



598th TRANS TRIBUNE

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Volume 6, Number 9, October 2007



Photo by Spero Pekatou

■ MS Chapman discharging containers in the Port of Astakaos, Greece,



***Port Operations at
Astakos, Greece***

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1957 - 2007

**50 YEARS OF
U.S. MILITARY
TRANSPORTATION
VIA BENELUX PORTS**

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Volume 6, Number 9
October 2007

SDDC 598th TRANS TRIBUNE

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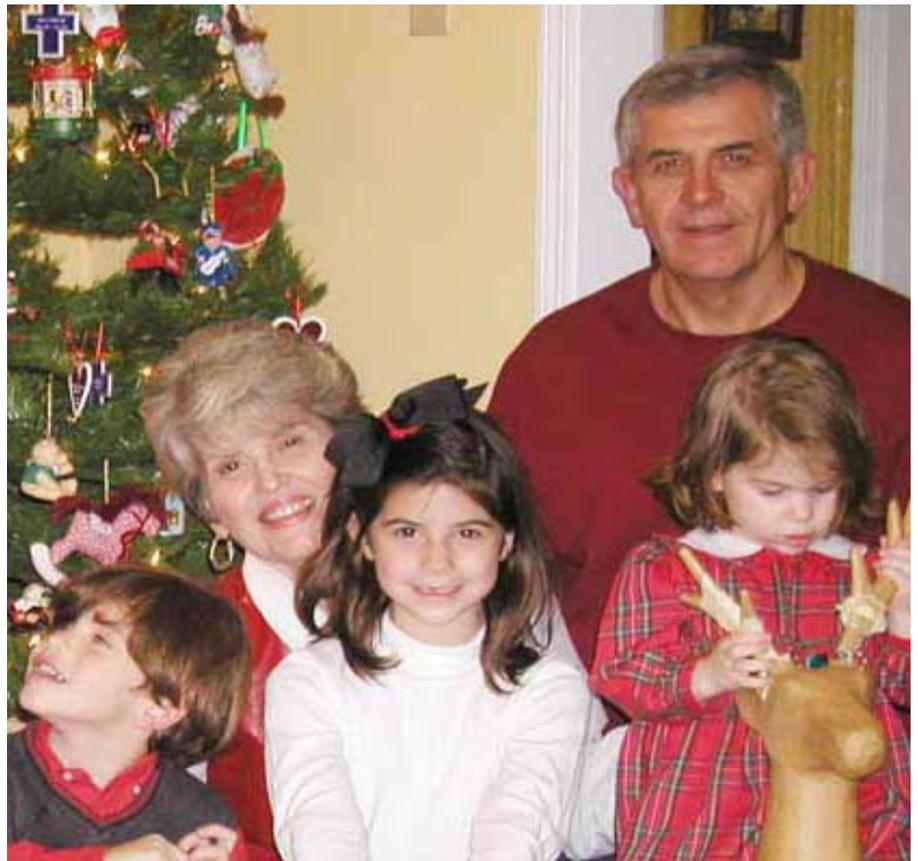
From the Commander

■ Colonel Janet L. Cobb
Commander 1190th DSB



Just a few quick notes away from the normal "Commander's Corner" topics:

Sometimes we are too lazy to put up a simple frame of photographs in our office. This is the digital age of photography so most of mine are on a CD-ROM or an external hard drive. It's quick --- we pop them onto our computer screens --- and enjoy the bright images of those we love. The constant fun and activity of our Rotterdam Military Community families, friends and kids prompted me to share two of my own photos with you. Our families --- who can include your husband, wife, kids, friends, neighbors and of course our pets --- are what keep us



■ My sister-in-law Nancy and brother Bill Cobb with their grandchildren during Christmas 2005.

strong in the service of our Army, our nation and our freedom. The fantastic Halloween celebration put on by MWR and our FRG brought out boatloads of kids this year! The turnout of costumed youngsters, their families and friends increased the fun factor a hundred-fold. Many of the adults --- even dogs! --- came down with “costume fever.” The Haunted House was simply incredible. Thanks to everyone who worked so hard to finish that project and to all the ghouls who populated it, to include but not limited to: Masja LaRue, Julie Shaw, Catharine Russell, Mark Friends’ Girlfriend, Lori Holland, Dallas Brannon, Matt Grant, Renee Handyman, Edward Handyman, Sohraya Ghazi’s Cousin, Mark Ghazi, Cieara Nelams, Stacy Nelams, Dexter Nelams, Jermaine Dompig, Nabiha Sir and Boyfriend, Miquel Delima, Staff Sgt. Kavaughuya Smith, Capt. Drew Meyers, Alicia Meyers, Gary Rucks and 1190th members.

