



117th Cavalry Association

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102d CAV (Mecz) 38th CAV (Mecz) 117th CAV (Mecz) 50th CAV RCN SQDN 50th RCN 5th RCN 5-117th CAV 1-102d CAVALRY
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President's Message Summer 2016 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.

I am happy to report that we are continuing to progress in our mission as the 117th Cavalry Association. Aside from attendance of about thirty members at the last several meetings, the Association is also making progress in several joint projects with the 1-102nd Cavalry.

As LTC Bill Morris briefed our members at the last meeting on April 8, 2016, the Heritage Room Committee, after its March 17, 2016 organizational meeting, met again on March 31, and, with the help of about a dozen Troopers, cleaned out the entire backroom area as well as the anteroom. I agree that without their assistance this would have taken another four or more meetings to achieve. Now the second and third steps remain, remove all items off the walls, sort and categorize them, and then recreate decorative wall displays presenting an organized, and balanced, identity of the Squadron, past, present, and future. We welcome any member that wants to help in categorizing or organizing our historic material.

Next, our members approved the Association sponsoring five couples for the *Spurs and Sabers Dance* at the Grand Summit Hotel on October 14, 2016. This will ensure that we will have the full spectrum of Troopers, from young to old, together to preserve the spirit of the Cavalry, and promote and enhance our friendships and camaraderie. It was amazing to note a span of over 70 years between the youngest and oldest Trooper in attendance at the last Spurs and Sabers Dance when the cake was cut with the ceremonial saber.

I also want to congratulate Sergeant First Class Dale McTighe for being recognized as the *First Sergeant William B. Maloney Trooper of the Year* for 2015, and First Lieutenant Robert Freeman being the *Colonel Harold J. Samsel Junior Officer of the Year* for 2015. We welcome you into the ranks of many great Troopers from the past, as 1SG Maloney and COL Samsel were. *Show 'em the Way!*

I had a unique opportunity on April 29, 2016, that I wanted to share. As I was returning from my morning walk that Friday, I noticed a Cranford Police presence at my neighbor's house. He called me over and introduced me to Brian D'Apice, a 32 year old 82nd Airborne Division veteran (2004-2008) who was completing his last leg of a 12,100 mile bicycle tour < www.bicyclearoundamerica.com > around the United States of America that started May 4, 2015, and ended April 29, 2016, at Rockefeller Center, in New York City. He picked several charities and rode his bicycle counterclockwise around our great country, appearing at over 40 schools, veterans' organizations and corporations, while crossing through 37 states, he raised \$43,505.00. He served two tours in Iraq, and one overlapped the last three months of my tour, when his unit arrived in Multi-National Division Baghdad in January, 2007. His self-discipline and zeal, which served him so well in the Army, led him to dedicate part of his life to help those less fortunate. He was an inspiration and reminds all of us why we served our great country to help the greater good. Remember that feeling and our brotherhood when we all celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Memorial Day this year.



Show 'em the Way!

Michael P. Hrycak (michaelhrycak@yahoo.com)
LTC, USA, Retired



SCO Message Time flies when you are in The Cav. Just a few short months ago, I was sending out my welcome message in The Spur and now it is time to for another issue including the exploits of the Squadron. The Squadron Headquarters completed the Warfighter Exercise in April, receiving many accolades for the performance of our Officers, NCOs, and Soldiers. I could not have been prouder of the work of The Cav team in tackling tasks from the setup of the Tactical Operations Center, to planning Squadron missions, and to our Delta Company support staff keeping everything running and providing the best military chow of my career. Headquarters rolled back into Westfield at the end of annual training to a welcoming picnic meal coordinated by the Family Readiness Group. Additionally, we saw the passing of the HHT guidon from CPT Ryan Harty to CPT Stephen Pruser. With this new leadership comes another challenging year ahead for HHT. Now we turn to the second major event for the training year. The "line troops" head to Fort Dix in June for two weeks of maneuver and gunnery training, once again supported by Delta Company. The Troop commanders have laid

on a challenging array of training in order to validate our Scouts on crew and section tasks. It looks to be a great annual training for our Soldiers. I will close by thanking the members of the Association for their support and words of encouragement. The Squadron is in good shape to carry on your legacy.

Show 'em the Way!

Timothy Coakley
LTC, AR, NJARNG
Commander
1st Squadron 102d Cavalry Regiment
Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel G-1





From the Editor – Phil Notestine Thanks to all who developed and contributed articles for this issue of The SPUR. As you will read, Association member and WWII veteran Larry Haskett has given permission to publish his WWII diary "Larry's War". Larry joined the 102d Cavalry Regiment at Fort Jackson, SC in 1942. Larry was born September 15, 1919. A widower, he has a loving family who are very proud of him for many reasons. He is on Facebook, so if you are too, "friend" him!

I have mentioned before that living near Fort Bragg, I have been happy and proud to meet and befriend many retired and active military men and their families. Patriotism is soaked in the soil down here! On May 18, a group of us, all military veterans, will attend a dinner during which retired 4 star Generals Ray Odierno, "Buck" Kernan and Lance Smith (USAF) will outline and respond to questions about "The State of our Military". All three live here in Pinewild. It should be lively, as many of us are damned angry about the degradation during the last 7 years.

