

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

**WE TRY
HARDER!**

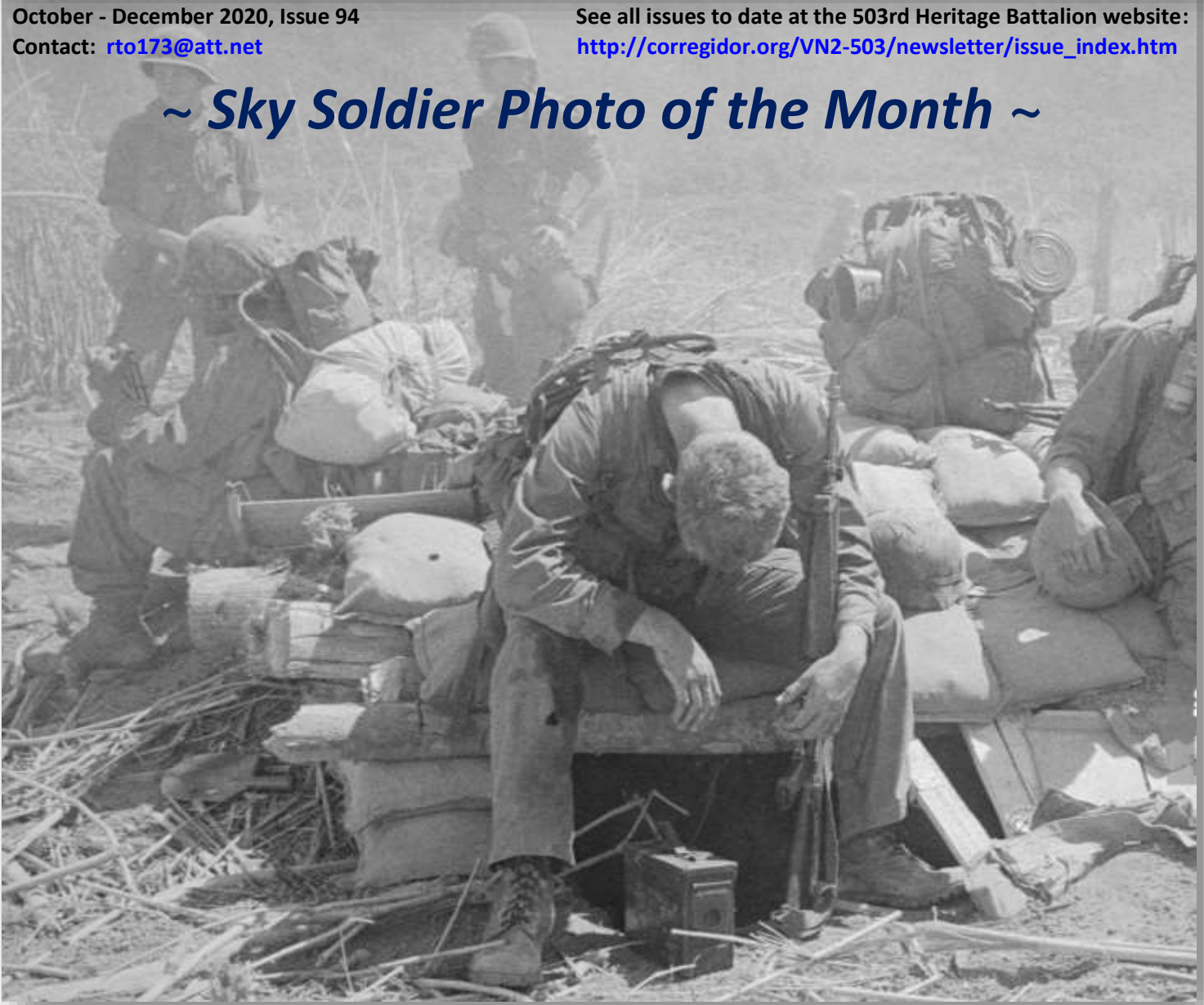
2/503d
VIETNAM
*****newsletter



October - December 2020, Issue 94
Contact: rto173@att.net

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

~ Sky Soldier Photo of the Month ~



~ Soldiers resting at a Bunker atop Hill 875 in South Vietnam ~

“Rests Exhausted Body. Dak To, South Vietnam: An exhausted U.S. soldier, rifle in hand and ammunition case within reach, sits on a bunker with his head draped between his knees in this recent photo. A moment of quiet atop the much fought-for Hill 875 afforded the GI a moment's rest.” See Page 15 for Presidential Unit Citation, and Issue 47 of November 2012 for detailed 125-page report on Operation MacArthur and the battles at Dak To in November '67.





**We Dedicate this Issue of Our Newsletter in Memory and Honor of the
Young Men of the 173d Airborne Brigade & Attached Units
We Lost 50 Years Ago in The Months of October thru December 1970**



"The time has come for me to change, from what I am to what I will be, and from thereafter, the world will see me." Leonard Allan Lanzarin, 20, SP4, A/2/503, KIA 11/4/70

**Ralph Wood Basnight, 22
SGT, B/4/503, 11/20/70**

1/8/09: *"Rest in Peace. So sorry to lose a friend and neighbor. We grew up together, played together, went to school together, and although we were in different services, we both fought in that war together. I think of you often. Rest in peace my friend."*
SGT Jack Smith, USMC



**Thomas Cooper, 22
PTE, RNZIR, 10/11/70**

"Taupiri Mountain, Ngāruawāhia. Wounded in action, 10 October 1970 – gunshot wound in friendly fire incident. Died of wounds at US 24th Evacuation Hospital, Long Binh on 11 October 1970."



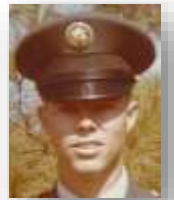
**Thomas Reuben Bradley, 21
SP4, D/4/503, 11/21/70**

8/18/04: *"He walked our point. Hello Chris, I was with your Dad in Vietnam, same platoon actually. He was a good guy, easy to like, very friendly. Being in country, in combat, didn't twist him like so many. That says he had a strong spirit. Do you have his spirit? I was 19 and he was 21 (an old fart). Married as I recall. I remember talking with him when he got back from R&R in Hawaii. He was very glad for that time with his family. That was 33 years ago. If I close my eyes, it was yesterday. Tom was my friend and I have carried him with me every day since. Your Dad was a good person with a good heart. Honor him, live well Chris."*



**Clayton Gerome Craig, 23
SGT, B/1/503, 12/18/70**

1/8/09: *"Friend. I grew up with Clayton Gerome Craig. We called him Stoney. He was a great student and an excellent Athlete. He was always the best at whatever he did. He was the kind of guy you wanted to be. I spent many days and nights at his house when we were growing up. I was in the Air Force when he was killed. Next to my son's death this is the hardest I have ever been thru. I Miss him to this day."*



Stan Harrison

**Robert Dorian Cranson, 20
SP4, B/4/503, 12/18/70**

3/18/02: *"Over 30 years have passed, yet I still think of you every day. You were my 'big brother' and when you left that August day, I could not imagine you would not come back. You did not come back, but you have always been with me. Some small piece of me still believes that somehow you were lost there, and that someday I will pick up the telephone or open the door and you will be there, but I guess that is only a way to hold onto my only brother. I miss you and love you, and I made sure Dad was well cared for until he came to rest next to you. Sleep peacefully, Robby."*



Denis Cranson

**Robert Charles Carver, 24
Flying Officer, RAAF, 11/4/70**

"Toowoomba QLD. Carver was in Vietnam only seven weeks when the plane in which he was the navigator failed to return to base at Phan Rang on 3rd November 1970. After an intensive search parts of the plane were found and his body was recovered in August 2009. Buried Garden of Remembrance, QLD."



**Charles Robert Coiley, 18
PFC, D/4/503, 11/30/70**

3/2/14: *"We Remember. Charles is buried at Saint Josephs Cemetery, Old Town, Penobscot County, ME."* **Robert Sage**



**Joseph Paul Curtis, 25
SSG, C/1/503, 12/17/70**

12/6/04: *"We Remember. Joseph is buried at Arlington National Cemetery."* **Robert Sage**



(continued...)



Dennis Humphrey Dale, 20
PFC, E/17th Cav, 11/20/70

5/29/17: "Miss and love. You are forever loved and missed and respected by your whole family. I know you carried your bible with you, so i know you are with him and with mom dad and aunt vi. Denny we all love you so very very much. Life would have been so much more complete with you but i know you did what was important to you. I love you little brother."
Carole Dale



David Gaddie, Jr., 28
SSG, E/3/503, 10/4/70

9/21/12: "Salute to a Fellow Tar Heel Veteran. You gave your life for your country and for this we Salute You."
Jim and Tom Reece and Rosa King



Wallace James Galvin, 32
SGT, HQ 26 COY RAASC, 12/25/70

"Maroubra, NSW. On his second tour of duty, Galvin was murdered in Nui Dat Christmas day 1970, by a disgruntled soldier wanting to kill another Sergeant. Buried Eastern Suburbs Crematorium, NSW."



Rex William Davies, 25
LT, 7RAR, 10/27/70

"Port Augusta, SA. Davies was accidentally killed in Phuoc Tuy when friendly patrols clashed 27th October 1970. Burial Stirling North Cemetery, SA."



James Thomas Germain, 26
1LT, A/1/503, 10/29/70

6/13/00: "To a dedicated soldier. Jim, you were one of the most dedicated soldiers and officer candidates I knew. I wish you could have come home with us, you had a lot to be proud of."
Monty Vogel



James Wheeler Dickey, 20
SGT, C/1/503, 10/21/70

3/19/05: "We Remember. James is buried at Arlington Nat Cem."
Robert Sage



Thurston Conrad Heaggans, 20
CPL, D/3/503, 11/15/70

4/2/08: "Remembered by his uncle."
Unsigned



Manuel De Leon Domine, 24
SGT, A/2/503, 10/25/70

"A Sky Soldier not forgotten."
Vietnam Vet



Michael Patrick John Herbert, 24
Flying Officer, RAAF, 11/3/70

"North Glenelg, SA. On the night of 3rd November 1970, Herbert and his navigator Robert Carver, had a bombing mission to Da Nang. They left Phan Rang at 7:30pm indicated by radio that they had completed the mission and were flying at 22,000ft, which was acknowledged and were told to go to 25,000ft. Then the plane disappeared off the screen. Herbert and Carver were posted missing and then presumed killed. Recovered and reburied in 2009 at Centennial Park Cemetery, SA."



Robert Fleming, 24
SGT, 1 AUST RFT UNIT, 11/9/70

"Melbourne, VIC. He did two tours of Vietnam and was a Sergeant at just 22. Fleming died of a brain hemorrhage at the 24 Evacuation Hospital, Long Binh on 9th November 1970. Buried Rookwood Crematorium, NSW."



Rubendid Hernandez-Rodriguez, 24
SSG, B/3/503, 11/6/70

5/31/01: "Still remembered. Ruben, you are still remembered y su prima Carman says it still hurts. You are still loved and even though I never met you I thank you for your service and hope to meet you some day in a peaceful place. Rick"
Morrow Nieves Family



William Elgin Fleming, Jr., 20
PFC, B/4/503, 11/20/70

(Virtual Wall states A/4/503)
7/16/17: "The brother I did not have the honor of meeting. May God bless you, Sister, grandparents, and Father."
Amen.spring



(continued...)



James Johnson, Jr., 23
SGT, 52nd Sig, 11/20/70
 (Virtual Wall states A/4/503)



7/17/17: "In your honor. I was born on November 20th 1970 in Tampa Florida on the day that James lost his life in service to our country. Today I wear his MIA memorial bracelet in honor of his sacrifice."

Kevin Newman

Note: Wall of Faces website states James is buried at Barrancas National Cemetery, U.S. Naval Air Station, Pensacola, FL. Ed



Robert Dale Kavich, 18
CPL, E/17th Cav, 11/22/70



1/9/17: "Gone too soon but never forgotten. Bobby, I will always remember the day you came to visit us before you left for the army. I was about 15 at the time. We played either Pool or Ping Pong, can't remember which, but I know that I won and you promised to come back for a rematch. *Don't forget KID, I will be back for a rematch and to win*. You were such a kind soul, reminded me so much of Uncle Bud, your Dad. I remember very vividly the day we received the news you were injured, then the day we received the news that you had gone home to Heaven. Such a pain to our family that I have not been able to forget. I thank you for your ultimate sacrifice so I could have a better life." **Janet Kavich Schoolcraft**

Peter Raymond Knight
LAC, RAAF, 12/15/70



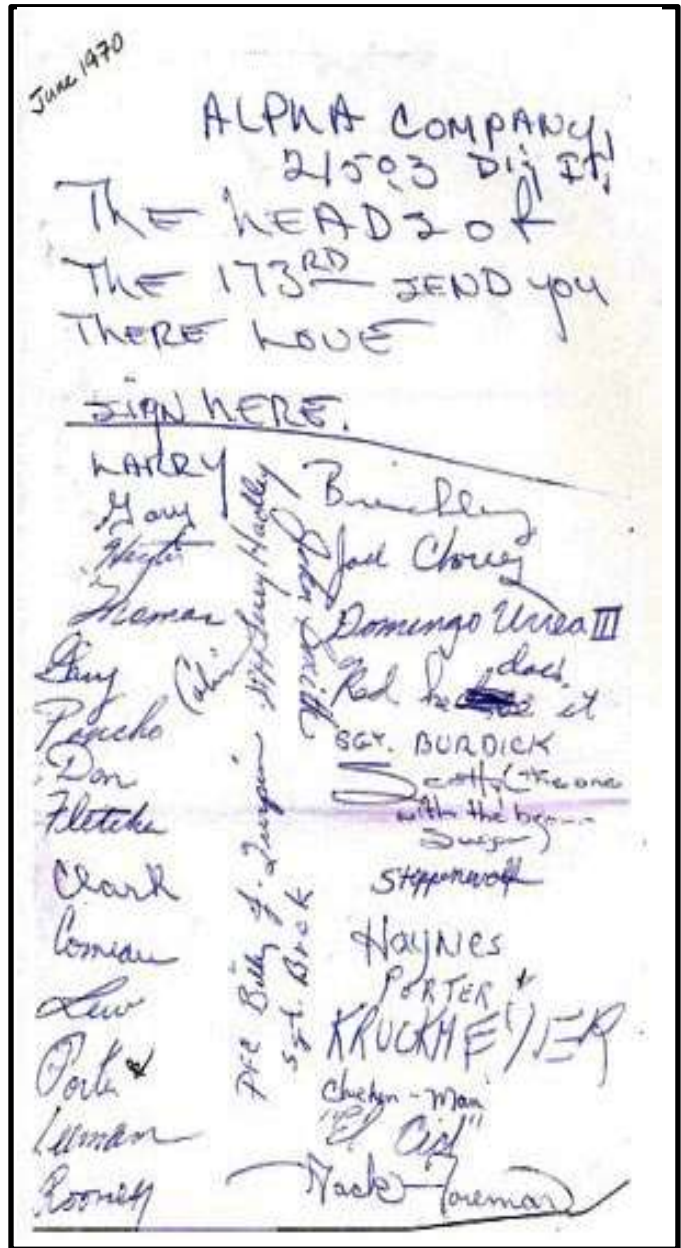
"Peter Ray Knight died on 15th December 1970 after a motor vehicle accident. Buried Brighton Cemetery, VIC."

Leonard Allan Lanzarin, 20
SP4, A/2/503, 11/4/70



12/27/11: "You are my endless love ... forever and a day. You wrote: 'The time has come for me to change, from what I am to what I will be, and from thereafter, the world will see me', but how could we know it would be like this? I am posting your photos wherever I can so the world will see you and I will see you when I get there. I love you."

Melinda Valle



Posted to Leonard

(continued...)



David Wayne Larson, 22
PFC, E/3/503, 10/4/70

9/17/17: "Such a brief time.

Dave, I have thought about you so often and wondered how both of our lives would have changed if only..... You were 19 & I was 16, you were from Axtell & I was from Minden. Too big of an age difference for that time and for my parents, but we did have several long talks. You were so good looking, and I remember your beautiful eyes, you made me weak kneed. I remember so vividly our last conversation in your really cool car at the county fair & I told you I couldn't date you because of our ages. You were always such a gentleman and I was broken hearted but I walked away. Rest In Peace dear man, you are a true hero & our country can never repay its debt to your family." **CR**



Harold Clifton Marsh, 21
SSG, HHB/3/319, 10/19/70

"Thank You. Dear SSgt Harold

Marsh, Thank you for your service as a Medical NCO. Thank you for the lives you save. Saying thank you isn't enough, but it is from the heart. Today is Father's Day and the first full day of summer. Time passes quickly. Please watch over America, it stills needs your strength, courage and faithfulness. Rest in peace with the angels." **Lucy Micik**



Ralph Peterson Miller, III, 26
1LT, HHC/3/503, 10/19/70

2/9/07: "Dad, There isn't a day

that goes by that I don't think about you. I wish I had been old enough to remember but that was not the way it ended up. I love and miss you, Dad." **Scott**

3/28/07: "Scott, I served with your dad at LZ Uplift in 1970, he was a fine man and someone you can be proud of. I was with B/3/503 and was in the field at the time the incident occurred so all my knowledge of it is second hand. I do know of one officer who was in the TOC at the time of the attack and if you can find him, he could possibly have some answers for you. I'm not sure of his first name but it was Lt. Lady, he was a good officer and respected by his men. I wish you only the best and offer my deepest condolences on the loss of your dad." **John J. O'Brien, B/3/503**



Oscar Robert Layporte, 21
CPL, 534th Sig, 10/30/70

7/11/12: "Bobby died at the

end of his tour in Vietnam for which he volunteered after which he was hoping to get a 6 month early out so he could start college after his discharge. He could have stayed in the compound and waited for his orders to return to the U.S. but chose to be in the field with the men in his outfit. That's the way my cousin was. Dan"

Daniel Pittson



Allan Brian Moss, 22
T/SGT, DET 52 SUP PI, 12/28/70

"Renmark, SA. Moss was

murdered by another Australian soldier at Nui Dat on Christmas Day 1970. Buried Evergreen Memorial Park Enfield, SA."



Allan Lloyd, 20
PTE, 7RAR, 12/30/70

"Canberra, ACT. Lloyd suffered

gunshot wounds in action late on the morning of 30th December 1970, in Phuoc Tuy. He died of his injuries two hours later at 1.30pm in 1 Field Hospital. Buried Traralgon Cemetery, VIC."



