



117th Cavalry Association

www.117th-cav.org

102d CAV (Mecz) 38th CAV (Mecz) 117th CAV (Mecz) 50th CAV RCN SQDN 50th RCN 5th RCN 5-117th CAV 1-102d CAVALRY
Volume 32, Number 3 133rd Issue (post WWII) Fall 2011



President's Message COL (Ret.) Dennis Dougherty Summer's end is a time for all Jersey Cavalrymen to gather together; the Troopers of the 1st Squadron of the 102d Cavalry Regiment, just back from Annual Training at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia, members of our 117th Cavalry Association and all the members New Jersey's Cavalry and Armor community.

Two events make September a special month this year. Our regularly scheduled meeting of the 117th Cavalry Association will take place on September 9th in the Heritage Room of the Westfield, New Jersey armory. It is a time for our membership to come together for the start of a new year of activities. In addition, the *First Annual Spurs and Sabers Dinner Dance* will be hosted and sponsored by the 1st Squadron of the 102d Cavalry Regiment. Both events will be a time for all of those in attendance to socialize, remember and honor all of those who have served and currently serve in Cavalry, Armor and Reconnaissance community throughout our state.

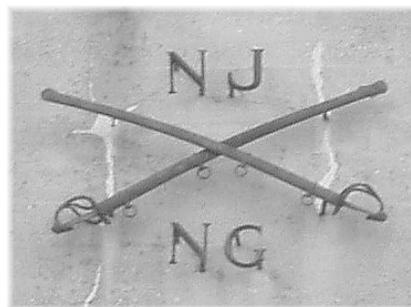
In past issues, I have discussed the collective lineage, honors and heritage that we in the 117th Cavalry Association all share and is now carried on by the 1-102d Cavalry. I have also talked about the locations where the troopers of New Jersey's Cavalry, Armor and Reconnaissance units were stationed. You can look at the respective unit histories for honors, campaign credits, and where they have been deployed. (www.117th-cav.org) Their history represents over a century of service. But the one intangible they all share are the men, the Cavalry Troopers who have served across the generations. They are bound together by many of the same traits that all of us who have worn our nations uniform share regardless of when they served. Words like destiny, heritage, tradition, and loyalty seem to transcend generations and are now carried on by those who serve in the 1-102d Cavalry. Their service forged in both peace and war-defending freedom throughout the world helped us grow and bring a level of experience that is found in few organizations.

I would like to thank LTC Ed Crystal and the 1-102d Cavalry for establishing this new initiative designed for us all to honor and remember the heritage and traditions that all Cavalrymen share. What can you do to insure that *Spur and Saber Dinner Dance* is a success? Simple, come to it. Call friends, who you served with, encourage them to come. It will be a time to renew friendships, meet, and socialize with the current members of the 1-102d Cavalry. Once there, I am sure you will see many others with whom you have served. Events like this provides us all with the opportunity to remember those who have dedicated their service in defense of our nation, state and community and most importantly have a good time. I hope to see you at this first *Spur and Saber Dinner Dance*, which will take on Friday September 23, 2011 at 6PM at the Grand Summit Hotel in Summit New Jersey. (See the enclosed flyer for details).

I hope to see you all at our next meeting on September 9th in the Heritage Room of the Westfield Armory and at the *Spur and Saber Dinner Dance* on September 23 at the Grand Summit Hotel. Please continue to show your support in your Booster Sponsorship of our 117th Cavalry Association newsletter "The SPUR." Many of you have made and continue to make donations, to help pay the cost of publication and mailing. Thanks to all of you for your generosity in support of our associations many initiatives in support of our membership and the 1st Squadron 102d Cavalry Regiment. We all have served.

Show 'em the Way!

Dennis



COMMANDER'S MESSAGE Greetings fellow Troopers and families from scenic Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia. 352 Troopers in 71 tactical vehicles and 2 busses made the 340 mile journey from the Squadron Headquarters at the Westfield Armory to Camp Wilcox at Fort A.P. Hill for Annual Training 2011. We all arrived safely. Immediately upon arrival, we proudly displayed our colors and guidons to mark our presence at the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's consolidated AT.

You will be proud to know that these Troopers' spirits are high and their training is high speed. The temperatures are peaking above ninety and the heat index is up over one hundred degrees.

Our Troop Commanders and First Sergeants have tightened up their areas and are preparing to move the Troopers into the field. The Recon Troop is beginning their tactical training with a road march to their training area. Our Scouts are gearing up for Squad tactical training focusing on Zone and Area Recons. Delta Company is heavily engaged in maintenance and driver training. The Staff is fully engaged in planning a culminating Squad Tactical Exercise and monitoring the Command Post of the Future (CPOF). The Fires Section and Mortars are preparing for live fire exercises and staffing whether to have the SCO or the SXO "ride the lightning" on day one of live fire.

The knowledge, experience and leadership qualities of the Squadron's NCO's and Officer's are evident in the seamless conduct of operations. As Squadron Commander, I am grateful for the quality of Troopers, NCO's and Officers I have been blessed with. While I am happy to accept the credit for such a great Squadron, I am well aware that it truly lies with these leaders and warriors.



Thanks again to the Association and to all of our families for your continued support. See you in two weeks.

SHOW 'EM THE WAY!