I am continuing my appeal for a good Trooper to take over as Editor of The SPUR. As I have stated in previous issues, it is time for a more current member who can attend meetings in Westfield to volunteer. I will provide templates, advice and assistance to get you on the right path. You need MS Word and Adobe Acrobat. If you do not have Adobe Acrobat, the Association will cover the cost. Call me to discuss. My contact info: 910-420-2968, email notie@msn.com I can't use an assistant or helper. It is a one man job! Step up, and take up the very honorable and interesting task!

117th Cavalry Association regular meeting April 16, 2016 Following the Pledge of Allegiance, and Moment of Silence, SGM (Ret.) Ken Mahan briefed on our 200 + members, and his current initiative is mailing notices to members regarding payment of annual dues. This was followed by Treasurer SFC (Ret.) Bill Gruss reporting, that since the last meeting, collected \$658.00, and spent about \$700, leaving a balance of \$7,800.59. Next, COL (Ret.) Dennis Dougherty, our defacto Quartermaster reminded the membership that we are selling hats for \$20.00 and Association crests for \$25.00. This was followed by the Heritage Room Reorganization Committee Co-Chairmen CW5 (Ret.) Frank Mnich and LTC Bill Morris; Members: LTC (Ret.) Mike Hrycak; Jim Anglim; 1LT Bob Freeman; SGM (Ret.) Ken Mahan; SFC (Ret.) Don Kondroski reporting that an organizational meeting held 17MAR16; Working Meeting 31MAR16. LTC Bill Morris briefed, and submitted a written report, regarding the cleanup and ongoing reorganization of the Heritage Room. Everyone was reminded of the 102nd Cavalry Squadron *Spurs and Sabers Dance* at the Grand Summit Hotel, Summit, New Jersey, 14 October 2016. The 117th Cavalry Association – (as part of new business-see below) will sponsor 5 couples at cost, and expect at least one table of members in attendance. Then, we moved onto new business. One of the members noted

Congress enacted law allows veterans to salute the flag during raising or lowering, when passing in a parade or in review, or when singing, or playing, the National Anthem or reciting Pledge of Allegiance.

This was followed by two member biographies: 1. COL (Ret.) Dennis Dougherty – drafted into Army in 1969, completed Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia, commissioned as Infantry Officer in 1970, served as Platoon Leader in Berlin Brigade, joined 5th Squadron 117th Cavalry in 1973, later served as Commander of 250th Main Support Battalion, the 50th Support Battalion, the 57th Troop Command and then the 42d DISCOM, as well as the New Jersey National Guard Chief of Staff. 2. CW5 (Ret.) Frank Mnich – initially enlisted as Mechanic at West Orange Armory in 1965, later became Unit AST at Elizabeth Armory, eventually became 5/117th Cavalry Personnel NCO, then became Warrant Officer, eventually assigned to Joint Force Headquarters as Force Modernization Officer, finally being promoted to Chief Warrant Officer 5, and retiring after 40 years of service in 2005.

We shared an article on page 12 of the February, 2016, issue of the *New Jersey Legionnaire* by Joe Bisbing, American Legion Post 524, Ocean City, NJ, attributing the 117th Cavalry Association as one of several veterans' organizations that established the "Coffee Express" Program that has been ongoing for close to ten years, and, in February, 2016, 31 packages were mailed to troops overseas. Next, former Association President, COL (Ret.) Dennis Dougherty and former Squadron Commander, LTC Bill Morris, presented a certificate commemorating Traci L. Kastner, an avid supporter of the Association, as an Honorary Member of the 117th Cavalry Association.

Heritage Room Committee – after accepting LTC Bill Morris' report, and a discussion regarding gathering material for Heritage Room, it was proposed, and supported unanimously, to budget \$1,500 for renovation and renewal expenses, as materials are purchased and requests for reimbursement are submitted. Members noted the difference already apparent in the meeting room after the 31MAR16 cleanup, which included over a dozen Squadron members.

Of note: MSG (Ret.) Thomas Bullock finally found his former gunner, SSG Ed Roskey (1976-93), who has been diagnosed with terminal cancer, if anyone would like to send an encouraging word or greeting: Edward T. Roskey, 151 Morris Ave. #404, South Plainfield, NJ 07080 (908) 290-8329

Spurs and Sabers Dance, as previously mentioned, the Association members voted to sponsor 5 couples, at cost, to attend the 14 October 2016 event at the Grand Summit Hotel, Summit, NJ. CPT Barry, (past A Troop Commander) planning on taking trip to France and follow path of Squadron during WW II. 50/50 was won by SGT (Ret.) Apgar, who donated his \$55 proceeds to the Association. It was moved to Conclude Meeting- 2043 hrs.

