

AIRBORNE

2/503d
VIETNAM
newsletter

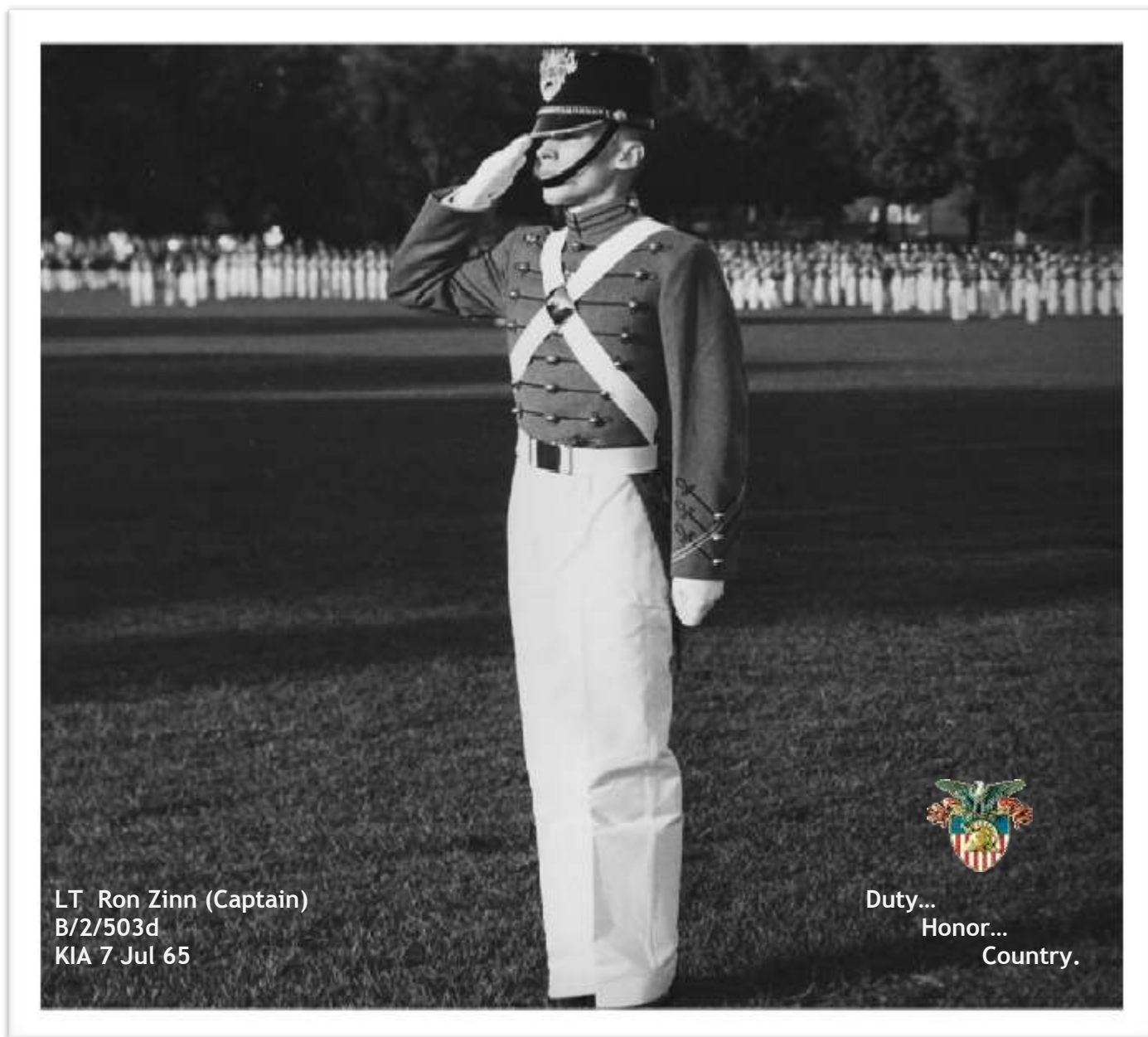
FOR THE MEN, AND THEIR FAMILIES, OF THE
2ND BATTALION, 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEP)

We try harder.

July 2013, Issue 55
Contact: rto173d@cfl.rr.com

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

~ 2/503d Photo of the Month ~



LT Ron Zinn (Captain)
B/2/503d
KIA 7 Jul 65



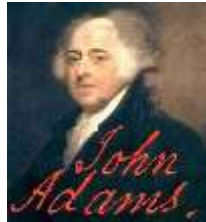
Duty...
Honor...
Country.

Ron at West Point. The 2/503d base at Bien Hoa, RVN in '65-'67, "Camp Zinn", was named in honor of Ron.



~ Life...Liberty...Happiness ~

The **Declaration of Independence** is a statement adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, which announced that the thirteen American colonies, then at war with Great Britain, regarded themselves as independent states, and no longer a part of the British Empire. Instead they now formed a new nation—the United States of America. John Adams was a leader in pushing for independence, which was unanimously approved on July 2. A committee had already drafted the formal declaration, to be ready when Congress voted on independence.



Adams persuaded the committee to select Thomas Jefferson to compose the original draft of the document, which congress would edit to produce the final version. The Declaration was ultimately a formal explanation of why Congress had voted on July 2 to declare independence from Great Britain, more than a year after the outbreak of the American Revolutionary War.

The national birthday, the Independence Day is celebrated on July 4, although Adams wanted July 2.

The Declaration of Independence A Transcription

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness. That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, -- That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.

Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that

mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

(continued....)



He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:

For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:

For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:

For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:

For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences

For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by

every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.

The 56 signatures appear at the bottom of the Declaration. ###



“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...”



American Revolutionary War

In this report, inhabitants of the thirteen colonies that supported the American Revolution are primarily referred to as "Americans", with occasional references to "Patriots", "Whigs", "Rebels" or "Revolutionaries". Colonists who supported the British in opposing the Revolution are referred to as "Loyalists" or "Tories". The geographical area of the thirteen colonies is often referred to simply as "America".

The American Revolutionary War (1775–1783), the American War of Independence, or simply the Revolutionary War in the United States, began as a war between the Kingdom of Great Britain and the Thirteen Colonies, but gradually grew into a world war between Britain on one side and the newly formed United States, France, Netherlands, Spain, and Mysore on the other. The main result was an American victory and European recognition of the independence of the United States, with mixed results for the other powers.

The war was the result of the political American Revolution. The British Parliament insisted it had the right to tax colonists to finance the colonies' military defense, which had become increasingly expensive due to the French and Indian Wars. The colonies argued that they already spent much through local government to maintain their place in the British Empire, with Benjamin Franklin appearing before the British Parliament testifying "*The Colonies raised, clothed, and paid, during the last war, near twenty-five thousand men, and spent many millions.*" The colonists claimed that, as they were British subjects, imposing laws in Parliament upon the colonists, and particularly taxation without representation, was illegal. The American colonists formed a unifying Continental Congress and a shadow government in each colony, though at first wishing to remain in the Empire and loyal to the Crown.

The American boycott of taxed British tea led to the Boston Tea Party in 1773, when shiploads of tea were destroyed. London responded by ending self-government in Massachusetts and putting it under the control of the British army with General Thomas Gage as governor. In April 1775 Gage learned that weapons were being gathered in Concord, and he sent British troops to seize and destroy them. Local militia confronted the troops and exchanged fire (Battles of Lexington and Concord).

After repeated pleas to the British monarchy for intervention with Parliament, any chance of a compromise ended when the Congress were declared traitors by royal decree, and they responded by declaring the independence of a new sovereign nation, the United States of America, on July 4, 1776. American Loyalists rejected the Declaration, and sided with the king; they were

excluded from power everywhere. American attempts to expand the rebellion into Quebec and the Floridas were unsuccessful.

France, Spain and the Dutch Republic all secretly provided supplies, ammunition and weapons to the revolutionaries starting early in 1776. By June 1776 the Americans were in full control of every state, but then the British Royal Navy captured New York City and made it their main base. The war became a standoff. The Royal Navy could occupy other coastal cities for brief periods, but the rebels controlled the countryside, where 90 percent of the population lived. British strategy relied on mobilizing Loyalist militia and was never fully realized. A British invasion from Canada in 1777 ended in the capture of the British army at the Battles of Saratoga.

That American victory persuaded France to enter the war openly in early 1778, balancing the two sides' military strength. Spain and the Dutch Republic—French allies—also went to war with Britain over the next four years, threatening an invasion of Great Britain and severely testing British military strength with campaigns in Europe, Asia, and the Caribbean. Spain's involvement resulted in the expulsion of British armies from West Florida, securing the American southern flank. The British naval victory at the Battle of the Saintes thwarted a French and Spanish plan to drive Britain out of the Caribbean and preparations for a second attempt were halted by the declaration of peace. A long Franco-Spanish siege of the British stronghold at Gibraltar also resulted in defeat.

French involvement proved decisive yet expensive, ruining France's economy and driving the country into massive debt. A French naval victory just outside Chesapeake Bay led to a siege by combined French and Continental armies that forced a second British army to surrender at Yorktown, Virginia in 1781. Fighting continued throughout 1782, while peace negotiations began.

In 1783, the Treaty of Paris ended the war and recognized the sovereignty of the United States over the territory bounded roughly by what is now Canada to the north, Florida to the south, and the Mississippi River to the west. A wider international peace was agreed, in which several territories were exchanged.



Office of the Honorary Colonel 503d Infantry Regiment

29 June 2013

MEMORANDUM FOR:
Distinguished and Honorary
Members, 503d Infantry Reg.

SUBJECT: Update



Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since my most recent letter to you of 28 November 2012, our Regimental Battalions and their fellow Sky Soldiers have returned from their Afghanistan deployment and are safely ensconced at their home station. There has been a cost. Thirteen warriors from the Brigade, including nine from our Infantry units and one civilian, fell on the fields of battle. The names of the fallen will be unveiled on the 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial at Fort Benning on a ceremony being planned for 12 June 2014.

After learning how to navigate a new system to obtain Army designation for Distinguished and Honorary Members of the 503d Infantry Regiment, Honorary Sergeant Major Richard Weik and I are pleased to announce the addition of the following Distinguished Members of the 503d Infantry Regiment to our Rolls: LTC (R) Robert B. Carmichael, Mr. Craig Ford, and Mr. Joseph Edward Hair.

LTC (R) Carmichael served as Battalion Executive Officer and then Commander of 2nd Battalion, 503d Infantry (1965-1966) during its deployment in the Republic of Vietnam. Since retiring from active service, LTC Carmichael has participated in numerous activities supporting the 173d Airborne Brigade Association. Among other accomplishments, he was instrumental in developing with three other Vietnam era 2nd Battalion Commanders a "Combat Service Citation" that has been awarded to hundreds of individuals who served in the 2nd Battalion during the Vietnam deployment. He is in large part responsible for developing and continues to support the initiative to bring World War II 503d Infantry Regiment veterans to 173d Airborne Brigade Association annual meetings.

Mr. Craig Ford was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry while it was stationed on Okinawa and deployed with it to the Republic of Vietnam in 1965, serving with distinction in heavy combat the unit experienced in 1965-1966. In recent years, Mr. Ford activated and served as President of the Seattle Chapter of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association. In 2005, Mr. Ford helped organize the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation and with eight associates is

responsible for building the world class 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial located on the National Infantry Museum campus adjacent to Fort Benning.

Joseph E. "Eddie" Hair served in the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry from 1967-1968 during its deployment in the Republic of Vietnam. In 2004, he organized and became President of the South Carolina Chapter of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association. He is past President of the Barnwell SC Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter, spearheaded an initiative to bring a Huey (tail number 17338) flown by the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company in support of the 173d Airborne Brigade in Vietnam to the Barnwell Veterans Park, worked closely with the Blue Star Mothers of Lexington County, and is currently raising funds to build a War Dog Memorial that will perpetuate the heritage of these four-legged warriors, many of whom accompanied Sky Soldiers in battle.

At this time, we are soliciting nominations for designation as Distinguished and Honorary members of the 503d Infantry Regiment. In addition to the criteria established in AR 600-82, Chapter 5-3, the Regimental Board that forwards recommendations to the Chief of Infantry requires that candidates for this designation display a continuing contribution to the Army and preservation of the Regimental heritage. Nominees may be active duty or retired warriors or civilians who meet the articulated criteria.

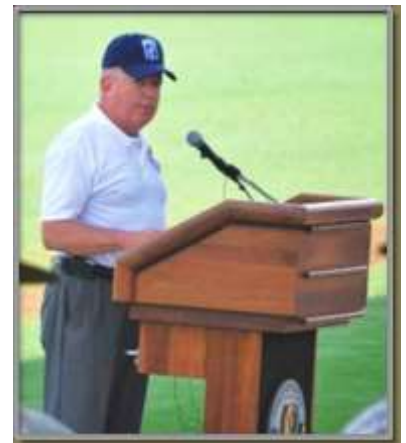
Please forward nominations to me at the address below by 1 November 2013 or contact me for more information about the nomination process.

Honorary Regimental Sergeant Major Weik joins me in wishing each of you and your families a safe, restful, renewing summer season.

Warm regards to all!

Kenneth V. Smith
COL, USA (Ret)
Honorary Colonel
503d Infantry Regiment
Louisburg, NC

Kvsmith173@gmail.com
252-478-9359



Ken addresses Sky Soldiers and guests during dedication of the 173d Memorial at Benning.



INCOMING!



~ Oops. Double Oops. ~

~ A 4th Of July For Chapter 17 ~



Chapter 17 is looking to have a get-together on July 4th. If you are looking to do something different on that day then come on out to the VFW Post 1108 in Richmond, Indiana (213 South 8th Street).

Every year there is a big turnout. There is a pig roast in the parking lot (hamburgers and hot dogs included if you wish). Military vehicles collection will be on display, and, yes, that faithful old jeep that you remember is among them. Also, a showing of cars, crazy cars; motorcycles, crazy bikes. Feel free to bring your own.

Chapter 17 will have a table with the Herd flag blowing in the breeze. We will be collecting for a raffle drawing the whole day. The winner will get half of what we collect and the Chapter will keep the other half. Have items you wish to sell? Bring them along and set it up on the table.

Bring your RVs and camp at the KOA Campgrounds. From Interstate 70 East or West take exit 151 and follow the signs. As it is a holiday and it's going to be crowded call ahead and reserve your lot. (KOA: 1-765-962-1219)

Butch Marcum will provide a shuttle to get you back and forth. On that day, call either Butch or me on our cells for shuttle service. (Butch: 1-765-969-6228 Bill: 1-614-370-6587 Area code might not be needed in that location).

Stick around too for the fireworks. Motels are abundant and easily available if you wish to spend the night. Food, drinks, air conditioning, pool table, music, are all available inside the Post. Tour the streets. Tour Richmond, Enjoy yourself. Can't take it anymore? Then head back to the campgrounds and relax with a beer.



No plans for the 4th? Then come on out to Richmond and spend the day with Chapter 17, Kentucky and Michigan, you guys are welcome, too. Bring the family. Pennsylvania, come on over!

[Sent in by Skip Kniley, 3/319th]

Thanks to the keen eye of our very best and most beautiful friend in the whole world, Christine McMillan, wife of 4/503 sniper extraordinaire Mike McMillan -- both of world famous Greybull, WY -- who kindly and gently pointed out our typing and geographical positioning error in last month's newsletter when we wrongfully identified *Old Faithful* in this photo as being in Yosemite National Park and not

“YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK IN WYOMING!!!”

I think the message read, “YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK IN WYOMING, DUMB ASS!!!” but we decided not to quote verbatim. Hell, we live in Florida, we don't know nuttin' about the west, except it has a lot of steers and things. Christine, please accept our utmost apologies to you and Yogi; by the way, we no longer live in that house on Merritt Island, FL where you and Mike stayed, so no need coming down here seeking justice; we moved, to Finland. It's right outside Detroit. Ed



Remembering...

Captain Ralph Southard XO, A/2/503d



Ralph Southard, XO, A/2/503d
1937 - 2011

#1. Bob Guy—Plt. Leader, 1st Plt., A/2/503d

As a young Infantry 2nd Lieutenant arriving in Vietnam in July 1966, I had little clue about what was really important to learn quickly and certainly lacked the solid experience of the veterans who had been in the fight for months. 1Lt Ralph Southard quickly grabbed me by the stacking swivel and got me headed in the right direction.



Bob Guy

The advice he offered, the guidance he furnished, the compassion he showed, and the kindness he always displayed to me, greatly assisted this rookie officer just joining A Company to transition to and accomplish my duties in a war zone. I am so sorry we missed word of his passing---I owed him and now will have no opportunity to repay. I will never forget his example. God bless him!

Bob Guy
A/HHC/2/503d, 1966-67

#2. Jack Kelley—CO, A/2/503d

I remember Ralph Southard for three things; he was the best XO I ever served with—we never got caught short administratively! As a friend and brother officer I felt he was a man who could always be relied on... and his character was rock solid. Finally, when A Company had its battle on June 29th, 1966 and the witness statements started coming in on Sgt Charles Morris...



Jack Kelley

it was Ralph who notified us, out in the field, that I was wrong and the Silver Star wasn't going to hack it. He said Morris's actions would merit the Medal of Honor. From that point on Ralph got folks on the road to get all the needed witness statements and paperwork, whether in Vietnam or the hospitals in Japan. He made it happen and the result was that Charles got the Medal. Since then I guess the lesson learned for me was not only did the soldier have to give a performance above and beyond the call of duty...but that the administration had to really reach out and build the case for the award. Capt Ralph Southard did all of that and his actions and Charlie's actions resulted in the presentation of the Medal of Honor. Never forget



Charlie Morris, A/2/503d
MOH Recipient

Jack Kelley
A/2/503d, 1966-67



NEWS RELEASE

(UPI Growald)

Charles Morris 1966

SGN 27 RPT

URGENT
(HOLD FOR FALLONDESK)



Saigon, July 30, 1966 (UPI) – The Viet Cong machine gunner fingered his trigger and waited. Twenty feet in front a U.S. army paratroop sergeant came crawling toward him. The communist fired, his bullets laying open the ribs (and) the chest of Sgt. Charles B. Morris. It should have been the end for the sergeant, but it was only the beginning.

For five hours the Galaxy, Virginia, soldier fought, although wounded again and again, led his men, cheered them, nursed them, save their lives and turned his ordeal into a triumph.

The special kind of glorious madness that was Sgt. Alvin York's in World War I and Sgt. Audie Murphy's in World War II belonged to Morris that dark morning of June 29 on a jungle plain 35 miles northeast of Saigon.

He led a squad and his squad led the Third Platoon of Company A of the U.S. Army 173rd Airborne's 503rd Infantry Regiment, 2nd Battalion. The Platoon was out alone and Sgt. Morris had spotted something odd.

To the 34-year old veteran of Korea and the Dominican Crisis, the broken twigs and some large freshly dug holes meant the guerrillas were near. Morris spread his squad out in firing positions and crawled forward. He didn't know how close trouble was until the Viet Cong machinegun snapped off the eight rounds that opened his chest. Bleeding heavily, Morris fired back and killed the gunner.

He kept crawling forward.

Morris, a few feet from the gun, side-armed a grenade into the communist position. The blast killed the rest of the gun crew and turned the automatic weapon into junk. Leaving a trail of his own blood behind, the sergeant crawled as fast as he could to the left to scout other Viet Cong positions.

Then he snaked back to his platoon leader and reported two Viet Cong 50 caliber machineguns, two 30 caliber machineguns, mortar positions and trenches filled with the guerrillas. He flatly refused first aid for his chest and brushed aside a medic's attempt to inject morphine to ease the pain. Morris said they had no time for first aid. The platoon had to get into defensive positions, quickly. As he spoke the communist machineguns and mortars opened up.

Morris broke away and crawled forward and led his squad into better firing positions. "Closer", he said, "closer". He placed his men only 20 yards from the communists. Many of his men were green, getting their first taste of combat. He patted them and praised them and told them how well they were doing. The 3rd Platoon was doing none too well.

The mortars and machineguns began cutting into them. Morris noticed he felt woozy and crawled to a medic. A Viet Cong 75 millimeter recoilless rifle had hit the man and there was not much left except the medic's kit. The sergeant treated himself, leaped up and began running back to his greenhorns. A communist grenade blast hit him like a swarm of super bees, knocked him down, stunned him.

