

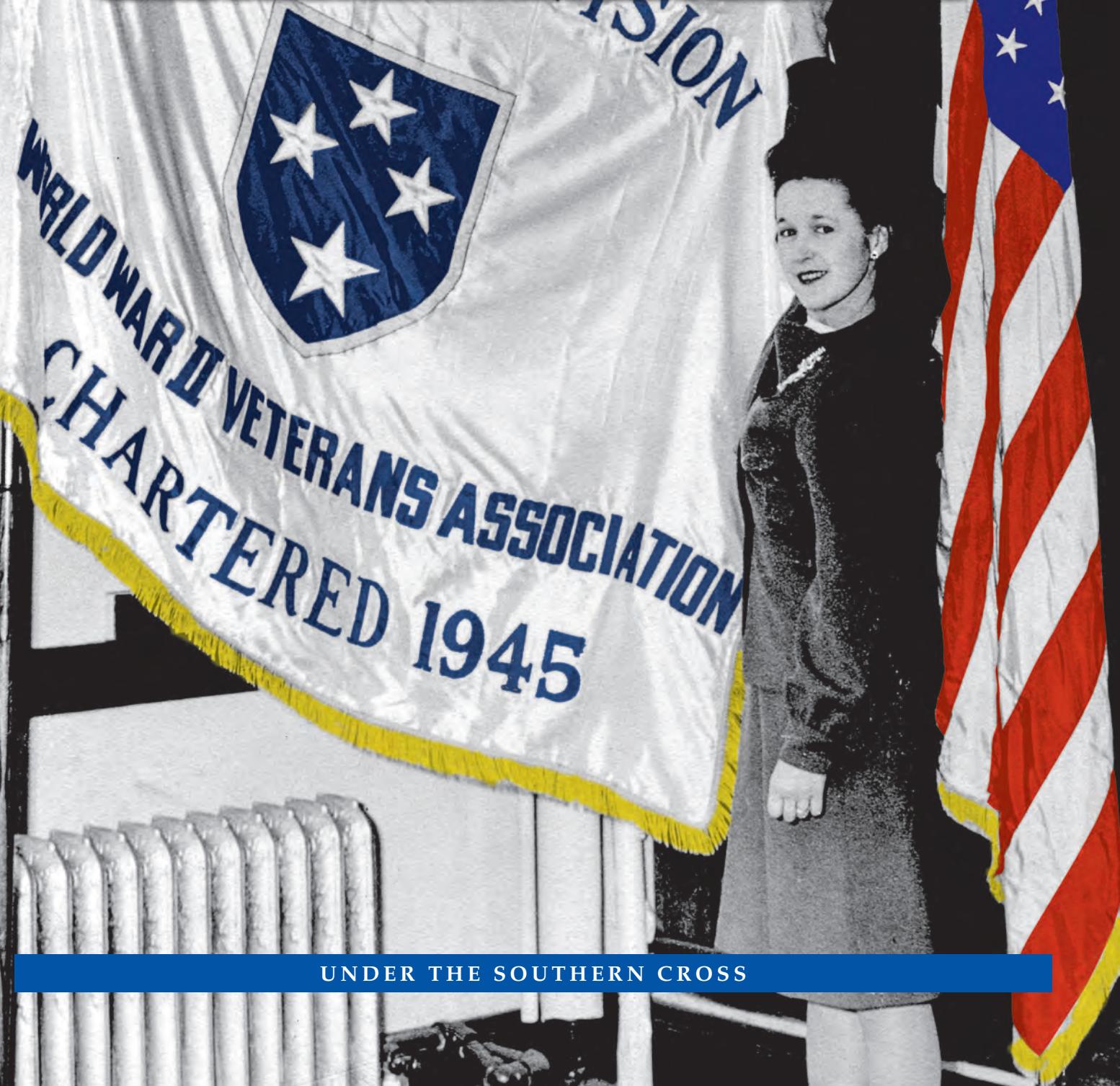
April • May • June 2014



# AMERICAL

## JOURNAL

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



UNDER THE SOUTHERN CROSS

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#### Cover: Through the Years

Reunions for Americal Division veterans and their guests were one of the very first activities of the Americal Division Veterans Association. The tradition carries on to the day. See 2014 reunion information on pages six and seven of this issue.

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## Heartland America and the VA Honors American Vietnam Vet

By David W. Taylor



Mansfield, Ohio is a nondescript mid-west town of 42,000 that's keeps to its business and pursues the American dream each day with core values and honest labor. It's the kind of town the political and social elite view as "fly-over country". But Mansfield is the kind of town that believes in God and Country (it has a high ratio of churches to its population) and it produces a steady stream of its citizens to serve its country, and has produced its share of heroes as well. One of them is David F. Winder.

The Veterans Administration built a new Community Based Outpatient Clinic in Mansfield, a 25,000 square foot facility that will serve the mid-Ohio area of approximately 14,000 Veterans. They chose to name the clinic after one of Mansfield's own sons, David Winder.

Winder was a medic, and a pacifist, who served 3rd/1st Infantry Battalion, 11th Light Infantry Brigade. True to his non-violent beliefs (his father was a pastor), Winder did not carry a weapon in the field, but had a desire to serve his country any way he could. On May 13, 1970 PFC Winder was a medic assigned to Company A during a sweep of a freshly cut rice paddy. The unit came under heavy fire from an entrenched enemy. Casualties began to mount. Winder started crawling to his first casualty across a long swath of bullet-swept terrain. He was wounded on his way but reached the soldier and applied first aid. Winder was wounded again as he tried to reach a second soldier under heavy enemy fire. He was within 30 feet of the second soldier when he was killed. His unit, inspired by his courage, rallied to stage a successful counterattack.

Winder was subsequently posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor by then Vice-President Gerald R. Ford. Winder's parents and siblings received the award in Washington, D.C.

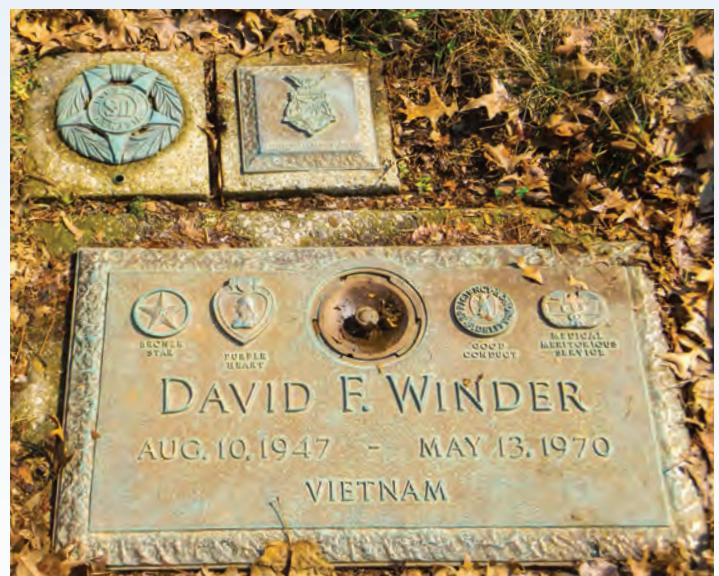
The dedication of the VA Clinic in his name took place on March 21st. I drove to Mansfield to pay my respects. Winder is buried at the Mansfield Memorial Park. His parents, Dr.

Calvin Winder and Gertrude Winder both died in 2008 after being married for 66 years. They are buried next to their son. Dr. Winder arrived in Mansfield in 1958 to pastor the First Presbyterian Church of Mansfield, And pastor he did. His church grew out of its building and location and he moved it on top of a small hill by Trimble Road. The church is very large and stately, with Jeffersonian architecture. God must have been smiling with the new VA clinic, dedicated to his son, is only seven-tenths of a mile down the same road.

David's siblings were all present for the dedication. They gave the VA Clinic their brother's Medal of Honor to be on display at the clinic to inspire others as he inspired his comrades many years ago in Vietnam.

None of Winder's siblings live in Mansfield as their life's work has taken them elsewhere. Nancy Winder Carpenter, the oldest, lives in Shaker Heights, Ohio and told me she was thrilled the clinic was dedicated in her brother's name. "We were all raised here in Mansfield", she said with tearful eyes, "And it is important that the clinic be named after David. What a wonderful honor." Joe Winder, the youngest, lives in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and remarked, "This is a rare honor. The Vietnam Vets were not given the respect they deserved and I hope this clinic in David's name will remind everyone of the sacrifices that were made by Vietnam Vets." John Winder, the second oldest, who lives in Hudson, Ohio, was taken aback by it all, "This is an emotional day for me because it brings back the memories of my brother and his sacrifice."

On my way home I stopped at the cemetery (only 4 miles from the clinic) to pay my respects. David Winder and his parents are buried side by side, on a low-lying hill, just as it starts to slope down from the top, the "Military Crest". It is good terrain...facing the west to see the sun set each day. I rendered a hand salute to all three of the Winder's, and in the soft breeze that glided across the slope came those words that entered my soul, "Well done good and faithful servants, enter into my kingdom."



## Adjutant's Notes

By Roger Gilmore

New member additions to the ADVA roster continue to be robust. We added thirty-eight new members to the ADVA roster for this reporting period. We did not have the boost like the previous reporting period with new members signed up at the national reunion, but it was still a solid gain in membership.

ADVA members Dennis Clark, Donald Wood and John Worrel sponsored and paid first year dues for buddies to become new ADVA members this quarter. One of our new members this quarter is a WWII Americal Division veteran. Mr. Gerald Roberts served with the 164th Infantry Regiment, and it is truly an honor to have another of the Old Guard join our ranks.

New life member additions for this period were eighteen. Four Americal Division veterans joined the Association as Life members. Fourteen annual pay members upgraded to Life status.

Another good sign of increased interest in ADVA membership is the number of former members who reinstated their membership this quarter. Twelve former members paid up dues to get reinstatement. Typically, this count runs around seven or eight for a reporting period. Two of these reinstatements were for life memberships.

One of the associate members joining ADVA this reporting period is Army COL (Ret) Joe Arnold. Colonel Arnold is the son of GEN William Arnold, the Commanding General of the Americal Division at the Cebu, Philippines site of the Japanese Army surrender to the Americal Division in August 1945.

I am going to use the Adjutant column in this issue to discuss a pressing need for our association - a more intense member recruiting effort this year. We continue to lose members through attrition (annual pay members not renewing their dues when their renewal period comes due) and deaths. We cannot do anything about those we lose in death, but we can encourage those members we know remain active in ADVA. There are many Americal Division veterans out there who are not ADVA members. If you know one, sponsor him for a one year membership and tell him about the benefits of ADVA membership. I know it is not easy to get fellow veterans to join the ADVA. I have tried without success to get Americal Division veterans I served with or met through other veteran organizations to join the ADVA. But it is essential to our ongoing success as U.S. Army veterans' organization to grow our membership. *If one third of our membership brings in one new member in 2014, we can increase our numbers by nearly one thousand.*

Please remember to notify me when your mailing address changes for any reason. This helps keep our mailing expenses low by avoiding a USPS charge for notifying us when your address is different than the one we have on file for you.

You can contact me by telephone or email to give me an address change, or notify me of a member's (or Americal Division veteran) death. My contact information is listed in the directory section of this issue. If you mail your new address to me, please use the Adjutant post office box in Richardson, Texas listed on the back cover. You can also fax me your address change or any other membership changes to this telephone number: **972-412-0089**.

### Corrections (Unit)

#### Thomas Schneider

196th LIB  
Alliance, NE  
★ PNC Rollie Castranova

#### George Watts

E/5/46th Inf Rgmt  
Laurens, SC  
★ Self

### New Members

#### Gary L. Adams

523rd Sig Bn  
Hamilton, OH  
★ Self

#### John Bales

C/5/46th Inf Rgmt  
Glendale, CA  
★ Self

#### Larry Carter

B/4/3rd Inf Rgmt  
Frostproof, FL  
★ Donald L. Wood

#### Philip Dickerson

C/4/3rd Inf Rgmt  
Newark, DE  
★ Self

#### David M. Fallon

A/5/46th Inf Rgmt  
Rutherford, NJ  
★ Mark L. Deam

#### Dan Folzenlogel

3/21st Inf Rgmt  
Indianapolis, IN  
★ Self

#### Scott F. Gray

723rd Maint Bn Co E  
Newport News, VA  
★ Chuck Phillipson

#### Larry J. Hammes

198th LIB  
Kansas City, MO  
★ John Worrel

#### Gerald S. Huber, Jr.

196th LIB  
Canton, MI  
★ Self

#### Ronnie L. Hukill

A/1/20th Inf Rgmt  
Oklahoma City, OK  
★ Joseph Hill

#### Eugene L. Kessler

23rd S&T Bn  
Auburn, IL  
★ Ronald J. Sheldon

#### Delbert Kirby

D/1/20th Inf Rgmt  
Johnstown, CO  
★ Ken Sabatin

#### Roeland Kloos

5/46th Inf Rgmt  
La Quinta, CA  
★ Mike Dunnagan

#### Jack D. Knisely, Jr.

E/1/6th Inf Rgmt  
Huber Heights, OH  
★ Roger Gilmore

#### Jerome Koeing

C/1/52nd Inf Rgmt  
Woodworth, ND  
★ Dennis Clark

#### Norman L. Linto

HHC/2/1st Inf Rgmt  
Oxford, MI  
★ Joe Perez

#### Scott Loners

C/1/52nd Inf Rgmt  
Seattle, WA  
★ Donald L. Wood

#### T. Michael Metesh

1/46th Inf Rgmt  
Pollock, LA  
★ James Tarver

#### William L. Mynatt

C/4/3rd Inf Rgmt  
Fishers, IN  
★ Jim O'Brien

#### Rayburn Nichols

A/5/46th Inf Rgmt  
Brenham, TX  
★ Jessie O. Gause

#### William J. O'Neill

1/14th Arty  
Irvine, CA  
★ Self

#### Robert Poznanski

TF Oregon (196th LIB)  
Linden, NJ  
★ Self

#### Gerald Roberts

164th Inf Rgmt  
Gilmer, TX  
★ Wayne Bryant

### ADVA MEMBERSHIP

30 April 2014

World War II	446
Vietnam	2,503
Cold War	8
Associate Members:	217
Total Members	3,174

