

May-June 2018, Issue 80
Contact: rto173@att.net

See all issues to date at 503rd Heritage Battalion website:
http://corregidor.org/VN2-503/newsletter/issue_index.htm

~ 173d Photo of the Month ~



"Brigadier General Richard J. Allen (left) Commanding General of the 173d Airborne visits the 1/50th headquarters at Camp Radcliff (An Khe). 1/50th Battalion Commander Jim Woodall on the right. Late 1968." See tributes, to General Allen on Page 33, and Colonel Woodall on Page 75. (web photo & caption)





**We Dedicate this Issue of Our Newsletter in Memory and Honor
of the Young Men of the 173d Airborne Brigade & Attached Units
We Lost 50 Years Ago in the Months of May & June 1968**



***"As in every war, the best never come home. They never get the chance to grow old.
Some may forget them -- we won't."***

Irv (Bugs) Moran, 173d LRRP

**Wayne Lynn Harland, 20
SGT, 173d LRRP, 5/1/68**

"A true American Hero. Wayne and I served together in the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, N.C. and in the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam in 1966, 1967 and 1968. Wayne and I, along with three others, volunteered for the Brigade's Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol Platoon and served together in that unit until my return to the States in April of 1968. Wayne was subsequently K.I.A. on May 1, 1968. He was an outstanding paratrooper who was extremely calm during the most extreme conditions. We served together on many LRRP missions. The photo of Wayne on this site (Wall of Faces) was taken at the conclusion of one of those missions. I think of Wayne often."



Irvin Moran, 173rd LRRP 1967-68

**Holland Irwin Langham, 18
CPL, B/2/503, 5/3/68**

"Holly and I were high school classmates. His mom was one of my English Teachers. Holly was one year younger than me and we were only acquaintances not close friends. I remember Holly as bright and clever, and cheerful. He was a good person with a great sense of humor. He was talented and full of hope and promise for the future. He had friends and a family who loved him. Holly was killed in Viet Nam nearly a year before I went over. I do not know the details of his death, but I think of him often. Thank you Holly, you won't be forgotten."



**Sutton Mobley, Jr., 19
SP4, B/1/503, 5/4/68**

(Virtual Wall states A/2/503)

"We knew each other in the 173rd Abn. I was there when he died. I am from the Tarboro, NC area so we had something in common. Sutton, we all called each other by last names, was a very good guy. I remember him as a quiet and easy going fellow who always did his best and never complained. I thought a lot of him and was very upset when he was hit. So many of our guys died. Bless him and his family can be proud of him because he was a HERO!!"



**John Melvin Durham, 20
SSG, B/1/503, 5/4/68**

"John is my friend. John and I both arrived in Bein Hoa at the same time and were assigned to the same company. We were together from around June 2, 1967 to his last day in May 68. We had great plans for each other once we were done. I received orders to come home two weeks later. His loss was one of my biggest of the year. I still think of him and smile."



Larry Egan

**John William Moran, 20
CPL, B/1/503, 5/4/68**

(Virtual Wall states A/2/503)

"I first off would like to say thank you. Thank you for everything you have done serving our country. I did not know John personally but my grandparents did. Both my grandma and my grandpa were friends of John's father. My grandparents were members of the Sheraden Legion where John's father Norman attended. They did not only know John because of his father but John had attended the dances held at the Legion. My pap told me John was a great kid and would always ask my gram 'what do you put on a sandwich first?' When they found out about John's death, my gram was heart-broken; she loved that kid. I wanted to post this remembrance to say that John is never forgotten and his stories are still being told today. I wanted to thank him for what he did for his country. He risked his life for the safety of others. I appreciate everything you have done and you will always be remembered."



Brittany Kent



(Tributes continued....)



**Robert Samuel Allen, 20****CPL, B/2/503, 5/5/68**

(Virtual Wall states A/1/50th)

"PFC Robert S. Allen was killed during the Battle of An Bao on May 5th, 1968.

This action was one of the most significant battles experienced by the 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry during its tour in Vietnam. PFC Allen was seen bravely directing fire from his armored personnel carrier (APC) in an attempted counter attack as his A Company was surrounded by a vastly superior force. His heroic efforts ended when his APC was hit by enemy RPG fire."

[Taken from ichiban1.org]

**Bruce Richard Backes, 21****SP4, B/2/503, 5/5/68**

(Virtual Wall states C/1/50th)

"SP4 Bruce R. Backes was the radio telephone operator (RTO) for the Platoon Leader, Lt. Harry Wilson, during the Battle of An Boa in Binh Dinh Province (May 5-7 1968). At noon, on May 5, 1/50th 'A' Company forces were attacked and outnumbered 10 to 1 by a regiment of the North Vietnamese Army. 'A' Company forces were overrun and took heavy casualties when Charlie Company was called in to reinforce the besieged Alpha Company. Upon arrival, the enemy, who had fallen silent to allow the 'C' Company troops to enter the ambush zone, opened fire with an intense and sustained barrage of small arms, automatic weapons and B-40 rocket fire from three sides. Bruce was mortally wounded in the neck while keeping pace with the platoon leader as he positioned the third platoon troops for battle. Fierce fighting ensued on both 1/50th Companies and additional reinforcements from 'B' Company, 1/50th Infantry and 'B' Company, 1/69th Armor were called in to battle the huge enemy force."

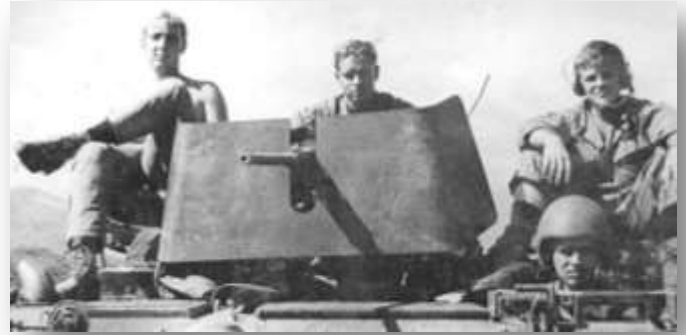
[Taken from ichiban1.org]



Left to Right (Standing): Ron Heinecke, Norm Poage and Matt Morrison...in front: Bruce Backes and Tim Voncina. Rest in peace with the warriors. (Photo Credit: Norman Poage)

Cortland Ellis Dennison, 20**CPL, C/1/50th, 5/5/68***"Ellis and I served together in C*

Company, mortar platoon. On that day of May 5, 1968, we entered the battle dropping mortar rounds close-in on enemy positions surrounding us. I did not learn of Ellis' injury until I returned to the unit a couple weeks later. Everyone liked Ellis. Congratulations to his parents for instilling good values in this man." **Bill Bontemps**



Cortland 'Ellis' Dennison, 55E-009 (top, right).

(Photo Credit: Ed Alvey)

**Malcolm Cyril Dulac, 36****1SG, A/1/50th, 5/5/68***"Dear Dad, I remember your love.*

I missed you all my life. There are scars where love should be. I never understood war or why you had to go there. But as I grow older I am very proud of your commitment to your country. I just find it sad that the world today does not honor what a service our soldiers provide to the country. I did have a good step-father who served in the Army in Vietnam too. He just died on October 2, 2006. He was a good man, so dad if you meet him up there shake his hand. He did right by your little girl. And tell my brother and my children I love them. I love you always. Denise. From his daughter,"

Denise Dulac-Stark



(Tributes continued....)



~ A Note from The Virtual Wall ~

"The After Action Report for the fight at An Bao gives this sequence of events:

In early May 1968 intelligence reports indicated that an enemy Regimental headquarters and an artillery unit had taken up residence in the Southwestern Crescent foothills in Binh Dinh Province. Continuing US search efforts had failed to locate enemy units, and the only significant contact was an unsuccessful night probe against LZ OLLIE on the night of 04 May. On 05 May the bulk of 1LT Dennis Hinton's 'A' Company 1/50 Infantry was directed to conduct a reconnaissance-in-force toward BR895783, north-west of LZ UPLIFT. The force, 50 men mounted in 9 armored personnel carriers, departed LZ UPLIFT at 0800, moved north along Highway 1 to LZ ICHIBAN, and turned westward toward their target area. There was no direct contact during the morning hours, although an enemy element of some 15 men was sighted and taken under fire. Shortly before noon 1LT Hinton put 'A' Company into a defensive perimeter for the noon break. One observation post was established for security. At 1144 the enemy initiated action with a volley of 75mm recoilless rifle fire which immediately disabled 5 of the 9 APCs. The RR fire was followed by a ground assault coming from an area of high ground southwest of the 'A' Company perimeter. Supporting enemy fires were received from the northwest, northeast, and southeast. 1LT Hinton's last order before he was shot was *'Get the hell out of here'*, an order which led to the operational APCs withdrawing to the east with what men they could collect amidst the confusion. Approximately 15 men had been left behind in the 'A' Company perimeter. The senior person present, 1LT Frank W. Webb, reorganized these men and established a fighting position behind rice paddy dikes and oriented toward the enemy's ground assault force. Unfortunately their rear was unprotected and enemy fire from the northeast took a toll, including 1LT Webb. Shortly after noon two relief forces were dispatched from LZ UPLIFT. The first to move out, 'C' Company 1/50, was followed by two tank platoons from 'B' Company 1/69 Armor. Charlie 1/50 took the same route as had Alpha 1/50 earlier, while the tanks moved further north on Highway 1 before turning toward the contact area. Charlie 1/50 arrived first, just in time to protect the remaining men of Alpha 1/50 from the enemy assault. Charlie loaded the Alpha survivors and moved out of the kill zone toward the west. Bravo 1/69 joined and the two companies established a perimeter west of the original contact area where

resupply, medevac, and reorganization for a counter-attack could be completed. At the same time, Bravo 1/50, reinforced with a tank platoon from Bravo 1/69, moved from LZ UPLIFT to LZ ICHIBAN and turned toward the contact area, approaching from the east. At 1700 Charlie 1/50 and the supporting Bravo 1/69 tanks began a counter-attack from their position to the west. As nightfall approached, the Charlie 1/50 force was directed to halt more or less in place and to establish a night defensive position, which they did. At midnight, or shortly thereafter, Charlie 1/50 and the tankers received a badly needed munitions resupply - just in time, as it turned out, because they were taken under heavy ground attack at about 0330. Although this attack resulted in three American dead and 18 wounded, the night laager held out. At daybreak the two US forces resumed their move to contact ... but the enemy had withdrawn. Sweeps of the battle area on 06 and 07 May found 117 enemy bodies; in addition, one enemy soldier surrendered on 07 May. When interrogated the POW said there had been three battalions established in a U-shaped ambush with the intention of catching and wiping out the American recon unit (Alpha 1/50). Although the enemy was unable to achieve his objective, eighteen American soldiers were killed in the fighting on 05 and 06 May 1969."

A Co, 1st Bn, 50th Infantry

1LT Dennis E. Hinton, Englewood, CO
1LT Frank W. Webb, Kenbridge, VA
1SG Malcolm C. Dulac, Dexter, ME
SGT James D. Ferguson, West Plains, MO
SGT Sherron E. Harbison, Flint, MI
SGT Robert J. Leska, Trumbull, CT
CPL Robert S. Allen, North Bergen, NJ
CPL Ronald A. Hillman, Texas City, TX
CPL Donald E. Lowe, Tacoma, WA
SP4 Donald R. Stephenson, Shelbyville, TN
SP4 Richard F. Wells, Little Rock, AR

B Co, 1st Bn, 50th Infantry

SP4 Craig A. Rood, Minneapolis, MN
PFC Bruce W. Tabor, Aurora, CO (Medic; HHC w/
B/1/50)

C Co, 1st Bn, 50th Infantry

SP4 Bruce R. Backes, Titusville, NJ
SP4 Rodney A. Crandall, Detroit, MI
CPL Cortland E. Dennison, Cave City, KY

B Co, 1st Bn, 69th Armor

SSG James W. Dial, Knoxville, TN
SSG Sanford R. Gaboriault, Franklin, VT

(Tributes continued...)



James Donahue Ferguson, 20
SGT, A/1/50th, 5/5/68

"A good guy and a great soldier. I knew Jim Ferguson from West Plains, Missouri. He was a good friend of my older brother whose name is also James. He was always friendly to me, wherever I saw him, always spoke, I remember seeing him for the last time on a Friday night at the Avenue theatre, he was in uniform with his jump boots and all. I believe just a very short time later he went to Vietnam, this was around July of 67, and then in May of 68, we heard he died in action. It was a sad time, me and my brothers still speak of him today after all these tears. THANK YOU JIM FOR PAYING THE ULTIMATE PRICE, YOU WILL NEVER BE FORGOTTEN MY FRIEND. Unsigned



"Under Way on the troop ship USNS General John Pope. Left to right: Wayne Wright, James D. Ferguson 55E-011, and Bill Black, all from 'A' Company."

(Photo credit and comment: Mick Hawkins)

Richard Al Green, 18
PFC, B/2/503, 5/5/68

"40 years later you came to mind. Richard I still remember growing up going to the army never thought you would go to the corp. I was not in country when you came home it still bothers me sometimes. Well I still miss you. P.S., sorry I never got to talk to your mom or family." Johnnie H. Washington

Sherron Everett Harbison, 21
SGT, A/1/50th, 5/5/68

"I remember when we heard. I was a young kid of five when we received news of Sherron's death. We lived in a small town in Texas called Mineral Wells as our father went through flight training with the US Army. We would endure two Viet Nam deployments starting



the next year. I have only a vague memory of Sherron from our grandparent's house in Curry, AL. His father was one of my favorite uncles and his mother was one of my favorite aunts. Sherron, and all Veterans, thank you." W.M. Drummond

Arthur Robert Henning, 18
CPL, C/3/503, 5/5/68

"We remember. Arthur is buried at Empire Cemetery, Eden, WI. PH."
Robert Sage



Ronald Arwed Hillman, 20
CPL, B/2/503, 5/5/68

(Virtual Wall states A/1/50th)

"The 50th Inf. Remembers. Ronald A. Hillman is fondly remembered by the soldiers with whom he served from 'A' Company, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry. Visit the Website of the Association formed by these 50th Infantry Vietnam Vets at: <http://www.ichiban1.org> Post a note on our 'Message Board' and possibly some of our members who served with Ron will respond. Search our site for photos and other documentation and(or) contact me (Jim Sheppard, Association Historian) at 50thInfantryAssociation@gmail.com for details about our Memorial for our men lost in action at the current day 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Headquarters at Fort Benning, Georgia. Memorial Wreath Laying Ceremonies are held every two years at the reunions of the 50th Infantry Association. Jim Sheppard



Dennis Edward Hinton, 24
1LT, B/2/503, 5/5/68

(Virtual Wall states A/1/50th)

"It was important for me to post this Memorial (Virtual Wall) for a special person who died when I was only 3 years old. I have a vivid memory of a picture of my uncle who was holding my baby sister and me by his side. It is the last and sadly the only memory I have of a great man whose life ended too early. I was told that he was a very special brother and son and I know he would have been an awesome uncle." Carrie Kirkutis



(Tributes continued...)





Robert John Leska, 20

SGT, A/1/50th, 5/5/68

"We remember. Robert is buried at Long Hill Burial Ground in Trumbull, CT. BSM PH." **Robert Sage**



Donald Everett Lowe, 21

CPL, B/2/503, 5/5/68

(Virtual Wall states A/1/50th)

"He was my younger brother by one year. We grew up together. We hunted together, we fished together, we dated girls together. We loved one another, but we were brothers, we didn't always agree. I went with the Air Force and he chose the Army. He served well, but he never came home. He will always live in my heart, as I miss him every day. My first-born son was named for him. One day when the Lord chooses to take me home, I will see him again. I look forward to that day."

William Douglas Lowe



Don, with a buddy, sometime, somewhere in Vietnam.

"To my best friend, a true hero. I was with Donald for 3 months, 24 hours a day and night of true horror and terror. We'd seen so much death and shared the pain of the loss of our friends. Donald was a true hero, he could of drove away to safety like many others did on 5-5-68 but instead he drove forward attacking the NVA, and gave his life with Robert Allen from N.J. His actions gave time for many others to escape and live. No one knew of his bravery but me laying in the rice paddy dikes wounded watching him attack to his death. God bless you Donald and Allen and the rest of the soldiers who gave their life for their country and the 1/50th, 173rd, 5-5-68." **James E. Fitzgerald "Doc"**

Jimmy Ray Moore, 21

CPL, B/2/503, 5/5/68

(Virtual Wall states A/1/503)

"Jimmy Ray 'Mule' Moore was an amateur Golden Glove boxer from San Francisco. He was well over six feet tall, dark skinned with huge hands, chest and arms. This man could have lifted a water buffalo without straining but he was never threatening. Just a quiet guy with an easy-going attitude and a quick smile who humped an M-60 machine gun for November (third) platoon. I vividly remember 'Mule' because after my platoon got wiped out in the St. Valentine's Day Massacre I was assigned to his gun team as one of his ammo bearers. He was one hell of a soldier who personally carried 600 rounds of ammo along with the 200 round belt he had on the gun. He faithfully cleaned his M-60 every other day and expected only the utmost effort from every member of his team. He also made sure we all carried at least 500 rounds of machinegun ammo as well. Suffice it to say that he was a competent field trooper and ran a tight gun team. I know this will sound bizarre in light of the circumstances, but I always felt halfway safe with him around. As for the way Jimmy met his death, all men at war can only hope that they pass on in such a manner. Mule died in the arms of a woman. It happened while he was on bridge guard just outside of old An Khe, in Binh Dinh province. A NVA sapper stepped into the bunker unannounced and discharged his AK-47. Jimmy and the woman died instantly from wounds sustained to the heart. The midnight firefight that raged afterward, a firefight that also would mean letters of condolences to other waiting mothers, would be fought without the deftly accurate and deadly wailing of Jimmy's machinegun. May God grant him eternal peace!" **Scott H. Smith, A/1/503**



Elbert Darrell Poff, 19

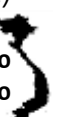
SP4, B/2/503, 5/5/68

(Virtual Wall states D/2/503)


"Darrell was my friend. Darrell and I met at the REPODEPO of the 173rd at An Khe, we became good friends. He loved his big Bowie knife that he carried and he talked often of an Edsel he had at home in West Virginia. We stayed together until his death in the 1st Platoon of Delta Co, 2nd/503rd ABN INF, 173rd ABN BDE (SEP). Darrell was quiet and dedicated. He was also a hero in the truest sense of the word...."



(Tributes continued....)



....On 5 May 68 in the Tiger Mountains, north of Phu My, he was killed. While on a squad patrol, humping down a dry stream-bed, looking for water to fill up a lot of canteens and fatrats we were carrying, we were ambushed by an NVA force of unknown size with small arms and automatic weapons. Darrell and another man (a new guy named Sch-ni-er or Sch-ri-ner) had gone down a steep embankment when the firing began. This new guy was hit at least twice, in the lower leg, and Darrell carried him in a fireman's carry, under intense fire back up the embankment and placed him in some boulders. I was the 60 gunner and laying down covering fire and reconning by fire when my AG Roger Metzler said Darrell said he was hit but OK. I turned my head to look and he had been hit again. The second was instantly fatal. His death was quick and painless and his heroism far and away above the Silver Star he was awarded (posthumously). This firefight began about 11AM and we were pinned down taking more casualties until after dark. Darrell was truly one of the best soldiers I ever saw in the Nam. But the most important thing about Darrell was that he was a good friend.
Written on 21 Nov 1998 by Robert Waters (M60 Gunner) 1st Plt., 2nd/503rd, 173rd Abn Bde (The Herd).

 **Francis Joseph Robinson, 19**
SGT, B/2/503, 5/5/68
 (Virtual Wall states A/1/503)
"We remember. Francis is buried at St Louis Cemetery in New Orleans, LA. BSM PH/OLC." **Robert Sage**



Craig Allen Rood, 20
SP4, B/2/503, 5/5/68
 (Virtual Wall states B/1/50th)
"Craig Rood is fondly remembered by the soldiers with whom he served from 'B' Company, of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry."




Donald Ray Stephenson, 20
SP4, B/2/503, 5/5/68
 (Virtual Wall states A/1/50th)
"We remember. Donald is buried at Wheel Community Cemetery in Shelbyville, TN. PH." **Robert Sage**



Bruce Wayne Tabor, "Doc", 18
PFC, HHC/1/50th, 5/5/68
"I was in the Army stationed in Korea when Bruce was killed. Bruce was my cousin. I remember later after I got back home our grandmother, who was living



with the Tabors when Bruce was killed telling me how a bolt of fear went through her when she saw a shiny green car pull up in front of the house and several men in dress uniforms got out. She said it was just like many years before when another shiny car pulled up to the house and several well-dressed soldiers came to the door to announce that Fred Tabor, Bruce's father, was missing in action. Turned out that he had been shot down over Germany and spent 18 months in POW camp. Bruce was 6 years younger than me. Our family spent many summer vacations visiting the Tabors in Aurora. Good memories." **Marshall Rodenberg**

 **Frank Wright Webb, 21**
1LT, B/2/503, 5/5/68
 (Virtual Wall states A/1/50th)
"Photo shown is a Portrait of Cadet Franklin W. Webb. This portrait hangs in the Preston Library, Virginia Military Institute (VMI)."



"I had the honor of meeting Frank at Officer Candidate School, Ft Benning, GA. Platoon members were determined by alphabetical order and with the first initial of our last names, T & W, we were lumped together into the 6th Platoon. I remember Frank as being a very easy person to be friends with. After six months of OCS we were both transferred to Ft. Hood, Tx in our time of readiness prior to going to Vietnam. We spent another four months hanging out at the Officer's Club pool and looking for trouble every party night. After we shipped off to Vietnam I didn't see Frank again. I remember the day that I heard about Frank's death. I was in the 198th Brigade Command Center and a friend radioed and relayed the terrible news. It is my understanding that he was killed by a sniper, after a very long hard 3 day battle. My best wishes to his family and all those whose life he touched. He was 'One Great Guy' and is missed by all that knew him."

"Second Lieutenant Webb distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous action on 12 October 1967, while serving with Company A, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry during a cordon and search mission near Hoa Tan in the Republic of Vietnam. When his unit became heavily engaged with a large enemy force, Lieutenant Webb, disregarding his own safety, led an assault against the hostile emplacements...."

(Tributes continued....)



....Repeatedly exposing himself to enemy fire, he made a complete search of the area and succeeded in neutralizing the enemy emplacements. His courageous action was instrumental in capturing a large number of hostile soldiers and contributed greatly to the successful completion of his unit's mission.

Lieutenant Frank Webb, 1st Platoon Leader of 'A' Company, was killed in action on May 5, 1968, near the villages of An Bao in Binh Dinh Province. 'A' Company forces were attacked and nearly overrun by the 'Black Star' Regiment of the North Vietnamese Army. 50th Infantry Archive Documentation shows that the 'A' Company Commander, Lt Hinton, was killed near the outset of the attack...shortly after calling for the remaining Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) to immediately withdraw back the way they had entered the area. Most of Lieutenant Webb's Platoon's APCs had been disabled in the initial volley of enemy rocket fire and he attempted to rally his now 'foot soldier' troops into a defensive position as human waves of NVA soldiers maneuvered in for the kill from three sides. Caught in open rice paddy areas, with only a small paddy wall for protection, the men of the 1st platoon were being killed by withering enemy fire. Frank Webb was killed by gunshot wound to his head...he died instantly.

For distinguishing himself by outstanding meritorious service in connection with ground operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam during the period from September 1967 to May 1968, Frank was the recipient of: The Silver Star, The Bronze Star, and 2 Purple Hearts in addition to his Combat Infantry Badge, Air Medal, National Defense Medal, Vietnam Service and Vietnam Campaign Medals." David Wrinkle



Richard Foy Wells, 20

SP4, B/2/503, 5/5/68

(Virtual Wall states A/1/50th)

"We remember. Richard is buried at Orion Cemetery in Grant County, AR. BSM PH/OLC." Robert Sage



Lawrence Lee Aldrich, 20

SP4, B/2/503, 5/6/68

"My brother, what can you say, although I was young at the time and really didn't understand what was happening, time has led me to realize the sacrifice Larry and all like him gave. My children never met him but they know him. We are all so proud to call him our hero, gone but not forgotten, a wonderful phrase, and so true....not just Larry, but all



who have given the ultimate sacrifice for 'Freedom'. It's true, freedom isn't free, but oh what a wonderful feeling it is. The best never rest and I am sure that they are all watching and defending us even today." Tim Aldrich

Larry Aldrich comes home. See Pages 64-65 for "OVER 42 YEARS LATER THE REMAINS OF A VIETNAM WAR MISSING IN ACTION SOLDIER RETURN HOME FOR BURIAL"

Larry Briscoe, 21

SGT, B/2/503, 5/6/68

I was 2 1/2 yrs old when u died. There's not a day that goes by that I don't think of u. I think of the advice that u would have given me the time we possibly would have spent together. I thank u for what u have given me. I thank u and your comrades. U are my hero always I miss u dad we all do. Happy birthday. Your son," Larry Briscoe, Jr.



Karl Lee Bullard, 20

1LT, B/2/503, 5/6/68

"Sky Soldier Honored: On behalf of myself and all the paratroopers who served in the 173rd 'Herd' Brigade in Viet Nam, we offer our respect and regrets for your sacrifice. May you rest in peace, never be forgotten and may your family be consoled with pride." Mike Switzer



[See Page 46 for LT Bullard's DSC citation]



Joseph Allan Clingerman, 19

PFC, E/17th Cav, 5/6/68

"You are survived by your niece and great-niece. Even though we never met, you will always be in our hearts and we will love you always. Tina and Kayla. From his niece,"

Tina L. Clingerman VanMatre



"Parents Given Son's Viet Medals"

VIETNAM MEDALS –

Medals awarded to Pfc.

Joseph A. Clingerman, killed in Vietnam, are presented to his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Clingerman of Dunbar, R.D. 2, at Army Reserve

Center ceremonies here. Making the presentation is Maj. Marvin A. Clem, Reserve center unit advisor. Herald Stanford



(Tributes continued....)



2/503d **VIETNAM** Newsletter / May-June 2018 – Issue 80

Page 8 of 90

~ A Note from The Virtual Wall ~

The 173rd Airborne Brigade's ground recon unit, E Troop, 17th Cavalry, lost three men on 06 May 1968, while the Brigade as a whole lost 12 men. Because The Virtual Wall cannot determine if these losses occurred in a single or separate engagements all 12 are listed here:

HQ Co, 173rd Abn Bde

SP4 Robert H. Mundy, Anniston, AL

E Trp, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Abn Bde

PFC Joseph A. Clingerman, Youngstown, OH

PFC Victor J. Humphrey, Baytown, TX

PFC Larry L. Kelly, Hayward, CA

B Co, 2nd Bn, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Abn Bde

1LT Karl L. Bullard, Miami, FL (Dist Svc Cross)

SGT Larry Briscoe, Denver, CO

SGT Lonny L. Stewart, Norwalk, CA

SP4 Lawrence L. Aldrich, Fort Worth, TX

CPL Thomas A. Fox, Richmond, VA

PFC Freddie I. Crockett, Hopewell, VA

PFC Lawrence M. McGinty, Philadelphia, PA

C Co, 1st Bn, 50th Infantry, 173rd Abn Bde

SP4 Rodney A. Crandall, Detroit, MI

Rodney Allen Crandall, 21

SP4, B/2/503, 5/6/68

(Virtual Wall states B/1/503)

"Rodney is buried at Forestlawn Cemetery in Detroit, Mich." **Robert Sage**



Freddie Isiash Crockett, 20

PFC, B/2/503, 5/6/68

Dear Sgt Freddie Crockett, Thank you for your service as an Airborne Qualified Infantryman. It is so important for us all to acknowledge the sacrifices of those like you who answered our nation's call. Please watch over America, it stills needs your strength, courage and faithfulness. Rest in peace with the angels." **Lucy Micik**



Thomas Amiss Fox, 18

CPL, B/2/503, 5/6/68

We remember. Thomas is buried at Morning Star Cemetery in Luray, VA." **Robert Sage**



Victor James Humphrey, 20

PFC, E/17th Cav, 5/6/68

"Pat and I went to high school with Vic and his sister Kathy in Baytown, TX. We graduated a year after Vic, at Robert E. Lee High School. He was on the track team with my husband Pat Boyle. We remember Vic as a very nice, outgoing young man. He was friendly to everyone, and had many friends. His family lived one street over from Pat, so they sometimes rode to school with us. Pat and I were engaged to be married when Vic died in Vietnam. We were in college, and came home to attend his funeral. We just want people to know that Vic is missed. We think about him from time to time, and reminisce about good times 30 years ago."

Janice Boyle



Larry Lee Kelly, 20

PFC, E/17th Cav, 5/6/68

"We remember. Larry is buried at Golden Gate National Cemetery." **Robert Sage**

Lawrence Michael McGinty, 19

PFC, B/2/503, 5/6/68

"Army Pfc. Lawrence M. McGinty, 19, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Herman J. McGinty, of 3280 Birch Rd., in Parkwood Manor. Pfc. McGinty was killed in action the same day his parents received a letter from his commanding general welcoming the young soldier to his unit. He died May 6, the day his parents received the letter from Brig. Gen. Richard J. Allen, commander of the 173d Airborne Brigade. Mr. and Mrs. McGinty had been notified May 8 that their son was missing after a battle on the 6th. On Wednesday, they received a telegram notifying them that his death had been confirmed. He was a 1967 graduate of Lincoln High School and had been working in an auto body and fender shop as an apprentice. Two months after graduation he joined the Army, trained at Fort Bragg, N.C., and Fort Benning, Ga., and was in Vietnam on April 13, less than a month before he was killed. His father is a truck driver for Wool Cartage Co. 70000 State Rd. Also surviving are a sister, Roseanne, 16, and two brothers, Stephen, 15, and Shawn, 4." **The Philadelphia Inquirer**



Robert Hall Mundy, 22

SP4, HHC/173d Bde, 5/6/68

"We remember. Robert is buried at Rock Springs Cemetery, Lafayette, AL."

Robert Sage



(Tributes continued....)



Lonny Lawrence Stewart, 21

SGT, B/2/503, 5/6/68

"We remember. Lonny is buried at Little Lake Cemetery in Santa Fe Springs, CA. PH." Robert Sage



Michael Anthony Gerome, 21

SGT, 173d LRRP, 5/7/68

(Virtual Wall states 74th Inf Det LRRP)

"Mike was my good friend. We spent our last evenings together stateside, in California, cruising and at 'going away', parties. My most vivid memories of Mike are of our flight from Atlanta to L.A., on our last leave prior to Vietnam, singing 'The Letter'. Mike was going to Nam as an MP with 18th Corp, while I was going as a grunt with the 101st. Later on he volunteered for the field: A fatal mistake. I made it. Why?" Unsigned



Paul L. Darden, Jr., 20

SGT, C/1/503, 5/8/68

(Virtual Wall states B/1/503)

"We remember. Paul is buried at Jones Cemetery in Snow Hill, Greene County, NC." Robert Sage



James Scott Brown, 19

CPL, B/3/503, 5/10/68

(Virtual Wall states B/1/503)

"Forever in my heart. Scott, dear brother, you were not long on this Earth, but your life was full and courageous. When we were children, I was your shadow...little sister sharing adventures with big brother. So many memories, so much sadness when you left, so much grief when you didn't come back. You are always with me, never forgotten, always loved. A true American boy, a true American hero." Julia Grogan-Brown



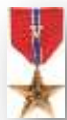
Warren Gray, 21

SGT, B/3/503, 5/10/68

(Virtual Wall states B/2/503)

"Dear Grandpa: I really wish I could see you. My mom and dad named me after you and my dad still has your jacket. I am very proud to have you in my family as a Vietnam soldier. Thank you for serving your country."

Warren Sheppard, Age 9 (posted 12/21/08)



Donald Giles Waide, 22

SSG, 173d LRRP, 5/7/68

"SSG Donald Giles Waide was survived by his mother, Nell Ogle Waide (1925-2011), father Clay Waide (1920-2004) 2 brothers: Douglas and Doyle; 2 sisters-in-law: Shirley and Karen; 2 nieces: Kimberly Sue and Stephanie Ann; grandparents: Mr. and Mrs. G.N. Cogdill and Mr. and Mrs. G.J. Waide. Donald and his parents are buried in Clayton Cemetery, Union County, New Mexico."

Virtual Wall posting

[See tribute to Don by his buddy, Irv Moran, on Pages 34-35]



Eckhard Gerhard Brenker, 21

CPL, C/1/503, 5/8/68

"A classmate remembered. Born in Germany. Raised in York, Pennsylvania. Died in Vietnam serving his adopted country. A boyhood friend and classmate. He is gone but he will not be forgotten by his friends and classmates at William Penn High School, York, Pennsylvania, Class of 1965."

Greg Doll, USMC (Ret)



Gary Edward Canapp, 19

CPL, C/1/503, 5/8/68

"May 8th 68. Gary I never forgot and I found your folks, though it took a lot longer than I ever imagined. Rest in peace brother. Airborne! The Herd will never forget!!!!" Unsigned



Robert Lee Owens, 22

SGT, B/3/503, 5/10/68

(Virtual Wall states B/1/50th)

"We remember. Robert is buried at Beaufort Nat Cem, Beaufort, SC. His stone says Co B, 1 BN, 50 INF, 173 ABN BDE." Robert Sage



William C. Sproule, Jr., 23

1LT, B/3/503, 5/10/68

"The last time that I saw Bill Sproule was as he was roused from his bunk at 0-Dark30 one night, told that his time in AIT Infantry, Ft. Dix was being curtailed, and that he was, immediately being reassigned to Inf. OCS, Ft. Benning. Bill Sproule was a super soldier, who I knew would do great things. That he died saving others, is to describe this great, funny, sensitive warrior. RIP, buddy." Larry Farrell



(Tributes continued....)





Bill Sproule, with a couple of his buddies, or as he would call them, his "babies". L-R: Sgt Jacobs - Lt Bill Sproule KIA - Steve Kelly

[See Page 42 for LT Sproule's DSC citation]

Roger Zimmerman, 24

SSG, B/3/503, 5/10/68

(Virtual Wall states C/2/503)

"Unknown but to 3rd platoon 3/503 173rd Airborne. Sgt. Zimmerman was the weapons squad sergeant when he went to the aid of the point squad which was pinned down in an ambush. Because he came forward firing his shotgun, the rest of the squad was able to disengage and pull back to safety. I hope somebody someday reads this." Jim Jacobs



Calvin Lionel Gooch, "Doc", 20

CPL, B/1/50th, 5/11/68

(Virtual Wall states HHC/1/50th)

"Miss You. Your smile and your sense of humor help your memory to live on in my heart and mind."

Candy (Duncan) Grant



Donald Eugene Honeycutt, 25

SGT, B/1/50th, 5/11/68

(Virtual Wall states C/1/503)

"Dear Sgt. Honeycutt, I never had the honor of meeting you. But I did meet your fiancé last year at the traveling wall. I saw her sitting alone on a bench so I stopped to talk with her. She told me about you. She still misses you and is very proud of you. I just wanted to leave a message thanking you for your service and your sacrifice. And I am so sorry for the loved ones you left behind. Thank you, sir, and God Bless." Billee



James Sidney Rylee, 27

SP5, B/1/50th, 5/11/68

"He served in Vietnam from August 15, 1967 to May 11, 1968. He was in the 173rd Airborne Brigade. He was killed on May 11, 1968 in Binh Dinh, South Vietnam Hostile, Ground Casualty. The body was recovered. He was a Methodist. He is on Panel 58E--Line 26. He left behind a daughter, Susan."