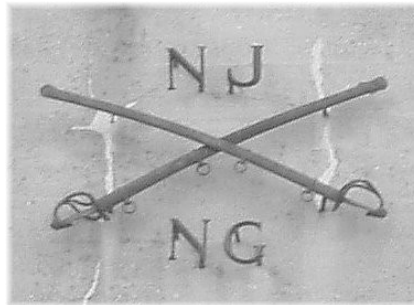
Attendance: *Jerry Infantino, Ann Marie Infantino, Brandon Hrycak (US Naval Sea Cadet Corps), Ed Barry, Kevin Murphy, Frank Mnich, James Anglim, Jim Pressman, Dennis Dougherty, Traci Kastner, Dan Mahon, Dutch Gauthier, Jenn Silva, Ryan Harty, Ken Mahan, Art Maggs, Ray Brown, Robert Apgar, Don Kondroski, Danielle Bracco, Bill Morris, John Blake, Robert Ryan, Bill Gruss, Michael Hrycak, Chris Sands, Steve Petroski, Frank Patrick and Ann Berger.*

[*Editor's note: the New Jersey National Guard Armory in Westfield was built and occupied in 1925. At that time, the Newark, Red Bank and Westfield Armories housed elements of the 102d Cavalry Regiment. The West Orange Armory was built some 10 years later and housed more of the growing 102d Cavalry Regiment - the historic 1st New Jersey Cavalry, known as the Essex Troop.*]

Westfield Armory Heritage Room Committee - Progress Report April 8, 2016 The following official committee was established on March 17th as the 117th Cavalry Association Heritage Room Committee consisting of eight members, including Two Co-Chairman: Bill Morris and Frank Mnich and six members - our Assoc. President - Michael Hrycak, our Past Assoc. President Dennis Dougherty and Jim Anglim, Steve Pruser, Ken Mahan and Don Kondroski. Purpose of Committee: To establish recommendations for future changes to enhance the room's appearance and remove the cluttering of wall and display cases including storage areas. The following three milestones were established: 1) Clean up and remove all items identified as excess and useless (no longer needed for any gainful purpose) in the Heritage Room and the two storage room areas. 2) Remove all items off the walls in both rooms. Sort and categorize them in some form of sensible organization for future display. 3) Recreate decorative wall displays presenting an organized identity, with enhanced recognition of their meaning. The Committee will also ensure that all useful essential pictures/articles and other property items are accounted for and are documented. Next meeting - March 31st.

Heritage Room Committee Clean-Up Meeting / March 31, 2016 @ 1800 We had a very successful clean-up meet with five of our committee members and about ten other Full Time Support and Family Support Personnel assisting us. We accomplished the first part of step one of our missions by cleaning up and removing all items identified as excess and useless (no longer needed for any gainful purpose) in the Heritage Room and the two storage area rooms. This task would have surely taken many, many more weeks of meetings to accomplish if we hadn't had the help of the FTS Force. Our thanks and gratitude goes out to CPT Harty and his FTS Personnel for all their thoughtful and caring support. Our next task will be to review all the items we are storing in the back room storage area (pictures, documents, clothes and other material) for their usefulness and then sort and label them. Also NOTED the following suggestions were recommended and discussed as future possibilities which will require the attention and consideration from our committee and the association membership: We discussed the removal of the wall between the two storage areas to make it into one

large storage area and add more shelves on the right side wall. Replacing the flooring in the back room with new carpets or laminate flooring (with possible donations) and Removing the wall paneling in both rooms and replacing it with sheetrock. Our next scheduled meeting, will be on April 14th @ 1800 hrs.



250th Tank Battalion



Distinctive Unit Insignia. Description: A Gold color metal and enamel device 1 1/8 inches (2.86 cm) in height overall blazoned: Per fess Or and Vert, in chief a horse's head erased Azure, and in base throughout issuant from upper sinister to lower dexter, a lightning bolt of the first. Attached below is a Gold scroll inscribed "STRIKE WITH STEEL" in Blue letters.

Symbolism: Yellow is the color for Armor and green is used as a secondary color. The blue horse's head on yellow is taken from the coat of arms of the 102d Cavalry Regiment, the battalion having been constituted in 1950 as the 3d Battalion of that organization. The lightning bolt

symbolizes the striking power of Armor.

Background: The distinctive unit insignia was approved on 28 March 1955. It was rescinded on 15 August 1961. **Coat of Arms - Blazon:**

Shield: Per fess Or and Vert, in chief a horse's head erased Azure, and in base throughout issuant from upper sinister to lower dexter, a lightning bolt of the first.

Crest: That for the regiments and separate battalions of the New Jersey Army National Guard: On a wreath of the colors Or and Vert, a lion's head erased Or collared four fusils Gules.

Motto: STRIKE WITH STEEL.

Symbolism - Shield: Yellow is the color for Armor and green is used as a secondary color. The blue horse's head on yellow is taken from the coat of arms of the 102d Cavalry Regiment, the battalion having been constituted in 1950 as the 3d Battalion of that organization. The lightning bolt symbolizes the striking power of Armor.

Crest: The crest is that of the New Jersey Army National Guard.

Background: The coat of arms was approved on 28 March 1955. It was rescinded on 15 August 1961.

The 250th Tank Battalion was headquartered in Phillipsburg NJ with subordinate units located in Port Murray, and Flemington, Bound Brook, and Hackettstown. With the exception of Phillipsburg the remaining armories continue to hold units of the New Jersey Army National Guard.