<b>Russell Rumsey</b> No Unit Given Dundee, NY ★ Self	<b>William M. Connolly</b> A/4/3rd Inf Rgmt Irmo, SC ★ PNC Rollie Castronova	<b>Thomas G. Tucker, Jr.</b> 23rd MP Co Victoria, TX ★ PNC Rollie Castronova	<b>James Taylor</b> 1/82nd Arty Berrien Springs, MI ★ PNC David W. Taylor	<b>Wallace M. Hunt</b> Unit Unknown Boise, ID April 15, 2014
<b>David Schlichting</b> 1st/1st Cav (11 LIB) Oshkosh, WI ★ Self	<b>Joseph W. DiLeonardo</b> 635th MI Det Elizabeth, CO ★ PNC Gary L. Noller	<b>Robert T. Tullos</b> E/1/46th Inf Rgmt Murfreesboro, TN ★ Bob Short	<b>New Associate Members</b>	<b>Dhimitri V. Karakosta</b> Unit Unknown Naples, FL April 18, 2014
<b>Edward M. Sinayi</b> 5/46th Inf Rgmt Ruidoso, NM ★ Self	<b>Michael J. Ford</b> A/2/1st Inf Rgmt Seattle, WA ★ Dennis E. Matthews	<b>Re-instated Members</b>	<b>Joe Arnold</b> U.S. Army (Ret) McLean, VA ★ PNC David W. Taylor	<b>Edward Monsen *</b> 182nd Inf Rgmt H Co Maynard, MA March 25, 2014
<b>Gary L. Souter</b> 1/82nd Arty HHC Tyler, TX ★ PNC Gary L. Noller	<b>Philip Gates</b> B/4/21st Inf Rgmt Pacerville, CA ★ Sid Staton	<b>James A. Besonen</b> 252nd FA (Radar) Grayling, MI ★ Bernie Chase	<b>Don Cabrol</b> Cleveland, MS ★ James Tarver	<b>Joseph Mullen *</b> 182nd Inf Rgmt A Co N Eastham, MA March 14, 2014
<b>George S. Triefenbach</b> 26th Engr Bn Co E Belleville, IL ★ Self	<b>James J. Hendricks, Jr.</b> 198th LIB Baltimore, MD ★ Self	<b>Michael W. Blum</b> E/1/6th Inf Rgmt Deland, FL ★ Dave Decker	<b>Richard D'Ambrosio</b> Peabody, MA ★ Self	<b>William Nash</b> Unit Unknown Raleigh, NC March 7, 2014
<b>Billy L. Waller</b> B/1/6th Inf Rgmt Macedonia, IL ★ PNC Ronald R. Ellis	<b>Francis W. Landry</b> C/1/52nd Inf Rgmt Lynn, MA ★ J.B. Blanchard	<b>John M. Corte</b> 198th LIB HHC Goodyear, AZ ★ PNC Gary L. Noller	<b>Jane Lambert</b> Pooler, Ga ★ Jack Head	<b>Vernon Nelson *</b> 132nd Inf Rgmt Des Plaines, IL July 1, 2013
<b>New Paid Life Members</b>		<b>Larry M. Pistole</b> E/1/46th Inf Rgmt St. Stephens Church, VA ★ PNC Gary L. Noller	<b>TAPS</b>	<b>Henry G. Salgado</b> 182nd Inf Rgmt Templeton, CA February 16, 2014
<b>Max Greene</b> 5/46th Inf Rgmt Newton, NC ★ Jessie O. Gause	<b>Charles R. Rando</b> 198th LIB HHC Columbia, SC ★ John W. Anderson	<b>Frank J. Kreisel</b> 132nd Inf Rgmt Woodbridge, NJ ★ Self	<b>World War II Veterans</b>	<b>Vietnam Veterans</b>
<b>Robert C. Salstead</b> E/1/52nd Inf Rgmt Springfield, MA ★ PNC Ronald R. Ellis	<b>James H. Snider</b> 8th Cav F Trp Seattle, WA ★ Bernie Chase	<b>Gilbert C. Lopez</b> A/4/3rd Inf Rgmt Hemet, CA ★ Ron Krul	<b>Michael C. Beatini</b> 164th Inf Rgmt Montvale, NJ February 19, 2014	<b>Nathan Allen</b> 123rd Avn Bn Sardis, WV August 2013
<b>Marvin Somers</b> C/5/46th Inf Rgmt Stevens Point, WI ★ Self	<b>Robert A. Spangler</b> 196th LIB Longview, TX ★ Self	<b>John L. O'Neil</b> 101st Med Det Lady Lake, FL ★ Self	<b>Albert Duncan *</b> 132nd Inf Rgmt Tallassee, AL February 27, 2013	<b>Steve Schaefer</b> 1st/1st Cav Des Plaines, IL April 25, 2014
<b>Dennis C. Walker</b> 1/52nd Inf Rgmt Laurel, IA ★ John C. West	<b>John N. Stevens</b> 181st FA Forked River, NJ ★ Self	<b>John G. Riley</b> A/4/3rd Inf Rgmt San Jose, CA ★ Bernie Chase	<b>John Fleck, Jr. *</b> 221st FA Middlebourne, WV August 2013	<b>Howard Spielman *</b> 3/16th Arty New York, NY Date Unknown
<b>Jimmy M. Brewer</b> A/1/6th Inf Rgmt Downing, MO ★ Self		<b>Henry Ruiz</b> A/5/46th Inf Rgmt San Antonio, TX ★ Cameron Baird	<b>Otto Heath</b> 164th Inf Rgmt Anaheim, Ca February 22, 2014	<b>*ADVA Member</b>

## 2014 National Reunion

### September 11-14, 2014

Hilton Houston North  
Houston, Texas  
PNC Ronald R. Ellis, Chairman

#### Welcome to Houston

The 2014 National Reunion of the American Division Veterans Association will be held September 11-14 in Houston, Texas. PNC Ronald Ellis is taking the lead in planning the reunion. He is assisted by PNC Ron Ward and ADVA members residing in the Lone Star state.

#### Headquarters Hotel

The reunion headquarters will be the Hilton Houston North. The hotel is located at 12400 Greenspoint Drive and is less than eight miles from George Bush Intercontinental Airport (IAH). Houston Hobby Airport, 25 miles from the hotel, also offers opportunities for air travel into the area.

As of May 7 nearly 700 room nights were already booked at the host hotel. Plans to utilize the nearby overflow hotel were being arranged. Reservations exceeded the initial room block but the special room rate of \$99 per night plus tax was still in effect on May 7. Guests arriving on Wednesday will have a slightly higher rate for all days of their stay.

Make reservations by calling 866-577-1154 and ask for a room in the American Division Veterans Association block and provide arrival and departure dates.

Reservations may also be made on-line. (see below)

#### Thursday- President George H.W. Bush Library, Texas A&M University.

Tour will depart the hotel at 9:00 AM for the 90 mile ride to the President George H.W. Bush Library located on the campus of Texas A&M University at College Station. A barbecue lunch catered by C&J Barbeque will be served in the library. The buses will begin leaving for the return trip at about 2:00 PM and arrive back around 3:30 PM. Cost for bus fare, admission fee, and lunch is \$45 each.

#### Friday- San Jacinto Monument, Battleship Texas.

Tour will depart the hotel at 9:00 AM for the 20 mile trip to the 1,200-acre San Jacinto Battleground State Historic Site in LaPorte, TX. Lunch will be provided at the nearby Monument Inn Restaurant. The annual memorial service to honor departed American Division veterans will take place inside at the restaurant. Buses will depart San Jacinto at about 2:30 PM. The tentative plan to visit the Houston National Cemetery has been deleted from the tour. The tour will arrive back at the hotel about 4:00 PM. Cost for bus fare, admission fees, and lunch is \$45 each.



#### Saturday- Business Meetings, Cocktail Hour, Banquet.

ADVA Executive Council and General Membership meetings will be held in the hotel on Saturday morning. A cocktail hour will begin at about 6:00 PM and the banquet will be seated no later than 7:00 PM. A special guest speaker is being arranged and will give a short presentation. The banquet will end at about 9:00 PM and allow time for final conversations and chats.

Please note: A new feature of the banquet will be the reservation of tables so that guests who wish to sit together may do so by prior arrangement. Groups wishing to reserve table space at the banquet must be prepared to provide names of those in the group when requested. Guests not requesting a specific seat assignment will be assigned a place. A seating chart will be displayed outside the banquet room.

#### Hospitality Room and PX Sales Room

The hospitality room and the PX sales area will be off the main lobby on the ground floor. The hotel features a Starbucks coffee bar, American café, and a roomy bar. There is adequate free parking in surface lots and parking garages.

Registered reunion guests will be provided with a detailed program of events. Exact event times and are subject to slight changes depending on variables.

#### Commemorative Rifle Raffle

The reunion committee is working to acquire a special commemorative Henry rifle to raffle at the reunion. Arrangements will be made to follow all laws and provide proper transfer and shipment of the rifle.

*Houston will be warm in September so bring plenty of hot weather clothing. The hotel features an outdoor swimming pool and a huge atrium lobby. The reunion hospitality room will be a cool and comfortable place to gather and visit with friends both new and old.*

Reservations may also be made on-line. The reservation web page is at

[www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/H/HOUGPHF-AMDI-20140910/index.jhtml](http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/H/HOUGPHF-AMDI-20140910/index.jhtml)

## 2014 ADVA NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

Houston, Texas Sept. 11-14, 2014  
Hilton Houston North  
12400 Greenspoint Dr.  
Houston, TX 77060  
281-875-2222



**Last Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **First Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Spouse/Guest** \_\_\_\_\_

**Street Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**First Time at an  
ADVA Annual  
Reunion? (y/n)**

**City/State/Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Unit(s)** \_\_\_\_\_ **WWII** \_\_\_\_\_ **VN** \_\_\_\_\_ **Handicapped assistance? (y/n)** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADVA member registration\*** **\$20.00/person X** \_\_\_\_\_ = **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Non- Member ( Americal vet)\*\*** **\$35.00/person X** \_\_\_\_\_ = **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guest/Spouse of members or non-members** **\$20.00/person X** \_\_\_\_\_ = **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

**\*No registration fee for WWII ADVA members.**

**\*\* Registration fee for non-member Americal Vet includes one year ADVA dues.**

Registration fee covers name badge, registration gift, admission to hospitality room, printed programs and other benefits.

Thursday tour to George H.W. Bush Library  
College Station, TX  
Includes bus fare, admission, lunch

Sep. 11, 2014 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM  
**\$45 per person X** \_\_\_\_\_ = **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

Friday tour to San Jacinto Memorial, Battleship  
Texas, Houston National Cemetery  
Includes bus fare, admissions, lunch

Sep. 12, 2014 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM  
**\$45 per person X** \_\_\_\_\_ = **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Banquet with Cash Bar and Program  
Select entrée(s) below  
Beef \_\_\_\_\_ Chicken \_\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian \_\_\_\_\_

Sep. 13, 2014 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM  
**\$45 per person X** \_\_\_\_\_ = **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

Business card size advertisement in program at \$50 each. Please enclose copy. **\$** \_\_\_\_\_  
Special message to be printed in program at \$5 per each 12 words. Enclose wording. **\$** \_\_\_\_\_  
Example: In memory of veterans of Co. A, 1/6<sup>th</sup> Inf. 1968-69 - from your buddies.

Make your room and reunion reservations well in advance  
Hotel rooms and event tickets are limited.

For more information on the reunion please contact:  
PNC Ronald Ellis, Reunion Chairman  
*Re196thlib@aol.com*; 903.738.9897

Additional information is available at [www.americal.org/programs/reunion](http://www.americal.org/programs/reunion)

Register on-line at [www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/H/HOUGPHF-AMDI-20140910](http://www.hilton.com/en/hi/groups/personalized/H/HOUGPHF-AMDI-20140910)

Make your own room reservations and ask for the ADVA special rate of \$109/plus taxes. Free airport shuttle (IAH).  
Tickets for free buffet breakfasts (\$16 value) will be provided to ADVA members staying at the hotel. Free parking.

**Total enclosed** **\$** \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to ADVA 2014 Reunion  
Send this form and payment to:  
PNC Ronald Ward; Reunion Treasurer  
280 Vance Rd.  
Protem, MO 65733-6346

## Legacy Committee Report

By Roger Gilmore, Chairman

### Americal Monument at Fort Sill, Oklahoma

As reported in the First Quarter 2014 Americal Journal, Willis Granite completed a recalculation of all cost components for the revised monument designs and concrete base in response to the Legacy Committee's request for ways to reduce the overall project cost.

The Legacy Committee has reviewed the revised monument designs, and feels the modifications made to reduce the monument construction costs are in line with the budget plan. We feel costs can be further reduced by seeking a nonprofit state sales tax exemption through the State Of Oklahoma Tax Commission. By obtaining such an exemption a further savings of just over \$2,000 can be achieved. Attempts to locate a sub-contractor in the Lawton area willing to submit a bid for pouring the concrete have proven to be a big challenge. With help from the Fort Sill Memorialization Board, we have been able to secure a bid from a Lawton contractor who has done work at the post. We have additional bid requests in to other Lawton area concrete contractors in order to get the best possible.

On April 28 ADVA Legacy Committee member and PNC David Taylor and I, accompanied by ADVA member and artillery veteran David Laukat, met with the Fort Sill Memorialization Board. We presented our Fort Sill monument construction plan with detailed drawings depicting the monument pedestals and Americal Division history inscriptions. This meeting is the first step in the monument placement process as outlined by the Fort Sill Department of Human Resources and Memorialization Board.

PNC Taylor gave the board an overview of the history of the Americal Division. I spoke about the Americal Legacy Committee mission, funding sources for monuments, and completed and future monument projects. The final portion of our presentation was a short display to illustrate the Fort Sill design and the plans for the concrete supports for the pedestals and the walking area.

The Memorialization Board members advised they approved our design and plan. We were assured a construction location in the southwest quadrant of Constitution Park.

The monument placement plan must next be approved by the Fort Sill Commanding General. The Memorialization Board advised they will submit the plan to the post CG immediately. We now wait for word on the post commander's decision on the monument plan.

### 2014 Americal Legacy Calendar

We continue to receive donations for ADVA Legacy monument construction in response to the 2014 Americal Legacy calendars.

ADVA Creative Director and Past National Commander John (Dutch) DeGroot produced this edition and all prior

issues of the calendar. The 2014 calendar is probably the best edition Dutch has done. We cannot do much other than say "Thank You, Dutch" for the fine work he does on the calendar and the Americal Journal. Dutch receives no payment for his work other than the thanks he gets from ADVA members. Thanks go out to PNC David Taylor and Associate Creative Director Frank Mika for their contributions to the calendar projects.

ADVA member donations have surpassed \$19,000 for the 2014 calendar. Of that total, we have received just over \$8,000 in individual amounts of \$50 or more. We appreciate all donations and one hundred percent of all donations go to support the ADVA Legacy Committee initiatives.

If you have not mailed in your donation for 2014 please write your check or money order and mail it in. The calendar mailing included a pre-addressed contribution envelope for mailing your check or money order. Donations may also be mailed to

*Ronald Ellis* at: 4493 Hwy 64 W; Henderson, TX 75652

### Americal Division Monument Project – Cebu, Philippines

We previously reported on the negotiations with the Cebu VFW Post on a Memorandum of Agreement to design and construct the Americal Division monument north of Cebu City, Philippines. The monument placement will be at the site of the Japanese Army surrender to the Americal Division in August 1945.

The Memorandum of Agreement has been executed by both parties. As part of the agreement, the ADVA Legacy Committee agrees to provide a major portion of the funding for site procurement, monument design and construction. The ADVA Legacy Committee's financial commitment to this project is capped at \$3,000.

CebuVFW Post Monument Committee is preparing to finalize logistics for the land survey of the monument site. Once the site survey is complete, the next phase will be to request estimates from local contractors for the design and construction of the monument base.