Definitely one of the best Haunted Houses I’ve ever screamed my way through. Kudos to Ines Nargang and Donna Rucks of the MWR staff, Martie Blanton and her FRG volunteers and MWR Director Ray Landrau. There was plenty of food, a USO band, well-organized games for the kids and a safe environment for sharing the Halloween tradition. What a blast! The Rotterdam Military Community is truly blessed to have this support group in place ■



■ *Chaplain (1st Lieutenant) Scott Kennis was commissioned as one of the Army’s newest chaplains on 31 Aug 07 at Fort Jackson, SC. He is the husband of my niece, Christy, who is shown holding Isabella Grace. The other wee folk are Samuel Cobb Kennis, Anna Cate Kennis and Mary Caroline Kennis. Scott is currently assigned as Battalion Chaplain to HHD, 548th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 10th Sustainment Brigade, 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York.*



*Halloween with the ‘Rotterdam Community’
598th Transportation Group - 26 Oct 07*

■ Photo by Sgt. Major Jesse Cavalier

Command Sergeant Major's Corner

By
Command Sergeant Major
Maryeva Beesley,
1190th Deployment
Distribution Brigade
(598th Trans Gp).



The 598th Transportation Terminal Group in Rotterdam is getting ready to receive our Soldiers and Civilians back from their current mission in South West Asia. At the same time the 1190th Deployment Support Brigade Soldiers will leave Rotterdam for

follow on assignments or to return to their civilian lives. A lot of changes are in store for all of us. How will everyone cope?

The military has several ways to make this transition/reintegration period as easy as possible. We have plans set in place to receive those coming back and those departing and we can always count on our Family Readiness Group for support. There is also an excellent website entitled "BATTLEMIND". The home page for this website states that the goal of their training "is to develop a realistic preview, in briefing form, of the stresses and strains of deployment on Soldiers and families. Four training briefs are available for Leaders, National Guard/Reserves, and families. The briefings are designed to help Soldiers and their families adjust to their changing environments. They also help families to cope when a service member is deployed or redeployed. We all know that these are very stressful time periods and it is nice to know that there is a place to go for help.

For more information go to www.battlemind.org and click on the heading for "Battlemind" Then select either Spouse or Soldier and have a look at the information available for dealing with Pre and Post Deployment. This website also has other information and links that will help us to cope with the changes of deployment and redeployment.

Have a good month and as always "Stay Safe".
CSM Maryeva Beesley

Normandy Staff Ride

By Maj. Kevin C. Carrigan, 598th Trans Gp, Operations Officer

Members of the 598th Transportation Group and the 838th Transportation Battalion took part in a Battlefield Staff Ride to Normandy, France, 27-29 Sep 07, to study the history of "Operation Overlord," the Allied invasion that would lead to the liberation of Europe from the Nazi dictatorial regime during WWII.

Highlights of the tour included visits to Utah Beach and Omaha Beach. While there, members viewed the beaches and bluffs that the allied forces stormed on D-Day - June 6, 1944. The group also visited the small French town of Sainte-Mère-Eglise. It was there that a U.S. paratrooper got his parachute entangled in the church steeple during the 82nd Airborne Division's drop behind enemy lines. The members also toured the artificial harbor at Arromanches. This site was an amazing feat of ingenuity, key to the logistics operations that contributed to the allies' success in the invasion of Normandy. The Battlefield Staff Ride provided excellent lessons in understanding the core Army values of courage and commitment, and illustrated the vital role of logisticians on the battlefield ■



■ Members of the Normandy Battlefield Staff Ride at the "Iron Mike" Statue.

Port Operations at Astakos Greece

Article and photos by Spero Pekatos, Terminal Director
SDDC Greece Detachment.



■ Loading the MS Chapman at the Port of Astakos, Greece

“This port would be great for ammo transshipments,” I told George Kokonos, SDDC Greece Detachment Terminal Manager, who was standing next to me overlooking the port of Astakos, Greece. We had come to survey this private port on the west coast of Greece in early 2007. The port was funded and owned by a private company and was just recently completed. As a result, the port is still not very well utilized. During our visit, there were no vessels in port, just three large gantry cranes overlooking lots of open pier space and vessel berths with a deep draft of 46 feet. The port is also located far from any populated areas.

George agreed with me. In the past few years we had done some ammo transshipments for cargo to/from CONUS going to/from Turkey, Bulgaria and Israel. The last few operations had been done skin to skin, in stream, in Souda Bay Crete. Numerous obstacles make these types of operations difficult. Bad weather can delay operations due to the vessels heaving to and fro, one vessel may be delayed which requires the other one to wait, and the equipment available (onboard or floating cranes) makes it very slow going. Continuing to view the port of Astakos, George and I talked about the efficiencies we would gain moving these operations here from Souda Bay. We wondered when the next one might take place and would we be able to convince everyone to make the change. We didn’t have long to wait.

