



January – March 2021, Issue 96

Contact: rto173@att.net

See all issues to date at the 503rd Heritage Battalion website:

http://corregidor.org/VN2-503/newsletter/issue_index.htm

~ The 46th Commander In Chief ~



Joseph Robinette Biden, Jr.

“May God bless you. And may God protect our troops.”





**We Dedicate this Issue of Our Newsletter in Memory and Honor of the
Young Men of the 173d Airborne Brigade & Attached Units
We Lost 50 Years Ago in The Months of January thru March 1971
and Mrs. Exie Carmichael, Career 173d Military Spouse**



***"True heroism is remarkably sober, very undramatic.
It is not the urge to surpass all others at whatever cost,
but the urge to serve others at whatever cost."***

Arthur Ashe, 1LT USMA

**Lex William Hickson Adams, 23
PTE, 2RAR, 3/31/71**

"From Coolangatta. A mortar man and rifleman, he was killed in action in a bunker system in Phuoc Tuy Province on March 31st 1971. He left a daughter Lisa. Buried Mt Gravett Lawn Cemetery, Queensland."



**Ronald William Betts, 23
Pilot Off, RAAF, 3/20/71**

"From Launceston, TAS. Betts was co-pilot of one of two Bushranger gunships called in to give direct support to Australians from 3RAR. Two Australian soldiers were lying wounded between the bunkers. Betts was killed when 20 rounds of enemy fire struck the gunship forcing it to land at a nearby fire support base on 20th March 1971. He was the first RAAF pilot killed in action in Vietnam. Buried Carr Villa General Cemetery, Launceston, TAS."



**Thomas Birnie, 31
SGT, 2RAR, 3/25/71**

"From Townsville, QLD. Bernie did two tours of Vietnam with 2RAR, 1967-68 during which he was wounded in 1970-71. He died of wounds at 1 Australian Field Hospital in the early hours of 25th March 1971, after being accidentally shot the previous morning by a sentry while re-entering his own platoon area. Buried Woongara Crematorium, QLD."



**Terry Lee Blair, 20
SP4, HHC/3/503, 3/7/71**

3/7/14: "Dear SP4 Terry Lee Blair, Sir. As an American, I would like to thank you for your service and for your sacrifice made on behalf of our wonderful country. The youth of today could gain much by learning of heroes such as yourself, men and women whose courage and heart can never be questioned. With respect, Sir," **Curt Carter**



**Alan Clarence Bloxsom, 29
LAC, RAAF, 3/31/71**

"Moura, QLD. Bloxsom was a crewman on a dust-off helicopter called to evacuate troops north of Nui Dat. Because of mortar fire the helicopter was directed to a ground position to pick up casualties. They hovered over the trees where red smoke was thrown by the enemy. Bloxsom was shot by enemy fire which peppered the helicopter and he died in hospital on the 31st March 1971. Buried Rockhampton Crematorium, QLD."



**Stephen Eldon Boots, 27
SSG, E/1/503, 1/7/71**

11/13/17: "Daughter of a fallen Soldier. My dad my hero. A special thank you to those who fought and lost their lives. Thank you for the beautiful messages left here (Wall of Faces) for my dad." **Stephanie Boots Arnold**



11/23/19: "I served with your dad in E Co. Recon 1/503rd 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam. I was thinking about him and typed his name in google and found this web site (Wall of Faces). I don't know if you were ever told what your dad's job was. We were recon team leaders together. Our platoon consisted of three 6 man teams. We ran missions for the battalion S2 & S3 which is intelligence and operations. He was on a mission looking for suspected NVA base camps when his team was ambushed and all were killed. It was a very sad day for our unit and tough to overcome and carry on. Your dad was a well respected leader and well liked by everyone in our unit. Most of all he was a great human being. It has been almost 50 years since that day, but I often think of your dad and the young men we lost. Sincerely," **Richard Coogan**



(continued...)



Jessie Michael Brooks, 20

SSG, E/4/503, 3/2/71

(Virtual Wall states B/4/503)

2/29/12: "Love you uncle Mike.

You were a hero to your younger sisters and you were so handsome! I hope to meet you in Heaven and to see you hug your children." **M. Lynch Evans**



Jerry Woodrow Cutting, 21

SGT, A/4/503, 1/23/71

11/10/16: "Miss you and think about you often. I remember the last time I saw you. You were heading back over after being home on leave and I had just gotten home on leave before heading over. I finally made it to Sydney but not when we were going to go. I heard about your death from some of your company on LZ John Henry. It was the worst day I had there. Miss you and think about you often!"

George Guile



Milton Raymond Dufty, 21

PTE, 7RAR, 1/15/71

"Kempsey, NSW. Dufty died from Gunshot Wounds to chest during ambush in Phuoc Tuy 15th January 1971. Buried Kempsey Cemetery, NSW."



Kent Douglas Erickson, 19

PVT, E/3/503, 3/29/71

7/15/19: "Battle Buddy. Dear Kent. Just found out of your passing. Three months after I left Vietnam. In those moments of reflection of the war I think of you along with others in our squad. The one thing that I remember most about you is every time I would take a picture of you and others in our squad you would always shy away or turn your head. It was hard to make you laugh. I'm going to leave now. My hope is to visit with you someday soon when I get to Washington." **Pat Runyon**



Rick Samuel Brown, 21

SGT, E/1/503, 1/7/71

5/30/03: "We love you Rick. We love you and we still miss you so much. You were brave and we know you fought hard. We are so proud of you and think of you every day. You are the light at the end of our tunnel. You are our hero! Your sisters and brother," **Robin, Jill, Terry, & "Weasel"**



Ross Tasman Clark

SPR, 1 FD SQN RAE, 1/25/71

"Sapper Ross Tasman Clark born Preston, VIC. Clark died at the Repatriation Hospital, Heidelberg, VIC, 25th January 1971. Buried Repatriation General Hospital Heidelberg, VIC."



Peter Craig

PTE, 5RAR, 1/25/71

"Born Coolamon, NSW. Craig died at Wagga Wagga 25th January 1971. Buried Wagga Wagga, NSW."



Patrick Loyal Fricke, 19

SGT, B/4/503, 3/7/71

10/4/01: "Patrick Fricke. It has been 30 years since you left this earth to go to heaven and a day doesn't go by without you in my heart. I want the world to know that you were my hero and most of all my best friend and my idol. Your picture hangs in our living room and all of my children know of you and who you were and yes my son has your name. Love Sam."

Sam Fricke



(continued....)



Eric Halkyard, 27**CPL, 7RAR, 1/16/71**

"Manchester, England. He was killed by enemy fire during an ambush the Australians had set in Phuoc Tuy at 6am 16th January 1971. Ashes sent to U.K."

**Randolph Guy Hart, Jr., 21****SGT, B/1/503, 2/28/71**

9/7/14: "The BEST brother. Randy, It's been 43 years now and I still think of you and miss you often. You were the best brother ever! You wouldn't believe this country and the shape we are in right now. I pray God will have mercy on us all and restore the USA to the country we can remember; one we are proud of and that will be God-honoring. I'll see you again in Heaven. What a day of rejoicing that will be! Love and miss you," Phyllis Compton

**Gilbert John Hartney, 39****WO2, 102 FD Workshop, 1/27/71**

"Melbourne, VIC. He served only 3 months before dying of complications from a peptic ulcer at 1 Field Hospital Vung Tau on 27th January 1971. Buried Springvale Cemetery, VIC."

**Gerald William Hill, 20****SP4, E/1/503, 1/7/71**

10/9/10: "You will always be perfect. So much time has passed, but every year I remember your birthday, your smile, your family. You were so young, I was so young, but were just perfect. You have always remained that way to me. I married a wonderful man and had 2 great children - a daughter and a son. All of them know about you and what everyone who knew you lost in January 1971. There are times that I still...." Carolyn

**Martin Jim, Jr., 19****PFC, A/3/503, 1/16/71**

10/10/16: "Ground Casualty. PFC Martin Jim Jr., 1LT Carlton J. Mendall, SSGT Earl Nelson, and PFC Bruce C. Shover were infantrymen serving with A Company, 3rd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. On January 16, 1971, all four suffered fatal injuries from the accidental detonation of allied land mines at an unknown location within Binh Dinh Province, RVN. It was reported that two explosions took place, the first when PFC's Martin and Shover, and 1LT Carlton tripped a friendly booby trap, and the second when SSGT Nelson hit another wire while running to their aid. [Taken from coffeltdatabase.org and thewall-usa.com]" W. Killian

**Bennie Frank Jones, 20****PFC, C/4/503, 1/9/71**

5/15/03: "Always thinking of you, 'cuz'. Dearest cousin Bennie Frank -- although, I was a little girl when you left I still remember how kind, supportive and responsible you were. You were TRULY the last of a decent group of men. I will always remember you in that way." Toni Y. Wethington

**Peter Francis Kowalski, 23****PTE, 2RAR, 2/8/71**

"Nudgee, QLD. He died of wounds from an enemy mine explosion in Phuoc Tuy 8th February 1971. Buried Nudgee Cemetery, QLD."

**John Walter Kupkowski, 26****SGT, B/1/503, 2/28/71**

7/4/18: "Tribute to Sky Soldier. On behalf of myself and all your fellow paratroopers who served in the 173rd 'Herd' Airborne Brigade in Vietnam, let me offer our joined respect and regrets for your sacrifice. May you rest in peace and never be forgotten." Mike Switzer

**Howard Sidney Lamb, 20****SGT, B/1/503, 2/28/71**

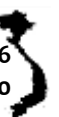
5/30/20: "Memorial Day 2020 Coosa Valley Chapter MOAA. We were both born in Gadsden Alabama and went to High School together. When we graduated in 1969 you went to Army Basic Training, I went to college. We are both Airborne and Rangers and were brothers in arms. You live now only in my memory because on 28 Feb. 1971, as you were returning to the safety of your base camp, you were killed by the enemy's ambush. Rest in God's Peace Christian Soldier. I'll see you on the other side." Robert Rollins, Major (Retired) US Army.

**Trevor Lyddieth, 38****WP2, AATTV (RAASC), 2/18/71**

"Stanmore, NSW. Lyddieth died after being shot accidentally at 1 Royal Australian Army Service Corp Vung Tau on 18th February 1971. Buried Northern Suburbs Crematorium, NSW."



(continued....)



Terence Edward Lyon, 35
WO2, 2 ADV ORD DEP, 2/9/71

"Northam, WA. On 9th February 1971 Lyon and Captain Grant Ross HQAFV were pre-destruction inspecting a hoard of enemy ammunition which blew up and killed them in Nui Dat. Buried Springvale Cemetery, Melbourne, VIC."



Paul Manning, 19
PTE, 3RAR, 3/2/71

"Newcastle NSW. Paul Manning was killed in action as a result of enemy probe on D Company the evening of 2nd March 1971. His Company was on familiarisation training when they were hit by a large group of enemy just outside Long Tan. Buried Woronora Cemetery, NSW."



Michael Shea McLhern, 18
PFC, C/2/503, 3/31/71

3/31/16: "Thank you PFC McLhern for your courage in the dangerous times, in a far and dangerous place."
A Grateful Vietnam Vet



Carlton Joseph Mendall, 24
1LT, A/3/503, 1/16/71

10/31/19: "As an 1969 alumnus of Northeastern University in Boston, MA, Carlton has been honored on the Northeastern University Veterans Memorial. He was a ROTC graduate of Northeastern and was one of 12 alumni who were in ROTC, and on the Memorial. The Class of 1969 suffered 7 alumni who died in SE Asia." **Bill Maloney**



A Note from The Virtual Wall
Alpha Company, 3/503rd Infantry lost four men to an accident on 16 January 1971:

1LT Carlton J. Mendall, Hyde Park, MA;
SSG Earl Nelson, Memphis, TN;
PFC Martin Jim, Mayetta, KS; and
PFC Bruce C. Shover, Marietta, OH.

The only information available to The Virtual Wall is the casualty records themselves, which appear to indicate that PFC Jim accidentally detonated an explosive device (grenade? defensive mine?). The explosion killed him and the other three men.

Perry Metzler, 30

PFC, HHC/173d Bde, 2/14/71

6/18/07: "I Remember watching you race, you were a great champion, you touched me in life you touch me in death. Thank you, God Bless." **Joe Matthews**



Note: Perry was a competitive bicyclist. **Ed**

James Albert Michael, 21
SGT, D/1/503, 2/13/71
(Virtual Wall states E/1/503)

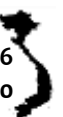
9/18/12: "A Living Remembrance. Jimmy, my first born is named for you - he is James Hunnicutt. Miss you, buddy."

Joe Hunnicutt



"James is on the left. Richard Tabor, who was also killed, is on the right."

(continued....)



Final Mission of SGT James A. Michael

SGT James A. Michael was an Airborne-qualified Infantry Operations and Intelligence Specialist serving with E Company, 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. On February 13, 1971, SGT Michael was a member of a six-man reconnaissance team operating in the Central Highlands near Bong Song in Binh Dinh Province, RVN. Their mission was to locate a suspected high-speed trail and mortar positions that the North Vietnamese Army was using in the area. The recon team had been inserted by helicopter from LZ Uplift into a patch of elephant grass from where they launched their patrol into the rugged wilderness blanketed in triple-canopy jungle. As they headed uphill, it was like walking through a tunnel with the foliage "roofed" over them. About 90 minutes into the mission, the team, walking in line, ran into an enemy booby-trap. A grenade, probably American-made due to its intensity and fragmentation pattern, detonated between the point man and SGT Michael who was in the slack (#2) position. Michael turned away from the explosion and received the brunt of the blast to his backside. Shrapnel perforated his pack and the several smoke grenades he was carrying. It set off a cloud of multi-colored smoke from which he staggered and fell into the arms of another team member. At the same time, enemy gunfire erupted from several concealed positions around the American patrol. Team members returned fire and a medivac and gunships were called in. The gunships arrived on station within 10 minutes and began to rake the enemy position with fire from their mini-guns. Meanwhile, Michael, who was critically wounded, stopped breathing. A team member was able to get him breathing again. Michael woke up, uttered the words "I'm scared," then died a few minutes later. With air support, the team kept from being overrun, and after about 90 minutes, a line company from the 503rd operating in the area arrived to reinforce their position. Attempts to remove two wounded by the ambush with a jungle penetrator failed, so the company carried the wounded and Michael, now in a body bag, down the mountain to their original LZ in the elephant grass where they were picked up and carried back to LZ Uplift. [Taken from coffeltdatabase.org and information provided by Stan Sharpe (March 2017)]. Posted by W. Killian

Steven Mike, 20

PFC, E/17th Cav, 1/6/71

1/6/02: "HAASHCH' EETT'I

(TALKING GOD) IN BEAUTY MAY I WALK.
ALL DAY LONG MAY I WALK".

Patrick L. McMullen



Larry Gene Mitchell, 18

CPL, D/1/503, 2/22/71

11/11/15: "My Friend. Larry G.

Mitchell was into fast cars and he was always willing to give us black kids a ride to the party in his car. He had made it a point to stop by mother's house and tell me bye. But we had only been a year apart, he was kool."

O'Hara Johnson



George Robert Morgan, 23

SGT, 173d LRRP, 3/7/71

(Virtual Wall states N/75 Rgrs)

10/14/15: "Remember My Team Leader. When I first arrived to 'The Hill' of N Company Airborne Rangers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in late 1970, I was assigned to teams that went on radio-relay sites. Eventually assigned to Golf Team of which George Morgan was the Team



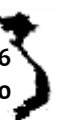
Leader. Others on that team at that time were Tony Duvall, Jimmy Akuna, James Cummings, Larry Peel (KIA) and myself. George Morgan was a great Team Leader and always took the time to listen to anyone's concerns or questions. He would never have any team member do something



that he would not do himself. A real Hero and Great Soldier with multiple tours of duty. Several other Team Leaders really respected him and when he got killed they took it hard as many of the Rangers in the company did. His dedication to his fellow Rangers in teaching them how to operate a six-man team successful is why most who served in 75th Inf. N Company Ranger got to come home. Since reuniting with members in 2000, we have recorded our unit history and now have 171 listed members who are in contact with each other. SSgt. Morgan will never be forgotten for his service to his country."

N/CO Ranger - Unit Director, Robert "Twin" Henriksen

(continued...)



Herbert Eugene Mulkey, Jr., 18
PFC, E/4/503, 3/2/71

5/28/89: "U.S. Army Pfc. Herbert E.

Mulkey, Jr., died March 2, 1971 while on patrol with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam. He had joined the Army in June 1970 before graduating from Linganore High School in Frederick County. He took his basic training at Fort Dix, N.J., AIT at Fort Benning, Ga., and advanced training at Fort Jackson, N.C. At the time of his death, he was serving with Company E, 4th Battalion, 503rd Infantry Division, 173rd Airborne Brigade. His father, Herbert E. Mulkey Sr., said his son, a paratrooper, was sent to Vietnam two months before he was killed. Private Mulkey was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star, Purple Heart and Army Commendation Medal. He had previously been awarded the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal. Combat Infantryman's Badge, Parachutist Badge, Expert Badge with Grenade Launcher Bar and the Good Conduct Medal. He was born June 5, 1952 in Fairfax, Va. His family came to the Mount Airy area about 10 years prior to his death.

...Private Mulkey is buried at Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia." **Carroll County Sun**



Earl Nelson, 26
SSG, A/3/503, 1/16/71

10/10/16: "Ground Casualty. PFC Martin Jim, Jr., 1LT Carlton J. Mendall, SSGT Earl Nelson, and PFC Bruce C. Shover were infantrymen serving with A Company, 3rd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. On January 16, 1971, all four suffered fatal injuries from the accidental detonation of allied land mines at an unknown location within Binh Dinh Province, RVN. It was reported that two explosions took place, the first when PFC's Martin and Shover, and 1LT Carlton tripped a friendly booby trap, and the second when SSGT Nelson hit another wire while running to their aid. [Taken from coffeltdatabase.org and thewall-usa.com]

W. Killian



Russel Courtney Nelson, 20
CPL, E/1/503, 1/7/71

4/28/18: "Thank you. Dear Russel, please know you will never be forgotten and always shine with the stars. Know that you are respected and thank you for all you gave. Bless you sir," **C. Lee**



"Russell is in the middle facing forward. The man to the right is Stephen Boots, who was killed on the same mission as Russell. The man on the left is Russell's step-brother, Darrel Shaw, who escorted Russell's body back to the States."

[CPL Nelson's first name is spelled differently on different source records. Brigade KIA list states "Russel"]

Billy Ray Parnell, 18
CPL, D/2/503, 3/31/71

3/14/19: "My Little Brother. You were my first friend. You were always my friend. I still cry a million tears especially when I visit you in Santa Fe. I've always wished I could have met some of the men who were with you that horrible night. I miss you today just as much as I missed you then. I will love you always."

Patty Parnell Cessna



Raymond Brian Patten, 20
PTE, 7RAR, 2/6/71

"Geraldton, WA. He died of wounds in 1 Field Hospital on 6th February 1971 after being wounded in action by an enemy mine five days earlier in Phuoc Tuy. Buried Rookwood Cemetery, NSW."



(continued...)



Charles Lamont Peace, 21**CPL, E/17th Cav, 2/7/71****Final Mission of CPL Charles L. Peace**

PFC Jose M. Rocha was an armor reconnaissance specialist and PFC Charles L. Peace an infantryman, both Airborne-qualified 'Sky Soldiers' serving with E Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade. On the morning of February 7, 1971, they were assigned to ride on the lead vehicle in a convoy sent out to establish a Fire Support Base (FSB) on the rim of a valley in the vicinity of An Khe in Binh Dinh Province, RVN. While the convoy was enroute, several vehicles were lost to enemy land mines planted in the roadway. After about an hour of this, a decision was made for two Sky Soldiers to conduct a manual mine sweep. Since PFC's Rocha and Peace were on the front vehicle, they were selected to perform this task. After dismounting, they were walking around a left turn bend in the roadway when an explosion was heard as they tripped a hidden 155mm round. Both soldiers were killed instantly. They were each posthumously promoted to corporal. [Taken from coffeltdatabase.org, thewall-usa.com, and vvmf.org]

**Luis A. Quinones-Rodriguez, 22****PVT, C/2/503, 2/25/71**

3/1/04: "We Remember. Luis is buried at Puerto Rico Nat Cem, Bayamon, PR." **Robert Sage**

**Clinton Curtis Robinson, 20****SP4, A/3/503, 1/7/71**

4/15/18: "Served with Clinton. I served with Clinton in Basic training at Ft. Dix. RIP brother." **Michael Murphy**

**Jose Marie Rocha, 22****CPL, E/17th Cav, 2/7/71**

12/11/98: "Jose 'Joey' Rocha attended Holy Trinity School in Milwaukee. He was a very colorful character and he gave Sister Desegnata some memorable moments. He was well-liked by his classmates and is missed by all of us that enjoyed his coolness."

Mike Morales

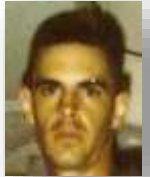
[See Final Mission of Charles L. Peace above]

**Grant Stuart Ross, 27****CAPT, HQ AFV, 2/9/71**

"Brisbane, QLD. On 9th February 1971, Captain Grant Ross and WO2 Terence Edward Lyon 2AOD were pre-destruction inspecting a hoard of enemy ammunition which blew up and killed them in Nui Dat. Buried Buried Mount Thompson Crematorium, QLD."

**Richard Leonard Rushlow, 21****SGT, C/4/503, 1/11/71****(Virtual Wall states A/4/503)**

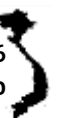
3/29/16: "Vietnam Remembrance Day 2016. Just to let you know that there are people that still think about you, you will always be in my heart we shared more than going to school and playing sports and chasing girls. We shared hell and all that went with it, we weren't together you Army and me Marines but we shared a lot. I was lucky, I got shot and sent home and you gave it all and for that I will always think of you and all those that gave their lives. As long as I am alive, You will always be in my heart, Your Brother John." **John Kiernan**

**Richard David Saldana, 20****SP4, E/4/503, 3/2/71**

4/20/05: "Hello everyone. My name is Roberta Avila and I am Richard's oldest sister. First of all, I would like to thank everyone who has posted their memories on here (Virtual Wall) for us to remember him by. Richard was very dear to all of our family and he is missed very much. I remember the day we found out about his death and the pain we all felt. I remember seeing a van driving up and down the street and thinking to myself, 'They're looking for the family of a fallen soldier to give them the bad news.' I didn't know that we would be the family they were looking for. Moments later, my brother Danny came running in telling us that someone was outside telling my dad that Richard had passed away. I saw the tears fall from my father's eyes and I fell to my knees in disbelief. I couldn't believe what I was hearing. I'll never forget that day as long as I live. Even months after the funeral, I still couldn't accept that he was gone. Every time the doorbell rang, I prayed that somehow, someone had made a mistake. Every year on July 7th, I always remember to wish you a happy birthday...."



(continued...)



....I try my hardest to keep your memory alive. I talk about you all the time and have pictures of you all over the house. Every memory and moment spent with you will be cherished forever. It still hurts to go from the first of the year to the end and not have you in our presence. One thought that comforts me is knowing that you are better off than any of us here! You are in heaven, patiently waiting for us to join you. To those who didn't have the blessing of knowing my brother, he was a loving, kind-hearted person we all looked up to. You are a hero, Richard. And you will never be forgotten...Love always, Roberta." **Roberta Avila**

Peter James Sheriff

RAAF 1, Op Sup Unit, 1/8/71

"He was seconded to 9 Squadron and died on 8th January 1971 after he accidentally discharged a helicopter M60 machine gun as he was removing it from a Huey in Albatross flight lines in Vung Tau Air Base. Buried Toowoomba Cemetery, QLD."



Bruce Charles Shover, 20

PFC, A/3/503, 1/16/71

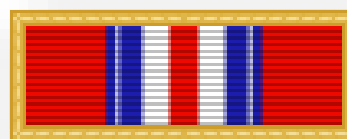
10/17/10: "Bruce enlisted in the 173rd Airborne Brigade. April 22, 1970 he went to Basic Training in Fort Bragg, N.C. After Basic he went to Fort Benning, Georgia for Airborne Infantry. His stay in Vietnam was for only a short time. In his letter he talked about jungle training which he liked this kind of challenge. Bruce will live in our hearts forever." **Sally Dion**



David Hugh Smith, 19

CPL, B/4/503, 3/11/71

3/21/05: "My name is Terri Smith and David was the oldest of us four kids and I was the youngest. I was just 16 when he died and in a couple of weeks I'll be turning 50. It's amazing how time flies but what's more amazing is how I can still remember everything about my brother and he will be forever young to me always. There's never been one day that I haven't thought about my brother and I hope he knew how proud I was to be his little sister and how much I love him always. Thank you for this website (Virtual Wall), you just don't know how it helps. GOD BLESS AMERICA. Sincerely yours," **Terri Smith**



Noel Alan Smith, 22

T/CPL, 21 ENG SUP TP, 3/28/71

"Melbourne, VIC. The intense fire from a exploding petrol stove mutilated Smith on 23rd March 1971. He died of pneumonia five days later in 24 US Evacuation Hospital. Buried Springvale Crematorium, VIC."



Gregory Martin "Doc" Stone, 21

CPL, HHC/2/503, 3/24/71

3/25/14: "My Cousin Greg. It was 43 yrs ago yesterday you left us, we found out today. Know that as the last of the family that knew you and we both served there. . .you are remembered every day. Never forgotten. May the good Lords eternal light shine on you and all the rest." **Bob Stone**



Richard Lee Stockett, 20

SGT, E/4/503, 3/2/71

10/4/11: "We Remember. Richard is buried at City of Mesa Cemetery, Mesa, Maricopa County, AZ. BSM." **Robert Sage**



Harold Leslie Slater

MAJ., PROVOST CORPS, 3/17/71

"Died in Brisbane after returning to Australia after a fight with Vung Tau cowboys 17th March 1971. Buried Brisbane, QLD."



(continued...)



Richard Eugene Tabor, 21**SP4, E/1/503, 1/7/71**

1/7/13: "My first Crush. He was 17, I was 4, he was the cutest, strongest boy I had ever met. He said he was going to marry me when I grew up. Rick would toss me into the air and catch me...then a pretty girl walked by. I landed on my head, Rick scooped me up and took me to my Daddy. I still would have married him." **Suzanne Hovland Clifton**



Richard is sitting with the bandage on his head. Russell Nelson, who was killed on the same mission on January 7, 1970, is on the right.

Alan Talbot, 21**PTE, 7RAR, 2/1/71**

"Great Britain. Talbot died when hit by an enemy mine that also wounded four soldiers on 1st February 1971 in Phuoc Tuy. Buried Fawkes Cemetery, VIC."

**David Alexander Trester, 22****SP4, A/1/503, 1/3/71**

3/24/00: "Where have all the good one's gone. I met David in 1969, in a little west coast town called Crockett. His parents lived there so he would stop by ever so often to check up on them. I only met him once when I was about 12 years old but he left a lasting memory that will be with me forever. I was young and dumb and thought I had fallen in love with him on our first and only meeting. He was wise enough and moral enough to not take advantage of my childish ways. He told me that he would be going to Vietnam soon and what his plans would be after he got there. He told me that his parents were old and poor, so he intended to step on a mine the first chance he got so they could collect the insurance money and not have to worry anymore or go without. I knew he meant what he was saying but I pleaded for him to return after the war because I would be older then and just maybe he'd get serious with me. He giggled, then sighed and said that he was going to stick with his plans. I never saw him again but often thought about him. Be it for the love he had for his parents or the childish love I had for him, or the respect he had for me. This fine young man will be in my heart and thoughts for the rest of my life. 'David, if you can hear me, I still am in love with you.'"

**Georgia Anna Snipes**

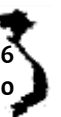
5/1/15: "A fallen comrade. David, I was standing less than 100 feet from you on that mountain top that fateful day in Kontum Province. Why I survived I'll never know! I do know that along with twelve others who were wounded that day WE WILL NEVER FORGET!! Until we meet again comrade, Danny."

Danny Thompson**Albert Allen Vencel, 20****CPL, E/3/503, 3/26/71**

3/16/07: "Hey A-l-l-l-l-b-e-r-r-r-r-t! Remember that tag line, how I'd say 'Hi' at WGH 1968 when I'd see you in the halls? Just ain't right, you were too gentle to be taken like this. And you went airborne. Son of a gun, Albert, whooda thot that, you! Well done. I ain't forgotten you, just like it was yesterday, cutting class for Prince's Pizza. Why don't you walk out of that place tomorrow, 'Hey, where'd everybody go? --Airborne! VJ, 101st Phu Bai 1969-70. From a high school friend," **V. J.**



(continued...)



John W. Wheeler, 22**LT, 3RAR, 3/2/71**

"Cremorne, NSW. Born April 25 1948, the son of an original ANZAC. A grenade killed him on the night of 2nd March 1971 in a nine hour contact in Phuoc Tuy. Buried Norwood Park Crematorium, ACT."

