

FREEDOM FORCE

News Magazine of the Museum of American Armor

Summer 2026



museumofamericanarmor.com

A message from **Lawrence Kadish**

Eight decades after the last shots of World War II were fired, museums dedicated to that conflict's machinery of war remain among the most vital institutions in American civic life. They are not relics of nostalgia—they are active guardians of memory, context, and democratic values.



The tanks, half-tracks, and artillery pieces preserved in collections like the Museum of American Armor provide something that textbooks cannot. They make history physical. A seventeen-year-old standing beside a Sherman tank suddenly grasps, in a way no photograph conveys, America's response to tyranny. History stops being abstract and becomes something that can be touched, measured, and felt.

But the relevance of these institutions extends beyond nostalgia or education. As demonstrated by the remarkable 2025 ceremony at the Museum of American Armor—where Japanese Shinto priests joined us in prayer amid the very weapons of their nation's former conflict—these spaces can facilitate reconciliation and reflection on an international scale. They remind us how former enemies can become allies with a shared sense of purpose and commitment to freedom.

At a time when the teaching of American history has become marginalized, that insight may be among the more important lessons the Museum of American Armor can teach.

A Cuppa Tea, Anyone?

The sign above the building proclaims “Museum of American Armor” but during this year celebrating the 250th anniversary of our Declaration of Independence, the visitor will find a significant commitment to British armor housed under its roof.

“Having vehicles that reflect the strategic alliance of World War II is an essential part of our mission;” explains Kevin Carroll, the Armor Museum’s Director of Public Affairs, who annually welcomes thousands of individuals to the facility.

“Obviously, iconic weapons such as the Sherman tank and M8 Greyhounds are among our core exhibits, but we have also made as a deliberate strategy the acquisition of British vehicles. These include the Dingo, a Universal Carrier, Staghound, Sexton, and most recently, a Comet tank,” stated Carroll.

The Staghound was acquired from an owner in Australia and the Sexton from the sale of armor from the now closed American Armored Foundation in Danville, Virginia. The most recent addition, the Comet, was purchased following an auction conducted by BAIV.

Also in the collection at the Museum of American Armor are post-war British vehicles including a Ferret and Fox acquired through the internationally respected importer Khaki Corps of Tulsa, Oklahoma.

The addition of British vehicles to the Armor Museum’s roster has not gone unnoticed.

The Staghound’s arrival and dedication was attended last year by officials from the British Consulate in New York as museum artist Stacy Wasson applied appropriate artwork to its turret.

The Armor Museum’s volunteer Director of Vehicle Maintenance, Andrew Strain, acknowledges that British vehicles on American soil require a reorientation when it comes to maintenance, repair, and replacement of parts. “The Comet demands a Masters Degree in late-war tank design when comparing it to the Sherman. It is a steep learning curve as this tank’s ‘feeding and care’ is demanding and unforgiving.”

Carroll reminds, “There are many stories to tell about this era but you can’t accurately present the story of America’s role in World War II without including our British allies in a substantive way. These vehicles accomplish that purpose.”





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Indian Diplomats Welcomed at the Armor Museum

As efforts proceed for a permanent tribute to the Indian Army during World War II at the Museum of American Armor, museum representatives welcomed diplomats from the Indian Consulate as they toured the facility to learn more about the Armor Museum and its exhibit plans.

Welcoming the delegation was Armor Museum trustee Colonel Jason Halloren (Ret.) and museum director Mark Renton who provided context for the tribute and a tour of the museum's two buildings.

Armor Museum Trustee Karamjit Dhaliwa stated, "We look forward to moving ahead with this collaborative effort for the purpose of creating a long overdue tribute to those who were among the Allied forces of democracy more than 80 years ago."

Fellow trustee Manpreet Dhaliwa reminded, "The Indian Army served with honor in multiple theaters during World War II, winning the admiration of its allies and wary respect from its enemies. It is time that America had a place to acknowledge that legacy and there is no better place than here."



Museum trustees **Karamjit & Manpreet Dhaliwal** are leading the effort to create the exhibit.



