



June 2013, Issue 54

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

~ 2/503d Photo of the Month ~



Sgt. Harry J. Johnson, A/2/503d, KIA 6/22/67, during
The Battle of the Slopes. He was Airborne...All The Way.



A Day of Distinction

Austin, TX – Family Carmichael gathered in Austin on Sunday, May 12, 2013, Mother's Day, at the home of Dave and Beth Carmichael, son and daughter-in-law of Bob and Exie. Bob, of course, is LTC Robert B. Carmichael, our former 2/503d Battalion Executive Officer and Commander in '65/'66 -- Bob would later serve a second tour as Battalion Commander with the 25th Inf Div. This large family representing four generations came together to honor the many mothers in their family, which they did, but a surprise was in store for the unsuspecting Sky Soldier sitting in the easy chair, also known as RBC, dad and grandpa.



2/503d's LTC Robert B. Carmichael (then Major), at Bao Trai airstrip on 2 January 1966, at beginning of Operation Marauder in the Mekong Delta. His would be one of two choppers hit that morning coming into a hot LZ.

It seems some months ago men he commanded in Vietnam recommended Bob for the prestigious *Distinguished Member of the 503rd Infantry Regiment Award*, ordered by the Secretary of the Army; a unique and special honor only 48 troopers of the regiment have received to date in recognition of their commitment to promoting the ongoing legacy of the 503rd Infantry Regiment. Past recipients include some of our generals, a former Secretary of the Army, battalion and company commanders, our Medal of Honor recipients, and troopers from the ranks, as well as WWII veterans of the regiment. Not too unlike a lifetime achievement award, it's something every 503rd paratrooper who receives it, receives it with great honor.

Honorary Colonel of the 503d Infantry Regiment, Ken Smith, and his Committee unanimously approved recommending LTC Carmichael for designation as a *Distinguished Member of the 503d Infantry Regiment*. Their recommendation required endorsement by the Commander of the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry (as senior active duty commander of a 503d Infantry Flag bearing unit), and the approval and signature of the Chief of Infantry. Ultimately, the Certificate announcing, "*By Order of the Secretary of the Army...*" was produced.

Living in Texas and within range of Austin, was Tony Geishauser, Maj. (Ret), who served with the 173d Cowboy's assault helicopter unit, and who gladly and generously accepted the invitation to personally present the award to Bob. On that Sunday morning Tony and his wife, Pam, drove to Dave and Beth's home in Austin. Bob's former RTO and now editor of our newsletter, along with his lady, Reggie, stopped by to witness the award ceremony.

A 173d banner was hung on the mantle, then Bob's son Dave placed near it a large poster photo of a young Major Carmichael and his trusty RTO taken a few years ago in the Mekong Delta; Dave then read the nomination to Bob, his family and guests. He quoted from Bob's men how over many years his father and mother had provided special support to the regiment, including direct financial contributions to regimental activities, many times providing items of value to men of his unit, and along with their late son, paratrooper LTC Charles Carmichael, extending helpful hands to troopers still fighting the war, assisting them with obtaining needed care through the Veteran's Administration. The nomination Dave read spoke of a man whom, not only during combat, but following 20+ years of service to his country, remains committed to the troopers he commanded during the Vietnam War and the regiment with which he served.

Typical of LTC Carmichael, he remarked, "*That would be nice if only half of it was true.*" It's all true, my Major.

Tony then shared with everyone present a congratulatory letter from Col. Smith, and read the citation; "*By Order of the Secretary of the Army, LTC Robert B. Carmichael, Abn, Inf (Ret), is granted and assigned the distinction of Distinguished Member of the 503rd Infantry Regiment.*"

(continued....)



On behalf of the Army Secretary, Col. Ken Smith and his committee, the active duty commander of the 1/503d, and the paratroopers of the 503rd Infantry Regiment, Tony then presented the award to Bob.



Cowboy Tony presents award to the distinguished LTC Carmichael.

Many of our men who served with Bob received word of the then pending award and sent in their own notes of congratulations to him, including our former battalion commander Col. George Dexter, and Bravo Company CO and former Hon. Acting Secretary of the Army, Col. Les Brownlee, among others. Copies of these notes were provided to family members who read them to Bob, and a bound copy of the notes was given to him.

In his usual self-deprecating way, Bob briefly spoke to his family and thanked everyone for being part of the surprise ceremony. Bob's soul mate, Exie, was also and rightfully recognized for her dedicated work on Okinawa during the war when she provided care and assistance to wives and families of our wounded and widows and their children of our fallen -- a most difficult duty and one none of us in combat would have cared to perform.

Upon conclusion of the ceremony, Bob received a congratulatory phone call from Les Brownlee, and they were happy to chat and reminisce about the times together when they were young and paratroopers.



L-R: Les & Bob from days of yore.

Special thanks go to Dave and Beth Carmichael for hosting the day's activities, and Tony and Pam

Geishauer who did a splendid job with the presentation and representing the regiment, plus all the family members who participated in honoring our former commander.

As an onlooker it appeared to me all of Bob's family shared in pride of and henceforth might gaze somewhat differently upon that old Sky Soldier sitting in the easy chair, the one they know as RBC, dad and grandpa.

Congratulations to LTC Robert B. Carmichael, and *All The Way, Sir!*

Lew "Smitty" Smith
RBC's old RTO



Bob, seated, with his bride Exie to his right, surrounded by four generations of Family Carmichael.



~ Cisco & Pancho ~ Then & Now



The photo in the background was taken at Bao Tria airstrip, RVN in the Mekong Delta on 2 January 1966 at the beginning of Operation Marauder and depicts (then) Major Robert Carmichael, (LTC Ret), 2/503 battalion executive officer, and his RTO, Private Lew Smith. In the foreground are Bob & Smitty on 12 May 2013, 47 years later at Bob's son Dave's home in Austin, TX. They haven't aged a bit. Ed

[Photo by Alyssa (Carmichael) Tjaden, Bob's granddaughter]

~ Amusing Postscript By His RTO ~

Following the presentation of the *Distinguished Member of the 503rd Infantry Regiment* citation to Bob (see report on preceding pages), he and Les Brownlee were speaking to one another by phone in a nearby bedroom when Bob's wife, Exie, fetched me; Bob, sitting on the edge of a bed, wanted me to say hello to the former Army Secretary and our Bravo Company CO. Thinking their conversation over, Bob handed me the phone but I heard Les continue to speak to him, so I placed the phone back against Bob's ear. Instead of taking the phone from my hand he and Les continued to converse with me standing there holding the phone against his ear for the longest time. Exie whispered, "RTO, huh?" Me, "Yup. 47 years later and I'm still carrying his damn phone."

Whodat?



***This strac looking, jump ready trooper is
Barry 'slo' Salant of
Delta Company, 2/503d. ATW 'slo'!***

Received a message and attachment below from N/Company Ranger David "Varmint" Walker (1970-71). He asked me to forward it to you.

Robert 'twin' Henriksen, N75 Rangers



night, rain, cold chow . . . and it's a time to gripe.

It is night. It is raining. It is 6,000 miles from home. It is three or four days without hot chow.

It is also a time for a soldier to complain about the whole miserable thing. And it is a time to listen.

"Boy," one fellow says, "I smell like a dog."

"What'd ya say?" another asked.

"I said I ain't had a shower in three weeks."

"That's nothing."

"Oh?"

"I haven't even brushed my teeth in that long."

"Aw, quit yer moanin'."

"All I said was I smelled like a dog."

"You don't have to advertise."

"Yeah, we all got noses, kid."

Next to his rifle and his mess kit, the wail of woe is a GI's best friend. It can't cool him when he's hot, turn canteen water to beer or ease the ache in his boots, but it comforts and it is the only alternative to saying nothing at all.

"Ya know what really gets me?"

"What?"

"It get me we gotta do everything in this war."

"Yeah."

"Two weeks ago we're fighting Viet Cong. Last week we're on the picket line. And now this week we're out in the boondocks again."

"Diggin' and piggin'."

"I haven't had a hot meal in a week."

"Ain't nobody else doing any fighting here?"

"Yeah, the enemy."



Chow Time: This paratrooper treats himself to a hot piece of good ol' American pumpkin pie, a tasty delight – and a rarity – in the Viet Nam battle zones. (*Your Men At War*)

No lights are allowed in the combat tent and the faceless voices mumble on from behind glowing cigarettes. It is humid, muddy and dreary. It is the third month of war for these people.

"I saw a guy in Saigon last week in jungle fatigues."

"So?"

"So he was a hospital clerk."

"And?"

"How come a clerk can get jungle fatigues but the First Cavalry who is in the jungle has got to wear regulars?"

"First Division ain't even got jungle books yet."

"Those guys in Saigon . . . they're Viet Congs."

"The guy was a hospital clerk, I tell ya."

"Jeeze."

"He even had the damned things starched."

The men have been pulled from the farm, the gas station and the business office. They have been told when to eat, where to sleep and how to kill. The mind becomes disciplined but not the spirit. It continues happily to rebel.

"I got the solution."

"What?"

"Vote for me for president."

"You?"

"My platform would be, 'Equal rights for the dogface.'"

"Or how about, 'A war on C rations'?"

"Or maybe, 'All the way for a pass each day.'"

"Ask not what the soldier can do for you, but what you can do for the soldier."

"In your heart you know he's right."

They laugh and sigh and the language is terrible. They whine about the mail service, groan about the PX, mutter about the lack of ice and women. They lament the heat, the filth, the insects.

"Hey, can it!" someone grumbles. "I'm trying to sleep."

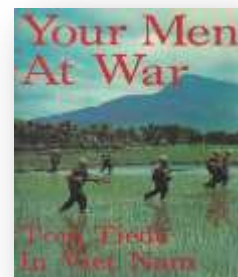
"Get him, will ya?"

"Yeah."

"Some guys are always griping."

[Excerpt from *Your Men At War* by Tom Tiede]

Many years following the war, author and war correspondent Tom Tiede would attend a 2/503 reunion in Cocoa Beach, FL where he was a guest speaker. Ed





INCOMING!



~ A Hell of a Soldier ~

Received the May 2/503 Newsletter, and again enjoyed looking through it this morning. Reading the Chaplain's Corner and the article on Charlie Morris (A/2/503); I personally knew Charlie. I can remember the day he was assigned to A Company, and the sharpest of soldiers, that he was! That neat flat-top hair cut he had then. I had the honor of visiting him at his home in Spring Lake, North Carolina. Charlie was one hell of a soldier, to say the least! Airborne.....All.....The.....Way!

Jim "Top" Dresser
A/HHC/2/503d

~ Clarifications ~

Doc Mundy was KIA on 6 May 1968, assigned to E Troop, 17th Cav from B Med. Mar 6, Vogel, Beale, Brown KIA, E Troop, 17th Cav.

Jim Haynes
E Troop

~ Remembering Recon & Jungle School ~

Just reading the latest edition (May 2013) and of course remembering Larry Aldrich, Karl Bullard, Larry Briscoe and Warren Gray. Larry Briscoe & Warren Gray were in the RECON Squad along with Jim Miller, J.B. Green and myself. I was the lucky one with malaria just before the shit hit the fan. I remember them all just as if it was yesterday. Came across the Certificate I received for Jungle School. I'm sending you a copy. Never knew it was in the file till years after I returned home and finally went through my papers.

Bob Beemer
B/2/503d



~Chaplain's Tour Over ~

Say it ain't so, Cap's tour is over?

Paul Fisher, LTC (Ret)
HHC/3/503d

Reply: Yeah, he done a good job, even from this heathen's perspective. Be well Paul, and ATW! Ed



LTC Jack Kelley, done good.

~ Note ~

We're in the hunt for a new 2/503d Preacherman to take over the *Chaplain's Corner* in our newsletter for a number of months. Don't believe what you heard about volunteering.....really.

Hey Mate!



"The little lead thingies go right in here."
(Web photo)



National Park Service Passes

WASHINGTON: The National Park Service extends free annual park passes far beyond the droves of Pentagon employees who lined up to take advantage of the offer today.

Through its *America the Beautiful* series, the National Park Service grants complimentary access to more than 2,000 federal recreation sites, national parks and wildlife refuges to active duty service members and activated Guardsmen and reservists and their families, said Kathy Kupper, National Park Service spokeswoman.

"The park service is just so grateful for the service of the military, so we've been looking for a way to show our gratitude," Kupper said. "It's taken a couple of years to get all the details worked out, but we're honored that we can pay back a little bit."

Service members can get a pass, valued at \$80., by showing their military identification card. Family members can obtain their own passes, even if the service member is deployed or if they are traveling separately, Kupper explained.

A pass covers entry and standard amenity fees for a driver and all passengers in a personal vehicle at per-vehicle fee areas, or up to four adults at sites that charge per person. Children age 15 or under are admitted free. Wounded warriors or any American citizen with a disability can get a free lifetime pass to all national parks.

A 25-year National Park Service employee, Kupper recalled the organization's decades-long military ties, specifically to the Army, which oversaw national parks between the 1876 establishment of Yellowstone, the first national park, and the 1916 stand-up of NPS.



Old Faithful Geyser at Yosemite National Park

"For about 40 years, you had the U.S. Army, particularly the U.S. Cavalry, including Buffalo Soldiers, care for our first national parks," Kupper said. "Yellowstone, Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon all had roads set up, built, with trails established and wildlife protected ... by the U.S. Army."



Kupper added that even park ranger uniforms are inspired by the cavalry uniform, symbolizing the enduring bond.

"Many national parks were set aside for use strictly by military, whether for rest and relaxation trips ... or for training," the spokeswoman said, adding that through the years, the parks have been home to some of America's most iconic images of freedom.

"Our service members are fighting to protect our freedoms and a lot of them are manifested in these symbols like the Statue of Liberty, the Liberty Bell, Mount Rushmore -- all sites cared for by the Park Service," Kupper said. "These places inspire the military and remind them what they're fighting for so where better for them and their families to visit?"



Source:

4th Battalion's email Newsletter by Jack Tarr 4/503d
(Photos added)

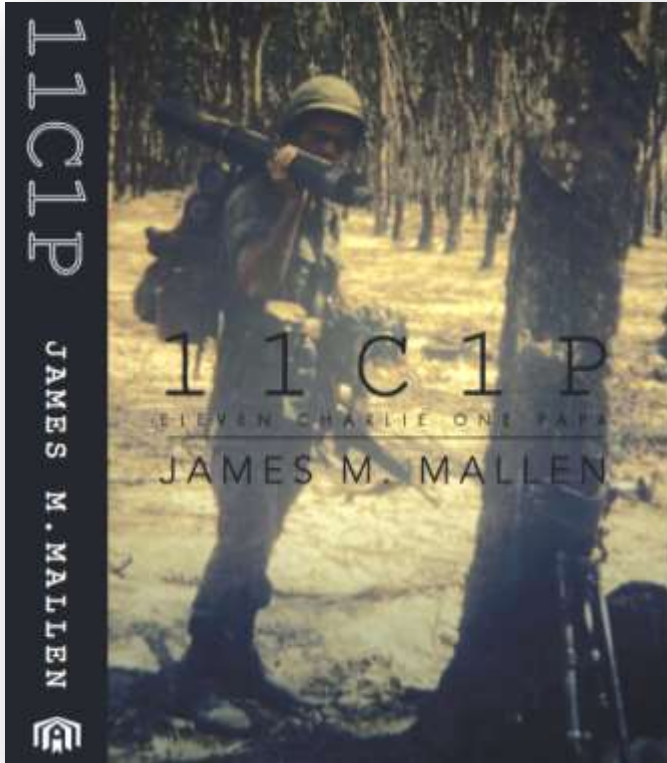


2/503d VIETNAM Newsletter / June 2013 – Issue 54

Page 7 of 60

Here's a new book by a fellow Sky Soldier. See Jim's kind offer below. Ed

Eleven Charlie One Papa



Excerpt from the Preface

This book has not been edited. It has not been edited for continuity, interest, or marketability. It has not been edited to make it more enjoyable or entertaining. It is simply a description of a year in Viet Nam, on the ground, straight out, full on. If you are looking for some intellectualized or romanticized or patriotic or sanitized version of war then this book is not for you.

If you want to know the details of what life was like for an Infantryman in a combat zone, what this Country requires of a combat soldier and what any Country requires of human beings, in the war of ideas, then read further. Kings, Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Politicians think that their ideas require War but they never personally suffer the consequences of their ideas, as opposed to a combat soldier. At worse, they lose their jobs while their combat soldiers are killed, murdered, maimed, wounded, sometimes horribly, physically and or mentally, usually, sometimes in ways that the average citizen simply cannot possibly imagine or comprehend, and it seems, do not want to consider in all of its horrible forms and ramifications. A President or Prime minister along with their Senate usually decide to wage war without any possible comprehension of what that decision will mean to

the men and their families who will bear the cost and burden of the battle.

Sometimes, leaders of countries declare that the actions of another Country or People are not acceptable, and therefore to "right that wrong", Soldiers will be sent to correct the situation. The leaders of those countries will never bear the horrible consequences of "righting a wrong". That is left to the men and women in uniform and their families who will suffer insufferable consequences because some Senator in an impeccably tailored and meticulously clean three piece suit seeks reelection for his own personal gain.

Before you say, "Lets go kick their ass", Why don't you, personally, go and kick their ass. To any politician who has not served in combat, I say, You have no idea of what you ask of the combat soldiers and their families. To those politicians who have served in combat, the damned very, very few that there are, I say if you support a war only because it helps your quest for re-election, against what you know, it will probably result in your eternal damnation. It has certainly resulted in Hell on Earth for hundreds of thousands of combat soldiers and their families.

And, to those millions of people who think that "righting a wrong" is worth fighting, I simply say, "What are You going to do about it, other than requiring someone else to suffer unimaginable horrors and unendurable pain and unrelenting torture, requiring their families to suffer insufferable hardships and heartache, for many, many years so that You can say, "Well, it had to be done, it was right that We had done it." We didn't do it. The leadership of this Country, and its Citizens, required a very small percentage of its Citizens to assume a burden that was unspeakably unbearable, far beyond the imagination of a normal human being, a burden of horror and pain and suffering that a Citizen, in his right mind, cannot comprehend, an unimaginable, interminable torture that the Citizens of a good country imposed upon their own sons and grandsons.

From a perspective of forty years after Viet Nam I can see that that was the reality of surviving Viet Nam veterans. May God bless and help every one of them and their families.

If you're still with me. If you want to know what life was like "On the Ground" for an American Infantryman in Viet Nam, then grab your bug juice and "RUCK UP". We're goin' in amongst them.

James M. Mallen
A/4/503d

I'll be more than happy to send a free e-mail attachment of my entire book to anyone from the 173d who wants it. Contact me at: 11C1Pabn@gmail.com Jim.

[Also available on Amazon.com]



Levin, Inhofe announce selections for National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force

April 11, 2013



WASHINGTON – Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Carl Levin and Ranking Member James M. Inhofe today announced their selections for the Congressionally-mandated National Commission on the Structure of the Air Force.