**Harris Lee Williams, 20****CPL, D/3/503, 3/31/71**

3/31/15: "Thank You. Thank you Corporal Williams for your leadership and courage." A Grateful Vietnam Vet

**Jonathan Traxler Wilson, 19****SP4, A/1/503, 1/3/71**

9/5/20: "To my brother Jonathan Traxler Wilson. I never knew that this page existed (Wall of Faces) until today. I know you are with our Mom, Chris, Granny, Martha and Peter. I am the only one left. I have 3 beautiful daughters and one grandbaby and they know all the trials and struggles our family went through. We will never ever forget the sacrifice you made for us. Love you forever. Tell everyone hi for me and give a big hug and kiss from me and my girls." Judy Neale

**John Ramsey Winton, 23****LT, RNZIR, V5, 3/10/71**

"Killed in action, 10 March 1971 – shrapnel from claymore mine detonated by fire in contact."

**William Stephen Woods, 20****CPL, B/3/503, 2/25/71**

4/28/07: "The Spartans never asked what the enemy numbers, just which direction. We served together in 3rd Platoon, Bravo 3/503rd. Woody 'White Gloves' was a true Spartan, he always wore white gloves cutting point, it was his trademark. Forever will he remain a warrior brother. From a platoonmate,"

John J. O'Brien**Remember one....Remember all.**

Exie Carmichael Career Military Spouse Passes



Exie Marie Carmichael passed away with her family by her side on Friday, October 30, 2020. She was born in Blooming Grove, TX to Mr. & Mrs. George Stokes on May 31, 1927. Exie married Robert Byron Carmichael, whom she met in Austin, Texas on September 15, 1951 and was a loving mother to her three children: Charles, Carol, and David Carmichael.

She graduated with a BA in Speech and Sociology from Texas Women's College and moved to Austin working as a Social Worker at the Austin State Hospital where she met her husband, Robert, while he was attending the University of Texas at Austin. While married to Robert during his 20-year military career as an Army officer, (including CO/XO of the 2/503d in RVN '65/'66), Exie continued her work as social worker as she counseled military wives that lost their husbands during in the Vietnam War.

Exie's gift of counseling others was a constant theme throughout her life to of which many became life-long dear friends. Her smile was known to all those that knew her as she always wanted to make those around her feel comfortable and welcome. *"Come and sit a spell and talk"* was a way of life for her. In many ways, it was the essence of who she was.

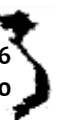
Exie's pride and joy were her grandchildren which she played a significant role in raising and mentoring into the people they are today.

Over the many years, Exie developed many deep life-long friendships that meant the world to her and for those of you that may read this, you know who you are. She was a very special and kind soul that will be deeply missed and never forgotten.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that you leave a kind word or memory here:

www.beckchapels.com/obituary/exie-carmichael

Rest Easy, Exie, and on behalf of men of the 173d Airborne Brigade and their families, we thank you. And yes dear friend, "there's no place like home".





INCOMING!!!



Correction

Thanks for the newsletter. There's one inaccuracy in it which I have seen in other publications (see Issue 94, Editor's Note, Page 40). When I arrived on Okinawa in June 1963 I was assigned to the 2nd Airborne Battle Group, 503rd Infantry. The 173rd Airborne Brigade was not activated until July 1963. Shortly thereafter the then COL Williamson arrived to assume command. Roy Lombardo (CO B/2/503) can verify this info.

Phil Blake
HHC/2/503

Thanks Phil. Ed

Cảm O'ng

Before the virus quandary, I was able to join a celebration with the wife, children, brothers, and in-laws of Sgt Phan Thai (deceased), interpreter and qualified US & VN jumper who served with 173d as a member of RSVN Army. One of two (out of 50 +/-) VN interpreters serving with the Brigade who, when given the opportunity to attend jump school, volunteered to do so.

Steve Konek, Sr.
HQ 173d Bde

[See story about Steve and Thai on Page 31]

Looking For Fellow Comrades

My brother, **Sp4 Oscar J. HALL**, who served in Okinawa and Vietnam in the 60's is looking to reconnect with members of his 503rd 2nd Airborne Battle Group Alpha (A) Company. A few names:

Pfc. James Ferguson
Spc. 4 Blancus
Pfc. Clapp
(NCO) Arthur Hawthorne

Any leads and information would be appreciated.

J.C. Hall
(404)797-9974
halljc1@att.net

"We Try Harder"
because we're
"Second To None!"

Remembering "Uncle Jack"



Memories--just got this photo from West Point. Recall I had the pleasure to do his funeral service in 2018 - June 29th. He was the best! Be blessed.

Rev. Jack Kelley, LTC (Ret)
CO A/2/503

(***INCOMING!!!*** continued...)



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Sad Memories



I have a hard time with this. In the picture, the two kneeling, Beauchamp and Zionts. All in the LRP were SD from their units. These two were from the 2nd Bn. Zionts got a letter that he had just become a father. He went over to see his 1st Sgt. and was told to come home in order to get promoted. Since these two guys were joined at the hip, they both left. Bam!!! Silver City, they both were KIA. I have heard stories that they were found decapitated. If you know anything about it, let me know so I can rest.

Ray Thomas
173d LRP

Ray, I was on that mission and in that battle with Beauchamp and Zionts, and vaguely recall hearing about a decapitation, but can't confirm it. The most descriptive report I've seen regarding their being KIA was by Bob Toporek, B/2/503, included here on Page 73 which appeared in an earlier issue of our newsletter. Ed

Home to Charlie Company at Camp Zinn



Hope all is well with you and family. Came across this old picture you might want to share. The troopers in C Company 2Batt will like it.

Richard Powell
C/2/503

The Outpost



I just watched *The Outpost*...an incredible true story of surviving combat in Afghanistan. A couple years ago, I did a book signing event and had the honor to meet Clint Romesha, who was also signing his book, "*Red Platoon*". Clint was awarded the Medal of Honor at "the Outpost". A truly humble man...the bravest of warriors. I'm glad they made a movie about this part of his life. *All the way,*

Chuck Dean
HHC/1/503 RVN



L-R: Chuck & Clint

[See Clint's MOH citation on Page 68]

(*INCOMING!!!* continued....)



Looking for Names of Chargin' Charlies



If possible, maybe put in this photo in our next newsletter. Johnny Graham (C/2/503) and I have been trying to put names with the faces. The year was in the end of '64 or the beginning of '65.

Steve Haber, C/2/503, '65/'66 RVN

Stevenhaber2012@gmail.com

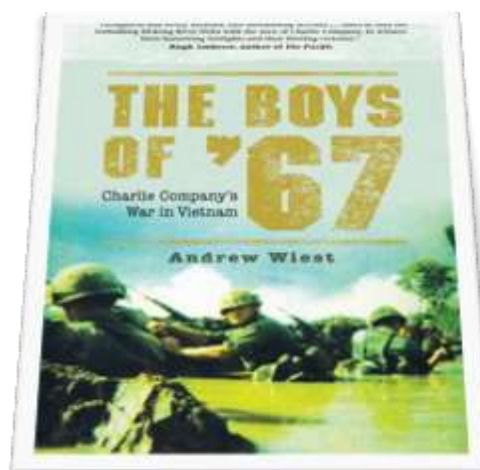
THE BOYS OF '67

I just finished reading *The Boys of '67*. It chronicles the formation of and day-to-day activities of the 9th Infantry Division from Ft Riley, KS to the Mekong Delta. I have never read a book this personal or so well researched. It not only details the lives of the active duty grunts, 90% of whom were draftees, but also their families and the interpersonal relationships from high school through death or for the lucky ones, death/retirement. It is uncanny how this parallels our lives-- just a different unit and location, although we did operate in their AO in the early days of our tour. Even the major battles (June & Nov '67) they're fights overlapped ours.

A real warning. It will bring back memories you may want to avoid. Please use discretion.

Roger Dick

C/2/503, Dak To '67



Available on Amazon

(**INCOMING!!!** continued....)



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A One Bird LZ

The LZ picture on page 19 (below, Issue 94) is on Hill 882. We blew that hole in the middle of November, as I recall. It was to remove casualties and resupply from the encounter. I don't remember if it was the 1st or 4th we were with, but after, we set and blew half the hill away as there was a massive bunker system and weapons stash in the ground. We humped out and then they pulled the Dog Team and us Engineers and we were dropped with the 2nd at 875 more towards the end. We ended up clearing the area after the friendly 500 was dropped, then crested with the units and mopped up. About the only good memory I have is them bringing in Thanksgiving dinner and tubs of ice cream. I really do not recall if we even ate any, just that it came in.

ATW, AZ Bill .

**Bill Berry
173d Engineers**



1/503d one-ship LZ west of Dak To.
(Photo by Tony Bolivar, Caspers)



Sent in by a 173d Company Commander, RVN

A Kniley Veteran's Day 2020



Veterans Day at the home of Skip Kniley (B/D/3/319th). Went there and shared a drink in salute. The guy has lost so much weight just by walking.

Bill Terry, A/319th

**Damn, Skip. Stop walking, you're disappearing man!!!
Nice flag brother. Ed**



And here's Skip again (3rd from right) after his sky dive standing landing on the shore of Cocoa Beach, FL during our 2/503 reunion there in '06. *"Where are the young paratroopers?"* the pubescent girls in bikinis were overheard to say ... really! Ed

(**INCOMING!!!** continued....)



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Whatta Mess

I have mentioned that old photos keep popping up on my phone. I am forwarding this one as it shows the "correct" Bravo Bull, that must have been brought from Okinawa by either Sgt. Kimbrell or Sgt. Cherry.

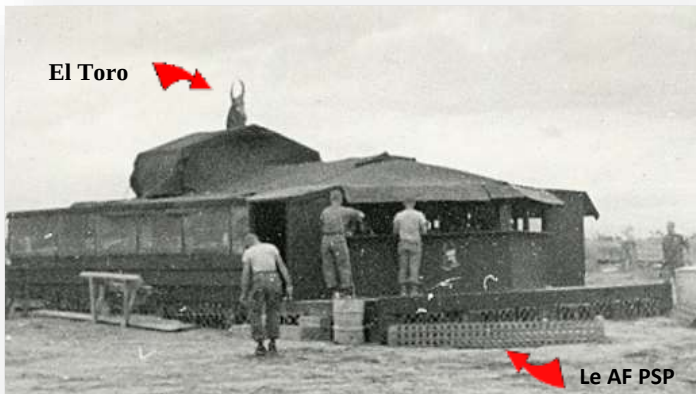
These old timers knew how to modify a mess tent into a cafeteria. Needing only Sgt. Edwards to go rob the Air Force of a deuce and a half of lumber.

Don't ask where the truck came from, as we didn't have any.

Jim Robinson

B/2/503

PS. Be sure to note the PSP "trim" that the Air Force no longer needed.



1RAR Memorial

The 1RAR Group Vietnam 1965-66 memorial has arrived at 1RAR in Townsville following its relocation from Holsworthy in NSW.

Our thanks must go to the 1RAR Association Committee lead by Jim Masters and his team who made all the arrangements and ensured that our memorial arrived safely.

It was intended that the re-dedication of the memorial would take place at 1RAR's 75th Birthday in October 2020, however, as you would be aware COVID 19 caused the cancellation of those plans. It is now planned to hold the re-dedication in October 2021.



1st Tour Memorial

Ray Payne OAM
1RAR

Season's Greetings Skysoldier

This has been a challenging year full of tragedy and triumph and I just want to take a moment to wish you the best the season has to offer.



Unfortunately, due to the Pandemic we miss our children, grandchildren, and old friends. We even had to postpone this year's reunion, but with a vaccine on the horizon we can look forward to next year in Scottsdale. That will be some jamboree with old friends coming together for the first time in years. Until then we must be careful, wear masks, keep social distancing —and get vaccinated.

Final note: If you are an annual member or have let your membership lapse go to:

<https://www.skysoldier.net/Pay-Current-Membership-Dues-Online>

and rejoin the Herd.

Until we can get together in Phoenix, Happy Hannukah and Merry Christmas!

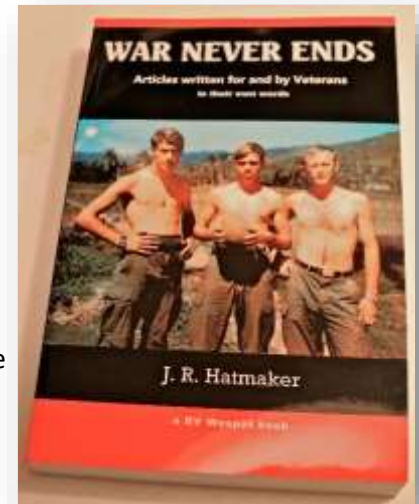
Thomas S. McMahon

President, 173d Airborne Brigade Association

War Never Ends

A photo of the cover of a book I ordered and

received today. As you can see, it is a compilation of stories and backgrounds of Vietnam Vets authored by Jerry Hatmaker. Jerry is the friend of one of my fellow NCOs in Delta Co, 4th Battalion, 173rd Airborne (John Adkins). John is pictured above in the center. The others are: Yours truly on the left of the photo, and Sgt. Royce Armstrong on the right.



From the little I read so far, Jerry did a great job of editing our text and adding background information to our stories. I have my evening planned out for tonight.

Well, I can scratch that one off the bucket list. On the cover of a book.

Jerry Sopko
D/4/503

(continued....)



Veterans Day 2020

By Ken Smith

President Emeritus, 173d Abn Bde (Sep)

Veteran's Day. The national holiday when we pause to honor the women and men who are serving or have served in the armed forces of the United States.

Our appreciation and thanks go out in a special way to the more than 250 veterans of all services that live in our Del Webb community. Veterans come in all sizes and shapes. And while the uniforms we wore were not the same, and the training we took different, we all have one thing in common...

A veteran, whether active duty, National Guard or Reserve, is someone who, at one point in his or her life, wrote a blank check made payable to the United States of America for an amount up to and including their lives.

For most veterans, that check was never cashed. But for many with whom we served, partial payment was extracted. A missing limb, a jagged scar, a certain look in their eyes that reflects the horrors of combat.

Just as veterans come in different sizes and shapes, the nature of service performed by these women and men were distinctly different but also had some things in common...

For example, foreign tours, even for those not in a combat zone, were difficult. Missed birthdays and anniversaries, missed holidays and celebrations with friends and family, unhospitable living conditions and more. And yet, almost all of us would do it again if called upon to do so by our nation. I would do it again – even though I never understood some policies.

As an example, I am parachute qualified. But for the time I was on jump status, I was paid \$110.00 a month in Hazardous Duty Pay to jump out of airplanes. The military didn't seem to realize that many of us serving in jump status would have jumped for free or even paid for this privilege.

I would do it again because after being retired for nearly 30 years I have learned to forgive. I have forgiven the guy who put gun powder in our ammunition so foul that it caused our M-16's to jam.

I have forgiven those responsible for late mail and messed-up salary payments. I even have forgiven those responsible for artillery landing too close, and cancelled air strikes.

But, I never have been able to forgive the pentagon bureaucrat who, in an incredible lame moment, thought that a service man would open a can of that green, greasy, gelatinous goo called Ham and Lima Beans, and

actually eat it! Those who ate C-Rations know well what I mean!

I would sign up again in a heartbeat and work to correct a mistake in what this day of celebration is called. Instead of "Veteran's Day" it should be titled "Veteran's and Veteran's Families Day."

It was the daughters and sons of veterans who were yanked out of schools and forced to leave friends mid-year to settle in a new environment.

It was the veteran's spouse who bore the brunt of substandard quarters and frequent moves. Of prolonged periods of being both father and mother. Of worrying when letters and messages stopped coming shortly after press reports of big battles, and for being that wonderful person who stood by us and supported us while we served our country.

I would sign up again if I were 20 years old for the privilege of serving again alongside of service members who dedicated themselves to protecting our nation and who fought as much for their fellow comrades as they did for our country. Men such as Medal of Honor recipient Chaplain Charles Watters, my friend and chaplain, who during a prolonged battle in November 1967 left friendly lines more than seven times to retrieve wounded warriors.

And men like Medal of Honor recipient Carlos Lozada, who had previously served under my command, in that same November battle when he manned a machine gun and held off attacking enemy soldiers, allowing his squad members to withdraw under fire to safety, until his position was overrun.

And men like Medal of Honor recipient Alfred Rascon, a medic and close friend, who refused evacuation and continued to treat wounded soldiers even though he received multiple wounds, and eventually was carried to an evacuation helicopter when he could no longer stand.

Yes, I would do it again.

On this day, hug a veteran and thank him or her for the freedoms you enjoy – and have a wonderful day.

Kenneth V. Smith
COL (Ret)
CO A/D/2/503, RVN
President Emeritus, 173d Abn Bde





D-Day 22 February 1967 Operation Junction City

On D-day the operation order was implemented as envisaged. Nine infantry battalions conducted air assaults (eight airmobile, one parachute) to cordon the entire northern portion of the objective area. At the same time, the 25th Division adjusted its one brigade in blocking positions on the west while positioning additional units for the attack into the horseshoe; the 3d Brigade, 1st Division, pushed north up Provincial Route 4 to complete the horseshoe.

The 1st Brigade, 1st Division, initiated the airmobile operations from Minh Thanh with one battalion making an airmobile assault at 0813 into a landing zone north of Route 246 and only 1,600 meters south of the Cambodian border. Sporadic small arms fire was encountered from the southern portion of the landing zone; however, the zone was quickly secured. The other two battalions of the brigade air assaulted into LZ's to the west of the first battalion at 1130 and 1630. They were unopposed.

Earlier that day, 845 paratroopers had boarded sixteen C-130's at Bien Hoa and at 0900 the 173d Airborne Brigade began its combat jump. As the aircraft approached the drop zone (three kilometers north of Katum), the jumpmaster's voice rose above the roar of the C-130:

"Stand in the Door!"

General Deane moved to the right door; taking his position in the left door was Lieutenant Colonel Robert H. Sigholtz, commander of the airborne task force composed of the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry; A Battery, 3d Battalion, 319th Artillery; and elements of the 173d Brigade Headquarters and Headquarters Company. As the green light flashed "go," General Deane jumped, leading the first U.S. combat parachute assault since the Korean War. There was no enemy contact during the jump.

Chief Warrant Officer Howard P. Melvin of San Francisco, California, then 53 years old, was participating in his fifth combat parachute assault over a period of some twenty years. His previous four were Gell, Sicily, Salerno and St. Mere Eglise.

By 0920 all companies had established command posts. A heavy equipment drop commenced at 0925 and continued periodically throughout the day.

By 1230 the battalion command post was established. There had been only eleven minor injuries as a result of the jump.

Almost simultaneously with the airborne assault, the 196th Brigade of the 25th Division began airmobile assaults in the vicinity of Route 246 along the north-western portion of the horseshoe. By 1350 all three battalions had completed their assaults unopposed.

(continued....)





The combat jump of the 173d Airborne Brigade during Operation JUNCTION CITY, 22 February 1967

(web photo & caption)

The northeastern portion of the inverted U was completed by the two other battalions of the 173d Brigade, then at Quan Loi, making their airmobile assaults into four landing zones, three north and one south of Katum.

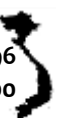
Ground elements for the operation had started rolling at 0630 on D-day as the 1st Division's 3d Brigade entered the action. While an infantry battalion remained in Suoi Da, other forces of the brigade attacked north along Route 4 from Artillery Base 1 at the "French Fort." Following the attacking force, the mechanized infantry battalion moved into defensive positions at planned artillery bases near Prek Klok and three kilometers to the north.

Artillery for the bases was in the column and was dropped off as the column came to the appropriate fire base. In the column was also the armored company of the 173d Brigade which would revert to the brigade's control upon linkup. Although there were temporary delays in getting the column pushed through caused by mines, road repair, and the need to bridge some streams, the linkup with elements of the 173d just south of Katum occurred at 1500,

The division engineer elements in the column had had a busy day in making Route 4 passable and in launching three A VLB's over streams. The 2d Brigade, 25th Division, and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (-) moved to positions near the open (south) end of the horseshoe and poised for their attack to the north in the morning.

The remaining brigade under the 25th Division continued search and destroy operations east of Route 22 and north of Trai Bi. Eighteen battalions, organized into six brigades, and one cavalry regiment were now deployed around the horseshoe. Thirteen mutually supporting fire support bases also ringed the operational area.

Throughout the day enemy contact and casualties remained light with four Americans killed and twenty-three wounded; enemy losses were unknown. The Air Force had also had a busy day, having flown 216 preplan red strike sorties in direct support of the ground operation.



Walter Mabry

HHC/2/503

Passes



Walter (Nick-Bones) Mabry entered rest on November 3, 2020 at Amita Health St. Joseph Medical Center, Joliet, Illinois. Walter was born March 1, 1944 to Isiah and Sadie Mabry in Madison County, MS. He was educated in the Joliet Public School system, enlisting in the United States Army serving in the Vietnam War, in the 173rd Airborne Brigade, member of Buffalo Soldiers, Joliet, IL; Deacon at Korean United Methodist Church where he did missionary work traveling to various parts of the United States and Guatemala.

He is preceded by his parents; wife, I. Sun Mabry; brothers, Roosevelt Journigan, Homer C. Clerk, George Willie Camble and Isiah El-Amin and sister, Ellareen Roberts.

He leaves to cherish his memories; his wife, Young Mabry; daughter, Kina Michelle Agnew; sons, Barry (Candace) and Matthew; grandchildren, Klean, Kimoni, Kaori, and Barry III; brothers, Percy (Bettie), John (Carolyn), Howard (Breonni) and Luther (Pamela); sisters, Callie (Alphonso) Yates, Sadie Maddox, Lillie Stephens, and Virgie Holmes; special friend, Elmer (Charlene) Wright; sisters-in-law, Emma Clerk, Willie Mae Camble, Christine El-Amin; a host of nieces nephews, cousins and friends.

Rest Easy With Your Fellow Warriors Brother

Keith J. Luce

E/2/503

Passes



Keith J. Luce, 69, of Coshocton, OH passed away on Thursday December 10, 2020 at his home.

Keith was born in Roswell, NM on June 18, 1951 to the late Clarence and Nancy (Trace) Luce.

He served in the United States Army during Vietnam from 1969-1971. Keith was a Sergeant in the 173rd Airborne Brigade and was assigned in the Central Highlands area of Vietnam conducting Combat and Reconnaissance missions. Keith was also a retired Firefighter and former Director of the Coshocton County EMS. He also taught fire services to high school students at the Delaware Ohio Career Center from 1995 until his retirement in 2008.

Keith is survived by his son Sean (Kristi) Luce of Coshocton and Jacque (Mike) Woodward of Coshocton; grandchildren Johnathan and Ty Woodward and Austin & William McMullen.

Along with his parents, he is preceded in death by his brother David Luce.

Memorial contributions may be directed to Disabled American Veterans, P.O. Box 14301, Cincinnati, Ohio 45250-0301.

An online memorial is located at
www.themillerfuneralhome.com

Rest Easy Sky Soldier



DOD Identifies Air Force Casualty

Nov. 28, 2020



The Department of Defense announced today the death of an Airman who was supporting Operation Freedom's Sentinel.

Captain Kelliann Leli, 30, of Parlin, New Jersey, died November 27 in a non-combat related vehicle incident at Al Dhafra Air Base, United Arab Emirates. The cause of the incident is under investigation.

Leli was a doctor who had worked with the 60th Healthcare Operations Squadron at Travis Air Force Base in California. The captain was also assigned to the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing.

Leli's colleagues remembered her as a great doctor who was always a team player.

"Our entire Travis family is beyond heartbroken over the tragic loss of our teammate, Kelliann," said Col. Corey Simmons, 60th Air Mobility Wing commander. "We are thinking of and praying for all her loved ones during this unfathomable time."

"Our Al Dhafra family is grieving the tragic loss of Capt. Kelliann Leli," Brig. Gen. Larry Broadwell, 380th Air Expeditionary Wing Commander. "She was an exceptional medic, officer, and teammate here, and her incredible presence will be deeply missed."

Rest Easy, Doc. On behalf of your country, we thank you.

Sedition by any other name is... Treason

Forts Bragg and Benning...many of us know them well.

Two of my older brothers served at Bragg, one with the 82nd Airborne, the other SF, and of course, all three of us survived jump school at Fort Benning. In the ranks of the paratroops one only needs say, *"Yeah, I served at Bragg (or Benning),"* and the trooper listening knows precisely the fort being referenced.

But as General Petraeus stated recently, he and few of us ever gave much or any thought to the genesis of the names of those forts we all hold dear; they are part of the airborne legacy, the mystique of the paratroops -- those names and forts are no less a part of us as Auburn University is to their alums — also with ties to the Civil War, having served as training grounds and as a hospital for the Confederacy.

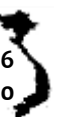
And while it seems likely the names of military installations which currently honor soldiers of the Southern Cause, it's also likely they will ultimately be replaced with heroic honorees who fought under *our* country's flag, while many of us in the old guard will forever hold those locales in fondness and esteem, if not whom their names represent.

And 50 years from now some old paratrooper will say, *"Yeah, I served with the 82nd at Fort Gavin, I think it was named Bragg at one time."* Ed

Camp Bragg was named for Braxton Bragg, a former U.S. Army artillery commander and West Point graduate who later fought for the Confederacy during the American Civil War.



Fort Benning is named after Henry L. Benning, a brigadier general in the Confederate States Army during the Civil War. Fort Benning is one of ten U.S. Army installations named for former Confederate Generals.



Jessie Shakalov On The Front Line On Thanksgiving Day



Paratrooper Extraordinaire Spec. Jessie Shakalov in Syria

Jessie Shakalov, the 82nd Abn paratrooper granddaughter of Jim "Top" Dresser (A/HHC/2/503 '65/'66) Barb, recently appeared on a CBS News report about how troops are spending the holidays in the war zone.



Jessie & Top. "I am so proud of her. I went into tears with pride! I love her dearly," said Top.

CBS Reporter: "Across the border in Syria at this small camp in the desert Specialist Jessie Shakalov from Tulsa, Oklahoma is in charge of making sure there is running water for the troops here. She was inspired to join up by her grandfather who served in Vietnam, and sent this message to her four-year old son Victor who she hasn't seen in five months."



Jessie: "I love you, I miss you, mom will be home soon. (while chuckling in front of the camera) That's it."

Source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfxKWLvs_i4

An Exception To The Rule



The thoughtful Sgt. Hassler, Recon RTO par excellence.

Gifts of any kind are always unwelcome here in this mancave where your newsletter is thrown together. The sole exception to that rule is the "VIETNAM RTO" coin you see above which came in from hooch buddy and fellow RTO **Jerry Hassler**, Recon 2/503 '66/'67.

Thank you Jerry, it will remain on perpetual display here at Smithville.

ATW Brother! Paragon 5-Kilo, Out

... -- - - - - -



From the archives....

Formation of the 173d Airborne Brigade, And Operations in Vietnam

**Army Source Document Declassified
per Executive Order 12356
4/12/91**

...Battle Group returned to Fort Bragg in 1959 and the 2d Airborne Battle Group departed Fort Bragg for Okinawa in May 1960, where it became the 2d Airborne Battle Group, 25th Infantry Division.

Formation of the 173d Airborne Brigade: On 25 June 1963 the 2d Airborne Battle Group became the 173d Airborne Brigade, and the newly-formed Brigade was assigned to the US Army, Ryukian* Islands. The Brigade had an authorized strength of 133 officers, 3 warrant officers and 3394 enlisted personnel. Units comprising the Brigade were the First and Second Battalions of the 503d Infantry, the Third Battalion of the 319th Artillery, and the 173d Support Battalion, plus D Company 16th Armor, E Troop 17th Cavalry and several separate companies and detachments.

Under the command of Colonel, now Major General Ellis W. Williamson, the 173d trained hard on its home island of Okinawa and throughout the Asian Theatre. Extensive airborne, guerrilla and jungle warfare training in the Philippines, Taiwan, Korea and Thailand brought the unit to a high pitch of combat readiness. It was from the parachute exercises on Taiwan with the Nationalist Chinese Army the 173d paratroopers were given



Ellis Williamson

the nickname "Tien Bing," Chinese for "Sky Soldiers," by the admiring Chinese population. The name stuck and has since been made the official nickname of the paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade.

* Ryukuan

During the time from its activation until the end of 1963 the Brigade trained to become ready and capable of successfully accomplishing its assigned missions. A total of 10,719 parachute jumps were made during this period and six field training exercises were held.



(web image & caption)

The Brigade started the year 1964 with its individual trained, tested and operationally ready. The entire Brigade, however, was handicapped due to equipment and personnel shortages resulting from the recent activation. During the calendar year the Brigade underwent varied and diversified training and plans were formulated to accomplish any contingency that might arrive. Culmination of the year's activities was a full scale off-island exercise, EXERCISE SKY SOLDIER/TIEN BING VI, which was conducted on Southern Taiwan as a joint exercise with elements of the government of the Republic of China. This operation tested the ability of each Brigade unit to accomplish its assigned mission as it operated in conjunction with all other elements.



**Desmond "Hammer" Jackson
C/2/503 1Sgt 'humping the
boonies' of Taiwan in 1964**

(continued....)



The equipment and personnel status so greatly improved during the latter portion of the year that near ultimate capabilities prevailed.