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ROLL CALL

Lessons from the Point



BY **COLONEL JASON HALLOREN (RET.)**

*Former Deputy Commandant, West Point
Secretary to the Board of Trustees, Museum of American Armor*

Every year, springtime remains a busy time at the United States Military Academy at West Point as it prepares to release roughly 1,000 newly minted Lieutenants into the Army whilst gearing up to receive 1,200 new cadets and conduct summer field training for better than 4,000 cadets. As a former Deputy Commandant, I reflect most at this time of year.

Clearly defined and consistently enforced standards create trust and predictability within the Corps of Cadets. Cadets rise to expectations when expectations are non-negotiable and modeled by those above them. Discipline is not restrictive, it's enabling.

Developmental failure is critical to future success. Controlled adversity in the field, classroom, or barracks environment builds adaptive leaders. Time under tension means something. Cadets who are allowed to fail and recover develop stronger judgment and resilience than simple "over management." Leadership's role is to create conditions that deliberately expose cadets to responsibility, friction, and accountability and where failure is instructive, not catastrophic.

Technical and tactical proficiency are essential, but character remains paramount. Character cannot be developed in isolation and must be embedded into daily routines, peer interactions, and leader engagement. The effectiveness of a unit is directly related to the level of trust between leaders and subordinates. Leadership, therefore, is inherently relational and a genuine investment in people is not ancillary; it's central.

Collectively, these reflections reaffirm West Point's mission to not only educate, but to develop leaders of character prepared for the complexities of modern warfare and service.



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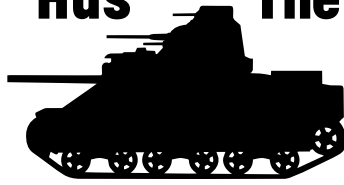
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The Lee ^{Left} Has ^{The} Building



The reality of war in 1939 quickly focused the aims of the U.S. Army to construct an American tank the equal of the German panzers. The new tank was the M4 Sherman and central to its design was a powerful 75MM gun, placing it on equal footing with enemy armor.

But when technical problems stalled Sherman production, the M3 Lee was hurriedly substituted as an interim measure. While still armed with the 75MM gun, its unconventional side mounting limited its use. Despite that and other shortcomings, the Lee was mechanically reliable and its 75MM gun was praised for its long range and improved armor penetration capability. The M3's timely 1942 debut in North Africa is credited with helping American and British troops defeat Rommel's famed Africa Korps.

M3 Lees were also supplied to Russia and provided to Indian and British soldiers during the battle for Burma. While classified as only an interim design, the M3 was a clear success, holding the line until the more capable Sherman tank was available in quantity.



For over a decade, a hallmark of the Museum of American Armor has been that every one of its military vehicles is operational, a unique achievement in itself, but even more so when most examples are over 80 years old. Yet when a rare and historically significant M3 Lee became available, the Armor Museum purchased it even though it had no engine. Now, however, thanks to the tireless efforts of the Museum's Board and volunteers, that is about to change.

Led by restoration professional Parke Oehme at War Horse Garage in Pennsylvania, a new engine is being installed, and along with other crucial drivetrain improvements, we expect to see our M3 Lee take to the fields of Old Bethpage under its own power later this year.

Our M3 bears the markings of the US Army's 1st Armored Division as it would have appeared in North Africa during 1942.



Emerging Armor Museum Leadership

Shane Ekberg has taken on many of the functions of a deputy director of the Museum of American Armor over the last many years, and now shares that title and its responsibilities with Chris Suhr who assumed the role when the museum opened 12 years ago. Shane is also the Armor Museum's liaison with the Long Island Living History Association.

Shane is a long-time veteran of the Nassau County Police Department and a past Captain in the Plainview Fire Department.

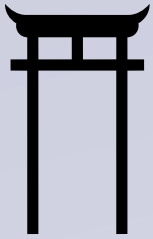
Andrew Strain is director of Historic Vehicle Maintenance and Restoration. That role reflects his considerable accomplishments to date with the Armor Museum's fleet, his project management skills, and his introduction of various innovations to enhance vehicle reliability.

A supervisor at AMTRAK's Sunnyside Yard facility, he came to that position building on his prior career experience at the New York State Department of Transportation. Andrew is a member of the National Technical Honor Society, and is a Kings Park volunteer firefighter, and is certified in Hazmat response.