Chairman Levin selected the Honorable R.L. (Les) Brownlee and Ranking Member Inhofe selected Lieutenant General Harry M. (Bud) Wyatt, III (Ret), to the commission.

“Les Brownlee is an individual who has given great service to his country in many venues,” Levin said. “His distinguished career in uniform, in Congress, and in the Army leadership brings important practical expertise to the panel from both an intimate understanding of the relationship between the Federal and State levels of government and knowledge of the process for translating national security requirements into military programs. As we reduce our commitments in Afghanistan in the U.S. Central Command, the Air Force and U.S. military forces will be restructuring to meet a revised defense security strategy. It is important than ever that changes in the structure of the Air Force are made in a transparent and objective process.”

The panel, which is required by the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013, will undertake a comprehensive study of the structure of the Air Force to determine whether, and how, the structure be modified to best fulfill current and anticipated mission requirements for the Air Force in a manner consistent with available resources.

Honorable R.L. (Les) Brownlee

The Honorable Les Brownlee served as Acting Secretary of the Army from May 2003 until November 2004. He became the 27th Under Secretary of the Army on November 14, 2001, following his nomination by President George W. Bush and confirmation by the United States Senate. Prior to that, he had served as a professional staff member and staff director of the

Senate Armed Services Committee under Senators Strom Thurmond and John Wagner. Mr. Brownlee is a retired Army colonel. He was commissioned in 1962 as a lieutenant in the infantry through the ROTC program at the University of Wyoming, and he holds a master's degree in business administration from the University of Alabama. He is a distinguished honor graduate of the US Army Ranger Course, and honor graduate of both the Infantry Officer Advanced Course and the Army Command and General Staff College, and a graduate of the Army's airborne course and the US Army War College. Mr. Brownlee served two tours in Vietnam and was awarded the Silver Star with oak leaf cluster, the Bronze Star with two oak leaf clusters, and the Purple Heart.

For complete news release see:

<http://www.armed-services.senate.gov/press/releases/upload/SASC-AirForceCommission-04-11-13.pdf>

Note: What the release failed to mention is, Les served as Bravo Company 2/503d CO during his first tour of duty. Ed



Bravo Bull, Ranger Les Brownlee in Phu Loi, RVN, 1966.
(Photo by Bob Sweeney, HHC/C/2/503d)

Any chance he'll start those AF dudes off with a nice round of Army Airborne pushups? You know, just to get their attention. Ed



From the VA....

2013 Notice of Funds Availability (NOFA) & Application

VA's Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program is offered annually (as funding permits) by the Department of Veterans Affairs Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) Programs to fund community agencies providing services to homeless Veterans. The purpose is to promote the development and provision of supportive housing and/or supportive services with the goal of helping homeless Veterans achieve residential stability, increase their skill levels and/or income, and obtain greater self-determination. Only programs with supportive housing (up to 24 months) or service centers (offering services such as case management, education, crisis intervention, counseling, services targeted towards specialized populations including homeless women Veterans, etc.) are eligible for these funds. The program has two levels of funding: the Grant Component and the Per Diem Component.

Grants: Limit is 65% of the costs of construction, renovation, or acquisition of a building for use as service centers or transitional housing for homeless Veterans. Renovation of VA properties is allowed, acquiring VA properties is not. Recipients must obtain the matching 35% share from other sources. Grants may not be used for operational costs, including salaries.

Per Diem: Priority in awarding the Per Diem funds goes to the recipients of Grants. Non-Grant programs may apply for Per Diem under a separate announcement, when published in the Federal Register, announcing the funding for "Per Diem Only."

Operational costs, including salaries, may be funded by the Per Diem Component. For supportive housing, the maximum amount payable under the per diem is \$41.90 per day per Veteran housed. Veterans in supportive housing may be asked to pay rent if it does not exceed 30% of the Veteran's monthly-adjusted income. In addition, "reasonable" fees may be charged for services not paid with Per Diem funds. The maximum hourly per diem rate for a service center not connected with supportive housing is 1/8 of the daily cost of care, not to exceed the current VA State Home rate for domiciliary care. Payment for a Veteran in a service center will not exceed 8 hours in any day.

Applications are not accepted for Capital Grants or "Per Diem Only" funding until the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) is published in the Federal Register. Funds will be awarded to programs determined to be the most qualified. The contact person for the Homeless Providers Grant and Per Diem Program is Jeff Quarles. Mr. Quarles may be contacted (toll-free): 1-877-332-0334; E-mail: VA Grant and Per Diem Program. The Homeless programs are administered nationally by Lisa Pape, National Director, VHA Homeless Programs, VA Headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Source: <http://www.va.gov/HOMELESS/GPD.asp>

[Sent in by Aaron "Gary" Newman, USN, VVA]



The Doolittle Raiders



A May 14th web report by Bob Green of BuzzyBuzzard, entitled "*A final toast for the Doolittle Raiders*," was sent in by Dave "Griff" Griffin, HHC/B/2/503, rightly stating --

"These men made a contribution no American should ever forget...."



James Doolittle

Following are excerpts from Mr. Green's report on the final reunion of the Doolittle Raiders in Ft. Walton Beach, Florida in May:



Doolittle and his Raiders

* In 1942 the 80 men bombed Tokyo in death-defying mission, retaliation for Pearl Harbor .



B-25s, led by Army LTC James H. Doolittle, prepare for take-off from USS Hornet (CV 8) on April 18, 1942, the first strikes against the Japanese homeland in the war. The Americans bombed the cities of Tokyo, Nagoya and Kobe.

* A case of 80 goblets is brought to their annual reunions. When a Raider dies a cup is upended.
* This year, there are four left. They'll toast the Raiders with aged cognac, and end reunions. It's the (final) cup of brandy that no one wants to drink. They once were among the most universally admired and revered men in the United States. There were 80 of the Raiders in April 1942, when they carried out one of the most courageous and heart-stirring military operations in this nation's history. The mere mention of their unit's name, in those years, would bring tears to the eyes of grateful Americans.



Even though there were no friendly airfields close enough to Japan for the United States to launch a retaliation, a daring plan was devised. Sixteen B-25s were modified so that they could take off from the deck of an aircraft carrier. This had never before been tried — sending such big, heavy bombers from a carrier. The 16 five-man crews, under the command of Lt. Col. James Doolittle, who himself flew the lead plane off the USS Hornet, knew that they would not be able to return to the carrier.

(continued....)



They would have to hit Japan and then hope to make it to China for a safe landing. But on the day of the raid, the Japanese military caught wind of the plan. The Raiders were told that they would have to take off from much farther out in the Pacific Ocean than they had counted on. They were told that because of this they would not have enough fuel to make it to safety. And those men went anyway.



April 1942 raid on Tokyo

They bombed Tokyo, and then flew as far as they could. Four planes crash-landed; 11 more crews bailed out, and three of the Raiders died. Eight more were captured; three were executed. Another died of starvation in a Japanese prison camp. One crew made it to Russia. The Doolittle Raid sent a message from the United States to its enemies, and to the rest of the world: We will fight. And, no matter what it takes, we will win.



Of the 80 Raiders, 62 survived the war. They were celebrated as national heroes, models of bravery. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer produced a motion picture based on the raid; *“Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo,”* starring Spencer Tracy and Van Johnson, (which) was a patriotic and emotional box-office hit, and the phrase became part of

the national lexicon. Beginning in 1946, the surviving Raiders have held a reunion each April, to commemorate the mission. The reunion is in a different city each year.

As 2013 began, there were five living Raiders; then, in February, Tom Griffin passed away at age 96. What a man he was. After bailing out of his plane over a mountainous Chinese forest after the Tokyo raid, he became ill with malaria, and almost died. When he recovered, he was sent to Europe to fly more combat missions. He was shot down, captured, and spent 22 months in a German prisoner of war camp.

The selflessness of these men, the sheer guts ... there was a passage in the *Cincinnati Enquirer* obituary for Mr. Griffin that, on the surface, had nothing to do with the war, but that emblemizes the depth of his sense of duty and devotion: *“When his wife became ill and needed to go into a nursing home, he visited her every day. He walked from his house to the nursing home, fed his wife and at the end of the day brought home her clothes. At night, he washed and ironed her clothes. Then he walked them up to her room the next morning. He did that for three years until her death in 2005.”*

So now, out of the original 80, only four Raiders remain: Dick Cole (Doolittle’s co-pilot on the Tokyo raid), Robert Hite, Edward Saylor and David Thatcher. All are in their 90s. They have decided that there are too few of them for the public reunions to continue. The events in Fort Walton Beach this week will mark the end.



Doolittle Raiders

And gentlemen, we salute you, and *All The Way!*



VA and Veterans Service Organizations Announce Claims Initiative to Reduce Claims Backlog

Joint Effort Aimed at Promoting Use of Fully Developed Claims (an excerpt)

WASHINGTON, May 21, 2013 – Today, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), Disabled American Veterans (DAV), and The American Legion announced a new partnership to help reduce the compensation claims backlog for Veterans. The effort—the Fully Developed Claims (FDC) Community of Practice—is a key part of VA’s overall transformation plan to end the backlog in 2015 and process claims within 125 days at 98% accuracy. VA can process FDCs in half the time it takes for a traditionally filed claim.

“VA prides itself on our ongoing partnership with organizations that represent Veterans throughout the claims process,” said Undersecretary for Benefits Allison A. Hickey. “A Fully Developed Claim is the most effective way to ensure a Veteran’s claim never reaches the backlog—and is the basis for this new initiative between VA and what we expect will be an ever-increasing number of Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and others who represent Veterans at various points of the claims process.”

“This new initiative takes a common-sense approach to working smarter to better serve our injured and ill Veterans,” said DAV Washington Headquarters Executive Director Barry Jesinoski -- “DAV is pleased to be working with the VA to help improve the disability compensation system.”

“We have been working with VA since last December on its fully developed claims process,” said James E. Koutz, national commander of The American Legion. “Teams of our experts have already gone to VA regional offices in Denver, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and other cities to help identify best practices for FDCs, and to further train our own service officers.” Koutz said the Legion’s next visit in support of the FDC program is planned for June at the VA regional office in Reno, Nev.

Claims are considered to be “fully developed” when Veterans submit all available supporting evidence, like private treatment records and notice of federal treatment records, to VA at the time they first file a formal claim and certify they have no more evidence to submit. This is the information that VA needs to make a determination on a disability claim.

[Note: Visit va.gov to read complete report]

War. What is it good for?

It’s not about lapel pins and flags, and for those who fight it, it in fact has little to do with democracy or protecting the homeland from attack by hordes of invaders. Likewise, parades and patriotic songs and bumper stickers, however nice and pleasing to the senses, are far removed from the reality of war. And in particular, to certain of our civilian friends and, specifically, politicians of every stripe, those of you so ready, so eager to rattle your sabers and call for yet more war -- you know little of what you speak. Then again, making war is an easy solution to difficult problems, and an endeavor you need not overly concern yourself with, for it is generally not *your* sons and *your* daughters doing the fighting, it is the sons and daughters of *others*. War, simply stated, is about killing and death, and wounds seen and unseen which the surviving warriors and their families carry with them for a lifetime; and the cost of war does not end when the war ends. You can read about that cost in this newsletter; “We miss you, we love you,” writes the father; “He never got to see his son, our first baby,” laments the wife. The story on the following page by one of our 2/503 buddies is one of thousands, no, tens-of-thousands and more of stories about war and death. Read it if you dare, rattle your saber, but unless a warrior, or a family member of a warrior, you know little of what you speak. Ed



A respite from war. A/2/503 buddies, L-R, Timothy Aikey (KIA, 2 Jan 66), and John Leach on R&R in Hong Kong.



Somewhere in Vietnam

"I forget the date and place, A/2/503d was on a search and destroy mission."

By Sgt. John Leach
A/2/503d, '65/'66

My company had been clearing a dense section of jungle for approximately three days, and not much was happening to that point, we hadn't seen any signs or made any contact with Charlie.

At the end of the day we came into a village just on the edge of the jungle, it was bordered on three sides by rice paddies and banana trees. During the walk through we made contact with VC's setting booby traps. There were shots fired off to my left, and report came down that one of our guys had shot at and wounded a VC. They also said that they were tracking his blood trail.

A short moment later we heard shots again. It seems that one of the guys tracking was so wrapped up in his tracking, and the VC managed to fire at our guy and wound him. The other men in the patrol finished off the VC. This caused us to call in dust off, which required us to set up a protective circle; so because of the time it would take we decided to set positions for the night.

As soon as night fell, we were being probed by small arms fire, and then by 60mm mortars. My position was just outside the village and you could hear the Slopes sliding the rounds in the tube. One round fell approximately 50 ft from our position and the only thing that stopped us from taking a nice piece of shrapnel was the banana trees.

The next morning as we were moving about eating, cleaning, etc., all of a sudden out runs a VC with his hands up in the air saying something in gook. I just about crapped my pants. He was taken to the center at HQ and questioned. He told us that there were more in the village hiding that wanted to surrender. Because of this, a squad size patrol was sent to check his story – the patrol was a squad from my platoon. They were in the village about 15 minutes when we heard shots and then an explosion -- we knew that they were hit.

The word came down to move out, back into the village -- there were wounded and dead to get out. We packed up, went in and secured the area of the squad. A moment later two men were carried and set down next to me to wait for the dust off chopper. I couldn't really see their faces as they were wrapped in ponchos. The first sign was sergeant stripes on the arm of one, and a PFC stripe on the other, then I looked to see who it was. It was PFC Jim Daley.

I was told that while on patrol Daley had come upon two VC doing something in a trench. Unfortunately for Daley, one of the VC saw him first; he fired an AK-47 auto striking Daley in the lower neck. Daley fell to the ground and the sergeant fired back striking at least one, the other retreated. The sergeant went to assist PFC Daley, and just as he did, a booby trap carnage of some type went off behind the sergeant killing him right out. Daley was already dead.

We brought them out of the village to the dried rice paddy to wait for dust off. After some time it came in, and we loaded both their bodies aboard.

There was a passenger on the helicopter who got off before we loaded their bodies, but at a glance we knew he was a news reporter, cameras and case in hand. As soon as the dust off was clear and we could hear what he wanted, he asked where he could find a 2/503 2nd Platoon. I told him that he was with A Co, 2nd Platoon. He asked where he could find a PFC Daley? With that question everyone just froze, we all just looked at him for a moment. I told him, *"You just missed him, he was one of the bodies going back to Bien Hoa Air Base."*

The newsman just dropped down and started to tear up, and I remember him saying, *"Oh my God. I stayed back for a later chopper to have another cup of coffee."* If he had made the resupply chopper, Daley wouldn't have been on that patrol. The newsman had come to do an interview with Daley for a human interest story. He also was bringing Jim Daley the news that he was a proud father, his wife had given birth to his baby.



Trooper Jim Daley, A/2/503, KIA (Photo by John Leach)





173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEP)



Our KIA in June, '65-'71

"One Backward Glance"

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

~ June 1965 ~

Edward James Anders, A/1/503

"Ed, you were my hero in 8th grade. You did and said what many of us were afraid to, yet you always showed respect, albeit sometimes a bit irreverently. I remember always smiling when in your presence. Thank you for those memories and for your service to our country. You're thought about and missed.

See you later, I hope."

Tim Murphy
8th Grade Friends



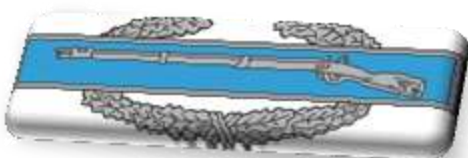
**Mike Garcia Bustos
B/1/503**

"To the uncle I never knew: You are not forgotten you live in our hearts and prayers. I am proud to be your niece."

Monica Spahr



**Jerry Ray Campbell
B/1/503**



**Maurice Richard Hill
B/1/503**



"Remembered through the years by his brother."

Clyde E. Hill

Dennis Leroy Pierson, B/3/319



**Thomas Charles Van Campen
B/2/503**

"Dear Cousin. You will always be remembered. I still love baseball and bet you still do. Susie named her first boy after you and he's turned out to be a really good family man. Love you."

Your cousin, Gretchen

~ June 1966 ~

Malcolm Crayton Berry "Doc", HHC/A/2/503*

"We all gathered at the Caravelle Hotel around 7:30 this morning to learn the trip to the 'Dustoff Café' wouldn't begin until 9 a.m. Mike Thibault asked me if I'd like to accompany him to 'Malcolm's Bridge', a footbridge Mike is having built over a river in some small village in memory of Malcolm Berry, a friend of his who was killed during the war on 29 June '66 and where Mike nearly lost his life to severe wounds....

(continued....)



....I declined his invitation and Mike Sturges decided to go in my place, as only a couple Americans could sneak into the restricted area where the bridge is being built."

Lew Smith, HHC/2/503d

Excerpt from *Sky Soldiers Return to Vietnam*

John Joseph Berthel, A/2/503

"The family misses and loves you on this Memorial Day 5/30/2005. Rest in peace with Mom and Dad."

Jim Berthel. From his brother

~ A Note from The Virtual Wall ~

On 29 June 1966, "A" Company, 2/503rd Infantry, lost 12 men in an engagement southeast of Xuan Loc.



A/2/503d, Operation Yorktown, Xuan Loc, what's left of 3rd Platoon.

Robert Michael Bowman, A/2/503



Gregory Thomas Buczynski
C/2/503

"Greg and I went through Infantry Advanced Individual Training (AIT) at Fort Gordon, GA, (Jan-Mar '66) and parachute school at Fort Benning, GA (Mar-Apr '66).

He was a great guy with an enormous sense of humor...I can remember he had huge feet, I think something on the order of 15EEE...I know I could put my 10Ds (boots on my feet) inside of his boots and lace them up...we did a lot of joking around at Fort Gordon to keep up our morale, 'cause it was pretty awful there (the barracks were old and run down and were heated by coal). At any rate, we were both assigned to the 173D ABN BDE in May '66. He went to the 2nd battalion (2/503 INF) and I to the 1/503 INF...I was lucky and returned...Greg and Dennis Erdos (1st Air CAV Div) did not. I'll never forget him."

Wayne Brassell, We served together

"You will never be forgotten.

I think of you and Dyke M and I understand Honor."

Stephen Jaques, LTJG USN

Thomett Darthan Campbell, HHC/2/503



Michael Donlon
HHC/2/503

"Because there are not many 'messages', or 'memorials' left for Michael, is not to presume that nobody cares ... it is because we care so deeply. My brother is dead 36 years (1966-2002), and I can hardly write my feelings ... 36 years after his death. He was 23 years old when he was KILLED by the leaders of our government ... He was CHEATED out of his life ... he never had a wedding, a child born, he wasn't here to comfort my Mom and Dad when they needed him, when we needed him. And, even today, at family gatherings, when my nieces and nephews, and my own children are together, I miss Michael, and his presence in our family. He was only 23 years old!

I wish he hadn't died!"