### Fund raising mementos Case Collector Knife and Dedication Videos

The second edition Americal Division collector's knife, produced by Case Cutlery, is proving to be a high demand item for members. The knife makes an impressive gift or keepsake item for your veteran memorabilia collection. Each knife is numbered from 1 to 150, and comes in a handsome wooden display box.

The DVD video of the dedication ceremony of the Americal Monument at Ft. Benning is still available through the Americal PX. If you were not able to attend the 2012 ADVA National Reunion in Atlanta, Georgia and the Fort Benning monument dedication ceremony, this DVD captures the entire event. The cost is only \$15.

Proceeds from sales of the Case knife and the dedication ceremony DVD go to the Legacy Program fund and will be used to help pay the costs of future monuments to veterans of the Americal Division.

## Update on Al Cotta

By Roger Gilmore



PNC Ronald Ellis and I were traveling through the coastal Mississippi area this past May and stopped in for a visit with founding ADVA member Al Cotta.

Al resides in the Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi. He is a proud Americal Division Veteran having served with the 121st Medical Battalion during World War II. His residence unit at the Armed Forces Retirement Home displays a number of ADVA and Americal Division memorabilia items.

One of the distinctions that Al holds is that he is the only known ADVA charter member still active in the association. He also served as the first ADVA National Adjutant and enthusiastically recruited new members when the association was formed.

Al enjoys the company of his many fellow veteran residents. His nightly routine is a movie selected from his vast video library. He loves to reminisce about past ADVA reunions he has attended and the many friendships he made over the years at both national and chapter reunions. Were it not for some medical issues that confine him to his residence, Al would most likely attend this year's national reunion in Houston, Texas.

Ron and I enjoyed exchanging stories and memories with Al and his AFRH buddy of several years, Bob Macy. During the visit we gave Al an ADVA clock to display with his countless other Americal mementos.

We hope to get a small regional reunion together at the AFRH next year for Al. He will enjoy his 96th birthday in October.

### "Banyan Nights" A poem by Lara Dolphin

*Burgettstown bred, I sit on steel atop a  
Bougainville ficus close to Bagana near the  
Torokina River directing artillery fire by radio.  
Nearby flares rain down on Hill 260.  
The Southern Cross appears, and the  
infantry slips behind concertina wire. Saint  
Barbara, bless these powdered eggs and  
dehydrated potatoes, guide our ordnance  
and steady our field glasses that we may  
observe what has to get to be.*

*In honor of her grandfather, WWII veteran Peter Messina*

## Your Submissions Are Needed

By the Journal editorial board

Readers of the Americal Journal may notice that the publication has been reduced from 40 pages to 36 pages. This change began with the first issue of 2014 and is due to a number of factors to include a lack of news stories.

The Americal Journal is usually divided into two major parts: news and stories. It is usual for ten pages to be reserved for World War II stories and ten pages to be reserved for Vietnam War stories.

The news section previously consisted of 15 pages. The remaining five pages were the inside and outside of the front and back covers and the PX display advertisement.

Recent changes reduced the news section to 11 pages with all other space allocations remaining the same.

The editors wish to utilize the magazine for two purposes. The first is to tell the history of the Americal Division by publishing first-hand accounts from Americal veterans. Some reprinted stories, usually for the World War II section, are also used.

The second purpose is to tell about the business and activities of the ADVA and its members. This includes committee reports, reunion and scholarship news, chapter news, messages from elected and appointed officers, and special news items from our members.

Photographs are always in demand but they must be high resolution. A resolution of 300 dots per inch (300 dpi) is adequate. Most cameras and scanners can be set to different levels of resolution. A good electronic file size is 500K to 1M. Larger files are okay but smaller files will not reproduce with any quality in a magazine format.

If you have questions about submitting news, stories, or photographs please contact the editors for assistance. Without your submissions the journal will not be what it should be.

### Three WWII Veterans Attend East Region Reunion

Three World War II veterans of the Americal Division attended the recent ADVA East Region reunion. From left to right is Claude Mook, 132nd Infantry Regiment, Co. L; Joe Tunis 245th Field Artillery, Btry. B; and Max Hartwick, 132nd Infantry Regiment, 3rd Battalion, Co. K. Photo by Mark Deam.





**Dear editor,**

Honorable and general discharges qualify veterans for many VA benefits including VA health care. Many veterans are not aware that the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) provides free or low cost health care to eligible veterans. VA primary health care is the most sought after benefit because of the high cost of private sector health care insurance. For example, depending on the income of the veteran, a 30 day supply of a prescription will be free or cost only \$9. In some cases eyeglasses and hearing aids are free of charge to eligible veterans.

It is a myth that a veteran had to serve in combat or serve overseas in order to be eligible for VA health care. Veterans may apply for VA health care at any time after separation from the military- this benefit never expires. VA health care qualifies under the Affordable Care Act and eliminates the need for a veteran to purchase qualifying health insurance or pay additional tax penalties.

To apply for enrollment in VA health care use VA Form 10-10EZ. Provide a copy of a DD-214 indicating character of discharge. Take or send the form and DD-214 to the VA health care facility that would be used for medical services. Request an appointment to see a primary care team.

VA Form 10-10EZ may be found on the internet through a GOOGLE search or at [www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-10EZ-fill.pdf](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/medical/pdf/vha-10-10EZ-fill.pdf). The form is also available from veterans service officers or by calling the VA at 800-827-1000.

*Note: Supplemental information provided by the editor.*

Anthony D. Lombardo  
Service Officer; VFW Post 1265

**Dear editor,**

Please inform Don Kilkore that the guy he wrote about in the Jan-Feb-Mar 2014 edition who claimed he was a LRRP at Chu Lai was a genuine wannabe- at least as far as 1967-68 goes.

There was no compound. We were in hooches next to the 178th Aviation Company (Boxcars). The AMERICAL Combat Center was just to the south of us. His story was complete nonsense. I especially liked the part about the PX and "wives". This is hilarious.

Sometime after the unit became Company G (RANGER), 75th Infantry, a relocation did take place to somewhere else on Chu Lai. I doubt much changed other than the site.

Jerry Schuster; Company E, 51st Infantry (LRP)

**Dear editor,**

Here is as story about what I call the last patrol of the war.

It was August 1945 when Co. I, 182nd Inf. Regt., positioned themselves in an area close to the outskirts of Cebu City, Philippines. This was after we were pulled back into a cantonment area. There was no more resistance from the Japanese.

We had large tents and bunks to sleep on. We had the Philippine people build us a nice mess hall with mosquito netting all around to prevent flies or bugs from entering with our meals. We beautified the area and were living a peaceful life after being in combat so long. It was quite a change. We had heard that the Atomic Bomb had been dropped and the Japanese may surrender. Up to that time we were preparing to invade the Japanese mainland.

We had very little security and we did not need it as there was no enemy close to Cebu. They had withdrawn from the area. Most of our duties at this time consisted of beautifying the area and making the areas livable and comfortable. We even took trips in to Cebu City. It was like R and R and there was no worry about the enemy.

One day we got a message from Headquarters that said that the Japs were harassing the engineers that were building roads near Sacsas where the Japanese later surrendered on Cebu. The Japs were sniping at the engineers. The engineers called us for help to stop the sniping

My executive officer called me in and briefed me on the situation. He said, "Now Ray, don't take any chances". After I had been briefed I was given the mission to take my squad and stop the Jap sniping at the engineers. I was warned to take care and do not take any chances and not get anyone hurt as the war was about to end.

I took my squad and loaded up for the mission. We went to the area where we were warned that the Japs were hiding and after locating the snipers we opened fire and ran them off. There was no danger and we had no casualties.

I believe this was the last patrol of the Americal. In late August we were informed that the Japs were about to surrender. We were prepared to debark for the attack of the mainland of Japan. Thank God that the attack did not come off and that the war ended.

Ray E. Poynter (1SG, Retired)

**Dear editor,**

I'm working on a project on the National Mall and its Monuments and Memorials. I'm looking for anyone who may have served with Sp4 Bruce Edward Peteroy of Staten Island, NY. He served in E/4/3/11 from 8/29/1968 to 5/12/1969. He died of fragmentation wounds in Quang Ngai Province.

A photo album of his life was left at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall last year. I've reached out to the VVA chapter on Staten Island and have started to track down family but want to reach comrades as well.

Isham Randolph  
ishamrandolph@gmail.com

**Dear editor,**

I read the letter to the editor by Jim Gales on page 11 of the Oct-Nov-Dec 2013 issue of the Americal Journal. It hit the nail right on the head. I am so glad the letter was published and included the list of diseases recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs to be presumed caused by the exposure to Agent Orange in Vietnam.

Now let me tell you of my trip down this path. I got drafted in 1969. It took me 11 months to get to Vietnam. I got there in July 1970 and came home in July 1971. At the time of my going into the Army I had a good job with good benefits. On my return back home I went back to my old job and never looked for another. In all I was there 40 years and retired in 2008.

I am a member of VVA, VFW, AL and the ADVA. I am not a real active member in any one for whatever reason I have.

Because of my health insurance from my job I never went to the VA for health care. Many years ago I did get a card advising me to put my name in. In the 1970s I did go to college on the VA GI Bill education benefit.

In March 2012 I found out that I had prostate cancer. Like Jim stated in his letter, I was unaware that prostate cancer came from AO exposure.

I told my Korea War vet cousin I had prostate cancer and he knew I was in Vietnam. He did not know about AO and prostate cancer. His primary care is the VA. He goes to the VA at least once a month.

I told my Vietnam vet co-worker and good friend the same thing. He has 100% disability and he does not know about AO and prostate cancer. He goes to the VA at least twice a week. He is in a group for help and he's been going there 43 years.

I told other veterans friends about this and they did not know about AO and prostate cancer. My wife's cousin is a DAV member and with a VA disability and does not know about AO and prostate cancer.

My wife's other cousin was a nurse with an ex-husband with prostate cancer. Guess what? She does not know about the tie-in. My brother-in-law was a Vietnam vet (Navy- I am not sure was he brown or blue water). He knew nothing about AO and prostate cancer.

Now we come to my story. My surgery was in May 2012. Today my PSA is around 0.2. I never went to the VA.

In August 2013 the American Legion magazine arrived at my home and after so many years of not reading it I sat down and read this one. There it was in black and white. An article in the magazine stated that the VA recognized AO and prostate cancer.

Holy smoke! I did not believe this. I spoke to my 100% disabled friend and all he said was for me to go down to the VA hospital and ask questions.

So in September 2013 I walked into the VA hospital and started the process. That day I took an exam and then went back in a week to get the results. All-in-all I was pretty good, PSA 0.2, nothing really bad. The PA who gave me the results told me to see a veterans service representative to get paperwork in order to file a VA claim. I am still in the process to file a claim with the VA for Agent Orange related prostate cancer.

Thanks for printing the list of AO recognized diseases. That should be in every issue. Thanks to Jim Gales for sending the letter to the editor. I hope others read it and get moving in the right direction.

Roland Mantovani  
helix11219@aol.com

**Dear editor,**

I was a LRRP with the Americal Division in 1968-69. I was with Co. E, 51st LRRP, and later with Co. G, 75th Rangers. Don Kilgore stated in a letter to the editor in the Jan-Feb-March 2014 edition of the Americal Journal that he met a man in Manhattan who claimed he was an Americal LRRP and went on missions alone.

This claim is utter nonsense. We never went out on any missions with less than a five man team and never for more than three days. We never went out for a week.

Our LRRP compound was adjacent to the combat center. We had no mess hall so we ate with the 23rd flying boxcars. We had no PX and no separate entertainment. There most certainly were no wives within the LRRP area.

This person definitely was not a LRRP in any stretch of the imagination. This person is delusional. I wish I could have met him.

Bob Sedlmeyer

**Dear editor,**

I am looking for information on the bands of the Americal Division, particularly The Americal Division Band. There were nine bands in the task force that was sent to the South Pacific just after Pearl Harbor. Chester E. Whiting became director to The Americal Division Band which was formed from members of those nine bands.

Various bands were all over the areas where the Americal Division was active. I am interested in all of them, especially the 180 Field Artillery Band and the

192 Infantry Band. Chester Whiting later returned to the United States to form the 1st Combat Infantry Band, The Army Ground Forces Band, and The United States Army Field Band, which I played in during the 1970s.

I am working on a history of all of these bands that form the background history of the USAFB. Can anyone help me with the activities of any of the band of the Americal Division?

Dick Taylor; retired band historian  
gableguy@tampabay.rr.com

**Unit Reunions**

3rd Battalion, 16th Field Artillery, 24-27 September 2014, Hotel Elegante', Colorado Springs, CO. All former and current battalion members. Please contact Tom Lightner at 760-445-2345 (San Diego area), for more information.

Co. B, 4/3rd Inf. group has around 800 contacted veterans and their reunion will have 100-150 attendees. It will be held Aug. 8-10, 2014 in St. Louis, Mo at the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Contact: Jim Depew [gitwood24@yahoo.com](mailto:gitwood24@yahoo.com); 9103 Red Cedar Dr., West Chester, Ohio 45069.

Continuing to search for Vietnam veterans who served with A/5/46 Inf. any time from 1968-1971. Have located 259 from the unit who are alive and have verified that 92 have died since they returned home. If you served with this unit please email Ellen Gause, [ellengause@ec.rr.com](mailto:ellengause@ec.rr.com), or call 910-862-9461.

## From the Vietnam Historian

Les Hines Reports



### Archive Research Continues

Jim Simms reports progress on obtaining historical documents from the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) in Carlisle, PA. This is going to be great! I have been trying to get these items since 1990! I will start working to transcribe the documents soon after I receive them.

Members of the Americal Division Veterans Association very much appreciate that Jim Simms and Mike Crutcher made copies of Americal unit newspapers from archives maintained by the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) in Carlisle, PA. Here is Jim's summary dated April 18, 2014:

It is hard to believe but I am headed to the post office to send the first disk off. The disk contains the 196th Bde., 3/21, 4/31 and division artillery units 6/11, 3/16, 3/18 and 6/56. I took the liberty of using your memo format on documents provided by others in developing the below draft about the source of the documents.

Listed below is the name of the unit newspaper, the number of issues and the year(s) each newspaper was published. A detailed listing of the volume, number, date and number of pages of each paper is provided in the folder for each unit. The newspapers are organized in individual year folders.

*196th Infantry Brigade "Chargers" 19 issues from 1966, 1968, 1969, 1970, 1971 and 1972.*

*3/21 Infantry "The Gimlets" - 6 issues from 1969 & 1970 \*\*.*

*4/31 Infantry "West of West" - 11 issues from 1969 & 1970.*

*6/11 Artillery (105) "Cannoneer" - 7 issues from 1969 & 1970.*

*3/16 Artillery (155) "Battle-Ax Banner" 4 issues from 1969.*

*3/18 Artillery (175/8 inch) "Hook & Star" 7 issues from 1969.*

*6/56th Artillery (Hawk) "Night Hawk" 4 issues from 1969.*

*Americal Division "Southern Cross" 2 issues from 197x.*

We completed taking photos of all but 100 more or less pages of the 4/3 infantry newspapers. I have also identified about 100 issues of the 1969 Americal News Sheets editions that you do not have that we will take pictures of next. There is also a large numbers of 1968 issues that you do not have that we will do next. The next batch I will send will be from the 198, 1/46, and 5/46. I should have the next batch ready around the first weekend of May.

