



# MOTOR POOL MESSENGER

the official monthly newsletter of the  
**MILITARY TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION**

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Issue FEBRUARY 2021

Editor: Dave Steinert



THEN



## In This Issue

In with the New:  
The Modernization  
of US Army Field  
Artillery,  
1939-1941  
Part III

## ON THE COVER...



**THEN-** Carpet bombing, also known as saturation bombing, is bombardment done in a large area in a progressive manner to inflict damage in every part of a selected area of land. The phrase evokes the image of explosions completely covering

an area, in the same way that a carpet covers a floor. Carpet bombing is usually achieved by dropping many unguided bombs.

Carpet bombing of cities, towns, villages, or other areas containing a concentration of civilians is considered a war crime as of Article 51 of the 1977 Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions.

Sometimes *obliteration bombing* is used to describe especially intensified bombing with the intention of destroying a city or a large part of the city. Also, the term *area bombing* refers to indiscriminate bombing of an area and also encompasses cases of carpet bombing, including obliteration bombing. It was used in that sense especially during World War II. In the European Theatre, the first city to suffer heavily from aerial bombardment was Warsaw, on 25 September 1939.

When the United States joined the war and the USAAF greatly reinforced the campaign, bringing in the Eighth Air Force into the European Theatre, many cities, both large and small, were destroyed by Allied bombing. The German cities Cologne, Berlin, Hamburg and Dresden are among the most infamous, as the latter two developed firestorms.

In the Pacific War, carpet bombing was used extensively against Japanese civilian population centers, such as Tokyo. On the night of 9–10 March 1945, 334 B-29 Superfortress heavy bombers were directed to attack the most heavily populated civilian sectors of Tokyo. In just one night, over 100,000 people burned to death from a heavy bombardment of incendiary bombs, comparable to the wartime number of U.S. casualties in the entire Pacific theater. Another 100,000 to one million Japanese were left homeless.

By the time of the dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, light and medium bombers were being directed to bomb

targets of convenience, as most urban areas had already been destroyed. In the 9-month long civilian bombing campaign, over 400,000 Japanese civilians died.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: Over 100,000 Allied airmen died during the war. The chance of surviving 30 missions in a heavy bomber without being shot down, killed or captured was 29 percent; for a medium bomber flying the required 50 missions the chance of survival unharmed was 52 percent.**

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**LATER:** A United States UAV (or uncrewed aerial vehicle, commonly known as a drone) is an aircraft without a human pilot on board. UAVs are a component of an unmanned aircraft system (UAS); which include a UAV, a ground-based controller, and a system of communications between the two. The flight of UAVs may operate with various degrees of autonomy: either under remote control by a human operator or autonomously by onboard computers referred to as an autopilot.

Compared to crewed aircraft, UAVs were originally used for missions too "dull, dirty or dangerous" for humans. While drones originated mostly in military applications, their use is rapidly finding many more applications including aerial photography, agriculture, policing, surveillance, infrastructure inspections, product deliveries, science, smuggling, and drone racing.

In 1959, the U.S. Air Force, concerned about losing pilots over hostile territory, began planning for the use of uncrewed aircraft. Planning intensified after the Soviet Union shot down a U-2 in 1960. Within days, a highly classified UAV program started under the code name of "Red Wagon". The August 1964 clash in the Tonkin Gulf between naval units of the U.S. and North Vietnamese Navy initiated America's highly classified UAVs into their first combat missions of the Vietnam War.

As of 2012, the USAF employed 7,494 UAVs –almost one in three USAF aircraft. The Central Intelligence Agency also operated UAVs.

**EDITOR'S NOTE: In the last few years with UAVs having the capability to carry and launch missiles with pinpoint accuracy, the process of eliminating enemy targets has become more "surgical" than the carpet bombing that was used during World War II without sacrificing the lives of airmen.**

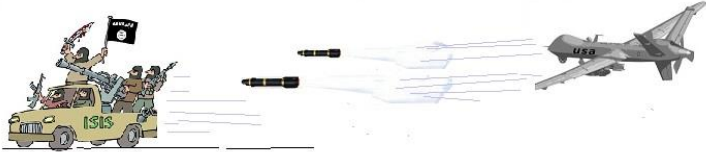


# ATTENTION MEMBERS!

**Because of the latest New Jersey Pandemic Restrictions...**

**THE FEBRUARY 2021 MTA MEETING AT THE WHIPPANY AMERICAN LEGION IS CANCELLED!**

**...but we will be having a MTA Zoom Meeting on Thursday, February 4<sup>th</sup> 2021...at 7:00PM**



## MTA Meeting Minutes

**Jan 7, 2020 – ZOOM Meeting**

Submitted by Anita Roberts, Recording Secretary

The first virtual ZOOM meeting of the MTA was called to order and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and a Moment of Silence. With over 20 members on the call, President **AI Mellini** asked for a motion to approve the Nov 1, 2020 Minutes (December meeting was cancelled). **Gary Schultz** made the motion to approve and **Tim Swanick** seconded. Motion carried.

