

October • November • December
2010



AMERICAL JOURNAL

DEDICATED AS A LIVING MEMORIAL TO ALL VETERANS OF THE AMERICAL DIVISION



CANTIGNY

UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

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AMERICAL JOURNAL

The Americal Journal is the official publication of the Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA). It is published each calendar quarter.

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Commanders Comments

By Jay Flanagan



New Year Ahead

Last year was a productive one for the ADVA. We have seen an increase, though slight, in participation by many members and chapters. There is still room for more volunteers, historical input, recruitment and Chapter involvement. If you have an active Chapter, keep it active by becoming involved and attending reunions and events where possible. If your Chapter is not an active one find out why. See if there is a way to get things rolling again. It takes some work, but not overwhelming or tiring work. It is just your typical communications and networking. Something that these days is even easier than before computers, cell phones and the internet.

2010 National Reunion 2011

I hope everyone who attended the 2010 national reunion in Lombard, IL had an enjoyable time. Due to my granddaughter's wedding I had to leave the reunion early on Friday. Senior Vice-Commander Larry Swank filled in for me at the meeting and banquet. I understand he did a great job.

In September 2011 the reunion will be at Colorado Springs, CO. Tom Packard has a good program put together. In 2012 there are currently three sites looking to put together a proposal for our reunion: Bowling Green, KY; Nashville, TN; and Northern New Jersey. Should anyone else wish to propose putting together our reunion for 2012, don't be shy. The more choices we have the better a chance of receiving an interesting site and activities.

Facebook

Do you or any of your family use Facebook on the internet? After setting up a Facebook site for my credit union and seeing the activity it encouraged in reaching out to others, I set up one for the ADVA. In the first month we have, not counting my credit union and me, 14 members. Links to videos about the Americal are posted and news and questions can be posted and answered. One of the videos is a Military History Video of the aerial bombardment of Cebu, Phillipines before the Americal landed in 1945. You might find an old friend or his relative as we get more and more members. My main goal is to provide another avenue for our fellow veterans to find the Association. Find the link to the Americal Facebook account on the main page of americal.org.

Legacy Committee

There has been progress in raising funds for the Legacy Committee and the planned monuments. We still have a long way to go and appreciate any contributions. If you do not have one of the Americal commemorative knives you should purchase on now before this limited edition is gone. Read more about this project on page 17 and seriously consider what you can afford and/or may do to help. This is our memorial for when we are no longer here.

1/182nd Infantry Set to Deploy

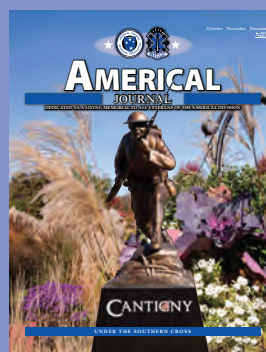
You may or may not be aware that there is a Massachusetts Army National Guard Unit, 1/182nd, that has been in training and will be deployed to Afghanistan early next year. I and some others will attend their Military Ball, if invited, in December 2010. The 182nd Infantry was one of the formation regiments of the Americal Division in WWII. The current 182nd Infantry incorporated the Americal 'Southern Cross' patch on the left side of their ACH helmets. Keep them in your thoughts and prayers for a successful deployment and safe return when finished with their missions.

Recruiting

Do you know of an Americal veteran who is not yet a member? I do and have about a 50% success rate in recruiting them to the ADVA. With annual dues at \$15.00, the benefit of finding other friends, learning more of our history, the scholarship program, and the great Americal Journal magazine, I don't understand why the others don't join us. When I found the ADVA years ago it was a no brainer for me. Do you have the same experience? Please keep trying and hopefully we'll eventually get them to join.

Veterans Affairs

This is an interesting and promising development for our brothers who receive or hope to receive disability compensation. The Department of Veterans Affairs' Advisory Committee on Disability Compensation met the last week in October 31, 2010 in Washington and heard from the VA's Executive Director of the VA-DoD Collaboration Service, Mr. John Medve, who announced that the Disability Evaluation System (DES) pilot program will be expanded worldwide to replace the existing DoD legacy program over the next twelve months. The pilot program came about as a result of the Walter Reed scandal in 2007 that uncovered wounded and disabled service members were receiving "low-balled" ratings as a result of the DES process. Several commissions that investigated Walter Reed and the DES process recommended eliminating dual VA and DoD disability evaluations, but using one medical exam and having DoD use the VA disability ratings in evaluations by the Services' Physical Evaluation Boards. The pilot, which has proven to improve the speed, effectiveness, and transparency of the DES review process, will expand from the current 27 sites to an additional 28 sites during this year's first phase. The system will be expanded to cover all remaining sites in additional three phases, with a target completion of October 2011. If you have questions on this or any other Veterans Administration programs be sure to find out who your local Service Officer is and get informed. Your VVA, VFW, DAV or American Legion can tell you the name and contact information or contact the National Association of County Veterans Service Officers.



Cover: Cantigny the home of the Big Red 1 Museum and the beautiful grounds were visited during the national reunion.

Photography: Dutch DeGroot

Adjutant's Notes

By Roger Gilmore

The annual ADVA reunion in Lombard, Illinois was, once again, another great event. PNC Dave Taylor and the Reunion Brat had a lot of activities planned for us. Friday's tour of the McCormick Estate and Cantigny Museum was first rate. Time passes quickly at these events, and it seems there is never enough time to visit with members we see once a year.

For the three months ending October 31, 2010 the association added twenty nine new members. Of these twenty nine new members, three joined as ADVA Life members.

The new member count for this period is somewhat disappointing. We had been adding new members at a rate of forty or more for each past quarter during 2010. We will pick up at least eight new members from the Lombard reunion before year's end. On a more positive note, we had eleven annual pay members upgrade their ADVA membership to Life status during this quarter. Five former members were re-instated to the membership roster. Consistent with the last membership reporting period, we had only one World War II veteran join our ranks this period.

For all annual pay members, I encourage each of you to keep your ADVA membership current. Please note your dues renewal date, listed in the address box on the back cover of this issue. If you are unsure about your renewal date or membership status, please contact me and I'll confirm the status. For your convenience, we accept the MasterCard credit card for dues payment. Please contact our Product Sales Manager, Wayne Bryant, to arrange payment by credit card. You will need to provide Wayne with your complete card billing information when paying by credit card. See the staff directory on the inside front cover for Wayne's contact information.

Another option for annual pay members is an upgrade to ADVA Life membership. The cost to upgrade to Life member status is \$165.00 for members under the age of 75. If you are over the age 75, the cost is \$75.00.

Each ADVA member can keep the association strong by working to bring in new members. Contact that veteran buddy who is not an ADVA member and encourage him to join today.



New Members

Robert F. Arney
11th LIB B/1/20th Inf
Arlington, WA
★ *Self*

James O. Billings
198th LIB 5/46th Inf
Thurmond, NC
★ *Self*

Steve Bogdas
23rd MP Co.
Carol Stream, IL
★ *PNC Dutch DeGroot*

Ross Carlson
198th LIB D/1/52nd Inf
Naperville, IL
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Robert Clement
3/16th Arty A Btry
N Fort Meyers, FL
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Keith M. Crouch
196th LIB A/4/31st Inf
Boulder, CO
★ *Jerry Sams*

Aristides C. Figueroa
198th LIB A/5/46th Inf
Bayamon, PR
★ *PNC David Taylor*

Jim Gleckler
3/16th Arty A Btry
Richfield, UT
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

John Gordon
WWII – Unit Unknown
Cupertino, CA
★ *Self*

William J. Graack, Sr.
1st/1st Cav A Trp
Peoria, IL
★ *James Tarver*

Michael S. Gresko
3/16th Arty A Btry
Yardville, NJ
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Howard Hernandez
196th LIB
Riverside, CA
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

David F. Hess
11th LIB A/4/21st Inf
Mineral Ridge, OH
★ *Self*

Steve House
178th MP Det
Waupaca, WI
★ *John Polecheck*

Richard E. Jocius
196th LIB D/4/31st Inf
Aurora, IL
★ *Self*

Daniel J. Liddy
11th LIB B/3/1st Inf
Wolverine Lake, MI
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Richard F. Linn
3/16th Arty A Btry
Vero Beach, FL
★ *Joseph Michaud*

Richard R. McConnell
198th LIB E/5/46th Inf
Rice, MN
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

George Mitchell, Jr.
11th LIB C/3/1st Inf
Boyce, LA
★ *James Tarver*

David R. Morton
198th LIB D/5/46th Inf
Muskegon, MI
★ *PNC David Taylor*

Richard L. Mullins
198th LIB A/1/6th Inf
Citrus Heights, CA
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Donald J. Nelson
11th LIB D/3/1st Inf
Valparaiso, IN
★ *Self*

Arthur N. Rollins
198th LIB B/1/6th Inf
Rutherfordton, NC
★ *Self*

Denton Terrell
198th LIB 5/46th Inf
Topeka, IL
★ *PNC David Taylor*

Francis J. Theusch
11th LIB 4/3rd Inf
Milwaukee, WI
★ *John Polecheck*

New Paid Life Members

Greg Felty
198th LIB A/1/6th Inf
Selinsgrove, PA
★ *Self*

Greg A. Hendricks
723rd Maint Bn Co A
St Charles, MO
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Douglas M. Womack
71st Avn Co
Grasonville, MD
★ *Jim E. Fulbrook*

Daniel E. Basher
198th LIB HHC/5/46th Inf
Chapmansboro, TN
★ *Anton G. Blieberger*

Arthur E. Brown, Jr.
198th LIB 1/52nd Inf
Hilton Head, SC
★ *Peter Messina*

Michael Deel
11th LIB C/4/21st Inf
Austin, TX
★ *PNC Ronald R. Ellis*

John E. Frederick
196th LIB C/1/46th Inf
Weston, WV
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Paul F. Hauke, Jr.
196th LIB A/2/1st Inf
Sandusky, OH
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

Edward J. Holmes
198th LIB A/5/46th Inf
Augusta, GA
★ *PNC David Taylor*

Ronald J. Krul
11th LIB A/4/3rd Inf
Tonawanda, NY
★ *Dennis Daniels*

ADVA MEMEBERSHIP January 31, 2010

World War II	513
Vietnam	2,416
Cold War	8
Associate Members:	177
Total Members	3,114

John H. Mackey
198th LIB B/1/52nd Inf
Austin, TX
★ *Rollie Castronova*

Samuel D. Smith
523rd Sig Bn Co A
Port Huron, MI
★ *Dave Rose*

James Tarver
3/18th FA Srv Co Btry
Leesville, LA
★ *NC Jay Flanagan*

Mike Twomey
3/18th FA C Btry
Tallahassee, FL
★ *PNC Gary L. Noller*

M. Bruce Welch
11th LIB B/1/20th Inf
Greenbriar, AR
★ *Self*

Re-instated Members

Richard I. Allen
26th Cmbt Engrs Co B
Inverness, FL
★ *Self*

Richard C. Keil
196th LIB E/2/1st Inf
Westminster, CO
★ *Roy Anderson*

James B. Murphy
1/14th Arty A Btry
High Point, NC
★ *Ron Davis*

Mike Pfetsch
1/14th Arty C Btry
Silver Springs, MD
★ *Don Ballou*

Terry Sula
11th LIB E/3/1st Inf
Green Valley, AZ
★ *Don Ballou*

New Associate Members

Dudley P. LeBlanc
Pierre Part, LA
★ *James Tarver*

Jerry Parks
Monogahela, PA
★ *Roger Gilmore*

TAPS

World War II Veterans

Robert Snyder
132nd Inf Rgmt Co K
Indio, CA
July 26, 2010

Verdinal T. McKean
164th Inf Rgmt
Alameda, CA
September 29, 2010

Stanley Oshaben
164th Inf Rgmt Co C
Willoughby Hills, OH
September 4, 2010

William J. Rizzo
182nd Inf Rgmt Co E
Ft Lauderdale, FL
August 25, 2010

Calvin E. Carpenter
221st FA
Chocorua, NH
January 7, 2010

William L. Smith
245th FA Btry C
Asheville, NC
September 28, 2009

Leamon E. Parrish
26th Sig Bn
Graham, NC
January 29, 2010

George T. Pitts
Americal Div HQ
Hilton Head, SC
September 11, 2010

Vietnam Veterans

Jerald J. McLane
11th LIB
Lexington, SC
August 15, 2010

George W. Rhoden
11th LIB C/1/20th Inf
Glen St. Mary, FL
August 6, 2010

Ray Connell
198th LIB B/5/46th Inf
Tyngsboro, MA
August 2, 2010

James C. Trepoy
196th LIB 3/21st Inf
Salina, KS
October 7, 2010

Last Roll Call WWII

Paul E. Dickerson
164th Inf Rgmt
N. Canton, OH
August 5, 2010

George R. Metzger
Unit Unknown
Riverside, CA
August 23, 2010

Jesse W. Parman
Unit Unknown
Dallas, TX
August 4, 2010

Chauncey D. Parsons
Unit Unknown
Patterson Township, PA
September 23, 2010

Odell H. Stuart
Unit Unknown
Stuart, VA
August 27, 2010

Anteo J. Tarini
Unit Unknown
N. Fort Meyers, FL
September 20, 2010

Edwin W. Taylor
Unit Unknown
Hyannis, MA
September 1, 2010

Last Roll Call Vietnam

Charles B. Thomas, Jr.
198th LIB CO
Melbourne Beach, FL
September 12, 2010

Jack R. Farmer
196th LIB E/1/46th Inf
September 1, 2010

Harry J. Williamson
Unit Unknown
Allentown, PA
July 19, 2010

Dick Pace
198th LIB A/1/46th Inf
Dedham, MA
August 8, 2010

Change of Address

Please notify the ADVA immediately of your change in address. This includes seasonal change of address. Keeping your address current will ensure that you continue to receive the Americal Journal magazine and other mailings in a timely manner. It will also help save costs as the ADVA has to pay the U.S. Postal Service for all returned mail. Contact the National Adjutant if you have any questions about your membership, dues date, payment of dues, etc. You may call him at 214-497-6543 or send an e-mail to gilmoraces@aol.com or write to Roger Gilmore, National Adjutant, 7301 Harvest Hill, Rowlett, TX, 75089.

Membership Dues

Membership dues should be sent to PNC Ronald Ellis, Asst. National Finance Officer, 4493 Hwy 64 W, Henderson, TX, 75652. You may pay by check or credit card. If paying dues by credit card please provide your telephone number and/or e-mail address for any required follow-up. Contact Ronald Ellis by phone at 903-657-5790 or by e-mail at re196thlib@aol.com.

