

E/2-22 on 1Aug44 (estimated). I sent him our recent newsletter and invited Tom to join our Society and come to Gettysburg. He reported back that his grandfather was reported MIA on 10Aug44 and body was recovered and interred in a French cemetery on 25Aug44. If anyone remembers PVT Delmar DeJaynes, please contact Tom.

The Battle of Fire Support Base Burt - A Helicopter Pilot's Story

Wayne R. "Crash" Coe, 350 Bay St, Suite 100-160, San Francisco, CA 94133-1966, pilot of Blackhawk 54 with 187th Assault Helicopter Company in 1967-68 supported the 22nd Infantry during the battle of FSB Burt - this is his story:

I loved the view from the top of Nui Ba Dinh. You could see the lights from the far away cities. And I loved the challenge of a perfect pinnacle landing. In the early evening, just as the sun drops below the horizon. It was my last stop, I could go back to Tay Ninh for the night's festivities at the club. It was amazing how fast they could get the cases of champagne off my helicopter.

Tonight would be great fun. **Captain David R. Warden**, our flight surgeon, would be on the courier from Cu Chi, and would be staying in the guest quarters. I loved flying with Doc and we had flown a lot of missions together. Doc is the greatest story teller of all time, and tonight I would get a double dose, staying up late for New Year's stand down.

I was the last bird in that night and after fueling and a quick stop at the arming pits for some linked 7.62 for the M-60's, I put my D-model Huey in the revetments, and started the hike to the operations tent, walking right past the mortar watch ships. WO Bill Britt was saying something is cooking down at fire support base Burt, and they were on alert. Bill Britt, Frenchy Gibault, what a team.

I found Doc and we start cooking a steak, out on the grill set up behind the Officer's Club. I liked it when the Army made an attempt during the holidays. Almost anything was better than C-rations. The party had started before Doc and I

got there and seemed to be in full swing by the time we sat down to eat our steak. WO Jim Conde could get anything, these steaks were proof. I looked up to Jim, a special forces type that went to flight school. He could speak the local language and he knew people in low places, if you know what I mean.

The party was a success, we watched a movie, heard and told some great stories (all true of course) and I headed off for bed, hoping the tent had cooled down enough to be able to sleep in. I walked over with Doc to find him a cot in the tent we kept for visiting crews, and on my way back was stopped by the on-duty orderly.

"Mr. Coe, find your doctor friend and get to operations, now!" I thought, "what kind of silly bs is being pulled now by one of my more than slightly inebriated flying buddies?" So, rather than wake up the Doc, I walked over to the Operations tent and a very serious Major Bauman looks up and says, "Where is your flight surgeon?" I started to speak and he cut me off, "Get him now, and get back here as fast as you can, your crew has been sent for, hurry!"

Doc was still awake, he jumped into his boots and grabbed his gear and out the tent flap in one move. For a huge airborne ranger, Doc moves so well, the word would be graceful, if not applying to 250 pounds of raw muscle and brains. My gear is in the tent and we both double time over to it and double time to the operations tent.

Major Bauman looked very unhappy, he was gruff when he was happy, he looked sinsiter tonight. "Men, I have a bad job for you two tonight. Mr. Coe, you are my only sober pilot, and Captain Warden, I have to send you as the co-pilot, I have no one else to send." I looked at Doc and he smiled at me.

I knew he was up to what ever it was, I think the word is fearless. "The medevac choppers from the 54th are having problems getting in to Fire Support Base Burt. Our boys need ammo and medevac, I am sending a fire team to cover you in and out - it looks bad down there."

We were taken to the revetment by jeep and my crew had the bird untied and ready to rock and roll. We were airborne in minutes after first stopping by the ammo bunkers and taking a full load of ordnance. As my heavy helicopter

staggered for some altitude, I noticed just how black it could be in Vietnam, and started to fly on instruments, tuning my radios to the ground FM, the FAC on VHF, and my company UHF.

"Blackhawk 54 inbound with a load of ordnance, where do you want it, over." No response. We must be too far out for them to hear us, and I pulled a little more pitch and grabbed some more altitude to help with the radio.

I was busy flying - I could hear the gunships on Victor (VHF), I could hear fastmovers (jets) on Uniform (UHF), no grunts on Foxtrot (FM). Doc keyed his mike, "Good night! Look at the fire fight going on out there!" In the inky darkness was the fountain of horror, a full fledged fire fight, tracers coming in, tracers going out, explosions, fire, it looked like a real mess down there.

Bullets ricocheting at every angle, I knew our Mechanized men (2-22) were fighting for their lives down there, and they would be needing ammo and medevac now. I asked the FAC for the ground frequency and he gave it to me.

"Ground control, Blackhawk 54, over." I could hear the din of battle behind a voice on the radio. "Blackhawk 54, we are under heavy attack and are requesting you stand by, say again ordnance on board." "Roger, Ground, I have 105 Beehive and a Doctor." After a moment of silence, ground comes back on the radio, "It is too hot to land now, but we urgently need your load."