Help USABOT Save a Tank! The 117th Cavalry Association and the Northern New Jersey Chapter of the Association of the United States Army are helping to The **United States Army Brotherhood of Tankers** to restore armored vehicles located on the grounds of the New Jersey Army National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt NJ. USSABOT is a veterans organization made up of present and former US Army tank crewmen and tank mechanics with nearly 9,000 members. They include in their mission statement the restoring and maintaining of tanks and armored vehicles on static display; the NJ chapter is providing most of the volunteers for this project.

Their save a tank project at Sea Girt is coming right along, but they could use your help. The United States Army Brotherhood of Tankers (USABOT), in conjunction with the NGMMNJ Foundation, has taken on the task of refurbishing the tanks on outdoor display at the Sea Girt Museum. These tanks

have been sadly neglected for at least 20 years. USABOT started with the M60 (an early model pre-dating the M60A1 configuration) in the summer of 2015 and are set to resume their project this spring. When the M60 is finished, they hope to move on to the M48A1, also on display at Sea Girt, and also in dire need.

To date our Northern New Jersey Chapter of AUSA and the 117th Cavalry Association have each donated \$200. The troops at USABOT have spent approximately \$175 for 2 spray cans and 2 gallons of OD Green paint and about \$115 in supplies such as paint thinner, brushes, buckets, etc. from Lowe's. It doesn't take an accountant, to see that they could use your help with donations to sustain this worthy cause. This project is not self-sustaining, and funds are needed to keep going. Things like sand paper, manual and circular wire brushes, primer paint, OD Green paint, paint supplies, gasoline for generators and power washers, liquid soap for power washers, and a myriad of other necessities are an ongoing expense. For this reason, they are sincerely hoping a number of generous people and organizations to help to see the project to completion. Any donations should be made out to the NGMMNJ Foundation with "Tank Project" on the memo line, and mailed to:

NGMMNJ/USABOT Tank Project
 ATTN: Duncan MacQueen
 PO Box 277
 Bldg. 66 Camp Drive
 Sea Girt, NJ 08750-0277

USABOT thanks you in advance for your generosity and you can rest assured that legacy left by NJ's 50th Armored Division – an organization in which many of us had served is being preserved and well cared for. Their next scheduled workday (weather permitting) is Saturday, 21 May at which time we hope to power wash and begin painting. Come on by and help out, or just say hello. If you would like to become a member of USABOT, contact Duncan MacQueen, mastergunner87@aol.com



C Troop, more commonly referred to as Comanche Troop, is the 1-102d Cavalry's Dismounted Reconnaissance element. Filled with seventy-five 11B Infantrymen, C Troop trains to hone their skills in both Infantry maneuvers as well as Recon tasks.

The Dismounted Recon Troop, which was created as an answer to making the Divisional asset of LRS (Long Range Surveillance) more readily available, is comprised of six 8 man teams that can be used individually or combined to work together, depending on the Squadron Commander's Intent. The unit also has its own organic seven man Sniper section and six man 60mm Mortar Section to assist the unit in its mission.

C Troop is currently preparing for Annual Training at Fort Dix, where they will be operating alongside Alpha and Bravo Troops to complete the Squadron's Mission.

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1LT Robert Freeman, PL 2PLT; CPT Aaron Tomasini, CO;
1LT London Nagai, PL 1PLT; 1LT Darby O'Brien XO



Larry's War, his WWII diary



Larry Haskett, soon to be 97 years old, is one of our treasured WWII veterans of the 102d and 117th Cavalry Recon Squadrons (Mecz), an original 117th CAV man. He was inducted in January 1942. After basic cavalry training at Fort Riley, KS he was sent to Fort Jackson, SC assigned to the Medical Detachment. After much protest and fuss, he was transferred to Troop B, 1st Platoon, 2d Squadron, 102d Cavalry Regiment. He was trained as a radio operator. The rest of the long and "adventurous" story follows!

September 15, 1945
Dear Larry:

Well, old son, if you did not come through. Had about given up hearing from you. Sure glad to hear of all the old boys on the way back. Hope this finds you already in the States with a discharge in the making. Gee, I often think about the old troop and the gang. You'll be doing it later on, yourself. Remember those awful shellings in Italy, and the ones that landed in the trees above us in Ramberviller Woods? We sure were a cocky bunch when we started out, but boy, we sure changed our outlook on the whole damn war, didn't we? How heavenly it was to sleep in a barn, or better yet, a house when we out-posted a town. The winter and the mud and the miserable cold. That all seems so far back to me now, and hardly a year has elapsed since the take-off from Italy to Southern France.

Larry, when you arrive in the States and have time, write me a letter and give me the dope on all the boys, how many still around and that New Year's Eve battle.

Had a malaria attack last week. One of those souvenirs from Italy. The doc said to lay off the bourbon for a while, so I guess I'll have to make the sacrifice. (CURSES)

Remember St. Loupe and the expression, "Did you say TANKS?" Just thought of that, and us with our puny little "37" gun. We had a damn good crew, though, if I do say so myself. Say one thing, Man, I never saw anyone as mad as you that day- you That was the day you went down a cellar and got that big Dutchcake out, wasn't it? We shot up everything- cows, horses buildings and all. Remember Wamp shooting that big horse pistol? We had fun, though we WERE nervous in the service. Yeah, I got the business from Bartoldi too. He's the guy that cowboied that armored car through a house and cracking up my arm after he hit that tank.