LTC Ed Chrystal, CO
1-102d Cavalry
50th IBCT





MAJ Ronald E. Deloatch - Squadron Executive Officer (XO) I am given this opportunity to write something about our upcoming annual training (AT) and a little bit about some of the events that the squadron will undertake in the near future. This AT will be a springboard for Training Year 2012. The squadron began preparation for this AT by developing and solidifying a comprehensive communication/signal training program. This program, initiated and monitored by our S-6, will allow the squadron to train on equipment that, in the future, will be used to make up the CPOF. The CPOF, or *Command Post of the Future*, is a full digital communications suite that will allow the squadron to conduct full spectrum operation in the modern/digital battlefield. For this AT, the squadron will focus on the building, configuration and employment of components of the CPOF to better prepare the squadron for full employment of all equipment in TY 2012. In conjunction with the development of the CPOF, all of the squadrons' vehicles just completed an extensive BFT/communications suite upgrade. This upgrade will allow a more

secure digital network and better communication within the squadron and our higher headquarters. To enable the squadron to achieve this goal it took many man-hours in planning and moving equipment to the sites where the upgrades took place.

Additionally, this is the first time in a while that the entire 50th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) will train as one. Because of this, the squadron will face some logistical challenges. The biggest and immediate challenge we will encounter this AT will be the actual movement to the field. The Squadron Staff and Troop Executive Officers have been working diligently in prepping the unit for this event. Many of the Troop XO's have ensured that vehicles and equipment at the troop level are prepared by having equipment inspected, calibrated and TI. Vehicles and other equipment identified as deadline have had their deficiencies corrected and have been put back into the inventory and will be ready for AT.

After AT, selected members of the Squadron and I will put the finishing touches on the 1-102d Cavalry's *First Annual Spurs and Sabers Ball at the Grand Summit Hotel* on 23 September 2011. This event will be a culmination of the Squadron's achievements during the past training year. It will provide a forum to celebrate the rich tradition of the Cavalry and the Squadron.

In reading this article, it should become obvious that the Squadron is a team and that it is at its best when it operates as such. The Squadron could not have been prepared for AT if not for the efforts of everyone doing their part. This AT is a culmination of our collective efforts to make this Annual Training meaningful and memorable.

We as leaders have an obligation to train our troops so that they are proficient in their jobs so that whenever and wherever we are called to mission, they and we can rest assured that they are ready to take on any task asked of them.

MAJ Deloatch is a Social Studies teacher in the Chatham HS. He and his wife Allyson live in Edison NJ.

“Show ‘em the Way”

Major Ronald E. Deloatch, XO
1-102d Cavalry
50th IBCT

From the Editor – Phil Notestine (M48 tank crewman 2nd from right, August 1958 Fort Knox) As you will read in the obituaries, 3 more of our “Class of ‘41” WWII combat veterans have moved out to *Fiddler’s Green*. Troopers Bob Lutz and Frank Prettyman served together in B Troop, 102d Cavalry Regiment from Fort Jackson SC to Algeria, when they were both transferred to C Troop, 117th Cavalry Recon Squadron (Mecz) for the upcoming combat operations in Europe. I was fortunate to have known them. Bob became my good counsel in developing historical articles for The SPUR; he served as the very able Historian for the Association for years. As many know, it was Bob who helped compile and edited the WWII Histories of the 38th, 102d and 117th Cavalry Recon Squadrons, given by him for posting on our Association web site for all to read, learn and research.



As I have frequently reported, we have been contacted by many who have searched for information about their relatives who served in one of these outstanding units. Most recently, the daughters of Charles Pierce (102d Cavalry) and Raymond Leone (38th Cavalry) made contact. Pierce died this past May. His daughter Katherine Green was able to find a memoir written for family, and has given permission to publish an excerpt in this issue, beginning on page 7. Raymond Leone, who served in the 38th Cavalry Recon Squadron as a scout squad leader in A Troop, has written a short book “*In Front of the Front Line*” about his WWII service. He has mailed a copy to us and his daughter Denise Horning is sending the digital document for possibly posting on our web site. Leone was inducted into the Army at Fort Riley, KS in April 1943. A Harley Davidson motorcycle owner/rider, he was sent to cavalry school and later posted to Camp Maxey, TX and the new 38th Cavalry, which was soon sent to England, replacing the 2d Squadron, 102d Cavalry. As we all know, the 2d Squadron was sent to Algeria as combat security for Allied HQ and reflagged, becoming the separate 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Mecz).

Since becoming Editor of this newsletter, many have expressed gratitude for articles about our WWII cavalymen for revealing their legacy of hardship, heroics, survival, fate in battle and comradeship. Well, I am very grateful to be able to do it! I have met or spoken with so many of our veterans and/or their families and have learned so much. Truly, I am a better, more thankful American now.

During the recent *Class of ‘41* luncheon, I told the group that they could be very proud of the “new” 1-102d Cavalry leadership. Having met many of the officers and several senior NCOs, I reported that the level of education, maturity, service “seasoning” and devotion to family, community and country is outstanding.

C Troop Change of Command Passing the Colors: Comanche Troop Receives New Commander - By CPT Vincent P. Tirri

12 June 2011 marked the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Comanche Troop, 1st Squadron, 102d Cavalry Regiment as the men received their new Commanding Officer.

Stetsons and Spurs were donned as past, present and future Troopers of Comanche stood before the Squadron Commander, LTC Edward Chrystal. The Troop’s colors were passed from CPT Vincent Tirri to CPT Jason Cornwell signifying the transfer of command while families and friends of the Troop witnessed the ceremony steeped in Cavalry tradition.

The past two years have witnessed a period of significant change in Comanche Troop. Following a successful deployment supporting Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force Command Arabian Peninsula in various locations in Iraq, the Troop reconsolidated into the latest force model of a Dismounted Reconnaissance Troop. In a year where the unit’s focus is centered on reset operations, Comanche Troop seized the initiative to develop their reconnaissance skills by attending the Tactical Tracking Operations School at Fort Huachuca, Arizona and bringing a Mobile Training Team to Annual Training at Camp Smith, New York. This training year saw a reinvigorated effort to focus training on

reconnaissance fundamentals and long-range marksmanship to develop a strong base of skills for future training evolutions.