In June 2007, we heard the first rumblings of a large ammo mission destined for Ashdod Israel and would need to be transhipped en route in September 2007. In the past, we had worked with loads of 10 and 15 containers at a time. This mission called for the movement of 690 containers. Due to NEW restrictions in Ashdod Israel, the shipment would be split onto six different vessel loads over a four week period, approximately two vessels a week. George Kokonos and I started to call various agencies and offices to discuss the idea of moving to Astakos, Greece. Deane Swickard, the SDDC Liaison Officer to EUCOM was onboard right away. The Navy took a little longer. The Explosives Safety Office in Souda Bay Crete was somewhat skeptical in the beginning. They felt there would be numerous problems with doing such a large ammo operation and were not keen on locating it in a port instead of in stream. However, once they visited

the port, along with us and MSC, everyone was agreed that this would be the best place to execute the mission.

By August, details of the mission were firming up and we were in the thick of planning for the mission. George Kokonos completed two requests for OTOs, providing port services in Astakos and Ashdod. Since we would be working in both ports at the same time, our own home office would need to remain open for a long time, and having only a total of nine personnel, we went to our parent battalion, the 839th Transportation Battalion for additional personnel. George Kokonos was going to supervise the mission in Astakos and I would supervise the Ashdod mission.

We went to the DAO (Defense Attaché Office) at the U.S. Embassy in Athens Greece to get the appropriate waivers for the mission and to formally request host nation support for force protection. The Greek Coast Guard has always provided first class force protection for us during previous missions and this was going to be no different.

One week out, we began to have a few problems. First we received a new schedule from MSC that was going to be much more ambitious, receiving vessels almost on a daily basis at times. The port authority explained that due to a lack of sufficient stevedores in the region, this schedule would not be supportable. Eventually, working with MSC and EUCOM and the port authority, we received a schedule that worked. We then discovered that another ammunition export mission to Lebanon, (that we had been expecting to occur), was going to happen during our first week of operations in Astakos and Ashdod, at the Greek East Coast port of Styliis. Theofanis Skepetaris would go with a representative from the battalion S-3 to oversee the stuffing, movement and loading of ammo containers. We would now have to actually close operations in the home terminal for two days, leaving only our System Administrator to monitor the phones. Fortunately this did not impact any cargo moving through the port of Piraeus. Then we discovered, one week out, there was going to be a small export mission out of Ashdod before we began any of the import vessels. We planned only two persons in Ashdod, Spyros Vogiatzis, Chief of Operations, and myself to check cargo and supervise the discharge of the cargo.

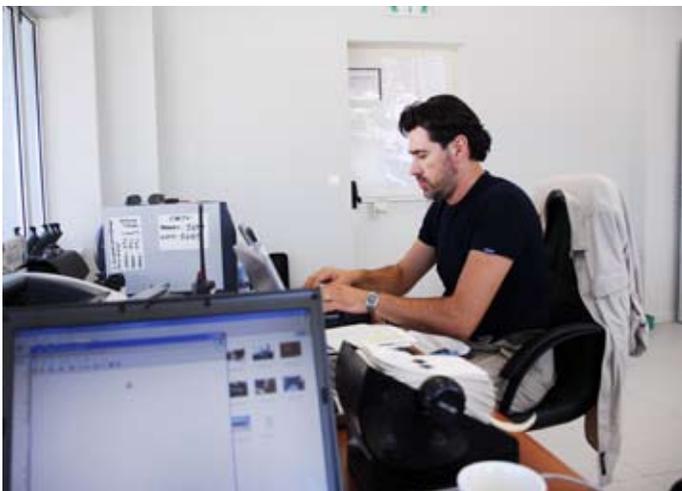


■ *Loading containers with ammunition on the MV Chapman at the port of Astakos.*

No documentation personnel would be deployed to Israel, as they would all be needed in Astakos. The plan was for us to do manual tallies of the cargo and then have our documentation folks in Astakos update WPS and FMS. Now we were going to need to create manifests and other vessel papers prior to the vessel leaving. Mike Pittas, one of our documentation specialists, solved the problem by creating the vessel papers ahead of time, translating it to a word document that we could make last minute changes to and print in Israel. Mike would update WPS by phone upon completion. Finally, one day before we were to begin operations in Astakos, George Kokonos discovered, from the port authority that required waivers had not been granted by the Greek Government. George did a magnificent job of coordinating between the DAO, the various Greek Ministries, EUCOM, and the port authority to quickly discover where the problem was and solve it.