What about Rogers and Wampler, did they make it Okay? Be sure to keep me posted as to how things go with you these days. Drop in on me any time you can. You will always be a welcome visitor. All the kindest and best regards to you and yours. Lots of luck.

Yours,

Rod

January 12, 1942 to October 27, 1945

August 11, 1991

It is now almost fifty years later, and a lot of water has passed under the bridge since those days. The other day I got out my little box of trophies and various war memorabilia- letters, like the one from my friend Rod Grassman, who became our gunner at the end of our time in Italy, and was with us through about half the campaign in Southern France, my notebooks which contained a lot of my thoughts, and poetry, (mostly parody type) written after certain actions of our Squadron. Timing and sequence are long gone, but I will try to remember the reasons for writing this stuff. You must remember that it was a long war, a long time ago, and I was in my early twenties when we got into it.

So, here goes---

In 1939, Hitler ordered his army to invade Poland, which started World War II. There were many events that led up to this, which you can read about in history books, but they are not relevant to this account, which is "Larry's War". In 1940, the Selective Service Law, or "DRAFT" was enacted, to create a defensive force for the United States. The men drafted were to serve in the armed forces for one year, a period that was subsequently changed to a longer time. Later, on December 7, 1941 in a surprise attack, Pearl Harbor was bombed by Japan, which brought the United States into the war.

I, like thousands and thousands of other young men who had not been drafted yet, quickly joined the various branches of service, and on January 12, 1942 I was inducted into the army, and "Larry's War" began. First stop, Camp Grant, Rockford, Illinois, where, after having been given all kinds of shots, tests and a uniform, a sergeant grabbed me and several other "soldiers", loaded us up on a truck, and our first mission in the United States Army was to move a piano!

Then somebody in charge of WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH HIM decided that I should be in the Cavalry, and shortly I was on a train bound for the Cavalry Training Center at Fort Riley, just outside of Junction City, Kansas. The Training Center Barracks were in an area along the Republican River-- the Republican Flats. It was here that all us new soldiers learned what it was like to be in the Army.

There were four training platoons to a Troop, with about fifty men in each platoon. I was in the second platoon of "A" Troop. Here we learned to live together, eat together, work together and march together. All for "Twenty-one dollars a day, once -a -month". There was a popular song at that time which had that little phrase in its title. But to get back to my story- we learned about rifles, machine guns, 45 caliber pistols, 60 and 81 millimeter mortars and hand grenades. They taught us how to use gas masks and to drive, Army style. We also found out about K. P. (Kitchen Police), guard duty, motor maintenance and about saluting Second Lieutenants.

Also, it was here at Fort Riley that I learned about the difference between my left and right sides. It was a certain Corporal Phillips that taught me. (How I hated that man!) During an early session of close order drill, I "columned left" when I should have "Columned right", and spent the rest of the drill period with my right arm held high in the air. My arm ached for the rest of the day, but I never made that mistake again.

I spent six months out there in Kansas, held over after three months basic training, as I had taken exams for the Army Air Corps. I passed the tests, and was waiting for something to happen. It never did. Anyway, I was out there through the cold, cold winter and the hot, hot summer and then, at the end of my second tour of Basic Training I was sent to the 102nd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Squadron, and placed in the Medical Detachment of the Squadron. I hollered and yelled about this assignment so much that finally I was transferred to Reconnaissance Troop B, 1st Platoon and sent to radio school.

In September of 1942, I got my first leave, and also the last for a few years. I went home for ten days, visited family and friends that were still around (and one special girl). Then, on the last night of my furlough, driving home at about four in the morning, I fell asleep at the wheel, wrecked the family car, went back to my base and left the country. On returning to

Fort Jackson, South Carolina, (which, I forgot to mention was the base of the 102nd Cavalry) we packed up, boarded trains for Fort Dix, New Jersey, and in due time we were on a ship in New York Harbor and on our way to England. It was a small Dutch Motor ship, the DEMPO. It held our whole Regiment, but not much more. Each little stateroom was equipped with two sets of triple deck bunks, one on each side with a very narrow isle in between. The bathrooms, or "latrines" were community affairs, none in the staterooms, and we were very much intrigued with our first encounter with bidets.

Shortly after boarding and getting settled down, each soldier was given an envelope with the following **letter** from President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, beginning "TO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY EXPEDITIONARY FORCES You are a soldier of the United States Army"...and ends with "You bear with you the hope, the confidence and the gratitude and the prayers of your family, your fellow-citizens and your President" (Larry still has his copy).

After the crossing, we disembarked at night at Liverpool. We were hurried into a subway train-- I can't tell you how long or how far we rode, but finally the train stopped. We got off, and the British Red Cross was waiting for us, handing out donuts and some strange green liquid they said was coffee. It didn't look like coffee, and it didn't taste like coffee, but it was hot, and we appreciated it. Here, wherever here was, we were loaded up into trucks, (lorries, they called them) rode a while longer and at last were settled into a camp on someone's estate just outside of the small town of Fairford.