As anyone who has ever led soldiers knows, handing over the guidon is the most difficult mission a Commander must complete. From the time LTC Dean Spenzos informed me that I would be assuming command in the fall of 2009, I knew this assignment would test my abilities and challenge me as a leader. I will always look at my time in command as a unique opportunity full of lessons and experiences that will shape my military career for years to come. It has been a privilege to lead the soldiers, work with the Non-Commissioned Officers, and the Family Readiness Group of Comanche Troop.

CPT Cornwell assumes command of a unit that is rapidly earning a reputation for training hard, and seeking new opportunities to develop its soldiers. The soldiers and NCO's of Comanche Troop will undoubtedly impress him, as they did me, with their dedication to each other and their mission. With the help of one of the best NCO's it has been my privilege to work with, 1SG Michael Klock, we can expect to see many great things from the warriors of Comanche Troop in the coming years.

Captain Jason Marcus Cornwell was born in Dixon, Illinois. He entered the United States Marine Corps on November 11, 1993 and attended Basic Training at Parris Island, SC. After completing Field Radio Operator training at Camp Pendleton, CA he was assigned to 2d LAAD (Low Altitude Air Defense) Battalion, NC.

Lance Corporal Cornwell participated in numerous exercises and deployments in support of II Marine Expeditionary Force. Specifically, cold weather training and two Mediterranean floats. In 1995, LCPL participated in operation "Strong Resolve" and in 1997, CPL Cornwell was sent to the Arabian Gulf in support of Contingency Operation "Southern Watch and Desert Thunder".

SGT Cornwell was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps in 1998 and began his civilian education at Rutgers University. In 2000, SGT Cornwell enlisted in the New Jersey Army National Guard and attended the US Army Infantry School in Jericho, Vermont. While assigned to Charlie Company, 2-113th Infantry, SGT Cornwell served as a squad leader and platoon sergeant until entering Officer Candidate School.

Upon completing Officer Candidate School, 2LT Cornwell entered the Intelligence Officer's Basic Intelligence Course at FT Huachuca, AZ. 1LT Cornwell was then assigned to 2-113th HQ as the Battalion Intelligence Officer.

In June of 2008, 1LT Cornwell deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. 1LT Cornwell performed the duties of Forward Operating Base Operations Intelligence OIC. In 2009, 1LT Cornwell completed his Bachelor's Degree from Jersey City University in the field of Criminal Justice. On June 1, 2011, CPT Cornwell assumed Command of C Troop, 1-102 CAV.

CPT Cornwell's military awards include: *Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Meritorious Unit Award, Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal (2nd Award), Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal w/ Campaign Star, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Component Overseas Training Ribbon, Navy Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (2nd Award), Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, German Armed Forces Proficiency (Gold).*

CPT Cornwall is with the NJ State Police, Troop B, Field Ops, Tactical Patrol Unit. Jason is happily married to Giselle. They have a 3-year-old son, Jason Jr.



Regular 117th Cavalry Association Meeting 3 June 2011 Westfield Armory COL (Ret.) Dennis Dougherty opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for fellow cavalymen that await us at Fiddler's Green. The reading of the minutes of the previous meeting was waived. 27 members were in attendance.

SGM (Ret.) Ken Mahan reported that we have 194 active members. Bill Gruss reported the treasury balance was \$4,355.98, with \$620.00 income and \$654.78 disbursements, leaving an available balance of \$4,321.23. He reported that our WWII veterans are no longer required to pay dues.

COL (Ret.) Dougherty went on to old business. He recounted the origins and organization of the New Jersey Cavalry, which comprised the 102d, 117th, 50th Recon, and recounted the first meeting of A Troop, 102d Cavalry on 3 June 21, 90 years ago. The members were reminded of the upcoming Spurs and Sabers Dinner hosted by the 1st Squadron 102d Cavalry on 23 September 2011. The cost for retirees is \$60/person.

Next, COL (Ret.) Dougherty went on to new business. With the relocation of the U.S. Army Armor School to Fort Benning, Georgia, a statue commemorating the U.S. Cavalry is being built there. COL (Ret.) Dougherty moved to have the Cavalry Association donate \$117.00 toward the costs of building the statue. The motion was seconded by SGM (Ret.)

Jim Dooley, with a unanimous vote in favor of the donation by the members. COL (Ret.) Dougherty reminded our members that Cavalry Association hats and shirts were still available at \$10.00 each, and reminded members that pay \$20.00, will be donating an additional item to our current Troopers.

The meeting ended on motion and commemorating the 90th anniversary of the first meeting of the 102d Cavalry Regiment. Members were reminded that the next meeting will be held at the Westfield Armory on 9 September 2011.

The following members attended the 3 June 2011 meeting at the Westfield Armory: *Dennis Dougherty, Ken Mahan, Arnold Lasner, Robert Apgar, Frank Patrick, David Mormak, Frank Mnich, James Anglim, Don Tracy, Ron Nier, Emil Allgeier, Henry Forstenhausler, Dave Ella, Dan Mahon, Jim Dooley, John Kieslor, Art Maggs, Dominic Mello, John Suiter, Patrick du Tertre, Steve Petroski, Walter Radwanski, Don Kondroski, Bill Gruss, Michael Hrycak, Chris Sands, Clement M. Curry Sr.*

Class of '41 Luncheon 4 August 2011 The new venue, the *River Rock* on the Manasquan River in Brick Township proved to be more than satisfactory. The food was very good and the servings generous. We were seated in the main dining area, with plenty of light and a great view of the docked boats. All were able to see and hear very well, and this made for lively discussions and sharing of stories. Pictures of Frank Prettyman and Bob Lutz being decorated with the French *Legion of Honor* in separate ceremonies were passed around as we remembered these two fine men who recently passed away. The date for the next luncheon was set for Thursday, 6 October 2011, same place and time.