### Medal of Honor to May 1968 Tam Ky Veteran

On March 18, 2014 President Obama presented the Medal of Honor to 24 veterans for heroism in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. Only three of the awardees survive to this day.

Among those receive the nation's highest award was former Spc. 4 Santiago J. Erevia of San Antonio, TX. Erevia earned the prestigious award for his courage during a search and clear mission near Tam Ky, South Vietnam, on May 21, 1969.

This award has an Americal Division connection. On May 12, 1969 one brigade of the 101st Airmobile Division was moved from the A Shau Valley area in the northern part of South Vietnam to Tam Ky. The Screaming Eagles reportedly pulled out of a battle and were in Tam Ky within 24 hours.

I have personal photos of the 101st soldiers leaving the planes at Tam Ky. I had tears in my eyes as I was glad we had gotten much needed help.

The 101st brigade was operating under the control of the Americal Division in Operation Lamar Plain. Major Colin Powell coordinated the operations between the Americal Division and the 101st Bde. The Brigade was released back to the 101st Airmobile Division in August 1969.

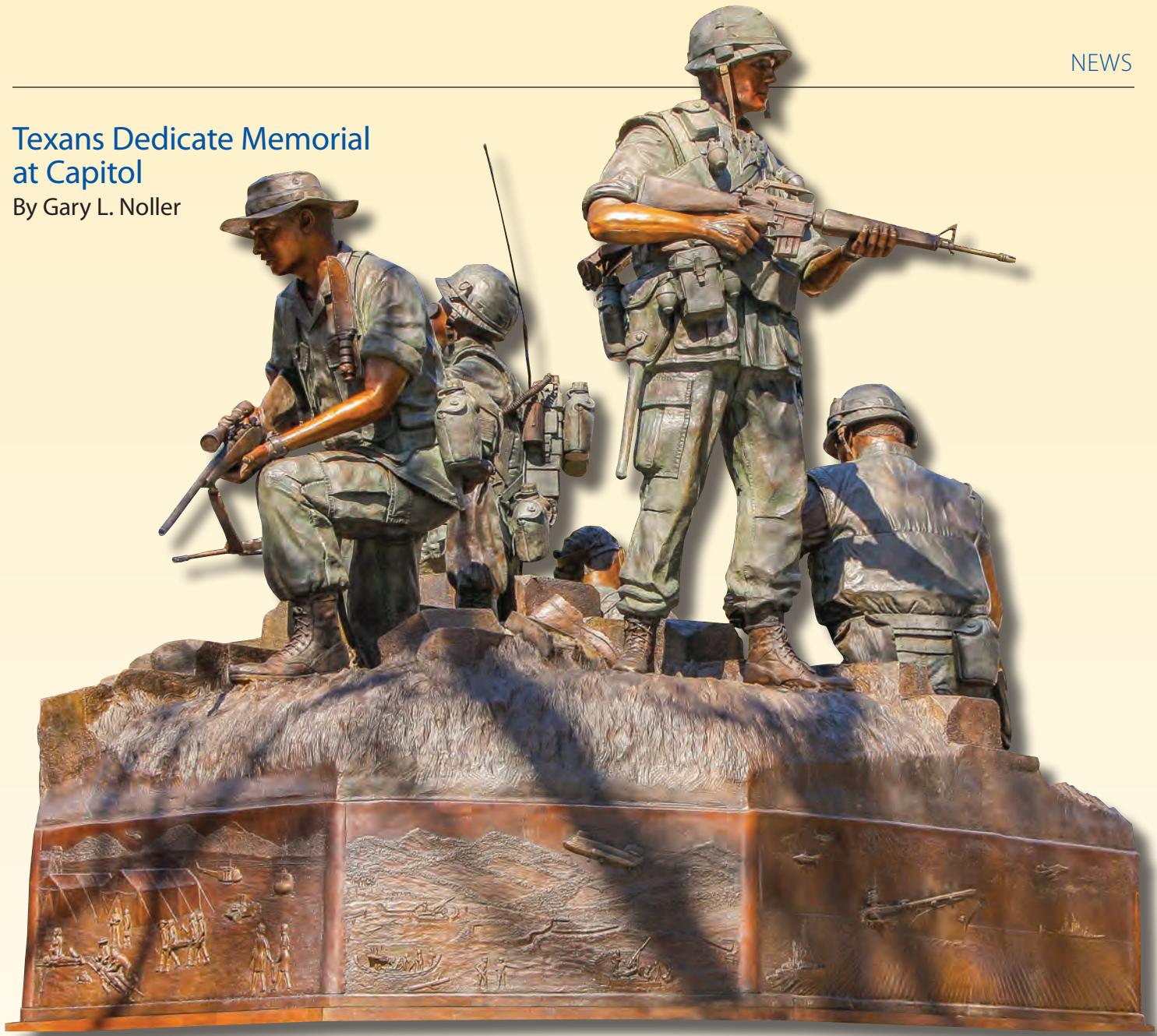
Erevia, a native Texan dropped out of high school and joined the Army. During an intense battle on May 21, 1969 he cared for wounded colleagues while under heavy attack. According to the Military Times, "without hesitation Specialist Erevia crawled from one wounded man to another," charged while armed toward the hostile fire, before eventually returning to take care of the injured troops he'd left behind.

The Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMAR PLAIN, from 21 MAY states that 1st Brigade elements engaged in heavy contact as the 1-501 fought a day long struggle against a determined, well dug-in enemy. At 0500H, C/1-501, vic BT164115, detected movement outside an NDP and engaged the suspected enemy with M-79 and hand grenades. A first light sweep disclosed 2 VC KIA. At 0642H, B/1-501, vic BT165108, received intensive small arms and heavy machinegun fire from an enemy force of unknown size. The ensuing contact continued throughout the day. C and D Co and Recon/1-501 converged on the area to assist the heavily engaged B Co. At 0730H, C/1-501 engaged an enemy force in the area and began a daylong fight in the immediate vicinity. At 0900H, Recon/1-501, vic BT165105, observed 4 NVA with a 12.7mm HMG and engaged the enemy position. At 1000H, D/1-501 joined the bitter fighting by engaging an enemy force in the area. The fighting continued throughout the day as the enemy tenaciously defended from steel-reinforced concrete bunkers. Tactical air, artillery and Air Cav support was used throughout the fighting, but the ground units remained locked in close combat throughout the afternoon. As the elements disengaged, the enemy left 25 KIA on the battlefield with the 1-501 suffering 12 KIA and 46 WIA in the fight.

*Editor's note: I have recently learned that Les Hines has retired from his paid occupation. I am sure he will enjoy more time with his family and friends and perhaps just take some time off. His contributions as ADVA Vietnam Historian are greatly appreciated by all.*

## Texans Dedicate Memorial at Capitol

By Gary L. Noller



On March 29, 2014 over 4,000 people gathered on the northeast lawn of the Texas Capitol to participate in the dedication of the Texas Capitol Vietnam Veterans Monument. The dedication took place forty-one years to the date of the last combat troop withdrawal from Vietnam.

The monument honors all Texas veterans who served in Vietnam but it is a special tribute to the 3,417 Texans who were killed or remain missing-in-action. Each of the five 1.25 times larger-than-life bronze statues depict a member of an infantry squad on a dawn patrol. They are posed in a circle with their backs together in a mutually protective stance. A medic tends to a wounded comrade. Their battle complete, they wait for a helicopter to extract them from the field of battle.

The statues display the diversity of the population of Texas and include depictions of Texans of Caucasian, Hispanic, African-American, Native-American and Asian-American descent. The soldiers wear no rank.

On the base that supports the statues are panels that represent the Texans who served at sea, in the air, on the ground, in the hospitals, and at other locations in support of those at the front

of battle. Buried within the base are 3,417 dog tags bearing the names of those who did not return.

The efforts to construct the memorial began in 2005. Legislators, business and community leaders, Vietnam veterans, families of casualties, and Texas citizens composed the memorial committee. The 79th Texas legislature unanimously approved H.C.R. No. 36 approving a monument on the Capitol grounds to honor Texans who served and died in Vietnam. The legislation was co-sponsored by Senator Juan "Chuy" Hinojosa and Representative Wayne Smith, both Vietnam War veterans. The monument was accepted on behalf of the people of Texas by Governor Rick Perry.

The American Division Veterans Association delegation attending the dedication was led by Cameron Baird, South MidWest chapter commander, and Edwin Griffin, chapter chaplain. Others in attendance included Fred Castaneda, Tony Martinez, Toribio Sonora, Jim Wark, Roger Gilmore, and myself.

Additional information about the memorial may be obtained on the internet at [www.tcvvm.org](http://www.tcvvm.org). Photos with this article were provided by Rene A. Morales, VVA Chapter #137.

Through the Years...  
ADVA Continues  
Annual Pilgrimages



## By Gary Noller and Dave Taylor

The American Division Veterans Association (ADVA) was founded in November 1945 by Veterans returning home from the war in the South Pacific. The association was formed in Massachusetts by local Veterans. These Veterans had previously served in units of the 26th "Yankee Division" Massachusetts National Guard before they were orphaned when the division was reduced from four regiments to three regiments. The units involved included the 182nd Infantry Regiment and various artillery, cavalry, medical, administrative, and other units.

The ADVA was incorporated as a non-profit organization in Massachusetts in 1945. However, it did not receive IRS tax exempt status as a 501c19 war veterans' organization until the 1980s. Joe Chin was the National Finance Officer at the time and submitted the necessary application to obtain the 501c19 determination for the ADVA.

In the early years the ADVA held reunions and banquets in the Boston, Massachusetts area. There was some effort to recruit members from outside Massachusetts but very few Veterans from other areas joined the association. Al Cota, the founding National Adjutant, tells of several ADVA officers traveling to South Dakota to encourage former members of the 164th Infantry Regiment to join. It appears that in those early years the geographic separation of the 164th Veterans in North Dakota and the 132nd Regiment Veterans in Illinois from attending the early national reunions always held in Massachusetts, resulted in little interest. Moreover, regimental camaraderie built up through the pre-war and wartime years suggested that

many Veterans simply wanted to reunite with their old regiments, battalions and company's.

The ADVA functioned until the mid to early 1950s and then things began to fall apart, undoubtedly with the Veterans trying to get on with the business of raising families, making careers and the lack of volunteerism for the ADVA back in a time when communications required more effort than they do today in the age of the internet. Records do not indicate the resumption of election of officers until late 1960s. Interest was renewed in a national American organization due to the reactivation of the American Division in Vietnam in 1967 and the fact that many WWII Veterans were retiring and had the time and interest to devote to reuniting with WWII comrades once again. Membership in the ADVA was open to Vietnam Veterans immediately. Records indicate that some Vietnam Veterans joined the ADVA during the Vietnam War but not many. One of the earliest was Rich Merlin (23rd MP Company – Vietnam) who joined the ADVA while in Vietnam. Rich's father was also an American Veteran from WWII and was an ADVA National Commander as well.

As the ADVA resumed activities including national reunions, the reunions were always held in the Boston area because the ADVA by-laws in effect at the time stated that the ADVA was headquartered in the Boston area.

In the early 1980s American WWII Vet Lloyd Morrell became active in the ADVA. Lloyd was from the Boston area and served in the horse cavalry in the Yankee Division. He transferred to artillery when the horse cavalry was dissolved at the beginning of WWII. Lloyd separated from the Army but later joined the Air Force





and retired as a Chief Master Sergeant. He resided for a time in Alaska and then moved to California.

Lloyd wanted to have an association of Americal Veterans but not be required to travel from the West Coast to the East Coast for its activities. In the early 1980s he organized a reunion of Americal Veterans in California. This reunion was held in Oakland, CA and included activities on a naval vessel (Lloyd's son was a Navy officer in the area). Lloyd continued to move for a diversification of the ADVA. ADVA officers decided to form a Far West Chapter of the ADVA in about 1983. The "Far West Region" was everything west of the Mississippi River. Lloyd was named chapter commander.

In 1987 Lloyd held a national reunion in Reno, NV. Vietnam Veteran Gary Noller saw an advertisement in a gun magazine for this reunion. He contacted Lloyd and asked if he was eligible for membership in the ADVA. He sent me a very nice welcome letter and encouraged Gary to get involved in the ADVA. Gary joined the association at that time (December 1986, life dues were \$50) but he did not attend the Reno reunion.

The 1987 Reno reunion was the first national reunion held outside of the New England area. It was held June 19-21 at the Sands Regent on Arlington Avenue at 3rd Street. Rooms were reserved at the enviable rates of \$42 plus tax for the weekend and \$14 for a single or double during the weekdays. The program was largely left open, for Veterans to enjoy gambling and local shopping or camaraderie at the hospitality room. No formal tours were given. Business meetings were held on Saturday which included the Far West Chapter Meeting and, at that time (believe it or not) the Chapter actually had a Ladies Axillary which also held a meeting. Saturday night was the annual banquet.

After the Reno reunion the ADVA began to form regional chapters and the chapters were given approval to sponsor annual reunions. It was only when the regional chapters began to emerge that the staff and groundwork was laid to branch out across the United States to hold annual reunions.

Ron Ward, another Vietnam Vet, began attending reunions in 1982 at Hyannis, the only Vietnam member in attendance. He was told another Vietnam Vet was in attendance but never saw him. The first reunion to see a small group of Vietnam Vets in attendance was the 1988 reunion at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania in 1988. Ron Ward recalls there were about 40 Vietnam Vets. Those early Vietnam Vet attendees included Ron Ward, Gary Noller, Dutch DeGroot, Rollie Castranova, Brian Mulchrone, Grant Finkbeiner, among others.

To be accurate, a number of WWII Vets initially were "chilly" to accepting the Americal Vietnam Veterans, into their ranks, in part because of the My Lai incident where the WWII generation thought the Vietnam Vets had brought discredit upon the division. In addition, the general doubts in America about the reason for being in Vietnam were shared by some of the World War II generation, even though it was the WWII generation that started and managed the war. But there were other ADVA members from WWII, some in leadership positions, who were adamant about the inclusion of Vietnam Veterans into the ADVA and they had no problem with taking on their WWII peers and demanding that we were all Americal Veterans first.

It was at the Hyannis reunion in 1982 that Ron Ward could not find a seat at a table at the Saturday annual banquet, as the WWII vets claimed "all seats are taken". He went to the bar to have his dinner and a WWII vet - one of the WWII Vets in charge - asked him why he was sitting at the bar? Ward replied "there doesn't seem to be any seats available" and the WWII Vet promptly replied, "Oh no...you are sitting with us!" It is a credit to those early Vietnam Vets who joined the ADVA and stuck with it, and to WWII Vets such as Pete Messina and Lloyd Morrell and a few others, who made sure they would be welcomed, that the ADVA exists today. Otherwise it is quite likely the Vietnam Vets would have formed another association and the Americal WWII legacy would have faded into history by the 1990's. Shortly after the 1990 reunion, Vietnam Vets began taking leadership positions in the ADVA.

