

Professor Emeritus Calvin Cramer on record in National WWII Museum



Calvin Cramer, right, and his older brother, Rev. Sol Cramer, a few years back, visiting their cousin, James Cramer's gravesite at Lorraine Cemetery, St. Avold, France. James Cramer is a namesake for Sauk Prairie VFW.

Professor Emeritus Calvin Cramer is a part of a series of 50 stories of WWII Veterans from the Sauk Prairie area accepted into the WWII National Museum in Louisiana.

Calvin grew up in a family of six children on a farm north of Prairie du Sac, just outside the village on Highway 12. The Cramers learned how to help with the farm work and care for one another as well as the community. They were a well thought of family. The children walked to Prairie du Sac grade school, which was almost across the street from their church at the time, Evangelical United Brethren. From there they went on to Prairie du Sac High School about four blocks south on Grand Avenue.

World War II was in the wind. The war along with the coming of the Badger Ammunitions plant, caused strange emotions. Calvin knew he would be drafted into the Army after he graduated from high school. In 1944 he was sent to Camp Hood (now Fort Hood) for basic training. From there he was sent to Fort Meade, a port of debarkation and traveled to Europe on the troop transport General Miegs, in a large convoy of ships. He landed at

Cherbourg, France and traveled east on 40 & 8 French boxcars that could carry eight horses and 40 men. Calvin joined the Fox Company 424th regiment of the 106th division. After the war ended in Europe his regiment was assigned to guard large German Prisoner of War Camps in Mainz. Over time, prisoners were interviewed. Those who had been drafted with no loyalty to the enemy were discharged.

Later in the summer of 1945, Calvin was transferred to Antwerp, Belgium, for rotation through the United States to the Pacific War. While he was on the troop transport on route to New York, the two atomic bombs were dropped on Japan and the war in the Pacific ended.

Following his discharge, Calvin enrolled in college under the G. I. Bill. He studied pre-engineering for two years at North Central College and then transferred to the UW-Madison, receiving a degree in Civil Engineering and Agriculture and a PHD in Civil Engineering. He taught Agricultural Building Design in the Department of Agricultural Engineering at UW-Madison for 30 years and retired in 1988 as Professor Emeritus of

Agricultural Engineering.

Professor Cramer had the good fortune of meeting a special teacher,

Patricia Herr of Lodi and they were married in 1952. The Cramers moved to the Herr family farm in 1955, which had been established in the family in the 1860s. Their son, Steven, and his wife, Kay, purchased the farm in 1995. Their children and grandchildren are the fifth and sixth generation to live on the family farm. Calvin and Patricia also have a daughter, Ramona, who lives with her husband, Larry Wesner, in Franklin, near Milwaukee. They have two children.

The Cramers are active in helping to keep Lodi up and running and alive. They are active in their Methodist Church, historical activities and love to spend time with their five grandchildren.



Patricia and Calvin Cramer today, 2011. *DORIS*

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