(continued...)



Morris rolled over and reached his men, doing the medic's work. PFC William Marshall of Detroit yelled,

“Sarge, I think I just lost my arm.”

Morris found Marshall was right. The youngster also lost a foot. PFC Thomas S. Shasteen of Pomeroy, Ohio, later reported that, *“Marshall told me he owed his life to Sgt. Morris. He told me that after he was hit, Sgt. Morris crawled to his side, giving encouragement and all possible aid...he found some morphine and injected it into Marshall and then apologized to Bill that he could not do more.”*

“The sarge saved at least five wounded men from dying,” his commanders said. The youngsters knew... *“Did you see how Sgt. Morris performed?”* said PFC Edward Balls of Rye, New York.

Balls watched Morris put a tourniquet on a wounded medic's leg just before another round killed the medic.

“I'm all right,” Morris told Shasteen. *“I'm hit in quite a few places but I'll be fine.”*

The young paratroopers fought on.

Sixty feet in front the communists tried psychological warfare....

***“Die Americans!
Die Americans!”***

they shouted in English. Morris answered....

“Come on, come on out and fight, comrades,”

the sergeant yelled.

PFC Everett C. Anderson of Germfast, Michigan, remembers later that his wounded sergeant hollered,

“I still got one arm and one left leg, so come on and fight!”

Morris had been wounded again, and he was fighting more than communists now. His wounds were telling, his blood spilled out and he passed out.

When he came to, Morris tried to move on. But a fellow squad leader, himself wounded in both arms, tried to hold the sergeant down. But Morris pushed the other sergeant away and returned to his men and his M-16 rifle. He was treating another wounded paratrooper when a grenade blast ripped his right hand, slicing off a finger.

Morris appeared to only shrug. He was worried now only about his men running low on ammunition. Crawling along his line, Morris collected ammunition and grenades from the youngsters he couldn't help any more. He gave the bullets to the living and began using the grenades himself.

The communists had begun charging, for what they apparently figured was a cleanup romp. Morris made it something else.

With his right hand almost useless, he grasped the grenades in his left hand and pulled the pins with the thumb of his right hand. He halted the Viet Cong chargers. Then he passed out again. When he came to, his sight was blurred but the battle raged.

In his now dim world, groping with his right thumb for the pin of the grenade held in his left hand, Morris tried to hurl another, but he couldn't get his thumb through the round pin holder. A few minutes later, when his vision cleared, he found out why. His right thumb from top to bottom was banded by grenade pins. Morris, angered, hurled the pins at the enemy, then he noticed his men were taking 50 caliber machinegun fire from the rear.

None of his men nearby were unwounded, so Morris and another wounded man inched back to silence the heavy machinegun. The machinegun killed Morris' companion. A grenade peppered his body with more fragment wounds. Slowly, painfully, the sergeant crawled behind the body of the dead American and, using it to support his M-16 rifle, began firing. He was a right-hander firing left-handed but he silenced the 50 caliber machinegun.



Dust Off at Xuan Loc, 29 June 1966

(Photo by Jack Ribera, A/2/503d)

(continued....)



When Morris returned to the platoon area he found only nine men in fighting condition. Exposing himself again and again, he dragged the wounded to an area where, with the least amount of shifting, the living, the wounded could make a last stand.

When a relief force finally arrived, Sgt. Morris was still dragging himself from man to man, praising his fighters and telling the wounded to “Hang on...hang on boys.”

He handed the fresh troops documents he plucked from communist bodies, and the documents showed how two Viet Cong regiments were waiting to ambush another paratrooper unit.



3rd Plt WIA carried to aid station on 29 June 1966.
(Jack Ribera photo)



What’s left of 3rd Platoon, A/2/503d at Xuan Loc,
29 June 1966. (Believed to be “Doc” Bob Beaton photo)

They offered to carry Morris to a helicopter. Morris, said no,

“I’ve been crawling for five hours on this here battlefield. Just show me where the choppers will land and I will crawl there also,” he said.

Note: The President of the United States made the presentation of the Medal of Honor to Staff Sergeant Charles Bedford Morris at the White House, at 1300 hours, on 16 November 1967.



President Johnson presents Medal of Honor to Charlie Morris at White House. (Web photo)

[Sent in by LTC Jack Kelley, CO, 2/503d, 1966]



From Down Under...

Les Allen 2/5th Australian Infantry Battalion

I write to bring your attention to a new documentary film about the war hero 'Bull Allen', of the 2/5th Australian Infantry Battalion, which has been released online via a creative commons license.

The 9 minute documentary film tells how Allen, who grew up in poverty in Ballarat in the 1920s, showed incredible bravery rescuing wounded soldiers as a stretcher bearer in the Middle East and New Guinea during the Second World War.

The film focuses on the events of 30 July 1943 on Mount Tambu in New Guinea, where Allen walked into enemy gunfire at least 12 times and carried wounded American soldiers out over his shoulders as the bullets flew past. For bravery on that day Allen was awarded the US Silver Star medal.



The film was commissioned by the Ballarat RSL and made by Wind & Sky Productions. Allen's sons and daughter and local amateur historian David Cranage appear in the film as well as military historian Phillip Bradley, whose book '*Hell's Battlefield*' features a photo of Allen in action on the front cover. Bull Allen himself died in 1982 and is buried in the Ballarat Cemetery.

The film is freely available online for anyone to watch. To watch the film, share the link, and for more information visit <http://www.windsky.com.au/bull-allen/>

The RSL commissioned the film so that Australians would not forget Bull. The overall purpose of sharing the film freely online is to raise awareness in as broad a way as we could manage.

If there is a way you could share the film on your web site or through sharing to your social networks for education and/or for awareness that would be a great outcome.

With kind regards

Lucinda Horrocks
Wind & Sky Productions Pty Ltd
Melbourne - Ballarat - Australia
lucinda@windsky.com.au Mobile: 0423 126 697
<http://www.windsky.com.au>

[Sent in by Ken Gann, 1RAR/RAA, book cover added]

Hell's Battlefield is the first book that tells the whole story of the Australians against the Japanese in New Guinea during World War II, from invasion in 1942 to the brutal end game in 1945. Besides giving new perspectives on the Kokoda campaign, the book covers the battles that preceded and those that followed, most of which have previously received scant attention. Phillip Bradley has conducted extensive research on the official and private records from Australia, the US, and Japan, and as well as these perspectives, shows those of the Papua New Guineans. He has also conducted wide-ranging interviews with veterans, and made extensive use of Japanese prisoner interrogation records. The text is further illuminated by the author's deep familiarity with the New Guinea battlefields, and is well illustrated with photographs, many previously unpublished, and maps. Hundreds of thousands of Australians, Phillip's father among them, fought in New Guinea and many never returned. *Hell's Battlefield* tells their story, and the battles they fought in, that raged on land, in the air, and at sea.

Note: *Hell's Battlefield* is available on Amazon.com





The U.S. Paratrooper

Overweight knees knock in rhythm to
jittery sweat-bleeding hands
Reverently securing last minute adjustments.
The traditional outcry from trooper to trooper is
"Leg," (non-jumper)
in jovial hope to relax
The feeling which they seek to possess.
Loose rivets spin a harmonious humming vibration
as the big iron bird
pushes the ground
faithfully downward
Until the altimeter marks fifteen hundred feet.
Fifteen hundred feet between the bird and ground
which will coach
The game of hope or chance, life or death.
Unlatching safety belts, tense fingers frantically
ignite cigarettes,
even non-smokers
In their pursuit to escape their search, indulge.
Thought desperately urges the reminiscence of home,
of girl friends, wives,
of fathers, mothers,
even difficult times
Are remembered, in hope of forgetting the ground.
Younger troopers often demonstrate their fear
by laughing and shouting.
Though this does not resolve a lasting condition.
Young and old troopers alike feel the plane as
the bird tosses,
the rivets hum,
The time of departure, a time of fate is nearing.
Disturbed stomachs rise as the bird drops,
loved ones are forgotten
home is forgotten
remembered—forgotten,
As the stomach rises higher, higher, to the burp-bag.

The jumpmaster shows one hand, one finger,
spelling "Six minutes,"
As wind gushes through the opening jump-doors.
Red lights declare the command "Get ready," as
the inboard stick,
the outboard stick,
Stammers to their feet at the command "Stand up."
The anchor line quivers at the command "Hook-up," as
safety pins fasten,
a trembling hand
grips the static line,
Awaiting the next command "Check equipment."
A positive check, a pat on the rump, "OK,"
time is near,
As the jumpers hold fast to the teetering plane.
The jumpmaster spots the white gleaming sand,
the drop zone,
the green light
Which screams the command "Stand in the door."
The airborne shuffle, the final command . . . "Go,"
the door position,
the vigorous exit,
the body position,
As the bird spits out the packaged paratroopers.
The all-powerful blast from the props, the speed,
a four second delay,
The surging wind broken by a sudden forceful jerk.
Then—profound quietness as the joyous trooper
checks his canopy,
the inflated chute,
So very tight, so full of air, so tenacious of life.
So tenacious of life, so tenacious of death,
so tenacious of mind,
so tenacious of fear,
so tenacious of life.

WILLIAM GALEN BAILEY

"It's from my first 82nd Airborne tour in 1963."

Jack Leide, MG (Ret), CO, C/2/503



Jerry Wayne Langston

B/1/503 Trooper & Dear Friend



My dear friend and fellow 173d Paratrooper Jerry Langston died on May 10th and I was just notified by his wife Jackie. Funeral services were held at the Melber Baptist Church on May the 14th and graveside military rites were conducted by American Legion Post #239 from Calvert City, Kentucky. Jerry retired as a foreman from the ISP Chemical Company in Calvert City, KY, but resided in Melber, KY. He was married to Jackie Langston and had two children, a daughter Wendy Brickman and a son Jake Langston. Jerry served with B/1/503d during 1964-66 and was awarded a Silver Star and Purple Heart for his actions on Hill 65.



Jerry

small dry ravine when I noticed Jerry going the opposite direction right back into the kill zone. Jerry was headed for the only radio we had even though the RTO (Mike Russo) and five other Paratroopers had already died while trying to call out on it. When Jerry got to the radio it was still operable, though shot to hell, and he contacted the battalion staging area. Having no idea where our exact location was it was decided he would fire a .45 pistol into the air at periodical intervals. The search patrol did soon find us but what Jerry and I both knew was that the enemy were still in the area and they also could locate the pistol shots. Of the 22 Paratroopers involved in that small part of the battalion's battle, only Jerry, myself and a new guy named Billy Martin survived, and I have no doubt we survived because of Jerry's heroics in getting to the radio so we could be located.

In the photo below of B/1/503d (1965-66) Paratroopers taken in 1998 at LTC Ray Marshall's home, the three of us are together and it was the only time it occurred. I'm squatting in front with the white hat and sunglasses, Jerry Langston is directly behind me in a tan colored shirt while Martin is to the far right of me in a dark colored shirt. Several in that photo were on Hill 65 and I love 'em all!!

Dutch Holland
B/1/503d (1965-66)

I need to honor Jerry for his heroics during Operation Hump and getting me off of that hill alive. We were with a reinforced squad and left to treat and evacuate four wounded as the rest of the company went over the hill to support C/1/503d. Shortly after their departure a large force of VC came up the trail from the opposite direction and on noticing us immediately flanked us on three sides. Even though we were vastly outnumbered they still threw several bugle charges on our condensed position resulting in high casualties. At one point I thought I was the only one left alive and started slowly crawling back off the hill to a



The Best of the Best.



173rd ABCT cases colors for 5th time in 9 years

Story and photo by Spc. Michael Sword
173rd ABCT PAO



Col. Andrew Rohling, left, commander of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team and Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel Coston, the 173rd's command sergeant major, case the brigade's colors during a ceremony at Hoekstra Field June 14.

Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team and members of the Vicenza Military Community gathered at Hoekstra Field here to watch as Col. Andrew Rohling, commander of the 173rd and Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel Coston, the 173rd's command sergeant major, cased the unit's colors during a ceremony June 14.

The ceremony signaled the end of operations in garrison and the beginning of the brigade's fifth deployment in nine years and their fourth deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"This is the fifth time since 2003 that we have stood and cased our brigade colors in Italy," said Rohling. *"The fifth time we have answered our nation's call to fight its wars."*

The 173rd faces a much different mission this time, as American forces begin to withdraw from the country and Afghan forces take the lead. But after a full-spectrum training exercise and a mission readiness exercise in Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels Training Areas in Germany, the brigade is well prepared for whatever they may encounter.

"I may be biased but I believe the Army did well in choosing the 173rd Airborne Brigade to return again to Afghanistan," Rohling said. *"This is a brigade who knows how to fight, knows how to win, knows how to take care of Soldiers and knows how to take care of Families."*

"It is a brigade that is surrounded by a great community and command that provides unwavering support every day."

The 173rd has already begun to deploy, having sent its advance parties to Afghanistan and more Sky Soldiers will continue to deploy in the coming weeks.

"For all these reasons, we stand before you trained and ready to once again 'move the Herd,'" Rohling said as he closed the ceremony. *"Ladies and gentlemen, signore e signori ... thank you again for sharing this day with us."*

Source:

http://www.usaq.vicenza.army.mil/sites/local/articles_news/2012_6_21_1.asp

Odierno visits 'Sky Soldiers,' Vicenza community (excerpt)



The 38th Army Chief of Staff (General Odierno) toured U.S. Army Africa operational facilities, met informally with Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team "Sky Soldiers," and other units, held a Town Hall meeting open to Soldiers, Army civilians, local national employees, contractors and family members, and concluded with a tour of the Army's newest installation, Caserma Del Din, set to open this summer as two battalions move south from Bamberg, Germany.

[Go to www.army.mil for complete report]



~ Reunions of the Airborne Kind ~

~ 2013 ~



B-2/501st, 101st Airborne Div., Reunion 2013, July 10-14, 2013, Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo, ND.

Contact:
Chuck & Sue German
Phn: 701-783-4386
Eml: chucks@drtel.net



101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans 19th Annual Reunion, September 5-8, 2013. Reunion HQ Best Western Ramokta Hotel, Rapid City, SD.

Contact:
Rodney Green
Reunion Coordinator
Eml: randhgreen@sio.midco.net



N/Company Ranger Reunion, July 22-28, 2013, Columbus, GA.

Contact:
Robert "Twin" Henriksen
Phn: (360) 393-7790
Web: www.75thrra.org



11th Airborne Division Association Reunion, September 22-26, 2013, Fayetteville, NC.

Contact:
Bert Kurland
President
Eml: berwan@embarqmail.com



Vietnam Veterans of America 2013 National Convention, August 13-17, 2013, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Jacksonville, FL.

Contact:
Web: vva.org



26th Annual Florida All Airborne Days, October 3-5, 2013, Hilton Ft. Lauderdale-Airport Hotel, Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

Contact:
Bob Buffington
South Florida All Airborne Chapter
Contact:
Bob Buffington
Eml: abnbuff@gmail.com



101st Airborne 68th Annual Reunion, August 14-17, 2013 at the Red Lion on the River, 909 N Hayden Island Drive, Portland, Oregon

Contact:
Jerry Gomes
Oregon Cascade Chapter
Phn: 503-668-6127

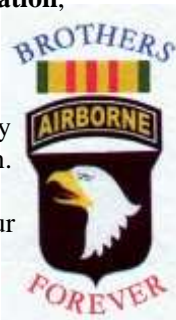
National Website: www.ScreamingEagle.org

101st Screaming Eagle Vets Sought

The 101st Airborne Division Association, with headquarters at Ft Campbell, Kentucky, is seeking "Lost"

Screaming Eagle Veterans who served with the Division during its ongoing history from World War II to Iraq and Afghanistan.

With 7,600 members and 28 Chapters, including Eagles currently on their fifth tour in Afghanistan, the Association is a vibrant, dynamic organization.



173d Airborne Brigade Association Annual Reunion, August 23-29, 2013, Las Vegas, NV. See Page 44 for registration.

Contact:
Jim Bradley
Phn: 727-376-2576 (after 4:30 p.m. EST)
Eml: webmaster@173rdairborne.com
Web: www.2013Reunion.com

Note: If you're aware of any upcoming Airborne or attached units' reunions please send details to: rto173d@cfl.rr.com



AIRBORNE...ALL THE WAY!



HE LED THE WAY



When SSG Patrick Tadina arrived in Vietnam, he didn't look tough enough to be a member of the elite United States Army Rangers. The paratrooper from Honolulu, Hawaii was quiet and soft-spoken and stood at five foot five. He only weighed 130 pounds. But both he and his exploits are legends in the Ranger world, where the motto is "*Rangers Lead the Way.*"

For more than five years, frequently dressed as a North Vietnamese soldier in either black pajamas or NVA khakis, with a floppy hat and sandals, Tadina led long-range patrols deep into North Vietnamese territory on raids and reconnaissance. These patrols were small and able to stay undetected for long periods of time. He also carried a 60 pound rucksack and a communist rifle. Because he was able to pull off the look of a North Vietnamese soldier, enemy troops relaxed when they saw him. He would quickly get off a round, killing enemy troops.

His service made him the longest continuously serving Ranger in Vietnam. While a team leader in Vietnam, he never lost a man. *Never.*

Tadina had served in the Dominican Republic before going to Vietnam. After the Vietnam War, he stayed in the military and went on to serve in Desert Storm. He retired as a Command Sergeant Major, the Army's highest enlisted rank, and in 1995, he was inducted into the Ranger Hall of Fame. During his years of service he received two Silver Stars, 10 Bronze Stars and three Purple Hearts.

Rangers lead the way – and Patrick Tadina lived up to that motto ... *this is what Honor looks like.*

[Source: National Infantry Museum webs

Did you ever have one of those days, boys? Did you ever have one of those days? When nothin' goes right from mornin' to night, did you ever have one of those days, boys, did you ever have one of those days?



One of the worst things in life is a Rigger with a sense of humor.

“Without discipline the Army would just be a bunch of guys wearing the same color clothing.”

~ Frank Burns





U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

locally-driven Mental Health Summits to further engage with local community partners and nurture community engagement to address the broad mental health needs of Veterans and their families.” Each VA health care system will reach out to relevant Veteran Service Organizations, community based organizations, health care providers, and local governments to

develop and conduct the Summits.

VA provides a full range of comprehensive mental health services across the country. In Fiscal Year 2012, more than 1.3 million Veterans received specialized mental health care from the VA. This number has risen each year from 927,052 in Fiscal Year 2006. In addition to hiring more mental health professionals, VA is expanding the use of innovative technology to serve Veterans in rural or underserved areas. VA expects to increase the number of Veterans receiving care from tele-mental health services in fiscal year 2013, and has increased the number of Vet Centers, which provide readjustment counseling and referral services from 233 in 2008 to 300 in 2012.

In November 2011, VA launched an award-winning, national public awareness campaign called *Make the Connection*, which is aimed at reducing the stigma associated with seeking mental health care and informing Veterans, their families, friends, and members of their communities about VA resources.

More information on Make the Connection can be found at www.maketheconnection.net.

Mental health professionals interested in seeking employment with the Department of Veterans Affairs can obtain information at www.vacareers.va.gov.

Veterans and their families interested in learning more about the mental health services provided by VA can go to www.mentalhealth.va.gov.

Source: www.va.org



Veteran's Administration hosted Job's Fair for returning vets.

VA Hires Over 1600 Mental Health Professionals to Meet Goal, Expands Access to Care and Outreach Efforts, Directs Nationwide Community Mental Health Summits

June 3, 2013

WASHINGTON – Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it has met the goal to hire 1,600 new mental health professionals outlined in President Obama's Aug. 31, 2012, Executive Order to Improve Access to Mental Health Services for Veterans, Service Members, and Military Families.

“Meeting this hiring milestone significantly enhances our ability to improve access to care for those Veterans seeking mental health services and demonstrates our continued commitment to the health and well-being of the men and women who have served the Nation,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki.

“Meeting this goal is an important achievement, but we recognize that we must continue to increase access to the quality mental health care Veterans have earned and deserve.”