Uriah Alex Johnson, his grandson



James, with a buddy. Photo from his grandson.

Lawrence Joseph Bronczyk, 19

SGT, D/2/503, 5/12/68

"Remembering the boy from Lakeland, MN. Dear Lawrence: Went to the Vietnam Wall today to find your name on the wall. My husband Bob, son Chad, Chad's son Eli, Granddaughters Siiri, Paris, and Emily and Joy Pontinen found your name on the wall. We left you flags and pins. I remember your Mother, she was such a pleasant lady. I tap danced with your sister at the Hutter Hall, where your Mother was the janitor. You were so missed by your family and friends. Thank you for you service. April 24, 2015."

Joy (Lautigar) Pontinen



(Tributes continued....)



Patrick Leroy Mansfield, 18**CPL, D/2/503, 5/12/68**

"We remember. Patrick is buried at Evergreen Cemetery, Tucson, AZ. PH."

Robert Sage**Errol John Bailey, 23****PTE, 1RAR, 5/13/68**

"From Kurri Kurri NSW. Bailey died at 24 US Evacuation Hospital Long Binh of wounds received in the Battle of Coral, Bien Hoa Province on 13 May 1968.

Buried Beresfield Crematorium NSW."

**Allen Roy Barnes, 21****SP4, A/2/13th Arty, 5/13/68**

"I remember Allen and his girlfriend coming to see me just before he was set to leave for the war. I loved him dearly. That was the last time I ever saw him. He kissed me and hugged me and said to remember him. I, 50 years later, will always remember that day. He appeared like Elvis to most of his fans. I will always love you cousin Allen. He protected our country." Cousin Suzie



Note: Allen is listed on the 173d list of KIA. We can assume he was either attached to our brigade or visiting on that fateful day. Ed

"Specialist 4th Class Allen Roy Barnes was a 32K20, Tactical Wire Operations Specialist, attached to A Battery 2/13 Artillery. In our battalion the commo guys always worked with one of the gun crews during fire missions. The gun crews relied totally on land line wires to receive firing data from the Fire Direction Center. Commo wire ran all over the battery area. Robert Newcombe of B Battery explains that if 'Charlie' dropped a couple of mortar rounds in the battery area it was just a matter of time before someone's commo wire got cut. The commo guys would have to scamper through the incoming rounds trying to repair the cut wire. The commo guys acted independently whenever these breaks occurred. We assume Allen Barnes did, too. Allen Barnes enlisted in the Army, and started his service with A Battery on February 1, 1968. On May 13, 1968 Allen was wounded at a fire support base during a mortar attack and died from the injuries. He was one of several Red Dragon Clan casualties who were commo men. We cannoneers never looked on them as commo men, but as fellow gun bunnies. Whenever a fire mission was in progress all available personnel became cannoneers, from the commo men to the motor pool men to the ammo men to the fire direction center men.

Rest in Peace, Specialist Barnes. You are remembered by the Red Dragon Clan for your selfless devotion to the guys in the unit. From a unit veteran,"

William E. Novakovic**Robert B. Hickey, 24****CPL, 1RAR, 5/13/68**

"Sydney NSW. Hickey was killed in action in Bien Hoa Province 13th May 1968. Buried Rookwood Military Cemetery NSW."

**Peter Edward (Joe) Lewis, 24****SGT, 3RAR, 5/13/68**

"Geraldton WA. Grew up on Eyre Peninsula. He was killed by a VC sniper on 13th May 1968 near Fire Support Base Coral, Bien Hoa. Buried Centennial Park Cemetery Adelaide SA."

**Robert Leo McNab, 20****PTE, 1RAR, 5/13/68**

"Melbourne VIC. He died during a North Vietnamese attack on a fire support base, in northern Bien Hoa on 13th May 1968. Buried Fawkner Cemetery VIC."

**John Alfred O'Brien, 21****PTE, 1RAR, 5/13/68**

"St Leonards NSW. He was killed in action on 13th May 1968 in Bien Hoa, two weeks after he arrived in Vietnam. Buried Northern Suburbs Cemetery NSW."

**Christopher James Sawtell, 19****GNR, HQ Btry, 12 FD Regt, 5/13/68**

"Born Mudgee NSW. Raised at Seven Hills N.S.W. He was killed by an exploding Rocket at Fire Support Base Coral in Bien Hoa on 13th May 1968. Buried Northern Suburbs Crematorium NSW."

**Ian James Scott, 21****GRN, HQ Btry, 12 FD Regt, 5/13/68**

"Camperdown VIC. He was killed by an exploding Rocket at Fire Support Base Coral in Bien Hoa on 13th May 1968. Buried Camperdown Cemetery VIC."



(Tributes continued....)



Lawrence Rodney Sheppard, 22
PTE, 1RAR, 5/13/68

"In honour of a dearly loved and lost soul of our family history...till we meet on our long journey home..." Donna

"Melbourne VIC. (Born Arthur D Cook Adopted out.) The rifleman private died in a major battle at Fire Base Coral on 13th May 1968 in Bien Hoa. Buried Springvale Cemetery Melbourne VIC."



Bevan Maxwell Trimble, 21
PTE, 1/RAR, 5/13/68

"Bendigo VIC. He died of frag wounds during the first VC attack on Fire Support Base Coral on 13th May 1968. Buried Bendigo Cemetery VIC."



Richard Christopher Watson, 20
PTE, 1RAR, 5/13/68

"Manchester Great Britain. He was killed in Bien Hoa on a morning patrol on 13th May 1968. Buried Springvale Crematorium Melbourne VIC."



John Hunter Whitton, 28
CPL, 1/RAR, 5/13/68

"Lanarkshire Scotland. He died during the Battle of Coral on 13th May 1968 in Bien Hoa. Buried Ashes sent to Scotland VIC."



Ian Kenneth Dawson, 24
CPL, 1RAR, 5/14/68

"Sydney NSW. Dawson was killed in action in Bien Hoa Province 14th May 1968. Buried Rookwood Crematorium NSW."



Christopher Robert Nisbet, 20
PTE, 1RAR, 5/14/68

"Brisbane QLD. Nisbet was killed in action in an enemy contact in Bien Hoa on 14th May 1968. Buried Hemmant Cemetery QLD."



John Gregory S. Pearce, 22
CPL, 1RAR, 5/14/68

"Mosman NSW. The section leader died from fragmentation wounds during an enemy contact on 14th May 1968. Buried Terendak Military Malaysia."



Thomas Walter Foy, 23
CPT, HHC/2/503, 5/15/68

"We remember. Thomas is buried at Baltimore National Cemetery." R. Sage



Anibal Ortega, Jr., 20
SGT, D/2/503, 5/15/68

Junior. I never knew you, but my Mom was your best friend. She misses you very much, and has your picture next to her bed when she sleeps. I know you watch over us. You died so young and I wish I would have been able to have met you. Chinky loves you Junior. We wish you were here." Unsigned



William Henry Martin, 22
L/CPL, 1RAR, 5/16/68

"Winton QLD. He served had extended his tour by six months when killed in action on 16th May 1968. Buried Winton Cemetery QLD."



Alan John Wallis, 20
PTE, 1RAR, 5/16/68

"Wingham NSW. He was killed sometime before dawn on 16th May 1968 during an enemy attack on Fire Support Base Coral Bien Hoa. Buried Sandgate Cemetery NSW."



Harry Winston White, 23
PTE, 1RAR, 5/16/68

"Gladesville NSW. He died of shrapnel wounds at Fire Base Coral, Bien Hoa at 3am on 16th May 1968. Buried Northern Suburbs Cemetery NSW."



Stephen Wayne Quinn, 19
CPL, D/1/503, 5/17/68

"This is my memory of my buddy Steve, when as 18 year old soldiers we were in the same squad. He was a fine soldier and very polite to all. Steve was fearless in battle and carried his weight as well as anyone in the bush. He wanted to be a machine gunner and got his wish when our gunner Benny Thompson left for home. Benny would always say things were OK when we three were together. I got wounded March 3, 1968 and when I returned to the field after weeks of rehab I was told that Benny and Quinn had left with Steve getting killed. I felt somewhat alone as we were a team but lived to tell a story. His family should be very proud of this soldier. I will always keep him in my heart."



John Rodriguez

(Tributes continued....)



Julian Thomas Fields, 21

SGT, C/3/503, 5/18/68

"There is not a day goes by that I don't think about this day - I am sorry it had to be you and not me. I miss the good times we could have had. Keep the beer cold and some fish for me. Your friend."

Douglas Anderson, 173 Airborne



Photo posted in connection with Julian's tribute.

Frank G. Herrera, 19

SGT, C/2/503, 5/18/68

"I was a friend of Frank. I held him after he was wounded and he did not suffer." **Roy Crayton**



Gregory Stanley Kowaleski, 21

SGT, A/2/503, 5/20/68

"The father of a young soldier killed in Vietnam, denounced the conflict as a 'political war' Friday and said it should have been over two years ago. Stanley Kowaleski, father of Army Sgt. Gregory S. Kowaleski, 21, of Mount Laurel Rd., Mount Laurel, N.J., said America should do everything possible to get out of Vietnam. 'I despise Communists,' Kowaleski said. 'We should use every possible means to end this war, including pullout. Not one of those Communists are worth one American life.' Kowaleski and his wife, Janet, learned Thursday their son had been killed by sniper fire Tuesday. A 1965 graduate of Lenape Regional High School in Medford, he joined the Army in February, 1966, and went to Vietnam last August. Sgt. Kowaleski, a Bronze Star holder, was a platoon leader. He had come home on emergency leave in January for his grandfather's funeral, but the malaria he contracted in Southeast Asia prevented him from attending the services." **Philadelphia Inquirer**



Larry Leon Mitchell, 19

SP4, E/17th Cav, 5/20/68

"Hi Larry, It has been 48 years since we graduated high school. Our 50th Reunion is coming up in two years and I doubt you would recognize these old gray headed grandmas and granddads as your classmates! -:) Larry, we remember you & James each time that we are together; you will always remain a part of the Pinevale Tigers Class of 1966!!! Thank you for the ultimate sacrifice!" **Jennifer**

Michael Davis Reeves, 20

CPL, E/17th Cav, 5/20/68

"Army Cpl. Michael D. Reeves, 20, son of Charles and Alice Reeves of Cape Ave., Cape May Point, N.J. Cpl. Reeves left high school two years ago to enlist in the Army. He had served one year in Vietnam, but after returning home in March, volunteered to return. 'There's a job to do and I'm going back,' he told his family. He was killed in a firefight on the out skirts of Saigon. Besides his parents, he is survived by a brother, Timothy; and three sisters, Shirl, Patty and Alice." **Philadelphia Inquirer**



Donald Charles Wood, 18

PFC, E/17th Cav, 5/20/68

"To Woody from a fellow trooper and friend. Although I only knew you for two months you made a lasting impression for the rest of my life. Your kindness and gentle spirit is everlasting in my heart forever. God bless you and we will see each other again someday. Brothers forever," **Paul H. Limon**



~ A Note from The Virtual Wall ~

E Troop, 17th Cavalry, was the 173rd Airborne Brigade's ground recon unit. On 20 May 1968

E Troop lost three men:

**SP4 Larry L. Mitchell, Valdosta, GA;
CPL Michael D. Reeves, Absecon, NJ; and
PFC Donald C. Wood, Philadelphia, PA.**

George Alfred Constable, 32

MAJ, RAA, 5/23/68

"Kyogie NSW. His Cessna was shot down while providing convoy cover from Fire Support Base Coral. Three days after returning from Rest & Recreation (5 Days) in Australia 23rd May 1968. Buried French's Forest Cemetery NSW."



(Tributes continued....)



James M. Levings, 19

SGT, C/3/503, 5/23/68

"We remember. James is buried at Snowbird Chapel Cemetery in Newtown, ND." **Robert Sage**



Ivan Kimokeo Pascal, 20

PFC, C/3/503, 5/23/68

"My brother Kimo was a very special person. He was loved and missed by all his family and friends. I will always love and miss him for he was more than a brother to me. He was like a father that I never had. I miss you Kimo, life for me has never been the same since you've been gone. I know things would have been much different if you were here. God Bless you and I love you, your Sister," **Kathy**



Gary Duane Fox, 18

CPL, E/17th Cav, 5/24/68

"We remember. Gary is buried at Sheridan Municipal Cemetery, Sheridan, WY. PH." **Robert Sage**



Linwood Gough, 24

CPL, A/1/503, 5/25/68

"I was assistant gunner on Cpl. Gough's M60 crew. I joined the gun crew in March 68 when he was the assistant gunner for Jimmy (Mule) Moore. Cpl. Gough was a good man, a professional soldier, and his only want was to get home to his family. If anyone knows or can get my information to his family please do, and if anyone in the family would like to meet with me, I will travel to wherever you are. Cpl. Gough was my friend, fellow soldier, and brother forever!" **George Purnia** (8/8/06)



Danny Hoskins, 25

CPL, C/1/50th, 5/25/68

"I still see the pain on my grandmothers sweet face when she talks about you..and how you had just started your life..you were a very admired brother..and you and her son, my father, were the same age..and very close..I wish I could have met you and I know I would've loved you just as much..you would have been a great..great uncle...I'll meet you someday... your nephew..." **Patrick Palmer**



Lindsay Noel Brown, 22

PTE, 3RAR, 5/26/68

"Bendigo VIC. Brown was killed in an enemy attack on Fire Support Base Coral, Bien Hoa in the early hours of 26th May 1968. Buried Benalla Cemetery VIC."



Alan John Cooper, 20

PTE, 3RAR, 5/26/68

"Royal Park SA. Cooper was with 2 Platoon, A Company 3RAR in December 1967 when he was killed at 4am 26th May 1968. Fire Support Base Balmoral in Bien Hoa Province was overrun by the enemy. Buried Centennial Park Adelaide SA."



John Walter Desnoy, 22

PTE, 3RAR, 5/26/68

"Melbourne VIC. Desnoy was killed in action in Bien Hoa Province at 3.30 am 26th May 1968 in the initial attack on Fire Support Base Balmoral. Buried Springvale Crematorium VIC."



William Malcolm Thomas, 21

PTE, 3RAR, 5/26/68

"Adelaide SA. A pre-dawn enemy attack on Fire Support Base Coral Bien Hoa killed the private on 26th May 1968. Buried Centennial Park Cemetery SA."



William Francis Brice, Jr., 23

SGT, HHC/2/503, 5/27/68

(Virtual Wall states E/2/503)

"In Nam we called Bill 'Febe', not sure why, as only had a chance to become good friends my first 30 days in Country, which would of been his last 30 days. He was still humping in the field at that time waiting to become the CO's jeep driver position to open up. It did finally open for him, just inside his short timer days of 30. He was a great guy who would give you the shirt off his back or last smokes. Always laughing at something stupid, but his laughs were infectious. I was with Febe, right up until the officer requested to head back. Once they turned on the highway, we heard the explosion and knew in our hearts, it was Febe. I always regretted not reaching out to his family, but what do you say, that has not been said before. I loved Febe as a very close brother and till this day I feel the pain I felt when I heard the explosion. I know he would tell me in his way of saying things, get over it....sorry Febe, that cannot happen. Rest in Peace Febe." **Bob Lohr**



(Tributes continued....)



Patrick Matthew Steele, 19

CPL, HHC/2/503, 5/27/68

(Virtual Wall states E/2/503)

To my brother and fellow warrior. I was with Pat in the same company with the 173rd Airborne...in 1968...We attended Forward Observer school together and went our separate ways in country....I remember the night he was killed. He was returning to LZ English from English North....in a jeep with another FO and they were both ambushed by the VC on the road back to the camp.....I was in the bush at the time, and didn't know he was KIA until I got back on a stand-down...My oldest son is named after Pat....He was a great guy who passed away way too soon, I will never forget him...." J.W. Hypes



Algernon P. Kaakimaka, Jr., 20

SGT, A/2/503, 6/1/68

"Algernon, Today, 3 June 2006, marks the 40th anniversary of the graduating class of Roosevelt High School, Honolulu, Hawaii class of '66". I wanted to let you know that you are not forgotten and that I remember you often. For a little over a year now I have worn your remembrance bracelet and have shared memories with all who have asked in whose memory do I wear the bracelet. The inscription upon the bracelet reads: 'Sgt. Algernon P. Kaakimaka, Jr. - Army - 01 June 68 - Vietnam - HI'. On this day there are probably many of our classmates who are reflecting back on those wonderful years at Roosevelt and all of the good times that were had and the everlasting memories and friendships that were made. I pray that you too will have moments of happy memories and reflections of your years as a 'Rough Rider'. A fond ALOHA, Bruce."
Bruce Dyer, USN MACV Saigon, South Vietnam 69-70



Sam Henry Boyd, 20

CPL, B/2/503, 5/28/68

(Virtual Wall states A/2/503)

"We remember. Sam is buried at Flint Hill Cemetery, Ft Mill, SC. BSM PH."
Robert Sage



Jeffrey Thomas Worle, 21

PTE, 3RAR, 5/28/68

"Murwillumbah NSW. He was killed in an attack on Fire Support Base Balmoral, Bien Hoa on 28th May 1968. Buried Cheltenham Cemetery VIC."



John Thomas Durrington, 29

T/WO2, AATTV (RAINF), 5/30/68

"Sydney NSW. While attached to the US Special Forces, the temporary Warrant Officer was killed in action in Quang Nam Province 30th May 1968. Buried Springvale Cem VIC."



Dal Edward Abbott, 21,

PTE, 1RAR, 5/30/68

"From Ashfield NSW. Abbott was killed in Bien Hoa on 30/05/1968 after being in the province for about a month. His family requested that his name not be placed on the honour roll at the War Memorial in Canberra. As of the 22/05/2013, after his family died, his name has been included on the Honour Roll at the War memorial in Canberra. He was buried at Terendak, Malaysia."



Frederick George Hamersley, 38

T/WO2, AATTV (RAINF), 5/30/68

"Georgina WA. He was killed in an operation against an enemy convoy in Quang Nam on 30th May 1968. Buried Karrakatta Cemetery WA."



Jessie Gerald Poe, 19

SGT, D/3/503, 6/2/68

(Virtual Wall states A/2/503)

"DeKalb County Honored Veteran: I did not know you, Jess, but I have heard stories and talked to several of your classmates. You came from a small town of under 1000 people, in an Illinois county that gave up 19 of its best. You are always remembered, with your name inscribed on at least 3 monuments, in Kirkland, Sycamore, and Springfield, Illinois. As a Nam Vet, I am proud of your service to our Nation, saddened by your death, and ever vigilant that you, and over 58,200 of our comrades lost, will NEVER BE FORGOTTEN. Rest in peace."

Richard Westlake



Jessie, with a little buddy, sometime, somewhere in Vietnam.

(Photo credit David C. Baker)



(Tributes continued....)



Dennis Michael Ramon, 19
SP4, D/3/503, 6/2/68

"You are not forgotten. The war may be forgotten but the warrior will always be remembered!!!! All gave Some - Some gave All. Rest in peace Dennis."

Jerry Sandwisch, 173d Abn Bde, '69-'70




Timothy Lawrence Strohm, 20
PFC, D/3/503, 6/2/68

(Virtual Wall states A/1/50th)

"We remember. Timothy is buried at Enterprise Cem, Enterprise, OR. PH."

Robert Sage



 **Joseph Tommy Vandevender, 21**
CPL, D/3/503, 6/2/68

(Virtual Wall states A/2/503)

"Boyhood friend. Well my friend, after growing up together, riding boats together, getting in trouble together...50 years ago I was notified by the Red Cross of your death. I too was on active duty. I was crushed. You took me to the airport when I left for Vietnam and was there to pick me up when I got back. My family considers you one of us and always will. I went back to Jamestown last week and went to visit you. I noticed some fresh flowers. I have a lead on your sister Patty and will try to contact her, I assume it was her. I recall how hard you worked just to join the Army and was proud for you. You will always be my friend. Rest in peace Joe, rest in peace." Joseph Campo



Marvin Winston Murray, 21
CPL, B/2/503, 6/3/68

"My Roommate HOWARD UNIV. When I heard the unfortunate news of your ultimate sacrifice, it took my breath away. Marvin was popular, had a great sense of humor, and was a brilliant mathematician. For those students who have and will reside in Cook Hall please remember that in Room 224 there once lived a soldier and my friend." Clinton E. Taylor



"Photos were sent to me by Bill McKenzie, 2nd from the left in the group photo. Thank you Bill." Janna Hoehn

Tony Valdez Nastor, 21
CPL, D/2/503, 6/5/68

"Remembering You. You are in our prayers after all these years."

Frank Dominguez



Dayton Joseph Hooks, 19
SGT, 173d Eng., 6/7/68

"To My Friend/My Brother. I talked to your brother several years ago and told him we served together and we were friends. You, Buddy, Stoker and me. You and Buddy paid the ultimate price but never will it be in vain. I am sorry I never got to say goodbye. I have never forgot you nor will I ever. Your friend and fellow trooper." Brent Johnson

Lawrence Oliver Rose, 20
PFC, D/4/503, 6/10/68

"To an American Hero. I am writing because I told my daughter about him since she is in Washington this weekend and I asked her to look him up on the Wall. She honored Larry by sending me a photo of his name. Larry was a classmate of mine who was destined to serve. As a student he idolized the soldiers. We grew up during this war. Don't ever forget our men and women who served and when you see them don't feel bad, walk up and say thank you, we do care. They are proud to hear this." Unsigned



Jerry Roger Ferguson, 24
SGT, D/2/503, 6/13/68

"To my sweet husband. Honey here I am at 72 and I would hope that you would have thought I had kept myself looking pretty for you. I'm still taking chemo pills and will till the day I die, then I'll see you and our daughter. My folks and yours are up there with you also and our grandparents, you are the lucky one Fergy. Your son will be 49 on Christmas Eve and he talks of you so much, he's a big hunter like you were. One day I'll see you again my skysolider, I was and have always been so proud of you. We were only married right at 4 yrs but all the fun we had. Still loving you." Judy Ferguson Scofield



(Tributes continued....)



**Porfirio Sam Solano, 21****SSG, D/2/503, 6/13/68**

"I remember that day. We spent the night on top of a hill overlooking the South China Sea on the Bong Son Plains. The morning was clear and the sun was bright. You were looking forward to going home, you only had a few days left and you were counting. You and the Lt. led your platoon to do a recon that morning. We heard the shots of gunfire down the hill, and my platoon went to assist you guys. Many were wounded and some paid the ultimate price, you were one of them. I will never forget that day....I always remember you and still struggle with survivors guilt....I have turned it over to the Lord, Prov. 3:4,5. I am now a Pastor and I speak about you and many others who have paid the ultimate price....you will never be forgotten."

Pastor Pete Untalon, D/2/503, '67/'68**Leonard Ray White, 21****CPL, D/2/503, 6/13/68**

"Leonard was an airborne infantry soldier! He went on aerial combat assault missions ... pulled point ... went on night-time ambushes ... he had to be careful of deadly boo-b-traps ... he had to look out for snipers ... he went on search and destroy missions ... and slept and ate in a hot brutal jungle. Leonard was always willing to do his share and more under sustained fear and enormous physical demand. A young man willing to perform all these dangerous duties in a life and death environment and to be brave daily is no less than heroic. On June 13, 1968 Leonard White relieved another soldier of his position as R.T.O. because that soldier had succumbed to malaria. While on a search and destroy mission this outstanding (Sky Soldier) was caught in the center of a Viet Cong ambush and killed fighting his way out. Leonard's body was returned to Watonsville and following a funeral, was buried with full military honors at the Pajaro Valley Memorial Park."

Charles Dewes**Henry Eugene Wooley, 21****SGT, D/2/503, 6/13/68**

"We remember. Henry is buried at McFarlands Cemetery in Banks, AR. PH."

Robert Sage**Charles Arthur Bedsole, 20****1LT, HHB/3/319, 6/17/68**

(Virtual Wall states D/3/319)

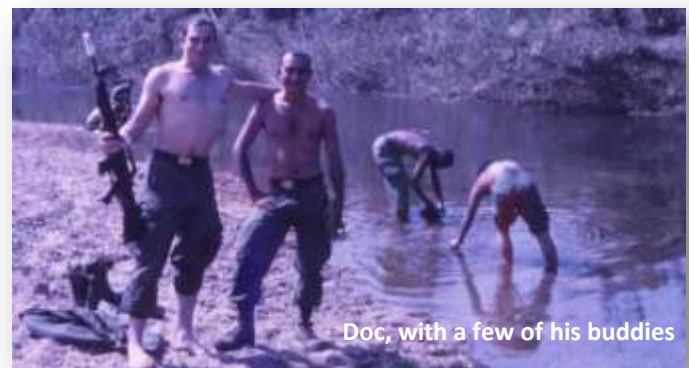
"We remember. Charles is buried at Baltimore Nat Cem." **Robert Sage**

**Charlie E. Berry, 21****SGT, C/4/503, 6/17/68**

"To my Brother. This day is in honor of all of our fallen military men and women, but my love, I honor you each and every day of my life. I humbly thank everyone of you that paid the ultimate sacrifice for my freedom and others. Each and every one of you are truly my HERO. I love you my brother and always will. There is a special place in my heart for you and that special place is my whole heart. I'm in a great place in my life right now. You would be very proud of your little sister as I am of myself. I give God the praise for that. Love you much!" **Unsigned**

**Donald Shuichi Fujimoto, "Doc", 22****SGT, C/4/503, 6/17/68**

"On this memorial day May 29, 2006, 38 years after Donald was taken from us, his supreme sacrifice for his family and his country is still felt very deeply. Donald was such a kind, gentle brother who lived every day of his short life with honor, strong conviction and great courage. I dearly miss his comforting, supportive presence as we were growing up together and will forever cherish his memory. His loving sister,"

Margaret (Fujimoto) Kawai**Doc, with a few of his buddies**

"In memory of 'Fuji'. Donald was the new senior aidman for Charlie Co, 4th Bn 503rd, 173rd Abn Bde. The unit had been given a mission that was for a Battalion size unit. After the unit went into the AO it became under fire from high grounds, all American weapons being fired by enemy troops. It wasn't long and Donald became wounded. Several of his company tried desperately to reach him and bring him to safety to no avail. Don gave his life in the highest traditions. He was a great soldier, liked by all who knew him, respected by all he treated as their medic. God be with your loved ones, your fellow medics..." **Lynn E. Morse**

(Tributes continued....)

~ A Note from The Virtual Wall ~
Sergeant Fujimoto was assigned to Charlie Company, 4/503rd Infantry, in Vietnam, and was one of six men killed in fighting on 17 June 1968:
SGT Charlie E. Berry, Atlanta, GA
SGT Donald S. Fujimoto, Stockton, CA
CPL Allen S. Stroud, Garner, NC
CPL Roosevelt Townsend, Mathews, AL
CPL William T. Wedgeworth, Cleveland, OH
PFC Michael J. Kennedy, Fort Lauderdale, FL

Michael Joseph Kennedy, 19
PFC, C/4/503, 6/17/68

"You are not alone. It's now going on 50 years, seems like yesterday that we walked into that ambush. I tried to help but there were too many of them and too few of us and it happened so fast. If there is an afterlife I will see you there Airborne Brother." **Koz**



Allen Sheffield Stroud, 20
CPL, C/4/503, 6/17/68

"Still Remembering My Beloved Husband. Allen S. Stroud served with Company C, 4th Bn, 503rd Inf, 173rd ABN Bde. I am looking for anyone who served with him in Vietnam. Allen was a good Man, Husband and Father. He was one of the greatest men I've known. He will always be sadly missed. He was proud and loved the fact that he was serving his country."

Dora Anne Stroud (Posted 2/19/05)



Roosevelt Townsend, 24
CPL, C/4/503, 6/17/68

"Slip off that pack. Set it down by the crooked trail. Drop your steel pot alongside. Shed those magazine-laden bandoliers away from your sweat-soaked shirt. Lay that silent weapon down and step out of the heat. Feel the soothing cool breeze right down to your soul ... and rest forever in the shade of our love, brother." **From your Nam-Band-Of-Brothers**
 (Quote from a letter home by Maj. Michael Davis O'Donnell)



William Thomas Wedgeworth, 24
CPL, C/4/503, 6/17/68

"A poem for William: My Soldier Boy I still remember to this day, That plane that took you far away. Across the ocean you went from me, I did not know, eternally! Our time was short but sweet, Again, we both shall meet! A love destined to grow, Forever and a day, we both know! God sure blessed us from above, A daughter, he gave us, with his love! When I look at her,



I see, A part of you still here with me! Thank you too, for this joy, My loving Soldier Boy! I hope you're waiting for me, In that promise land! And when I take my last breath, Please hold my hand! We will then be together, Forever!!!!" Michelle

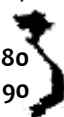
AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL FOR HEROISM

The following AWARD is announced posthumously.
 Awarded: Bronze Star Medal 'with "V" Device



Reasons: For heroism in connection with military operations against a hostile force. Private Wedgeworth distinguished himself on 17 June 1968 in the Republic of Vietnam. On this day Private Wedgeworth's platoon was given the mission of sweeping the right flank of the company for suspected enemy positions. As his platoon advanced they started receiving heavy automatic weapons fire, grenade, rocket, and mortar fire. Private Wedgeworth immediately began to lay down a deadly base of suppressive fire with his machine gun, realizing the necessity of placing accurate fire upon the enemy. Private Wedgeworth stood up so that he could see the enemy positions more clearly through the dense undergrowth. Private Wedgeworth continued to advance with his platoon standing up and placing devastating fire upon the entrenched enemy, as the platoon advanced the enemy fire became more intense. Still with total disregard for his own personal safety he continued to expose himself to the deadly hail of enemy fire in order to place more accurate fire upon the enemy. Because of the heavy casualties his platoon was ordered to withdraw. As the platoon started moving back Private Wedgeworth continued to expose himself, firing upon the enemy and giving his platoon the much needed time to move their wounded comrades down the hill. As he started to return to his platoon he saw the enemy trying to out flank the right side of his platoon, realizing how disastrous this would be, he began placing a hail of deadly fire upon the enemy and in doing so exposed himself even more to the hail of devastating enemy fire. As he continued to fire from an exposed position he was mortally wounded by the intense enemy fire. Private Wedgeworth's great courage and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the Military Service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army,

(Tributes continued....)



~ A Note from The Virtual Wall ~

C Company, 4/503rd lost seven men during a fight in Lam Dong Province on 17 June 1968:

SGT Charlie E. Berry, Atlanta, GA

SGT Donald S. Fujimoto, Stockton, CA (medic, HHC w/ C/4/503)

CPL Allen S. Stroud, Garner, NC

CPL Roosevelt Townsend, Mathews, AL

CPL William T. Wedgeworth, Cleveland, OH

PFC Michael J. Kennedy, Fort Lauderdale, FL

D Btry, 3rd Bn, 319th Artillery

1LT Charles A. Bedsole, Severna Park, MD (Arty Fwd Observer)

William Douglas Sisler, 21

SGT, A/4/503, 6/19/68

"Favorite neighbor. Bill was my Middle School neighbor. I had a tremendous crush on him and we actually went to a dance together. He moved away in high school and I lost track of him. How sad to realize he died so young. He was a very special person."

Judy Moss Airhart



David Thomas Bell, 19

CPL, A/4/503, 6/20/68

"With my dad. David although I did not know you, I knew of you from my father Rick, he kept pictures of you in his books and talked about you a lot. Now that he has left this earth he now joins you in a place the rest of us can only dream of. I want you to know that none of you guys died for nothing we are thankful for your sacrifice and regardless of past opinions of those from your generation, my generation appreciates your sacrifice in a land so far away from home. You are all heroes, thank you for your honor and dedication. And please look over my father in heaven."

Unsigned



Michael John Wickman, 22

PTE, RNZIR, V3, 6/22/68

"Killed in action, 22 June 1968 – gunshot wound to head and neck in contact at YS523586."



Noel Stanley George Lyes, 29

PTE, RNZIR, 161 Bty, 6/23/68

"Noel you are forever in our hearts... you will always be remembered brother."

Arohanui," Rex and Rose Matthews, Hokitika



Michael Earl Walker, 19

CPL, D/1/50th, 6/27/68

"We remember. Michael is buried at Fredericksburg East Cemetery in Fredericksburg, OH."

Robert Sage



Larry Hays Smith, 23

CPL, HHC/1/50th, 6/29/68

"We remember. Larry is buried at Magee Cemetery in Magee, MS. BSM PH."

Robert Sage



Lest We Forget





INCOMING!



~ A Respected & Gallant Leader ~

"This newsletter (Issue 79) really hit home hard. Almost more than the 875 / 882 because it is my time frame and battles. Finally getting some closing on these times. Thanks for helping me with that my friend.



Attached (below) is one of three or four pictures I have of Vietnam. All the rest of my pictures and memory stuff was lost in a storage sale in the 80's. Anyway, the picture is of Lt John Fera, KIA 18 MAR 68. He was as his silver star said a real respected and gallant leader. I actually spent some time with this guy as I had gotten back to the field in February after going to Japan to take the West Point pre-test. He is/was a graduate and spent some time telling me the reasons I should go.

I got hit on 29 MAR 68 and was ruled medically disqualified from going, oh well.

Another guy and I were the ones that bagged Lt. Fera. He did not suffer but it sure put us in the hunt for the sniper. The entire unit spent a lot of ammo on the sniper who got him but we did get him and a number of others that day.



LT John Fera, D/1/503*
chowing down in the field

After some stuff we had been through earlier in the month I believe about a week before he was given a field assignment as an acting Company Commander but not for sure of that, just in the back of my head from our talks.

Airborne all the Way my Friend, Arizona Bill."

Bill Berry
173d Engineers

*173d KIA list states B/1/503

***"IT IS OUR JOB TO
REMEMBER."***

Mark Carter
173d LRRP

~ The Rabbit Hole ~

"Another huge effort (it seems to me) to get this long newsletter out (Issue 79). I liked the story of how you left the People's Paradise of Vietnam to The Fatherland and met the love of your life who has a slight German accent.

I was at my local grocery store the other day and came across a civilian wearing a 82nd Abn logo on his hat. I acknowledged him as we passed with an 'Airborne,' and he instinctively came back with, 'All the way, sir!'

I've been out about 34 years now, but some days it seems like yesterday. Not an everyday thing here in AggiLand. Still fun to go back into the rabbit hole once in a while. Tony"

Tony Geishauser, Maj. (Ret)
335th AHC Cowboy Jockey
"Honorary Member of 2/503"

Note: During a 2/503 reception at the Ft. Worth reunion years ago, some of you will recall Tony was made an "Honorary Member" of our battalion for *"intentionally allowing his Huey to be shot down inside our perimeter so he could live his life-long dream of fighting in ground combat with the 2/503d"*, during Operation Silver City. He also spilled our eggs. Ed

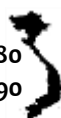


Maj. Tony Geishauser, Cowboys, holds up some of 300 coupons for free breakfast at McDonalds for all 2/503 troopers in attendance to replace the breakfast he "spilled" at LZ Zulu Zulu on 3/16/66, stating, *"Cowboys may be late sometimes, but we always deliver!"*



Capt. Bill Vose, A/2/503, presents Tony with a plaque naming him an honorary member of the 2/503d. An hour and forty-five minutes later, with some difficulty, we were able to wrest the microphone from Vose's tight grip thanks to a platoon of men from 4-Deuce employing a crowbar and a choke hold. ☺

(INCOMING! continued....)