Tony Howard Myers, 21
SP4, E/4/503, 12/22/70

4/14/08: "A quiet and loyal

professional Recon Infantryman. I remember Tony when I served with E/Recon, 4/503d, 173d Abn Bde. Tony was killed after I was assigned to N/75th Rangers. He was a great warrior who looked after his fellow soldiers. He was instrumental during the Sniper Island mission. I will miss him dearly and think of him often. Airborne All the Way." **LT Raider 6**



Jimmy Eugene Marchesi, 23
PFC, A/2/503, 10/31/70

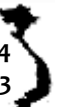
9/8/04: "We Remember. Jimmy

is buried at Ft. Logan National Cemetery."

Robert Sage



(continued...)



Raymond Kevin Nichols, 39
WO1, 106 FD WKSPS, 12/28/70

"Bundaberg, QLD. An outstanding soldier, he had a massive heart attack and died in unit lines in Phuoc Tuy 28th December 1970. Buried Springvale Crematorium Melbourne, VIC."



Terrence Patrick O'Boyle, 23
1LT, E/17th Cav, 11/20/70

5/26/17: "Remembering Terry – Memorial Day 2017. The last time I saw my classmate and close friend Terry O'Boyle was over 47 years ago at our West Point graduation. We were 21 years old. Terry was more than just smart and outgoing. He had an unmatched strength of character and a humble sureness of purpose. He was kind, considerate, and deeply religious. He loved his country. He was destined to do great things. He had the 'right stuff'".



Ernest L. Albanese, Jr.



Roberto Lerma Patino, 30
SGT, 173d LRRP, 10/22/70
(Virtual Wall states N/75 Rgrs)

8/13/04: "My Hero, My Brother. Its been 34 years since you left us and since my heart was broken. You are so very missed and Loved. You did what you thought was right and you believed in the cause. To me you were always my hero, but you didn't need to go and prove it. I love you my brother and will always cherish all that you did for me. My life was never the same since you died. I only wished I hadn't been so young when you died, because there was so much I would have wanted to share with you. I feel so cheated out of my relationship with you. Nevertheless, I am so very proud of you my brother. I stand tall every Memorial Day just knowing You died for me and all those people that live in the USA. Your sister, Rebecca." Rebecca M. Carrizales



Patrick James Paulich, 20
PVT, E/1/503, 11/30/70

8/5/14: "Remembering Patrick 44 years later. I served with Patrick in the 173rd Airborne Bde. He was a good guy and I remember the day he came 'In Country'. I was shocked when I heard he had been killed. I SALUTE you, Patrick. AATW"

Gary Hansard



Ferenc John Ramm, 32
SGT, C/1/503, 12/17/70

12/19/15: "One tough soldier! Ramm, as a veteran of three tours in 'Nam, you were my hero. I looked up to you and listened to your words of advice, as much later in life as a young 20 yr old fresh from Infantry training in the states. I was there with you on that fateful day as we walked into the 'kill zone' of a deadly ambush. As our 'point man' on that patrol, you were the first to go down. Our first three at the lead were killed instantly, and the rest of us survived, but only because of your sacrifice. Honor and valor described you back then, and we all had immense respect for you. You trained me, and kept me alive, and I will never forget you and your strength. I can never repay you, and I will be in your debt forever!"



Mike Armstrong
C Co 1st Battalion 173rd Airborne Brigade

Paul Edward Reed, 30
SSG, A/2/503, 10/31/70
(Virtual Wall states A/1/503)

3/3/14: "We Remember. Paul was a Staff Sergeant with A CO, 1st BN, 503rd Infantry, 173rd ABN when he was murdered by unknown person(s) when a grenade was thrown into the tent where he was sleeping. RIP Paul, your assailant(s) shall face their day of reckoning for their actions. You sacrificed your life for this country and it should not have been cut short by any fellow soldiers." Unsigned



Walter James Roberts, 21
SP4, HHC/3/503, 11/5/70

12/11/09: "We Remember Walter is buried at St Mary's Calvary Cemetery in Mt Morris, MI." Robert Sage



Richard C. Schoenberg, 23
CPT, D/4/503, 11/21/70

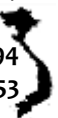
8/18/04: "I will always remember You. Captain Schoenberg, I honor you with memory and tears. You will never be forgotten. Those of us that served with you will always remember. Always. Forever and always Airborne,"



Doc Turner, platoon medic, Delta Co, 4th Battalion 173rd Airborne Brigade, November 21, 1970

[See story about Patrick on Page 37]

(continued....)



Martinus Jacobus M. Schuit, 23
SPR, 17 CONST SQN, 10/22/70

"Holland. He died in 24 Evacuation Hospital, on October 22 1970, after he fell from a truck in Vung Tau and fractured his skull on 4th October 1970. Buried Centennial Park Cemetery, SA."



Wendell Taylor, 20
SGT, A/4/503, 11/2/70

6/18/16: *"My friend. Wendell... I will always remember you as a friend and fellow soldier."*
Eldon Pittman, Jr., US Army SGM (Ret)



Bruce Gordon Sempstrott, 20
PFC, B/4/503, 12/18/70

7/28/14: *"We Remember. Bruce is buried at Holy Cross and Saint Joseph Cemetery, Indianapolis, IN. BSM"*
Robert Sage



Brian Dale Upright, 18
SP4, E/3/503, 10/4/70

2/17/01: *"I would like to find someone that was in my brother's unit. I was 4 years old when he died and would like to know more about him. Please contact me by email. Thank you."*



Henry James Sims, 28
SGT, E/1/503, 12/31/70

5/14/03: *Your Nephew. I never knew you. I seen your pictures around Momma's house. I just wish you would've came out alive so I could've knew what you were like. Even though I didn't know you I want you to know that I am proud of you. I know you were scared and it takes a lot of heart to do what you and others did. I love you for that. Your siblings miss you as well as the rest of your family. I know you are in heaven with Momma and I know it was a joyous site to be reunited with your mom again. I miss her too and one day I will see her again and you for the first time. Once again I can never stress how much I wish I could've met you, also I wish I could've met Randy too. But I'll get to see him one day for the first time also. I love all ya up there."* **Unsigned**



Garry Ian Willoughby, 22
PTE, 2RAR, 10/8/70

"Melbourne, VIC. The rifleman private was killed in Phuoc Tuy on 8th October 1970. Buried Lilydale Cemetery, VIC."



Francis Albert Zerggen, 19
CPL, E/17th Cav, 11/20/70


2/18/05: *"We Remember. Francis is buried at Philadelphia National Cemetery."* **Robert Sage**



Dennis Leroy Ziebarth, 20
SP4, B/3/503, 11/20/70

6/9/14: *"Fallen Hero. I came with my platoon to help when you were shot. The medic told the Captain you were still alive so the Captain ordered me to call the medivac. I was there when you were loaded on the medivac. What I heard was you died on the way to field hospital. I was partying with you just before we went out, and its always bothered me that the next day you were gone. Rest in peace."*
Dan



 **Gary Wayne Smith, 21**
SGT, B/4/503, 12/23/70

(Virtual Wall states E/4/503)
1/1/00: *"The Littlest Angel. Gary started school in Potwin, Kansas. When we were in the first grade our school put on a production of "The Littlest Angel" for Christmas. Gary played the lead part. As I remember it, it was just about perfect."* **Joyce (Wohlgemuth) McRae**



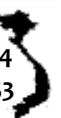
*Of all the stories that are told
This shall be told of you
Dear Soldier,
How you gave your life
For those you never knew.*

Excerpt from the poem, *The Stranger*, by Callie Crofts



Malcolm Lindsay Sutherland, 26
PTE, RNZIR, 10/31/70

"Killed in action, 31 October 1970 – gunshot wound to back in contact. Place of burial: Christchurch."





INCOMING!!!



Question of the Day



You are out in the jungle and haven't had a Coke or beer in a month or two and all of a sudden here comes mamasan strolling out of the bush with beer at \$1.00, Coke at \$.50. How can she get this and we can't?

Dave Glick
B/2/503

A Father's Pride

Matt was in Afghanistan for his 23rd birthday. He was in Iraq for his 24th.

In the first week of Aug, 2003, just before the second deployment I went to Bragg to bring his Jeep back to PA. Before I left for home, we decided to have a few beers together at the sports bar on post.

Matt was disappointed that his Unit was deploying again after only 6 months dwell time. Quite a few of the Paratroopers from the first deployment had gotten out or moved on.

We talked about his pending promotion, but I noticed that he really didn't want to talk about the near future. I decided to tell stories until I got him laughing. Old, crazy family stories always worked. I came to the realization that he had outgrown me as a man.



Sgt. Matthew J. Sandri
82nd Airborne Div.
KIA 3/20/04
Op Iraqi Freedom

Rather than being disappointed with my own accomplishments in life, I realized how immensely proud I was of this young man, who was closer to me than any man. Who had accomplished things I would never be able to, and who I continue to look up to. Today (September 1) he would be 41.

Please join me and raise a glass in his honor. Cheers!

Bob Sandri
Matt's Dad

Did He Foretell The Future?



"A depiction of life in 2022 by an Italian magazine first published in 1962 depicted pedestrians using motorized pods instead of walking, something that may turn out to be quite accurate given current fears over coronavirus. The image was drawn by Walter Molino, an Italian comics artist and illustrator. It featured on the front page of a 1962 edition of *La Domenica del Corriere*, an Italian weekly newspaper which ran from 1899 to 1989. The cartoon shows individuals navigating the sidewalk from within the confines of their own personal pod."

Sent in by
Bob Warfield
B/2/503

(INCOMING!!! continued...)





Went to the Kokomo event Thursday and Friday. Wanted to remain until Saturday but the temperature was to drop to 38 degrees that Friday night so my motorcycle said, "You are nuts! You and me are going to freeze, especially you in a summer tent. Let's go home." Had to obey the bike.

The total crowd wasn't as large this time around but there was still an impressive number.

In the picture on the left are (seated) Ken Lambertson and standing left to right: Bill Terry, Amy Lambertson, Kaiser Sterbinsky, Danny Fredrick, Mark Rexroat, and Doug Larabel.

In the next picture is the same group without Kaiser. I think he took the picture. Karen Larabel is in the cast (bicycle accident) with Doug Larabel standing behind her.

Bill Terry
A/3/319

NOVEMBER 1967
173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE'S
DEADLIEST MONTH
Hill 875 - 23 November 1967

Though the Viet Nam war raged for another four years, no American unit would suffer more casualties in any one month than that of the 173d Airborne Brigade.

My individual unit's (Alpha Company, Second Battalion 503rd Infantry) annihilation resulting in 76 KIAs and 25 WIAs. Five months earlier on 22 June, indisputably foreshadowed what most military experts consider the turning point of the war.

No longer would US ground units engage the elite North Viet Nam regular troops with singular, understrength elements. As for the subsequent campaigns undertaken by the Brigade throughout the perplexing topography of the Central Highlands; all operations would be conducted by *united elements* within the Brigade.

Never again would these hard-bitten paratroopers be caught unprepared against an impending formidable enemy force. We would match their dynamism with our overwhelming valor. Fate, however, is a cruel mistress. Nothing could have prepared us for the profuse and unimaginably vicious battles that lay ahead.

Commencing on the 3rd of November, was when the 4th Battalion sustained 18 KIAs, or on the 19th and 20th when thirty-one and seventy-two Sky Soldiers respectively perished. Savage encounters were anticipated for Hills 875, 823, 882 and for far too many other nondescript but deadly 'hills'.

By month's end, the Brigade would sustain 209 Killed in Action, and over 455 plus Wounded in Action.

Historians have described the aftermath of this grisly month's *Battles for Dak To* as the beginning of the end of the war as we knew it.

It should be noted: The newly arrived 3/503 incurred only one (1) KIA during this period; however, their casualties would increase exponentially in the coming months.

Wambi Cook
A/2/503
Survivor of the
Battles at Dak To
in June and
November '67



(INCOMING!!! continued...)



Cowboy Reunion 2021

We did not receive many reunion location suggestions, so the list is small. I will let you know if there is enough interest to pursue any of the sites. If there is not enough interest, we may simply have an informal gathering at the highest rated location.

Results will be posted in the October 1 Cowboy Newsletter and on the Cowboy Facebook page.

With the uncertainty of flying and COVID-19 it may be difficult to have any gathering in 2021

Thanks for your continued cooperation.

**Dom Fino
Cowboys**



Dear Bulls and Associates

A year ago, 12 to 16 September 2019, 2/503d Bravo Bulls Jim Robinson, Joe Logan, David Glick and Herbert Murhammer - supervised and kept under control by their respective better halves - visited the D-Day beaches in Normandy.



Couples at Normandy's Pointe du Hoc, from left to right: Robinsons, Murhammers, Logans & Glicks

The program and schedule were established by Jim Robinson who has great expertise in this kind of exercise. Yet, there was one danger that he missed to mention, see for yourselves:



Published in
TIME Magazine 2019

90

Pounds of sand a French couple tried to take home from Sardinia as a souvenir; the sand is protected by law, and the tourists could face up to six years in jail for its theft

Caught in the act!



Joe Logan on Omaha Beach saving some sand from being washed away.

(Photo by Herbert)

Admittedly, he salvaged a good bit less than 90 pounds. Joe is a seasoned traveler and he knows that

"what you pack, you have to carry".

Joe was not the only one. A certain David Glick, apparently, had also been observed in a similar posture.

Speaking of David: On our last evening in Bayeux (before heading out to Anne's farm in the heartland of Normandy), David and I decided that we needed a beer while the rest of the troops were getting ready to go out for dinner. The bar was ideally situated between the hotel and the restaurant and we found a nice table for people-watching on the sidewalk. David admired the glass in which the beer was served (typical for serving Belgian "abbey beers"). He asked me to inquire if he could buy one of those.

Inside, I explained to the barkeeper who we were and why we were here. Without saying much, the guy grabbed a glass, wrapped it in newspaper and handed it to me. When I asked him, *"How much do I owe you?"*, he replied: *"Forget it! We owe you!"* No further comment! Here's David's glass:



Be well y'all. And don't forget to vote.

**Herbert (and Annie) Murhammer
B/2/503, (Geneva - Switzerland)**

(INCOMING!!! continued....)



A Bravo Bull's Trip To The U.S.

As promised, a few pics from our USA visit in Spring 2016.



L-R: Annie Murhammer, Lew "Smitty" Smith (HHC/2/503), and Herbert Murhammer (B/2/503) at the Cocoa Beach, FL VFW Post on April 16, 2016. Photo-bombing is good buddy LT Joe Lewellyn of the 25th Inf RVN.



Milton Olive Highway, aka Ebenezer Road, a few miles south of Lexington, Mississippi, April 22.



Airborne Bridge, Atchafalaya Expressway, near Lafayette, LA, April 20.



At Milton's grave, West Grove Cemetery on Ebenezer Road, April 22. A few days later, Bob Warfield (B/2/503) also stopped there to pay his respects.

(Herbert's photos continue....)





This is where my military career ended in November 1966.
Photo taken April 25, 2016.



Herbert and his beautiful bride Anne at Branson, MO on May 4.



Meeting of the Bravo Bulls in Branson.

Thank you for the recent newsletter. Once again you have done an outstanding job. Praise you.
Fondly and ATW,

Herbert Murhammer
B/2/503, '65/'66 RVN
Geneva, Switzerland

Good Luck Bob!

On behalf of our battalion we send best wishes for a speedy and full recovery to our buddy **Bob Lohr**, E/2/503, heading to back surgery in October. *That'll teach you to jump out of airplanes!* Good luck Bob, and *ATW Brother!* **Your 2nd Batt Brothers**

It Wasn't "Friendly Fire"

Just checking in with you so see if it would be helpful if in the next newsletter you can ask if any of the readers served with "B" Co. during the May 6, 1968 battle and could write a statement of what they remember and have it Notarized in preparation of eventual submissions to change Larry Briscoe's listing on the Wall of Faces website from 'killed by Friendly Fire' (the bomb) to 'killed by Enemy Fire'. I think we need to get the paperwork started as too much time has passed and we only have a limited amount left, if you know what I mean.

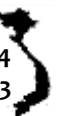


Sgt. Larry Briscoe
B/2/503
KIA 5/6/68

Keep well and thanks for all your work.

Bob Beemer
B/2/503

Note: See report about Larry and his buddies on Pages 24-26 herein. Contact me at rto173@att.net and I'll put you in touch with Bob. Ed



A HILL IS WON



AFTER BLOODY BATTLE, A BREAK

... For weary troops of 173rd Airborne

HILL 875, Vietnam (AP) The enemy's final resistance along the fortified ridge line Thursday was light. Only a squad remained of the North Vietnamese companies that had held Hill 875 through nearly five days of bitter battle.

COMMUNIST MORTARS on a parallel ridge opened fire on paratroopers of the U.S. 173rd Airborne Brigade as they moved up with a yelp and a holler in the final attack.

But the paratroopers quickly overran the ridge line, the last enemy holding on the hill that proved to be the most costly objective in the war.

Seesaw Battle Kills 102 GIs

Officers said 102 Americans had been killed and 172 wounded in the seesaw struggle that started last Sunday for control of the strategic height 14 miles southwest of Dak To and about four miles from the ill-defined frontier of Cambodia.

Enemy dead left on the field were estimated at 120.

IT WAS 300 YARDS to the top through a spaghetti of jungle growth pitched together by air strikes.

Wednesday the paratroopers were mortared as they removed their dead from earlier fighting and shelling. Planes bombed the crest above them all day.

At 11 a.m. Thanksgiving Day Bravo and Charlie Companies of the 4th Battalion were strung out along a narrow trail leading into the collapsed jungle. They were ready to jump off.

"Take care of yourself, Dick," one paratrooper said to another.

Bravo In Lead Men Jog Forward

"See you at the top," a third said.

Bravo went first. The first squad sprinted forward into the tangle and started maneuvering. Behind them a mortar team, carrying their tubes and ammunition, moved out on a dead run and cut right like halfbacks to set up their weapons and cover the company.

THE PARATROOPERS sounded like rooters at a prize fight. Carrying heavy packs, they stumbled at times and fell over the fallen trees. Then they rose and jogged forwards.

Flame-thrower men and machine gunners came next.

"Keep an eye on the bunkers," somebody yelled.

THE LEAD MEN threw grenades.

The Communists had webbed the crest with sturdy bunkers and chest-high trenches that virtually withstood the near continuous air strikes.

The action moved on.

"SGT. BROWN, I want your people spread out," an officer yelled.

"Medic!"

(continued...)