A list of reunion years, locations, chairmen, and sponsoring chapters for the past 30 years follows:

- 1982** Hyannis, MA (?) National-sponsored
- 1983** Stowe, Vermont (?) National-sponsored
- 1984** Laconia, NH (?) National-sponsored
- 1985** none
- 1986** none
- 1987** Reno, NV (Lloyd Morrell) Far West Chapter
- 1988** Carlisle Barracks, PA (?) Eastern Chapter
- 1989** Orlando, FL (?) South East Chapter
- 1990** Oakbrook, IL (Joe Micek) Great Lakes Chapter
- 1991** Hyannis, MA (Bernie Chase) New England Chapter
- 1992** San Antonio, TX (Bill Maddox) South Midwest Chapter
- 1993** Topeka, KS (David Recob) Central Mid-West Chapter
- 1994** Newburg, NY (Steve Dennison) Eastern Chapter
- 1995** Oakbrook (Chicago) IL (Micek) Great Lakes Chapter
- 1996** Reno, NV (Lloyd Morrell) North West planned but held in Far West
- 1997** Worcester, MA (Bernie Chase) North East Chapter
- 1998** Orlando (Bob Kapp/ Jon Hansen) South East Chapter
- 1999** St. Louis, MO (Ron Ward/Gary Noller) Central Mid-West Chapter
- 2000** San Antonio, TX (Ernie Carlson/Bill Bacon) South Mid-West Chapter
- 2001** Cleveland, OH (Dave Taylor/Larry Watson) Eastern Chapter
- 2002** Washington, D.C. (Terry Babler) Great Lakes Chapter but held in East
- 2003** Little Rock, AR (Nick Bacon) South Mid-West
- 2004** Reno, NV (Rich Merlin) FW
- 2005** Kansas City, MO (Chrystal) Central-Mid-West Chapter
- 2006** Portland, OR (Dave Hammond) North West Chapter
- 2007** Buffalo, NY (Dave Eichhorn) Eastern Chapter
- 2008** Jacksonville, FL (Lee Kaywork) Southeast Chapter
- 2009** Shreveport, LA (Ron Ellis) South Mid-West Chapter
- 2010** Lombard (Chicago), IL (Dave Taylor) Great Lakes Chapter
- 2011** Colorado Springs, CO (Tom Packard) Far West Chapter
- 2012** Atlanta, GA (Ron Ellis/Roger Gilmore) ADVA Legacy Committee
- 2013** Nashville, TN (Ron Green) South East Chapter



Original Americal Division  
Veterans Association Brand

Chapters were formed and subsequently merged with other chapters through the years; they may all sponsor reunions. In the past 10 years the Northwest chapter merged into the Western Chapter, Northeast into the Eastern Chapter and Central Midwest and Great Lakes Chapter into the new Great Midwest Chapter.

As long as Americal Veterans remain devoted to the ADVA, the reunions will continue, and our Vets will visit new places, meet new faces and reunite in a bond of camaraderie, all Under the Southern Cross of the Americal Division.

## Another Invasion on Cebu, Philippines

By David W. Taylor



**March 26, 2014** saw another “invasion” on the Talisay Beach of Cebu, Philippines. It’s a beach landing that has occurred for many years now, on the same date, to mark the Americal’s landing on March 26, 1945 to liberate the Philippine people.

Fire crackers replaced artillery shells and enemy machinegun bullets while Philippine Marines acted out the role of the Americal’s soldiers in a small budget but heartfelt reenactment of the beach landing. Organizers of the event said it’s the thought of remembering the gallantry of Americal soldiers and Filipino guerillas in their joint efforts to liberate Cebu that counts. Officials led by Cebu’s Vice-Governor and the Mayor of Cebu City - presided over the 69th commemoration of the March 26 landing. The Vice-Governor told the onlookers that “the battle did not end 69 years ago and that Cebu’s youth have to fight their own battles now”. The mayor reminded the youth to “know the importance of this historic event and dedicate themselves to making Cebu a better place”

Cebu City is also the location of VFW Post 12130 and American Legion Post 63, both made up of American Veterans who live on Cebu. One Veteran in the VFW Post, Brian Bartlett, was a medic with the 1st/52nd Infantry Battalion, 198th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal Division in Vietnam. The American Vets presented a wreath in honor of the Americal, as part of the ceremony.

Another American Veteran and Commander of the VFW Post, Alex Roese, noted, “The speakers mainly



“Americal landing” on the Talisay Beach takes place on March 26, 2014; Americal soldiers are played by Philippine Marines.

spoke about the importance of remembering the Veterans and remembering the assistance from the US. It was also pointed out by the Vice Governor about the help and aid that has come to the Philippines over the last 50-plus years from Japan. And now Japan, the US and the Philippines are great allies, which are especially important today because of the increased hegemony that the Chinese are asserting in Asia”. Davenport also noted, “The reenactment of the beach landing took about 30 minutes, was very entertaining but not true to history”

During the day Roese spoke to several of the Philippine military officers present, including the Commander of the Philippine Army Central Command, a Lieutenant General, three other general officers, the mayor of Talisay and the event organizers. They were excited to learn that next year plans are being made to dedicate a monument to the Americal Division at the Japanese surrender site north of Cebu City, the day after the Talisay Commemoration is held, and that several members of the Americal Division Veterans Association will be in attendance, including the possibility that General Arnold’s (Americal Commander on Cebu) son will be in attendance (retired Colonel). Cebu officials were looking forward to next year and the two commemorations.



Monument erected by the Philippine people to commemorate the Americal landing on Talisay Beach



In a reenactment more symbolic than accurate, the "Americal soldiers" carry the American flag and Philippine flag during the beach landing to liberate the island of Cebu



Exact same beach area where the Americal landed in 1945, is now used for reenactments of the historic event.

#### *Cebu, March 2015*

As was mentioned in previous Americal Journal issues, the ADVA Legacy Committee is working with American Veterans who live in Cebu City, to construct and erect a monument dedicated to the Japanese Surrender to the Americal in September 1945.

The dedication of the monument will be at the exact site of the Japanese surrender and will take place next year in late March, to coincide with the annual commemoration of the Talisay Beach landing. Possibly one dedication will follow the other over a two day period. Your ADVA WWII Historian and two members of the Legacy Committee are planning to attend and will arrive approximately one week prior to the commemorations, to tour the Japanese battle sites in conjunction with a local Cebu University history professor. The ADVA will not be arranging tours for ADVA members who wish to attend. However, those who are interested in possibly attending should contact WWII Historian Dave Taylor (contact information on inside cover). Once travel arrangements are confirmed (dates, flights, hotel, etc.) we will be happy to share that information with interested members who wish to join us. They will be responsible for making their own travel arrangements.



American Vets who live in Cebu City, and are members of the VFW and American Legion Posts in the city, take part in the Talisay beach landing ceremony. Note one Vet proudly displays the 1st/52nd Battalion banner. He served in the Americal in Vietnam with the 198th Light Infantry Brigade.

(All photos courtesy of Brian Bartlett – Cebu)



*ADVA WWII Historian note: This article was located during my inspection of Americal archive materials which were transferred from Worcester, Massachusetts to Eldred, Pennsylvania. The exact title of the article is, "Banzai" Suicide Attack – Target: Americal Division Reconnaissance Troops (Cebu, March 1945). The author, Hitoshi Emori lists his title as "former PFC of the defunct Imperial Japanese Army 6142 "Akatsuki" ("Dawn") Ship Transportation Engineers, Liloan, Cebu"*

*The article was translated to English after the war by another Japanese soldier in the same unit. He (name unknown) is identified in the photo in this article. The Japanese soldier who translated the work had contacted W. J. McLaughlin of the ADVA, who lived in Mashpee, Massachusetts. McLaughlin subsequently sent the translated article to former Americal Newsletter Editor Jim Buckle.*

In July 1944 I was inducted into military service from the reserve forces to serve in Cebu, Philippines. I was first conscripted into the Army in 1939 at the age of 20 and sent to China. At the time of my discharge I held the rank of Private First Class, and by the time of my 2nd call to colors I was married and was to be a father in two months. When I embarked from Hiroshima (location of the headquarters of the Army "Akatsuki 6142" Ship Transportation Command) I felt for sure that this time I would never make it back.

En route to the Philippines I went through the harrowing experience of being subjected to aerial attacks by American planes and was forced to swim for my dear life when the troopship I was on was sunk off Manila Bay. I barely managed to reach my destination, Consolacion, Cebu, a little town about 6 kilometers north of Cebu City, just after the Americans had landed on Leyte on October 20, 1944. Consolacion was one of several bases used by our ship transportation engineers, which operated diesel-

powered landing crafts for transporting men and supplies on amphibious missions. Our main unit, a replacement and training base of regimental size, was located in Liloan about 6 kilometers to the north (Note: near the Silot Lagoon where the Americal Division later had its base camp from around June 1945).

The detachment I was assigned to consisted of around 80 men under the command of a young lieutenant named Negishi. I belonged to a squad of 14 men headed by Sergeant Maruyama. Our main duty was to patrol the Consolacion-Mandaue coastal highway from possible infiltration by Filipino guerillas. Inside our defense perimeter was a hospital for lepers, and because of reports of guerilla activity I went out on patrol to this area on a number of occasions. The hospital gave me the creeps.

If the Americans landed on Cebu we were to pull out immediately for Liloan. I was stationed in this area for five months, and with the passage of time the war situation surrounding Cebu became increasingly ominous. The landing of the Americans seemed imminent around March 1945. Then at dawn on March 26 our fears became a reality. I was momentarily gripped with fear but this soon turned into a feeling of resignation. We soon received orders from our headquarters in Liloan to hold our perimeter with determination.

On the 3rd day after the Americans landed we received a report that the advance units of the Americans had advanced to Mandaue, a mere 6 kilometers away from Consolacion. On the 6th day (April 1) we were informed that American tanks had penetrated to within 1 kilometer from our positions. We had not been waiting idly however. Under Sgt. Maruyama's directions we had planted mines in strategic places such as roads, houses and trees. We manned our positions with whatever arms we could muster. Each soldier received around 120 rounds of ammunition for the 1905 vintage bolt-action rifles which were the mainstay rifles



*(Photo was provided by a Japanese soldier who was a friend of Hitoshi Emori, author of this article. The Japanese soldier has the following to say about the photo):*  
 "This is a group photo of part of my Army unit taken on December 5, 1943, in Hiroshima just prior to embarkation to Cebu. We were all yanked out of college to fight the hairy barbarian Yanks and die a glorious death for Emperor Hirohito. I am pictured 5th from left, 2nd row from bottom. I was a shy 21 and had never had a girlfriend; much less kissed a girl (believe it or not). The guy standing on my right, facing the photo was born in Hawaii. He died of malnutrition, compounded by dysentery".

of the Japanese Army. We also received one hand grenade each. Our weapons were woefully inferior to fight the Americans with their highly advanced arms. Our fighting spirits, however, were at fever-pitch high.

The enemy tanks penetrated our front line of resistance, their tracks screeching with a sound that was eerie and terrifying. On orders we opened up with everything we had. The mines we had planted in the target area exploded almost perfectly. Smoke and fire engulfed a large area on Consolacion. We expected the American infantrymen to make their appearance at any moment, but after waiting for what seemed like an eternity our scouts reported back that the Americans had retreated. We all let out a shout of joy convinced that we had repelled the enemy.

Our joy was short-lived, however. Sgt. Maruyama was called by Lt. Negishi, and when he returned he was shaking his head wearing a grim expression on his face and as if talking to himself he mumbled, "There is no way out of it, we have to go through with it." The next thing he did was call me, PFC Sakizaki and PFC Saito, and with tears in his eyes he said, "I was just ordered by Lt. Negishi to pick three men to form a suicide squad to attack what our scouts report to be an enemy reconnaissance vehicle

inside our perimeter near the leper hospital. It seems to be in radio contact with its headquarters, and our mission is to attack and blow it up." The sergeant seemed almost apologetic in giving out the orders. He explained that he chose the three of us because, as luck would have it, we happened to be nearby and within sight as the other soldiers were in dugouts at the moment.

The sergeant further added, perhaps to solace our feelings that he would not let us die alone. He was going to send the remaining soldiers in the squad to the target area at night to make a bayonet charge all together. "Orders are orders, and to us soldiers the orders of the superior are the orders of the emperor" he emphasized firmly. From the time of basic training we had been disciplined through physical beatings that orders of the superiors had to be carried out with no questions asked. So conditioned and regimented was my whole being to this ridged discipline that the order which would turn me into a human bomb evoked hardly any emotion. I reacted like a selfless human being, automation as it were. I philosophized that since I was destined to die this would be a quick and clean way to go, no suffering from wounds. Just a big blast and everything would be over in an instant. My mind was completely oblivious of my loved

ones back home. At ordinary times I naturally thought about them as a normal human being would. But at that particular moment my mind was completely absorbed with the imminent mission. Nevertheless I had unemotionally and as-a-matter-of-factly trimmed my fingernails as well as a part of my hair and wrapped them up neatly so they could be given to my loved ones as a remembrance by someone in our unit who may be lucky to survive the war.

Before we departed on our deadly mission Sgt. Maruyama poured water into our cups to make a toast for the success of our mission. We had no ""sake" (rice wine) so we had to be content with water. We exchanged vows that we would be sure to blow up the enemy. Of the three soldiers I was the leader, not because I was the oldest at 25 but because I had entered military service some days or months earlier. In the Japanese military a soldier who has entered service even one day before you is your superior and he had to be obeyed no matter what.

It was about noon when we headed for the target as our buddies waved to us shouting words of encouragement. The target – reported to be a lone communications or reconnaissance vehicle – was said to be near the leper hospital, about 3-4 kilometers away. The distance was to be covered by jogging almost all the way. It was a very hot day and my thirst soon became unbearable, perhaps compounded by the mental stress that I had been subjected to. We had covered only about one kilometer, and my canteen was empty. The other two reported the same situation. Saito then volunteered to fetch some water. A little while later he came back with canteens brimming with water. With a sigh of relief bot Matsuzaki and I drank our fill without stopping to breathe. The water had a strange sweetness to it and at the time I thought it was something out of the world, although it had a particular smell.

After quenching our thirst and taking a mouthful of hardtacks, we stared out again. We hadn't gone very far when we came to a grove of trees with a water buffalo hole still occupied neck-deep by its long-horned tenant. The water was muddy with worms swimming in it. The odor of the water made me recall the smell of the water I had just drunk. Although I thought it was preposterous my suspicion prevailed and I called out to Saito, "Hey, don't tell me that was the stuff you made us drink!" He broke into a big grin and nodded. Matsuzaki and I stared at each other in disbelief and laughed out loud. "What the hell", I said, "we're going to die anyway so it doesn't matter if we're going to have a bellyache or dysentery!"