As of May 31, 2013, VA has hired a total of 1,607 mental health clinical providers to meet the goal of 1,600 new mental health professionals outlined in the Executive Order. Additionally, VA has hired 2,005 mental health clinical providers to fill existing vacancies. VA has also hired 318 new peer specialists towards the specific goal of 800 peer specialists by Dec. 31, 2013 as outlined in the Executive Order. VA expects to meet that goal as well.

VA also recognizes that meeting the needs of Veterans and their families requires collaboration and partnership between VA, other federal agencies, and local communities. *“Locally-driven summits provide a well-established method to strengthen our community partnerships, and they have been successful in support of VA's goal to end homelessness among Veterans,”* said Veterans Health Administration, Undersecretary for Health, Dr. Robert Petzel. *“The President is directing all VA health care systems nationwide to conduct*



Sgt. Theodore Mendez, Sr. "Pappy"



E Troop, 17th Cav

Theodore Mendez, Sr., Sergeant, Infantry Section Leader, 2nd Platoon, E-Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade was known to his fellow soldiers as "Pappy." Sergeant Mendez grew up at a young age, and he described himself as a "juvenile delinquent" at the age of sixteen. He enlisted in the United States Army as a teenager, and he recounted the experiences of his training by concluding that the knowledge, skills, and discipline he earned gave him the dignity he needed to walk through life.



Pappy

Sergeant Theodore Mendez, Sr. was a paratrooper with the 2nd Platoon, E-Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. Sgt. Mendez was a parachutist and a Master Jumper with over 250 military parachute jumps. Sgt. Mendez's training included jumping from an experimental, commercial, four engine, jet aircraft from the side door with the engines running and an airfoil opened and in place in order to counteract the prop blast. Jumping with three other parachutists, Sgt. Mendez was rendered unconscious when the prop blast from the jet engines slammed all four parachutists against the side of the fuselage of the airplane. Sgt. Mendez descended to the ground in his parachute harness with his parachute canopy open.



Sgt. Mendez was trained as an infantryman, a reconnaissance soldier, a "Recondo"; and later, Sgt. Theodore Mendez, Sr. became an instructor at the United States Army's Recondo School prior to the Vietnam War. Sgt. Theodore Mendez, Sr. served with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Okinawa, the South Pacific, and he was a member of the 173rd Airborne Brigade's South Pacific Strike Force.

Sergeant Mendez landed in the Iron Triangle of Vietnam with the first combat assault made by the United States Military in May, 1965. At the time of the first combat assault in Vietnam, Sgt. Theodore Mendez was a member of the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol, LRRP's (pronounced LURP's), and he was always regarded by the soldiers that served with him in Vietnam as a member of "The Original LRRPs." Sergeant Mendez served nearly continuously as a member of the reconnaissance section of the infantry and cavalry of the 173rd Airborne Brigade for the next four and one-half years; all of his duty being in Vietnam.

Sergeant Theodore Mendez, Sr. was a member of a five man detachment of Long Range Reconnaissance Specialists, who were sent out to reconnoiter the area which came to be known as Dak To. The 173rd Airborne Brigade had been requested on an emergency basis to the assist the 4th Infantry and the First Air Cavalry, who had both become engaged in an intense battle with both Viet Cong and North Vietnamese regulars in the western sector of II Corps....

(continued....)



...While on a ridge overlooking the valley that approached Hill 805, Sergeant Mendez instructed General Schweitzer, *"Do not send troops into the valley. The area is swarming with NVA and Viet Cong."* Sergeant Mendez's reconnaissance report was ignored, and the Battle for Dak To ensued with many casualties to both sides. Sergeant Mendez remained on the ridge line for five days, in the end alone, before he returned to Pleiku, Vietnam.

Sergeant Mendez is pictured in the photograph (previous page) at the Logistical Supply Area, L.S.A., at Bao Loc, Vietnam, while serving as the infantry section leader of 2nd Platoon, E-Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. While serving as the infantry section leader, Sgt. Mendez, "Pappy", was the model soldier for the men with whom he served. Sgt. Mendez was a gentleman. He was the first to greet the men who were new additions to 2nd Platoon, E-Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. Sergeant Mendez was magnanimous in his instruction of technique and the application of his skills to his fellow soldiers. Sgt. Mendez was meticulous in his dress and preparation for his duties.

After serving for four and one half years in Vietnam, Sgt. Mendez had acquired a quiet dignity that was unsurpassed by any other soldier in his unit. Sergeant Mendez had become a quiet, compassionate, and skillful teacher in the military applications of his skills and knowledge. His performance in difficult situations was unsurpassed by any other soldier in 2nd Platoon, E-Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. While on patrol as light cavalry, over fifty miles from the L.S.A., Bao Loc, Vietnam, Sgt. Mendez personally repaired the transmission of the jeep he commanded with the bailing wire that was used to secure boxes of C-rations which were carried on the jeeps. While I knew Sgt. Mendez, on two occasions, he personally disarmed two roadside, cluster "booby traps" that were detected by the scout section, when the trip wires crossing Highway 20 were observed prior to the packets of twelve grenades being "tripped". Sergeant Mendez disarmed such unconventional devices during the day and at night.

Sergeant Theodore Mendez, Sr. led day and night reconnaissance patrols frequently; always beyond the fan range of the component artillery of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Sergeant Theodore Mendez has a personal body count of seventy-seven enemy. Sergeant Mendez, "Pappy," had returned to the United States on R&R vacation once, but returned to his unit in Vietnam to serve the United States Army as he had been trained and wanted to do.

On July 14, 1969, at the age of 36, while sitting at a table in a mess tent at night, a fire fight broke out on the perimeter of the L.S.A. compound, the base camp of the 2nd Platoon, E-Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. Sergeant Mendez was the first man in the mess tent to react and was the first man out of the tent, running to his "hootch" to retrieve his weapon. Upon entering the "hootch" of one of the soldiers under his command as the infantry section leader, he spotted a loose, "live" grenade on the wooden pallet, floor, of the "hootch" and he tried to retrieve the "live grenade." Grasping the grenade in his right hand, he held it to his chest, and it detonated. The white phosphorous grenade blew the thumb of his right hand off and mutilated his chest and face. One other soldier in the tent at the same time also tried to retrieve the "live" grenade. After an air medic "dust-off" evacuation was denied, an ambulance was sent to the front gate of the L.S.A. compound at Bao Loc from the 3rd Battalion Headquarters of the 173rd Airborne Brigade which was located nearby. Sergeant Theodore Mendez, Sr. was carried by stretcher to the front gate of the L.S.A. compound and loaded onto the ambulance. Sergeant Theodore Mendez, Sr., "Pappy," died the next morning at 6 a.m. in an evacuation hospital in Nha Trang, Vietnam.



Sergeant Mendez was survived by his son, a high school student at the time.

A story recounted by Sergeant Mendez as an example of the courage of the men with whom he served was that while performing a repel from an in-flight helicopter at the C-S Demonstration for the commanding officers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, Sgt. Mendez fell from the rope with which he was repelling and landed on the concrete runway in front of the reviewing stand. Upon landing, he jumped to attention and saluted.

Needless to say, Sergeant Mendez, Sr. was the finest and most highly trained soldier I had the good fortune of ever meeting, while serving in the United States Military. I know this, because I served with Sergeant Mendez, Sr. as a scout in the reconnaissance section of 2nd Platoon, E-Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade at Bao Loc, Vietnam, and I was one of the four soldiers who loaded Sergeant Theodore Mendez, Sr. onto the ambulance in Bao Loc, Vietnam.

Frederick R. Lurting
a.k.a., Frederick R. White
We served together





173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEP)



Our KIA in July, '65-'71

"One Backward Glance"

*173d Airborne Brigade Association and Vietnam Virtual Wall records report service in these units.

The cost of war does not end when the war ends.

~ July 1965 ~



Edward Joseph Almeida
B/1/503



"I was stationed at Fort Polk, LA, after recovering from wounds suffered in Pleiku in the summer of '65 when I was assigned escort duty to accompany the body of Edward from Delaware to Boston. I remember the honor of it and standing guard at the funeral parlor. I'll never forget the night before the funeral when his family said goodbye before the casket was closed.

It still hurts! Welcome home Edward!"

Marty Murphy

McArthur Johnson
B/1/503, B/2/503*



Ludwig Peter Kohler, D/173d Spt Bn



Raymond Patrick Meehan, "Doc"
B/2/503



"Ray lives on in the hearts of his family, Sister Maelene Meehan, O. P., and brothers Robert, Kenneth, Richard, Vincent and Kevin."

Durward Frank Ray, B/1/503, B/2/503*

Rudolph Villalpando Hernandez
B/2/503



David Lafate Howard, B/2/503

Johnie Edward Rice, Jr.
B/2/503, E/17 Cav*



Photo posted by Bernice Rice.

"He is my son."

John Dillinger Shaw, C/1/503, B/2/503*

Allen Isaac Johnson
B/2/503



(continued....)





Ronald Lloyd Zinn
B/2/503



"Thank you to the creators of this memorial (Virtual Wall). Ron Zinn was and forever will be my brother. It is nearing 42 years since his death. His parents are both gone, but his sister and I remember him often with love, affection, and admiration. He was very special, as are all those names on the Wall. In 2006, there was a nice ceremony in Orland Park. It was to recognize her fallen heroes, of which Ron was one."

From his brother,
Jerry Zinn
Davenport, Iowa

CAMP ZINN

NAMED IN HONOR OF 1LT RON ZINN



May 10, 1939 – July 7, 1965

The first Officer of the 2/503d Airborne killed in action during the Vietnam War.



Camp Zinn near Bien Hoa Air Base, home to the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry Regiment, 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep), '65-'67. Foreground: "B" Co., Left: "A" Co., Rear: "C" Co., Right: HHC. (Photo by: Col. George Dexter, Bn CO)

"Camp Zinn was named in honor of Ron Zinn who was killed in action on 7 July 1965. I was perhaps the lowest ranking officer in the brigade; Ron was not too far my senior and we connected. The other officers in the company were Captain Roy Lombardo, Jim Bennett, Bill Olds and Dick Eckhert who were all 1st Lieutenants while Ron and I were 2d Lieutenants. Brigade had a super radio mounted on the back of a jeep that could transmit all the way back to Okinawa, which we thought was pretty high tech. I had a jeep and would take Ron to the radio whenever we had the chance. His wife was newly arrived in Okinawa. It was difficult to carry on a conversation with the 'overs' but it was better than no conversation at all. Ron was an Olympic walker and competed in the 1964 Tokyo Olympics. He attempted to teach me how to do that odd gate, but, was not very successful at it. Ironically, the same Olympics were what got Herbert Murhammer into hot water. Ron, like the other 'B' Company officers, was very competitive.

On 7 July Ron's platoon was the lead element of the company that morning. We had landed on the afternoon of the 6th, moved north, and settled in for the night. On the morning of the 7th we reversed direction and crossed the paddy that we had landed in the day before. As we moved in the jungle, Ron's platoon remained in the lead. Ron, Jim Bennett, myself and a couple of RTOs were behind the lead Squad. Platoon Sgt. Eugene Davis (awarded the DSC for action later that day) was a little to the rear of the formation. I slowed down allowing Sgt. Davis to move up to my position. I told him that I was scared and that I was sure that the shit was about to hit the fan. At that instant, the machine-gun opened up just as Sgt. Howard encountered the outer defenses of the Viet Cong training center that we stumbled on to. Ron ran forward to Sgt. Howell's aid and was struck by the fire of a least one machine-gun. I believe he was killed instantly as I never saw him move. He was about 10 feet to my left front for the duration of the battle. I helped carry him to the chopper after we had gotten the wounded medevac'd."

Jim Robinson, B/2/503d

~ A Note From The Virtual Wall ~

"On 07-08 July 1965 ten US soldiers from the 173rd Abn Bde were killed during a sweep in the area known as War Zone D, north of the Dong Nai River and northwest of Bien Hoa."

(continued....)



~ July 1966 ~

James Wilford Collins, C/4/503, A/82 Avn

“Remembrance. As the crews of COWBOYS & FALCONS gather in Atlanta in late June of '99, you will be remembered.”

George Murray, 335th AHC, RVN

Julius Collins, Jr., C/2/503



Joseph Francis Hunt
C/4/503

“SSG Joe Hunt is my husband. He was KIA on his second tour of RVN, on 27-7-66 in a helicopter crash during Operation Aurora II. At that time, he was serving with Co C, 4th Bat (GERONIMO BAT) of the 503rd Inf, 173rd AIRBORNE (Sep). On his previous tour (0165-1265), he was MAC-V. If you knew him, please contact me. Thank you”

Mary Hunt

He is my husband

me2shellin@tampabay.rr.com

(Posted January 18, 2011)



“Joseph Francis Hunt holding his wife Mary with their daughter Thea Hunt (right). These pictures were taken December 1964 before Joe left his wife and daughter for his second tour in Vietnam. Joe, your family now includes a granddaughter wishes you a Happy Fathers day, along with a proud uncle, who never forgot you. We all love you, you were such a loving husband and father. You will be in our hearts forever, till we meet again. God Bless You.”

(The above message and photo were sent to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund to be placed at The Wall during our Annual Father's Day Rose Remembrance Ceremony).

VVMF

~ A Note From The Virtual Wall ~

“Ten men died in the crash of a UH-1D (tail number 64-13571) of ‘A’ Company, 82nd Aviation Battalion (including 5 men of the 4/503d and one man from the 173d Engineer Company). A/82 Avn was supporting a 173d Abn troop lift. This aircraft was number 8 in the formation. It was seen to pitch up to a vertical position, falling off to the left. It completed a 270 degree turn while descending rapidly and exploded on impact with trees. Post-crash analysis determined the crash was due to a mechanical failure.”

Source:

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



Joe David Kegley
C/4/503

James Larry McCrystal, C/4/503, 173d Eng*

Melvin Warren McDowell, HHC/C/4/503

Carlos David Moore, HHC/C/4/503*

“Hey Carl, it's Gerry, Gerry Stesiak. I remember buddy. The chopper you were in had its transmission lock up. All aboard died with you my fellow medic of Hqs Co. 4/503 of the 173rd. Platoon Sgt. Shepherd had me take your place out on line. Hey Carl, remember that diary I kept of our activities? Well pal, I finally wrote that book. It's titled ‘Raptors Prey’, and is coming out this year, 2001. Yea, it's some 35 years later guy. Yea, I know, it seems like just five minutes has gone by. Of course you're in it. Most of the guys, in some form, are in it too. Yea Carl I've told our story, pretty close to the way it was. Say hello to Jerry Bartram for me. Jerry, too, was KIA while taking my place on the line when I went to Hawaii for R&R. Yea, I'll write him too. Well Carl, it won't be too long when we'll be standing shoulder to shoulder again in platoon formation. You probably won't recognize me though. Age changes all of us. But I know one thing for sure, I'll recognize you.

Until then pal, rest well.”

Gerald K. Stesiak

We served together

(continued....)





James Theodore Noss, "Doc"
HHC/C/2/503*

"Jimmy Noss graduated from Bruceton High School in Preston County, West Virginia with the class of 1963. He moved to Baltimore, Maryland where he found a job in which he marked patterns on lumber for sawers to use as a cutting guide. Maintaining his home of residence in West Virginia he received his draft notice two years later and reported for basic training on October 4, 1965. After medic training he was assigned to the 173rd Airborne and reached Vietnam on May 18, 1966. He was killed on July 3, 1966 as he was tending to the wounded. His family received the report he 'raised up to care for a wounded soldier when he should have stayed down.' Preston County will not forget Jimmy Noss and all that he stood for when he sacrificed his life caring for the wounded in his care. He is remembered in the book which I wrote, 'NOT TO BE FORGOTTEN, PRESTONIANS WHO DIED IN VIETNAM' in which he is featured along with 16 other men from Preston County, West Virginia who died in Vietnam. This book, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall and The Virtual Wall will be instrumental in assuring that James T. Noss and the others will not be forgotten."

Dorothy Snyder

together. You were a very nice guy with a good sense of humor; you were a M60 Machinegunner like myself. I'm sorry you didn't make it back. I will go to Church with my wife on Memorial Day and say a prayer for you and all the others who didn't make it back from the Brigade. RIP."

Unsigned
We served together



Chargin' Charlie, Eric Ribitsch

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you might have known my uncle. Thanks. :)"

Eric Ribitsch
eric.ribitsch@itt.com
(Posted 23 Mar 2002)

Harold W. Reinbott, Jr., C/4/503, A/82 Avn*



Eric Ribitsch
C/2/503



"PFC Eric Ribitsch arrived in-country in VietNam in September 1965. During his tour, he received two Purple Hearts and was awarded a posthumous Bronze Star with Valor Device for his heroism. He was killed on July 3, 1966 in Operation Yorktown in the vicinity of Xuan Loc. He was 23 and a true hero. I am proud to be his nephew, named after him, and I wear his dog tag every day. As my uncle would say...

'AIRBORNE ALL THE WAY.'"

"Its been a long time since we were in Vietnam together. I was in B Co., we went to jump school

~ A Note From The Virtual Wall ~
"Charlie Company, 2nd Bn, 503rd Infantry, lost four men on 03 July 1966."

Joseph C. Sampson, Jr., C/4/503, A/82 Avn*
"You exemplify the spirit of Army Aviation 'Above the Best.'"

LTC Dick Townes, USA Ret'd
(ORWAC 65-18)

Elmer Wayne Scarborough, C/1/503, C/2/503*



(continued....)





**Jerry L. Schemel
C/4/503**

"I barely knew you, you were dating a friend's older sister. But you picked us up and gave us a ride every time you saw French Fry and I. The 1965 Red GTO of yours is still the coolest car. I will never forget you Jerry. May GOD be with you.

William Giles and family."

William Giles



**Terry Kenneth Wilkins
C/2/503**

"Terry and I served together with the 101st Airborne at Ft. Campbell, KY, in 1965, when my orders came for Vietnam, and I joined the 2nd Battalion of the 173d Airborne in Bien Hoa in December of that year. Terry came over in January of '66, and was assigned to Company 'C' of the 2/503rd as a grunt. Terry was a funny kid, kind of a hell raiser and always laughing. Before joining the army and volunteering for airborne, he lived in Las Vegas with his mother. Years after the war I wrote to his mother but could never locate her --

I regret I never found the lady, I suspect she would have wanted to hear from one of her son's friends. He was a blonde kid, but not really cut-out for combat, but then again, who of us were? I was pulling radio duty in the commo bunker across from the church at Camp Zinn one night, and Terry came in loud and drunk and, as usual, kidding around. I yelled at him to get out, which he did -- sadly, that's the last memory I have of my friend. Shortly after, I found myself in 3rd Field Hospital near Saigon, and as a ritual while there I made it a point to read the obits in 'Stars & Stripes', and found Terry's name there. Upon returning to Zinn I immediately went to his hooch and asked his squad leader how Terry had died. The young fellow was clearly upset with the question, and simply told me Terry was shot in the leg, went into shock and died -- that's all I knew for over 30 years. A couple years ago I connected with one of Terry's hooch buddies, and the man told me Terry had been on Listening Post duty, was shot in the foot, did go into shock and died.

For the past ten years or so I've worn Terry's KIA bracelet, taking him with me wherever I go, and often when leaving home I'll put his bracelet on and say, 'Come on, Terry, let's go get something to eat.' Terry was an imperfect soldier, like many of us, and just a kid. I recall him telling me he entered the army using a forged passport, and when he arrived in-country he was only 17. I try to keep the memory of my friend alive ..."

Lew (Smitty) Smith

RTO, 2/503, 173d Airborne '65/'66



**Rutherford J. Welsh
82 Avn**



*"WARRANT OFFICER RUTHERFORD J. WELSH, a native of Canada born in Toronto, Ontario who served as an ARMY AVIATOR with A COMPANY 82nd AVIATION BATTALION 173rd AIRBORNE BRIGADE was posthumously awarded the following military decorations and service medals
PURPLE HEART, AIR MEDAL, NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL, VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CAMPAIGN SERVICE MEDAL
and was entitled to wear
ARMY AVIATOR WINGS.*

YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

NOR SHALL YOU EVER BE. R E M E M B R A N C E."

Clay Marston



(continued....)



~ A Note From The Virtual Wall ~

“Charlie Company, 2nd Bn, 503rd Infantry, lost four men on 03 July 1966.”