From his sister

~ A Note from The Virtual Wall ~

HQ Company, 2/503rd Infantry, lost three men on 05 June 1966.

Debrow Dozier, C/1/503

Jesse Clarence Felder, A/2/503



David Allen Ferraro
A/2/503

"He loved us so. Every day, in a hundred ways, he told us so. In honesty, in affection, he told us so. He loved us so. Every day, in a hundred ways, he showed us so. With loyalty and bravery, he showed us so. He was our defender, and he kept us free! He took an oath to guard us, and fought for liberty! He loved us so, and we should know. For we loved him so. PFC Ferraro, you were one brave man who did brave deeds for America. You gave all that mortality can give! Your name and fame are the birthright of EVERY American citizen! You had been there and done that!...."

(continued....)



....You stood up for our country! I believe that Avonmore's (and Pittsburgh's) own, Jill Corey, whom I greatly admire as one of my three top favorite fabulous songbirds of all time, along with Julie Andrews, who's from England, and Dusty Springfield, also from England, but she passed on some years before, would be very proud of your service to our great country. Well done, Soldier! Be thou at peace."

Unsigned

Frederic William Fritts, A/2/503

Stephen H. Gaymon, B/1/503

"Stephen was a true patriot. He joined the Army on his own accord. He wanted to be a Ranger, but did not qualify. He believed fighting the war was the right thing to do and paid the price only 10 days after arrival in Vietnam with a claymore mine. Did he die in vain? Hell, no. The United States showed its resolve to fight and Communism is no longer a threat. Stephen was one of my best boyhood friends and news of his death was one of the most shocking events of my life. I remember him often and especially at Memorial Day, as his death occurred on June 3. America gave its best in Stephen Gaymon."

Rick White

Friend

Frank Graves, A/2/503

Richard Lee Hido, A/2/503

"Myron Beers NEVER forgot you! Right to the end of his life from agent orange poisoning on 6/7/11 he talked of you & suffered your loss.

God Bless your soul."

Mrs. (Myron) Maria Beers

They served together



Raymond Hoyt Hudson

E/17th Cav

"Slip off that pack. Set it down by the crooked trail. Drop your steel pot alongside. Shed those magazine-ladened bandoliers away from your sweat-soaked shirt. Lay that silent weapon down and step out of the heat. Feel the soothing cool breeze right down to your soul....and rest forever in the shade of our love, brother."

From your 'Band of Brothers', Bill Nelson
2/502nd Inf., 101st Abn, Fellow 'Nam Vet '69-'70



Tommy Roy Jones

A/2/503



James T. Lockridge

A/2/503

"Photo Credit: His brother Anthony Lockridge. Rest in peace with the warriors."

(continued....)



Rene Cerda Lopez, C/2/503

"We miss you, we love you. You are still alive every day in our hearts and minds. Not a day goes by that we do not think of you. Love never dies. We are very proud of father for the ultimate sacrifice that he made 12 June 1966."

Cora Lopez Jimenez
He is my father

Terry Wayne Lorenz, B/1/503

"Terry was assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade. He was killed in a firefight in Phuoc Long Province, near Vung Tao in the final days of Operation Hardihood.

We were honored to have served with him."

Larry Dacunto
His Company Commander



**Ward Warren Mills, Jr.
C/2/503**

"Anyone that knew Ward please contact his sister Phyllis at 540-389-1848 or Nancy Wright at 540-985-3470."

Phyllis Grinnell, Sister – Martha Mills, Mother
(Posted November 15, 2001)

Albert Raymond Potter, A/2/503

"Al Potter was my neighbor when I was 13 years old, shortly before he was killed. His wife Carrie and him treated me as a daughter and were very special to me.

*I will never forget either of them.
God Bless his soul forever more."*

Pat Scott
We were close friends



**Ralph Simon
C/2/503**

"Proud of my Uncle. Although my memories of my uncle are too few, I will always remember the dedication, honor and sacrifice he made for all of us and never take for granted the freedom we all enjoy today. Thank you Uncle Ralph."

Michael Chiacchieri
Nephew



**Leslie R. Smith
A/2/503**

**Francis George Stevens, A/2/503
David Wayne Stewart, E/17th Cav**



**Paul Joseph Surette
A/2/503**

"I cried a lot today as I remember a beautiful life that was taken away! You were once with me all day as we laughed the time away in Holbrook High we had to stay! I want to thank you through my tears for your friendship so sincere, if you think I forgot you, your wrong for I carry your smile throughout my years."

Jean Levangie Reuther
We were high school classmates

**Billy Williams, A/1/503, A/2/503*
William Jeffrey Wilson, HHC/173d Bde**



**Charles Joseph Wisniewski, Jr.
HHC/2/503**

"Although I only knew you for 8 years of my life, you were my hero. I miss you and wonder how different life would be if you were here with us now.

Love you, 'little sister'."

Cathryn
He is my brother

~ June 1967 ~

Terry Lee Odis Allen, A/2/503

(continued....)



Erling Alton Anderson
39th Scout Dog Plt



James Arnold, A/2/503



Jeffrey Lawrence Barker
A/2/503



William Joseph Boehm
A/2/503

"Many of PFC Boehm's exploits in Vietnam can be found in the book, 'Blood on the Risers: An Airborne's Soldier's Thirty-five Months in Vietnam' by John Leppelman. May the American people never forget the sacrifice he made on their behalf."

Arnold M. Huskins

~A Note from The Virtual Wall~

The "Battle of the Slopes" began as a routine search and destroy mission conducted by the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry. Early on 22 June, A Company left its night laager with 2nd Platoon in the lead, then 3rd Platoon, with the Command Group and 1st Platoon bringing up the rear. At 0658, 2nd Platoon's point squad ran into several North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops, initiating an intense firefight which prevented 2nd platoon from linking up with its point squad. The remainder of A Company then came under attack by the NVA, isolating the three Platoons one from another. Heavy fighting continued through the morning. A Company's 1st and 2nd platoons were down to fifteen effective men when radio contact was lost at about 1100. At this point the Command Group and 3rd Platoon themselves were surrounded and heavily engaged. Shortly afterwards, the 2nd platoon's senior surviving Sergeant withdrew his remaining men to the Company Command Post, placing thirty-five wounded and thirty effective soldiers within the 3rd Platoon's defensive perimeter. At 1140 the Company Commander decided to move

back up the ridge to a more defensible position, a move completed by about noon. Thus at noontime A Company was dispersed and surrounded, with 1st and 2nd Platoon's dead and wounded separated from the Command Group/3rd Platoon defensive perimeter. The Battalion reserve, B Company, had been inserted into a single-ship landing zone several hundred meters away and was beginning to move out toward A Company's position. C Company was conducting an assault through entrenched NVA troops in an effort to reach A Company. B Company was engaged by 1230. The remaining men of A Company still were under heavy assault and were not relieved by C Company until about 1430. A landing area was cleared and the remnants of A Company extracted. As the afternoon continued, C Company was able to secure and search the area around the A Company defensive position but night fell before they could extend the search into the areas where A Company's 1st and 2nd Platoons had fought. B and C Company set up separate defensive positions for the night. As the 2/503 soldiers waited through the night, anticipating an all-out attack, the men heard shots punctuated by screams as the NVA executed the American wounded. At dawn, B and C Companies searched the battlefield. They found only one survivor from A/2/503; he had survived both his initial wounds and a close-range head shot. Forty-three American soldiers had died from head wounds inflicted at close range. Further clearing operations on the 23rd and 24th confirmed heavy losses among the NVA troops and identified the NVA unit involved as the 6th NVA Battalion, 24th NVA Regiment. The final results of the engagement were as follows:

U. S. Losses: 76 killed and 23 wounded (74 dead from A Company). ARVN losses: 1 ARVN interpreter/advisor and 2 CIDG killed. Enemy Losses: 106 NVA KIA (body count), 407 NVA KIA (POSS), 3 POWs. PFC William J. Boehm was one of the 74 men from A/2/503 who died that day.

Note: See June 2011, Issue 29 of our newsletter for a detailed report on *The Battle of the Slopes*. Ed



(continued....)



Ervin L. Burns
A/2/503



"Jake, I was a kid of only twenty when I reported to OCS without any money. Pulling up in front of the company on a bus. As soon as I got off I could hear the senior candidates cuss. I knew I was in trouble when the first thing I saw was a Second Lieutenant and he made me low crawl, pulling my duffle bag with me I made it to the steps, and immediately this Lt. said 'Give me fifty reps.' I was tired and hungry by the time I got to bed it was 2300 and we had to get up by 0330 the Lt. had said. My first impulse was to quit and continue to be enlisted although it wasn't a disgrace but my goals had been twisted. Lt. Burns or 'Jake' as he was called, was my Tac Officer and if only I had a dollar for every foot he made me crawl. He refused to let me quit and he told me I would finish or die. For he had lived in Kentucky the same as I. He pushed me and taught me till an officer I did make, and only did I make it because of a Lieutenant named Jake. After I graduated and got my new assignment, he took me aside and schooled me on manners and refinement. He was actually from Utah, his wife a southern girl pretty enough to ponder, and I don't think he ever got used to words like 'over yonder'. As I left he told me I didn't know if you would make it, but see what happens when you don't quit. A few months later I saw Jake in Vietnam standing by a LZ. At first I couldn't believe my eyes till he turned and saw me. We talked but a minute as we were both going on different missions. We agreed we would meet in the world under different conditions. This was in early June 1967, and on the 22nd of June Jake was on his way to heaven. I've tried to find his wife and girls for over thirty years, and tonight I talked to Shelia the oldest on the phone through a lot of tears. By chance I found her on a web site I hadn't seen, and how my heart jumped when I saw her name on the screen. I can't wait to tell her about her dad and I in the old days. The Lord sure does work in mysterious ways."

©David R. Alexander
My Mentor, My Friend

Albert Butler, Jr., A/2/503



Darrell Wayne Butts
A/2/503

Carlin Martin Campbell, Jr.
A/2/503



"We called him 'Terry'. I did not know his real name until I found him on The Wall. I last talked to Carlin Martin Campbell, Jr. and Michael J. Waterman on the runway at Dak To on June 21, 1967. They were waiting for the chopper and said they were going on a recon mission on the mountain. On June 22, 1967 they fought the NVA until the last of their ammo. Carlin Martin Campbell, Jr. was one of 74 in A Co 2/503, 173 Abn Bde to lose his life that day in the Battle of the Slopes. I think of him often, I will never forget."

From a fellow soldier,
JBW

Leonard James Carter
A/2/503



Thorne M. Clark, III, A/2/503

"Mac, I think of you often. The motorcycle rides, the trips to Santa Barbara, the good times just hanging out. I remember the last time I saw you, with your spit-shined jump boots and shiny airborne wings and all of your damned optimism. I wish that I could share with you some of the blessings I've had come my way over the 35 years that I've outlived you. Who knows? Maybe I can."

Your friend, Mark



(continued....)



Ronald Cleveland Clark
A/2/503



"Fast friends. Jump School, February of '67. I don't remember much anymore, but I'll always remember you."

J.W. Dillon, USAF, '65-'71
We were close friends

Jimmy Lee Cook
C/2/503



"True love. Jimmy was 'the one.' I know he was a wonderful son and brother. But he was my first and only true love. I look forward to seeing him again in the presence of the Lord."

Pam
We were close friends

"Pvt Cook, who served with Charlie Company, 2nd 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, was unfortunately killed in a friendly fire incident when he returned to his company perimeter on Hill 1338 near Dak To. May his service to our country never be forgotten."

Arnold M. Huskins

Jack Lester Cripe, A/2/503
Lloyd Dwain De Loach, A/2/503



Lester Michael De Riso
A/2/503

Loved and Missed. You are always loved, missed and forever in our hearts. Your sacrifice will never be forgotten. I will always miss and love you Uncle Lester. Love, Lori."

Lori LaBossiere
Niece

Charles Orvis Deedrick, Jr.
A/2/503



"I was a classmate of Chuck's and grew up with him on 4th Street also. Chuck and I used to go to the spillway every day to fish. His pop would come out and get us with his pickup every night. Chuck was in Germany before going to Viet Nam. He signed to go there (Vietnam). I was there the same time as he was and was going to look him up at Long Binh where a common friend, Dorothy Dye, was stationed as a nurse. She saw me and told me about Chuck."

Ron Schmidt

"I served with the same unit as Charles, except about six months later. He died in the Battle of the Slopes on June 22, 1967. He was from Minnesota City, near Winona, MN. Charles made the ultimate sacrifice along with scores of his fellow paratroopers on that day near Dak To, Kontum. Airborne All The Way!"

Dan Pomeroy
We served in same unit

Thomas Alfred Deschenes
A/2/503



Thomas Benedict Duffy, Jr.
A/2/503



(continued....)



**Timothy James Egan
A/2/503**



"Tim Egan was a great friend. He loved sports and was on the Lindblum High School speed skating team. When he enlisted in the Army, he wanted to the best so he volunteered for the Airborne. Tim was with the 173rd ABN for less than a month when he was KIA on June 22, 1967. We all still miss him."

Michael A. Daukus
Best friends

James Richard Emmert, A/2/503

**Russel Warren Engle
A/2/503**



"'Rusty' Wrestler, football player, friend to everyone, always a smile."

Bill Arthur, Madison H.S., 1966
Friend

**Bobby Lee Finney
A/2/503**



"My good friend. After all these years that have gone by, I still miss you my friend. We went to Vietnam together."

Waldren Cook
We were close friends

Burrell Gibson, A/2/503

Kenneth Lawrence Greene, A/2/503



**David Junior Heller, "Doc"
A/2/503**

"Buddies. I remember we ran Track together. He didn't talk much but he sure was fun to be with. He had a dry humor and I miss him."

Glenard McKeehan
We were high school classmates

**Alvin Gene Hill
A/2/503**



"This is in honor of Alvin 'Gene' Hill, my much thought about half brother, who was killed in action in Dak To (about 6 miles from the Laos, Cambodia & Vietnam border) in the Republic of Vietnam on June 22, 1967. He served from 12/3/1963 to 6/22/1967 in Co. A, 2nd Army Airborne Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division. He was awarded the Bronze Star, 2 Purple Hearts, the Military Merit Medal, and the Gallantry Cross with Palm. Gene, though I only know from pictures and our family's descriptions of you, I still think about you today because of how your life and death touched all of our lives. These are those who loved you: (our mother -- who always would cry when she thought about you, Ruth Tew-Hill-Porterfield-Grubbs; our aunt - who always would cry when she thought about you, Blanch-Tew-Sapp; our uncle, Fred Sapp; our grandmother, Annie E.-Hinson-Tew-Sapp; our brother, who suffered more than the family realized a long time after your death, John David Hill; your wife, Linda Hill; and your daughter, Tammy Hill-Putnum; and me (your sister), Sylvia-Porterfield-Teston).

I did not get the privilege of knowing you because you were taken from us only a month after I was born in 1967. However, I have always wished I could have known you because of how the rest of the family talked about you and how much they seemed to miss you. They would always say how you were a very hard-worker and very kind-hearted. I remember how they said you could have gone to West Point Military Academy, but that you went to serve your country in Vietnam instead because you felt it was more important to serve your country than going to West Point....

(continued....)



....From what I hear, your whole company, except one person, were circled around, ambushed, and killed in a valley on the same day you were. If anyone knows this person, tell them I am interested in hearing from them. I cannot take back what anyone went through, but I appreciate all the effort they, and everyone, put out fighting for our country (though Vietnam War became a war that was hard to win & unsupported by our government and eventually not worth the effort of the people fighting). The absence of one person, whether we know it or not, can make a difference in our lives. Thank you for serving our country with all you had. I hope to meet you in Heaven."

Sylvia (Porterfield) Teston
He is my brother

Doyle Holcomb, A/2/503

"I remember Doyle Holcomb, Airborne. The last time I saw Doyle alive he had a pair of antlers tied to his ruck sack. We were waiting for the last lift of choppers to pick us up. We were headed for Dak To. I didn't get to talk to Doyle before A Company was lifted to the mountain Landing Zone on June 21, 1967. On 6/22/67 Company A 2/503 came under fire. They took on NVA regulars that out-numbered them by 5-1. They fought until they ran out of ammo. 74 of America's best died that day. Doyle was found at the front of the fight. I think about Doyle almost daily."

From a fellow soldier,
JBW

Richard Elmo Hood, Jr., A/2/503

"My best friend and West Point roommate. Though Rich at times struggled with certain academics, his intellect matched his balanced character; in common sense and values he was unmatched. Disgusted one night by my arranging my uniforms perfectly before sitting down to study (with a cigar stuck in my face), Rich could not stand the stifling West Point atmosphere any longer. He jumped up, opened my pin-neat closet, threw my uniforms on the floor, marched over them, jerked the cigar out and threw it out the open barracks window. Now calmed down, without one word he sat down to study. I realized he had done a good thing. From his Father, a WWII Bulge Battle vet, Rich received a fine sense of US politics, and I had expected him to run for Congress and eventually, for President. What a loss, not only to me and his family (only son) but to the Nation."

William Bergman
Roommate at West Point

Vins Ronald Hooper, A/2/503

David E. Johnson, A/2/503

**Harry J. Johnson
A/2/503**



**Richard Bruce Johnston, A/2/503
Richard J. Johnston, A/2/503**



Duty...Honor...Country

**Donald R. Judd
A/2/503**



"Don Judd was my Squad Leader in the summer of 1964 when I was a plebe at West Point. I remember him, in the 'heat of the battle' that was Beast Barracks, as a quiet man, who led his squad with a sense of purpose and conviction. He was not caught up in the frenzy of hazing us, but taught us 'the ropes' about how to survive Beast. Later, as years went on, Don graduated with the Class of 1966. He was killed before I graduated in 1968. My thoughts were, both then and now, that Don was a quiet, thoughtful leader who could have made much more of a contribution to the Army, and to society, had he survived his tour. Thanks, Don, for teaching us to survive."

Mike Trollinger, USMA, Class of 1968

"We were stationed together at Fort Monmouth. One day when I was leaving the PX he waited in his car and asked if I needed a ride back to the Company we were assigned to. While driving we talked about his being alerted to Viet Nam. I found him to be a great leader and I am glad to have known him. Several months after he left, the company was notified he was killed in action. I read the account of his death on line. With the aid of the computer it took 40 years to find out he was a Hero and died trying to save a life. On June 22 this year it was 40 years since his death."

Steve
We served together

[See Don's Silver Star Citation on Page 46]

James Robert Lester, C/4/503

(continued....)



Kenneth Kawika Lima
A/2/503



"I remember Sgt. Lima from JROTC at McKinley High School in Hawaii back in 1965. I had just graduated in 1967 when he was killed.