Unidentified Shell Falls on 3 Men

"Where the hell is the machine gun?"

The North Vietnamese mortar shells fell among the paratroopers and walking wounded trickled back downhill.

ONE SAID: *"I'm no good. I'm hit."*

"Quiet down, you're okay," one of his buddies said.

Three paratroopers were 40 yards from the top. One carried a flame thrower.

EITHER A SHORT U.S. artillery shell or a Communist mortar round fell among the three men. No one was sure. The flame-thrower man exploded in a spiral of reddish orange flame. All three were killed.

Seconds later another private moved forward, heard an explosion and said: *"Is that incoming?"*

The rifleman next to him answered, *"I don't care about the past, I'm worried about now."*

High Noon Brings Securing Of Hill

The paratroopers moved over the top. As they consolidated their defenses they were mortared once more, heavily.

The hill was secured at noon.

SIX AMERICANS were dead, and eight more were wounded in the attack. It had seemed anti-climactic.

Of the few North Vietnamese who had stayed to the last, most evidently escaped down the hill. Only one fresh enemy body was found. Estimates of the original detachment had ranges from 200 to 500 men.

"All I had in mind was to get on top of this damn thing and take care of it," said Spec. 4 David Norfleet, Salisbury, Md. *"We had to get it before it got the rest of us."*

SGT. WILLIE Freeman of Lyons, Ga., said: *"We had it in our minds to take this thing. I guess we accomplished our mission."*

It was the end of an ordeal.

'I Hate To See Kids Like That'

Two days before, dead and wounded clogged the trail waiting for helicopters. A major said: *"We were mortared one time, and the wounded didn't even move. They didn't run for cover. I hate to see these kids like that."*

Before the attack Thursday, a company commander who was to trail Bravo and Charlie told his platoon leaders:

"THAT'S THE PLAN. *Now you all go see your friends and wish them good luck and pray that we get out of this thing alive."*

The 2nd Battalion, said by one of its officers to be the hardest-hit unit of its size in Vietnam, was removed by helicopters at sunset. Three of the battalion's four companies had been on the hill. Of about 350 men five days before, only 97 had come through unhit.

'Thankful These Men Are Alive'

The brigade's Roman Catholic Chaplain, Maj. Roy Peters of Sacramento, Calif., said: *"You ask me what there is to be thankful for on this day. I am thankful that these men here are alive and that we have accomplished our mission."*

[Source: *Orlando Sentinel*, Friday, Nov. 24, 1967]

TRẬN ĐÁNH ĐÔI 875, ĐẮK TÔ

...Chiến tranh đã làm cho người sống và người chết có cùng một màu xanh xám xịt trên đồi 875. Cách duy nhất để nói ai còn sống và ai đã chết trong số những con người kiệt sức là quan sát khi những viên đạn cối của đối phương rơi xuống. Những người sống chạy vội một cách không hổ thẹn vào những căn hầm bé tí được đào sâu vào đất đỏ trên đỉnh đồi; những kẻ bị thương bò vào những chỗ ẩn nấp dưới gốc cây đã bị gãy ngả rạp trên mặt đất. Chỉ có người chết là không di chuyển, nằm ngay trên những căn hầm nơi mà họ đã chết ngay khi viên đạn cối đầu tiên rơi trúng, hoặc úp mặt vào đất nơi họ bị bắn gục.

(Trích từ điện báo của Peter Arnett gửi AP, tháng 11/1967)

THE BATTLE OF HILL 875, ĐẮK TÔ

...War painted the living and the dead the same gray pallor on Hill 875. The only way to tell who was alive and who was dead amongst the exhausted men was to watch when the enemy mortars came crashing in. The living rushed unashamedly to the tiny bunkers dug into red clay of the hill-top; the wounded squirmed toward the shelter of trees that had been blasted to the ground. Only the dead didn't move, propped up in the bunkers where they had died in direct mortar hits, or facedown in the dust where they had fallen to bullets.

(From an Associated Press newswire report by Peter Arnett, November 1967)



HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Washington, DC

16 June 1969

GENERAL ORDERS NUMBER 42

I. THE PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION. Award of the Presidential Unit Citation (Army) by the President of the United States of America to the following units of the Armed Forces of the United States is confirmed in accordance with paragraph 194, AR 67-5-1. The text of the citation, signed by President Richard Nixon 22 May 1969, reads as follows:

By virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States and as Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the United States, I have today awarded



THE PRESIDENTIAL UNITY CITATION (ARMY) FOR EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM TO THE 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE) (LESS THE 3D BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY REGIMENT AND COMPANY D, 16TH ARMOR) AND TO THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNED AND ATTACHED UNITS: 39TH INFANTRY PLATOON (SCOUT DOG), 75TH INFANTRY DETACHMENT (COMBAT TRACKER DOG), 74TH INFANTRY DETACHMENT (LONG RANGE RECONNAISSANCE PATROL) AND THE 335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY, UNITED STATES ARMY

The foregoing attached and assigned units of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) distinguished themselves by extraordinary heroism in connection with military operations against an armed enemy during Operation MacArthur in Kontum Province, Republic of Vietnam from 6 November to 23 November 1967. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) and assigned and attached units moved to Dak To in the central highlands during the period 1 to 6 November 1967 with the mission of initiating search-and-destroy operations in conjunction with elements of the United States 4th Infantry Division and allied forces. Opposed by the elite 24th, 32d, 66th and 174th North Vietnamese Infantry Regiments supported by the 40th Artillery Regiment of the 1st North Vietnamese Infantry Division, the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) and its assigned and attached units displayed exceptional gallantry, determination, esprit de corps and professional skill in defeating a heavily armed, well-trained, well-disciplined and numerically superior enemy operation largely from well-prepared and heavily fortified positions. From the combat assault of Hill 823 on 6 November to the final victory on Hill 875



on Thanksgiving Day, the Battle of Dak To was characterized by countless displays of gallantry, relentless aggressiveness and quick reaction on the part of all United States Forces involved. During the establishment and defense of fire support bases and combat assaults into enemy strongholds, individual accounts of unhesitating courage and tenacity to achieve final victory were made a part of history. For 18 days of continuous combat at pointblank range, the friendly forces relentlessly pressed the attack against seemingly invulnerable fortified positions until they were reduced and the enemy destroyed. The separate and combined actions of the Brigade results in a hard-fought and unprecedented victory, rendering the 174th North Vietnamese Infantry Regiment combat-ineffective. The allied defeat of the 1st North Vietnamese Division frustrated a major enemy attempt to control the Dak To area and the surrounding highlands. The accomplishment of this mission by the officers and troopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade and assigned and attached units was in keeping with the highest tradition of the military service and reflects great credit upon their units and United States Army.



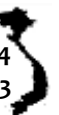
BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

W.C. WESTMORELAND
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff



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VETERAN



To understand a Military Veteran you must know:

We left home as teenagers or in our early twenties for an unknown adventure.
We loved our country enough to defend it and protect it with our own lives.
We said goodbye to friends and family and everything we knew.
We learned the basics and then we scattered in the wind to the far corners of the Earth.
We found new friends and new family.
We became brothers and sisters regardless of color, race or creed.
We had plenty of good times, and plenty of bad times.
We didn't get enough sleep.
We smoked and drank too much.
We picked up both good and bad habits.
We worked hard and played harder.
We didn't earn a great wage.
We experienced the happiness of mail call and the sadness of missing important events.
We didn't know when, or even if, we were ever going to see home again.
We grew up fast, and yet somehow, we never grew up at all.
We fought for our freedom, as well as the freedom of others.
Some of us saw actual combat, and some of us didn't.
Some of us saw the world, and some of us didn't.
Some of us dealt with physical warfare, most of us dealt with psychological warfare.
We have seen and experienced and dealt with things that we can't fully describe or explain, as not all of our sacrifices were physical.
We participated in time honored ceremonies and rituals with each other, strengthening our bonds and camaraderie.
We counted on each other to get our job done and sometimes to survive it at all.
We have dealt with victory and tragedy.
We have celebrated and mourned.
We lost a few along the way.
When our adventure was over, some of us went back home, some of us started somewhere new and some of us never came home at all.
We have told amazing and hilarious stories of our exploits and adventures.
We share an unspoken bond with each other, that most people don't experience, and few will understand.

We speak highly of our own branch of service, and poke fun at the other branches.
We know however, that, if needed, we will be there for our brothers and sisters and stand together as one, in a heartbeat.
Being a Veteran is something that had to be earned, and it can never be taken away.
It has no monetary value, but at the same time it is a priceless gift.
People see a Veteran and they thank them for their service.
When we see each other, we give that little upwards head nod, or a slight smile, knowing that we have shared and experienced things that most people have not.
So, from myself to the rest of the veterans out there, I commend and thank you for all that you have done and sacrificed for your country.
Try to remember the good times and make peace with the bad times.
Share your stories.
But most importantly, stand tall and proud, for you have earned the right to be called a Veteran.
I'm a VETERAN!

author unknown

[Sent in by a Bryan Bowley, B/2/503]



C/2/503 veterans after that battle at LZ Zulu Zulu on 16 Mar 66.

(Photo by RTO Wayne Hoitt, HHC/2/503 who fought with them and was wounded in that hole)



From the archives....

Cade Duncan Pendergraft

NOVEMBER 10, 1995 – SEPTEMBER 19, 2020

Sgt. Cade D. Pendergraft, 24, an infantryman with 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, died Saturday, September 19, 2020 while hiking the 52 Tunnels World War I site on Monte Pasubio.



Sgt. Pendergraft graduated from Rancho Cucamonga High School in California and joined the Army in 2015. After serving with the 1st Infantry Division and deploying to Poland for contingency operations, Pendergraft joined the 173rd Airborne in December 2018. He deployed again in support of contingency operations to Romania in 2019. He is a graduate of Army One Station Unit Training and Airborne School at Fort Benning, Ga., and the Basic Leaders Course.

His awards and decorations include the Army Achievement Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon, the Army Service Ribbon and Parachutist Badge.

Sgt. Pendergraft was known by his friends, superiors, and fellow paratroopers as someone who took advantage of the opportunities afforded by being stationed in Italy. He traveled to the far reaches of Europe with every free moment.

"The entire battalion is incredibly saddened to lose such an amazing paratrooper, NCO and young adult," said Lt. Col. Derek Noel, commander, 2nd Bn., 503rd Inf. Regt. *"Sgt. Pendergraft was special. He utilized every available moment to better understand the world he lived in. We will remember and honor Cade as an ideal example of a warrior, scholar and leader."*

He is survived by his father, Stephen Pendergraft and stepmother, Ingrid Pendergraft of Simpsonville, S.C.; his mother, Christine Duncan of Fontana, Calif.; brother, Blake of Fontana, Calif., brother, Spencer, and sister, Emily both of Simpsonville, SC; paternal grandparents, Nathan and Patricia Pendergraft of Orange, Calif.; maternal grandmother, Joann Marshall of Calif.; aunts and uncles, John and Pam White and Teri and Sharon Skok.

Rest Easy Young Sky Soldier

Airborne Masks

A U.S. Army paratrooper from the 173rd Airborne Brigade waits for an airborne operation to begin at Grafenwoehr Training Area, Germany, July 23, 2020.

RYAN LUCAS/U.S. ARMY



As reported by Nancy Montgomery with *Stars and Stripes* on July 28, 2020, "Members of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Germany for the annual Saber Junction exercise are required to wear masks in most circumstances this year, but not when jumping from the door of an aircraft."

"It's not hard to social distance at 1,200 feet," said Maj. Chris Bradley, a brigade spokesman.



In The Beginning

On 26 March 1963, the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) was assigned to the Regular Army and activated on Okinawa. Brigadier **General Ellis W. Williamson** took



command of the unit, which was chartered to serve as the quick reaction

BG Ellis Williamson on right

force for the Pacific Command. Under Williamson, the unit trained extensively, making mass parachute jumps. They earned the nickname Tien Bing (Chinese: 天兵), literally *Sky Soldiers*, from the Taiwanese paratroopers.

During their time in Okinawa, they prided themselves as the *"toughest fighting men in Okinawa, if not the entire U.S. Armed Forces"*. They (1/503) took their theme song from the television series *Rawhide*.

As the Pacific quick-reaction force, they were the first army brigade to be sent to South Vietnam two years later when hostilities escalated there.



Service Members Want Discussions on Race, Diversity, Inclusion



In meetings with Defense Secretary Dr. Mark T. Esper, service members in the Pacific said they want serious discussions about race, diversity and inclusion and want the military to confront racism and address conscious prejudice and institutional bias.

On every trip, the secretary makes time to speak with service members. Some of his talks include all hands and are on the record. Other talks are private and the secretary speaks in generalities about what he hears from service members.

During this trip he spoke to an all-hands gathering aboard the USS Essex and with a small number of crew members on the ship. He spoke with Marines, a SeaBee civic action team in Palau, and with airmen at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam. He will have more opportunities in Hawaii.

"Most of my conversation was with the troops ... talking, diversity, inclusion, and ... on that particular topic, what they tell me is ... any type of bias that they experienced has been mostly on unconscious bias," he said.

But there is also conscious bias, and the service members discussed the need for understanding and education with Esper.

"I see a continuity in terms of their feedback, and ways to address bias in the ranks," he said. *"They all shared that there's a [discomfort] about discussing these issues, issues of race."*

They want more conversations. *"I don't believe anybody thinks there's a silver bullet,"* he said. *"They certainly want there to be more discussions, or would*

welcome more discussion — and less formalized discussion, more organic discussion."

Service members do not want another PowerPoint presentation on equal opportunity, but an actual discussion seeking empathy and understanding.

"I come away encouraged," Esper said. He said service members have told him that, generally, their treatment within the military is different from that on the outside.

Source:
DoD / Defense News

Michael Constantino C/2/503 Passes



There was no obituary – no service. The only honor was a friend of ours with the VVA Chapter in St. Augustine, Florida, who flew a “hole” flag at a Memorial Golf Tournament. I know when he served (with Wayne) and that he served also in Panama after Vietnam.

He was hard to keep up with and really reclusive. He made it to a few reunions and tried to survive the best he could. He was wounded at least twice when he was with the 173d. He made the combat jump. And he was a very gentle soul. That’s all I can tell you about him.

I’m sending you a photo from my gmail account that is of the flag that was flown. The picture was from one that was taken by our friend when we were there in March and he was telling me of his first few days in C Company as the first replacement to a bunch of guys that had been together since Okinawa. He was a great guy.

Iva Tuttle
(Wife of Wayne Tuttle, C/2/503)

Rest Easy, We Try Harder Trooper





Cowboys UNIT HISTORY

1 November 1967 -- 30 November 1967

Prepared by:

1 Lt. PAUL C. HOWELL

OPERATIONS:

a. The month of November started with the 335th Assault Helicopter Company supporting the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) in Operation Bolling in the Tuy Hoa area. 337 troopers were lifted in the morning when a change of mission was called in at 0600 hours. The lift commenced at 0700 hours and terminated at 1100 hours.

b. On the 2nd and the 5th of November the COWBOYS were in General Support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Operation Bolling. Falcon 612 was flying on a General Support mission for the Brigade when fire was received, and the ship took a hit. No injuries resulted from the incident.

c. On the 4th of November the extraction's schedule for the morning were delayed for over an hour due to the weather. Once the lift was started, problems arose when previous unscheduled lifts were required. No fire was received, and no enemy movements were observed.

d. On the 5th of November after returning to Phu Hiep with half of the proposed extraction completed, five (5) UH-1Hs and a Light Fire Team were ordered to prepare for and close on Kontum today. Captain Stewart and the appropriate aircraft departed this area at 1400. At 2130 word was received that all aircraft arrived at Kontum and were setting up to stay.

e. No missions were scheduled at Phu Hiep today. One (1) small lift was performed at Kontum to support the Brigade's participation in Operation McArthur. A Light Fire Team was called out of Phu Hiep to attempt to assist the Special Forces Camp, 57 rockets and 1000 7.62 rounds were fired.

f. On the 7th of November the remainder of the flyable aircraft departed Phu Hiep for Kontum, and all arrived safely. Aircraft 648 crashed while flying resupply and had to be destroyed in place. All persons escaped without injury.

g. On the 8th of November ten (10) "Slicks" and three (3) Falcons departed Kontum for support of the Brigade



at Dak To. 171 troops were carried on the assault then the ships reverted to their normal missions. At 0630 aircraft 643 reported receiving fire, but no hits were received.

h. On November 9th, ten (10) UH-H1s and three (3) Falcon gunships departed Kontum for Dak To to support the 173rd Abn. Bde. with a Combat Assault. At 0730 hours aircraft 620 and 704 reported receiving fire, but no hits were taken. 640 passengers and 8 tons of cargo were carried on the assaults.

i. On the 10th and the 11th of November Combat Assaults were performed for the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 173rd. 470 "Sky Soldiers" and 12 tons of cargo were carried on the assaults. The remainder of the days' activities were in General Support of the Brigade.

j. A short lift on the morning of the 12th placed 257 troops and 20 tons of cargo for the LRRP and the 1st Battalion. General support of the Brigade in Operation McArthur comprised the remainder of the days' operations.



1/503d one-ship LZ west of Dak To.

(Photo by Tony Bolivar, Caspers)

(continued...)





Cowboys at Dak To

(Photo from Tony Bolivar, Casper Pilot)

k. On November 13th, Warrant Officer Gary Bass while on an emergency resupply mission received fire and took three (3) hits. The ship was flown back to Kontum and Warrant Officer Bass took out another ship. No injuries resulted from the incident.

l. November 14th through the 17th the COWBOYS supported the 173rd Abn. Bde. with normal General Support missions in support of their participation in Operation MacArthur.



“Dak To, November 1967: A Hook bringing in one of our wounded slicks. We had six slicks shot down on 11/19/67 while supporting the 173d Airborne Brigade's 2nd Bn/503rd Infantry on Hill 875.”

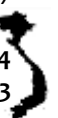
(Image from Jeffrey Tillman, Cowboys' web)

m. On the 18th the COWBOYS flew General Support and resupply missions for the Brigade. 207 “Sky Soldiers” and 31 tons of cargo were carried.

n. On the 19th of November the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173rd Abn. Bde. (Separate) ran into heavy contact while assaulting Hill 875, to the Southwest of Dak To. No landing zone was available for ships to land with supplies and to pick up the wounded, so “sling loads” and “kick-outs” were required. Ship after ship attempted to get the loads into the area. All ships were covered with gunships, artillery and airstrikes. All ships received heavy automatic weapons and small arms fire. Five (5) ships were shot up and forced to set down at a fire support base. Warrant Officer Jerry B. Freeman received a scalp wound, completely destroying his helmet. Specialist Five Paul E. Rennie was wounded with a round through his shoulder.