It was now 1 September and we were finally starting operations, the first vessel was to be the Chapman, loaded in Sunny Point, NC. We were going to discharge 474 containers in Astakos, and

■ *Mike Pittas from the Greece Detachment working the documentation in Astakos.*



send the remainder of the cargo for discharge in Ashdod. This discharge was not going to be that simple. There was a requirement to have the first 60 containers to discharged in Ashdod. These containers had to be destined for nearby ammo depots. This allowed trucks to make more than one run. Also the load needed to be redistributed for vessel stability and to spread the cargo far enough to allow two gangs and cranes to discharge her in Ashdod. This meant that more than the 474 containers that were going to stay in Astakos for follow on vessels would need to be discharged and then be reloaded. The crew in Astakos met this challenge and ensured the Chapman was complete and on its way to Israel, meeting published sailing times. From this point on, the remaining five vessel loads went smoothly. While we were working in Astakos, John Dimakos was busy at the home terminal, inputting WPS, receiving and shipping



■ *George Kokonos, Terminal Manager, SDDC Greece Detachment, explains the operation to Sgt. Maj. Tony Escalona and Sgt. 1st Class Charles Martin from the 839th Transportation Battalion.*

POVs, and with guidance from John Kyzirakos, who was working as an MCS in Astakos, custom clearing cargo. The System Administrator, Carl Smeltz assisted as much as possible, accomplishing many administrative tasks that were required. Harris Vaziourakis, Chief of Documentation, monitored all this from Astakos, ensuring all WPS inputs for all three ports were correct and timely.

In Israel, things were also going well. Vessel operations occurred at night, routinely beginning at 2230 hours. The Jewish New Year brought a break to the operation for five days, restarting again on the 16th of September and finishing on the 21st, concluding this multi-port operation. This operation enhanced the relationship the SDDC Greece Terminal has with its customers in Israel and the port authorities in Astakos and Ashdod.

The last of deployed personnel returned on 24 September. No accidents, no injuries, and over 1250 movements at three ports in two countries. A savings of over 600,000 dollars for the US Government was achieved by storing the containers awaiting transshipment on a pier instead of on a vessel. It was just another month for the SDDC Greece Detachment ■

50 YEARS U.S. MILITARY TRANSPORTATION VIA BENELUX PORTS

By Lou Woutersen, Vice President at Large, NDTA European Region

During a luncheon at the Rotterdam Netherlands Marine Corps Base on 11 October, officials of The Netherlands, Belgium and the United States commemorated 50 years of U.S. military transportation via the ports of Rotterdam and Antwerp.

Among the distinguished guests were a former Dutch Secretary of Defense, a Dutch Congressman, the Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy, the Rotterdam Alderman for the port and representatives of the Antwerp and Rotterdam Port Authorities, Dutch and Belgian military and several other institutions.

The focal point at the formal part of the event was Colonel Janet L. Cobb, Commander of SDDC, 598th Transportation Terminal Group (Rear). On behalf of her command she received tokens of appreciation from the City of Rotterdam, the Port of Rotterdam and the Dutch Marines. The speakers referred to the many years of close cooperation, the many strategic and technological changes in the ports before and after the Cold War and SDDC's planned move to the Marine Barracks in Rotterdam. Colonel Cobb expressed her gratitude and presented a plaque to Mr. Harbers, the Rotterdam Port Alderman, Mrs. Van Iersel of the Port of Rotterdam, Captain Verbist, harbourmaster of Antwerp, and to our host Commander Van Gelderen, Chief of Staff, Van Ghentkazerne.

Lt.Gen. U.S. Army (Ret) Ken Wykle, President of the National Defense Transportation Association closed the formal session with a presentation in reference to what NDTA may provide for Government and civilian logisticians. The following luncheon was enjoyed by all, for the combination of good food and an opportunity to informally exchange views and plans.

The event was hosted on behalf of the Dutch Marines, by Commander Van Gelderen and organized with the assistance of the NDTA, European Region. ■



■ Colonel Janet L. Cobb, Commander of the 598th Trans Gp (Rear) , thanked all representatives for their great support over the years.



■ Representatives of NDTA, Rotterdam City Hall, Rotterdam and Antwerp Port Authorities, U.S. Embassy, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Army and other institutes attended this luncheon at the Van Ghentkazerne.



50 year U.S. Army presence in Rotterdam and Antwerp!

The Bremerhaven Port of Embarkation activated the subports, Mannheim, Germany and Rotterdam, The Netherlands in 1957. Personnel from the Rotterdam office also handled the import and export of U.S. Army cargo in the the Port of Antwerp. The Bremerhaven Port of Embarkation was established in Bremerhaven, Germany , as the 17th Major Port on 7 June 1945. This was the first activity which supported the U.S. Forces in the Central European Theater of Operations, handling U.S. Army cargo through water ports. This mission is presently handled by the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command (SDDC 598th Transportation Group).