*'He maka lehua no kona one hanau'
One who has the face of a warrior (loyal and honored)
in his place of birth.*

From the Hawaii Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Aloha Oe"

A Fellow Vet

Stephen Allen Kelly, A/2/503



Clifford Wayne Leathers, Jr.
E/17th Cav

*"Photo credit: His brother Michael A Leathers.
Rest in peace with the warriors."*

James Robert Lester, C/4/503

Frederick Hugo Liminga, "Doc", HHC/2/503

"Two names on the wall are Freddy Liminga and David Wedhorn. They were boyhood friends. They had a clubhouse in the sauna in Freddy's back yard. On the door was a sign that clearly stated 'NO GRILS ALOUD' I was the only girl they knew.

I will always miss them."

Patty

We grew up together

Robert Richard Litwin, A/2/503

*"At this Christmas time I always say a prayer
for you and remember with some tears."*

Donna

He is my husband

[See Page 43 for Robert's DSC Citation]



Jimmy Clint Lowry, A/2/503

"You are not forgotten. There are no posts here. Perhaps because your family and friends don't know about the Virtual Wall, but I do. That's why I'm here. You died an honorable death serving your country. Nobody can fault a man who fights in an unpopular war and put duty and country first. May the Lord bless you and keep you in His arms until we all meet again."

Leilani Jones

Gary Allen Luttrell
A/2/503



"Gary, this is Ron Byrd---On June 19, 1967 I met you in Pleiku. I just got in country and you arrived a couple days before me. We talked at the mess hall for about an hour about Sterling and our parents. I guess I was the last person from our home town to see your smile."

Ron Byrd

We served together



Walter Christian Mayer
A/2/503



"To my friend who just happens to be of same blood. You will live forever in our hearts and minds. You've made us all proud that you served our country when called. You chose duty, courage and honor when others chose cowardice and selfishness."

Capt. Michael J. Shull (Ret), USAF
My Cousin

(continued....)



**William Stanely McBroom
A/2/503**



"I will never forget your smile, or you sitting at the kitchen table having coffee with mom just before you shipped to Viet Nam. We still miss you so and visit you every August with mom, dad, Juluis and Doc.

Love you still!!!!"

Sarah Ann McBroom Klar

He is my brother



"The attached is a picture of William S. McBroom with his Mother, Clemis Roberts McBroom, and his brother, Robert C. McBroom. This picture was taken in the Fall of 1966 a few months before we both went overseas to Thailand and Vietnam. Billy was killed on June 22, 1967. Our Dad was not doing well and both of us were home on leave."

Bob and Donna McBroom

He is my brother

Ellis A. McBride, Jr., B/2/503

Frank McCray, Jr., A/2/503

"I was probably one of the last to see you before your demise. I'll never forget you, Brother. I have a photo that couldn't post."

Wambi Cook

A/2/503d

John Henry McEachin, Jr., A/2/503

"He was my uncle whom I never had the opportunity to meet and know as my uncle. He was killed in Vietnam without even knowing who I was. I would have liked to have known my father's other brother."

Lillie M. Epps (McEachin)

Charles Robert Mears, B/1/503

"'Bobby' was my idol growing up in Patterson. He was an Eagle Scout, active in sports and church. I wanted to be just like him ... I still have a picture of him

camping when we were in 7th grade. He was an only child ... the apple of his parents' eyes. My prayers are with them now and forever ... Peace."

Michael Nelson

"It was my honor and privilege to have served in the same platoon as 'Chuck' Mears. Although it's been 37 years I can still visualize his ready smile and guileless ways. I respected Chuck's humility, quiet confidence, inner-strength, and easy-going manner.

I never met a more trustworthy, dependable man.

God bless all of you, family and friends!"

From a fellow Skysoldier,

Gilbert D. Hill

Stephen Adam Mika

A/2/503



Donald Martin Munden, A/2/503

William Arthur Munn, A/2/503

"I can't remember my uncle. All I remember are the pictures and me crying to sleep because I didn't know him."

Amanda

He is my uncle



Timothy John Murphy

A/2/503

"My mother attended your wake. She said your dad could only stare at you. I can only imagine what he was thinking. I wish I had known you. I wish you had made it home here. I thank you for what you did for our country. God bless you."



Patch

From same township



(continued....)



Daniel Lee Negro
A/2/503



*"Danny i miss and think of you all the time,
wish we were still able to go bird hunting
again, with your Dad, but he's gone too,
lonely without the both of you.*

Love your Cuz."

Sid, 1st Cousin



*dying for his country. He died as a paratrooper, about
three weeks after his 19th birthday. He and I were as
close as twins. My grief has lasted a lifetime. He was
a treasure. We all miss him so much and wonder
how much our lives would have been enriched."*

Judith A. Decker

He is my brother



Michael Parker
HHC/2/503

*"My name is Gary Baker, I am looking for information
on Michael Parker. I was in Vietnam with him when he
was killed. Any information please email me at
baker4751@windstream.net. Thank you."*

Gary Baker

Vietnam friend

(Posted August 26, 2012)

The Gallantry Cross (Vietnamese: *Anh-Dung Boi-Tinh*) is a military decoration of the former Government of South Vietnam (Republic of Vietnam). The medal was established on 15 August 1950. The decoration was awarded to military personnel, civilians, and Armed Forces units and organizations in recognition of deeds of valor or heroic conduct while in combat with the enemy. Recipients were cited at the Armed Forces, Corps, Division, Brigade or Regiment level. The Gallantry Cross was modeled after the French *Croix de Guerre* (Cross of War) medal.

George Patton, "Doc", HHC/A/2/503*

John Perry Patton, A/2/503

"Johnny was killed around June 3, 1967 at Bien Hoa.

*Johnny was a platoon Sgt. of around 90 men. His
company was ambushed by 300 Vietcong. One young
hero escaped by crawling into the thicket and
pretended to be dead. He was the only one who came
out alive. Before the platoon was wiped out, those
brave men took out the majority of the Vietcong. It
took over two weeks before the Army could go in and
retrieve the bodies of our men. That is why the date of*

*Johnny's death is different. Johnny is buried at the
Precidio in San Francisco, CA. He is also honored at the
Noyo Harbor monument in Fort Bragg, Ga. along with
two other men who gave their lives for our Country."*

Lynn Prather

He is my brother

Jerry Lynn Noe
A/2/503



*"Jerry, I love you very much and think of you every day.
I wish that I had told you how much I loved you before
we lost you. I love you very much. Big brother Dale."*

Dale Noe

He is my brother

Michael Donald O'Connor
A/2/503



*"My brother was always happy. He was
a joy to his parents and his siblings and had
many close friends who spent their
social times together. He was a hard
worker and always wanting to help others. He went to
the Army and had his five buddies all sign up at the
same time. He turned down officers school because he
wanted to really get into the thick of things if he was
going to fight for his country. He knew he wouldn't
come home; he gave everything away and resigned to*



(continued....)



George Albert Poor, Jr.
A/2/503



"I had a bunk across from George in AIT at Fort Gordon, Georgia. I did not know him well, but remember one instance clearly. We were in our final weeks of training before Christmas leave. We had to do an Escape and Evade and I was 'captured.' We had heard a rumor that in the enemy stockade where there was a three hole privy with the center hole an escape to the outside. I tried it and as I poked my head out there was George in a guard tower as an NVA giving me the all clear sign. I escaped. Thanks George and God bless you."

*Jack Bradford
We served together*



Leonard Burton Poore
A/2/503



"Leonard and I grew up together in Beaumont, Texas as neighbors across the street from each other on the corner of Ector and Pipkin Street. Leonard and I ran, played, stayed and fought together daily throughout our Elementary, Junior High, and High School Days! Leonard was an only child, adopted by Francis and Orlon Poore, who both loved him dearly. Lovingly, they always gave Leonard everything they had, and all they could afford!! Leonard was never really a star in any sports or activities during his Junior High or High School days, although he tried desperately to make the starting team in almost every sport you could think of, at the time. Leonard was always just a bit too tall, a bit too lanky, and a bit too awkward. He grew up, it seems, just always failing to quite make it as the starter on any team, in any of those sports, that he tried. Leonard also tried playing the drums, playing a guitar, playing a horn, and on and on, but none of those musical instruments ever really stuck with Leonard, for very long. Leonard was a good student, but not an exceptionally strong student, in school. When he graduated from South Park High School in 1965 (a Greenie!), he tried the College life, for a year or so, but that just didn't work out for him. Leonard was 2 years older than me, and in my Senior Year at South Park High School in 1967, Leonard joined the Army.

Leonard left for boot camp and I really didn't see him at all during my Senior year, until the late spring of 1967, just before my High School Graduation. Leonard had returned home to Beaumont after his basic training, just before he was to be deployed to Viet Nam, as a Paratrooper, in the U. S. Army. Leonard was literally a changed person, truly a changed young man of 20 years old, when I saw him at my home that night. He was decked out in his Paratrooper uniform, and he stood there tall and proud, and he spoke of what he had done, and then spoke of what he was going to do, in the Army, as a Paratrooper!! You see, after all of those years of trying and trying, and changing to something else, with disappointment time and time again, it had all changed for Leonard!!!! Leonard had found something that he really liked, and he had stuck to it!! You see, Leonard had finally made the Team!!! Leonard was a 'Starter'!!! He was starting with that Paratroop team, and going to Viet Nam, to bravely serve his country!!!! Leonard died just a few weeks after I saw him at my house that night. He died when he and 81 other brave souls parachuted into the Viet Nam jungle, and all of them perished in an apparent ambush, in one of the worst days in terms of total American casualties of the entire Vietnamese War. You see, just like the example that Leonard's parents had always set for him, Leonard Burton Poore gave 'all us Americans' everything he had, and all he could afford!! Leonard paid the ultimate price for our Freedom!! His funeral is still one of the saddest days in my life, right along with those sad days when we buried my Mom and my Dad due to cancer. Leonard will always, always be remembered, as well he should be. Leonard Burton Poore, was what a true American Hero is all about!!!"

*Randall G. Morgan
We grew up together*



(continued....)



Robert Lee Preddy, A/2/503

"Though Dream I walk through the scented air of summer Into the frozen air of winter, And as tears inside me fall The pain of old wounds Calls me to mend them, And I realize once more That things done before Have no ending. I feel the cold of eve slowly waning. As sun burst rays of warmth overtake me. And the twisted seeds of doubt Which spread my sins about Lie parched and withered. And the present not the past Claims me at the last For me, it's not over. Bob, you were my boyhood friend but, you died a man in a place that few people could understand. Thank You for your sacrifice and courage. I Salute you my friend. May you rest in peace. Your friend through eternity."
Chuck Selby, We were high school classmates

Floyd Elmer Quarles, A/2/503

Ralph Joseph Rizzi, A/2/503

**Trine Romero, Jr.
A/2/503**



"Trine Romero Jr. was born to Trine B. and Juanita Romero on March 4th, 1947. He was the 3rd child of a family of 11 siblings. He attended elementary school at Washington Ave., Junior High at North Junior High, which is now the Educational Services Bldg on north Kentucky. He went to Goddard High School and graduated with honors, from the first graduating class of Goddard High School, in 1966. He was drafted right out of high school into the army on August 26, 1966, the day my second child was born. He went through his basic training at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas. When he finished basic training, he then went to Fort Benning, Georgia for his airborne school. He was attached to the 173rd Airborne Brigade. I still remember the headlines that Sunday in June; as a matter of fact what it read was 176 killed and 24 wounded in 173rd Airborne Brigade. My stomach felt so queasy when I saw that. My husband Frank, being with the National Guard, told me 'it may not be your brother, because there are so many companies per brigade.' They were ambushed and ground casualty in Kontum, South Vietnam. The next day we found out the news of his death. I will never forget that Monday morning in June 1967. There was a knock on our front door around 6am. I thought it was my husband's boss bringing him the keys to open the shop. But boy was I wrong; it was my father and my brother, Eddie with the bad news that our brother had been killed in Vietnam. I just could not even fathom that to be true. We then went to my parent's house on North Union

Street and while we were there, this big truck went by with quite a few men sitting in the back of an open truck. I remember running after the truck and yelling, 'Trinito, Trinito!!' That is what we called him, little Trine. The next thing I knew I woke up at St. Mary's Hospital where they had to give me something to calm down. I know a part of me went with him because for so many years, about 20 years to be exact, I grieved him. Then I started thinking, I need to let this go, so that he could rest in peace. We were very close. Our mother said when she lost her mother that is was very hard, but that when you lose a child it is even harder.

Trine was an awesome person, a good son and a sibling who cared for all his family. I must also mention he has a daughter he never knew. Yvette Romero Corral, who was born in November 1967. He would have been very proud of her. She is an RN in Mansfield, Texas. She has two daughters, Jasmine and Marissa Corral. Trine's siblings started from the oldest: Minnie Sosa, Eddie Romero, Maryana Romero de Romero, Angie Barnes, Terry Gauna, Robert Steven Romero, David Romero, Monica Meeks (now deceased), Melissa Morales and Melinda Lara. Trine loved the sport of baseball very much and played just about every summer. I feel some comfort to know that our brother was born at St. Mary's Hospital, that is now the Joe Skeen Building and that now in front of that building is the County's War Memorial and my brother's name is on the memorial. I feel blessed with this Healing Wall, that I was made aware that there are three different moving walls. I was under the impression that this was the same wall that was here on June 11th—17th, 2002, at the Russ DeKay Soccer Complex. A gentleman, Robert Gibson, told me that this wall that is here at Church on the Move is the Healing Wall. My dream is to someday go to Washington, DC to visit the Vietnam Memorial. My husband and I are planning on going before this year is over. I would personally like to thank Pastor Smothemon, his Church Staff and Congregation, Lola Whitfield and her husband. Also the many volunteers and the Veterans who contributed as well and very special thank you to Frank Carrillo for personally contacting me about all the ceremonies. What a better time than Independence Day to have the Healing Wall here, not only that but for our family - Trine's services were held on July 4th 1967 and we put him to rest on July the 5th, 1967 — 42 years ago and for this to happen 42 years ago to the day on this day of closing ceremonies for the Healing Wall."

Frank Carrillo, He is my brother

(continued....)



Hector Mario Saenz
A/2/503



that took place at Dak To on June 22, 1967.
I for one cannot thank you enough."
From his sister, Linda Smith-Goldsberry

James Walter Sanford, A/2/503

Warren Herbert Schrobilgen, Jr., A/2/503

"As a senior in high school, I was given your name and wrote you a letter. You responded and sent me a picture. I remember you told me all about your car! Then my next letter came back. I have never forgotten you and was able to find your name on the Traveling Wall. I pray someday we meet in Heaven."

Beverly Miller

Jeffrey Ross Sexton, A/2/503

"Jeff, your heroism is more significant to me as each year passes. I am so grateful for the opportunity to find remembrances of you on the net. We miss you and look forward to the day we are all together again in a place where there is no war or hatred. We adore your friend John Edward Carnes and just knowing him helps us know what a fine man you were, though you were still so young...way too young to leave this earth. You died for something you believed in, freedom for all. Only those who have lost someone as we did you, can know that even after all these years your absence is still felt. God bless those men and their families that serve this country. Love to you, your sister."

Chris

John Sharber, Jr., A/2/503

"Almost 46 years since I last saw you and the hurt never diminishes."

Wambi Cook, A/2/503d

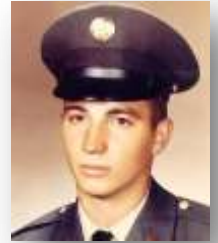
We served together



Lloyd Edgar Smith
A/2/503

"Lloyd is still deeply missed by all those who loved and knew him. He was 22 years old at the time of his death. As a sister, it is so hard to read about what occurred during the battle that took so many brave lives, especially my brother's life. However, when a son, brother, husband, father, etc. is killed fighting for the Country we all hold so dear to our hearts we want to know what, where, how and when it occurred. Thanks goes to all those that took the time to tell your story about the events

Charles Harry Snow
A/2/503



The following appears in a tribute to Charles by his friend Brenda, author unknown:



"Do you remember me America? I was the one which others cared not to be. I went where others feared to go and did what others failed to do. I asked nothing from those who gave nothing. I reluctantly, accepted the thought of eternal loneliness should I fail. I have seen the face of terror, felt the chill of fear, warmed to the touch of love. I have hoped, pained, and cried. But foremost, I have lived in times others would say are best forgotten. At the very least, in these later days, I am able to say with the greatest pride...that I was indeed an American Soldier!"

Enemy Virtually Wipes Out Two U.S. Platoons Only Six GIs Survive Battle

Saigon (UPI) -- Hundreds of black-bereted North Vietnamese soldiers surrounded two "lost platoons" of U.S. paratroopers high on a mountain ridge and virtually wiped them out in fierce fighting that killed 76 Americans, U.S. spokesmen said Saturday. Only six of the trapped GIs survived and they all were wounded.

Nineteen other Americans from rescue units seeking to reach the besieged Americans were wounded in one of the worst defeats suffered by the American Army in Vietnam.

A paratroop spokesman said the North Vietnamese, after mowing down the two platoons in murderous cross fire, methodically went among the wounded GI's finishing them off with pistol shots and rifled their bodies of food and money.

But the North Vietnamese paid a heavy price in the battle with the two platoons and other troops of the U.S. 173rd airborne brigade that tried to rescue them in the mountains near the borders of Cambodia and Laos about 275 miles northeast of Saigon.

(continued....)



A communiqué issued in Saigon said "no firm casualty count has been reported" but officers in the field estimated that the North Vietnamese 24th division had suffered as many as 450 dead in the fighting. At one point bodies of about 60 North Vietnamese soldiers were found stacked up around the perimeter of the lost platoons. They had apparently been used as shields for the charging Communist soldiers.

The battle actually took place Thursday but correspondents were forbidden by the U.S. military command to report it until Saturday. Military officials said they did not want the Communists to know that contact between the lost platoons and their parent unit had been broken.

Seventy of the 76 Americans who died in the fighting along the ridge line belonged to the two platoons from one company of the 173rd airborne. The six others were from rescue units.

"Every man in the company is a hero," said Company commander Capt. David Milton of Dallas, Tex. "The folks back home can be proud of them and how they conducted themselves."

Johnson Augustus Steidler
A/2/503



**"So much the better, for we shall
fight them in the shade."**

- Leonidas, Spartan King -
- Battle of Thermopylae, 480 BC -
From his brother,
Ron Steidler

David Allen Stephens
A/2/503



"My Dear Allen, you gave me beautiful memories I'll never forget, and a beautiful daughter who looks so much like you, but you never had a chance to see her or hold her in your arms. If I had a choice, I would want you to come back to me more than anything else in the world. You were my brave soldier who, even though you had been wounded, you still wanted to stay with your comrades who needed you. You're my hero, my knight in shining armor. I know God has a

*special place for you in heaven, and you have peace,
love, and happiness forever."*

Patricia A. Stephens
He is my husband

David Richard Stephenson, A/2/503

Robert Louis Stevens, Jr., A/2/503

"Kalamazoo GI Killed in Vietnam Robert L. Stevens Dies in Firefight. Army Pfc. Robert L. Stevens, 18, of Kalamazoo, was killed in action Saturday during a fire fight in Vietnam. Stevens was serving with paratroop forces when he was killed, according to Army officials. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert L. Stevens Sr. of 1224 Healy. The young paratrooper was the 22nd Kalamazoo area man to be killed in Vietnam and the seventh from the city to die in the conflict. Pfc. Stevens enlisted in the Army Sept. 12, 1966, after attending Loy Norrix High School. He took basic training at Ft. Knox, Ky. and Paratroop training at Ft. Benning, Ga. He was also stationed at Ft. Gordon, Ga. He left for Vietnam April 8. He was born August 24, 1948 in Flint, Mich. Joldersma & Klein Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements."
THE KALAMAZOO COUNTY VIETNAM WALL.