### Financial Report as reported by AI Mellini:

#### Dec. 31, 2020

<b>Beginning Balance:</b>	\$43,975.19
<b>Income:</b>	42.31
<b>Expenditures:</b>	(109.92)
<b>Closing balance at Dec. 31, 2020:</b>	\$43,907.46

#### For the year ending Dec. 2020

<b>Beginning Balance at Jan 1, 2020:</b>	\$52,629.13
<b>Income:</b>	11,247.54
<b>Expenditures:</b>	(19,969.21)
<b>Ending Balance:</b>	\$43,907.46

AI gave a summary of the 2020 finances. We spent \$3250 on donations, \$2096 for insurance and \$3850 on the newsletter. We had two trail rides, a picnic, meeting dinners, trip to the military museum which cost \$2695 in expenses. The Swap Meet had income from vendors of \$4495 and incurred expenses of \$1248 in advertising and \$3658 for the field deposit. The deposit for the Fair Grounds and most of the vendor fees have been carried over to 2021. On the positive side, we received \$3160 in dues and \$2935 from *Vehicles in Movies*. In summary, as shown in the tables above, our bank balance went down \$8700 for the year. **Ginnie McDevitt** has confirmed that our balance is adequate to operate the Club.

AI emphasized that with very little income coming in, dues are very important. We need the money to operate the club. If any member has not paid yet, NOW is the time. If you lost the self-addressed postage paid envelope from the November newsletter, please send your check to the PO Box address on the back of the newsletter, AI reminded members that if a vehicle is being used in a movie, the MTA requires an insurance waiver. Only one waiver is needed for the year. Email AI.

AI mentioned that due to an incident where a MVPA member at a non-sanctioned (and non-MVPA insured) event had a loaded gun incident, the MVPA was sued and has lost its insurance. Subsequently, they cancelled insurance coverage to all its affiliates. The MTA has coverage independent of the MVPA and AI is looking into getting higher limits for the MTA. During discussion, it was suggested we have a Safety Commission to check privately for guns and that we do safety inspections at the Swap Meet. AI warned against the MTA being responsible for enforcement of safety but said he would discuss the matter with the Exec Bd.

**Carolyn Hoffman** gave a T4T wrap up report. 5500 Toys were collected by the MTA. 17,000 toys were purchased by OTT from partnering with *Donate a Toy and Lend Lease*. **GREAT JOB CAROLYN!** **Tim and Angie Farrell, Ken and Patrick Gardner, John Sobotka, Jean Swanick, Mark Mellini, Fabian and Natalie Ledesma** and others. were instrumental in making the MTA T4T run a success. **Kudos to the team!!**

**Tim Swanick** informed the club that Dover Dodge/Jeep on Rte. 46 in Rockaway would like to have several jeeps from the Club to park in front of the business on a Saturday as an eye catcher. Tim gave him a quote of \$500 for 4hrs. from 10am-2pm. Dover Dodge/Jeep asked for more information regarding our fee and how many jeeps to present to the owner.

MTA Swap Meet Business Cards were requested by both **Jack Pellington** and **Frank Shane**. AI will provide them cards and anyone else who needs them. Just email AI. Our meetings will remain virtual until we can either meet at the Legion Hall or at Fireman's Field in the late Spring.

Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by **Frank Shane**, seconded by **Tim Farrell**.



*Members, this is a tough time of the year. Between COVID-19 and winter temperatures, we might as well work on our vehicles. Mark and I just bought new tires for our M38A1 and plan to have some rust removed this winter. I wanted to let you know our January virtual meeting was a success. We had a minor hiccup or two but we had over 25 members including some from out of state. Wonderful to hear from members that won't drive from Florida to make a meeting. Sigh!!! We plan at least the February and March meetings virtual. Please call in and join us.*

BTW, I now have the 2021 Swap Meet business cards and flyer. Email me if you need either.