Attending were *Class of '41* members (shown from the right) *Joe Pocaroba, Jim Kane, Irv Partelow, Jack Ferguson, Ed Leonard and Frank Wiswall.* Guests included *Sam Cunninghame, Don Tracy, Ken Mahan and Phil Notestine.* A neighbor of Jack Ferguson, Cunninghame was with the *Junior Essex Troop, Westfield Armory* in the early 1940's. He joined the Marines in 1951 and had a career with the NJ State Police, serving with BG Ken Wondrack and SGM Jim Dooley.



Membership Update – SMG (Ret.) Ken Mahan Trooper! Look at your address label! If the date is not September 2010 or later, you are behind in your dues. Your subscription to *The SPUR* is going to run out due to non-payment of dues. A sample of label:



SEPT 2012

**KENNETH L. MAHAN
12 W. WALNUT ST
METUCHEN NJ 08840-2616**

To Members behind in their dues, you will have date circled in RED! This is the only notice you will receive. Send information and/or dues to me at the Metuchen address shown above. **Annual regular dues of \$20.00 are due in September.** Make checks payable to **117th CAV Association.** We cannot continue to mail *The SPUR* to lapsed members. Stick with us, we want you as a member, but you must pay your own "freight"! **Email:** Please send your email address to me at kmahan117@aol.com. We are compiling an email list of members and we want to include you. **Association web site:** www.117th-cav.org/ Read past issues of *The SPUR*, look up the WWII histories of the 38th, 102d and 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadrons (Mecz).

All WWII Veterans will no longer pay dues, you will see WWII over your name. **Bear in mind September starts our year 2012. These names are listed under Taps. Robert C. Lutz, Francis A. Prettyman, and MSG (Ret) Rocco S. Spano Jr.** I have lost 3 good friends, 2 were friends that I could go to information about the 117th Cavalry and one friend I have known for 53 years, I have followed him from "D" Troop, to "A" Troop, to Squadron Headquarters Staff. He is now in "Fiddler's Green". He has been a mentor along the way. I am glad to have known and worked with him.

TAPS

Charles Blondell Pierce III, 89, died peacefully on May 11, 2011, surrounded by his loving family. Charles was born on August 16, 1921, to Charles Blondell Pierce and Julia Smith Pierce in Elizabeth, N.J. He grew up in Elizabeth and enlisted in the US Army serving in the European Theater for three years and participating in the Normandy invasion, as an officer

with the famed 102d Cavalry Group. He rose to the rank of Captain and received the Purple Heart for wounds in combat during "Operation Cobra" in Normandy, and American Defense Service Medal. A proud American, Charles continued to serve his country as a member of the National Guard of New Jersey, and ultimately rose to the rank of Major. He also was a member of the Sons of the American Revolution.



Upon returning to the US in 1945, Charles met and married Ruth O'Neil, his beloved wife of 65 years, and attended Seton Hall College. He began his life long career with Shell Oil Company in New York and he and Ruth and their growing family then moved to Atlanta, GA. with Shell and finally to Houston where Charles retired. An avid golfer, Charles was a member of Champions Golf Club and enjoyed many years of great golf and friendship. Charles was also a member of St. Ignatius Catholic Community.

Charles was a loving husband, father and grandfather and will be greatly missed and fondly remembered. Survivors include his wife, Ruth Pierce; children, Jane Lehto and husband Don, Charles (Chip) Pierce, Mike Pierce and wife Catherine, Sandy Pierce and wife Anne-Marie, Katherine Green and husband Danny; grandchildren, Michael, Christina, Elizabeth, Johanna, Sam, Claire and Ben; sister, Mary Louise Pierce. Charles was predeceased by his grandson, Matthew Charles Pierce.



Francis A. Prettyman, 94, Known as the "Legend", of Wall Township NJ, passed away Friday, May 27, 2011, with his family by his side. Frank was born in Jersey City, moved to Bloomfield, where he resided for 20 years before moving to Sea Girt. Frank served with the 102d Cavalry Regiment and was a combat veteran of the 117th Cavalry Recon Squadron (Mecz) during WWII. He was inducted in January 1940, sent to Ft. Jackson, S.C. January 1941 and went overseas in September 1942. Frank fought in campaigns in Italy, Africa and France. Decorated with the *Purple Heart* and *the Bronze Star*, he was cited by the French and American military commanders for his courage and abilities. In 1994, his cavalry squadron was honored by the town of Montrevel, France for its liberation on their 50th anniversary. On Veterans Day 2009, he received the *Legion of Honor* medal from the French Consulate for his contributions to the liberation of their country during World War II. After the war, he was employed by Pan American World Airways as a Staff Accountant for

over 30 years. Upon retirement, he was a major force in raising funds for the restoration of the Sea Girt Lighthouse. He served as a trustee for St. Mark's Roman Catholic Church for 12 years and was a member of the Holy Name Society. He served as an Usher and Eucharistic minister and was a pillar of the Church. Frank is survived by his beloved wife of 59 years, Angela; loving children, Dennis and Renee Prettyman of Elmwood Park, Jim Prettyman of Wall, Michelle and John Kerestan of Wall, Catharine and Robert Meskin of Middletown, and Margaret and Stephen Geiger of Fair Haven; and his cherished grandchildren, Emily, Alex and Grace Geiger, and Jonathan and Jordan Meskin.