Fa'Asaviliga V. Tafao, A/2/503

"Dear Saviliga. So many years have passed since you've left us...our family has grown and things have changed, but you have always been in our hearts and never been far from our thoughts. I was so young when you left us but our family is so good at keeping everyone's memory alive that you have never really been gone. We miss you very much and we love you even more. Rest in peace big cousin."

Love, Jackie

Larry Burns Turner
A/2/503



(continued....)



Daniel Viramontes Valdez
A/2/503



"Danny was a part of the 173rd Airborne Brigade and he died at the Battle of the Slopes. His memory has never been forgotten. Today he lives through his stories and photographs and will continue to do so for all generations to come."

Kristina Upton-Valdez
He is my uncle

Charlie Lewis Walker, A/2/503
Willie Craig Warren, 173 Eng.

Michael J. Waterman
A/2/503



"Michael J. Waterman was born on March 16, 1947. He attended Westminster School, graduating in June 1966. He was a Boy Scout, in Little League and manager of his high school football team. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, camping, hiking, skiing, and gymnastics. Michael entered the Army in Sept. 1966. He trained at Ft. Dix, N.J., then Ft. Gordon, GA and airborne training at Ft. Benning, GA. He went to Vietnam April 8, 1967 where he was killed in Dak To on June 22, 1967 in a battle with North Vietnamese regulars."

Mr. and Mrs. D. Rodney Waterman
He is our son

"Michael was a good friend and a great person. He watched out for his friends and fellow soldiers. He was a brave soldier who fought until the end. He was lost on the mountain at Dak To along with 74 other troopers on 06/22/67. They fought until they ran out of ammo. I think about them often. God Bless."

From a fellow soldier.
JBW

Edwin Jerome Williams, A/2/503



Alexander C. Zsigo, Jr.
A/2/503



"This is for my oldest brother "Chuckie" whom I waited for to come home, but never did. He was my hero who gave his life for our country, becoming a hero for all. I hope to soon add pictures and articles about my hero Chuckie. Thank you for reading about my brother.

Please come back soon to view the added remembrances, and please add your own."
Love, Lil sis." His sister



David Zsigo visiting his brother Alex at the Moving Wall

"We owned a farm next to Alex's farm. I use to go through the corn fields cultivating the corn with a 4 row cultivator and this was hooked to a John Deere. Alex would be over in the next field and wave at me. He sure would make that tractor move. In June of 1967, I was in the yard with my father and brother (RVN Cobra Helicopter Combat Pilot) working on farm equipment when my grandfather drove up and told us about Alex being killed. He said the whole company had been wiped out. I had just returned from Detroit previous to this news. I had returned from getting my physical at the induction center. So the news about Alex was not good. I was drafted and went into the U.S. Army on August 23, 1967. My Republic of Vietnam service was from May 1968 to May 1969. I was a unwilling participant in the 2nd Battle of Saigon. Our plane was unable to land at Bien Hoa due to combat conditions. When we did land we were under heavy fire. The whole Vietnam experience was a tragedy for all. I hope we do not do this again."

John C. Brunger, M.S. Ed.
70% Disabled Republic of Vietnam Combat Veteran

(continued....)



~ June 1968 ~

Charles Arthur Bedsole
HHB/D/3/319*



*"Your brother Dan Loved and missed you.
My sister married Dan."
William Swope
Marine Nam 1968*

David Thomas Bell, A/4/503

"The Right Stuff. I've thought about visiting The Wall, but I can't - I don't know why. I came across The Virtual Wall on the Internet a couple months ago. Your name was one of those I looked for. We weren't all that close to one another, but over the years I've still thought about you from time to time. I was somewhat saddened to find that no one had posted a remembrance for you. I know you are remembered by many, and it's only an oversight. The folks that knew you best probably haven't found their way to this Virtual Wall yet, I am sure many have visited with you at The Wall in Washington DC. Today being the first observed Memorial Day of the new Millennium (according to some people), I thought I would sit down and put some of my memories of you and the times we shared in writing. I can still remember your parent's grocery store, just around the corner from the house I lived in on Clark Street. Sometimes I catch a scent that reminds me of the smell of the fresh fruits and vegetables your folks would put out in front of the store. I remember your Mom; her dark hair with gray streaks, and you in your white apron. I remember how you and Randy beat the living tar out of the new guys on the varsity squad at the bottom of every pile during practice scrimmages, particularly me. You claimed it was to see if we were made of the 'right stuff'. We were never a real threat to beat most of the other teams; except Kirtland, but every team we played knew they had been in one hell of a battle by the time the fourth quarter ended. I remember Coach Nelson and the rest of you guys sneaking up to my hospital room with the projector and the game film after I had been injured in the first game of the season against Gilmore Academy. The look on the nurse's face when she came into the room and found the entire Willoughby South High football team. Don't know how she knew something was going on in my room. It was you and Randy that helped me off the field when I was injured again in the last game at Kirtland. You guys made a great pair of crutches, too bad you

weren't the same height. It was right around graduation when we heard you had been killed in action. It was hard to believe that little more than a year earlier we had played football together, and you were already gone. I guess that's why thoughts of you seem to come back to me around this time of the year - graduation time. I'm sorry you didn't make it Dave, you were made of the 'right stuff' - you truly were a Rebel. Rest in peace Dave."

T.D. Hamilton

Willoughby South High Rebels Class of '68
Vietnam Vet '71 - '72

Charlie E. Berry, C/4/503

"Charlie was one of my best friends during my high school days. He was an all-around good guy."
Melvin Rhodes, High School Buddy



Jerry Roger Ferguson
D/2/503

"Sgt. Jerry R Ferguson KIA 13 June 1968. Never got to see his son, our 1st baby. Jerry, I now live in your Mom and Dad's house, Granny lives with Jerry Lee, she can't be by herself anymore. I help out when they need me...Bob and I are getting things all fixed up and it's looking good. Still after all these years, I miss you and wonder what it... Put two of your pixs up today. Time goes on but you never forget. Judy."
Judy Ferguson Scofield, He is my husband



Donald Shuichi Fujimoto, "Doc"
C/4/503

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

His loving sister, Margaret (Fujimoto) Kawai

(continued....)



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

Lynn E. Morsell, His platoon sergeant

~ A Note from The Virtual Wall ~

Sergeant Fujimoto was assigned to Charlie Company, 4/503rd Infantry, in Vietnam, and was one of six men killed in fighting on 17 June 1968.

Dayton Joseph Hooks, 173 Eng

"Long overdue. I was with Hooks when he was killed. He did not suffer and died doing the work that needed doing. I wished I could have helped him."

Robert L. Howard

We served together

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

Brent Johnson

We were close friends



**Algernon P. Kaakimaka, Jr.
A/2/503**



"Aloha, my brother Algie.

I miss you more each day. What fun you were to have around. Hope the rest of our ohana is there with you. I will see you again. Till then

A hui ho

Ano ai ko ala hele

Aloha ia oe, your baby tita Ku'u lei."

From his sister

"MY BROTHER, I MISS YOU."

From a friend and "Herd Brother",
Sam Boccuti

**Michael Joseph Kennedy
C/4/503**



Marvin Winston Murray, B/2/503

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

Charles E. Taylor

We were college classmates

Tony Valdez Nastor, D/2/503



**Jessie Gerald Poe
A/2/503, D/3/503***

Dennis Michael Ramon, D/3/503

Lawrence Oliver Rose, D/4/503

"Never forgotten. Larry was an old high school buddy and we both served in Vietnam at the same time. However, he made the ultimate sacrifice. He was a great guy with a great sense of humor."

Joseph Francella
588th Engineers

We were high school classmates

**William Douglas Sisler
A/4/503**



"He is remembered. His name stands on a memorial in front of Morgantown High School."

Gary Burch

(continued....)



Larry Hays Smith
HHC/1/50



"Larry Hays Smith is fondly remembered by the soldiers with whom he served from the Heavy Weapons Platoon 4.2' Mortar Section of Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry."

Jim Sheppard
50th Infantry Historian
He served in our unit

Note: This remembrance is posted in connection with each 1/50th KIA.

Porfirio Sam Solano
D/2/503



"Yo Bro, sup my friend. Another year has come and gone and we still miss you very much. Once again I'll place a rose at the wall in your remembrance! We miss you. Avondale Parade is getting bigger every year, you would be very proud of Avondale and of our American Legion Riders!! I salute you my Bro!"

Butch Chavez
Vice President American Legion Riders
We were close friends

"Have always remembered you on Veterans and Memorial Day. Throughout my military career I would at times think of you. Why did God take you away? What a sacrifice it was for your family. I still think of you, like it was yesterday. When I first met you and we got along great. You were an outstanding young soldier. I am just sorry I took so long to write this, but I didn't want to cause any hardships. But you have always been in my prayers. Brother in Arms Forever."

SFC Cortez (Ret)
US Army 1st Cav Div
We were close friends

Timothy Lawrence Strohm
A/1/50



Allen Sheffield Stroud
C/4/503



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

Dora Anne Stroud
He is my husband
Queenanne1@bellsouth.net
(Posted February 19, 2005)

Roosevelt Townsend, C/4/503
Joseph Tommy Vandevender, A/2/503, D/3/503*
"Whenever I visit his grave I recall the fine person he was. We only knew one another for a short time, going off to serve our country. Sorry you had to lose your life, especially hurts now that we hear about the lies they were feeding us. God Bless You Joey."

Bob Grundner, RM3 USNR
Friends

Michael Earl Walker, D/1/50



William Thomas Wedgeworth
C/4/503

"This is a picture of William when he was in Vietnam on his tour of Duty. He will always be remembered in our hearts and in our prayers."

Michele
He is my father



*"17 Jun 2008, 40 years ago today.
From a friend from the same platoon."*
Wayne Walker



(continued....)



Leonard Ray White, D/2/503

*"I remember you Squaman -- I said goodbye but you
were already gone --
I think of you from time to time -- TL."*

Thomas L. Thomas
Fellow soldier



Henry Eugene Wooley
D/2/503

~ June 1969 ~



John Peddie Batterson, Jr.
4th PI Det

*"He was our leader, our friend, our mentor as young
boys at Camp Siwanoy, Wingdale NY. We were there
when we heard the news. He had told us he was going
to be a photographer. We asked why was he going
and he told us it was his duty to serve. I would
remember that when I enlisted in the Air Force."*

Steven H. Klein
We grew up together

Robert Dennis Clatfelter, D/4/503

*"I never met you, but I'm Richard's son. I have heard
stories of you and even though we never got the
chance to meet, I cry sometimes when I think of you. I
wish you had the chance to see me and our family
now. I wish I had the chance to see you now. But we
will meet again someday. I love you.
Thank you for your sacrifice."*

Nathan Clatfelter
He is My Uncle

Jerry Lynn Ervin, A/B/3/503*



Charlie Will Farmer, Jr.
D/16 Armor



*"I would like to have my father's name posted on the
Virtual Wall. His name was Staff Sergeant Charlie W.
Farmer, Jr. He was from LaGrange, Georgia.
I was born in May, '69. My Dad was killed in June, '69.
I would be interested to know if there is someone who
might remember serving with him. He was with the
173rd Airborne Brigade."*

Leslie Battle
lesb92@bellsouth.net
(Posted 17 Nov 1999)

Note: SSG Farmer's name appears on the Virtual Wall

*"Charlie. I have really missed you all these years. I did
a rubbing of your name when the traveling wall came
to Memphis. I hope to see you on the permanent wall
in Washington someday. You are such a great guy."*

Jack Syfan
Friend/Teammate



Joe Robert Garcia, "Doc"
A/HHC/4/503*



*"I knew Joe as a teenager along with his sister
Carmen and brother Paul. He was a close friend of my
cousin Alfonso and an adopted member of the family,
he was always welcomed. As a Vietnam vet and 'lifer
grunt' I know the importance of medics in an infantry
unit and he represented them well.*

Love you, Joe."
From a friend,
Rudy Segura, 1st Sgt (Ret)

(continued....)





Phillip Dean Hardy
D/16 Armor

*"Remembered by his niece."
Stephanie Hardy Alphin*

"My Love. You have traveled with me for 41+ years and will be with me forever! My love for you is as strong for you today as it was the day you walked away from me in hurt and anger. But I was hurt worst the only regret I have and I am still carrying it with me is when I ask you to wait till I was 18 to marry you or at least a few more months. I should have listened to you and maybe we would have had our family and growing old together. Forgive me my Love as I have forgiven you for things that happened after the worst day of my life. I still love you and always will and I still waited for you after you left in hopes that when you came home you still wanted me! You are My Hero and will always be My True Love." Unsigned



James Harrison Hopkins
A/4/503

"James Harrison Hopkins was born on April 28th, 1949 in Marietta, Georgia. He was the son of Pascal and Marion Hopkins of 1171 Powder Springs Street, Smyrna, Georgia. He was the younger brother of Pascal Junior and Victoria as well as the twin brother of Harriett, and the half-brother of James Warren.

Harry, as his classmates and friends knew him, attended Smyrna Elementary, Pebblebrook Junior High, Campbell High, and Wills High School. He was intelligent, witty, handsome, and an excellent dancer.

Many called him a natural born entertainer. After graduating Wills High School in 1967, Harry fulfilled his dream of following in his father's footsteps by enlisting in the United States Army to become a paratrooper.

He attended basic training at Fort Gordon, Georgia, and then 11B Advanced Infantry Training and the United States Army Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia. He deployed to South Viet Nam on June 26, 1968 and was assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

Harry fell on June 4, 1969 in the Central Highlands Province of Binh Dinh. He had only 22 days remaining before his tour of duty would have been completed and he would have returned home. Harry was buried

in the Marietta National Cemetery on June 13th with full military honors. He attained the rank of Specialist Four. His awards and decorations include the Purple Heart, Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster and "V" Device for Valor, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnamese Campaign Medal, Combat Infantryman's Badge, and the Parachutist Badge. Harry was a beloved son, brother, playmate, classmate, and friend to many. His heroism and sacrifice are not forgotten. Sleep peacefully, Harry, and comfort your loved ones.

We will always remember you."

Steven McDonald, We grew up together

Robert Joseph Kazmierczak, C/1/503, D/4/503*

"I have prayed for him every week since his death and will always wonder why he had to die at the age of 20. We attended Father Baker High School together and graduated in 1966." Stan



William Travis Matlock
C/1/503, A/1/50*

"My twin daughters were only 3 when Travis gave his life for our country. He always called them his little 'girlees'. You will always be in our hearts, Travis."

Maxine Gaddy, Sister-in-law



Left to right on the VTR: William Travis 'Tex' Matlock (22W-034), SGT Joe Rodgers, Bates and Junior Villeuman.

(Photo credit: David Payne)

(continued....)



Michael James Parmerter
HHC/173 Bde



"CPT Parmerter lost his life while serving with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 173rd Airborne Brigade. If any member of FAOCS Class 21A-67 has access to a class photo-please contact me."

Randy Dunham
Field Artillery OCS Alumni
faocsalumni@sbcglobal.net
(Posted December 26, 2009)



Roger Alan Parrish
C/4/503



"You arrived a week before I did. I lasted four weeks after you. 36 years ago today it seems like yesterday. Rest easy, Rog."

From a fellow platoon leader C/4/503,
Fred Stephans

"Roger and I were at Manhattan High School together. He was one class behind me. Our fathers were both professors at Kansas State University and his family and mine both loved to vacation in the Rockies. One summer (I think after my junior year and his sophomore year), we met at a campground at Lake Granby, Colorado. We decided to climb Long's Peak just outside Estes Park. The plan was to hike up to Joe's Grove just above the timberline and camp the night, then do the serious climbing the next day. We made it, but I got such a horrible case of altitude sickness I'm not sure how I ever hiked back down."

Go with God, my friend!"

From a friend,
Bill Curnutte



Long's Peak Colorado

Lorenzo Richard Pettis, A/1/50
Jerry Eugene Rogers, A/4/503
James Everett Sawyer, Jr., D/4/503

"Hello Uncle Jimmy. My father has told me so much about you. I hear you were a ladies' man, had an ear for music, and were a wonderful person. My son Josiah looks like you. You are missed."

Love, your niece Kendra Sawyer

"We completed jump school together, February 1969. God only knows what we would have got into if we had known each other longer. Instant brotherhood at Ft Benning, like we had been friends forever. He wasn't Jim to me, I always called him 'Tom Sawyer'. Cried the day his letter was returned to me in the Nam. First time since I was a kid. Still get weepy thinking about it. God have mercy on us all."

Rest in peace, Jim!"

From a friend,
Paul C. Stike, Jr.

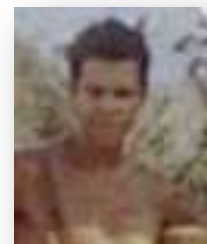
Eugene Kenneth Wallace, HHC/173 Bde

"I haven't forgotten you. I was involved in the ambush that took the life of Sgt. Wallace. We did a lot of shooting and used up all our ammo that day. A 4/60 duster came to help and called in gunship support. We carried Sgt. Wallace's body onto the dustoff. He died almost instantly in front of me. I never met him before. But I will never forget him."

God bless you buddy."

R.J. Conboy

Albert B. Washington, Jr.
B/1/503



"In his arms. As I tried to revive you for the third time I knew that you were in the hands of our Lord. I felt his hand on my shoulders and I knew it was time to let you go with him. Your service to our Country will never be forgotten. You are with me every day."

Julio Gonzales

173rd, 503rd Bat, Co. B., 3rd Plat.

Norman Gene Welch, A/2/503
Michael Alan White, D/2/503, A/3/319*

(continued....)



A black and white portrait of a young man with short, light-colored hair, looking slightly to the left. He is wearing a dark military uniform with a high collar and a strap across his chest. The background is a plain, light color.

"JJ Clark and I served on the staff of the 173rd Airborne Brigade during 1969 and 1970. He was the Operations Officer and I was the Assistant Intelligence Officer. We worked closely together for a period of time when I served as the Senior Intelligence Officer. Every morning for about two months we met in his tent to review the special intelligence reports. He was usually just finishing his morning shave. I can still recall his slightly freckled face, reddish hair, penetrating blue eyes and commanding voice. He was a tremendous help to me and greatly assisted me in doing my job. He was a superb mentor. Without question he was an outstanding Operations Officer no matter what was happening regarding brigade operations, he was on top of it. You could see and feel his presence in the brigade operations center when he was there. At other times you might find him in a chopper monitoring operations, he was always near the action. Because of his outstanding performance of duty and future potential, the brigade commanding general selected him to command one of the brigades battalions. He was in his command chopper directing a battalion operations when he was killed. He was at the front and where he wanted to be. His loss was tragic and ended the career of a bright officer. JJ Clark was not only a fine officer, but a true leader and mentor. He did his duty and served his country well. He is remembered."