This newsletter includes a "end of year 2020" financial statement. As you can see, we spent \$8722 more than we brought in. Remember we didn't shut expenditures down until mid-March and by that time we had spent \$3250 on donations. While our Treasurer says our balance is good, we need income to keep it there.

Without the parades or Swap Meet, our revenues are down. So, long story short, please pay your dues and keep the MTA healthy.

Stay safe, Al

## MTA 2020 Officers and Key Committee Heads

### President- Al Mellini

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### Vice President- John Sobotka

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### Recording Secretary- Anita Roberts

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### Treasurer -Ginnie McDevitt

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### Sergeant at Arms-Andrew Salzano

Tel: 973-831-0920

### Membership Chairman- Fred Schlesinger

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### Swap Meet Chairman- Bill Murphy

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### Webmaster- Rudy Garbely

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### Quartermaster and MTA Archives Custodian Gary Schultz

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## IN WITH THE NEW: THE MODERNIZATION OF US ARMY FIELD ARTILLERY, 1939-1941

### PART III

By Jim Swanick

American idealism was shattered on the morning of 10 May 1940 as two massive German army groups descended on France and the Low Countries. As *Army Group B* swarmed over Belgium and the Netherlands, the phalanx of *Army Group A*, Heinz Guderian's *XIX Panzer Corps*, struck through the Ardennes. Transiting the rough terrain of the forest far more rapidly than the French believed possible, Guderian's command spilled out of the woods and smashed into the French 2<sup>nd</sup> Army at Sedan on 12 May. By the following evening

multiple bridgeheads over the Meuse had been secured, and *Army Group A* kicked its advance into high gear as its armored formations drove deep into the Allied rear, reaching the Channel coast on 20 May and trapping approximately 1.7 million Allied troops between the two German army groups.

Within the yawning pocket, which stretched from the Netherlands to northern France, were the entirety of the Dutch and Belgian armies, the British Expeditionary Force (BEF), one full French field army, and substantial elements of four more. Of those trapped, at least 1.2 million marched into captivity; the remainder were killed, evacuated, or filtered away, leaving behind immense stores of heavy equipment. The destruction of these forces broke the back of Allied resistance in continental Europe; although heavy fighting continued in the interim, by mid-June France was ready to surrender. The world looked on in shock; the war in the west was over, and the world's greatest army had been quickly and violently defeated.



One Gun for Father and Son: A modernized 75mm gun M1897A4 on maneuvers in New York state, 1935. It would not be until the outbreak of war that the Army finally retired the venerable "French '75."

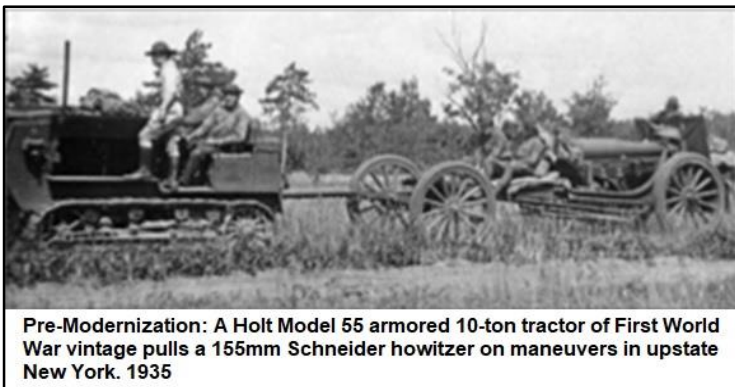
Such tumultuous European events shook the United States. Even before France had fallen President Roosevelt called on Congress to grant him the authority to federalize the National Guard and call up Reserve personnel, citing a need to rapidly fill out the armed forces with trained personnel to properly safeguard the nation. In the same request he appealed for the resources necessary to begin mobilizing American industry for war. Defense appropriations rose accordingly, as the War Department budget rose from 1.1 billion dollars in 1940 (itself double the amount appropriated in Fiscal Year 1939) to approximately 1.75 billion dollars in 1941. Over the course of Fiscal Year 1941 this initial budget skyrocketed, as events around the world stimulated additional appropriations that ultimately brought it to a staggering 13.5 billion dollars. Of this amount, approximately 3 billion dollars went to the Ordnance Department.