Bram de Jong, 598th Transportation Group, Public Affairs Officer asked some former leaders for their most exciting experiences when they worked in the BENELUX..



Colonel,
U.S. Army
(Retired)

Ralph I. Sebacher

1980-1984

Major Ralph I. Sebacher filled the role as the MTMC TTCE Director of Operations from 1980-1984

My most exciting experiences

Calling the Commander or his operations officer every AM for all the ports under MTMC Europe control must have been a hell of a phone bill for us. I never saw it. I, along with Roger Maguire worked the Dutch MOD to let a U.S. vessel load ammunition at EEMSHAVEN. This was the first time the Dutch let us do this in the Nertherlands. I have many great memories of our time in Rotterdam. I met and worked with some great people of many Nationalities. They were the four best years out of my 30 in the Army.

Present status

Vice President for Army Programs for Stanley Associates Inc., a DOD contractor. R.sebacher@stanleyassociates.com

Colonel,
U.S. Army
(Retired)

Jack L. Riley

1983-1985

Lieutenant Colonel Jack L. Riley was the Commander, MTMC Benelux Terminal during the period June 1983 to July 1985.



My most exciting experiences

The most exciting period of command at Benelux Terminal was the planning and execution of three REFORGER exercises in a two year period. Ports used for these exercises were Antwerp, Rotterdam, and Amsterdam. Planning included: the use of commercial ports, commercial rail, highway, barge and trucking to move equipment from the Benelux countries to Germany. The Amsterdam exercise was conducted during the winter months of 1985 with lots of snow and ice falling during the entire exercise. The other exciting experience was the great relations that we fostered being the German work force at MTMC Rhine River Outport and the Dutch work force at Rotterdam. This was the most professional multi national work force that I had the experience of working with during my entire Army career.

The NDTA Benelux Chapter was an excellent association of commercial transportation and ports, military, and government folks from Belgium, The Netherlands, and the U.S. who were striving to provide the best support to each other to support the NATO soldiers.

Present status

I retired from active duty on 1 October 1995, as the Chief of

Staff, Fort Eustis, Virginia. After retirement, I went to work for Stanley Associates, Inc., headquartered in Alexandria, Virginia with duty station in Charleston, SC. The major task in this job is to manage war reserve stocks loaded on Navy RO-RO ships, to support our power projection Army in multiple deployment scenarios and OCONUS locations. In conjunction with this job I have traveled the world and have had the opportunity to reacquaint myself with many friends still working in the transportation and shipping industry. My email address is john.riley3@us.army.mil or judor@aol.com at the house.

Of course the SDDC Rhine River Detachment in Mannheim, Germany celebrates its 50 years anniversary as well!! Your editor needs more time for research to write about this Detachment in a later Trans Tribune. Forward your comments, stories, memories, pictures about Rhine River Detachment (RDD) to Bram.dejong2@us.army.mil

**Colonel,
U.S. Army (Retired)
Philip
Sterbling**

1988 - 1990

I was Director of Personnel for MTMC Europe (1988-1990) and Chief of Staff (1990-1992)



My most exciting experiences

My most memorable experience was working with the MTMC-Europe Team, commanded by Col. Rick Barnaby, to deploy the 7th Corp from Europe to Saudi Arabia for Desert Storm. The team work and dedication of the entire MTMC workforce was superb. It was an experience that created lifelong friendships and memories that will never fade.

While I was assigned to MTMC-Europe we had regular social events that focused on Hails and Farewells, Holidays, and Ethnic Observances. These events served as a way to bring US, Dutch, and Canadian military, civilian, and family members together on a regular basis. The Thanksgiving dinner hosted by MWR and the families while we were preparing for Desert Storm was beyond description. What a Morale Booster! I remember Leen Brand cooking at the Cadi. His breakfast "Toasties" were outstanding. You should give Leen a privileged parking permit at the front door to unload his food! Next to Desert Storm, the other big event was the falling of the Berlin Wall and the resulting logistics operations that followed. MTMC Europe made a difference in many lives and in U.S. National Security.

Present status

I am the Staff Director for Military Personnel and Administration for the Defense Logistics Agency
My e-mail address is Phillip.sterbling@dla.mil

**Colonel,
U.S. Army
(Retired)**

**Rick J.
Barnaby**



1990 - 1992

It was my good fortune to be the Commander of MTMC-Europe from 3 August 1990 to 10 July 1992.

My most exciting experiences.

There were many memorable experiences: Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Steel Box- the movement of the Gas Munitions out of Europe, Provide Hope and Provide Comfort and more. No matter what the requirement we had a magnificent team of leaders and a superb combined staff that accomplished everything.