Robert C. Lutz, 90, passed away on June 23, 2011 at home in Tinton Falls. He was born in East Orange and resided in Tinton Falls. He was a retired manager at New York Telephone Company. A WWII veteran of the 102d Cavalry Regiment and original member of the 117th Cavalry Recon Squadron (Mecz) serving in combat as a recon Sergeant, Robert was a member and historian of the *117th Cavalry Association* and of the NY Telephone Pioneers. The People of France honored Lutz for his WWII service with the Legion of Honor, during a ceremony on the French warship DDG *Jean Bart* in the New York harbor on May 30th, 2005. His recreational pastimes spanned the seasons with skiing in the winter and sailing during the spring and summer. Robert is predeceased by his parents, Henry Lutz and Elsie Freimuith Lutz. He is survived by his loving wife Marie O'Brien Lutz of Tinton Falls, his sister; Eleanor Condit from Caldwell, his two nephews; Robert Condit of Caldwell, and Arthur Condit of Forked River; and his niece Joan Judge of Caldwell.



Rocco S. Spano Jr., 80, died on July 5, 2011. Born in Elizabeth, N.J., Rocco lived there until he married and moved to Avenel, N.J., and then to Long Valley, N.J., where he lived for 43 years before moving to Whiting, N.J. He served on the board of education for the Long Valley schools for 17 years while working at IBM as a facility manager until his retirement. Rocco then went to work for ISP/GAF until he retired again. He served in the 5 -117th Cavalry of the New Jersey Army National Guard for 43 years, retiring as a master sergeant. MSG Spano was a member of the *117th Cavalry Association* and a great friend to his fellow cavalrymen. A member of the Atlas Pythagoras Lodge No. 10 F&AM, he was a member of Shriners International and the Crescent Shrine of Trenton. Rocco is survived by his wife, Joan (nee Decker), and four children, Rocco F. Spano and his wife, Cathie, of Long Valley N.J.; Dr. Michael R. Spano and his wife, Dawn, of North Carolina; Donna Ann Spano and her partner, Daryle, of Chatham, N.J., and Debra Lee Hornung and her husband, John, of New Jersey. Rocco had six grandchildren, Carly, Mikey, Mark, Dana, Nicholas and

Reese, and three great-grandchildren, Brianna, Jack and Claire. He is also survived by his brother, Frank Spano and his wife, Antoinette, of Colonia, N.J., and his sister, Ann Romano of Garwood, N.J. He was predeceased by his daughter, Jan Spano, and his sister, Frances Irwin.

Mr. Louis Di Belardino, 83, of Colonia, N.J., died Wednesday at the Center of Hope Hospice in Scotch Plains, N.J. Funeral services will take place on Saturday at 8 a.m. from the Lehrer-Gibilisco Funeral Home, 275 W. Milton Ave., Rahway, N.J., followed by a 9 a.m. Funeral Mass at St. John Vianney R.C. Church, Colonia. Entombment will be in St. Gertrude Cemetery, Colonia. Friends may call Friday from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. at the funeral home. Mr. Di Belardino was born in Rahway and was a lifelong resident of Colonia, N.J. He was a U.S. Army veteran of World War II and an operation engineer for NAPP-Grecco in Newark, N.J., where he worked for many years, retiring in 1992. He was a communicant of St. John Vianney R.C. Church in Colonia and a member of the Pine Ridge South Four Senior Club in Green Acres, Fla. Mr. Di Belardino was an avid woodworker and loved playing cards. He was a loving husband, father, brother, grandfather and great-grandfather and will be dearly missed. Mr. Di Belardino is survived by his wife of 61 years, Catherine (Lesinski) Di Belardino; two sons, Louis and his wife, Debbie Di Belardino, and Gary and his wife, Tracey Di Belardino; a sister, Louise Hrycuna; four grandchildren, Michelle, Michael, Anthony and Nicole and four great-grandchildren, Alexis, Olivia, Evan and Anthony. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions can be made to the Center for Hope Hospice, 1900 Raritan Rd., Scotch Plains, N.J. 07076. (His son Louis is a member of the 117th Cavalry Association and a retired SFC, NJARNG)



Major (Ret.) Charles B. Pierce memoir *From excerpts, provided by his daughter Katherine Green.* (Pierce is top row right) "I graduated from high school at 17 in 1939 and on my eighteenth birthday, I joined the *Essex Troop*, a Horse Cavalry unit that was part of the New Jersey National Guard in Westfield, New Jersey. We practiced being soldiers and learned how to ride. During the summer of 1940, we spent two weeks in Canton, New York on summer maneuvers.

I was a private, riding my horse and leading a horse with a machine gun pack. We knew at this time that the National Guard would be called into service soon in view of threat of war. Instead of starting school, a neighbor who worked for Shell Oil Co. got me a temporary job in the New York Office sorting mail until January 6, 1941 when we were called into Federal Service and shipped to Camp Jackson, near Columbia, South Carolina.

We went into service on January 6, 1941 and were shipped as a regiment to Camp Jackson. We were half-horse and half-mechanized. By April 1942, the horses were shipped to Front Royal, Virginia, and we became a Mechanized Cavalry Reconnaissance Regiment. We were shipped to England in July 1942 and arrived in a mounted uniform.