Mark Wilson has long been engaged in Armor Museum digital marketing. A lifelong WWII history enthusiast with a passion for storytelling, he has applied those skills on the museum's behalf. Recognizing that work, Mark has been named Director of Social Media for the Museum of American Armor.

Professionally, Mark is a senior talent acquisition leader with over 15 years of experience recruiting top-tier professionals across corporate sectors, including finance, legal, and communications.





Visiting Japanese Shinto Priests Bring Reflection to a Ceremony Marking the End of WWII

On the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, two Shinto priests traveled from Japan to join other members of clergy from Long Island, Nassau County Executive Bruce Blakeman, Suffolk County Executive Edward Romaine, and visitors to the Museum of American Armor in a ceremony of reflection and remembrance.

"In the summer of 1945 the instruments of surrender were signed, bringing an end to World War II," stated County Executive Blakeman. "Many of the Americans who fought in that conflict would come back to the United States and make Long Island their home, including my parents. On this milestone anniversary it is fitting and appropriate that we remember their courage, sacrifice, and legacy."

Nassau County Executive Romaine observed, "Sadly, the American generation that fought and won that conflict on behalf of freedom and democracy is leaving us. We have a solemn obligation to acknowledge their priceless legacy."

The underlying message of the event was the transformation of two nations that were once bitter enemies into staunch allies in the defense of democracy, 80 years later.

It was a deeply symbolic gathering—World War II armor serving as the backdrop for a multi-faith ceremony bringing together former adversaries in a spirit of remembrance and reconciliation.

"The juxtaposition of Japanese Shinto priests alongside an American rabbi, and a priest, in a museum dedicated to American military hardware, made for a genuinely moving and historically significant moment," observed Gary Glick, Commander of Jewish War Veterans on Long Island.

The war's lasting impact created social, economic, technological, and geo-political events that continue to impact our nation and the world more than 80 years later.







A 250

Birthday Tribute

Among the reasons the United States can observe its 250th anniversary this year is because of the courage and sacrifice of those who have served in our military over the centuries.

It is that heritage of valor that was at the center of this year's World War II Encampment Weekend held in cooperation with The Museum of American Armor, The Long Island Living History Association (LILHA), and the Nassau County Department of Parks, Recreation, and Museums.

Before visitors as far away as New Jersey and New England, a steady display of operational armor, coupled with tactical "assaults" on enemy positions, living historians "FDR" and "Churchill," and exhibits that included a French café run by a member of the "Resistance," served to underscore a common mission to honor those who have defended freedom.



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THE LETHAL "88" GERMAN

IS THE LATEST ARMOR ADDITION

*By Kevin Carroll, Director, Public Affairs,
The Museum of American Armor*

Even the casual student of World War II immediately recognizes the name "Eighty-Eight". The German 88mm (8.8cm) gun was a dreaded weapon during that conflict War, with that fear spread among Allied airmen, tankers, infantry and sailors alike.

Originally manufactured by Krupp as an anti-aircraft cannon, it excelled in that role. The high velocity gun combined with a rapid rate of fire and superior accuracy allowed it to fire timed fuzed shell to altitudes approaching 30,000 feet, placing all Allied aircraft within its deadly range.

Later, these same characteristics also allowed the 88mm gun to be successfully employed against increasingly heavily armored Allied tanks. In that role, its flat trajectory and high velocity armor-piercing shells were deadly accurate at a range of over one mile and were capable of penetrating tank armor 4" thick. The "Eighty-Eight" was also a devastating artillery piece, equally destructive to troops and structures. Versions of this gun also armed the decks of German U-Boats and were famously used as the main armament on the Tiger I and II tanks.

The Museum's "Eighty-Eight" was acquired from The Artillery Museum in St Lo, Texas where their extraordinary collection continues to offer an historic array of Allied and Axis firepower through the leadership of Craig Olden.