Readying the US Army for a potential major conflict with Germany or Japan was a high order and equipping the Field Artillery Branch with modern materiel proved no exception to this rule. As of 30 June 1940, the Army's inventory of light and medium field artillery consisted of 91 75mm howitzers, 4,236 75mm guns, and 2,971 155mm howitzers, 599 of which had been upgraded for high speed transport. Its total stock of heavy artillery numbered 973 155mm guns, 475 8-inch howitzers, and 320 240mm howitzers. All of these pieces were obsolete in one form or another and required



modernization or replacement in order to bring them up to par with the demands of the modern battlefield.

The first to go were the 75mm guns. In the aftermath of the 1940 maneuvers they were replaced by the 105mm howitzer that had been developed during the Interwar Years, which by now had been fitted with a suitable carriage. Designated the M2A1 following improvements to the breech ring, the new piece was standardized in March of 1940. Accompanying it at the division level would be the new 155mm Howitzer M1, adopted in May 1941. New weaponry was also developed for use at the corps level and above as pre-war design programs that had stalled for lack of funding were revitalized, resulting in the adoption of the 155mm Gun M1A1, 8-inch Howitzer M1, and 4.5-inch Field Gun M1 in mid-1941 even as work continued on an 8-inch gun and 240mm howitzer. Finally, the advent of the Armored Force and recognition of the need for a self-propelled artillery piece led to the "development" of the M7 105mm Howitzer Motor Carriage, which was actually little more than a 105mm M2A1 strapped to a medium tank chassis. Thus, by the end of Fiscal Year 1941 the bulk of the design process involved in rearming the Field Artillery Branch had been accomplished.



Pre-Modernization: A Holt Model 55 armored 10-ton tractor of First World War vintage pulls a 155mm Schneider howitzer on maneuvers in upstate New York. 1935

The adoption of new pieces meant little until they were actually produced. Supplying a large army, those of the Allied powers, or both would require the mobilization of a massive industrial base. Such potential existed within the United States, but it lay within the hands of private firms unfamiliar with the production of weapons of war. Although the Ordnance Department had conducted industrial surveys, educational orders, and production studies during the Interwar Years to identify which manufacturers could be a good fit to produce war materiel, no conversion of production lines occurred prior to the fall of France. Therefore, while funding for rearmament surged in the aftermath of that critical event, production lagged due to the time required to obtain and install new tools, train personnel, and work out the kinks in the production process. The production numbers for field pieces built between July 1940 and 31 December 1941 were accordingly paltry- only 597 105mm howitzers, 65 155mm guns, and 458 75mm pack howitzers- but simply getting factories online represented major progress toward successfully equipping the Field Artillery Branch with modern weaponry.

In the aftermath of the Louisiana-Texas Maneuvers of 1940 the Army again reorganized the infantry division. The November 1940 tables of organization set the standard for the organization of division artillery, dropping it from five battalions in two regiments to four battalions that reported to the division artillery commander. Three battalions were outfitted with

105mm howitzers for direct support of the division's three infantry regiments, while the fourth battalion carried 155mm howitzers for general support. Each battalion was staffed by three batteries of four howitzers, along with a headquarters and headquarters battery, service battery, and medical detachment. This would be the standard makeup of division artillery throughout the war. For the time being non-divisional field artillery remained organized into brigades of three regiments (two 155mm howitzer, one 155mm gun) of two battalions each.

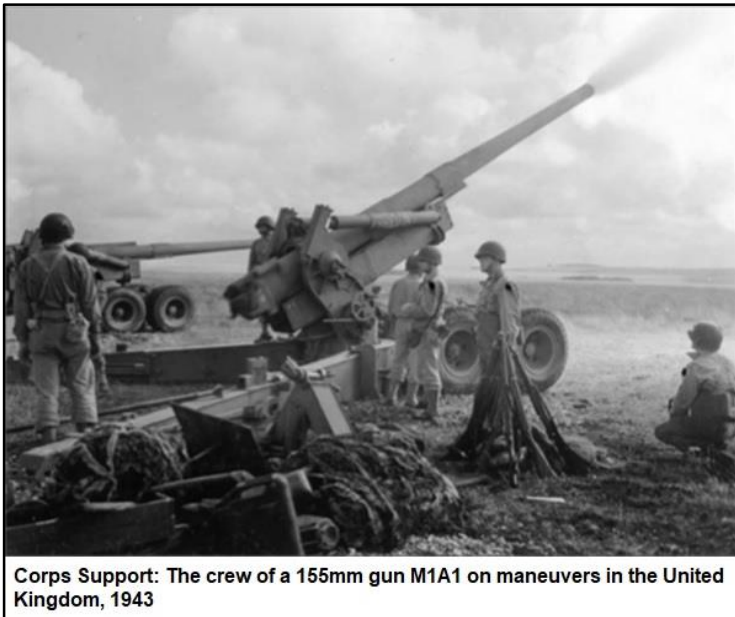


An early model 105mm howitzer on trials in 1932.