The Desert Shield and Storm experience of guiding an international team that loaded 172 ships in 70 days was one of the highlights of my military career. Our U.S., Dutch and Canadian Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and Civilians worked in positions of leadership far above their pay-grade with multi-national teams and quickly demonstrated their expert capabilities all over Europe and the Middle East. Not only did they get the job done but almost all of the key players went on to advancement and positions of great responsibility and some even had the experience of doing another deployment 10 years or so later to the same geographic area. >>>

■ *Port of Rotterdam, Beatrixhaven, during Operation Desert*



■ Photo by Bram de Jong, 598th Trans Gp PAO

Many of our team have become lifelong friends and I treasure that. One of my best memories of NDTA Benelux Chapter are the briefings before and after Desert Storm. We initially gathered the group on a Saturday afternoon and outlined what was to happen for the Deployment as we went from 9 to 18 ports in 2 weeks and they all gave us their unbelievable support. After the war was over and we were into the redeployment we thanked them all with a briefing and reception and told them how good they were at the ship loading and port operation business.

The other part of the equation that made this all possible was the support from the families and MTMC-EUR Community throughout all of the operations. When we were all working 12 to 14 hour shifts the families brought in dinner on many of the evenings, Leen in the Caddi was there before the sun came up every day with strong coffee and great food throughout the day, the Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations that happened for us and around us were just awesome. It seemed that everyone saw the challenges at hand and rose to the occasion. It was a magical time for we saw the future leaders being developed and experts in all of our critical areas creating and innovating for the benefit of a massive deployment of troops and equipment.

Present status

I am the Manager of the National Highway Institute, the technical training arm of the Federal Highway Administration, one of the agencies that is part of the US Department of Transportation. We are located in Ballston Va, just across the Potomac River from DC. My e-mail is rick.barnaby@fhwa.dot.gov.

**Colonel,
U.S. Army
(Retired)**

**Jan H.
Harpole**

1991 – 1992

Deputy Commander,
MTMC Europe

1994 – 1996

Commander, MTMC Europe
and Southwest Asia



My most exciting experiences

It would be impossible for me to list in this short paragraph all the positive, exciting and rewarding experiences of my two assignments to Rotterdam --- experiences which have both enriched my life and made an indelible imprint upon my view of the world. However, after considerable thought three things always return to the top of my list.

First and foremost was the incredible display of teamwork and self-sacrifice displayed by each and every MTMC Europe em



Photo by Bram de Jong, 598th Trans Gp PAO

■ Rotterdam, Beatrixhaven -- Loading helicopters during Operation Desert Shield.

ployee, both military and civilian of more than a dozen nationalities, as we faced innumerable challenges, not only the sheer volume of materiel that we were moving back and forth across half the globe, but also the host of legal, cultural, and operational issues which arose at a mind numbing pace.

Second was the amazing partnership that developed between MTMC, host governments, and the commercial firms who executed the transportation mission. It was a partnership which I believe was only possible because of the close and continuing professional and personal relationships which developed over time and were greatly facilitated by professional organizations such as NDTA.

And finally, but for me personally very important, was the incredible courtesy and kindness shown to my mother, a World War II veteran, when she visited us in 1995 and was able to participate in events marking the 50th Anniversary of the end of that conflict. It was an extraordinarily moving experience for her and helped me better understand what a significant impact the shared experiences of that time have on our world today.

Present status

Jan Hess Harpole is the Contingency Operations Manager of Defense Logistics Agency Office of Operations Research and Resource Analysis. Telephone: (Work) 804-279-3344 (Mobile) 571-243-2717 and E-Mail: jan.harpole@dla.mil

**Colonel,
U.S. Army
(Retired)**

Susan R. Sowers

1992-1993

I was assigned as an Army Captain whose first job was to deploy to Saudi (Dammom) to work at the Port for the redeployment of Desert Storm equipment. With my recent completion of a Masters of Science in Transportation Engineering, you can imagine my reaction when I was attached to a reserve TPU from New Hampshire, and they immediately assigned me the “esteem honor” of putting together a 400th ship loading party. After swallowing a little humble pie, I decided to make it the best party ever, and it was. We convinced the Captain of the Cape Diamond to hold it on his ship – and we were able to bring in a rock band from the U.S. With decorations throughout, live music, good food, near-beer, and lots of Saudi/US attendees – it turned out to be a great time, and provided me with a wonderful networking experience. More importantly, I was reminded of just how important it is to stop and recognize the progress that has been made to date; progress that is possible as a result of the whole team working together toward the same goal. One thing is for sure - there will always be more work to do, but sometimes, it’s more important to pause and recognize the team. Bottom line – it all happened through relationship and trust – it is that bond that will enable us to do anything together in the future.