~ To The War Makers ~

"Is there a hard copy (of Issue 79) published similar to the 173d issue (*Sky Soldier Magazine*)? Here's what I'm thinking.

War is so tragic and impacts so many fine young Americans, I'd like to send a copy of this newsletter to the President and each member of Congress and let them look at the faces of those who fall serving their country.

They should think and make sure that when they send young Americans off to war it should be really, really necessary for national security.

Secondly, they should realize that when they do send troops off to war, it is our obligation to help them heal from all wounds, both physical and mental. It's sounding like a crusade but I'm willing to do it. I need someone's permission. Yours? Families? Who would object? Keep up the good work, bro. Airborne. Tom."

Thomas S. Abraham
C/2/503



LT Tom Abraham
Wpns Pltn Ldr
C/2/503

Reply: Hi Tom. There are no hard copies available, but, you're welcome to print our newsletters and send them to anyone you like. Very seriously doubt this President would read it, as it's widely reported he reads scant little. The attached newsletter, Issue 76, listing our fallen from Dak To in November '67, might have even greater impact on any Pol who would take the time to look at it. Yes, once ready send me details about your web site designed to help vets. Be well brother. Ed

A Letter Dated March 10, 1966, To President Johnson and Read by the President During the Posthumous Presentation at the White House to the Parents of Milton B. Olive, III, B/2/503, Recipient of the Medal of Honor

"It is our dream and prayer that someday the Asiatics, and the Europeans, and the Israelites, and the Africans, and the Australians, and the Latins, and the Americans can all live in one world. It is our hope that in our own country the Klansmen and the Negroes, the Hebrews and the Catholics will sit down together in the common purpose of good will and dedication, that the moral and creative intelligence of our united people will pick up the chalice of wisdom and place it upon the mountain top of human integrity; that all mankind, from all the earth, shall resolve, 'to study war no more.' That, Mr. President, is how I feel and that is my eternal hope for our Great American Society."

Milton B. Olive, Jr.

~ Future Famous Cowboy Quote ~



Tony & Pam

"The more any of us learn the more we know how little we know compared to what there is to know. One of the few things I have learned is to not disagree with one's wife. Right or wrong, she's going to be right."



Maj. Tony Geishauser
335th AHC

~ Reply to Future Famous Cowboy Quote ~



Ed & Joyce (Always)

"Spot on Tony, and as far as the wives go, right again! I was told that I married Mrs. Right; I just didn't realize that her first name was 'Always'!!"



MSG Ed Kearney
B/2/503

Note: I don't know this for a fact, but I believe it to be true....these boys are now in deep shit! Ed

(INCOMING! continued....)



2/503d VIETNAM Newsletter / May-June 2018 – Issue 80

Page 22 of 90

~ Sky Soldier Yank & Kiwi Brothers ~

"Karen and I are 'Down Under' for five weeks. After three weeks in New Zealand we flew to Sydney, Australia today and we'll fly home on April 6.

If you have room in the next publication here is a brief report I sent to my local Vietnam Veterans Chapter for our monthly newsletter!

AATW!"

Rich Whipple
HHC/2/503

I met up in Auckland, New Zealand with John Deazley, the President of the Vietnam Veterans of New Zealand. Nearly 3900 Kiwi's volunteered to fight in Nam along with the Aussie's, and in '65 and '66 they both were under the command of the 173d Airborne Brigade ("Sky Soldiers"/ "The Herd").

The Aussie's have two chapters of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association and the Kiwi's have one chapter.

I met John at the Fort Benning Reunion two years ago and he has the 173d hat on and has a 173d Airborne Brigade sticker in his back window that has attracted both the 82nd Airborne and the 101st Airborne veterans that have visited New Zealand! I hope to see him at the Herd Reunion in Arlington in May!

"Airborne, all the way!"

Rich Whipple, Chaplain



L-R: John & Rich

"The flag of New Zealand is a defaced Blue Ensign with the Union Flag in the canton, and four red stars with white borders to the right. The stars' pattern represents the asterism within the constellation of Crux, the Southern Cross."



~ Sky Soldier Seat Covers !



"What do you think of my new seat covers?"

Ron Thomas
173d LRRP

Reply: A great way to have your seat covered.
All The Way, Ron!!

~ Tommy Corbett, B/2/503 or B/4/503? ~

"Good afternoon,

I'm not sure if this is a typo or if someone has it wrong. I was looking for information on Tommy Corbett and reading about the battle for Hill 875. On the WALL, he is listed as being in 4/503. I grew up with him and was just checking to see if he was mentioned in the battle. I stumbled upon your page for the 2/503 and realized that Tommy is listed as being in the 2nd Battalion and not the 4th Battalion. Just wondering if this was an innocent typo or is he listed wrongly on the wall?

John Schmidt

Our reply:

Hi John. **Linwood Corbett** is listed as B/4/503 on our 173d Bde KIA list, and the same on the Virtual Wall.

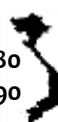
Tommy Corbett is listed as B/2/503 on our KIA list, but B/4/503 on the Virtual Wall. Both KIA in November '67 during the battles at Dak To.

Either our KIA list or the Virtual Wall is incorrect. I'll include a feeler in our next 2/503 Newsletter.

Smitty

Anyone out there know for sure with which battalion Tommy Corbett served? Thanks!

(INCOMING! continued....)



On March 16, 1966, during Operation Silver City at landing zone Zulu-Zulu in the heart of War Zone 'D', one U.S. paratroop battalion suddenly found itself surrounded by a reinforced enemy regiment. At the end of the fiercely fought five-hour battle, although outnumbered 3-to-1, the paratroopers could claim one of the most significant victories in the war.”

Time Magazine

~ Memories of Silver City ~

I remember we operated a number of clicks away from 2/503rd for several days before they got hit on 16 Mar 66. We were in primary tall jungle at the time. They finally moved us closer to 2/503rd because of an upcoming B-52 strike and we had to be at least 5 miles away from it.



Mortar crew during Operation Silver City

We came out of the primary jungle into a semi-cleared area. Not many trees here as you can see from the picture of the mortar crew. Not sure who they were firing for. We stayed a few days at this camp and sent out patrols each day looking for Charlie. We did not have much luck though.

The day the 2/503rd got hit we had already sent out patrols. The patrols we sent out were going in the opposite direction of where 2/503rd was located. If I remember right, C Company 1/503rd was the last one in the battalion to relieve 2/503rd. Not 100% sure on this but I know our patrols were the furthest away from our base camp.

One thing that struck me at the time and I still remember today is the air support 2/503rd got -- helicopter gunships and fighters. The jets and A-1s were stacked up like cordwood over where the 2/503rd was located. As one flight was finished the next would start their run. Quite the show as I watched it while we were waiting for our patrols to come back in. The only thing I could think of was where were all these assets when I was on Hill 65 five months before?

We could hear the fighting going on as the 2/503rd was not that many clicks from us. We also had a bird's eye view of the fighters. 2/503rd was located a little

higher than we were located but not in thick primary jungle.

Once we got back in the jungle the terrain flattened out. The jungle was not as thick and high as we had been operating in before and was somewhat open.



Picture shows holes Charlie used to hide out. The ones we found were not very big and had not been used in a while.

We came across a few VC hiding behind fallen down logs. One of my commo guys shot two of them. Never really ran into any resistance getting to the 2/503rd as Charlie had cut and run. Pretty quiet when we got there late that day. We took up our defensive positions for the night.

We were supposed to go back to Bien Hoa I think the next day but the brass decided to keep us in the field for several more days while we sent out patrols. We almost lost a patrol when Navy jets dropped their load almost on top of them. We did get probed every night and I know we got mortared at least one night. Not a lot of mortar rounds though.

After several days of patrolling we marched out to our LZ to return to Bien Hoa. About two weeks later I PCS'd back to the states after 25 months overseas. Fourteen months Okinawa and eleven month Vietnam.

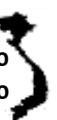
I got to say Ron (Thomas) these were some of the best times of my life and served with the damn finest paratroopers in the world. I am proud to say I served in the 1/503rd. It was a hell of a unit.

If I think of anything more I will let you know. I have several more pictures of Silver City. I will go through them and see if they will help me remember anything more. Let me know if there is anything else you may need. *Airborne!*

**Craig Ford
C/1/503**



Photo of Craig taken during Silver City, his last combat operation in Vietnam.



Farewell to Jack Price

Sky Soldier

Extraordinaire



Jack, with Sam, the love of his life.

Jack Price left us, way too soon, for his final DZ on 4 April. He was a Military Academy graduate, Ranger and parachute qualified before he joined the Bravo Bulls (B/2-503 PIR) in late 1965 at Bien Hoa.

A fellow platoon leader (commissioned through OCS) described Jack, with tongue in cheek, as a pretty good officer despite being a USMA graduate. That was an understatement because Jack was an erudite, hard charger, who could express himself and his thoughts quite well. In fact that same platoon leader would enlist Jack's presentation help when a new idea was to be pitched to the Company Commander.

Jack's aggressive leadership style led to his rapid WIA status. But before being WIA, Jack left his mark on the Bravo Bulls by two major events.

The AR15 (or M16), the new Infantry rifle, was issued with magazines and a cleaning kit (to include cleaning rod). The cleaning kit had a pistol belt attachment for ease of carry. As some troops would get medevac'd, their rifle would be retained or returned to the unit but the pistol belt (with cleaning rod) would often go with the evacuee. Consequently, a shortage of cleaning rods quickly developed. Without prompting, Jack drafted and mailed a letter to Colt Repeating Arms requesting an emergency resupply, with which they complied. The mechanics and logistics of this process is not known but the cleaning rods showed up and the credit goes to an aggressive LT.

The early 60's saw the expansion of the Playboy empire. To facilitate growth, they built Playboy Clubs in

major cities. As an advertisement ploy, Playboy offered a club key for the purpose of entry for \$100 as well as a year's subscription, with the first issue to be delivered by a Bunny. While his platoon contributed to that collection, Jack put up the lion's share of the membership/subscription. From the hospital, Jack chided Playboy for the unfulfilled delivery promise, which led to Jo Collins' visit to effect the delivery. Her presence was a real moral boost for the Bulls but personally celebrated by RTO Larry Paladino with a passionate kiss.



The lucky LT, arm in sling, dines with G.I. Jo (Playboy Bunny of the Year, Jo Collins).

Cut from that event in 1966 to 1985 when the 173d Abn Bde came to Washington to march and to celebrate. Again through Jack's efforts, Jo Collins and the Playboy team came and replayed the 1966 event to include filming at the hotel and at the Vietnam Memorial.

(continued....)



Jack had already married Sam (Shirley), one of his many nurses and who was a diamond merchant. Later Jack began to join the Bravo Bulls at Arlington each November for our Memorial Ceremony. He and Sam built a fortress in Virginia and started raising bees commercially. Throughout the years he was a key media contact for his USMA class.

Gone too quickly but he will live on in our memories and in our ceremonies. May he enjoy God's embrace and the reunion with all of his military friends.

Roy S. Lombardo, Jr., LTC (Ret)
Company Commander ('64/'65)

~ Remembering Jack ~

I recall meeting Jack on a few occasions when he participated with the Bulls on some of the Bravo Bulls' reunions. I did not know him well but it was a pleasure to talk to him.

I recall he once told me about where he lived in Virginia. He said if I wanted to get some really nice views of the countryside, I should stop by to visit with him and his wife Sam if I was ever in the area. The last I recall him gathering with us was when he and Shirley came to the 2015 Bulls' reunion in Fort Benning, Georgia.

Here is a photo that I found of him at our reunion. Condolences to the family, and may he rest well.

Ed Kearney
B/2/503



Above: Jack, kneeling in front left, with his Bravo Bulls buddies at Arlington National Cemetery.

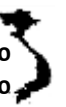
Jack and I both arrived the 2/503d in December '65 as replacements – yet neither of us would have recalled knowing the other at that time. But, over the years Jack and I had become 'email friends', and most recently we were discussing with Les Brownlee the possibility of Jack interviewing Jo Collins for an upcoming issue of our newsletter. Just a few weeks ago, Jack sent a note

stating the interview with the *Playboy* Bunny would most likely not occur.

As he did with Ed, Jack also invited my wife and I to visit his home....sadly, we never did. Today, our thoughts are of Jack and his family during this saddest of times. **ATW LT! Smitty**

"Bury Me With Soldiers"

I've played a lot of roles in life;
 I've met a lot of men,
 I've done a lot of things I'd like to think
 I wouldn't do again.
 And though I'm young, I'm old enough
 To know someday I'll die.
 And to think about what lies beyond,
 Beside whom I would lie.
 Perhaps it doesn't matter much;
 Still if I had my choice,
 I'd want a grave 'mongst
 Soldiers when
 At last death quells my voice.
 I'm sick of the hypocrisy
 Of lectures of the wise.
 I'll take the man, with all the flaws,
 Who goes, though scared, and dies.
 The troops I knew were commonplace
 They didn't want the war;
 They fought because their fathers and
 Their fathers had before.
 They cursed and killed and wept...
 God knows
 They're easy to deride...
 But bury me with men like these;
 They faced the guns and died.
 It's funny when you think of it,
 The way we got along.
 We'd come from different worlds
 To live in one where no one belongs,
 I didn't even like them all;
 I'm sure they'd all agree.
 Yet I would give my life for them,
 I know some did for me..
 So bury me with soldiers, please,
 Though much maligned they be.
 Yes, bury me with soldiers, for
 I miss their company.
 We'll not soon see their likes again;
 We've had our fill of war.
 But bury me with men like them
 Till someone else does more.



Saluting Barbara Bush



Sailors salute while conducting morning colors aboard the USS George H.W. Bush in Norfolk, Va., April 18, 2018. The aircraft carrier flew the flag at half-mast to honor former First Lady Barbara Bush.

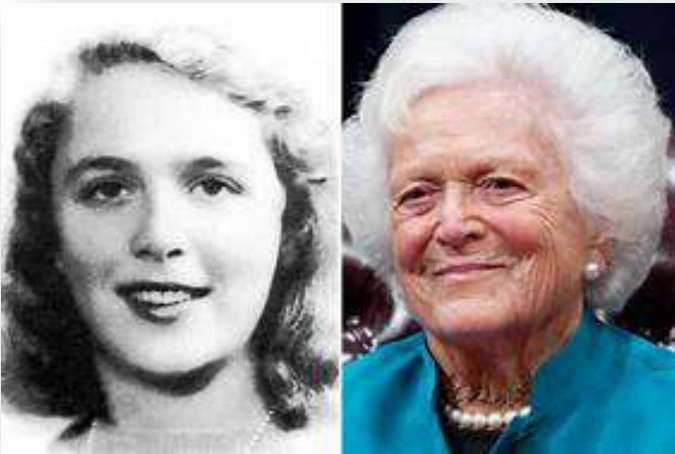
(Navy photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Brooke Macchietto)

First Lady Barbara Bush

June 8, 1925 ~ April 17, 2018

"To the military, she was a Navy wife, a ship sponsor and a devoted advocate of the men and women in uniform, whom she treated like family."

Dana White, Pentagon Spokesperson



A good lady, indeed.

"At the end of your life, you will never regret not having passed one more test, not winning one more verdict or not closing one more deal. You will regret time not spent with a husband, a friend, a child, or a parent."

"Never lose sight of the fact that the most important yardstick of your success will be how you treat other people — your family, friends, and coworkers, and even strangers you meet along the way."

Barbara Bush

A Gift From One Brother To Another



Our good buddy, Dick Holt, C/2/503, like this newsletter editor, did not make the February '67 combat jump in Vietnam. But, Dick was in possession of this framed copy of the cover of *Life Magazine* depicting that blast; including the complete magazine itself. Dick wanted these mementos to find their way into the hands of one of our guys who actually made the combat jump, and he sent them in here.

After reviewing the jump manifest, Dick agreed this illustration of a moment in our unit's history should go to combat blaster Jerry Hassler, Recon/2/503. And the reason Jerry was selected?

Mr. Hassler and his sons own one of the largest if not *the* largest gun stores in Franklin, TN or all of TN, where Jerry will post the framed combat jump magazine cover for hundreds if not thousands of visitors to view over many years ahead.

A hearty thanks and *Airborne All The Way* to 2/503 brothers Dick & Jerry. 🇺🇸



Survivor Smile



Retired Army Col. Ben Skardon, a 100-year-old Bataan Death March survivor, crosses the 8.5-mile finish line of the Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range, N.M., March 25, 2018. Skardon also is a beloved Clemson University alumnus and professor emeritus. (Army photo by Ken Scar)

Drop Zone Descent



An Air Force pararescueman descends over a drop zone after performing a high-altitude, low-opening free fall jump during training at Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, March 23, 2018. (Air Force courtesy photo)

Stretch of Michigan highway dedicated to fallen Shiawassee County soldier

By Roberto Acosta

racosta1@mlive.com

Updated Mar 8; Posted Mar 8



Photos of Army Pfc. Shane Cantu remain on the field after his funeral service on Monday at the Corunna High School football field. Cantu, a 2010 graduate of Corunna High School, was killed during an attack at his compound in Afghanistan. Cantu was remembered as a popular student who was a fearless leader on the football field. (MLive.com File Photo)

SHIAWASSEE COUNTY, MI - A stretch of M-71 between Owosso and Corunna in Shiawassee County will soon be renamed in honor of U.S. Army Private First Class Shane Cantu.

The Michigan Senate approved House Bill 4168 this week, introduced by state Rep. Ben Frederick, R-Owosso, to name the portion of road **"Pfc. Shane Cantu Veterans Memorial Highway"**.

Cantu, 20, a 2010 Corunna High School graduate was killed after insurgents threw an explosive over a wall on Aug. 28, 2012, at the base where he was serving in Charkh, Afghanistan.

He was a member of the Army's 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team.

"As a man, he was smart, caring, quick to make us smile and make us laugh when we needed it," remembered Jennifer Clarke, Cantu's mother, at a Sept. 10, 2012, memorial service held for her son at Nick Annese Athletic Field at Corunna High School....

Read entire report at:

www.mlive.com/news/flint/index.ssf/2018/03/stretch_of_michigan_highway_de.html



Face of Defense:

Married Army Paratroopers Serve Together



By Army Spc. Charlton Pope, 173rd Airborne Brigade
Combat Team

VICENZA, Italy, Feb. 13, 2018 — Army Staff Sgts. Zachary and Michelle Evans have spent almost their entire military careers together.



Taking the plunge together: Army Staff Sgts. Zachary and Michelle Evans pose together for a photo outside the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team headquarters building in Vicenza, Italy, after earning their Senior Parachutist Wings together, Jan. 23, 2018. This was the last jump they completed with the unit; it was also the last jump they both needed to obtain the title of Senior Jumpmaster.

(Army photo by Spc. Charlton Pope)

They met while in-processing with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in December 2010, after both had completed Airborne School. They were placed in the same company and platoon. Michelle jokes about Zach having to ask her out on a date three different times before she finally said yes. They have been practically inseparable since.

They deployed together to Afghanistan in 2012 with the 82nd Airborne in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, both earning a Combat Action Badge. The couple were married soon after returning from the deployment.

Both soldiers came into the Army as privates and have risen through the enlisted ranks together. While Zach beat Michelle to private first class, Michelle has beat him to every rank since; however, he has never been far behind her. This competitive spirit has kept them both striving to get to the next level and to be better than they were before.

Deployments to Afghanistan

In 2014, the couple were rotated back overseas for their second deployment together with the 82nd to Afghanistan. During this deployment, Michelle won the Sgt. Audie Murphy Board.

After returning from the deployment, the couple were posted to Italy with the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team, heading to the Brigade Support Battalion. While serving in Italy, they both attended Jumpmaster School, failing together the first time. They were able to attend again soon after; this time, Michelle passed, but Zach would have to attend one more time.

As they gained experience as jumpmasters, the couple neared the requirements for their Senior Parachutist Wings. Michelle had been setting up manifests for Jumps and assigning jumpmaster duties. She worked out a way for them to get the last jump needed for their senior wings together. This was one of only two jumps they shared together. Their first jump together was at Fort Bragg as privates. Their last was on Jan. 19, 2018, where they pinned

on their Senior Parachutist Wings.

Instructor Duty

The Evans' will next serve together at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, to be advanced individual training instructors. They are both looking forward to working in a new location and to teaching new soldiers. Zach says that he has always had a passion for instructing soldiers and passing down his knowledge. They are also excited about starting a family together. In September, they welcomed their first child, Elliot. They're very joyful about starting this new chapter in their life.

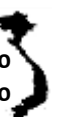


Sky Soldier families who jump together, stay together. Ed



2/503d VIETNAM Newsletter / May-June 2018 – Issue 80

Page 29 of 90



Sgt. Audie Murphy Club serves as elite organization for NCOs

By Angie Thorne, Fort Polk Guardian staff writer
July 10, 2009



Sgt. 1st Class Ronnie Robertson, left, and Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Grzywa, both of the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry Regiment, are inducted into the Fort Polk chapter of the Audie Murphy Club during the Army birthday celebration June 15.

(Photo Credit: Angie Thorne, Fort Polk Guardian staff writer)

FORT POLK, LA -- Most kids think that super heroes are cool. Strength beyond measure and the ability to fly are just two of the attributes that help them defeat the bad guys. Adults know those characteristics can be found only in the imagination. That doesn't mean there aren't real heroes. Any Soldier can tell you that.

Audie Murphy is one of those heroes. In his short lifetime, this sharecropper's son would grow to become a movie star, song writer and poet in addition to a legend on the battlefield. That seemed unlikely during World War II when he was turned away from both the Marines and paratroopers for being too small.

On his third attempt to enlist and fight for his country, the Army recruited Murphy. Soon, everyone found out it was Murphy's attributes rather than his stature -- he was only 5 feet 5 inches tall -- that made him a great Soldier. Murphy is the highest decorated Soldier in American history.

Leadership, courage and skill are what helped him and his Soldiers defeat the enemy. Those qualities are at the heart of the Army's noncommissioned officer's

professional spirit and the basis for becoming a member of the Audie Murphy Club.

"The Audie Murphy Club is an organization of Soldiers that have a true desire to give back to the Army, community, Soldiers and Family members. They don't just care about the Army community, but the community as a whole," said Sgt. 1st Class Arnie Cobos, 6th Battalion, 353rd Regiment, 162nd Infantry Brigade (Foreign Security Forces Training Team). Cobos is the president of the Fort Polk chapter of the Audie Murphy Club.

You can't just sign up to be a member of this elite organization. Cobos said that though Soldiers compete for membership only against themselves, just a small number of them make it through a rigorous set of evaluations. *"The club is made up of the top 10 percent of your NCOs in the military. Any Soldier from sergeant to sergeant first class is eligible to try to become a member,"* said Cobos.

The process begins when Soldiers present themselves to the board to determine if they meet organizational requirements. *"It is a three-board process that starts at battalion*

and then moves to brigade and division levels.

"The final approving authority is the division level sergeant major. On this installation that is Sgt. Maj. Christopher K. Greca, post command sergeant major. The boards are made up of a panel of sergeants major, which includes one Audie Murphy member. Applicants must pass all three boards before they become members," said Cobos.

She said Soldiers strive to become members of the club, but there isn't a lot of advance studying involved. Knowledge required for the boards includes how to care for people, regulations and post policies, how to be legally, ethically and morally correct in anything that you do and your willingness to give back to the community.

(continued....)



Much of this knowledge is intangible. *"One of the things you can study is Audie Murphy's bio, which is in the Forces Command bylaws that govern our organization -- regulation 215-7. That's the only official bio you can use. You also need to know about the crest and a little bit about the organization and what we do because there are several chapters across the country -- each one a little different,"* said Cobos.

She said if you don't become a member the first time through -- don't give up. Just try again. *"Not everybody makes it the first time. I think the thing that affects most people when they go before the board is their fear of the board itself. It's not a straight question and answer format. Instead, these boards throw scenarios at you. Basically, they give you a situation to work through. They want to know what you are going to do to assist a Soldier or their Family member through whatever problem they are facing. You get hit with a lot of ethical dilemmas. They make you think,"* said Cobos.

Boards are held quarterly and the tentative schedule for the fourth quarter of this year is Oct. 2. The first quarter of next year is Jan. 6. Induction takes place at the commanding general's quarterly award ceremony following the receipt of a certificate and an Audie Murphy medallion.

Member activities include:

- *Establishing a scholarship fund.**
- *Mandating more than 30 volunteer hours per member.**
- *Conducting outreach with the Fort Bliss chapter to raise money for hurricane relief.**
- *Community projects like Habitat for Humanity.**

Cobos said that the club is currently getting back on their feet. *"With all the deployments going on, the organization hasn't had a huge turnout. So, we are out there recruiting and trying to get members involved again,"* said Cobos. In the future, Cobos hopes to sponsor the Leesville Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps for a drill team competition. *"This is a great opportunity for outstanding NCOs to participate in something worthwhile and to give back to the community, Soldiers and Family members,"* said Cobos.

Cobos said that Soldiers interested in becoming members are encouraged to attend the meetings held once a month. The next meeting is July 29 at 11:30 a.m. For more information about the Audie Murphy club call 653-2420.

AUDEY MURPHY

Soldier, Veteran, Actor

1925 ~ 1971

The most decorated U.S. soldier of World War II, Audie Murphy returned home a hero and became an actor, starring in his own story, *To Hell and Back*.

Born in Texas on June 20, 1925, Audie Murphy eventually became the most decorated U.S. soldier in World War



II. Though he was only 21 years old at the end of the war, he had killed 240 German soldiers, had been wounded three times, and had earned 33 awards and medals. After the war, he appeared in more than 40 films. He suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder throughout his life.

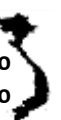
Born in Kingston, Hunt County, Texas, on June 20, 1925, Audie Murphy was raised in a sharecropper's dilapidated house. Murphy's father, Emit, fell short on his parental responsibilities, continuing to father children, 12 in all, despite the fact that he had no plan for how to feed them. Picking up the slack, Murphy helped feed his mother and siblings by hunting rabbits and other small animals around their property.

In 1940, Murphy's father deserted the family for good, and his mother passed away a year later. Moved to do something to honor his mother's life, Murphy enlisted in the military 10 days after his 18th birthday. In February 1943, he left for North Africa, where he received extensive training.

A few months later, Murphy's division moved to invade Sicily. His actions on the ground impressed his superior officers and they quickly promoted him to corporal. While fighting in the wet mountains of Italy, Murphy contracted malaria. Despite such setbacks, he continually distinguished himself in battle.

(continued....)

www.army.mil/article/24226/sgt_audie_murphy_club_serves_as_elite_organization_for_ncos



In August 1944, Murphy's division moved to southern France as part of Operation Dragoon. It was there that his best friend, Lattie Tipton, was lured into the open and killed by a German soldier pretending to surrender. Enraged by this act, Murphy charged and killed the Germans that had just killed his friend. He then commandeered the German's machine gun and grenades and attacked several more nearby positions, killing all of the German soldiers there. Murphy was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions.

Over the course of World War II, Murphy witnessed the deaths of hundreds of fellow and enemy soldiers. Endowed with great courage in the face of these horrors, he was awarded 33 U.S. military medals, including three Purple Hearts and one Medal of Honor.

In June 1945, Murphy returned home from Europe a hero and was greeted with parades and elaborate banquets. **LIFE magazine honored the brave, baby-faced soldier by putting him on the cover** of its July 16, 1945 issue. That photograph inspired actor James Cagney to call Murphy and invite him to Hollywood to begin an acting career. Despite his celebrity, however, Murphy struggled for years to gain recognition.



In 1949, Murphy published his autobiography, *To Hell and Back*. The book quickly became a national bestseller, and in 1955, after much inner debate, he decided to portray himself in the **film version** of his book. The movie was a hit and held Universal Studio's record as its highest-grossing motion picture until 1975.

Murphy would go on to make 44 feature films in all. In addition to acting, he became a successful country music songwriter, and many of his songs were recorded by well-known artists, including Dean Martin, Jerry Wallace and Harry Nilsson.

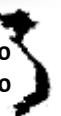
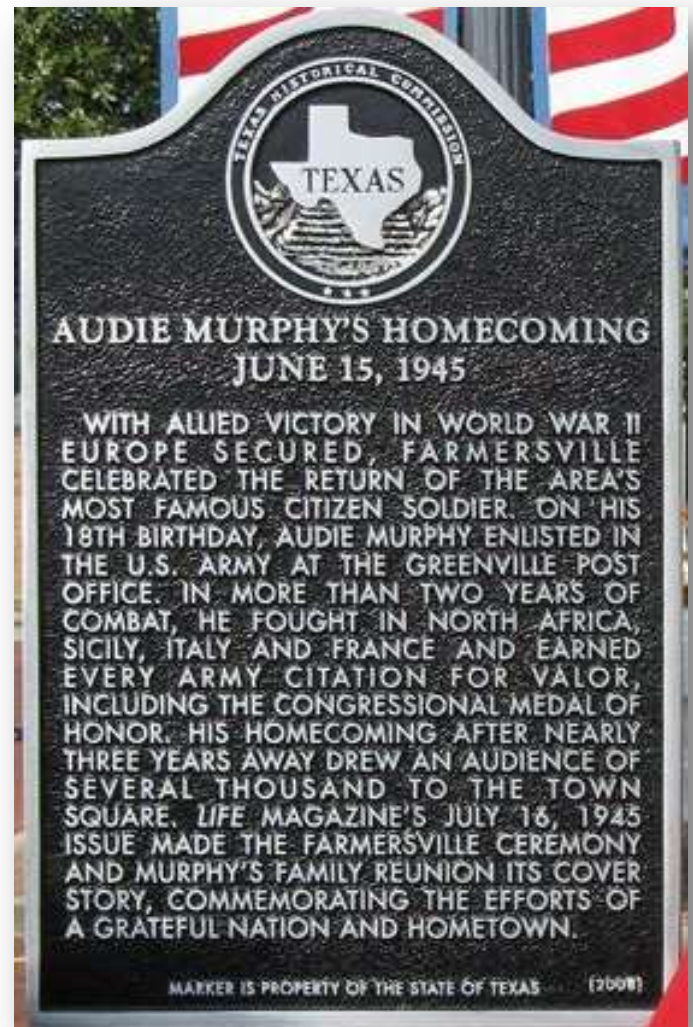


During his rise to fame, Murphy met and married 21-year old actress Wanda Hendrix in 1949. Their marriage appeared rocky from the start and they announced their plans to divorce in 1950. He married again in 1951, this time to Pamela Archer, with whom he had two children. Plagued by insomnia and nightmares, a condition that would eventually become known as post-traumatic stress disorder, Murphy suffered from a powerful addiction to sleeping pills.

In his later years, Audie Murphy squandered his fortune on gambling and bad investments, and was in financial ruin when he died in a plane crash on May 28, 1971. Murphy, who achieved the rank of Major in the reserves, was buried at Arlington National Cemetery on June 7, 1971, and was given full military honors.

Source: www.biography.com/people/audie-murphy-9418662

(All images added from web)



New Vision and Dental Plans Coming Soon to Military Families and Retirees



IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 03/19/2018

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM), in partnership with the Defense Health Agency (DHA) and the Department of Defense (DoD), announced the Federal Employees Dental and Vision Insurance Program (FEDVIP) will be offered for the first time to TRICARE eligible retirees and their families during the 2018 Federal Benefits Open Season. Active duty family members will be eligible to enroll in FEDVIP vision insurance.

The TRICARE Retiree Dental Program ends on Dec. 31, 2018. Those enrolled in TRDP must choose a dental plan through FEDVIP to have coverage in 2019. Enrollment is not automatic. Today's announcement affects 1.63 million beneficiaries enrolled in TRDP and offers a choice to an additional 1.3 million eligible retired beneficiaries not currently enrolled in TRDP.

Most beneficiaries in a TRICARE health plan may enroll in a FEDVIP vision plan. This comprehensive vision coverage, including eyeglasses or contacts, is in addition to the routine eye examination benefit that many beneficiaries have under TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Select.

The Federal Benefits Open Season enrollment period, Nov. 12, 2018 through Dec. 10, 2018, runs concurrently with the TRICARE Open Season. Coverage will be effective Jan. 1, 2019.

FEDVIP currently serves more than 3 million Federal employees, retirees and their families. FEDVIP enrollees give the program high marks for quality and value. It provides comprehensive dental and vision insurance at competitive group rates with 10 dental and four vision carriers for enrollees to choose from.

"OPM is thrilled to offer a variety of quality vision and dental plans to our military retirees and their families, and for the first time, an option for vision insurance to active duty family members," said OPM Director Jeff Pon. *"We look forward to providing FEDVIP to the military, their families, and retirees."*

For more information, visit TRICARE.benefeds.com to sign up to receive messages, updates, and reminders on the FEDVIP throughout the rest of this year.

Source: U.S. Department of Defense. Visit us on the web at <http://www.defense.gov/>

RICHARD J. ALLEN, SR., BG (Ret) **Commander, 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep)**

Richard J. Allen, Sr. (Brigadier General, U.S. Army, Retired) of Atlanta, died quietly after a short illness Wednesday morning, July 20th, 2005. He is survived by his wife, Sara Kay Allen; his four children: Jane Allen Kimzey, Robin Sutton, Richard J. Allen, Jr., and Adair Allen; nine grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.



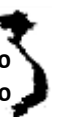
General Allen, who entered the service as a Private and rose to the rank of Brigadier General, served his country in two wars and one military action. In World War II he participated in all operations of the 101st Airborne Division including the parachute assaults in Normandy and Holland and in the Battle of Bastogne. In Viet Nam he commanded the 173rd Airborne Brigade and served twice in the 101st Airborne Division.

His decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star, and the Croix de Guerre of France.

Upon retirement he returned to his native Atlanta to assume an active role in government, civic and church affairs. He worked with then-governor Jimmy Carter in the Georgia Department of Industry and Trade developing strong trade ties with several countries in Latin America and Europe. He was an active member of Peachtree Road United Methodist Church, serving on several boards there, and participated in the Timothy Sunday School Class, frequently in the role of speaker and teacher. He was a leader in the Great Decisions program of the Senior University of Greater Atlanta and at Lifespan Resources. He was a member of the Buckhead Kiwanis Club and made numerous presentations on current national and international affairs there and at other Atlanta civic organizations.

A student and scholar to the end, General Allen engaged consistently in research and analysis of current political and social issues; as a result of this research and his distinguished military service, he was frequently called upon by local news and civic organizations for commentary and analysis. Perhaps most important, he was a loving husband, a supportive and instructive father, a faithful friend.

Published in *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*



A buddy remembers his buddy....

CHRISTMAS IN THE JUNGLES OF VIETNAM

I have enjoyed many beautiful and heartfelt Christmases in my life, but one stands out as my most memorable. It was Christmas 1967, and I was a 20 year-old paratrooper serving in Vietnam with the 173rd Airborne Brigade's Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP).

In December of 1967, our LRRP teams were conducting seven-day recon missions in the rugged jungle rainforest mountains along the borders of South Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Our missions were to locate the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units that were infiltrating into South Vietnam along the infamous "Ho Chi Minh" trails. We would attempt to observe these units until our Brigade's Parachute Battalions and/or air assets could engage them. Our team's survival in this environment depended on complete stealth.

At first light on December 24, 1967, our six-man recon team Alpha was inserted by helicopter into this mountainous region west of Dak To, Vietnam. We spent all that day patrolling through the thick jungle in search of the NVA units. We stopped just prior to darkness and settled in the heavy bush for a long Christmas Eve night.