Because of the War and secrecy, we were shipped to Ft. Dix and to Staten Island to board a British Transport named the "*Dempo*". We traveled by train at night from Ft. Dix to Staten Island and as we went through Newark, one of our boys saw his brother, a Newark Policeman, on the train platform. Consequently, everyone knew the regiment was going overseas.

By that time, I was a Platoon Sergeant and my best friend Joe Genaro was the 1st Sergeant of our troop. Joe, being the 1st Sergeant, rated a cabin and I shared it with him. The ship officers were British and the crew was Indian. We shipped out in Convoy to Halifax and picked up Canadian Escort for part of the trip. The convoy was about 18 ships and blackout was a must because of the German U-Boats. It took about 18 days to zigzag across the Atlantic and a couple of our ships were sunk by German Subs during a night attack.

Nothing could be thrown over-board and there was no smoking on deck at night. Officers and Sergeants had loaded pistols and were authorized to shoot anyone who did so.

Rations were so bad that even the oatmeal had worms in it. The *Dempo* was later sunk in the Mediterranean and we were all happy about it.

We arrived at night at Liverpool, England. England was completely blacked out because in 1942, the Germans were heavily bombing England. We were entrained to Fairford, England on an estate with a big manor house. This was in Devonshire, or as the English call it "Sunny Devon". We stayed there and I was given a direct commission as a 2nd Lieutenant. A couple of weeks later, they also gave Joe Genaro a commission. We trained with vehicles all over England on both moors: Dartmoor and Exmoor.

During this period, I was sent to Scotland for a month to a British Reconnaissance Regiment to study their methods. It was a pleasant month and I enjoyed the British very much. They were good soldiers.

While in England, we would get weekend passes and we would go to London - despite the bombing. One night, the building behind where I was staying was bombed. The Regiment finally moved to Swindon Barracks and I was promoted to 1st Lieutenant. We stayed here until it was time for the invasion of France. By this time, I was executive officer of "Troop A" under Captain Bill Clifford - a great guy! "A Troop" consisted of about six officers and 190 men.

Early in June, we were loaded on Landing ships in the English Channel with Jeeps, Armored Cars, Tanks, 75mm self-propelled assault guns and half-tracks.

We were scheduled to land on Omaha Beach on D+2 following the assault by the 29th Infantry Division and Rangers. The Channel was full of ships and I watched the Naval Vessels firing on the coast. It was like the 4th of July, except people were dying. On the afternoon of D+1, I was having coffee in the wardroom when we were told to disembark. Only the HQ platoon of Troop A with Captain Clifford and I got off that afternoon because they closed down after dark.

We and our vehicles went to the top of the hill and dug slit trenches and waited until the next morning to gather up the other three platoons when they landed. German planes came that night, but did not bother us.

Because Normandy was primarily agricultural, and because all fields and farms were separated by hedgerows about six foot high and four foot thick and because they had been there for centuries, tanks could not get through them. Consequently, they were road bound and armor could not maneuver. Our tank company Co-Commander was Jim Depew (we had been Sergeants together). While we were eating one night, his maintenance sergeant Curtis Culin suggested that what was needed to break the hedgerows was like a fork for the tank front. They immediately built one with four prongs and welded it to a tank. They tried it and it broke through the hedgerow without any trouble. Secrecy was immediately established and after viewing by General Bradley (1st Army Co). They were made and mounted on all 1st Army tanks. This permitted us to break out of hedgerow country and move rapidly across France into Germany. Both Jim Depew and Sergeant Curtis G. Culin received the *Legion of Merit* for this.

On July 26th on the breakthrough early in the morning, I was inspecting our line with the Headquarters Platoon Sergeant and my Driver (Commanding Officer was wounded previously, so I was commanding Troop A). The Germans were shelling us with mortars and one landed close to me killing the sergeant and wounding the driver and me. In 24 hours we lost four of our six officers.

I was wounded in the neck, hip, and shoulder and was patched up and taken back to a field hospital (large tents with a number of operating tables in each - just like "MASH"). We were all placed on the ground around the hospital and when our turn came up, in we went and were operated on.

The next day, I was flown to a hospital in England where I spent four months. It took longer because after a week or so, they operated again because of fever and infection caused by cloth from shirt in shoulder wound. Back then, they left wounds open and packed with Vaseline gauze, which they changed daily.

I was discharged from the hospital in November and placed on six months temporary limited service. My shoulder required daily exercises in order to raise my right arm properly.

I was assigned to a Prisoner of War Camp in Cherbourg, France. The compound (30,000 German Prisoners) was commanded by an old friend of mine who promptly gave me command of the 454 Military Police Escort - GUARD Co. In addition, he placed me in charge of the prison guards, a French Infantry Battalion. I was a Captain by now.

This was an interesting experience because of the size of the camp, which consisted of many acres in which were 30 some cages consisting of about 1,000 prisoners in each cage. One cage consisted of Russians who fought with the Germans (some had been chained to the guns). In one cage were young Germans, 16 to 17 years old. In another cage were the officers.

It is interesting to note that just prior to the *Battle of the Bulge*, the prisoners were somehow aware of this and some German Officers attempted to get into the German Enlisted Men's cages to communicate with them. "*Sieg Heil*" was often heard.

I would frequently spot inspect the cages. The Germans were clean and disciplined. The Russians were dirty and undisciplined. The Russian Commissar - not the officer was the boss.

When I entered a German cage, a German Sergeant would immediately holler "*Achtung*", and if I stayed an hour, they would remain at attention for an hour.

One day, a Russian Colonel accompanied by a member of Eisenhower's staff visited us and we had lunch with them. The Russian was upset that we were treating the Russians just like Germans and he indicated that the American Prisoners they were recapturing were not treated that way. Our colonel reminded the Russian that the Americans he recaptured were Prisoners of the Germans, not fighting with them.