Theodore Williams, Jr.
C/1/503, C/2/503*

“*Teddie, you were like a brother to our family, and the day we heard of the tragic news, we all felt and still feel the loss. Our mother and sister Cheryl has passed on and we know that all of you are in heaven. As life is, we will all be together one day in the presence of God.*”

Mark Tolbert Clark, Sr. and Family
He is my brother

“*REMEMBERED by his friends and family in the Blue Island community.*”

A memorial from
Randy Kethcart

~ A Note From The Virtual Wall ~

“C Company, 1/503rd Infantry, lost two men that day (4 July 1966).”

Stephen Andrew Zukov, A/2/503

~ July 1967 ~



Edward Barden
C/4/503

Myron Stanley Beach, Jr., A/4/503

“*My Dad way my hero. Myron S. Beach Jr. is my father. I was only six years old when he was killed. I would like to talk to anyone who knew him. If you knew him, please email me. Thank you.*”

Myron L. Beach

myronandcarolebeach@hotmail.com

(Posted December 27, 2007)

“*Myron and I served together with the 5th Special Forces on an "A" team in Tan Phu 1963-64. He taught me as the kid on the team, the finesse of pinochle and*

cigars. He was a true born leader and loved the Airborne. He left SF because he always wanted to be a squad leader in combat. He achieved it with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. He left a wife and two children. Butch and I had a great time together on our first tour and I will never forget him. My children presented me a few years back with the 'Veteran at the Wall' drawing dedicated to Myron. It hangs proudly in the entranceway of my home. He is also remembered with a plaque at my VFW hall in Calabash, NC. God rest my cigar chomping buddy.”

Ray Ketcham

“*SFC Myron S. Beach was a true American hero. We served together the last two months of his life and what I saw was one of JFK's paratroopers in action. He led every charge we had and you knew Sgt. Beach was the go to guy. I have seen him run into an NVA bunker complex and by himself take out all three of them while we all watched on our bellies. When we saw this we all charged and on that charge I killed my first and only NVA with my shotgun while he was aiming at Sgt. Beach after his M-16 jammed. Beach took out 2 more bunkers with grenades.*”

Chuck Huller
C/4/503 173 Abn

~ A Note From The Virtual Wall ~

“The 4/503rd was rapidly deployed to the Central Highlands after the Battle of the Slopes. On 10 July, moving up Hill 830, A Company came under intense fire from an entrenched Viet Cong main force battalion. On 12 July, after taking the hill, D Company discovered a single network consisting of 60 bunkers with supporting foxholes. In short order, two more bunker complexes were discovered. The fighting on 10 July cost 25 American lives; eleven of the dead were from A Company, 4/503rd.”



John C. Borowski, A/4/503

“*I do not fear an army of lions, if they are led by a lamb. I do fear an army of sheep, if they are led by a lion.*” -- Alexander the Great --

[See John's DSC citation on Page 45]



(continued....)





Kenneth Lloyd Brown
A/4/503, B/3/319*



David Paul Crozier
A/B/4/503*

Clifford Garland Burch, A/2/503
"Miss you Cliffy"
Carolyn Mayr
Niece



Roger William Clark
A/4/503

"Roger, our life together was cut very short but not my memories. Like you said, 'our love will never die.' I still think of you each day and all the plans you had. With love and always a smile just for you as promised, Bev."

Beverly Clark Wheelock
From his wife

"We grew up as friends, our families were close. Now the years have passed and the wounds have healed, but I still miss my old playmate and friend. I still have your Airborne Wings that you so proudly earned.

*God Bless You, my pal and friend!
A memorial initiated by a friend."*

Reg Mongeur
Bethel, Vermont

~ A Note from The Virtual Wall ~

"On 10 July 1967, while conducting a large scale search and destroy mission near Dak To, Company A, 4/503rd Infantry, engaged an entrenched Viet Cong main force battalion. Company A lost 10 men killed in action during heavy fighting."



Gene Francis Colvin
B/1/503

Jimmy Earl Darby, B/4/503

*"About my brave brother Jimmy Darby:
My brother was in the 173d Airborne Brigade. He entered the Army as a very young and brave soldier March 06, 1967 and died July 10, 1967. He was very special and everyone who knew him loved him. He came from a small town called Opp, Alabama. Jimmy was my brother, my father was killed in 1965 and Jimmy became the man of the house and did an excellent job. All his friends called him by his nickname 'Fish' because he loved to swim. He is my hero, and my sister and I love and miss him so much. I hope one day I will be able to find other soldiers who served with him in Vietnam. I named my son after Jimmy and I hope and pray he will be an honest and brave man just like his uncle Jimmy Darby. Jimmy will never be forgotten, and all the soldiers who fought for our freedom will also be remembered. I will love and miss you forever, my dear brother. Your brother Earl and sister Glenda. We love you and miss you."*

From his brother,
Earl McCormick

~ A Note From The Virtual Wall ~

"The 4/503rd was rapidly deployed to the Central Highlands after the Battle of the Slopes. On 10 July, moving up Hill 830, A Company came under intense fire from an entrenched Viet Cong main force battalion. On 12 July, after taking the hill, D Company discovered a single network consisting of 60 bunkers with supporting foxholes. In short order, two more bunker complexes were discovered. Twenty-five US soldiers died in the fighting on 10 July. Many others were wounded in the engagement. On 15 Feb 1973, almost five years later, SP4 Peter G. Lechnir of Milwaukee, Wisconsin died from wounds he received on Hill 830 while serving with Bravo 4/503. He was overlooked when the Wall was constructed, and his name was not added until November 1991.

(continued....)



Gerald Edward Davis, D/4/503

"Mr. Gerry Davis...a hero from our town. Gerry Davis was a friend of mine in Bethlehem PA. Although he was older than me I always respected and admired him. He was one hell of a football player in high school. If the war didn't take him he would have went pro. Gerry Davis was taken by 'friendly fire'. This was the first time I ever heard that term used. At first the Army would not admit to that, they had a story about an ambush or something and said Gerry was a hero. Well, Gerry was a hero! Gerry still is a hero to me, that's how it will stay. Rest in peace Soldier...and thanks."

Gilbert Johnson
Good friend of family

William Joseph Deuerling, A/4/503

Larry Allen Doring, A/B/4/503*



Arthur Albert Erwin
A/4/503

"If anyone reads this please contact me. My cousin Andy Samans was among those who died with Arthur and the others from their unit. I wanted to know if anyone has pictures ... maybe of the group of the guys in Arthur's unit? Andy's mom is still alive at age 93 and I know she'd like to hear stories you might have of Andy from loved ones who were with him. Today is May 27, 2007. I have tried emailing those whose emails I saw on the www site but they were returned. From Andy Saman's first cousin (our dad's were brothers!)."

Barb Samans
tourist51@aol.com

"Arthur. YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN – GOD BLESS AND KEEP YOU ALWAYS!"

Bruce Dyer, USN
MACV Saigon 69-70

James Fabrizio, B/4/503



Ronald B. Hamblin, B/1/503

"A Good Soldier & Proud Dad. Ron was in the B Company headquarters command group of the 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne). His tragic death was especially heartbreaking because he had found out just a few days earlier that his wife had given birth, and he was ecstatic to be a father. His exuberance was infectious. The rest of us were excited at his happy news. Ron was a good buddy, a fine soldier, and a loving father. What a tragic loss to all of us."

Dennis Hupp
We served together



Frazier Daniel Huggins
B/4/503



David Harold Johnson
A/C/4/503*
"REMEMBERED by a first cousin."
Bill and Renee Clark

Ronald Russell Jones, D/4/503

(continued....)





**Daniel Walter Jordan
A/4/503**



*"When you get to heaven, Saint Peter is going to say, 'How did you earn your living, how did you earn your way?' Gone and missed."
From his son*

*"Danny Boy. You'll always be remembered as the boy cousin in a family full of girls. You were fleet of foot and brilliant. Your good looks took after the Jordan, not the Redmond, side of the family. We were so proud as you graduated from Purdue. I can't believe that it's been over forty years. You would have been retired by now. Your cousins are slipping away, one by one. Soon another generation will replace us. I hope that your story of bravery and sacrifice of life will be passed on and on."
Barbara E. Hamilton
Second cousin*

[See Page 48 for Daniel's DSC citation]

Szoltan Sigmond Klein, C/1/503

*"Sonny, I remember your Mom & Dad taking me on your summer vacation ('64) to Asbury Park. We roamed the boardwalk, jumped into the ocean all week long and the girls looked good. I remember sleeping over at your house in the summer, sneaking out in the middle of the night to pick cherries and smoke Camels. I remember you coming to my house before you went over in a black beret and jump boots-- I felt like a little kid standing next to you. You changed. You were very quiet, serious, and proud—a lot more grown up than the last time I saw you. I had no idea that I would never see you again. Miss you Sonny-God Bless-your old buddy."
Tom Reighard
We were close friends*

Siegfried Kofler, HHC/4/503



Peter George Lechnir, B/4/503

*(Incident date Jul 10, 1967, date deceased Feb 15, 1973)
"Peter was my cousin, he grew up in West Allis WI with his brother Randy and Sister Lonnie, he also had two other sisters Penny and Mary. I remember how sad it was the day we found out he was shot and then I believe it was 6 years later when he died. He is now with his mother Gerry along with a lot of other people that loved him. I am going to see the moving Vietnam vets wall tomorrow."
Sue Dorszynski (Dickens)
Cousin*

*"Peter served in Co B, 4th Batt, 503 Inf, 173rd Abn. He was wounded on hill 830 on July 10, 1967 near Dak To. His wounds were so severe that the doctors at Fitzsimmons said he was the worst case they had seen leave the hospital and survive. My uncle Peter's blessing was that my Aunt Carolyn (his fiancé at the time) was a nurse. They were married at the Va hospital in the chapel. Although he was confined to a wheelchair, over the next couple of years Peter got to experience many of the pleasures of life he was almost robbed of. He got to buy an Eldorado Cadillac he was so proud of. He bought a house and got to travel around the country some. Most importantly, he got to share his life with Carolyn and family who loved him before he died. Peter passed away Feb. 15, 1973 at home with Carolyn instead of on the battlefield where too many young men never owned a car, or a house, or married their sweetheart. Love Tom."
Tom Evans
Nephew*

Michael Sidney Mitchell, B/3/319

*"Kept my word. Mike. It broke our hearts when you were lost to us. Nancy and Marsha remained good friends for many years. Nancy's husband was lost over there too in 1968. I looked in on Marsha over the years and she did well. It was my sister Nancy who helped her cope through those first few months of grief. Oh how I hate war and why is it they always take the best? Take care my friend and rest in peace. What a party we will all have when we all meet next!"
Judy Diaz*



Oris Lamar Poole, A/4/503

(continued....)





Arthur Clifton Retzlaff
B/4/503 B/3/319*

"Skip' Retlaff was three years older than I and, as such, he was a role model...focused, straight-arrow, sincere, a solid young man. He was, in the truest sense, a 'flower of American youth.' I know his family and friends from Westfield remember him fondly and proudly."

Charles Miller
We grew up together

"If I should die...remembrances for 1LT Arthur Clifton Retzlaff, USA...Westfield's Citadel grad and bravest of the brave!!!!!!!!!"

"If I should die, and leave you here awhile, be not like others, sore undone, who keep long vigils by the silent dust, and weep...for MY sake, turn again to life, and smile...Nerving thy heart and trembling hand to do something to comfort other hearts than thine...Complete these dear, unfinished tasks of mine...and I, perchance, may therein comfort you!"

Joel Michael Sabel, "Doc"
HHC/B/4/503*



"Joel and I were classmates in both grammar and high school. We were both teammates on the 1st football squad at Amat. He was always a good friend, teammate and especially an admirable person. His death in a horrific war broke my heart. I'll never forget you Joel. God bless!"

Tim Gover
We grew up together

[See Page 49 for Joel's DSC citation]



Walter A. Samans, Jr.
A/4/503

"If anyone reads this please contact me. My cousin Andy Samans was among those from Company 'A', 4/503rd Infantry, who died at Hill 830. I wanted to know if anyone has pictures ... maybe of the group of the guys in Arthur's unit? Andy's mom (my aunt) is still alive at age 93 and I know she'd like to hear stories you might have of Andy from men who were with him." From his first cousin,

Barb Samans
tourist51@aol.com
(Posted 23 Nov 2007)

"Sam (nickname), some of us were e-mailing about you last summer after I got the guts to look you up on the Wall. You were a good door gunner but you just had to transfer out of our aviation unit into the real army (infantry). Some of us tried to talk you out of it but you knew where your duty lay. A man of real character knows his own heart, and you followed yours. Gone but not forgotten, my brother."

Mike Simmons, We served together



Walter (Andy/Sam) Samans in Vietnam.

(continued...)





William Alexander Scott
HHC/4/503

"You are not forgotten. You taught me, and a lot others how to stay alive. Thank you."

H.J. Peters



Wesley Robert Sexton
A/2/503

BOBBY SEXTON IS KILLED IN VIETNAM

The name of Bobby Sexton of Cornelia, Sunday was added to the list of hero's names engraved forever in the hallowed list of those who have given their life in the defense of their country.

Word was received here early Monday morning of the death of Bobby on the battlefields of Viet Nam. According to word received here and from press dispatches, an elite force of North Vietnamese regulars wearing white, black and green uniforms caught two U.S. paratroop companies in a crossfire of automatic weapons and mortar fire Monday night in the central highlands near Dak To, north of Plieku. The crossfire killed 26 Americans and injured another 36 according to dispatches.

Among them was Bobby Sexton, son of Mr. and Mrs. Bob Sexton of Cornelia. Mr. and Mrs. Sexton were notified of the death of their son by a special messenger early Monday morning.

Pfc. Sexton's body is being flown back to Cornelia for burial, and funeral arrangements will be announced by McGahee Funeral Home as soon as they are made.

Bobby was widely known throughout the community. He graduated from South Habersham High School in 1965. He had worked on the construction of the Hall County Hospital as an electrician's helper. At the time he was drafted into the service in November of 1966 he was studying electronics in Atlanta.

He was a member of the Cornelia volunteer fire department for a number of years and firemen held him and his work in high esteem.

He took his basic training at Fort Benning, and advanced training at Fort Gordon. Following in the footsteps of his father, who was a paratrooper in World War II, he volunteered for the paratroops and took his jump training at Fort Benning.

He arrived in Vietnam on June 2 of this year and was serving in the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

Last week his parents received a letter from him telling of a battle in which all his buddies who had gone overseas with him were killed in action following a Vietcong ambush. He was spared this by being in a rear area at the time.

Bobby enjoyed many hobbies, among which were collecting Civil War relics. A heavy Civil War type cannon which will fire a projectile across the lot, still stands in the family's back yard. He had built the instrument to add to his collection of relics. Cornelia firemen prize a drawing he made of the firemen in action.

He was a member of the Bethlehem Baptist Church. He is survived by his parents; three brothers, Danny, Terrie, and Douglas, and a sister, Kay; and his maternal grandmother, Mrs. W. H. Loudermilk, all of the family home.

"The Northeast Georgian", July 13, 1967

"This article appeared 33 years ago. Since that time, Bobby's father has passed away; his brother, Danny, was killed in a car accident; and his grandmother, Willie Loudermilk, passed away on December 27, 2000, at the age of 100. Bobby Sexton was my cousin."

Joni Mabe



Franklin Steve Shepherd
A/4/503

Malton Gene Shores, A/B/4/503*



(continued...)





Bobby Horace Sorrells
B/1/503, A/4/503*

"This is to my Dad. It's Memorial Weekend and I found this site. I'm not sure what I want to say, except that I am proud of you. We lost Granny (your Mother) one year ago this month. Granny sure was proud of everything her Bobby did. Your two sons very much missed you and so did your two daughters. We are all grown up now and have pretty much stayed strong and proud all our lives. Mom and our Step Dad did a great job with five kids (one half-sister). You have 5 grandchildren, plus one adopted a year ago. We also have 3 other grandchildren from our half-sister. I couldn't imagine life without them or her. Well, we are all doing as well as life could be without you in our lives. I love you and will miss you all the time left in the world. Love from your youngest daughter,
Rose."

Rose Doyle

"Hey there, dad. I've just recently turned 41. 10 years past your junior leaving this world at 31. So young. So strong. So courageous. Our country is now in an ongoing war with Iraq and terrorism. How proud I am of the men and women who are in our armed forces. How proud you must be looking down and seeing and knowing the courage it takes to put it out there. Life. I know you would be right in there or least wanting to, even at the age of 69. I know you must've been so excited to be with your mom once again. I'm sure you're so proud of your kids and the families we now have. You would love your grandchildren so much.

Your granddaughter and my daughter Carol Ann represent the Marines in the ROTC. She has made me proud. She has done so well. A medal recipient such as yourself. Your name lives on. Your family lives on.

Your memory lives on. And the blessings of your fatherhood lives on. Missed by all. Your youngest son,
Bobby."

Bobby Sorrells

"Dad. Rose and Bobby have told you of the family you left behind and how it is growing! They've told of our pride in your service to us and this country. At 46 I wonder...I wonder, sometimes, what our lives would have been like had you made it back. I wonder what you would have been like. I wonder what it was like for you there. I wonder what you were like there. I wonder what you would think of my growing up. I

wonder what you would think of me now. I wonder how you could have gone there leaving four kids and a young wife here. I wonder how different everything would have been had you not gone. I wonder how I am different because you went. I wonder if I have a right to wonder these things. I wonder why, after all these years, I still wonder these things.

I wonder... I...just...wonder..."

Your Eldest Son, Bill



Harry Diwain Spier
B/4/503

"Yo Harry. Harry was my first cousin and was like a big brother to me. It broke my heart when we lost him. Neither Harry or I had any brothers and we spent a great deal of our childhood days fishing, hunting and just hanging out together. I miss him dearly and will meet up with him at Fiddler's Green."

Jim Spier

~ Fiddler's Green ~

A legendary imagined afterlife, where there is perpetual mirth, a fiddle that never stops playing, and dancers who never tire. Its origins are obscure, although some point to the Greek myth of the "Elysian Fields" as a potential inspiration.

'Fiddler's Green' appears in Frederick Marryat's novel *The Dog Fiend; Or, Snarleygow*, published in 1856, as lyrics to a sailors' song:

***At Fiddler's Green, where
seamen true
When here they've done their
duty
The bowl of grog shall still
renew
And pledge to love and beauty***

[See Page 49 for more about Fiddler's Green]

(continued...)





Ralph McGuin Stacey, Jr.
B/1/503

"Ralph and I served together in Vietnam for a few months before he was killed. I remember him as a very friendly guy. He was well liked by nearly everyone in the company. All of us in the unit were devastated when we found out that he and another well-liked trooper (Private First Class Ronald Hamblin) had been killed that night. Ralph (and Ron) served proudly. I hope that Ralph's family and friends can find some degree of consolation in knowing that others still grieve his loss and will continue to pray that Ralph rests peacefully in His Savior's loving arms."

Dennis Hupp
We served together



Jesus M. Torres
B/4/503

"I am not sure which would be the best photo to honor Jesus. All the photos are Spring of 1967 prior to deployment. Affectionately known as Jay (my Cousin), he was my Guardian at my first communion. I was so proud to walk hand in hand with him. He was extremely bright, religious and a true mentor. The photo(s) were taken while we were preparing to go to my confirmation in the Spring/Summer of 1967. We were all filled with extreme grief when we received notification that he had been taken that summer. He had so much to contribute to society but I am also glad that through his faith he rests with the Lord!

Love ya always, your cousin Dennis."