As we neared the target area we crept into the bushes to get our bearings. Suddenly we heard strange voices. A close look revealed that there were three enemy soldiers who appeared to be on patrol. Saito whispered, "Shall we get them?" But I quickly warned that we shouldn't use our grenades, our only weapons other than explosives, because the explosion would disclose our position. Besides, our mission was entirely different. With great care not to make any noise we hurried to our target area in a roundabout manner. But on reaching our destination we were dismayed to find the recon vehicle had gone away. No enemy was in sight. The only visible trace of the enemy was the track of vehicles imprinted in the asphalt surface of the highway which had turned soft under the merciless hot sun.

Now we were completely flabbergasted. We couldn't go back without having accomplished anything after having been given a rousing sendoff with a "toast" by our buddies. As the three of us sat down near the shade of the gate to the leper hospital and pondered our fate, we sensed approaching footsteps. We hid ourselves instantly as we feared the enemy had come. Our fear turned to a sigh of relief when we spotted two of our buddies who were returning from a separate patrol mission. They greeted us eagerly as they had a message from Sgt. Maruyama that since it was already discovered that the enemy recon vehicle had gone away we should return promptly. What a relief I mused. Now we can go back without any sense of disgrace bothering us.

Lt. Negishi and Sgt. Maruyama greeted us warmly. Even our buddies were elated at our "safe" return. I felt so embarrassed that we wanted to crawl into a hole. To redeem myself I offered to join the "banzai" charge that night but Sgt. Maruyama had a squad limited to ten men whom he was to lead and he told me to rest for the next mission. He and his men left that night after going through the ritual of toasting with water; all of us sending them off never expected them to return alive. But the next morning they all returned safely. In his report Sgt. Maruyama claimed they found two tanks hidden in a coconut grove and blew them up by inserting 7-kilogram explosive charges underneath them. An amphibious vehicle was likewise reported to have been blown up. We couldn't help but regard the report with a bit of skepticism, but nevertheless it created a sensation. No time was lost in reporting the results to regimental headquarters in Liloan. One soldier who was credited for having shown exceptional bravery in the successful attack was promoted two ranks.

Around mid-April the Liloan garrison troops were to retreat to the nearby hills, and regimental headquarters ordered Lt. Negishi to hold the Consolacion positions to the last man until the retreat was fully completed. Sporadic "banzai" attacks up to that point had cost the lives of about a dozen men. When the Liloan garrison vacated the town and stared for the nearby hills about April 20, Lt. Negishi rescinded the order to fight to the last man. But by a queer twist of fate the Americans commenced a three-pronged attack on Consolacion with confirmed reports of 40-plus tanks and motorized vehicles. This attack was preceded by several days of incessant aerial attacks, mainly Grumman fighter planes. The situation became desperate. About twelve of us survivors manned a ridge on a hill against which a line of American infantrymen made its uphill advance. Our concentrated fire seemed to have surprised the Americans, and we managed to cut down a number of them in the forward line. But the attack was followed up by tanks against which we never had a chance. Our ammunition became exhausted, and we were ordered to retreat towards Liloan, each man for himself.

Of the eighty-plus men in Lt. Negishi's detachment only three of us are alive today. Both Saito and Matsuzaki of my original suicide team perished in the retreat. The three of us who made it back were able to put this little article together by trying to recall the battle as it happened, and this is offered to the memory of Lt. Negishi, Sgt. Maruyama and fellow men who gave their lives in battle under hopeless circumstances.



The National WWII Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana, named one of the top 12 museums in the world by Travel Advisory, "resurrected" part of the Americal Division Band of WWII for a series of shows from September 20 to October 20 in 2013.

Jay Hagen, Band Director, explained the short route that took the band to adopt itself to the Americal: "This show was first put together for the opening of the Boeing US Freedom Pavilion at the museum that features a simulation of the USS Tang, a submarine that saw action in the Pacific Theatre in WWII." Hagen's wife and the museum's Entertainment Director, Victoria Reed, created a variety show for the occasion based on the USO shows that Bob Hope was associated with during WWII. "It went over so well that it was decided to bring in back for a full run in the Stage Door Canteen, the museum's 1940s-themed entertainment venue."

The show was planned to coincide with a new exhibit for October of 2013, honoring Bob Hope. The small swing band directed by Hagen, called the "Victory Six," had performed for several other shows in the canteen, but Hagen and Reed wanted to bring some more authenticity for this particular show. As part of their research, Hagen did several Google searches regarding military bands that were stationed in the South Pacific Theater during WWII. Those searches led him to Sgt. First Class Rahne Murner of the 40th Division Army Band. Murner then consulted an online military band forum where he asked what Army Division band might have performed with Bob Hope in the South Pacific during WWII. COL Thomas Palmatier, Commander/Bandmaster for the United States Army Band "Pershing's Own" responded:

"Recommend they use 23d Infantry Division, usually known as the Americal Division. It was in the S. Pacific

**Comedian impersonates Bob Hope visiting the Pacific Islands with the Americal Band behind. Hope did, in fact, visit the Americal Division on Bougainville just before the Americal left for the Philippines.**

Theater throughout WWII and had a very active and excellent Army Band under CWO Chet Whiting who retired as LTC Whiting, the first commander of The US Army Field Band. High probability they would have performed with Bob Hope in WWII and Vietnam"

Hagen immediately contacted me as the ADVA WWII Historian and additional information was provided.

Reed swung into action and bought Americal patches from the ADVA Quartermaster, which were sewn onto their Army uniforms for their performances. The 6-piece band consisted of three horns (trumpet, saxophone and trombone) and rhythm section (piano, bass and drums). The "Americal Band" played for one month with three performances each week, Friday and Saturday's at 8:00PM and a Sunday matinee at 1:00PM. Entertainment Director Victoria Reed said the performances were an overwhelming success. "Each performance was oversold with ticket sales and each performance received a standing ovation!"

The band opened each show with "In the Mood," a Glenn Miller hit that was very popular for Army bands during the war. Another popular tune the band performed during the show was Artie Shaw's "Begin the Beguine". Both Glenn Miller and Artie Shaw had led band that performed for the troops during WWII. The group also accompanied several vocalists who portrayed celebrities who entertained the troops with Bob Hope during WWII, including Francis Langford singing the nostalgic song, "I'll Be Seeing You." Other popular tunes sung, with the singers portraying the original vocalists, were "Lilli Marlene" (Marlene Dietrich) and "I-I-I Like You Very Much" (Carmon Miranda).

## Vietnam Journal

By Andy Olints

### CHAPTER 12 DECEMBER 7, 1970

Our platoon was assigned a new platoon leader two days after Lt. Harrell was wounded. Lt. Arthur Schmidt was the new platoon leader and I was very surprised how good he was. He fit in with the platoon easily. He took charge, showed a lot of confidence, and could read a map. I was so happy he wasn't one of those gung-ho guys who talked about killing dinks.

About the same time that Lt. Schmidt came out to the field the company was told that we would be working with a company of South Vietnamese soldiers. I hated that. Each platoon in our company (Co. D, 1/46 Inf.) was assigned a Vietnamese platoon. I was afraid to sleep at night thinking that one of these South Vietnamese soldiers was going to kill me. I remember they were loud and just seemed to cause a commotion with everything they did. I noticed that the South Vietnamese lieutenant had very nice fatigues that looked as if they had been starched and his boots looked polished. This lieutenant didn't carry an M16; he carried a pistol. He also didn't carry any water. He did carry a map and a compass. He definitely was the boss of his platoon.

On the morning of December 7, 1970, Lt. Schmidt told me to tell my squad that we would be going out on a light patrol. I remember telling everyone in the squad about the light patrol and that we were lucky we didn't have to carry our packs all day. We also would be using the same night laager for the coming night. I looked at Cowboy Bob Stainton and said to him, "I have good news and bad news. The good news is we're going on a light patrol. The bad news is it's Pearl Harbor Day (not a good day for the Americans)".

American troops are up at first light, eat quickly, get their orders for the day, and are off on a patrol. The South Vietnamese got up later and then they had to start a wood fire so they could cook their rice. One of their guys carried a big steel cooking pot and a few other guys carried a lot of water. It seemed to take forever to get the water to boil in that pot. Then they added some American dehydrated rice that cooked in a few minutes. Lastly, they all had to eat, clean the pots and get their orders from their lieutenant. I'm guessing that I sat there waiting for an hour and a half.

When we finally got word to get ready to go on patrol Lt. Schmidt wanted the Vietnamese to take point. For the next few minutes Lt. Schmidt used hand gestures to the South Vietnamese Lieutenant trying to convince him to walk point. Then Lt. Schmidt looked at me and said, "It's their war. They should walk point." To settle the matter, both lieutenants called LZ Young to ask who should walk point. The answer came back: Have a Vietnamese walk point and then have every other man be an American. We were now about two hours late starting the patrol. I usually walked third in a formation like the one we were using, but now I'm



***"showed a lot of confidence, and could read a map"***

walking sixth. That made it very hard for me to keep control of the direction we had to walk in. About an hour into the patrol the Vietnamese point man allegedly spotted an NVA and fired his M16 at him.

I'll bet a thousand dollars that the point man never saw an NVA. I make these comments because I always felt that if our platoon had not been two hours late starting the patrol our whole day would have been a lot different.

I'm guessing about noon the patrol stopped to call in our location. We were on the top of a small hill overlooking some rice paddies and a few hooches. I was just sitting there with Lt. Schmidt, who was looking at his map and telling his radio operator what location to call in to LZ Young. I was looking at the rice paddies and hooches and thinking how beautiful the village was. It was like a plantation. The rice paddies were about fifty feet square and there were about four of them. Between the rice paddies were dikes that you could walk on. Next to one of the hooches was a small vegetable garden and in front of the hooch was a well for water. I didn't usually tell my platoon leader what to do, but I asked him to call LZ Young and have them call any South Vietnamese troops that were staying in this village. I wanted these South Vietnamese troops to know that we were up on the hill overlooking them.

Lt. Schmidt got on the radio and I stood, waiting to know what LZ Young thought about this village. Lt. Schmidt looked at me and said, "There are no friendly villages in this area. There are no villages in this area on the map." My heart sank. About one minute later a man walked out of one of the huts in the village and he walked to the well. He had a bucket, tied it to the rope, and lowered it into the well to get some water. He then washed himself with the water as our patrol watched from the hill. A second earlier we were standing there with not a problem in the world and now we are hiding behind trees, lying on the ground, and looking at an enemy base camp.

I'm watching Lt. Schmidt on the radio and also the rice paddies and huts below. To my left I could see some movement and all of a sudden I saw a North Vietnamese soldier with an AK47 rifle carrying a pack on his back. I was

stunned just looking at him. It is quite the thing to see your enemy walking across a rice paddy dike.

I looked at Lt. Schmidt. He was on the radio talking to our company commander, Lt. Schmitz. I looked back at the NVA soldier as he walked across the dike and into one of the huts. Seconds later another NVA soldier appeared and he also walked across the same rice paddy dike. I couldn't believe what I was seeing. Then the third NVA soldier appeared. The final count of NVA soldiers who walked across the rice paddy dike was fifteen. I never saw two of them together. These NVA soldiers were very professional in the way they maneuvered around their base camp. If we had fired our M16s at the first NVA that we saw, we would never have known that there were fourteen more soldiers in the camp with him.

I have no idea how long all of this took. With Lt. Schmidt on the radio, I never got to talk to him. All the information I got was our men whispering to each other. In no time at all our company commander arrived at our location with another squad of Americans and a squad of South Vietnamese. With two American squads together we now had about 24 Americans altogether. Lt. Schmitz was the company commander, Lt. Schmidt was my platoon leader, and I don't remember the name of the other platoon leader.

Accompanying the company commander was our field first, Staff Sergeant Joe Wolfe, the highest-ranking sergeant in the company. As I was lying on the ground looking at the village, I was also watching these four leaders of our company. Some of them were on the radio talking to LZ Young and others were looking at the map. I could see they were talking to each other. One of the men in my squad whispered to me that Lt. Schmidt was calling in some artillery on the village. I looked over at Lt. Schmidt and he had a disappointed look on his face. Then I got word that because some other infantry companies in our area were getting re-supplied by helicopter, there would be no artillery fire on the village. The commander at LZ Young didn't want an artillery round hitting a helicopter in mid-air.

My thoughts were, "Cancel the re-supply and fire artillery on fifteen known NVA in the three huts." Minutes



**"Lt. Schmidt got on the radio and I stood, waiting"**



**"had no problem with the on-line assault"**

went by and once again I could see our four leaders talking on the radio and studying the map. I got word that they were trying to get gunships (helicopters with rockets and machine guns) to assault the village. I had been in-country five months and had never seen a gunship. I thought, "What a great idea! The gunships could really do some damage on the village." Once again I could see disappointment on the face of Lt. Schmidt. The gunships were up in Da Nang on a mission and were not available for use.

Lt. Schmidt came over to me, sat on the ground, and told me he had tried to get artillery and gunships to fire up the village, but none were available. He then told me to take my squad, go carefully down to the bottom of the hill, and get as close to the rice paddies as possible without being seen. Then I was to get my ten men on-line and assault the village. My eyes opened up wide and my mouth dropped. Did I just hear what I thought I heard? Then Lt. Schmidt said that for support, our other squad of Americans would fire their M16s and M60 machine guns into the village from the top of the hill to cover us as we were running across the rice paddies. For extra support, the twenty South Vietnamese soldiers with us would also fire into the village. All firing of weapons would stop when we got close to the village. I had no problem with the on-line assault, but I didn't like the idea of the South Vietnamese firing their M16s over our heads until we got close to the village.

My squad consisted of Bob Stainton, George Salcido, Sexton Vann, Leroy (Butch) Bruch, John Ortega, and four other men whose names I can't remember. Lt. Schmidt, our platoon leader, was also part of the assault.

We got down to the bottom of the hill with two M72 handheld rocket launchers. To start off the assault on the village, we first fired the M72 rockets into the village and then all eleven of us started running across the rice paddies into the village.

All the other soldiers on top of the hill started firing into the village. There was about two to three inches of water in the rice paddies and it was slow and very hard to run fast. We could hear hundreds of rounds of ammo flying through the air. I really don't know if the enemy was firing at us. Halfway across the rice paddy my canteen fell into the



**"hundreds of rounds were fired"**

water and my instincts told me to stop and get the canteen. I didn't stop, but I slowed down thinking about getting that canteen. The men got to the end of the rice paddy and ran past the well and veggie garden and right through the huts. Once we were through searching the huts, we set up a perimeter and secured the area. I couldn't believe that all fifteen North Vietnamese soldiers had just disappeared. Not one of them was in sight and there were no blood trails. Did they have tunnels or did they run out the back doors and into the jungle?

It only took a few minutes for the rest of the troops who were on the hill firing support for us to also run across the rice paddies. It took a few more minutes to get organized. I had to make sure I had all my men accounted for and then check with the other squad's leader to see if the other squad had all their men. I stood looking along one of the rice paddies and I noticed two more small huts about 150 feet away. I asked Lt. Schmidt where the other squad was located. He looked at me and said, "In the area to my left." I then pointed to the two small huts and said, "Then who is over there?" Two men appeared from the huts so I fired my M16 on full automatic and eighteen rounds went off in seconds at the two men who I thought were NVA. In seconds most of the American troops assaulted the two huts and no bodies or blood trails were found. Hundreds of rounds of ammo from our M16s and M60 machine guns were fired into those two huts. I just couldn't believe that we could see the enemy, but we couldn't get any kills that we could confirm.