Death Notices

The Americal Journal magazine wishes to publish notices of the deaths of Americal Division veterans. This includes ADVA members as well as non-members. Send notifications to Roger Gilmore, National Adjutant. Provide name, date of death, Americal unit, and place of residence of the deceased. ADVA members are listed first under the TAPS section. Non-ADVA members are listed under the title Last Roll Call.

Elbert Horton; 246th FA

Elbert Russell Horton, 94, of Timberlake, NC passed away on July 9, 2010. He served with the 246th Field Artillery in World War II. For many years he promoted and organized reunions of Americal Division artillery veterans. Elbert was very proud of his service in the artillery and in the Americal Division.

Elbert Horton's brother James (J.B.) also served in the Americal Division in World War II. They were born an year apart (1916 and 1917) and joined the Army in April 1941. After artillery training at Ft. Sill, OK they joined the troops of Task Force 6814 and deployed from Brooklyn, NY in January 1942. They remained with the Americal Division until the end of the war. J. B. passed away in 1964.

J.B.'s son Reginald (Reggie) Horton served with Co. A, 1/6th Inf., 198th LIB in 1969-1970. This service of brother-brother, father-son, uncle-nephew, World War II-Vietnam War is a rare occurrence for Americal Division veterans. Two other elder Horton brothers also served in the military in World War II and the Korean War.

James C. Trepoy; 3/21st Inf.

By Ron Mitchell



The Gimlet Association's Honorary Regimental Sergeant Major James C. Trepoy (CSM USA RET) passed away October 7, 2010 in Salina, Kansas. Jim was 89 years old and an original member of the Gimlet 21st Infantry Regimental Association.

The retired Command Sergeant Major served two assignments with Gimlet Battalions: 1SG, B 1/21st Inf. (Mech) 25th ID, Hawaii 61 – 64 and CSM, 3/21st Inf., 196th Light Infantry Brigade, Vietnam 68 – 69. He entered the Army 17 September 1942 as a draftee. He served over 26 years retiring as a Command Sergeant Major on 1 August 1970. He had 50 months time in grade as a pay grade E-9 when he retired. During those 26 years CSM Trepoy served proudly with great distinction and honor. CSM Trepoy was nominated to be a Distinguished Member of 3rd Infantry Regiment (Old Guard Association) September 2002. Jim was also an Atomic Veteran, participating in Operation Upshot-Knothole in Nevada.

The outstanding devotion to duty demonstrated by CSM Trepoy along with his enthusiasm, willingness and dependability were an inspiration to all personnel who served with him, reflecting great credit on himself and the military service.

Charles B. Thomas, Jr; 198th LIB

Charles B. Thomas, Jr. (COL, USA, Ret.), 89, of Melbourne Beach, FL passed away on September 12, 2010. He was born in Baltimore, MD and graduated from Johns Hopkins University.

Thomas entered the U.S. Army in 1942 as a 2LT in the infantry and completed 30 years of duty. He served with the 99th Inf. Div. and 42nd Inf. Div. in France, Germany and Austria in WWII. He was with the 1st Cav. Div. in Korea. During the Vietnam war he served as the commanding officer of the 198th Lt. Inf. Bde. From June 1968 to December 1968.

Henry E. Barton; 132nd Inf.

By Lucille Barton



The other day I received the Americal Journal April-May-June 2010 issue. I was so pleased to read Louisa Fulton's article about her dad Robert Fulton. I plan to contact her about her father and talk about things we have in common.

My husband, Henry E. Barton, was a member of Task Force 6814 and then the Americal Division in the South Pacific during World War II. He passed away on April 28, 2010. He would have been so pleased and so proud to know of the recognition given to the 132nd Infantry Regiment. This was the outfit that he was a part of for four and one-half years.

Henry was drafted into the U.S. Army on April 23, 1941. He took the oath at the Chicago, IL armory and was sent to Camp Grant, IL for processing. From there he went to a camp in Tennessee and was assigned to Co. L, 130th Infantry, 33rd Infantry Division.

He left New York on January 22, 1942 on the S.S. Cristobal. He first went to Australia for a few days while changes were made on the ship. Then he was then sent as a volunteer to the 132nd Infantry Regiment medical detachment. His next assignment was as a combat medic with Co. G, 132nd Inf. He landed in New Caledonia with Task Force 6814 in March 1942.

When he was finally sent back to the United States and was waiting for orders to be discharged he was sent to Camp Upton, Long Island, New York. He worked there at the same hospital as I did. I was also in the Army and was a surgical technician. After a short courtship we were married in the post chapel on August 8, 1945. Had he lived longer we would have celebrated our 65th wedding anniversary this year. He was just a wonderful person and I do miss him so much.

There are three books written about the men in the group my husband belonged to. Orchids in the Mud was written by Henry's buddy Dr. Robert Meurcke. Under the Southern Cross by Francis D. Cronin is the division's history in World War II. A book came out just a few years ago about a doctor and surgeon who operated on my husband in a tent on one of the South Pacific islands.

I see the reunion is planned for Lombard, IL this year. The reunions that my husband and I attended in the past were always nice. I only wish Henry were here and we could attend once more.

God Bless all of you boys and thanks for all you did for your country.

Locator Requests

See more locator requests at www.americal.org/locator/; write or call an Americal Journal editor if you need help making contact with a veteran listed below.

Looking for: Information on chaplains and chaplain assistants killed in action. I am working on a memorial project to be erected at the U.S. Army Chaplain Center and School in Fort Jackson, South Carolina starting February 2011. I need to prepare a list of Army chaplains and chaplain assistants who were KIA (non-illness related) while assigned to the Americal Division. A name, unit, date of death, and perhaps denomination would be extremely helpful. Our goal for this project is to not forget any of our soldiers who were killed in combat. Therefore, we are counting on our division associations to help us not unintentionally overlook anyone. Contact: 2LT Jeremy Anderson; chaplainmemorial@yahoo.com.

Looking for: Information on casualties from Btry. A, 3/16th Artillery, 27 February 1971, at LZ Snoopy. Dennis Linn Craver, John Anthony Cukale, and James Lewis Steinkirchner are all recorded as non-hostile casualties. Craver is shown as dying from burns, other two from other accident. It appears to be a likely breech accident. There is nothing in the Americal TOC logs. I would like to know the circumstances of these casualties. Contact: Dick Arnold; indyrja@yahoo.com.

Looking for: Names of those in my chain of command when I was on LZ Center on May 12, 1969. I served with mortar platoon, Co. E, 3/21st Infantry from December 1968 to June 1969. After almost 40 years I have been reunited with several members of my squad. During a visit with two of them they asked had I received any recognition for a deed of heroism during an attack by a sapper squad while we were on LZ Center, May 12, 1969. They insisted on pursuing a Bronze Star w/Valor device for my actions and they have both written sworn testimonies to the fact. I need endorsements or narratives from my chain of command and eyewitnesses about the action. One name I remember was Lt. Clark, my platoon leader. Another name I have come up with is Lt. Benseman, duty officer during the time of the attack. Contact: Rick Landis; rlandis3@yahoo.com.

Looking for: Anyone with information about the death of my cousin Wayne Eugene (Bucky) Lewis from Indiana, Pa. Bucky was with E Co, 1/52nd Inf., and was wounded or injured somehow on Feb 15, 1968 and died on Feb. 18, 1968. We wrote often and he sort of prepared me for Nam, if that's possible. He died on the day I received my orders for Nam and I've been struggling with that for over 40 years. Contact: Andy Bourdess, 11th Armored Cav., 68-69; abourdessjr@hotmail.com.

Looking for: Wesley Cheely, 198th Inf., WIA June 17, 1970; Song Tra Bong River. Cheely was at Walter Reed with me after being WIA. I was a RTO with 1/52nd Infantry FO Team with Lt. Wm. Johnson. We took fire at 4:00 AM coming home from a seven day patrol west of FB Stinson. Anyone recall a reporter, Leslie, from AP wire services spending a week with us? Contact: Tom Homlink, 219 59th Ave S., St Petersburg, FL, 33705, TVHolmin3@hotmail.com.

Looking for: Anyone from the 523rd Signal Battalion in Chu Lai in 1967-1968. Contact: William (Bill) Bush, 408-247-9140, bill.bush@sbcglobal.net.

Looking for: Information about action on August 22-23, 1968 and names of personnel who were killed or wounded at that time while serving near LZ Sooner and LZ Bowman, Co. A, 1/46th Inf. Contact: Ralph Moran; 580-355-3168.

Looking for: Anyone who knew my wife's father, James Rodney Sowers, Sergeant, Co. A, 1/46th Inf., KIA May 12, 1969. Contact: Paul Mahan, 531 Blackstream Road, Hermon, ME 04401, 207-433-7799, pmahan@hammondslumber.com.

Looking for: Information on the Pathfinder detachments assigned to the Americal Division during the Vietnam war. They are the 14th Pathfinder Detachment and the 123rd Pathfinder detachment. Contact: Sir Robert James Fogarty II, KSM, KOS; fogart57@hotmail.com.

Looking for: Veterans of the 555th Engr. Co. who left Fort Hood around Oct. 1967 for Viet Nam. Contact: Danny E Kierce; dannyeugk@bellsouth.net.

Looking for: Anyone who knew my brother, PFC Peter P. Auletta, KIA July 17, 1970 while serving with Troop E, 1st Cav., 11th LIB, Quang Ngai Province. Contact: R. Auletta; aulettir@aol.com.

Looking for: Veterans from Btry. D, 1/14th Artillery, 1971; I would like to hear from buddies; I have photos but no names. Contact: John Eubank; eubankjohn@hotmail.com.

Reunion Notices

The 2011 **Americal Division Veterans Association National Reunion** will be in Colorado Springs, CO on September 8-11, 2011. See more information at www.americal.org/reunion.shtml. The reunion chairman is Tom Packard. He may be reached at packard50@q.com or 720-635-1900.

The **24th Annual Winter-Fest R & R** All Veterans Festival and Reunion will be held in New Glarus, WI on January 13-16, 2011. A large group of Americal veterans are expected to be in attendance at the first veterans reunion of the new year. Additional information can be found at <http://www.wivietnamvets.org>. You may also contact Ron Lewis at 608-712-4532 or send an e-mail to Bill Hustad at wfh1@tds.net.

Seeking interest of **Americal RV'ers** and campers for a trip to Quartzite, AZ to dry camp in the desert. This would be held in conjunction with the big RV show January 22-30 and the rock and gem show February 2-6, 2011. Camping in the nearby desert is free. Please contact Bob Kapp at bobkapp3@aol.com.

The **Abilene Grunts Association** will be holding their annual Tet reunion on Saturday, February 5, 2011 at the Taylor County Fairgrounds, Abilene, TX. For more information contact Cameron Baird, ADVA Southwest Chapter Commander, altdorf@krc.com, 830-644-2704.

The **2/11th Artillery**, 1966-1967, will have a reunion on February 11, 2011 in Orlando, FL. For information contact Paul Fast at plfast@yahoo.com, 859-226-7649.

The **25th Anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home Parade** reunion will be on June 17-18, 2011 in Chicago, IL. Events include a display of The Moving Wall at Navy Pier. See up to date information at www.serviceandhonor.org.

Vietnam Historian Report

By Les Hines

It was nice to be able to set up a resource center in the hospitality room at the national reunion in Chicago. I had great responses from roughly 65 veterans who visited with me. I was able to demonstrate to veterans that they have the tools to do a fairly detailed research with just the three DVD set provided at the reunion. Approximately 45 veterans donated cash to help cover the cost of providing the computer and printer supplies.

I also had the opportunity to visit with veterans about obtaining new materials to add to the database. Bill Walker of the 1/46th Inf. said he would send me a copy of the 1970 1/46th unit album to be scanned. Sgt. Garcia of 1/20th Inf. said he would send me copies of the 11th LIB newsletters that I do not have. Nancy Lynch, the author who addressed the Saturday night banquet, stated that she would check with the Americal Division veterans that she documented to see if they have materials that we could put in our database.

Frank Mika is looking at purchasing a large bed scanner so that he and Dutch DeGroot can scan the oversize issues of the "Southern Cross". I would like to continue to have Bruce Flaherty obtain more of the situation reports for the Americal Division. I am working on transcribing the first two months of the Apr-July 1967 period that we have received. If we can get at least the August through October 1967 period we will have a continuous coverage of the period from the start of Task Force Oregon through to the standdown of the Americal Division. I support the efforts to obtain videos from the archives. Larry Swank has done an amazing job getting this material together.

I think that the Division TOC reports could be sold separately through the ADVA product sales. They can fit on two DVDs. The format is PDF and this is not going to change for a while. We need volunteers to work on the TOC reports to transcribe them into text documents.

Next year I would like to see if someone could help me with the historian effort at the reunion. I would like assistance so that if I could not make the reunion someone could still help veterans. At this reunion I saw time after time that after I showed a veteran the database he would go over to help another veteran on another computer.

I am excited about the Dave Taylor book on the 5/46th Inf. in Vietnam. We have had several new Americal related books published this year. Authors Thomas Podzol, Grant Coble, Keith Nolan (RIP), and General Patrick Brady have recently published books. At least three other new books are in progress as well. This includes one on Kham Duc (1968) which has been in the works for over ten years now.

We have been supporting Americal Division unit websites and individual unit reunions. I have helped several reunion sponsors last year with historian materials. In return we have had several of the sponsors promoting ADVA membership at the reunions as well as networking to find more historical materials.

Beyond The Call Duty

By Gary L. Noller

Reunion guests at the 2010 reunion were out of the hospitality room on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights by about midnight. But that does not mean that the hospitality room was empty. Les Hines worked alone into the early morning hours to prepare historical items of interest to Americal veterans. He copied and printed pages from the division Tactical Operation Center (TOC) reports,

tactical maps, magazines and newsletters, daily staff journals, Operation Reports-Lessons Learned (ORLL), situation reports, photographs and videos, and the many other resources that he brought.

Les installed three computers and monitors, two printers, several CD-DVD drives, and other computer hardware devices to handle the many requests that he received. There was never a time that Les did not have a veteran at his side with one or two waiting in line to ask a question.

Les has been the ADVA Vietnam Historian for over 15 years. But his quest to obtain historical records of the Americal Division in Vietnam has been going on for more than 20 years. He has expended thousands of hours and a fair amount of his personal funds to acquire anything he can that is a record of the division in Vietnam. Over the years he has received assistance from many Americal veterans who have shared with him items from their personal collections. Only a small part of what Les collects is funded by the ADVA.

On Saturday night an Americal veteran joined me at a table in the hospitality room. He told me that he had just spent about an hour at the computer with Les. He said that Les had shown him entries in the division TOC report that described the combat actions that involved the veteran. "I am so happy that I had the chance to see those records," said the veteran. "This has helped bring closure for me for things that happened 40 years ago. Now I know the details of who and what we were up against."

