



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
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President's Message 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.

The "friendships and camaraderie" bind us together, through our service, devotion to our country, and now by sharing the past, present, and future through our membership and participation in our Association. We represent multiple generations of our Squadron, and share in the freedom that we cherish and took an oath to defend.

In this issue of *The SPUR*, I have shared an article, "Russia's New-Generation Warfare", written by Dr. Phillip A. Karber, of the Potomac Foundation, and LTC Joshua Thibeault, an operations research systems analyst and member of Training and Doctrine Command's Russian New Generation Warfare Study Team. It presents 10 most critical lessons the U.S. Army must learn from this conflict (the Russo-Ukrainian War in eastern Ukraine), now in its 30th month, after 15 years of counterinsurgency operations, and must now focus on preparing for the next war against near-peer threats. When reviewing those lessons: 1. New Generation Warfare; 2. Electronic Warfare; 3. Unmanned Aerial Systems; 4. Massed Fires; 5. Heaving Infantry Fighting Vehicles; 6. Light Vehicles Vulnerable; 7. Dispersion and Maneuver; 8. Air Superiority, Supremacy; 9. Aviation Relevant, Vulnerable; and 10. High Casualties; it appears to be a throwback to the Cold War. Two examples, we are forewarned that "Russia employs a combination of dual-purpose improved conventional munitions, scatterable mines, top-attack munitions and thermobaric warheads that have catastrophic consequences when used in preplanned, massed fire strikes. The U.S. has removed all of these warheads from its inventory." The Secretary of Defense had ordered the demilitarization of many of these weapons after most major powers had concluded the 2008 Ottawa Treaty after they considered them "relics of the Cold War." Next: "In July 2014, Russia launched fire strikes with long-range artillery and multiple rocket launchers employing top-attack munitions and thermobaric warheads against two Ukrainian mechanized battalions in the open. This intensely concentrated fire strike lasted only a few minutes yet inflicted high casualties and destroyed most armored vehicles, rendering both battalions combat-ineffective. [ARMY Magazine VOL. 66, NO. 6, June 2016](#)"

It was quite a coincidence, since I had prepared my article for inclusion in the last issue of *The SPUR* at the end of July, and in the meantime, On 5 October 2016 at the Association of the United States Army Convention in Washington, DC, General Mark Milley, the Army Chief of Staff, addressed what the Army is facing in the future: "We've developed high levels of skill ... but the cost of developing those skills and the cost of having to fight that war for a decade and a half is that our skills at fighting a higher-end threat, a near-peer competitor, a nation state, and the bread and butter tasks of conducting combined arms operations atrophied because we didn't practice it for 15 years," General Milley predicts that "...we are on the cusp of a fundamental change in the character of ground warfare... analogous to...It's the difference between going from horse cavalry to tanks and wheeled vehicles."

In addition, LTG H.R. McMaster, the hero of the 26 February 1991 *Battle of 73 Easting*, now the Deputy Commanding General of Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), had addressed Congress last April: "Russia, China, & others are also increasingly capable of electronic and cyber-attack to jam or hack the wireless networks on which US forces rely. Even if airpower or artillery is available, you might not be able to call it up and transmit the coordinates to strike. Russian ability to shut down Ukrainian networks has "been a real wakeup call," McMaster said. The Army already has a (somewhat anemic) plan to rebuild electronic warfare capabilities disbanded in the 1990s, but they're aware they must go further. "We convened a team of expertise to figure out what can we do now," McMaster said, which will be working over "the next few months."

So, it is clear-sighted progress on our part that we are combining our membership with those that have previously served together with those that are currently serving. We will greet the future of our Army together.

I am happy to report that we are continuing making progress in several joint projects with the 1-102nd Cavalry. Heritage Room Committee co-chairs LTC Bill Morris and CW5 (Ret.) Frank Mnich are preparing to catalogue, assess and categorize our material. The goal is to keep a balance between the different eras of the Squadron. We are contemplating renaming the Association to the New Jersey Cavalry Association. To be carried another meeting, and published in *The Spur*, to allow member feedback. Again, we welcome any member that wants to help in categorizing or organizing our historic material.

Also, the Squadron leadership selected five couples that the Association sponsored for the Spurs and Sabers Dance at the Grand Summit Hotel on October 14, 2016. This annual event has combined the Association Reunion together with the Squadron's main social event of the year.

This is who we are, where we came from, we served together at some point and met many great Troopers, and this camaraderie is who we have become. May we always stay in touch, and be remembered as having served in the defense of our nation's freedoms.

Next Meeting: 2000 hrs. Heritage Room, Armory 500 Rahway Avenue, Westfield, New Jersey 11 November 2016 (Veterans' Day)

Show 'em The Way!