*"THE CORPS! Bareheaded, salute it!
With eyes up, thanking our God
That we of the CORPS are treading,
Where they of the CORPS have trod!
They are here, in ghostly assemblage!
The MEN of the CORPS long dead!
And our hearts are standing ATTENTION!
While we wait for their passing tread!
We sons of today, we salute you!
You sons of an earlier day!
We follow, close order, behind you!...
Where you had pointed the way!
The Long Gray Line of us stretches
Through the years of a century told!
And the last man feels to his marrow,*

Harold Eugene Cowan, B/3/503

"We were always in the 'Suai Ca' or the '506' Valley when we lost someone or took a casualty. On this trip to the valley we had split the platoon up and our squad was laagered on the crest of a long ridge running parallel to route 506, a red dirt road that ran the length of the valley. We could watch the entire valley from there and had a sense of being able to see everything that happened. It was an illusion, of course, but the view from the ridge was broad and peaceful. The slopes leading down to the valley floor were covered with scrub brush and at places a hard scabble that caused us to slip and slide whenever we had to run a patrol down to the floor for recon or ambush. It seems like we were camped in that location for days. On this trip, our squad was made up of Staff Sergeant Bill King, Sp/4's Luke Lohman, Willy 'Popcorn' Wright, Pat Sheeley, Dave Greene and a couple of other guys along with myself, giving us nearly the strength of a complete squad. We occupied the ridge with the platoon headquarters section. Lt. Mathers was our Platoon Leader and still in the field with us at that point. The LT was from Virginia Beach, near my home in Newport News. He was always relaxed, displaying a confidence that should have come from a previous tour but this was his first trip in country - like most of the rest of us. SFC Via was with us, so was Pennathy, Canary, and others...."

(continued....)



....One of the platoon's other squads was positioned on the valley floor. We knew approximately where they were, based on map coordinates. We could almost see the exact area in the valley where they were positioned but couldn't see them individually. They were pretty good at hiding out! We had positioned OP's on our flanks on the ridge and the rest of us were spending the days concealed but relaxing - not doing long, tiring patrols. We were also traveling with a sniper team on this trip - two more guys like us - but armed with better weapons! The sniper team was armed with a match grade M14 rifle and were outfitted with a variety of scopes, range finders and starlight technology. Their training and equipment was the source of a lot of long conversation and speculation on what they could hit and how far away they could hit it.

Early in the afternoon a few days after beginning this particular mission, the position of Gene's squad on the valley floor was suddenly revealed by an eruption of automatic rifle fire echoing up from the valley. It was instantly answered by the return fire of his squad members as they grabbed their weapons and tried to recover from the surprise encounter with the enemy.

The fire exchange didn't last too long - tapering off quickly, as if a cease-fire had been called. Up on the ridge overlooking the valley, Lt. Mathers quickly got their squad leader on the horn - I don't remember his name, he was a 'senior' staff sergeant, with experience in the field - for a situation report. It seemed that a couple of enemy soldiers had quietly and accidentally stumbled onto our guys. The enemy's surprise was probably as great as theirs. They got off the first volley - it was enough - Gene Cowan went down - caught in the face by the sprayed fire of the enemy AK-47. Gene was gone from us as quickly as the enemy's fire had erupted. Gene's squad returned fire and sought the quickly disappearing enemy - they mounted a four or five man chase team but could find no bodies to claim as evidence of having avenged Gene's death - only a blood trail that went on for some distance. The chase team quickly regrouped. Their squad leader called in a friendly KIA by roster line number that's when we knew that it was Gene who was gone. I didn't know Gene - only a few of our guys did - he was a pretty quiet guy and had not been in-country very long. I look for his name on 'The Wall' whenever I'm there. Days later, back at LZ Uplift, the Battalion Chaplain held a memorial service for Gene."

Former Staff Sergeant Lee Wilkerson
"B" Co., 3rd Bn., 503rd Infantry
173d Airborne Brigade

Joseph Michael Giusta
C/3/503



"Giusta is second from the left in this picture, we had just been resupplied and the guys were having some fun with the shaving cream out of the SP package."

Gregg Corbin, we served together.

Donald Dale Hall, C/1/503

"Donnie, as I approach retirement I keep remembering the fun we all had at Kaiser Lake chasing the babes and drinking beer and how you never got to fulfill your life's dreams and ambitions. John K is doing well and I have not seen Bruce M in years but you are remembered and you will never be forgotten.

Your friend,
Steve Wright
USMC 1968-1974

William Leon Hudnall, C/2/503



(continued....)



**Michael James Le Leaux
A/3/503**



"He was one of mine, in my platoon in the 173d Airborne Brigade. He was KIA in 1970 just short of his 19th birthday. We called him 'Lo' because of the last part of his name. He was quick, brash and impulsive, qualities that he admitted had gotten him in some trouble in earlier years. But he learned fast and became a good enough soldier to walk point for us. He is buried in Our Lady of Sorrows cemetery in or near Westwego, Louisiana."
Sgt. K (Tom Kaulukukui)
We served together

John Arthur McGinn, C/4/503

"My name is Bill McCollum, I was John's close friend in Vietnam. As soon as we met we became close. We even looked like brothers. He was just a great guy and soldier. We talked a lot and saw the Vietnam war the same way. John was always trying to help the Vietnamese people and kids. I wish I had talked to his dad because he told me how much he loved and missed him. I only wish I was with him the night he died. I will never forget him and wish to tell everyone what a good friend he was. R.I.P. my friend, the war for you is over. I'm still trying to find some way of letting go, but I guess it will be with me until we meet up with you in another life."
Bill McCollum
He was my battle buddy

"(Excerpt) I remember the day I found out that I'd lost one of my closest college friends. Jack McGinn was a tow-headed kid from Chevy Chase, Maryland, who had a warm, winning smile and an easy manner. Jack and I had met and gone through fraternity rush together at the beginning of our freshman year. Jack pledged Sigma Pi Fraternity and tried like hell to get me to do the same. I really wanted to, but I knew that I would have been the only Jewish guy in the house; I wimped out. Jack decided not to return to college for his senior year and enlisted in the Army instead. Following completion of basic and advanced infantry training at Ft. Jackson, South Carolina, he left for Vietnam as a rifle squad leader. A few weeks later, he was dead. I'll never forget the day I found out. Dean Brodie, a bear of a man who was the advisor to the Freshman Senate, spotted me in a hallway of the student union and motioned me into his office. He closed the door. An inveterate kidder, he was strangely serious and

gracious that day, asking me to take a seat on a couch as he sat opposite me on the edge of his desk. 'I have some sad news,' he said. 'Jack McGinn died.' It hit me hard. I felt my throat tighten, a knot in my gut, my eyes water. My eyes and fingers fixated on the tight weave of the thick black fabric of his couch. Dean Brodie told me what he knew, then came over and put his hand on my shoulder. 'You liked him a lot, didn't you?' I nodded, unable to speak for a few minutes. I hope to honor his memory and his service by never forgetting him."
Steven Hirsch
We were college classmates

Daniel Jackson McMahan, B/1/503



**Donald Warren Ollila
B/3/503**



"Donald Warren 'Don' Ollila was born on November 16, 1948, in Watertown, South Dakota, to Jean and Toivo (Ole) Ollila. He had three brothers: Dale, Richard, and Randall. He also had one sister, Suzanne. He and his family moved from Watertown to Sturgis, South Dakota, in 1961, and he graduated from Sturgis High School in 1967. He had plans to become an architect and had pre-registered at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. He married Connie Muckler in 1969. Connie remembers, 'Don was a fun-loving man who enjoyed life to the fullest. He loved riding motorcycles and working on his cars.' Donald Ollila entered the service on August 28, 1968, at Sioux Falls, South Dakota. He volunteered for both Jump School and instant NCO school. He went overseas to Vietnam on September 11, 1969, with Company B, 3rd Battalion, 173rd Infantry Division. Sergeant Donald Warren Ollila was killed in action on June 8, 1970, in his final month in Vietnam. He was killed when his platoon was on patrol; he had gone to get water for everyone, and he was shot in the thigh and bled to death on the field. His body was recovered and returned to the U.S. and he was then buried with military honors in the Black Hills National Cemetery, as are both of his parents...."



(continued....)



....Sergeant Ollila's awards include: Marksman badge (M16 and M60 machine gun), Parachute Jump Wings, Combat Infantryman's badge, Sharpshooter badge (M14), Good Conduct medal, National Defense Service medal, Vietnam Service medal, Vietnam Campaign medal, Bronze Star medal, Air medal, Army Commendation medal, Purple Heart medal (with Oak Leaf Cluster), and the Silver Star medal. But according to his brother, 'He had many medals, but the one that meant the most to him was his Jump Wings.' Rest in peace with the warriors." Unsigned

[See Don's Silver Star Citation on Page 48]

Philip Morey Overbeck
B/4/503



Stephen Kealoha Ramos
N75/LRRP



"The son of SFC Stevens R. Ramos and Mrs. Ramos of Schofield Barracks."

"Steve and I went to AIT and airborne school together and later wound up in the 173rd Airborne Brigade. He served in November Rangers and, after a stint as a grunt in the 2/503, I served in Casper Flight Platoon as a door gunner. One of my close buddies was Ed Liptrap, a crew chief. During a night extraction Steve could not get on Ed's helicopter. He leaped and Ed held on to him. Steve slipped from Ed's grasp and fell to his death. I grieved for Steve as I comforted my friend. Ed and I stayed up the rest of the night. I'll never forget the sun coming up that morning. Ed and I went to breakfast and then flew our missions. For over thirty years I have searched for Ed. I hope I find him."
John Potts, We served together (Posted June 27, 2002)



Janna Hoehn collected photographs of the 42 men from Maui County, Hawaii who died in the Vietnam War, made this beautiful portable display, and sent the photographs to us.

John Robinson, D/1/503

Steven Ray Stoltz
A/4/503



"Steve this is the least I could do for a friend (a different photo posted. Ed), fellow soldier and the fact that I miss you. Lest we forget. Damn it Steve, I came home, why didn't you?"

David J. Peters
We grew up together



Victor Arnaldo Tafoya, "Doc"
HHC/B/1/503*



"Victor, Old friend, classmate and neighbor. Happy Birthday and Merry CHRISTmas to you from someone that admires you for your courage and for the unselfish sacrifice that you made for your men and for our country. God's peace my friend."

Scott Wilcock
A good friend



John Frederick Tillou, Jr.
B/1/503



"T, it has been 36 years since we served together in Vietnam. I have always remembered all you taught me. You are always in the thoughts of the Satan Plt members who had the honor to serve with you."

Sgt. Ken Gaudet
Squad/Fire Team Leader



(continued....)



Michael Patrick Tomsic, D/3/503, D/Spt*

"Mickey was a very young boy when he left for Vietnam. We never saw him alive again. He was a good son and a good friend to our family. We have missed him ever since he died. I don't think we will ever forget him!!"

Frances D. Olson
We were close friends

Thomas Edward Watson, A/4/503

"Hi Buddy. Tom, I remember our training at Ft. Gordon and Airborne school together. I recall the night we went AWOL for the night to party. We had a great time. We were delighted that we were going to the 173rd Airborne. No way did we want to go to a leg unit! I was a door gunner with Casper Platoon when you were killed. It is now 2004 and you still come into my mind. I will always remember you."

Your buddy, John Potts
We served together

~ June 1971 ~

Carl Warden Brewster, D/4/503

"You will always be in my thoughts dear friend. I rememeber when you were assiged to D/4/503 and we became friends instantly with both of us being from Ohio. I will always miss you. You, along with the others will always be in my heart until we meet on the other side."

Richard L. Clark
Sgt/Team Ldr, D/4/503, 173d Abn
We were close friends

Maurice Herbert Bryant, A/4/503

Thomas Joseph Conniff, A/3/503/173 LRRP*

Ernest Dwight Hart, Jr.
N75/173 LRRP



Joseph D. Hayes
N/75, 173 LRRP

"Jay was my best friend. We spent countless hours together from the age of 12 until he went into the

Army; within a year of his entry into the Service, I would be drafted. He began his tour in Vietnam on July 27, 1970, and I entered Vietnam on May 6, 1971-- just 38 days before he was killed in action. To become a hero had always been Jay's goal in life. He loved the military and idolized a cousin who had become a colonel in the Green Berets. Initially, he was ruled '4-F' because of a childhood accident, and was unable to join the Army. However, that would not stop his quest to serve his country in time of need. He urged his doctor to issue a medical release that would allow him to enlist, and so his journey to glory resumed. Funny thing, that road to glory! Somehow we presume that we will live to enjoy the accolades of those whom we love, and we overlook the fact that the price of glory may be the ultimate price. Nevertheless, those of us who knew Jay well believe that the potential sacrifice of his life would not have deterred him in the least from making his choice to serve God and country. Indeed - Jay reached his goal. He is memorialized forever with those who bled and died in the War that we weren't allowed to win. Rest in Peace, my friend, forever enshrined in the cold, black granite of Panel #03W - Row #074."

From a friend,
Paul Shelton



Larry Lee Miller
D/4/503



Hugh Ames Sexton, Jr.
D/4/503

"Hugh called us from the hospital after his injury. He acted like nothing was wrong. He didn't want to worry us. My father went to Saigon and was with Hugh when he died."

Addie Sexton Futrett
He is my brother





Platoon Sergeant

ROBERT RICHARD LITWIN

who served with

COMPANY A

2nd BATTALION (AIRBORNE)

503rd INFANTRY REGIMENT

173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)

was posthumously awarded the

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS CITATION

FOR AWARD OF THE

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

Date of Action: 22 June 1967



Citation:

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, 2nd Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry, 173d 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.

HQ US Army, Vietnam

General Orders No. 5285 (16 October 1967)

He was also a posthumous recipient of the

PURPLE HEART

NATIONAL DEFENSE SERVICE MEDAL

VIETNAM SERVICE MEDAL

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM CAMPAIGN SERVICE MEDAL

and was entitled to wear the

COMBAT INFANTRYMAN BADGE

and

ARMY PARACHUTE WINGS

***“THE PROUD YOUNG VALOR THAT
ROSE ABOVE THE MORTAL THEN,
AT LAST, WAS MORTAL AFTER ALL”***

***YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN
NOR SHALL YOU EVER BE***



Reflections of June 22, 1967

By Wambi Cook

A Company 2/503, 2/67-2/68

WambiCook@aol.com



It had been 35 years or so when I finally garnered the courage to address my Viet Nam past head-on. Memories of the times had purposely lain dormant. I rationalized it wasn't worth it to arouse such recollections. It would certainly cause irreparable damage to my already delicate mental well-being I reasoned. Above all, I was unsure of my emotional capacity to cope with specific episodes that, even to this day, continue to annex my nightly slumber on an all too regular basis. It took another Alpha company survivor's insistence that I read a recent internet article recounting Alpha Company 2/503's mêlée on 22 June 1967. Only after reading the article several times did I come to terms with the battle and how it has affected my psyche through the years. The bloodbath had been branded with the more beguiling, **Battle of the Slopes**. I suspect I'll always refer to it as Hill 1338 or June 22. The eye-catching titles to otherwise horrific actions were never to my liking.

I arrived in country some four months earlier, exactly five months shy of my 21st birthday on that infamous day. Even with such a relatively short stretch with 2nd Battalion, I was one of a couple dozen of Alpha's "seasoned grunts", who was senior in both time *on line* and age by more than 75% of the remainder of the company. Soon after first setting foot in Camp Zinn did I begin hearing of the No DEROS Alpha tag. Of course I blew it off as another attempt by DEROSing shorttimers to put the fear of God in us longtimers.

I'm fortunate in that I can draw on my personal/intimate aspects on some circumstances leading up to 22 June 67. I'm able to do this through letters I'd written my wife and mother at the time. I discovered some long forgotten *diaries* of sort a few years ago in my Mom's basement. For the most part what I've excerpted is exactly as written. However, for the sake of clarity, I've taken editorial discretion and grammatical liberties with some passages. The following was gleaned from these correspondences:

June 1- (I described while convalescing in Bien Hoa where I was hoping to extend my shrapnel leg wound 'profile' from May 15 for at least 30 more days.) ☺ "I got a big scare today. Every available man is being sent to the field. My leg is still very swollen and I'm going to

try and by-pass B Med and go directly to 93rd Evac in Saigon." (This vain attempt to milk a few more days in the Bien Hoa garrison failed miserably. I and a few others were choppered to Pleiku and ultimately Dak To airstrips the following day). **"Tell my little boy daddy's coming home soon. I love you my dearest....just have faith and everything will turn out for the better."**

June 3- "They weren't kidding about the bad weather here in Pleiku. Rain, rain, then more rain. Will it ever stop? Yes, dear, I'm back in the field. Well I'm still off the line that is. I reported to B-Med and was immediately placed on a 30-day limited profile until the swelling in my leg subsides. **My love, night is nigh and I'm losing light. Be as sweet as can be and never stop loving me."**

June 5- "Today I gave my fatigues a half-ass wash job with some Lifeboy soap then setup a shower outside my hooch.....because of the light rain and intermittent sunshine my clothes were dry by evening. **I guess I'll close for now. Be sweet and loving as usual."**

June 6- "The fellas and I have been talking for 2 or three hours. I've never heard so many outrageous lies in my life, and they tell them with such straight faces. After each lie someone else tries to top it with an even bigger exaggeration. **Take care of that beautiful body because I have big plans for it next month."** (I spent a wonderful and well deserved R&R with my wife a couple weeks after 6/22).

June 7- "The weather is still the same. It's pouring right now. It won't last more than 5 or 10 minutes then start all over again a half hour later. The mud in some places comes up to my knees. It rained terribly the past two days. It's the worst I've seen. We awoke this morning and the 'sump' where the mess hall throws its garbage overflowed as far as our tent. It took three of us a couple hours to clean it up. **Stay calm and sweet until tomorrow. I love you."**

June 8- "One guy received a letter from his wife stating their son had been baptized Catholic and would remain Catholic even when he returned to the world. He was baptized Presbyterian and didn't appreciate it one bit. So what does he do? He writes and tells her he wants a divorce. **Tell my son daddy's praying for you both."**

(continued....)