Dennis Torres
September 22, 2012

~ Operation Greeley ~

"The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) and supporting units under Brigade control continued Operation GREELEY throughout the month of July. Brigade elements met with light contact in July while searching for infiltrating/exfiltrating NVA units near the tri-border area. The largest enemy contact was made on 10 July 1967 when Alpha Company, 4/503d Infantry

engaged an estimated NVA Battalion at grid coordinates YB 860140 while conducting search and destroy operations in that area. The lead element of the company initially received heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire from two bunkers. The enemy (NVA) force was estimated to be of company size and were well entrenched in fortified positions approximately 35 meters to A/4/503d Infantry's northeast (front). The company reinforced the lead element as artillery and airstrikes were directed on the NVA. B/4/503d Infantry deployed to the vicinity of YB 862141 (northeast of A/4/503d Inf). As they maneuvered to attack the enemy positions, they came under heavy fire from two additional light machineguns, small arms, automatic weapons, 60mm and 82mm mortar fire. This enemy force was also estimated to be at company strength and was mutually supporting the NVA unit engaged with A/4/503d Infantry. D/4/503d Infantry maneuvered elements to reinforce the two friendly companies in contact. All units continued to receive fire until 1800 hours. Artillery support was rendered both in direct firing upon enemy positions and in blocking fires, deterring the enemy's access to routes of withdrawal. Results of this engagement were: 25 US KIA, 50 US WIA, 0 US MIA, and 1 CIDG KIA. Enemy losses: 9 NVA KIA (BC), 1 AK-47 rifle; 1 pistol and one (1) 7.62mm Chicom rifle."

[Note: See June 2011, Issue 29, of our newsletter for a detailed report on *Operation Greeley*, also known as *The Battle of the Slopes*].



Walter Douglas Williams
HHC/4/503

"Major Walter Douglas Williams was a distinguished graduate of the USMA in the Class of 1956. He was posthumously awarded the Purple Heart Medal."

Clay Marston
Biographical Researcher



(continued....)



~ July 1968 ~



Joseph Ralph Franckowiak
B/1/50



Jerry Lee Graves, C/1/50, A/2/503*

"Jerry Is My Brother. I Think Of Him, Every Day. He Will Always Be Loved And Missed, By All His Family."

Edward Graves

"This is my great uncle Jerry. Although I never got the chance to meet him, my Grandma speaks of him often. I'm curious if anyone knows details not listed on here, or if anyone had served with him?"

Nicole

Nicole.luckett88@gmail.com

(Posted March 21, 2013)

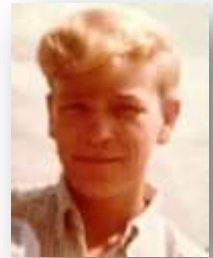
Michael Conrad Larsen
B/1/503



"PFC. Michael C. Larsen, 21, Cedar River, was killed during combat operations in Bien Hoa, north of Saigon, Vietnam, July 19. He was a member of the U.S. Army's Company B, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Division of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Mr. Larsen was born June 2, 1947 in Marinette, Wisconsin. He attended Marinette High School and Stephenson High School before entering the service in August, 1967. He was sent to Vietnam May 3, 1968. Surviving are his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Larsen, Cedar River; one sister, Mrs. Robert (Diane) Bucholz, Chicago, Illinois; his paternal grandmother, Mrs. Peter Larsen, Cedar River; and his maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Leroy, Stephenson."

Menominee Herald-Leader

Thomas Burton Lukes, A/1/50
Jose Alberto Ortiz-Burgos, E/17th Cav



Ronald Edward Pillow
A/1/50

"I never got the chance to know my brother. I was only 2 yrs old when he was killed. The only picture I have of him is a picture of him holding me when I was 1 yr old. Here's to you Bro."

Kenneth Pillow

He is my brother

Gerald Duane Sack, A/3/503

"Gerald Duane Sack gave his life in a land of strife. Leaving behind a wife and a son to never hold or see dying so others might be free. Let us never forget our men and women who served during the Viet Nam conflict ... some gave all and all gave some. I know Gary was not a Green Beret but the song is beautiful and so appropriate. Gary left behind family and friends who would give anything to have him home. Yet they go on and some day they will meet again at Heaven's Gate." Unsigned

"LETTER FROM A CARING SOUL"

**THANK YOU TO ALL THE BOYS,
WHO WENT OFF TO WAR.
NO FANFARE, NO NOISE,
JUST GOT ON A PLANE TO RIDE,
TO A FOREIGN WAR WHERE THEY COULD DIE,
LOSE A LEG, ARM, BE IGNORED.
WE BROUGHT BACK OUR HOSTAGES FROM IRAN,
CHEERED THEM GAVE THEM A CLAPPING HAND.
BUT OUR BOYS FROM NAM,
WE MADE THEM FEEL DISGRACED,
AND TURNED OUR FACE
TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY,
WHEN ALL WE HAD TO SAY**

**"THANK YOU FOR SEEING, A NATION NEEDED FREEING."
BUT NO! WE DIDN'T SEE,
THAT ANOTHER HUMAN NEEDED TO BE FREE.
OUR POLITICIANS WERE IN A RUSH,
TO KEEP IT ALL HUSHED.
SO WE DIDN'T MAKE THEM HEROES,
TO MANY THEY WERE ZEROES.**

(By Mary M. Kappes, written the day before the Vietnam Memorial Dedication, 1982)

(continued....)





James Arthur Stell
B/1/50

"Tomorrow is Veteran's Day and I'll be thinking about you Uncle Jimmy. Miss you lots. Love, Vikki."

Vikki Gamier
He is my Uncle

"I was the Army officer who was assigned to go to Point Marion and tell his next of kin of his death on 20 Jul 68. The streets were not well marked and I drove around in a military vehicle for some time trying to find the address. Finally, I had to stop and ask. Then I moved as quickly as possible because I knew phone calls would be made. The two elderly people in the house appeared to be Stell's grandparents. They seemed not to know why I was there. I told them as gently as I knew how and almost immediately a younger woman knocked on the door crying, 'Is it true?' I left them dissolved in tears. Seeing things like that in the Pittsburgh area caused me to realize the war was not possible to win for a price we could afford to pay. I'm still tearful thinking of that day."

Harry McMackin



Gary Lee Strouse
B/1/50



Richard Berry Taylor
D/2/503

Robert Virtus Tillotson, A/2/503

"I wish we could have met, my dad's told me a lot about you...Golden Gloves winner and all. Rest in peace Uncle Bob."

Thomas B. Tilloston
(USMC)



Alain Joseph Tremblay
173d LRRP, 74th Inf Det*



"Alain J. Tremblay, 'Christian Crusader, Sgt. Rock". To your family you will always be our hero. We miss you and love you. You are in our daily prayers. Love Kenneth, Wayne, Suzanne, Dan & Monique."

Suzanne Bruno
He is my brother



Larry George Trevarton
C/2/503

"We have determined that Larry Trevarton was not a member of the 1st Battalion (M), 50th Infantry during our tour in Vietnam. Initially, he was listed as a casualty within our battalion but subsequent document gathering proved otherwise. His name was inscribed in error on our 50th Infantry Vietnam Memorial in front of Battalion Headquarters, Fort Benning, Georgia. A unanimous vote of our association ruled that his name will remain on our memorial and we will give corrected information here on our web site. Visit:

<http://www.ichiban1.org/pdf/MemorialTrevarton.pdf>

The photo was obtained from family friend Charley McCauley."

Jim Sheppard
Historian

Robert Charles Witzel, E/17th Cav



(continued....)



~ July 1969 ~



Steve Leon Anderson
C/4/503

"Steve Leon Anderson was born July 12, 1946 in Bluefield, West Virginia. He was the son of Grant and Hazel (Perkins) Anderson. He attended the public schools in Bluefield and was a graduate of Park Central High School in the Class of 1964. He was baptized in the Mount Zion Pentecostal Church at an early age and worked in the church until he left Bluefield. Upon graduating from high school, he served in the Job Corps for eighteen months. He entered the Army in September 1967 and had been stationed in Vietnam for three months before his death on July 10, 1969.

Leon was survived by his parents, three brothers: Brackston, Grant Jr. and Roland; his sister Carolyn and his maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Sandy Perkins of Youngstown, Ohio. His daughter, Leontine, was born on September 3, 1969."

Leontine Walker
He is my father



Timothy Wayne Beverford
C/1/50

"Tim, your early death changed the course of my life. I volunteered for the army, Viet Nam and served in '71 & '72. At that time I chose to extract my pound of flesh for them taking your life. I accomplished what I set out to do by becoming a LRRP/Sniper for the Americal Division. Over thirty years have passed and there are times that I still miss you and long to talk about all the many things that never got said. I never told you how much I admired you and looked up to you. I remember watching you playing football for Hollywood High School, no team seemed to be able to run the ball around your end of the field. Most teams gave up trying, you were just that good. You were the middle brother, I always expected you to do the very best out of the three of us. I know now that you are with Jesus, I believe this with all my heart, as I'm a Christian now. It just took me a little longer than you

to come to the truth. Your face is one of the first ones I want to see when I reach there. I love you my brother and I miss you very much. Please tell Bill Taylor, George Floyd, Oscar Pearson & Virginia Rodocker I also will see them when I arrive."

Bill Beverford



Michael R. Blanchfield, A/4/503



SP4 MICHAEL R. BLANCHFIELD
A CO, 4TH BN, 503RD INFANTRY
173D ABN BDE, USARV
Army of the United States
Arlington Heights, Illinois
From Jan. 4, 1950 to Jul. 3, 1969

~ Medal of Honor Citation ~

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Sp4C Blanchfield distinguished himself while serving as a rifleman in Company A on a combat patrol. The patrol surrounded a group of houses to search for suspects. During the search of 1 of the huts, a man suddenly ran out toward a nearby tree line. Sp4C Blanchfield, who was on guard outside the hut, saw the man, shouted for him to halt, and began firing at him as the man ignored the warning and continued to run. The suspect suddenly threw a grenade toward the hut and its occupants. Although the exploding grenade severely wounded Sp4C Blanchfield and several others, he regained his feet to continue the pursuit of the enemy. The fleeing enemy threw a second grenade which landed near Sp4C Blanchfield and several members of his patrol. Instantly realizing the danger, he shouted a warning to his comrades. Sp4C Blanchfield unhesitatingly and with complete disregard for his safety, threw himself on the grenade, absorbing the full and fatal impact of the explosion....

(continued....)



....By his gallant action and self-sacrifice, he was able to save the lives and prevent injury to 4 members of the patrol and several Vietnamese civilians in the immediate area. SpC Blanchfield's extraordinary courage and gallantry at the cost of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

Arnim N. Braithwaite, D/4/503



Charles David Brasier
E/17th Cav*

“Specialist 4th Class Charles D. Brasier is the gentleman depicted in the center of the three individuals shown in the photograph (on right). Charles D. Brasier was approximately nineteen years old when this photograph was taken during a reconnaissance mission out of Bao Loc, Vietnam (II Corps). Mr. Brasier was an orphan, who had been raised by the ranch hands on a farm in Oklahoma. He enlisted in the U.S. Army voluntarily and became a paratrooper. Shortly after a fire fight was initiated by the enemy on the perimeter of the base camp of the 2nd Platoon, E Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade at Bao Loc, Viet Nam, a loose white phosphorous grenade was rolled on the clapboard, pallet, floor of the ‘hooch’ in which Mr. Basier was sleeping. Awakened immediately by the sound of the machine guns firing, Mr. Brasier scrambled from his cot, saw the grenade on the floor, dove for it in an effort to protect the other men sleeping in the ‘hooch’ (a sandbagged tent), and covered the live grenade with his body just before the grenade detonated. Charles D. Brasier was evacuated from the area by stretcher and then by means of an ambulance that had been brought to the front gate of the Logistical Supply Area (L.S.A.), which served as the base camp for 2nd Platoon, E Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. Charles D. Brasier died at six o’clock the next morning in an evacuation hospital in Viet Nam. Charles D. Brasier served as my gunner on our jeep in 2nd Platoon, E Troop,, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. He was among the finest soldiers to have served in the United States Military.”

Frederick R. Lurting
We served together



Soldier standing in the middle of the three American soldiers in the photo, wearing the tiger suit: Sp4 Charles D. Brasier, Gunner. To the right of Sp4 Charles D. Brasier, Jim Clark, Driver. To the left of Sp4 Charles D. Brasier: SSG Frederick R. White (a.k.a. Frederick R. Lurting), Reconnaissance, Scout, Car Commander. 2nd Plt., E-Trp., 17th Cav., 173rd Brg.



Ronald William Cardona
C/75 Rangers

~ Another Year ~

*Another year closer to coming home
Another year of being alone
There's a place in my heart that is empty still
I try not to cry, but my tears still spill
A photo, a rubbing, a name on the wall
They don't seem to ease my pain at all
Your Ranger brothers keep me strong,
But even that doesn't last for long
Time will ease the pain they say
So in year 38 I'll still wait and pray.
Kathleen Cardona, He is my husband*

Bruce Edward Coley, B/C/1/503*

*“Today is the 32nd Anniversary of your death, I can still feel your body getting colder waiting for the dustoff to pick you up. I love you and will never forget you.
Airborne, Johnny.”*

John B. Andres, Jr., My airborne brother

Alfonso Marquez Duran, N75 LRRP

(continued....)





William F. Ericson, II
A/1/503



"Bill, your 45th graduation from West Point is coming up soon. Can't believe how the years have flown by. As always, Clare."

Clare Conlan Ericson Barkovic
Widow

"You were a great soldier and I'll always be proud of you for doing that completely on your own ... but this is who I miss ... my brother, Billy."

Lisa
He is my brother



Lisa and Billy
1950

Bobby Lee Gentry, A/1/50
Roy Nathaniel Givens, C/1/50

"Roy, I know you are gone but I will never forget our growing up together. All the times we spent doing childish pranks we thought were fun things to do. We were just children. Those days are long gone but will never be forgotten. Thanks for the wonderful memories that you made possible.....all because we were friends."

Lemuel Brown

Leonard George Greville, A/2/503
(Incident date June 6, 1969)



Jackie Dwayne Hamby
173d Eng

Ronald Steven Holeman, N75 LRRP

"You and two other Rangers lost their lives that day. I was replaced that day and the Ranger who took my place that day died. He came from another team. The names are burned in my mind forever.

Rest easy Ranger."

Sgt. Ron Combs
Team Fox

James Cleveland Jackson, C/1/503
James Allen Johnson, 39th Scout Dog



Ervin Jones, C/4/503

"Sergeant Jones: Good Squad Leader, Good Guy. Someone remembers, pal."

From his Platoon Leader,
Fred Stephans

(continued....)





Duane Richard Keil
A/4/503

*"My Brother, Skysoldier, 173rd Airborne.
Duane was tall and thin, like a bean pole! Always laid back, never moved too fast. He liked iced tea, sometimes even carried around his own jar of instant. Loved just hanging out on the couch and watching 'stupid movies!' Loved kids, he would play on the floor for hours with my little brother, playing cars, or building things with blocks. Mom was into experimental cooking when we were young. Duane was the 'guinea pig'! He would eat anything! He didn't have much, except for an old 55 Chevy. That car was his pride! He was so tall he had to have his seat all the way back to drive. The back of his seat was broken so he was almost lying down when he drove. You always knew it was his car, it had FU-MAN-CHU written on the back sides of it! Duane always smiled, had a great sense of humor. Always joking around! Never liked any boy I liked, thought they were losers (he was usually right!). We would fight a lot, guess that's normal. I miss him so! What I wouldn't give for one more argument, then a big fat hug! I never got the chance to tell him how much I loved him, but I do! He was my 'Big Bro', best friend, and most of all, my Hero! I think of you every day. We all miss you! 'Keep Flyin High Bro'!!!! I'LL LOVE YOU FOR FOREVER AND A DAY! Miss you every Min.!"*

Toni Weaver
"Dreamweaver"



"Duane and his sister Toni taken just before he went into the Army."

A POEM FOR YOU, BROTHER!

OUT OF THE CLOUDS

written by Esther B. (Campbell) Gates

*Out of the clouds I tumble
to survey the earth below.
With a snap of my billowing canopy
I glide like a bird, and slow.
The wind kisses my face
Like a friend –*

*Takes my hand to lead the way.
The other hand grasps St. Michael's wings
in the exhilarating game we play.
The thunder of the silence
Soothes my soul
As I drift in laughter's wake,
And I dance on the air
With the earth my goal
All for my country's sake.*



Golsby Kimbrough, Jr.
D/16th Armor



"It's hard to believe that so many years have passed. I was just a little girl when you died but I remember it as though it were yesterday. Thank you for your love for our incredible country."

Debbie Collins Jeter, Next door neighbor

"Kimbrough enlisted in the Army in July 1967, two weeks after graduating from Benjamin Franklin High School, because he felt that fighting for his country was preferable to the kind of fights he might get into if he stayed in his neighborhood. Kimbrough wanted to be a doctor, and often promised his parents that someday he and his four brothers would support them. The 20-year-old sergeant was a light truck driver in Viet Nam, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment of the 173rd Support Battalion, 173rd Airborne Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Kimbrough had extended his tour in Viet Nam six months and was temporarily assigned to a South Vietnamese army armored company when he died on July 6, 1969. He was survived by his parents and four brothers."

Jim McLhenney, Viet Vet

(continued....)





James Howard Lee, "Doc"
B/Spt Bn

*"To live in the hearts we leave behind,
is never to have died."*

(Thomas Campbell, circa 1888)

A memorial from his Mother, sisters, and brothers.

"Hey Jim. Well, after over 30 years I finally went to visit you. I'm sorry it took me so long. I couldn't go when I got back, I guess I just didn't have the guts. Then I spent too many years trying to forget. That was wrong. I'll never forget you. There were fresh flowers at your site. It's good to know that your family still remembers too. I left something for you.

Rest in peace man."

William Wagner
We served together

Henry R. Reyes, B/2/503

"We remember your smile. I talked with your mom following the 2000 Memorial Day service at Hillcrest Cemetery in Porterville. I had my ex-wife, Jan, place a flag on your grave at the cemetery. Your mom called to thank me. She said she knew I was the one who made sure it was placed there. I told her you'd have done it for me. See you in class."

Stephen Brown

We were high school classmates



Theodore Mendez, Sr.
E17 Cav, 173d LRRP*



[See tribute to Theodore on Pages 18-19]

Jerry Wayne Spears, E/2/503

"Jerry was my first cousin. We all miss him, and know that he is in the arms of the angels, and is in God's care, along with his dear Mother and Father, Ruby and Howard Spears. God Bless the entire family."

Unsigned



Larry Murray, E/2/503



Joseph Rendon
D/4/503



Wayland Dan Stembridge
D/4/503

"Son of Wayland T. and Gertrude, brother of James, Shirley, Pat, Janis, and Connie. Loved and missed by his friends and family."

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I shall fear no evil: for Thou art with me;
Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.

Psalms 23:4

(continued....)



**Michael Oliver Thomas
N75 LRRP**



"You are in my thoughts almost every day even after all these years. You were my baby brother and you have been sorely missed by your whole family. The one thing that has helped is you believed in what you were doing and you loved your family and country. You are in Gods arms today and Mom and Dad are also with you. Love, Pat."

Patricia Shaffer
He is my brother

"I loved you in 1969 and my love has never faded. Thank God for memories Michael, they are more precious than gold. I tried to reach your sister, but could not find her, I never wanted to fall out of touch with her. I Love you Michael, Nancy."

Nancy Leonhardt Short
We were a couple

~ July 1970 ~

Johnny Allen, Jr., A/3/503

"In loving memory I would like to honor my big brother I really never got to know. I can tell you that he looks just like my dad. I never got to talk to him and I only have pictures to remind me of him. Missing you and see you in heaven. Love, one of your sisters."



**Douglas Paul Atkins, "Doc"
HHC/3/503**

"Private First Class Douglas Paul Atkins was born on September 14, 1950 in Ann Arbor to Mr. and Mrs. Variell L. Atkins. Douglas is a 1968 graduate of Pioneer High School in Ann Arbor. He also attended Washtenaw Community College prior to his entry into the Army in August of 1969. Private First Class Atkins started his tour in Binh Dinh Province, South Vietnam on July 6, 1970 serving as a Medical Corpsman with Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. Douglas' unit was operating in an area that was full of 'booby-traps'.

Private First Class Douglas Paul Atkins was killed by a booby-trap explosion on July 27, 1970, just 23 days into his tour in Vietnam. Douglas earned the National Defense Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, the Parachutist Badge, the Expert Badge with Automatic Rifle Bar, and the Sharpshooter Badge with Rifle Bar prior to his death. He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the Army Commendation Medal, Purple Heart, Good Conduct Medal, and the Combat Medical Badge. Doug is survived by his parents, family and friends. He lived 19 years, 10 months and 13 days. Rest in peace with the warriors."



