



# NEWSLETTER 177

May 2007



**Matt and Bob Tallman's beautiful 44 MB**

## DEBRIEFING

In the "Best laid plans of Mice and Men column" the last meeting was a bust. The newsletter ran late with some Internet delivery and posting issues and this unfortunately led to the meeting being cancelled. Happily there was no new business, but the Air Force Museum folks who were hosting us needed an early warning with names and license numbers and as the cut-off loomed we decided to cancel. Hopefully we can do this another time, perhaps in the fall.

The Main web site has now been fixed and as well we now own our own domain [www.prairiecommand.ca](http://www.prairiecommand.ca) which links to the main page, the classifieds and an event calendar.

## NEXT MEETING

As is our usual practice, there are no formal summer meetings. When necessary, club business is conducted at club events

Speaking of club events please check the calendar on the web site and the listing we put in this newsletter. If you can attend an event, please let the exec know. Even a "can't make it" is helpful for planning purposes. As well for those of you who have provided us an e-mail address we send out "Warning Orders" specific to each event that the club is involved in. You all have spent a lot of time and energy in restoring your vehicles. Bring them out for others to appreciate!

## EVENTS

As always this summer is shaping up to be a busy one with some major events in the works. By the time you read this the Show n Shine at the Red River Ex, the Transcona Hi Neighbour Days and the Prairie Dog Central events will have been completed. Here is what is next on the list.

🚗 "Princess Auto Day" which is scheduled for Saturday June 16th. The theme is a customer appreciation day mixed in with some fun events and displays. It seems there is enough interest to have displays at both store locations. For those who wish to go to the Pa net Road location, call Gord Falk for details. For the Portage site, Don True man or Jeff Helps can answer questions. Princess Auto has been kind enough to print the club brochures that we had designed over the winter and there will be some available to hand out at these events.

🚗 The Springfield Days Parade is also on June 16th in Oak bank. We have done the Springfield parade several times however missed last year. In the past we had vets riding in our vehicles. Call Gord Falk if you want to attend this event.

🚗 The RCA museum in Shilo is having an open house the July 1st long weekend. Rob Love has suggested that folks who wish can camp out at his place and he thinks he can arrange a trail ride for one of the days. We are still trying to come up with logistics support to get vehicles out there. More information will be sent out as it becomes available.

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☛ All British Car Meet is at the Forks on July 8th. Last year Gord's Ferret was entered.

FYI As members of MAAC we get a lot of mailers and promotions from organizations asking for turnouts to "show'n'shine" activities. Even NAAACCC sends discount cards for Traveller's Inn and a car rental company. It's impractical to calendar these events or even distribute the coupons we get. Please inform yourselves through the MAAC calendar, the Friday newspapers automotive sections about events close to you that you may enjoy participating in! We can't keep up with the flood of info!

## DISPATCHES

Several members made it out for the Show'n'Shine portion of the Red River Swap Meet sponsored by the Manitoba Classic and Antique Car Club annual event at the Red River Ex Grounds in Headingley Mb. Best catch at the flea market was a fuel transfer selector for a CMP for three bucks...Bill Spence now long on transfer valves. Also a Jeep Can and mounting bracket. Can was trash but the mount was minty for ten bucks. Next BBQ, the can will be filled with part load of water and steamed up to blow out the dints...I won't be there tho. 15 bucks got Derk Derrin another FNC1 Bayonet in very nice condition.

Bill Spence is shifting gears on his CMP project and moving right along. This entails a complete cab change-up and is turning in to a really interesting project.

You may recall a few newsletters back that member Bill Briercliffe was making every effort to preserve Transcona (CN Shops) first steam locomotive as a piece of local history. Dark forces from Winnipeg were attempting to move it to the local rail museum. Last weekend other forces conspired to cause the collapse of the rail line to the museum, and it would appear at this time the locomotive will remain in it's original home. No conspiracy theories yet...

Derk Derin has a water tight radiator for his carrier, and a fully functioning transmission. Not certain that the radiator is IN the carrier though.

After many hints about a new addition to the PCMV family Bob and Matt Tallman have finally delivered a beautifully restored 1944 MB. Bob says there is a long story as to its acquisition, but as your pres has a short attention span he asked for the short version. Seems a Dutch gentlemen who was a boy during the war remembered fondly the Canadian troops riding around in jeeps. Many years later, after emigrating to Canada, he found and restored an MB to wartime Canadian markings. It looks very complete with a few things like correct mirror arms to be found and some additions for safety such as turn signals. All in all a very nice

machine! For a further Dutch connection, see the presidents report on his trip to Arnhem.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

As mentioned else where in this newsletter, we are well into the show season. In an effort to make things easier for members we initiated many of your suggestions identified during discussion that took place over this past winter as to how to prioritise events and how to get the info out.

To date your executive committee has:

- identified featured events to focus turnout. We try and do no more than one or two a month.
- continued to publish as much info as we can in the newsletter
- created and are keeping up to date a calendar on the web site.
- send out specific event info to members who have an e-mail address.

So far the response has been under whelming, with mostly the same usual suspects showing up at events! Of course we recognize that the club is made up of volunteers and with today's busy life styles it is hard to plan too far in advance, however to allow us to respond in a more timely manner to formal invites, it would be very helpful if you could let us know if you can attend or perhaps as important, if you cannot. This allows us to tell event organizers how many vehicles to expect and to reserve some space for us.