Nights in the jungle were long and hard, and we all knew that this one would be especially so. During the night hours, the six of us would sit back-to-back, huddled together like a covey of quail waiting to explode outward if necessary. The first hint of daylight could not come quick enough. Any verbal communications were conducted mouth to ear in a very hushed whisper. Very few words were spoken that Christmas Eve night, but we all had thoughts and dreams of happy childhood Christmas memories.

The oldest team member was 22 year old Team Leader Donald G. Waide of Clayton, New Mexico. Don and I had served together stateside in the 82nd Airborne Division and had now been together for over six months in Vietnam. Don and I had been assigned to the Military Police Platoon of the 173rd Airborne Brigade prior to volunteering for the LRRP's. I was accepted into the LRRP Platoon in late June of 1967, and Don followed shortly thereafter. A total of five of us from the Military Police Platoon went to the LRRP's and three were subsequently killed in action.



"This photo was taken by me at the chopper pad on the beach area of Tuy Hoa where we ran missions into the mountains west of Tuy Hoa in Sept/Oct of '67 (prior to going back to Dak To in Nov) and again in early 1968 after Dak To. I think the photo was from Jan/Feb 1968. Don was not in Tiger stripes as he was not going out on this mission. He was assisting in the backup chopper during the insertion in case the team was shot up on the insertion."

(Photo by Irv Moran, 173d LRRP)

In an Airborne Brigade filled with courageous men (13 Medal of Honor recipients and over 1,800 paratroopers killed in action), Don was arguably the most daring and courageous paratrooper. Don possessed that very rare combination of being highly intelligent and absolutely fearless. As his Assistant Team Leader, I knew that all of the team members would follow him anywhere.

Prior to the absolute darkness of the jungle night setting in on that Christmas Eve, I observed Don encoding an unusually long message to be transmitted back to our forward base camp well over seventy miles away....

(continued....)



....When I read the message on Christmas morning, I saw that Don had encoded and transmitted Clement Moore's entire poem *"The Night Before Christmas"*. When I glanced over at Don, he just looked at me and gave me his signature cowboy grin.

Prior to moving out on patrol that Christmas morning, we all had our one daily meal which consisted of a cold dehydrated beef and rice LRRP ration. On this day, in our imaginations, this meal became each of our Moms' Christmas turkey dinner with all of the trimmings. Before we moved out on patrol that Christmas morning, I used a surveillance camera to take a photograph of Don holding up a Merry Christmas greeting to his mother. That photograph turned out to be a picture of Don on his last Christmas morning.



"Dear Mom...Merry Xmas"

Donald G. Waide, a true American hero, was subsequently killed in action on May 7, 1968, while on patrol in Binh Dinh Province, Vietnam. At the time of his death, Don was doing what Don always did--leading and protecting his team members. Don had only 35 days left on his 14-month Vietnam tour of Duty.

It has been 50 years since that very unique and memorable Christmas. To this day, when I look at the photograph of Don taken on that Christmas morning, although my eyes may be moist, a smile instantly appears on my face.

Irvin W. Moran
Green Bay, Virginia
Christmas 2017



VA Launches Telehealth Program for Rural Vets with PTSD

March 6, 2018

WASHINGTON — With a focus on improving access to mental health care for Veterans living in rural areas, today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced it has launched a pilot telehealth program that will give rural Veterans with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) remote access to psychotherapy and related services.

VA's Office of Rural Health, in partnership with VA's Quality Enhancement Research Initiative, is supporting the Telemedicine Outreach for PTSD (TOP) program to deliver therapy and other care through phone and interactive video contact.

"Our researchers have worked diligently in recent years to establish the safety and efficacy of PTSD psychotherapy delivered remotely, ensuring Veterans will get the same quality of PTSD care as if they were in a doctor's office at a VA medical center," said VA Secretary David Shulkin. *"We are excited to see this program help greater numbers of Veterans living in rural areas..."*

Dr. John Fortney, a research health scientist at the VA Puget Sound Health Care System in Seattle, Washington, is leading the project.

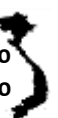
"Long travel distances to urban areas can be a major barrier to care for rural Veterans," Fortney said. *"In a prior trial, we were able to use telehealth technologies successfully to engage Veterans in evidence-based, trauma-focused therapy without their having to travel to a distant VA medical center."*

To date, more than 500 rural Veterans who are not receiving specialty PTSD care have enrolled in the study. The participants may choose between the two main forms of evidence-based, trauma-focused psycho-therapy used in VA: cognitive processing therapy and prolonged exposure therapy.

Veterans participating in the program receive frequent phone calls from a care manager who helps them access services provided by off-site psychiatrists and psychologists. The psychotherapy is delivered via interactive video from a VA medical center to a community-based outpatient clinic (CBOC) or to the Veteran's home. The telephone care manager also monitors the Veterans' progress and helps them overcome barriers to care.

The program includes 12 CBOCs across the nation in Charleston, South Carolina; Iowa City, Iowa; Little Rock, Arkansas; Denver, Colorado; San Diego, California; and Seattle. The results, which will be available in 2020, will lay the groundwork for national implementation of the TOP program.

To learn more about VA research on PTSD, visit
www.research.va.gov/topics/ptsd.cfm



Sky Soldiers feel heat during Real Thaw

Story and photo by:
Staff Sgt. Philip Steiner
173rd Airborne Brigade Public Affairs



A Portuguese soldier drops a round in a 120 mm mortar for a fire mission with Sky Soldiers from A Troop, 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade during live-fire training at Exercise Real Thaw in Santa Margarida, Portugal, March 10, (2017).

TONCAS, Portugal — Paratroopers of 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade participated in a two-week international training event known as Exercise Real Thaw in Portugal, from March 1 to 17.

Exercise Real Thaw was a Portuguese-led large joint and combined force exercise, designed to develop and foster international cooperation in air and land tactical training.

"We came here to do an airborne operation with our Portuguese allies. Then we moved to conducting live-fire team movements, incorporating mortars and anti-tank weapons," said Capt. Craig Barnhill, commander of C Troop, 1st Squadron, 91st Cav. Rgt., 173rd Abn. Bde. *"We (finished) off with a situational training exercise in conjunction with company of Portuguese paratroopers."*

Throughout each section of the exercise, cooperation and cross-training between the paratroopers of 1-91 and Portuguese 1st Paratrooper Battalion demonstrated continued training contributions to develop and improve air and combat action readiness between NATO allies.

"There are a lot of missions accomplished here, big and small picture, for us. The live fires help train our lethality while, through our small-unit movement skills and our weapon proficiency, we strengthen our ability to ability to move quickly and accurately," said Barnhill. *"Stepping back, [we are] working with our Portuguese counterparts to build cohesion and relationships with our NATO allies."*

From airborne operations to fire-support, the direct coordination and ability to build partnership capacity for real world-missions was a universal theme throughout Real Thaw. *"We are doing a combined, indirect fire support plan. Our primary mission is to work in conjunction with other NATO forces,"* said Staff Sgt. Benjamin Richardson, mortars section, A Troop, 1st Sqdn., 91st Cav. Rgt. *"For example, we were Doing coordinated illumination for the Portuguese [forward] observers while they conducted fire missions with 155mm Howitzers."*

Throughout Exercise Real Thaw, the U.S. paratroopers had the opportunity to observe and learn more about the techniques used by the Portuguese 1st Airborne Battalion.

"It is always good to see how someone else does it. They have a certain level of finesse to their job that I can see and want to learn from that," said Sgt. William Smith, C Troop, 1st Sqdn., 91st Cav. Rgt. *"The younger guys can see this too and it gives them something to shoot for- to become more proficient in their job as well."*

Exercise Real Thaw provided an opportunity for the paratroopers to get out to the field to test the skills they covered in a static learning environment.

"Anytime you can get a live-fire experience it is invaluable. You can do all the classroom time you want, but there is no replacement for down-range feedback," said Richardson.

Throughout the missions, the live fires, the late nights and hard days, some similarities shine through both nations, according to Smith.

"They have a large amount of pride in their country and that is something we share: pride in what we do and where we come from," said Smith.

(continued....)



The 173rd Airborne Brigade, based in Vicenza, is the U.S. Army Contingency Response Force in Europe, capable of projecting forces to conduct the full range of military operations across the United States European, Central and Africa commands areas of responsibility.



"Paratroopers with 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade jump from a 37th Airlift Squadron C-130J 'Hercules' during Exercise Real Thaw in Toncas, Portugal, March 7, 2017. 173rd Paratroopers jumped along their Portuguese counterparts from the Portuguese 1st Airborne Brigade. Exercise Real Thaw is a Portuguese-led large joint and combined force exercise, designed to develop and foster international cooperation in air tactical training. The continuing contributions to develop and improve air readiness are significant to maintaining security and building partnership capacity with our NATO allies."

(This photo, added to article above, was shown in connection with a different report by Staff Sgt. Philip Steiner)

Source: 173d Airborne Public Affairs)

Why Veterans Reunite

"I now know why men who have been to war yearn to reunite. Not to tell stories or look at old pictures. Not to laugh or weep. Comrades gather because they long to be with the men who once acted at their best; men who suffered and sacrificed together, who were stripped of their humanity. I did not pick these men. They were delivered by fate and the military. But I know them in a way I know no other men.

I have never given anyone such trust. They were willing to guard something more precious than my life. They would have carried my reputation, the memory of me. It was part of the bargain we all made, the reason we were so willing to die for one another.

As long as I have memory, I will think of them all, every day. I am sure that when I leave this world, my last thought will be of my family and my comrades... Such good men."

By an unnamed Soldier

[Sent in by Frank Martinez, A/1/503]

No DEROS Alpha Trooper Alan C. Cote

Alan C. Cote, 71, of Durham and formerly of Jaffrey, died Tuesday, Nov. 28, 2017, after an extended illness.

Alan was born in Peterborough Jan. 27, 1946, son of the late Anthony and Mary (Desrosiers) Cote. He was a graduate of Conant High School, and had attended Auburn Community College and Franklin Pierce University before joining the U.S. Army and faithfully serving his country during the Vietnam War. He had served with Alpha Company of the 173d Airborne Brigade in Okinawa, and in Vietnam had received a Purple Heart.



Alan had life memberships in the DAV, the Military Order of the Purple Heart, the 173d Airborne Association, the American Legion and VFW, having been a past commander, quartermaster, trustee and chaplain of the Jaffrey VFW Memorial Post 5613. Alan had also served on the Board of Directors of the Korea-Vietnam Memorial Park, the town of Jaffrey's Cemetery Committee, as well as the Memorial Day and Veterans Day Committee's. He was an associate member of the National Association of Postmasters of the United States, New Hampshire Chapter.

On Nov. 6, 1994, Alan married Suzanne (Luebker) Bennett Self. They had lived in Jaffrey before moving to Durham in 2009. Alan enjoyed all forms of fishing, playing cribbage and gourmet cooking. In addition to his parents, Alan was preceded in death by his wife, Suzanne, on Jan. 10, 2014; and by his nephew, Scott Alan Langevin.

He is survived by his daughter, Lisa Salotti of Geneva, N.Y.; his three stepdaughters, Gretchen Vatalaro of Nashua, Erica Thompson of Raymond and Emily MacPherson of Glenmore, Pa.; his granddaughter, Brooklynn Salotti of Geneva, N.Y., and an extended family.

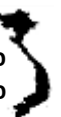
A memorial service with full military honors was held. Alan requested memorial contributions be made in his name to the Korea-Vietnam Memorial, c/o Jaffrey War Memorial Committee, P.O. Box 565, Jaffrey, N.H., 03452, or to The Jimmy Fund, in memory of Scott Alan Langevin, 10 Brookline Place West, 6th Floor, Brookline, MA 02445-7226. To share memories and photos with Alan's family, please visit his permanent online memorial at www.cournoyerfh.com

Rest easy with your brothers, Sky Soldier.



2/503d **VIETNAM** Newsletter / May-June 2018 – Issue 80

Page 37 of 90





(Image from web)

"I first heard this anonymous poem recited by Daisy Turner in Ken Burns' treatment of the Civil War." Jim Bethea, HHC/2/503, '65/'66

Dear Madam

Dear Madam,

I am a soldier, and my speech is rough and plain.

I'm not much used to writing, and I hate to give you pain,

But I promised I would do it, and he thought it might be so

If it came from one that loved him, perhaps it would ease the blow.

By this time, you must surely guess the truth I feign would hide,

And you'll pardon me for rough soldier words, while I tell you how he died.

It was in the maw of battle. Fast rained the shot and shell.

I was standing close beside him, and I saw him when he fell.

So I took him in my arms, and laid him on the grass.

It was going against orders, but I think they let it pass.

'Twas a mine ball that struck him. It entered at his side.

But we didn't think it fatal 'til this morning, when he died.

"Last night, I wanted so to live. I seemed so young to go.

Last week I passed my birthday. I was just 19, you know.

When I thought of all I planned to do, it seemed so hard to die.

But now I pray to God for Grace, and all my cares gone by."

And here his voice grew weaker, as he paused and raised his head.

And whispered, *"Goodbye, Mother."* And your soldier boy was dead.

I carved him out a headboard, as skillful as I could

And if you wish to find it, I can tell you where it stood.

I send you back his hymnbook, the cap he used to wear,

The lock I cut the night before, of his bright, curly hair.

I send you back his bible; The night before he died,

I turned its leaves together, and read it by his side.

I keep the belt he was wearing; He told me so to do.

It has a hole upon the side, just where the ball went through.

So now I've done his bidding. I've nothing more to tell.

But I shall always mourn with you the boy we loved so well.



In memory of the commander, "Iron Mike" Healy...

MAJOR GENERAL (RET) MICHAEL D. HEALY

June 13, 1926 ~ April 14, 2018

Michael D. Healy was born June 13, 1926, in Chicago, IL, the oldest of three sons of an Irish cop who later retired as a Police Lieutenant. In 1945, at 19, he enlisted in the Army. He graduated from Infantry OCS, Ft. Benning in 1946 and is in the OCS Hall of Fame.

As a young Lieutenant after World War II, he served in troop assignments in the 1st Cavalry Division and the Army of Occupation in Japan. He completed Parachute Training in Japan. In Japan, he met the lovely daughter of a US prosecutor at the Japan War Trials. In 1949, he married Jackie, whose support and love have been significant factors in his military success.

At the outbreak of the Korean War, he joined the newly-formed Airborne Ranger Companies. He was a platoon leader and company commander with the 4th Ranger Company which conducted behind-the-lines special operations. His company was later attached to the 187th Airborne Infantry Regiment and made the parachute assault on Munsan-Ni, Korea.

With the 11th Airborne Division, Ft. Campbell, KY, he was a company commander and staff officer before completing the Infantry Officers Associate Course. Captain Healy then was assigned to the newly-formed 77th Special Forces Group, Ft Bragg, NC, in 1953. He was an A Team Commander and Operations Officer with the Group, and an Instructor at the Special Forces Warfare Officers School.

He was one of a few select Army officers to attend the USMC Officers Advanced School, Quantico, VA, in 1955-56. Then he was assigned as A Team Commander and Ops Officer, 10th SF Group in Europe. After Command & General Staff College, Major Healy was Chief, Special Warfare Ops and Foreign Intelligence, HQ, DA.

In July 1963, Major Healy was selected for the sensitive position as Operations Officer and Senior Advisor to the Vietnamese Special Forces, during the time when there were only a few Americans in that country. He subsequently commanded the first mobile guerilla battalion (Mike Force) with US Army Special Forces.



In August 1964, LTC Healy assumed command of the 1st Battalion, 501st Parachute Infantry Regiment ("Geronimo"), 101st Airborne Division. After almost two years commanding the 1/501st, he was selected for the Army War College.

However, he elected to lead his Geronimo Battalion to Vietnam in June 1966. The 1/501st was re-designated as 4th Battalion, 503d Parachute Infantry Regiment, 173d Airborne Bde (Sep).

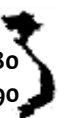
In February 1967, after 30 months of consecutive battalion command, he was selected to serve as Executive Officer and Special Assistant to the Deputy US Ambassador during the formation and initial operation of the Office of Civil Operations in Vietnam.

After the Army War College, Colonel Healy was Deputy Commander, Special Warfare Agency and Institute for Strategic and Stability Ops, Combat Development Command.

He then returned to RVN for his third tour, as Commander of Special Troops and Assistant Chief of Staff, G1, XXIV Corps. In August 1969, he assumed command of the 1st Brigade, 9th Infantry Division in the Mekong Delta. Three weeks after his brigade deployed back to Hawaii, he was recalled by General Creighton Abrams to command the 5th Special Forces Group in Vietnam. After almost 20 months in command, he returned to the US with that unit in March 1971, earning the Distinguished Service Medal.

Colonel Healy was then assigned as Chief, Pacific Division and Deputy Director, Operations Directorate, HQ DA. Brigadier General Healy's next assignment was Assistant Division Commander, 82d Airborne Division, Ft. Bragg, NC.

(continued....)



fter 8 months at Ft. Bragg, he was again requested by General Abrams to return to Vietnam as Deputy Commanding General 3rd Regional Assistance Command. In June 1972, he became Commanding General, 2d Regional Assistance Command.



MG Healy, an icon in the paratrooper and Special Forces communities. (web photo)

He remained in command until all US combat forces were ordered out of Vietnam. For this service, he was again awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. An interesting fact is that he was one of the early Americans in Vietnam in 1963, and almost 10 years later, commanded a major portion of US fighting forces at the end of US armed involvement in RVN.

General Healy assumed command of the John F. Kennedy Center and Institute for Military Assistance in 1973. He was promoted to Major General and remained in command until October 1975. His last overseas assignment was as Chief of Staff, Combined Military Planning Staff, CENTO, in Turkey.

General Healy's final assignment was Commander, US Army Readiness and Mobilization Region V, Ft. Sheridan, IL, where he had enlisted as a private 35 years before. He remained in command until his retirement on 28 Feb 1981.

General Healy's numerous awards include: Distinguished Service Medal (3 awards); Silver Star (2 awards); Legion of Merit (3 awards); Distinguished Flying Cross; Bronze Star Medal w/V (6 awards); Air Medal w/V (4 awards); Army Commendation Medal (3 awards); Navy Commendation Medal w/V; Purple Heart (2 awards); Good Conduct Medal; many foreign awards; and numerous service medals and citations. He holds a Master Parachutist Badge with combat jump star; Combat Infantryman's Badge w/star; Diver's Badge; and Army General Staff Badge. He has been awarded Parachutist Badges from six different countries.

Of General Healy's 35 years of military service, he spent 5 and ½ tours in Vietnam. He was in command assignments for almost 28 years, and on jump status for 27 years. They are the proud parents of six sons and several grandchildren. His youngest grandson completed Basic Training at Ft Jackson, SC in 2006.



"Maj. Gen. Michael D. "Iron Mike" Healy when he was awarded the Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment award in Jacksonville in 2015. U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School." (web photo).

"Rest Peacefully, Sir. You inspired us all to reach further, go faster and take that one more step no one dared take. You will be missed." The Fat Guy



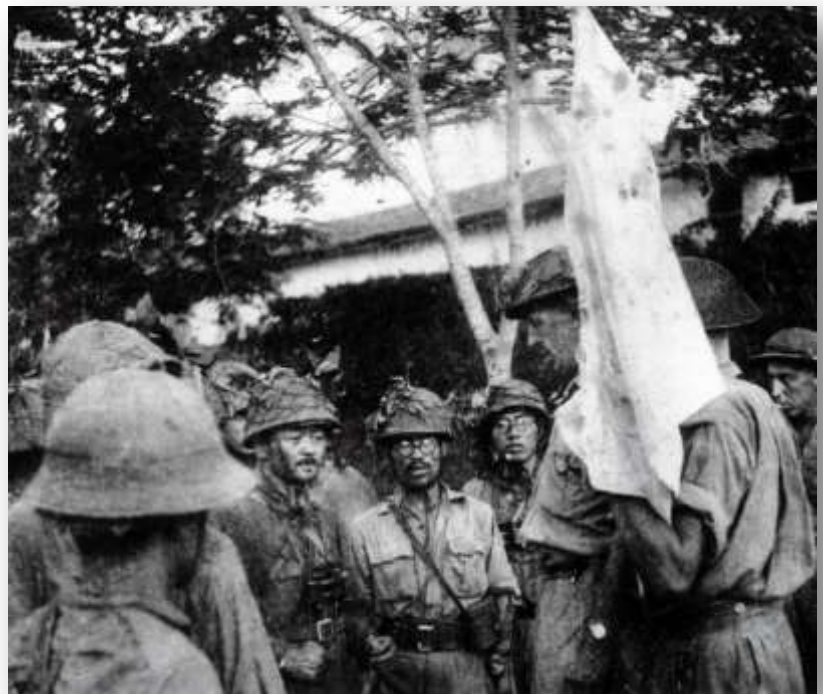
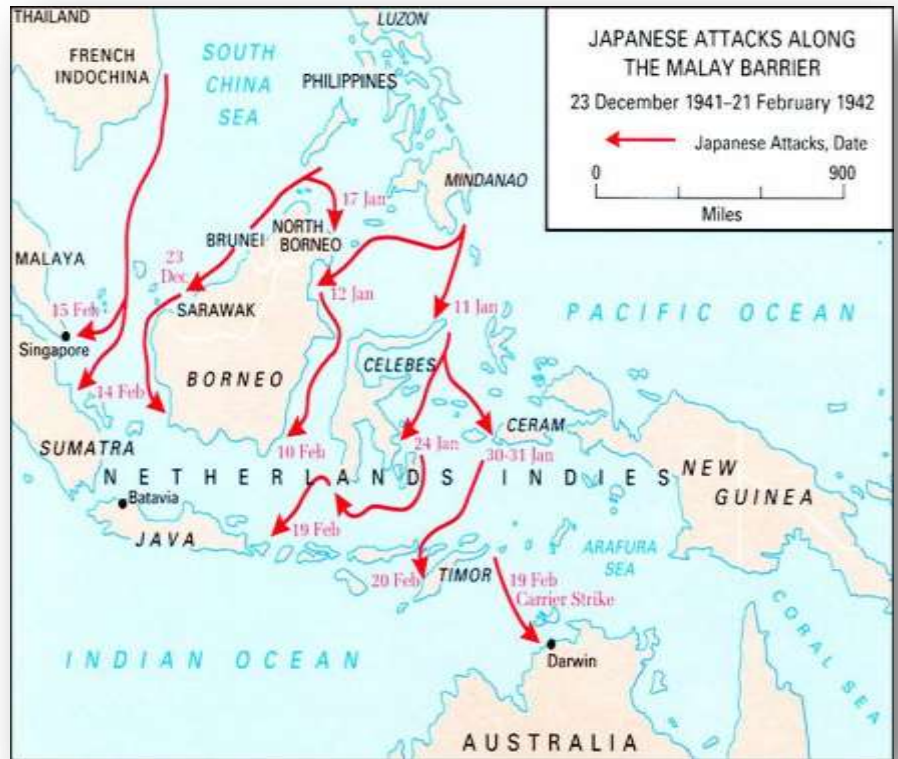
Unfit to Command

'They're facing the wrong way!'

With its vast resources of rubber and tin, Malaya was one of the jewels in the British Empire's crown after the First World War. To protect it, the British government decided to construct a chain of airfields down the peninsula and a naval base below it on the island of Singapore, which would also serve to defend the vital sea supply routes between Britain and the Far East. But with money scarce and Japan, the main threat, seemingly passive, little was done in the 1920s.

All this changed in the early 1930s when Japan overran Chinese Manchuria, resigned from the League of Nations and denounced the restrictions of the international naval disarmament treaties. For Britain the construction of the Singapore naval base now became a priority. But because the military authorities did not believe a Japanese attack down the Malayan peninsula was possible, all the fixed 9.2-inch and 15-inch guns equipping the coastal batteries were pointing out to sea. The north of the island opposite the peninsula was left undefended.

The theory was that Singapore would be able to hold out for seventy days, the time it would take for a fleet to arrive from Britain. By the late 1930s, however, the Army had begun to concede that amphibious landings on the east coast of Malaya were possible. A paltry sum of money was therefore made available to construct a line of defences in southern Malaya that would prevent Japanese artillery from coming within the range at which it could fire on Singapore island. It had only been partly completed by the time of the Japanese invasion in December 1941. With the guns pointing the wrong way, the island was virtually defenseless when the Japanese attacked across the Johore Straits two months later.



"The British surrender Singapore on 15 February 1942."

(Map and photo from web added)

Military Blunders

The how and why of military failure

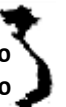
By SAUL DAVID

Excerpt, Page 67



2/503d **VIETNAM** Newsletter / May-June 2018 – Issue 80

Page 41 of 90



This is to Certify that The President of the United States of America Takes Pride in Presenting
The
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS



To
SPROULE, WILLIAM C., JR.

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross (Posthumously) to William C. Sproule, Jr. (O-53387xxx), First Lieutenant (Infantry), U.S. Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Company B, 3d Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade. First Lieutenant Sproule distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 10 May 1968



as a platoon leader of an airborne infantry company conducting a combat operation. His platoon made heavy contact with a large North Vietnamese force. During the assault on the enemy, Lieutenant Sproule moved out ahead of his men to fire more accurately on the insurgents and to adjust supporting artillery fire. As he advanced, he was hit in the chest by a burst of enemy automatic rifle fire. Ignoring his wounds, he moved to his point man who had been pinned down during the initial exchange of fire. Lieutenant Sproule provided covering fire for the man as he crawled back to join the rest of the platoon. He then adjusted artillery fire on the North Vietnamese positions, bringing it so close to his own location that he was wounded several times by the shrapnel. An enemy machine gun to his front began placing deadly fire on his platoon, and he attempted to direct the artillery on the emplacement to destroy it. This couldn't be accomplished without moving his platoon back.

Rather than risk more casualties to his troops in a withdrawal, Lieutenant Sproule assaulted the position alone. He charged to within five meters of the gun, firing on the enemy the entire way, before he was mortally wounded by a burst of heavy fire from the weapon. First Lieutenant Sproule's extraordinary heroism and devotion to duty, at the cost of his life, were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

HQ, USARV GO 3685 1 Aug 68



Caption: "William C. Sproule 3d, 2, looks at medals awarded posthumously to his father, Army 1st Lt. William C. Sproule Jr., for heroism in Vietnam. Boy's mother, Mrs. Suzanne N. Sproule, of Broomall, received the decorations from Brig. Gen. William M. Mantz at ceremony at PMC Colleges in Chester. Among awards are the Distinguished Service Cross and the Bronze Star Medal." *Philadelphia Inquirer*

In Letters Home From The LT

"As platoon leader, he said in letters he was proud of his men. He referred to teenage soldiers in his unit as his 'babies.' Many times, his mother said, the letters reflected the horror of seeing his men killed.

'It is really rough and at times I think, why did I ever do it? But I must be truthful. Aside from being separated from my wife and family and all my friends, I like it because I am at last serving my country in a proper manner,' Lt. Sproule said in one letter.

His last letter to his wife was written May 7. *'This is the last letter - until we meet in Hawaii,'* he wrote."



Sky Soldier medics always ready, uniform or not

Story by Spc. Kyle Harvey
173rd Airborne Brigade



Major Adrian Arnett (Right), the Battalion Surgeon for the Brigade Support Battalion, 173rd Airborne Brigade and Major Andrew Galdi (Left), the Senior Physician Assistant for the 173rd Airborne Brigade training in Grafenwoehr Training Area in late March 2017.

Two United States Army Surgeons were first on the scene of a tragic accident on Highway B66 in western Austria, aiding a man in the fight for his life.

A farm tractor heading northbound on B66, a two-lane highway, attempted to turn left but overlooked the semi-truck that was traveling toward it in the on-coming lane and was struck head on.

The two United States Army Officers, Major Adrian Arnett, the Battalion Surgeon for the Brigade Support Battalion, 173rd Airborne Brigade and Major Andrew Galdi, the Senior Physician Assistant for the 173rd Airborne Brigade, were driving with their families near Feldbach, Austria on the morning of November 22nd when they came upon the crash.

Communicating to each other through hand held radios and quickly realizing that this event had just occurred, the two rushed to the aid of the victim. *"...there's no question that we were going to get out and help..."* said Maj. Arnett

The Army Doctors retrieved aid bags from their cars and ran to the mangled wreckage. Upon reaching the victim, Maj. Arnett found a pulse in the man's neck while Maj. Galdi assessed his other injuries.

Observing the oil and gasoline leaking from the tractor, Maj. Galdi made the decision to cut the cloth door from the farm tractor in order to pull the man from the wreckage.

A gnarled steering wheel and cab interior held onto the large man, forcing both of these Soldiers to muster all of their strength in order to pull him free.

"Once we laid him on his back, we checked him again, and he's not breathing. His pulse was irregular and pretty faint," said Maj. Arnett.

Discovering the victim was no longer breathing on his own and had lost consciousness, the duo rapidly began chest compressions, as well as administered a breathing bag to keep the man's body oxygenated and blood flowing to his vital organs. *"...learning the basics of what you get from Bayonet First Responder or Combat Life Saver Class; how to stop Hemorrhages, how to maintain someone's airway, just being familiar with that and practice with that.*

I think every soldier should have those skills in their arsenal," said Major Arnett

Roughly 30 minutes into their rescue, first response Austrian Emergency Services arrived. *"...they have a significant amount of equipment, but not the clearance to use it, so that's where it was beneficial for us because we could use all the equipment"* said Maj. Galdi.

The Austrian Emergency Services provided them with an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), an Oropharyngeal Airway (OPA), along with much needed fluids given to the patient. Continuous chest compressions, defibrillation, and other Advanced Cardiac Life Support techniques were conducted for the next 15 minutes until the 69-year-old-man eventually passed.

It was later determined that the injuries sustained in the accident were to the severity that he could not be saved. This did not stop the 173rd Airborne Brigade surgeons from making every effort to save him, because this is what they are trained to do.

(continued....)



"...I think a lot of people probably drove by and thought I wish I could have done something, and I hope that when people have those skills and the ability to help, they put those into effect!" said Maj. Arnett

Majors Arnett and Galdi epitomized Personal Courage and Selfless Service, two of the Army's Core Values, on this day.

The 173rd Airborne Brigade prides itself on training and maintaining the pinnacle of the Airborne Soldier no matter what the MOS marker on their ERB reads, from doctors to cooks and truck drivers to infantryman. This instance is a prime example of the doctors and medics in this brigade who are always ready to jump into the action with their counterparts and treat, with confidence, whatever may happen to those men and women under their care.

Maj. Galdi said, *"What you carry on you, knowing the equipment, knowing how to use it, and knowing the indications when to use that equipment, and utilizing Bayonet First Responder which is our version of our CLS is going to prepare you for this"*.

The Brigade cultivates a mentality of toughness and bravery which is highly respected by our NATO allies and feared by our foes. Training daily to keep warfighting skills sharp so that when the time comes, Sky Soldiers are prepared for any obstacle they will face. There's not a mag pouch or drop of CLP a Sky Soldier takes for granted. These Paratroopers learn, train and maintain their arms and equipment to be constantly prepped for any occasion.

This 173d Abn Bde report appeared on-line at
www.militarymedical.com/?p=17243



A most appropriate motto
for the Support Battalion. Ed



News Release, 01/10/2018

VA Revises Regulations on Reimbursement for Emergency Treatment of Veterans

WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it has, through a Federal Register notice, revised its regulations concerning payment or reimbursement for emergency treatment for non-service connected conditions at non-VA facilities.

VA will begin processing claims for reimbursement of reasonable costs that were only partially paid by the Veteran's other health insurance (OHI). Those costs may include hospital charges, professional fees and emergency transportation, such as ambulances.

This change comes on the heels of an earlier announcement that VA was taking immediate action to address delayed payments to community providers, found here.

Effective Jan. 9, VA updated a portion of its regulations in response to an April 2016 U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims decision that stated VA could no longer deny reimbursement when OHI pays a portion of the treatment expenses. VA will apply the updated regulations to claims pending with VA on or after April 8, 2016, and to new claims.

By law, VA still may not reimburse Veterans for the costs of copayments, cost shares and deductibles required by their OHI.

VA will work directly with community providers to get additional information needed to review and process these claims. Previous claims do not have to be resubmitted unless requested by VA.

More information on the amended regulation along with guidance may be found here





Reunions of the Airborne Kind ~ 2018



2018 Currahee Reunion at Fort Benning, GA, and the **2018 506th Association Reunion,** Columbus, GA, May 16-19, 2018. Contact: 706-660-1000



82nd Airborne All American Week 2018, Fort Bragg, NC, May 21-24, 2018. Contact www.82ndairborneassociation.org/phone/events.html



173d Airborne Brigade 2018 Reunion, Alexandria, Virginia, May 23-27, 2018, contact www.skysoldier.net/2018-Reunion-Registration



4/503 Reunion in 2018, Alexandria, VA, in connection with the 173d Airborne Brigade Reunion. Peyton Ligon is again organizing a dinner Friday, May 25th for anyone who served with the 4th Batt in 'Nam. PLigon3392@aol.com



20th Annual Currahee Reunion, Tunica, MS, June 4-7, 2018, contact Jerry Berry at 406-291-7678 or jerryberry@currahee.org



101st and 2nd 502 Reunion, Chicago, IL, August 15-19, 2018. Contact www.2nd502.org/index.php?page=reunioninfo



17th Annual Casper Aviation Platoon Reunion, Dallas/Ft. Worth, TX, June 28-28, 2018, contact Ned Costa, Event Manager, NCHuey721@aol.com



101st Abn Div 2nd/501st E Co, Recon, Mortars & HQ (Vietnam), Wilmington, NC, September 20-23, 2018. Contact James Hill 704-310-1800, tomnbonnie@bellsouth.net

NOTE: If you are aware of any upcoming "Airborne" or attached unit reunions, please email complete details to rto173@att.net for inclusion in our newsletter.



Airborne...All The Way!

Just Some of the Planned Sites to be Visited During This Year's 173d Airborne Brigade Association Reunion in Arlington/DC



Arlington National Cemetery Wreath Laying



Night tour of DC Monuments



Army Heritage and Education Center



Bull Run Battlefield



Vietnam Wall & Wreath Laying





Distinguished Service Cross

Awarded to

KARL LEE BULLARD



Karl (L), at basecamp with a buddy.

United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, July 9, 1918 (amended by act of July 25, 1963), takes pride in presenting the Distinguished Service Cross (Posthumously) to First Lieutenant (Infantry) Karl Lee Bullard (ASN: 0-5338XXX), United States Army, for extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Company B, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade. First Lieutenant Bullard distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 5 May 1968 as an infantry platoon leader. A reinforced Viet Cong company launched a violent attack on his company's position near Bong Son. Throughout the attack, Lieutenant Bullard moved from one position to another along the perimeter, directing the fire of his men. When the attack had been repulsed, he called for volunteers to move outside the perimeter with him to recover a friendly squad which was isolated, surrounded and under attack. Lieutenant Bullard was wounded in the leg during the maneuver but refused to stop for medical treatment. When his troops reached the squad, he directed them in laying down a base of fire to cover the withdrawal.

After insuring that all the beleaguered element's members had returned to safety, he moved out again to rescue a second isolated squad. Lieutenant Bullard advanced across two hundred meters of enemy controlled terrain before he contacted the surrounded element. When he arrived, he found that all the men in the squad had been wounded and the position was still receiving intense fire. The enemy then mounted a massive ground assault. Several of the Viet Cong fell at Lieutenant Bullard's feet as he directed the fire of his men which succeeded in repulsing the attack. While returning to the company perimeter, he personally killed two more insurgents. When the second squad had been brought to safety, Lieutenant Bullard left the perimeter a third time to recover a radio and machine gun which his men had been forced to leave behind. Lieutenant Bullard was personally responsible for inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy and for saving the lives of twelve American soldiers. First Lieutenant Bullard's extraordinary heroism and devotion to

duty, at the cost of his life, were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. ###

What is a Hero?