LTC Michael P. Hrycak, USA Retired

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From the SCO In my last message, I left out an important event from Annual Training. The Squadron hosted fifteen officers and NCOs from the Albanian Army. Alpha and Bravo demonstrated their mounted maneuver capability while C Troop showcased their sniper section expertise. Our guest left with a better sense of the dedication and training required to forge a ready combat unit. Summer comes to a close and with the turn in the weather comes a transition in the Cavalry training cycle. The new training year starts with a long weekend of weapon qualification and mounted gunnery. These events will set the conditions for the Squadron to execute platoon maneuver training over the winter, and to ready the unit for XCTC in May. By the time you are reading this, the 2016 *Spurs and Sabers* dance will be behind us with the greatest attendance to date. I want to pass on my thanks to the association members, family readiness group supporters, and the Troopers of the Squadron that made it another successful event. We share our heritage not just through the mementos on display in the heritage room, but also through the shared experience of service to our State and Nation, and the time we spend together as The Cavalry Family. We now look forward to Casino Night on November 19th. Spread the word and bring out your friends and family for an enjoyable night supporting the Troopers of the Squadron. My time as Squadron Commander will draw to a close in February. MAJ Dennis Stiles, the Squadron XO, will take the reins at a change of command ceremony tentatively scheduled for February 26th, 2017.

Scouts Out...

Show 'em the Way!

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





From the Editor Phil Notestine I am glad to see that some progress is being made regarding the renaming of the Association. This matter has been on the table for many years! My vote is for *NJ Cavalry and Armor Association*, an all-inclusive name, and very appropriate. Thousands of NJARNG veterans who have served in the many various cavalry, tank and tank destroyer units would feel recognized and included.

LTC Mike Hrycak has contributed an article on the Russo – Ukrainian War. Very timely – LT Leo Matthews, grandson of one of our WWII 102d CAV recon troopers, Tech 4 Edward C. Matthews *Bronze Star* –V (deceased) is a 2015 graduate of the USMA and serves as a platoon leader in the famed 173d Airborne Infantry Brigade. LT Leo Mathews, who wears the coveted *Ranger* and *Pathfinder* insignia, is now in Lithuania, near the Ukrainian border. Another of my young friends, a 2014 USMA graduate and platoon leader in the 101st

Airborne is **the** rapid reaction force for the hapless UN forces in South Sudan. I believe that LT Danny Freeman will be training some US Marines in *Pathfinder* and other specialties in support of UN and other forces that may come into play. Then off to Djibouti.

I will now stop writing and save space for a page of *Spurs and Saber* dinner - dance pictures and a third installment of "Larry's War", SGT Larry Haskett's WWII diary is a treasure. Reading it fills me with pride and admiration for our older brothers of the WWII 117th Cavalry Recon Squadron (Mecz).

Anyone interested in taking over as Editor of *The SPUR*, please contact me via email notie@msn.com or phone 910-42-2960 or snail mail – 28 Oxtan Circle, Pinehurst, NC 28374.

September 117th Cavalry Association Meeting A motion was brought to the floor my LTC Morris to accept the Minutes from the previous Meeting. Motion was approved by voice vote.

Old Business: Membership- SGM Mahan - 210 Members, 2 new Members from last meeting. 1-102d Cavalry Troopers Assn brought in 15 new members. Discussion regarding incorporating PayPal on the 117th Cavalry Assn. Facebook page was held. Quartermaster - new hats are on the way. Heritage Room - LTC Morris reported Step 1 Complete - Walls striped and things organized. Need Member input on the structure and organization of historical items; determine what to keep and what to discard. Room should have a flow to it.

New Business: Renaming the 117th Cavalry Association - for the last two meetings it has been discussed to rename the 117th Cavalry Association as the NJ Cavalry and Armor Association so that it covers NJ's entire armor and cavalry heritage. COL Dougherty spoke of nesting it with the U. S. Cavalry and Armor Association <http://cavalryandarmor.com/> This will be formally discussed in November's meeting. The successful *Spurs and Saber Dinner Dance* held 14 October was discussed. Phil Notestine, *The SPUR* editor for over 10 years now, has asked to be relieved. We must canvas members and Soldiers for volunteers. New attendees; Tom McGreevy - Uncle was in 117th Cav and trying to reconnect with uncle's history. Casino night- 19 Nov supports *Bonds of Courage* and the Squadron's FRGs. Family Day 24 September: ID card machine and a lot of veteran's resources. *Bonds of Courage*- Can help veterans navigate resources and assist.

Attendance: unavailable.



53d Armor Organized 26 March 1875 at New Brunswick as Company D 3d Regiment Infantry, New Jersey National Guard. Mustered into Federal service 13 May 1898 at Sea Girt as Company D 3d New Jersey Volunteer Infantry but did not serve outside Continental United States. Mustered out 11 February 1899 at Athens, Georgia and resumed State status. Redesignated 2 May 1899 as Company H 2d Regiment Infantry, New Jersey National Guard. Called into Federal service and mustered in at Camp Edge, Sea Girt on 25 July 1917. Drafted into Federal service on 5 August 1917. Redesignated 11 October 1917 as Company H 113th Infantry and assigned to the 29th Division. Relieved from the 29th Division and demobilized 28 May 1919 at Camp Dix, New Jersey. Reorganized and Federally recognized 30 November 1920 at New Brunswick as Company G 3d Infantry, New Jersey National Guard. Redesignated 1 March 1921 as Company A 3d Infantry,