Trying to pick events to focus the clubs participation on is difficult and most if not all are worth going to, however if I can encourage you to get out to one event this year it is the Princess Auto Appreciation day on June 16th. The day is in support of the Princess Auto Foundation a very worthwhile cause. As well Princess Auto has kindly agreed to print the club brochures we developed over the winter and I feel we should show our support by turning out. Please let us know if you can attend.

I had the pleasure of being on hand for the first club event attended by Matt and Bob Tallman with their newly arrived 44 MB. It is a beauty and got many positive comments. As noted elsewhere it is restored to represent a Canadian jeep in Holland. This is a pretty interesting coincidence as I have recently returned from a business trip to Amsterdam where I had a chance to visit the Airborne Museum in Oosterbeek.

That's all for this month, hope to see you out to at least some of the club events.



**Hartenstien Hotel - Then and Now**

## **ARNHEM – 63 YEARS LATER**

*On the narrow corridor that would carry the armoured drive, there were five major bridges to take. They had to be seized intact by airborne assault. It was the fifth, the crucial bridge over the Lower Rhine at a place called Arnhem, sixty-four miles behind the German lines, that worried Lieutenant General Frederick Browning, Deputy Commander, First Allied Airborne Army. Pointing to the Arnhem bridge on the map he asked, "How long will it take the armor to reach us?" Field Marshal Montgomery replied briskly, "Two days." Still looking at the map, Browning said, "We can hold it for four." Then he added, "But, sir, I think we might be going a bridge too far."*

These words, contained in the preamble to Cornelius Ryan's book – "A Bridge Too Far", have always fascinated me and the movie of the same name, is one of my favourites. To have an opportunity to visit the site of the battle was not something that I thought I would ever be able to do, however being asked to attend a NATO conference in Amsterdam, put it within reach. A quick check of the schedule showed that there was a day that my presence was not required and I could make the hour and a half train trip to Arnhem to visit the Airborne museum in nearby Oosterbeek. I convinced a USAF lieutenant that the trip would be a good chance for some "professional development" and after a quick word to that effect with his head of delegation, we were off.

The train ride from Amsterdam was very smooth, fast and quiet and the time passed quickly. A short bus ride from Arnhem to Oosterbeek and we were let off a block from the museum which is housed in the old Hartenstien hotel that

served as MGen Urquhart's HQ during the battle. The displays are very well done with numerous video's depicting various events during the battle. Signs are in Dutch and English and the staff is conversant in both. The basement houses a number of full size diorama's with period sounds and voice's. Weapons are displayed as they would have been used and there is a display depicting MGen Urquhart giving the order to his officers that they would be withdrawing back across the Rhine at night. My favourite display of course was the one depicting para regiment signalers working their Wireless No 19 Set.

The grounds and surrounding area are very well maintained and it is clear that a lot of work has gone into the museum and its displays. After a few quick purchases at the gift shop, we were off to the Arnhem Oosterbeek Military Cemetery.





**Arnhem Oosterbeek Cemetery**

The people of the Netherlands are very thankful to the allies who risked their lives or who paid the ultimate sacrifice, to rid their country of the Nazi's, and the Dutch take great pains to honour their memory. This was very apparent to me as a result of my visit to the Arnhem Oosterbeek war cemetery. Rather than being remote and forgotten, the graveyard is nearby to the museum (within walking distance) with clearly marked direction signs showing you the way. The site is very well maintained and I am told that on Remembrance Day this cemetery, like all other war graves in the Netherlands, are visited by school children who pay tribute to those who help free their country. It is most definitely NOT just a day off from school or work.

While the site contains the remains of all who died in this area of the Netherlands during the latter stages of the war, clearly the bulk of the graves contain the fallen members of Operation Market Garden. The beauty of the site and the obvious care with which it is tended was very moving, and having read the information signs and memorial inscriptions in the entrance to the site, my American companion and I began to walk amongst the graves.

Almost immediately I received a bit of a shock when the first grave marker I read belonged to A.D. Trueman, a relative of our own newsletter editor perhaps?

The movie "A Bridge too Far" concentrates on the British and American efforts in Market Garden and does not address the

small but none the less important efforts of Canadians as well. During the failed bridgehead regular re supply drops were conducted to try and get much needed food and ammunition to the beleaguered men of the 1st British Airborne Division. Many aircraft were shot down and a number of RCAF crewmen are interred in Oosterbeek. Likewise during the evacuation across the Rhine, Canadian combat engineers risked their lives to pilot small boats across the river to rescue escaping troops. Sadly a number of their members are in Oosterbeek as well.



A number of things were driven home to me by visiting Amsterdam and the war sites. First and foremost is the lack of understanding that the average Canadian has in the level of appreciation that still exists to this day in the Netherlands. Having never had our freedoms taken away from us, it is hard to understand why it is important to help others who are so oppressed. The second is the age of the fallen. Most were under or in their early 20's, and yet they had the

conviction to risk their lives for others. I am not certain that strong ethic still exists in today's Canada. And finally I believe we take our freedoms too much for granted. The world still harbours those that would be happy to have democracy fail, and we need to be as willing to fight tyranny today as were the young men and women of 63 years ago.