Americal veterans who served in Vietnam are fortunate that Les Hines has the focus and the devotion for collecting the history of the division during that era. He has truly gone beyond the call of duty. I do not know anyone who even comes close to achieving what he has done. I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that of all the Army divisions that served in Vietnam the Americal Division has the best unit historian- and this includes those "famous" divisions who have many more veterans and many more government-paid-for resources.

Les is very serious about his task. He is very generous and he is very humble. He seldom asks for anything. But one thing he should get from every Americal veteran who served in Vietnam is a sincere word of thanks. He deserves that recognition.

My words to Les: "Thank you. Keep up the great work. We appreciate all you do for Americal veterans."





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FAR WEST CHAPTER

AZ CA CO HI NV NM UT WA OR ID UT MT WY

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SEC/TREAS

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The Far West Chapter held its annual reunion along the Colorado River in Laughlin, Nevada at the Aquarius Casino Resort in October 2010. There were 23 veterans and eleven guests in attendance including four veterans from WWII and nineteen who served during Vietnam. Our group took a Colorado River tour of the Laughlin area on the riverboat,

"Celebration" on Monday afternoon. We learned of some interesting local history during the tour.

We held our semi-annual election of officers during the Tuesday morning business meeting. Re-elected were Rick Ropole, Chapter Commander and Tom Packard, Chapter Secretary/Treasurer. Also elected to new two year terms were Gene McGrath, Vice Commander and Paris Tagnoli, Sgt. at Arms. Our next meeting will be in Colorado Springs in conjunction with the 2011 national ADVA reunion. Further details on when and where the chapter meeting will be held will be in future issues of our newsletter, the Cannon.

We continue to plan the ADVA Annual 2011 reunion in Colorado Springs, Colorado. It will be held at the Crowne Plaza Colorado Springs, September 8 – 11, 2011. A Friday morning tour of the Air Force Academy is being finalized along with a Saturday morning tour of Old Colorado City and the Garden of the Gods for the wives and quests while the business meeting is taking place. Information about several "on your own" tours and places to see will be listed in the next issue of the Journal and in some of the chapter newsletters along with a registration form. Activities in and around Colorado Springs are many, so make plans to come early and stay an extra day or so. The weather during this time of the year is very pleasant and the mountains are beautiful. Make your plans to attend the 2011 reunion in Colorado Springs.



ADVA Members: Regional and unit chapters allow you to meet and associate with Americal veterans with common interests. Make plans to attend the next chapter reunion and plan to have a great time. Chapters are always seeking individuals willing to take leadership roles and help plan and execute chapter functions, activities, and events. Chapters also take a leading role in hosting annual ADVA national reunions. Please contact your Chapter Commander and let him know you are interested in participating in the chapter and generously volunteer your leadership skills as appropriate.

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL CHAPTER

IL IN MI MN WI

COMMANDER

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Adjutant

Terry Babler,
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(608) 527-2444 email: pointman69@tds.net

Senior Vice Com.

Gary Gardner
Jr Vice Com.
Harold Waterman



The Americal Division Veterans Association national reunion in Chicago was a class event. I met many Vietnam veterans that all said the same thing. They wish they had contacted comrades years

ago. Most of us waited for many years to even consider it. Talking about our experiences with others who have been there, did that, is healthy for us mentally and physically. The good men I met at the reunion exemplified that idea.

We must not forget the veterans coming home now. Many of them don't want to join veteran groups because they are not yet ready to talk about their experiences, just like many of us were back then. We must support our fellow veterans to help them come home sooner than we did. If you know a recent veteran, give him your respect. They earned it just as we did.

The next meeting for the Great Lakes Chapter will be at Winterfest in New Glarus, WI on January 14-16, 2011. If you have never attended Winterfest, come on down. Everyone is situated closely to assure good conversation amongst everyone. If you need more information, contact me via email and I will get you the information. If anyone has any ideas regarding a chapter reunion, let me know. If anyone can produce a chapter newsletter, it would be great to hear from you.

Agent Orange has opened up new claims for heart problems and diabetes amongst others. If you served in Vietnam and have either problem, or if you have other medical problems that may be related, contact your local county Veteran Service Office to find out if you are eligible to file a claim for disability compensation. You earned any benefits you are eligible for, so take advantage of it if you can.

Enjoy every day we have left. It is worth it and we are too! Contact me, Dale J Belke, Chapter Commander, at belked@ckhweb.com or 608-897-4429 if you wish to discuss any of these topics in more detail. Peace.

EASTERN REGIONAL CHAPTER

DC DE KY MD NJ NY OH PA VA WV MA NH VT ME CT RI

A.D.V.A.

COMMANDER
Joseph Adelsberger
joeordeb_1@msn.com

Treasurer
Mark L. Deam
mdeam@woh.rr.com

Vice-Commander
Terry Siemer
TSiemer9528@wowway.com

The eastern region held their 2010 reunion in Hampton Va. May 20th-23rd with Dave Eichhorn as reunion chairman. We had 71 veterans and spouses that attended of which seven were WWII veterans. At our

annual meeting on May 22 we elected new officers.

At this time I would like to thank everyone for electing me as their new commander. I also would like to thank Connie Steers for the job he did over the past three years. Thanks should go to Dave Eichhorn for the job he did on the reunion.

Our 2011 reunion will be held at Holiday Inn South in Swedesboro, NJ. It will be hosted by Jack Haas. More Information will follow later. The chapter web site can be found at

<http://home.roadrunner.com~sidneyalum/advaerc/>

23rd MILITARY POLICE CHAPTER

WWII Korean War/Panama CZ Vietnam Global War on Terrorism

COMMANDER

Dale Meisel

VICE COMMANDER

Wes Haun

SEC/TREAS

Tom Packard

packard50@q.com

My wife and I were unable to attend the Chicago reunion, although we initially planned to do so, but I understand that there were about a dozen 23rd MPs in attendance, led by home town boy Dutch DeGroot. We definitely will attend, God willing, next year's reunion in Colorado Springs. For us it will be a

homecoming. Fort Carson was my first assignment in the Army. We have not been back to that area in 40 + years.

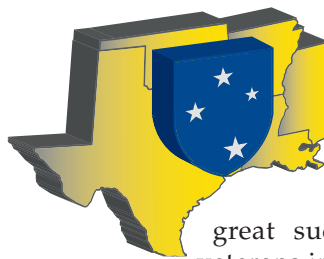
I was initially detailed to Armor branch and was assigned to the 4th/12th Cavalry, 5th Infantry Division (Mech.). Then I moved to my basic branch, Military Police and was assigned to the 5th MP Company. From there it was on to Vietnam and the Americal Division.

Chapter business has been slow since the June reunion. Dutch DeGroot and Dave Navy are still working as the Nominating Committee to formulate a slate of candidates for next year's election. Tom Packard is putting on another hat as Chairman of the 2011 ADVA reunion. I am sure he can use some warm bodies when the time comes.

May God bless all of you and your families during the Christmas season, and may you prosper in 2011! Contact me, Dale Meisel, at 610-391-8991 with any comments or questions you may have about the chapter activities and schedule.

SOUTH MIDWEST CHAPTER

AR LA OK TX MS

**COMMANDER**

Cameron F. Baird

P.O. Box 211

Stonewall, TX 78671

830 • 644 • 2704

altdorf@ktc.com

The chapter reunion in San Antonio, TX in May 2010 was a great success with over 50 Americal veterans in attendance. We are planning a reunion for the Fort Polk, (Leesburg) LA area on May 12-15, 2011. James Tarver of Leesville, LA is putting together plans for the visit to Ft. Polk. This shows a lot of promise particularly for Americal veterans who trained at Ft. Polk prior to deployment to Vietnam. Look for more information about the 2011 chapter reunion in the Jan-Feb-Mar 2011 edition of the Americal Journal.

We received a nice message from Tamara Bacon, widow of Nick Bacon. Nick passed away on July 17, 2010. On behalf of the chapter I sent a message and an arrangement of flowers to Tamara to express our condolences on the loss of Nicky. She replied, "I want to thank you for the comforting words and the beautiful flowers the South Midwest Chapter sent. Our family wishes to thank each and every member for all the prayer support. God has poured out his mercy and grace upon our family..."

The chapter has a few autographed copies of MG Patrick Brady's book titled Dead Men Flying available for sale. Price of the book is \$25 plus \$2 each for postage. This is a wonderful book for several reasons. First of all, it is the story of the evolution of air ambulance (Dust Off) operations in Vietnam. Pat Brady was there, and he saw it all, beginning in 1964 with a small unit with inadequate resources – five choppers to cover the entire country. He was there during the intense battles in 1968 when Dust Off men and machines were pushed to the absolute limits of their capabilities. Their success is measured in the highest survival rate for battlefield casualties of any previous war. Second, it is the story of the enormous courage and flying skills of the pilots and crewmen who carried out missions of extreme danger. Their missions, conducted under any weather condition, day or night, and almost always under enemy fire, demanded extraordinary bravery. Finally, it is a testament to the unprecedented humanitarian efforts in treating and evacuating civilian casualties as well as enemy combatants. This is where Brady's allegiance to the Medical Corps comes through loud and clear. His mission, his focus and his very being is oriented toward saving lives, not taking them. MG Brady resides in the San Antonio area and was very gracious to meet with us at the chapter reunion in May 2010.

Please contact me, Cameron Baird, at altdorf@ktc.com or 830-644-2704 anytime I may be of service. Have a Merry Christmas and a very happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year.



Readers: If you need assistance in making contact with the letter writers listed on these pages please contact one of the editors. They will be happy to assist you.

Dear editor,

The annual Vietnam War re-enactment event was held here in Ukraine from July 25-31, 2010 and is already history. A week has gone like one day. We're back home but damn miss those days....

As a first part of the report about the event please take a look at our "construction process" - how did we build the FSB PICAREL-LI. The text is only in Russian, sorry for that, but I hope you will be able to understand the main theme: Part # 1 <http://www.gunfighters.kiev.ua/picbuild.html>; Part # 2 <http://www.gunfighters.kiev.ua/picbuild1.html>; Part # 3 <http://www.gunfighters.kiev.ua/picbuild2.html>.

More photos about the construction are available here: <http://diorvin.io.ua/album349724> and <http://picasaweb.google.ru/PavlyukTorres/123#>.

The final look of the FSB and reports will be available in the nearest future as there is too much to write and remind. Warm regards and remain your friend

Max Popov; (SSG Popov, The Gunfighters)
Kiev, Ukraine

Dear editor,

I was saddened when I learned of the death of COL (Ret.) Oran K. Henderson. The story I am relating is a story that concerned many of the men in the 11th Lt. Inf. Bde. who deployed to Vietnam.

I was selected to remain behind and help close out our quarters and buildings in Schofield Barracks, HI. As we cleaned out the foot lockers and wall lockers I was amazed at the amount of money, towels, and civilian clothing that had to be removed and disposed.

The brigade was fed C-rations on the parade ground. Afterwards more than a truckload of odds and ends of C-rations were picked up. I placed the discarded clothing and C-rations on the porch of our quarters. The dependents had a field day going through them and saving things that could be used in the future.

COL Henderson and I along with a few others flew out of Hawaii to Vietnam. As we were waiting at the airport in Honolulu we saw flashing lights approaching. As the lights approached closer to the airport terminal we saw a bus escorted by military police. When the bus pulled up and stopped the M.P.s unloaded it. The bus contained quite a group of men from the stockade. They were turned over to COL Henderson and he in turn told us to see that these men got to Vietnam.

We left Hawaii, flew to Guam, then the Philippines, and then to Vietnam. We landed at Tan Son Nhut airport where we spent the night. The next morning we had a formation and COL Henderson

spoke to us. He said, "Gentlemen, we are flying 410 miles to the north (Chu Lai) at 16:30 hours. All of you be at the airport or be gone. I don't care which." But after all these years I do not think that we lost one man from that stockade group.

MSG (Ret.) Warren Reed; 11th LIB
Newport, VA

Dear editor,

When I returned to Ft. Sill, OK after my tour with the Americal Division (February 1968- February 1969) I was given the worst assignment any officer could get. That is as a CAO- Casualty Assistance Officer.

That was the title- the job was to make death notifications. At first the job was just for the Ft. Sill area. I had been at Ft. Sill for various assignments from 1948 through 1969. I, of course, had many friends there, both officer and enlisted. I knew their wives and families. Many times when I made a death notifications I knew the family personally.

All notifications were hard. But these were really difficult. The PMSTs at the state's colleges usually made the notifications on those in their areas. But when they went out for training with their ROTC units I picked up the whole state of Oklahoma. I made notifications all over Oklahoma as well as southern Kansas and the Texas panhandle.

All notifications had to be made between 0730-1930 hours. If the notification was far away I had to fly or drive several hours to get there. It was up to me whether or not to take a chaplain with me. Some chaplains were very helpful but would almost get one killed. The last thing some wife, mother, or father wanted to hear was a young chaplain telling them that their husband's or son's death was God's will and that he was in a better place. I quickly learned which chaplains to take with me.

As you might guess this job was a killer and it almost drove me "around the bend." This is why I retired before I planned to do so. It still haunts me especially when I see articles about Vietnam war deaths and the grief sustained by their families.

MAJ (Ret.) Glen C. Davis; Divarty
Paden, OK

Dear editor,

In 2009 a group of veterans and their wives made a trip back to Vietnam and everyone agreed that it was one of their best trips. The country at peace is beautiful! The people are friendly to Americans. The American dollar goes a long ways and it was an opportunity for us to show our wives where we'd spent our year.

The trip was sponsored by a veterans group located in southwest Michigan called Lest We Forget (LWF). I am president of LWF and also a two tour Vietnam veteran (First Cavalry Div and Americal Div). Our tour will be led by Vietnam Battlefield Tours (VBT) out of San Antonio (www.VietnamBattlefieldTours.com). VBT is a non profit organization staffed with Vietnam veterans who receive no salary for leading the tours, just expenses. They always send two guides and for our 2009 trip our two guides were Bill and Gene. Bill has taken over 35 groups back and Gene has taken 15 groups back.

The places we visit will be determined by where veterans were stationed during their Vietnam tour. VBT will contact veterans sev-

eral months before the trip and ask where they were stationed. VBT guides will take the maps we used in the 60s and with a handheld GPS take us within 10 meters of all the fire bases and landing zones that we were stationed on.