After a few weeks we were moved to a huge British Army Complex outside the town of Swindon. During this time we were able to visit both London and Oxford, where we were served warm beer in the pubs, and fish with their eyes staring at us for breakfast. We rode the double deck busses and the funny cabs, did a lot of sightseeing and generally had a good time. In London I was scolded by a clerk in a Woolworth's Store when I held out a handful of money for her to take out whatever the price was of what I was buying. She told me that I must learn the value of British currency, because, she said, if I continued to hold my money out that way, some unscrupulous person would be sure to take advantage of me. I thanked her for her concern, but continued on as before.

It was here, in Swindon , that our vehicles were assigned to us. Scout cars and half-tracks, both mounting 50 caliber machine guns, M5 tanks (little ones) with 37 millimeter cannons, self-propelled 75mm howitzers and of course, jeeps. Now we trained, trained, trained and trained some more. We took our guns apart and put them back together. Then we did it again. And again until we could do it blindfolded. We oiled and greased our vehicles over and over and then did it one more time.

Then, late in October or November the Regiment was split into two separate Squadrons. The one that went to Africa, and that I was a part of became the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, Mechanized, while the 102nd remained in England and later, I believe, became part of the June 6th Invasion of the Fortress Europe. For the 117th, it was back aboard ship, and on our way to North Africa. Our destination was Algiers. Sometime after landing was made, the Squadron was put ashore as "Primary Combat Security Force" for AFHQ.

We moved into and were stationed in the little town of Douera, about 25 miles east of Algiers. It was here that we learned about the evils of drink. Especially me. The French people here (and everywhere else) drank wine with their meals. We just drank wine. Muscatel seemed to be the favorite here, and the natives would cut it with water when they drank. Not us! We drank it straight. By the tumbler full. I did it. Once. I woke up the next morning in a dung heap, with a half a dozen little Arab children squatted around me in a circle. Staring at me. And a hangover you wouldn't believe. "Nuff said. " No more muscatel.

On December 30, 1943 the Squadron received orders and raced across the continent of Africa from Algiers through Cherchel, Mostaganem, Oran, Sidi-bel-Abez, Tlemcen, Oujda, Taza, Fez, Meknes, Casablanca and finally Marrakech, Morocco to be security for the Casablanca Conference.

We now had our new M8 Greyhound Armored Cars, with a 37 MM cannon and a coaxially mounted 30-caliber machine gun in the turret. We mounted a 50-caliber machine gun on the turret apron, and thought we were pretty hot stuff. We were there in Marrakech for about two weeks and then at the end of the conference, we headed back to Algiers, expecting to rest for a while., and we did, for a very short while.

In May, by the time the fighting had been finished in North Africa, I had become a Tech 5 Radio operator. At this time, the Squadron was enlarged, adding a Troop C, to which I was transferred. This was when the Canadian Club crew was formed. Platoon Sergeant Hap Hahnenfeld - Car Commander, T5 George Bond- Gunner, T5 John Wampler- Driver and me, T5 Larry Haskett- Radio Operator.

(We tried to have everyone able to do each other's job, just in case. Also, as I said in the beginning, time and sequence are not in the best of order. Now, copying this in December of 1996, I know that when we went to Casablanca in January, I was already in "C" Troop so all this must have happened earlier, rather than in May.) Now, it was back to a heavy training schedule- radio practice, gunnery practice, and all the same old dismounted drill and motor maintenance. We did get time off, though, and occasionally a bunch of us would get passes, and we'd go into Algiers for dinner and booze. This time it was Georgie Bond, John Wampler and me. George and John were new replacements, fresh from the States, and I was going to show them the sights.

We had dinner at a Harbor Front restaurant called the Chapon Fin. Us soldier boys didn't have too much couth and stuff like that there about good restaurants, and we ordered Escargot, not having the slightest idea what we were getting into. There was also an Escargot soup, which, when it came and we smelled it, we had the waiter explain to us what we were going to eat. We all came close to being sick and he (the waiter) took pity on us and allowed us to change our order to American Beef! We thought that was great, and it was served with a variety of vegetables. The meat was covered with a hot brown gravy. This was more like it, we thought, but when we scraped away the gravy to see what we were eating, Lo and Behold---plain old Corned Willy. We ate it, though, because we were hungry, but we did enjoy our wine.

Later, while we were waiting for the trucks to take us back to Douera, George, weary from all that high living was seated on the ground, his back up against a building wall, fast asleep. A couple of well-lit up French sailors came by, and decided that they wanted to see if George was their friend. I tried to explain to them that George was not their friend, and they started to get a little hostile. This woke George up, and he stood up slowly, at the same time snarling, "What the Hell is going on here?" The French sailors suddenly lost all interest in who George was and promptly disappeared. Oh, yes. George was about six foot six and had the beef to go with it.

This was also about the time that I got a letter from my Mother, telling me that my brother Bob's B17 had been shot down during a raid over Germany, and that he was listed as missing in action.

We were not involved in the July invasion or in any of the fighting in Sicily, but then THE POWERS THAT BE got together and decided that it would be nice if we packed up all our stuff and went to Italy.

So in May of 1944 that's just what we did!