On the 20th the COWBOYS continued to support the 2nd Battalion with all available flyable aircraft. Two (2) more aircraft were shot up and forced to land at a fire support base to await evacuation. One load that was dropped in was a landing zone kit so that the unit on the ground would be able to make an area large enough for our ships to land to resupply and carry out casualties.

(continued...)



Two (2) more aircraft were hit today while resupplying the 2nd Battalion on Hill 875. The battle is still raging. 11 tons of cargo was carried into the landing zone and 111 MEDIVACS were carried out.



“Back From Battle -- Dak To, South Vietnam: Members of the 173d Airborne Brigade are helped from evacuation helicopters by medics after returning from Hill 875. U.S. Army paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade on Nov. 22 made a final assault up the bloody slopes of Hill 875.”

(UPI Radiophoto by Al Webb. 11/22/67)

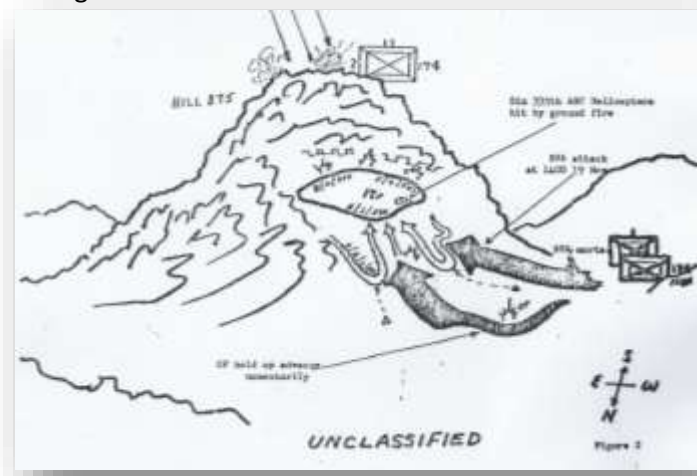
On the 23rd of November, Thanksgiving Day, the big assault for the Hill was made. The hilltop was taken in the afternoon by members of the 2nd and 4th Battalions, 173rd Abn. Bde.



Aerial view of the top of Hill 875 after the battles.

The COWBOYS participation in the battle consisted of Combat Assaults and resupply missions under the most hazardous conditions of hostile fire. There were a total of nine (9) helicopters that received extensive combat

damage during the period 19 November to 21 November and over ten (10) COWBOYS were wounded during the action.



Location on Hill 875 where six 335th AHC Helicopters received hits by ground fire.

o. On the 24th of November the COWBOYS performed an extraction for the 2nd and 4th Battalions, 173rd Airborne Brigade. Over 400 “Sky Soldiers” were extracted from the vicinity of Hill 875. In the General Support and resupply roles 240 passengers and 17 tons of cargo were carried. No significant enemy resistance was met during the day.

p. 32 tons of cargo and 350 troopers were carried on the 27th and 28th of November in Operation MacArthur Southwest of Dak To, Kontum Province, RVN.

q. On the 29th of November the COWBOYS were delayed from their missions for almost an hour and a half due to the heavy layer of ground fog. Normal missions were performed during the day with no enemy resistance met.

r. On the 30th of November the COWBOYS supported the 1st Battalion with the extraction of 171 troopers.

November has drawn to a close. What started as a quiet month for the COWBOYS ended up as one of the fastest moving and active months in some time.

(continued...)



VA breaks ground on American Indian Veterans Memorial at Riverside National Cemetery

Sep. 25, 2020

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Secretary Robert Wilkie today broke ground on the first American Indian Veterans Memorial at a VA national cemetery.

This is VA's first major monument honoring American Indian, Alaska Native and Pacific Islander Veterans.

"Today is California Native American Day and there is no better way to honor American Indian Veterans than with this groundbreaking ceremony," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. *"More Native Americans per capita serve our country than any other demographic. This memorial will honor their sacrifice and service in the United States military."*

The memorial at Riverside National Cemetery consists of a plaza and walkway centered on "The Gift," a twice life-sized bronze statue representing an American Indian. Construction is expected to be completed in the next couple of years. The memorial is being paid for with funds raised by the Riverside National Cemetery Support Committee.

Riverside National Cemetery is the busiest cemetery managed by the VA's National Cemetery Administration. It was established in 1976 through the transfer of 740 acres from March Air Force Base. The cemetery was dedicated and opened for burials November 11, 1978.

To learn more about the American Indian Veterans Memorial, contact Riverside National Cemetery Executive Director Peter Young at 951-653-8417, or visit www.facebook.com/NatCemRiverside



Cowboys bringing wounded Sky Soldiers back off The Hill.

Source:

335TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY, UNIT HISTORY, courtesy of Dominic "Dom" Fino. Photos added.

Note:

See Issue 47 of November 2012, for a detailed report on Operation MacArthur and the battles at Dak To.



Remembering a Buddy



The late Steve Welsh 10/19/47 – 5/26/17, C/2/503, on Dak To airstrip in October 1967.





CASUALTY STATUS

as of 10 a.m. EDT Sep 28, 2020

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM U.S. CASUALTY STATUS (1)

	<u>Total Deaths</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>Non-Hostile</u>	<u>Pending</u>	<u>WIA</u>
OIF U.S. Military Casualties	4,418	3,481	937	0	31,994
OIF U.S. DOD Civilian Casualties	13	9	4	0	
Totals	4,431	3,490	941	0	31,994

(1) OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM includes casualties that occurred between March 19, 2003 and Aug. 31, 2010, in the Arabian Sea, Bahrain, Gulf of Aiden, Gulf of Oman, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Persian Gulf, Qatar, Red Sea, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Casualties in these countries before March 19, 2003, were considered Operation Enduring Freedom. Personnel injured in OIF who die after September 1, 2010, will be included in OIF statistics.

OPERATION NEW DAWN U.S. CASUALTY STATUS (2)

OND U.S. Military Casualties	74	38	36	0	298
OND U.S. DOD Civilian Casualties	0	0	0	0	
Totals	74	38	36	0	298

(2) OPERATION NEW DAWN includes casualties that occurred between Sept. 1, 2020, and Dec. 31, 2011, in the Arabian Sea, Bahrain, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, Iraq, Kuwait, Oman, Persian Gulf, Qatar, Red Sea, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Personnel injured in OND who die after Dec. 31, 2011, will be included in OND statistics.

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM U.S. CASUALTY STATUS (3) (4)

OEF U.S. Military Casualties	2,218	1,833	385	1	20,093
Afghanistan Only 3	130	12	118	0	56
Other Locations 4	4	2	2	0	
Totals	2,352	1,847	505	1	20,149

(3) OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (Afghanistan only) includes casualties that occurred between Oct. 7, 2001, and Dec. 31, 2014, in Afghanistan only.

(4) OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (other locations) includes casualties that occurred between Oct. 7, 2001, and Dec. 31, 2014, in Guantanamo Bay (Cuba), Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Jordan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Philippines, Seychelles, Sudan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Uzbekistan and Yemen. Wounded in action cases in this category include those without a casualty country listed.

OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE U.S. CASUALTY STATUS (5)

OIR U.S. Military Casualties	99	21	78	0	235
OIR U.S. DOD Civilian Casualties	2	0	2	0	
Totals	101	21	80	0	235

(5) OPERATION INHERENT RESOLVE includes casualties that occurred in Bahrain, Cyprus, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the Mediterranean Sea east of 25° longitude, the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea. OPERATION FREEDOM'S listed.

OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL U.S. CASUALTY STATUS (6)

OFS U.S. Military Casualties	93	64	29	0	573
OFS U.S. DOD Civilian Casualties	2	2	0	0	
Totals	95	68	29	0	573

(6) OPERATION FREEDOM'S SENTINEL includes casualties that occurred in Afghanistan after Dec. 31, 2014.



Stories of war, remembering our men who served....

We Remember Larry Briscoe And His Buddies

I was talking to Jim Miller last night who along with JB Green, Warren Gray, Larry Briscoe and myself served in the RECON squad of B Co. 2/503, Captain Bernard Griffard was our CO.

On 6 May 1968 Larry Briscoe was KIA at the beginning of the battle with elements of the 3rd NVA Div. Jim told me that Larry, our RTO, was targeted because of the radio in order to isolate the squad. This is similar to the story JB told me after I came home in beginning of December 68 and I meet him at a friends' house.

JB stated that he saw movement in the hedgerow, fired and hit the ground and all hell broke loose killing Larry. As RECON worked away from the Company the Squad was isolated. This is the same action for which Lt. Karl Bullard

received his DSC leading his platoon to rescue the squad. (I was not at the battel having been extracted from the field with malaria a couple days before). [See May-June 2018 Issue 80 Page 46 for Karl's DSC citation]

The problem I have is Larry is listed as killed by friendly fire when in fact his wounds were caused by hostile fire. I have not seen JB since 1968. Warren Gray was KIA 10 May 1968 leaving only Jim Miller as an eyewitness so how do you think this listing of Larry's can be corrected? I think Larry's family deserve a factual accounting.

Anything you can do or suggest would be helpful. If you like you can give my name and address to Larry's and Warren's family if they would like to contact me.

This was also the battle the Airforce dropped the bomb on our perimeter killing Lawrence Aldrich.

I'm attaching the names of our company's KIA's for '68 just so you'll have them and if you like I can answer questions about some of the men.

Keep well always

**Bob Beemer
Recon/B/2/503**

Good morning Bob,

A lot of years have passed since the bridge fiasco near An Khe on 3/4/68. It's all 'water under the bridge' some might say, but the memories are still there, haunting and will never go away.

The David Wood, who I was put in contact with and writing a 'memoir' about the 'friendly fire' incident on 5/6/68, is also bringing back a lot of hidden memories from Nam. He is keeping his memoir focused on just that 1 day, but so much happened preceding that day,

that lead up to that incident and also the days that followed. In particular, how Cpl Langham was KIA on 5/3/68. That was horrible and his KIA never should have happened the way it did, just as the way Jackson and Roman were killed on the bridge. But I digress, sorry.

Larry Briscoe was not killed by 'friendly fire'. At some point when we got to Bong Son, Larry took over my radio and became the Recon squad RTO. When we got hit on 5/6/68, I believe, because

Larry was carrying the radio -- they first shot him and killed him, in order to take out our communications with the rest of the company. Fortunately, Lt Bullard's platoon was not far behind us and they immediately pulled up behind us and we were ordered back within their platoon. Lt Bullard, seeing Larry down, ran out to him to pull him back, but the enemy was waiting for this and they shot and killed Lt Bullard.

Artillery and Air Support were called in and after an intense short amount of time, the errant bomb was dropped on our Company position, killing Larry Aldrich, wounding David Wood, and killing and wounding many more. We were reinforced by another Infantry Company and then also an unknown Armored unit of APCs and a tank or two and eventually we were extracted back to the Fire Support Base.

(continued....)



On 5/10/68, we were sent back out to the field. I am not sure, but I believe that Warren Gray took over as RTO of our squad after Larry was killed, and Warren was killed on 5/10/68, when our squad again got hit. I was wounded during this same contact, and was extracted by the Battalion Commander's helicopter, along with Warren and others, because they couldn't get a medivac chopper in.

I stayed in-country, at 3 different hospitals, for about a month or two, before being sent back to the fire support base in Bong Son. Cpt Fox offered me a job as the Brigade mail clerk, back in An Khe, and I took it. I sorted and delivered mail to wounded Brigade troopers around the country of Viet Nam, in different hospitals, until I returned stateside. Returning stateside, I was originally assigned to a Special Forces unit in Ft Devens, Mass., but got a compassionate reassignment to Ft Bliss, Texas, because of my mother's failing health. Got married in July of 1969, to my beautiful wife, Sue, and we have been married 51 years. We had 2 sons, our oldest died last year, and we adopted our grandson when he was just a baby. I was a Police Officer in the city of Phoenix, Az for over 30 years, and worked as an Instructional Assistant in a Special Education classroom for 10 years. My wife was a school teacher for over 30 years in Phoenix.

From your list of names of members of our company, I only remember Jackson, Roman, Cpt Rogan, who was killed at An Khe, by a sniper, JB Green, Larry Briscoe, Warren Gray, and of course you. There are some others that I remember from our Recon Squad, that left before you arrived.

Well now that I have bored you to death with this trip back through time, I'll sign off for now. Got plenty of more stories that maybe we can share when we meet again sometime.

Take care and Stay Safe,

Jim Miller
Recon/B/2/503

Note: I might have Cpt Gifford and Cpt Fox's names confused and mixed up. Jim

I THINK OF YOU EVERY DAY

"I was 21 1/2 years old when you died. There's not a day that goes by that I don't think of you. I think of the advice that you would have given me, the time we possibly would have spent together. I thank you for what you have given me. I thank you and your comrades. You are my hero always. I miss you dad, we all do. Happy Birthday. Your son,"

Larry Briscoe, Jr.
(Wall of Faces, 5/27/02)

**Two Horrible Days At War
For The Bravo Bulls
In The Month Of May 1968**

(Name, Age, Rank, Date KIA)



Lawrence Lee Aldrich, 20
SP4, 5-6-68



Robert Samuel Allen, 20
CPL, 5-5-68



Bruce Richard Backes, 21
SP4, 5-5-68



Larry Briscoe, 21
SGT, 5-6-68



Karl Lee Bullard, 20
1LT, 5-6-68



Rodney Allen Crandall, 21
SP4, 5-6-68



Freddie Isiah Crockett, 20
PFC, 5-6-68



Thomas Amiss Fox, 18
CPL, 5-6-68



Richard Al Green, 18
PFC, 5-5-68



Ronald Arwed Hillman, 20
CPL, 5-5-68

(Two Horrible Days continues....)



Two Horrible Days....



Dennis Edward Hinton, 24
1LT, 5-5-68



Holland Irwin Langham, 18
CPL, 5-3-68



Donald Everett Lowe, 21
CPL, 5-5-68



Lawrence Michael McGinty, 19
PFC, 5-6-68



Jimmy Ray Moore, 21
CPL, 5-5-68



Robert Hal "Doc" Mundy, 22
SP4, 5-6-68



Elbert Darrell Poff, 19
SP4, 5-5-68



Francis Joseph Robinson, 19
SGT, 5-5-68



Craig Allen Rood, 20
SP4, 5-5-68



Donald Ray Stephenson, 20
SP4, 5-5-68



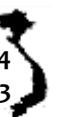
Lonny Lawrence Stewart, 21
SGT, 5-6-68



Frank Wright Webb, 21
1LT, 5-5-68



Richard Foy Wells, 20
SP4, 5-5-68





**1SGT Ron Rosser, Paratrooper,
Medal of Honor Recipient**

Family meant everything to Army Sgt. 1st Class Ron Rosser, who was the second oldest of a whopping 17 siblings. It was that love of family that drove him to the front lines of the Korean War. There, during one of the coldest days of winter, he single-handedly took out dozens of enemy soldiers and saved many of his own during a lopsided fight that would earn him the Medal of Honor.



Rosser was born Oct. 24, 1929, in Columbus, Ohio, at the onset of the Great Depression. As the family's oldest boy, he said he never had time for hobbies since he helped take care of his siblings. But he learned quickly that he was a fighter.

"If you bothered one of my brothers, I cleaned your clock. And if you bothered one of my sisters, you better leave town," he joked in a Library of Congress Veterans History Project interview.

To help support his family, Rosser joined the Army in 1946 at the age of 17. He became a paratrooper and served as part of the post-World War II occupation force in Japan and Germany. When he returned to civilian life three years later, he followed in his father's footsteps and became a coal miner.

But that didn't last. When Rosser learned his brother, Richard, had joined the Army and died fighting in Korea, he wanted revenge. So, he reenlisted.

"I had made up my mind before I went there that you can't kill my brother and get away with it," he said.

Looking for Revenge

After reacclimating to military life, then-Cpl. Rosser was sent to Korea, where he served as a forward observer — basically the eyes and ears for the field artillery at the head of the front lines.

"Not many men get into the kind of combat I was in," he later said. *"Most men, their company goes up and their company comes back. I never came back. I always stayed up there, and I watched a lot of men come and go."*

On Jan. 12, 1952, Rosser was attached to Company L of the 38th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Infantry Division, in a region known as the Iron Triangle. They were sent to raid a Chinese-held mountaintop outpost and destroy its winter installations. It was 20 degrees below zero with about a foot of crusty snow on the ground, so their success would be a huge blow for the enemy.

But their daytime sneak attack didn't work. At the bottom of the hill, they were stopped by fierce artillery, mortar and gunfire.

Rosser was with the lead platoon. He immediately handed his radio to his assistant and charged up the fire-laden hill with only an M2 carbine rifle and a single grenade. He took out the occupants of the first bunker he came upon with his gun. At the top of the hill, he killed two enemy soldiers before hopping into a trench and killing five more. Rosser then hurled his one grenade into another bunker, which took out several more Chinese soldiers. He then shot two more as they fled.

At this point, Rosser said he yelled for backup, but he realized he was alone.

"Every time a [U.S. soldier] moved, he was killed or wounded," he said. *"It was really a nasty fight."*

From there, Rosser went back downhill through enemy fire to get more ammunition and grenades. Along the way, he saved a lieutenant who had been shot right in front of him.

After reloading, Rosser charged the hill again, taking out more Chinese in the trench he'd just cleared. On his way to more enemy bunkers, he got hit by a grenade but was able to keep going and take down more of the enemy. He said he even managed to deflect a grenade tossed at him while he was in a trench.

"It hit me in the hip and dropped down against my foot. I couldn't get away from it, so I dove across the Chinaman I'd just killed. Just as I went over this Chinese soldier, the grenade went off," Rosser recalled.

"Instead of blowing my legs off, it blew the heel off one of my boots. When I hit the ground, I bounced back up, and I caught this guy up on his toes, looking to see if he got me. I gave him about six [shots] in the belly."

He was again out of ammo, so for a second time he headed back down the hill, picking up another wounded soldier along the way who he took to relative safety. After another resupply, he charged the hill a third time, hurling grenades into enemy positions.

(continued....)