The tour will start in Saigon and go north. Tentatively, we plan to visit the Mekong Delta, Saigon, Da Lat, Nha Trang, Qui Nhon, An Khe, Pleiku, Hoi An, Da Nang, Hue, Quang Tri, Khe Sanh, Hanoi and Ha Long Bay. These locations are subject to change based on the participants. The itinerary from 2009 has been slightly changed to permit us to spend a day at the French resort city of Da Lat. Our hotel in Saigon will be the Rex Hotel and we will spend a night on a ship on Ha Long Bay. The hotels will be three star plus or better.

The tour price will be based on the size of the group. Last year the tour price was \$4,300 for the 21 day trip. This includes airfare from Los Angeles, air conditioned motorcoach, Vietnam airfare, all meals, gratuities, emergency medical and evacuation insurance and much more. Anyone interested in receiving information may contact me at 269-925-7176 or dealsbro@sbcglobal.net.

Don Alsbro; 23rd Admin. Co.
Benton Harbor, MI

Dear editor,

My copy of the Jul-Aug-Sep 2010 Americal Journal arrived today. I usually leaf through it to see what's inside - today was not any different. As I flipped through the pages I suddenly saw drawings that I recognized (pp18-21).

I was the 198th LIB S-1/Adjutant in Chu Lai. My hootch-mate, CPT Charlie Walden, the brigade S4, and I went through hootches vacated by troops who left the country. We had to clean up after the troops who were so happy to be leaving RVN that their clean-up was not up to standards. In one of the hootches I found a couple of line drawings. Seeing the drawings in the last issue of the Americal Journal I knew immediately that the ones I found in Vietnam were drawn by the same artist, Andy Ladak. I still have the drawings, but they are somewhere in the house and not where I had expected they would be.

One drawing was funny and one was more on the sardonic humor side. The first showed a patrol standing at the edge of the jungle in a clearing with an officer approaching. The caption read: 'Sir, we thought we heard a chicken so Jones when to check it out.' Sticking up over the jungle canopy in the distance, was a huge chicken's head with a pair of legs and boots protruding from the beak. The second was on the order of the humor in not-so-good taste that was mentioned in Andy's article. It showed a village with a raised platform in the middle. A LT with a smoking M-16 stood on the platform surrounded by dead bodies as denoted by "x's" for eyes. A Captain approached him and the caption read: 'Oh No, Lieutenant! Not Again!'

Someday I may find the drawings or the scans I made of them. I will return them to Andy Ladak. I did not know his name until I saw the drawings in the magazine. It is a small world.

Frederick A. Kolbrener; 198th LIB S-1
Lake Ridge, VA



Dear editor,

I recently found this color slide I took from a Huey in late 1968. The slide is noted with the comment "11th Brigade base camp south of Chu Lai". I was a B-52 pilot on an orientation visit in-country at the time. Don't know if you have any need for these old pictures but thought I would pass it on.

Ted Daniel; Colonel, USAF (Ret)

Dear editor,

The following information may be helpful to Americal Division veterans who are trying to locate casualty records and other information about their military service.

The battalion and brigade S-2/3 logs are good for giving unit locations and incidents but they do not always mention names of individuals wounded or killed. Later in the war some logs did name individual soldiers. The only sure way to find individual information is the morning reports of the unit such as the company or battery. The morning reports should name all men wounded. They list almost all incidents of the unit, such as promotions, personnel going on R+R, personnel coming into the unit, etc.

The morning reports are almost sacred to the Army and are usually very accurate. However in the case of personnel treated and the field and returned to duty, sometimes that info was not passed on to be recorded, especially in a large combat action.

The best way to get the morning reports is to call the Military Records Personnel Center in St. Louis and explain your situation. Ask for the morning reports several days before and several days after the date of the action of interest.

Contact information for the records center is as follows: 314-801-0800 by phone, MPR.center@NARA.gov by e-mail, or write to Military Personnel Records Center, 9700 Page Ave., St. Louis, Missouri, 63132-5100.

PS On behalf of all Grunts Our Never ending Gratitude and Thanks to all men in the Arty esp "A" Battery 1/14th Arty for all the times you saved us.

Bill Schneider; Co. A, 1/46th Inf.
Barnhard, MO



ADVA 2010 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS



I would like to thank you for your generous contribution. Your charitable act helped me get a good head start to my first year of college at the University of Iowa. The reason I chose this school was because of its tremendous medical

program. As of right now, I plan to do pre-physical therapy. I believe the University of Iowa will aid me to achieving my goal. Once again, thank you. Your gift is greatly appreciated.

Leighna R. Reuter; University of Iowa
Rick Reuter, grandfather;
3/21st Inf.



Thank you for the awarding me one of the scholarships for the school year for 2010/2011. It will be very helpful when I start at Texas A&M in the Corps of Cadets at the Maritime Academy. Again thank you very much.

Josh Williams; Texas A & M Galveston
John R. Pfaendtner,
4/31st Inf.



I am humbled that my letter about patriotism, especially regarding my father's war experience and ensuing disabilities has been recognized as a tribute of our family's patriotism and respect for our military services throughout the world. A great thanks to all the Americal Division veterans for keeping us safe and free.

Frances Hogan; Case Western Reserve Univ.
David W. Hogan, father;
26th Engr.

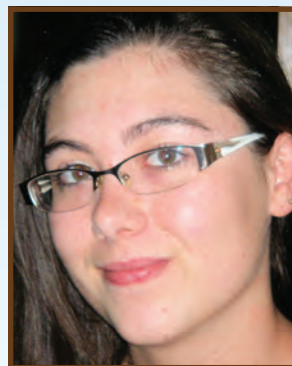


Thank you for selecting me to be one of the recipients of this year's scholarship. I will be sure your money is put to good use as I look to further my education at Greenville College majoring in Math Education. I also appreciate the recognition of my Uncle and Grandfather's service in the Americal Division by awarding a scholarship to both my cousin Matthew Burch and myself. Thank you again for helping me further my education through awarding one of your scholarships to me. (Photograph: Burdett Burch, Matt Burch, Tim Burch, James Burch)

Tim Burch; Greenville College
Burdette Burch, grandfather;
132nd Inf.

As I have learned more about the Americal Division, I have come to better understand what an honor it is to receive your scholarship. I am currently a senior with a double major in physics and mathematics at Coe College in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Thank you for helping me to continue my education.

Matthew J. Burch; Coe College
James A. Burch, father;
26th Engr.



I would like to thank everyone involved with the Americal Scholarship for the great things scholarships can help students achieve. I am very appreciative of the generosity that has been forwarded to me. This scholarship allows me to have some assistance with the cost of books and tuition and feel secure in my choice

to continue pursuing my career. Knowing that there are people who believe in my abilities as much as I do offers an extra motivation to work hard to accomplish my goals.

Alyssa Buehne; Johnson County CC
Gary Roschevitz, grandfather;
1/20th Inf.



Thanks so much for your generosity! I have been blessed by attending Calvin College this year, and I look forward to beginning again in the fall.

Thank you to my grandpa, Ken VanderMolen, and the Americal Division veterans for helping to make this possible with your scholarship! (Photographed with grandfather.)

Julia VanderMolen; Calvin College
Kenneth VanderMolen, grandfather;
182nd Inf.



I am incredibly grateful for the Americal scholarship I have received. As an aspiring engineer studying at Iowa State University, I am constantly reminded of how important my education is. This scholarship has made it possible for me to pursue my dreams and further my career. Thank you for your support.

Meredith Gibson; Iowa State University
Jack Leaverton, great-grandfather;
221st FA (RIP)



I would like to express my immense gratitude for being awarded with an Americal scholarship for a fourth year. My father, Dennis, and I both received

this scholarship with great pride. My time at the University of Washington has been greatly advanced by your support, and I will graduate this coming June. I will then enter industry as a marine engineer. My success as a student is in great debt to your four years of financial assistance. Thank you so much. (Photographed with father.)

Alan Orthmann; University of Washington
Dennis Orthmann, father;
174th AHC



Thank you so much for selecting me to receive an Americal Scholarship. I will be attending Bowling Green State University, majoring in Computer Science, starting August 2010. This scholarship will help considerably towards my tuition and is greatly appreciated. Thanks again for your generosity.

Parker Dean Bushey; Bowling Green State Univ.
David D. Bushey, father;
1/20th Inf.



Thank you, members of Americal, for the help you have provided to me for the second year in a row towards my continuing education. Not only to me, but towards our nation. Thank you very much for your attitude of continuing service. I wish the best for you all.

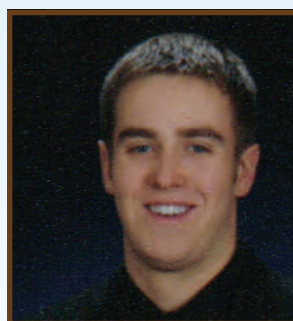
Aaron "Henry" Davis; Southwest Baptist Univ.
Larry F. Henry, grandfather;
6th Spt.



Your contributions toward my higher education will certainly help me in my quest for a degree at University of the Cumberlands in the fall. Your service and courage not only allow me to

live freely in the United States but has now given me the financial aid I need to succeed. Thank you so very much. (Photographed with father.)

Patrick Parten; Univ. of the Cumberlands
Steve Parten, father;
4/21st Inf.



I would like to thank you sincerely for the scholarship you have given me. Your generosity is very much appreciated by me and I am very thankful. The money is also very much appreciated by me and is going to be put towards my tuition.

Jake Ophaug; North Dakota State University
Theodore Ophaug, grandfather;
164th Inf. (RIP)



I cannot express enough gratitude in how much this award means to me. Not only is it beneficial to the furthering of my education, but the source it comes from is so much more important to me. To be recognized by such an esteemed group is a great honor and I am most appreciative. I am taking

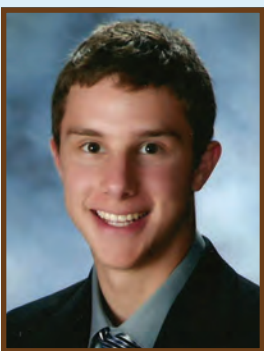
my first steps in college already with a sense of accomplishment and encouragement for my effort to come. Thank you for the scholarship and for supporting me in my college goals.

Jason Fulbrook; William and Mary College
Jim Fulbrook, father;
71st AHC



I would like to thank you very much for awarding me a scholarship. I appreciate your time and consideration in presenting me with this monetary award. The scholarship will definitely be a great help in financing my education at the University of Chicago. Thank you again!

Martha Fahlgren; University of Chicago
Thomas Zajac, grandfather;
132nd Inf. (RIP)



Thank you for awarding me the Americal Scholarship. This generous award will help me with my college tuition. I am ever mindful of the many sacrifices the members of America's armed forces make; being away from their families, in constant danger, and being stationed in foreign lands. Their sacrifices ensure freedom

and security for Americans. I am honored to be a recipient of the Americal Scholarship.

Thomas Herring; Worcester State College
Joseph Papa, grandfather;
182nd Inf. (RIP)

**The Journal Staff Congratulates
all of our ADVA recipients!**



I want you thank you and the Americal veterans for the award of my scholarship. I truly appreciate your consideration and generosity. This will definitely help me in my final year of college. I'm hoping to enter a law enforcement field upon graduation and will always be very thankful and extremely proud to be

associated with the organization as a result of my Dads' service with the division in Vietnam.

Sean E. Matthews; University of Connecticut
Dennis Mathews, father;
4/21st Inf



I want to thank the Americal veterans for the \$1000 scholarship I have received. I am so grateful because this scholarship will help to finance my dream of becoming a registered nurse. I also would like to thank all of the veterans that fought for our country, and especially my father for making this scholarship possible.

Brianna Waldron; Seattle University
JClayton Waldron, father;
1/1st Cav.



I am greatly appreciative for the scholarship that you have granted me. This scholarship will allow me to continue to achieve my goals and reach my dreams. Without your donation I would be faced with many difficult financial situations. Your association is a blessing. Thank you from me and from my grandfather.

Laine S. Reuter; University of Iowa
Rick Reuter, grandfather;
3/21st Inf.

I greatly appreciate and am thankful for the scholarship I received from your association. I am a senior at Indiana Wesleyan University and am pursuing journalism and/or radio broadcasting after graduation. Your generosity is a blessing and will go a long way in helping me pay for the cost of a private education. Thank you again!

Zac Hiser; Indiana Wesleyan University
William E. Hiser, father;
4/3rd Inf. (RIP)

Legacy Program Continues to Grow

By Roger Gilmore

Reunion Generates Funds for Americal Legacy Program

The Legacy Program had a very successful fundraising effort at the national reunion in October 2010. We conducted two fundraisers at the Lombard event. The second annual Legacy silent auction, in which sixty-five auction packages were displayed for bidding by reunion attendees, raised a total of \$2,090.00. In addition, reunion chairman and PNC David Taylor conducted a raffle to benefit the Legacy Program. His efforts raised a total of \$1,535.00. The raffle giveaways were three drawings for complimentary nights at the Westin Hotel during the reunion.

In addition, the Legacy Program received individual donations totaling \$1,350.00 during the reunion. The McCormick Foundation of Wheaton, IL gave a very generous donation in the amount of \$1,000.00. The McCormick Foundation oversees the First Division Museum at Cantigny and the Robert R. McCormick Museum. Colonel Robert R. McCormick served with the 1st Infantry Division in World War I and was the owner of the Chicago Tribune newspaper.

On behalf of the Americal Legacy Committee, I want to thank all reunion attendees who participated in the silent auction and those individual donors who made our fundraisers in Lombard a resounding success.

Fund Receives Bequest from Horton Estate

In September, the ADVA received an estate bequest from a recently deceased Americal Division World War II veteran and ADVA member. Member Elbert Horton, a World War II veteran who served with the 246th Field Artillery Battalion, passed away

in July 2010. Mr. Horton generously bequeathed a portion of his estate to the ADVA, requesting that his gift be dedicated to the preservation of the Americal Division's history in World War II.

During the Legacy Committee meeting in Lombard, committee members discussed Mr. Horton's gift and the disposition of the donated amount. Current plans are to allocate the Horton estate gift to both the monument construction at Fort Benning, Georgia and the Americal Museum displays in Worcester, Massachusetts. The Massachusetts museum contains displays of Americal Division memorabilia from the World War II theater, and future needs for maintenance and refurbishing will be funded out of the Americal Legacy Program treasury.

Americal Division 2011 Calendar Fundraising Project

Our major Legacy Program fundraiser for the year, the 2011 Americal Division calendar, was mailed to all ADVA members in early November. ADVA member and Creative Director Dutch DeGroot did a superb job on design and lay out for the second edition, and this one is even better than the inaugural edition which was published a year ago.