To be continued....



Membership Update –SGM (Ret.) Ken Mahan Trooper! Look at your address label! If the date is not September 2015 or later, you are behind in your dues. Your Subscription to *THE SPUR* is going to run out, due to non-payment. A sample of label:

SEPT 17

**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 and Associate dues \$15.00 are due in September.** Make checks Payable to **117th CAV Association.** If you pay booster money, that is for Widow's list not for your dues 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 Kennethmahan2@gmail.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, 102nd and 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadrons (Mecz). All WWII Veterans will no longer pay dues, you will see WWII over your name. **We are looking for help on mailing The SPUR, For about an 1 ½ hours during the day at the Armory. Let me know if you can help.**

Luncheon June 28: At the "RIVER ROCK" Friends of the Cavalry On the Manasquan River, we will meet at noon. If you want to go, call me at (732)548-7991 Ken Mahan. We tried to have one in April, but between people being ill or away, we had to cancel.

TAPS

(Happily - NONE to report!)



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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-18 EMIL ALLGIERE
 WI-26 CHARLES ANGELLO
 SP-26 BOB & LORRAINE APGAR
 SU-18 JAMIE AYALA
 SU-32 ED BARRY (mem. of) BILL BARRY TROOP D (AIR)
 5-117th CAV
 SP-17 BILL BENNERT
 FA-21 RALPH BOCKINO (mem. of) by wife CATHERINE
 SP-17 MSG TOM BULLOCK TROOP A 5-117th CAVALRY
 FA- 24 JUDGE SANTI CARNEVALI, WWII 102nd & 117th CAVALRY
 FA-16 1SG (Ret) DONALD M. CHAMBERLIN
 WI-16 LTC (Ret) CLAUDE COOK mem. MSG ROCCO SPANO &
 wife JOAN
 WI- 20 STEVE CUP WWII 102d CAVALRY
 SU-16 LTC (Ret) PETER D'ELIA
 FA-16 ROBERT A. DENNIN JR. - A FRIEND
 SU-16 SGM (Ret) JIM DOOLEY
 SU-16 COL (Ret) DENNIS J. DOUGHERTY
 WI-18 1SG (Ret) PHILIP DUNN, A Troop mem. wife BETTY
 FA-17 JACKIE ELLIS (mem) MSG DAVID JAMES ELLIS 5-117 CAV
 WI-17 MANUEL G. FERRI
 SU-19 CPT (Ret) GERALD D. FISCHBEIN
 WI-16 LTC (Ret) ALAN R. FISHER
 WI-22 MIRIAM FISHER (mem.of husb.) WILLIAM E. FISHER
 WI-17 HENRY & MARION FORSTENHAUSLER
 WI- 62 JOHN FRANTZ, LT A Troop 5-117th CAV
 FA-16 FRIEND OF 117th CAV.
 SU-16 BILL GRUSS & LINDA
 FA-20 BARBARA HANSEN wife of TOM HANSEN
 SP-18 LAURANCE HASKETT, WWII - 117th CAVALRY SGT Troop C
 WI-18 LTC (Ret) JOHN S. HUFF (mem. of) C Troop, 117th CAV
 '43-'44 mem. HANK EGBERT & BILL CRONE bros.-in-arms
 WI-18 BILL HYNDMAN (mem. of) CPT PAUL SEIDEL, F CO.
 WWII 117th CAV. *Silver Star, Fr. Croix de Guerre*
 WI-19 ANNE MARIE & GERALD "JERRY" INFANTINO
 SP-17 DONALD KONDROSKI
 WI- 20 LTC (Ret) WILLIAM KALE mem. NJ CAV SOLDIERS
 WI -24 ESTELLE, ANDREW & JAY LASNER in mem. Arnold
 Lasner – husband, father – proud veteran Troop B 117th CAV
 WI-16 Dr. DANIEL W. "TREY" LEE III, (mem. of) CPT DANIEL W.
 LEE, **CMH**, WWII Troop A, 117th CAVALRY RECON SQ.
 SU-19 1LT (Ret) EDWARD J. LEONARD, *Class of '41*, PSG B Troop
 117th CAV, Montrevel POW French *Legion of Honor*
 WI-16 SSG (Ret) THOMAS J. LINDSEY & MARY
 SU-16 GREGG S. LISTER
 WI-18 C. J. MacNICHOLS
 SU-16 JEAN & SGM (Ret.) KEN MAHAN
 SP-18 CSM (Ret) A. A. MAGGS
 FA-16 BARRY MALONEY (mem) WM B., TIMOTHY MALONEY,
 ROBERT KLING
 WI-20 KEVIN MALONEY (mem.) 1SG BILL MALONEY SR. and
 My brother TIM MALONEY
 WI-33 PETE & EDITH MARTINEZ
 SP-17 PEDRO MARTINEZ
 SU-16 ED & BETH MATTHEWS (mem. of Ed's father)
 T4 ED MATTHEWS B TROOP 102nd CAV WWII
 FA-16 WAYNE McCANN
 FA-19 LTC (Ret) W. SCOTT McCANN
 SP-29 CSM SCOTT MECHANOWSKI 1-102nd CAVALRY
 SP-23 CW4 (Ret) BILL MERRING & CHARLOTTE