Field Training exercises were extensively conducted during the year, and a total of 26,339 parachute jumps were made. The 173d proved itself an "Airborne – All the Way" unit, having demonstrated a splendid capacity for training, working together and combat readiness.

The 173d Airborne Brigade in Vietnam: The 173d Airborne Brigade continued its mission on the "Rock" (Okinawa) until alerted for deployment to Vietnam. On 5 May 1965, the Brigade became the first United States Army combat unit in the Republic of South Vietnam. On its deployment the Brigade, due to its extensive training while on Okinawa and numerous exercises conducted on other islands in Southeast Asia, was possibly the most combat-ready unit ever to enter an armed conflict of the Stars and Stripes of the United States.

2/503's Doc Carter provides medical care to local villagers in '65. (George Dexter photo)

Throughout the year 1966 the 173d Airborne Brigade continued to conduct operations but in and outside of its tactical area of responsibility. Operations were conducted to continue to locate and destroy the enemy forces and their logistical installations and to reduce the enemy's hold on thousands of loyal Vietnamese.

During the period 1 January to 30 April the Brigade participated in numerous combat operations.



Upon arrival at Bien Hoa AFB in May '65, 2/503 troops prepare to move out. (Photo by LTC George Dexter, Bn CO)

Upon reaching Vietnam, the Brigade secured the area around BIEN HOA and VUNG TAU with their base camp being BIEN HOA. It was the first United States unit to fight in the infamous War Zone D, a long-known Viet Cong stronghold. Again and again, the Brigade proved itself an exceptionally worthy United States combat unit.

Operation SILVER CITY was conducted from 9-22 March in War Zone D. During SILVER CITY, on 16 March, the 2d Battalion 503d Infantry was engaged by an estimated Viet Cong Regiment. The result was 343 Viet Cong killed in action (by count) and 211 Viet Cong killed in action (estimated). This operation was considered the most successful operation in which any American unit had participated in

during the Vietnam conflict. Altogether operations during this period resulted in 626 Viet Cong killed in action (by count) and 493 Viet Cong killed in action (estimated), while friendly losses were 84 killed in hostile action and 518 wounded in hostile action.

(continued....)





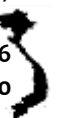
Operation Silver City. On the afternoon of 15 Mar 66, Sky Soldiers of the 2/503d arrive LZ Zulu-Zulu in the heart of the "D" Zone jungle where the enemy had planted "anti-chopper" stakes in the ground.

(Photo by RTO Wayne Hoitt, HHC/2/503)

From 1 May to 31 July 1966 the Brigade continued to conduct tactical operations over a large portion of III Corps tactical zone. To accomplish its mission the Brigade conducted a total of six combat operations of battalion size or larger. Each of these operations resulted in Viet Cong losses of personnel, equipment and supplies.

During this period the Brigade continued to operate from its base camp located near the city of BIEN HOA in BIEN HOA Province. The 4th Battalion 503d Infantry arrived in Vietnam on 25 June 1966, being assigned to the 173d. A Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol was formed on 25 April 1966. Volunteers within the Brigade were transferred and provided the nucleus of the original unit. The Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol has continued to be a vital source of intelligence. They are the "eyes and ears" of the Brigade.

(continued....)





173d LRRPs in Vietnam. The “eyes and ears” of the Brigade.

The Brigade continued combat operations, began to conduct Revolutionary Development Operations and continued to consolidate Republic of Vietnam control throughout III Corps Tactical Zone during the time-frame of 1 August to 31 October 1966. A total of four battalion-size or larger operations were conducted.

During this period the internal structure of the Brigade remained the same, however, several new units were attached. These were the 39th Infantry Platoon Scout Dog, the 24th Military History Detachment and the 45th Postal Unit.

The 173d conducted four more combat operation from 1 November to 31 January 1967. The rapid deployment for these operations indicated that the Brigade could, while in a base camp situation, be rapidly deployed to a trouble zone in a matter of minutes. The 173d Airborne Brigade was by now well-known as Vietnam’s “reaction” unit, deploying to where the fighting was the heaviest.



Pete Peters with Prince, 39th Scout Dog Platoon

During the calendar year 1967 the 173d Airborne Brigade continued to launch numerous operations against the Viet Cong and the growing North Vietnam Army forces. It continued its strong Civic Action and Civil Affairs programs and made numerous MEDCAP and DENCAP operations. It was during the month of February, 1967 that the 173d achieved what is, for paratroopers, the best “first” of all. The 2d Battalion 503d Infantry made the first combat parachute jump in 15 years to spearhead Operation JUNCTION CITY, one of the

largest operations in United States Army History.



A blast from the past. Kontum Province, 22 Feb 67.

During June, the Brigade was called to send troops to II Corps Tactical Zone, in the area of KONTUM, to aid the 4th Infantry Division in Operation GREELEY, the 4th Battalion 503d Infantry was sent. On 19 September the Brigade commenced Operation BOLLING in the TUY HOA/PHU HIEP area (II Corps). In November, the Brigade’s rear elements moved from BIEN HOA to AN KHE, Camp Radcliff (II Corps) to better support the troops, as all line elements were now operating in the II Corps Tactical Zone.

(continued....)





Steve "Sgt. Rock" Vargo, C/2/503, survivor of 'The Battle of the Slopes' during Operation Greeley.

Shortly after the rear elements of the Brigade reached Camp Radcliff the 3d Battalion 503d Infantry arrived in Vietnam. The 3d Battalion was formed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina in March, 1967, and its arrival gave the Brigade four Airborne Infantry Battalions. The Battalion entered tactical operations on 5 November in the BOLLING area of operations.



3rd Batt 503rd IN (ABN) 173rd BDE. The 3rd Batt in formation on the dock in Qui-Nhon on or about 27 Oct. 1967 before convoy to Anh-Khe, Vietnam. (web photo & caption)

The 173d commenced Operation MACARTHUR on 1 November, but terminated its command participation in MACARTHUR on 14 December 1967. However, the First and Second Battalions, 503d Infantry remained in the DAK TO/KONTUM area under the operational control of the 4th Infantry Division.

During this operation, in late November, the 173d became engaged in one of the most critical battles of the war around the Vietnamese town of DAK TO and the Brigade distinguished itself with the true spirit of the paratrooper.



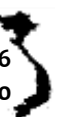
"DAK TO, SOUTH VIETNAM, 11/22/67: Members of the 173rd Airborne Brigade are engaged in a long, long crawl to the crest of Hill 875, a steep mound that in four days has cost American forces some of their highest casualties of the war. Pushing inch-by-inch of sloping earth behind them, U.S. paratroopers seized most of the hill Nov. 22. They are now faced with a North Vietnamese stronghold atop the peak and reports of two fresh regiments of NVA troops moving into the region." (Web photo & caption)

The year 1968 found the Brigade continuing Operations BOLLING and MACARTHUR, and on 16 January, the 173d began Operation WALKER, replacing elements of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

But the 173d had been looking for a "home of its own," its own TAOR, since deploying to the Republic of South Vietnam. This opportunity came in March, 1967, when the Brigade replaced elements of the 4th Infantry Division and began Operation COCHISE, thus assuming operational responsibility for BINH DINH, PHU YEN and PHU BOM Provinces. Operation COCHISE, now DAN SINH continues to the present time.



Note: See Issue 47 featuring Operation MacArthur, The Battles at Dak To in November 1967.



The Wall of Faces

Of the over 1700 Sky Soldiers who perished during the Vietnam War, five decades later all their photos are now posted on the Wall of Faces.

Herbert Wilson's picture has been posted on the Wall of Faces! That completes the Brigade.

Ken Smith, Col. (Ret)
CO A/D/2/503, RVN



Herbert Wilson, Jr.
Private First Class
C CO, 2ND BN, 503RD INFANTRY, 173RD ABN BDE, USARV
Army of the United States
New York, New York
August 26, 1947 to March 03, 1967

9/5/18: *"You are not forgotten. The war may be forgotten but the warrior will always be remembered.*

All Gave Some--Some Gave All. Rest in peace Sky Soldier."

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

A special thanks to Ken Smith and many other Sky Soldiers and friends of Sky Soldiers who worked tirelessly over the years to locate and post photos of all our fallen.

We Try Harder...indeed



From the web....

THE INFANTRYMEN

A fourth line battalion, the 3d Battalion, 503d Infantry joined the 173d Airborne Brigade recently after undergoing five months of extensive training at Ft. Bragg, N.C., while attached to the 82nd Airborne Division.



MG John R.D. Cleland

The newly formed Battalion was a member of the old "Rock" regiment during World War II. Later deactivated, the unit remained quiescent until April 1 when it was reactivated under the command of Lieutenant Colonel John Cleland. Colonel Cleland was a member of the Battalion when it earned the nickname "The Rock" in the battle of Corregidor.

The well-trained paratroopers arrive in country October 24 at Qui Nhon after a 20-day voyage from Oakland, California. Most of the men are new in country, but there are over 50 paratroopers who have served with the Sky Soldiers previously. The majority of the Battalion's troops have recently come from Jump School at Ft. Benning, the 82nd Airborne Division, Europe or OCS.

The new Battalion began to form immediately after its reactivation. On May 1, they began preparing to join their parent unit in Vietnam. The training at Ft. Bragg was strenuous, since there was much to learn about the type of fighting that they would soon encounter. They began with operational tactics such as individual and squad maneuvers. Even the weather cooperated: training in the summer heat at Ft. Bragg was good preparation for tropical jungle fighting. By June the unit was well on its way to being a combat-ready battalion. During June they moved on to platoon and company operations, including airborne assaults.

During the last part of July a field training exercise called CROATAN was held in the Coratan National Forest in the southern part of North Carolina. A non-commissioned officer who had recently served with the

173d Airborne Brigade explained, *"We conducted every type of tactical operations during our two-week field problem that I knew of while I was in Vietnam."*

During the next two months the Battalion spent most of their time preparing their equipment for the long trip to join their fighting parent unit in Vietnam. Shortly after their arrival in country they underwent a week of training conducted by the 173d Airborne Brigade Jungle School in An Khe. Later, the 3d Battalion moved to Tuy Hoa, where they have conducted extensive

operations against the enemy.



Waiting for welcoming ceremonies to begin at Qui Nhon

Jumping from 200 feet, the lowest combat jump on record, the 3d Battalion assaulted the island fortress of Corregidor, long held by the Japanese. The paratroopers defeated an enemy force 5 times their size and captured large quantities of explosives and ammunition. The island's nickname became the battalion's.





From Boy To Scout To Paratrooper

By Brig. Gen. Ellis W. Williamson
Commanding General
173d Airborne Brigade (Sep)



As a turbojet skims over Okinawa, 60 paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) line up. The jumpmaster stands by the door, the wind whipping in. Suddenly a green light flashes, and the men move out. They have 30 seconds to jump. Everyone realizes the necessity for speed. Everyone, except one man.

"Hey, guys," he yells. "Tell me how you like my triple somersault. I'm trying for the Olympics."

It gets a laugh, but it delays the troopers for 3 precious seconds. As a result, two troopers come down on a sharp coral rock.

Men of the 173d must learn to function as a team. No one tries to stifle innate individuality, but basic orders have to be followed. It's not a game with us, but often a question of life and death. Naturally, the laugh-getting trooper got a bawling out when he landed—in more colorful language than a Scout-master uses to an errant Scout.

Everyone in authority must be stern at times. A father has to stop his young son from playing with matches. A Scoutmaster must keep an adventuresome boy from practicing knife throwing when it endangers others. Discipline is seldom pleasant, but often necessary.

The 173d has approximately 3,600 trained paratroopers. These young men come from Houston, from Honolulu, from the streets of New York. One youngster from Hazard, Ky., was attracted to the airborne because he considered it a rough-and-ready outfit. He had no fear of jumping and he gloried in the physical demands, but one thing bothered him. He had trouble giving his uniform and boots that extra-special care that's the hallmark of a paratrooper. He thought clothes should be comfortable, that's all.

When he first landed in Okinawa, he flunked inspection on several occasions. He thought his CO was "picking on him," and let it go at that. Then one Saturday afternoon in Naha City, he saw a group of seamen glaring respectfully at some troopers. The troopers walked tall, their trousers were creased, razor-sharp, their boots were spit-shined to a high gloss. They seemed to say, *"Look, I'm proud of my outfit, I'm proud of my job."* The Kentucky youth, as he later told the story, put his boot to the back of his pants' leg and swore to change his ways. In a flash he realized that uniforms and medals don't make the man—but often they symbolize an inner worth and accomplishment.



Everyone admires certain symbols. Cub Scouts long for the day they can wear the Boy Scout's uniform. Officers beam as they see the silver Parachutist's Badge pinned to a young man's uniform. We all—father, army officer, Scoutmaster—enjoy seeing accomplishment and growth.

When the young son takes that first step, there's usually a father looking on happily. There are other milestones after that: the first haircut, the first day at school, the first time he drives the family car. The Scoutmaster sees the Tenderfoot advance and change—to

First Class, to Star, perhaps to Eagle Scout. Sometimes the older person must reprimand, sometimes he must encourage. Often he has to let the younger person work out his own problem.

One freckle-faced youth seemed the perfect recruit to the paratroopers. He has always excelled, both at home and at school. He didn't think there would be any difference in the paratroopers. But one afternoon he found himself faced with a problem.

"I don't know why, but I just can't jump," he confessed as his turn came to leap for the first time from a plane. Then

he watched all his classmates go in front of him.

On the ground, the jumpmaster said, *"You have one more chance. Either go back up and jump—or you're out of the paratroopers."*

The young man bit his lip, replied, *"Okay, let's go back up, I'll do it this time."*

He did. He had never been a quitter, and he wasn't then. Later, he became the jumpmaster himself.

How does Scouting prepare a man to be an airborne soldier? A man who lives the Boy Scout Oath, Law, and motto is prepared to be an airborne soldier or anything else he wants to be. Every man in is the result of his youth. Most of our men are only a few months or years away from Scouting age, and we are proud that many of our most successful troopers are former Scouts.

We in the military often say that we can make a soldier in a short while if his parents and his community have first made him a man.

Source:

This Week On Okinawa, Vol. 11 No. 34, 8/20/65
[Images & photo added]



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Arlington man helps orphanage in Vietnam where he found in 1966-68

By Kristi O'Harran, Herald Columnist
October 8, 2009

Steve Konek jumped into action after Typhoon Ketsana ravaged a Vietnamese orphanage Sept. 29. Konek received this urgent message from a friend in the Central Highlands of Vietnam: *"The children are very miserable and hungry, thirsty. We'd like to call your help."*

The Arlington man supports Vinh Son II Orphanage in Kontum. He served in Vietnam as a U.S. Army paratrooper during tours of duty from 1966 through 1968.

He asked buddies with Chapter XVI, Society of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, to help support the kids. They organized two charity baseball games, raising \$6,000, and ponied up \$1,000 this week.

It's not Konek's first humanitarian mission.

Thai Phan, who lives in Seattle, came to the United States in 1976 thanks to Konek's sponsorship. The translator met Konek during the war.



Thai's good buddy, (then) PFC, Steve Konek, near Bien Hoa, RSVN.

Phan said he can't thank his sponsor enough. *"I help him raise money,"* Phan said. *"The orphans need it."*



Operation Ho-Bo Woods, Civil Affairs – Medical Mission.
L-R: Sgt. Phan Thai, Dr. Anderson, PFC Witt.

Konek learned about Central Highland needs after his father was buried two years ago. A Vietnamese priest who officiated at the service connected Konek with Jack McLaughlin, an orphanage supporter.

The men became friends dedicated to the same cause. Konek, president of the Pacific International League where the Everett Merchants play, organized benefit baseball games with the help of the Airborne Brigade, U.S. Special Forces Association and Veterans of the 81st Special Forces Republic of South Vietnam.

After his Army service, Konek earned a political science degree at the University of Washington. The family man is a grounds keeper for the Marysville School District.

He needs a sponsor for the 2010 game. For more information, e-mail Konek at sk1k47@hotmail.com.

"At the games, we give away free things I gather," Konek said. *"We make it a fun event."*

Konek returned to Vietnam in April to deliver goods to Vinh Son II including bicycles and computers for little ones with few material possessions.

He did some sightseeing and found his old Dak To base camp where the airfield was strewn with roots drying in the sun. He learned a Buddhist temple he yearned to revisit had been destroyed in 1972.

"There were some emotional things there," Konek said, declining to elaborate.

Some channel pain into action.

[Reprinted with permission of
The Daily Herald of Everett, Washington]
(Photos added)



173rd Airborne Tests 100% COVID-19 Free After Seven Weeks in the Field

AUG. 27, 2020 | BY ARMY SPC. RYAN LUCAS

As Exercise Saber Junction 20 wound down and the 173rd Airborne Brigade prepared to redeploy to Vicenza, Italy, and Grafenwoehr, Germany, brigade medical personnel administered COVID-19 tests to the entire force, Aug. 21, 2020. While the brigade finished its exercise, medical personnel administered 2,500 swabs and rapid testing in Landstuhl, Germany. All tests came back negative for the virus.

"We're conducting 100% testing of the brigade in order to ensure the health and safety of our soldiers and allies during the movement of our troops back to Italy," said Army Staff Sgt. Michael Aponte, a laboratory technician in the brigade.



An Army medic paratrooper assigned to 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade swabs for COVID-19 during a 100% surveillance testing of the brigade in Hohenfels Training Area, Germany, Aug. 20, 2020 during Exercise Saber Junction 20.

Four battalions of the 173rd Airborne Brigade are based in Vicenza, Italy, while another two are based in Grafenwoehr, Germany. Prior to the beginning of Exercise Saber Junction 20 and the preceding field training exercise in Grafenwoehr Training Area, all Italian-based paratroopers were tested for COVID-19. *"We tested the force in Italy before moving forward to Germany,"* Aponte said. *"Today we're going to take care of the whole brigade and some attachments that we have with us."*

In order to accommodate the testing, the brigade took a tactical pause and temporarily suspended the simulated wartime environment. Spread across the vast Hohenfels Training Area, each battalion sent medical personnel to pick up the testing equipment from the brigade.

"The brigade is providing the tools and each battalion is adjusting to their area of operations," Aponte said. The 54th Brigade Engineer Battalion, for example, used one of the simulated towns to carry out their testing, while the Brigade Support Battalion used tents.



Army medic paratroopers assigned to 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, swab soldiers for COVID-19 during a 100% surveillance testing.

Army Pfc. Frank Croce, a medic assigned to the Brigade Support Battalion, assisted in the testing of 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment. Commenting on the testing site, Croce said they were able to set it up very quickly after the tactical pause began.

"It's a hasty setup, but it's effective," Croce said. Once each battalion finished swabbing their entire personnel roster, the brigade collected the samples and shipped them off in a UH-60 Black Hawk for testing. As of Aug. 22, all samples tested negative.

(Army Spc. Ryan Lucas is assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade)



Tradition...

Honoring & Remembering Military Relatives of RVN 2/503 Troopers

Many of our 2/503 Vietnam War “*We Try Harder*” troopers are direct descendants of and/or have relatives who bear our family name and who served or are serving our country in the military and in wars and conflicts past and present. Here are just some of our military relatives who bear our family names.

Lest we forget...



Robert “Bob” Beemer
SGT, B/2/503, '67-'68

I served with 2/503 from Nov. 67 to Nov. 68, discharged Feb. 70 with rank of Sgt.

Steve L. Beemer, my brother, CPL, came to Vietnam right after I arrived in Nov. 67. He served with the 1/9 Marines better known as the “Walking Dead”



up in I Corps. Steve was telling me that the one thing most of the men in the unit had in common was the Purple Heart.



Anna M. McDonald-Beemer, my mother, was a 2d Lt. in the Army Nurse Corp. during WW2. Back in the 50's it was a common joke to say *Your Mother Wears Combat Boots*, in her case it was true. She resigned her commission when

my father was released from POW camp and they were able to get married. It almost didn't happen as she had orders to go to the Pacific.

William H. Beemer, my father, enlisted in the service and earned the rank of E-6 before going to OCS. He hooked up with the 8th Army (Golden Arrow) for the push into Europe where he was captured and sent to a POW camp in Poland. He was released after VE Day. He attained the rank of Captain but after the Korean War the Army reduced his rank to the highest enlisted rank. He stayed in Army and achieved Command Sergeant Major, retiring with the rank of Captain.



(continued....)





Walter (Wild Bill) Bills
C/2/503, '67-'68
Dak To



Robert "Bobby" Bills, my oldest son in Mosel, Iraq, retired as an E7 following 22 years of service in the army.



Ken Bills, my brother, in front of photo, was a U.S. Navy Boatswain Mate, LSMR, RVN, 1967.



K.C. Bills, Jr., my grandson. He just earned his wings in December and now is at Ft. Lee Riggers' School.



(continued....)





Phillip L. Blake

COL, USA (Ret), HHC/2/503, '63-'65

I served as a captain in the 173rd from 1963 to 1965, including six months assigned to HHC, 2/503rd Inf. as an assistant S-3 in Vietnam. I returned to VN in 1966 and was assigned to 1st Bn (Abn), 12th Cavalry, 1st Air Cav Div, during which time I commanded A Company for eight months. Then in '72-'73 I was initially a battalion advisor in the ARVN Airborne Division, and completed my tour as the aide-de-camp to General Fred Weyand, the last COMUSMACV.

Ellis D. Blake, COL (Ret), my late father, was an infantry battalion commander in the 33rd Inf. Div. in the Pacific during WWII.



Hollis L. Blake, my father's youngest brother, T/Sgt WWII, was a battalion Sergeant Major in the Pacific.

Robert E. Blake, LTC (Ret) my older brother, was an advisor to an ARVN 105mm Battalion in '63 and XO of the 2/19th FA 1st Cav Div. during '69-'70.



Douglas Blake, LTC (Ret), my youngest brother, was too young for VN.



Steve Blake, my brother who served as a 2LT in the mid '60's.



L-R: Phil, Doug and Bob



(continued....)





James "Top" Dresser
SFC, A/HHC/2/503, '65-'66

Jessie Shakalov, my granddaughter and I. She is currently serving with the 82nd Airborne Division in Syria.

(See Page 22 for CBS news report about Jessie)



continued....)





Leslie A. "Les" Fuller
Sgt., A/2/503 Inf., Vietnam, Feb. 1967-68

I was also in C/2/325 Inf., 82nd Airborne. Here are just some of my people. There are way too many to list.

Morres Fuller, Captain, 117th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, Company E, Union Army, Civil War.

Charles A. Fuller, WW1, U S Navy 14 June 1917 to 11 November 1919, aboard ships USS Oregon and USS Nanshan, his rank was SKIC. He also served onshore in Russia and was awarded the WW1 victory medal, US Navy, onboard a ship somewhere near Russia.

Leslie W. Fuller, my son, Sergeant Major. Served with the 101st Airborne in Iraq for 30 months, Korea 1 year, Haiti for 9 months, Ukraine for 9 months and Ft Hood for 3 years. Is currently with 101st Airborne/Assault.



Martin H. Fuller, War of 1812.

Thomas Fuller, the Black Hawk War in 1832.

Elias E. Fuller, WW2 Sniper, U.S. Army, Luzon Islands, 1944-1948.

Frank E. Fuller, U.S. Marine Corps, 1948-1950.

Leland R. Fuller, U.S. Army, 1952-1955, Germany.

Henry A. Fuller, U.S. Army 1951 -1953, Ft. Leonard-wood.

Lester D. Fuller, U.S. Army 1954- 1956, Ft. Hood (Tanker).

Makayla Fuller, my grand-daughter. JROTC, 1993, Ft. Campbell.



George Lloyd Fuller, U.S. Navy (SEAL), Viet Nam, 1965-1969.

Larry D. Fuller, Viet Nam 1970, Combat Engineer, Sp/4, 101st Airborne.



Larry E. Fuller, U.S. Army, SFC, Bosnia, Kuwait 1993. Indiana National Guard. Combat Engineer.



(continued....)





Earle L. Graham
SSG, USA (Ret), A/2/503, '67-'68

Myself, SSG Earle L. Graham, served 3 years 1965-68, Airborne Infantry, Dominican Republic (82nd Abn) and Vietnam. Volunteered at Ft Bragg when 3rd Bn of 173rd was formed. Was reassigned to A Co, 2nd Bn after Battle for Hill 875. 10/67-5/68.

Johnny Graham, PFC (deceased), my father. Army. He served from approximately 1940-43, all stateside duty.



Robert L. Graham, my older brother. Served 3 years, 1964-67. Army, Signal Corps, France and Germany.

Benjamin F. Graham, my brother. Sp4, (deceased), 1968-71. Served in Germany.



Donald J. Graham, SSG (Ret), my brother. Served 1972-75, 82nd Abn, 17th Cav. Two tours in Afghanistan and one in Iraq. 11th Special Forces.



Raymond C. Graham, Sp4, my brother. Army, 1972-74, Field Wireman, stationed in Germany 18 months.

Thelma D. Graham, my sister. SSG, Air Force, 1984-83, Administrative Specialist, Incirlik AF Base Turkey, Clark AF Base, Philippines.



Marcus R. Graham, my nephew. Sp4, Army, 1991-98 USA, Telecommunications, Kuwait and Korea.

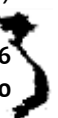
Kelle D. Graham-Gunter, my daughter. Sp4, 2003-2006, Army, Quartermaster Chemical Repair, Iraq 2003-2004 and 2005-2006.



James Graham, my first cousin. Sgt. (E-5), Army, 71-79. Storage Specialist/Surveyor, Korea.



(continued....)





Gerald (Jerry) Hassler
SGT, HHC/Recon/2/503, '66-'67

Earl A. Hassler, Marine, WWII, imprisoned at Omori near Tokyo. He also fought during the Korean War where he suffered frostbite.



"Gaunt allied prisoners of War at Omori camp near Yokohama cheer rescuers from U.S. Navy. Waving flags of the United States, Britain and Holland." (web photo)

Donovan Strathmore Hassler, Jr., U.S. Army during peacetime.



Joseph, Christian, Michael, George and Abraham fought in the American Revolution with the York County Pennsylvania Militia. Michael served with Col. George Washington at the Battle of Brandywine.

John Hassler served in the War of 1812.

Augustus Emanuel Hassler served in the Civil War with the North and was twice wounded at Antietam where, despite his wounds, raised the U.S. flag when the flag bearer was shot. He also fought at Gettysburg, Wilderness and Appomattox.



Battle of the Wilderness, 1864
(web image)



Guy W. Hassler fought in the American Indian Wars, Spanish American War, Philippine Insurrection, Mexican border and World War I.



(continued....)





Joseph M. Logan, Jr.
MAJ, B/2/503, '65-'66

In 1980 I was the active duty evaluator to the national guard battalion my father once commanded. For almost two weeks I drove the present commander nuts about facts of his unit and the armory. It was the old time unit technician who figured out who I was. As a kid I had spent time exploring the armory and attending events.



My mother and father meeting the Queen's mother about 1954, while he was in the armory of the 7th Regiment, NYNG.



Lawrence M. Logan, my son, served with the 82d from 1986 until 1990, called back for Desert Storm.

Cynthia and Patricia Logan, my two oldest daughters joined the Navy because I always came home dirty after being in the field.

Suzanne, my youngest daughter is married to a USAF airman, and a son in-law who served 28 years in the Navy.



Joseph M. Logan, LTC, my father, joined the New York National Guard in the late 1930's, attended OCS and was commissioned a 2LT, activated October 1940 with the 165th Inf, 27th ID, saw action at Makin, Saipan and Okinawa. I was three and a half when I first met him in January 1946.



(continued....)





Robert "Bob" Lohr
SGT, E/2/503, '68-'69



Stanley Lohr, Pvt., Germany, US Army. I pinned his wings on him, during a 173rd reunion at Ft Benning. I did not even realize it till I ran into someone and they gave me info, it was that day I became a Life Member. Notice his wings, he is as proud as I am.

Michael Lohr, Pvt, Iowa Regiment, Union Army, Civil War.

Delmer "Del" Lohr, my father, Seaman, US Navy, Subtender "Orion", WWII.



Submarine tender USS Orion (AS-18)
with seven submarines.

Melody Lohr, my sister, SP/4, MP, 42nd MP Group, Germany.



[See Page 45 for Medal of Honor awarded to Bob's grandfather]



(continued....)





Roy Lombardo
LTC, CO B/2/503, '65

Wayne Lombardo, LTC (retired), my brother, fought with the 3-187 IN at Hamburger Hill and later an advisor to the ARVN.

Lance Lombardo, LTC (retired), my oldest son, deployed with the 2-504 PIR to Desert Storm and later parachuted into Panama as a Platoon Leader. Later DELTA FORCE.

Kevin Lombardo, is still serving for 30 years and has deployed twice as much as me and my oldest son. He recently returned from Niger, after an earlier tour in Uganda.

Both my sons are Rangers and Master Parachutists.

Ryan Lombardo, CPT, my grandson, was just sworn into the Space Force.



Harold W. "Hal" Mahar, Jr.
1LT (CPT Ret), C/2/503, '66-'67
The Citadel, Class of '64

My first tour was as a 1st LT, 3rd platoon leader, C Co, 2nd Bn 503rd INF, 173rd Abn Bde Sep 1966-67, Bien Hoa. Second tour as CPT, Recovery Officer, Counter Intelligence Directorate, MACV HQ 1968-69, Cholon.

