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Friday, 16 December 2011 08:34

Restoration of Pattons Mobile Command Truck



For visitors coming to the Patton Museum, the General Patton mobile command van has always been one of the most popular exhibits in the Patton Gallery. It has given visitors a chance to see the actual vehicle from which Patton lived and worked as he commanded the Third Army during World War II and allowed them to see a more [personal](#) facet of Patton's life. While the command van has been preserved and remained under cover for years, it has been repainted and altered so that it no longer resembles the original vehicle.



In a colorized war-time photo, General Patton emerges from the rear of his command van (courtesy Denny Hair)

Now the Patton Museum volunteers are undertaking one of the most significant projects in the museum's history; [the complete](#) restoration of the command van to its war-time configuration. Patton Museum volunteer Don Moriarty is the head of this project. He, along with other volunteers, will work to rediscover the command van's history, repair the damages and alterations and preserve its original features. They will also remove layers of post-war [paint](#) in an attempt to uncover the original war-time markings, record them and repaint and mark the vehicle as it would have appeared in 1944. Most of the narrative and photo captions on these project pages are taken from Don's [project reports](#).

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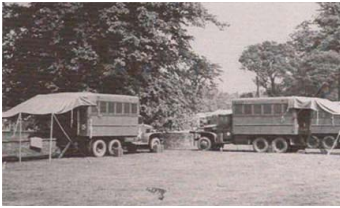
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Tree carvings and bark graffiti unveil private lives from WW2

British student has become the world's only expert in military tree carvings - using the bark graffiti to trace soldiers' life stories Chantel Summerfield, 24, is

Background History of Patton Mobile Command Truck

by Don Moriarty



CCKW ordnance shop vans at ETO. (courtesy of Third Army HQ web site)



Soldiers loading equipment into CCKW ordnance shop vans. (courtesy of Third Army HQ web site)

The CCKW series 353 two-and-a-half ton truck is a basic World War II-era truck designed as a small-arms ordnance [repair shop](#). In 1944, a number of CCKWs were ordered to be converted as mobile command posts. Third Army headquarters retained three such mobile command post trucks which were the [heart](#) of the tactical headquarters of General Patton's Third Army. This particular mobile command post truck was used by General Patton for the duration of combat [operations](#) as Third Army commander. It acted as his personal field quarters as well as a command [center](#).

Immediately following the end of hostilities in May 1945, the tactical command post vehicles were reportedly "deactivated" and sent to an undetermined equipment depot for return to the United States. Information exists showing that the van was retained in Germany from May 1945 through December 1947. Archival information shows that in June 1947, efforts were ongoing to return it to the United States.

"Plans call for the van to be returned to Third Army Headquarters at Atlanta, Georgia, where it will be used for recruiting purposes. The famous equipage will probably find its final resting place in the Patton Museum at the Armored School, Fort Knox, Kentucky, where it will occupy an appropriate place among the [memorabilia](#) of one of America's greatest fighting men." War Department



General Patton (I) and General Middleton with one of the three Third Army HQ vans. (screen capture from DOD film)

In both a December 24 and December 30, 1947 memo, the plan for the van to be shipped directly from Germany to Fort Knox is discussed regarding the time-line of shipment. Beforehand there was no information available as to a specific time-line. It seems that there was a definite [interest](#) at very high levels of command as to the disposition of the Patton van and its Fort Knox destination.

In a memo from the Office of the Army Field Forces commander, General Devers, to the commanding general of the Armor Center, Fort Knox, dated June 9, 1948:

"The Patton Van has been located at Leterkinney Arsenal pending shipment direct to you for Patton Museum being requested of the Chief of Ordnance."

Digital records show that the Van arrived at Fort Knox, Kentucky in June 1948. At the time of its arrival the van predates the official dedication of the museum, May 1949, by almost a year. The Patton mobile command HQ van would be one of the many collection vehicles displayed in the original Patton Museum from 1949 -1972.

From 1972-73, the displays from the old museum were transferred to the new Patton Museum which included the Patton mobile command HQ van where it was placed in the Patton Gallery. From 1973 till January 2011, the Patton mobile command HQ van would remain basically untouched in the Patton Gallery. During this entire period, it is believed to have been moved two or three times, but basically remaining in the same general location for the entire period.

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studying the inscriptions engraved into tree trunks by troops during the two World Wars as part of her archaeology PhD. Often using just a...

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massacre survivor dies aged 91

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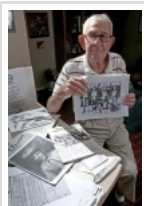
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Dambusters war hero Paddy Gingles tourist mix-up



A holidaymaker on a trip to Norway received full VIP and a civic reception after being mistaken for a World War II Dambusters hero. David Wilson, 47, had flown to Tromsø to find out more about his great-uncle Capt Paddy Gingles, who bombed a Nazi warship off Norway in 1944. But the museum he contacted ahead of his trip thought...

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