June 9- "Over the past week we had three killed and 6 or 7 wounded. Two deaths were by a freak accident. A grenade exploded on a guy's pistol belt. He was killed instantly and two others wounded. I just knew we'd get hit sooner or later. Guys coming in from the field were telling me how lax everybody was getting. Sleeping on guard duty, loud talking, etc. The FNGs just don't realize how serious it is out here. The past couple days opened a lot of their eyes. It's too bad a few had to learn the hard way. ***Kisses & love to my son. I love him so. I love you both.***"

June 10- "This army is becoming real chicken shit. Two cooks were sent to the field pending court martial because they forgot to roll down their sleeves after 6PM as if the bugs come on duty at 6. ***Give my everlasting love to our son. I miss you all so very much. Well, dear, I'll write as much as possible. I'll make it through this.***"

June 13- "Rumors are spreading that we'll soon be moving farther North to Da Nang. A much wilder rumor is that the Brigade will be jumping into Israel as a 'reactionary force.' We'd tell them they'd better shape up or we'll get you. (Ha!) ***Love and kisses to everyone. I'll write again soon. Your loving son.***"

June 15- (I was part of the final contingent of the brigade to leave our Bien Hoa base camp). "We're supposed to be a reserve force for some special forces camp somewhere near Pleiku Province. The problem, operation phase, etc., is supposed to take about 30 days, but like I've said many times before, I never can tell about this man's army. ***Be sweet and we'll be together for sure in a few weeks.***"

June 16- "I've decided that if I do have to go back on line, I hope to return to my old platoon and same squad. We had a lot of laughs and still got our work done." (I rejoined Alpha in the field that same afternoon. I was honestly overjoyed to be back with my boys. A dozen or so faces I didn't recognize. I surmised they arrived during the month I was recuperating).

June 24- "My darling Anita, I thank the lord I'm alive today. We arrived in Dak To on the day of the 17th. Our primary objective was to protect a special forces camp and the Montanyards (mountain natives). This was supposed to be a relatively easy operation. We'd been out 3 days with no incidents. We left our last LZ about 7:15 AM the morning of the 22nd. My platoon moved last. We stayed behind to spread tear gas crystals all over our positions. This was done to prevent the VC from hitting us from the rear. The lead platoon hadn't hit the bottom of this very steep hill (mountain) before the VC hit. At first it seemed like a minor firefight. My platoon stayed on top while 2 others battled an

unknown force of VC. I volunteered along with a few others to go forward and bring up the wounded. As I headed down the hill I could hear what one would imagine what a huge football crowd would sound like. It was VC cheering as they came at us in human waves. They soon overran our perimeter. I'm sure they were well doped up. I got further into the action when I realized the VC had surrounded us on all sides. Guys were getting killed all around me. I did what I could. I swear the VC was so close some fought hand-to-hand. My rifle never jammed and I didn't run out of ammo." (Unfortunately, the remaining pages were either misplaced or lost over time).

Epilogue

One would think that after suffering over 75% casualties, it would take Alpha a significant period of time to get back to fighting strength. On the contrary. The reconstructed Alpha Company was reloaded, for the most part, by troops fresh from the states or in-country jump qualified transfers with little or no combat experience to speak of. We began running daily operations a click or two from the **Slopes** within a week. My R&R couldn't commence soon enough. Upon my return from Hawaii I was informed that the company, and particularly my platoon, incurred five deaths and multiple wounded from a friendly artillery or mortar short-round the day after I left for R&R. Needless to say the prospects for completing my tour in one piece grew exponentially inferior with every passing day. Charlie had his best chance of killing me on the 22nd, and I was resolute not to give him the satisfaction a second time. As luck would have it, he got his second best opportunity five months later, a meager few kilometers from 1338, on Hill 875. Xin loi, SOB.



Wambi....a proud paratrooper of the Sky Soldier kind.





Donald Richard Judd

Date of birth: April 11, 1943

Date of death: June 22, 1967

Place of Birth: Batavia, New York

Home of record: Alexander, New York

Status: KIA

Donald Judd graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, Class of 1966.



~ SILVER STAR CITATION ~



Regiment, in the Republic of Vietnam. On 22 June 1967, with First Lieutenant Judd in the position of rifle platoon leader, Company A was engaged by a North Vietnamese Battalion. With the lead platoon pinned down and in danger of being overrun, Lieutenant Judd stood up and rallied his men in relief of the beleaguered force. Although seriously wounded in this gallant assault, Lieutenant Judd constantly exposed himself to the intense enemy fire to reorganize the perimeter and encourage his men. Despite the heavy volume of automatic weapons fire being directed at him, Lieutenant Judd went forward of the lines to extract a wounded man. Though he sustained another crippling wound, Lieutenant Judd continued forward and succeeded in returning the man to the relative safety of the perimeter. Hearing another cry for help, Lieutenant Judd left the safety of the perimeter to drag in another wounded man. Refusing medical aid so that his men would have more medication, Lieutenant Judd disregarded the murderous hail of enemy fire and continued to move throughout the perimeter to lead his men and redistribute ammunition until he fell mortally wounded. Lieutenant Judd's courage and professional conduct were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.

General Orders: Headquarters, I Field Force Vietnam,
General Orders No. 653 (August 15, 1967)

Action Date: June 22, 1967

Service: Army

Rank: First Lieutenant

Company: Company A

Battalion: 2d Battalion

Regiment: 503d Infantry Regiment

Division: I Field Force

Awarded for actions during the Vietnam War:

The President of the United States of America, authorized by Act of Congress July 9, 1918 (amended by an act of July 25, 1963), takes pride in presenting the Silver Star (Posthumously) to First Lieutenant (Infantry) Donald Richard Judd (ASN: OF-107775), United States Army, for gallantry in action while serving with Company A, 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry.



Duty...Honor...Country



~ THE FINAL INSPECTION ~

The Soldier stood and faced God,
Which must always come to pass.
He hoped his shoes were shining,
Just as brightly as his brass.

'Step forward now, Soldier,
How shall I deal with you?
Have you always turned the other cheek?
To My Church have you been true?'

The soldier squared his shoulders and said,
'No, Lord, I guess I have not.
Because those of us who carry guns,
Can't always be a saint
I've had to work most Sundays,
And at times my talk was tough.
And sometimes I've been violent,
Because the world is awfully rough.
But, I never took a penny,
That wasn't mine to keep...
Though I worked a lot of overtime,
When the bills got just too steep.
And I never passed a cry for help,
Though at times I shook with fear.
And sometimes, God, forgive me,
I've wept unmanly tears.
I know I don't deserve a place,
Among the people here.
They never wanted me around,
Except to calm their fears.
If you've a place for me here, Lord,
It needn't be so grand.
I never expected or had too much,
But if you don't, I'll understand.

There was a silence all around the throne,
Where the saints had often trod.
As the Soldier waited quietly,
For the judgment of his God.

'Step forward now, you Soldier,
You've borne your burdens well.
Walk peacefully on Heaven's streets,
You've done your time in Hell.'

Author Unknown



[Sent in by Ed Privette, HHC/2/503d]

Richard Mark Pearsall

Delta Company Trooper

December 26, 1948 to March 16, 1969

Remembered by His Buddies

These are the only pic's that I have of Richard Mark Pearsall, KIA March 16, 1969. If you could find some room in the next newsletter the few guys I keep in touch with would appreciate it.

Paul Littig
D/2/503d



Sergeant Richard Mark Pearsall

D CO, 2ND BN, 503RD INFANTRY, 173RD ABN BDE,
USARV

Army of the United States

Pontiac, Michigan

On the Wall at Panel W29, Line 55

"Not Forgotten"



2/503d VIETNAM Newsletter / June 2013 – Issue 54

Page 47 of 60



Donald Warren Ollila

Sergeant

Sturgis, South Dakota, Meade County

November 16, 1948 -- June 8, 1970

Killed in Action in Vietnam



~ Silver Star Citation ~



For gallantry in action while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an armed hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam:

Sergeant Ollila distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 8 June 1970, while serving with Company B, 3d Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate). As he was leading a watering party down a trail to a stream, he spotted two North Vietnamese Army soldiers on its opposite bank. It was apparent they were waiting in ambush for they were already in a well concealed position. He immediately opened fire resulting in the death of one of the enemy, at the same time yelling to his men to take cover. While still firing in a fully exposed position to cover the movement of his men off the trail, he was



wounded in the hip. Only after his men reached safety did he dive for cover himself. Even though he was seriously wounded he continued to lay down suppressive fire forcing the enemy to flee up the ridge to his rear. He continued to fire until he fell unconscious from his mortal wounds. His willingness to expose himself to enemy fire for the safety of his men even though wounded was a clear indication of his courage and unwavering devotion to the safety and welfare of his fellow soldiers. Sergeant Ollila's actions were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.



~ Reunions of the Airborne Kind ~

~ 2013 ~



The Edmonton Airborne Social Club next

Airborne Regiment Re-Union at the Edmonton Aviation Museum June 7-9, 2013. The Theme Chosen by the Re-Union Committee is "REMEMBER THE FALLEN".

Contact:

Bill Tremain

Committee Chairperson

Eml: tremain.bill@gmail.com



335th Assault Helicopter Company, 11th

Reunion, June 17-22, 2013, at the Golden Nugget Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, NV.

Contact:

Andy Hooker

Special Projects Coordinator

Cell: (941) 320-2463

Eml: Andyhooker1@aol.com



12th Annual Casper Aviation Platoon

Reunion, June 20-23, 2013, Crown Plaza Hotel, Arlington, VA. This reunion will be

highlighted by participation in a Wreath Laying Ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers followed by a Memorial Service for those lost in the Vietnam War. The Service will be conducted by the Reverend Henry B. Tucker, former Commander of C/1/503 and recently retired from the Bellevue Baptist Church of Memphis, Tennessee.

Contact:

Col (Ret) Donald Bliss

Eml: armerlec@aol.com



Special Forces Association National Convention 2013

, June 26-30, 2013, Hyatt Regency Hotel, hosted by Chapter XV.

Contact:

Fred Solis, 201-491-2783

Pat Connolly, 210-826-8023



B-2/501st, 101st Airborne Div., Reunion

2013, July 10-14, 2013, Ramada Plaza Suites, Fargo, ND.

Contact:

Chuck & Sue German

Phn: 701-783-4386

Eml: chucks@drtel.net



Vietnam Veterans of America 2013

National Convention, August 13-17, 2013, Hyatt Regency Hotel, Jacksonville, FL.

Contact:

Web: vva.org



173d Airborne Brigade Association

Annual Reunion, August 23-29, 2013, Las Vegas, NV. See Page 51 for details.

Contact:

Jim Bradley

Phn: 727-376-2576 (after 4:30 p.m. EST)

Eml: webmaster@173rdairborne.com

Web: www.2013Reunion.com



101st Airborne Division Vietnam Veterans 19th Annual Reunion

, September 5-8, 2013. Reunion HQ Best Western Ramokta Hotel, Rapid City, SD.

Contact:

Rodney Green

Reunion Coordinator

Eml: randhgreen@sio.midco.net



11th Airborne Division Association

Reunion, September 22-26, 2013, Fayetteville, NC.

Contact:

Bert Kurland

President

Eml: berwan@embarqmail.com



26th Annual Florida All Airborne Days

, October 3-5, 2013, Hilton Ft. Lauderdale-Airport Hotel, Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

Contact:

Bob Buffington

South Florida All Airborne Chapter

Contact:

Bob Buffington

Eml: abnbuff@gmail.com

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



AIRBORNE...ALL THE WAY!



2/503d VIETNAM Newsletter / June 2013 – Issue 54

Page 49 of 60



OPERATION SIN CITY



26 - 29 August 2013

The 173d Airborne Brigade Association Annual Reunion

Hosted by:

Chicago and Florida Chapters

~ REGISTRATION FORM ~

Please print & copy form for additional names.

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

Name: _____

Shirt Size: ____ Phn: _____ Eml: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: ____ Zip: _____

Country: _____

Unit served with in the Brigade: _____

Guest Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Shirt Size: _____

Guest Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Shirt Size: _____

Guest Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Shirt Size: _____

Guest Name: _____

Relationship: _____ Shirt Size: _____

~ Registration Fees ~

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

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

____ \$150. Gold Star Family Member

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

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

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

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

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

____ **Total of check enclosed in USD.**

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

Please Make Checks Payable to:

173d ABA 2013 Reunion

and mail to:

2013 Reunion

5640 Wellfield Road

New Port Richey, FL 34655

Host Hotel

The Orleans

4500 W. Tropicana Ave.

Las Vegas, Nevada 89103

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

ID Code A3SSC08

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

Rate good for 25 to 29 August 2013. Or register

on-line at www.orleanscasino.com/groups

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

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

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

Reunion Contact:

Jim Bradley

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

www.2013Reunion.com





PART VII

503rd PIR WWII Journal

See Parts I thru VI of WWII 503d PIR trooper Jerry B. Riseley's 'official journal' in Issues 46, 48, 49, 50, 52 & 53 respectively, of our newsletter. Photos added. Ed

19 September 1943



Special service O takes a poll of the Bn. Preparations are being made to send them the Bn Cmdrs and one officer from each Co to Gordonvale to get various things from Co supply rooms, jump suits, jump boots etc., etc. Considerable sweating as to who will get to go. Looks bad for the new married adj. Men in hospital: 54-malaria.

Capt. Bates transferred from duty and command. 1st Lt. Cole took command of company.

20 September 1943



Orders comes out saying that no more may the additional individual weapons in the Bn, the Mousers (sic), 45 revolvers, the 45 pistols GI long since surveyed or paid for on statement of charges, be carried. The next assembly area will show whether or not this is so. (Suspect that it is one of those things like roaring and promising trial of anyone so indiscrete as to bring jump badges to New Guinea and then after the jump, announcing that jump badges may be worn where upon a few officers and several men produce badges from nowhere and not a word was said. Men in hospital: 50.



Images are courtesy of the Emmett Lee Wester Collection

21 September 1943



Lt. Col. Jones, Lt. Meade, Capt. Falcon, Lt. LaVanchure and Lt. Riseley leave out before dawn on a pilgrimage to the mainland. Arrive Cairns by C-47 (Aust) 1000 hr to be greeted by Lt. B-C-D and Lt. Hill. B-C-D, a loud mouthed former second Bn boy, got hurt at the football game and missed the big game at Nadzab. Effect: Very good on listeners morale. Old camp area is falling down, weeds are growing up in the Co areas and the dust settles heavily. The officers club is well intact under the leadership of Lt. Aldrich and Charles McNeal. Parachutist still look that way and no doubt are still considered a very undesirable group by all other arms and services on account of their profession commands respect from all soldiers whatever the nationality and when peace comes the yank parachutist will no doubt find themselves much akin to their German colleagues not so the Japanese who aren't people but a cross between Japs and rats and monkeys. Hospital: 1 officer and 59 men, malaria.



(continued....)



22 September 1943



Capt. Greco gathers the Co Commanders together and says these things ought not to be and further more they're not going to be. This

does a lot of good on account of Capt. Greco is not noted for monkeying around. The Gordonvale commandos return while Lt. Turinsky leaves on a rather hazy mission to Gordonvale which brings to mind the fact that the Seventh Australian Division never gets any publicity because they expressed the opinion in public that Gen. Blamey whored around a lot in the Far East. Hospital: 1 and 65, malaria.

23 September 1943

Recommendations for OCS turned in today: Hospital today. 2 and 65, malaria.

24 September 1943



Bn received orders giving us 35 EM replacements. Good men, their service records all show at least one court martial. An unusually poor

group of eight balls will show maybe seventy five percent courts martial. Bill folds by strange coincidence have started to show up raffled and empty down in the creek. Lt. Col. Jones assembled them and gave them a talk. Hospital: 2 and 70.

25 September 1943

Yesterday morning regtl formation by Col. Kinsler explaining to the men that the unpopular coverall order is 6th Army and not regtl and promising a hope for 10% furloughs. Which latter might as well not been said because promises to soldiers are taken at just what they are.

26 September 1943



Sunday and off. Training starts tomorrow: Hospital: 4 and 78.

The death of Pvt. Russell M. BONFIELD of Alabama (SN 34160338) occurs.

Pvt. Bonfield is interred at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific at Hawaii, which is unusual, in that the burials of other 503d PIR & 503d PRCT personnel not interred privately are almost entirely at the American Military Cemetery at Manila. (Col. Kenneth H. Kinsler is interred at Honolulu). The reason for Pvt. Bonfield's interment in Hawaii, and the circumstances of his death are presently unknown to the authors. Refer to Honor Roll Data Card.

27 September 1943

Preparations are being made to move to a new area down by Jackson strip where there is water and we won't have to go as far to enplane. Hospital: 4 and 71.

28 September 1943



Capt Greco has been having a fever for two or three days but he hasn't gone to the hospital because he's afraid there's a show coming up and he doesn't want to miss it. Hospital: 3 and 76.

29 September 1943

Move to new area - using six trucks, it took the Bn all day shuttling, to get moved. Hospital: 3 and 75.

He finally went to the hospital 26 Sept 43.

30 September 1943

Big fatigue work on new camp. Hospital: 1 and 60.

1 October 1943

Regtl Surgeon raises hell about police of old camp. Co funds arrive from Gordonvale. Col. Kinsler calls all unit commanders together and clarifies the sleeves rolled down order of General



Krueger. This order is a Kruegerism. It may not seem important to some but Gen. Krueger feels he issued the order and as long as he commands it will be enforced and woe to the subordinate who fails to enforce it. Hospital: 2 and 75.

2 October 1943



Fatigue on new camp continues. Capt. Greco's condition unimproved. 1st Sgt. Hostinsky, S/Sgt. Vaughn, 1st Sgt. Gayon, Sgt. Cole to OCS.

(Note: At this time platoon sergeants were staff sergeants and squad leaders were sergeants.)

3 October 1943

Capt. Greco died at 1745. The loss to this Bn is unmeasurable. We might as well have lost any other officer (other than Lt. Col. Jones whom we are liable to lose any day through promotion to regtl cmdr). Capt. Greco was the only potential Bn Cmdr in the Bn.

(continued....)



(Note: Several sentences have been omitted here because they evaluate other officers weaknesses of command. Such evaluations do not fall within the scope of the battalion S-1's duties. To include them would bring criticism of an excellent journal as well as cast doubts about good officers).

Capt. Greco was the logical Bn commander, seeing the best in men and officers and recognizing their native weaknesses, he was an uncanny judge of human nature and men. Take the case of Pvt. Roberts. Roberts was one of the only three men to quit jumping in Co F. He was made a cook. A jumper who quits is sort of like a mulatto bastard. The jumpers won't have anything to do with him and the non-jumpers look down on him because they have all (after making damn sure that the request won't be approved) at one time or another requested to be made jumping cooks. Anyway, Capt. Greco kept saying to me *"that boy Roberts isn't a coward, he just got peeved at the regtl."* Then after we had got to Moresby he said *"I'm going to send Roberts back to F Co. I'm not even asking him. He's going back there and I think when the time comes he'll jump."* So Roberts trained w/Co F and Sept 5, he jumped at Nadzab, no longer a coward. It might have been a little thing to the govt, one man saved but that man was redeemed in his own eyes. He no longer had to say to himself *"I am a coward."* Capt. Greco knew how he wanted things run and he ran them that way. He commanded Co F before he became executive officer. Co F would have followed Capt. Greco anywhere, any time. Those boys looked at him as a great officer.