Harold W. Mahar, Sr., my father, CPT, 3rd Infantry Division, WWII.



Gail Simmons Mahar, LT,
1966-67, 3rd Surgical Vietnam
Hospital Bien Hoa, Vietnam.

Gail was LT Simmons in the '60s and we did not reconnect 'til 35 years later and we were married May 24, 2002.



(continued....)



Nathan D. Moody
SGT, C/D/2/503, '67-'68

Worth H. Moody, my dad, S/Sgt WW2, he was with the 2nd Ranger Bat., one of the many heroes at Normandy.

Howard Moody, proudly served in the Civil War with the Confederacy.



Gary Prisk
COL, CO C/D/2/503, '67-'68

Court Prisk, my brother, COL, CO C/3/319th Artillery, RVN



Ed Prisk, my father, MAJ, General Eisenhower's Liaison Officer to Field Marshall Montgomery, WWII.



Maj. Ed Prisk, second from left backrow, with Montgomery and his staff.



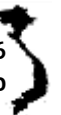
Ed Privette
MAJ, CO HHC/2/503, '67

Nick Privette, MAJ, grandson paratrooper, now serving in Reserves after active duty.



Ed, pinning his original jump wings on his grandson **Nick** at Ft. Benning jump school graduation.

(continued....)





Donald Lewis "Smitty" Smith, Jr.
SP4, HHC/2/503, '65-'66

I served in HHC/2/503 in '65-'66, as an RTO. Also served with the 101st at Campbell, and the 509th Abn in Germany.

Theron J. Smith, my great uncle was a Union soldier who served in Co. A, 114th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, known as "Lincoln's Regiment" during the Civil War, whom after the war was credited with developing much of the Snake River Valley near Idaho Falls, ID in the 1890s, where he also served as Justice of the Peace.

Samuel Smith, my great-great-great grandfather, together with his brothers, served the cause of the colonies in the American Revolution, when they were paid in colonial scrip which was never redeemed, but they had the satisfaction of knowing they had risked their lives in a good and triumphant cause. Late in life Samuel represented his district in the assembly of the State of New York.

Two brothers were army paratroopers, **Rick** with the 82nd during peacetime, and **Bob**, SSG with 5th Special Forces during the Vietnam War, where he was blinded in one eye by enemy fire during a firefight near Dak To on his third tour.



L-R: Brothers Bob & Smitty
Camp Zinn, December '65



Kenneth V. Smith, COL (Ret)
CO A/D/2/503 & Bde HQ, '67-'68
S-3 2-1 Inf in I Corps, '71-'72

President Emeritus, 173d Abn Bde Assoc.

Leo W. Smith, LTC, USA. Served with the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Depression. Called to active duty in 1940 and served through the duration of the war. Served with USAR until retirement in 1960.

Leo W. Smith, II, LTG, USAF. Graduated from West Point in 1958. Served with the Strategic Air Command at Minuteman Missile Bases. Flew B-47, B-52. Vietnam era service (two tours) flying C-130s. Retired as DCINC, Strategic Air Command.

Vincent M. Smith, LTC, USMC. Commissioned in 1960. Served two tours in Vietnam, including commander of a company during the siege of Khe San with the 9th Marines, "The Walking Dead".

Daniel M. Smith, COL, USA. Graduated from West Point in 1966. Served one tour in Vietnam as an Intelligence Specialist.



Heroism during combat runs in this family.... The grandfather of Bob Lohr, E/2/503, RVN, was the recipient of the Medal of Honor during our nation's Civil War.



"The third from left backrow was David Casey, from my mother's side, the Medal of Honor recipient awarded for recovering the unit's flag under fire, which apparently was a huge deal then for building morale. His brother was a prisoner at Andersonville where men were so hungry they would fight over bits and pieces of Rat for nutrition, so the story goes." Bob Lohr

DAVID P. CASEY

RANK: PRIVATE (HIGHEST RANK: CORPORAL)

CONFLICT/ERA: U.S. CIVIL WAR

UNIT/COMMAND: CO. C, 25TH MASSACHUSETTS INFANTRY

MEDAL OF HONOR ACTION DATE: JUNE 3, 1864

MEDAL OF HONOR ACTION PLACE:

COLD HARBOR, VIRGINIA, USA

BORN: 1842, IRELAND, DIED: JANUARY 4, 1893



CITATION:

The President of the United States of America, in the name of Congress, takes pleasure in presenting the Medal of Honor to Private David P. Casey, United States Army, for extraordinary heroism on 3 June 1864, while serving with Company C, 25th Massachusetts Infantry, in action at Cold Harbor, Virginia. Two Color Bearers having been shot dead one after the other, the last one far in advance of his regiment and close to the enemy's line, Private Casey rushed forward, and, under a galling fire, after removing the dead body of the bearer there from, secured the flag and returned with it to the Union lines.



Battle of Cold Harbor by Kurz and Allison, 1888

The Battle of Cold Harbor was fought during the American Civil War near Mechanicsville, Virginia, from May 31 to June 12, 1864, with the most significant fighting occurring on June 3. It was one of the final battles of Union Lt. Gen. Ulysses S. Grant's Overland Campaign, and is remembered as one of American history's bloodiest, most lopsided battles. Thousands of Union soldiers were killed or wounded in a hopeless frontal assault against the fortified positions of Confederate Gen. Robert E. Lee's army.



Friends to all Sky Soldiers, Exie Carmichael and her late husband LTC Bob Carmichael, our former 2/503 Battalion XO/CO in '65-'66 RVN, were kind enough to entrust to me, Bob's former RTO, many of their personal writings from Okinawa and Vietnam, for temporary keeping, including the following piece by Exie who honors here other 'heroes' of our Battalion and Brigade, and whom we thanked for sharing this report with us....Exie passed away on 10/30/20, see Page 11 herein. Bob called his bride "Ex". Photos added. Ed

Truly, the Army takes care of its own

By Exie Carmichael

21 July 65

Many times in the past twenty-five years combat units have been ordered overseas from the United States of America, leaving their families at home in the states. However, on Okinawa, we believe we have a first. The 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) which was activated on June 25, 1963, was on May 3, 1965, ordered to Viet Nam. Approximately five hundred and fifty families were left behind on Okinawa.

We have often heard it said, *"Don't worry, the Army takes care of its own"*. We had no idea how true this could be, or to what extent the people of Okinawa, both Ryukyans and Americans would give of themselves to fulfill these words.

Lt. General Albert Watson II, Commanding General USARYIS, IX Corps, at once offered any and all assistance that was needed to help Brigade families.



"Brig. General Ellis W. Williamson read a special Christmas message to the members of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) Officers' Wives Club at their December luncheon held at the Fort Buckner Officers' open mess on Thursday, Dec. 17. General Williamson is commanding general of the 173rd." (Photo & caption dated 12/20/64)

Prior to his departure, Brig. Gen. Ellis W. Williamson, Commanding General of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) appointed Capt. Joe A. Icenhower, Brigade AG, as the Dependents' Assistance Officer. His job was to set up an office to aid 173rd dependents. These dependents were to include those already on the island as well as those scheduled to arrive.

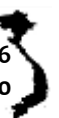
Realizing that one man could not possibly accommodate five hundred and fifty families, Mrs. Ellis W. Williamson, wife of the commanding general, asked Mrs. William Ver Hey to help organize and supervise the office to be staffed by the ladies of the Brigade. Mr. Ver Hey appointed two assistants, Mrs. Jesse Dumas, wife of Capt. Dumas and Mrs. Frank T. Blanda, wife of Capt. Blanda. A group of ten ladies became the volunteer staff. The wives represented Brigade men of all ranks, Enlisted, NCO and Officer. The first worker to appear on the job was Mrs. Charles Langmack, wife of PFC Langmack, a Chaplain's Assistant. Mrs. Langmack's knowledge and interest in social work was instrumental in planning some of the services that the office could render.



L-R: Mrs. Carmichael, Mrs. Watson & Mrs. Williamson on Okinawa, October 29, 1964.

General Watson, accompanied by Stanley R. Riser, Under Secretary of the Army, now Secretary, visited the office in late May.

(continued....)



In the weeks that followed, necessity revealed the many talents and abilities possessed by the staff to support the activities and functions of the office. Upon her arrival at the office, she first checked to see if there were any pending cases from the previous day. Next, she contacted the hospital to see if any 173rd dependents had been admitted. Should there be, if it was a child, she phoned the mother, or a neighbor to see if help was needed. This, of course, would be followed by other calls of whatever nature of assistance was needed. A form was then filled out and sent to the husband so he would be informed of the situation. The large bulletin board labeled *"Incoming Dependents"* was checked to see if any families were arriving within the next 10 days. The answer was usually yes and a standardized procedure was followed to prepare for the incoming family. Also among the workers were ladies experienced in typing, filing, and dictation. The area in which all excelled was revealed in the answering of busy telephones by cheerful voices who said, *"Good morning, 173rd Dependents' Assistance Office, May I help you?"*

The office was a nerve center from which problems were resolved and channeled. Assistance in handling technical problems was given by military men in the Adjutant General section of the 173rd Rear Detachment. Many of the non-technical problems were taken to wives and friends through a channel of communication which included Battalion Commander's wives, and Company Commander's wives, Sgt. Major's wives, and First Sgt.'s wives. These ladies gave many hours to developing and perfecting a locator file which gave information on each family of the Brigade. Quick communication was the aim of this file which included maps to each home, the name of a unit friend, and the telephone number of a neighbor. Communication was also established in the form of a weekly bulletin which announced scheduled activities, gave helpful advice and other pertinent information.

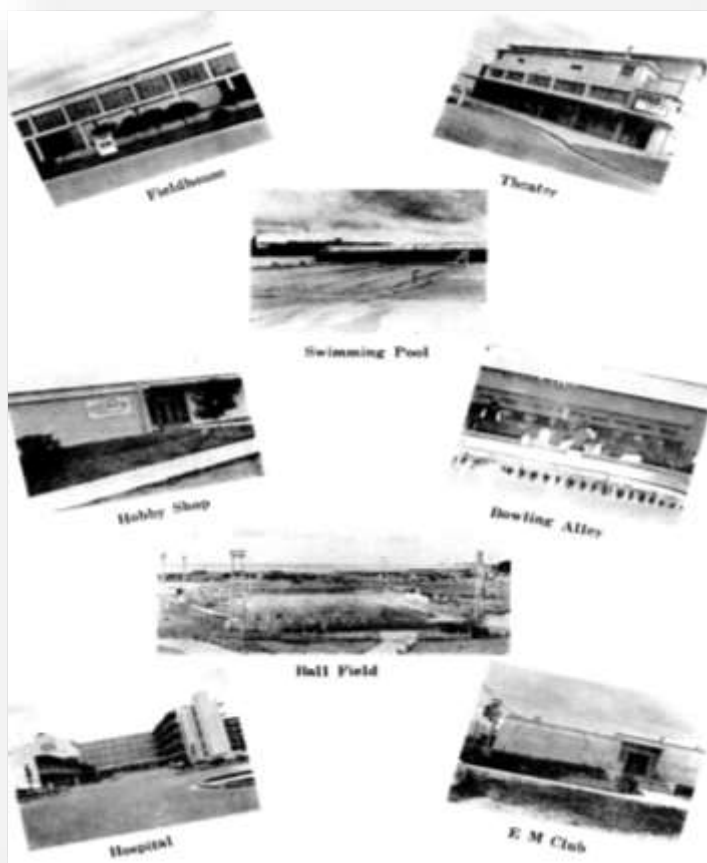
One Brigade lady, the mother of seven and a registered nurse, gave many hours of her time toward helping other families. Unfortunately, she became ill and major surgery was required. One of the families who she had assisted stepped in to care for her children.

Most of the Brigade ladies proved to be very self-reliant and wanted to do for themselves. Some of the ladies could have qualified for their chauffeur's license, they spent so many hours chauffeuring newcomers and non-drivers to the post exchange, the commissary, hospital, and post office. A few of the ladies could even be classified as used car dealers. The summer months bring about a large number of families rotating home. It became necessary for the wives to sell the family car,

arrange for the shipment of household goods, and clear quarters. To sum it up, one wife said,

"I've learned more about the Army in the last month than in the past seven years. I think I could tackle anything now."

With gallantry typical of Army men, the Non-Commissioned Officers of USARYIS assigned a sponsor to each new family arriving on Okinawa. The Dependents' Assistance Office also assigned a "wife assistant" to each incoming family. The NCO men coordinated with the appointed Brigade sponsor to make the arrival of these families on Okinawa as easy and pleasant as possible. By the end of June approximately 70 new families had arrived on the island. High on the priority list was the belief that each new arrival should be greeted by her Brigade sisters as she stepped off the plane or boat. Many Brigade wives met these new families, scrubbed floors and hung curtains for people they had never seen. Additionally, they secured the basic furniture from quartermaster, purchased the necessary food articles from the commissary, and returned the following day to show the newcomer the whereabouts of the post exchange, commissary, schools and hospital.



Fort Buckner hot spots.

(continued....)



In late May the Dependents' Assistance Office was put to a second test, the approach of the first typhoon of the season. Throughout the island, without exception, the other units and organizations stationed on Okinawa had offered their assistance and the services of their personnel. It was now needed, and each family of the Brigade was assigned a "typhoon buddy". In addition to typhoonizing their own families, those men secured trash cans, affixed typhoon shutters and made sure the wives and children of the Brigade were snug and safe. The assistance of the 1st Special Forces Group as "buddies" in this program was greatly appreciated and especially so, by the husbands and fathers in Viet Nam.

Whether it's the weather or nature, the course cannot often be changed. Many women gave birth to babies, or went into major surgery without the support of their husbands. However, in each instance there was a close friend or neighbor standing in the wings. It was a wonderful feeling to know that if and when the occasion arose and assistance was needed, there were helping hands.



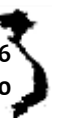
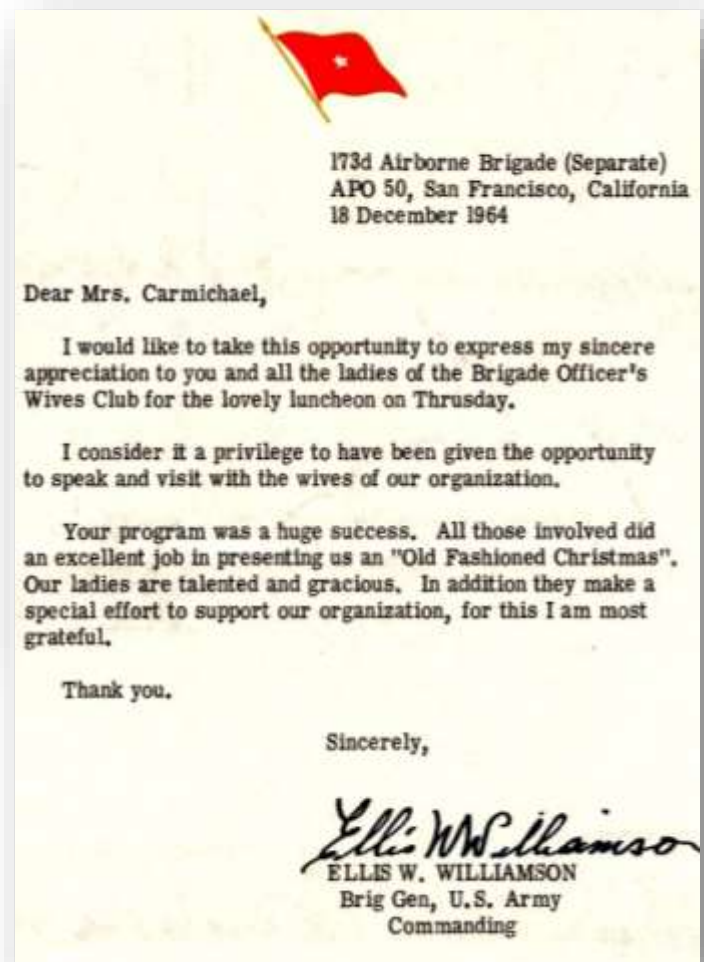
Sky Soldier wives on Okinawa were known to lightheartedly refer to themselves as "*Airborne Lassies*". Caption: "The regular meeting of the Executive Board of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) Officers' Wives' club was held Wednesday, May 26 at the home of Mrs. Williamson who had also invited the ladies for lunch. Guests pictured above in the front row are (L-R) Mrs. Harold Wunsch, Mrs. Raymond Conder, Mrs. Fred Elam, Mrs. William Mitchell and Mrs. Carmichael. Shown in the back row are (L-R) Mrs. John Tyler, Mrs. Jack Hemmett, Mrs. George Dexter, Mrs. Charles Milhorn and Mrs. Verlon Westmoreland."

(Dated 11/4/64)

This office was opened with willing, but inexperienced ladies working together to provide assistance where needed—to the best of their ability. Due to the type of mission assigned the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) on Okinawa, it is possible for this situation to occur again. With this thought in mind, records were kept to where and how things were done. A booklet was prepared giving detailed information concerning all function and activities of the office. Where it has been necessary for our present committee to operate somewhat on a trial and error basis, with the help of the Dependents' Assistance Booklet, should it again become necessary, this committee could be operating within a few days.

Most significant of all—because their wives and children were provided for—whatever the size of the problem, large or small, the men of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) could give wholeheartedly of themselves to the mission in the Republic of Viet Nam.

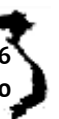
Truly, the Army takes care of its own.



There was once a quieter, more relaxed, and jovial time for 2/503 Sky Soldiers and their spouses while on Okinawa, until war came a-callin’.



Caption: “Lt. and Mrs. Richard Dixon, Capt. and Mrs. Roy Lombardo, Maj. and Mrs. William White, Maj. Harold Austin, Lt. and Mrs. James Bennett and Capt and Mrs. John Manolakis are pictured in costumes they chose for the Mardi Gras costume party given by the officers and their ladies of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry at the Fort Buckner Officers’ open mess on Saturday evening, Jan. 30.” (Courtesy of Exie Carmichael)



HEADQUARTERS
2D AIRBORNE BATTLE GROUP (REINFORCED), 503D INFANTRY
APO 50, U.S. Forces

6 June 1963

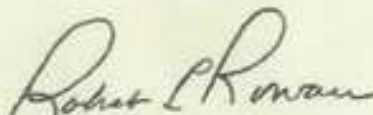
COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

The 503d is about to depart for Thailand. There the Battle Group will take part in Exercise "DHANARAJATA", during which it will meet a greater challenge than on any FTX in which it has participated in the past. Maneuvering in Thailand will be a new experience for the majority of our troopers. The simulated battlefield in that country, next to war-torn Laos, will tax the physical stamina and the professional competency of us all.

Together with other U.S. Army Troops, the 503d will represent the armed might of the United States of America and its determination to deter aggression in Southeast Asia. The troopers of the 503d have performed well in past off-island exercises. We must do the same on this one. The Thais are staunch allies of the United States; their opinion of our military professionalism can be considerably enhanced by the superior conduct and appearance of this fine Battle Group. Therefore, only the highest standards of conduct and appearance will be tolerated. The 1st Battle Group, 5th Infantry from Hawaii is also scheduled to participate in the exercise. The performance of the 5th Infantry will be a yardstick by which we will be measured and compared.

The 503d will be reorganized upon return from Thailand, so this exercise will be the last for this Battle Group, culminating three years of duty in the Pacific Area. During that period we have earned a well deserved reputation for superiority; it is my desire that the 2d Airborne Battle Group (Reinforced), 503d Infantry maintain that reputation and pass into history with a final outstanding success.

I view the forthcoming exercise with unlimited confidence, based on my evaluation of the worth of every 503d paratrooper participating. Success is assured if everyone does his job in the "Airborne, All the Way" manner in which he has been trained.


ROBERT L. ROWAN
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

(continued....)



RYUKYUAN REVIEW IX

VOLUME 13, NO. 4 The Defense of Freedom A Man's Job JUNE 14, 1963

503d Airborne Strikes In SEATO Exercise

BANGKOK—June 11, 1963 marked the first time in the long history of Thailand that its skies were blanketed with the open canopies of American Paratroopers.

Paratroopers of the 2d Airborne Battle Group, 503d Infantry, Commanded by Colonel Robert L. Rowan, provided a spectacular highlight in Southeast Asia Treaty Organization "Exercise DHANARAJATA." This highly mobile unit forms the backbone of SEATO's lightning quick retaliatory power in the event of any overt aggression, thus bolstering the defenses of any threatened member nation.



The 2nd Airborne Battle Group 503 / Infantry exhibits some of the weapons that give the troopers their firepower and mobility in the field. The 503d is now involved in a joint SEATO muscleflexing exercise on the frontiers of Thailand in Southeast Asia. Exercise "DHANARAJATA" involves joint forces from Thailand, Great Britain, New Zealand, Pakistan, Australia, the Philippines, France and the United States. Soldiers of the 503d in the picture are (left to right) PFC Sam Sandoval, Hq Co, with the M79 grenade launcher; at the "SEAT" are PFC William Sheppard, driver, PFC Harry E. Simpson, Leader, and Sp/4 Lavereal A. Roswell, section leader assault gun platoon all from Hq Co. Ready with the M14 is S/Sgt Jack Schmitt, "B" Co. (Photo By Mr. McCarthy)

Nicknamed "The Rock" for its heroic two week assault against overwhelming Japanese forces on the Island of Corregidor over 27 years ago, the 503d

Infantry staged the largest personnel cargo drop in the history of Southeast Asia.

Upon landing in Thailand, the 503d Infantry tied in with elements of the Royal Thai Army, Commonwealth Forces, and U.S. forces in the SEATO "muscleflexing" exercise.

Since arriving on Okinawa in 1960 the 503d Infantry has taken part in five major field exercises and joint maneuvers with Philippine and Republic of Free China Armies.

The 503d Infantry maintains its razor sharp edge of combat readiness through constant training at its home here on Okinawa. The first ring of the alert telephone brings the entire unit to life with a perceptible snap, and its troopers are ready for either an exercise or the real thing.

From the early stages of preparation to the jumpmasters' final "go", sending the combat ready men raining from the skies, the entire operation functions with the clockwork precision denoting the professional fighting man.

Movement of troops to the marshalling area in the cool night air, the final check of personal equipment, and boarding into the giant aircraft is only the climax of constant, tireless training, both individual and unit. Every man must be skilled not only in basic Infantry tactics, but in airborne procedure as well.

Within seconds after the lead man streaks toward the earth, the sky fills with a seemingly never-ending stream of blossoming white canopies. An awesome sight to any enemy, airborne operations such as Corregidor, the Battle of the Bulge and the beach head at Normandy have endeared the hearts of every Airborne infantryman.



~ The 2/503 In Color ~

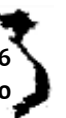


The wounded Sky Soldier standing on right waiting for dust off in the “D” Zone jungle during Operation Silver City in this March 1966 photo is Capt. Les Brownlee (Col. Retired), former 2/503 Bravo Company Commander, and the future Acting Secretary of the Army.

Later this year we will produce a Special Edition of our newsletter, *The 2/503 In Color*, featuring color photos by men of our battalion in Vietnam and from other sources, to include brief captions where possible.

Over the years we’ve collected many color photos, but if you’re not sure we have 2/503 RVN color photos from you, please email them to rto173@att.net to be considered for inclusion in this Special Edition. Thx!

ATW! Ed



Nation Honors Veterans at Arlington National Cemetery

NOV. 11, 2020 | BY C. TODD LOPEZ



Commander In Chief Donald J. Trump, Vice President Mike Pence and Robert Wilkie, secretary of Veterans Affairs, participate in a ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery, Nov. 11, 2020. (Photo by DOD Screen Capture)

At Arlington National Cemetery today, President Donald J. Trump, Vice President Mike Pence and Robert Wilkie, secretary of Veterans Affairs, participated in a Veterans Day wreath ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to honor those who have served in the U.S. military.

Earlier, the president issued a proclamation on the White House website to commemorate the day.

"America's veterans have fought to defend our country, its values and its interests since the first days of our founding," the president said. "They have defeated tyrants, eliminated terrorists and secured freedom at home and abroad. Their courage and fortitude in the face of adversity serve as an example for all Americans."

Veterans Day was originally known as Armistice Day and was first observed on Nov. 11, 1919, exactly one year after the signing of the armistice that ended World War I. In 1954, the observance was renamed Veterans Day.

Veterans Day honors all those who have served. The Department of Veterans Affairs estimates there are nearly 20 million veterans living today in the United States. More than 15 million of them have served during an era of war, including World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the Gulf War.

"On Veterans Day, we pause to pay tribute to all who have proudly worn our Nation's uniform," Trump said.

"These soldiers, sailors, airmen, Marines and Coast Guardsmen selflessly placed lives, well-being and security of others before their own. We enjoy the privileges of peace, prosperity and freedom because of our veterans, and we are forever indebted to them beyond measure."

Source:



HEADQUARTERS
2D AIRBORNE BATTLE GROUP (REINFORCED), 503D INFANTRY
APO 50, U.S. Forces

20 February 1963

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

In the immediate future troopers of this Battle Group will again be privileged to participate in a combined airborne exercise with the Chinese Airborne Regiment on Taiwan. The exercise, the third of its type, is to be called SKY SOLDIER/TIEN BING III.

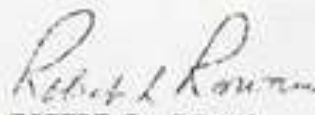
Highly qualified American and foreign observers will watch the 503d's performance during the airborne assault and the subsequent ground action with envious and critical eyes. You are paratroopers - the cream of the combat potential of the United States Army in the Pacific. Therefore you will be expected to accomplish your missions with the aggressiveness and skill which are traditional for airborne units.

The mission of the 503d will be difficult; it will challenge the resourcefulness of each trooper. In the absence of specific orders, use your initiative, another traditional trademark of the paratrooper. Put your tactical training and know how to use and demonstrate that you are professional soldiers. If each trooper puts out as an individual, he can be sure that he will contribute his share to the success of the Battle Group during the next few days.

As always, I am confident of each trooper's ability to further enhance the already outstanding reputation of the Rock Battle Group.

I wish you all a good jump and successful conclusion of the exercise.

AIRBORNE - ALL THE WAY!


ROBERT L. ROMAN
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

(continued....)



EXERCISE SKY SOLDIER TIEN BING VI

In early October 1964, the Republic of China (R.O.C.) forces noted increased reconnaissance activities by aggressor aircraft and also an increase in enemy ship sightings in the Taiwan Bay area. On 20 October an estimated 100 aggressor troops were observed landing in small boats on the coast near the mouth of the Ta Tit River. After coming ashore they deployed in a southwesterly direction toward Chaung Hau.

The steadily improving economy and standard of living in Taiwan and the existence of the antiaggressor government arc believed to have caused the "aggressorland" to become more hostile toward the Republic of China. In the final days of October, an aggressor force, having made other successful landings on the coast, directed its forces north and south, to turn the friendly positions. The R.O.C. field armies contained the aggressor forces and prepared to execute a counterattack plan to drive the enemy back into the sea. At the same time, the R.O.C. requested immediate assistance from the United States under existing treaties and security arrangements, in order to eliminate the international security threat. As a result of this request, planning was initiated for the employment of U.S. and R.O.C. airborne forces.

This was the hypothetical military/political situation on the island of Taiwan and the setting for joint United States-Republic of China Exercise Sky Soldier/ Tien Bing VI from 27 October to 5 November 1964.

Sky Soldier VI Troop Carrier Command Post was activated at 1600 hours 25 October on Naha Air Base, Okinawa, by Brigadier General Richard H. Ellis, Commander, 315th Air Division, and Troop Carrier commander for the exercise. Over seventy United States Air Force transport aircraft, under the operational control of the USAF 315th Air Division, had been assembled on Okinawa, along with more than 3800 personnel and over 3,800,000 pounds of cargo to be airlifted into the exercise area to join their allied R.O.C. forces in repelling the simulated aggressor.

Three Command Airlift Support Units (CALSU'S) were established to execute the orders issued by the Troop Carrier Command Post. The CALSU at Naha Air Base controlled 315th Air Division flying units of the 6315th Operations Group, which is equipped with three C-130 troop carrier squadrons. At Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, the CALSU supported the aircraft from the 22d Troop

Carrier Squadron, 1502d Air Transport Wing (MATS), and crews from the Naval Air Transport Wing, Pacific, flying Air Force C-130's. The third CALSU was located in west central Taiwan to monitor and control Sky Soldier airlift operations.

Organizations directly involved in airlift operations were the 315th Air Division and its subordinate units: the 5th Communications Squadron, 7th Aerial Port Squadron, 9th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron, and 815th Troop Carrier Squadron; also the 6315th Operations Group and its assigned troop carrier squadrons, the 21st, 35th, and 817th.



An informal conference is held during the joint United States-Republic of China Exercise Sky Soldier/Tien Ring VI. Conferees are Brig. Gen. Richard H. Ellis, Troop Carrier and 315th Air Division commander; Col. L. M. Tannenbaum, 315th deputy chief of staff for operations; and Brig. Gen. Ellis W. Williamson, 173d Airborne Brigade commander.