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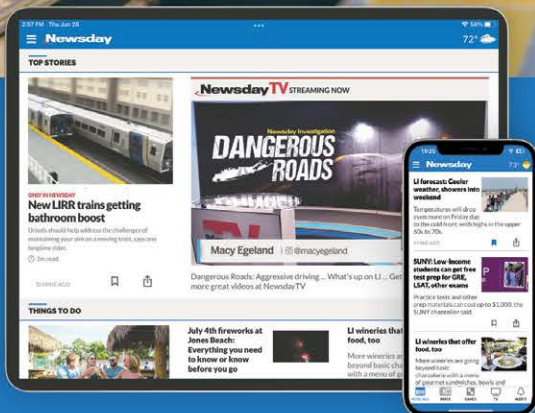
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THE *ART* OF THE POSSIBLE

Researched by Grace Demeo

Sometimes history is kept alive with the turn of a wrench. And that is precisely what the owners of Oehme Bros. War Horse Garage in Lititz, PA, are all about.

A nationally respected World War II vehicle restoration facility, it is owned and operated by brothers Parke, Nate, and Erick Oehme, whose shared commitment to historic authenticity ensures a future for military vehicles in their care.

Fascination with history since childhood, coupled with family ties to the military that included a father who served in Vietnam, formed the inspiration for their intriguing careers.

Parke Oehme acknowledged that repairing 80-year-old armor vehicles is challenging, but even more so is finding the replacement parts their repair assignments often demand.

During World War II, the United States would frequently store backup repair parts with our European allies, which nearly a century later is now a resource for the War Horse Garage and others who seek to repair and restore these historic vehicles. That potential source of supply, coupled with on-site capabilities including CNC machining, metal fabrication, wood working, and canvas/leather capabilities creates a one-stop problem-solving destination.

But if replacement parts are non-existent Parke says they have the means of using 3D printing which he describes as “incredibly useful.”

In 3D printing a mold is printed and the part is then cast out of metal from that mold. Even with the aid of modern technology, each project still presents its own challenges.

The Oehme brothers recently had a Russian SU-76 motor gun carriage brought to their shop, whose body was so damaged that it was beyond restoration.

“We had very little information, as this is only one of three in the country, and when we are done it'll be the only one that's restored,” Parke explained.

This forced the team to fabricate almost the entire vehicle, from the powertrain to the armor. Their success reinforced the Oehme family commitment that no vehicle is beyond their skills.

With such a wide range of vehicles arriving at the War Garage, each brother brings his own skill set to a project. Parke focuses mostly on the mechanical side, and Nate's particular skill is the upholstery and canvas leatherwork. Other members of their team specialize in fabricating or machining.

Any favorites? Parke admits the M18 Hellcat has claimed a special place in his heart. “After refurbishing this tank destroyer belonging to the Wheels of Liberation collection, the team took it for a test drive and reached speeds of 50 miles per hour just as it did in combat,” he recalled.

Keeping the past restored and running is more than just a job for the Oehme Brothers. It is a calling that is keeping military history alive for yet another generation of Americans.

A man with a tattoo on his arm is working on a large, dark metal component, possibly a tank hull, in a workshop. An American flag is visible in the background, and various tools and equipment are scattered around the workspace.

A busy restoration floor underscores the trust armor owners have in the Oehme Brothers. The restoration magic happens in our a full fabrication machine shop.



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When considering how best to honor America's 250 years of independence, the Long Island-based Paws of War organization quickly decided to highlight the role of animals in the nation's military history on its website (pawsofwar.org).

Paws of War has been rescuing animals our service members find during overseas deployments, bonding with them, and would otherwise be forced to leave behind when their tours of duty end and they return to the States since 2014. The organization was initially founded so that no animal, like no service member, would ever be left behind.

As they celebrate their 12th anniversary, their tribute to four-legged heroes who have befriended and defended our troops tells the stories of animal heroes — dogs, cats, and horses — who have played a role in every war from the Revolutionary War through the Global War on Terror.

There's the story of General George Washington and British General William Howe. Both were dog lovers who brought their dogs to war. Readers will discover how cats served the nation, how a dog aboard the USS Constitution saved it from a potential ambush, and how a dog survived the massacre at the Alamo.

All of the wars America has engaged in have had animal heroes, among them: the terrier named Sallie, who is commemorated at Gettysburg; the horse Teddy Roosevelt charged up San Juan Hill upon; the incredible saga of a stray dog-turned-Army sergeant named Stubby, who captured a German spy during World War I.