New Jersey National guard. Redesignated 22 July 1922 as Company A 114th Infantry and assigned to the 44th Division. Redesignated 2 July 1924 as Company E 114th Infantry. Inducted into Federal service 16 September 1940 at New Brunswick. Relieved from the 44th Infantry Division and inactivated 16 November 1945 at Camp Chaffee, Arkansas. Redesignated 28 June 1946 as Company E 2 14th Infantry. Redesignated 1 March 1948 as Company E 114th Infantry. Reorganized and Federally recognized 9 June 1948 at New Brunswick. Converted and redesignated 8 May 1954 as Headquarters, Head- quarters and Service Company, 252d Tank Battalion (120mm Gun) and assigned to the 103d Armor Group; concurrently, remainder of battalion organized from new and existing units at Woodbridge, Bound Brook and New Brunswick. Reorganized 1 March 1956 as 252d Tank Battalion (90mm Gun). Consolidated with the 250th Tank Battalion (organized and Federally recognized 13 February 1951 as 3d Battalion, 102d Armored Cavalry and redesignated 1 May 1954 as the 250th Tank Battalion), reorganized and redesignated 1 March 1959 as the 53d Armor, a parent regiment under the Combat Arms Regimental System to consist of 1st and 2d Medium Tank Battalions (Patton), elements of the 103d Armor Group. Regiment disbanded 15 April 1964 when 1st Medium Tank Battalion was broken up and 2d Medium Tank Battalion was redesignated 6th Battalion, 50th Armor.

CAMPAIGN STREAMERS

World War I

Meuse-Argonne Alsace 1918

World War II

Northern France Rhineland Ardennes-Alsace Central Europe

DECORATIONS

Presidential Unit Citation (Army), Streamer embroidered *SCHALBACH* (114th Infantry cited for action on 25 Nov 1944; WDGO 27, 1945)

COAT OF ARMS

SHIELD: Or, a taeguk azure and gray between four fleurs-de-lis in cross vert.

CREST: That for the regiments and Separate battalions of the New Jersey Army National Guard: On a wreath of the colors (or and azure) a lion's head erased or, collared four fusils gules.

MOTTO: *Strength in Steel.*

Yellow is for Armor. The shoulder sleeve insignia of the 29th Division represents service in France with that Division during World War I while the fleurs-de-lis commemorate the four campaigns in Europe during World War II.

DISTINCTIVE INSIGNIA

The insignia is the shield, crest and motto of the coat of arms. Although the insignia depicted was unofficially worn between 1961 and 1964, samples were not approved until 6 April 1995. It replaced an earlier version consisting of the shield and motto, samples of which had been approved on 20 December 1956 for wear by the 252d Tank Battalion.



COL Dennis J. Dougherty USA Retired Past President and new Historian of the 117th Cavalry Association. Dennis has been submitting articles of historical NJ Army Guard Cavalry and Armor units. This one is the latest of a series. Dennis was the Historian of the 117th Cavalry Association when it was formed in 1980, and recently agreed to resume that role. He was the Association President for over 16 years! COL Dougherty is the AUSA Northern NJ chapter and AUSA NJ State president. He is an advocate and supporter of ROTC in New Jersey. He is a retired history teacher.



Early in his Army career LT Dennis Dougherty served proudly in the famed Berlin Brigade: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Berlin_Brigade initially as platoon leader, C Company, 2-6th Infantry Regiment, and XO Headquarters and Headquarters Company Berlin Brigade.

Russia's New Generation Warfare – Lessons Learned – Russo-Ukrainian War Dr. Phillip A. Karber, of the Potomac Foundation, and LTC Joshua Thibeault, an operations research systems analyst and member of Training and Doctrine Command's Russian New Generation Warfare Study Team, published an interesting article that gives insight into Russia's development and implementation of a New Generation Warfare in Ukraine, in the June, 2016 issue of *Army* magazine, <https://www.ansa.org/articles/russia%E2%80%99s-new-generation-warfare> . It is important to study the development of Russia's new weapons and tactics to keep our Army, and our allies, as well as NATO, ready to confront this threat.

There are five component elements: 1. Political Subversion- inserting "agitprop" agents that manipulate mass media through Information Operations using ethnic-linguistic class differences, etc. 2. Proxy Sanctuary – seizing key government facilities, police stations, military depots, and airports, arming and training insurgents who destroy ingress transportation infrastructure, create phony one-party referendums, cyberattacks to compromise victim communications, thereby creating "people's republics" under Russian tutelage, 3. Intervention – deploying large scale Russian forces to engage in large scale military exercises along its border, "introduction of heavy weapons to insurgents; creation of training and logistics camps adjacent to the border; commitment of so-called volunteer combined-arms battalion tactical groups; integration of proxy troops into higher-level formations that are equipped, supported and led by Russians.", 4. Coercive Deterrence – secret strategic force alerts, with "snap checks", forward deployment and exercises of tactical and theater nuclear weapons, aggressive air patrolling in neighboring areas to discourage other state involvement, 5. Negotiated Manipulation – using and abusing Western-negotiated ceasefires to reset and rearm their forces while bleeding opposing army white and using fear of escalation to inhibit other nation involvement and assistance.