Heavily Outnumbered

According to Rosser's Medal of Honor citation, during the course of the fight, he *"single-handedly killed at least 13 of the enemy."* But according to Rosser himself, *"I got that many in the first trench."*

"I was up on the top of this mountain by myself taking on sometimes as much as 200 Chinese," he said. *"They were all over me, jumping on my back and grabbing me by the leg. I was beating them with my rifle."*

Rosser eventually made it back down the hill, where he warned the captain in charge that they needed to withdraw. Despite being wounded, Rosser organized his platoon to carry the dead and wounded to safety. He made several trips across open terrain that was still under fire to pull back men injured more seriously than he was.

Of the 170 men who were with him that day, only 68 returned. Ninety were killed, with 12 more listed as missing in action.

A Life Changed Forever

Rosser said he was still stationed on the front lines when his company commander informed him that he was recommended for the Medal of Honor. When the award became official, Rosser returned to the U.S. and immediately got on a plane to Washington.

On June 27, 1952, Rosser was presented with the nation's highest award for valor by President Harry S. Truman during a White House ceremony. His entire family was in attendance.



"It was kind of frightening — all these generals were there and congressmen and Senators, everybody paying attention to you," Rosser said. *"I don't know why, but I knew my life would never be the same."*

"It's the way people look at you — like you're something special when you're really not," he continued. *"You're just an ordinary soldier who got caught in something. ... I was lucky enough to survive."*

Legacy

After the war, Rosser served in several capacities, including in Germany and as a paratrooper instructor at Fort Benning, Georgia. He retired after 22 years when he was denied a request to join combat in Vietnam after his youngest brother, Gary, was killed, according to his obituary.

Rosser went on to earn a college degree and worked several civilian jobs after the Army. He eventually established two scholarship programs named in honor of his fallen brothers.

Rosser married four times and had a daughter, Pam, with his second wife. He was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma toward the end of his life, according to his daughter. He was at her home in Bumpus Mills, Tennessee, when he died after a fall on Aug. 26, 2020. He was 90.

Rosser met with schoolchildren and soldiers throughout his life to talk about his experiences in war. He said over time his desire for revenge faded. Instead of thinking about the men he killed, he preferred to think about the soldiers he saved.

"I used to think about the Medal of Honor and the importance of it," he said. *"To me, the real honor of the Medal of Honor is that a handful of young men who were with you at a difficult time thought you were worthy of it."*

In 1999, Rosser donated his Medal of Honor to the statehouse in Columbia, Ohio, in hopes of inspiring children who visited on field trips.

May your legacy live on, sergeant.

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

And we ask you, what kind of man would do all that? Well, a paratrooper man for one. Ed

Ron's brother Gary
MSGT USMC
KIA 9/20/66, RVN

Semper Fi, Brother





Remember When Illinois Route 173 became The 173rd Airborne Brigade Highway



The 173rd Airborne Brigade had been deployed to Afghanistan and Elite Forces, Chapter VI, of the 173rd Airborne Brigade decided it was time to request Illinois Route 173 just south of the border with Wisconsin be designated as the 173rd Brigade Highway. The goal was to have the name changed in time for The Herd to be redeployed back to Italy and allow Sky Soldiers leave to return to the United States.

To accomplish that, members of Chapter VI began in 2007 to contact the Mayors and their City/Town/Village Counsels to support that goal and members of the Illinois House and Senate to vote for that goal. Each of the municipalities approved the highway name designation for the 173rd Airborne Brigade and so advised their Illinois Representatives and Senators. Representative Jack Franks and Senator Michael Bond took the lead and submitted a Joint Resolution:

Illinois General Assembly - HJR0107 Synopsis As Introduced

Designate Illinois Route 173 as the 173rd Airborne Brigade Highway in honor of the brave men and women of the United States Army 173rd Airborne Brigade



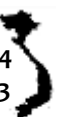
*Thank you for visiting Springfield
State Senator Michael Bond*

Ceremonies and presentations over, there was a series of handshakes and thanks between the Sky Soldiers and State Senators and Representatives. In this photo, Sky Soldiers Jose M. Palacios, Oliver Thomas, Richard "Doc" Jones, an Unknown Iraq Sky Soldier and Mary Iskerka are seen with Illinois Senator Michael Bond who sponsored the Bill in the Senate. Pats on the back and handshakes were deserved by all present.

AIRBORNE, ALL THE WAY!!

RAGMAN

**Robert A. Getz, President
Elite Forces, Chapter VI
173d Airborne Brigade Association**



James "Wally" Speed, Col. Recon 2/503 RVN Passes



James Wallace ("Wally") Speed was born on September 26, 1940 to Mary Sue (Stubblefield) and Lonnie Lafayette Speed in Florence, Alabama. The family moved to Tennessee during World War II, due to his father's work at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, where the atomic bomb was developed.

He attended The Citadel, the Military College of South Carolina, for one year before receiving a competitive appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, from which he graduated in 1963.

He was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant upon graduation, and he selected the Infantry Branch. He trained at Fort Benning, Georgia, where he completed the Infantry Officer Basic Course, Airborne School, and Ranger School.

His first duty assignment was with the 25th Infantry Division at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, where he served as an infantry platoon commander in the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry. He completed a Vietnamese Language course and then received a temporary duty assignment ("TDY") to Vietnam, where he worked with various Vietnamese Army units. He was the first member of his West Point class to be assigned to Vietnam in any capacity, since, at that time, only ranks of First Lieutenant and higher were being assigned to Vietnam.

Upon his return to the Division in Hawaii, he earned the coveted Expert Infantryman Badge and was reassigned to the elite 173rd Airborne Brigade, which had recently deployed to Vietnam.

In the 173rd, Wally was assigned to the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry ("The Rock"), which was the same unit in which his uncle had served in WWII. For valor in combat while commanding the Recon Platoon, he was awarded the Army Commendation Medal w/"V" (for valor), and he received two Purple Heart Medals for combat wounds, as well as the Combat Infantryman Badge. He was selected to serve as the Aide de Camp to the Commanding General of the HQ Area Command, and he served in that capacity until he was reassigned back to the 173rd Airborne Brigade to the 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry as the S2 (Intelligence) and S5 (Civil Affairs) Staff Officer. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service in Vietnam as well as the Presidential Unit Citation.

In February, 1968 Captain Speed joined the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) just as the Tet Offensive of 1968 was winding down, and he was assigned to the G3 staff as an operations officer in the Division Tactical Operations Center, where he participated in Operation Pegasus, which was the relief of the besieged Marines at Khe Sanh. After six months on the Division Staff, he was assigned to command D Company, 1st Bn, 12th Cav, and his rifle company conducted combat operations for the remainder of his tour of duty in Vietnam. He was awarded a second Bronze Star Medal w/"V" for valor and the Air Medal for meritorious service aboard aircraft, during combat operations.

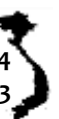
Wally completed a third tour of duty in Vietnam, then married Janet Reeves of Chattanooga. They had a daughter, Kimberly Jan Speed.

Wally lived life to the fullest and savored the simple pleasures - a fresh cup of coffee, a hot dog, a good book. He enjoyed a tasty meal, whether home cooked or out. On special occasions, he loved to go to Bones or La Grotta. His hobbies included photography, travel, and hiking, especially in the Canadian Rockies -- that was his happy place. But, his greatest happiness of all came from the love and the pride he felt for his family. His eyes lit up when he spoke of his grandchildren - Alaska, with her budding artistic flair, and Kameron, with his hard work and talent on the drums. They were his joy and his hope for the future.

Janet Reeves Speed, his wife of 41 years, predeceased him in 2010.

Condolences may be sent or viewed at www.wagesfuneralhome.com

Rangers Lead The Way, Sir!

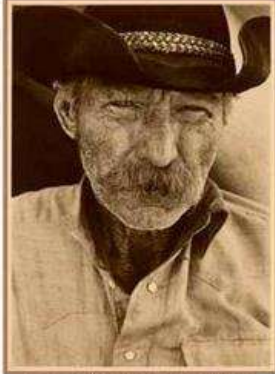


A Great Newsletter



The 335th AHC Cowboys' *Falcon News* is a great newsletter. In fact, we stole from their October issue the bit of 'Cowboy' wisdom you see below. We don't mind if you tell them either cuz they don't hear none too well given all that *WHOO WHOO WHOO* sound they had to endure. *We love them Cowboys...and Caspers! Ed*

Here are the Five Rules for Men to Follow for a Happy Life that Russell J. Larsen had inscribed on his headstone in Logan, Utah. He died not knowing that he would someday win the...
"Coolest Headstone" contest..."



A COWBOY TOMBSTONE

FIVE RULES FOR MEN TO FOLLOW FOR A HAPPY LIFE

1. It's important to have a woman who helps at home, cooks from time to time, cleans up, and has a job.
2. It's important to have a woman who can make you laugh.
3. It's important to have a woman who you can trust, and doesn't lie to you.
4. It's important to have a woman who is good in bed, and likes to be with you.
5. It's very, very important that these four women do not know each other or you could end up dead like me.

PREPPING FOR THE DROP.... LOVE THEM RIGGERS

Ramstein, GERMANY — With Saber Junction's joint, multinational airborne operation fast approaching, the riggers of the 173rd Brigade Support Battalion, 173rd Airborne Brigade are efficiently packing parachutes and rigging heavy equipment to drop into Hohenfels Training Area.



U.S. Army paratroopers assigned to 173rd Brigade Support Battalion, 173rd Airborne Brigade ensure equipment is properly rigged for the upcoming airborne operations in Hohenfels Training Area during Saber Junction 2019.

Photo by Spc. Ryan Lucas

Riggers serve a foundational and critical role for all U.S. Army airborne operations. Responsible for packing every parachute, they ensure soldiers and equipment successfully descend to the drop zone. *"The riggers contribute to SJ19 [Saber Junction 19] by providing the airborne insertion and the aerial re-supply,"* said Sgt. 1st Class Erick Griego, the aerial delivery platoon sergeant, *"we have ten days to execute normally what takes two weeks to do... We're on a tight schedule. We're up early, we're working late."* Saber Junction's airborne operation will take place on Sept. 18, 2019.

Saber Junction 2019 (SJ19) is an exercise involving nearly 5,400 participants from 16 ally and partner nations at the U.S. Army's Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels Training Areas, Sept. 3 to Sept. 30, 2019. SJ19 is designed to assess the readiness of the U.S. Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade to execute land operations in a joint, combined environment and to promote interoperability with participating allies and partner nations.



Villagers Progressing In Art Of Brickmaking

BONG SON – Brick construction is a relatively unknown trade in some areas of South Vietnam, land of thatched and mud huts. However, things are changing. The Civil Affairs Office of the 173rd Airborne Brigade is currently working on a program to teach the Vietnamese along the central coast the art of making durable concrete bricks .

At Truong Luong Refugee Camp in Bong Son an experimental brick manufacturing location has begun to turn out a much improved brick.

According to Major Ronald Lawrence, a Brigade Civil Affairs Officer, "A six-man crew with two machines is now putting out 2,000 bricks a month; and what is most important, they are bricks which will last."

"When the local people tried making bricks before," said Major Lawrence. "They made the mistake of drying them in the sun, which causes them to crumble more easily. Now, with the machines and the technique of shade-drying, they have a more durable product."

Eventually, the Brigade, in conjunction with CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support) hopes to build nine schools with locally manufactured bricks in the Bong Son area. .

"We think the program will be expanded significantly,"

It is hoped that the number of Vietnamese refugees gainfully employed will increase with the improved brick-producing process. Eventually the 2,700 refugees also hope to return with their new skills to the nearby An Lao Valley, which they were forced to evacuate because of VC terrorism.

Source: *The Observer*, January 24, 1969



Vietnamese refugee camp.
(Web photo)

Valor Awards of Men of the 2/503d RVN



Gentlemen & Surviving Family Members, hello:

We've begun the process of producing a publication honoring as many of our men as possible who served with our battalion in Vietnam and who are recipients of the **Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star w/V Device, Army Commendation Medal w/V Device** or **Soldier's Medal** in recognition of their heroic acts during combat with the 2/503d RVN.

We will publish the highest valor award citation of each trooper, or the valor award specified by recipients, who were on the roster of the 2/503d or received a valor award while attached to our battalion for their acts while in combat with our battalion. If citations cannot be obtained, where possible, we will list the names of 2/503 troopers and the valor award they earned.

If you are the recipient of one of these valor awards while on the roster of or attached to the 2/503d in Vietnam, please email a copy of the official Army citation, and a VN era or current photo of yourself, to rto173@att.net Also, if you are in possession of a valor citation of a 2/503 buddy, please send that in too.

Once we believe we've compiled all the valor award citations and photos possible, we will email the completed document to you and all Sky Soldiers on our list for your keeping. Also, it will be provided to the 173d Association, the University of Florida's Military Digital Library, and the 503rd PRCT Historical Battalion websites for their permanent posting.

The next two pages include a sample of how this publication may appear, and it is produced for the purpose of creating a consolidated historical record for our men, their families and descendants, as well as researchers and educators. Kindly forward this to your 2/503 buddies.

We understand countless men of our battalion, particularly many of those who lost their lives, were never formally recognized for their heroic acts during combat. But, what we can do is create this lasting document in their honor and in honor of those Sky Soldiers of the 2/503d who were so recognized.

Honor one, honor all.

(continued...)





Valor Award Recipients Of The 2/503d RVN



Photo of the hands of SFC Charles B. Morris, A/2/503, holding his Medal of Honor.

This publication will present citations of valor earned by numerous but not necessarily all of the men of the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry Regiment, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) who are recipients of the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star w/V Device, Soldier's Medal or Army Commendation Medal w/V Device in recognition of their acts of heroism during combat in Vietnam. This will also be published in honor of the countless men who served in the 2/503d in Vietnam, particularly those men who lost their lives, yet were never formally recognized for their heroic acts during combat.

It is because of men like these, men like us are alive today.

Produced by Sky Soldiers of the 2/503d RVN

(continued....)



Valor Award Recipients of the 2/503d RVN

They Were Young and Brave and Paratroopers

Robert L. Gore
B/2/503, '70



For heroism in connection with ground Operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam. Sergeant Robert L. Gore distinguished himself by valorous actions on 12 April 1970 while serving as a member of Company B 2d Battalion (Airborne) 503d Infantry. While on a combat operation in the Soui Co Valley, a squad of the first platoon was engaged by an enemy force armed with machine guns, grenade launcher, and other small arms. Sergeant Gore was a member of the reaction force dispatched to the contact. While enroute, the reaction force encountered an enemy machine gun position. The position was well placed and dug in. The enemy was delivering effective fire upon the reaction force and threatened to pin them down. Sergeant Gore exposed himself to the enemy force and laid down a base of fire so that other members of the reaction force could assault the bunker. After the enemy position was overrun and destroyed, the friendly elements were consolidated and supporting fires were employed. The first platoon went into the area after the supporting fires were lifted and immediately became engaged with elements of an NVA Company. The first platoon was pinned down and the second platoon was sent to flank the enemy position. At the same time, Sergeant Gore along with two other men assaulted the enemy position and destroyed a machine gun position, silencing four NVA soldiers. Their gallant efforts inspired the entire element to put forth a vigorous attack and completely overrun the enemy position. A total of thirteen NVA soldiers were silenced and two machine guns, an M-79 grenade launcher, four AK-47's, one pistol, various documents and other items of equipment were captured. Sergeant Gore's personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.



platoons of the company became engaged with an entrenched platoon sized Viet Cong force. During the first hour of the battle, Captain Kaplan coordinated supporting mortar fire for both platoons. When the platoons were running low on ammunition, Captain Kaplan, taking his reserve platoon as carrying parties, immediately set out to resupply and reinforce his advanced elements. Upon nearing the battle area, Captain Kaplan had the engaged platoons mark their flanks with smoke and maneuvered his reserve element to bring fire on the Viet Cong positions from the flank. At the same time, he dispatched sorely needed ammunition to the second and third platoons. Despite the enemy fire concentration, Captain Kaplan fearlessly maneuvered his reserved element to within fifty meters of the enemy and laid down a base of fire. While the resupply was being carried out, Captain Kaplan called in gunships to strafe the enemy. The helicopter strikes coupled with withering fire from the then reinforced platoon immediately routed the entrenched enemy. Captain Kaplan's outstanding display of aggressiveness, devotion to duty, and personal bravery were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military services and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

John W. Searcy
HHC/2/503, '66



For heroism in connection with military operations against a hostile force: Sergeant Searcy distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions on 16 March 1966 while serving as assistant platoon sergeant during an attack from an estimated Viet Cong regiment near Phuoc Vinh, Republic of Vietnam. When the attack started, he immediately placed his personnel in positions to defend the battalion command post group. After establishing the perimeter, he consolidated the mortar ammunition for the mortar crews. During the course of the five-hour battle, Sergeant Searcy administered first aid to many of the wounded. When small arms ammunition became critical, he helped to carry ammunition forward through intense hostile fire to the frontline soldiers. Sergeant Searcy's personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army.



Kenneth Kaplan
B/2/503, '66



For heroism in connection with military operations against a hostile force: Captain Kaplan distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous action on 19 November 1966 in the Republic of Vietnam while serving as Commanding Officer of Company B. On this day, the second and third



(continued....)