As the Ordnance Department tackled modernizing the Army's arsenal the Field Artillery School pursued improving fire direction. In 1929 a British field artillery officer, Lt. Col. Neil Fraser-Tytler, published a book detailing his experiences in the First World War. Fraser-Tytler had been a battery commander during the war, and, disgruntled with the monotony and ineffectiveness of conducting unobserved indirect fire, had begun sneaking into No-Man's Land after dark in order to register his guns on the next day's targets. During his night-time forays he would crawl forward of friendly lines with a field telephone until he reached a suitable observation post. Once this had been accomplished, he would register his battery on various targets by firing only one gun and adjusting that fire onto the target. Once a target had been registered the battery recorded the corrected firing data and passed it along to battalion headquarters for dissemination to the rest of the unit. The system was not quite groundbreaking- indeed, it was simply a method of conducting observed indirect fire- but it served to inspire Major Carlos Brewer, Director of the Gunnery Department at the Field Artillery School. Brewer envisioned a field artillery system that was responsive to the needs of forward elements, something that had eluded the armies of the

First World War. By 1931 he and his instructors had introduced the first element that would revolutionize American fire direction: a graphical firing chart. The firing chart was a graph drawn to fit the battery positions of the battalion and the battalion base point, the latter being a common reference point identified by a forward observer (FO) that each battery registered upon. With the real locations of each battery and the base point known, targets were identified relative to the base point through a request such as: "enemy strong point, reference point 600 left, 400 short." This allowed each battery to quickly compute firing data by modifying the data it had computed through registration, in this case specifically adjusting it to hit a target 600 yards to the left and 400 yards short of the base point. Major Orlando Ward, Brewer's successor, refined the system between 1932 and 1934 by transferring the responsibility of computing firing data from the FO to a group of personnel at the battalion level, called the fire direction center (FDC). He also transferred responsibility for directing fire, i.e. deciding which targets to fire upon and how to do so, from the battery commander to the battalion commander, and oversaw the adoption of radios, which considerably improved the reliability of communication between the FO and FDC. The new system was very fast-

and made the graphical firing chart the one-stop-shop for all computing and plotting, whether the battalion was delivering observed or unobserved fire, and improved the responsiveness of the system through the adoption of a graphic firing table that allowed for rapid computation of firing data. Finally, he adapted the system to mass an entire division's artillery by registering one gun from each battalion on a division check point. Demonstrations for the Army Chief of Staff, General George C. Marshall, and Major General Robert Danford, Chief of Field Artillery, in April and October 1941 convinced both of the system's merits, and it was adopted immediately.



Corps Support: The crew of a 155mm gun M1A1 on maneuvers in the United Kingdom, 1943

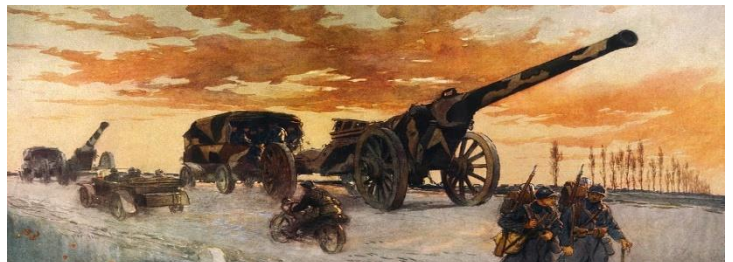
during one demonstration in 1933, the battalion massed fire (directed the fire of all of its batteries onto one target) on the target within 8 minutes- and allowed the battalion to mass fire using information provided by only one FO. Such a feat had previously been impossible, as targets had been identified relative to terrain features and a battalion shoot was only possible provided an FO from each battery could see it.