Dr. Karber had prepared an in-depth paper "*Lessons Learned*" from The Russo-Ukrainian War – Personal Observations' 6 July 2015 for a Historical Lessons Learned Workshop sponsored by Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Laboratory and U.S. Army Capabilities Center (ARCIC) based upon 15 separate trips to Ukraine from March, 2014, through June, 2015 (when he was wounded during an MLRS (Multiple Launch Rocket System) attack at Lebedyn'sky and had to discontinue his trips). Unfortunately never published (I have an electronic copy to share), it urged a military dialogue to observe and understand the Russian "New Generation Warfare" as it was being implemented in eastern Ukraine, the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the Minsk I and II Ceasefires, assess the current and future capabilities of the Ukrainian Army, most importantly to create an understanding and develop capabilities for U.S. and NATO forces to counter, neutralize, and defeat the Russian Warfare by gaining an insight and understanding into its Tactics, Techniques and Procedures (TTP's).

I can only share a few examples of Dr. Karber and LTC Thibeault's observations and recommendations. Electronic Warfare is the centerpiece of the Russian effort, to deny communications (there are areas in the Donbas region where no electromagnetic communications are possible), defeat Unmanned Aerial Systems (which are relied upon to a very large extent not just for reconnaissance and surveillance, but also targeting and even bombing), defeating artillery and mortars, and targeting command and control nodes. They urge our forces to go back to being proficient on analog systems, remove all unnecessary electromagnetic emitters, and "a day without radios and computers" during training missions, as well as develop organic Electronic Warfare (EW) systems. Unmanned Aerial Systems are being used in large numbers on both sides, with their limited radar cross-section and ability to appear on target with little to no warning, they have been used very effectively for immediate and mass suppression or mechanized and light units, citing one battle in July, 2014, where two Ukrainian mechanized battalions suffered mass casualties (over 30%) in minutes (together with massed artillery, rockets, top-attack munitions and thermobaric rounds). New weapons are being employed to defeat UAV's, but need to be deployed down to company and platoon level. Our forces need to emphasize cover concealment, and deception (yes, just like the Cold War), in addition to using these new UAV defeating weapons and tactics.

Of grave and immediate note: "Russia employs a combination of dual-purpose improved conventional munitions, scatterable mines, top-attack munitions and thermobaric warheads that have catastrophic consequences when used in preplanned, massed fire strikes. The U.S. has removed all of these warheads from its inventory." (Army article) This would require U.S., NATO, and allied development and intervention (including the repeal of Secretary of Defense Gates directive for U.S. forces to comply with the 2008 Ottawa Treaty) to reverse the sliding-back to the dark ages nature of Russian development of weapons and ammunition that a decade ago all major powers agreed was a relic of the Cold War and needed to be demilitarized and relegated to museums.

As a final example, in early August, 2014, Ukrainian Colonel Mikhail Zubrowski, a Fort Leavenworth Command and General Staff College graduate, organized his 95th Air Assault Brigade, and planned and executed the "largest and longest armored raid behind military lines in recorded military history" (Dr. Karber, Lessons Learned, pg. 35), modeled after JEB Stuart's raid of the rear of McClellan's forces during the Civil War Peninsula Campaign, by employing combined-arms company teams along parallel axes of advance, penetrating the enemy's defenses, splitting the two People's Republics in half, and then clearing out 200 Kilometers of the infiltration area along the southern Donbas, including relieving the beleaguered 25th Airborne Brigade, overrunning and capturing and destroying Russian tanks and artillery, and finally returning to the starting area near Sloviansk (moving and unprecedented 450 Km, mostly behind enemy lines). This demoralized the Russian and proxy forces, but relieved several trapped Ukrainian garrisons. Unfortunately, this spurred a heavy-handed counterattack by Russian Battalion Tactical Groups toward the end of August, 2014, resulting in the Battle of Ilovaisk, and creation of a new Western Front toward Mariupol (to attempt a land bridge to Crimea). The Ukrainian forces were in a large part surrounded, and massed fires decimated two mechanized battalions in a matter of minutes, giving Putin a chance to force Ukraine's President Poroshenko to accept the first Minsk ceasefire agreement, which included the right of safe passage, which the Russian, and proxy, forces reneged on, massing fires and killing retreating Ukrainians, and capturing and torturing Prisoners of War (POW).

Thus, we have the harbinger of Russian-developed New Generation Warfare being employed and developed in eastern Ukraine. Although the media has ignored the Russo-Ukrainian War, the military has not, and cannot. U.S. and other armies have been training and preparing Ukrainian forces to continue to fight and counter the Russian invasion. But it is up to us, both those currently serving, as well as those that are now retired as spectators, to keep our leadership sighted in to what really matters. Russia has already showed the world what it can and will do in Chechnya and Georgia, and currently Syria as well, and our country's leadership needs to study and develop our fighting forces to counter and defeat them, and all those who want to follow them.