Individual member donations from the 2010 calendar to support the Legacy Program amounted to just over \$19,000.00. From the 2011 calendar, we hope to raise nearly \$30,000.00. This will put us right at our funding goal for the at Fort Benning monument. Please be generous when you mail your legacy donation in the envelope enclosed with the 2011 Americal Calendar. This will be the only direct request that will be made for the Legacy Fund for the entire year so please answer the call for your support. Send your donation regardless of how large or how small it may be. All contributions for this worthy memorial to Americal Division veterans are greatly appreciated.

Update on Monument Placement at Fort Benning, Georgia

The ADVA Legacy Committee has been advised our monument site is going to be relocated at the Fort Benning location. The proposed relocation is due to the size of our base design and environmental compliance associated with the size. The new location will be in a prime display area that will be easily reached on the Walk of Honor. I am traveling to Columbus, Georgia in early November to survey the new location with National Infantry Foundation staff personnel and ensure that the new location meets our expectations. I will provide more information on the revised site in the next issue of the Americal Journal.

Commemorative Americal Knife Still Available

Over two-thirds of the inventory of the Commemorative Americal Knife has been sold in the first year of availability. The Legacy Committee has decided to limit the production of this knife to a single edition. No more knives will be made when the initial supply is exhausted. If you have been waiting to purchase this special gift for yourself or for a buddy you need to make your purchase sooner rather than later. The supply is expected to last for just a short time longer. Send \$75 for each knife to Wayne Bryant, Product Sales Director

Dave Taylor receives \$1,000 check for Legacy Fund from the McCormick Foundation.





Close to four hundred Americal Veterans and their guests attended the ADVA 2010 National Reunion at the fabulous Westin Hotel, Lombard, Illinois, just a few miles from Chicago. Vets started signing in as early as Monday, October 4 for the reunion, which officially took place October 7-10. The reunion was blessed by exceptional weather with low eighty-degree temperatures and sunny skies. This year the 1st/1st Cavalry Squadron co-located their annual reunion with us as well.

We held a raffle drawing for ADVA members who reserved their hotel rooms prior to June 30, for room upgrades to suites. The winners of that raffle were, Roger Barney 1st/1st Cav, John Forshag, E Recon, 5th/46th, 198th LIB and Darryl "Tom" Smith, A Company, 4th/21st and B Company 1st /20th, 11th LIB. On Saturday we held a raffle to benefit the Legacy Fund, using the complimentary rooms we earned from the hotel for our room reservations. Three raffle winners each had three hotel nights paid for. Those winners were: Dennis Matthews (4th/21st, 11th LIB), James Tarver (Service Battery, 3rd/18th Field Artillery) and Jim Triplett (C Company, 1st/46th, 196th LIB).

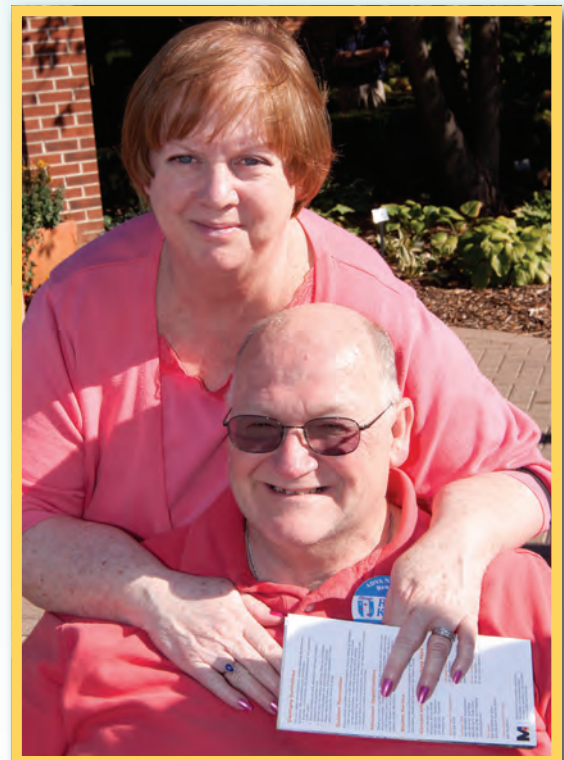
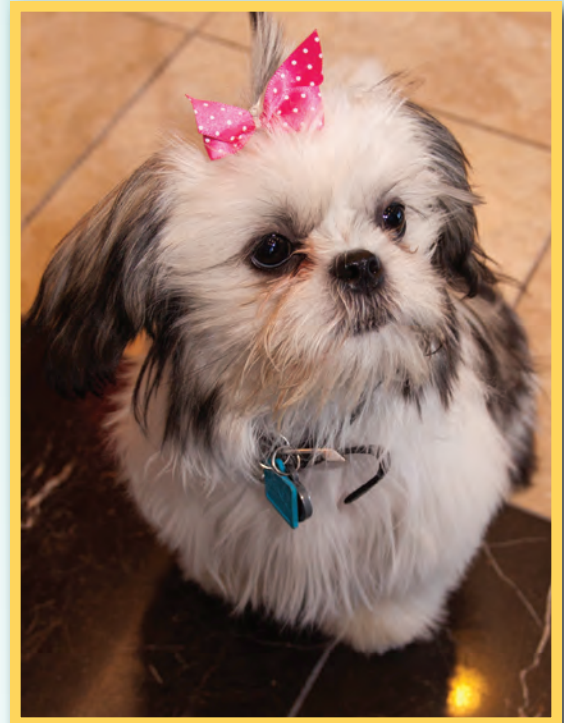
Vets and guests took a Chicago City tour on Thursday which included lunch at the Navy Pier. A Welcome Buffet Reception was held at the hotel on Thursday evening. Friday was marked by an exceptional day as we visited nearby Cantigny Park, which was once the summer residence of Chicago Tribune Publisher Robert McCormick. McCormick served with the 1st Infantry Division in World War I and renamed his estate after the battle of Cantigny, France, one of the most defining moments of his life. Americal vets visited the First Division Museum as well as McCormick's mansion. The dining facility at the Visitors Center was reserved exclusively for Americal guests who were treated to a great buffet lunch of hamburgers and brats.

At the end of our visit at Cantigny a short memorial service was held in front of the Visitors Center to honor Americal Vets who gave the ultimate sacrifice in war. Before the ceremony we were privileged to have the Executive Director of the Cantigny First Division Foundation, Dr. Paul H. Herbert, offer some remarks to our group and then, in a complete surprise, he presented us a check for \$1,000 to the Americal Legacy Fund.

The 1st/1st Cavalry Squadron was honored to have two special guests at the reunion. The first was Lieutenant General Richard Graves and his wife. General Graves was the 1st/1st Cavalry Squadron Commander from December 1969 to July 1970 and went on to have a distinguished career in the active Army. The second guest was the current 1st/1st Cavalry Command Sergeants Major, David V. McGuire – "Blackhawk 7". The 1st/1st Cavalry Squadron was recently reactivated to the active Army on September 16, 2010.

Saturday while the vets attended the ADVA annual meeting, spouses were treated to a shopping experience at the nearby Oakbrook Center, which began with a wine reception with canapés at the Mon Ami Gabi restaurant. The Saturday night banquet dinner included a guest speaker, Nancy Lynch, a former columnist with the Wilmington (Delaware) Morning News. During the peak years of the Vietnam War (May 1968- December 1972), Ms. Lynch wrote many columns related to the letters and photos she received from servicemen in Vietnam. Forty years after writing her column she wrote a book, Vietnam Mailbag: Voices From the War, 1968-1972, to give a new generation a fresh look at the first-person accounts of troops in the combat zone. Her speech was spell-binding and Nancy was on-hand in the hospitality room after the banquet to sell and autograph her very moving book. ADVA members who would like to order her book can get it on www.vietnammailbag.com.

Thanks to all who attended this year's national reunion! Next year we will meet in Colorado Springs from September 8-11, 2011. The site will be the Crowne Plaza Colorado Springs (Eight miles from the airport with free shuttle service and free parking). Highlights will include a tour of the US Air Force Academy and a chuck wagon supper and western music show at the Flying W Ranch. Mark your calendars now!









The Dreaded Knee Mortar

By Robert Cashner



TOP LEFT: Misnamed by the American GIs who opposed it in combat, the Japanese Type 89 knee mortar was actually a light grenade launcher fired from a position on the ground. Here, an American Marine demonstrates a preferred firing position for one of the weapons after its capture.

TOP RIGHT: A pair of Japanese soldiers fires a Type 89 grenade launcher in combat.

To help compensate for the lack of heavy weapons, the Imperial Japanese Army worked hard to develop large numbers of what were probably the best light infantrymen in the world at the time. Their creed stressed relentless offensive action seeking a quick decision and emphasizing spiritual factors including zealous dedication and fighting spirit. Night attacks were a true specialty, and their weaponry reflected their light and fast doctrine.

To offset their frequent lack of artillery, the Japanese augmented their firepower through the extensive use of mortars, the best and most cost-effective substitute for industry-intensive heavier artillery.

Technically, Japanese light “knee” mortars at first merely bridged the gap between hand grenades and true mortars and were more properly referred to as grenade dischargers. The weapon first developed was adopted in 1921, a 50mm grenade discharger, and it was an almost painfully simple smoothbore muzzleloader. Although it could fire signal and smoke rounds, this discharger was primarily used with the infantry’s standard 19-ounce Type 91 hand grenade, which could be lobbed to only about 75 yards maximum range. This discharger was known as the Model 10.

Japanese weapons used a year-based nomenclature that was often quite confusing to Westerners and requires some explanation. Initially, weapon model numbers were based on the year of the reign of the various emperors. For instance, the 6.5mm light machine gun was adopted in 1922, the 11th year of the Emperor Taisho era; thus it became the Model 11.

After the death of Emperor Taisho, the model numbers were calculated

Although Japan had achieved a major revamping of its industry and entered World War II with weapons, aircraft, and ships, in particular, that were often superior to those of the Allied forces, Japan’s manufacturing capacity still remained insufficient for the task at hand.

When it came to weapons production, the Imperial Japanese Army’s requirements often came in second to the needs of the Imperial Japanese Navy. The Army was an infantry-heavy organization that lacked much in the way of the modern heavy weaponry other armies enjoyed. Their antitank capabilities were extremely limited; artillery was often lacking and sometimes restricted to small, outmoded pieces; and its armored forces included obsolescent tanks that were greatly inferior to their opponents’ armor.

Actually misnamed, this Japanese light infantry weapon earned the respect of the American soldiers who encountered it.



from the last two digits of the year since the date of the founding of the Japanese Empire. Thus, when a new and improved 50mm knee mortar was adopted in 1929, it became the Model 89, with 1929 being the 2,589th anniversary of the Japanese Empire.

The Model 89 was by far the most prolific of the grenade dischargers and the weapon most commonly encountered by Allied Marines and soldiers throughout the various theaters of the Pacific War. Technically known as the Hachikyu Shiki Jutekidanto, or 89 Model Heavy Grenade Discharger, the new weapon featured a wide variety of improvements over the old Type 10 and had almost universally replaced the former weapon by 1941. To the frontline Japanese infantryman, the Type 89 was most often referred to as the Juteki.

Still a relatively simple weapon, the Type 89 consisted of a steel pipelike barrel with enough rifling to spin stabilize the new projectiles, a trigger housing, a range-adjusting assembly, and a small curved base plate. Designed to be braced against a log, tree trunk, or the ground, this odd-shaped base plate helped give the Type 89 its deceptive nickname.

For whatever reason, Allied soldiers dubbed the weapon the "knee mortar" and some even tried to fire the Type 89 with the base plate braced against the thigh. The 1943 U.S. Army manual on Japanese weapons reported that a Marine on Guadalcanal attempted to fire a knee mortar in such a fashion and the recoil had broken his thigh bone. Although it had a barrel length of only 10 inches and was just two feet long overall, the Type 89 still weighed a rather hefty 10 and a quarter pounds. Although the Type 89 was fully

capable of firing the Type 91 infantry hand grenade used in the Type 10 grenade discharger, it was designed for the new 1-pound, 12-ounce Type 89 50mm high-explosive shell. Smoke, incendiary, practice and flare projectiles were also available.

This new Type 89 shell engaged the mortar barrel's rifling for increased stability and accuracy and boasted a greatly improved maximum range of 770 yards. The shell consisted of a point detonating fuse, a grenade body filled with about one-third of a pound of high explosive, and a propellant assembly that screwed onto the bottom of the grenade body prior to firing.

To fire, the gunner removed the fuse's safety pin and dropped the bomb tail first down the muzzle of the knee mortar. A pull on the leather lanyard attached to the trigger then fired the weapon. The firing pin struck a percussion cap primer that fired the propelling charge, which also caused a copper driving band on the charge body to push out and engage the rifling of the barrel. The force of discharge also set back and armed the fuse in the nose projectile and recoiled the mainspring inside the mortar.

The weapons were almost always fired at 45 degrees elevation. Sighting capability, as such, consisted of only a line marked on the barrel itself, although some models captured by the Americans on Attu Island in the Aleutians also featured a small bubble level.

Adjusted by a knob connected to a worm screw on the bottom of the barrel, the firing pin assembly could be moved up or down to increase or decrease range. Graduated range scales for the two main types of projectiles were etched onto the stem of the tube that housed the trigger assembly. The Type 89 shell could be adjusted to ranges of 393 to 2,132 feet. This method of adjustment allowed the mortar man to change range while still holding the weapon in place to fire through small overhead holes in the jungle canopy.

Despite these relatively crude controls, a soldier could quickly and easily be trained to fire the Type 89 knee mortar with impressive accuracy. While it could be fired by one man, a knee mortar with a three-man crew could maintain an effective rate of fire of 25 rounds per minute.

Being triggered rather than drop fired, the knee mortar could also be

braced against a tree trunk and fired almost horizontally. It was often used in such a way to shoot through the firing slits of bunkers. Some theorize that using the Type 89 in this fashion with a dedicated antitank round could have proven to be an effective tank killer, but there is no reason to believe it would have been any more effective or ineffective than the similar caliber rifle grenades fielded by various armies in World War II.

The fragmentation rounds did their work well enough. Postwar U.S. Army medical studies concluded that approximately half of all Allied battle casualties were caused by mortars, and of those roughly 80 percent came from knee mortars. Technically, the Type 89 shells had too much explosive and not enough metal, producing a lesser amount of relatively small shrapnel much more likely to wound than kill. This was not any consolation to men hit by these flying shards of steel.

Probably the main reason for the knee mortar's reputation for deadly effectiveness among Allied soldiers resulted from the sheer numbers of the weapon employed in the field. Every Japanese rifle platoon consisted of three squads of riflemen and a fourth grenade discharger squad fielding three or four knee mortars. A single Japanese rifle company could field as many as 12 grenade dischargers. Conversely, the standard American infantry rifle company had only three 60mm mortars in a separate weapons platoon.

