

Mounted cavalry than just horses



members come from both out-in-the-country and big-city backgrounds.

Half-section cannon "stuck in the mud"

No description of Parsons' Mounted Cavalry would be complete without discussing John Gunter's protracted struggle to put together a cannon half-section.

The half section consists of a 1902 gun, fired during "We've Never Been Licked," and later found embedded in mud during a '74 Bonfire cutting weekend. The section also includes a limber, which is a two-wheeled cart, that holds some artillery shells and serves as a seat for the gun crew.

A six-horse team is supposed to pulled the limber, to which the cannon is hooked.

Gunter, class of '79, spent so many hours searching for a limber for the gun that he actually bombed out of school for a semester. Nonetheless, the Muleshoe native did not cease his efforts.

He mooched wheels off of the cannons sitting in front of Allen Military Academy in Bryan and scraped together enough money to partially restore both the 3" gun and limber.

The Association of Former Students provided money to have the limber, which was found on a ranch, and the gun, restored by the Lewis Brothers in Georgetown.

Harnesses were purchased in Ohio and authentic McLellan saddles were bought in Maryland.

Gunter figures the project is \$10,000 short of completion. New wheels have to be built and a 6-horse team needs to be purchased and trained.

A special trailer would also be needed to haul the equipment on trips.

The fly in the ointment is that the entire half-section project is actually independent of Parsons' Mounted Cavalry.

"The Cav didn't support me in any way or fashion," Gunter said. "It was just a pull-out on my part."

He said others assumed it was a cavalry project because he was a cav trooper.

Maj. Henderson, the Cav advisor agreed.

"It was a John Gunter thing," he said.

The half-section sits in a side bay of PMC's new tack room, visited on occasion by curious Cav members. Some of the juniors have expressed interest in reviving the project.

All they need is more manpower and \$10,000.

PMC is only six years old

Story by Doug Graham
Photos by Lee Roy Leschper Jr.

tended March-ins and won honors in parades and rodeo grand entries in towns as small as Mercedes to cities as large as Houston.

Originally the horses were kept out at the old Bryan Airfield Annex. The long drive tired the juniors who had to, as they do now, feed the horses every morning. The horse pen was small, which led to fighting among the animals.

Later, during the 77-78 year, Hernia Hill, a plot of land owned by several former students, was loaned to PMC. The area was much larger, and only about 5 miles from campus.

Texas A&M's new president, Dr. Jarvis Miller lent a hand the next year and gave the Cav a plot of land on FM 2818. The University also built a \$25,000 tack room. That is a step up from the days when Cav members used to carry all of their equipment in their own vehicles.

The cavalry is currently upgrading the facilities. It built new fences and is building feedstalls. The defunct Pin Oaks stables in Houston, which housed the troopers during Houston trips, has donated one of its barns to the cavalry.

Reese is currently trying to figure out a way to dismantle as much of the structure as possible, haul it up to College Station and then reassemble it.

The unit advisor, Maj. Henderson, is not an Ag. He is a graduate of North Texas State University.

"I semi-volunteered for the Cav

because I was in a horseback club at NTSU," he said.

Working with the troop has been a learning experience for the

major, he said, especially as the unit works to overcome problems.

"What we lack in skill, we make up in enthusiasm."



Completing a turning maneuver during practice, the PMC members look a striking, varied group.