Within a week, all Russians were shipped back to Russia.

On a few occasions, I had to go head to head with the French Major commanding the French Battalion because of the poor discipline of some of the soldiers. I felt sorry for him. He was a former *French Foreign Legion* Officer who had a battalion with a number of misfits and communists.

Around June or July of 1945, I returned to the United States with 454 Military Police Co. I arrived in Hampton Roads, VA just about 3 years from when I left.

You all know that during this leave, I met and married your mother (or grandmother). I was still in the service and scheduled to return to armor and head to the Pacific. Fortunately, while on our honeymoon, the war in the Pacific ended and I was sent to Camp Claibourne, LA to disband the 454 Military Police Company.

I was separated from the service on January 6, 1946 and moved to Westfield, NJ in 1948."

[Editor's note: 1947, Westfield Armory – CPT Charles Pierce was CO of Troop A of the newly formed 50th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, Vince Rettino was 1SG. The 12 other enlisted men included Ken Quaas and Bill Maloney. The Squadron Commander was James Depew and the XO was Tom Piddington. All those named here were WWII veterans.]



BE A BOOSTER OF THE SPUR

Shown at the left of each name is the last issue and year in which your entry will be published.

SP = Spring, SU = Summer, FA = Fall, WI = Winter



SP-15 EMIL & MARGARET ALLGEIER
 SU-15 NANCY ASHFORD & JEANNIE BROWN (sisters)
 (mem. father) SSG WM. T. TITTER
 WWII B TROOP 117th CAV
 FA-12 BILL ANTONUCCI (mem. of) 1SG WM. B. MALONEY SR.
 SU-25 BOB & LORRAINE APGAR
 SU-13 CRAIG BEACHER
 FA-12 ROSE MARIE BENNERT (mem. of) BILL BENNERT
 WI-19 RALPH BOCKINO (mem. of) by wife CATHERINE
 FA-11 DOROTHY CASPAR (mem. of husb.) RICHARD J.
 CASPAR
 WI-12 MSG TOM BULLOCK A Troop
 FA-12 SANTI CARNEVALI *Class of '41*, 117th CAV WWII
 SU-12 STEVE CUP, SCOUT A TROOP 102nd CAV WWII
 SP-13 SSG (Ret.) CLEMENT & JEAN CURRY
 WI-11 LTC (Ret.) PETER D'ELIA
 WI-13 COL (Ret.) DENNIS DOUGHERTY
 WI-13 1SG (Ret.) PHILIP DUNN, A Troop
 FA-13 LTC PATRICK du TERTRE (ARMY OF FRANCE)
 WI-11 1SG (Ret.) DAVE ELLIS, D Troop
 WI-17 MANUEL G. FERRI
 WI-11 LTC (Ret.) ALAN R. FISHER
 WI-22 MIRIAM FISHER (mem. of husb.) WILLIAM E. FISHER
 SP-12 WILLIAM FISHER JR.
 FA-11 BOB FOLEY, HHT (Ret.)
 WI-11 HENRY & MARION FORSTENHAUSLER
 WI-31 JOHN FRANTZ, LT A Troop
 WI-12 ROBERT GREEN
 SP-13 LOIS HAASIS (mem. of) CW4 WALTER HAASIS
 FA-20 BARBARA HANSEN wife of TOM HANSEN
 WI-12 LTC (Ret.) JOHN S. HUFF (mem. of) C Troop, 117th CAV
 '43-'44
 FA-14 BILL HYNDMAN (mem. of) CPT PAUL SEIDEL, F CO.
 WWII 117th CAV. *Silver Star, Fr. Croix de Guerre*
 FA-15 CHARLES JOHNSON WWII 117th Cavalry Recon
 SP-14 COL (Ret.) KEN KLEIN in loving mem. of wife JOANN
 SP-12 ESTELLE & ARNOLD LASNER, WWII 117th CAV
French Legion of Honor
 FA-13 JAY LASNER in Honor of his Dad, Arnold Lasner
 SP-13 RON La VERDE (mem. of uncle) T-5 THOMAS G.
 HENNESSY, A Troop, 117th CAV KIA 5 JUNE '44 ROME
 WI-11 ROCHUS E. & CELESTE LAWRENCE
 WI-13 EDWARD J. LEONARD, *Class of '41*, PSG B Troop
 117th CAV, Montrevel POW *French Legion of Honor*
 SP-12 BOB LUTZ *Class of '41*, C Troop 117th CAV WWII
French Legion of Honor
 SU-12 CSM(Ret.) ARTHUR MAGGS (mem.)
 CSM (Ret.) JAMES E. KIERNAN
 WI-13 JEAN & SGM (Ret.) KEN MAHAN
 SU-12 KEVIN MALONEY (mem. of) 1SG WM. B. MALONEY
 SP-12 BRIAN & BRUCE (mem.) 1SG WM. B. MALONEY
 FA-20 PETE & EDITH MARTINEZ
 WI-14 ED & BETH MATTHEWS (mem. of Ed's father)
 T-4 ED MATTHEWS B TROOP 102nd CAV WWII
 FA-11 CHARLOTTE & BILL MERRING