Military Air Transport Service (MATS) units under the operational control of the 315th Air Division were the 1503d Air Transport Group and its assigned 22d Troop Carrier Squadron, the 1502d Air Transport Wing augmentation aircraft and crews, and U.S. Navy crews from VR7 Naval Air Transport Wing, Pacific, flying Air Force C-130's. Exercise Sky Soldier/Tien Bing VI brought together a total of over 40 units and supporting elements of the U.S. and Chinese Army, Navy, and Air Force. In addition to the 315th Air Division and subordinate units mentioned above, other U.S. Air Force units included Fifth Air Force, Thirteenth Air Force, and 313th Air Division, all part of the Pacific Air Forces. The U.S. Army units participating were the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep), Headquarters IX Corps, 999th Signal Company, and elements of the 97th Civil Affairs Group, 549th Quartermaster Company, and U.S. Army Broadcasting and Visual Activity, Pacific.

(continued....)



Sky Soldier/Tien Bing VI had several objectives, the more important of which were to improve the combat readiness of participating units; exercise the airborne capabilities of the U.S. airborne brigades; evaluate the effectiveness of marshaling plans, procedures, and techniques; and provide training in all phases of combat airlift and tactical air operations.

Initial activity began early Monday morning, 26 October, with briefings on the exercise for all personnel involved in the operations. Loading of the aircraft started at 0800 with members of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep), Camp Sukiran, Okinawa, rolling their trucks of cargo up to the aircraft. Thirty-six 315th Air Division and ten Naval Air Transport Wing C-130 Hercules were loaded with 600,000 pounds of cargo for airdrop on D-day, Tuesday, 27 October.

For the paratroopers of the U.S. Army's 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep), Tuesday began at 0500 when 2000 of them were loaded on 24 C-124 Globemasters of the 1502d Air Transport Wing and the 1503d Air Transport Group (MATS), for the flight of some 500 miles along the Ryukyu island chain to the airdrop site in the west central Taiwan area.

The Republic of China forces were the first into the assault area, completing their airdrop of Chinese paratroopers at 1000 hours. Next in C-130's came a 14-man combat control team from the 7th Aerial Port Squadron and a 50-man Army assault team from the 173d Airborne Brigade. The C-124's followed at 1100 hours, dropping 1000 paratroopers before high surface winds prevented further drops for the day.

On Wednesday winds in the drop zone had diminished, and the paratroop and cargo drops were completed. Airlanding of assault cargo started Wednesday afternoon, and C-124's and C-130's delivered over a million pounds of cargo daily on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday.

The C-130 aircraft were equipped with the 463L roller rail conveyer system, here used for the first time in any exercise of this magnitude. With this system, aircraft needed less than 10 minutes to offload airlanded cargo at their destination, while combat assault rolling stock was offloaded in a matter of seconds during the airland assault phase. Airdropped cargo utilizing the same system exited the aircraft in less than 10 seconds.

Aircraft-movement and weather information, vital in all exercises of this type, was under the control of the 5th Communications Squadron. A 12-man team at a fixed site at Naha Air Base and a 12-man mobile communications team set up in Taiwan handled up to 150 weather, aircraft-movement, and administrative

messages each day during the assault phase, 27-31 October.

Starting on D-day, 27 October, and during all aircraft movements, squadron weather reports were broadcast over the objective area every 15 minutes. The mobile communications team can be air-moved to any site and be fully operational two hours after landing. It can then tie into existing networks or operate alone and communicate over long distances.

Division-size airborne exercises such as this have constantly improved the defense posture and the combat and operational readiness of the armed forces of the United States and its allies in the Pacific in recent years.

*Office of Information
Hq 315th Air Division*

The Work on the Ground



The hub of airlift operations during the joint United States-Republic of China Exercise Sky Soldier/Tien Bing VI was the Troop Carrier Command Post at Naha Air Base, Okinawa. Staff officers worked around the clock to see that operations went according to plan.

Planning cargo- and troop-loading schedules. Navigators of the 35th Troop Carrier Squadron do their preflight work. Navigators were responsible for getting their aircraft over the drop zone at the exact second called for in the operation plan.



(continued....)



A 51st Organizational Maintenance Squadron crew refuels a 315th Air Division C-130. The 51st was kept busy throughout the exercise maintaining the divisions four squadrons of C-130's at Naha Air Base.



Aircraft movement information was transmitted by the 315th Air Division's 5th Communications Squadron. Communicating between this fixed station and a mobile station in Taiwan, the squadron handled up to 150 messages each day on aircraft moves.



Proper loading of cargo by the 315th Air Division loadmasters pays off as the crew quickly offloads this huge C-124 Globemaster in Taiwan. In just five days of the joint exercise, over 3,800,000 pounds of combat cargo was airlifted from Okinawa to Taiwan.

The Loading Phase



Combat cargo loading at Naha Air Base. USAF C-130 aircraft airdropped more than 600,000 pounds of assault cargo during the exercise.

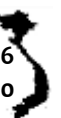


Army members of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) and Air Force loadmasters of the 315th Air Division push a double pallet of Army 'mules' into a C-130 Hercules during the assault phase. Using the 463L roller conveyer system for the first time in a Pacific area exercise, crews were able to onload palletized cargo in minutes, offload in 10 minutes, and airdrop cargo in less than 10 seconds.

An Army self-propelled antitank (SPAT) is loaded into a C-130 for aerial delivery. This weapon, along with thousands of pounds of other combat cargo, was airdropped in west central Taiwan.



(continued....)





"Airborne All The Way"—Troops of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) march aboard a 1503d Air Transport Group (MATS) C-124 Globemaster of The 22d Troop Carrier Squadron at Kadena Air Base, Okinawa. These airborne troopers were dropped in west central Taiwan during the exercise.

The Aircraft Begin To Roll



The C-130's. An 815th Troop Carrier Squadron crew is briefed prior to flight by the aircraft commander. Other crew members are the flight mechanic and two loadmasters.



The C-124's. Globemasters of the 1502d Air Transport Wing and 1503d Air Transport Group (MATS) are readied for early morning take-off at Kadena Air Base. These aircraft flew over 2000 paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) in support of Sky Soldier VI. The MATS airlift augmentation units were under the operational control of 315th Air Division.



(xxy)-six C-130 Hercules of the 315th Air Division move out for the runway at Naha Air for a formation take-off. The 315th Air (xxx) flying units include the 21st, 35th, (xxx) and 817th Troop Carrier Squadrons.

This formation helped deliver over 3,800,000 pounds of combat cargo to west central Taiwan in support of Sky Soldier/Tien Bing VI.

Airborne—and Down



C-130 Hercules of the 315th Air Division move into a close tactical formation on the way to the drop zone during Sky Soldier VI. C-130's from the 21st, 35th, 815th, and 817th Troop Carrier Squadrons air-delivered over 600,000 pounds of combat cargo to the drop zone.

(continued....)





315th Air Division's combat control team and the 173d Army assault team caught a few winks prior to jumping, after which they set up a drop zone for over 2000 173d Airborne Brigade troopers who jumped thirty minutes later.



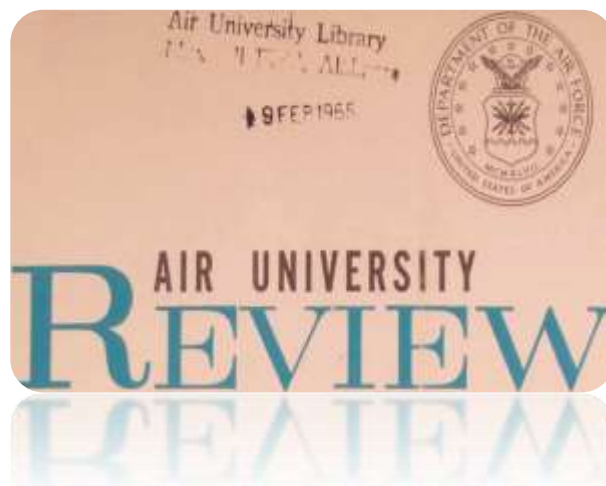
(xxx) parachutes of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) were seen almost (xxx) during the joint United States-Republic of China Exercise Sky Soldier VI. The regular paratroopers were preceded into the drop zone by the 115th Air Division combat control team and a 50-member Army assault team.



Thousands of tons of combat cargo pour from the C-130's during the D-day assault phase. All cargo hit the ground within the objective area.



Source:
Department of the Air Force
Air University Review, February 1965
(xxx) = undistinguishable word



Brain stimulation for Alzheimer's on the horizon? Veterans participate in study

October 20, 2020

Veterans are at higher risk for Alzheimer's disease compared with the general population. Part of that has to do with military risk factors like PTSD or brain injury. High rates of diabetes among VA patients also play a role.

That's why learning new ways to prevent or treat Alzheimer's disease is a priority for VA research. One recent study focused on apathy. Apathy is the most common behavioral problem in those with Alzheimer's, affecting 7 in 10 patients. Apathy involves loss of motivation and initiative, and social withdrawal.

The small pilot study at the Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System found that brain stimulation improved apathy. The results are online in the *Journal of Alzheimer's Disease*.



In the photo above, by Jeff Bowen, Dr. Prasad Padala simulates a repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation treatment with Ashlyn Jendro, a research assistant. She's holding her thumb up to indicate the twitching caused by the pulses.

Pilot study involved 20 Veterans

Twenty Veterans with Alzheimer's disease and apathy took part. Half received repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS), a type of brain stimulation. The others received sham stimulation, basically a placebo.

Through patient and caregiver interviews, the VA team documented "significantly greater improvement" in apathy levels in those who received brain stimulation compared with the control group.

The positive effects continued up to three months.

Besides improvements in apathy, the researchers also noted "significantly greater improvement" in memory, attention, and cognition in the rTMS patients compared with the sham treatment group.

In rTMS, doctors apply magnetic coils to the scalp at specific points. This creates an electric current in brain cells. The Food and Drug Administration has approved the therapy for depression that doesn't respond to other treatments. The technology is being studied widely for other brain disorders including Alzheimer's.

The research team concluded that repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation "may be safely used in people with Alzheimer's disease and may improve apathy, function, and some aspects of cognition."

How long does the benefit last?

Can the effect last longer than three months? "That's the million-dollar question," says lead researcher Dr. Prasad Padala. He is a geriatric psychiatrist with VA and University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

"Unfortunately, no study has looked at that thus far. Ours is the first study to say that the effects persist until three months. I don't know about four months. I don't know about five months. The only thing I can say is at three months the effects were still there."

"If I have to treat somebody clinically based on this result, I would be inclined to give them a maintenance treatment, a booster dose of sorts at three months, like we do now for treating depression."

Apathy keeps neurons from connecting

The main side effects from the rTMS were discomfort in the area where the magnet sat on the patient's head, and headaches. Those issues occurred only during treatment and resolved soon afterward.

Padala says those in the study who received the sham treatment were subsequently given access to the real treatment through a clinical program. He is enthusiastic about the therapy's potential.

"I'm so interested in this area because people with pre-dementia who lose their motivation and have a lot of apathy tend to convert into dementia at much higher rates than those who keep their motivation and interest levels."

"So if you don't do anything in your daily life, you're not connecting the neurons in the brain and you're hastening the process of neuro-degeneration. To put it simply, if someone has pre-dementia and on top of that they have apathy, their brain shrinks faster."

Based on his research to date, he believes "brain stimulation may slow down the shrinking of the brain." More study is needed, he emphasizes.

Posted in Health, Inside Veterans Health, Research,
Top Stories by Mike Richman



~ Paratroopers of the Sky Soldier kind ~



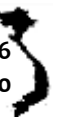
"Members of the 173rd Airborne Brigade are engaged in a long, long crawl to the crest of Hill 875, a steep mound that in four days cost American forces some of their highest casualties of the war. Pushing inch-by-inch of sloping earth behind them, U.S. paratroopers seized most of the hill on Nov. 22. They were then faced with a North Vietnamese stronghold atop the peak and reports of two fresh regiments of NVA troops moving into the region."

(Web photo & caption)



1965: US infantry

"The U.S. 173rd Airborne are supported by helicopters during the Iron Triangle assault. The Iron Triangle was a strategic stronghold for the North Vietnamese and remained so until the end of the war. The United States involved over 3 million service members in the conflict, which spanned 19 years." (web photo & caption)



Lawrence Joel: A quiet anniversary for a reluctant hero

SCOTT SEXTON

Nov 10, 2020



Lawrence Joel was an Army medic assigned to the 1st Battalion of the 503rd Regiment in the 173rd Airborne Brigade, 503rd Infantry during the Vietnam War.

(Lawrence Joel; photo published March 9, 1967)

Originally published on Nov. 8, 2015, the 50th anniversary of Lawrence Joel's heroic feat. Sunday marked the 55th anniversary.

How's your Sunday? Perhaps you've been to church already and just finished a leisurely breakfast.

Or maybe you're still at home, catching up on some reading with a fresh cup of coffee. The day's agenda is likewise unhurried; the wet leaves out back may or may not get raked before the undefeated and suddenly interesting Carolina Panthers kick off.

However you've opted to spend this day, it almost certainly beats the way Lawrence Joel passed this same Nov. 8, 1965. Joel, an Army medic assigned to the 1st battalion of the 503rd regiment in the 173rd Airborne Brigade, 503rd Infantry, woke in the Republic of Vietnam with orders to accompany his unit for a mission his commanders thought wouldn't be anything out of the ordinary.

"Fairly routine ... just like back at Fort Bragg — going out to play war games," Joel said once.

It was anything but routine.



Medal of Honor recipient Lawrence Joel with his parents

April 9, 1967. (Frank Jones, *Journal*)

By the end of Nov. 8, 1965, Joel would be shot twice and yet have the strength to save the lives of 13 of his fellow troopers while under a savage attack. He would become the first living Black American to receive the Medal of Honor since the Spanish-American War in 1898 and the first medic in Vietnam to receive the nation's highest military honor.

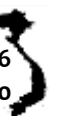
So, how's your Sunday?

'Just one guy'

By now, almost everyone in these parts knows the basics about Lawrence Joel.

War hero. The one they named the coliseum for. Local guy.

(continued....)



Beyond that, though, the details about his life and service have been largely lost to time. And maybe that's the way Joel would have wanted it.

After he was awarded the Medal of Honor, Joel called his father back home in Winston-Salem to caution him about how he might "boost" his son when the papers and television stations began calling.

"I'm just one guy," Joel told his dad. *"There are a lot of other fellows fighting that war who deserve just as much recognition as I do."*

Even after a welcome home parade was held in his honor following the presentation of the medal — some 2,500 marchers turned out for one of the biggest homecomings ever afforded to an individual, Joel stayed humble and tried to remain just another soldier. He didn't give many interviews and generally eschewed public speaking, but when he did, Joel almost always tried to share the spotlight. A black-and-white photo of Joel during that parade shows a man with a shy smile who appears to deliberately slouch down in the backseat of an open convertible instead of sitting up high on the trunk as was sometimes customary.

"I never did feel comfortable as a celebrity," he once told a reporter. *"There were many people who deserved that role much more than I did. I guess I just happened to be there at the right time."*

Still, on this 50th anniversary of what has become known as "Operation Hump," it's fitting to remember Joel and the bravery that led to his becoming a reluctant hero.



Lawrence Joel, a Medal of Honor recipient, with Hubert Humphrey (left) and President Lyndon Johnson.

(Journal file photo)

Indomitable courage

The details, provided by general order No. 15 by the Department of the Army, depict an Army medic who deliberately and repeatedly risked his own life to treat and save those of the soldiers in his unit.

His company was in the lead during a search-and-destroy mission against guerillas operating near a U.S. airbase in Bien Hoa, South Vietnam, when it was ambushed by a VC battalion that outnumbered American soldiers at least 6 to 1.

Nearly every man in the lead squad during that initial burst of fighting was wounded or killed; Joel rushed forward under heavy fire to begin treating the injured. He was shot in the right leg by machine gun fire, continuing to work after giving himself a shot of morphine and bandaging his wound.

"Then, completely ignoring the warnings of others and his own pain, he continued his search for wounded, exposing himself to hostile fire, and, as bullets dug up the dirt around him, he held plasma bottles high while kneeling, completely engrossed in his life saving mission. Then, after being struck a second time and with a bullet lodged his thigh, he dragged himself all over the battlefield and succeeded in treating 13 more men before his medical supplies ran out."

Still, the battle raged for the entire day. Joel, after locating a new stock of medical supplies, continued treating the wounded. When the fighting ceased, he was credited with saving the lives of at least 13 soldiers despite his own wounds, which would require three months of treatment and rehabilitation.

"Specialist Joel demonstrated indomitable courage, determination, and professional skill when a numerically superior and well-concealed Viet Cong element launched a vicious attack," the order reads.

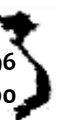
Joel returned to the Army, and went back to Vietnam for a time. He retired from the service for good in 1973, and went to work for the Veterans Administration. He died of complications from diabetes in 1984. He was 55.

"He's influenced me to want to put lives together, not take lives," said the Rev. Tremaine Joel after his father's death.

What do you think about that? A soldier whose selfless actions 50 years ago today saved 13 of his comrades inspired his own son — and likely many others in his hometown — with his repeated acts of bravery.

How was your Sunday?

Reprinted courtesy of Scott Sexton and the
WINSTON-SALEM JOURNAL



They were young once, and brave.



E Company's Bill Wingett, One of the Famous 'Band of Brothers', Passes Away

Oct 14, 2020 Craig Bowman

Lebanon - William T. Wingett was born July 3, 1922, in Spokane, Washington. On 1st October 2020, the world lost another veteran of World War II, when Bill Wingett died peacefully at the Edward C. Allworth Veterans' Home in Lebanon, Oregon.

Those staff members who could, along with the Veterans' Home residents, lined the walkways as Bill left for the last time on a flag-draped gurney. At the end of the walkway, the flag was folded and presented to Bill's family. This walk of honor is a long-standing tradition at the home.

"I've stood up behind a machine gun and burned through six barrels in two hours, and there was nothing left but death and misery."

Gregory Wingett, Bill's nephew, said that his uncle *"slipped into heaven, very comfortably, from old age."* He went on to say that other residents told him that they had never seen so many people turn out for similar processions.

Bill was one of the last members of the "Band of Brothers" and was a machine gunner with Easy Company, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 101st Airborne, during World War II.

The day after Pearl Harbor he enlisted with his 4 brothers.

The name "Band of Brothers" comes from the book written by Stephen Ambrose and the television mini-series of the same name, directed by Tom Hanks and Tony To. The book and mini-series are an accurate account of the Easy Company, a paratrooper company, during the final year of World War II in Europe.



Bill was interviewed by the *Statesman Journal* on the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings, and he insisted that he was not any more a hero than any of the other men that wore a uniform during this global conflict.

"We got in an airplane in England," he says. "We jumped out of the damn thing in France, and the fight began. There's not much more to say about that."

Bill was a modest man, but he was wounded three times and was awarded a Bronze Star for bravery. The 20 medals that he had been awarded were displayed on the wall in his room. They included the Purple Heart with two oak leaf clusters, for the three times he was wounded, as well as his Bronze Star.



The 506th Parachute Infantry regiment took part in some of the war's most brutal and bloody battles.

(continued....)



Their fame started as they parachuted into France on the 6th June 1944, at the D-Day Landings' commencement, and cleared the beaches for the incoming ships and landing craft.

After Normandy, Easy company went on to fight in the European theatre of the war. The battles they took part in included the Battle of the Bulge, Operation Market Garden, and the Battle of Bastogne.

Bill fought through Normandy, jumped into The Netherlands in September 1944 for Operation Market Garden, fought through the hellish conditions of the Battle of the Bulge, and through Germany and Austria and wars end.

In Bill's laconic manner, he described his jump into France in the following way, *"We got in an airplane in England, we jumped out of the damn thing in France, and the fight began. There's not much more to say about that."*

His nephew said that Bill never tried to glorify the war in any of the interviews he gave. His answers were straightforward and thoughtful.

When peace was declared, Bill Wingett re-enlisted with the 82nd Airborne, serving until 1948. During this time, he served with his younger brother. Some time later, he became a member of the Naval Reserve. He served with them for 17 years and retired with the rank of petty officer first class.

Late in 1961, Bill and his wife Peggy, and their family, moved to Salem, where he started working at a paper mill. He then opened his own woodworking factory, which he ran until the 1990s. Peggy died in 2010.

"The water almost did me in. I was heavily laden and landed in 7 feet deep. I am not a swimmer."

In 2011, Bill donated his guidon from the 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment to the Don F. Pratt Memorial Museum.

This museum in Fort Campbell, Kentucky, is at the home of the 101st Airborne Division.

A guidon is a flag that is carried by any military unit as their standard. With the fame attached to the 506th, these flags are highly sought after by collectors, and Bill was offered \$7,000 for his flag, but he chose to give it to the museum instead.

Details of the memorial service for Bill will be advertised in due course.

Rest Easy Screaming Eagle, job well done, Sir.

Source: <https://www.warhistoryonline.com/>

Don F. Pratt Memorial Museum

The Don F. Pratt Museum was established in 1956 as a division museum for the 101st Airborne Division. The museum's central theme is the history of the 101st Airborne Division, the "Screaming Eagles," and it covers the period from the early 1940s to present.

Memorabilia from Brig. Gen. Don F. Pratt, along with some of the personal possessions of Generals William C. Lee, Maxwell D. Taylor, Anthony C. McAuliffe and William C. Westmoreland, are among the featured exhibits. Other exhibits include a completely restored CG-4A cargo glider—which carried glider-borne Soldiers into combat during World War II, two 17th century bronze eagles. An illuminated Dutch Manuscript recognizing the Divisions role in Liberating Holland in WW2, captured enemy weapons and equipment from Vietnam, a recruiter's jeep from the 1970s and items which had belonged to Adolph Hitler and other high-ranking Nazi officials.



Bill, donating his guide-on

Although the main museum theme focuses on the history of the 101st Airborne Division, there are also individual displays that address early developments in airborne warfare. Included in the displays are the following units: the 11th Airborne Division, the 12th Armored Division, the 14th Armored Division, the 20th Armored Division, the **173rd Airborne Brigade**, the 187th Airborne Regimental Combat Team, the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne), and the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (Airborne). An outdoor park across the street from the museum displays various military aircraft and equipment used by the division.

The centerpiece of the park is the "Brass Hat"—a fully restored C-47 aircraft resembling the plane used to carry the division commander, Maj. Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, into Normandy during World War II. The museum also includes a reference library and archives, both guided and unguided tours (reservations required), daily historical films, gift shop, gallery talks, lectures and educational programs.

The museum is open Monday through Friday, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. (closed on Saturday, Sunday, Christmas, Thanksgiving and New Year's Day).

For more information or to schedule tours or briefings, call (270) 798-3215/4986. Gift shop phone is 931-431-2003.



REUNIONS OF THE AIRBORNE KIND



Casper Aviation Platoon Reunion 2021,
Las Vegas, NV, March 29-April 1, 2021.

Contact:

Ned Costa, casperned68@yahoo.com

Web:

<http://www.casperplatoon.com/Reunion2021.htm>



Charlie Airborne Arctic Paratroopers FWA
2021 Reunion, Alaska, June 5-12, 2021.

Contact:

<https://www.charlieairborne.com/>



Company D 16th Armor
173d Airborne Brigade Separate

June 12-28, 2021, Doubletree Resort, Scottsdale,
AZ.

Contacts:

Warren Williams

wwwilliams@etc.net

Dave Curtin,

decurtin@myfairpoint.net



173d Airborne Brigade Association 2021
Reunion, Scottsdale, AZ, June 23-27, 2021.

Contact:

<https://www.azskysoldiers.org/>

[See Registration Form on following page]



2021 Ranger Rendezvous, Columbus, GA,
July 19-23, 2021.

Contact:

<https://www.75thrra.com/>



101st Airborne Division Association 76th
Reunion, Loews Ventana Canyon Resort,
Tucson, AZ, August 18-21, 2021. Contact:
Rocky Mountain Eagles Chapter, Tel:

Phone: 303-522-6608



335th AHC 2021 Reunion, Golden
Nugget, Las Vegas, NV, September 28-30,
2021.

Contact:

Dom Fino, falconfino@comcast.net

Airborne....All The Way

Another medal you earned....

Vietnam Cross of Gallantry

The Vietnam Cross of Gallantry is the equivalent of the French Croix de Guerre. The Vietnam Cross of Gallantry is awarded to all military personnel of all branches who served in-country Vietnam between 1 March 1961 and 28 March 1973 and to U.S. Army Vietnam and its subordinate units for the period 20 July 1965 to 28 March 1973, regardless of DD-214 notation



The RVN Gallantry Cross was established by the Vietnam Government by Decree No. 74-b/QT, dated 15 August 1950 and Decree No. 96/DQT/HC, dated 2 May 1952. Authorization for all U.S. Army personnel was confirmed in HDQA General Orders No. 8, dated 19 March 1974. Authorization for other branches of the military defers to the Army authorization date.

This is in addition to the award the brigade has already gotten.

Please read the Source of the above

info: <http://amervets.com/replacement/vcog.htm>

Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States and its Allies: for valorous achievement in combat during the Vietnam conflict, March 1, 1961 through March 28, 1973. Every American and every nation Allied with the United States who served in Vietnam was awarded the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry.

The Cross of Gallantry is recognized by the United States government and all federal agencies. Because the Cross of Gallantry does not appear on every U.S. Vietnam veteran's DD-214 Vietnam veterans may receive government acknowledgement of this medal by requesting a DD-215 from the National Records and Personnel Center in St. Louis, MO using standard form (SF) SF-180. To obtain an SF-180 please travel to members.aol.com/forvets/htomr.htm For more information about the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry, travel to

www.amervets.com/replacement/vcog.htm#isr

Best,

Brooke Rowe, Associate Librarian

The American War Library

www.americanwarlibrary.com

Source: www.173rdairborne.com/cog.htm



Sky Soldiers Jumpin' Into Arizona!

What a blast! Watch the cacti during your PLF!!



Rendezvous at LZ Scottsdale

*Valley of the Sun
Hosted by Chapter 25
June 23 to June 26, 2021*



Name: _____ Phone (____) _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Unit Served: _____ Dates Served: _____

Guest Name 1: _____ Male/Female _____

Guest Name 2: _____ Male/Female _____

Guest Name 3: _____ Male/Female _____

Registration Fees

_____ \$173.00 Association members (includes hospitality room, banquet meal, gift bag)

_____ \$173.00 per guest members (include banquet meal, hospitality room)

_____ \$55 per Gold Star Family applicant

_____ \$100 per Active Duty Member not on orders

_____ FREE, Active Duty Member on orders

Optional Activities

_____ \$85.00 Grand Canyon Tour

_____ \$85.00 Golf Outing
Scottsdale trolley to Old Towne Scottsdale
Scottsdale Gun Club
Butterfly Wonderland

Western Spirit: Scottsdale's Museum of the West
There is so much to do and see
The Scottsdale Trolley is free.

The Hotel has a shuttle will take you to many of the local spots.

_____ FREE Gold Star Luncheon
_____ \$15.00 Ladies Luncheon

Vendor Fees

_____ \$125.00 Association member vendor registration (One table, two chairs.)

_____ \$150.00 Non-association member vendor registration (One table, two chairs.)

Vendor Extras:

_____ \$100.00 per additional table

_____ \$50.00 Electricity at vendor table

To register and pay on line, visit www.azskysoldiers.org Make checks payable to **Arizona Skysoldiers, Chapter 25**

SUBTOTAL DUE:

\$ _____

Mail to: Arizona Skysoldiers, CH25, 3345 E. Cholla, Phoenix, AZ 85028
Hotel reservation: Doubletree Resort by Hilton, Paradise Valley-Scottsdale
5401 N Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, AZ 85250

(1-480-947-5400) For additional information contact Bill Reynolds at 865-748-4065
E: billreynolds66@yahoo.com

Reserve hotel room early to acquire handicap room as hotel is limited in these rooms.
One must be registered to take part in all listed activities
Registration does not include any mini reunions (such as 2d Battalion etc.)





Clinton L. Romesha

Medal of Honor Recipient



Rank: Staff Sergeant

Conflict/Era: War on Terrorism (Afghanistan)

Unit/Command:

**Bravo Troop, 3d Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team,
4th Infantry Division**

Military Service Branch: U.S. Army

Medal of Honor Action Date: October 3, 2009

Medal of Honor Action Place: Outpost Keating, Kamdesh District, Nuristan Province, Afghanistan

Citation

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Section Leader with Bravo Troop, 3d Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, during combat operations against an armed enemy at Combat Outpost Keating, Kamdesh District, Nuristan Province, Afghanistan on 3 October 2009. On that morning,

Staff Sergeant Romesha and his comrades awakened to an attack by an estimated 300 enemy fighters occupying the high ground on all four sides of the complex, employing concentrated fire from recoilless rifles, rocket propelled grenades, anti-aircraft machine guns, mortars and small arms fire. Staff Sergeant Romesha moved uncovered under intense enemy fire to conduct a reconnaissance of the battlefield and seek

reinforcements from the barracks before returning to action with the support of an assistant gunner. Staff Sergeant Romesha took out an enemy machine gun team and, while engaging a second, the generator he was using for cover was struck by a rocket-propelled grenade, inflicting him with shrapnel wounds.