**Hilburn M. Burdette, Jr.
C/N75 LRRP**

"It has been 36 years and I still miss you and still feel the loss/pain in my heart when I think about you. You are my HERO!"

Gary L. Burdette, 1SG, USA, Retired
Never forget

"Buddy you are not forgotten. After you were hit, Strak carried you and Wiley out of the Kill Zone. Fry and I carried your body to the helicopter for dust off. Fairwell Friend."

Mac
We served together

"Sergeant Hilburn Burdette is remembered by his comrades from the 75th Infantry - the Rangers."



Albert Calmese, D/4/503

(continued....)



Bruce Charles Candri, B/2/503, 173d LRRP/N75*

"After arriving in RVN, Corporal Bruce served as my Assistant Team Leader (ATL) for Ranger Team 'Echo' when we were assigned to Company N (Ranger) 75th Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) at LZ English in Bong Son. I last saw him in September 1969, when I was reassigned. Bruce was a bright, cheerful, young man with a good head on his shoulders and had a lot of potential for being a good soldier and leader. I

was very saddened to hear years later that he was killed. He had a lot of life to live, and was a good friend who you could trust to watch your back and didn't have to worry about when the chips were down.

I will miss you."

Robert P Mohs



**Frederick David Greene
A/3/503**

"What I remember best about my cousin, Freddy, is his crooked smile. He smiled a lot. We grew up in a time when life was perfect. We cousins (and there were many of us) were able to see each other often. Family potluck suppers and parties were the norm for our close-knit family. As we hit the teen years we didn't always want to visit the aunts and uncles but the COUSINS! Woo hoo. I never turned down an opportunity to see Freddy and his younger brother, Jim. They played guitar together and had what would be called a garage band now. They were good - even played some parties. I'll never forget the day Freddy's music was stopped forever. I would never see that smile again. Our family was forever changed that day. Oh, we have gotten on with our lives. We have been truly happy and truly blessed all these years. The cousins are still close. Yet even now I still see, in my mind's eye, that empty spot where Freddy's smiling face should be. Wars are bad. They rob us of our loved ones. They scar us as individuals and as a nation. We must strive to NEVER FORGET all the dedicated soldiers who have followed their commander-in-chief's order to go to war. We must pray for our leaders that they do their utmost to keep our country from war. I love you, Freddy."

Your cousin,

Glo

"Fred was a squad leader in my platoon. He was caring and competent, a fine man from a fine family in Detroit. He wanted to be a lawyer like his Dad. It was my honor and privilege to help bury him in 1970. My prayers are always with him and his family."

Sgt. K (Tom Kaulukukui)

We served together

Harold Utah Hayes, HHC/1/503

"I was 9 years old. I remember my mother crying when she got the call. And me not understanding. Now I understand."

Unsigned

(continued....)

**William Bert Cleverley, "Doc"
HHC/4/503**



"I was not even 2 years old when you died, but your memory has always lived on through your family and mine. My dad wears your memory like a badge of pride and my mom told me how I used to love to go to you. I can't wait to meet you one day.

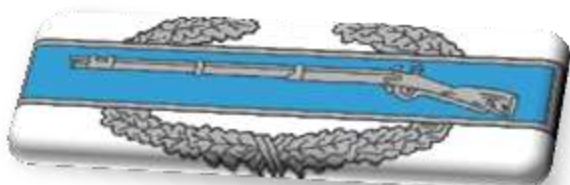
Love, Kelly."

Kelly Cleverley Melvin

From his niece

"I went from kindergarten through high school with Bill. He lived just one street over from me in Detroit. He came and visited me on leave from Nam when I was home from college. It wasn't long after that when I heard of his tragic passing. Bill was a sweet, gentle soul and I will always remember his wonderful smile. Your friend."

Pat Newsted Durkee



**Sherman Pondexter Davis, A/3/503
Tony Manuel Florez, B/4/503**





Phillip Jay Hilderbrant
E/17th Cav



Danny Lee Hilterbran
D/1/503

"Danny carried my radio for months. We were in D Co 1/503 out of LZ Uplift. I remember well talking with him about the 'world' and his two small babies at home ... we were both 20 and looking forward to coming home. He was on the radio the day we got a request for a warm body for 'REMF' job ... out of the field. He asked me if he could take it as his ticket out of the mud ... I gladly gave his name and wished him well in life. Sadly, it was in the rear that a fire broke out while he was assisting a brush clearing operation around a TOC. While fighting the flames one of the men set off an old French landmine, killing Danny and another soldier. In my heart I know I gave him his ticket out of the bush ... but for all these years, I wonder if I had only passed on the 'gift' he would have been there to see his children grow...He will always be smiling in my memories."

From his Platoon Leader,
Mike Rogers



Michael Edward Kiscaden
E/20, C/N75*



"Sgt. Michael E. Kiscaden, 19, of 608 W. Walnut St., Lancaster, was killed Wednesday, July 1, in Vietnam when the military vehicle he was driving was attacked by hostile forces. He is the 62nd countian to die in the war in Southeast Asia. Born in Lancaster, he was a son of Donald E. and Ruth H. Dornes Kiscaden. He attended McCaskey High School and received his state diploma from the Department of the Army. Sgt. Kiscaden was a ranger with the 173rd Airborne Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division. He had enlisted in the Army in August of 1967. He received the Air

Medal for his participation in more than 25 aerial missions over hostile territory in Vietnam, and received the Army Commendation Medal for valorous action on September 13, 1969 while serving as a senior scout observer of a ranger team engaged in combat with a numerically superior force near Pham Thiet. Sgt.

Kiscaden received the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious achievement in ground operations against hostile forces from January, 1969 to January, 1970. Surviving are his parents, at home; a sister, Kathleen J., at home; his maternal grandmother, A. Margaret Dornes, at home; and his paternal grandfather, Robert E. Kiscaden, of Lancaster."

Jim McIlhenney
Viet Vet



Gregory Keith Krueger
E/17th Cav

"Our recon platoon had a three day stand-down at Lo Dho beach. After a game of football, we decided to bury Greg in the sand. I can remember the look on his face as I took a picture of him in the sand. He was having a great day away from the riggers of being a combat recon team leader. I liked Greg and was extremely sad when he passed away. He will always be remembered."

Larry Trevaskis
We served together



So long Greg.

(continued...)





John Joseph Lavelle
C/Spt Bn

"Army Spec. 4 John Lavelle was the 25th Bayonne youth to die in the Vietnam conflict. A parachutist, Lavelle was stationed in Germany prior to being sent to Southeast Asia. He trained as a parachute rigger at the Army Quartermaster School, Ft. Lee, Va., and later completed a three week course at Ft. Benning, Ga., which qualified him as a parachutist."

Joe Stachelski

Pleasant McCray, Jr., D/2/503

"I was the Aircraft Commander of the C130 that carried you on your final flight from the field back to Saigon. I have never forgotten you and the supreme sacrifice you made. Rest in peace."

Roy J. Spencer, Jr.



Robert Dale Osier, Jr.
E/4/503

"When I visit my dad's grave I visit yours too. Yours is next to my dad's. I was in Vietnam when you died and missed your funeral. Rest in peace."

Cornell B. Osier. Cousin

Jose Manuel Perez, A/4/503

"Thank you Manny, for all your encouragements and memories for the times we spent running and hunting. You gave your life in order that others could enjoy this freedom. God Bless you."

Robert W. Acres, We grew up together

William Dale Secor, B/4/503

"Bill was my squad leader and he is the reason I'm here today, he saved my life many of times. He took me under his wings and showed me the ropes when I was green. I will never forget him. I have a new family now because of him. I also owe him my rank, when he passed on, I had to take his place. I found out what an awesome job he had keeping us in line. He is in a better place now and I believe he's at rest even though he was taken young. I will never forget him and he will have a place in my heart. Airborne All the Way!"

Unsigned



Kenneth Wesley Slaughter
D/4/503

"Never got to really know you. As a young Sgt you thought I looked like a 15 year old teenager. We ran only one mission but I knew you were an LT that we could trust under fire. RIP, and I will always remember you."

Sgt. Turner
4th Bat, 173d Abn

Randal Gene Sowers, HHB/3/319

John Anthony Suniga, Jr., "Doc", HHC/2/503

~ July 1971 ~

Alan Sherman Goff, A/2/503

"We will always remember you. Thank you for being there for us. From a friend."

Robert Santangelo

Richard Stuart Patterson, A/2/503

"Snoopy, I was there in the 506 Valley when you died. Hardly a day has gone by over the last 30 years that I have not thought about you. You took my place on the patrol. I don't know why, but it happened. I have always wished I could talk to your family and tell them about you. Your country and I owe you a great debt! You will not be forgotten."

Sam Crews

We served together

Michael Watkins, D/1/503, 534 Sig*

"Mike and I ran track together at Franklin K. Lane High School...he was better at it than I was. He was always there urging me not to quit when I got tired. I shipped out two years before he did, in 1967. Never saw him again. I did get a picture of him at the annual sports banquet...one of the guys sent it to me. Looked like he was having a good time as usual. Later I found one of us together at my going away party. I miss you man. Whenever I'm having a rough time now I hear you telling me not to quit...and I manage to muddle on...later man...Phil 'Hard Grind' Capps."

Neighborhood/high school partners





OPERATION SIN CITY



26 - 29 August 2013

The 173d Airborne Brigade Association Annual Reunion

Hosted by:

Chicago and Florida Chapters

~ REGISTRATION FORM ~

Please print & copy form for additional names.

(Indicate shirt size for each individual. S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL)

Name: _____

Shirt Size: ___ Phn: _____ Eml: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ___ Zip: _____

Country: _____

Unit served with in the Brigade: _____

Guest Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Shirt Size: _____

Guest Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Shirt Size: _____

Guest Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Shirt Size: _____

Guest Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Shirt Size: _____

~ Registration Fees ~

___ \$150. Per Member or Guest before 25 July 2013,

\$165. Per Member or Guest after 25 July 2013.

___ \$150. Gold Star Family Member

___ \$100. Per Vendor Table (173d Vendors only)*

___ \$75. Per Active Duty Soldier (Not on Orders)

Free Active Duty Soldier (On Orders, i.e. Command, Color Guard)

Free Gold Star Luncheon (173d Gold Star Family Members)

___ \$25. Sky Soldier Adoption Program* "Have your meals on me".

___ Total of check enclosed in USD.

**Sky Soldier Adoption Program: We have active duty Sky Soldiers fly in from Italy who must pay airfare, hotel, meals and reunion fees costing them thousands of dollars. We try and offset their cost by giving them a break on the registration cost. You can help out by purchasing a meal voucher so our active duty Sky Soldiers traveling in from Europe will have reduced cost. Please contribute to our Sky Soldier Adoption Program and let him/her have their meals donated and sponsored by you!*

Please Make Checks Payable to:

173d ABA 2013 Reunion

and mail to:

2013 Reunion

5640 Wellfield Road

New Port Richey, FL 34655

Host Hotel

The Orleans

4500 W. Tropicana Ave.

Las Vegas, Nevada 89103

Phone: 702-365-7111 Toll Free: **800-675-3267**

ID Code **A3SSC08**

Room Rate: \$29. per night + Tax and fees.

Rate good for 25 to 29 August 2013. Or register on-line at www.orleanscasino.com/groups

Refunds if notified by 25 July 2013, no refunds after 25 July 2013.

Only authorized 173d vendors may hold a raffle, one per table in the vendors' area only.

173d Gold Star Family Members of our KIA's: Spouse, Parent, Sibling, Children)

Reunion Contact:

Jim Bradley

727-376-2576 after 4:30 pm EST (Please)

www.2013Reunion.com





**HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM
APO San Francisco 96375**



GENERAL ORDERS NUMBER 4665

14 September 1967

AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced posthumously:

**BOROWSKI, JOHN C. RA16838078 PRIVATE FIRST CLASS E3
United States Army, Company A, 4th Battalion, 503rd Infantry,
173rd Airborne Brigade**

Awarded: Distinguished Service Cross

Date Action: 10 July 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam:

Private First Class Borowski distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 10 July 1967 while serving as platoon machine gunner during a large scale search and destroy mission near Dak To. As Private Borowski's platoon investigated a recently traveled trail, it received intense fire from a well-entrenched Viet Cong battalion. Firing rifles, automatic weapons and mortars from concealed bunkers, the insurgents were able to inflict numerous casualties on the friendly force. Private Borowski disregarded his own safety in this storm of fire and maneuvered to within 20 meters of the enemy's right flank machine gun position. When his own machine gun was damaged by an insurgent's fire, he continued to engage the hostile gunners using only his pistol. He received a shrapnel wound but never eased his force of attack. Later, despite enemy fire sweeping the area, Private Borowski crawled to a nearby friendly position. He refused medical treatment, grabbed a rifle and grenade launcher, and once again advanced on the Viet Cong. He was mortally wounded while firing with devastating effect into the enemy's bunkers. Private First Class Borowski'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.



Some gave all....

Authority: By direction of the President under the provisions of the Act of Congress, approved 25 July 1963.



HUD & VA TEAM UP TO PROVIDE PERMANENT HOMES TO 9,000 HOMELESS VETS

HUD-VASH vouchers to build on 17 percent decline in Veteran homelessness since 2009

WASHINGTON – Approximately 9,000 homeless Veterans living on the streets and in the nation's shelter system will soon find a permanent place to call home. U.S. Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Shaun Donovan and U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Eric K. Shinseki announced today that HUD will provide \$60 million to local public housing agencies across the country to offer permanent supportive housing to homeless Veterans, many of whom are living with chronic disabling conditions.

The supportive housing assistance announced today is provided through the **HUD-Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) Program** which combines rental assistance from HUD with case management and clinical services provided by VA. Since 2008, a total of 48,385 vouchers have been awarded and 42,557 formerly homeless Veterans are currently in homes because of HUD-VASH. Donovan and Shinseki announced this additional support for homeless Veterans in an address to the National Coalition of Homeless Veterans conference today.

"It's a national tragedy that those who served our Nation in uniform can end up living in our shelters or on our streets," said Donovan. *"Today we make another investment in meeting President Obama's challenge that we end Veteran homelessness once and for all."*

"These HUD-VASH vouchers are a critical resource to accomplish our shared goal of ending Veterans' homelessness in 2015," Shinseki said. *"With the continued support of President Obama, Congress, and our community partners, we will end homelessness among Veterans and provide these brave men and women with the earned care and benefits that help them live productive, meaningful lives."*

HUD-VASH is a critical part of the Obama Administration's commitment to end Veteran and long-term chronic homelessness in 2015. HUD's annual "point in time" estimate of the number of homeless persons and families for 2012 found that Veteran homelessness fell by 7.2 percent (or 4,876 people) since January 2011 and by 17.2 percent since January 2009. On a single night in January 2012, 62,619 veterans were homeless.

[See complete May 29th report at va.org]

Pebbles...One of the Few

Charlie Company 2/503 lost a good man this week in June 2013 while on a recon in Benton, Arkansas.

We called him Pebbles because he was from Little Rock...the man had a rural ease about him, a grin that continually signaled larceny was afoot, and a sense of humor that was rarely black but always delivered on time.

Ken Gilbert is his Christian name...for me, his captain, Pebbles is a better fit. He stood his post as a Grunt in 1st Platoon for one year...never bitched... smoked some...and was always on the pad when the slicks took us back to the woods.

Paratroopers are a special breed of men and Pebbles was one of the few...Like Nasty, and Van, and the others who have gone on.

I will miss knowing I can talk to Pebbles, paratrooper to paratrooper... and have a beer.

A damn shame is what it is...

Cap

Gary Prisk
CO, C/2/503d

Pebbles with the 'Hill People' and Cap at 173d Reunion in Lexington



Front row L-R: Ken "Pebbles" Gilbert & Zulu
Back row L-R: Doc, Robertson, Harv, Linus & Cap



~ The Oldest Jumper ~

CLEVELAND (AP) -- A 92-year-old man with artificial knees made it into the record books by becoming the oldest person ever to jump out of an airplane without holding on to anyone else. "What a thrill!" Herb Tanner said seconds after he touched down Friday. "That was beautiful. Just gorgeous. I'd love to do that again, but not today."

Tanner, of the Cleveland suburb of Mayfield Heights, looked to the *Guinness Book of World Records* to see what kind of mark he could make in parachuting. Jumping while attached to another parachutist was out. A 99-year-old woman already had done it, and the record for males was held by a 95-year-old Englishman. But Tanner could still break a record if he jumped solo.

The record had been held by the late Edwin C. Townsend, who was 89 when he jumped in Louisiana in 1986. After receiving basic jump instruction and making 10 computer jumps using a virtual reality simulator, Tanner was ready. The 105-pound Tanner -- fake knees, hearing aid and all -- climbed into a jump suit and leaped from a plane at 3,500 feet.

A lifelong pilot, Tanner has flown for 63 years but never parachuted. "I always wanted to parachute, but my wife wouldn't let me," he said. "She said she would leave me if I jumped. She died two years ago."

Note: The oldest Tandem Jumper was 100 years old, October 1999 (*Skydiving magazine*).



~ The Youngest Jumper ~

In a leap into the record books, four-year-old Toni Stadler became the youngest person to skydive! The tandem parachute jump took place at the Cape Parachute Club, 25 miles north of Cape Town, South Africa, on Oct. 27, just five days before Toni's fifth birthday.

The youngster was strapped to jumpmaster Paul Lutge's chest as they leaped out of their single-engine plane 10,000 feet above the earth, freefalling for half a minute before opening the parachute.

Toni's mom said, "We have been skydiving for four years and recently Toni started asking if he could jump too. We did not make him do it. He made us let him."

http://www.skyxtreme.com/archive/dec_jan2000/news.htm#record

Smitty & Smitty

But which is which?



Last month we ran a photo of Reggie's and my most favorite guy ever, a young Aidan Lewis Smith (Smittytoo) wearing his 173d Airborne beret and decked out in cammo while sitting at the controls of a Vietnam-era Huey on display at a Vets' reunion in Melbourne, Florida. Upon seeing the photo of her younger brother showcased in our newsletter, a backlash was heard across the peninsula in the form of a beautiful, little girl voicing loudly, "Opa! How come I'm not in your magazine?!" To keep peace is the Smith household, here's your newsletter editor with our most favorite little girl in the whole wide world; surfer, piano player, singer, basketball & football player, artist and student extraordinaire, grand-daughter Sofia Danielle Smith (aka Smitty). Proud Ed

~ In The Whole Wide World ~

2/503 troopers are invited to send in a photo of you with your favorite little (or big) boy(s) and/or girl(s) for inclusion in a future issue of our newsletter. Please send photo and a brief descriptive note to rto173d@cfl.rr.com entering "The Whole Wide World" on the subject line. Dressing them up as paratroopers is optional. ☺ Ed



2/503d VIETNAM Newsletter / July 2013 – Issue 55

Page 47 of 64



**HQ US ARMY, VIETNAM,
APO San Francisco 96375
21 September 1967
GENERAL ORDERS NUMBER 4802**



AWARD OF THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

1. TC 320. The following AWARD is announced posthumously.

DANIEL WALTER JORDAN

1st Lieutenant, Infantry

Company A, 4th Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry Regiment

Awarded: Distinguished Service Cross

Date of Action: 10 July 1967

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: The Distinguished Service Cross is presented to Daniel Walter Jordan, 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 A, 4th Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate). First Lieutenant Jordan distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 10 July 1967 while serving as platoon leader of an airborne infantry platoon on a combat mission near Dak To. Late in the afternoon, the lead platoon of Lieutenant Jordan's company was attacked and pinned down by heavy automatic weapons fire from a well-entrenched Viet Cong force. He received an order to maneuver his men in a flank attack on the insurgents to relieve the attack pressure on the engaged element. Because of poor radio contact, he was forced to run through areas exposed to hostile fire to coordinate with his commander. He then returned to his men and braved constant hostile fire to organize his men and lead them forward. For a half hour, Lieutenant Jordan made repeated trips to the command post to report his element's progress and receive instructions.



He moved among his men, calming and encouraging them, although this forced him to expose himself many times to the enemy's weapons. Under his leadership, the platoon was able to advance to a position from which to assault the Viet Cong machine gun positions. While courageously leading his men against

the numerically superior insurgent force, he was mortally wounded. First Lieutenant Jordan'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.