Despite proving successful in multiple demonstrations throughout the 30's, the Field Artillery School's new system was not well received. Institutional conservatism aimed at preserving the authority of the battery commander and simple refusal to believe that the system worked prevented its implementation until 1941, by which point it had been improved upon further by another Director of the Gunnery Department, Lt. Col. H.L.C. Jones. Jones gave the battery commander the job of directing fire in fast-moving situations, with battalion taking over once things had settled down. He enlarged the FDC



Artillerymen of the 29<sup>th</sup> Division conduct exercises with their 105mm M2A1 howitzers in the United Kingdom, 1943.

On 7 December 1941 the Empire of Japan struck at the possessions of Great Britain and the United States, its major blows landing upon on the Philippine Islands, Malaya, and Pearl Harbor. At that point the Field Artillery Branch was the most capable combat arm of the US Army. Although its arsenal had not yet been replaced in full, the crucial steps of designing and standardizing new pieces and mobilizing industry to produce them had been accomplished. Division artillery had been streamlined through the adoption of new tables of organization, and with the successful conclusion of efforts begun in the 1930's the branch had been fully motorized. Finally, the branch had uniquely enhanced its combat effectiveness through its development and adoption of the graphical firing chart and fire direction center. By embracing the use of radios and graphical firing tables that allowed for rapid computation of firing data, the branch had even further augmented the effectiveness of the new fire direction system, making it the most responsive and advanced in the world...continued with Part IV in the next issue of Motor Pool Messenger!





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**Parts for Sale-** 230 CI M725 motor, ran when pulled, burns oil \$200, M725 litter racks-best offer, M725 Rear doors, some dents, no rust \$200 for the pair, M715 windshield frame, minor surface rust \$150, NOS in packing Southwind heater for M725 possible M-43 best offer, M37 windshield frame outer only \$75, M725-M715 rims with lock rings –make offer. Many more items available, too many to list. Call for more information. Call Matt Ziegler, cell 973-445-3890, email : [Matrziegler@gmail.com](mailto:Matrziegler@gmail.com)

**For Sale:** 1964 Ford M151, current Odometer: 34252. Currently registered and inspected in New York State. Comes with Army radio, mounted machine gun (disabled firearm) w/ mount and cartridges, trailer, plastics to go over vehicle (no photo included, but available at request) as well as two large boxes of extra parts. Vehicle has always been garage kept. Buyer is responsible for pick-up or to arrange for shipment for out of town sales. This vehicle has not been cut. Asking \$18,000. Located in Pine Island NY. Please contact Lodzia - 845-258-4493 or Vince - 845-728-9191.

**For Sale:** Replica 81mm mortar. M1 tube and bi-pod. M4 sight. Has incorrect M23A1 two-piece base (Nam era?). The tube is original with 1 pin cross welded and a dummy cup welded on. Comes with one practice round (inert) in a newer taped tube. And a wooden ammo crate. Asking \$3000 . Will take a M35a2 ring mount in trade. Kirk Stinson 862-209-0933

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# CLASSIFIEDS

To add or remove listings from the Classifieds, please email Dave Steinert at [dsteinert@mtaofnj.org](mailto:dsteinert@mtaofnj.org) or call 973-347-9091.

**For Sale:** 1972 M151A2 by AMG, uncut Mutt w/radios, full canvas, Fording Kit, licensed N.J., Reg., w/extra parts including OEM in the box, windshield and frame, restored in 2001. Asking \$15,000 or B.O. Delivery Available at extra cost. CALL VINNY SCHWARTZ at 973-476-9544, [vsaws@optonline.net](mailto:vsaws@optonline.net)

**For Sale:** Two 1952 Dodge M37s. One restored and in good condition, \$4500. Another 1952 M37 unrestored, \$3200. I also have many Jeep and M37 parts for sale, call Tom Weaver @ 973-627-9448.

# BACK THEM UP!



# Military Transport Association

P.O. Box 391  
Budd Lake, NJ 07828

**THE FEBRUARY MTA  
MEETING WILL BE A  
ZOOM MEETING ONLY!**



a chapter of the Military Vehicle Preservation Association

The Military Transport Association is dedicated to the education and preservation of historic to present military vehicles. Members enjoy restoring, displaying, and operating military vehicles of all types, from bicycles to tanks.

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You do not have to own a military vehicle to be part of this exciting and active hobby - you just need a desire to do your part in keeping our military history alive. All you need to join the MTA is to fill out the the form below, include your dues payment, and mail it to the address below. Alternately, you can give your form and dues to any MTA member you meet at any of our events.

for more information, visit our website at [www.MTAofNJ.org](http://www.MTAofNJ.org)

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