Addressing the history of Military Working Dogs on more recent battlefronts, the Paws of War website brings us the stories of the canine heroes of the Korean and Vietnam Wars, as well as those of the Cold War, Desert Storm, Afghanistan, and Iraq.

Paws of War's mission of "helping both ends of the leash" is in evidence every day, whether in rescuing dogs from overseas battlefronts and bases or in their numerous programs serving the needs of vets, active-duty, and first-responders who benefit so greatly from the emotional support animals bring. Check out their website and discover an integral part of American history that is sure to touch your hearts.

*No animal,
like no service
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ever be left behind.*



Image: Stubby, 1918.
From National Museum of the U.S. Army.

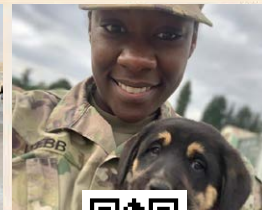


Image: Crewmen with cats aboard USS Olympia, 1898.
From Cats in the Sea Services, Naval History Magazine, U.S. Naval Institute (usni.org).



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THANK YOU to the Museum of American Armor for your continued partnership and dedication to honoring both heroes and the dogs who served faithfully by their side.

★ **THE STORY CONTINUES TODAY.** ★
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SCAN TO
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Armor celebrates our nation's **250TH BIRTHDAY**



From parades in Bethpage, Massapequa Park, and Wantagh to the flight line at Republic Airport hosting the Blue Angels participating in the Four Leaf Airshow, vehicles from the Museum of American Armor were everywhere to be seen as Long Island and the nation observed our country's 250th anniversary.



Academy Charter Middle School Students Donate to the Armor Museum

For students of The Academy Charter School's Uniondale Middle School Campus, American military history has jumped off the pages of their history books, coming alive at The Museum of American Armor.

With Airborne living historian Charlie Luceno offering a practical lesson on what it took to jump into Normandy on June 6, 1944, students toured the Armor Museum as part of their Civic Readiness Project under the guidance of Social Studies educator Kavian Kennedy.

Visiting Academy Charter students included Jeremi Anderson, Makyla Aristide, Alexa Argueta, Jefferson Maldonado, Dakoda Mason, Ely Chavez Moreno, Dominick Nicholas, and Amy Pena.

The school field trip would be followed by a surprise invitation from the students. Veterans and volunteers at

the Armor Museum were invited to a campus breakfast where they were served by students. Their hospitality was followed by a generous donation of \$1,500 to the Armor Museum raised through student cake sales.

Mr. Kennedy noted, "Our students were very much looking forward to serving representatives of those who have served our country and expressing their appreciation for the sacrifices veterans have made. As part of this special occasion, the students made the presentation and donation to the Museum of American Armor in gratitude for the meaningful educational experience the organization provided."

Kennedy reminded it was part of the school's mission statement to "create world class competitive scholars who will learn today, lead tomorrow, and serve in the future."



LILHA's **Charlie Luceno** prepares a student to experience D-Day without the parachute jump. The Armor Museum's **Jason Halloren** and **Kevin Carroll** are presented with a student donation to the Armor Museum.

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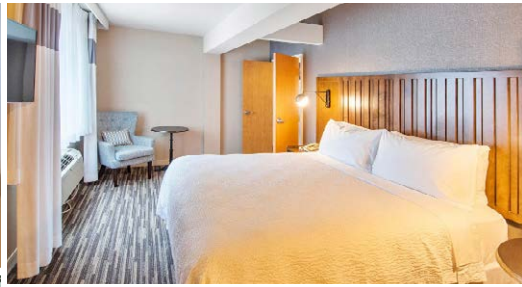
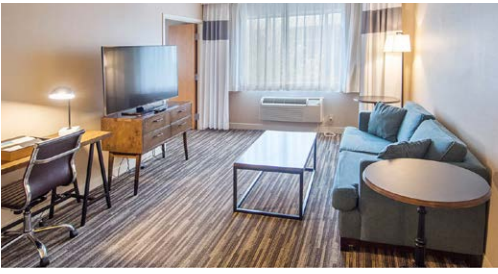
ARMOR'S ATTIC



A new million-dollar indoor storage facility that will allow for the creation of rotating exhibits at The Museum of American Armor is now officially open.