Contributed by LTC (Ret) Mike Hrycak.

Third installment of "Larry's War"

....We tried to be in a town each night, so that when morning came we could ask for hot water to make coffee. This was a kind of sneaky ploy, because the French people's substitute for coffee was, I think, roasted barley. They had bread, eggs and potatoes, while we had real coffee, canned bacon and "Comfiture" - I don't know if I spelled it right, but it meant something sweet, and in this case, jam. Somehow, we would end up in the kitchen, sharing each other's food, while the "mamma" of the house did the cooking. After all, if you are going to fight a war, you should have a good, hearty breakfast first. So for a while, although we had minor firefights with small enemy units, until the vicinity of Montelimar, which is where things got really messy.

By this time I had become a Tech 4 Radio Operator, which meant more money, although I had nowhere to spend it. At this particular time, I was in contact with the Squadron network for artillery fire control. In the same area as Montelimar there was a little town called Grane. We moved into it without firing a shot.

It is also where I had my first tub bath in many moons. Gee, it felt good to be clean for a change. Anyway, the French underground informed us that a column of German Tiger tanks was reroute to retake the town. We sent this information back to Squadron Headquarters, with map coordinates of the crossroad that the Tigers would have to pass through to

get to us, then settled down to wait for them. Trouble was, there was a screw-up somewhere, and we never did get the artillery fire we had requested. We lost the town along with Captain Omer Brown and several other men. We planted a few land mines in the roadway and scrambled out of there. Later, we had to shell the town to drive the Tigers out and for us to move back in. Needless to say, the town was a mess, and the people were not quite as thrilled to see us as they had been before.

So on we went, up the Rhone valley, on the tail of the retreating Germans. Crest, Valence, St. Atone, Lyon and then back to Grenoble. Chambray, Nanny, Belgrade and St. Claud. Now we were nearing the Swiss border, and we all thought how nice it would be if we were to make a mistake in reading our maps and end up in Switzerland, where we would be interned for the rest of the war, but we didn't. We went on through Champagne, Polling, Dole and Besancon, because that's what we were paid to do. I've listed all these towns so that if you look on a map you will be able to follow the route of "Larry's War".

I must admit that now, all was not sweetness and light. A couple of weeks ago I located a book that I have been hunting for, for about forty odd years. It was written by LTG Lucian Truscott, Commander of the 6th Corps, which included me and my associates. I got the book on April 5, 1992, and the part about my outfit is not the happiest reading, and I quote:

"After General Patch telephoned his approval, we lost no time in putting the new plan into effect. My aide's journal records our activities: (Monday, September 3, 1944... Corps CP moves to Embrue after morning briefing. New order to all division commanders under new plan. 3dID to shuttle NE with all possible speed., with 36th ID continuing to push N. 45th ID to clean up situation at Burg and assemble behind 3d. General to 3d CP Sw of Lagging. New scheme explained to Gen. O'Daniels. They will start immediately. Lunch back at CP. Off to 45th C P at 1500 where plan is explained to En, Eagles. Up to I Co., 180th ID. Observed tank and small arms fire SE of Burg. Back to CP 1800, meeting Gen. O'Daniels on the road. 7th Inf. already on the move and making time. Debacle at Montrevel when 1 and 1/2 companies 117th Cavalry go to sleep and are surrounded and captured. C S goes to find out what happened. Gen. talks to Major Mc Garry of 117th in War Room after dinner. Still no explanation, but remnants pulled out and sent north.)

This incident was almost the only mistake this gallant 117th Cavalry Squadron made during the whole campaign. I had ordered Colonel Hodge to gain the rear of the 11th Panzer Division, which was opposing the 45th Infantry Division at Burg, and he had done so. This detachment had obviously grown somewhat careless, because when the 11th Panzer Division withdrew during the night, these two Companies were surprised and overrun, and most of one and a half companies were captured. It was a sad blow to me, even though many of the men rejoined us within the next few weeks. It is a testimonial to the "Cavalry Spirit" and to the American Soldiers that this blow only spurred the squadron on to greater efforts.)"

It was our "B" Troop with parts of A Troop, aided by our Tank Company who were overrun., and during the night, "C" Troop was called on for help, but by the time we got there, it was all over, and all we found was the smoldering wreckage of both American and German vehicles, a few wounded, and the dead of both armies, and the Germans had moved on to the north. I think that possibly Generals, in writing their memoirs paint things a little to their advantage. Perhaps I have, too. I only know that while our guys might have been asleep at the switch, which I personally doubt, the odds, two troops against an armored division, were greatly against them, and they gave one hell of an accounting of themselves against a very much larger force.