SU-13 PAMELA THONACK MILLER (mem. of father)
 HERBERT A. THONACK, *Class of '41*, 117th CAV
 SU-15 JUANITA MITCHELL (mem. of husb) FRANK,
Class of '41, PSG B Troop 117th CAV, Montrevel POW
 WI-11 CW5 (Ret.) FRANK MNICH & JANET
 SP-12 ZACK MOUSHEGIAN (mem.) JAMES A MOUSHEGIAN
 FA-13 RONNIE NIER
 WI-12 PHILIP NOTESTINE (mem. of) MAJ JOHN B. COULSTON
 Troops C & E, *Class of '41*;
 602nd Tank Destroyer BN '43-'45
 SP-12 JOYCE & HAROLD "SMOKIE" OWEN, *Class of '41*,
 117th CAV WWII
 WI-11 FOTINOS PANAGAKOS
 WI-11 FRANK & BETTY PATRICK
 FA-14 COL (Ret.) BOB PEARCE & CAROL, (mem. of)
 RICK APBLET
 FA-12 (mem. of) MAJ CHARLES B. PIERCE, WWII 102nd CAV
 WI-12 TOM PETTY
 WI-16 (mem. of) COL (Ret.) TOM PIDDINGTON, *Class of '41*
 FA-15 SALLIE LEE PIERCE (Widow of) DANIEL LEE, **CMH**
 WI-11 CSM (Ret.) AL PHELAN Jr. (mem. of) MSG FRED MATTOX
 SP-12 DOT & LTC (Ret.) KEN QUAAS
 FA-11 ART REINBOLD (mem. of) ED SUTTON
 SU-12 MSG (Ret.) ART & RUTH REINBOLD (mem. of)
 "POP" CHRISTOPHER
 WI-92 MRS. ROBERT D. ROBBINS, (mem. of ROBBIE)
 FA-21 FRED RODMAN, (mem. of brother) WALTER RODMAN
 F Company (tanks) 102nd CAV WWII
 SP-13 DONALD SAMSEL (mem. of Father) COL (Ret.) HAROLD
 SAMSEL, *Class of '41*, 117th CAV WWII FR. *Legion of Honor*
 SP-15 SALCIDO FAMILY (in mem. of) 1LT MANUEL SALCIDO
 (Ft Jackson '42) 117th CAV. F CO. KIA Italy June 1944
 SP-18 ROBERT SALCIDO (mem of brother) 1LT MANUEL SALCIDO
 SP-17 JAMES SCANLON
 FA-11 EILEEN SCHNARR (mem. of husb) WILLIE SCHNARR
 WI-12 ROBERT J. SMITH
 SP-12 JOHN SUITER
 WI-12 CPT MIKE TARRICONE
 WI-15 1SG GEORGE THOMAS
 SU-13 CW4 (Ret.) DON TRACY & CHICKIE
 FA-16 CHARLES A VIVIANO (50th CAV RCN SQDN)
 SP-12 CSM (Ret.) HENRY WETZEL & GRACE, (mem. of)
 GEORGE "RED" EMERY
 WI-14 LTC (Ret.) FRANK WISWALL, USAF *Class of '41*
 B Troop, 102nd CAV '41- '42 Fr. *Legion of Honor*
 WI-27 FRANK A. WOODS, PSG A Troop, 3rd Platoon
 117th CAV WWII
 SP-13 FRG HHT 1-102nd CAVALRY

BECOME A BOOSTER – RENEW YOUR BOOSTER

To become a Booster of *The Spur*, please send \$10.00 for a year of inclusion as a Booster in four issues of *The Spur*. Make check payable to the **117th Cavalry Association** - \$10.00 for each year of support. Mail to **Bill Gruss, Treasurer, 117th Cavalry Association, 21 Blake Drive, Clark NJ 07066-1645**. Indicate how you wish to be listed:

1-102d Cavalry prepares to move to Fort A. P. Hill for Annual Training 2011



1-38th Cavalry returns to Fort Bragg NC after a successful mission in Afghanistan





Spurs and Sabers Dinner Dance

Friday, September 23, 2011

6:00 pm

The Grand Summit Hotel

570 Springfield Avenue

Summit, New Jersey

Please join us for the first annual *Spurs and Sabers Dinner Dance*
on Friday, September 23, 2011.

Cocktail hour will begin at 6 pm, dinner begins at 7 pm. Cash Bar.

Hotel reservations can be made by calling the Grand Summit Hotel (908)273-3000.

Rates for the overnight accommodations are \$ 139 Single, \$ 149 Double.

Rates include full breakfast. Rooms blocked under "Cavalry Association".

Name: _____ Address _____

Email: _____ I would like to purchase the following
tickets: # ___ @ \$ _____ /ticket = \$ _____ Total

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

Dinner Choice - Chateaubriand: _____ Chicken: _____

Ticket Information O4/CSM & Above: \$ 75 per person O3: \$ 65 per person LT and
below: \$ 55 per person Retirees/Civilians: \$ 60 per person

Formal Dress / Cocktail Attire

Please return this completed form and your check made payable to:

102nd Cavalry Officers Association

MAIL TO: CPT Joseph McNamara, 500 Rahway Avenue, Westfield, NJ 07090

Phil Notestine, Editor, *The SPUR*
22 Yorke Road
Mountain Lakes, NJ 07046
Email: notie@msn.com



COL (Ret.) Kenneth Klein
President Emeritus
COL (Ret.) Dennis Dougherty
President
LTC (Ret.) Ken Quaas
Editor Emeritus

DUES DUE ↓

1ST New Jersey Cavalry



MISSION STATEMENT: It is the continuing objective of *The SPUR* to foster and preserve the Spirit of the 117th Cavalry Association, and to promote and enhance the friendships and camaraderie of our members, who are mutually bound by service and devotion to our country. **NEXT ASSOCIATION MEETINGS - Friday evenings 1930 hours: 9 September, 11 November 2011, 3 February 2012.**