My most exciting experiences

Though principally a briefer and an action officer for the Operations Division when I returned from those five months in Saudi, I was permitted to travel a few times outside the HQ. One of the most memorable trips was a month in Rochester England as the Safety Officer for an ammo vessel that we were loading from barges to the mother ship that was anchored in the Thames away from the port. Not knowing one thing about ship board operations, these kinds of assignments were always interesting. Since it was ammo and not just inert cargo, I quickly got smart on the procedures for properly using the ship’s own cranes to haul ammo off the barges. “This” is what I love about the Army. Most often, we are never really trained or prepared for doing a job – but we have the “right stuff,” and each other, to get it right in the end. Here again, this operation was a joint effort, and I will always treasure the teachers and the friends that I made with my Dutch counterparts. The best part of these relationships - is that they were real –lasting across the decades. When I returned to Europe 12 years later as the Commander of the 37th TRANSCOM, my Dutch friends remembered me like I had just been there. With friendship, utter professionalism and a spirit of cooperation, they made our joint mission of deploying Germany-based units out of the Port at Antwerp to the port in Kuwait - the



largest and most successful port operation since WWII. Without question, there is nothing more valuable to be gained in life than these bonds of respect, love and trust. As St Augustine reminds us: “Nothing is hard for love.”

Present status

I retired in Feb 07 as the Chief of Staff of the 3d COSCOM, and am currently in my first year of Seminary at the Virginia Theological Seminary (Episcopal) in Alexandria, VA. My email address is susan.sowers@us.army.mil I would love to hear from my old friends!

**Command
Sergeant Major,
U.S. Army
(Retired)**

Richard W. Wood

1994-1997

I was the 598th U. S. Army Transportation Group (then MTMC Europe) Sergeant Major from July 1994 to July 1997. My commanders were COLs Tom Brown, Jan Harpole and Kirk Miyake.

My most exciting experiences

It is very difficult to mention only a few of my cherished memories of Rotterdam, Capelle aan den IJssel, the organization and the wonderful people, both military and Dutch civilians, but one really stands out. My wife Carmen and I were extremely fortunate and happy to be a part of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the liberation of The Netherlands. We attended all the events planned during that time, and met some of the most interesting people ever.

I enjoyed my responsibility of traveling around Europe, The Azores and the Middle East to visit our military and civilian employees. These people were, and remain the most professional employees of any organization in the world. They deploy at a moment’s notice and expertly perform their missions in an ever-changing logistical arena.

The NTDA Benelux Chapter always did a wonderful job in promoting the vital link between the military and commercial industry to maintain the cooperation that is necessary for world-class customer support and service. We enjoyed some wonderful port tours, luncheons and wonderful evening events at castles and other interesting venues.

Present status

I retired as a Command Sergeant Major, and have been working for the past six years at the Joint Personal Property Shipping Office, Colorado Springs, both in employee and supervisory roles. Richard.wood@jppso-cos.af.mil



Colonel,
U.S. Army
(Retired)

Tom E. Thompson

1998 - 2000

I was the Commander 598th
Trans Gp July 1998 - June 2000.



My most exciting experiences

The USNS Watkins made it's first overseas voyage to Bremerhaven and Rotterdam. I rode the ship from Bremerhaven to Rotterdam and really enjoyed the experience of living in a state room and entering the great Port of Rotterdam by ship. The Kosovo Campaign kept everyone very busy. The Operations Center at Rotterdam was working around the clock, supporting operations in Croatia, Italy, Albania, and Turkey. John Kamen, my driver, was kept busy taking me to and from the airport at Amsterdam as I traveled to our terminal operations at all of these locations. We hosted many fine events with the first lady Mayor of Capelle; she was a great friend to the command and a wonderful speaker.

Present status

I now work part time as a consultant to The Howland Group, Inc in support of SDDC operations at the Port of Philadelphia, PA. I live in Milton, WV with my wife, a cat, 5 dogs, and 14 goats. Life is good in almost heaven, West by God Virginia.

Colonel,
U.S. Army

Victoria A. Leignadier

2002-2004

I was the Commander, 598th
from June 2002 until July 2004.



My most exciting experiences

My greatest experience while serving as commander was to be able to work with world class professionals in transportation supporting the largest movement of cargo since WWII. It was also a great opportunity to renew old friendships such as Jean-Jacques Moyson, Hessen Noord-Natie. The support of him, his company and all the other industries combined with the great professionalism of the 598th is what made all our operations such a success.

Present status

Today I have the pleasure of being a faculty member of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

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- The Port of Antwerp loaded with U.S. Army equipment to be shipped to Southwest Asia, Operation OIF in 2003.



■ Photo by Bram de Jong, 598th Trans Gp PAO

COOP exercise at Van Ghentkazerne

By Major Jon Reeves,
PLEX Chief, 598th Trans Gp (Rear)

Military and civilian members of the 598th Transportation Terminal Group conducted a Continuity of Operations (COOP) Exercise at the Van Ghent Kazerne, home of the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, on October 26, 2007.