January 26, 1999. Over the past fifty years or so I have spent a lot of time reading various accounts of the business of "Kill or be killed" and yesterday I found an account of the above debacle in the

THE SEVENTH UNITED STATES ARMY
REPORT OF OPERATIONS
France and Germany 1944 - 1945

"By 3 September the 117th Cavalry reconnaissance Squadron had reached Bourg-en-Bresse and Montrevel on Highway 75. During the night units of the 11th Panzer Division, withdrawing northward after the fight at Meximieux, entered Bourg-en-Bresse and a "free-for-all" followed. Almost all of the men of Troop B, 117th Reconnaissance Squadron, were killed or captured and their equipment lost, including 20 one-quarter ton trucks 15 armored cars, and 2 light tanks. Although opposed by enemy armor and a number of heavy self-propelled guns, Troop B fought gallantly and succeeded in inflicting heavy losses on the Germans. The following day, the 45th Division, having destroyed enemy holding forces at Point drain, on Highway 75, and at other points southeast of the city, occupied Bourg-en-Bresse."

I must also tell you that I had been a member of B troop from the time I joined the 102d Cavalry Regiment at Fort Jackson, South Carolina until I was transferred to the newly formed Troop C while we were in Africa, and many of these men were my friends prefer this account to the one written by General Truscott.

We sneak and peak the whole day through, To us, it's our vocation. But even so, most all of us Are bucking for rotation.

Rotation was a system set up to return combat soldiers to the United States, where they would become the Cadre for Training Units, such as the one at Fort Riley. I don't remember how it was supposed to work, but our troop sent back just one man. For the record, the next one on the list was me, from way back in North Africa, but somehow, it never happened.

Sometimes, late at night, someone manning an outpost would get a bit nervous, hear a little noise or a bush rustle in the blackness out there in front of him and would let off a short burst on his machine gun. There were times when it was a good thing that he did, and other times...

It was fall now, and the nights were getting a little chilly. On through Vessel, Lure, Luxeuil-les-Bains, Retirement and Spinal. Now we felt old, like there had never been anything else in our lives but the war, and it seemed like there would never be anything else. Somewhere, on a night patrol, carrying a forty-pound radio on my back, I fell into a river up to my ankles, head first. Someone grabbed me and yanked me back out of the water, or I would probably be there yet. We were getting awfully tired of this war.

John Wampler had been our armored car driver up to this time. But now, with winter coming on, John began to have nightmares, and started to scream in the middle of the night. This was really not a good thing to do when you were on an outpost some distance in front of the rest of the United States Army, so John was sent to the rear echelon, and was replaced by Harry Rogers as the driver of our armored car.

*There was a time when we were brave,
As brave as we could be.
But that was once upon a time
When we were young, you see.
We used to tell of what we'd do,
If we should catch a Kraut.
Them days is gone for ever,
'cause in combat, we found out*

*That we're really "Reluctant Reckon,"
Our Troops, A, B, and C
Aren't anxious to do battle
Nor are HQ, F, or E.*

*It isn't that we're frightened,
'cause we never heard of fear.
It's just that we get worried
When we know the Krauts are near.*

*But we try to be courageous
When we're out there on the line,
To stand up to the bullets,
And the shells, and all the rest.*

I must tell you that while there were a few soldiers along the way that seemed to need booze to stiffen their spines, for the most part, the American Soldier was just a guy, scared, but still trying his best to do a good job, no matter what. In my box of memories, I recently discovered a little scrap of paper where I talked of the rain, and I think I will insert it here, where it seems to fit.

We called it *Purple Heart Lane*. I guess that every combat soldier the world over has a place or two in his memory that was his own personal Purple Heart Lane. Ours was the Ramberviller Woods. Hardly a day went by that someone didn't earn one. We got there in the pouring rain, but we didn't mind too much. We didn't expect to stay there. As soon as the flanks caught up, we'd be on the move again. It wouldn't take long, because the Krauts didn't have a thing. We had them on the run. Then the shells came in, including screaming Mimi. There was no place to go, so we had to just stay there and take it. It was our first experience with "tree bursts", and they're pretty rough. When the barrage was over, those of us still in one piece dug foxholes. Now we figured we were safe. We had our little pits to dive into when the stuff came over again, but we still hadn't learned. In a forest, when a shell with a proximity fuse hits the treetops, there is a tree burst, and the shrapnel comes straight down. Now we took the wounded out of the foxholes and took them back to the aid station.

*We dug our holes down pretty deep
In the woods where we were at.
Awaiting for the final leap
On the road to Baccarat.*

*We sat out there for thirty days,
It really was a killer.
There wasn't much that we could do
In "Fort du Ramberviller"*

We were there for pretty close to a month. Our holes got bigger and deeper, and ended up with roofs, by placing logs and boards across the top, and then piling lots of dirt over them. Now the only way to get hurt was to suffer a direct hit. This area had been a battlefield and a place of trench warfare during World War I.

It was here during our stay in the Ramberviller Woods, that I was in a forward observation post, just a telephone and me. A hole had been dug by an earlier observer, and he had covered it nicely, leaving it open on both ends for quick access, if needed. I thought that was very kind of him, until the shells came in and I dove for cover, discovering that my benefactor had been quite a bit shorter than me, so no matter how I scrunched down, either my head was sticking out one end, or my feet the other. I decided that my head was the most important, but I sure did worry about my feet. The Germans had a mortar called the Nebelwerfer. I've probably spelled it wrong, but no matter. It was a five-barreled rocket-launcher, and the shells it fired we called the Screaming Mimi. It shrieked all the way over, and it sounded like it was heading straight for you--- right at the middle of your forehead.