Undeterred by his injuries, Staff Sergeant Romesha continued to fight and upon the arrival of another soldier to aid him and the assistant gunner, he again rushed through the exposed avenue to assemble additional soldiers. Staff Sergeant Romesha then mobilized a five-man team and returned to the fight equipped with a sniper rifle. With complete disregard for his own safety, Staff Sergeant Romesha continually exposed himself to heavy enemy fire, as he moved confidently about the battlefield engaging and destroying multiple enemy targets, including three

Taliban fighters who had breached the combat outpost's perimeter. While orchestrating a successful plan to secure and reinforce key points of the battlefield, Staff Sergeant Romesha maintained radio communication with the tactical operations center. As the enemy forces attacked with even greater ferocity, unleashing a barrage of rocket-propelled grenades and

recoilless rifle rounds, Staff Sergeant Romesha identified the point of attack and directed air support to destroy over 30 enemy fighters. After receiving reports that seriously injured soldiers were at a distant battle position, Staff Sergeant Romesha and his team provided covering fire to allow the injured soldiers to safely reach the aid station. Upon receipt of orders to proceed to the next objective, his team pushed forward 100 meters under

overwhelming enemy fire to recover and prevent the enemy fighters from taking the bodies of the fallen comrades. Staff Sergeant Romesha's heroic actions throughout the day-long battle were critical in suppressing an enemy that had far greater numbers. His extraordinary efforts gave Bravo Troop the opportunity to regroup, reorganize and prepare for the counterattack that allowed the Troop to account for its personnel and secure Combat Post Keating. Staff Sergeant Romesha's discipline and extraordinary heroism above and beyond the call of duty reflect great credit upon himself, Bravo Troop, 3d Squadron, 61st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division and the United States Army.



N COMPANY RANGERS, 75TH INFANTRY

Suited up in camouflaged fatigues, with darkened faces to help them blend in with the surrounding vegetation they are going into, the Rangers ready themselves for a mission.

The small group of men with rucksacks on their backs and M-16's in their hands scurries aboard a helicopter to fly to their destination.

Trained in the art of rappelling, the Rangers are prepared to tackle any obstacle and overcome it to reach their assigned location. It may be southeast of Landing Zone English in the rugged triple canopied jungles of the Tiger Mountains. Or the enemy infested regions of the mountains around the An Do and An Lao Valleys.

Wherever, the Rangers' mission is to find the enemy and follow his movement. It is also to keep the commanding general informed as to the enemy's whereabouts, his strength, armament and if moving, his direction.

The majority of their missions are for reconnaissance purposes. A secondary mission of capturing enemy or ambushing a well-used trail is more often than not an integrated aspect of recon.

Rangers are also capable of conducting large-scale combat patrols for raids and recon.

These Sky Soldiers are alert individuals whose aggressiveness severely limits the enemy's freedom of movement in their so-called safe areas.

They penetrate the NVA and VC sanctuary's daily to play a deadly game of "hide and seek" in the jungles and forests of Binh Dinh Province.

During an enemy encounter, the Ranger's knowledge of the use of artillery and air support gives him the advantage of quick, devastating fire power, at a moment's notice.

Sweating from the scorching sun or soaked by the monsoon rains these paratroopers never lose the pride or courage it takes to be a Ranger.

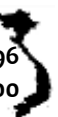
In their endless struggle against the enemy, their ARVN counterparts and these soldiers of Co. N, (Ranger) 75th Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade, know that *"A winner never quits and a quitter never wins."*



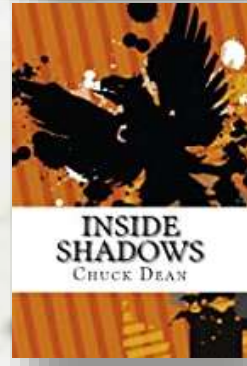
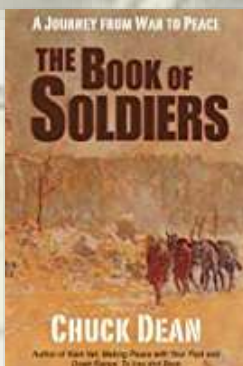
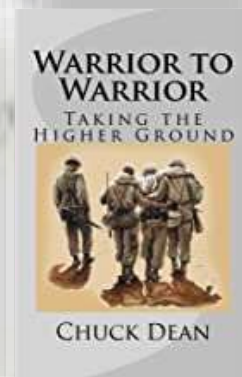
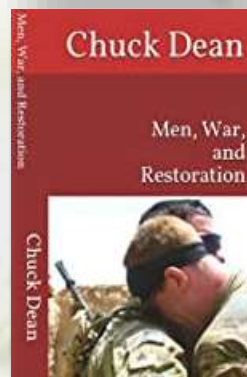
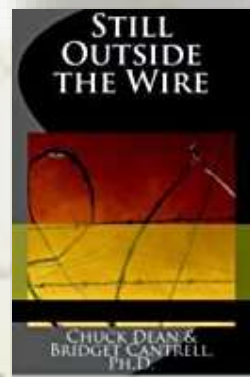
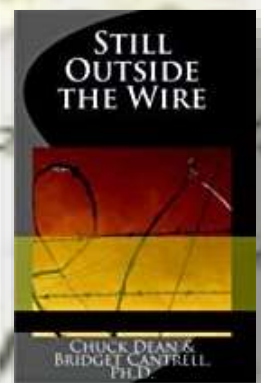
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RLTW



Military Books By Chuck Dean, HHC/1/503d, RVN



Chuck's books are available at <http://www.amazon.com/author/chuckdeanbooks>

If you served or are serving with the 173d Airborne Brigade or any attached unit, and wrote a book or memoir about your time in service or related to the military, email details to rto173@att.net to be included it in a future issue of your newsletter with our compliments. Ed

A wise, young Sky Soldier hooch buddy, Jim Bethea, HHC/2/503, '65/'66, once shared with us:

***"IF YOU DON'T WRITE IT DOWN,
IT NEVER HAPPENED."***

Don't let your stories go missing for all time. We hope you'll take advantage of your newsletter to have your stories recorded for posterity. Ed





Army Staff Sgt. Allan Ohata

NOV. 30, 2020 | BY, DOD NEWS

During World War II, Japanese-American service members weren't welcomed with open arms on their home turf thanks to the stigma that came with the Pearl Harbor attacks in Hawaii. But Army Staff Sgt. Allan Ohata was one of many Japanese-Americans — known as Nisei — to push ahead anyway to fight with bravery and distinction.

More than 55 years after he took out dozens of enemy soldiers in Italy, he was finally awarded the Medal of Honor.

Army Staff Sgt. Allan M. Ohata of Company B, 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate).



Ohata was born Sept 13, 1918, in Honolulu to parents who emigrated from Japan. The family owned a small flower garden business where Ohata and his seven siblings occasionally helped. After high school, he worked with his brother, Donald, in a surplus parts store.

Ohata joined the Army in November 1941 — a month before the attacks on his home island of Oahu that thrust the U.S. into World War II.

At the beginning of the war, Nisei weren't initially allowed to serve in the armed forces due to fears stemming from the attacks perpetrated by Japan. Deep suspicion of Japanese-Americans settled across the nation, leading to the relocation of hundreds of thousands of people to internment camps simply out of distrust.

Yet many Japanese-Americans still wanted to serve. Eventually, they were allowed to enlist into segregated units. Ohata was swallowed into that fold. In June 1943, he volunteered with more than 1,200 other Nisei soldiers to sail from Honolulu to Europe to fight as the 100th Infantry Battalion. They were the first all-Nisei Army unit activated.

By the end of September 1943, after a few months of sailing, Ohata's unit landed on Italian soil. It was slightly more than a month later that he would be put to the biggest test of his life.

Soldiers Robert Shimada and Jinichi Miyashiro, members of the 100th Infantry Battalion, set up a 60mm mortar during battle in 1943.



On Nov. 29, 1943, then-Sgt. Ohata was near Cerasuolo, Italy, with Company B of the 100th Infantry Battalion (Separate). Ohata, his squad leader and three other men were ordered to protect their platoon's left flank against about 40 heavily armed enemy soldiers.

Ohata posted one of the men on the far left, 15 yards from his own position. A few minutes into the fight, he heard that man shouting for help. Apparently, his automatic rifle had been shot and damaged.



U.S. Fifth Army soldiers of Company M, 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regiment march through Vada, Italy, to an area where Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark would present the Presidential Citation for outstanding action in combat to the 100th Infantry Battalion, which was composed of Japanese-American troops.

Without hesitation, Ohata jumped up and ran 15 yards through heavy machine gun fire to help the soldier. As soon as he got there, Ohata opened fire on the enemy, killing 10 men while his fellow soldier withdrew to get his damaged weapon replaced.

(continued....)



When the soldier returned, he and Ohata took out 37 enemy soldiers while holding their position. Both men then charged the three remaining soldiers and took them prisoner.

According to Ohata's citation, he and his fellow soldier also managed to stop 14 more enemy soldiers, killing four and wounding three more while the rest fled. The pair held their flank through the next day, staving off all other attacks.

A Quiet Life

Ohata eventually came home from the war and received the Distinguished Service Cross for his bravery. It was just one of many honors the 100th Infantry Battalion earned, making it one of the most decorated units of the war.

Ohata left the Army, went back to school and got a degree in engineering. He worked for Northrop Aircraft and Lockheed Missile and Space Company in California. Ohata died of colon cancer on Oct. 17, 1977, when he was just 59. He is buried in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii.

Soldiers with the 100th Infantry Battalion, 442nd Regiment fly battle streamers awarded through a Presidential Citation just tied on by Lt. Gen. Mark W. Clark, the commanding general of the Fifth Army, near Rosignano, Italy, in 1944.



Ohata's sister, Mildred, said he was always a quiet child, and that didn't change when he got older. He rarely talked about the war. According to a 1985 *Hawaiian Herald* article, most of the friends he made later in life didn't even know he'd been in the war until after he died. His sister said he suffered his cancer diagnosis alone nearly until the end because he didn't want to burden others.

Belated Honor

While the marvelous bravery of the men of the 100th was well-known during World War II, only one Medal of Honor was initially given to a Nisei soldier: Private 1st Class Sadao Munemori received it as an upgrade from a Distinguished Service Cross in April 1946, a year after he died in battle.

That would change 50 years later.

The Congressional Gold Medal was given to Japanese-American soldiers who served in the 442nd Regimental Combat Team during World War II.



In the 1990s, legislation sponsored by a Hawaiian Senator led to an official review of many of the Distinguished Service Crosses that had been awarded to Japanese-Americans for their heroics and loyalty — despite the discrimination they faced at the time. After years of research, the review resulted in the military upgrading 19 of the 52 Distinguished Service Crosses and one Silver Star to Medals of Honor.

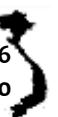
Ohata, six other members of the 100th and several more Nisei soldiers received that honor on June 21, 2000. During a White House ceremony, President Bill Clinton presented the medals to those who were still alive and their family members. Ohata's brother, Donald, accepted the medal on his behalf.



During a White House ceremony on June 21, 2000, President Bill Clinton presented the Medal of Honor to Donald Ohata on behalf of his brother, World War II Army Staff Sgt. Allan Ohata, whose actions during battle in Italy in 1943 were instrumental to the success of his unit. Several other Japanese-American soldiers from World War II were also awarded the nation's highest medal that day.

We continue to thank Ohata and all the Nisei soldiers, airmen, sailors and Marines who put their lives on the line for their nation during World War II.

This article is part of a weekly series called "Medal of Honor Monday," in which we (the DoD) highlight one of the more than 3,500 Medal of Honor recipients who have earned the U.S. military's highest medal for valor.



Every veteran who survived the ferocious battle which took place around this small jungle clearing named LZ Zulu Zulu has his own images of that day tattooed in his mind. This place was a life-altering place for many, and a place to die for hundreds more, mostly them, but including Sky Soldiers John Beauchamp and Charley Zionts. Ed



John Beauchamp, 19
CPL, B/2/503
KIA 3/16/66



Charley Zionts, 20
SP4, B/2/503
KIA 3/16/66

Just Another Day

By Robert Toporek
B/2/503d

It was just another day in the jungle that March morning. We woke from sleeping on the hard ground with our backpack as a pillow. We were somewhere in the jungle following orders. None of us, as best as I can remember, questioned why we were there. I mean, come on, we were the Americans fighting for Democracy just as our fathers, grandfathers and forefathers had before us. I mean, what greater thing to fight for than human freedom?

Anyway, our squad gathered at the edge of a trail, actually, it was a pretty big trail. If we knew what the Ho Chi Minh Trail was we would have known We were on it, but who the hell knew anything in 1966? For some odd reason, I couldn't tell you who our company commander was, we had lost one it seems every time we went out. I certainly don't remember who our squad leaders were or our platoon sergeant, but I do remember Cpl. Beauchamp. No one ever called him Cpl., it was only Beauchamp. Our squad once again was chosen to patrol the perimeter before the rest of the battalion pulled out.

Beauchamp and I argued over who would pull point. He only had 45 days left. He had spent a year in-country and I just couldn't see him risking it another time. He, on the other hand, felt like it was his turn, and he did out-rank me, so off we went.

Why the hell we were walking straight up that trail to this day baffles me. About 100 yards out all of a sudden Beauchamp turned a corner; from that moment on all hell broke loose. I thought we had walked into an explosion of an ammunition factory! Every conceivable noise a rifle, machine gun, grenade or rocket launchers could make going off simultaneously, went off. Beauchamp was killed instantly and the rest of us were pinned down.

Our platoon behind us was firing out in our direction, not really knowing where we were, and Charlie was pumping about as much lead into our section that was humanly possible. All of a sudden I heard a loud thump in the tree behind me; I realized in that moment there was a God. If I had simply been kneeling differently, I would have been hit through the eyes.

I don't know how we ever got back to the battalion that day, but we did.

As we later found out, we were ambushed by a battalion of NVA Regulars. It wasn't a pretty day and I don't really remember much beyond that. Seems like whoever from our platoon hadn't been killed, they were wounded or came real close.

Check out the names on the Wall, and look for the date March 16, 1966. In those graves live stories of amazing bravery and sacrifice.



Dustoff of our dead and wounded at LZ Zulu Zulu after the battle on 16 Mar 66, during Operation Silver City.

(Photo by RTO Wayne Hoitt, HHC/2/503, WIA at Zulu Zulu)



The *Buddy System*....nothing like it. While not a 173d photo, it reminds us of our own time during war when relying on your buddy and him relying on you, was essential to our very survival. Thanks to Terry Fincher for reminding us. ATW!



1968: Hill Timothy

“U.S. soldiers, one wounded and being carried by a colleague, walking down Hill Timothy during the conflict in Vietnam. Almost 60,000 Americans died in Vietnam. The unconventional ways of fighting, and the knowledge the Vietnamese had about their own terrain, led to the United States removing troops without completing their objectives.”
(web caption and photo credit Terry Fincher)

Terry Fincher

Terry Fincher (8 July 1931 – 6 October 2008) was an award-winning British photojournalist. His career took off in 1956 when he accompanied British forces that invaded Egypt during the Suez Crisis. He later did five tours of Vietnam covering the war there for the *Daily Express*, as well as reporting extensively from trouble spots in the Middle East and Africa.

He was British press photographer of the year for 1957, 1959, 1964, and 1967, and runner-up in 1968 (as of September 2013, a still unbeaten record).

He was the subject of *This Is Your Life* in 1976 when he was surprised by Eamonn Andrews. **Source:** Wikipedia

“His pictures exposed the human reality of the conflict—soldiers, wet and miserable, cowering from shelling or weeping for lost comrades, and civilians struggling for normality amid the chaos and destruction. They also laid bare his own reactions to the conflict and his respect for the people and soldiers caught up in it.” **Source:** gettyimages



Why does everybody want to be a Paratrooper?



**The Leap Frogs on Navy's birthday
10/13/20**



**Air Force Parachute Team
10/3/20**



**Marine Corps static line jump
9/25/20**

Here's one reason.....



Seventy-six years ago on February 16, 1945, paratroopers of the 503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team (PRCT) make their jump onto Fortress Corregidor during WWII.



HARRY DREWS SEES THE SIGHTS OF CORREGIDOR ON A WOODEN LEG

By Harry Drews



Harry Drews, Frank Marino, Bradford, Harry Clearwater.
(Photo courtesy of Mark Patterson)



Since the 503's last great reunion in St. Louis, when the trip back to the Philippines was finalized, I knew that I would be on that trip because I had to revisit Corregidor.

Why?

Because on 24 February, 1945, an enemy soldier threw a hand grenade at me and it exploded between my feet. Shrapnel cut the main artery to my foot which slowly died and necessitated my going through two amputations of the right leg. I had to return to the Philippines and, of course, Corregidor.

We left the Manila dock on the morning of 15 February, 1979, and headed for Bataan. In about one hour the faint outline of Corregidor could be seen. It was a thrill just to see that famous Island grow larger and larger as we headed to Mariveles.



"The tunnels still exist in Mariveles," Bataan, Philippines.
(503rd PRCT Heritage Bn photo added)

As we closed in Malinta Hill could be recognized. The Island looked peaceful and quiet, but it brought back many memories and faces and names of the men in Company D who didn't make it back even on one leg.

That evening we stayed in a marvelous motel on Bataan overlooking Corregidor. I cannot exactly explain it, but every now and then I had to walk out on a balcony and look at that Island which was being shaken from top to bottom 34 years ago in preparation that led to its recapture. That night I went to bed but slept very little thinking about the big event of again walking on ground which even angels 34 years ago may well have dreaded doing.

(continued....)





(Web map of Corregidor Island added)

The next morning the adrenalin was running high as we departed from Bataan and headed around the west and south end of the Island. As we passed Cheney Ravine I can still see in my mind the efficiency of a good fighting team in clearing a pill box of the enemy. Next came a culvert, and even though we in Company D gave an unknown number of enemy an opportunity to live, they chose to die begging for mercy after they made their choice, but by that time it was too late. So far we had not lost a man in that day of fighting. Cheney Ravine was ours for that day.

A few days later we again reviewed the ravine, but where the ravine met the ocean we cornered 21 enemy in a shallow cave. Again the enemy was given an opportunity to save their lives, but they chose differently. Fighting the enemy not more than four feet away cannot but be remembered. One also remembers the losses we suffered. The self-destruction our enemy inflicted upon themselves was difficult to believe -- that ordinary foot soldiers could be made to believe suicide would help their cause. It didn't.

As we rounded the Island a bit more I began to try and pick out the point top side where Company D was entrenched when the enemy banzai'd us one night. It was a hot and humid night, but still my teeth chattered in fear of dying.

The next morning the members of Company D who remained reorganized and attacked into the heart of the area. We discovered so many dead and wounded, our own and the enemy, that I have never felt so much hate for anyone as I did for our enemy. From that very moment on, as far as I was concerned there would be no quarter given and no quarter asked.

On February 24, 1945, just eight days after our landing, Company D, what was left of it, went down Cheney Ravine to the ocean, walked through a mine field, and turned left.

This day we would clear out the beach area past Searchlight Point.

I remember the boulders, the heat, the anxiety, the uncertainty, the expectancy, the flies, the dirt, and best of all the confidence and the great morale of our Company.

It had been tough going and the Lt. called for a break for the stragglers to catch up. I remember my order to several scouts to head up the knoll to observe front and rear. The explosion of a rifle shot on the knolls I remember ordering a squad up the knoll and I headed up that knoll to help the two men. One scout had shot an enemy. I remember the thought that where there is one, there will be more. By that time the second scout and I found eight or nine enemy lying in a trough. I remember working my Thompson sub-machine gun and then all hell broke loose. We were being fired on from the side of Corregidor.

I remember passing the first enemy shot three or four minutes prior. Something told me to turn around, and sure enough one of the eight or nine enemy who had just been shot was standing up -- he wasn't standing a second later, but as I looked down, there was that damned hand grenade. The next thing I know is that my right arm is bleeding, my entire body was unduly warm -- no pain, just warm and I am shaking my head trying to clear it. I know something is wrong.

Somehow I walked away still holding my weapon. My mind and training said *"don't lose that weapon"*. I walked about 12 or 15 feet and dropped to the ground. I see enemy dropping off the sides of Corregidor. I'm still being fired at and I can feel the rock splinters hitting me. About that time I remember two members of Company D running out to me and dragging me behind a boulder. I remember pulling my trousers down with my left hand. My right arm was broken. I remember the bubble of blood that made me believe I had lost what is so important to every man. I really didn't mind dying, but I didn't want to die *"that"* way.

Now we head toward our landing and reception near Malinta Hill. I look up to a point on Corregidor's top side when I and several other members of Company D spent the first night where I watched the last 503d Battalion landing by landing craft. All of a sudden the enemy opened up 50 yards ahead of me with a heavy automatic weapon.

(continued....)



I remember watching a small destroyer escort sail in between the landing craft and the enemy firing at our people; lowering the dual 3-inch guns and firing point blank into the enemy's position. I remember the enemy screaming in pain, and I remember feeling no pity.



Barracks at Malinta Hill.
(National Archives photo added)

Now I am again on Corregidor -- this time in a happy and friendly mood. I am with friends who no doubt have many of the same memories.

After the "Welcome Back" ceremonies, we all are taken top side and now I am standing in awe of the 503d Memorial mock up. It is beautiful. It is just what I visualized and it is something that every member of the "Rock Force" can be proud of. It is a memorial that will stand for millenniums to remind all peoples that tyranny must pay a high price and that truth, freedom and democracy will prevail. It will stand to remind the many visitors to Corregidor for years to come that the 503d was here and conquered.

Travelling around Corregidor one notices that all man-made objects that were on the Island prior to the start of World War II will bear the scars of battle forever. However, nature has taken care of the scars inflicted on the natural surroundings, as if God is telling humanity to never desecrate the Island again, as it belongs to the men and women who gave so much to defend and recapture it.

No one can ever forget the members of Company D who ran back and forth between the columns of concrete and having an enemy sniper take a shot at them, so the rest of us could try to pick out the sniper. I believe we finally drove that enemy soldier to the point of frustration because he finally came out of his hiding place (having not hit a single man) and tried to throw a grenade at our Company D man who went out to bring the sniper in as a prisoner. The hand grenade was never thrown and the sniper never survived.

There are more memories to be told, some unfit to be recorded for history. These memories of Corregidor, Mindoro, Leyte, Noemfoor, Negros are always brought home every time I take an airplane trip and go through security. Yep, the many pieces of shrapnel still imbedded in my arm and leg are of sufficient size and quantity to cause security guards to check me thoroughly. I have stopped telling them why the bells ring and the buzzers buzz. These are my memories.

Harry Drews has passed away.

This article was originally published in the 1977 reprint of *The Return To Corregidor* by Harold Templeman, under the title "HARRY DREWS SEES THE SIGHTS OF CORREGIDOR ON A WOODEN LEG".

Reprinted here courtesy of Paul Whitman and his
503rd PRCT Heritage Battalion website.
Photos added where indicated.

503rd Memorial on Corregidor



**"NO SOIL ON EARTH IS MORE DEEPLY
CONSECRATED TO THE CAUSE OF HUMAN
LIBERTY THAN THAT OF THE
ISLAND OF CORREGIDOR."**

General Douglas MacArthur



LET'S GET 'EM

One morning when I was commanding the Second Battalion of the 415th Infantry Regiment, a distraught tanker from the 3rd Armored Division came into my Command Post (CP). He needed help.

It seems he was leading a supply column up the road that ran through our position. About a mile north of us his column had been attacked and he had lost two tanks. He wanted us to clear the road for him.

I called Captain Mauldin, who commanded G Company, and told him to get the company ready to move out. I would be down to the company in a few minutes. When I got there, I explained the situation. I told him we would move up the road to a road junction a few hundred yards north of us and then we would continue north through the woods so as not to be seen.

There was a ridge just ahead of us as we entered the woods. We kept the troops behind the ridge as Mauldin and I went to the top to observe the terrain on the other side of the ridge. If German tanks had knocked out the two tanks, I figured we would see them here. I was wrong. All we saw was a valley and then another ridge.

We moved the company forward with bazooka (a hand-held antitank rocket launcher) men up front. We climbed the next ridge and repeated the observation procedure. This time we could see a village about 500 yards away from us. A dozen or so villagers were leaving the village. This was a sign that something unusual was going on. It indicated the possibility they foresaw action in which they did not want to be involved.

I said to Mauldin, *"Let's go to the village and see if it is clear."* We moved the company down the ridge and started across the absolutely flat field that extended to the village. Mauldin and I were thirty or forty feet out in front of the troops who were spread out in a line of skirmishers.

When we were about 200 yards from the village, a slight movement caught my eye. I focused on it and saw a German soldier sitting behind a machine gun. As I mentioned, the field was as flat as a pool table, absolutely no place to take cover. Realizing we were sitting ducks, I yelled, *"There they are. Let's get 'em."* Then I started running as fast as I could at the machine gunner. All of us started running and yelling.

To my relief and amazement, the gunner got up and ran. He did not fire a shot.

Once in the village we found there were some armored vehicles and troops. We captured about 50 Germans and Mauldin's bazooka men immediately knocked out six armored vehicles. The one we did not immediately get, drove out of the village up a small rise north of the village and stopped, apparently because a bazooka shot had damaged its engine. We later brought forward the tank platoon attached to the battalion. They finished off the vehicle on the slope so that it would not fire at us anymore.

I found out years later after the war that this German force had been sent out to reconnoiter for a place that the German force, hemmed in by the Seventh Corps' encirclement of the Ruhr Pocket, could break out. I will tell this story in a moment under the heading of **BEYERLEIN AND THE MAP** (NOT INCLUDED IN THIS ISSUE, ED).

Captain Mauldin was awarded the Silver Star for the valor he displayed in leading his men, especially in knocking out the enemy's armored vehicles. The 3rd Armored Division's supply column moved on. All in a morning's work.

John Deane
1919 ~ 2013

[Story provided by Jack Kelley, LTC (Ret), CO A/2/503]

John Russell Deane Jr.
(June 8, 1919 – July 18, 2013) was a highly decorated United States Army officer with the rank of General. He served as commander of the United States Army Materiel Command. The General served his country in WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. In December 1966, he was assigned as Commanding General, 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam. He earned two Distinguished Service Crosses in Vietnam.



Affectionately known as
"Uncle Jack" by his men.



Remembering Remembrance Ride Oz

Fifty Five (55) years have passed since Australia lost a son to the war in Vietnam, as a Nation we should pause to Commemorate his Ultimate Sacrifice.

*He mingles not with his laughing comrades again,
He sits no more at familiar tables of home,
He has no lot in our labour of the daytime,
He sleeps beyond Australia's foam.*



Thomas Simpson

36205

Gunner: 105 Field Battery

Service: Australian Army

War: Vietnam 1962-1975

Date of Death: 09 December 1965

Place of Death: South Vietnam, Vietnam

Cause of Death: Illness

Age at Death: 27

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old.
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
We will remember them.*

R.I.P. My man, Stand Down Duty Done.

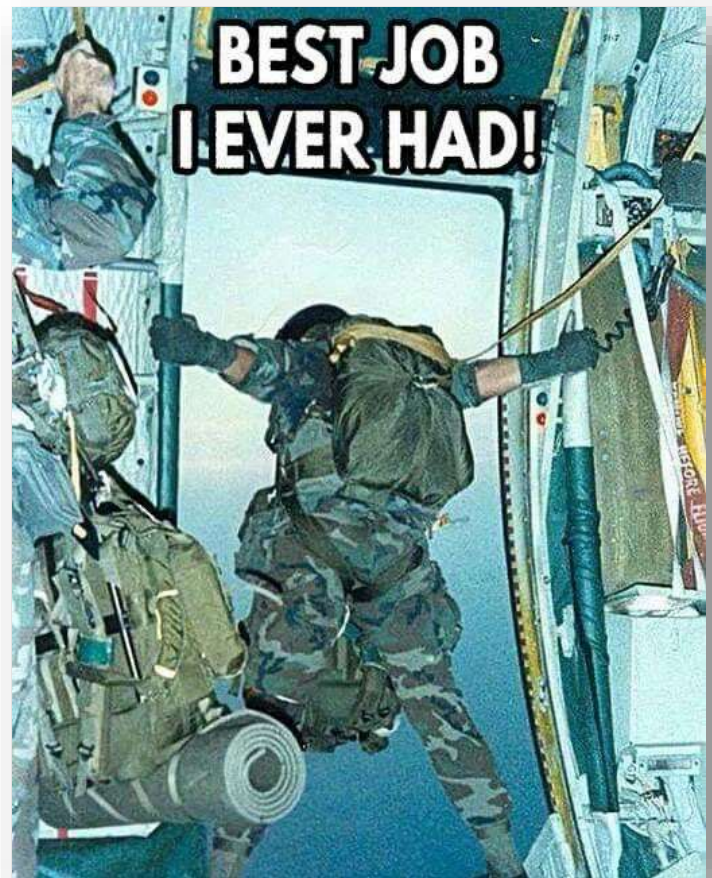
Regards,

Rob_E

Cyaaa



KATHY--A cute young miss who proudly wears the Airborne Patch on her right shoulder is Kathy, seen here talking with some rear area paratroopers in the "Happy Hootch" at Camp Radcliffe. (photo by 1Lt Emmert)



~ Freedom ~

As combat veterans we often state many gave their lives as we risked our own while fighting for *freedom in our country and for countries of the world* -- there is truth in that statement and as confirmed by our military forebearers (see tributes on Pages 33-45 of this newsletter). As Americans we take pride in such great sacrifices in the name of all which is good. Yet, here, in our own country such freedom is not equally enjoyed by all our citizens, and that too is a true statement.