An illustrious warrior.

A person admired for achievements and noble qualities.

One who shows great courage.

The central figure in an event, period, or movement.

A person demonstrating extreme devotion.

1LT Karl Lee Bullard.



52 years ago this year...

173rd Airborne Brigade, Vietnam War, Operation Toledo, US Army Video Narrative

Elsewhere in the country, troops of the 173d Airborne begin Operation Toledo, as they jump off from their forward command post northeast of Saigon. Flying over the thick jungles of Long Khanh province they end the 26 kilometer air ride to their objective.

Landing in a section of Highway No. 1 bordering a village, the troopers dismount and spread out on either side of the road.



Operation Toledo. Troops land along Highway 1.
(Image from video)

As soon as the helicopters are gone, the assault forces regroup and begin moving westward along the highway – their mission, to search and clear the surrounding grounds. Evidence of a quick withdrawal by Viet Cong forces in the area is found by the advancing troops. The abandoned campsite is thoroughly searched before the men continue onward.

To reach some of the thickest jungle country in the corps area where it is believed the Viet Cong may still be, the flying infantrymen begin crossing one of the many rivers found in this region.

With the aid of a guide rope, the men work their way across the muddy rain swollen water course. By the time all of the troops have crossed, it is late in the day. The south bank is secured and camp is made for the night.

Several soldiers are injured and medical choppers are signaled. Openings in the jungle are so small that the helicopters cannot land. Pickup by sling, cable and winch is the only practicable and fast method for removal of the men.

The wounded are placed in the hoisting equipment and gently taken aboard for the quick return trip to a hospital in the rear for immediate medical attention.

Back at the 173d forward command post, troops conduct Medcap and Dentcap programs for the friendly villagers there. The medical aid given by the troops is of the overall civic action program being carried out by the 173d Airborne Brigade.

Source:

Watch video at

www.youtube.com/watch?v=W48uo4Zr8Hc

OPERATION TOLEDO

10 August - 7 September 1966

**Phuoc Tuy & Binh Tuy
Provinces.**

The Sky Soldiers uncovered over 125,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, over 50 tons of rice, 10 base camps, 75 huts and 5 tunnel systems in the May Tao Secret Zone.



Veteran Angels



How We Operate

We are a fellowship of combat Veterans and others who are dedicated to helping Veterans find spiritual healing through a spiritual re-connection. We envision a world where every Veteran has an opportunity to find his or her spiritual connection. All of Veteran Angels' services are provided without discrimination of any kind and without cost to the Veteran. We do not require a faith commitment from anyone we help. We exist solely to help Veterans make a spiritual connection that will help them heal.

Director

THOMAS S. ABRAHAM

tsabraham@me.com



Founder of Veteran Angels

- West Point Graduate, NCAA football and wrestling
- Airborne Ranger
- Served with the 173d Airborne in Vietnam
- Rifle Platoon Leader & Weapons Platoon Leader
- 4.2 Mortar Platoon Leader
- CO, HQS & HCO, 2/503 Inf., 173d Airborne
- Combat Jump in Vietnam, February 22, 1967
- Company CO Advanced Inf Training, Ft. Polk, LA

Director

CW2 JOE L. MALUCHNIK

jmaluchnik@hotmail.com



- Graduate of Point Park University
- Graduate of California Univ. of PA
- Graduate of Indiana Univ. of PA (B.S. Edu)
- Veteran of Iraqi Freedom & Enduring Freedom

Director

ANITA LEONARD

- Graduate of Greensburg Salem H.S.
- Graduate of Mercy Hospital School of Nursing (RN)
- Graduate of Seton Hill University, BA
- Graduate of Univ. of Pittsburgh, Master in Public Health



Seeking Veterans who are challenged by the demons of combat trauma. Veteran Angels is a Foundation established by combat veterans of the Vietnam era to help combat Veterans of that war and the recent wars in Iraq and Afghanistan find angels to aide them in spiritual healing through love for family, love for friends, and love for The Higher Power. Our volunteers, of both eras, understand the trauma of combat because they have been there. They have sought spiritual help and have felt the power of spiritual healing. We want to help fellow Veterans with their recovery.

We offer a brief retreat in the mountains of Pennsylvania, with no cost to the Veteran for lodging or food. We will try to help with transportation on an as needed basis. All speakers, instructors, and Foundation members are volunteers. We all want to help. All funds we raise will go to benefit the program. We believe that no man or woman should be left behind.

We have combat experienced speakers, spiritual speakers, and will provide classes in yoga and/or meditation to assist in the healing process.

We will offer several retreats a year, depending on response. Our web site is under development but check it occasionally for more information. You can email us from the web site. You may also contact our Founder, Tom Abraham, at tsabraham@me.com or call his cell at 724-433-6323.

We are currently looking for Veterans interested in seeking spiritual help and those Veterans who would like to volunteer to help other Veterans.

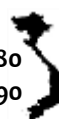
This program is open to all, regardless of religious affiliation. Not affiliated with any specific religion. We offer spiritual guidance. We do not administer health care, but may be able to refer Veterans needing health care to appropriate destinations.

Time, date, and location of the next retreat will be announced by email to those who have expressed an interest and on our web site, WWW.A-VETERANANGELS.COM.

Follow us and Like us on Facebook at Veteran Angels.



Note: Visit their website if you like for complete bios and details about their organization. This is published for information purposes only and is not an endorsement by the editor of this newsletter. Ed



A 2/503 Trooper's Tribute To His Fallen Buddies

Posted on the *Wall of Faces*

I was with Pat the night before he died and the next day within 20 minutes of his death. I want to say now that war is ugly. Death is ugly. The battlefield is a harvesting point.

Pat was a mortar crew member and an Artillery Forward Observer. The last night Pat and I saw each other, the Platoon Leader of Delta Company 2/503rd Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade (SEP), had made the mistake of deciding to enter a horse shoe cliff, compounding his error by doing so just before dark. A horse shoe is a terrain feature in the shape of a horse shoe. This one had vertical cliffs that led to an enclosed plateau of small size from which the only way out was up the cliffs.

As soon as they descended, the unit received automatic weapons fire from a North Vietnamese Army unit of indeterminate size, which pinned them to the closed end of the terrain feature. One of the 2nd Platoon members had been shot in the ankle, and every time he moved, he was shot again for a total of at least 3 hits. A friend of Patrick's named Poff had stood up from behind a large boulder to engage the enemy sniper with his M-79 grenade launcher.



Cpl Pat Steele
KIA 5/27/68



Elbert Darrell Poff
KIA 5/5/68

The shooter/sniper engaged Poff with a burst of AK-47 hitting Poff in the chest killing him instantly before Poff could fire a round. As other troopers moved to recover the still alive and wounded man, they received more AK-47 fire making rescue impossible without taking more MIA or KIA casualties. Three or four had been shot already. It was getting dark fast as it does in the high mountains of the Viennese Cordillera. (Note: Author may have meant *Annamese* Cordillera, a densely forested area running through west central VN. Ed)

I was an Artillery Observer also and I arrived with a platoon of A Company 2/503rd Infantry 173d Airborne Brigade (SEP). I immediately set out to plot fire missions while other members of Alpha Company began their descent into absolute darkness. After a while a Dustoff showed up and hovered, lowering its rescue basket for the wounded and for the guy who had been shot several times. He was recovered last.

I thought, well, mission accomplished, I'm out of here. But no, the Battalion Commander decided to let us spend the night as it was totally dark and losing a ship in that degree of darkness would create a rescue nightmare so we were ordered to spend the night. We had taken no overnight gear. No Starlight scopes, no blankets, no claymores, no food, no water, just rifles and a combat pack that consisted of a basic ammo load, grenades, and individual medical gear.

Just before the first evacuation chopper landed, Patrick Steele told me, "*Poff was my best friend. Don't let them take his body. Guard him all night.*" Poff's body was on the edge of the perimeter. I slept outside of him so I could drag his body to protection in case of an overnight enemy attack. Pat told me, "*I'll see you back at LZ English (Landing Zone English).*" I arrived at LZ English late the next day.

Pat was just arriving himself from wherever it was Delta had spent the day. Our Company Commander, Captain Parker, wanted to go spend the night at LZ English North (a small, fire support base 5400 meters northwards that covered LZ English with mortar fire). It was nearing the 1800, the onset of the nationwide curfew. Pat said, "*We're going to English North to take Captain Parker. Come with us.*" I was a 2/503rd Wildcat Team member and I was 30' from home. I was already in the jeep with Pat, Darby, FEBE the driver and close friend when Captain Parker showed up and said, "*Well, everyone can't go. This is a 4 passenger vehicle and the MPs are going to remove one of you when we reach the gate. George, why don't you stay. They'll be right back.*"

(continued....)



So I got out of the jeep. No one was armed with any firearm, whereas I was always fully armed. If I went to the latrine, I had my combat gear.

I asked Pat, *"Do you want me to pick up your mail?"* He said, "Yes", so I went into the orderly room returning with his mail, reached out to hand it to him, but he said, *"No, no, you hold onto it. We'll be back in about 20 minutes."* I waited outside the orderly room. Some minutes later I heard an explosion followed by a roar of automatic weapons fire. I looked northwards and could see a tall cloud of black smoke. It was a fuel fire signature. Somebody was hit. Then, I heard over the radio, *"Echo, Echo, you have two KIAs. I say again, you have two KIAs"* broadcasting names in the clear. Patrick Matthew Steele and William Francis Brice. Bodies are recovered.

I could not believe it. I went to the orderly room to ask the 1st Sergeant if it was real. He said, *"Yes it is."* *"Could it be a mistake?"* I asked SGT White. *"No, it's no mistake."* *"But they were just here. He said he was coming back. They can't be dead."*

I gave back Pat's letters, But I knew it was true. I went to the latrine where no one could see me and I cried, and then cried some more. Sometimes, over 40 years later, I still cry in private.

The enemy had planted a mine in the road, and then set it off as the Jeep was driving over it accompanied with a high volume of AK-47, and SKS fire. They missed the Jeep and blew up the right rear tire of the trailer they were towing. FEBE had tried to turn back to English North by making a left hand U-Turn, but the Jeep flipped over landing on its right side pinning Pat's right leg under it. Then, the enemy came out onto the road bed firing, one of them opening fire on the fuel tank that was located under the driver's seat so that the gasoline poured down onto Pat. The enemy then proceeded to light the gasoline killing Pat by burning him alive.

FEBE had been shot in the hip with one of the initial rounds so he could not run, only drag himself. One of the enemy ran up to FEBE and emptied an entire magazine into his face as reported to me by one of the LZ English North residents.



William F. Brice, Jr.
"FEBE"
KIA 5/27/68

I arrived with the first wave of traffic just after 0600 when the curfew was lifted the following morning. LZ English North had an 81mm mortar platoon, a 4.2" mortar platoon, two twin M-42 40mm dusters, sometimes an overnight quad fifty, at least one 3.5", maybe even a 90mm rocket launcher, and approximately 100 men with rifles and pistols. No one had fired a single round at the enemy. I remembered watching two Cobras cranking up, lifting off a few feet then landing, and then securing as I was hearing the casualty report over the radio.

I asked some engineer, *"Where are my friends?"* and he pointed to a Deuce and a Half with an open rear gate wherein I could see two loaded body bags. I asked a few of them, *"Why didn't you do something? I would have driven a Duster to the road and opened fire. Why didn't anyone here do anything?"* They answered almost in unison, *"We didn't know what to do and there wasn't anyone around to tell us. We wanted to do something, but we didn't know what to do."* I believed them.

There was one Infantry Captain, one Infantry 1st Lieutenant, a few Infantry Sergeants, and there was no one to tell them what to do?

The whole trip was unnecessary. The entire country became a free fire zone at 1800. Aircraft operations, ground operations stopped and became defensive positions from 1800-0600. Night operations like patrol, ambush, aloft gunship fire support operations remained active. It was so close to curfew. Why did they go so late? If I had been there it would have turned out differently. I was always fully armed.

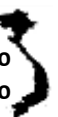
Pat was my closest friend after FEBE, but we were like brothers. The three of us. We were closer than brothers, tighter than brothers.

Pat was a good guy. A paratrooper, a mortar man, an Artillery Observer. The two most hated men in any battlefield are the snipers and the AFOs. In our battlefield, we were paratroopers, AFOs, Rangers, LRRPS. We were Herdsmen. I miss my brothers. We were hated for the good we did, but we were hated together, and we loved together.

I miss them so much.

George

Source: An unsigned posting on the online site *Wall of Faces*, yet the report indicates it was posted by a trooper named George. (Photos added) Ed



Honoring a WWII Vet

From Ed Kearney, B/2/503



Maybe we can reflect back over our lives and wonder what the secret is to our surviving thus far and wonder what it would be like to hit the 100th mark. Here is a gentleman that will soon be 112 years old. He lives in Austin, TX. I had heard of him and found out that he lives only a couple miles from the church that my wife and I attend.

I chair the veterans committee at this church and we reached out to Mr. Overton and were able to connect with his caretakers and schedule a visit with him. I didn't think it would happen but it did. His nephew and cousin were accommodating so the committee went to visit with him after a church service.



WWII Veteran Mr. Richard Overton, 111

Here are a couple shots of us visiting with him. There are about 40 military veterans in our church. Many retired and some just did their tour and got out. There are 8 on the veterans committee from all branches of the military except the Marine Corp. Two nurses, one Colonel MD, USAF E-9 and a couple E-7s and one I'm outta here.

Wesley Veterans Committee met with Mr. Richard Overton on Sunday March 18, 2018. Overton is Austin's and America's oldest living veteran at 111 years old. He may be America's oldest living male. It was explained that Mr. Overton was a little cranky this morning but at 111 years old, he can if he wants to. However, we found him to be affectionate and charming.

He was wondering who all these people were in his house and his nephew explained that we wanted to visit with him; he said "Ok".

Someone asked him what is his secret to a long life to which he replied, "I smoke 10 cigars a day." When he met President Barack Obama four years ago, it was said the president asked him what the secret to his longevity was. Mr. Overton responded, "I smoke 10 cigars a day and drink whiskey." Today, his nephew says Mr. Overton smokes about 15 cigars and does indulge occasionally.

After we mingled a tad and spoke to him, he was so pleasant and still has a sharp memory. He also has a good sense of humor and is so proud to have served in WWII and traveling all over the world.



We saluted him, and yes, he returned a grand salute to us.

Mr. Overton will celebrate his 112th birthday on May 11, 2018. What an honor and joy it was for us to meet with him. He is an inspiration to all.



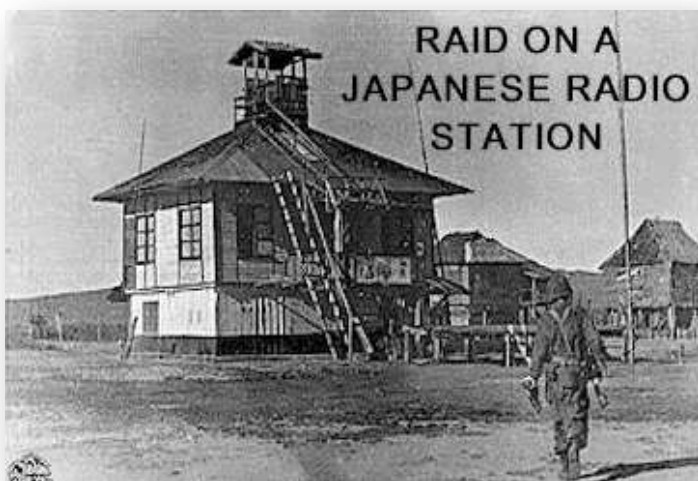
Bravo Bull Ed Kearney with Mr. Overton in Austin.



"RAID ON A JAPANESE RADIO STATION"

This is a recounting of "B" Company's attack on Paluan - and perhaps a little more - but only from the perspective of a sergeant of the First Platoon. Each of our other platoons has a similar story to tell, but no one has told them yet. I fear now in the year 2001 that no one ever will. I'm lucky to have been able to do so.

Jack Herzig



The crucial final phase of General of the Army MacArthur's plan for freedom of the Philippines would culminate with the liberation of Luzon where the main Japanese force was located. Frustrating this plan was a Japanese radio station on the island of Mindoro that provided early warning for the enemy's anti-aircraft batteries, fighter planes and flak boats on Luzon of the approach of our planes that were based on Mindoro. Since the Japanese radio station was located in the fairly large Philippine town of Paluan, it was not feasible to destroy the station by air attack or naval bombardment. B Co, 503rd Parachute RCT, reinforced by a machine gun section, was chosen to land some distance south of the town, then hike up to attack and destroy the radio station and its complement of about 80 Japanese soldiers.

B Company was landed shortly after midnight by a navy LCI on the coast of Mindoro some 20 miles south of the town of Paluan. The circumstances of our disembarkation were a shameful episode upon the USN personnel in charge. When its captain saw a

Japanese plane on a night with no clouds under a brilliant full moon he thought it was so dangerous to his ship that he backed off the shore before we paratroopers were all disembarked, deliberately dumping many of us in water so deep that we were relatively fortunate to have had only one of our 60mm mortarmen drown. I cannot recall the poor fellow's name. He and the other members of the mortar platoon were loaded down, in addition to their rifles and M1 ammunition, with either four or six mortar rounds (I'm not sure) or the mortar tubes, base plate, bipods and sights. At that time, Warren Pepper, our number one mortar gunner, put his own life in jeopardy by swimming out to save several other troopers who certainly would otherwise have drowned under the weight of their equipment. Pepper was, much later, awarded the Soldier's Medal.

Max Kulick, a rifleman in our platoon, was able to take a number of pictures of the attack and its aftermath which is currently (in 2001) available on the internet at *The Dropzone*.



L-R: Ernie Larson, Bill Sedlar, Vernon Primley, Jack Herzig, Charlie Hardman; (kneeling) Ted Hoggatt

As we hiked up toward the enemy station, my first platoon was in the lead. Ted Hoggatt, our first scout, signaled that someone was approaching and the entire company rapidly moved off the trail into the bushes ready to open fire as we had quickly learned to do back in New Guinea. I saw that it was a young Filipino whom Ted had seen and heard coming. I stopped him and found that he was a resident of Paluan, the site of the radio station, who had been forced to lead a patrol of Japanese soldiers coming south while we were going north on the same trail. The young fellow told me that he ran away when the Japanese stopped to put their shoes back on after crossing a stream....

(continued...)



....He warned me that they were just a few minutes away heading in our direction, that they were thirteen in number with a sergeant in charge, that they were all armed with rifles and grenades, and that one of them had an American Garand M1 rifle that had been picked up when American and Filipino forces were forced to surrender the Philippines in 1942.

A lieutenant and a sergeant from our regimental headquarters had been coming along as "liaison" with six Filipino guerrillas, the leader of whom wore one of our old "tin hat" World War One helmets and armed with Enfield bolt action rifles that was the standard U.S. Army weapon before we adopted the "03" Springfield. Originally, they were supposed to be familiar with the area and in some way guide us, but they were constantly arguing with each other so our commanding officer, Capt. Chester Smith, had them tag along toward the end of the column so as not to impede our advance.

When the Filipino came down the trail, the guerrillas took off into the bush, which was all right with us but not so good for the lieutenant and the sergeant because they must have thought they were on safari and had had the guerrillas toting their weapons. Now aware that there really was an enemy, they were trying to call the guerrillas back to get their weapons so we had to tell them to shut up.

As we had done before in New Guinea and

Noemfoor, we set up an ambush with Jim Pascarelli, the BAR man of the first squad, as the base for fire and to his left the BAR gunner from the second squad, "Press" Ferguson. Ted Hoggatt, Bill Prendergast, "Junior" Malo, and Bill Harris took up positions covering the trail with their rifles. Sergeant Don Blum and I, both carrying Thompson machine guns, moved off to the right as far as we could to kill any of the enemy who might not be cut down by the BAR and rifle fire. I arranged that we would all open fire when Pascarelli, who had the best field of fire, did. We heard the enemy coming. The first in line was a very large soldier, wearing a white loose shirt, who turned out to be the sergeant. Pascarelli's first burst took down the first four or five of the enemy, Ferguson's BAR jammed, and the rest of the enemy party fell under our fire.



L-R: Junior Malo, Jack Herzig, Bill Prendergast

Don Blum and I went in to be sure that there were no survivors who could pose a danger to us. We both happened to see the soldier with the captured U.S. Garand rifle as he had Don in his sights and pulled the trigger. For some reason, the rifle did not fire and I was able to dispatch the enemy soldier in the next few seconds. As fate would have it, both Don Blum and "Press" Ferguson were to be killed the next day as we assaulted the radio station.



Don Blum target of the misfired M1 in our ambush. He was killed inside the school.

While Captain Smith and we were getting ready to continue our march and talking about how fortunate we were that the Filipino youth had been able to give us information about the Japanese patrol, a captain, who clearly was not part of the 503rd, came up to me and said that I should have detained the young fellow. We were all rather high spirited about what had happened so we were not surprised when Ted Hoggatt said,

"We were busy killing Japs. Where the f___ were you, sir?"

Captain Smith evidently chose not to hear that and the "foreign" captain backed off. Someone said later that he was CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps) which did not mean a thing to us.

(continued....)



By nightfall we had arrived at the outskirts of the settlement of Paluan, which was in two neighborhoods about three-to-four hundred yards apart. It was located at the apex of a very large bay, opening to the west, with a population close to a thousand living in three or four rows of "houses" built of local materials like bamboo and other natural products which made very comfortable residences. All were raised some five-to-six feet off the ground by thick wooden poles which allowed breezes and moisture to circulate.

The Japanese had taken over the "new" school and the "old" school in middle of the north section of the settlement, which were in a line end-to-end at a right angle to and about 100 yards from the beach. They faced out onto a former playground that had been turned into a parade ground and there was a new, small two-story building in which the radio was located. That building also had a watchtower on the top where a lookout thereon had an excellent view seaward to sound an alarm in case of sighting any landing force.



The radio station and the lookout post.



A view from the top of the radio station north toward Luzon where the Japanese survivors fled, pursued by my platoon.



The lookout gave a good view in all directions.

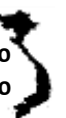


View of the school buildings from the lookout.

We met about midnight to develop our plan which had my platoon entering the eastern part of the area two squads abreast and setting up close to the schools in which the enemy was sleeping. The light machine gun section took a position close enough to be protected by our left flank. We were set up so that we and the machine guns would have raking fire over the parade ground. The third platoon was to set up to our right facing south onto the parade ground and schools, and the second platoon was to our south facing north but in cover so that they would not accidentally be hit by fire from our third platoon.

We were situated like a horseshoe with the schools, the radio building, the parade ground and the Japanese in our center, and the open side being the shore.

(continued....)



The local people had told us that the Japanese garrison formed into ranks every morning at sunrise to say prayers to the Emperor on the parade ground. That was when our machine gun section and the first and third platoon would destroy the enemy. The Japanese had placed an ammunition "dump" several hundred yards north of the schools that was guarded by four soldiers. This target was given to our guerrillas to whom we had given adequate weapons.

Captain Smith set up company headquarters a few yards behind my platoon and our 60mm mortar platoon took cover a hundred yards behind us. The same old brilliant moon that caused us problems when we landed was still up there making the area very bright but we managed to get in place in the deep shadows of the houses despite the lookout on top of the radio building.

As daylight started to break, we heard sounds familiar to any soldier, that was of the Japanese first sergeant getting his troops up and out. To our great dismay, there was firing off to our right alerting the Japanese in the schools who immediately took shelter under their buildings. The guerrillas had been seen by the Japanese guards at the ammo "dump" and had been fired upon, thereby alerting the entire Japanese force. Although we didn't have a specific target, we fired at the schools and the radio building for perhaps a minute. Ernie Larson, a rifleman in our first squad, stood up and took the classic position of a model target shooter. He squeezed off one shot, knocking the lookout over the side of his little box on top of the radio building, who then slid off the roof into a crumpled heap. *"Just like Errol Flynn,"* laughed Ernie, as he took cover.



The Japanese soldiers had constructed dugouts under each of the school buildings that were reinforced by thick logs. They had also prepared a maze of trenches they would have used in case of a seaborne attack that they were now manning to escape our fire. These preparations presented us with a formidable defense for the enemy while we could only take cover behind the logs that were standing on end supporting the civilian houses. From under the schools, we started to take rifle fire which we were able to suppress, but then we came under heavy fire from a machine gun with us in the first platoon as the primary targets. Pascarelli spotted the machine gun and engaged in a kind of duel and was able to put it and its crew out of action.

The next day when we came back into the area, we found that the machine gun was one of our own taken from a downed plane and with a very high rate of fire. On it were deep gouges where Pascarelli's bullets destroyed the enemy crew. We did not receive any more fire from that machine gun. However, that was too late for several troopers who had been wounded and Captain Smith, who had been shot in both legs.

During what seemed to be a standoff, our third platoon, from houses that gave them the advantage of elevation, was able to pick off some of the defenders who were moving through the trenches. The second platoon cut off several attempts by the enemy trying to escape from the schools to move to the south. Sergeant Blum, Ferguson, and several other troopers, firing as they went, ran into the new school in an attempt to locate and destroy the enemy under the floor. Blum was killed, Ferguson wounded, and the other troopers forced out by heavy fire from under the floors. We had to get Ferguson out as soon as possible.

"Ted" Kaczor, from our mortar platoon who was a big strong guy, said he'd go in and get Ferguson, who was pretty large, too, while Ted Hoggatt, John Serba, "Junior" Malo and I would cover for them. Off we went, firing to prevent enemy fire from the dugouts. Kaczor came rushing down the steps practically carrying the wounded Ferguson when from under the building rolled a hand grenade that went off at our feet, killing Ferguson but leaving the rest of us, including Kaczor, unharmed.

I've seen a lot of action but that memory of Kaczor hauling Ferguson down those steps while we were trying to protect them is one of the most vivid in my mind.



Ted Kaczor (who tried to get the badly wounded Ferguson out of the school) and Sisto Castillo in Lae, N.G. 1943

(continued....)





The School steps

By mid-afternoon, I still hadn't seen any officer. Our platoon had lost some of our best people but we were trying small group forays and sniping where we thought we might have some effect. In a maneuver like that to get Ferguson, we stormed in and brought Don Blum's body out of the school with no opposition this time. However, our wounded, which now included Prendergast, also from our platoon, were not getting adequate treatment.

The lieutenant from regimental headquarters assumed command, and ordered that we withdraw to the other smaller, southern sector of the settlement. Some of us thought that we shouldn't leave what we had fought to take. We did move out and set up a secure area where, after local people shared their food with us, we were able to really sleep well for the first time in several nights. PT boats picked up our dead and wounded. Among the dead was that sergeant from regimental headquarters. My first platoon had suffered most casualties: Sgt. Blum, Ferguson, Prendergast, Hoggatt, Larson, and several others.

During the night the Japanese had abandoned their positions and the dozen or so survivors took off to the north. At daylight we went back to the scene of the fighting where the local people had already started to bury the dead Japanese. Our new commander gave me, with the remnants of my platoon, the assignment of pursuing the fleeing Japanese. So the eight of us picked up water, extra canteens, c-rations, ammunition, and food from the rest of the company. With several local fellows to act as runners we took off after the Japanese with no more instruction than that.

Over the next several days we learned that five of the Japanese had drowned in a boat trying to make Luzon, others were killed by Filipino guerrillas and the rest evidently lost in the jungle. About a week later I got word that some of us were to be picked up by a PBY navy seaplane, and several days later the rest of us were also returned to our base in Mindoro.

Some say that our company had not quite recovered when we landed on Corregidor several weeks later. The lieutenant who took over command of B Company was killed on the island of Negros in June, 1945. Some of the "old timers" of B Company said that it was not a totally bad thing. I was 22 years old then.

I met Ted Hoggatt in San Francisco in June, 1945, as we were being sent home for discharge. I met Captain Smith at Fort Benning's Airborne School in 1951 when both of us were recalled to active duty for the Korean War. This time I was a lieutenant. Ted Kaczor was badly wounded on Corregidor in the attack on Water Tower Hill just a few feet from me, losing the use of his legs. He died within a few years. Max Kulick killed himself in 1950. So the war did not end for many of us in 1945.

Max had an older sister in New York City who had been in touch with my mother, also in New York, during and after the war. Seems that Max never was able to reconstruct his life after he was discharged. Maybe, like me, he had a well-meaning uncle who told him that he'd been out of uniform "three weeks now" and ought to "get going" as a civilian. Three weeks seemed like a short time to be "back" after three years in the furnace of the Pacific. Hell, he'd spent three weeks in a hospital in New Guinea shivering from the chills and sweats of a "fever of undetermined origin." Maybe he couldn't see the future peddling frozen food door-to-door off the back of a truck, or being a "private investigator" for the Great Northern Detective Agency in Hackensack, New Jersey. He couldn't see the future after trying to tough out several miserable days on the Ford light truck assembly line in Fort Lee, New Jersey, or being a cub reporter for the *Jersey Journal* in Union City, New Jersey. Maybe he couldn't find a replacement for a home to return to since his sister's life had changed over three years. Maybe, at the end of the "52-20" unemployment program for former GI's ran out after a year, he couldn't find any replacement for the security of the company of fellow human beings who had shared the dangers of a shooting war and had even taught him to play double pinochle. Maybe he could not be comfortable except among other guys who all made the same wages. And maybe the faces and places in his extensive collection of hundreds of pictures that he had taken during his service possessed more reality and promise than his present life. So he went back to Australia which was more real and promising than his life in the big city. Some of his pictures, including one of Max himself, are preserved on *The Dropzone*.

(continued...)



So it made sense to Max to go back to the place that had offered such positive feelings. My wife, Aiko, and I were doing some research for the Department of Justice and found Max's name on a ship's manifest when he returned to the U.S. in 1949 from Australia. Even that trip didn't work for Max. Death offered more promise and less pain than life. So he ended the pain. He was just as much of a casualty of war as was Sergeant Donald Blum. Max deserves a Purple Heart, too.

THE AUTHOR



"Ready for the
Saturday Evening Post
photographer"



Fort Bragg,
September 1942

[Reprinted courtesy of Mr. Paul Whitman and the
503rd PRCT Heritage Battalion website]

Jack Herzig, 83; Aided In Redress for Japanese

August 29, 2005

Jack Herzig, 83, a lawyer who with his wife played an instrumental role in gaining redress from the United States for the internment of Japanese Americans during World War II, died Aug. 21 at his home in Gardena, Calif. He had colon cancer.

Between 1942 and 1945, the federal government interned more than 120,000 ethnic Japanese, most of whom were born in the United States, amid widespread anti-Japanese sentiment.

The U.S. Supreme Court in the 1944 case of *Fred Y. Korematsu v. the United States* upheld the constitutionality of the decision to imprison Japanese Americans during the war. Korematsu, who in 1942 was a 23-year-old welder living in Oakland, Calif., refused to report to an internment camp. He was arrested, convicted of violating the internment order and was sent to a camp in Utah.

Mr. Herzig and his wife, Aiko Yoshinaga-Herzig, in the 1980s uncovered documents in the National Archives and other repositories that showed government prosecutors suppressed, altered and destroyed evidence during its prosecution of Korematsu. The documents enabled a team of largely Asian American lawyers to file a petition for *writ of coram nobis*, a rarely used legal strategy to overturn convictions after new evidence is discovered.

In November 2003, U.S. District Court Judge Marilyn Hall Patel from the bench exonerated Korematsu and blasted the government for basing its decisions on "*unsubstantiated facts, distortions and the [opinions] of one military commander whose views were seriously tainted by racism.*"

The ruling helped secure a presidential apology and financial reparations for former internees.

Korematsu, who died in March, was given the nation's highest civilian honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, by Bill Clinton in 1998.

"Jack Herzig is one of those unrecognized giants of redress for Japanese Americans," said Dale Minami, a San Francisco Bay area civil rights lawyer who helped form the legal team to exonerate Korematsu. "*He and his wife found the documents that essentially incriminated the United States government and undercut the whole rationale of military necessity for internment.*"

Mr. Herzig was committed to social justice and also denounced the discrimination that surfaced during the Persian Gulf War and more recently during the war with Iraq, Minami said.

Besides his wife, survivors include four children.

Source:

www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2005/08/28/AR2005082801056.html



(web image)





173d Airborne Brigade Combat Jumpers ~ Vietnam

“The following individuals made the combat parachute jump on 22 February 1967 in the vicinity of Katum, Republic of Vietnam.”



