**The Southwest Chapter of the Company of Military Historians March 26, 2022**

The Southwest Chapter of the Company of Military Historians had their first face-to-face meeting since 2021. This meeting was held at Company members Ed and Patty Cote.

Eleven members, which included two Fellows were in attendance. Members included Fellow Mark Kasal, Fellow, Joseph Musso, Ed and Patty Cote, Earl Robinson, Douglas Sprague, Jon Woodland, Cisco Lopez, Ed Hull, John Bertram, and Steve Fowler. Ed and Patty Cote brought guest Nathan Hittle and member Jon Woodland brought guest Carl Fraga.

Company Fellow and Chapter President, Mark Kasal, opened the meeting with an update on the Headquarters happenings. He discussed the on-going efforts to digitize the past and current journals for easy access. Mark also discussed his new position in the Company as Vice President of Membership and his efforts to the revitalization of several Company chapters that went dormant due to the lack of chapter leadership, COVID, and the loss of key chapter members. The 2022 annual meeting at Rock Island Arsenal was discussed and it appears that the Southwest Chapter will have a good turnout.

AS is normal, members brought items to show and discuss. Mark brought his subjects of his last two articles in the Journal on the 1851 belt plates with six-pointed stars and examples of the illusive 1890 Indian Scout had insignias. He also discussed an example of a solid silver U.S. Marine officer’s horse blanket chevrac, and a rare 1880 iron-guard hunting knife with the rare Varney scabbard. Jon Woodland brought a tough to find, Mills McKeever cartridge box, an artillery electrician’s black dress helmet, a Horstmann officer’s chapeau. Company members Earl Robinson brought a unique Civil War Hardy hat, that belonged to Capt. Rufus Smith one of the California Volunteers that became part of the Massachusetts 2nd Volunteer Cavalry. He was killed at Cedar Creek leading his men against the Confederates. Ed Cote had the Pièce de résistance: a 3-inch ordnance rifle that he recently acquired. This cannon was one of the First Pennsylvania Light Artillery, also known as Co. F, Ricketts Battery. This cannon saw service at the battles of Chancellorsville, Gettysburg, mine run, Spotsylvania, Wilderness, Petersburgh. This gun was in the war until 1865.

Photo 1 John Woodland discussing his Mills McKeever

Photo 2 Capt. Rufus Smith, 2nd Massachusetts Volunteer Cavalry slouch hat photo curtesy Earl Robinson

Photo 3 Steve Fowler, John Bertram, Earl Robinson, and Joseph Musso

Photo 4 3-inch Ordnance Gin #

Photo 5 Joseph Musso and Cisco Lopez inspecting the gun

Photo 6 Joseph Musso and Mark Kasal