2/503 Valor Award Recipients Identified To Date

Thus far, we've compiled official army citations of valor and/or photos for these troopers, except as noted:

MOH - Medal of Honor. DSC – Distinguished Service Cross. S
S - Silver Star. BSV – Bronze Star w/V Device.
ACMV – Army Commendation Medal w/V Device
SM – Soldier's Medal for Heroism

Thomas W. Aikey, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Charles A. Bell, B/2/503, SS (photo/citation needed)
James A. Bednarski, C/2/503, BSV
Jan Bobowski, A/2/503, BSV
Patrick Bowe, HHC/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Larry Briscoe, B/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Nathaniel Brown, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
R.L. Les Brownlee, B/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Karl L. Bullard, B/2/503, DSC
Robert B. Carmichael, HHC/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Kenneth Kaplan, B/2/503, BSV
Carmen Cavezza, A/2/503, SS (citation needed)
George S. Colson, II, B/2/503, BSV
Michael J. Cosmo, C/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Gary Cox, D/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Charles R. Crews, A/2/503, BSV
Eugene R. Davis, B/2/503, DSC
Michael Deeb, HHC/2/503 (citation needed)
Richard Eckert, B/2/503, BSV
Samuel A. Eidson, A/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
Mile Le Roy Ellis, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Frederick W. Fassett, HHC/B/2/503, SS
Gerald N. Floyd, A/2/503, BSV
J.L. Frazier, Sr., A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Leslie A. Fuller, A/2/503, BSV
Amador B. Garcia, Jr., HHC/2/503, BSV
Pedro L. Garcia, HHC/2/503, SS
Robert P. Gipson, B/2/503, DSC
Michael J. Gladden, B/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Robert L. Gore, B/2/503, BSV
Robert A. Gray, C/2/503, SS (photo/citation needed)
Steven Haber, C/2/503, BSV
William T. Hagerty, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Philip P. Hayden, C/2/503, DSC (photo needed)
Rudolph Hernandez, B/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
Richard E. Hood, Jr., A/2/503, SS (photo/citation needed)
Ross T. Hulslander, A/2/503, BSV (photo needed)
Vladimir Jakovenko, C/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Donald R. Judd, A/2/503, SS
Kenneth Kaplan, B/2/503, BSV
Harold J. Kaufman, C/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Jack Kelley, A/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Michael J. Kiley, A/2/503, SS
Richard N. Kimball, Jr., D/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Charles Knecht, A/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Kenneth M. Knudson, A/2/503, SS
Rodger M. Koefod, B/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Gregory S. Kowaleski, A/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
Johnny H. Leake, A/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
John Leide, C/2/503, BSV
John L. Leppelman, C/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Robert R. Litwin, A/2/503, DSC
Richard Lock, B/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
Carlos J. Lozada, A/2/503, MOH
Gregg P. Lyell, A/2/503, ACMV

William H. Marshall, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Martin T. McDonald, HHC/2/503, DSC
Daniel F. McIssac, E/2/503, BSV
Stephen Adam Mika, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
David A. Milton, A/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Willie C. Monroe, A/2/503, BSV
Charles B. Morris, A/2/503, MOH
Timothy J. Murphy, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Daniel L. Negro, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Michael D. O'Connor, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Milton L. Olive, III, B/2/503, MOH
Jerry L. O'Neal, C/2/503, SS (photo/citation needed)
Charles E. Owens, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
William Palenske, A/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
Freddie Parks, A/2/503, SS
Alfred J. Paul, III, C/2/503, BSV
Leo A. Pellerin, A/2/503, BSV
Elbert D. Poff, D/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Billy W. Ponder, Sr., C/2/503, DSC (photo needed)
George A. Poor, Jr., A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Charles L. Raiford, Jr., C/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Jerry R. Rebits, B/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Donald A. Rice, HHC/2/503, BSV
Eric Ribitsch, C/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Edward L. Richardson, A/2/503, ACMV (citation needed)
James H. Robinson, B/2/503, ACMV
James P. Rogan, B/2/503, DSC
William A. Ross, D/2/503, BSV
John J. Schimpf, B/2/503, SS
Frederick L. Shipman, D/2/503, SS
Dale A. Schram, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
James C. Schultz, A/2/503, BSV
Peter J. Schutz, A/2/503, SS, (photo/citation needed)
John W. Searcy, HHC/2/503, BSV
Frederick L. Shipman, D/Recon/2/503, SS
Irwin W. Short, B/2/503, BSV (photo needed)
Donald L. Smith, Jr., HHC/2/503, BSV
Lewis B. Smith, D/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Charles H. Snow, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
John R. Stalter, C/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Arthur C. Stang, III, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Johnson A. Steidler, A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Robert L. Steven, Jr., A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Robert Sweeney, C/2/503, BSV
Truman R. Thomas, HHC/2/503, BSV
John R. Tighe, B/2/503, BSV (citation needed)
Robert Toporek, B/2/503, BSV
William J. Tucker, A/2/503, BSV (photo/citation needed)
William C. Vose, BSV, A/HHC/2/503
Conrad N. Walker, 2/503 (Attached), SS
Robert A. Warfield, B/2/503, SS
Charles J. Watters, 2/503 (Attached), MOH
Frank W. Webb, B/2/503, SS (citation needed)
Alexander C. Zsigo, Jr., A/2/503, BSV (citation needed)

Note: Valor citations for the troopers shown in bold typeface have appeared in issues of this newsletter.

This project will likely take a number of months to complete.



Sports Heroes Who Served is a series that highlights the accomplishments of athletes who served in the U.S. military.

SEPT. 29, 2020 |
BY DAVID VERGUN, DOD NEWS

Most baseball fans of the legendary Yogi Berra probably don't know that he also served in World War II.

Berra actually signed with the New York Yankees in 1943, but put his baseball career on hold to join the Navy.

He was a gunner's mate assigned to the attack transport USS Bayfield. As a gunner's mate, Berra was responsible for the operation and maintenance of weapons and other ordnance equipment, as well as small arms and magazines.



The ship's destination: Utah Beach, France, on D-Day, June 6, 1944.

During the invasion, Berra manned a landing craft support vessel from which he said he *"sprayed bullets and rockets across the heavily fortified beach fronts before the troops landed."*

Berra was wounded in the hand by incoming enemy fire; he was later awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

In the years following his Navy service, he continued to support the troops. In 1950, he participated in a campaign with the Treasury Department to promote the purchase of U.S. savings bonds. In 2009, he received the Lone Sailor Award, and, in 2010, he was honored with the Audie Murphy Award for his Navy service.



Berra the Baseball Legend

As a player, Berra was with the New York Yankees from 1946 to 1963 and the New York Mets in 1965.

He was an 18-time All-Star and won 10 World Series championships as a player - more than any other player in Major League Baseball history. He had a career batting average of .285, while hitting 358 home runs and 1,430 runs batted in. He is also widely regarded as one of the greatest catchers in baseball history.



Berra caught Don Larsen's perfect game in Game 5 of the 1956 World Series. He also holds the all-time record for shutouts caught — 173.

As a manager, he was with the Yankees in 1964, the Mets from 1972 to 1975, and back with the Yankees from 1984 to 1985. He is one of only seven managers to lead both American and National League teams to the World Series.

As a coach, he was with the Mets from 1965 to 1971, the Yankees from 1976 to 1983, and the Houston Astros from 1986 to 1989.

Berra appeared as a player, coach or manager in every one of the 13 World Series that New York baseball teams won from 1947 through 1981. Overall, he played or coached in 22 World Series, 13 on the winning side.

In 1972, Berra was elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame. That year, the Yankees retired his uniform, number 8. Incidentally, Bill Dickey, the Yankees coach who taught Yogi Berra the finer points of catching, had previously worn number 8 as a catcher for the Yankees in the 1930s and 40s. Both catchers had that number retired by the Yankees. Both catchers served in the Navy in World War II.

Berra the Quotable

Outside of baseball, Berra is widely known for some memorable quotes. Here are just a few of many:

When you come to a fork in the road, take it.

You can observe a lot just by watching.

It ain't over 'till it's over.

No one goes there nowadays; it's too crowded.

Pair up in threes.

He hits from both sides of the plate. He's amphibious.

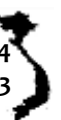
The future ain't what it used to be.

90% of the game is half mental.

It's déjà vu all over again.

A nickel ain't worth a dime anymore.

I never said most of the things I said.



Remember one, remember all...

Patrick Paulich: “What a Waste”

Posted on May 25, 2015 by Jessica McBride

“What a waste.”

Those were the words spoken again and again by Earl Paulich in reference to the loss of his brother, Vietnam War veteran Patrick James Paulich, who died in combat on Nov. 30, 1970 at 20-years-old. Only their mother called him Patrick, though. To everyone else he knew he was Pat.

Patrick Paulich photo obtained by Kenan Goyette.

Pat was born on St. Patrick’s Day on March 17, 1950 and was named Patrick because of that. He was the youngest of five siblings and grew up in Niagara, Wis. with his parents and siblings Betty, Brad, Frank, and Earl. Brad and Frank had both served in the military before Pat. Brad was in the Navy during the Cuban Missile crisis but never saw combat, and Frank had suffered injuries in Vietnam and was sent home and has been partially disabled from them.

When Frank came back from Vietnam, Pat began to start thinking about a future in the military as well. He was living with Frank and Frank’s wife and working a factory job in Racine, Wis. when he decided to enlist in the Army. His brothers Earl and Frank remember him as being a kid searching for his place in life.

“He was a nice kid just trying to find his way,” said Earl Paulich.

“I think he wanted to do something,” said Frank Paulich. *“He looked up to his big brother.”*

The brothers said he wrote letters to their mother and the family frequently, and Frank spoke to him on the phone all the time while he was away. The letters were of shock at what he experienced and saw and the true horror that was the Vietnam War.

When the news came, that day in November 1970, the entire family was devastated. Earl remembers the exact sequence of events that took place when he first heard the horrible news.

He was a college student at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and was hanging out in his dorm room with his friends. There was one payphone on each floor, and a knock came on his door saying there was someone on the phone for him. When Earl answered, it was his uncle from Michigan who told him of his brother’s death.

“I remember walking back to my room thinking, ‘how am I going to tell my friends what just happened?’” said Earl Paulich.

Earl was not a supporter of the war, but he still loved his brother who chose to fight in it and was devastated when he found out his brother had died.

“I was angry because I didn’t want the war anyway.” The Paulich’s mother had lost her mother-in-law whom she was extremely close with and another family

member, all within three months of each other, but Pat’s was the worst.

When the time came for Pat’s funeral, it was decided to be a closed casket but the family was given the choice of seeing their beloved brother. Everyone chose to see him except their mother.

Earl described the scene with Pat being wrapped in bandages in his casket. His casket had a glass cover and his head was partially wrapped as he had suffered a head wound.

“It was just horrible.”

When recounting the event, Earl said he had been thinking about the funeral and his brother lately and had had a dream about the funeral and seeing his brother

in the casket.

“Why did I do that? Why did I want to see that?” was all that he could think or say.

The brothers both remembered Pat as a good kid saying he was a *“very, very loving man”* and was just trying to find a place where he fit in.

“It’s been a long time,” said Earl as he reflected on his brother’s life and death and the 45 years that have since passed. *“Life’s not fair. Thank God there’s more joy than bad.”*

Source:

<https://mediamilwaukee.com/special-projects/patrick-paulich-waste>



**Patrick James Paulich, 20
PVT, E/1/503, KIA 11/30/70**





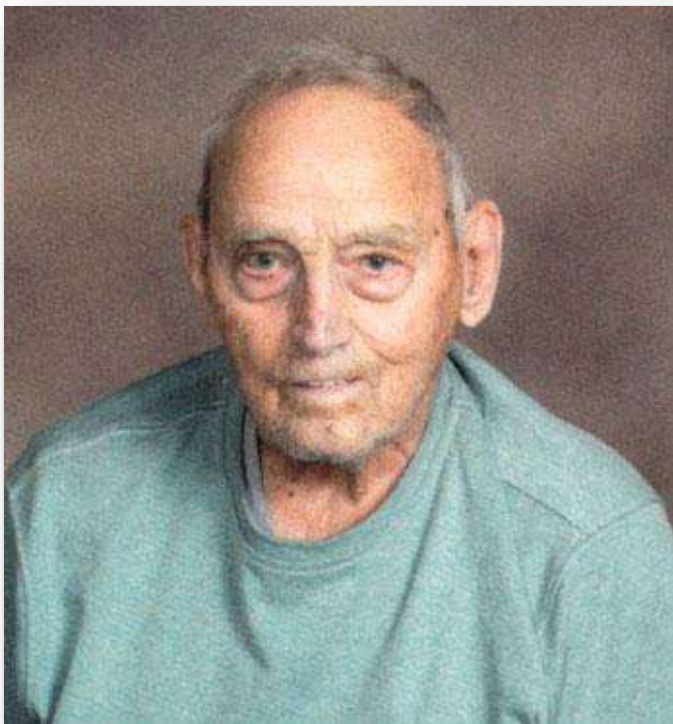
Remembering Our Heroes...

503rd PIR Paratrooper Extraordinaire Lyle George Dykhoff



Lyle George Dykhoff went home to his heavenly Father on Thursday, May 14, 2020, after a short, but heroic battle with cancer

May 19, 2020



Lyle George Dykhoff went home to his heavenly Father on Thursday, May 14, 2020, after a short, but heroic battle with cancer. Mass of Christian Burial for Lyle was held on Tuesday, May 19 at 10 a.m. at St. Joseph Catholic Church, Devils Lake with the Very Reverend C.F. Wilhelm celebrating the Mass. The Rosary was recited at 9:30 a.m. on Tuesday. Military Honors was accorded outside the church on Tuesday following the funeral Mass. Visitation was at St. Joseph Catholic Church on Tuesday beginning at 8:30 a.m. until time of the funeral Mass. Burial was at the Lakota Cemetery at a later date. Lyle was the fifth child born to Frank and Pauline (VanSteenvoort) Dykhoff on Dec. 3, 1925, at Devils Lake, ND.

He grew up on the family farm near Crary, ND, and attended school at Crary, Bartlett, and Doyon, ND. Lyle married Marion Horysch on June 28, 1947. They were the very proud parents of, Gary David, their only child. They made their home in Lakota, ND, where Lyle was postmaster for many years.

He was active in the Lakota American Legion and was a life member of the Lakota VFW Honor Guard/Firing Squad, performing many 21-gun salutes. For many years, he was a Boy Scout leader and loved taking the boys on camping and fishing trips. Lyle was a member of St. Joseph Church and the Knights of Columbus.

After retirement from the Post Office, they built a home on the lake at Devils Lake where he spent many hours fishing with friends. Lyle was an avid deer hunter and always looked forward to deer season. He loved family reunions and had a special fondness for all his little nephews and nieces, teaching many of them the fine art of fishing, although he always caught the most fish.

Lyle enlisted in the United States Army at age 18, following his two older brothers into the service and proudly served his country during World War II. He served with the Company A 503rd Paratrooper Infantry as a Demolition Specialist. He earned the Bronze Star as part of a regiment that fought for the Negros Island in the South Pacific.

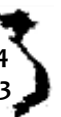
He was called back into service during the Korean War. He earned another Bronze Star for pulling some 50 Koreans from the mountains of Korea in the most frigid and deadly weather encountered by US Forces. While moving ammunition in Korea, he was injured in a munitions truck accident, breaking his back.

He proudly wore his cap proclaiming he was a veteran of World War II and Korea.

Lyle suffered his greatest loss with the death of Marion in 1990, and his son, Gary, in 1992.

An exceptional man and true hero, we will miss him in our lives. The family requests in lieu of flowers that memorials be sent to St. Joseph School and Chapel Fund in memory of Lyle.

All The Way, Lyle!



Sky Soldiers Jumping Into Arizona! Watch the cacti!!



Rendezvous at LZ Scottsdale

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



Name: _____ Phone (____) _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

Unit Served: _____ Dates Served: _____

Guest Name 1: _____ Male/Female _____

Guest Name 2: _____ Male/Female _____

Guest Name 3: _____ Male/Female _____

Registration Fees

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

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

_____ \$55 per Gold Star Family applicant

_____ \$100 per Active Duty Member not on orders

_____ FREE, Active Duty Member on orders

Optional Activities

_____ \$85.00 Grand Canyon Tour

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

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

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

_____ FREE Gold Star Luncheon

_____ \$15.00 Ladies Luncheon

Vendor Fees

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

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

Vendor Extras:

_____ \$100.00 per additional table

_____ \$50.00 Electricity at vendor table

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

SUBTOTAL DUE:

\$ _____

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

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

Reserve hotel room early to acquire handicap room as hotel is limited in these rooms.

One must be registered to take part in all listed activities

Registration does not include any mini reunions (such as 2d Battalion etc.)



~ Editor's Note ~

Preparing for war, or, is this any way to treat an Airborne Battalion?

For the added historical record of our battalion and brigade, this report is offered for your study, reading pleasure and, in some cases, surprise if not amusement. Here we find our beloved 173d Airborne 2/503 battalion and brigade embarking on a simulated combat exercise in Taiwan during the latter part of 1964, intended to hone their skills and test their abilities in preparation for war. The After Action Report source document which follows was transcribed and is presented unabridged, with photos added. Where "(?)" appears, we are unsure of the adjacent word shown due to poor quality of the copy in our possession. Notwithstanding the obvious errors and misjudgments in the planning and execution of this operation, those reading this who are not intimately part of our 173d Airborne family should know, the 173d was activated on Okinawa in 1963 as the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate); the unit earned the nickname "Tien Bien" ("Sky Soldiers"), given them by Nationalist Chinese paratroopers; in May 1965 the Brigade became the first major ground combat unit of the United States Army to

be committed to the war in Vietnam; the Sky Soldiers conducted the only U.S. mass combat parachute jump of the war in February 1967, and during more than six years of continuous combat, fighting in many of the most viscous battles during the war, including but not limited to the battles in the "D" Zone jungle and mountain ranges of Dak To, the brigade earned 14 campaign streamers and four unit citations; the Brigade lost over 1,700 Sky Soldiers in combat while sustaining over 8,400 paratroopers wounded in action; thirteen paratroopers of the 173d Airborne were awarded the Medal of Honor for conspicuous gallantry in battle; and during the war, our 2nd Battalion bore two nicknames, "We Try Harder" and "Second to None". The brigade was deactivated in 1972, then reactivated in June 2000, as the U.S. Army's Contingency Response Force in Europe, having undertaken multiple tours in combat in the Middle East. The Brigade's lineage dates back to WWI, and includes the famed 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR) who fought in the Pacific theatre during WWII. Ed

EXERCISE SKY SOLDIER TIEN BING VI

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

The steadily improving economy and standard of living in Taiwan and the existence of the anti-aggressor government are believed to have caused the 'aggressorland' to become more hostile toward the Republic of China.

In the final days of October, an aggressor force, having made other successful landings on the coast, directed its forces north and south, to turn the friendly positions. The R.O.C. field armies contained the aggressor forces and prepared to execute a counter-attack plan to drive the enemy back into the sea. At the same time, the R.O.C. requested immediate assistance from the United States under existing treaties and security arrangements, in order to eliminate the international security threat. As a result of this request, planning was initiated for the employment of U.S. and R.O.C. airborne forces."



Sky Soldiers of the 2/503 during practice jump onto Yomitan DZ on Okinawa in 1965. (Photo by Bn Cmdr George Dexter, LTC)

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

Sky Soldier VI Trooper Carrier Command Post was activated at 1600 hours 25 October on Naha Air Base, Okinawa, by Brigadier General Richard H. Ellis, Commander, 315th Air Division, and Trooper Carrier commander for the exercise....

(continued....)



....Over seventy United States Air Force transport aircraft, under the operational control of the USAF 315th Air Division, had been assembled on Okinawa, along with more than 3800 personnel and over 3,800,000 pounds of cargo to be airlifted into the exercise area to join their allied R.O.C. forces in repelling the simulated aggressor.