The Jump Manifest ~ Operation Junction City

(Alphabetized by Last Name)

Updated 19 July 2013

Abernathy, Ronald, SP4	Boisvert, Kenneth, SP4	Catozzi, Paul H., PFC	Degregio, Danial, PFC
Abraham, Thomas, 1LT	Bonill, Ricardo, PFC	Cersosimo, Anthony, CPL	Delgado, Enrique, SGT
Adair, Dennis, PFC	Booker, Richard, PFC	Chackel, Gino, PFC	Deloach, Loyd, PFC
Adams, James, PFC	Booth, Robert L., PFC	Chain, Willie, PFC	Demboski, Bruce C., PFC
Adams, Johns, SP4	Borba, Robert, PFC	Chapin, Norman, PFC	Denham, Charles, PVT
Adams, Mack J. PSG	Bothwell, Frank E., SGT	Chase, Walter, SGT	DePue, Robert F., PFC
Aherns, Henry M., PFC	Bowe, Clarence, SP4	Chavis, Jimmy, SGT	DeSaulles, Norman, PFC
Alandt, Charles, PFC	Bowman, Edward, SGT	Cheatham, Lewell, SGT	Detten, William, SGT
Alexander, Douglas M., SP4	Boyle, David J., 1LT	Chriswell, Truman, PFC	Dickman, Gregory, PFC
Allen, Eddie, PFC	Bradley, Willie C., SP4	Clark, Gene, PFC	Dillard, John, SP5
Allen, Johnny, PFC	Brawley, Don, SP4	Clark, Paul C. Jr., CPT	Dillard, Oliver, SP4
Allen, Odell, PFC	Bright, Ralph, SGT	Cleland, Harry T., SP4	Dillon, James D., CPL
Anderson, Charles C. Jr.,	Broady, Willie J., SGT	Cleveland, Wayne, PFC	Dinardo, Paul, PFC
Anderson, Donald E., SP4	Brooks, John, SSG	Cohen, Thomas, SP4	Dineen, John, PFC
Anderson, James L., MAJ	Brooks, Johnnie, SGT	Cole, Kenneth, SP4	Dingess, John F., SGT
Anthony, Kionell S., PFC	Brown, Donald W., SGT	Cole, Robert H., CPT	Dixon, Allen C. Jr., MAJ
Armstrong, Jackie D., SFC	Brown, George, SGT	Coles, Joseph T., PFC	Dockery, Williard, SFC
Arnold, Dale, PFC	Brown, Harvey, PFC	Collier, Melvin T., PFC	Dombrowski, Larry, SGT
Asbury, Clinton, SP4	Brown, Joe, SGT	Collins, Clifford C., PFC	Donastorg, Alfonso, PFC
Ashwood, Benjamin H., SFC	Brown, Julius, SSG	Constantino, Michael, SP4	Donohue, Thomas, PFC
Austin, James G., PFC	Brzostowski, Sigmund, SP4	Copper, Jackie, SP4	Dorsey, Thomas, 1LT
Austine, Mark, PFC	Bungardner, Terry E., SP4	Corbitt, Alfred, SSG	Dove, Bennie S., SSG
Baker, Dale W., SP4	Burgess, Peter D., CPT	Cortez, Alfred, PFC	Drake, Michael J., PFC
Baker, Hilbert, SP4	Burnette, Larry G., SP4	Cortez, Miguel, SP4	Drake, Randall, CPL
Balderos, Joe R., CPL **	Burnette, Thomas, PFC	Cox, George T., SGT	Drayton, Johnny, SP4
Banks, Holly, PFC	Burns, Charles W., PFC	Craig, Gary P., PFC	Drish, George R., PFC
Banot, John F., PFC	Burrow, Henry W., LTC	Craig, Norris, PFC	Duhon, Chester, PFC
Barrs, Talmadge, SP4	Byers, Terrence, PVT	Crane, Richard, PFC	Dulin, George, SSG
Barse, Randolph, PFC	Cacaddan, Roger, D., PFC	Crawford, Dana, PFC	Duncan, Dallas, PFC
Barthule, Russell T., SP4	Caires, Clyde, PFC	Crews, Tim, SP5	Duncan, Phillip, PFC
Barton, Richard B., SP4	Calderon, Juan, PFC	Crigmyle, Arthur, PFC	Durham, Clyde, PFC
Batiste, John J., PFC	Call, Kenneth, SP4	Crowder, Alonzo, PFC	Dysart, Berttis, SSG
Baura, Gary, PFC	Callaghan, James T., CPT	Crowe, Marion, SSG	Ebald, Michael L., PFC
Bayne, Joseph P., PFC	Callahan, Welborn Jr., 1LT	Crump, Roger L., MAJ	Elders, Sylvester, PFC
Beaver, Gerald, PVT	Campbell, Kenneth, SP4	Cruz, Guadalupe, CPL	Elgin, Robert G., SP4
Beck, William, PFC	Camus, Glyn, SGT	Cruz, Gerald, SP4	Ellenwood, Russel O., PFC
Beisswanger, Robert F., SGT	Capalbo, Kenneth A. SP4	Cruz, Peter, CPL	Elliot, Harlen, SP4
Bell, James H., SP4	Card, Vincent W., SSG	Cullen, Kenneth A., 2LT	Emery, Walter, K., PFC
Bennett, Charles, PFC	Carney, Thomas P., CPT	Culp, William F., PFC	Engle, Russel, PFC
Benton, Lester H., PFC	Carns, Edwin H. J. Jr., CPT	Cunningham, Richard, SP4	English, Raymond, PFC
Bentz, Edward, PFC	Carr, Milton, B., CPT	Curran, Paul W., PFC	Epley, Louis P. Jr., SP4
Bertrand, Arland A., PFC	Carrier, William, PFC	Curvan, Leonard J., PFC	Ernst, Gary, PFC
Bethke, Gerald H., MAJ	Carroeon, John G., PFC	Cutbirth, Harry, PFC	Esua, Plmer M., 2LT
Bice, Randall, PVT	Cartagena, Angel L., PFC	Daniels, Olen, SGT	Evans, David, PFC
Bigger, Floyd, PFC	Carter, Edmund, PFC	Darling, Gregory, MAJ	Evans, James L., 1LT
Biggs, Homer, SGM	Carter, Preston H., PFC	Dearman, Wayne R., PSG	Everson, Wesley, SSG
Bills, Steven, PFC	Carter, Timothy, PVT	Davis, Edward, 1SG	Fabisch, Keith, PFC
Blackshear, Clarence, SP4	Caruso, Joseph, SP4	Davis, Andrew, CPL	Falcey, John, PFC
Blankston, Johnnie, SP4	Caryle, Dennis, PFC	Davis, Joe, PFC	Farmer, Michael L., PFC
Blattenberger, Richard, SP4	Cassidy, Raymond, PFC	Davis, Ronald, CPL	
Blizzard, Kenneth D., SSG	Castaneda, I, Felomeno, PFC	Day, Dennis, SSG	
Bly, Charles, SP4	Castello, Leroy D., SP4	Dean, James R., PFC	
Bobowski, Jan, SSG	Castillo, Jaime, PFC	Deane, John R. Jr., BG	
Bogan, Jimmie, PFC		Dee, Manfred, PFC	

(jumpers continued....)



2/503d VIETNAM Newsletter /
May-June 2018 – Issue 80

Page 58 of 90

Farrow, William, SGT
 Feedham, Donald F., 1LT
 Felix, Lorenzo, SP4
 Ferek, John, PFC
 Ferguson, Robert L., SP5
 Fernandez, Gilbert, PFC
 Fike, Woodrow, PFC
 Fischer, Duane, SSG
 Fisher, Alton, PFC
 Fitzanko, Steven, SP4
 Fitzgerald, Eldon, SSG
 Fitzroy, James, SP4
Flood, Clifford, SP4
 Florence, Theddis, PFC
 Flowers, Jimmy, PFC
 Fluck, James C., PFC
 Foote, George, PFC
Foote, Lester, M., 1LT
 Foreman, Eugene, SP4
 Fox, Robert C., 1LT
 Friend, Bernard D., MAJ
 Frierson, David, SP4
 Fuller, John, PFC
 Fumerton, Arthur E., 1LT
 Funches, Henry, PFC
 Funderburk, Rupert A., SP4
 Furnish, Raymond, PFC
Gaines, Robert, SP4
 Gantt, Nethcnie, SP4
 Garacia, John, PVT
 Garcia, Pedro, SP4
 Gardner, Cicero, SGT
 Garrett, Walter J., SP4
 Garrison, E. S., PFC
 Garvin, Patrick X., SP4
 Gatlin, Carlton, PFC
 Gerber, Robert, PFC
 Gibson, Burrell, PFC
 Gilbert, Joseph, PFC
 Gilbert Willie, SP4
 Gigliello, Xavier, J., LTC
 Gipson, Roosevelt, SGT
 Gist, Rogers, SGT
 Gleason, Arthur, PVT
 Glen, Thomas, PFC
 Golbeski, Philip, PFC
 Gonzales, Leroy, SSG
 Gooch, Calvin, SGT
 Gordy, Charles M., SSG
 Goudia, Kernell, SP4
 Gould, Richard L., PFC
 Grant, Charles, PFC
 Grant, Edward O., PFC
 Grant, Frederick, SP5
 Grant, James, SP4
 Gray, Frank, SGT
 Green, Charles T., SFC
 Green, Charlie, SGT
 Green, Larry, PFC
 Green, Moses, SP4
Gregory, Ronnie, PFC
 Griffin, David, SP4
 Grossman, Gary J., SP4
Guerra, Pedro, SP4
 Guy, Robert, 1LT

Guyer, Albert M., 1LT
 Gwinn, Donald O., PFC
 Gyant, Charles, SSG
 Haggard, Roy, SP4
 Hale, Robert W., PFC
 Hall, Albert, PFC
 Hall, Clarence, PFC
 Hall, Donald C., PFC
 Hall, Leon, PFC
 Ham, William, PFC
 Hand, James, PFC
 Handley, Larry C., SGT
 Hardy, Richard, SGT
 Harmon, Kenneth, SSG
 Harris, Franchot, PFC
 Harris, Greg N., PFC
 Harris, John, SGT
 Harris, Michael F., PFC
 Harris, Nathaneil, PFC
 Hart, Barry, SP4
 Hart, Lannon, PFC
 Harvey, Jack, PFC
 Hassler, Gerald, SP4
 Hatcher, Drayton, PSG
 Hatcher, Thomas U., SP4
 Haupt, Joseph, SP5
 Hayes, Thomas, PFC
 Henderson, Carl, SSG
 Henderson, James R., PFC
 Hendon, Charles W., SP4
 Henges, Randall, PFC
 Henley, Gonzale, PFC
Herring, Wallace B., SP4
 Hershman, Walter, SP4
 Henry, Cecil O., SGT
Hickhan, Ronald J., SP4
 Hicks, Dortch, PFC
 Higgins, Michael R., PFC
 Hill, Michael K., PFC
 Hill, Robert L., PFC
 Himma, Einar, LTC
 Hines, John G., PFC
 Holland Douglas C, SP4
 Hollis, Joseph Jr., 1LT
 Holloway, William H., PFC
 Holman, Delano, SP4
 Holmes, J.T., PFC
 Hood, Bobby, PFC
 Hoover, Ernest L., PFC
 Hopkins, Elmo, SP4
 Horton, Bill W., SP4
 Howard, Robert, PSG
 Hostack, Leon, PSG
 Hudson, Jack, SP4
 Hunt, Paul L., PFC
 Iglio, Charles J., SP4
 Ingram, John D., SP4
 Isom, Terry R., PFC
 Jacobs, Emelindo A., SP4
 Jackson, Cecil, SP4
 Jardine, Gene, PFC
 Jaugerui, Eulalio, PFC
 Jaynes, Richard, SGT
 Jenkins, William H., SSG
 Jennette, Roert, PFC

Jennings, Walter R., PFC
 Jenskins, Alvin, F., PFC
 Jenson, Daryl R., SP4
 Johnson, Daniel, PFC
 Johnson, David, SGT
 Johnson, Dennis C., PVT
 Johnson, James F., PFC
 Johnson, Phillip, PFC
 Johnson, Robert, SP4
 Johnson, Ronald D., SP4
Johnson, Walter J., SP4
 Johnson, William, SP4
 Johnson, William, PFC
 Jones, Arceidus, SGT
 Jones Robert, PFC
 Jurkis, Joseph S., CPT
 Kajuawsky, Robert, PFC
 Kapatanakos, Glenn, PFC
 Kaplan, Kenneth, CPT
 Kapule, Wilfred, SGT
 Keaney, John, CPT
 Keith, James, PFC
Keller, Robert L., SP4
 Keller, William J., PFC
 Kelley, Donald, SP4
 Kelley, Stephen, SP4
Kelly, Charles, SP4
 Kelly, John, SP4
 Kendall, Robert, MSG
 Kiaka, Henry, SP4
 King, Harold, SP4
 King, Nathaniel, SGT
 King, Samuel, SP4
 King, Wesley, PFC
 Knapp, Thomas J., PFC
 Kohaya, Bobby S., PFC
 Konen, David E., SSG
 Kores, Gary D., PFC
 Koston, Daid, SP4
Kozak, Thomas S., SP4
 Kreutz, Leonard, PFC
 Krolinkowski, Gary, PFC
 Kruger, Richard, PFC
 Kughn, Cecil R., SP4
 Kuhl, William, PFC
 Kuitert, Gary, SP4
 Langham, Daniel W., PFC
 Langley, Stanley D., CPL
 Larson, George, SP4
 Laster, Leroy, PFC
 Latham, Billy R., SP4
 Leader, William, PFC
 Lee, Luther, SP4
 Lefler, James I., PFC
 Leibowitz, Bruce, PFC
 Lester, Michael, PFC
 Levart, Michael, PFC
 Lewis, Donald L., 1SG
 Lewis, James R., PFC
Leyva, Parra-Frias R., PFC
 Lietabert, William, PFC
 Lindberg, Steven, PFC
 Lindsay, Arthur, SP4
 Lindsey, J.B., PFC
 Lindsey, William, SP4

Lobdell, Barry, PFC
 Lomez, Jimmy, PFC
 Long, James R., PFC
 Look, Elmer, PFC
 Lorrington, Kenneth M., SSG
 Loser, Ronald E., SP4
 Lucas, Levi, SP4
 Lucas, Robert, PFC
 Ludas, Michael, PFC
 Lumbrazo, Andrew, SP4
 Lynch, Peter, PFC
 Lytwyn, Michael, PFC
 Macko, John, SP4
 Macum, David G., PFC
 Magwood, Nathaniel, PFC
 Mahone, James, SGT
 Major, Henry, SP4
 Malone, Michael L., PFC
 Maples, Francis, PFC
 Marable, Martin H., SGT
 McCarthy, Richard T., PFC
 Marchant, Charles, SP5
 Marles, Jeff, PFC
 Martino, Robert, SP4
 Martz, Leroy, PFC
 Massa, Richard, PFC
 Matchette, Claude R., CPT
Mathews, Charles P., SSG
 Mathews, Gordon, PFC
 Matthews, Robert, SP4
 Mavroudis, Stergios, 1LT
 May, William K., MSG
 Maya, Jesse, SP4
 McCateer, Peter, CPT
 McCoy, George V., MAJ
 McDonald, Charles, PSG
 McDonald, Elson, D., PFC
 McEachin, John R., SP4
 McFalee, Jose, PFC
 McGill, William F., 1LT
 McIntyre, James F., SGT
 McKay, Jeffrey S., 1LT
 McMaan, Troy C., PFC
 McManus, David, SP4
 Means, Alex Jr., SP4
 Meeks, Richard L., PFC
 Melton, Clayton E., SGT
 Menke, Theodore, SP4
Meredith, David, L., 2LT
 Meunier, Glenn W., SSG
 Miller, Ira D., SP4
 Miller, John A., PFC
 Mills, Jerome, SP4
 Minchew, Roy A., SP4
 Mickna, John R., SSG
 Mims, Marin, PFC
 Minore, Frank, PFC
 Mitchell, Gerald, 1SG
 Mitchell, Linwood, SP4
 Mitchell, Robert, 1LT

(jumpers continued....)



Mitchell, Willis, SSG
 Moffett, Herert, PFC
 Monforti, Richard, PFC
 Montague, James W., SP4
 Moore, Douglas E., SGT
 Moore, Ronald C., SP4
 Morales, Diaz, PFC
 Morris, Robert, PFC
 Mountcastle, James L., SFC
 Mountel, Robert, MAJ
 Mozden, James P., CPT
 Mrsich, Robert A., SGM
 Mulherin, James, SP4
 Munsil, Richard G., PFC
 Murray, James, SGT
 Myers, Donald, SGT
 Najera, Richard, PFC
 Nelson, James B., SP4
Nelvin, Howard P., CW4
 Nesse, David, 1LT
 Nest, Richard B., PFC
 Newland, Leslie, SP4
 Newport, Daniel, SP4
 Newton, Michael E., SP5
 Nicholls, William H., PFC
 Nicholson, Sim C., PFC
Nix, George W., SP4
 Nixon, Milton, SSG
 Nolden, Joseph, SSG
 Nordin, William, LTC
 Norlander, Gary, 1LT
 Norman, Martin C., PFC
 O'Bryn, Bill, PFC
O'Conner, Roy F., PFC
 O'Donnell, Richard B., SP4
 Ogaard, Dennis R., PFC
 Oged, Wallace, PFC
O'Kelly, Rick, PFC
 O'Leary, Bartholomew, 2LT
 O'Neal, George H., 1SG
 O'Neal, Larry, SP4
 Oney, Henry L., SFC
 O'Rourke, Edmund, PRC
 Ortiz, Barborso, PFC
 Oury, John M., SP4
 Owen, John J., 1LT
 Owens, James D., SGT
 Palmer, David, SP4
 Palmer, William T., MAJ
 Parker, Harold, SP4
 Parks, Peter, PFC
 Parris, Vernon, PVT
 Pascarella, Frank, 1LT
 Pate, O'Neal J., SFC
 Paternostro, James B., SGT
 Patrick, Gary T., PFC
 Patton, Berry, SP4
 Patton, George, SP4
 Paul, Alfred J., 1LT
 Payne, Jesse, SP4
 Pearson, John, SGT
 Pendarives, Sylester, PFC
 Pendleton, Ronald, PFC
 Penrod, Arthur, PFC
 Peraliz, Isador, PFC

Pereir-Rivera, U., SGT
 Perez, Melvin, PFC
 Perez, Roberto, SP4
 Perkins, Paul S., PFC
 Perry, Leamon C., SP4
 Peters, Elmer., LTC
Phillips, Alan B., CPT
 Phillips, Don, MAJ
 Pierce, Lynwood, PFC
 Pigion, Louis F. Jr., 1SG
 Pinkston, Hugh, PFC
 Pinn, Reginald D., PFC
 Plunkett, Braxton, SSG
 Powell, Marcus, N., SSG
 Proffitt, Edward A., SGM
 Prouty, John, PVT
 Pruden, Linwood, PFC
 Quarterman, Theodore, SP4
 Rader, Phillip, PFC
 Radmann, Bruce, SP4
 Ragus, Morris E., SSG
 Razer, Clifford, PFC
 Reece, Gary J., SP4
 Reed, John J., PFC
 Reid, William B., PFC
 Reiper, Peter L., PFC
 Renfro, Norman, PFC
 Renteria, David, PFC
 Reyes, Johnnie, SSG
 Reynolds, William, PFC
 Richard, John, SP4
 Richardson, Charles, SP6
 Richburg, Jerry, SP4
 Rice, Harley G., SP4
 Rine, Dana W., MSG
 Rines, Buck, PFC
 Rivers, Herbert L., SP4
 Roberts, Billy, SP4
 Robinson, Clarence, PFC
 Rocha, Richard, SP4
 Rodriguez, Carlos, SP4
 Rodriquez, Santos, SSG
 Roehl, Gary, PFC
 Rogers, Denis, SP4
 Rogers, George H., SSG
 Rose, Keith, SP4
 Ross, George A., PFC
 Ross, William A., PFC
 Roundtree, John, SSG
 Routt, Ruin R., SGT
 Rowell, Harold B., SSG
 Rowlette, Lee, CPL
 Roybal, Teddy, PFC
 Saez-Ramirez, Angel, SSG
 Sagnola, Charles, PFC
 Saigh, Gregory, SP4
 Salazar, Paul, SGT
 Sanchez, Rickie, SSG
 Sanders, Donald, PFC
 Santelli, Robert, SP4
 Sappington, Charles, SP5
 Sause, John, PFC
 Scarino, Augustino, PFC
 Scarola, Frederick, SP4

Schaub, Melvin G., PFC
 Schramm, Nicholas, PFC
 Schultz, Peter, SP4
 Schwartz, Charles, PFC
 Schwartz, James, SP4
 Schmuck, Hemut, PFC
 Schwartz, Harold, SP4
 Scott, Samuel, SGT
 Scott, Walter, SP4
 Scrimager, Samuel, SGT
Sebastian, Gerald, SGT
 Secora, Michael, PFC
 Seeley, William L., SP4
 Seman, James D., PFC
 Sharp, Craig, PFC
 Shirley, James, PFC
 Shoemaker, Jerome, 2LT
 Shoemaker, Sammie, PFC
 Short, Lee V., SP4
 Shortlidge, John, PFC
 Shotts, Donald C., PFC
 Sigholtz, Robert H., LTC
 Sims, Deborah, SGT
 Siska, John R., LTC
 Sizemore, Earl, SGT
 Skiles, James A., PFC
 Skorupa, Norgert D., SFC
 Smeding, Peter M., SGT
 Smith, Arthur, PFC
 Smith, Charles, PFC
 Smith, David, SP4
 Smith, Donald, CPT
 Smith, Gary D., PVT
 Smith, James A., PFC
 Smith, Larry, PFC
 Smith, Mathew V., PFC
 Smith, Richard, PFC
Smith, Richard M., SP5
 Smith, William, PFC
 Smith, William B., PFC
 Sneed, Charlie Jr., PFC
 Snider, Billy, PFC
Solie, Terence, PFC
 Soule, Dennis L., SP4
 Spear, Patrick, PFC
 St. Julien, Leander, PFC
 Staler, Johnny R., SP4
 Starsiak, Richard P., 1LT
 Stephens, David, SP4
 Stephens, Warren A., SP4
 Stevens, Wilber, PFC
 Stewart, James, SGT
 Stewart, John, PFC
 Stickler, Rexford W., 1LT
 Stout, Timothy N., SGT
Strack, Lawrence, PVT
 Strambersky, Robert, PFC
 Strode, James H., PSG
 Stroup, Kenneth, PFC
 Sturdevant, Thomas, SSG
 Summers, Clarence, PFC
 Supove, Pete, PFC
 Sutterfield, Gerald, PFC
 Swedenbord, Paul A., PFC
 Taglis, Dean B., SP4

Tanner, Leonard, PVT
 Tapia, Richard, PFC
 Taylor, Robert, SP5
 Taylor, Robert W., SP4
 Taylor, Thomas, SP4
 Teufel, Thomas N., PFC
 Thompson, Gary, PFC
 Thompson, Robert, Jr., PFC
 Thompson, Alex, SSG
 Thornhill, Jesse, PFC
 Tippa, Joseph, PFC
 Tipton, Doyle, SP4
 Toland, Dwayne, SP4
 Tomlin, Melvin, PFC
 Toomer, Jerry, SP4
 Torres, Francis, PFC
 Torres, Secundine, PFC
 Townsend, Jack, SSG
 Tucker, Ronald, PFC
 Tuttle, Lloyd, PFC
 Tyler, James L., SP4
 Tyree, Edward M., PFC
 Tyson, Arthur, PFC
 Ulloa, Francisco, PFC
 Utzman, Charles D., MAJ
 Vaglio, Rafael A., SSG
 Valvarez, Jose, PFC
 Van Wagner, Raymond, SP4
 Vasquez, Selvester J., PFC
 Vellozzi, Lauren J., SP4
 Walder, Ephron, SGT
 Walker, Charlie, PFC
 Walker, Conrad N., MAJ
 Walker, John F., PVT
 Wallace, Raymond, SP5
 Walls, Calvin, PFC
 Warbalow, Elmer, SP4
 Ward, Bruce G., SP4
Ward, Jimmy L., SP5
 Ward, Peter H., CPT
 Warner, Edmund H., PSG
 Warner, Larry, SFC
 Warnic, Ben, PFC
 Watters, Charles J., CPT
 Watson, Delando, PFC
 Watson, Henry, MAJ
 Watson, Lamont W., PFC
 Watson, Leon, PFC
 Waye, Harold A., MSG
 Webb, Leonard, PFC
 Weigand, Leo, PFC
 Weissenbacher, Warren, PFC
 Welch, Stephen M., PFC
 Wenzel, Thomas, 1LT
 Wheeler, Joseph C., PFC
White, Jehue, PFC
 Whitehead, Curtis, SP4
 Whiteman, Ronald, PFC
 Wiggins, Alvin, SGT
 William, Richard, SGT

(jumpers continued....)



Williams Richard L., SSG
Williams, Tommy, SGT
Williams, Willie T., PVT
Willoughby, Lawrence, CPT
Wilson, Chester, SP4
Wilson, Herbert, Jr., PFC
Wilson, James, PFC
Wilson, Leroy, SP4

Wilson, Raymond, PFC
Wilson, Raymond E., SP4
Wilson, Terry, PFC
Winberg, James, PFC
Windsor, James A., MAJ
Winters, Jon, SP4
Wirth, David N., SGT
Wiseman, Larry L., PFC

Wolfe, Paul E. SP4
Wood, Harris, SGT
Wood, James C., PFC
Woods, Cleophus G., CPL
Worington, James, CPT
Wright, Alden, PFC
Wright, Evander, PFC
Wright, Henry L., PFC

Yates, Reinald, SP4
Young, Edward, SP4
Young, Joseph, SP4
Young, Raymond, SSG
Zanon, George, J., SFC
Zarate, Ignacio, PFC
Zsigo, Alexander, PFC

Red = Spelling corrections, per GO 681, dated 24 April 1967

Blue = Names to be Deleted, per GO 681, dated 24 April 1967

Green = Names added, per GO 681, dated 24 April 1967

**** Confirmed by DD214 (Not on original list)**

Source as of April 5, 2018:

<http://www.173rdairborne.com/manifest.htm>

War photographer Catherine Leroy also made the combat jump but is not listed.

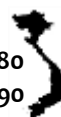
Note: While transcribing and alphabetizing this jump manifest we noticed a number of misspelled names (i.e. Charles Watters listed as *Charles Waters*, and Bob Guy listed as *Bob Guty*, corrected herein). If you detect any names and/or ranks listed which are either misspelled or incorrect, or troopers not listed who made the combat jump, please send details to

Historian@Skysoldier.net Ed



~ *The Combat Blast* ~

Sky Soldiers of the 2/503d and troopers from attached units make their combat jump in Vietnam. *Airborne, All The Way!*



The General With One Ear

Years ago, a young Leg army Captain was injured in a jeep accident, the only permanent injury was the loss of his left ear. Since he wasn't physically impaired, he remained on active duty and eventually became a General. However, during his career he was always sensitive about his appearance.



One day the General was interviewing for his personal staff a Leg LTC, a Leg Major, and a paratrooper 1SG who had served with the 173d Airborne in Vietnam. The first interview with the LTC was great. At the end of the interview the General asked him, *"Do you notice anything different about me?"*

The Leg LTC answered, *"Why, yes, General. I couldn't help but notice that you are missing your left ear, so I don't know whether this impacts your hearing on that side."*

The General got very angry at this lack of tact and threw him out of his office.

The next candidate, the Leg Major, when asked this same question, answered, *"Well yes, Sir, you seem to be short one ear."* The General threw him out as well.

The third interview was with the 1SG Sky Soldier. He was articulate, extremely sharp, and seemed to know more than the two Leg officers put together. The General wanted this guy, but went ahead with the same question. *"Do you notice anything different about me?"*

To his surprise, the 1SG said, *"Yes Sir. You wear contact lenses."*

The General was impressed and thought to himself, what an incredibly tactful soldier. *"And how would you know that First Sergeant?"* the General asked.

The 1SG replied: *"Well, sir, it's pretty hard to wear glasses with only one fuckin' ear."*

First Sergeant's....you gotta love em. Airborne!

[Sent in by Larry Paladino, B/2/503, as *The Admiral With One Ear*, modified here]

But Reality Is Even Funnier

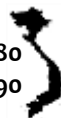
Platoon Sergeant Leon Hostack returned to A/2/503 prior to "The Jump". He made *LIFE MAGAZINE* with a great photo. He was a great trooper and a really great Platoon Sergeant. He was profane, even more so than the rest of us and that is saying a lot. Sergeant Major Proffitt rotated home, and was replaced by Sergeant Major Rogers (later to be the Brigade Sergeant Major), who in no way was profane, not at all.

After he was there a short time Sergeant Major Rogers called a meeting of all the NCO's up in the battalion movie theater. The Sergeant Major made the statement that way too much obscene language was being used and he wanted it stopped, especially the use of M.F. *"Am I understood? Any questions?"* Up stands Leon Hostack, ***"Sergeant Major. What the mother-fuck do you mean by M.F?"*** End of meeting.

Jack Owens, Paragon Alpha 36, A/B/2/503d



The outdoor movie theatre at Camp Zinn where all language lessons were taught.



A little fluff....

RIBBONS AND MEDALS AND BADGES ARE NICE

Ribbons and medals and badges are nice; they easily and quickly convey to the onlooker the stories of the armed forces path the wearer had taken to that moment when first looked upon by the sage military observer. We all have some of them, and yes, we're proud to have earned them in recognition of our service to country and to our fellow paratroopers, particularly those earned from our time at war, and in spite of war to us being a marriage mixed with love and hate.



These baubles are tangible reminders and invocators of memories of combat and youth; they are personal souvenirs of a time from a different era understood by an exclusive few, the recollections of which will likely and ultimately become clouded by time itself, yet the medals and ribbons and badges will forever survive us.

For combat vets such as yourself, the CIB (Combat Infantryman's Badge) is often the most coveted by young and old G.I.'s alike, worn with the greatest of pride, it speaks to our stretch in combat; it's suggestive of our bravery whether we were brave or not – yet, the mere willingness to go to war in itself exhibits bravery; it tells of a commitment to forgo our very life for our fellow troopers if needed...it says, and in G.I. vernacular, ***“Yes, I was in the shit; and I've seen and done things you can only dream about, if you dare to dream such things...as many of us do, for the rest of our lives.”***

And our jump wings, also proudly worn, represent a different type of badge which reminds us of a time when we believed ourselves to be physically unbounded, uniquely daring and unchallenged by fear, while filled with a comradery with our fellow Airborne troopers which for most of us remains as strong and meaningful today as it did decades ago.

When seen on display by an approaching paratrooping officer, the badge would always induce a hearty *“All The Way, Sir!”* from a lesser-ranked jumper, to instantly evoke an equally hearty *“Airborne!”* in return -- none of this fully understood by those without the wings, but a special language fully understood by those who speak it, by those who earned the right to speak it, who earned the right to wear that different type of badge.

Ribbons and medals and badges are nice. *Airborne!*

Lew “Smitty” Smith

HHC/2/503, '65/'66

Editor, 2/503d Vietnam Newsletter

VA launches welcome kit to guide Veterans to the benefits and services they've earned. This is where Veterans should start.

VA's onboarding process can be overwhelming at times. Veterans who have visited a VA outreach booth, VA eligibility office, or have gone through a Transition Assistance Program know that VA has no shortage of technical handouts, benefits books and materials. But, even with all of these resources, Veterans are telling us *“Where do I start?”*



Now, VA can point all Veterans to the VA Welcome Kit. Go to [Vets.gov](https://www.vets.gov) to check it out.

VA Welcome Kit: No matter where you are in life, the new welcome kit will help you use the VA benefits and services you have earned. In addition to step-by-step enrollment instructions, the kit also lists points of contact for dozens of VA program offices, including HEALTH CARE, FINANCES, HOUSING, EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, MEMORIALIZATION.

“The welcome kit is so simple, it's the way everything needs to work in VA,” said VA Secretary Dr. David Shulkin.

The kit is now available on [Vets.gov](https://www.vets.gov) and will soon be sent to all separating service members as part of VA's existing welcome home process.

The Veterans Experience Office created the kit using human-centered design principles, including the feedback of more than 150 Veterans throughout the country. The guide will continue to be updated based on additional feedback and information.

The kit was distributed and warmly received at the Student Veterans of America conference in San Antonio, Texas. Veterans commented, *“I wish I had this when I got out”* and *“I've never seen something from VA like this.”*

While the VA kit does not provide all of the technical information on VA's programs included in the Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors handbook, it does provide a summary and the steps required to enroll in VA services.

Download the kit, print it out and share it and please give us your feedback on it! ###



OVER 42 YEARS LATER THE REMAINS OF A MISSING IN ACTION VIETNAM WAR SOLDIER RETURN HOME FOR BURIAL



July 6, 1947 ~ May 6, 1968

FORT WORTH — 31 January 2010

For Americans who lose their lives in combat, a military funeral can bring a measure of comfort. The Aldridge family waited decades for this moment.

On Saturday, Specialist Larry Lee Aldrich of the U.S. Army 173rd Airborne Brigade joined his father at Greenwood Cemetery in Fort Worth. The elder Aldrich died in 2005 never fully knowing what happened to his son in the Vietnam War.

"I know even up to his last couple of weeks, he wished he would come home before he died," remembered Janine Peck, the soldier's sister.

Hundreds attended the burial service, including Robert Beemer, who served with Aldrich in Vietnam. *"I still find it — after 42 years — there were things that touched me,"* he said. *"We took care of each other. When we went to sleep at night, people like Larry stood over us to watch us."*



Larry's buddy, Bob

Just before the attack that killed him, Aldrich helped lead an ill and injured Beemer to safety. When Robert Beemer learned that the Army brought the remains of his fellow soldier back home to Texas this week, he flew in from New York for the funeral.

"I never thought I'd ever see Larry again," he said. *"When I learned last week they had found remains and were going to have services, I had to come down — I owed him that."*

In 1968 — soon after saving Beemer — Aldrich disappeared in an explosion. At first, he was listed as "missing." The 20-year-old was later officially said to have been killed, but his body was never found.

Last year, however, workers excavating the site of the blast discovered his remains.

"I'm just happy he's home and can be with my dad," Peck said.

Aldrich had been in the Army less than one year when he was killed.

There are still 1,720 Americans unaccounted for from the Vietnam War.

FORT WORTH — 30 January 2010

In the darkness of Wednesday morning, Larry Aldrich finally made it home. His arrival on American Airlines Flight 8 from Honolulu brought the baggage handlers' work on the ramp to a halt. People peered out the windows of the largely quiet terminal.



Members of an Army honor guard in their spit-shined black shoes and pressed uniforms silently carried the flag-draped casket bearing what is left of Aldrich's body to a hearse, closing a chapter that opened in 1967 when Aldrich left Love Field for Vietnam.

(continued....)



Specialist Lawrence Lee Aldrich is one of the 58,260 men listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, killed in his 20th year when a 750-pound bomb landed on his position in the middle of a firefight on 6 May 1968.

Until last year, he was also one of the 1,720 men whose remains were not recovered during or after the 10-year war in Southeast Asia.

But one day last autumn, a day almost no one in the family thought would come, a day Larry's dad died waiting for, the government called Aldrich's oldest surviving sibling and told him his brother was no longer missing.

DALLAS-FORT WORTH AIRPORT — 28 January 2010

Hours before dawn, a jet lands at D/FW International Airport, a cargo door opens, and the U.S. Army returns Specialist Larry Aldrich to the family he left 42 years ago.



Soldiers from Fort Hood solemnly carry out their duty as honor guard.

A brother and sister finally weep at the sight of a flag-covered casket they'd given up hope of seeing.

"I actually never thought we would ever see any of his remains," says Janine Peck, Aldrich's little sister. *"It wasn't in my dreams at all that he would come home."*

Aldrich didn't come home from Vietnam sooner because his remains were only recently found. He was blown up by an American bomb that fell short during a battle in May of 1968.

"I don't know if I ever gave up," says Larry's brother, Tim Aldrich. *"I used to have dreams he would show up some day. Now he has."*

The Army first listed Larry Aldrich as "Missing in Action", then changed it to "Killed in Action."

In 1996, his fellow soldiers memorialized him in Fort Worth, and his father, Darwin Aldrich, recalled the day in 1968 he drove his son to the airport, just five months before Aldrich was killed.

"That was the hardest thing I had to do," the elder Aldrich said at that 1996 ceremony. *"He had a feeling he was not coming back. I tried to tell him, 'No, Larry, that's not right. You'll be back.' I guess he had a premonition."* Darwin Aldrich died in 2005, still wondering and waiting.

"I know even up until his last couple of weeks he would still talk about how he wished he could come home before he died," said Janine Peck. *"We knew he was killed, but because we never got anything at all, we would always say, I think maybe someday he might come up to the door and knock on it and say, 'I'm home.'"*

On Saturday, father and son will finally be reunited. Larry Aldrich will be interred in his father's site at Greenwood Cemetery in Fort Worth.

Motorcycles of the Patriot Guard roared ahead of the hearse, escorting the fallen soldier from the airport. It didn't matter that other drivers couldn't see their flags in the darkness, or know their mission.

More than two thousand American families still wait for their loved ones to come home from Vietnam. Searchers still scour battlefields for clues. Scientists still labor to identify the remains of GIs with stories just like Larry Aldrich.

"He sent me some letters from Vietnam,"* said his little sister. *"Talked about how it was horrible over there. And he would be happy to come home. And he was going to be 21. He died in May, and he would have been 21 in July. He wanted to come home."

[Source: *The Wall of Faces*. Photo of Bob Beemer added]



50TH INFANTRY REGIMENT OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY (MECHANIZED) REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM 1967 TO 1970



~ A History & Timeline ~

As authorized in the National Defense Act of 1916, the 50th Infantry (Regiment) was Constituted on 15 May 1917 in the Regular Army

The 50th Infantry was organized beginning 1 June 1917 at Syracuse, New York, drawing a majority of its initial members from drafts of the 23rd Infantry Regiment which had previously seen occupation duty in Alaska in 1867 after that territory's acquisition from Russia.