A Sky Soldier buddy sent in the following report which speaks to that very reality – we don't know if the author is a veteran, but he could be. It's presented here in hopes of causing us, as Americans, to pause, to think of what our nation is and what we, as young paratrooper combatants, believed it to be. Ed

“My Mission To Create A Kinder World”

Twice a day, I walk my dog Ace around my neighborhood with one, or both, of my girls. I know that doesn't seem noteworthy, but here's something that I must admit:

I would be scared to death to take these walks without my girls and my dog. In fact, in the four years living in my house, I have never taken a walk around my neighborhood alone (and probably never will).

Sure, some of you may read that and think that I'm being melodramatic or that I'm “playing the race card” (I still have no clue what that means), but this is my reality.

When I'm walking down the street holding my young daughter's hand and walking my sweet fluffy dog, I'm just a loving dad and pet owner taking a break from the joylessness of crisis homeschooling.

But without them by my side, almost instantly, I morph into a threat in the eyes of some white folks. Instead of being a loving dad to two little girls, unfortunately, all that some people can see is a 6'2” athletically-built black man in a cloth mask who is walking around in a place where he doesn't belong (even though, I'm still the same guy who just wants to take a walk through his neighborhood). It's equal parts exhausting and depressing to feel like I can't walk around outside alone, for fear of being targeted.

If you're surprised by this, don't be. We live in a world where there is a sizable amount of people who actually believe that racism isn't a thing, and that White Privilege is a made-up fantasy to be politically-correct. Yes, even despite George Floyd, Christian Cooper, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor (and countless other examples before them, and many to come afterward), some people still don't seem to get it.

So, let me share some commonsense points:

1) Having white privilege doesn't mean that your life isn't difficult, it simply means that your skin color isn't one of the things contributing to your life difficulties. Case in point, if it never crossed your mind that you could have the cops called on you (or worse, possibly killed) for simply bird watching then know that is a privilege that many black/brown people (myself included) don't currently enjoy.

2) Responding to “Black Lives Matter” by saying “All Lives Matter” is insensitive, tone-deaf and dumb. All lives can't matter until black lives matter.

3) Racism is very real, and please don't delude yourself into thinking it's limited to the fringes of the hardcore MAGA crowd. As Amy Cooper proved, it's just as prevalent in liberal America as it is anywhere else.

4) While racism is real, reverse-racism is not. Please don't use that term, ever.

5) In order for racism to get better, white allies are absolutely critical. If you're white and you've read this far, hopefully you care enough to be one of those allies. Please continue to speak up (despite some of your friends and family rolling their eyes at you), because your voices matter to PoC now more than ever. Special shoutouts to many of my friends for doing it so well.

6) And if you're white, and you're still choosing to stay silent about this, then I honestly don't know what to say. If these atrocities won't get you to speak up, then honestly, what will? Also, it's worth asking, why would you choose to follow me? If you aren't willing to take a stand against actions that could get me hurt or killed, it's hard to believe that you ever cared about me (or my mission to create a kinder world) in the first place.

As for me, I'll continue to walk these streets holding my 8 year-old daughter's hand, in hopes that she'll continue to keep her daddy safe from harm.

I know that sounds backward, but that's the world that we're living in these days.

#BlackLivesMatter

[Author unknown]





BG Robert Reese Neyland

By the time **Robert Reese Neyland** graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, in 1916, he had made a name for himself in three sports.

As a lineman for the football team, he helped the Black Knights win the Army-Navy games from 1914 to 1916.

As a baseball pitcher for the Black Knights, he authored a 35-5 record. In 1914, he fired the first no-hitter in Army history when he blanked Colgate. In boxing, he was an undefeated, heavyweight boxing champion for his final three years at the academy.

Neyland also found time for academics, graduating near the top of his class.

Several professional baseball teams, including the New York Giants, tried to lure Neyland to their teams with big-money offers, but he decided to stay in the Army where he was deployed to Texas as an Army Corps of Engineers officer and helped erect levees along the Rio Grande River. Neyland then served as an engineer in France during World War I.

In 1921, he returned to West Point as an aide to Army Brig. Gen. Douglas MacArthur, then the academy's superintendent. While there, he also assisted in coaching football, baseball and boxing.



In 1925, Neyland became the head football coach at the University of Tennessee while continuing his military duties as an ROTC instructor.

Neyland's coaching career was disrupted twice — when he was recalled to active duty in 1934 and deployed to Panama and again in May 1941 just before the start of World War II.



Spotlight: Commemorating World War II

In 1942, Neyland was appointed head coach of the Eastern All-Army team that took on National Football League clubs to raise money for the Army Emergency Relief fund. The team played three games, defeating the New York Giants and Brooklyn Dodgers before losing to the defending NFL champion Chicago Bears.



Neyland then served in China, Burma and India, supervising the transport of Allied war supplies across the Himalayan Mountains. He left the Army as a brigadier general in 1946.

In 1946, Neyland resumed coaching at UT, where he earned the nickname "the General." In 1952, he quit his job as coach and became the UT athletic director for a decade. During that time, he helped to design UT's stadium.



During his legendary coaching career in Knoxville, Tennessee, he compiled an overall record of 173-31-12, winning four national championships and seven conference titles.

Neyland died in 1962. Today, the University of Tennessee football stadium is named in his honor and there's also a statue of him there.



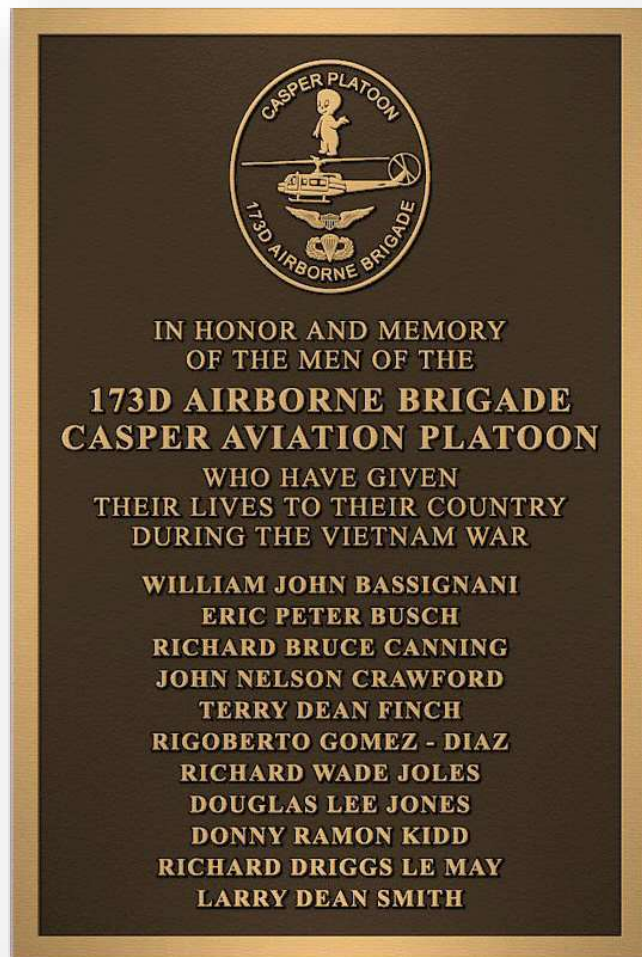
Source:  U.S. DEPT. OF DEFENSE

Sports Heroes Who Served is a (DoD) series that highlights the accomplishments of athletes who served in the U.S. military.



Remembering our fallen brothers...

Casper aviation platoon Memorial



Casper Aviation Platoon Organization:
Memorial Bronze Plaque



Casper Aviation Platoon Wreath Laying Ceremony at
The Tomb of the Unknown
Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C.
June 23, 2013

Guest of Honor

MANILA, PHILIPPINES, 02.18.2020

Mr. (Richard/Dick) Adams is the last surviving member of the 503rd Infantry Regiment that conducted the combat airborne assault into Corregidor on Feb. 16, 1945.

Retired Master Sgt.
Richard Adams talks to
Maj. Light Shin, the Brig-
ade Chaplain, during the
75th anniversary mem-
orial of Operation Top-
side at the Manila
American Cemetery and
Memorial Center in
Manila, Philippines on Feb. 17 2020.



(Photo by Sgt. John Yountz , 173rd Airborne Brigade)

The 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade commemorates the history of those paratroopers that came before them and passed on a legacy known as "The Rock". This is the nickname of both 2nd Battalion and the island fortress of Corregidor.

During WWII the island was taken over by the Imperial Japanese Army and was projected to have roughly 800 Japanese soldiers ready to repel an amphibious assault, however unbeknownst to our paratroopers, there were over 6000. On Feb. 16 1945, "The Rock" conducted the only combat airborne assault in the Pacific Theater during the war.* This Airborne Operation was considered extremely dangerous due to limited space of the drop zone, high winds, cliffs, and the ocean. The surprise of the attack led to the victory of the assault.

Operation Topside was one of the culminating successes early on into the Pacific Theater that set the foothold for many operations that followed. These events are part of the 75th anniversary memorial of Operation Topside at the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial Center, U.S. Embassy Manila, and Corregidor Island in Manila, Philippines from Feb. 16 to Feb. 21, 2020.

Source: 173d Abn Bde

* 503rd also made combat jump onto Noemfoor. Ed

Dick Adams

Dick was one of the WWII 503rd troopers who as a guest of our Association attended one of our annual reunions years ago. At that reunion Dick gave me this piece of parachute silk he recovered from Corregidor during an earlier return trip there. It will one day be donated to the Airborne & Special Operations Museum near Bragg. Ed



John Hamill

Renowned Sky Soldier Passes....



John Hamill, a decorated Vietnam War combat medic, journalist and screenwriter, passed away Tuesday after contracting COVID-19. He was 71.

The death of Hamill, the fifth of seven siblings born and raised in Brooklyn by Irish immigrant parents, came just a month after his older brother, author and newspaper columnist Pete Hamill, died at age 85.

John Hamill, a die-hard Mets fan, was retired and living in California when he came down with the virus three weeks ago and never recovered, according to a Facebook post by his sister Kathy.

"Johnny was a kind, brilliant, funny, sweet brother whom we loved so very much," she wrote. "His entire family is heartbroken and devastated at a wonderful, meaningful life cut short."

Hamill served in Vietnam with the 173rd Airborne as a medic, surviving two helicopter crashes during the Tet Offensive while earning a Bronze Star and a Purple Heart. When he returned home, John marched in Washington with the Vietnam Veterans Against the War, recalled his brother Denis.

Hamill wound up in the family business of journalism with Denis and Pete, working as a reporter and Queens columnist for the *Daily News*. He also wrote for the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner*, the *Boston Herald American*, *Rolling Stone* magazine and the *Village Voice*, and co-authored a pair of Hollywood screenplays: *"Turk 182!"*, starring a young Timothy Hutton in 1985, and *"Critical Condition"* with Richard Pryor in the lead in 1987.

John Hamill also worked in public relations for the New York City Housing Authority. He is survived by wife Christine and daughter Molly, along with siblings Brian, Denis and Kathy.

Works by John.....

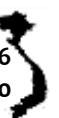


Some of John's other work.....



Neither of these Sky Soldiers is believed to be John, but this was like some of his most important work.

Rest Easy, Doc, and ATW Brother!





Cowboys

335th ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY UNIT HISTORY

THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS

T'was the night before Christmas, And all through
the pad,
Not a creature was stirring, Thanks to Old Grand Dad.

The doors were left open, With uncanny care,
In hopes of some round eye Wandering in there.

The COWBOYS were sleeping, In fart sacks all bare,
While visions of Sweethearts, Danced through the air.

When out on the Flight Line, There rose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed, to see what was the matter.

Away to the door, I flew like a flash,
Tripped on a beer can, And fell on my ash.

I picked myself up, My feet started beaten,
A trail to the Flight Line, Where I fell over Keaton.

The wind and the rain, Fell into our face,
The smell of old Nam, All over the place.

When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But all the mechanics, Just dead drunk on beer.

At last they had found a moment of peace,
Old Horsethief was rotatin, And leavin the Far East.

With a jerk of my head, I heard someone exclaim,
Now Biddy and Murray, Don't call him that name.

Up Schweitzer, On Stocker, Now cut off their beer,
With all of this racket, You'll have Snuffy out here.

To the top of the roof, To the top of the wall,
It looked like the pilots, Were out drinken them all.

When down through the middle, A small figure
skittered,
He looked so darned funny, I just sat and twittered.

His eyes, how they twinkled, His dimples so merry,
A rarity amongst COWBOYS, Goin home with his
Cherry.

With a twinkle in his eye, And a fifth in his hand,
He was so darned drunk, He could hardly stand.

His actions were shaky, Jerky and quick,
I knew in a flash, It had to be Old Six.

He turned with a jerk, And lowered his bag,
And called out to Woodard, Hey, don't be a drag.

Grabbing their Orders, Tight in their fists,
Six and Old Horsethief Finished their fifths.

Chief Falcon, Buzzard, Mustang and Dick,
Rushed up with refills, Unsteady, but quick.

And finally Snuffy, Stirred and awoke,
Looking for Bowser, Webb and some bloke.

Grabbing his whistle, Clipboard in hand,
The thunder of his feet, Could be heard on the sand.

With a crackle and static Avionics came through,
With a brand new rumor, Too good to be true.

The COWBOYS is leavin This range around here,
Headin for home, And all they hold dear.

Old Howell gave a yell, Don't give me that stuff
I'm the S2 and I'll tell you sho nuff.

The COWBOYS is stayin, Right where they am,
On the South China seacoast In the country of
Nam.

The COWBOYS that were goin Were a miserable
bunch,
Red eyed, hung-over, And loosin their lunch.

They'd done a good job During their year,
Bedecked with medals With grins ear to ear.

Mounting their Birds They got ready to fly,
With a wave of their hand, They took to the sky.

And they heard us exclaim, Ere they flew out of sight,
Merry Christmas to ALL, And to all a good night.

The Old Sarge

Source:

335th Assault Helicopter Company, Unit History

Reprinted courtesy of Dom Fino, Cowboys



HE WOULD NEVER TALK ABOUT IT

Don Abbott

Something I've been meaning to address, and probably will not do well, is one of the statements I keep hearing over and over: *"My (fill in the blank) was in the 503rd, and jumped on Corregidor. He would never talk about it".*

I think that is pure Bull For any number of reasons he might not seem to talk about it. Maybe when he came home he talked about it until all his relatives got so bored at hearing the same old stories they shut him up. For example, I remember a case a long time ago while a father and I were talking about service days and his son said *"Oh, that Old War!"* That was during Vietnam and talking war experiences was not popular and besides it was an *Old War*.

The implication of the *"he would never talk about it"* was that the experience was so horrible he couldn't talk about it. Not many of our men were that sensitive, believe me. Seeing a friend killed in the tropics and so soon bloated with maggots you couldn't recognize him is not exactly a dinner time topic. There may have been a few experiences men would not discuss, but not many.

Then maybe the man's position was one he was not proud of or he did not actually participate. Service Company, for example, was brought onto Corregidor a day or so after the assault jumps or the amphibious landings. They provided an important service but no combat function. My friend Sam Smith went from CO of "E" Company to CO of Service Company where they put him in charge of emptying the stockade and taking the inmates on the Island as work details. Do you suppose Sam was proud of that?

Some people are just not very good story tellers. Their verbal skills stand in the way of *"talking about it"*. Some of the most interesting stories probably could, and would, be told if they could get their story in, while a more forceful person was hogging the stage with an uninteresting story.

Some men may have lied a bit about their experiences and trapped themselves in statements they would like to distance themselves from. Toward the end of Negros, when the fighting was pretty much behind us, the 503rd got a lot of replacements. These men, through no fault of theirs, saw no combat. A number of these will show up at the reunions and skirt around describing their combat experiences. They would have been in the middle of things if they had been brought in a few months earlier.

So, every time we get the *"he would never talk about it,"* I wonder why.



Francis O'Neill, Don Abbott, Gen. Wayne Downing, Ed Pater, Henry "Hoot" Gibson & Robert "Cracker" Atkins all talking about it.

The author, Don Abbott, was a LT in "D" Co. (Nadzab, Noemfoor), the Executive Officer in "E" Co. (Corregidor), and Company Commander of "A" Co. (Negros).

Don passed away 2 September 2005.



Reprinted courtesy of Paul Whitman and his 503rd PRCT Heritage Battalion website.



Many VA Benefits Will Be Expanding



(Report image)

In a posting on December 18, 2020, Jim Absher of [Military.com](https://www.military.com) reported, "Congress has passed legislation making several changes to benefits administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs."

The legislation is known as "the Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvements Act of 2020," states the report.

Some of the changes planned include:

Expansion of Medal of Honor Pension

The monthly pension paid to Medal of Honor awardees will be paid to their surviving spouse upon the death of the service member.

2021 Military Retiree and Disability Pay Raise

See report at

<https://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/allowances/cola-for-retired-pay.html>

Life Insurance

Beginning in 2023, the VA will be getting into the life insurance business. In 2023 the new law requires the VA to offer all disabled veterans under age 81 a whole-life policy by that date. Policies will be limited to a \$40,000 payout for most veterans.

Home Loans for National Guard Members

National Guard members without active-duty service will be eligible to receive a VA home loan in 2021.

Memorial Benefits

Within two years of the bill becoming law, the VA will begin paying the costs to transport a deceased veteran's remains to state and tribal veterans cemeteries.

Native Americans and VA Copay

Within one year of the law becoming effective, all Native Americans will be exempt from any VA copay for health care or medication, regardless of whether the individual has a service-connected disability.

See entire report at:

<https://news.yahoo.com/many-va-benefits-expanding-2021-230957930.html>

Valor Awards of Men of the 2/503d RVN



Gentlemen & Surviving Family Members, hello:

We've begun the process of producing a publication honoring as many of our men as possible who served with our battalion in Vietnam and who are recipients of the **Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star w/V Device, Army Commendation Medal w/V Device or Soldier's Medal** in recognition of their heroic acts during combat with the 2/503d RVN.

We will publish the highest valor award citation of each trooper, or the valor award specified by recipients, who were on the roster of the 2/503d or received a valor award while attached to our battalion for their acts while in combat with our battalion. If citations cannot be obtained, where possible, we will list the names of 2/503 troopers and the valor award they earned.

If you are the recipient of one of these valor awards while on the roster of or attached to the 2/503d in Vietnam, please email a copy of the official Army citation, and a VN era or current photo of yourself, to rto173@att.net. Also, if you are in possession of a valor citation of a 2/503 buddy, please send that in too.

Once we believe we've compiled all the valor award citations and photos possible, we will email the completed document to you and all Sky Soldiers on our list for your keeping. Also, it will be provided to the 173d Association, the University of Florida's Military Digital Library, and the 503rd PRCT Historical Battalion websites for their permanent posting.

The next two pages include a sample of how this publication may appear, and will be produced for the purpose of creating a consolidated historical record for our men, their families and descendants, as well as researchers and educators. Kindly forward this to your 2/503 buddies.

We understand countless men of our battalion, particularly many of those who lost their lives, were never formally recognized for their heroic acts during combat. But, what we can do is create this lasting document in their honor and in honor of those Sky Soldiers of the 2/503d who were so recognized.

Honor one, honor all.

(continued....)



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Valor Award Recipients Of The 2/503d RVN



Photo of the hands of SFC Charles B. Morris, A/2/503, holding his Medal of Honor.

This publication will present citations of valor earned by numerous but not necessarily all of the men of the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry Regiment, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) who are recipients of the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star w/V Device, Soldier's Medal or Army Commendation Medal w/V Device in recognition of their acts of heroism during combat in Vietnam. This will also be published in honor of the countless men who served in the 2/503d in Vietnam, particularly those men who lost their lives, yet were never formally recognized for their heroic acts during combat.

It is because of men like these, men like us are alive today.

Produced by Sky Soldiers of the 2/503d RVN

(continued....)



Valor Award Recipients of the 2/503d RVN

They Were Young and Brave and Paratroopers



Robert Richard Litwin
A/2/503, '67

The Distinguished Service Cross is presented to Robert Richard Litwin, Sergeant First Class, U.S. Army, for extraordinary heroism in action in connection with military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam, while serving with Company A, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate). Platoon Sergeant Litwin distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 22 June 1967 while serving as rifle platoon sergeant of an infantry company on a search and destroy mission near Dak To. His platoon was savagely attacked by a North Vietnamese battalion and pinned down by an intense hail of automatic weapons fire. Seeing his platoon leader killed, Sergeant Litwin stood up in the midst of the raging firefight to rally his men against the numerically superior hostile force. Wounded early in the battle, he refused aid and directed the fire of his men on wave after wave of onrushing enemy soldiers. He heard a cry for help and braved withering fire to race forward of his lines and aid a wounded comrade. Wounded again, he bravely carried the man back to safety under heavy fire. He continued to repel the mass assaults while radioing for air strikes within fifty meters of his positions. He sustained another wound while directing the air and artillery strikes, but continued to refuse aid while fighting furiously to repulse the enemy onslaught. Realizing that his defenses could not last much longer, he moved through the bullet-swept area directing the withdrawal of his men. While evacuating the wounded, he was hit again. Continuing to refuse aid, he sent his men ahead and remained to cover the withdrawal. He was mortally wounded while courageously leading his men in the face of grave danger. Platoon Sergeant Litwin'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.



Foy E. Privette, Jr.
HHC/2/503, '67

For heroism in connection with military operations against a hostile force: Captain Privette distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 17 May 1967 in the Republic of Vietnam. On this day Captain Privette was in the Battalion Command Post, which was preparing for extraction from a fire support base, when it came under heavy mortar and automatic weapons fire. Captain Privette moved through the intense enemy fire to reach wounded personnel, carrying them to secure positions and administering first aid. Returning time and again under heavy enemy fire to the aid of the wounded, Captain Privette was himself seriously wounded. Ignoring his own wound he continued to aid others until all had been cared for. Captain Privette's outstanding display of aggressiveness, devotion to duty, and personal bravery was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.



Irvin W. Short
B/2/503, '67

For heroism in connection with military operations against a hostile force: Specialist Four Short distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 16 March 1966 during a combat mission in the Republic of Vietnam. On this day, Specialist Four Short was participating in an operation against the enemy when his unit was surrounded and attacked by a hardcore Viet Cong battalion. Specialist Four Short's squad leader was wounded in the initial attack. Without hesitation, Specialist Four Short assumed full command of his squad. Observing the enemy in preparedness to assault down a vital trail, he concentrated the fires of the squad in the critical area while he adjusted mortar barrages to repel the hostile attack. Throughout the heavy fire fight, Specialist Four Short constantly exposed himself to the intense enemy fire to go from position to position distributing the resupplies of ammunition and encouraging his men to hold their weakened position against the much larger force. Specialist Four Short took command of a leaderless, much battered squad and molded it into a powerful fighting machine. Specialist Four Short's aggressiveness, devotion to duty, and personal bravery were in keeping with the highest tradition of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.



(continued....)



2/503 Valor Award Recipients Identified To Date

Thus far, we've compiled official army citations of valor and/or photos for these troopers, except as noted:

MOH - Medal of Honor. DSC – Distinguished Service Cross. S

S - Silver Star. BSV – Bronze Star w/V Device.

ACMV – Army Commendation Medal w/V Device

SM – Soldier's Medal for Heroism

Thomas W. Aikey, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Charles A. Bell, B/2/503, SS (photo/citation needed)
 James A. Bednarski, C/2/503, BSV
 Jan Bobowski, A/2/503, BSV
 Patrick Bowe, HHC/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Larry Briscoe, B/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Nathaniel Brown, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 R.L. Les Brownlee, B/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Karl L. Bullard, B/2/503, DSC
 Robert B. Carmichael, HHC/2/503, SS (citation needed)
 Carmen Cavezza, A/2/503, SS (citation needed)
George S. Colson, II, B/2/503, BSV
Michael J. Cosmo, C/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Gary Cox, D/2/503, SS (citation needed)
 Charles R. Crews, A/2/503, BSV
Eugene R. Davis, B/2/503, DSC
 Michael Deeb, HHC/2/503 (citation needed)
 Richard Eckert, B/2/503, BSV
 Samuel A. Eidson, A/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
 Mile Le Roy Ellis, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Frederick W. Fassett, HHC/B/2/503, SS
Gerald N. Floyd, A/2/503, BSV
 J.L. Frazier, Sr., A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Leslie A. Fuller, A/2/503, BSV
 Amador B. Garcia, Jr., HHC/2/503, BSV
Pedro L. Garcia, HHC/2/503, SS
Robert P. Gipson, B/2/503, DSC
 Michael J. Gladden, B/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Robert L. Gore, B/2/503, BSV
 Robert A. Gray, C/2/503, SS (photo/citation needed)
 Steven Haber, C/2/503, BSV
 William T. Hagerty, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Philip P. Hayden, C/2/503, DSC (photo needed)
 Rudolph Hernandez, B/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
 Richard E. Hood, Jr., A/2/503, SS (photo/citation needed)
 Ross T. Hulslander, A/2/503, BSV (photo needed)
 Vladimir Jakovenko, C/2/503, SS (citation needed)
 Donald R. Judd, A/2/503, SS
Kenneth Kaplan, B/2/503, BSV
 Harold J. Kaufman, C/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Jack Kelley, A/2/503, SS (citation needed)
 Michael J. Kiley, A/2/503, SS
 Richard N. Kimball, Jr., D/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Charles Knecht, A/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Kenneth M. Knudson, A/2/503, SS
 Rodger M. Koefod, B/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Gregory S. Kowaleski, A/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
 Johnny H. Leake, A/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
John Leide, C/2/503, BSV
 John L. Leppelman, C/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Robert R. Litwin, A/2/503, DSC
 Richard Lock, B/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
 Carlos J. Lozada, A/2/503, MOH
Gregg P. Lyell, A/2/503, ACMV
 William H. Marshall, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)

Martin T. McDonald, HHC/2/503, DSC
 Daniel F. McIssac, E/2/503, BSV
 Stephen Adam Mika, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 David A. Milton, A/2/503, SS (citation needed)
 Willie C. Monroe, A/2/503, BSV
 Charles B. Morris, A/2/503, MOH
 Timothy J. Murphy, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Daniel L. Negro, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Michael D. O'Connor, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Milton L. Olive, III, B/2/503, MOH
 Jerry L. O'Neal, C/2/503, SS (photo/citation needed)
 Charles E. Owens, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 William Palenske, A/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
 Freddie Parks, A/2/503, SS
 Alfred J. Paul, III, C/2/503, BSV
 Leo A. Pellerin, A/2/503, BSV
 Elbert D. Poff, D/2/503, SS (citation needed)
 Billy W. Ponder, Sr., C/2/503, DSC (photo needed)
 George A. Poor, Jr., A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Foy E. Privette, Jr., HHC/2/503, BSV
 Charles L. Raiford, Jr., C/2/503, SS (citation needed)
 Jerry R. Rebits, B/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Donald A. Rice, HHC/2/503, BSV
 Eric Ribitsch, C/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Edward L. Richardson, A/2/503, ACMV (citation needed)
James H. Robinson, B/2/503, ACMV
 James P. Rogan, B/2/503, DSC
 William A. Ross, D/2/503, BSV
John J. Schimpf, B/2/503, SS
Frederick L. Shipman, D/2/503, SS
 Dale A. Schram, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 James C. Schultz, A/2/503, BSV
 Peter J. Schutz, A/2/503, SS, (photo/citation needed)
John W. Searcy, HHC/2/503, BSV
 Frederick L. Shipman, D/Recon/2/503, SS
Irwin W. Short, B/2/503, BSV (photo needed)
Donald L. Smith, Jr., HHC/2/503, BSV
 Lewis B. Smith, D/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Charles H. Snow, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 John R. Stalter, C/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Arthur C. Stang, III, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Johnson A. Steidler, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Robert L. Steven, Jr., A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Robert Sweeney, C/2/503, BSV
 Truman R. Thomas, HHC/2/503, BSV
 John R. Tighe, B/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
 Robert Toporek, B/2/503, BSV
 William J. Tucker, A/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
 William C. Vose, BSV, A/HHC/2/503
 Conrad N. Walker, 2/503 (Attached), SS
Robert A. Warfield, B/2/503, SS
 Charles J. Watters, 2/503 (Attached), MOH
 Frank W. Webb, B/2/503, SS (citation needed)
 Alexander C. Zsigo, Jr., A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)

Note: Valor citations for the troopers shown in bold typeface have appeared in issues of this newsletter.