*I've sweated shells of every size,
Including Screaming Mimi.
And just like all the other guys,
It's knocked me off my beady.
There's lots of stuff that we can take,
But Mimis not one of 'em.
The fellers quiver and they quake
When Mimi screams above them.*

*It's such an awful sounding wail
We tremble when we hear it.
It makes our nerves and spirits fail
There's no wonder that we fear it.*

*And when the screaming sound is done,
It crashes with such power-
To me, it's not a lot of fun,
It turns my stomach sour.*

*If I should ever find the Gee
Who built this rocket, well,
I'll wire him with TNT
And send him straight to Hell.*

Now it was November. Finally, we got strong again, took Baccarat, and were on our way to Strasbourg, getting near the German border. The closer we got, the harder the fighting became. It was about this time that our gunner, Rod Grassman was hurt during an encounter with some German armor. He had been "borrowed" and was in another armored car at the time, and he got the "million dollar injury" that sent him home and to a discharge.

...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. New Members: CW4 Thomas Frickanisce, was with D-Air, C-Air, and F-Troop, State CSM Edward Santiago was in "C" Troop when 5/117 CAV HHT was in Vineland. We are looking for help on mailing The SPUR, for about 1.5 hours during the day at the Armory. Let me know if you can help (732) 548-7991.

TAPS



LTC John S. Huff 1921 - July 2016 95 years old, passed away from age related reasons at the Veterans Affairs Hospital, Fort Whipple, Prescott, Arizona.

He was a remarkable man with an amazing and long life. John was born in Frankfort, Kentucky. By the time he was three, his family had moved to Tucson, Arizona, at that time a town of just over 20,000 people. In junior high school he ran around with future author Ray Bradbury, sharing their interest in reading and science fiction. He graduated from Tucson High School in 1938 where he was a member of the junior ROTC. John continued with ROTC training at the University of Arizona, graduating in 1942. The morning of graduation he was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant into the Army Horse Cavalry and ordered to Officer Basic School at Fort Riley, Kansas where he trained in Mechanized Cavalry, bridging the transition from horse to vehicle.

In February, 1943 he obtained a short leave and returned to Tucson to marry Marion Knudson on Valentine's Day. They had met in front of the University of Arizona Library. John impressed her at their introduction being dressed up in his ROTC uniform, complete with a sword! How could she resist that? In March of 1943 he was ordered to New York and the two of them drove their small car cross-country from Tucson. From New York he was ordered to North Africa, where Lieutenant Huff spent most of 1943 in Morocco and Algeria with the 117th Mechanized Cavalry, C Troop.

His unit was transferred to Italy where John was part of General Clark's escort as he entered Rome, which had been declared an "open city" by Germany and the Allies sparing ruin. They continued to pursue the Germans north to Florence where they were ordered back Naples. He then became part of Operation Dragoon, invading southern France on August 15, 1943. His platoon led the landing at St. Tropez, in front of the Third Infantry Division. Malaria (contracted in Africa) soon derailed John for a few days, but he was able to rejoin his platoon in France as they continued north to Grenoble and the Belfort Gap. Just north of the town of Draguignan his platoon surprised and captured over a thousand German soldiers, including a General. John's malaria returned and he was evacuated back to Naples. By the end of 1944 he was in a hospital in Santa Fe. Recovering, John was assigned back to Ft. Riley, Kansas. From there he and Marion were sent to Tokyo as part of the post-war occupation of Japan from 1946 to 1951 when he returned to the U of A as a ROTC instructor. He was then sent on a series of assignments, moving up the ladder to Lt. Colonel: Japan & Korea 1953 - 1956, Ft Leavenworth 1957-1958, New Orleans 1959-1960, Pentagon 1960-1963 (Army Chiefs of Staff and even wound up on a ship during the Cuban missile crisis), and a final assignment to Bangkok, Thailand 1963-1964.

John retired from the Army in 1964, returning to Tucson. He worked for the University of Arizona as Assistant Dean in the Continuing Education Department, helping to set up courses all over Arizona and in Mexico. He retired from the U of A and was hired by Tucson Electric Power in their personnel division. He retired staying in Tucson until 2001 when he and Marion moved to Prescott. The two traveled for many years to Europe, Hawaii, Alaska, Canada, New Zealand and all over America. John in proceeded in death by his two sisters, Amy Lue Yordt of California and Anna Lee Markle of Texas. He is survived by his wife of 73 years and two sons, John and James.