Then they got on trucks and went in toward Port Moresby where the cemetery is. It's a smoothed off grassy area with rows of white crosses, each with a name painted in black and a dog tag nailed up at the top and there

is an American flag flying at half mast. Then the big govt hearse drove up. The graves registration officers and his sergeant handled it like experienced funeral directors.

The pall bearers were Capt. Padgett, Lt. Parks, Lt. McRoberts, Lt. Fishburn, Lt. Riseley, and Lt. Bradbury, they held the flag over the casket while Father Powers said his mass over the remains of Capt. Greco. Then Lt. LaVanchure firing squad fired the salute. The graves registration sergeant presented the flag to Col. Kinsler, who will send it to Mrs. Greco. Thus did Capt. Greco perform his last act for the government.

And the battalion goes on just like it will when everybody present today is gone and dead. Just like when a civilian dies, some unreasonable people blame the doctor. But there wasn't anything he could do, he knew Capt. Greco would either get well or he wouldn't. But you can't expect some people to have much sense. The almighty gave them a head to think with but he couldn't work out a way to make them think. So they go along right smug and don't do much thinking except about themselves and how good they are. And they are happy so I guess that's all that matters. They're easy enough to get along with and it sort of irritates at time to hear some officer blowing about what hot stuff they are when you know from sad experience just how stupid they've been on occasion.

Take the rank conscious 1st Lt. _____ from Georgia. He doesn't know it but when he took that patrol out toward the Erap River for overnight (Markam Valley Operation) his whole platoon came back and made it a point to report to the Sgt. Major that the braggart Lt. and his more than braggart assistant from Texas, the smart boy that can find time to criticize everyone, particularly his brothers, were scared silly all the way and so over cautious and outwardly frightened that the platoon was disgusted with them. And by telling the Sgt. Major hoped that it would get higher.

It's discouraging to have the regimental adjutant call up and tell you that the Officer whom you put on OD, (the mess officer) a stuttering 1st Lt. of over 10 years commissioned service, had his guard sleep in their own tents instead of the guard house. You sort of feel sorry for the dumb son of a bitch which sorrow is soon lost when he tells the Battalion Commander, the staff, and every officer in the battalion that the adjutant didn't send an officers orderly to the mess this morning. Especially when you check up and find that the boy was there at 0630 but the Mess Sergeant put him on KP. All in a day's work I guess.

4 October 1943



Today we buried Capt. Greco. They had a mass down in the regtl chapel, which is nothing but a few branches and an altar which is protected by a small

fly. Most of Co F was there and maybe a hundred and fifty of the rest of the bn and all of the bn officers who had clean clothes. A lot of officers from the rest of the regiment were there. Chaplain Powers said the mass.

(continued....)



He said it wasn't customary for a Catholic ceremony to eulogize their dead because such things usually weren't so. But anyway he said *"I have never heard anyone say anything against Capt. Greco which is more than I could say about anyone else in the regiment."* That's right too. This regiment is full of hate and ambitious Brutuses (Brut). Most of the officers have forgotten any concepts of honor whatever. Capt. Greco wasn't one of these. When you look at it, the condition does seem sort of odd. But it's so. The term "nothing sacred" well applies. And it's probably a natural thing, brought on by living and thinking as machines of war.

5 October 1943



Work proceeds on the camp. Hot dope: Capt. Haedecke, Lt. Fife (1st Bn) convicted before a B board and shipped for some time. According to

sworn statements the Capt (1) was a bad administrator (which could be said of a lot of Co Cmdrs), (2) let his men take musette bags, pistols, tennis shoes to Markam Valley (as did every Co Cmdr in this bn), (3) let Lt. Fife, who was Regular Army, permit his platoon to go wild firing and injuring one, kill another. (But who shot Westberry, killed Millikin, injured Coluff etc?) Unofficially their big error was getting in bad with the P.T.B. (*P.T.B. = Powers that be*).

Awards of Purple Heart for wounds received in action at Nadzab Strip near Lae, New Guinea 5 Sept 43: Marion P. Synkowski, 35119981, Pfc, Co F; Randolph A. Carter, 33131017, Pfc, Co D; Paul J. Baltvik- 6900985, Pfc, Co F; Hubert L. Meeks, 14022998, Cpl, Co F; Martin Seal, 32212684, Cpl, Co D; Albert W. Westberry, 6926108, Cpl, Hq 2nd Bn; Victor S. Coluff, 16055449, Pvt., Co D; Hertbert G. Elmore, 38090421. Pfc, Co D; 8 Sept 43:

Killed in Action: Pvt. Parker, John M. 6399671, Hq 2nd, chute didn't open; Died of Wounds: 1st Lt. Millikin, Lindsay B. 0387344, Co E. Booby trap."



6-7 October 1943

These pages deliberately blank.

8 October 1943

Just one big happy family. That's the battalion. Everyone loves everyone and no one would think of knifing anyone. Not unless they thought it would do the victim some harm. The rest of the regiment, they think, is going to the dogs. Except that when comparing other regiments to this one, they cannot understand how those regiments can even function -- after all, they have no training like us.

Still forgotten is the spectacle of Lt. Gen. Walter Krueger at Gordonvale. His sad voice, *"Take a kindly interest in the welfare of the men."* *"Morale is that hidden spirit."*

This (below) is not a part of the original journal.

(By the way, soldiers, I, Riseley, the Adjutant whose Journal this is, kept as required by Army Regulations, have a disclosure to make as to how I arrived at the important job of Battalion Adjutant. But before I was battalion Adjutant, back there in Gordonvale days, I was an officer in Lt. Cole's Headquarter's Company. His First Sergeant was the wonderful Eddie T. Bright. But while the Table of Organization said the Executive Officer of Headquarter's Company should be the Battalion Mess Officer, I was the Battalion Mess Officer, and the Assistant Platoon Leader of the Machine Gun Platoon. I spent much more time Mess Officering than Machine Gunning. But there came a time when we did a jump up on the Atherton Table lands, at a place called Mareeba. So my mess hall was left down of Gordonvale, and I went off on the Mareeba problem.

We had scarcely gotten back from the Mareeba problem, when there was a call that General Krueger was in the area on an inspection. I followed him, General Krueger, and Colonel Jones, then the Battalion Commander, through the mess hall. At length, General Krueger turned to me. My hero. I had first seen him when I was with the 23d Infantry at Fort Sam Houston. That day at Fort Sam Houston, he spoke to an officers' meeting. *"There are two things I want to leave with you,"* he said, *"two of the most important things I can say to you. First, when there comes a time when it is a choice between doing your duty and saving your life, you will always choose the alternative of doing your duty. Second, when GI web equipment is being washed, make sure that it is carefully rinsed so as to get rid of all the GI soap. Because if it isn't, the equipment will turn yellow."*

(continued....)



"Riseley," said General Krueger, the greatest Prussian of them all, "This mess hall looks like a pig sty."

"Yes, Sir," I said. And, of course, those are the two words that win wars.

The "Guinea Gold", an Army house organ, issued 2000 copies of the issue showing the picture of the jump. How do the men know this? Some of them worked at the Gold office. But not one copy has been issued to this battalion. A little thing, perhaps, but where is the "kindly interest"? Maybe a younger regiment has it.

8 October 1943

A cadre of enlisted men and one officer (Lt. Meade) will be selected to go to Gordonvale to train recruits. Much bucking and speculation on who will get to go. Much exciting news, Capt. Lamar, our Battalion Surgeon, is going to give physical examinations for Flying Cadets. Three 2d Lts have been promoted, two of them over every 501st Prcht Bn 2d Lt. (Meaning Riseley, for one). Much happiness about this.

9 October 1943

No journal entry.

10 October 1943



Seventeen men leave on cadre to Gordonvale. Sixty-five men line up in front of the dispensary to take physical examinations for Flying Cadet. They

know there are 350 replacements in Gordonvale. Capt. Lamar was instructed by his superiors to give no examinations and the men are sent back to their outfits.

"I am now the new Lamar," says the doctor, "I will assert myself. My blood is coursing with male hormones."

In truth, Lamar's heart is broken because he is not chosen for the Gordonvale detail. (There was a nurse down there named Swannie. In later years he would marry her, and live out south in the Kansas City, Missouri Country Club district. I went there to see him about 1966. The three of us, Lamar, wife Swannie, and I, went out for a fine dinner. Then we took Swannie home, and Lamar was to take me back to the Convention Hotel. First, though, we went to see some people he knew. There were two girls and an unemployed auto salesman. On the way back, I said, *"Captain, I bet that unemployed used car salesman eats as much as a St. Bernard dog."*

"I wouldn't be surprised," he said, sadly.

Meantime, back in New Guinea, at Port Moresby near Jackson Strip, Lamar is at the officer's table at the mess. He wants to be sent to Australia and he doesn't

think he is being treated fairly. So, with all these officers looking on as sort of jury, Lamar being probably the most popular officer in the battalion, he puts his case to the Battalion Commander. Rather an unfair thing to do. It put Lt. Col. George M. Jones in the rather unpleasant spot of knowing that his officers know that Jones knows that Lamar's treatment is not satisfactory to Lamar. The Army is a crazy assed place. Here is Jones, with four years at West Point, graduated near the bottom of his class. And here is Lamar with about 10 years of University and Medical School. Did Jones know that Lamar was probably the most loyal officer Jones had? Lamar would never straight out disagree with Jones, even if he didn't agree.

Capt. Greco's death left us weak. Capt. Lamar's going would not make us any stronger. Officers and men who had waited, knowing that Capt. Greco would stand to their good if they were any good, now squirmed a little at the *"keep them bucking"* policy. The under current is getting stronger, and the feeling is that it is going to break wide open. Pfc. Jones out of Co E is puzzled. He wanted to be a flying cadet, and once passed pre-flight training. So Pfc. Jones went to see the 5th Air Force Adjutant General who told him to apply to the Adjutant General. (At Moresby the 503d was right next to the 5th Air Force. It took the Army this long to figure out that, there being plenty of room, why not camp the parachute regiment next to the airstrip?) At any rate, Pfc. Jones was like everyone else — he sent an information copy straight through.

Pvt. Kelly out of Co F, one of the three test-platooners in the outfit, told Lamar he wants to get out of the outfit. Kelly, after three years, doesn't want to be a corporal; he doesn't even want to be a PFC.

The regimental moral is not good. Some officers are running -- applying for transfer. Fellow officers whose judgment they have always trusted are looking for a way out. It is a general rout. (Most influential, yet silent, applier for transfer is Capt. Snavely, Regt S-2. Many officers heard about his letter, and came to see him.

Capt. Pratt apparently wrote the most effective letter. He asked to be transferred to a parachute unit with competent leadership. This was all directed, of course, at Colonel Kinsler, not at Lt. Col. Jones. The 2d Bn (Jones' command) has held its ground. Not so the 1st and 3d Bns.

(continued....)



11-12 October 1943

These dates deliberately left blank.

13 October 1943

The treachery of Lt. X. Capts. Y and Z brought back a couple of girls from Sydney while the regiment was at Gordonvale. Sydney has some nice girls. In the words of Lt. Bradbury, who had a leave down there, "Never before have I seen so many, so beautiful, so co-operative." When you figure out that a 2d Lt. with parachute pay drew more money than the Prime Minister of Queensland, it is not so strange. Anyway Capts Y and Z installed them in a house they rented at Gordonvale, and arranged to have them hired as female parachute riggers. These were civilian Australian women who packed our parachutes. Time came that Capts Y and Z had to move forward to Moresby with the regiment. But not Lt. X. Lt. X had a football knee and could not go. (This was a damn fool time for the Army to find out about it. The nearer we got to combat, the more of these Saturday afternoon hero football players discovered they had bad knees). So Lt. X moved in on Capt. Y's Sydney girlfriend. (He had to give up command of a company to do it, but his enthusiasm for parachute warfare was not high. Capt. Y's girl did not respond. She, at first, would have nothing to do with Lt. X. I can see that. X was not an easy guy to think much of. But X was not going to give up. He started a whispering campaign. No results, she was still true to Y. He spread the word that Y was telling everyone he had a couple of whores shackled up in Gordonvale. He gets another officer to repeat it. No success. Lt. D-F-E and Lt. F-E-D (names omitted) are busted out of the outfit after J. Dick has tipped off General Howell that they are here. Returning to Gordonvale, D is used as one of X's helpers. The foundations of the former virgin's faith in Y are shaken. Next X has a returning enlisted man in the maintenance section go to help himself. This is the last straw and Y's girl gives in to X. X, of course, is down there, because that is where the parachutes are kept, and folded. This is the last straw. The citadel falls. Ah bitter life.

14 October 1943



Lists are being turned in on a mass production basis. The policy: Any man who thinks he is officer material can appear before the board to be sent to OCS in Brisbane. (No record of how many were sent.)

15 October 1943

One Lt. Cataline (not his real name) is announced as Bn S-3. This is not good. Everyone calls him Johnnie Big Ears: He was given the name by Capt. Greco. (Note: the rest of this entry, almost a full page, has been omitted.)



16 October 1943

The 6th Army Inspector General arrives, unannounced. (If you ask Capt. Pratt about it, he will tell you it happened after his letter went direct, as well as through channels. His letter, please recall, asked to be transferred to a parachute unit with a capable regimental commander.)



The IG starts through the outfit like a monkey searching for fleas. He is using a random call roster system in addition to free for all complaint sessions. First customer: Lt. Cataline. Johnny Big Ears himself. Total time consumed with him: 3 1/2 hours. What did Cataline say? Did he paint a rosy picture? No one can say except the IG and his stenographer. Good bet. Whatever Johnnie Big Ears said it was for the benefit of 1st Lt. John R. Cataline.

Note:

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





Fellow paratrooper and combat medic, Sgt. Matthew “Matt” Sandri, C Company, 82nd FSB, 3BCT, 82nd Abn Div., who was killed in action on 20 March 2001, in Fallujah, Iraq, is an honored hometown hero in Shamokin/Coal Township, Pennsylvania.



Who Are These 2/503 Troopers?



Does anyone remember the names of the men pictured in this photo by Bob “Doc” Beaton, of a Company or Battalion awards ceremony held in January, 1967? What were the circumstances of the awards? Also, I am still searching for information about Sp4 Rusty Engle who was killed June 22, 1967. Sincerely,

Keith Hale

Friend of Rusty Engle, 3rd Platoon, A/2/503

keith.b.hale@gmail.com

Note: Sky Soldier second from left is Medal of Honor recipient Charlie Morris. Ed



Love is Colorblind

I took my dad to the mall the other day to buy some new shoes (he is 66). We decided to grab a bite at the food court.

I noticed he was watching a teenager sitting next to him. The girl had spiked hair in all different colors - green, red, orange and blue.

My dad kept staring at her. The teenager kept looking and would find my dad staring every time.

When the teenager had enough, she sarcastically asked: *"What's the matter old man, never done anything wild in your life?"*

Knowing my Dad, I quickly swallowed my food so I would not choke on his response; I knew he would have a good one!

In classic style he responded without batting an eyelid...

"While I was in Vietnam I got really drunk once and had sex with a parrot. I was just wondering if you're my kid."



[Sent in by one of our 2/503d buddies...but of course]

Future Casper or Cowboy?



Seen here at the controls of the VN era Huey proudly wearing his 173d beret is Aidan Lewis Smith (Smittytoo), grandson of this newsletter's editor at *Vietnam & All Veteran's Reunion in Melbourne, FL*. Just about the right age to fly one of those in war.



Proudly on display at home of N75 LRRP Extraordinaire, Hugh "Hubie" Imhof.



Team Sky Soldiers Kicks Ass On The Links...Again



L-R: Cocoa Beach Florida's Gunnery Sergeant Elia P. Fontecchio VFW Memorial Post 10148 Men's Auxiliary secretary-treasurer and team captain Mike Britt, Auxiliary member and the day's Team MVP Tom Sebastian, Ladies Auxiliary member Debbie Rockholt and widow of the late Sky Soldier Don Rockholt, 2/503 newsletter editor Lew "Smitty" Smith, and Viet Vet AF buddy and eagle-maker Bob Szymanski in May before tournament at Baytree Golf Club.



**Elia
Semper Fi**

Melbourne, FL -- Once again Team Sky Soldiers donned our colors and gathered at the annual *Hope 4 Heroes* golf tournament, a fund-raiser for wounded vets of the wars in the Middle East; this time dedicating our round to Don "Rocky" Rockholt (*Superman*), our former golf buddy and A/2/503d LRRP war hero who passed on recently (see Page 3, Issue 52). Our first order of the day was to sign "*Dedicated to Don Rockholt*" on our scorecard, then to curse at him a little for dying, okay, a lot. But he was with us the entire day and didn't miss a single slice, hook or water ball.

Here in Central Floridaland it stormed all week, day and night, and we all expected the tourney to be rained out. But, the skies opened up, the sun shone brightly, and it was hot as hell. Thanks Rocky for putting in a word and making it a perfect golf day for us.



Rocky

After Don left us his bride, Debbie, asked me if I wanted anything of his. At first I told her no, but then asked if she would give me his golf putter -- something I hoped to carry in the golf bag as a memento of Rocky's days on the course with us. I told Debbie I wouldn't use it as it never worked for Don either. Before the tournament began, Debbie presented me with Don's putter...I might try putting with it, once, as long as no lightning is about.

The wounded youngin's from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars were on hand too, many with their wives and children. Two of these brave lads, each having lost a leg at war, also competed in the golf tournament and played in the foursome immediately ahead of us. Throughout the day we would watch in wonder and admiration as these fellows teed off, standing on one leg without the use of a prosthetic. After striking the ball their momentum would spin them around in a complete circle yet never once falling; then, like all golfers, cursing at that unruly white ball as it went to places unknown.

Needed funds were raised for these wounded warriors and their families, and many gifts won by teams competing were not accepted but instead directed to the young warriors' table. We also sent P's and gifts their way but being the selfish bastards we are, Team Sky Soldiers kept for ourselves the free round of golf we won.

We took first place in this tournament last year, maybe by a stroke, but with Rocky looking down (or up) on us, this day we could do no wrong, turning in an unbelievable winning score of 58, with nary a bogey on the card but a lot of pars and birdies and even an eagle turned in by Bob. So what if Bob is a former professional golfer (just don't tell the other teams please).

The day was bright and warm and dry, the young vets were helped some, a record score was posted by Team Sky Soldiers, and Rocky tagged along -- it was a good day in Central Floridaland. Oh, and I have a new putter I'll keep in my bag, always.

**Lew "Smitty" Smith
HHC/2/503d, '65/'66**

Hope 4 Heros	
NAME	
2A Sky Soldiers	58-14
3A Wounded Warrior	70-2
3B Gary Sadler	64-8
5A Chuck	72 E
5B Snell	68-4
6A Bowen	60-12
6B Wounded Warrior	73+1



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