All emergency essential personnel were required to participate in the exercise to test the 598th's ability to relocate and continue operations in an emergency situation. The exercise was preceded by an alert drill which tested the unit's ability to contact its employees and give them emergency instructions. Over 20 personnel representing the primary staff functions of the 598th participated in the COOP exercise. This was the second time that the 598th Trans Gp has exercised this



■ Staff personnel of the 598th Transportation Group tried out communication assets at the Van Ghentkazerne.

plan. In the future, the 598th hopes to integrate more personnel with the inclusion of support for other tenant units. Based on the continuing terrorist threat worldwide, it is vital that the 598th Trans Gp be prepared to relocate without degradation in its ability to fulfill the mission of supporting the warfighter. ■

■ Photo by Bram de Jong, 598th Trans Gp PAO

839th Trans Bn receives a "Commendable" on the ICI

By Maj. Kevin C. Carrigan,
598th Trans Gp Operations Officer

An Initial Command Inspection of the 839th Transportation Battalion was conducted from 9-12 October 2007. The 598th Inspection Team, made up of 15 members from all functional areas in the Group, traveled to Livorno, Italy, to help facilitate the transition of the new Commander, Lt.Col. Robert King.

The inspection provided an initial assessment of the 839th's strengths, as well as identification areas of requiring improvement. Together the members of the 598th and the 839th came up with the solutions necessary to improve the unit's readiness and its ability to conduct its global mission.

The 839th received ratings of Satisfactory or Commendable in all inspectable areas, with an overall rating of Commendable ■



1. Master Sgt. Frederick Boute (right) reviews the 839th Unit Training Requirements with Sgt.Maj. Tony Escalona (left). 2. Staff Sgt. Alecia Thomas (right) ensures that the 839th military personnel procedures comply with Army regulations with the assistance of Jeannette Truscelli (left), Management Support Assistant for the 839th. 3. Elise Holtan (right), 839th Transportation Planner, and Mark LaRue (left) discuss WPS, MILSTAMP, ICODES, RFID, TDRs and various other acronyms that are used in the port operations of the 839th Trans BN. 4. The 598th CIP Team

■ Photos by Roland Tanner (1 & 4) and Major Kevin Carrigan (2 & 3)



598th Transportation Group Ash Shuaybah



Photos from SWA, made by Master Sgt. Marvin L. Bonner

1. Lt. Col. Blanton, Deputy Commander 598th Trans Gp (Forward) and Maj. Kotzman, S3. 2. Lt. Col. Sears, Col. Westbrook, Commander 598th Trans Gp (Forward) and Command Sgt. Maj. Riddick. 3. Col. Westbrook reenlists Sgt. 1st Class Simpson. 4. NCO DP with the Navy on Customs. 5. Brig. Gen. Visot (left) and Col. Aucoin (Right) visited during Safety Day. Col. Westbrook, (Center). 6. Col. Westbrook reenlists Specialist Lovins.



598th Transportation Group Ash Shuaybah

More photos from Master Sgt. Marvin L. Bonner

7. Class members at Safety Day, September 2007. 8. Col. Aucoin and Command Sgt. Maj. Licea award Staff Sgt. Betts with an Army Commendation medal. 9. 598th Trans Gp (Forward) Command Sgt. Maj. Riddick awards Specialist Megary with the Army Commendation Medal. 10 and 11. Agility Warehouse Tour.



Winter Driving in Europe

By Rudy Magereij,
598th Safety Manager

It is that time of the year again, a time when winter driving in Europe soon must be reckoned with.

To avoid number one problem in winter time - the **NO** start miseries - your engine must be in a good state of tune. It helps to know your vehicle is winter road worthy.



Pay special attention to:

- Is the cooling system OK, and is there enough antifreeze in it to provide the necessary protection? If in doubt about the strength of the antifreeze, have it checked.
- Tires, check for the correct pressure and tread depth (minimum 1.6 mm)
- Heater and defroster, check the system. It is essential to both safety and comfort in winter, so be certain they work properly.
- Is the radiator clean and leave free, and are the various hoses in good condition and clamped down tight?
- Lights must operate at maximum efficiency. In heavy weather clean your lights often.
- Clean your windows well, good visibility is essential.
- Check battery, even a new or well charged battery can quickly wear down in cold weather.
- Is the exhaust system in good condition and free of leaks? Check especially for blown gaskets, leaking pipe constructions, and holes in muffler and tailpipe.

FOG: (slow down, keep your distance and use your lights)

- Slowdown and put your lights on when traveling in fog or smog.
- Keep your headlights on low beam for best visibility.
- Maintain an adequate following distance.



ON CYBER PATROL