Having benefited from a matching \$500,000 grant from Nassau County, the Armor Museum raised the additional funds to open a 8,500 square foot facility that permits armor vehicles to be stored out of the weather when not on public display or operating in the field.

With professional construction management by Blumenfeld Development Group, additional assistance included National Grid, Racanelli Construction Corp, Frank Suppa Landscaping Corp. R&M Engineering, and Darr Construction.



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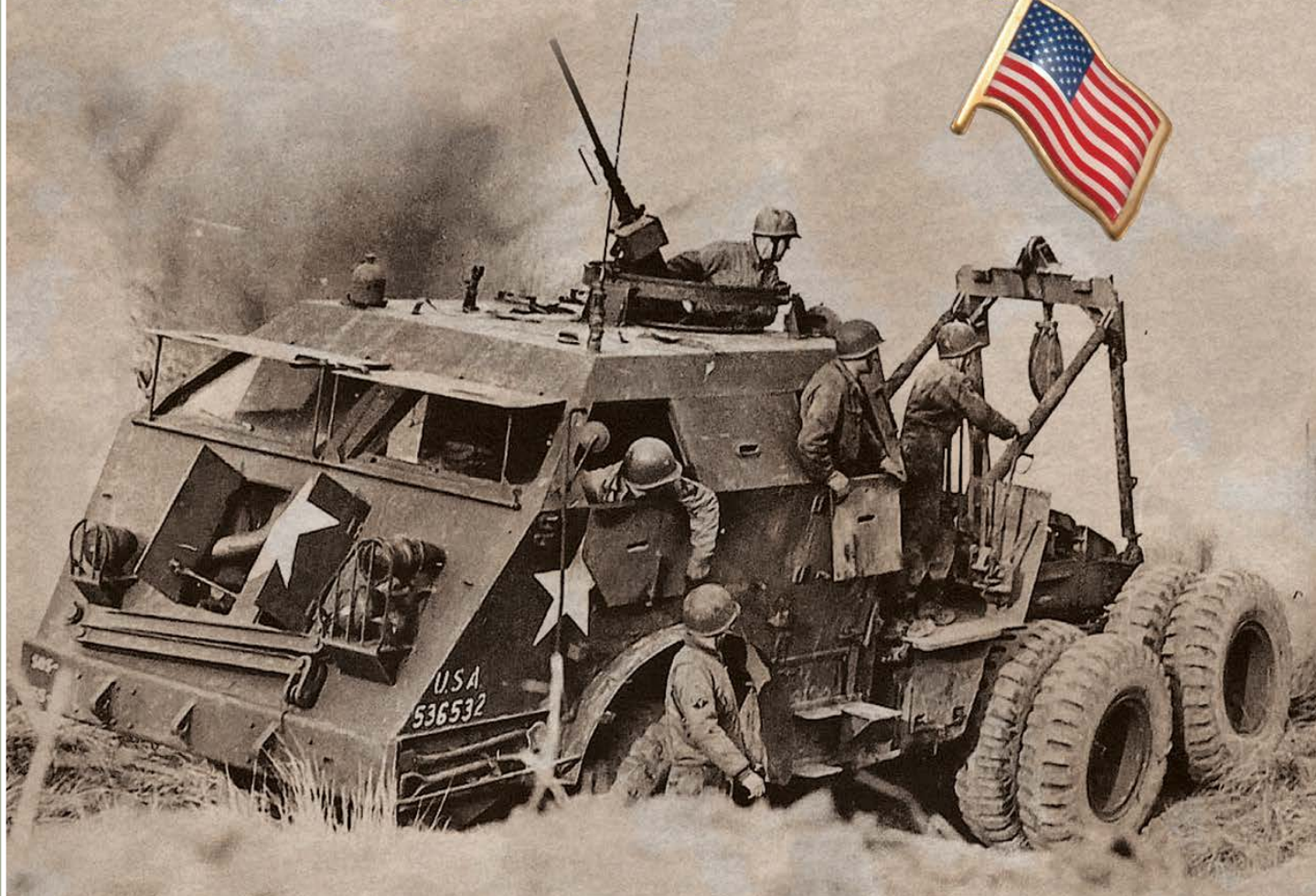


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