Allied soldiers who met the knee mortar in combat were universally impressed by it and hated being on the receiving end of it. In the aftermath of the Battle of Guadalcanal, Lt. Col. Merritt "Red Mike" Edson, leader of the famous Marine Raiders, critically evaluated the knee mortar and insisted American forces badly needed an equivalent. He listed the following reasons:

- "1. It is a one man load.**
- 2. A man can carry ten rounds on his person besides his weapon.**
- 3. It has a high rate of fire.**
- 4. It gives to the platoon commander a weapon of this type which is immediately available to him.**
- 5. This mortar uses the Jap all-purpose hand grenade...."**



UPPER LEFT: In the heat of battle, a Japanese soldier pulls the lanyard to fire a Type 89 grenade launcher.

LEFT: A close-up view of the Type 89 grenade launcher reveals its simple, rather primitive construction.

BOTTOM: An American soldier holds a captured Japanese Type 89 grenade launcher. Firing from such a position, however, often resulted in serious injury.

being manufactured in Austria, Chile, Spain, Turkey, South Africa, and elsewhere. These new, lightweight 60mm mortars are designed for much the same purpose as the venerable Japanese Type 89. They are fired by hand without a bipod, make use of simple sights, and are specifically intended to give small groups of light infantry or special forces immediate indirect fire of their own. The knee mortar itself may be gone, but the concepts it pioneered live on today.

Author Robert Cashner resides in Philipsburg, Montana. He has previously written for WWII History on the Boys Anti-Tank Rifle.

Reprinted with permission from author Robert Cashner (Philipsburg, Montana) and WWII History magazine, October, 2010 (Sovereign Media Company, Inc. Herndon, Virginia).

A Marine Corps legend, then-Lt. Col. Lewis M. "Chesty" Puller seconded Edson's opinion. "I consider it imperative that the Army and Marines be equipped with knee mortars and only carry one type grenade." Army Sergeant C.W. Arrowood completely agreed: "The Jap knee mortar gives us hell. They come in fast, thick, and accurate. Can't we have one?"

The answer to Sergeant Arrowood's question was a resounding no. United States forces soldiered on with the little loved rifle grenade until the advent of the M79 40mm grenade launcher during the early stages of the Vietnam War.

British and Commonwealth forces came close to having a knee mortar of their own with the excellent Ordnance ML two-inch mortar. A 51mm weapon, it too was fired with no bipod and a lanyard trigger. It was so effective that it continued to equip troops around the world for decades after World War II. An updated version, the L9A1 51mm mortar, is in use today. The two-inch mortar, however, was issued only at the rate of one per platoon.

Today, the visage of the knee mortar lives on in the form of the "commando mortar," models of which are currently



Happy Birthday, Daddy

By JoAnn Webb Williams

My daddy is Joseph (Joe) N. Webb of Florence, SC. For his 84th birthday my daughter, Jill Anderson, baked a cake in the form of an Americal Veteran hat. He was delighted to see it.

I was my parents' first child and a very young baby when Daddy, still a teenager, went to war. He was drafted on his 18th birthday, September 14, 1944, and was sent to the Philippines. He was a corporal and served as a company clerk with the 182nd Infantry Regt.

After the bomb was dropped he was sent to Japan where he was assigned to IX Corps and worked for the Inspector General (IG). He worked as a supply clerk and kept inventory of supplies and equipment such as rifles, uniforms, and shoes. He was in an office with four colonels, a major, and several captains. He was promoted to sergeant and helped train replacements so that others could go home with their units. We have a photo of him that was taken by a friend in 1945.

Daddy was discharged from the Army in September 1946. I was two years old when he returned home from the war. I knew him by his photos and when I first saw him I called him "My Daddy Joe". He told me I was in a chicken yard with my grandmother gathering eggs and that's how I greeted him. That is his first memory of getting home and seeing me for the first time since he left.

Several times lately Daddy has told me that when he came home from Japan in WW11 he could not vote. The reason- he was too young to vote! His point was that he was old enough to fight in a war but not old enough to vote in an election.

My Daddy is very proud of his service with the Americal Division. And we are all very proud of him.

The Americal Division was slated for the invasion of Japan in the late summer of 1945. The surrender of Japan after the dropping of the atomic bombs made the planned invasion unnecessary. Americal Division troops were part of the occupation force in Japan in September and October 1945. Beginning in November 1945 units of the Americal Division were shipped home one-by-one and inactivated. By Christmas 1945 the entire division was dissolved. But "young" Americal Division soldiers such as Joe Webb remained in Japan and received duties with units such as IX Corps, 1st Cavalry Division, 25th Infantry Division, and others. -Editor-



Off To War

By Cosmo A. Albano
(Master Sergeant –
57th Engineer Battalion)

(WWII Historian's Note: The article which follows are notes from the diary of Cosmo "Al" Albano, describing life on the SS Argentina while sailing under Task Force 6814 to Australia. His comments provide a rare insight into the travails of Americal soldiers sailing to war. This document and accompanying photos was provided by Joe Neville, stepson of Albano. We are grateful for his contribution. Cosmo Albano passed away in January 2002 but he remains the author of these reflections.)

During WWII I served with the 57th Engineer Battalion in the Americal Division, from March 1941 to September 1945. The following is a copy of my private notes made during my journey from Boston to Australia. It shows a different side of the life of a soldier as compared to all the action that followed.

1942

January 19 (4:35PM) With the sun shining and a fairly warm breeze blowing off the parade field the shrill order was given to begin our march, leaving Camp Edwards, Mass. We headed for the train depot, two and one half miles away. Upon arriving at the station it was obvious that we each had carried enough to load a pack mule. We climbed aboard the train and set off in a southwesterly direction with only the moon and stars as witnesses. We were all nervous at this point – not knowing what would be next.

January 20 Arrived in Brooklyn at 2:27AM. The next two hours were spent in receiving orders and awaiting their cancellation, marching, resting, cursing, etc. I could not help thinking that the best thing in the world would be to be anywhere else imaginable.

4:30AM – We climbed aboard the SS Argentina at Pier 32, Brooklyn, NY. Trudged in line up to A Deck (top), found on arrival it was not the right place and we needed to go down to B Deck, Starboard side. There we were directed to bed down for the night. The room was filled with a maze of bunks



that looked, almost at first sight, like the pigeon holes of a rural post office. Here we were told to deposit our individual equipment and "get some rest." After unloading the equipment we found that it completely filled the bunks and that it was necessary to pile it on the floor again if we were to lie down. Others found it more restful to leave the stuff on the bunk and sleep on the floor. Two hours later we were awakened and called to breakfast.

After going down, down, DOWN to the kitchen we found that a mess line had already formed. It was necessary to follow the line back through the corridor to the other end of the ship, down to the hole, through a winding staircase and back up to B Deck, where we had started. After hours of patient waiting we arrived at the kitchen again and we were served a delightful breakfast and lunch, although we did not realize it at the time. We were now introduced to a two-meal-a-day diet.

January 23 Set sail-they have not told us where we are going.

January 24 Spent day looking around the ship – it is big.

January 25 Because I am a sergeant and supposed to keep the records and make up the payroll I have been assigned to the "Headquarters Office" in a former woman's bathroom. You can use your own imagination on this

one.

January 26 Seasick all day – seems as if we are going south, my stomach first.

January 27 Did a little work and became seasick again – back to bed. Not much to do anyway.

January 28-29-30 Not so much sick as too weak to do much. Great way to fight a war.

January 31 Sighted land. Went through the Panama Canal – three guesses where we are going. Replenished water supplies and took on some other supplies at Balboa. Ship got stuck in mud and we had to wait for high tide to get going again.

February 1 In the Pacific. Uncle Sam should have provided us with some recreation on this voyage. It may have slipped his mind, being so involved in the business of figuring out just how he was to squeeze 300 men into a space provided for 30.

Bed time really becomes a dreaded ordeal. Because of the total blackout every night at 5:15PM, our windows are clamped tight. With approx. 300 men sleeping one foot above the other and piled six high in an area that would ordinarily accommodate 30 you can imagine what the condition of the air is, not to mention the intensity of the body heat. For the past few days I've been trying to get some sleep on the open deck – Promenade Deck. All we now have to do is accustom ourselves to this methodical system of disagreeable living. One can not imagine the bedlam that exists on a troop transport like this. If you are not knocked down and trampled on by the men it is most certain that the rocky and bumpy boat will take care of you.

February 3 Last two days I was down with lazy feeling and did not have enough energy to attempt making an entry. Anyway, it seems that this voyage is going to be everlasting. Rumor has it we are headed to the Philippines.

Today things really became messed up. You would not believe the time it took for us to become situated in our quarters. We did it by cramming, tucking, nailing and fastening our equipment to make room enough to get through the aisle for an emergency abandon-ship. Now the order has come to swap quarters with the infantry. This gives us several days of shoving, swearing, nailing, lying and hiding equipment all over again. During

all this maneuvering I've already lost my overcoat, web belt, bayonet, canteen bottle, OD shirt, overseas hat, underwear (4) and all my socks.

The farther we go the worse our "office" turns out to be. It is bad enough to have the battalion headquarters in the ladies room but now the heat reaches up to 95 degrees during the day. The first few days we found it convenient to shed our shoes and shirts. Now everyone has become a trifle bolder and we now work at our typewriters and go about in our underwear.

February 6 This morning the air, the beautiful view and the convoying Light Cruisers and Destroyers seem to take me back to the Boston Navy Yard. Everywhere you happen to glance there are ships. Today, being Friday our breakfast menu included some awful looking stewed fish, boiled potato, cereal (blue oatmeal), bread, jam and coffee. Not being accustomed to such a hearty breakfast at this time of day I confine myself to the delicious jam and coffee.

The Commanding Officer has deemed it necessary to ration our drinking water from now on. From now on it will be turned on for two hours three times each day.

2:00PM and the water is turned on. I don't know what happened to the supply but it has taken on a rancid, fishy taste. Once it is down and after you jump around for a while your thirst is quenched and you are none the worse for drinking it. Rumors are that we may sight land tomorrow and take on a fresh supply of drinking water and food stuffs.

February 8 Sighted land yesterday and now in port but I am not sure just where we are. We have taken on the much needed water and food stuff. At first we thought there might be a possibility of going ashore for a short while. This thought was immediately abolished when guards were stationed at every exit of the boat and one couldn't sneak off if he wanted to. Once the supplies were loaded we were on the way again.

February 10 This morning had a heavenly start, with a beautiful calm sea and an exceptionally fine breakfast for all. Then it was marred by a bulletin from headquarters stating that a long voyage lay ahead, making it more necessary to become more stringent

in the rationing of fresh water. Furthermore we should appreciate that the food would also be rationed more sparingly in the future in anticipation of conserving it to last for the voyage ahead. Now water is accessible only one hour, three times a day and, for food, tonight's supper will tell.

February 12 Today something new has been added. I now found my field jacket has been stolen from my bunk. I have been using it as a pillow, so now I'll simply have to do without this luxury. If I ever catch anyone prowling around my worldly goods I think I'll kill the lousy crook.

Last night's meal was putrid. The couple of mouthfuls that I did venture to eat wouldn't even wash down with the supposedly tea we had. I think supper was supposed to be a mutton stew or some such equivalent.

The air consists of humid stagnancy and one can hardly remain in quarters without gasping for air. This, plus the lack of water, rotten food, lack of sleep, etc. not to mention that the Government has withheld our pay for the past three months has made everyone very hard to get along with.

The food situation has gotten to some of the fellows. Father Brock, our Chaplain on board, asked us to pray for the repose of the soul for a brother soldier who was shot trying to get some extra food from the ships stores. People will do anything when they are in desperation for want of food. He was shot to death by a non-commissioned officer on guard at the food storage area. God only knows what they'd do to a man caught snitching water after being shut off. Another death occurred through an accident when one of the nosier soldiers ventured below to find out what the engine room was all about. The result was that he was crushed to death by the machinery. Quickly a burial is held by saying a prayer or two and the body is nicely wrapped in a piece of canvas and tossed overboard with nonetheless grief attached.

February 13 Friday – The way things have been going, every day could be Friday the 13th! Our Finance Officer convinced us that approximately 24 hours after reaching our destination each and every soldier would receive \$10.00 and probably be given a couple days to venture around whatever country we're in, merely to become accustomed to the value of their

money. Isn't it wonderful. We can look forward to a meal of our liking, even though it may cost us the entire \$10. It will be worth it.

Yesterday I started a good book titled "Stars of the Sea." It is rather spicy, being a narrative concerning the Revolutionary War. Rather a coincident, the main characters of the story owned a number of merchant vessels leaving Boston and traveling the same route we are on now. Reading it seems to be an account of our own lives. The one exception is that we have not yet met any type girls that seemed to have been running rampant in those days. Our days are yet to come and who can predict that we won't fall victims of such girls when we finally reach land. One can dream can't he? In exactly six more days we shall have been sailing on this tub precisely one whole month.

Yesterday we were very fortunate to attend a noncoms meeting where an officer gave a very interesting talk. He spoke on mannerisms, aptitude and general conditions and the ways of Japanese soldiers. From the way he talked it won't be any joke to lick the Japanese because of their extensive training as soldiers. Still, with their almost obsolete and inferior equipment in comparison to ours, in time we should give them the trashing of their yellow bellied lives. He said that we can expect to be sipping tea in Tokyo during the Cherry Blossom time. Our G-4 should know what he is talking about since he spent eight months as a Captain in the Japanese Army and lived in Japanese for several years. He assured us that we would enjoy ourselves very much in Tokyo. The thoughts of it are great (Postscript – Boy was he wrong!).

February 15 Another Sunday of sailing aboard this luxury vessel bound for it seems nowhere. Today more than any other day I have spent aboard I seem to have taken on a homesick and yearning for the little things in the past, not to mention having one or two glasses of Ballantine Ale.