This project will likely take a number of months to complete.



Initial limited supply of COVID-19 vaccine available for health care personnel

Veterans receiving VA health care will be contacted when a vaccine is available.

December 15, 2020, Health, Inside Veterans Health, Top Stories by Vantage Point Contributor



The first COVID-19 vaccines will arrive at 37 VA facilities in the coming days and vaccinations will begin after VA receives a supply of the vaccine. The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced that a COVID-19 vaccine manufactured by Pfizer received an Emergency Use Authorization.

Following this authorization, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) made recommendations for use of the authorized vaccine.

The vaccine has proven to be safe and highly effective in clinical trials. There are side effects similar to those after other vaccines but they are short-lived. This COVID-19 vaccine marks a crucial step in getting the COVID-19 pandemic under control.

Offering the vaccine first to health care personnel the initial supply of the vaccine is limited. Working with the CDC and other federal partners, VA developed a phased plan to benefit the most people.

Under this phased plan, VA will begin vaccinating health care personnel – as they are essential in continuing to care for patients throughout the pandemic. At the same time, VA will vaccinate Veteran inpatients in Community Living Centers and Spinal Cord Injury and Disorder Centers.

VA will vaccinate additional Veterans receiving care from VA at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 after health care personnel have been offered the vaccine.

VA's ultimate goal is to offer the vaccine to all Veterans receiving care at VA as well as employees who want to be vaccinated.

Contacting Veterans for vaccine appointments

Initial COVID-19 vaccine supplies are limited and first being offered to health care personnel. As the supply increases, care teams will contact Veterans receiving care at VA about their options.



It's important to understand that many Veterans will not be able to get the vaccine during this initial rollout when supply is limited. To reduce the risk of exposure to COVID-19, Veterans should not come into a VA facility seeking a COVID-19 vaccine.

Care teams will contact Veterans directly when a vaccine is available, based on each Veteran's risk factors.

However, Veterans can sign up to get updated information through our *Keep Me Informed* tool. Additionally, at this time, Veterans can't get a COVID-19 vaccine in the community through VA's Community Care Network. As more vaccine becomes available, VA will determine whether it can make vaccines available in the community.

Receiving the vaccine

The Pfizer vaccine will be administered in 2 doses. The second dose will be given 21 days after the first dose. To stay safe and continue to protect yourself and others, even those who receive a vaccine should follow the 3 W's: Wear a mask. Wash your hands. Watch your distance – stay 6 feet apart.

VA looks forward to offering the vaccine and asks all Veterans and VA health care personnel for their patience during this initial rollout.

Important Resources

Veteran-facing COVID-19 vaccine website
CDC COVID-19 vaccine website

Jane Kim, MD, MPH, is the chief consultant for Preventive Medicine at the National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Patient Care Services.



Freedom's cost

Mother keeps memory of son's sacrifice alive

By Robbie Evans
thenewsstar.com
May 31, 2010



Randy Hart, 21, Sgt., B/1/503, KIA 2/28/71

To many people, Memorial Day is one day out of the year that they...recognize men and women who lost their lives serving their country in the name of freedom.

But for Una Wade Hart of Monroe, a glass-encased flag and fading photographs of her son in a special corner of her home have been reminders for the past 39 years of the sacrifice made by her son for his country. Her only son, Sgt. Randall Guy Hart Jr., was killed in action Feb. 28, 1971, while serving as a Army paratrooper in Vietnam.

Not a single day passes by without Hart reliving the painful memory of losing her son. And after nearly four decades, Hart still weeps when she thinks about her family's loss.

"How do I deal with it? I cry a lot," Hart said. "I wish I didn't cry like I do, but I miss him terribly."

Randy Hart graduated from Ouachita Parish High School in 1967 and attended Northeast Louisiana University. His father, Randolph Hart Sr., was a U.S. Army veteran who fought in the D-Day invasion of Normandy in 1944. In May 1969, Randy Hart joined the Army and went through paratrooper training at Fort Benning, Ga.

"That was Randy's desire, if he had to go, to be in the branch his dad was in," she said. "His dad was very proud of him when he enlisted."

One of her lasting regrets has been missing her son's first training jump as a paratrooper. Her husband talked her out of seeing it for fear that something might go wrong during the jump.

Less than two years later, the Hart family would receive word from the Army that their son had been killed in action.

"We got the news three days later and it took eight days to bring his body home," she said.

Twenty years after her son's death, one of the soldiers who had served with Hart's son in Vietnam, Larry Pike of Georgia, contacted her after several years of trying to locate his family. After meeting Pike, she learned more about the last moments of her son's life.

"Randy had gone to the aid of one of his men that had been killed, and he took a bullet on the inside of his right leg and it severed the main artery," she said as she held back tears. "In 10 minutes, he had bled to death."

They were under such heavy fire that a medivac helicopter couldn't get there that night to get his body out. So Larry sat with the body all night.

Una Hart had never known Pike until he had contacted her 19 years ago. She learned that Pike himself had been severely injured during battle two weeks after her son's death.

Since that time, Pike and his wife visit her twice a year and Pike calls her every week.

"He's like a second son to me," Hart said.

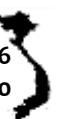
Hart has fond memories of a son who used to call her "Mama-O" and ask her to make her special hobo stack-up sandwiches for his friends and him.

Although families who have lost loved ones during times of war need no reminders of the sacrifices made, Hart said her ultimate hope is for people to think of Memorial Day as more than just a day off from work.

"We're living in a different age than we did when I was younger, and since Vietnam, it seems it's been almost a put-down to be a soldier," Hart said. "To me, Memorial Day should be a time when our minds turn back to the sacrifices that were made."

"It's a time (Memorial Day) I would like to know people did remember what our sons gave and the sacrifices they made."

[Source: Posted on the Wall of Faces, 6/11/10]



Pic From The Past



"AID FROM AIRBORNE-- Medics from the 173rd Abn. Bde., Sp5 William L. Allen (L) and Capt. Woodward Burgert Jr., give first aid to a boy in the Montagnard village of Thanh Binh." (U.S. Army Photo)

Source: *The Reporter*, October 9, 1965



ITMFA

**It's The Military's
Finest Airborne!**

Icy Descent



Air Force Staff Sgt. Nicholas Waytkus descends onto the Malemute drop zone during training at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, Nov. 17, 2020.

(Photo by: Alejandro Pena, Air Force)

A letter from Sabrina Danielle Smith (7 years old)

10/10/2019

My great-grandfather, Ronny Smith, served in the United States Army in the 173rd Airborne 4th Battalion D Company.

He served in the Vietnam War.

He was wounded while he was there and received the Purple Heart medal.

He also received two bronze star medals. With V device, he also received the Vietnam Service Medal and the received an accommodation medal.

He got his combat infantry badge and his wings. His unit received the presidential station medal. My Pop was a paratrooper, he jumped out of planes.

I am very proud of my Poppy for service our country to protect us.

Love you, Pop
Sabrina

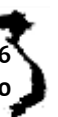
My hero, my Poppy

Source: *The Pampa NEWS*, December 5, 2020



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~ 2/503d Combat Service Citation ~

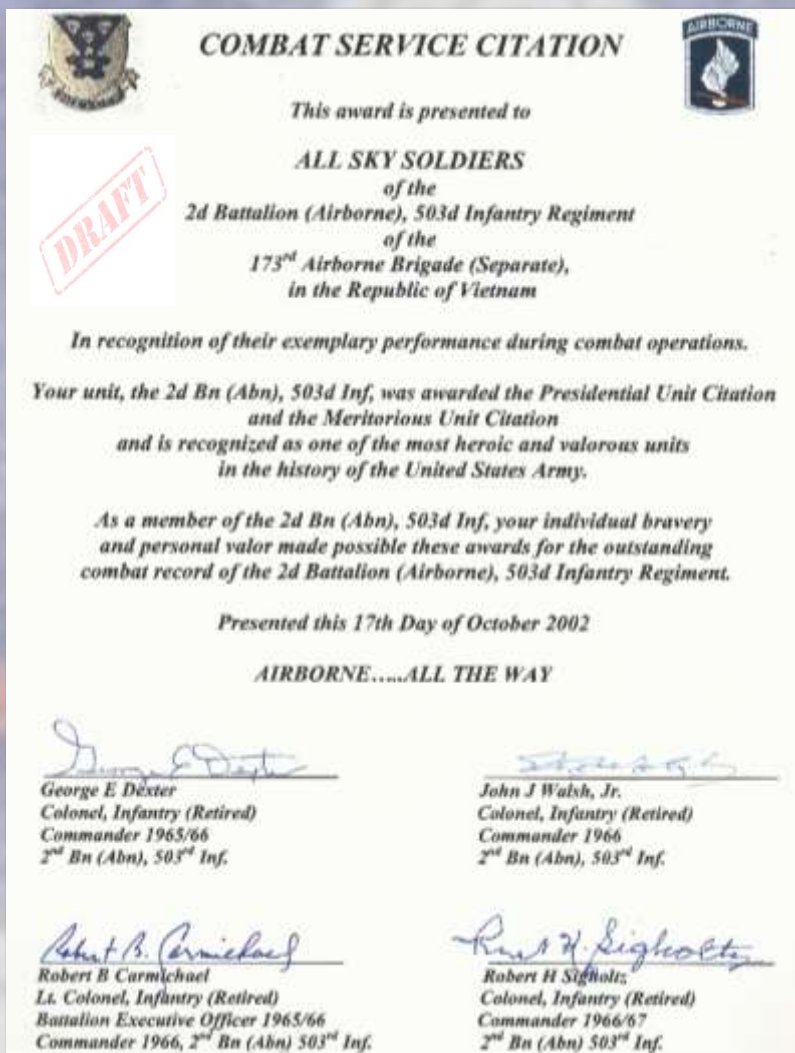
In 1965 thru '66, I and a few others share the distinction of having served in the battalion command group with all four Battalion Commanders of the 2/503 during those two years; LTC George Dexter (Col. Ret), Maj. Bob Carmichael (LTC Ret), LTC John Walsh (Col. Ret), and LTC Bob Sigholtz (Col. Ret). Sadly, Colonels Dexter, Carmichael and Sigholtz have all left us, and we lost contact with Col. Walsh. But, before in leaving us, the four men tasked this old RTO with distributing to men who served with the 2/503 during the Vietnam War, a special award, an award of which they all signed.

The Commanders recognized too many of the men they led in battle and 2/503 troopers of our battalion who served later in the war, were never formally honored with medals and citations for their valorous acts during combat. To right this in a small way, and

while not an official army award, they created the *2/503d Combat Service Citation (CSC)* as a way of thanking their men for their great sacrifices during war. To date, hundreds of our battalion's men have received their CSC.

If you served with and were on the roster of the 2/503 during any year(s) of the war in Vietnam, or if attached to our battalion (i.e. Engineers, Scout Dog Platoon, FAC, etc.) during a combat mission, please email to rto173@att.net your name, final army rank, 2/503 company (or attached unit and dates of action when with the 2/503 on a combat mission), and we will email you your personalized Combat Service Citation.

Surviving relatives of our fallen and of 2/503 troopers who have since left us, are invited to request the CSC in the name of their loved one. ATW! Ed



Merrill's Marauders

Below is a press release feature story about the significance of Sept. 21, 2020, for Merrill's Marauders. I think you'll find it interesting since it includes memories from all eight living Marauders about Sept. 21, 1943.

These men didn't come of age in a world of texting and other social media, and it takes more than that to tell their story.

There are also two photo page attachments with interesting images and information that I hope you'll look at.

Thank you for continuing to support Merrill's Marauders. Pray the Congressional Gold Medal is awarded to the 5307th Composite Unit Provisional very soon. You can try to have this press release picked up by media, or you can save it for background.

Jonnie Melillo Clasen

Merrill's Marauder Liaison Officer

**Daughter, Merrill's Marauder and Korean War veteran
Vincent Melillo**

Future WWII Merrill's Marauders leave San Francisco 77 years ago Sept. 21, 1943 on SS. Lurline – Eight still alive

By Jonnie Melillo Clasen



"Brig. Gen. Frank Merrill directing troops."

More than a quarter century ago, 2,000 young Infantry volunteers from the Caribbean and Stateside shipped out of San Francisco Sept. 21, 1943, on the S.S. Lurline, the Matson Line's luxury "flagship" converted into a WW II troop ship.



Nearby Camp Stoneman in Pittsburg, CA was the "staging area" where the "expendable," volunteers, who would later be known as Merrill's Marauders, first converged for a brief stay after arriving on troop trains from Miami, FL and various U.S. Army posts.

Camp Stoneman was a holding area for about one-million soldiers destined for the Asiatic-Pacific Theater. Soldiers boarding ferries for the San Francisco Port of Embarkation usually had their "spirits lifted" as they walked under the Camp Stoneman sign saying, *"Through this portal pass the best damn soldiers in the world."*



(continued....)



That sign was an apt description of the 2,000 unnamed volunteers who would become part of three battalions headed for an unknown, top-secret destination and objective none were expected to survive. "Magnificent" is how some writers have described them.

Only eight, all in their late 90s, are alive from the nearly 3,000 arriving on the Lurline in Bombay, India Oct. 29, 1943. The Lurline had docked in New Caledonia October 2 to pick up almost another 1,000 volunteers who were combat-seasoned veterans of South Pacific battles.

Trained in India by Britain's Maj. Gen. Orde Wingate's jungle-fighting Chindits, the "expendable" volunteers changed the course of WWII in Asia May 17, 1944, when they seized northern Burma's all-weather Myitkyina airfield. That allowed supplies to be flown over the Himalayas to connect the treacherous Burma and Ledo roads so a critical land route could be forged into China, one of the Allied countries.

Designated the 5307th Composite Unit Provisional Jan. 1, 1944, the volunteers, nicknamed after their commander, Brig. Gen. Frank D. Merrill, made military history by walking farther than any WWII fighting force – almost 1,000 miles – with only what they could carry on their backs or pack on mules.



(Web photo added)

They hacked tunnels through dense jungle tall and wide enough for men and mules. They climbed the 6,100-foot Naura Hkyat pass in Burma's Kumon Mountains where tons of supplies and documents were lost as mules fell to their deaths from slippery, monsoon-soaked trails.

Their defeat of the much larger, better equipped elite Japanese 18th Division in five major battles and 30 minor engagements came at great cost. Malaria, mite typhus, dysentery, isolation, jungle maladies and AOE –

an accumulation of everything – had ravaged their bodies so only about 200 walking skeletons were capable of combat when they seized the Myitkyina airfield.

Their success in the China Burma India Theater, today called the "forgotten theater" of WWII, surprised world leaders. Gen. George C. Marshall, then Army chief of staff, said the mission *"against large numbers of the enemy with few resources was unmatched in any theater."* They not only defied the odds and survived, but five went on to live into their 100s – one reaching 102, two turning 101 and two more living to 100.



General Marshall

The remaining eight are a testament to the Army's stipulation that all volunteers *"will be of a high state of physical ruggedness."* Those eight still have vivid memories of their 1943 train trip across the United States, brief stay at Camp Stoneman and Lurline voyage across the Pacific to India.

Marauder spokesman and historian Robert "Bob" Passanisi, 96, from Lindenhurst, NY is one of 14 children from a large Italian family that had five sons fighting in WWII, including one who served during WWI.

Passanisi had no idea his Army qualification would give him special privileges onboard the Lurline. *"As we approached the gangplank for the Lurline, a couple of officers we hadn't seen before stopped each man to ask what their MOS was,"* he explained. *"Up until that time, no one knew what our specialties were. Mine was radio communications."*

After repairing a piece of the ship's equipment and *"just days after the Lurline sailed out of San Francisco, the captain asked me to broadcast the ship's nightly music request show. I had accidentally learned our 'secret destination,' but could not share that information ... so I selected the theme song for the nightly music show as the 'Song of India' to give the men a hint"*

James E. Richardson, 99, from Jacksboro, TN, was one of seven brothers, also from a family of 14. Six served in WWII. Five came home. John "J.C." was killed after D-Day in France and is buried there.

(continued....)



Richardson's memories of Camp Stoneman and the Lurline are humorous. *"After traveling across the Southwest on a very hot train to Camp Stoneman, they put some of us on KP duty and were supposed to relieve us, but they didn't so we just sat down and quit. They threatened to court-marshal us, but we knew they wouldn't."*

"Before we boarded the ship in San Francisco, someone picked up a little puppy and snuck him on the Lurline," said Richardson. *"The puppy, which we named 'Lurline,' traveled with us all the way to India."*

"The Lurline had one sub-chaser assigned to travel with us across the Pacific," added Richardson, who had been assigned mail orderly duty. *"I remember looking out across the ocean, and you could see nothing but water and sky until it looked as though it dropped off the edge of the world."*

"After we landed in Bombay, we were put on trains with wooden floor-boards, and monkeys ran all through them," he said. *"We were headed toward our training base before starting into the jungles of Burma."*



Gilbert H. Howland, 97 from Hamilton, NJ, a triple Combat Infantryman Badge recipient who fought in Korea and did two combat tours in Vietnam, said, *"While we were waiting to ship out from Camp Stoneman, we stayed fit by doing PT."*

I remember playing a lot of poker and dice and being entertained by bandleader Louis Prima."

On the Lurline, Howland was assigned a room with another man *"five decks down but I slept on the top deck in case the ship was torpedoed. The seas were rough, and at times we lost sight of our escort ship as waves came up and the Lurline went down to the bottom of a trough."*

Gabriel B. Kinney, who turns 100 in February, was part of about 1,000 men from South Pacific battles picked up by the Lurline in New Caledonia. *"I was on the island of Vella la Vella when I volunteered for the mission."*

"An LST (Landing Ship Tank) picked us up at Vella la Vella and we traveled first to Guadalcanal and from there to New Caledonia where we stayed about three weeks before the Lurline arrived."

"The group from the Pacific was put in quarters below deck and not allowed on the upper deck because of crowded conditions," said Kinney. *"It was very hard on the men who had been in the jungle fighting, because they wanted to see the sunlight."*

After landing in India, Kinney traveled by train with the South Pacific volunteers, who made up what would

become most of Merrill's Marauders 3rd Battalion. Kinney said in 1944 when he was assigned to 2nd Battalion, primarily made up of volunteers from the Caribbean, *"I was looked at strangely because I had yellow skin after taking anti-malaria drugs for more than a year."*

Kinney and his wife, Elena, 94, celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary Sept. 8, 2020, at their apartment in a Daphne, AL senior facility which has been under Covid-19 lockdown. They also enjoyed a favorite pastime, a short walk on the beach at Fairhope, AL, recently buffeted by Hurricane Sally.

September 8 was also a special day for Raleigh Naves in Chippewa Falls, WI, where he celebrated his 98th birthday with his wife of 73 years, Betty, 92, and children. However, the family was only able to visit Naves from outside his window at the long-term care facility where he lives under strict Covid-19 lockdown. His wife, who visits through the window every day, held up a sign with birthday greetings.

His son, Jim Naves, said his Dad and five brothers who fought in WWII did not share much about their war-time experiences. They all just came home, got on with their lives *"and didn't look back."* The family knew when he left on the Lurline because the departure date is listed on his discharge papers.



(continued....)



Rocco J. Deluca celebrated his 98th birthday Sept. 5, 2020, at one of Connecticut's first long-term care facilities put under Covid-19 lockdown. His daughter, Joyce Horey, had to cover her clothing with a special gown along with wearing her normal mask and gloves before being permitted a special visit for her Dad's 98th birthday.

Horey said her Dad spent the Lurline's long voyage recovering from surgery. *"Two Navy surgeons convinced Dad to have his appendix taken out while he was on the ship rather than having it done in India,"* she explained. After arriving in India, Deluca didn't initially have the strength to shoulder his pack.

Russell Hamler, 96, from Pittsburgh, PA, remembers the Lurline stopping in Perth, Australia. He described vessels accompanying the Lurline through rough seas from Australia as looking like *"pieces of junk floating out there."*

Hamler said his room on the Lurline accommodated 12 men who slept in berths. He and others were assigned to cleaning various parts of the ship, including the mess hall located in the Lurline's ballroom. He remembers eating well while onboard.

Hamler said when some of the men *"were setting up a room to accommodate four or five poker games, they were caught by 'the padre'."* The priest shut the door to the room and said, *"We're going to have church."* Hamler said that priest went on to become a bishop in the Boston area.

James T. Collins, 96, from Tampa, FL could have been one of Hamler's buddies getting ready to play poker. Collins remembers playing many games of poker and craps on the Lurline. He and Hamler were among the 1,000 men who answered President Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1943 call for the top-secret *"dangerous and hazardous mission"* and volunteered from the Caribbean.

The Lurline also performed outstanding WWII service. She was a luxury cruise ship halfway from Honolulu to San Francisco when Pearl Harbor was attacked Dec. 7, 1941. She returned as a troop ship full of soldiers and supplies.

In 1944, she carried Australia's Prime Minister John Curtin to meet with President Franklin D. Roosevelt. Eleven of her sister ships were lost during WWII. On Sept. 11, 1946, the Lurline sailed from Australia with 3,560 on board, including 500 war brides and 200 children.

Marauder Howland had the unusual experience of taking two Lurline voyages – the first when she was a troop ship and the second when she had been restored to her former elegance after WWII.

While stationed in Hawaii, Howland, a career soldier, took his wife, Andriena, and children, Mary, Bob and Linda, on a postwar 1959 Lurline luxury cruise from Honolulu to San Francisco.

In February 2019, Howland returned to Pittsburg, CA for the first time since 1943. He once again stood under the Camp Stoneman "portal sign," now permanently displayed at the Pittsburg Historical Museum.

He was the museum's guest speaker, talking to an overflowing audience about Merrill's Marauders and his service during the Korean and Vietnam wars. He presented the museum's director with the first of a new plaque created to commemorate 2019 as the 75th anniversary of the Marauders 1944 Burma mission.

Bills to award Merrill's Marauders with a Congressional Gold Medal are currently before Congress where it's hoped action will soon be taken to award the 5307th CUP with the nations' highest honor for a military unit. After that, the next step is to the President for his signature.

[Sent in by Ray Thomas, 173d LRRP]

(All photos from the web added)

A Dangerous And Hazardous Mission

In August 1943 at the "Quebec Conference", President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Prime Minister Winston Churchill, and other allied leaders decided that an American Long Range Penetration Mission behind the Japanese Lines in Burma was needed to destroy the Japanese supply lines and communications and to play havoc with the enemy forces while an attempt was made to reopen the much-needed Burma Road.



President Roosevelt issued a Presidential call for volunteers for "A Dangerous and Hazardous Mission". The call was answered by approximately 3,000 American soldiers. The volunteers came from Stateside units, from the jungles of Panama and Trinidad they came, from the campaigns of Guadalcanal, New Guinea, New Georgia they came, to answer the call, some battle scarred, some new to the ways of war, each different but with one thing in common. They Answered The Call.

The Unit was officially designated as the "5307th Composite Unit (Provisional)" Code Name: "GALAHAD", later it became popularly known as "MERRILL'S MARAUDERS" named after its leader, Brigadier General Frank Merrill....

(continued....)



....Formed into six combat teams (400 per team), color-coded Red, White, Blue, Green, Orange and Khaki, two teams to a Battalion, the rest formed the H.Q. and Air Transport Commands.

After preliminary training operations were undertaken in great secrecy in the jungles of Central India, the Marauders began the long march up the Ledo Road and over the outlying ranges of the Himalayan Mountains into Burma. The Marauders with no tanks or heavy artillery to support them, walked over 1,000 miles through extremely dense and almost impenetrable jungles and came out with glory.

In five major (WALAWBUM, SHADUZUP, INKANGAHTAWNG, NHPUM GA, & MYITKYINA) and thirty minor engagements, they defeated the veteran soldiers of the Japanese 18th Division (Conquerors of Singapore and Malaya) who vastly outnumbered the Marauders. Always moving to the rear of the main forces of the Japanese the Marauders completely disrupted the enemy supply and communication lines, and climaxed their behind the lines operations with the capture of Myitkyina Airfield, the only all-weather airfield in Northern Burma.



The attack on Myitkyina was the climax to four months of marching and combat in the Burma jungles. No other American force except the First Marine Division, which took and held Guadalcanal for four months, has had as much uninterrupted jungle fighting service as Merrill's Marauders. But no other American force anywhere had marched as far, fought as continuously or had to display such endurance, as the swift-moving, hard-hitting foot soldiers, of Merrill's Marauders

When the Marauders attacked Myitkyina they had behind them over 800 miles of marching over jungle and mountain roads and tracks. They had to carry all their equipment and supplies on their backs and on the backs of pack mules. Re-supplied by air drops the Marauders often had to make a clearing in the thick jungle to receive the supplies.

Every wounded Marauder was evacuated, an extraordinary feat in itself. Each wounded Marauder had to be carried on a makeshift stretcher (usually made from bamboo and field jackets or shirts) by his comrades until an evacuation point was reached. These evacuation points were mostly small jungle village's, where the Marauders would then have to hack out a landing strip for the small Piper Cub Evac. Planes. The brave sergeant-pilots of the air-rescue unit would then land and take off in these very hazardous conditions, removing every seriously wounded Marauder one at a time. The small planes, stripped of all equipment except a compass, had room for the pilot and one stretcher.

At the end of their campaign all remaining Marauders still in action were evacuated to hospitals suffering from tropical diseases, exhaustion, and malnutrition or as the tags on their battered uniforms said "A.O.E." (accumulation of everything).

For their accomplishments in Burma the Marauders were awarded the "DISTINGUISHED UNIT CITATION" in July, 1944. However in 1966 this award was redesignated as the "PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION" which is awarded by the President in the name of Congress. The Marauders also have the extremely rare distinction of having every member of the unit receive the "BRONZE STAR".



The unit was consolidated with the 475th Infantry on August 10, 1944. On June 21, 1954, the 475th was redesignated the 75th Infantry. It is from the redesignation of Merrill's Marauders into the 75th Infantry Regiment that the modern-day 75th Ranger Regiment traces its current unit designation...

**Merrill's Marauders - 75th Infantry Rgt. –
75th Ranger Rgt.**

Source: <http://www.marauder.org/history.htm>

Update about Congressional Gold Medal process and events, posted 11.10.2020

The CGM bill has passed, the medal is being designed, and it can take months to complete the design process.

An official award ceremony in Washington D.C. at the Capitol will probably take place anytime between late summer 2021 to sometime in 2022.



Farewell to Troopers of the 173d Abn Bde & 503rd PRCT and Attached Units Who Made Their Final Jump

Jack Frank Angel, 93

Bangkok, Thailand, 10/24/20
173d Spt Bn, RVN

Benjamin "Ben" Ashwood, 83

Virginia Beach, VA, 9/28/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Jose "Joe" A. Avelar, Jr., 72

Albert Lea, MN, 10/9/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Richard W. Bartholow, 76

Grass Valley, CA 7/26/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Brett Arlington Beyer, 72

Bloomington, IL, 11/7/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

John Paul Bock, SFC, 49

Mountain House, CA, 10/12/20
173d Abn Bde, Iraq/Afghanistan

David Stephen Bowers, 71

Hollywood, FL, 6/1/20
A/1/503, RVN

Teddy E. "Ted" Dickerson, 84

Ulysses, PA, 11/20/20
173d Abn Bde

Stephen L. Flaherty, 73

Steep Falls, ME, 12/2/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Jack P. Gallo, 78

Canton, OH, 10/27/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Eugene Goggles, 77

Arapahoe, WY 10/16/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

John Hamill, 71

Retired in CA, 9/1/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN
(See tribute on Page 84)

Robert Trenton Huffman, 77

Jacksonville, NC, 11/25/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

David Wayne Knight, 71

Conifer, CO, 10/13/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Aaron Zennon Ledoux, 36

Saskatoon, Canada 11/17/20
2/503d, Afghanistan/Iraq

William "Bo" Lowe, 74

Lufkin, TX, 10/10/20
A/1/503, RVN

Keith J. Luce, 69

Coshocton, OH, 12/10/20
E/2/503, RVN
(See tribute on Page 20)

Walter Mabry, 76

Joliet, IL, 11/3/20
HHC/2/503, RVN
(See tribute on Page 20)

Victor Ponce de Leon,

Phoenix, AZ 10/5/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Steven C. Noel, 72

Bennington, VY, 11/15/20
3/319th Arty, RVN

William Lee Purcell, CSM, 85

Cunningham, TN, 8/23/20
HHC/Ops, 4/503, RVN

Carl A. Rea, Jr., Col (Ret), 75

Richmond, VA 10/10/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Paul K. Redman, 70

Sandusky, OH, 9/29/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Joseph Harvey Robinson, 75

Pine, CO, 8/21/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

William (Bill) H. Shippey, 82

Leavenworth, KS, 8/11/20
N/75 Rangers, RVN

Donald Walter Stanek, 84

Myakka City, FL, 6/28/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Ronald A. Stockton, 72

Wentzville, MO, 8/25/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Lindal Tillery, 76

Polk City, FL, 8/28/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Ryan Anthony Tomich, 22

Monroe, WA, 7/26/20
173d ABCT

Mark P. Vande Hey, 73

Kaukauna, WI, 9/15/20
173d Abn Bde, RVN