BG William H. Ellis

Three Command Airlift Support Units (CALSU's) were established to execute the orders issued by the Trooper Carrier Command Post. The CALSU at Naha Air Base controlled 315th Air Division flying units of the 6315th Operations Group, which is equipped with

three C-130 trooper carrier squadrons. At Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, the CALSU supported the aircraft from the 22d Troop Carrier Squadron, 1502d Air Transport Wing (MATS), and crews from the Naval Air Transport Wing, Pacific, flying Air Force C-130's. The third CALSU was located in west central Taiwan to monitor and control Sky Soldier airlift operations.

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

HEADQUARTERS

2D BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503D INFANTRY

APO 50, U.S. Forces

12 November 1964

(Declassified)

**TO: Commanding General
173d Abn Bde (Sep)
ATTN: S3
APO 50, U.S., Forces**

SUBJECT: After Action Report for Sky Soldier VI

1. The following after action report is submitted for Exercise Sky Soldier VI conducted during the period 27 October to 6 November 1964.



"2/503rd Parachute Jump on X-Ray DZ, Ping Tung, Taiwan. This was Tien Bien II, the last jump on Taiwan for the 2/503 ABG. Tien Bien III was in 1963 conducted by the 173rd Airborne Brigade."

2. Summary of operations.

a. 2d Bn (Abn), 503d received the Brigade order to conduct a parachute assault, seize 3 objectives, and defend the airhead line on 1 October 1964. Planning was immediately begun, and the Battalion order was issued on 15 October 1964. Subsequent to issuance of the Battalion order, detailed instructions were issued,

manifesting was accomplished, and preparations for the marshalling phase was accomplished. The 2d Bn moved to the respective call forward areas at 0100 on D-day. Movement to the departure airfield was finished by 0400 D-day.

b. One half of the Battalion was dropped at P+2 on D-day. As a result of excessive winds on the drop zone, the other half was dropped at 0830 on D+1. The initial objectives were secured and the Battalion assumed the defense of the airhead. The Chinese interpreters joined the Battalion at 1330 D-day.

c. All Battalion objectives, to include roadblocks, COP's and minefields were secured by 1528 on D+1. All units remained in the defense throughout D+1.

d. The Battalion received a warning order to relieve E/17th of defense mission, and move to an assembly area south of airhead at 0103 on D+2. They departed the drop zone, passed through assembly area Blue, and was disposed in assembly area Bronze and Blue by 2000 on D+2. Brigade orders received to cross Ta Tu River on D+3. The battalion order was issued at 1830 hours on D+2.

e. Battalion crossed LD at 0700 hours on D+3, B Company leading the attack. AT 0930, A Company crossed the river; C Company crossed shortly thereafter. B Company continued to move south and seized the 01 Line. A night attack order was received from Brigade for the night of D+3; however, the exercise play was stopped until 0600 on D+4.

(continued....)



f. On D+4 the Battalion crossed the LD at 0600 hours. Objective Waite was seized at 0900 hours. Throughout D+4, D+5, D+6 and D+7 the Battalion continued the attack south, seizing a series of objectives on the right portion of the Brigade sector. On D+6 B Company relieved elements of 1/503d on Battalion's left flank. On D+7 the 2/503d assumed the responsibility for the Brigade front. At the end of D+7 the Battalion was along PL Green, 4,000 meters short of 1st Allied Army Objective 5.

g. On D+8 the Battalion crossed the LD at 0515, and secured objective M by 0700 hours. The final objective was secured at 0900, and the Battalion was moved to an assembly area in preparation for the movement back to Okinawa. The Battalion closed into the assembly area at 1700 hours D+8.



2/503 on Taiwan, heading back to Okinawa
(Photos by Don Rice, HHC/2/503)

h. On 6 November the Battalion departed the assembly area for the departure airfield. The first group left at 0140(?) and the second at 1000 hours. The entire Battalion closed into the departure airfield at 1200 hours. Aircraft departed throughout the afternoon, and the entire Battalion airland elements closed back into Camp Kue by 062230 November 64.

3. Accomplishment of exercise objectives: All objective as outlined in Exercise Plan, Exercise Sky Soldiers/Tien Bing VI were accomplished.

4. Problems encountered: The following major problems were encountered in all phases of Exercise Sky Soldiers.

a. Phase I, Marshalling

(1) In the marshalling phase, excessive confusion existed due to the excess loading at Brigade level. The movement between various units' call forward groups, manifesting and briefings were overly complicated. By 20 to 25 and placed in as many as 10 aircraft. In other Battalion operations, the same breakdown has been made at Battalion level without the problems and coordinating with other Brigade units. If personnel are cross loaded at Battalion level, personnel will be cross loaded almost as it was at Brigade level for this exercise.

(2) Briefings of troops on last minute details from D-1 to D-Day was unrealistic due to the non-existence of a large marshaling area. If troops were moved into a settled marshaling area, then briefings could be conducted until time to move to a departure airfield.

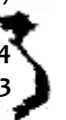
(3) C Company did not receive adequate transportation to move the complete unit to the call forward area.

(4) The Brigade requirement to carry a 15 day basic load of batteries plus 25% tied up transportation and was not necessary during the problem.

(5) Late change in the Brigade Admin Order caused excessive confusion at the last(?) minute. Transportation, marshalling and other areas had great confusion because of these changes. Transportation on was requested originally, and changed twice before final movement. Plans to not go to a Brigade call forward area came too late. The Battalion tried to react by setting up a make efficient call, but this was unsuccessful due to non-availability of transportation.

(6) Some of the airlanded vehicles did not have the proper amount of fuel in their tanks and ran out of gas before leaving the arrival airfield.

(continued....)



(7) Vehicles not departing Okinawa until D-3 were moved into the Battalion call forward area on D-day for control purposes. They were subsequently moved to a Brigade call forward area from 1 to 1½ days prior to departure. Once these vehicles departed our call forward area, control was done by Battalion, and this control was never gained by Brigade. When drivers arrived at the Brigade call forward area, they were only told what time they would depart. More control must be exercised in the handling of these drivers since their supervisors jumped into the area of operations on D-day.

(8) There was a lack of coordination between the 173 A.E.S.P and 549th QM Company as to the methods of rigging. As a result, many loads were changed several times before the actual rigging began.

(9) One rifle company was detailed to provide one platoon to assist in movement of heavy drop loads. The detail was 40 minutes late and caused two loads to be re-manifested. Battalion S4 did not notify Battalion S3 of this change in manifesting.

(10) The infantry battalions were in complete charge of the rigging site, even though other Brigade units had loads being rigged. Throughout this rigging, and subsequent movement of loads to the departure airfield, these other units did not always have representatives available. The loads, and further responsibility should remain at Brigade level. Responsibility for overall running of the rigging site must be held at Brigade level, with representatives from all units available for coordination and rigging of their own loads. During the movement of loads to the departure airfield, decision had to be made regarding other units' loads, but coordination with these units was very difficult since no representatives from these units were available in the rigging site.

(11) Insufficient 1:25,000 maps were issued for this exercise. Errors up to 300 meters were noted when transferring coordinates from the 1:50,000 maps to the 1:25,000 maps.

(12) There was no medical coverage for the troops after the medical platoon gear was packed on D-1.

(13) There was no jumpmaster briefing schedule or conducted at either Battalion or Brigade level.

(14) It was not specified before the exercise as to the action to take in regard to simulated casualties.

(15) The Battalion Surgeon was sealed into Camp Kubasaki after the abort on D-day and was not allowed to visit the hospital to see the injured Battalion personnel.

(16) Some aircraft had 23 PAE bags aboard, some had only 3.

(17) No manifest check was conducted prior to movement to the respective call forward areas. This resulted in a large number of personnel not being manifested. Battalion Command Group #2 was not manifested as scheduled until D-1. This error was discovered only accidentally.

b. Phase II: Airborne assault operations.

(1) High winds prevented parachute assault of the entire Battalion on D-day. An unrealistic situation developed in that one half of the Battalion remained in place until D+1 to finish accomplishment of the original mission.

(2) Administrative procedure for aggressors were very unrealistic, i.e., one company of this unit was halted outside an administrative aggressor CP to allow the aggressors to move.

(3) Only one vehicle, a ¾ ton truck from the support platoon was available for recovery of ammunition, batteries, water, etc., from the drop zone and subsequent resupply

of Battalion units. In an actual operation as outlined by OPLAN Full Strike, this would never suffice. Battalion policy outlines that company transportation would be released to the S4 in an actual operation for this purpose. During this exercise this transportation was constantly on the move on the Drop zone for re-supply of water and rations to the units.



4-Deuce Platoon Trooper on Taiwan -

(Don Rice photo)

(4) The companies could not submit an accurate equipment status report until the day after the heavy drop, due to a lack of information on aborted loads. This prohibited the Battalion Commander and Brigade Headquarters from being informed on the equipment status of the Battalion.

(continued....)



(5) This infantry battalion did not have the water carrying capacity as required by OPLAN Full Strike. Restrictions were placed on rigged Loads as to the maximum number of water cans that could be placed on each load. By adding this water to the water carried on the individual, the total did not equal that amount specified to be carried in the OPLAN.

(6) Numerous vehicles were damaged on the heavy drop. Most of the damage was done to the front fenders, caused by the straps connected to the front wheels.

(7) Many water cans were lost on the heavy drop. The loss was caused by apparent theft.

(8) The prepositioned medics on the drop zone did not tag the injured individuals' equipment as outlined in the Admin Order. This equipment was returned to the unit S4 after movement from the drop zone, and much confusion existed in returning this equipment to the correct unit.

(9) Immediately following the heavy drop, units of the Battalion called and asked which loads had aborted. Brigade was asked the same question with no answer being provided. As a result, units went for approximately 3 days before they could account for their equipment.

(10) No provisions for resupply of essential TOE items and class items were made. The loss of heavy drop containers of rations and water would have severely hampered the units in completing assigned missions had a water point not been prepositioned prior to the jump.

(11) The P.C.L. available on heavy drop vehicles was not adequate. Without the ability to resupply at the Director Headquarters motor pool, the Battalion would not have had the capability of operating its vehicles until a P.C.C. resupply was established by airland.

(12) Ammunition boxes representing the Battalion basic load (approximately 25% of the actual load) were not picked up until transportation was received to move troops out of the airhead. Both the S4 ¾ ton truck and the rifle companies' M-274's were in continuous movement on the drop zone resupplying rations and water.

c. Phase III: Attack out of airhead.

(1) Intelligence play in the problem did not reach Battalion level in sufficient time for the Battalion to react to the information.

(2) Controller and Aggressor restrictions were unrealistic. Controllers would stop a unit until a certain time and give no reason for the hold up. If asked, they would place an unrealistic Aggressor unit on the

objective. This distorted the enemy situation. Frequently no Aggressor at all was on the ground.



HHC/2/503 Mortarman John Searcy taking five on the M-274 "Mule" in Vietnam

(3) Movement of KIA's to the rear was very slow. Individuals were left beside the road for many hours waiting to be moved to the rear. Removal of the simulated dead from the forward unit is an S4 function normally conducted during daily resupply runs. The requirement to carry the dead to the I.O.C was unrealistic.

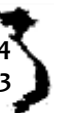
(4) Brigade clearing station was located too far to the rear. At no time during the problem was there any communications between the Battalion aid station and the Brigade clearing station. Evacuation of casualties to the clearing station by Battalion organic transportation tied up the FLA's and delayed the evacuation of casualties from the companies to the aid station. Clearing station vehicles did not arrive at our aid station for their role of evacuation until after dark on D+5.

(5) There were no provisions for feeding of simulated casualties at Brigade clearing station.

(6) Brigade clearing station would not accept actual casualty weapons. The Medical Annex to the Admin Center stated actual casualties would be evacuated with their equipment.

(7) Communications with Brigade Headquarters by land line was extremely poor. Most of the land lines we had with Brigade were laid by our Battalion. The Brigade used wire lines laid by Battalion for Brigade traffic during the river crossing.

(continued....)



(8) This Battalion was not notified when or where Brigade Headquarters was moving when they displaced. Many long periods of time elapsed during which we have no idea of where Brigade Headquarters was located, and there was no communications with Brigade during their displacement. The only consistent coordination with Brigade was through our own Liaison Officer.

(9) Movement from the drop zone occurred before the Battalion had facilities to move its heavy drop supplies to a position to provide close continuous support.

(10) Locations of supply routes and water points were not known in all cases. On several occasions this information was not known at Brigade S4.

(11) Coordination between the Brigade S4 and the L.O.C. was lacking in many instances. The Brigade L.O.C. was not informed of the S4's location and the coordinates of supply and water points issued by one did not agree with the coordinates of supply and water points issued by the other.

(12) Supply lines were too far extended for the conditions of the roads, and the speed of the problem. During a good portion of the problem, Brigade supply points were over one hour's drive from the Battalion Combat Trains.



2/503 troopers Frankie Guerro & Joe Barbarick on Taiwan
(Don Rice photo)

(13) The river crossing operation and subsequent action south occurred prior to the arrival of the Support Battalion and the majority of the Battalion airland vehicles. As a result, logistical support of the attack was difficult. Had this been a real operation, the need for ammunition resupply would have prevented the attack from moving as rapidly as it did.

(14) Maintaining the rifle companies' A bags on 2½ ton trucks and 1½ ton trailers prevented using three 2½ ton trucks with trailers throughout the problem to their best advantage.

(15) An excessive period of time elapsed (up to 3 days) from the time vehicles airlanded until they joined their units.

(16) The controllers required extensive play of ammunition, medical evacuation, and evacuation of dead bodies. Little of the support normally provided by units higher than Battalion was received.

(17) The 2½ ton truck with trailer organic to the medical platoon is too large for close tactical support in this terrain. This truck remained in Field Trains during the entire exercise.

(18) Distance and speed of movement made wire lines difficult to install.

(19) Air request and Brigade Admin Log nets (AM) were not established.

(20) Signal repair section from Brigade were too far to the rear.

(21) The rifle companies did not receive their A bags until D+8, resulting in personnel wearing the same items of clothing for the entire exercise.

(22) This unit had no engineer support to assist in clearing minefield when it was the only attacking unit.

(23) The suspense of 1500 hours to Brigade for the daily PDS is unrealistic and almost impossible to meet in a repeatedly moving situation. To meet this it was necessary to impose a 1330 suspense on the companies.

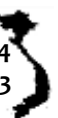
(24) The Battalion CP was notified only once when replacements were to arrive. Usual notification was received with the physical arrival of the personnel.

(25) Communication between S1's at Battalion and Brigade level was very poor. When wire lines were cut, as was the normal situation, it was virtually impossible to send messages between the S1's. The distances between the Battalion and Brigade CP's made frequent motor messenger runs impractical.

(26) Preparation of unit morning reports in the field were inaccurate.

(27) The current PDS Form (USARVIS Form 337, April 1960) is vague. The instructions on the form are not clear and definite enough. As a result, PDS's were prepared in as many different ways as there were personnel preparing them.

(continued....)



(28) Preparation of the periodic personnel report was a duplication of the PDS.

(29) The reconnaissance platoon was not utilized to the maximum as an intelligence gathering agent because of the problem play and existing road network.

(30) Vehicles arrived at the arrival airfield with tape on unit and national markings. When this tape was removed, it would also remove the markings. Information to not cover markings was received too late from Brigade to stop covering the markings.

(31) Two vehicles arrived at the arrival airfield with their radios turned on. This resulted in batteries having to be recharged prior to departure to forward units.

(32) Some individual equipment captured from the Recon Platoon by the Aggressors was never returned.

(33) The antitank platoon was ineffective throughout the exercise because of the lack of armor play by the aggressors.

(34) Artillery FO's had 1:50,000 maps, but received fire support plans on a 1:25,000 map. Communication between Artillery FO's and the FDC was lacking in all but one rifle company.

(35) Coordination between our Recon Platoon and Troop E, 17th Cavalry was poor.

(36) The TCP's set up by Brigade for the motor move from the drop zone to Assembly Area Bronze were pulled out too soon. Consequently, personnel who moved north for resupply or to pick up airlanded vehicles at position Blue had difficulty following the route.

(37) Chinese troops moved on the road within the Battalion sector on D+7 and D+8 without coordinating with the Battalion.

(38) Confusion existed during the night attack on D+2, i.e. Battalion received approval to cross LD at 1900 to seize objective White, but was notified at 1858 that Brigade would conduct a night attack at 2200.

(39) The Artillery LNO had no portable radio or map, and could not keep up with the Battalion Command Group when on foot.

(40) The FAC was useless on D-day and in terrain which vehicles could not negotiate because he did not always have a portable air-to-ground radio.

(41) There was much confusion in the use of the map subcontractor code. In addition, the point of origin code expired 2 days before the exercise ended and was never renewed. The Brigade used too many codes, causing confusion in breaking coded messages.

c. Retrograde Phase:

(1) Movement from the marshalling area to the departure airfield was too soon. This unit began departing the marshalling area at 0440 for the departure airfield, then spent six hours waiting at the departure field.

(2) No TCP's were established from the marshalling area to the departure airfield; consequently, some march units got lost and/or delayed.

(3) Departure system was too rigid. Units were outloaded as to the priority for return to Okinawa, but when one chalk aborted, it could not take the next plane arriving. This caused some units to depart before a unit with a high priority.

5. Actions taken to overcome problems encountered: The paragraphs noted below correspond to paragraphs listed in 4 above.

a. Phase I:

(1) Brigade informed that cross loading at Brigade level would create unneeded confusion, but no action was taken by Brigade.

(2) No action taken.

(3) Sufficient transportation was sent back to C Company to shuttle personnel.

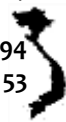
(4) thru (7) No action taken.

(8) Coordination was made by this unit during actual rigging.



2/503 Sky Soldiers motor through city in Taiwan during Exercise Tien Bien VI.

(Photo by Don Rice)



503rd Paratroopers at war in the Pacific...

THE 503RD P.R.C.T. HERITAGE BATTALION **Online**

"THE GREAT CORREGIDOR BRASS TURKEY SHOOT"

Chet Nycum*



Earlier that day whilst on patrol, we had located an ammo dump on high ground east of and above the ice plant. The storage area faced NW and SE, and all the shells had been stacked with their projectiles pointing north-west into the hill. As we patrolled across this storage area we could see that the Japs had wired the dump with explosives. We quickly moved back and reported the find. Our brass elected not to investigate further and brought in some demolition men and set off an explosion. After the explosion, small fires burned in the area well into the night.

It being the end of the day, some of the men, feeling relatively safe inside the G Company sector, set to trying some of the sake and the whiskey which had been found. I can't recall the name of the whisky, but it had four roses on the label. Together they made a powerful mix.