I never heard or saw the helicopter that brought out Col. Doyle, our battalion commander, but I wasn't surprised that he flew out to be with his men in combat. He talked to our company commander Lt. Schmitz and our platoon leader Lt. Schmidt.

A third group of huts were located another 150 feet from where we were positioned and we were told to stay where we were. Finally, gunships were going to arrive. We were told to pop a few smoke grenades to show our location. All of a sudden two gunships came flying in very low to the ground, their mini-guns firing hundreds of rounds of ammo, and when they got close to the last few huts, they fired some rockets. Watching these gunships fire up the huts was one

of the most exciting things I ever saw in Vietnam. When the pilots first started firing the mini-guns, the bullets were no more than fifty feet away from our troops on the ground. It was very scary at the time, but I thought it was so powerful to watch these gunships in action.

After the gunships flew away, I looked up and there was Col. Doyle with Lt. Schmitz, running across a rice paddy dike. Lt. Schmidt grabbed my arm and said, "Let's go." I was running across the rice paddy dike and ahead of me were Col. Doyle, Lt. Schmitz, and Lt. Schmidt. I actually said to myself, "Some private in the North Vietnamese Army is going to get a medal for killing a colonel, two lieutenants and a sergeant with one blast of ammo from his AK47." My second thought was that if someone fires at us, I'm going to dive into the rice paddy. All four of us made it to the huts and other U.S. troops followed.

While searching the huts in the village we found five kids and two older women. The South Vietnamese lieutenant took the oldest boy who had been captured around the back of the hut and whacked him on the head a little. The boy gave information that the village was used as a resting place for NVA soldiers. The boy said that the night before there had been over fifty soldiers in the village. All this information was told to me from other members of my squad.

It was December and by six o'clock in the evening it was already getting dark. I think Col. Doyle made the decision that it was too late in the day for the troops to move so we were to stay in the area of the village for the night. Resupplies of ammo and C-rations were being flown out on a helicopter. Before the helicopter landed, a few of men set up a small perimeter to protect the helicopter while it was on the ground. The helicopter landed and dropped off all the supplies, and the colonel boarded the helicopter



**"to pop a few smoke grenades to show our location"**

to return to LZ Young. I was sitting there watching the helicopter takeoff, and no more than fifteen feet from me a NVA soldier fired his AK47 at the helicopter. It scared the hell out of me and I fired a few rounds in the area that the firing had come from. Once again the enemy disappeared. I often thought about the NVA who fired at the helicopter. I think he could have killed me any time he wanted. I believe he was well trained and he knew he had a chance to maybe shoot down a helicopter.

The cases of C-rations were opened and everyone just picked up one of the meals, not knowing what meal they took. Some moron back at LZ Young who sent out the C-rations didn't send out any heat tabs to cook them. I was pissed. C-rations could be one of the worst meals in the world and not heating them up made them even worse. I ate some crackers and water.

Soon it was dark and all the American and South Vietnamese troops formed a perimeter (a circle of about 150 feet round). About every twenty feet in the perimeter was a guard position with two men. The two men at each position had to take turns guarding the position all night. In the center of the perimeter was the command post, which consisted of Lt. Schmitz, Staff Sergeant Wolfe and their radio operator, Pfc. Peter Detlef.

The command post was very important as the leaders of the company had to keep contact with FB Young and the artillery command. Every night out in the field the command post had target spots on the map preplanned with the artillery command. If artillery was needed, it saved the command post time by being ready with these preplanned areas of attack. Staff Sergeant Freddie Walker came over to our squad and told us what area in the perimeter we had to guard. We had ten men in the squad and that meant five guard positions. Everyone in the squad knew what to do. I knew Bob Stainton since I got in-country, so Bob and I picked out an area in the perimeter. The other eight men in the squad picked out where they wanted to be in the perimeter.

About 8:30 that night I heard the sound of an M16 and at the same time I heard the sound of an AK47 rifle. My first thoughts were that the NVA must be trying to find out exactly where we were. Then I got word that a South Vietnamese soldier had been killed while shooting at an NVA. The NVA also had been killed. The location of the shootings was far away from where Bob Stainton and I were. Bob and I just sat there talking (whispering) about all the things we were going to do when we got back to the States.

About 9:30 that night I could hear the sounds of metal hitting metal. Sound carried through the woods at night, and it seemed as if we almost knew exactly where it was coming from. The sound I heard was one that was familiar, but I just couldn't figure out what it was. To me, it sounded like a sledgehammer hitting a metal base. Well, it turned out the metal base was the bottom of a mortar tube being positioned in the ground.

The next sound we heard was the sound of a mortar round sliding down a tube. A second later we heard the same sound and another mortar round slid down the tube. Then I heard a loud voice, "In-coming," which meant that

the enemy was firing mortar rounds at us. Bob Stainton looked at me and said, "Run to the stone wall behind us." We could actually hear the mortar rounds in the air. The first two mortar rounds that were fired landed past my location, and in seconds I could hear the call for a medic. The next two rounds landed to our left. My mind was thinking about a training class we had about the NVA shooting mortar rounds at us. In class we were told that because the NVA didn't have sights on their mortar tubes, the NVA would shoot the first two mortar rounds over our heads. The second two rounds would land short of us. The third two mortar rounds would hit us. I'm thinking to myself, "If another two mortar rounds go off, I am going to be hit." I can still hear the sound of the third two mortar rounds going down the tube, and I could hear the rounds in the air all the way to me. I was lying on the ground in a fetal position and I was right next to a stone wall. I told myself to bring my arm down to my side. I wanted to protect my heart with my elbow and arm as a shield. I had my eyes shut and I heard and felt the mortar rounds go off. The sound was loud and the concussion of the rounds really hurt. It felt like someone hit my whole body at one time. My first thoughts were, "I'm alive." Then I actually moved my fingers and toes and everything in my body seemed to work. I tried to get myself functioning after my body was hurt from the concussion. I was trying to get myself to think properly. I felt this warm feeling running down the right side of my face. The warm feeling was blood. I was totally surprised that I was wounded on the top of my head. Then the left side of my waistline started to burn (I had a waistline back then). I touched the burning feeling and it was blood. Nothing hurt but it was quite a feeling to realize that I had just been wounded in two places and I was O.K. I then heard the calls for a medic. I heard Doc Hicks (the medic) yell that he too was wounded but would help.

Next to me was Bob Stainton and he was screaming, "I can't see." Bob screamed, "I'm blind." I grabbed Bob and he had a lot of blood all over his face. Somehow I calmed him down and got him to wipe his face. He was afraid to open his eyes because he thought he was blind. Finally, he opened his eyes and he could see. Bob had a bad shrapnel wound in his shoulder. I think the shrapnel took a big chunk of flesh from his shoulder, and his blood and flesh flew onto his face and into his eyes. Bob's shoulder was hurting and he was in shock. More mortar rounds were still being fired by the NVA. I took Bob about ten feet from where we had been located behind the wall and we sat down in a rice paddy. It seemed safer there. More mortar rounds would continue to land in our perimeter.

About 100 feet from me was the location of George Salcido and Sexton Vann. Right before the mortar rounds were fired, Sexton decided to get some rest. Sexton gave his wristwatch to George and said, "In a few hours wake me up." Minutes later a mortar round landed right next to their position. Both George and Sexton were extensively and seriously wounded with shrapnel. Both men were carried to the helicopter and for a few days were in the hospital together. With all the complications from serious wounds and pneumonia, it took over a month for George and Sexton to get back to a hospital



***"An artillery base called Hawk Hill started firing artillery rounds"***

in the United States. A year later both men got out of the hospital. Twenty-eight years later George was reading the book *Sappers in the Wire* and he noticed Sexton Vann's name in the book. After a phone call to Sexton, a few months later George would fly from California to North Carolina where Sexton lived. After twenty-eight years, George would return Sexton's wristwatch. Thirty-eight years after being injured, both George and Sexton still have problems from their shrapnel wounds.

Close to George and Sexton were Dennis Rouska and Leroy (Butch) Bruch. Mortar rounds landed right next to their position and both men were seriously wounded. No one actually saw what happened to them, but some people think both men were wounded by the first mortar round. It is assumed that Dennis tried to help Butch and that the second mortar round landed close to them, killing Dennis while he was trying to help Butch. Dennis' body was found lying on top of Butch as if he had been trying to protect him. Butch would live and Dennis Rouska would receive the Distinguished Service Cross posthumously.

An artillery base called Hawk Hill started firing artillery rounds in our defense. Mortars rounds from the enemy and artillery rounds from Hawk Hill were landing at the same time. In order to accurately direct artillery rounds against the enemy, communication between Hawk Hill artillery base and our command post (company commander) had to be perfect. First, our soldiers had to

fire artillery rounds at the enemy's mortar tubes. Then, artillery rounds had to be fired as close as possible to our own company position and completely around the location of our troops in the hope of stopping any North Vietnamese troops who were near our location.

Bob Stainton and I were in one of the rice paddies when all these artillery rounds were going off. I could actually hear the rounds being fired from Hawk Hill. I swear that I could hear the rounds in the air. I just sat there and prayed that no one made a mistake and dropped an artillery round on one of us. Sometimes when one of the rounds would explode, I could hear and feel the shrapnel in the air.

Finally, the artillery and mortar rounds stopped, and the Medevac helicopter approached to pick up the wounded. Lt. Schmidt lit some C-4 explosive, the flame of which was used as a marker for the helicopter to land. I helped Bob Stainton to the helicopter and it was while doing so that I first noticed how many people had been wounded. George Salcido, Sexton Vann and Butch Bruch were badly wounded and they were the first men put on the helicopter. Peter Detlef and Bob Stainton were next, and I sat in the door gunner position. Before I got into the helicopter, I found out that Dennis Rouska had been killed.

Looking back at this exact time, I wish that I helped out more with the other wounded men. I have to give credit to the other guys who went around from one position to another helping out. It was dark out and the enemy was close, but they still did their jobs. During the attack the command position had called in the artillery and then the Medevac helicopters, and in a very bad situation kept control of the company. In a situation like this, people have to step up and help and they did.

Before the helicopter took off I thought about getting out of the helicopter, walking up to the pilot, and telling him the location of the enemy mortar tubes. I didn't want to fly over their position knowing that the enemy could be firing their AK47s at the helicopter. The helicopter started to take off, and at tree top level, we flew over that exact area and my heart almost stopped. Thank God no one fired at us. I sat in the door gunner seat and watched the medic work on the three badly wounded men. Sexton Vann seemed to be in the most pain. The helicopter flew to the coastline and then headed south to Chu Lai and the hospitals. I'm guessing we were about 3,000 feet up in the air and that was my first time I flew at night. I could look down and see lights in the different villages. I could also see the ocean waves, and yes, right next to me, were five wounded men.

Finally, we approached the first hospital and when we landed, a few doctors came running out, but they only took Butch Bruch out of the helicopter. I didn't understand what was going on until someone told me that this particular hospital was for amputees. What I was told at the time was that Butch had a few fingers blown off. I really don't know for sure if Butch lost some fingers.

As the helicopter landed at the second hospital I could see that there were about four nurses and a few medics waiting for us. We landed, and George Salcido and Sexton Vann were put on gurneys. In seconds the medics cut away

all their clothes. To me it looked like the medics used razor blades to cut off the clothing. Nurses wrapped inflatable splints around their legs for support and then the guys were rushed to the x-ray room.

Pete Detlef, Bob Stainton and I walked into the hospital and some of the medics there asked us what parts of our body were wounded. They then told us we had to go to the x-ray room first. I was the least wounded so I was last to be x-rayed. When I finally got to the operating room, I was shocked. There were four operating tables with George, Peter, Sexton and Bob lying there naked. I looked at George and Sexton and couldn't believe how many wounds they had. It looked as if their legs had been cut wide open, and I could see all this flesh but no blood. My first thoughts were of how someone could be cut up so much and not bleed to death. I then noticed the doctors. They looked like they were in control of everything and there was no panic. I then felt that both George and Sexton would live.

I was told to take off my shirt and sit on one of the operating tables. Bob Stainton was next to me and he asked me if I knew where his false teeth were. He said he didn't want any of the nurses seeing him without his teeth. I said, "You don't have any clothes on, so why do you think the nurses will notice that you don't have any teeth?" One of the medics came over to me and shaved one half of my head. Then a doctor came over to me and first checked out my head. He put a small bandage on the cut and then he looked at my side. He told me the shrapnel went too deep into my stomach and he would not remove it.

George and Sexton would be staying at this hospital, but Bob, Peter and I would get a jeep ride to a third hospital. The jeep driver drove us to the door of the new hospital and said, "Go in that door," and then he drove off. We walked in and showed the medic on duty some papers and he told us that there weren't any beds open at the hospital and that we had to go to a different hospital. I asked for a ride to the fourth hospital and the medic told me the only available driver was sleeping. For the second and last time in Vietnam I lost my cool. I looked at the medic and then looked at the back room, and I could see someone sleeping there. I jumped over the counter, pushed the medic aside, headed toward the back room and in a loud voice said, "I will get him up." As I was walking to get this shithead up, he jumped out of bed and started yelling, "I'll take you, I'll take you." He drove us to the fourth hospital and I told him to wait there till we got some beds.

The medic in the fourth hospital didn't say much. He gave us some hospital clothes and some bed sheets. He then told us to make our own beds. It was December 7, 1970, and I hadn't slept in a bed with a pillow and bed sheets since June 15. I made the beds for Bob and Peter, and while I was making the beds, one of the other wounded GIs in the hospital said to me, "I only have one can of soda but you guys can have it." Did that taste good! I hadn't had a shower since Thanksgiving, but I put on the clean hospital clothes and got into those clean sheets. It felt good to lie down in bed. Then I think I got a little bit of a panic attack. It was dark in the room and I lay there thinking about what

had happened that day. I didn't have my M16 with me and I just didn't like the idea that there was no one on guard duty. I looked for the doors in the building and planned an escape in case some NVA might open the doors and throw in a hand grenade. It was about three o'clock in the morning and I was very tired and in a panic mode. Finally, I was so tired I told myself to close my eyes and just take a nap.

About six o'clock in the morning someone grabbed my big toe and said, "Get up and shave." My first thought was, typical Army bullshit. I got up and took a shower and then shaved. Peter, Bob and I then had breakfast in a real mess hall. Sgt. Kavanaugh, who had been wounded just a few weeks earlier, came to visit us. He brought mail and packages from home.

A few beds from mine was a staff sergeant who had been in my platoon. He was the staff sergeant who was wounded on December 1. The day we got there was his last day at the hospital.

The doctors arrived at the hospital and they stopped to see each soldier and check on his wounds. I was doing great and for the next three days I would be in the hospital. I had a hard time sleeping at night because it just didn't feel right that no one had an M16 to protect us (me). I got most of my sleep in the day when a lot of people were around.

