

# The ACAV Lives...in Bosnia

by Sergeant First Class Gregory T. Dean (Retired)

Having just retired from the Army, my access to *ARMOR* magazine is limited. Finding a copy, I read the article on the need for the ACAV and the absence of the kits for the M113s. Preparing for our deployment to Bosnia in the fall of 1995 while in Graf and seeing the possible threats to the two M113s in our company, I convinced the 1SG to let me attach 20mm ammo cans to the sides of his track. These cans were filled with dirt or sand; they ended up with extra oil, MREs and whatever else could be stuck in there. This still provides the effect of spaced armor.

The gun shields were somewhere in the system since some of the M-88s in our battalion had them. Our ever-resourceful motor sergeant found the ACAV kits in the system, and, while back at home station in Friedburg, they arrived and were installed on the 1SG's 113 and on our maintenance track.

Our company was attached to 3-5 Cav from Kirchgoens. Our company was further broken up with the 3rd platoon going to an infantry company and we got one BFV platoon. So we ended up with two mixed platoons and one tank pure. After about two months in country, we became a tank pure company again. Platoons used in patrolling actions were made up of two tanks and our two M113s. The



An ACAV kit on an M113, with improvised spaced armor made from empty ammo cans.

M113s were manned by the crews of the two tanks that were left back at Camp McGovern. All these crewmembers were armed with M16s and one M-60 machine gun.

Our Bosnia ACAVs were quite effective in patrolling the narrow streets in the Zone of Separation. It is difficult to maneuver an M1A1 through narrow streets and laying M-2 Flex is a lot easier than slewing a 120 in a narrow side street. Mind you, the M1 gets more respect than any other vehicle in the area. "Peace Through Intimidation."

The ACAV kits are out there, and they are just as effective today as they were in Vietnam.

**Editor's Note:** You can find *ARMOR* Magazine via the Web at:

*knox-www.army.mil/dtdd/armor*

or via Fort Knox's web page at:

*http://147.238.100.101/*

*We are slowly but diligently adding past issues to our web page. – Ed.*