JOEL MICHAEL SABEL

Specialist Fourth Class, U.S. Army
Headquarters and Headquarters Company,
4th Battalion (Airborne),
503d Infantry Regiment,
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate),
Date of Action: July 10, 1967



Citation:

The Distinguished Service Cross is presented to Joel Michael Sabel, Specialist Fourth Class, 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 Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate). Specialist Four Sabel distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 10 July 1967 while serving as a medic of an Airborne infantry company on a combat mission deep in hostile territory. When his company came under heavy automatic weapons and mortar fire from a well-entrenched enemy force, Specialist Sabel repeatedly ignored his own safety to move among his wounded comrades to treat them. Seriously wounded himself, he refused medical aid and instructed others in treating the injured while he bandaged his own wounds. He continued to expose himself to the withering hostile fire while rendering constant aid to others despite his own injuries. With mortar and automatic weapons fire falling around him, he never stopped to consider his own welfare. He was mortally wounded while bravely caring for the needs of his comrades in the face of grave danger. Specialist Four Sabel'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 US Army, Vietnam, General Orders No. 4663
(September 14, 1967)

Home Town: West Covina, California

1st Cavalry Division

Fiddler's Green, The Cavalrymen's Poem

The first appearance of the poem, entitled "Fiddlers' Green" (in published form) was in a 1923 Cavalry Journal. Its origin and author is unknown. Although historical research indicates that it may have originated in Ireland, it was believed to have found roots in the United States Cavalry Units in the post Civil War period and was first sung by the troopers of the 6th and 7th Cavalry Regiments.



Fiddler's Green

Halfway down the trail to Hell
In a shady meadow green
Are the Souls of all dead Troopers camped
Near a good old-time canteen,
And this eternal resting place is
Known as Fiddler's Green

Marching past straight through to Hell
The infantry are seen
Accompanied by the Engineers,
Artillery and Marines,
For none the shades of Cavalrymen
Dismount at Fiddlers' Green

Though some go curving down the trail
To seek a warmer scene,
No Trooper ever gets to Hell
Ere he's emptied his canteen,
And so rides back to drink again
With friends at Fiddlers' Green

And so when man and horse go down
Beneath a sabre keen,
Or on roaring charge of fierce melee
You stop a bullet clean,
And the hostiles come to get your scalp
Just empty your canteen,
And put your pistol to your head
And go to Fiddlers' Green



Buck Sergeant in Training

This photo was taken while I was a Training Officer at Ft Ord. The Platoon Sergeant for this unit was from the 173rd. I don't know his name but I remember a few things about him.



I believe he was with the Herd in Okinawa and went with them to Vietnam. He had a string of objects in his pocket which he said were the ears of NVA or VC that were killed while he was in country. He said that was the way they would confirm their body counts (i.e. cut off the ears and turn them in with their reports). I have no idea if that was true or not. I'd sure like to know if he's still around and remembers being with me at Ft Ord. Could you ask in our Newsletter?

I'd also like to know if there are any Infantrymen who were trained in D-3-2. That was my unit in '65 and '66. It was an AIT Infantry Training Company. They'd come through for eight weeks, we'd have a break for a week or two and then another company would come through for eight weeks. My favorite was to Airborne Shuffle them to and from the training areas around the post. I even had a Company Commander from another Company come to my CO complaining that we embarrassed his unit as we'd *Airborne Shuffle* by calling out in cadence:

*Too Bad
So Sad
D 3 2
Is Coming Through
D Company
Passing By
So Good
Airborne
All The Way
Can't Stop
D 3 2*

I'm wondering if any of our Sky Soldiers remember being in D-3-2 and my being their Training Officer? I must have been there for at least seven companies of trainees - approximately 2,100 Infantrymen. I'm guessing that at least 20 or 30 ended up in the Herd. Could you put the question up in our newsletter?

Thanks,

Airborne, All The Way!!

"Ragman"
Bob Getz
Task Force CO, 2/503d
rgetz173@yahoo.com



Infantry training at Ft. Ord, 1965. (web photo)





PART VIII

503rd PIR WWII Journal

See Parts I thru VII of WWII 503d PIR trooper Jerry B. Riseley's 'official journal' in Issues 46 thru 50, and 52 thru 54 respectively, of our newsletter. Ed



17 October 1943



The Inspector General reigns in the Bn S-3 tent. (*Where Riseley could see who came in and out*). On the list, all Co Cmdrs., all 1st Sgts, several junior

officers and the Bn Ex officers. In the afternoon he took complaints down at the chaplain's tent. Not only did he listen to the woes of the self-appointed ill-treated soldiers, putting the ones who were in the wrong on the right track with a few well directed remarks and making notes on those who were in the right, but he asked a few questions of his own. Carefully warning the officer or the enlisted man of his rights under the 24th Article of War and indicating he was making a formal investigation, he started his questions:

Do you have faith and confidence in the leadership and ability of your platoon leader?

If the answer is "yes" he'd ask about the company commander. Then the battalion and regimental commander. If the answer is "no", then "why not?" Concerning the regimental commander, Kenneth Kinsler, he got a "No" answer. Then "why not?"

A. On 5 Sept. I met Col. Kinsler on the trail leading to the battalion objective. He did not have any equipment on or near him.

Q. Not even a rifle?

A. Not even a rifle. He didn't even have a helmet. He asked me if any of my men had his belt. I told him they did not. He stood alongside the trail as they passed, there after the Nadzab jump, and asked each one if he'd seen his belt.

Q. What else?

A. Arriving at the CP he took a rifle squad out of one of the companies to serve as his personal body guard.

Q. What else?

A. He spent his time at Nadzab in a cub airplane looking for parachutes for the two days and on the third day assigned the task to a Lt.

Q. What do you think he should have been doing?

A. I think he should have been forward with his battalions and companies seeing how they were getting along. I know my battalion commander, Col. George M. Jones, spent most of his time with his forward platoons. Colonel Kinsler's CP was almost a mile behind the Seventh Australian Division CP.

Q. Have you spoken of the reasons for this lack of confidence with any other officers?

A. Is that an incriminating question?

Q. I think not.

A. Yes, I have.

Q. Have they agreed with you?

A. I cannot recall any who disagreed.

Q. How many officers have you spoken to about this?

A. At one time or another every officer in the battalion with the exception of, of course, of the Bn Cmdr. Say every officer from the company commanders down.

Q. What are your duties in the battalion?

A. I am the Battalion Adjutant.

The proceedings go on. Most are sitting and waiting.



Colonel Kinsler

(Photo courtesy Dan MacRaid & 503rd Heritage Bn)

(continued....)



An interesting account is placed here:

"The fall of Officer Candidate John Q. Zilch* (not his true name) who was detailed for OCS around 1 Oct 43: 1st Sgt. Zilch, a Slav and ex-boxer, looked the part. He was a leader. He welded into Company P the spirit that made it the finest company in the regiment (there will be 10 claims to that). With due respect to the company's splendid succession of Company Commanders, Zilch was the moving force. He had a high respect for his boys. They had a high respect for him too. Candidate Zilch washed out of OCS."

"(Zilch) could lick any man in the company — and frequently did if he considered the man needed it. Captain Mulucki (not a true name) regarded him as the finest man he had ever known and often said he'd make a poor lieutenant, but a superior company commander. But Sgt. Zilch had been in the tropics for more than two years now. He said, "The tropics ain't good for a man."

One day last month, Zilch, who never confided in anyone, confided to one of his officers, "Lieutenant, I've aged ten years in the last six months." Something was wrong. When Zilch left for OCS I could feel P Company breathe a sigh. I breathed one myself. Which is not strange. A lot of people do unexplainable things around here.

Like Lt. Grant with his well-poised air appearing to contemplate a problem at an officer's meeting. (Screen credit here to the University of Kansas. Their graduates come away with a view that they never believe anything, especially what they see). Grant will go for days with a scowl on his face, scarcely speaking to , anyone his pants legs unbuttoned and not giving a damn for nothing. But he always turns up again, the same cussedly brilliant Bitsy. After Zilch left, the wind began to blow. Tales about how, running out of money in a poker game, Zilch calmly reached over and took half of the pile of money belonging to a private and went on playing without saying a word. His company commander, "I saw him over in the orderly room eating cookies out of a package, the soldier the package was sent to never had seen it. Doc Lamar: "Zilch is all right. He just took too much atabrine."



Lt. Bitsy Grant

*Mike Hostinsky, 1st Sgt. F company did not complete OCS in Brisbane and was rotated home.

"The score: Col. Kinsler is going to be relieved. (Our guess: Not one man did I hear say 'the wind was blowing my way') that he had confidence in the regimental commander. Of the answering the other commanders, I could hear an occasional yes or no, but the answers concerning the regimental commander were loud and clear "No's."



Parachute Officer Class 8
March 27, 1942

The battalion. The roster system has called in few officers thus far. Those who have been called in have stayed as long as two or three hours. What are they saying? Do you have confidence in the ability and leadership of your battalion commander? What is the answer? Although an officer may disagree with some of his policies—the killer hikes at Port Moresby for instance, and although an officer may have felt that Lt. Col. Jones has been unduly strict on occasion, has shown partiality, has placed over confidence in an unworthy subordinate, has endeavored at times to better his own ends without consideration of the battalion; although an officer may personally hate him for promises unkept, although he in his own mind may have charged Jones with a hundred misdeeds, there is only one answer to the question if he is true to himself. And that answer is, "Yes, sir, I do have every confidence in Colonel Jones." Without going into proof, for the man is proof in himself, the fact remains: The men of this battalion regard Lt. Col. Jones as their leader and they do have every confidence in his leadership and ability. They may cuss him and in their hearts damn the very day he was born, at times, but he has caught that intangible thread in much of them, that pacifier of a scared soldier in danger, "he knows what he is doing and everything is going to be all right."

Waiting. The officers are resting back and whispering a bit. Waiting to see what is going to happen. Waiting for something they've long known was going to happen. Colonel Kinsler could only fool the government so long.

(continued....)



18 October 1943



One more name scratched off the roster today, Lt. Blum left for temporary duty with base section here in Morseby.

Everyone is sweating out who the new mess officer will be--bastard job that it is. (Ex-mess officers: Capt. Falcon, Lt. Parks, Lt. Jacomini, Lt. Riseley, Lt. Schuder, Lt. Grant). Capt. Falcon pulled one from behind his ear, laying a letter on the Bn Cmdr's desk addressed to CO 503d requesting relief from duty as a company commander on the basis of ill health due to extended tropical duty. He came to Panama with Company "C" 501st Prcht Bn, July 1941.

The IG is still scratching around. All of the officers of the battalion are to standby for call, all Sgts also. Lt. Cataline virtually threatened Mr. Joe Bitala (Warrant Officer) with everything, from courts-martial to beating hell out of him. All because Mr. Joe told Johnnie Big Ears, politely, as benefits a WOJG speaking to a rank conscious 1st Lt., that the lamp Johnnie Big Ears was carrying out of Lt. Howard's tent (CO Hq Co 2d Bn), was a lamp which did belong to Hq Co. Cataline told him it was none of his goddamn business, to which Joe was apologetic but insistent in his reply that the lamp did belong to Hq Co. Then Cataline really began to cuss him. There was nothing that Joe could do, a WOJG can't cuss back at a rank conscious 1st Lt. But the witnesses won't forget. Because Mr. Joe has his own prestige. He is one of the most liked officers in the battalion. Nobody ever had any trouble with Mr. Joe. As adjutant, I've tried his soul, swore at the man that invented radios and telephones and put them in the army and called them communications. I have condemned the whole bloody business and everybody connected with it. But Bitala and his gang always get my messages through. And old Joe stands around with a grin on his face through the whole process. Warrant Officer Junior Grade Bitala was getting along with people in the Army when 1st Lt. Cataline was a small fry in the poolroom.

Vandivort made mess officer. This is a great sorrow into a man's life. But he'll have greater sorrow. *Vandivort would have greater sorrows than anybody ever knew. As it came to pass, in another battle, in the same war, on July 23, 1944, he would lose his life in the same incident for which Sgt. Ray Eubanks was awarded a posthumous Medal of Honor. This citation for action at Noemfoor Island, Dutch New Guinea, is set forth in full elsewhere in the Heritage Bn Website (also see June 2013, Issue 50, Page 44 of this newsletter. Ed). Lt.*

Vandivort was awarded a posthumous Silver Star for his heroic action which resulted in his death.

Back to Vandivort in happier days.

He's just been made mess officer. New Guinea rations consist of coffee, cream of wheat and some other concoction for breakfast, dinner brings dried potatoes and the juices of vegetables crowding out a bit of greenish meat, no coffee. Supper is much on the line of dinner except there is tea.

This bothered Capt. Padgett, the Bn S-3 and a slide rule genius from Georgia Tech. He is deserving of a Legion of Merit for his tireless effort and final success in designing a fit trap and finding a perfect bait for it. Let it be known that in the Army there are fly traps and fly traps. A fly trap, old trap, old style, has always been a standby of medical officers. If a medical officer can find no serious recommendations to make, he will turn a solemn face to the CO and say "*Build fly traps!*" and then walk away. All other activities cease. The entire command builds fly traps, square ones, cone shaped ones, triangular ones, in all sizes and forms. But they all have one thing in common: the flies carefully avoid them. The next day the medical officer returns. "*You are not using proper bait!*" Then he walks away. Field manuals are poured over. Mess Officers and ex-mess officers go into conference: mess sergeants and ex-mess sergeants go into conference. Suggestions are gleaned from experiences at Fort Kobbe, Canal Zone, Pina, Republic of Panama, Manila, P.I., and Honolulu.

"Sugar and Vinegar", "Cold Bacon Rind", and "Salt and Molasses." All are tried. But the flies ignore everything and continue to swarm on the lips of our canteen cups. It was this problem that the brilliant Capt. Padgett faced. The heroic manner and tactical decisiveness with which he solved the problem should go down as a tribute to the type of officer who has built this battalion. He simply picked a fly trap at random and calmly inserted a plate of Lt. Blum's choice food beneath. By noon the innards of the trap were filled with flies.



**Ray Eubanks, 2/503d
MOH Recipient**

(continued....)



Lt. Col. Jones called an officers meeting in the officers' quarters. The subject: Officers' tents. The argument: A tour through same. The solution: Make reveille until you learn to keep your tents tidy. Effects: A general feeling of sheepishness. Effects tomorrow: a general feeling of sleepiness. Too bad.

Capt. Falcon went to the hospital today. Capt. Padgett left out on a mission for Col. Kinsler. North? Or South to engage a defense counsel?

19 October 1943

This page deliberately left blank.



20 October 1943



Holiday today. One year ago today, two battalions and RHQ and Service Company left the USA. 1 Nov. should be a day of mourning for the 501st Prcht

Bn. On that day it embarked at Balboa, Canal Zone (1942) and joined the regiment aboard ship bound for Australia, "Bless 'em all."

Today a letter went forward to relieve Officer candidate Zilch and return him without prejudice to this organization.

The Inspector General is still holding court.

21 October 1943



Jack Horner and Bibb and Luscomb return from Gordonvale. The new officer replacements are fresh out of OCS. Schuder has received permission talking himself into a job as Rear Base (Gordonvale) Mess Officer and is ready to marry and settle down for the duration. Luscomb spent his time in Australia well, no doubt, but this time, too well. He, the great bachelor Luscomb, consort of Margarita of Kelly's Ritz in Panama, says he is going to get married.

Reports started floating in this afternoon. The Inspector General had worked his way clear to the top and has Col. Kinsler sitting on a bench across the table from his

in the IG's office down by the Chaplain's tent most of the day. How unfortunate it is when holders of power take themselves and their power too seriously. There must have been a better way to do it. Whatever was done, it was not done right. If anything should have been inspected that day, it ought to have been the Inspector General. Blast forever the pompous wielders of power! What did the Inspector General say to Col. Kinsler? What kind of preparation went into the making of that Inspector General? What an idiot! Who is to inspect the Inspector General?

Did the Inspector General say to Col. Kinsler, "You are no leader?" Or did he just make a few recommendations, and take his leave of the regiment, and go back to General Krueger so that General Krueger could come down himself and take a look at the situation? Maybe if the Inspector General had said to Col. Kinsler, "Kinsler, this regiment looks like a pig sty," then Col. Kinsler could have simply said "Yes, Sir." Said the two words that win wars, and that would have been the end of it. Kinsler could have slipped away, been given a nice billet down in Brisbane in charge of the WAC's, the WAVES and the motor pool, and been happy polishing his parachute badge. For goodness sakes, he had done enough. He had brought the regiment this far forward, and he did not have to pull the thing along forever. General Krueger recognizes all of the problems that come up in an Army in a war. He has always respected our 503d soldiers as the finest physical specimens to be found in the Army. And Col. Kinsler was as much of a soldier as any of us. What the hell, who can be forever the perfect soldier, and who wants to be? Will the Inspector General call Krueger in to deal with whatever has to be dealt with? WE are still waiting. Perhaps Kinsler has enough pull to get out of this without being reclassified and with nothing more than a quiet transfer to an airborne command in the States. He can be made Base Commander. And perhaps he doesn't.

The battalion at present is engaged in combat firing.

In the light of what is to come, the Adjutant is writing these entries after several eventful days. No matter how tough the soldier, empathy and compassion lay underneath as a bedrock of personality.

(continued....)



22 October 1943



In the late afternoon of 21 October 1943, Colonel Kinsler summoned his lieutenant colonels to his tent. He shared a bottle of whiskey with them in a cordial and apparently normal social interaction. That night, Colonel Kinsler and an Australian nurse travelled to a nearby gravel pit. Later, the nurse reported that Colonel Kinsler had committed suicide.

Some believed the nurse's story. Some didn't. The gunshot wound was reportedly in Kinsler's chest. The weapon was Kinsler's own .45 Colt. (Riseley knew from first hand observation that Colonel Kinsler was a failure as a commander, but he did not forget that Kinsler was a human being. In today's society it seems that more and more we preach love and kindness, while in practice we cover our own asses).

This morning Lt. Col. Lawrie, the regimental executive officer, called and said it was urgent that Lt. Col. Jones be located at once. Lt. Col. Jones ranked Lt. Col. Lawrie, but down in Gordonvale, long ago, when Major Britten had command of the 2d Bn for a short time, a very short time, a military decision was made. It was decided that since Lt. Col. Jones got along famously with the 2d Bn, and the war probably wouldn't last long enough for the 2d Bn to learn to get on with somebody like Major Britten,* or Lt. Col. Lawrie, that it would be best for everyone to leave the 2d Bn to Lt. Col. Jones, and let Lt. Col. Lawrie and Col. Kinsler tough out the compatibility problems of being regimental Ex and Regimental CO. They did this famously.

**Lieutenant Colonel John W. Britten served as commanding officer of the Second Battalion succeeding Colonel Jones until December 1945 when he was moved up to 503d RCT Executive Officer. Thus he was in command of this battalion for fourteen months.*



Lt. Col. Jones was out on the rifle range and no one knew where that was. Since Jones returned to the battalion in May, there had never been any doubt about where Little Joe Lawrie stood. When Col. Kinsler was gone, Little Joe was still regimental executive officer. Not regimental commander, but regimental executive officer. On those days, Lt. Col. Jones was the regimental commander, and he was also CO 2d Bn. But

the regimental orders for the day, the day in which Col. Kinsler was gone, were signed, "By order of Lt. Col. Jones."

On such days it was not a good idea for anyone at regiment to hand the CO 2d Bn any monkey business. On one of these days, we had a motor officer named Lt. M-P-O. Lt. Col. Jones sent word down to M-P-O to send a jeep. But M-P-O said that could only be done on the authority of Lt. Col. Lawrie. Every man in the regiment knew what the rank was between these Lt. Colonels. Everybody but M-P-O. This day he wasn't too sharp. He must have sharpened up because he grew into a lawyer. Either that or it takes a certain type of dumbness to succeed at the law. At any rate, it was only after Lt. Col. Jones asked M-P-O did M-P-O want to send up that Jeep or did he want Jones to order Lawrie to drive the Jeep up himself, that M-P-O got the idea. Come to think of it, that is about the only time I ever saw Jones on the edge of being a bit irritated. And he only did it to reason with someone who wasn't quite up to the job that morning.



LTC Jones

(continued....)