I don't hear the Rat Pack, so I call the Stinger gunships, "Stinger lead, Blackhawk 54, over." "Stinger, go ahead." "I have 105 Beehives and a doctor on board, can you get us in?" "If you want to go in there, we will escort you in, what is your location?" "Blackhawk 54 is Northwest five miles out." "Roger, Blackhawk, come to the south end of Burt, we will pick you up and escort you in, but there is a lot of fire down there so make it a fast approach."

We fly south of Burt and I can see the gunships coming out to get us. I start the 120 knot approach, at first going past the gun cover, but then as I start to flair, they are by my side, miniguns roaring, low level insanity. I can't see a thing with all the smoke and flares competing with the tracers. I see a lone trooper standing with his arms over his head, guiding me in, exposing himself.

The bravery of the men on the ground chokes me up. I am guided to a spot with wounded men. Doc is out of his seat and on the ground, doing the much needed triage, so we can take the worst hit out and hope to save them. Men come from the dark and take the ammo off, the volume of fire in the perimeter is intense, I am taking hits. It will only be a matter of time and this helicopter will never fly again. Doc has his load and is back in the right seat, I call coming out, and look up to see a pair of gunships covering my ass coming out. We are low level in the dark with a load of men, all severely wounded. Doc says, "I had better get busy", and jumps over the console and starts taking care of the men.

I fly direct to the 12th Evac pad in Cu Chi. I call Bill, "inbound with wounded". Nice to hear a familiar voice on the radio. I wondered if he ever slept, he was always there when I needed him. He will expedite the unloading of our wounded. Best Pad Man in Vietnam.

Cu Chi tower clears me direct to the Medevac Pad and I come in hot, flaring sideways to clear the tail boom, and I am almost down and on jumps Big Bill and he takes charge. Bill strips off the loaded weapons and explosive devices, gently lifting the men on to stretchers waiting by the open door. Bill does his work like a mad man, but every move is practiced. Bam, Bill hits me on top of my helmet to tell me he is jumping off and I can pull pitch. Total time on the pad - maybe two minutes, but probably less.

We lift to a high hover and ask tower for permission to go to the ammo bunkers, and they clear us direct. The ammo humpers know what is going on and have our load waiting. We watch them put it on the aircraft, then a quick call to the tower and we are staggering into the air again. We have enough fuel, and I would like to be light going in, to help with control of the aircraft down low behind the perimeter of Burt.

Doc and I start to hear the radios first, things are bad, looks like one of the gunships is down, in the dark. I see the fast movers laying down napalm, lights things up, kind of pretty, and deadly at the same time. I can not see Burt yet, but the fire works were spectacular coming from a concentrated spot on the horizon. As we get nearer,

we call the ground and ask for status, they wave us off, too hot. Damn, now fuel was a problem.

It took a few minutes to find a gun team, they had one down, and were big time mad. I think they would have escorted me into hell if I had asked. They called the fire and I made the approach, we turned this one around in seconds, not one mistake, in and out. I called Big Bill and Doc went to work in the back.

Doc and I flew all night, and in the morning we landed by the shot down Stinger gunship so Captain David Royal Warden, Jr, MS could perform his duties as a flight surgeon and issue a cause of death for the crew. The men in the Stinger gunship had been burned very badly by the fire. I know it was a shock to Doc, his whole demeanor changed. Fight all night and then in the morning perform autopsies on the men who had been covering your ass all night, is a tough one.

Doc and I flew into Burt numerous times, but what we really remember is the aviators we lost, not the men we saved.

World War II Short Stories

B.P. "Hank" Henderson, 1925 Price Ave, Knoxville, TN 37920, Medic WWII wrote:

Before we reached Cherbourg during the fourth week of June, 1944, Captain Marshan came up to me and said, "Hank, we have three German wounded soldiers down the highway and we have been given orders to get them. Take your litter squad and these two (pointing to two men) about a hundred to a hundred fifty yards before you get to the curve in the road and bear off to the left and come in from the rear of the buildings, because the Germans have observation on the curve and anything that comes down the road gets artillery at the curve."

We went off the road about 150 yards and came in from the rear of the buildings. The wounded Germans were in front of the buildings. We started to give them morphine and they said, "nix, nix" - but we shot them with morphine anyway. We started back the way we came in. When we were leaving the buildings in the rear, we were bracketed with artillery shells. I can see them hitting the ground in front of me and to the

left of me. There were twelve litter bearers and three German wounded soldiers.

Now this is the hard part, can you believe that none of us got a scratch out of that artillery? As we went on our way after the barrage lifted, the Germans began to speak English to us. It turned out that all three of them had lived in the United States and worked in the automobile plants. They went to Germany to visit relatives and were not allowed to return to the United States, but were put into the German army.