50th U.S. Infantry - 16 October 1917 - Camp Syracuse, New York. This recruitment and training camp was set up on the New York State Fairgrounds in the Lakeland section of Syracuse near Lake Onondaga.

Company sized movement south had already begun when the 50th Infantry Regiment was Assigned to the 20th Infantry Division on July 31, 1918. Along the way various units stayed in New Jersey, Washington, DC, Curtis Bay, Maryland, and Camp Greene, North Carolina, before arriving at the new home of the 40th Infantry Brigade of the 20th Infantry Division at Camp Sevier near Greenville, South Carolina.



Company "L" shown here in Washington, DC in May of 1918.

As the 20th Infantry Division began to take shape and train for deployment to Middle and Lower Silesia near Germany, the Spanish Influenza outbreak decimated the regiment's ranks as well as those of the entire military installation. The entire camp was quarantined on September 23rd, 1918, until the outbreak subsided. Hundreds died from this outbreak.



Camp Sevier

The Armistice between the Allies and Germany ended the fighting in the First World War. It went into effect at 11 am on 11 November 1918...thus ending the need for the mobilization of the 20th Infantry Division for war. The 20th Division was Demobilized on 25 February, 1919.

The 50th Infantry Regiment was relieved from Assignment to the 20th Infantry Division on the 28th of February, 1919.



Company "H" at Camp Sevier, October of 1918

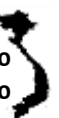
The Regiment had already received its orders that it would be deployed to Europe as part of the occupation forces when relieved from assignment to the 20th Infantry Division. They were, in fact, moved to Camp Dix, New Jersey in December of 1918 until departing by ship from the port of Hoboken, New Jersey on October 16, 1919.

In November of 1919 the 50th Infantry Regiment was assigned to the 2nd Brigade, Armed Forces in Germany and stationed near Laacher See, Mayen, Germany. (Near Koblenz and the Rhein River)



50th Infantry at Laacher See, August, 1921

(Tribute continued....)





Headquarters, 50th Infantry, Laacher See, Germany, August, 1921. Note the horses. The infantry was still reliant on Horses and Mules for transport of men and material during and after World War I. Of note: During this occupation, Sergeant Edward F. Younger, 50th Infantry, was chosen to select the 1st "unknown soldier" to be entombed at Arlington National Cemetery.

The 50th Infantry Regiment was Inactivated on December 31, 1921

The Regiment was Demobilized on July 31, 1922.

On February 15, 1942, the regiment was activated at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

On March 20, 1942, the regiment was assigned to the 6th Armored Division and moved to Camp Chaffee, Arkansas where they participated in the August to September Louisiana Maneuvers. Headquarters for the maneuvers was the newly built Camp Polk (later Fort Polk).

The Regiment was transferred to Camp Young, California on October 11, 1942 and to Camp Cooke, California, on March 19, 1943.

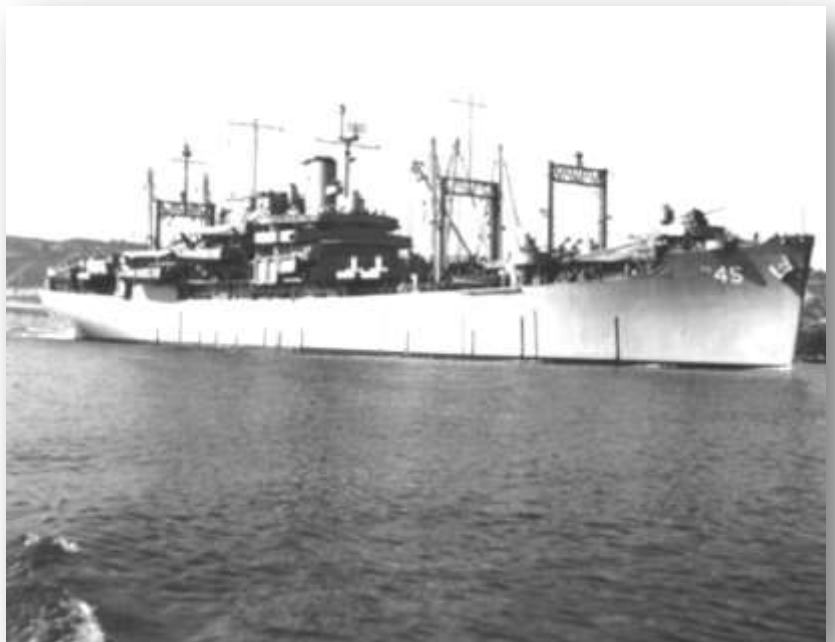
It was while at Camp Cooke that the regiment was redesignated, less the 1st and 2nd battalions, as the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion. The 1st and 2nd Battalions were redesignated as the 44th and 9th Armored Infantry Battalions, respectively. (Historian's note: Since these Battalions were redesignated into other Regimental lineage, they are not chronicled here during this period. In essence, what had been the 3rd Battalion became the only battalion of the 50th Infantry Regiment and "carried the colors" of the regiment until 1956. It should be noted, however, that the 9th and 44th Armored Infantry Battalions also served in the 6th Armored Division and participated in the same campaigns as the 50th Armored infantry Battalion).



In continued preparation at Camp Cooke, the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion participated in 5 months of maneuvers in the Mojave Desert. The ranks of the 50th were also increased to full strength with men from the 69th Armored Regiment...a regiment whose 1st Battalion, after reconstitution, the 50th Infantry would work with in 1968 and 1969 in Vietnam.

Early on the morning of January 27, 1944, the Battalion assembled in Camp Cooke for the last time, and by late afternoon had entrained for the cross country journey that was to terminate at Camp Shanks, New York, the Port of Embarkation.

Boarded the USS Henrico on February 11, 1943 to the 14 day trip which ended with the Battalion disembarking at Greenock, Scotland on February 25, 1944. From Scotland, the Battalion travelled by train to Burford, Oxfordshire, England for final training and preparation for embarkation for the European Theater.



USS Henrico, APA-45

(Tribute continued....)



The 50th Armored Infantry Battalion moved ashore at Normandy after the beachhead had been established...and did not participate in the initial beach landings. Action soon followed as the 50th was responsible for the liberation of the towns of Brehal and Granville, France, and the capture of over 300 enemy soldiers.

The 50th Armored Infantry Regiment participated in all major campaigns of the 6th Armored Division in World War II including:

Normandy - 6 June 1944 to 24 July 1944

Northern France - 25 July 1944 to 14 September 1944

Rhineland - 15 September 1944 to 21 March 1945

**Ardennes-Alsace - 16 December 1944 to
25 January 1945**

Central Europe - 22 March 1945 to 11 May 1945



Company C - Near Bastogne in January of 1945.

The 50th Armored Infantry returned to New York on September 17, 1945.

Inactivated September 18, 1945 at Camp Shanks, New York.

The Korean conflict brought demand for more trained troops and Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, was reactivated in August of 1950. The 6th Armored Division was designated as a replacement training division.

As part of the 6th Armored Division, the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion was activated on September 5, 1950.

The 50th Armored Infantry Battalion was Inactivated on 16 March, 1956 at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

The 50th Armored Infantry Battalion was Relieved July 1, 1957, from Assignment to the 6th Armored Division.

The 3 Battalions of the Regiment were moved to Fort Hood Texas and assigned to the 2nd Armored Division (Date unknown).

On February 25th, 1958, the 3rd Battalion was redesignated as Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 3rd Armored Rifle Battalion, 50th Infantry and relieved from Assignment to the 6th Armored Division.

On April 1, 1958, the 3rd Armored Rifle Battalion was activated with the 7th Army. They were the primary opposing forces (OPFOR) for training & maneuvers at Wildflecken Germany.

The 3rd Armored Rifle Battalion retired it's colors on July 15, 1962

The 3 Battalions were officially consolidated on July 1, 1959, to form the 50th Infantry, a parent regiment under the Combat Arms Regimental System.



On July 1st, 1963, the 1st and 2nd Battalions were reorganized and redesignated as the 1st and 2nd Battalions (Mechanized), 50th Infantry. Both the 1st and 2nd Battalions took part in the massive "Operation Big Lift" in October of 1963 when the entire 2nd Armored Division was airlifted to Germany as a show of force in the cold war. The 1st Battalion participated in "Operation Long Thrust " in 1964 and took part in maneuvers near the Czech border.

December of 1965, the 1st and 2nd Battalions became Infantry Training Battalions, each training 3 cycles of Basic Combat Trainees. The 3rd group of Basic Combat Trainees were also given Advanced Infantry Training and retained.

(Tribute continued....)



VIETNAM

In the Spring of 1967, the 1st Battalion was notified that they should prepare for deployment to the Republic of Vietnam. Drafts of men from the 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry and 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 41st Infantry were used to bring the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry to full strength.

The 2nd Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry saw service in Erlangen, Germany at Ferris Barracks and in 1983 was redesignated as the 4th Battalion, 41st Infantry.

The 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry was relieved on September 1, 1967, from assignment to the 2nd Armored Division .



USS General John Pope

Boarded the USS General John Pope on September 1, 1967 at Oakland, California for the 21 day trip which ended with the Battalion disembarking at Qui Nhon, Binh Dinh Province, Republic of Vietnam on September 21, 1967.

GEN Westmoreland, COMUSMACV, addressing 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry shortly after they arrived in Vietnam in September 1967.



The 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry served in Vietnam under the U.S. Army, Pacific (USARPAC) command, as a general reserve and was attached to the following units:

September 22, 1967 to February 28, 1968 attached to the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

March 1, 1968 to April 4, 1968 attached to the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

April 5, 1968 to October 6, 1969 attached to the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

October 7, 1969 to September 30, 1970 attached to Task Force South, I Field Force, Vietnam.

October 1, 1970 to December 13, 1970 attached to I Field Force, Vietnam.

The following 50th Infantry Designations were used by units not a contiguous part of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry in Vietnam:

Company E, 50th Infantry (Long Range Patrol), 9th Infantry Division from December 20, 1967 to February 1, 1969. On February 1, 1969, the department of the Army reorganized the 75th Infantry as the parent regiment for long-range patrol companies under the combat arms regimental system. Maj. Gen. Ewell activated Company E (Ranger), 75th Infantry, from Company E, 50th Infantry.

Company F, 50th Infantry (Long Range Patrol), 25th Infantry Division, from December 20, 1967 to February 1, 1969. The unit was redesignated as Company F (Ranger), 75th Infantry on February 1, 1969.

50th Infantry Scout Dog Platoon, 4th Infantry Division from March 7, 1967 to December 10, 1970.

Company E (Rifle Security), 50th Infantry, U.S. Army Support Command, Da Nang, 1st Log Command, USARV from June 30, 1971 to January, 1972...formed from the ranks of the 2nd Security Police Company, Camp Baxter, Da Nang.

Company F (Rifle Security), 50th Infantry, U.S. Army Support Command, Da Nang, 1st Log Command, USARV from January, 1972 to November 16, 1972.

The 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry participated in 10 Vietnam Campaigns. Other 50th Infantry Designations participated in 3 additional campaigns.

Major Battles of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry in Vietnam: Attack on the Night Laager of Company C, Halloween, 1967.

Battle of Tam Quan, December 6 to 20, 1967.

Battle of An Tinh at An Loc (1), January 2 to 4, 1968.

Battle of Trung Thanh, January 23, 1968.

Tet Offensive - Phu My, January 31 to February 4, 1968.

Attack on LZ Litts, March 9, 1968.

Battle of An Bao, May 5 to 7, 1968.

Battle of Trung Hoi (2), May 11 to 13, 1968.

Battle of Trinh Van (1), May 25 to 26, 1968.

Battle of Thien Gaio, December 15, 1969.

Attack on LZ Betty, May 3, 1970.

(Tribute continued....)



The 1st Battalion (mechanized), 50th Infantry was assigned to the 2nd Armored Division at Fort Hood Texas on December 16, 1970.

Inactivated on January 27, 1983 at Fort Hood, Texas and relieved from assignment to the 2nd Armored Division.

Withdrawn August 28, 1987, from the Combat Arms Regimental System, reorganized under the United States Army Regimental System as the 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry, and transferred to the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command, Infantry Training Brigade, Fort Benning, Georgia.

Infantry Training Brigade Deactivated 18 May, 2007 and replaced with the newly Activated 198th Infantry Brigade, United States Army Infantry Center, Fort Benning, Georgia.

198th Infantry Brigade Distinctive Unit Insignia
50th Infantry Regimental Distinctive Unit Insignia
50th Infantry Regimental History compiled by James Howard Sheppard, Historian for the 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Association who served with Company C, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry from December of 1965 to June of 1968.

~ Compiled November, 2012 ~

~ Updated April, 2014 ~

Source Material:

Order Of Battle of the United States Land Forces in the World War (1917-19), zone of the Interior. Volume 3, Part 2.

U.S. Army Order of Battle 1919 - 1941. Volume 1. The Arms: Major Commands and Infantry Organizations.

World War II Order of Battle by Shelby L. Stanton

A History of the 50th Armored Infantry Battalion by Sergeant Joseph D. Buckley.

Department of the Army Lineage and Honors, QMACH 424.2 & 421.4 50th Infantry Regiment.

Vietnam Order of Battle by Shelby L. Stanton.

1st Cavalry Division Daily Staff Journals & Intelligence Summaries: 1967-1968.

3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division Daily Staff Journals: March, 1968.

1st Battalion (M), 50th Infantry Battalion Histories & After Action Reports (Various).

173rd Airborne Brigade Daily Staff Journals, 1969.

IFFV, Task Force South, Daily Staff Journals 1969 - 1970.

IFFV Daily Staff Journals, 1970.

National Archives Records Administration, Textual Records Center, College Park, MD.

“Brave and Bold”



198th Infantry Brigade Distinctive Unit Insignia



50th Infantry Regimental History compiled by James Howard Sheppard, Historian for the 1st Battalion, 50th Infantry Association who served with Company C, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry from December of 1965 to June of 1968.

~ Compiled November, 2012 ~

~ Updated April, 2014 ~

Source:

www.ichiban1.org/pdf/50thInfantryRegimentHistory.pdf



The Home Front May 68

It had been a normal spring in middle Tennessee. Everything was in bloom, my allergies were killing me, but my allergy capsules were keeping me dried up and spaced out during the daytime. Farmers were proud of the spring calf crop and the first cutting of hay was well on its way to maturity. At Middle Tennessee State University the mini-skirts were shorter than ever as the pale bare legs of winter gave way to the early tans of late spring, but the semester was winding down and finals were upon us. Most of my fellow dorm dwellers had left on Thursday in anticipation of a fine spring weekend, but I had a final exam on Friday afternoon and was still in my bed when the sole pay phone on my floor started to ring at 6:25 A.M. on Friday May 10, 1968.

I remember it as if it were yesterday. The dorm was more quiet than usual and the ringing of the phone seemed amplified, but no one was answering it. After about ten rings I got up, looked at my clock, opened my door and noted that not a soul was in the hall or headed for the phone booth. I slowly walked toward the ringing sure that it would stop or that someone would step out of their room and catch it before I got there. I answered the phone and to my amazement the voice on the other end was my mother who was equally shocked to hear me answer. As if time stood still, my mind went into slow motion and processed the moment. I first thought about the unusual odds of my answering the phone (I never had before and did not after this instance) and hearing my mother on the other end of the line. I knew something was dreadfully wrong and I wanted to hang up before she had time to tell me. In fifteen seconds I received news that would change my life forever just as it had changed the lives of Huffman and Louise Stephenson.

Just as day was breaking on the morning of Friday May 10, 1968, two army officers removed their hats and knocked on the door at 109 Pickle Street in Shelbyville, Tennessee. Major Fullerton and Captain Gorman were survival assistance officers sent from the ROTC Cadre at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee to meet the Stephenson family at home before they began their work day and inform them that their only child, twenty year old Specialist 4 Donald R.

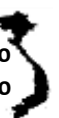
Stephenson, had been killed in Viet Nam. They brought with them a short telegram which simply stated that their son had been killed during a firefight on May 5, 1968 near the South Viet Nam city of Ahn Khe. The terse message said he had died as a result of burns.



**Donald "Donny" R. Stephenson
November 11, 1947 ~ May 5, 1968**

Across the street neighbor Ruby Dixon watched through a window in horror realizing what was happening. As the officers left the Stephenson home, Mrs. Dixon ran over to check on the Stephensons and got the grim news....within ten minutes she had called my mother and by 6:30 A.M. I received the word that my best friend was dead. I've never felt emptiness equal to that in my life. I walked back through the empty hall toward my room and stood in the spot outside my door where Donny and I had our final conversation before he left for Viet Nam the previous December. It seemed so strange to me that our final promises to one another and the coming of the word of his death had both taken place in that cold, sterile dormitory hall.

(Tribute continued....)



I sat stunned in the darkness of my room and reflected on the promise he had required of me in December.... that I stay close to his parents while he was gone and look after them if anything happened to him. My parents were waiting for me to call and tell them when I wanted them to pick me up so I could get to the Stephenson's house as soon as possible. At that moment I needed a friend instead of a parent so I called one of our (Donny's and mine) running buddies, and he agreed to make the thirty mile drive to pick me up. Keeping the promise to Donny had to start right then and I knew it, but denial was already settling in, and I needed proof that this news was accurate.

After hastily dressing, I headed for the ROTC building to get the news straight from the horse's mouth. I was currently enrolled in a class on battle tactics that Captain Gorman was teaching, so I went straight to his desk. He told me about the telegram and the visit he had made to Shelbyville earlier that morning. His manner was incredibly matter-of-fact in my estimation. I was sure that there was more information than had been relayed to them but was astonished to learn that he knew nothing more than the words on the telegram that he had delivered. He advised me that it might be days before we heard anything more about the return of the remains, but told me my friend's body would be accompanied by a soldier, and I could feel free to check back with him anytime. I left his office very much cast down.

An hour or so later two of my friends arrived and as we drove back to Shelbyville, I replayed the morning's events like a newscast. How could he be dead? I had just received a letter from him the day before that was dated in late April. Why had it taken so long for the news of his death on May 5th to get to his family? When would his body get home? How did he die? Did others die with him or was he alone? Would we hear anything from other soldiers or officers in his outfit that explained his death? It would be years before most of those questions were answered, but the most pressing question was what could I say to his Mother and Dad who I had seen the previous Sunday?

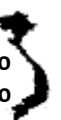
My friends dropped me off at my Mother's office so I could pick up her car and drive to Donny's house. Before going there I decided to go home and talk to my Dad who was a decorated World War II flyer. I hoped he could offer some comfort and advice on how to deal with this situation. Dad had been very fond of Donny, and as soon as I saw him I knew that he was as upset as I was. *"War is hell son, war is hell"*, was about all he would say. He had never been able to talk much about his own war experiences, and I knew that Donny's death was bringing back a lot of memories. He just told me to

do the best I could and remember that Donny was counting on me to be there for his parents. I had to look past my own shock and grief to do those things Donny had faith in me to do when he needed me most.

As I drove to his home at 109 Pickle Street, I felt that he was with me, and I just asked him to help me do things the way he wanted them done. Through the years I continued those conversations and always felt his presence....I still do as I write these words. I was hoping that the Stephenson's would be alone when I got there, but a crowd of family and friends had gathered, and they would keep the vigil with them during the eight days and nights which passed while they waited for Donny's body to return. Five days would pass before they received another visit from the survival assistance officers who had received word that the body would be returning to Tennessee around May 17th or 18th. They indicated that a telegram would be sent to them so they could advise the family and the local mortuary as to the day and time the coffin would arrive at the airport in Nashville and be ready for transport home. Unfortunately they had no answers for the family's most urgent questions about the particulars of their son's death, but both officers were Viet Nam veterans, and they brought some maps and afforded the family as much understanding as they could about the mission of the 1st Battalion 50th Infantry and the 173d Airborne Brigade. The family watched the national news every morning and evening which was dominated by talk of the Viet Nam War and the Tet Offensive in particular. They had a new awareness and appreciation for the meaning of the KIA statistics that were given each day.

I spent as much time as I could with the Stephensons during those days. I met all the members of the extended family and was always introduced to them as *"Don's best friend"*. I helped out with chores at the Stephenson farm, and generally did anything I could to be of comfort. I spent a lot of hours just waiting with the family for the word on Donny's return. As we waited, the need to understand the particulars of his death became prominent in all the conversations that were taking place. Surely the government would provide his parents with more information so they could appreciate their son's sacrifice.

(Tribute continued....)



Finally the day came when his body was to arrive home. The soldier accompanying the body, a Sergeant Lewis had already contacted the funeral home and told them that the coffin was not to be opened. In those days there were a lot stories about bodies being mixed up or empty coffins being sent with orders that they not be opened. Mr. Stephenson demanded that someone be allowed to see the remains just to verify that it was his son that had been killed. The Sergeant called his superiors and received permission for the coffin to be opened briefly for identification. Five people including me were selected to look at the body but the Stephensons declined to be present. When I arrived at the funeral home, the other four men had already identified the body and encouraged me to accept their verification that it was Donny. They said he was badly burned but they knew it was him and that viewing the remains would be extremely upsetting to me. His cousin David Perryman took me aside and gave me the details, saying Donny's body was in a body bag and a new uniform and envelope full of medals was on top of the body. They unzipped the bag in the area of the face and could readily tell that it was Donny.

His flag draped casket was taken to a viewing room and a copy of his official army photograph was placed on top of the casket. Thousands of flowers were sent and surrounded the casket. The funeral was scheduled for two days later and hundreds of people came to comfort the family. The night before the funeral, Donny's cousin Ed Perryman and I asked to be allowed to stay in the funeral home with the casket and permission was granted. Somehow it was important for us to spend his last night on earth with him. I developed a special bond and affection for Ed that night as we sat and talked, laughed about his nature, and cried over his death; but mostly we wondered if we would ever know what really happened.

As soon as the funeral home staff arrived, I went home and took a short nap, then dressed and went back to the funeral home. Donny's girlfriend Valerie Brown and her mother had driven in overnight from Missouri for the funeral. The rest of the day is a blur for me. I was a pallbearer and rode to the cemetery, which was about six miles away, with Valerie. People said the funeral procession was two miles long, and I remember folks lining the streets as the procession passed. There were full military honors, and I particularly remember "Taps". I left as the grave was being covered and stopped and told the Stephensons of my promise to Donny and my intent to keep it. I spent as much of the following day with Valerie until her mother took her home that afternoon.

For years we wondered what really happened because no more information was forthcoming from the Army. I continued to try and with the advent of the internet came the development of the website for the 1st Battalion 50th Infantry which was Donny's outfit. As a result of the efforts of some caring surviving members of his outfit, I found out that he had been killed in a terrible battle where all of the officers had been killed as well. Through the kindness of those fine brave men, those of us who want Donny's memory kept alive have blessed us in more ways than they will ever know.

Paul Cross

Copyright 2010 Paul Cross Contact for copy permission: via e-mail: rpaulc@comcast.net

###

[Attempts to contact Paul failed. We're hopeful he is pleased to have his tribute to his buddy Donny appear here. Ed]



Donald R. Stephenson



PERSONAL DATA:

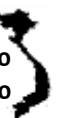
Home of Record: Shelbyville, TN
Date of birth: 11/11/1947

MILITARY DATA:

Service Branch: Army of the United States
Grade at loss: E4
Rank: Specialist Four
Promotion Note: None
ID No: 53908479
MOS: 11B2P: Infantryman (Airborne Qual)
Length Service: 00
Unit: A CO, 1ST BN, 50TH INFANTRY, 173RD ABN BDE,

CASUALTY DATA:

Start Tour: 12/09/1967
Incident Date: 05/05/1968
Casualty Date: 05/05/1968
Status Date: Not Applicable
Status Change: Not Applicable
Age at Loss: 20
Location: Binh Dinh Province, South Vietnam
Remains: Body recovered
Repatriated: Not Applicable
Identified: Not Applicable
Casualty Type: Hostile, died outright
Casualty Reason: Ground casualty
Casualty Detail: Burns



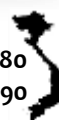


50th Infantry (Mech) Vietnam Photos

"The 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry served in Vietnam from 22 September 1967 to 13 December 1970 in II Corps (Central Highlands), providing our combat power to major units as and where it was most needed. At times we were attached to the 1st Cavalry Division, 4th Inf Division, 173d Airborne Brigade and 1st Field Force Vietnam. What we did is now history."



(Web photos)



James R. Woodall

Colonel Infantry, (Ret)



Colonel James R. Woodall '50 received a Bachelor of Science in Agricultural Administration from Texas A&M and a Master of Business Administration from Shippensburg University. He is also a graduate of the Infantry School, Command and General Staff College and the Army War College.

He served 28 years in the Regular Army and two and four years in the Naval and Army Reserves, respectfully. He has served overseas in Germany, Korea and Vietnam.

Colonel Woodall's military awards include the Silver Star, two Legions of Merit, three Bronze Stars, three Meritorious Service Medals, eight Air Medals, three Commendation Medals and two Vietnamese Gallantry Crosses.

His last military assignment was as Professor of Military Science and Commandant of Cadets at Texas A&M.

He retired from the Army in 1982 and worked in the insurance and financial services business until 2002. He has served as a Class Agent, President of the Brazos County A&M Club and is responsible for securing four of the seven Medals of Honor awarded to Aggies in World War II for display in the Sanders Corps Center.

His book *Texas Aggie Medals of Honor* details the search for the medals and the story behind each.

As a cadet, he was a company commander, Ross Volunteer, Co-Editor of the 1950 *Aggieland* and a Distinguished Military Graduate. ###

James R. Woodall, LTC

Colonel Infantry, (Ret)

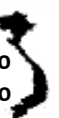
Award of the Legion of Merit



Citation:

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress, 20 July 1942, takes pleasure in presenting the Legion of Merit to Lieutenant Colonel (Infantry) James R. Woodall (ASN: 0-885xx), United States Army, for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding services to the Government of the United States during the period July 1968 to July 1969, while serving consecutively as Executive

Officer and as Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry Regiment, 173d Airborne Brigade in the Republic of Vietnam. Demonstrating remarkable leadership abilities and rare qualities of judgment, Colonel Woodall came to be known as the hallmark of professional skill and competence while serving as Executive Officer. His inherent ability to grasp and analyze problems of grave and far-reaching consequence enabled him to render flawless decisions. He provided firm and positive command and technical guidance to his staff while at the same time showing them sufficient latitude to develop operating procedures peculiar to their particular areas of operation. As Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, Colonel Woodall displayed a high level of foresight and organizational ability which proved instrumental in the unit's unprecedented level of accomplishment during a critical period of combat activity. Through his initiative, resourcefulness, adaptability to change and readiness to resort to the expedient, he has materially contributed to the Free World struggle against armed communist aggression in the Republic of Vietnam. Lieutenant Colonel Woodall's professional competence and outstanding achievements are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army. ###



Air Cavalry, 'Sky Soldiers' Test New Air Assault Concept

April 25, 2018

By Army Sgt. Gregory T. Summers
22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

HOHENFELS, Germany --

As the setting sun marked the start of another spring evening at the training area here, the roar of helicopter turbine engines competed against the thrumming rhythm of rotor blades beating the air as 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division soldiers began their work.



Army Chief Warrant Officer 3 Whit Taylor, right, a CH-47 Chinook helicopter pilot with Company B, 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, discusses flight operations for a night assault mission with Army 1st Lt. Ross DeMay, middle, the air operations officer with 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, and another "Sky Soldier" inside a hangar at Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, April 23, 2018. Soldiers from both units tested new warfighter concepts as part of the Army Joint Modernization Command's Joint Warfighting Assessment 18, an exercise that increases training readiness, future force development and interoperability with NATO allies.

(Army photo by Sgt. Gregory T. Summers)

Helicopter flight crews with the 1st ACB partnered with "Sky Soldiers" of the 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade to conduct an air assault/infiltration exercise in the late hours of April 23.

Night Assault Training

The night assault, with the objective to secure an airfield to integrate vehicles into an airborne infantry formation, was part of Army Joint Modernization Command's Joint Warfighting Assessment 18.

JWA is a training event designed for soldiers to operate realistically and test new concepts and capabilities required for the joint force to win across multiple environments.

"We are conducting a battalion-sized air assault and providing aviation support to 1st Battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade while they test a new vehicle concept," said Army Lt. Col. Nathan Surrey, commander of the 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st ACB and aviation task force for JWA.

"The exercise is complex and part of a much larger combined arms training event for JWA, but we are inserting these paratroopers deep into enemy territory at multiple landing zones with an equal opposing force present," Surrey said.

Four CH-47 Chinook and four UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter flight crews transported and inserted nearly 300 soldiers into the training area. Additionally, four AH-64 Apache helicopter crews provided security and attack aviation support during the infiltration.

Employing Speed, Surprise

"It's all about speed, surprise and operational reach," Surrey said. *"That's what we provide to our ground forces."*

The assault mission tested both units' capabilities and challenged them with new operational concepts that emphasize the importance of decisive action. The key focus of the training was to integrate vehicles into a light infantry formation, Army Maj. Chris Zagursky, the executive officer for 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, said.

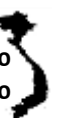


An AH-64 Apache helicopter flight crew, left, with 1st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion, prepares to escort a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crew, right, with 3rd Assault Helicopter Battalion, both with the 227th Aviation Regiment, 1st Air Cavalry Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, during a night training mission at Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, April 23, 2018.

(Army photo by Sgt. Gregory T. Summers)

[Read entire report at

<https://www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1502829/air-cavalry-sky-soldiers-test-new-air-assault-concept/source/GovDelivery/>



Rigger Rigor



Army Pvt. Kylie Nielsen rigs a parachute at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, April 3, 2018. Nielsen is assigned to the 4th Quartermaster Company, 725th Brigade Support Battalion.

(Air Force photo by Justin Connaheer)

Camouflage Paint



A paratrooper puts the final touches on face paint camouflage in preparation for airborne operations onto Juliet Drop Zone in Pordenone, Italy, April 10, 2018. The soldier is assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade.

(Army photo by Paolo Bovo)

MG ELLIS WILLIAMSON MEMORIAL BENCH



There is another new addition to the footprint of the 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial on the Walk of Honor of the National Infantry Foundation campus.

As a result of generous contributions from Chapters I (Sigholtz Chapter) and IX (New England Chapter) and individual Sky Soldiers in these Chapters, the National Memorial Foundation Board of Directors obtained "naming rights" to a bench installed by the National Infantry Museum immediately adjacent to our Memorial.



The Commander

The Bench is located across the sidewalk from the 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial.

This Dedication Marker is affixed to the front of the Bench.



[Sent in by Ken Smith, Col (Ret), CO A/D/2/503]



Jumping Out of Planes



"Rod Serling with father Sam in 1944."

Credit: therodserlingzone.tumblr.com

Serling served in the Pacific theater in both a paratrooper division and a demolitions unit during World War II. By his own admission, he wasn't a natural combat soldier:

"It was the point of the service that, if you didn't jump in time, you'd be five miles beyond where you were supposed to go with the comparative comfort of your own colleagues; so, it behooved you to get out that door as fast as you could. You were supposed to yell, 'Geronimo.' This was the war cry of the American paratrooper. For the life of me, I could never get up enough courage to yell anything but 'Ahhh.' That was pretty much the story of my service."

Serling must have developed a taste for adrenaline though, because after the war he earned extra money testing parachutes for the U.S. Army. He earned \$50 for each successful jump, even taking on hazardous jumps for a higher wage. He once earned \$1,000 testing a jet ejection seat, which had killed the three previous testers.

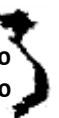
(Source: Wikipedia)



(web image)

PARATROOPERS

...are about the most peculiar breed of human beings I have ever witnessed. They treat their service as if it were some kind of cult, plastering their emblem on almost everything they own, making themselves up to look like insane fanatics with haircuts to ungentlemanly lengths, worshiping their units almost as if they were Gods, and making weird animal noises like a band of savages. They'll fight like rabid dogs at the drop of a hat just for the sake of a little action, and are the cockiest sons of bitches I have ever known. Most have the foulest mouths and drink well beyond man's normal limits, but their high spirits and sense of brotherhood set them apart and, generally speaking, the United States Paratroopers I've come in contact with are the most professional soldiers and the finest men I have ever had the pleasure to meet. By unknown



VA and U.S. Digital Service Launch New Web Tool to Help Veterans Track their Benefits Appeals

March 23, 2018

WASHINGTON — Today the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the U.S Digital Service announced their launch of an improved Appeals Status tool to increase transparency and enable Veterans to track the progress of their benefits claims appeals.

"It's important that our Veterans have the opportunity to track their appeals process in a timely and efficient manner," said VA Secretary David Shulkin. *"For the first time ever, Veterans can see their place on the Board of Veterans' Appeals' docket, including the number of appeals that are ahead of them."*



The tool, which went live March 21 on VA's [Vets.gov](https://www.va.gov) website, will allow Veterans to access detailed information about the status of their benefits appeals and will include alerts about needed actions, as well as estimates of how long each step of the process takes.

Some Veterans who have previewed the new tool said it had given them hope and helped them understand that the process might take longer than expected.

Source:

www.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=4030

***OOPs! Goodbye Mr. Secretary.
Long live the new Secretary!
OOPs!***

Farewell to a Fellow Paratrooper and Friend of the 173d... "Hello Darlin'"

On April 23, 2018, Mr. William "Bill" Haggerty, a proud West Virginian, took his final jump in Cocoa Beach, FL. While Bill earned his jump wings in the army, he never wore them in public. *"After jump school, I never served with an active airborne unit,"* he said years ago. A veteran of the 1st Cav in Vietnam, Bill first served as a combat grunt before becoming a door gunner. Bill was a wise man, a friendly man, and a man helpful to anyone who crossed his path and in need of help, but now, Miss Vietnam has claimed another of her long lost sons. Bill will be missed by all who were fortunate to have known him. *Thanks for everything brother. Airborne Bill, and All The Way!!* 🇺🇸



Our buddy Bill, at 2/503 reunion in Cocoa Beach, 2006.

Sky Soldier wisdom...

"Our lives are but for a moment, while what we do or leave undone will echo down through eternity."

By Joe Marquez, C/1/503rd,'69; N/75th, Juliet,'70; A/2/503rd,'70; Chaplain: SC Chapter 30; and the National 173d Airborne Brigade Association. *Serving those who served.*

Soft Landing



"A paratrooper assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade performs a parachute landing fall upon contact with the ground in northern Italy, March 1, 2018."

(Army photo by Lt. Col. John Hall)

It's always good to make contact with the ground. Ed



"U.S. Army 1st Lt. Kyle Gorak participates in a British best detachment competition at the 7th Army Training Command's Grafenwoehr training area, Germany, March 1, 2018. Gorak is a paratrooper assigned to 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade."

(Army photo by Markus Rauchenberger)

***"I wanna be an Airborne Ranger,
I wanna live a life of danger!"***



2/503d **VIETNAM** Newsletter / May-June 2018 – Issue 80

Page 79 of 90

Commander in Chief, Donald J. Trump Delivers Remarks at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar – March 13, 2018



Thank you. I am really thrilled to be here at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, home of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing and the mighty Miramar Marines. Thank you very much. This is beautiful.

And we're here today to celebrate your incredible achievements, so relax, be at ease and let's have a good time for a couple of minutes. OK? And thank you for being here, Darrell.

Colonel, I want to just thank you and Colonel Woodworth, I salute you both. You are really tremendous. The job you've done. You led the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing and the Miramar Marines with the excellence and honor for which this corps is admired. All throughout the world, they talk about you.