Since misery loves company, yesterday shall be remembered in that another convoy, about the size of ours, joined us out here in mid-ocean. I imagine they are bound for the same place that we are. From their appearance and the forlorn look in the eyes of the men on the other ships, they must have met

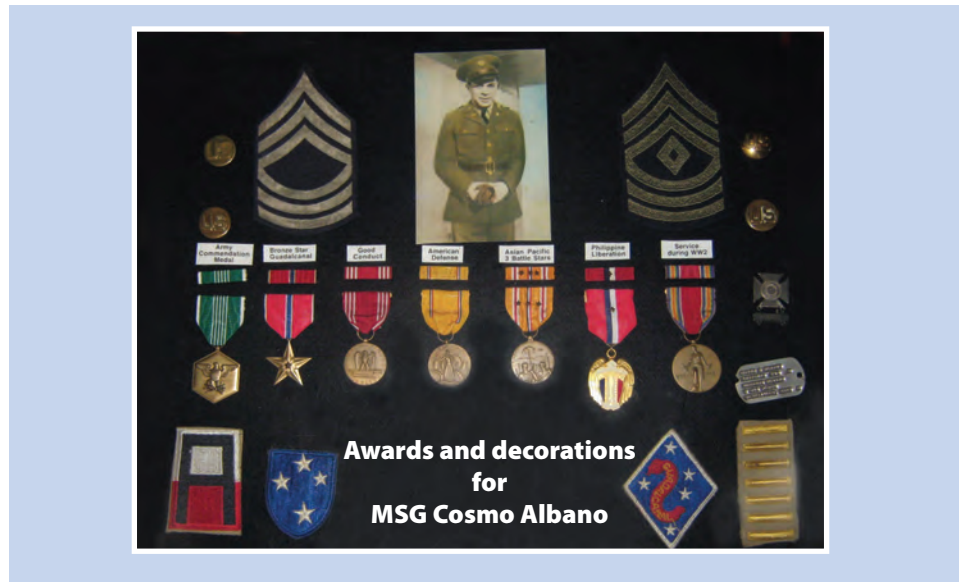
with the same deprivations to date. If they contemplate doing what I as one individual intend to do during our shore leave, then a hot time can be expected.

February 17 Today rumors start to spread about our destination being Australia. I can hardly wait to get on dry land again after a month's trial aboard this good old bounding and reeling main. As soon as I get my \$10 and leave I expect to patronize the first drug store or barroom, whichever is first. I plan to drink anything that is cold and drink until I have had more than my share and the money runs out.

February 18 Today began with activity galore. In the early morning I happened to witness a good fist fight. Later all of our navy escort sped by us and started throwing depth charges all over an area of about one half mile. Apparently one of the Destroyers must have detected a Sub in the midst of our convoy. Probably it was lying in wait to get a good shot at us. The depth charges shoot the daylights out of our boat, being the lead ship since it is the largest and fastest. I don't know yet of they destroyed the Sub but the rumor all over the ship is that they did. Some fellows say they saw an area of oil on the surface.

This morning, as I live and breathe, should be commemorated for the unusually good breakfast. Wonderful fried ham, grapefruit, cereal with MILK, eggs and marmalade. Of course it would not be military if something was not a stir to mar something like this. It so happens that today is set aside as FAST DAY, "Ash Wed". We didn't dare even have it placed on our trays as Father Brock happened to be poking around our Mess hall to find out who the unholy ones are on this crate.

February 21 Having crossed the International Dateline yesterday, today will somehow have to be the tomorrow we gave thought to yesterday. It's wonderful the way things are happening on this boat. We went to bed last night, Thursday, and woke up to find Friday had passed into oblivion during our sleep. The loss of this one day, the 20th is somewhat of a kick to the Government in that they will have to pay us for a day that didn't exist. As it is now I've only had about 16 more days before my one year of continuous service expires. From then on the Government will have to pay me an additional \$10 pr month on top



of the \$54 I'm already receiving. Who said you'd never get rich in the Army!

Official now. We are heading for the distant shores of Australia where Kangaroos are sights for sore eyes. We should reach our destination sometime the latter part of next week.

February 23 I can't say this is a good morning. We are now in the midst of an awful storm in the middle of the Tasmanian Sea. The bow of our ship, as large as it is, seems to submerge below the waves with the precision of a clock beat. With the heavy fog coming and the rain I believe we're in for a good tossing around. I don't feel so good, with all this rocking and reeling. I think I may need to make a dash for the nearest deck soon.

Our CO requested everyone participate in a dress rehearsal this morning in preparation for disembarking within a couple of days. This, I imagine, is to check on each individuals clothing and equipment. This might be a good time for me to make my own check for my lost equipment. "We want to make a good impression and to look our finest when parading through the main cities of Australia." This means washing our leggings, shirts, trousers, cartridge belts, etc. I don't know how these things will come out being washed in cold salt water. I imagine it will wash them to some extent, considering they have had a full month's wear and tear.

February 24 Storm has not subsided any this morning and I'm almost on the verge of collapse. Today it didn't pay to get up. Everyone seems to be crying on with the most disagreeable attitude.

You can just imagine what the response is when somebody is asked to replace someone who is too seasick to work. One can't even find solace in his own bunk as someone above or below is either groaning or moving from side to side, shaking the whole tier of bunks. I can't think straight today. I think I'll wander off to one of the decks and remain for the rest of the day wherever I happen to fall.

February 26 This morning, after a good Rip Van Winkle sleep, we were awakened by some early birds who spread the news that land was sighted. Australia at last. I can hardly wait to get my feet on solid ground again. I bet we land on some well known city and have to march 10 to 15 miles out of the city limits. At least we are all looking forward to a good walk for a change.

(WWII Historian Note: After returning from the war in September 1945 Cosmo Albano worked for the Veterans Administration until he retired at age 66. As noted above he passed away in 2002. WWII was the worlds last "Total War" There were six Albano brothers and they all served in WWII. Andy was in the Army with Eisenhower as he could speak English, Italian, French and Dutch; Dan joined the Marines and was in the South Pacific; Angie drove a truck for the Army over the Burma Road; Albert was with the Army Air Force in Florida repairing planes. And his youngest brother, Arthur, joined the 57th Engineer battalion, Americal Division toward the end of the war. He was the last of the brothers to answer the final roll call on December 7, 2008).

Memories of Panama

By Benny Gamino

I enjoyed reading the story about the 23rd Infantry Division in Panama and Puerto Rico that was featured in the April-May-June 2010 edition of the Americal Journal. I would like to tell about my time with this unit.

In March 1955 I finished engineer training at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO. From there I went by troop train to Ft. Kilmer, NJ. I then received orders to go to Puerto Rico and begin an assignment with the 65th Infantry Regiment. I was in Headquarters Company, Pioneer and Armament (P and A) platoon. We were at Camp Losey.

There was a period of a couple of weeks where we were on standby to go to Korea because there was a belief that the war over there was going to start up again. After a short time things got straightened out a little in Korea and we were no longer on standby.

In December 1955 the 65th Infantry was in the process of being deactivated. Most of our company with over a year left in the service was sent to Panama on a troop ship. In January 1956 I was assigned to the 518th Engineer Company at Ft. Clayton, Canal Zone. After a few months our company was transferred to Ft. Kobbe, Canal Zone.

While I was with the 518th Engineers we did a lot of training with different units that came to Panama for jungle training. At one time we trained with the 82nd Airborne Division.

I recall that there were a lot of snakes in Panama. We killed one once and it took nine men standing side-by-side to hold it up. We also had a monkey and we built a cage for it. There was only one man in our company that was able to get along with that monkey. The monkey bit one soldier and that was the end of the monkey.

Once there was a situation near Ft. Kobbe that we could hear and see but have nothing to do with. One Panamanian political party tried to overthrow another one. The battle lasted three days. We could see flashes and hear explosions. We were on alert but we were not allowed to leave the fort.

Another time my company received a hazardous work detail. We did not know what it was until we arrived at the location. When we got there we saw three or four small hills covered with trees and other vegetation. We soon found that the small hills were actually ammunition bunkers.

The ammunition had been stored there since World War II. We were told that some of the ammo was unstable. Trucks backed up to the bunkers and we carefully loaded them with the ammo. The work lasted about three days. We were never told where the ammo was being taken or what eventually happened to it.

One night my company had an exercise to build a pontoon bridge across a river. We were teaching a South Korean army unit how to build bridges. A South Korean soldier was standing close to me when one of our officers came over to talk with him. The American officer called the Korean "General". I had no idea that I was standing next to a general.

On New Year's Eve 1956 a couple of guys and I were standing outside a bar in Panama City. A taxi pulled up near us and a Panamanian National Guard soldier and the taxi driver jumped out and said that we were under arrest for



throwing something at the taxi driver. This was not true. They put us in the taxi and told us that if they did not get ten dollars from each of us they would take us to jail. We each paid them ten dollars each and they let us out of the taxi. I still wonder how many times they pulled that on U.S. Soldiers that night.

President Eisenhower came to Panama in 1956 or 1957 for a conference North, Central, and South American countries. We were in the jungle prior to his arrival. The platoon I was in was brought back to Panama City to secure a cemetery that the President was scheduled to visit. He was going to the cemetery to lay a wreath at the grave site of a former leader of Panama.

As part of my duties to help secure the cemetery I crawled on my knees and probed the ground with my bayonet to see if anything harmful had been buried. The local citizens were stopped at the gate of the cemetery and their flowers were searched. Then they were escorted into the cemetery so they could visit grave sites. Once the cemetery was secured we were sent back to our company in the jungle.

There was a very sad event that happened when we were leaving the jungle after one of our training exercises. One of our trucks carried a water tank in the bed of the truck. For some reason the tank moved in the bed of the truck which caused the truck to go down the side of a mountain. The truck driver was injured very badly. The assistant driver was killed. The driver was transported back to a hospital in the United States.

I was very honored to be part of the Honor Guard at the memorial service for our comrade that was killed in the accident. There was a service for him on post. Two of his buddies escorted his body back to his home area in Hawaii. I always think of those two men in that tragic accident.

In September 1957 I left Panama by troopship with stops in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Our sea journey ended when we docked in New York. We then flew from New York to Oakland, CA and the Oakland Army Terminal. I was discharged about a week later.

We were lucky not to be in a war during my time in Panama. It was a good tour and a very interesting time. The 518th Engineer Company consisted of some very good officers and soldiers.

Mr. Benny Gamino is a member of the Americal Division Veterans Association. He resides in Los Banos, CA. The 23rd Infantry Division was activated in 1954-1956 and assumed lineage, traditions, and heraldry of the Americal Division of World War II.

Surviving the Odds Vietnam Pilot Navigated Deadly Skies

Darryl James can say he survived the odds. An officer and a helicopter pilot, he served a one-year tour of duty in Vietnam from September 1968-69.

"I was one of 10,000* helicopter pilots in Vietnam," he said one afternoon in his office at H.L. Brown where he works as geoscience manager. "One-fourth of all the casualties in Vietnam were officers**, and of that number one-fourth were helicopter pilots. Half of all the helicopter pilots either crashed or were shot down." Add one other statistic to that: James also was one of the few pilots to have a master's degree.

He grew up in Sayreville, N.J., and at Rutgers University he joined the ROTC "because it interested me." After obtaining a bachelor's degree in geology, he was given a two-year deferment to stay in college and work on the master's degree. During college, he volunteered for the Army flight program and earned a private pilot license.

After graduating in 1967 with his master's degree, James entered the Army and eventually was assigned to flight school.

"I wanted to go into fixed wing but the Army needed helicopter pilots," he explained. The basic helicopter training school was located in Mineral Wells, and the assignment gave James his first taste of Texas and Mexican food. Advanced helicopter training was at Fort Rucker in Alabama.

Then came orders to head to Chu Lai, Vietnam, with Americal Division Artillery Air.

"I had three days of orientation flying a Scout helicopter, which is a single-pilot aircraft," he said. "Most helicopter pilots went over there and flew as co-pilot in a Huey for four months before being allowed to become aircraft commander. On my fourth day, I was sent solo on a combat mission in the small scout helicopter."

Soon afterward, his unit was sent Loach helicopters, which James compared to a Corvette.

"It was fast and maneuverable with a jet-turbine engine, six radios and good armor plating all around the seats," James remembered. Pilots wore a fireproof flight suit, gloves and a helmet.

The missions were varied and included convoy cover, aerial reconnaissance, transporting key personnel to the battle field, and supporting the South Vietnamese army and the Marines in Da Nang.

"We would take a long range recon patrol out to an obscure location and drop them at one point, then go back later and pick them up at another point. These men were quiet, heavily armed and dressed in black."

James saw his share of combat missions. By the time he returned to the States, he had received 17 Air Medals, which equated to 25 combat missions for each medal.

He learned a different style of survival flying.



"Three minutes after taking off, we would be in dangerous territory," he recalled. "From 15 feet to 1500 feet was called a helicopter's Dead Man's Zone because we could be easily hit by small arms fire. We either flew above 1,500 feet or at 110 knots just 10 feet off the ground, which was low leveling."

When landing in the field, helicopter pilots employed the "corkscrew" landing in which they would literally take the aircraft around and around while spiraling downward keeping the aircraft as close into the safe area as possible.

James can't forget the time he flew a lieutenant colonel and a sergeant major out to a battlefield. The colonel's firebase had lost 22 men that night. When the helicopter drew close to the site, James received "check-fire" from the howitzer battery to land. But as the aircraft was easing down, machine gun fire went screaming out his right door. With the Loach flaring to land, vulnerable at 50 feet in the air, a mortar hit the landing pad and killed two warrant officers James was scheduled to pick up.

"I quickly aborted landing, climbed madly, and told the lieutenant colonel we shouldn't land. He said 'We have to. Those are my men down there, dying.'"

As the helicopter eased back down to the pad, the two officers got out of the door and stood on the skids on each side while hanging onto the door frame "like John Wayne," said James. "The helicopter bounced once on the pad, and the two men jumped off the skids onto the ground."



Light Observation Helicopter (LOH) known as a Loach on landing pad in Vietnam.



Darryl James (L) and Connor Dotson (R) flew with the same Americal unit in Vietnam.

During a pilot's last month of service in Vietnam, he would usually draw the easy assignments: post exchange (PX) runs, ferrying government officials, or taking the Doughnut Dollies (young women in the Red Cross) to various locations.

It was during James' last few days in Vietnam that he encountered one of his most harrowing experiences involving a new major who had little flying time.

"We needed to get a new computer out to one of the firebases where fighting was going on and it was nearly dark," says James. No pilots were available, except CPT James and the Major. "He wouldn't go," James recalled.

Helicopter pilots rarely flew at night because of the mountainous terrain and inherent danger landing in the darkness. If James' unit had to fly at night it was policy to have two pilots. James had to go without a second pilot. His crew chief volunteered. As they approached the dark firebase, James and his crew chief could see the howitzers firing below. Given a "check-fire" to land, the helicopter corkscrewed down and softly eased onto the sandbag landing pad. The computer was grabbed out of the helicopter, the non-working unit thrown in, and the helicopter took off. At 200 feet, all six 105-howitzers fired directly below them, the brilliant flashes from the guns blinding James.

"All the way home, folks on the radios said, 'Oops, sorry. That was a screw up. Are you OK?'" James recalled.

He headed home that September and served on the colonel's staff at Fort Wolters at Mineral Wells. Although his military time was coming to a close, James was almost sidetracked into the astronaut program. His credentials fit all three requirements.