LTC (Ret) Robert C. Sheldon Jr. of Upper Deerfield Twp., aged 69 years, passed away suddenly and unexpected on Saturday, September 10, 2016 at his second home in Lewes, Delaware. Born in Bridgeton, he was the son of the late Robert C. and Emily (nee Adams) Sheldon, and the husband of Charlotte (nee Ellis) Sheldon. Robert, or Bob as he was known, had lived in this area all of his life and was employed for over 40 years with the E.I. DuPont Chambers Works Company as a Laboratory Technician. He was a proud veteran who had commanded the 3-102d ARMOR NJ Army National Guard and also the NJ Air National Guard. He was also a proud member of both the Brearley and Elmer Masonic Lodges, where he served formerly as Deputy District Grand Master and currently as the treasurer for the Brearley Lodge. He loved reading and playing golf, and trips to Delaware with his wife Charlotte, but he especially loved spending time with his family and especially his grandchildren. Besides his wife Charlotte of 32 years, he is survived by his children, Kelly Corliss, Alexandra "Sandy" Sheldon, Scott Volk and his wife Cindy, Philip Volk, Amy Colaneri and her husband Jim, his sister Catherine Speziali and her husband Frank Jr., his sister-in-law Karen Sheldon, and nine grandchildren. He was predeceased, besides his parents, by a brother, Daniel Sheldon.

Thomas Harold Clews WWII Army veteran, formerly of New Jersey, geophysical-cartographer Thomas Harold Clews, 90, passed away Oct. 15, 2016, in Broken Arrow, Okla. Thomas was born on Nov. 2, 1925, in Jersey City, N.J., to Thomas Edward and Florence Irene (Van Horn) Clews. He was retired as a manager of graphics for the Marion Corporation in Mobile, Ala. Thomas was predeceased by his wife of 45 years, Ruth Eleanor (Parks) Clews. He is survived by son, Mark Stephen Clews and wife, Lei An; granddaughters, Brooklyn Nicole Clews and Jennifer (Taylor) Schisler and husband, Brandon Schisler; great-grandson, Cameron Schisler, and sister, Florence Christina Clews of Cranford, N.J. Thomas grew up in rural New Jersey, and graduated from Cranford High School. He was a member of the Troop "B" 2d Squadron, Mechanized Cavalry, New Jersey State Guard, his senior year in high school. Thomas enlisted in the Army during World War II, serving in combat in Europe with the 69th and 3d Infantry Divisions from the Battle of the Bulge to the link-up with the Russian forces at the Elbe River. He was awarded the *Combat Infantry Badge*, *Bronze Star*, *Purple Heart* and *French Croix-De-Geure*. In 2004, he was awarded the *Diplome d' Honneur* and *Medaille Du Cinquantenaire* from the French War Veterans Association for participating in the liberation of France in World War II. He was employed as a geophysical-cartographer for Ashland, Deep Rock, Amerada-Hess and Marion Oil corporations. Thomas was a charter member of the Association of Professional Draftsman and a fellow in the American Congress on Mapping and Surveying.

SPUR AND SABERS DINNER DANCE





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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



- FA-20 EMIL ALLGIERE
- WI-26 CHARLES ANGELLO
- WI-17 SHARON & BILL ANTONUCCI mem.
1SG BILL MALONEY SR.
- SP-26 BOB & LORRAINE APGAR
- WI-18 COL (Ret) KEVIN AUSTIN 5-117 CAV
- 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
- WI-16 LTC (Ret) CLAUDE COOK mem. MSG ROCCO SPANO &
wife JOAN
- WI- 20 STEVE CUP WWII 102d CAVALRY
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- WI-18 COL (Ret) DENNIS J. DOUGHERTY
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- WI-17 LTC (Ret) ALAN R. FISHER
- WI-22 MIRIAM FISHER (mem.of husb.) WILLIAM E. FISHER
- FA-19 BOB FOLEY (HHT Ret)
- WI-17 HENRY & MARION FORSTENHAUSLER
- WI- 72 JOHN FRANTZ, LT A Troop 5-117th CAV
- WI-17 BILL & LINDA GRUSS
- 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
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- SP-18 CSM (Ret) A. A. MAGGS
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My brother TIM MALONEY
- WI-33 PETE & EDITH MARTINEZ
- SP-17 PEDRO MARTINEZ
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- SP-29 CSM SCOTT MECHOWSKI 1-102nd CAVALRY
- SP-23 CW4 (Ret) BILL MERRING & CHARLOTTE

- FA-20 RON NIER
- WI-16 ROMAN MILANOWICZ and BEVERLY
- WI-17 CW5 (Ret) FRANK MNICH & JANET
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- FA-37 JOYCE OWEN wife of 2LT HAROLD "SMOKIE" OWEN,
Class of '41, 102nd & 117th CAV - B & C Troops WWII
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- WI-17 FRANK PATRICK
- WI- 16 CSM (Ret) AL PHELAN mem. 1SG ED MURPHY
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- SP-17 mem. ARTHUR REINBOLD
- WI-92 MRS. ROBERT D. ROBBINS, (mem. of ROBBIE)
- WI-43 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
- WI-97 EILEEN SCHARR mem. husband WILLIE
- FA-19 BILL SEDLAK
- WI- 20 DONNA STINNER mem. SKIP STINNER
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- FA-21 GEORGE L. THOMAS
- 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
- SU-17 GRACE & CSM (Ret) HENRY WETZEL (mem)
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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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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:** November 11, 2016; February 10, 2017, April 7; June 9; September 8 and November 10, 2017