About 1400 WO Crawford called "Hey, Jerry B., you got a Field Manual 22 dash 5, that's the one on Military Courtesy?"

"No, but what do you want to know?"

"How many men in a firing squad?"

"I don't know. You can find it in USASOS regulations; we had eight for Capt. Greco, did somebody die?"

"Okay, I'll look it up" (pause, then) Hey, Jerry B., Colonel Lawrie wants to talk to you."

"This is Colonel Lawrie, Riseley. There will be a regimental formation tomorrow for Colonel Kinsler's funeral. The uniform will be jump suits, boots, and helmets. Colonel Jones says to have the men spend the rest of the day cleaning up their uniforms."

I went over to see City Parks at Company F. He was conducting NCO school. I might as well have told John Cole to start packing, we're going back to the States. Parks wasn't hearing a thing I said to him. He was just intent on doing what he was doing and he didn't want to be interrupted.

All he did was say "Okay," and go on with the lesson. After I swore at him for about two minutes and ended up giving the order "in the name of Colonel Jones" did it dawn on him that I might be setting him up for something unpleasant indeed. When I went ahead and gave the order in the name of the President of the United States, Parks finally began to comprehend. Snaz Howard, commander of Headquarters Company, was over in his bunk. "How did Kinsler do it?" he asked.

Captain Davis P. Falcon, over at E Company, was the only one who appeared even momentarily grieved. Capt. Falcon is a sort of deep guy even if he did have trouble the other day figuring out that the "C" on his dog tags wasn't his blood type. Old Ivey aid, "I guess that makes you battalion commander, chief."

The general opinion amongst the officers was that they didn't think Kinsler had been in that deep. General discussion: How he could have done it better. Suggested methods: He could have jumped without hooking up. All he had to do, with us there at Jackson Strip, was to call for a C-47E. Others thought he could have driven his jeep over a cliff. Just how Colonel Kinsler died is not yet known. But even the recruits down in D Company know why. It is sad, but it is a game which cannot be played again.

23 October 1943



Jump suits, jump boots, helmets, stripped belts, and individual arms. Thus clad did the 503d Parachute Infantry Regiment form on the ball diamond, down by the Chaplain's tent to salute their former regimental commander for the last time. It was a salute to the uniform of a full Colonel, Regular Army, Parachutist. And that was all.

At the cemetery, I was relieved. Somehow I feared that Colonel Kinsler might be buried next to Captain Greco. As it was he was buried in the same row. I suspect that Captain Greco is still there. His widow wrote me that after five months she had remarried. In other words, she didn't want to hear anything more about Captain Greco. Colonel Kinsler is also probably still there. As Edgar Lee Masters points out in *Spoon River Anthology*, "It takes all kinds to make a grave yard."



Photo by Daniel MacRaid, courtesy 503rd Heritage Bn website.

Lt. Col. Joe Lawrie, the regimental executive officer summoned Lt. Col. George Jones, the commanding officer of the Second Battalion, to the regimental command post from a training exercise he was conducting in the field. As senior officer of the 503d PIR, Jones was immediately ordered to assume command.

(continued....)



(Name of source unknown) *“Colonel Kinsler was found in a jeep in a gravel pit down by the hospital. Captain Lamar said it was a caliber 45 bullet through the heart. Captain Lamar said he didn’t think it was in line of duty. But he was wrong there. The Army held that it was in line of duty. About the only thing that is certain about the whole business is that Colonel Kinsler ended up dead. For me, I do not know who fired that bullet.”*

No note was ever found to shed light on whether Colonel Kinsler took his own life. There was no investigation. His body was later moved from the American sector of the Port Moresby Cemetery and reinterred in the U.S. Military Cemetery in Honolulu, Hawaii; space A-78.

Appendix

There came a time, of course, with Colonel Jones now Regimental Commander, that I performed all the functions of the Regimental Adjutant. Our regular Regimental Adjutant, Francis X. Donovan, was off down in Brisbane somewhere, so I just tagged along with Colonel Jones. But shortly the officers who were in charge of our Parachute Rear Base in Gordonvale didn’t get their bookkeeping done, and so I was sent along down to the Rear Base, as Adjutant. Everything I did down there, I did, *“By order of Colonel Jones”*, and that saved a lot of confusion with having field officer medical officers come by, or even other folks. I stayed there at that Rear Base until the Regiment was at Dobodura, in New Guinea, and then I was ordered back to Dobodura, while I would be awaiting rotation. I had hardly gotten to Dobodura when the remainder of the regiment flew out of there to go to Hollandia. So there I was in business with all the regimental files.

Flashback

Jackson Strip Camp at night. Sometime after Colonel Kinsler’s death. Walking back from the movies in the dark. Having been a mess officer, by accident I was walking past the 2d Battalion kitchen. I recognized a voice of a cook named Crowley. He was talking. *“Why,”* he says, *“the night before they found Colonel Kinsler dead, him and Colonel XYZ came by here in a jeep about ten o’clock.”*

I didn’t think anything about it at the time. But I was pleased to recognize my friend Crowley’s voice. And I did not know how things were supposed to be. But flashing forward to Dobodura, when I found myself with a rear base detachment of not over 30 men, at first, and hardly any officers, except for CWO Smith. He was at one end of the regimental area, and I was at the other. And, of course, in the privacy of my being Regimental

Adjutant at the Rear Base, I went right to the report of the investigation of the Death of Colonel Kenneth Kinsler. And the most important thing I noted in it was that Colonel XYZ, who, of course was not Colonel Jones, gave a statement.

Colonel XYZ went to bed early that night he said in his statement. *“He didn’t see Colonel Kinsler at all that night.”*

Jerry B Riseley

Hey Mate. Hey Yank.



“The Aussies arrived by land, and the 503d arrived by air. Both were glad to link-up.” (503rd Heritage Battalion)

Note:



Jerry Riseley’s Journal appears here courtesy of Paul Whitman of the 503rd Heritage Battalion website, and will continue in our August newsletter. Ed



Last month 173d Cowboy chopper pilot Tony Geishauser and his wife, Pam, visited the beaches at Normandy, France. We asked Tony to share with us his thoughts about their visit. Tony lost his own father, a Marine, at Iwo Jima during WWII. Ed

Reflections on Normandy from a visitor to Omaha Beach

Combat infantry stay away from roads and open spaces. Pilots avoid over-flying open spaces like the plague. They are killing zones to be avoided at all costs.

But what happens if you can't avoid huge open spaces you have to traverse with no cover from withering enemy fire coming at you point blank from elevated positions?

This is what Omaha Beach looks like at low tide today. **Three thousand Americans died on this beach** in one day from the relentless fire from German gun emplacements zeroed in on this beach and other landing sites (Sword, Juno, Gold, Utah and Pointe du Hock) on D-Day – June 6, 1944.



Cowboy chopper pilot Tony Geishauser stands on the hallowed sands of Omaha Beach.

What were the individual soldiers on this operation to retake France thinking as they disembarked from their landing craft? They knew they had no options but to literally do or die. The future of the world depended on what they would do that fateful day. It was not clear at all that victory was a given. The supreme commander of this massive invasion, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, wrote a message to be read in case of failure. He wrote

that the failure of the mission was not because every American and allied soldier, sailor and airman did not fight their hardest, but because of his inadequate planning of the mission. Thankfully, that message never had to be read as he had planned correctly and the greatest generation prevailed over their tough German advisories.

These soldiers were brave almost beyond description. None would have called themselves heroes. Most if not all were scared like never before, but they knew the over through of Nazi Germany was their task and no one else could or would be able to do the job for them. They knew that many of them would die so that future Americans could live in a free world without Nazi rule. Yet, when the doors of the landing vehicles opened, each soldier took a deep breath hoping for the best and expecting the worst.



U.S. troops assaulting the beaches at Normandy.

The dying screams of this wonderful band of brothers are now muted in the peaceful American cemetery provided by a grateful French nation in Normandy. Even in death, however, members of the greatest generation are still at military dress-right-dress.

(continued....)





American cemetery at Normandy, France. They were a band of brothers.



The Greatest Generation



'Ghost' American soldiers mingle with World War II age Frenchmen who pay their respects at the American cemetery....



....but no one can take their eyes off the killing fields the beaches were on that fateful day.

Tony Geishauer
Major, US Army (Ret)



The Chilling Letter Eisenhower Drafted in Case the Nazis Won on D-Day

By Eloise Lee
Business Insider

On this day 68 years ago, nearly 3 million Allied troops readied themselves for one of the greatest military operations of world history.

D-Day. And the push that led to Hitler's defeat.

At least 160,000 of those troops landed on the shores of Normandy, France. As they stormed the beaches, General Dwight D. Eisenhower's confident words summed up the incredible significance of their mission:

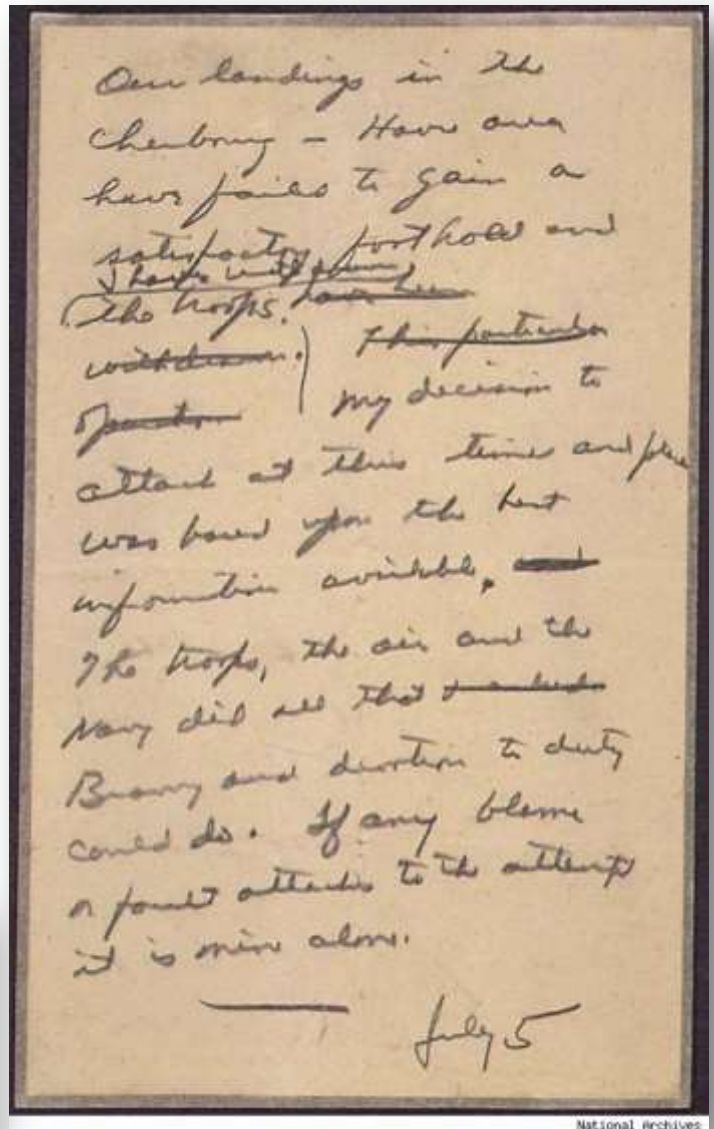
"You are about to embark upon a great crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The eyes of the world are upon you," he wrote in a famous letter sent to troops before the assault.



"We will accept nothing less than full victory! Good Luck!"

But there's another letter that he set aside "in case of failure." What if we lost?

As you may have seen before in the National Archives, General Eisenhower had doubts in the face of a "well trained, well equipped and battle-hardened enemy." If the invasion of Normandy failed, this is the message he would have relayed to the public. How different the world would be.



National Archives

Here's what it says:

"Our landings in the Cherbourg-Havre area have failed to gain a satisfactory foothold and I have withdrawn the troops. My decision to attack at this time and place was based upon the best information available. The troops, the air and the Navy did all that bravery and devotion to duty could do. If any blame or fault attaches to the attempt it is mine alone."

Note: He accidentally dated the letter July 5. It should have been June 5. We're sure he had a lot on his mind.



ROBERT S. SWAZUK

A/1/503 Trooper

Sky Soldier Robert Swazuk was born August 23, 1946, and died October 1, 2012 – we just now learned of his passing thanks to Michael Monte of C/4/503 and Chapter 1 president. Bob grew up in Ben Avon and attended Sacred Heart Elementary School and Avonworth High School.



Bob Swazuk

He was the son of Paul and Dorothy Swazuk (deceased), and the brother of William, Linda and Deborah (deceased). At the age of 16, Bob joined the Army. General Mathew Ridgeway (his father's commanding officer in the 82nd Airborne) interceded for him to join the Airborne in spite of his age. Bob joined the 173d Airborne Brigade, A company 1st Battalion 1st Platoon, in Okinawa, Japan in 1964. The 173d became the first Army ground combat unit sent to Vietnam in May 1965. Bob worked as unit radio operator, through triple canopy jungle, chasing down the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam. Initially assigned to guard airfields, men of the 173d were soon launched against two Viet Cong strongholds in War Zone D and the Iron Triangle. The Battle for Hill 875, a legendary fight, took place November 19-23, 1967. In the single most costly battle of the Vietnam War, Bob was one of 250 men to walk up the mountain (Hill 875) and only one of 20 to walk down. After the war, Bob continued his education and was married in 1970 to Linda Winslow of Bellevue. They have four children, Amy, Scott, Wendy and Ashley; and four grandchildren. Bob spent the majority of his career as a manufacturer's representative in the plumbing and HVAC industry. He lived for the last 20 years in the Columbus Ohio neighborhood of Worthington.

(Adapted from the obituary in *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*, 4-5 October 2012).

Five Sky Soldier veteran members of Chapter 1 attended the service -- alphabetically, they are Chapter Historian Edward Anthony (MI Detachment), Joseph Flesch (4th Batt), Mark Johnstone (New Brigade), Terrance Modglin (4th Batt), and Chapter President Michael Montie (4th Batt). In addition, Chaplain (CPT) Scott Kennaugh is a Sky Soldier veteran. He served with the Brigade during the 4th deployment.

All The Way, Bob

WWII Trivia ~ July

July 1, 1940, Japan: Rationing of sugar, matches and other goods is introduced.

July 6, 1940, Germany: Hitler's return from the Western Front is greeted by vast enthusiastic crowds.

July 10 1940, USA: Roosevelt asks Congress for a \$4,848 million defense budget to fund a 1.2 million-man army and 15,000 new planes.

July 1, 1941, USA: All men aged 21 or over have to register for the draft.

July 12, 1941, USSR: Moscow is raided by the *Luftwaffe* for the first time.

July 26, 1941, Philippines: Roosevelt incorporates the armed forces of the Philippines into the U.S. Army and sends General Douglas MacArthur to take up the command of U.S. forces in the Far East.

July 4, 1942, Egypt: The Australian 9th Division arrives to reinforce Allied resistance as the exhausted German Panzer units start to run out of ammunition.

July 9, 1942, Amsterdam: The Jewish Frank family, including 13-year old Anne, who keeps a diary, go into hiding from the Nazis.

July 15, 1942, El Alamein: The Allies hit two Italian divisions, forcing Rommel to postpone his offensive.

July 9, 1943, Heidelberg: Goebbels vows that Allied bombing will be avenged by a new secret weapon.

July 27, 1943, Solomon Islands: US forces assault Horseshoe Hill in New Georgia and sink two Japanese destroyers at Rabaul.

July 2, 1944, New Guinea: US amphibious forces seize Noemfoor Island.

July 6, 1944, Normandy: US forces capture La Haye-du-Puits.

July 17, 1944 France: US aircraft drop napalm for the first time, on a fuel depot at Constances.

July 2, 1945, Japan: Tokyo says that five million civilians have been killed or wounded by US fire-bombs.

July 11, 1945, Germany: The Russians hand over the western half of the city of Berlin to British and US forces.



Astonishing Vietnam War photos reveal the moment U.S. troops unleashed hell on Viet Cong sniper in hills above an Army camp

By Daily Mail Reporter
20 June 2013



A Vietnam War veteran has released incredible night-time photographs he took of American troops opening fire on a Viet Cong sniper who had been firing on a U.S. Army camp.

For more than four decades, photographer James Speed Hensinger kept these incredible photographs to himself, not releasing them to the public until now. Hensinger was just a 22-year-old paratrooper with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in April 1970 when a Viet Cong sniper began spraying automatic rifle fire on Hensinger's base in Phu Tai, near the coastal city of Da Nang.

The U.S. soldiers were trying to kill a Viet Cong sniper who routinely fired on the camp from the safety of the rock outcroppings. *"We were pissed off at taking Viet Cong sniper fire from the mountain above us several nights in a row,"* Hensinger, now 66 and living outside Denver, Colorado, recalls. *"The guy would stand up from behind a rock and blow off a clip from his AK47 on full-auto. The sniper was shooting at such a high angle that most of his rounds came through the sheet metal roofs of our hooches. We decided to use a 'heavy' response the next time the sniper hit us."*

The following night, Hensinger set up his Nikon FTN camera to take long exposures to capture the firefight. Each shot includes 15 to 60 seconds of gunfire. When the Viet Cong sniper began shooting, the Americans unleashed hell. An M42 self-propelled anti-aircraft gun began pouring cannon and machine gun fire into the hills above the camp.

James Speed Hensinger was a 22-year-old soldier when he set his Nikon camera to take long exposures. He didn't know what to expect when he sent the film off to be developed. What he got back is nothing short of incredible

The smaller M-60 machine guns chime in again as they soldiers pour thousands of rounds into the hillside. The sniper was never found, though soldiers did discover traces of blood when they searched the area the next day.

Hensinger's spectacular photos capture the streaming automatic weapons fire and corresponding explosions where the sniper was hiding out. Each red line represents a tracer round that was fired from an M-60 machine gun set up in the towers guarding the camp. The red lines show only one quarter of the machine gun rounds fired during the gun battle.

The M-42 was equipped with a pair of 40mm Bofors auto-cannons, and a .50-caliber machine gun. Both weapons can be seen firing white tracers into the hills.



Sky Soldier James 'Speed' Hensinger

(continued....)





© James Speed Hensinger / Rex Feal

The M-42 tank's .50-caliber machine guns fire - lighting up the hills. The soldiers didn't know where the sniper was - they were hoping to hit him with the massive barrage.



© James Speed Hensinger / Rex Feal

Then and now: Hensinger is now 66 and lives in a suburb of Denver, Colorado. Hensinger never considered himself a professional photographer, but has always loved shooting pictures.



To read the entire report and view all of James' photos, go to: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2345454/Vietnam-War-photos-reveal-moment-U-S-troops-unleashed-hell-Viet-Cong-sniper-hills-Army-camp.html#ixzz2WzWaR6AP>

Or, enter a general search for *American Troopers unleash hell*

Hensinger says: *"We sent out patrols during the day, and found a blood trail one morning. Otherwise, we never found him. The rocks on the slope were as big as Volkswagens. It took a very stupid officer to put a pin in the map and say, 'Build it here.'"*

Hensinger has never released his photos publicly until now. The frames from April 1970 capture a time near the end of the war

Hensinger was 22 and had been deployed with the 173d Airborne Brigade. By April 1970, the unit had seen substantial combat.

[Sent in by Scott Kubiszewski, son of Steve "K" Kubiszewski, B/C/Recon/2/503d]



173d Airborne Association Membership Application Form

PLEASE PRINT AND FILL-OUT THIS APPLICATION

Please *circle* the appropriate boxes below

Mail Application and Payments to;

Membership Secretary, Dennis Hill
97 Earle Street
Norwood, MA 02062-1504

New	Renewal	Change of Address, <i>Change of Chapter</i>	
Annual Membership			
Ends on 31 December of each year - \$ 24.00			
Regular *		Associate	
Sky Soldier	Veteran	Gold Star	Spouse of deceased Sky Soldier
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Unit while with the 173d: (A-1-503rd or Co A/Support BN): _____

Chapter Affiliated to: (4, 18, At Large): _____ **Send Magazine:** []U.S Mail or []Via Email

Gold Star Relationship (Wife, Mother)(PFC Mike Smith 11-08-67): _____

My Email address: _____

After we receive your payment (\$ 24.00 or \$ 173.00), please allow two weeks for processing.



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