Now and then, a round from the ammo dump opposite us would explode as the fire cooked it off, and the shell casing would be blown high into the air directly over our heads and into the bay beyond us. As the shell casings would turn and tumble in flight above us, they made a sound "kalk kalk kalk kalk kalk," sounding for all the world like wild turkeys flying overhead.

Some of the troopers, for it was then well into the night, were feeling pretty wild and brave, and on hearing the turkeys, started shouting and shooting at them. I don't know whether they were target shooting, or expecting to have turkey for breakfast. Either way, in the morning, there was no turkey for breakfast.

*Paul Whitman from an interview with Chet Nycum

[Reprinted courtesy of Paul Whitman and his 503rd PRCT website]



- (9) No action taken.
 - (10) Units notified to have representatives, but no results realized.
 - (11) Brigade notified.
 - (12) & (13) Brigade notified with no results.
 - (14) No action taken.
 - (15) Request to visit the hospital was denied.
 - (16) No action taken.
 - (17) A manifest check was attempted, but was not realized due to lack of transportation.
- b. Phase II:
- (1) No action required.
 - (2) Controllers informed but they were unable to overcome this problem due to the stereotyped situation.



"LST's taking us back to Okinawa." Don Rice

Postscript

Should any of our AF, Navy, Coast Guard and, god forbid, Marines read this with the intention of poking fun at our unit, I will remind them, we're ARMY PARATROOPERS who jump behind enemy lines to hold ground for days with little or no logistical or other support. Unlike other branches, which will go unnamed (see above), we don't need no stinking logistical support!! (Good thing too). And, as an afterthought, perhaps some documents should never be declassified. Ed

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From the archives....

SCOUT DOGS

One of the saddest parts of the Vietnam War is the fate of the loyal scout dog who serves the brigade. Unlike the paratroopers, he has no DEROS. He is here until death relieves him of his duties.



TAKING A BREAK FROM BOOBYTRAPS

“Buddha” has risked his life daily for four years. In that time, he has gone through eight handlers and has been wounded five times. Buddha has been through the fire fights of the old search and destroy days and has detected many boobytraps during pacification that would probably have killed an unwary trooper.

Buddha is luckier than other dogs. Many of the dogs of the 39th Scout Dog Platoon and the 75th Combat Tracker Teams have died in combat or from disease. But in the long run, Buddha’s fate will be just about the same.

This is unfortunate, because the large dog has allowed eight handlers to go home alive and saved countless others because of his skill and alertness in the jungles, mountains and plains.

He has made his mark on the enemy too. Since 1966 he has “personally” killed five communists.

Buddha won’t get any medals. The only thing going for him now is the gratitude of those few men in the brigade who know him.

TIPTOE WITH ME

Softshoe through the mortar rounds, through the mortar rounds with me, is the now sound of Staff Sgt. Jerry K. Lenz, of Detroit, Mich. The medical platoon sgt. of 3d Battalion 503d Infantry at LZ Uplift has won the award as the best softshoer in the jungle.

The award came early the morning of April Fools Day when the landing zone was hit with rocket and mortar rounds. Lenz, with his army issue ballerina boots especially made for the stage floor of the LZ, began dancing through the incoming rounds helping the wounded.

The self-proclaimed Carnegie Hall entertainer claims *“It was the hardest performance I’d ever made, and the holes in the stage floor made it extremely difficult to come out of my Swan Dive.”*

The climax to his performance came when he was administering first aid to a wounded paratrooper. On cue from his musical accompaniment, a sharp whistle, Lenz, with total disregard for his own safety, threw himself on the man as the mortar round landed in front of the aid station. Taking shrapnel wounds, he continued to give aid to the man.

Recalling the incident, Lenz could only say, *“I guess they forgot to replace me with the stunt man.”*

(continued....)



OVER HILL, OVER DALE, THROUGH THE BRUSH, ALONG THE TRAIL

Opening new roads to friendship are the 173d Airborne Brigade Engineers. One such project is the recently completed 13 mile stretch of road from the Bon Son bridge to Lo Dieu hamlet on the coast.

"We are really proud of this project," said 1st Lt. Antone G. Cerne (sp?), the operations officer. The road was started last June and was worked on till August when the dreaded monsoons hit. *"That put a crimp on our operations and confined us more or less to the LZ and direct combat operations,"* said Cerne who hails from Lorain, Ohio. In February after the monsoons had let up, the work resumed.

"We started this gigantic operation from scratch," the lieutenant explained. *"When we started there was only a small footpath. Most of the area was under VC control at the time, and we had to fight as well as work our way through."* So far route 173 (as it was appropriately named) has cost the engineers three five-ton trucks and several casualties.

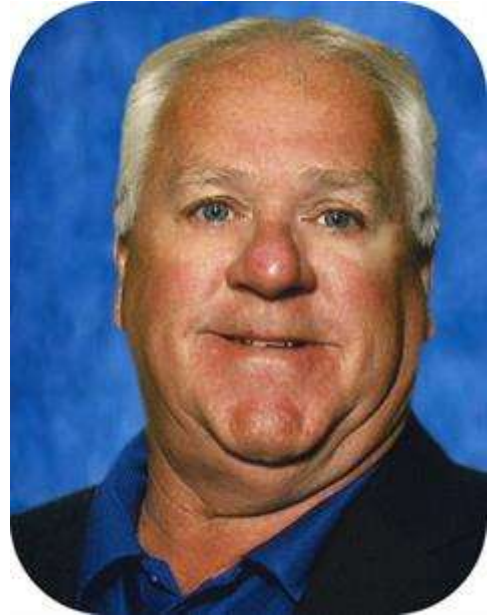
"Our biggest problem at first was the booby traps and mines," said the company commander, Capt. Thomas M. Deputy.

Presently there are two platoons working on the project; putting in the finishing touches and extensions to the road and connecting nearby hamlets and villages. A platoon of RFs and a squad of U.S. infantry, along with the engineers, provide the security for the project. *"We have used almost all our heavy equipment on this operation. The genuine interest and individual efforts of the men played a large part in this accomplishment. The Vietnamese farmers even pitched in and help us,"* said the operations officer. *"We have cut off Charlie's food source and cut down on his activities. With the road open, the VC know the villagers can get help immediately,"* commented another soldier.

The engineers maintain a mini-base near Lo Dieu. At present they have a platoon on LZ English working on the new special services swimming pool. As one man puts it, *"We do anything and everything. A short while back we even built a duck pond for the general."*

Whatever the 173d engineers are called on to do, they do in a professional manner – keeping with their motto, *"To Gain The Ultimate."*

David "Stoof" Steffen A/2/503 Passes



David V. "Stoof" Steffen, 71, of La Porte City, IA died Sunday, July 26, 2020 at his home.

He was born June 18, 1949 in Geneseo, IL, son of Vernon and Ruth Johnson Steffen. He graduated Cambridge (IL) High School in 1967 then attended Automotive Technical School in Des Moines. He served in the U.S. Army during Vietnam.

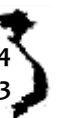
Dave married Sherry "Jeannie" Jeffries September 30, 1972 at Hammond Ave. Brethren Church, Waterloo. He worked in the Sears Automotive Dept. and then worked as parts manager at Glen Jeffries Implement. He drove truck as an owner/operator, retiring in 2006. Then was part time instructor for Hawkeye Community College and DOT tester in the Transportation Center. He was a member of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, Rochester Chapter. He loved sprint car racing and NASCAR and enjoyed traveling the U.S. and spending time in Florida.

Dave is survived by his wife, Sherry "Jeannie" Jeffries of La Porte City; two sons, Brett Steffen off Ely, NV, and Kale (Stacy) Steffen of Parrish, FL; four grandchildren, Cameron, Kaden, Chase, and Ella Steffen; and a sister, Diane (Bob) Gushanas of Illinois.

He is preceded by his parents; and father-in-law, Glen Jeffries.

Rest Easy 'No DEROS Alpha' Trooper

[Document source & author unknown]



The Father of Paratroopers and of Grit & Humor and Old Wars



Mom, Smitty, Dad

In the old photo below you'll find five brothers with their mother. Of her seven sons in total, three went on to become army paratroopers; oldest brother Rick, an All-American with the 82nd Airborne, Screaming Eagle older brother Bob, having served with the 101st, then three tours in Vietnam with the 5th SF where he lost an eye in a firefight near Dak To and has souvenirs of shrapnel still in his brain to this day, and this old VN vintage 2/503 Sky Soldier RTO, having also served with the 101st and later the 509th Airborne.



Circa 1953 in Los Angeles, CA. L-R front: Bob 5th SF, Lew (Smitty) 173d, L-R back: Rick 82nd, holding brother Kriss, our mom Lois with brother Tim in her arms and brother Pat standing in the door. Shirts were at a premium those days.

From our father's side of the family we descend from other Smith army grunts including my dad's uncle, Theron J. Smith, a Grand Army man, who served with Company A, 114th Illinois Volunteer Inf. on the Union side during our Civil War and was later credited with developing much of the Snake River Valley in Idaho following the war where he also platted the Broadbeck addition to Idaho Falls and became Justice of the Peace there, and his grandfather Samuel and Samuel's brothers whom Theron reported served with the Americans in the Revolutionary War, something in which we share a certain family pride.

But, outside of the extra jump pay to attract these three boys from the other side of the tracks, there was little to foretell the brothers' futures as troopers of the para kind. The greatest height we'd ever experienced as young boys was sitting on the backs of our horses; which brings us to our father, a non-paratrooper.

Donald Lewis Smith, Sr., for whom I'm named, was a musician, a professional entertainer, a farmer, and quite the horseman - understandable having been born shortly after the turn of the last century and descendent from early settlers of Dutchess County, NY - and something he taught his sons as a young boys. To that point, here's an amusing story having been passed along to our grandkids and offered here for posterity.

In the late 50's our parents owned a small chicken ranch in Chino, CA, also stocked with horses, goats and other farm creatures, and situated in the middle of 88 acres of barley and oats along Carbon Canyon Road not far from the prison there. Visiting us one weekend from Hollywood was dad's sister Merle with her daughter Dawn and son Kay whom we called Kit, a future sailor.

My dad had saddled Sugar, an old bay mare whose legacy included multiple appearances in Rose Bowl parades years prior, to trot up a dirt road to collect the mail. Kit was anxious to ride a horse and asked my father, "*Uncle Don, will you teach me how to ride?*" He said he would once he returned. He was wearing glasses, and with reins in left hand and a cigarette in the right he rode off on his postal mission.

After collecting the mail and about halfway back down that dirt road he put Sugar in a full gallop to the excitement of our city slicker cousins. Just as they reached us Sugar caught a hoof and did nearly a complete flip with dad astride. Sugar got up, shaking herself, her shins and face scratched and bleeding. My dad got up, his glasses askew, reins in his left hand with the mail and cigarette still in his right, his face also scratched and bleeding, then turning to Kit he said, "*Now that's how you ride a horse.*"

I've wondered on occasion if the grit and sense of humor our dad displayed that day played some part in his sons becoming paratroopers years later? After all, those are two of many qualities we all needed to possess to jump out of perfectly good airplanes. Thanks for the lesson, Dad.

Donald Lewis Smith, Jr., son of Don

Note: 2/503 troopers are invited to send in their military-linked family stories to share in our newsletter, also for the purpose of posterity. Ed



Farewell to Troopers of the 173d Abn Bde & 503rd PRCT and Attached Units Who Made Their Final Jump

Angelo P. Bordonaro, 100

Syracuse, NY
October 22, 2019
503rd PRCT, WWII

Rodrigo "Big Ricky" Ramirez Chavez, 70

Vernon, TX
August 11, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Stephen Chisdak, 93

Moosic's Greenwood Section, PA
April 8, 2020
503rd PIR, WWII

Michael Constantino, 73

St. Augustine, FL
June 30, 2020
C/2/503, RVN

Lyle George Dykhoff, 94

Devils Lake, ND
May 14, 2020
503rd PIR, WWII

John Norton Enos, 69

Smith River, CA
May 30, 2020
Cowboys, RVN

Leonard A. (Lenny) Eversoll, Jr., 71

Clinton, IA
August 13, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Jesus Luna Garcia, 73

Hanford, CA
August 17, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Joseph F. Glisson, Sr., 70

Jacksonville, FL
August 3, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Kazimier S. "Kaz" Grzyb, 83

Worcester, MA
September 7, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Timothy Michael Hall, 73

Vista, CA
July 23, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Jerry D. Henry, 74

Knoxville, TN
July 27, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Danny L. Jones, 72

Vancouver, WA
January 15, 2020
3/319th Artillery, RVN

Ulion Steve Morris, Sr., 70

Louisiana
September 20, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Leland J. (Lee) Nicholson, 71

Helena, MT
July 12, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

Cade D. Pendergraft, 24

Cucamonga, CA
September 19, 2020
2/503, Romania

Paul Bernard Reed, Sr, 82

Campbellsville, KY
July 20, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

James Wallace "Wally" Speed, 79, Col.

Snellville, GA
August 21, 2020
Recon/2/503, RVN

David V. "Stoof" Steffen, 71

La Porte City,
July 26, 2020
A/2/503, RVN

Gary Michael Vaughn, 74

Santa Barbara, CA
August 11, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN

John E. Wynn, 69

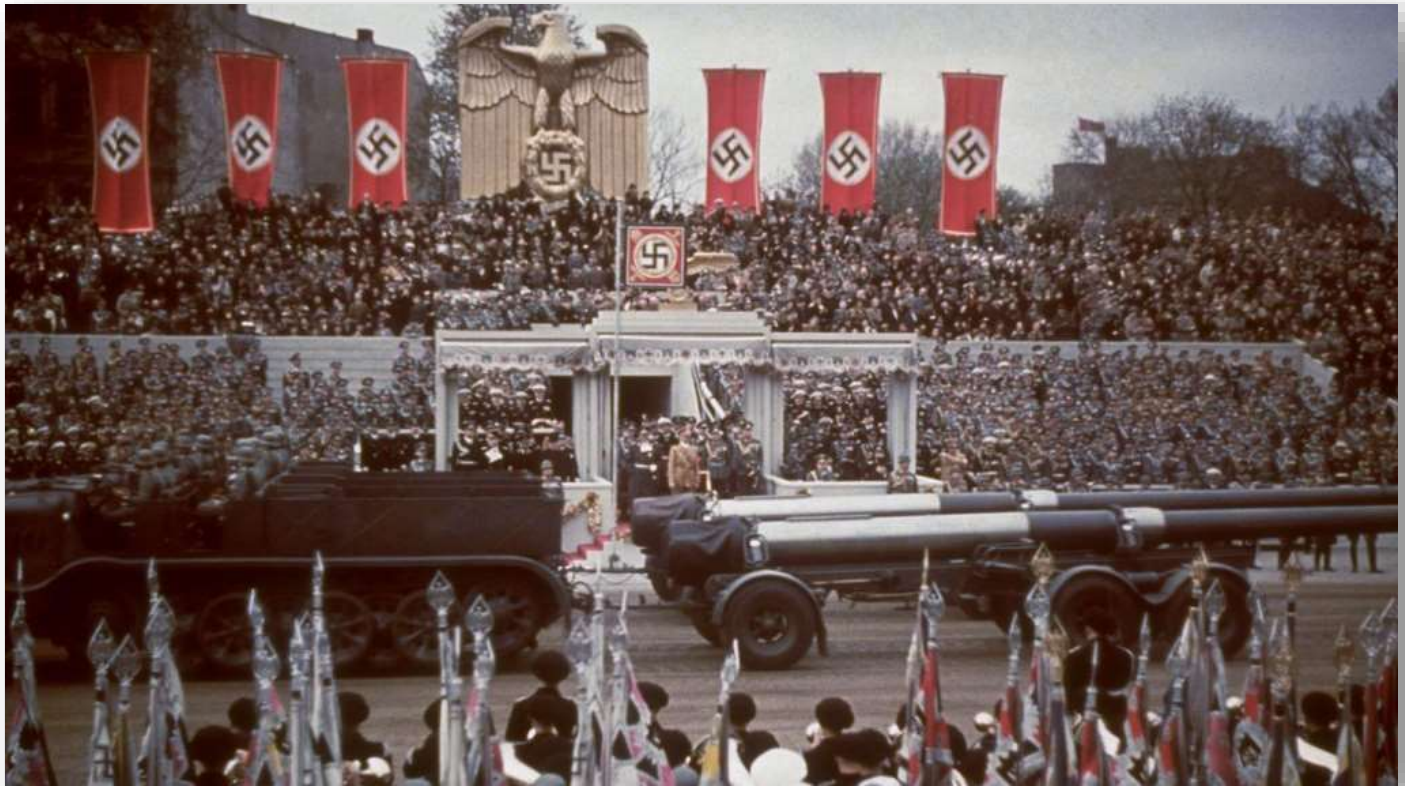
Randolph, PA
July 3, 2020
173d Abn Bde, RVN



This Military Leader Should Never Be Forgotten

They hailed him, they worshiped him, they followed him....to their doom.

- He broke all political norms and violated judicial standards to gain sole power over his country
- He convinced his followers to believe what was verifiably untrue and to believe only him
- He blamed immigrants and racial minorities for all problems facing his country
- He promoted a tolerance for demagoguery, violence and brutality against opponents and his own people
- He deployed government troops in unmarked vehicles to arrest innocent citizens
- He caused his followers to demonstrate blind trust in him and his decisions on all matters
- He professed himself to be the only leader who could *"lift the country out of its soulless dead end"*
- He suspended civil liberties, established a dictatorship and formed his own secret police
- He preached *"Germany first!"* to his cult-like minions
- He was a notorious liar stating, *"the less honest a political message, the better"*
- He employed simple verbal tricks to replace complex policy discussion
- He was responsible for untold millions of deaths
- He denounced news media as the enemy of the state
- He used his powerful position to amass personal wealth
- He orchestrated a plebiscite vote of intimidation and fear, for all intents and purposes making him a dictator
- He ordered military parades to honor him
- He literally destroyed his and other countries and the wealth and lives of those who praised and followed him
- It was only after his death and total defeat of his nation did his countrymen say, *"We never knew."*



April 20, 1939, in Berlin. A military parade to celebrate the Führer's 50th birthday. It was all about him.

"Remember that all through history, there have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they seem invincible. But in the end, they always fall. Always."

— Mahatma Gandhi, *Gandhi: An autobiography*



YOU FOUGHT FOR EVERYONE'S RIGHT TO