"They wanted a company grade officer," he said, "someone who was rotary-wing qualified, and someone who had a master's degree in math or a basic science, like geology."

He applied and waited. Meanwhile, Exxon offered James a job as a petroleum geologist at New Orleans. Rather than re-enlist and keep waiting on the astronaut program, James opted for the job. He was transferred to Midland for

two years and then Stavanger, Norway, before returning to Midland. He later went to work for Southland Royalty Company as the district geological supervisor and then as exploration manager. When the company was acquired by Meridian Oil (later Burlington Resources) James was offered a job transfer to Houston. His family preferred staying in Midland, and the former helicopter pilot remained grounded as an independent geologist/engineering petroleum consultant until taking his position as geoscience manager with HL. Brown in early 2010.

"Serving in the Army gave me leadership qualities and made me confident in myself," James said in looking back on those experiences. "Flying alone in a small scout helicopter was frightening for a pilot fresh out of flight school. Our unit relied on the counsel of our experienced pilots to survive. With their advice, and the Army's training, and perhaps some luck, we learned to fly and live through this experience.

"My year in Vietnam was memorable. That year, I developed a confidence and trust in myself that steered me successfully through life. There is nothing like the camaraderie and friendships made in the military service," James said.

"These men in my unit have remained my friends and are like my own brothers."

Story by Lana Cunningham. Originally published in PB Oil & Gas Magazine by the Permian Basin Petroleum Association in May 2010. Reprinted with permission.

Editor's notes and corrections: Darryl James currently resides in Midland, TX. *It is estimated that 40,000 helicopter pilots served in Vietnam. **The number of officers killed in Vietnam was approximately one out of seven deaths.

Destination Task Force Oregon Chu Lai (1967)

Photos by Peter Bramble

Part Two

Peter Bramble went to Vietnam in August 1966 and served in a signal unit in Nha Trang. In April 1967 he was transferred to Chu Lai to serve with G2, Task Force Oregon (TFO) headquarters. TFO was the largest task force in Vietnam. It consisted of five brigades to include the 11th LIB, 196th LIB, and 198th LIB. These three brigades formed the Americal Division when it was activated in October 1967. The final part of this series of photographs will appear in the next edition of the Americal Journal. -Editor-



Task Force Oregon (TFO) barracks at Chu Lai



TFO troops in Saigon waiting to move to Chu Lai



Captured NVA ChiCom Grenade

Supply depot at Chu Lai





Watchtower overlooking South China Sea at Chu Lai



Chu Lai beach defenses



Signpost at Chu Lai USO club



Binh Minh's store and laundry

A4 Skyhawks at Chu Lai airbase



Vietnam Firepower - Old and New

Photos submitted by Glen C. Davis

Text by Gary L. Noller

The weapons and tactics used in the Vietnam War were often the same as those used in World War II and the Korean War. But the M-16 rifle, M-60 machine gun, and the innovative use of helicopters easily distinguish the battlefields of Vietnam from the previous wars.

Much of the artillery used in Vietnam was identical to the earlier eras. The arsenal included 90mm, 105mm, 155mm, and 8-inch guns. Mortars used in Vietnam were 60mm, 80mm, and 4.2 inch. The .50 cal and .30 cal machine guns were still utilized on vehicles and in fixed locations.

The M-60 tank came out after World War II and saw limited action in Vietnam. It shared the battlefield with M-551 Sheridan tanks, armored personnel carriers (APCs), and tracked scout vehicles.

Infantrymen in Vietnam were equipped with the M-16 rifle, M-79 grenade launcher, M-60 "Pig" machine gun, and the M-26 fragmentation grenade. Infantrymen were often inserted into the midst of action by helicopter combat assault with additional firepower from helicopter gunships and tactical aircraft.

The firepower available to the U.S. Army in Vietnam is vastly surpassed by what is available to combat troops deployed today. They deserve to have the best.



Redlegs await fire mission for dug-in 175mm howitzer.



M-60 "Patton" Main Battle Tank prepares to assault enemy positions.

Air strike hits enemy concealed in jungle bunkers during battle of Hau Than.



Light infantry squad moves across open rice paddy for cover in tree line.



My Redemption

By Dan R. Vaughn, Jr.

Taken from My Life, My Hell, This Grunt's Journey Back to the World © 2010 by Dan R. Vaughn, Jr., Co. D, 2/1st Inf., 1968-69

It was just as daylight was fading into dark when I heard a mix of noises coming from the ruins of an old French plantation house. Its roof was gone, as well as part of its walls, and a village of grass huts had grown up around it. I drew closer and could hear an old woman screaming and begging in Vietnamese. I could also hear someone moaning in pain, and I knew something was very wrong.

I walked through the doorway to find three Vietcong. One was holding an old woman on the floor as she screamed and pleaded for the life of her husband. The second also had his back to me as he was beating an old man to death with his fists, and the third was holding the old man's arms behind his back so he couldn't resist the beating. The third VC was the first to see the barrel of my rifle as I pointed it at his chest, and he released his grip on the old man. I motioned for him to back up against a wall. The other two turned toward me and knew their night of terrorizing two defenseless old people was over as I backed them up to the same wall. I was consumed for a few seconds with the desire to kill all three; it would have been easy, and my actions would have not been questioned. My only fear was my rifle jamming; and since the next man behind me was carrying an M-79 grenade launcher, I hesitated. We could have had to defend ourselves in hand to hand combat; and with our heavy packs on, the VC could have overwhelmed us and escaped.

I was proud of the prisoners I had taken; but to this day, I wish I had killed them. If I had to do it over again I would have covered that wall with their blood. This might seem cruel of me, but they had it coming; and if the situation had been reversed, they would have not hesitated in taking my life as they had tried to take the life of the old man. We found out he was the village chief; and when he refused to turn over the village's rice crop to the Vietcong, they threatened to beat him to death in order to find out where it was hidden. He refused, knowing his people would go hungry as a result of the loss of their crop.

I wonder what the war protesters here in the World (America) would have thought if this incident had been shown on the news. If only for a few minutes, they could have seen the true side of the Vietcong and the tactics they used to terrorize the people of South Vietnam. The tactics they used were a violation of every law of war and humanity. I can't deny there were atrocities committed by some allied troops, but they pale in comparison to those committed by the communists every day.



I am sure they would have thought it strange and wondered why this old woman had wrapped her arms around my leg and was crying tears of joy as she thanked me over and over for the life of her husband. Her tears meant more to me than any medal I could have received, and, too, the look of terror in the eyes of three Vietcong as they feared death from me is treasure beyond measure. One of our medics did what he could for the man, and I am sure he lived, but it would be a day or two before the swelling in his face would allow him to be able to open his eyes and see again. He held out his hand; and as I grasped it with mine, he thanked me for his life. I couldn't understand his words, but I didn't need to know any Vietnamese to understand how he felt. These few moments in my life did much to restore my self-respect and my pride in our nation's mission.

The majority of Americans know of the fifty-eight thousand who died in the Vietnam War, but very few have heard of the hundreds of thousands who have died since its end. They are the forgotten victims of a war fought by politicians instead of generals with no real plan for victory. Vietnam veterans by the thousands have died since the war because of their exposure to Agent Orange, but so many more have taken their own lives to forget the Hell on Earth which they endured. In my book, I try to take the reader back in time so they can understand the real story behind the Vietnam War as seen thru the eyes of those of us who fought it. My story tells of the struggles of day to day life as I and my brothers faced the enemy in battle in Vietnam, and it also tells of their bravery and sacrifice for each other. I have tried to explain to the reader how combat affects those of us burdened with pain, loss, and guilt for those who could not return. I hope my story becomes a lasting tribute to those men and women lost in a war in which America seemed to have forgotten so many years ago. I also hope and pray that it will save the life of just one veteran before he or she gives up their struggle to find peace.

A Versatile Breed of Dog

By Jim Hamilton

I've always felt that the German shorthaired pointer (GSP) was probably the most flexible hunter of the sporting breeds. And that is exactly what the commentators at the Westminster Dog show say each year when they introduce this dog to the audience.

I was able to observe shorthairs in their native country while serving as a mechanized infantry platoon leader with the 4th Armored Division near Ansbach, Germany in the late 1960s. I completed German Hunting School (Jagdschule) prior to deploying to the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) in 1969.

The shorthairs I hunted with in Deutschland were quite a bit bigger (more than 80 lbs.) than ones I grew up with in Nebraska and Illinois. My Dad brought home our first GSP in 1952 when we were living in Lincoln. Back then they were considered a new kind of hunting dog. The most popular bird dogs in the Midwest at that time were spaniels, setters and English pointers.

European shorthairs, along with Drahthaars, Vizslas, and Weimaraners, are classified as all-purpose dogs and are used to search for wounded game, such as the Roe deer and wild boar, in addition to pointing and retrieving grouse, pheasant and partridge. I personally observed a large male shorthair retrieve a downed Roe buck while on a hunt in Northern Bavaria. He had the deer by the neck and dropped it as though it were a rabbit at the base of the tree where his owner and I were waiting in a stand. Roe deer are small in size and are similar in stature to the pointer.

I participated in a different kind of hunting in Vietnam while serving with the Americal Division. In the fall of 1970 I was south of Da Nang in Quang Ngai Province. I found out that our 198th Brigade Infantry Scout Dog Platoon had a shorthair that they were training for mine detection and early warning during combat patrols.

I watched the dog work at our Division base and was able to see this pointer named Cappy perform in the field. There he pointed one of the Vietnamese interpreters who wandered into our camp and later held steady on various planted training mines and booby traps. It was the first time I ever saw a bird dog point a human being. Our interpreter, Trang, was superstitious and didn't like it.

My tour in Vietnam ended a month after observing the shorthair and I never found out what happened to Cappy or how well this breed fared in combat. It is believed that over 500 military dogs perished in RVN during the course of the war. Various breeds were used initially, to include bloodhounds, but they were considered too noisy in the field with their habitual howling.

Many of the German shepherd scout dogs in Vietnam had a rough go of it because they tended to charge the enemy rather than hold. Some of these herding dogs tripped booby traps or were shot by snipers. I thought the GSP could do well in the Gulf War, but I suspect the extreme heat, wind and dusty conditions might negate their effectiveness. The wet climate was bad enough for masking scents in Southeast



Cappy with trainer and handler PFC George Coleman (L), 1LT James D. Hamilton.

Asia, but the windy, dusty desert heat would play havoc with a pointer.

My family's owned shorthairs most of my life and one of my dogs, Holly, was colored liver and white almost exactly the same as the pointer I encountered in Chu Lai, RVN. I thought about that scout dog many times while hunting in Eastern Montana for the elusive prairie game birds. I'm betting Cappy would have preferred that kind of hunting as well, and I hope he was able to enjoy it after his tour of duty was over like I did.

Killed In Action, Struck By Lightening

By John W. Bennett

I served in Vietnam from 1967-1968. I was struck by lightning and declared dead. I was put in a body bag and flown to a hospital where I was put in the morgue. After many hours I came to and in my pocket was a pocket knife. I cut myself out of the body bag. In a few days I returned to my battalion where the commanding officer declared, "Bennett, you're dead." I said, "Thank you, Sir." "Bennett, no, I mean you're DEAD," he said. I saw documentation that had been prepared for me to receive the Purple Heart.

I have written a book called "Killed In Action, Struck By Lightening". The book contains this story and many additional stories about my experiences in Vietnam. It also tells of my life since returning home and the treatment that I have received for the injuries I sustained in the lightning strike.

My trip to Vietnam was aboard the USNS Gordon that sailed from Hawaii on December 5, 1967. I was assigned as a medic in a recon platoon in the 11th Light Infantry Brigade. We headquartered at Duc Pho before moving to OP Dragon. It was at OP Dragon where my brush with death occurred.

Everyone that has read the book says that it is a very good book to read. I am contributing 25% of the profits from this book to homeless veterans.

You may contact me by phone or mail: John W. Bennett, gooberdoo@msn.com, Phone 717-642-9729--home, 717-398-5485--cell. 14 Locust Trail, Fairfield, PA 17320.

OUTLAW...Out of Arkansas

By Michael J. Martin © 2003

**He grew up...an Arkansas farm boy...
Runnin' barefoot...through the cotton fields...
He'd pretend he...was in the army...
A hero...on the battlefields...**

**And those railroad tracks was all there was around there...
Ever was gonna go anywhere...
He jumped the first train bound for Glory...
Soon the boy was headed Over There...**

Chorus:

**They called him, "OUTLAW"...out of Arkansas...
And he would go out where the law wouldn't dare...
He could talk the talk...Lord, he could walk the walk...
He was brave...but that don't mean he wasn't scared...
He's just not a man...for givin' in...to fear...**

**But, in the rear, Lord...he was nothin' but trouble...
They'd lay down the law...it didn't do no good...
But, out there, Lord...in the jungle...
There was another law...he understood...**

**He was not a man...to leave a friend...behind...
Even when...his own skin...was on the line...
"Ya don't just lay there on the ground!
Return fire! Pin them down!
That's the law that will allow you to survive!"**

Chorus repeats

**He made it home, Lord...back to Arkansas...
They said he's a "Hero"...that's a weight to bear...
He wasn't done, though...Duty still called...
Over There, Lord... and Over Here...**

**There's those forgotten souls in Vietnam...
And those abandoned here at home who needed him...
He spent his whold life helpin' others...
Coverin' his brothers...
A Man of Honor...a man who gives a damn...**

Chorus repeats

Michael J. Martin, like Nick Bacon, served as a "Jungle Warrior" with the 11th Light Infantry Brigade in 1968-69. Martin served with Co. C, 4/3rd Infantry, and received the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, and Combat Infantryman Badge. For more information: www.myspace.com/michaeljmartinmusic.



A Tribute to Nicky D. Bacon

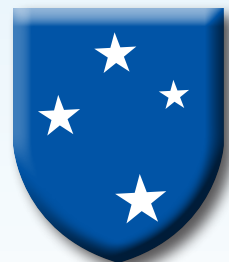
By Michael J. Martin

Medal of Honor recipient Nicky Bacon, who was with Co. B, 4/21st Infantry, 11th LIB, died of cancer on July 17, 2010 at the age of 64. Nicky and I were tight. I loved him like a brother.

The funeral was attended by the current and two former Arkansas governors and eight Medal of Honor recipients. I heard that an estimated 3,000 people were at his funeral and that 1,500 were at a reception afterward.

At the reception I had the honor of performing "OUTLAW...Out of Arkansas" which I wrote about Nicky. I also sang a favorite song of Nicky's, "Will the Circle Be Unbroken" at the end. A huge circle of his friends and family formed around the room. It was a hell of a tribute to a hell of a man.

I think the lyrics for "OUTLAW" serve as a concise biography of Nicky.





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