Don Lee, 7421 W. Lake St, St. Louis Park, MN 55426-4322 B/1-22 WWII recalls his D-Day on Utah Beach: I remember how I felt the first day in Normandy when I was crawling up a ditch to flame a machine gun and the paratrooper behind me was killed. My nephew could see it still bothered me and pointed out that was not my fault and it could have been me. I can still hear his last gasp as I crawled past him. The next day I got my first purple heart but just had the medics dig the fragments out of my shoulder and arm. Also got a new helmet liner as the next mortar shell punched a hole in my helmet. I kept the helmet but lost it the next time I got wounded.

A Story From The Foxhole

Jim Dice of Dayton, OH was a PFC rifleman, radio operator, and mortarman in the 1st and 4th platoons of C/3-22 during 1967-68. He recently wrote a letter to Chuck Boyle, his CO:

It was maybe January 20th or so and we were working out of a small fire base about five to eight clicks east of Cu Chi. There were a lot of NVA and VC in the area around us. Every day we would come under fire as we crossed this plain and searched toward some river. Someone was shot in the forehead as we came upon a base camp. Some of the guys took it real hard. I was new in country and didn't know the guy. They had to carry him for a long time until he could be dusted off. They tried to cover his face but it was awful.

A couple of days later we came upon a base camp and took some sniper fire. As we got into it you could see that they had left in a hurry; there were cooking fires still burning and you could

smell them. We got through the base camp and beyond that there was a clearing...a swamp really, that was knee deep in water. I was the First Platoon radio operator for LT Harris at that time. Al Ulate was walking point and I don't know how they missed him. He told me later that he threw all of his grenades so maybe he got all the enemy to his front. LT Boyle, our CO, didn't want to walk the company into that water without artillery to the front, but it was denied. So we pushed on out until the whole company was in the open, up to their knees and hips in water. As we got closer to a tree line on the other side, all hell broke loose. We were sitting ducks on a pond!

The water was flying up all around me from the bullets. RPGs were exploding all over and guys were screaming for a medic. LT Harris yelled at me to move forward. We got up and moved only a few feet when he got shot below the knee. I tried to spray the tree line with my M-16 but it jammed. I could hear the VC moving in the tree line. LT Harris called for the radio. Water and bullets were jumping everywhere. I yelled that I'd get to him as soon as I could and I called the CO with his messages. A few minutes later I got to him and he took the radio. He was more worried about his men than his wound. He was a brave leader who really cared for his men.

We held our own until gunships arrived. Two choppers, "Smokeys", laid down a cover of smoke so that we could pull back. With all the noise and smoke, Ulate didn't know we were pulling back and we almost left him. As we were backing out of the water, he came skipping across the top of the water, 20 yards at a stride.

When we were out of the water, jets came in and bombed the tree line...it was awesome! All of the wounded had been rounded up and the medics were tending to them. Ron Hudson was hit bad in the shoulder - just covered with blood. We lost quite a few that day. I remember how our Company Commander was so upset after it was all over since he knew that we were going to get hit and had begged for artillery and gunship support. He always put the welfare of his men first. I know that for myself and others like me, we would not be alive today if someone else had led us. It was an honor to follow LT Harris and our CO in battle. I am very proud to be a veteran

of Vietnam and a member of C/3-22. Thanks to all the men who served. (Jim Dice was badly wounded at ApCho in February 1967, lost his hearing when an RPG burst right next to him.)

Book Corner - Books about 22nd Infantry

We have three new books to add to our reading list.

David Roderick, 923 Marguerite Lane, Carlsbad, CA 92009, H/2-22 WWII has written the war history of the regiment using the format of following the battles from the after-action reports to trace our battles from D-Day to the end of the war in Europe. "A thorough study of the literature covering the 4th Division's success at Utah Beach describes the events that were hidden to us as we fought our personal battles in the hedgerows of Normandy, the St. Lo breakthrough, Mortain counterattack, Falaise Gap, and the race for Paris are vividly described through personal testimony by our buddies who were there." Also included are the Siegfried Line, crossing of Meuse River, Hurtgen Forest, Battle of Bulge. Thirty five maps and illustrations serve as vivid reminders of the places burned into our memories of those friends who were lost on the battlefield. **"Deeds not Words: A Narrative of the 22nd Infantry Regiment in World War II"**, a 238 page narrative, is available for \$25.00 including shipping and handling from David Roderick at the address shown above. He will also have it for sale in Gettysburg.

Wes Trindal, 698 Forest View Road, Edinburg, VA 22824-3513, F/2-22 WWII has written one of the best personal accounts of a man's experience in the military that I have ever read. Starting with basic training and advanced individual training, through the boat trip to Europe and his travel through the replacement system, Wes finally arrives at the 22nd Infantry Regiment during the height of the battle in the Hurtgen Forest. His description of his experiences in the Hurtgen and after is reading that you can not put down. Wes has given the Society the right to copy and sell to our members, **"And Then There Were None"**. The book is available from PO Box 682222,