SP-18 RON NIER
 WI-16 ROMAN MILANOWICZ and BEVERLY
 WI-16 CW5 (Ret) FRANK MNICH & JANET
 SP-17 DENNIS & GARY MONAHAN (mem. father) PVT MILLARD D.
 MONAHAN TRP B 117th CAV – POW MONTREVEL
 WI-16 1SG (Ret) Troop D (AIR) RONNIE & CONNIE NIER in mem.
 MSG ROCCO SPANO HHT 5/117th CAV
 SP-17 PHILIP NOTESTINE (mem. of) MAJ JOHN B. COULSTON
 Troops C & E, *Class of '41*; 602nd Tank Destroyer BN '43-'45
 FA-37 JOYCE OWEN wife of 2LT HAROLD "SMOKIE" OWEN,
Class of '41, 102nd & 117th CAV - B & C Troops WWII
 WI-16 FRANK PATRICK
 WI- 16 CSM (Ret) AL PHELAN mem. 1SG ED MURPHY
 WI-16 (mem. of) COL (Ret.) TOM PIDDINGTON, *Class of '41*
 SU-19 ANTON and MARILYN PLONNER
 SU-16 PETER PRICHARD mem. T/SGT JAMES H. SMITH
 WWII 117th CAV F COMPANY
 SU-16 LTC (Ret) KEN QUAAS (mem) DOROTHEA
 SP-17 mem. ARTHUR REINBOLD
 WI-92 MRS. ROBERT D. ROBBINS, (mem. of ROBBIE)
 WI-38 FRED RODMAN, (mem. of brother) WALTER RODMAN
 F Company (tanks) 102nd CAV WWII
 SP-18 ROBERT SALCIDO (mem of brother) 1LT MANUEL SALCIDO
 SP-17 JAMES SCANLON
 FA-19 BILL SEDLAK
 WI- 20 DONNA STINNER mem. SKIP STINNER
 FA-17 JOHN & MARGARET SUITER
 WI-20 mem. SSG WILLIAM T. TITTER WWII TRP B 117th CAV
 SP-19 JOE & SABRINA TOOMEY (mem. of) BROTHER
 SGM ANTHONY FREDA JR.
 WI-17 CW4 (Ret.) DON TRACY & CHICKIE
 FA-16 CHARLES A VIVIANO – 50th CAV RCN SQDN
 SU-17 GRACE & CSM (Ret) HENRY WETZEL (mem)
 1SG GEORGE W. EMERY
 WI-18 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-18 MARTHA ZOLLER, FRANK MITCHELL JR. & PAM GUNTER
 (mem. of) FRANK & JUANITA MITCHELL
 SU- 3013 FRG HHT 1-102nd CAVALRY

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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:

From the WWII Unit History of the 117th Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron (Mecz):

“At this point, the 117th was maintaining contact with the American 3rd Division and the French 2nd Division, all with orders to fight our way into Rome at all costs. Late in the afternoon of June 4th, patrols of the 3rd Division reached the outskirts of Rome. On the morning of June 5th, all elements of the Squadron advanced northeast and had entered Rome by 1700 hours.

June 5, 1944 at 0330 hours, "A" Troop arrived in the assembly area of Salone Vecchio after being strafed by enemy planes. At 0800 hours, the CP was subjected to an artillery barrage in which one man was killed and one wounded. At 1100 hours, "A" Troop was ordered to move toward Rome in support of "B" Troop, which had moved through the city and was operating northeast of the Rome where they were in contact with the enemy and the 3rd platoon had captured 14 prisoners. Cpl. Kuntz of "B" Troop was wounded in action at 2010 hours and Pvt. Allard of "C" Troop was slightly wounded in a motorcycle accident.

Other casualties for the day were Tec 5 Thomas G. Hennessy of "A" Troop killed by artillery fire and Tec 4 Jurgens also of "A" Troop wounded by artillery.

The Squadron CP moved into the city at 1900 hours and set up an operations office in an apartment house.

The civilian population turned out in force to greet their liberators with great emotion and enthusiasm. The highways leading into their city were littered with wrecked German Tiger tanks and motor vehicles of every type, but with the exception of a few buildings on the outskirts, Rome had been spared the ravages of war.

That same day while, "A" & "B" Troops were operating north of Rome, "C" Troop was detailed to escort General Mark Clark into Rome and provide security for 5th Army HQ.

In Twelve days, the Squadron had advanced nearly 100 miles against strong enemy resistance. There was cause for pride in the performance of all elements. The fighting had, however, taken its toll. There were more than 100 casualties including 10 KIA. No one had been captured, and we had taken more than 200 prisoners.”



Troop C passes the Coliseum with LTG Mark Clark; the 1LT is believed to be Marvin Carlile, in charge of escort detail. Carlile joined the 117th Cavalry in Algeria. He was injured in France. Post WWII, he was recalled as a Captain for the Korean War, but did not deploy. Now 94, he lives in Orinda, CA.

The SPUR
c/o SGM (Ret) Ken Mahan
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Editor

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 - Fridays 1930 hours:** June 10, 2016; September 9, 2016; November 11, 2016