I want to thank all of the incredible soldiers, sailors, Airmen and Coast Guardsmen who traveled here today from the stations all across the San Diego region. I have a message for you straight from the heart of the American people. And you know what that is. We support you, we thank you, we love you, and we will always have your back like you have ours. Thank you.

And very importantly, most important. To all of the military spouses and family members here today, we know that you really serve too. Many cases, you're the real boss in the family, right? We know that. So thank you. None of this would be possible without your incredible sacrifice and the tireless support that you give. So thank you all..

And finally, to the thousands of Marines here today, from Miramar and Camp Pendleton. I want you to know how proud we are of everything we do. And, you know, we have General Kelly here, four star. And he's doing a great job in Washington. I think he likes what you do better than what he does, but he's doing a great job. He misses you.

Your devotion fills our allies and our families with confidence. Your courage fills our enemies with dread. And your example inspires countless young Americans who dream of being the best, to someday wear the uniform of the United States Marines. All of you know the truth of the famous saying, "*Once a Marine*".

(continued....)



But I'm with you all the time. Today we're the -- with those Marines, I'll tell you. I gave a speech recently at the Coast Guard Academy. It was so great. And between Annapolis and West Point, Air Force Academy, we've done them all and we're doing them. So we'll see you guys very soon.

But today, I hate to say it. Congratulations. And I'm proud to say that we have several really tough Marines serving in our administration. So not only John Kelly, but defense secretary -- now, did anyone ever hear of Mad Dog Mattis? No? He's doing a great job. Chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, General "Fighting Joe" Dunford. And our new director of the Secret Service and veteran of the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing, General Tex -- you know General? You know him? Tex A., I call him. Big General "Tex A".

Our administration is stacked with Marines because Marines are the kind of people you want at your side. And trust me, you don't ever want to be on the other side of a fighting Marine. It's trouble. It's painful.

The Marines are the first into battle and the first to fight. Marines never give up, never give in, never retreat and never, ever surrender. You are faithful to each other, faithful to your mission and you are always faithful to the country that you love, the USA.

And as your commander in chief, just like every president before me, I have no greater comfort than knowing I can have absolute faith in you.

In 1918, when foreign military aggression threatened our way of life, we called on the Marines. Marine Sergeant Dan Daly urged his men through the horrible trenches with the courageous battle cry that you all know very well, *"do you want to live forever"*? That was the question and that was the cry.

In 1945, when we needed someone who scale the cliffs and to plant the flag at a rugged mountain peak, in Iwo Jima, we called on the Marines. In 1950, when setbacks loomed in Korea, although we're doing a pretty good job with Korea right now. And hopefully something positive will come out of it. Hopefully something very positives going to come out of it. We'll see. And we're prepared for anything, right? We always have to be prepared for anything. But I really believe something very positive could happen. Great for Korea, North and South, and great for the world and great for this country.

So when it loomed in Korea and when we needed warriors who would fight against all odds, and the chosen reservoir, we called on the Marines, the legendary men of the frozen chosen. In 1962, when America needed a man to border rocket launch into space and orbit the earth for the first time, we called on a Marine, the one and only John Glenn.

The legendary acts like these who have sacrificed courage of heroism are the proud legacy of the United States Marines, can be very proud. Your heritage drives you, your heroes inspire you and your actions immortalize you in the pages of American history, incredible history. And every day you push yourselves to new heights of excellence and new depths of courage, keeping America safe, America strong, and America free.

You honor your duty to your country. Now we must honor our duty to you. For too long the men and women of the United States Armed Forces have been asked to do more with less. You've borne the costs of underinvestment and deferred modernization and, also, deferred maintenance. You've endured longer and more frequent deployments.

You've spent countless hours fixing and maintaining old equipment. You have fewer ships than we should, fewer planes than we should and you have fewer of you than we should. Today, I am very pleased to report that all of that is changing and all of that as you have seen is changing quickly.

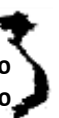
The Trump administration is committed to a policy of peace through strength. We have finally ended the devastating defense sequester that you've lived with for many years. We are now undertaking the largest military buildup since Ronald Reagan and one of the largest buildups we've ever had in the history of our nation.

Last year, I requested and received an additional \$21 billion to address urgent readiness shortfalls. The two-year budget agreement I just reached with Congress will provide \$700 billion in defense funding this year, the largest ever, larger by far than any country has ever spent. And next year we will raise that number to \$716 billion. That's a lot of money, even for you, that's a lot of money.

We're also investing in our greatest weapon of all, our most powerful weapon, our most beautiful weapon, our most brilliant weapon; you. In 2019, we want to give you your largest pay raise in over a decade. You deserve it. You deserve it. You deserve it.

And we are building new F-35 joint strike fighters and we are going to send them right here to Miramar, along with lots of other fighters and lots of other weaponry; weaponry like we've never had before or sent before. They'll be sent also all over the world.

(continued....)



And I understand some of you really great pilots could use some new CH-53s. Is that a correct statement? You want to see some new ones, huh? That's (inaudible). Well, you're getting them, okay, brand new, right off the line. We are getting a lot of great stuff.

I'm happy to report that in the near future Miramar is getting brand new CH-53K King Stallions; the big ones you are getting. They'll be sent soon. They are coming. They are being made.

We are also modernizing our nuclear capabilities and rebuilding our nuclear infrastructure. We're investing more money than we have ever done before, because we have to be so far ahead of any other country. It's a capability we never even want to think about using, but we have to be prepared. And in a nuclear front, we are so far, and will be so far ahead of any other country. We have no choice.

We have increased investment in hypersonic weapon systems by 50 percent and we're accelerating development of hypersonic systems that can fly five times the speed of sound. That's pretty quick.

In space, the United States is going to do Colonel Glenn proud. We are finally going to lead again. You see what's happening? You see the rockets going up left and right? You haven't seen that for a long time. Very soon we are going to Mars. You wouldn't have been going to Mars if my opponent won, that I can tell you. You wouldn't even be thinking about it. Wouldn't be thinking about it.

My new national strategy for space recognizes that space is a war-fighting domain, just like the land, air, and sea. We may even have a Space Force -- develop another one; Space Force. We have the Air Force; we'll have the Space Force. We have the Army, the Navy.

You know, I was saying it the other day, because we are doing a tremendous amount of work in space. I said maybe we need a new force. We'll call it Space Force. And I was not really serious. Then I said what a great idea. Maybe we'll have to do that. That could happen. That could be the big breaking story. Look at all those people back there. Look at them. Oh, that fake news. They know. They understand.

So think of that, space force, because we're spending a lot and we have a lot of private money coming in. Tremendous, you saw what happened the other day, and tremendous success.

From the very beginning many of our astronauts have been soldiers and sailors, airmen, Coast Guardsmen, and Marines. And our service members will be vital to ensuring America continues to lead the way into the stars. We're going to lead the way in

space. We're way, way behind, and we're catching up fast -- so fast that nobody even believes it.

I also have released a new National Security Strategy that underscores the vital importance of homeland security. It's all about homeland security, right? We protect people all over the world, but we're going to protect them better than ever before -- our homeland. It's about time, right?

Nobody's going to mess with us. Dangerous criminal and terrorist organizations relentlessly seek to exploit our immigration system. I've just come from a trip to the border, where I met with our wonderful border agents -- Border Patrol and the ICE agents -- unbelievable people -- and reviewed prototypes of a new physical wall that will protect our border and protect our country. We don't have a choice. We need it. We need it for the drugs. We need it for the gangs. We need it for lots of reasons. We have to have it. It'll be 99.5 percent successful. People won't be able to come over it. The drugs will stop by a lot -- although we have to get a lot tougher with drug dealers. Have to. But that wall will stop so much. And we looked at the different prototypes, and it was fascinating. And we have two or three that really work. We had people trying to scale -- we've done them every way.

You know I'm a builder. What I do best is build, OK? You know other people, they build a wall and then say, you know, it doesn't work. Well, wait a minute, we just built 1,000 miles of wall. Well, we made a mistake; it doesn't work. We should have done it a different way. We're doing it before we build. Better idea, right? Do you think? Little better?

We're going to have a great wall. It's going to be very effective. It's going to stop people from -- you're not going to see them climbing over this wall too easily. That I can tell you.

I've also called in Congress to close dangerous loopholes that are exploited by traffickers, smugglers and cartels. Human trafficking in this modern age is worse throughout world than it's ever been. Who would think that? In this modern -- human trafficking is worse than it's ever been. Each of you has sworn an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.

Our task in government is to ensure that we preserve what we have gained through incredible sacrifice -- of you and many people before you....

(continued....)



....That is why my administration is confronting sanctuary city policies that nullify federal law, violate our Constitution, and threaten the safety and security of our nation. They shield criminals. We can't do that. And that is why we are asking Congress to ensure that no federal funds subsidize this dangerous and unlawful behavior. We want to protect you, and we want to protect all of our families. We want to protect our nation.

We're also taking action to protect our homeland from rogue actors overseas through enhanced missile defense. We're spending a tremendous amount on missile defense, and that's money well spent. And it's also jobs. We make them here. We make them right here. It's also jobs.

We're adding new interceptors, improving sensors, and advancing radar capabilities by many, many times. I have empowered our commanders in Afghanistan with the authorities they need to win, enabling the full might of the American military.

The coalition to defeat ISIS has now liberated almost 100 percent of the territory previously held by these terrorists in Syria and Iraq. We did a great job -- you did a great job. You did a great job. They would have been around for a long time and they'd be getting bigger and stronger. And, you saw it. And we knocked the hell out of them, we knocked them.

I want to say a special thanks to all of the men and women from the 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing Miramar Air Station and stations across the San Diego region, especially the two Miramar-based squadrons who have just returned from deployment, the Death Rattlers and the Greyhawks. Where are you? Right? Good. That's a good looking group. That's great. Thank you, great job. Your service has been extraordinary.

We won't let up until ISIS is completely destroyed. ISIS never thought this would happen. They never got hit like this. We took off the gloves. In one year, we did more damage to ISIS than other administration, a certain other administration, did in many ways. We took off the gloves.

We're also working with allies and partners to block Iran's path to a nuclear weapon, and confront its sponsorship of terror and bloodshed all around the world. Everywhere we go in the Middle East it's Iran, Iran, Iran, behind every problem is Iran. Well, we're dealing with it in a very serious fashion. One of the worst deals I've ever seen was the Iran deal. \$150 billion we gave them, for what?

With your skill and your bravery, I know that the United States military will forever remain the greatest fighting force in the history of the world. And we're making it now, with \$700 billion and \$716 billion the

following year. We're giving you the tools that they were trying to take away from you, so important. And the Marines, as always, will be the tip of the spear.

So to the fighting men and women of Miramar and all across the San Diego area, we must all think bigger, build faster, push farther, dare higher and be greater than ever, ever, ever before. Each one of you is vital to our mission.

You're fighter pilots, helo pilots, mechanics, engineers, hospital corpsman, sailors and sergeants, but above all you are great American patriots, just great American patriots. You race into battle, rush into fire, fly into danger and you give all to defend our nation, our people and the American way of life. And they love you.

A century ago, every man who heeded Sergeant Daly's battle cry was pushed on to victory and to glory by that same love of country. As war engulfed Iwo Jima, our young heroes set their eyes upon the same beautiful sight; red, white, and blue perched atop an incredible rocky peak. And when Colonel Glenn looked down on the United States as he soared beyond the limits of our atmosphere, he was filled with the same pride of one beating American heart.

Our pride makes us strong, our strength keeps us free. And because of heroes like you, our freedom will never die. We are becoming stronger, and stronger, and stronger as a nation.

And, while a lot of you don't think about it, our economy is setting records. Our unemployment is at all-time lows. African American unemployment is the lowest it's been in history. Hispanic unemployment is the lowest it's been in history. Women unemployment is the lowest it's been in 18 years. And we're setting records.

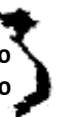
And last week, we had over 150 million people working. That's more people working in our country than ever before in its history. We are making a lot of progress for you. All across this nation, we pray for our country, and we thank God for our United States Marines.

Today and every day, we pledge to remain always faithful. It is an honor to be with you. You are very, very special people. Thank you, God bless you and God bless America. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Read text and/or watch speech at:

<https://factba.se/transcript/donald-trump-remarks-marine-miramar-california-march-13-2018>

(web photo taken during speech added)



'Fuck Nazis' Holiday Lawn Sign Placed By Vietnam Vet of the Sky Soldier Kind



(Greeley Tribune, Colo. 21 Dec 2017 By Tyler Silvy)

According to the *Greeley Tribune* of Colorado, neighbors of Sky Soldier Joseph Ruibal, 69, of Greeley, weren't overly pleased with the sign our trooper posted on his front lawn, particularly the vulgar language on display. We're unsure if the vulgar language they referred to was *fuck* or *Nazis*.

The paper quoted Joseph as saying, "*If (people) want to wear the Nazi emblem, that's fine,*" Ruibal said. "*It's just like the confederates; they're both loser flags.*"

"The day I take the sign down is the day I take the American flag down," Ruibal said.

Read entire report at:

www.military.com/off-duty/2017/12/21/f-nazis-holiday-sign-will-stay-place-vietnam-vet-says-after-complaints.html

Battalions Seek Out Enemy Near An Khe Viet Cong Suffer Losses

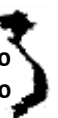
VOL. II, NO. 4 2 FEB 1969 BONG SON - The remote jungled foothills of the Central Highlands north of An Khe were the Brigade's prime area of interest during the first weeks of January as elements of the 2nd and 4th Battalions, 503d Infantry assisted by gunships of Delta Troop, 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment conducted Reconnaissance in Force missions throughout the region, seeking out enemy base camps and staging areas. Both Infantry Battalions made numerous light contacts during the period and turned up several caches of rice and medical supplies.

However, the biggest single contact of the period was made by elements of the 1st Battalion (Mechanized) 50th Infantry when it met a Viet Cong Company along Route 19 and killed nine. A single APC from Alpha Company, 1/50th accompanied by a Tank from the 1/69th Armor began the contact when they were engaged by enemy mortar and rocket fire. An hour long battle ensued when the remainder of Alpha Company and Helicopter Gunships quickly reinforced. In addition to nine VC killed, the Infantrymen found 7 AK47 rifles, 2 B-40 rocket launchers and an APO machine gun which the routed enemy left in their wake.

Elsewhere in Operation Walker, 4th Battalion Hawk Ambush teams had considerable success in turning up small encampments including one Battalion-sized VC camp which housed over a ton of rice and three banners with Fidel Castro's picture. Two Sky Soldiers from C/4/503d also killed seven VC and captured 7 weapons between them. The biggest single discovery, however, was made by A/2/503d which turned up an enemy tunnel hospital complex 40 miles northwest of An Khe. The discovery followed a short firefight with enemy snipers in which the Company killed two. Then, after searching the area, the Paratroopers found three large buildings with beds and a tunnel complex leading away from it. The tunnel complex turned into a hospital which contained three operating tables, a mess hall, sleeping area for 48 and large wheat storage bin.

The next day, Gunships of Delta Troop 2/1 Cavalry Regiment flying visual Reconnaissance in a nearby area, spotted two groups of VC moving across a valley and killed eight. In Operation Cochise/Dan Sinh, the 1/503d made light and scattered contact while operating along the coast north of Qui Nhon, while to the south near Tuy Hoa, D/16th Armor began a large operation with the 47th ARVN Regiment.

Source: www.ichiban1.org/html/news_pages/news_15.htm



More From *The Whip* Down Under

While in Melbourne, Australia we visited the Shrine of Remembrance, which is a memorial for those that served their country.

The tour guide noticed that I had my VVA shirt on that had "Vietnam Veteran" on it, so he mentioned the Shrine had a room just for the Vietnam War.

I took a picture of the plaque (below) that shows the Aussies fought with the 173d Airborne Brigade. It's awesome that the Herd is a part of their military history.

All the Way!

Rich Whipple
HHC/2/503
1968-69

FROM BATTALION TO TASK FORCE

On 29 April 1965 Prime Minister Robert Menzies announced that Australia would send an infantry battalion to Vietnam. And so, less than a month later, 1RAR left Australia, joining a massive American commitment of military forces to South Vietnam.

1RAR and supporting Australian units including artillery, signals, a reconnaissance flight, logistic support units, and a troop of Armoured Personnel Carriers, operated as part of the American 173rd Airborne Brigade. Based in Bien Hoa province, they carried out search-and-destroy operations against Viet Cong strongholds to the north of Saigon, known as War Zone D and the Iron Triangle, and discovered extensive Viet Cong tunnels in the Ho Bo woods.

By March 1966 the Americans were rapidly escalating troop numbers in an effort to win the war. Australian Prime Minister Harold Holt supported them, publically promising President Lyndon B Johnson that Australia would go 'all the way with LBJ'. Meanwhile, Australian commanders wanted to be able to operate with more independence. The government agreed to triple Australia's Vietnam commitment by deploying a self-contained task force, with its own area of operations.

The 1st Australian Task Force (1ATF) established its main base at Nui Dat, in the centre of Phuoc Tuy province, a predominantly rural area largely controlled by the Viet Cong. Supporting units, including medical units and a squadron of helicopters from the RAAF's No. 9 Squadron, were based on the coast at Vung Tau. Putting the Task Force base in the middle of the province was a deliberate strategy to establish military dominance. A reaction came soon, leading to the biggest action the Australians had faced so far: the battle of Long Tan on 18 August 1966.

Lest We Forget...

The **Shrine of Remembrance** is a war memorial in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, located in Kings Domain on St Kilda Road. It was built to honour the men and women of Victoria who served in World War I, but is now a memorial to all Australians who have served in war. It is a site of annual observances of ANZAC Day (25 April) and Remembrance Day (11 November) and is one of the largest war memorials in Australia.

Designed by architects Phillip Hudson and James Wardrop who were both World War I veterans, the Shrine is in a classical style, being based on the Tomb of Mausolus at Halicarnassus and the Parthenon in Athens. The crowning element at the top of the memorial's ziggurat roof references the Choragic Monument of Lysicrates. Built from Tynong granite, the Shrine originally consisted only of the central sanctuary surrounded by the ambulatory. The sanctuary contains the marble Stone of Remembrance, upon which is engraved the words "*Greater love hath no man*". Once a year, on 11 November at 11 a.m. (Remembrance Day), a ray of sunlight shines through an aperture in the roof to light up the word "Love" in the inscription.

Beneath the sanctuary lies the crypt, which contains a bronze statue of a soldier father and son, and panels listing every unit of the Australian Imperial Force. The Shrine went through a prolonged process of development which began in 1918 with the initial proposal to build a Victorian memorial. Two committees were formed, the second of which ran a competition for the memorial's design. The winner was announced in 1922. However, opposition to the proposal (led by Keith Murdoch and *The Herald*) forced the governments of the day to rethink the design, and a number of alternatives were proposed, the most significant of which was the ANZAC Square and cenotaph proposal of 1926. In response, General Sir John Monash used the 1927 ANZAC Day march to garner support for the Shrine, and finally won the support of the Victorian government later that year.

The foundation stone was laid on 11 November 1927, and the Shrine was officially dedicated on 11 November 1934.



Faces on the Wall

We are down to 42 names for 2/503 including only one from 22 June 1967 and down to 118 for the Brigade of photos we are missing of our KIA. Please email me any photo you have of our 2/503 troopers listed below.

Ken Smith, Col. (Ret)

CO A/D/2/503

2/503d Infantry Battalion

kvsmith173@gmail.com

HHC/2/503

FRANKLIN, Willie

Nov 16, 1937 - Oct 14, 1967, Detroit, MI

GREEN, Moses,

Nov 29, 1945 - Mar 3, 1967, Jamaica, NY

PATTON, George

Jun 4, 1948 - Jun 22, 1967, New York, NY

RINEHART, Joseph Lester

Jun 26, 1948 - Dec 2, 1968, Washington, DC

SPAIN, Ervin

Mar 28, 1935 - Nov 20, 1967, Chicago, IL

STONE, Gregory Martin

Sep 1, 1949 - Mar 24, 1971, Torrance, CA

WARD, Rudolph Nathinal

Nov 1, 1945 - Nov 19, 1967, Portsmouth, VA

A/2/503

CLARKE, Irvin Jr.

Sep 24, 1941 - Feb 26, 1966, New York, NY

FELDER, Jesse Clarence

Mar 17, 1943 - Jun 29, 1966, Jersey City, NJ

KELLY, Stephen Allen

Jun 27, 1947 - Jun 22, 1967, Atlanta, GA

LAUREANO-LOPEZ, Ismael

Aug 16, 1945 - Feb 21, 1969, New York, NY

LESZCZYNSKI, Witold John

Mar 16, 1948 - Nov 19, 1967, New York, NY

MITCHELL, Clarence

May 24, 1932 - Feb 26, 1966, Nashville, TN

MOLTON, Kenneth Wayne

Apr 9, 1948 - Dec 7, 1968, Birmingham, AL

OROSZ, Andrew John

Aug 19, 1946 - Nov 19, 1967, New York, NY

PEGGS, Albert Lee

Sep 10, 1945 - Dec 4, 1968, Chicago, IL

POTTER, Albert Raymond

Dec 28, 1938 - Jun 29, 1966, Browns Mills, NJ

STEVENS, Francis George

Jun 18, 1945 - Jun 29, 1966, Ellsworth, ME

WALKER, Charlie Lewis,

Jan 30, 1947 - Jun 22, 1967, Munford, AL

B/2-503

GRAY, Warren

Apr 5, 1947 - May 10, 1968, Inglewood, CA

HARPER, Richard Earl

Feb 21, 1944 - Jan 12, 1966, Birmingham, AL

HATCHETT, Kyle Henry

Aug 3, 1945 - Aug 23, 1965, New York, NY

McCOY, Elec

Dec 1, 1946 - Oct 25, 1967, Oswego, SC

MORRIS, Robert L.

Jul 10, 1948 - Dec 2, 1967, Columbus, OH

ROMAN, Jeremias

Apr 29, 1948 - Mar 4, 1968, New York, NY

ROST, Leroy Alphus

Nov 11, 1948 - Nov 13, 1967, Moline, IL

SIMMONS, Willie James

Jul 8, 1948 - Nov 13, 1967, Detroit, MI

TIGHE, John Roy

Apr 22, 1947 - May 17, 1967, Lomita, CA

WASILOW, John Stephen

Jun 7, 1949 - Nov 24, 1968, Myrtle Beach, SC

WESTPOINT, Thomas Lee

Oct 8, 1941 - Sep 30, 1966, Charleston, SC

WILLIAMS, Van

Aug 3, 1946 - Oct 10, 1965, New York, NY

C/2-503

ANTHONY, Lionel S.

Dec 1, 1945 - Mar 4, 1967, Los Angeles, CA

CARPENTER, Douglas Joe

Jan 11, 1947 - Mar 25, 1967, Bauxite, AR

HARRIS, Nathaniel

Jul 19, 1947 - Oct 18, 1967, Bessemer, AL

HUDNALL, William Leon

Sep 15, 1949 - Jun 29, 1970, Richmond, VA

QUINONES-RODRIQUEZ

Luis A., May 7, 1948 - Feb 25, 1971, New York, NY

RIVERA-GARCIA, William

May 13, 1946 - Feb 15, 1969, New York, NY

SAEZ-RAMIREZ, Angel Perfir

May 4, 1934 - Mar 3, 1967, Orocovis, PR

TYLER, Lester

Dec 6, 1943 - Nov 20, 1967, New York, NY

VASQUES, Selvester Joe

Jan 26, 1944 - Mar 3, 1967, Los Angeles, CA

WILSON, Herbert Jr.

Aug 26, 1947 - Mar 3, 1967, New York, NY

D/2-503

CABE, Paul Philip

Apr 26, 1952 - Apr 5, 1971, Guild, TN



Remembering a Commander...

Hubert Cunningham, 75

October 19, 1996

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C. -- Hubert Summers Cunningham, a 1941 graduate of Clarkston High School, died of causes related to age Thursday at Womack Army Hospital here. He was 75. He was a retired U.S. Army major general.

He was born in Enterprise, Oregon, July 3, 1921. He later moved to Clarkston.

He entered the Army as an enlisted man in August 1942 and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the infantry March 12, 1943, after completing officer candidate school at Fort Benning, Ga.

Following airborne training at Fort Benning, he joined the 194th Glider Infantry, 17th Airborne Division in Europe. He saw combat in France, Belgium and Germany, and participated in an airborne assault across the Rhine River near Wessel, Germany.

He also served in Korea, first as an infantry battalion adviser to South Korean forces, and later as an assistant adviser at the South Korean Army headquarters. Following completion of the U.S. Command and General Staff College, he became an instructor at Fort Benning.

From 1955 to 1957, he attended Harvard Business School in Boston, receiving a master's degree in business administration.

In June 1968 he departed for Vietnam, where he served in various capacities until August 1969, when he became commander of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. In September 1970, he became director of operations, United States Strike Command, at McDill Air Force Base in Florida.

In 1972 he was assigned as Chief of the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group in Korea. He left Korea in 1974 to become deputy director for operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, D.C. In 1975, he became deputy to the Inspector General, Department of the Army.

He retired from the Army in 1976. From 1975 until his death, he was president and owner of Cunningham Cycle World in Fayetteville. He was a longtime member of West Fayetteville Rotary Club and past president of the Fort Bragg Retiree Council.

He is survived by two sons, Michael R. Cunningham and Richard Lee Cunningham, both of Fayetteville, N.C.; and seven grandchildren.

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 9, 2018

Statement by Acting VA Secretary Robert Wilkie Congress Must Pass Choice Bill Now to Give Best Care Options to our Veterans

Today marks four years since the disastrous wait-time scandal in Phoenix came to light, where long wait times at the Phoenix VA and at other department facilities nationwide led to unconscionable delays in receiving care.



Robert Wilkie

Following that scandal, Congress passed the bipartisan VA Choice legislation that allowed Veterans to seek care in the private sector when faced with VA wait times of over 30 days, or when Veterans had to travel more than 40 miles to see a VA doctor.

Funding for the Choice program was set to expire last year, but Congress extended it twice while it worked on a bipartisan deal for the next generation of Choice legislation that would give even better options for Veterans to seek care in the community when the VA was unable to provide them the best standard of treatment.

It's time to fix the Choice Program – as well as the department's other non-VA care efforts – once and for all by merging them into a single, streamlined community care program that's easy to use for Veterans and VA employees.

America's Veterans are looking to Congress and VA to come together now to provide them the best possible solutions for their care. Your VA will be working overtime to achieve the promise of leaving no veteran waiting for care.

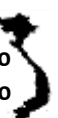
Source: va.org

All the way, Sir!



2/503d VIETNAM Newsletter / May-June 2018 – Issue 80

Page 87 of 90



Army Parachute Riggers Strive for Safe Landings

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Gary A. Witte, 642nd Regional Support Group

FORT VALLEY, Ga., April 10, 2018 — For soldiers in the 421st Quartermaster Company, “attention to detail” is less a catch phrase than a lifesaving mission statement.



Army Sgt. Sean M. Bryant of Macon, Ga., shows Army Pvt. Joshua I. Brackin of Dothan, Ala., where the parachute static lines need to be checked for defects at Fort Valley, Ga., March 10, 2018. Both soldiers are parachute riggers with the 421st Quartermaster Company.

(Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Gary A. Witte)

Parachute riggers with the 421st, based at the Army Reserve Center here, pack hundreds of chutes every month for use by reserve and active-duty troops across the southern United States. And, there isn't just one kind of parachute. There are more than a dozen types, each with a specific method for packing to ensure they open correctly.

Army 1st Sgt. Richard A. Davis of Musella, the senior noncommissioned officer for the unit, said one mistake by a parachute rigger can lead to a fatality or injury.

'Everything Has to be Precise'

"A lot of things can go wrong," Davis said. "Everything we do to pack a parachute has to be done by steps. Everything has to be precise."

Military jumps typically involve the use of a thick cord -- called a static line -- to pull the chutes open. If the static line is routed wrong, the parachute won't open. If the static line is faulty and the problem isn't discovered, it can shred and the parachute also won't open. If the risers which connect the jumper to the chute are flipped, its canopy might only partially open -- sending the soldier speeding toward the ground.

Army Master Sgt. Brian W. Steverson of Bonifay, the operations NCO, said only qualified riggers are allowed to put chutes together, and they have to remain proficient at their jobs. *"It's really important to stay current, because every parachute is a life-support system,"* Steverson said.

Heavy Cargo

Cargo loads can be even more complicated. Because of the weights involved -- up to about 2,000 pounds -- the chute has to be adjusted to deploy a certain way, otherwise the shock of its opening can tear it. This would send the heavy payload raining down across the landscape. *"Hopefully, no one is below it,"* if that happens, Steverson said.

To become a qualified parachute rigger, soldiers must go through airborne orientation, then airborne school, then rigger school, he said. As part of graduating rigger school, which itself is an 11-week course, the soldiers pack their own chutes and then jump with them. *"When they come to us, they already have six or seven jumps,"* Steverson said.

Battle assemblies for the company feature all the usual requirements for an Army Reserve unit, including physical training tests, equipment accountability and classes. But then, there is the steady drumbeat of safety checks, packing chutes and preparations for the next unit jump.



Army Spc. Arnesha S. Noble from Warner Robins, Ga., a parachute rigger with the 421st Quartermaster Company, signs her name after inspecting a parachute at the Army Reserve Center in Fort Valley, Ga., March 10, 2018. Riggers with the unit pack hundreds of military chutes every month for use across the southern United States.

(Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Gary A. Witte)

'Signs Name'

Parachute riggers have to maintain their status by jumping every three months -- at a minimum. If they don't maintain their jump status, they aren't allowed to pack or inspect parachutes, Steverson said.

(continued....)



A handful of riggers remain at the unit on active duty to continue the packing process throughout the week and also travel with the chutes when shipped to locations in California, Texas, Florida, South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama. These parachutes allow members in those airborne units to maintain their own jump status.

‘Hundreds of Parachutes’

Typically, several hundred parachutes get packed each month. Properly packing a single parachute can potentially take anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour, depending on how experienced the rigger is. There are 13 rigger checks of each chute -- including inspections prior to its assembly, before it is packed, while it is packed, after it is packed and a jumpmaster inspection at the airfield -- before they are authorized to be used in a jump.

Army Sgt. David C. Frady is one of the full-time parachute riggers. He's been doing it for eight years and enjoys the complexity because of the variety of payloads and parachutes they have to manage. There's a lot of information to absorb all the time, since both the equipment and missions change. But it can get repetitive. And they always stay busy, he said.

"You pack 15 a day and you do it every single day until you meet mission requirements," Frady said. "It just becomes the norm."

‘Riggers Take Responsibility’

The parachute rigger's name goes in each chute they pack, along with the names of its inspectors. Once the parachutes are delivered, a rigger from the unit stays to monitor and record the jumps.

Davis, who became first sergeant for the unit in 2014, said he witnessed the resupply of American troops in Afghanistan by air and it reinforced the importance of their work to him. "We are enablers," he said. "Our job enables soldiers to resupply and continue the fight."

Accidents remain rare, Davis said. He added that the parachute riggers with the 421st Quartermaster Company take their mission personally and have pride in their work. *"It's still a high-risk thing in which we're involved, but we do everything we can to keep it safe,"* he said.

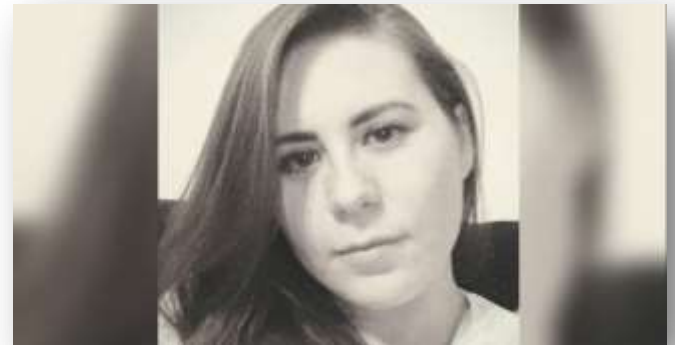


Source US DoD:

www.defense.gov/News/Article/Article/1489459/army-parachute-riggers-strive-for-safe-landings/source/GovDelivery/

Army veteran killed in Henrico ‘took care of everyone’

March 19, 2018, by Scott Wise



Amber Chambers

HENRICO COUNTY, Va. — A Henrico woman killed early Saturday morning on Gaskins Road in Henrico's West End was identified by police as 29-year-old Amber Diane Chambers.

Chambers was an Army veteran — a paratrooper — who served with distinction in 173rd Airborne Brigade and held the rank of sergeant, according to military friends who considered her a mother-like figure among their group.

"She took care of everyone in the company," friend Conor Heldenfels said. *"She made sure you made it home from the bar, she kicked people out of your bed, she gave you the advice you needed, not what you wanted to hear."*

Police found Chambers Saturday, March 17, at approximately 1:35 a.m., when officers were called to Gaskins Road near Interstate 64 for what was described as a medical emergency.

"Officers found a female laying in the roadway who was pronounced dead at the scene," a Henrico Police spokesperson said. *"Evidence at the scene indicated Chambers was walking on Gaskins Road when she was struck by a southbound vehicle that left the scene."*

Police later found a damaged vehicle at West End apartment complex on Camelot Circle, off Quioccasin Road.

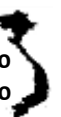
It was the same color as the vehicle believed to have been driven by the driver who fatally struck Chambers.

After further investigation, police arrested 37-year-old Travis J. Harris. He was charged with felony hit and run and driving on a suspended license.



Travis Harris
(Police photo)

Source: <http://wtvr.com/2018/03/19/amber-chambers-obit/>





A Farewell to Troopers of the 173d Abn Bde & 503rd PRCT Who Made Their Final Jump



Robert L. Anderson

Temple, TX
March 7, 2018
D/3/503, RVN

Donald Wayne Barth, 69

Waterloo, IA
April 9, 2018
4/503, RVN

Carl B. Borowicz, 83

Rodney, MI
173d Abn Bde, RVN
February 28, 2018

George William "Bill" Campbell, 75

Vida, Oregon
March 3, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Amber Diane Chambers, 29

Henrico County, VA
March 17, 2017
173d ABCT

Herman Floyd Crews, 58

Lawtey, FL
January 10, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

John "Geg" Dougherty, 69

Highland Falls, NY
March 1, 2018
173d RVN

Bruce David Field, 70

Fenton, MI
January or February 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

William Richard Gast, Jr., 71

Baker City, OR
April 4, 2018
C/1/503

Ralph Andrew Goff, Chaplain 90,

Bentonville, AR
April 10, 2018
503rd ABG

Steven John Hastings, 70

Croyton, NH
January 11, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Kennis Headman

Ponca City, OK
March 3, 2018
173d Abn Bde RVN

Michael "Iron Mike" Healy, MG

Jacksonville, FL
April 14, 2018
CO 4/503, RVN

John Lee Lape, 69

Dixon, CA
April 1, 2018
173d Abn Bde RVN

James D. "J.D." Lee, 68

Charlotte, NC
January 10, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Robert L. "Maggie" McKee

Molokai Island, HI
January 30, 2018
D/3/503, RVN

John D. O'Brien, 77

Las Vegas, NV
March 30, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Owen Henry Peyton, Jr., 67

Boring, WA
February 24, 2018
173d Abn Bde

Jack Price

Willis, VA
April, 4, 2018
B/2/503, RVN

Paul J. Rank, 68

Manitowoc, WI
March 5, 2018
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Gerald L. "Gary" Thompson, 70

Watertown, NY
March 25, 2018
173d Abn Bde



Rest easy, boys. Job well done.