When the doctor came to visit me on the third day, he said, "There's no infection so it looks like we can stitch you up today and you can get out of the hospital." He made an appointment for me to get stitches a little later on that day. I went into a small operating room and I assumed that a doctor was going to sew me up. The first thing he said to me was, "Do you want a big scar or a little scar?" I said, "Sir, I think I'll take a little scar because I have six months left in Vietnam and I might get wounded again." He looked at me and said, "I'm not an officer. I'm a Private First Class in the Army and I had six weeks of training to learn how to sew people up."

December 7 will always be a very important day in my life. Each year on December 7 I think of all the guys in my platoon. I always think about Dennis Rouska. When I look at a clock on December 7 and see what time it is, I relate that time to what I was doing in Vietnam on that day. I had this crazy thought. I almost died that night, but I lived. It's like I was born twice, two birthdays. Each year I think of all the guys when I go out and have a pizza on December 7. Why not be happy, I'm alive.

Thanks to the computer and e-mails I have the opportunity to write to George Salcido. In one of his e-mails he told me that December 7 was his second birthday and he went out to dinner that night. I thought I was the only one who thought that way, but a lot of wounded veterans think alike. Thirty-eight years later I e-mail George Salcido, Sexton Vann and Bob Stainton. We definitely have a few things in common.

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## Faces Never Forgotten

By Bob Wolf

There is a program named Faces Never Forgotten that is collecting and assembling the photographs of every person who was killed in action in Vietnam. They have accumulated over 30,000 pictures so far. This means they are halfway to their goal.

They would like to attach faces and stories to all the names that are chiseled on The Wall. They hope to accomplish this task by the time the new Education Center opens near the current Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.

I have taken the liberty of submitting all the photos I have in my possession (entrusted to me by the guys from Alpha Company) of Alpha Company, 5/46th Infantry, who were KIA in Vietnam. Most of these photos have now been incorporated into the Never Forgotten website. But some of the photos I submitted weren't included because Never Forgotten already had photos of some of the guys. The photos may be seen at [www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces/](http://www.vvmf.org/Wall-of-Faces/). Additional information is also available at [www.buildthecenter.vvmf.org/pages/faces-never-forgotten-campaign](http://www.buildthecenter.vvmf.org/pages/faces-never-forgotten-campaign).

After building The Wall, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund (VVMF) continues its mission to honor, educate and heal by building the Education Center at The Wall. The Center will be the place on the National Mall where the stories and sacrifices of our heroes will never be forgotten. Financial contributions to raise the \$85 million needed for the construction of The Education Center at The Wall are now being accepted.

My database extends mostly to Alpha Company vets. Many of you have contacts with those who served in other units and branches of the Armed Forces. I would ask you to pass this message along to them as they may have photos of men who were KIA that they might like to contribute to the project. If you or your friends would like to add to the collection (KIA only), your contact person is Janna Hoehn. Feel free to use my name and e-mail, [neverforgotten2014@gmail.com](mailto:neverforgotten2014@gmail.com) when you communicate with her.

A word about Janna is in order. She lives on the island of Maui, and to the best of my knowledge, she is the top fundraiser for Faces Never Forgotten. You can Google Janna Hoehn and read her biography on the web. I highly recommend it.

Janna put me in touch with Jan Scruggs in Washington DC. I didn't know who Jan was until I saw him on the Smithsonian Channel recently. Jan was the originator of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial concept. It was his idea. It was his project. He is the man who petitioned Congress for the land to build The Wall. He is the man who raised the private funds necessary to build the memorial. In short, Jan's idea was the genesis for The Wall -- a project that has healed a divided and broken nation. You can also Google Jan on the web and read his biography. He is a decorated Vietnam veteran who deserves a huge "WELCOME HOME" from all of us.

I want to thank Janna for putting me in touch with Jan. I count them both as personal friends. But I also want to express my gratitude to Bill Crawford who, innocently enough, precipitated all of this by sending me a simple e-mail about a project that was unknown to me.

Thank you, Bill.

## 2014 Combined Reunion:

**"A" Co. 1/46 Inf., Kham Duc, Ngok Tavak**

**By Bill Schneider**

This will again be a combined "A" Co., 1/46th Infantry, Kham Duc and Ngok Tavak Reunion. This possibly will be the last combined reunion of these three groups. John White from Australia will be here for the reunion and therefore we expect a good turnout.

The dates are October 8-13, 2014 (hotel rates good 10/6/14 to 10/13/14). The location is the Sheraton Lakeside "Chalet" (make sure you specify "Chalet" as there are two Sheraton's at this location. The hotel offers free airport shuttle. Hotel contact information is 191 Westport Plaza, St. Louis, MO. 63146; Ph: 314-878-1500; Fax: 314-212-2180. The reunion rate is \$89.00 per night plus tax. Club level rooms are \$129 per night plus tax. Make your reservation with special reunion code CODE: ACO-KD VIETNAM REUNION.

We have only booked 75 rooms for now, but as these rooms fill they will add more to our block. Therefore, if you want to be guaranteed of being in the "homebase" hotel, please make your reservations early -- they can always be canceled if something comes up. There are two "sister" hotels that they will be able to provide for us for the overflow, but if you want to be at the epicenter -- make your reservations early.

The opening of the Hospitality Room will be Wednesday, October 8. But please come early and stay late and enjoy the beautiful St. Louis fall. This location is a new one with as many as 15 restaurants, pubs, eateries, etc. Also, the Plaza sports a "Starbucks", McDonald's, Panera's, etc. This location is one of St. Louis' finest and is getting better as more shops open.

There again will be a Friday wine/cheese/non-alcoholic beverages reception, Friday and Saturday Kham Duc-Ngok Tavak seminars, and a Saturday banquet.

St. Louis has a reputation for being a wonderful family oriented city. The St. Louis Zoo is one of the world's finest and it is FREE. The St. Louis Art Museum, History Museum, Science Center, and all things located in the "Forest Park" area are FREE. Anheuser Bush also still does free tours through the brewery and Grant's Farm. There are many free things to do in St. Louis plus those that charge admittance.

The reunion registration fee is \$20 per person. The Saturday banquet begins promptly at 6:00 PM and is \$38 per person. We expect many special guests will be there to include Col. Joe Jackson (MOH) and General Patrick Brady (MOH).

So, come early and stay late and enjoy the beautiful fall in St. Louis, MO. Bring your family & enjoy St. Louis' German heritage and "Octoberfest".

This reunion will be quite special for us all as we continue to lose our "brothers" more frequently. So, if there is someone you have been wanting to talk with, reunite with, etc. now is the time to do it. We have found from personal experience that "putting it off until later" is a devastating and regretful "wake up call".

For additional information and reunion registration form please call Bill or Ann Schneider at 636-942-4042; cell: 314-805-9248 or send a message to [wschnei591@aol.com](mailto:wschnei591@aol.com).

## Americal Veteran Awarded the MOH

By Gary L. Noller



SP4 Donald P. Sloat, of Coweta, OK, was killed on January 17, 1970 while serving as an infantryman with Co. D, 2/1st Infantry, 196th Lt. Inf. Bde.

The Army informed Evelyn Sloat of her son's death. They simply told her he was killed-in-action. A short time later a soldier who had served with SP4 Sloat told her that her son stepped on a land mine. She accepted this account for nearly 40 years.

In 2008 Mrs. Sloat received startling new information on a land mine via a story in the *Washington Post* that her son saved the lives of three of his comrades when he protected them from a tripped booby-trapped grenade. The explosion injured members of the patrol and took the life of Don Sloat.

Mrs. Sloat also learned that her son had been written up for the Medal of Honor. But for some reason the award was never processed. SP4 did receive two Bronze Star Medals for Valor, an Army Commendation Medal, Purple Heart, and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

Mrs. Sloat contacted her representatives in Washington, D.C. and requested their assistance. She also began the search for Vietnam veterans who were with her son at the time of his death. In particular, she needed to contact officers that could document how her son was killed.

It was a slow process and Mrs. Sloat was determined to see it through. Unfortunately, she passed away in 2011. But the effort to get recognition for her son continued. The pieces finally came together.

But not all obstacles were yet overcome. A regulation in the U.S. Code requires that evidence substantiating the Medal of Honor must be submitted within three years of the combat action. The U.S. Congress would have to pass an act and have it signed by President Obama in order to waive this regulation.

Part of the required legislation reads as follows:

113th CONGRESS; 1st Session. H. R. 3304

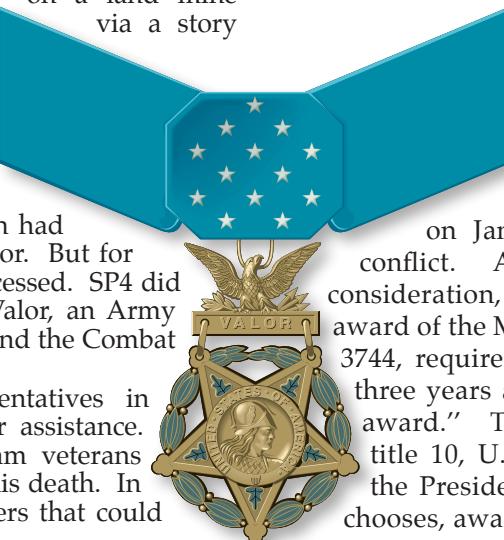
SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION AND REQUEST FOR AWARD OF MEDAL OF HONOR TO DONALD P. SLOAT FOR ACTS OF VALOR DURING THE VIETNAM CONFLICT.

(a) Authorization.--Notwithstanding the time limitations specified in section 3744 of title 10, United States Code, or any other time limitation with respect to the awarding of certain medals to persons who served in the Armed Forces, the President is authorized and requested to award the Medal of Honor under section 3741 of such title to Donald P. Sloat of the United States Army for the acts of valor during the Vietnam Conflict described in subsection (b).

(b) Acts of Valor Described.--The acts of valor referred to in subsection (a) are the actions of then Specialist Four Donald P. Sloat of the United States Army serving with 3rd Platoon, Delta Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal Division on January 17, 1970, during the Vietnam Conflict.

On January 11, 2013 a letter was written by Robert M. Gates, Secretary of Defense, to Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, Chairman, Committee on Armed Services, House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. The letter said:

**DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN:** I am writing in response to requests from Senator Tom Coburn and Representative John Sullivan for award of the Medal of Honor (MoH) to then-Specialist Four (SP4) Donald P. Sloat under the provisions of title 10, U.S.C., section 1130, of ``Consideration of proposals for decorations not previously submitted in timely fashion: procedures for review.''



I reviewed the proposal for award of the MoH to then-SP4 Sloat for saving the lives of three of his fellow soldiers by shielding them from a grenade blast with his own body on January 17, 1970, during the Vietnam conflict. After giving the nomination careful consideration, I believe then-SP4 Sloat's actions merit award of the MoH. However, title 10, U.S.C., section 3744, requires that the MoH be awarded ``within three years after the date of the act justifying the award.'' Therefore, a statutory time waiver to title 10, U.S.C., section 3744, is required before the President of the United States may, if he so chooses, award the MoH to then-SP4 Sloat.

The final award authority for the MoH rests solely with the President of the United States. My favorable determination in no way presumes what the President's decision might be.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Legislative Affairs. A similar letter is being sent to the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services, Senator Tom Coburn, and Representative John Sullivan.

On December 26, 2014 President Obama signed the required legislation as part of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2014.

Donald P. Sloat was 20 years old when he lost his life in Vietnam. His hometown of Coweta, OK is located in Wagoner County just a few miles south of Tulsa.

Coweta has the unfortunate distinction of having lost more of its residents in Vietnam, on a per capita basis, than any other community in the country. Nine Coweta residents died in Vietnam. At that time, Coweta had about 2,800 residents.

Sloat is survived by two sisters, Kathy Sloat and Karen Sloat McCaslin. Information about a ceremony to present the Medal of Honor to Sloat's next-of-kin was not available at the time of writing this article.

Additional information may be found on the internet at: [www.fallenheroesproject.org/united-states/don-sloat/](http://www.fallenheroesproject.org/united-states/don-sloat/)

## Vietnam Locator Requests

Post your requests on the [americal.org](http://americal.org) website at:

[www.americal.org/blog/](http://www.americal.org/blog/)

**Author :** Jimi Small

E-mail : [jimiraysmall@gmail.com](mailto:jimiraysmall@gmail.com)

Comment: I was a photographer with the 523rd from 69/70. If anyone knows me let me hear from you. I'm 65 and just got a computer. I didn't know this stuff was out here. I've always wondered about all the guys. I guess I thought I was the only one thinking about things.

**Author :** Dinh Thieu Nguyen (IP: 123.22.208.135 , 123.22.208.135)

E-mail : [nguyendinhthieu1943@gmail.com](mailto:nguyendinhthieu1943@gmail.com)

Comment: I served as an interpreter for S-5 of 1/52 Battalion then I was transferred to the psychological operations office of 198 LIB which located in Bayonet near Chu Lai. I am looking for Captain Banta York, Newman, and the driver and those who worked in this office.

**Author :** Leo Reardon

E-mail : [khesahn71@aol.com](mailto:khesahn71@aol.com)

Comment: Looking for any of my brothers who served with me at Camp Faulkner, Danang and at Khe Sahn with 1/1 Cav 23rd Inf.

**Author :** Fausto J Garofalo Jr

E-mail : [garf1313@gmail.com](mailto:garf1313@gmail.com)

Comment: I am looking for anyone who was with me in the vil. Spring 1969. I was with B Battery, 3/16th Arty. Tien Phouc Vietnam. Nov.68- Sept 69.

**Author :** geoffrey powell

E-mail : [geoffreyn@gmail.com](mailto:geoffreyn@gmail.com)

Comment: Looking for B btry 3rd 16th FDC. I was an 11b placed in arty and OJT to FDC from 9/69 to 9/70. Looking for Lt moran, drew larsen, hanson, scott, harold k. snake, d allen, bombardier. My nickname the grunt was used to broadcast the met for area arty.

**Author :** Jimmy Rimando

E-mail : [Mbps5@aol.com](mailto:Mbps5@aol.com)

Comment: Served with the Americal Division with HQ; A Co, 723rd Maintenance Battalion from May 1970 and duros on April 1971. I had a chance to extend 30 days in Nam to get a 6 month drop. I declined and spent my last 7 months at Fort Ord, CA with CDEC. My hometown was only 20 minutes from there.

I mostly was in charge of the Perimeter Tower Guard facing Hiway 1 by the Main Gate. Looking for Specialist Mitchell, Meadows, Jim DePasquale. Contact me at

1-831-424-4002, would like to hear from anyone that served during this time.

**Author :** Paul Finnegan

E-mail : [phfinnegan573@gmail.com](mailto:phfinnegan573@gmail.com)

Comment: Looking for information on people I served with. I was in country August '68 until September '69. Served with B 3/21 196th LIB 3rd Plt Americal Division. Looking for: Boone, Jesse; Branum, Cliff; Mena, Joseph; Moore, James 'Rocky'; Shaha, James; Sorenson, Kenneth; Brandt, Roger;

**Author :** Frank E. Palmer

E-mail : [ACSEVENJY@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ACSEVENJY@GMAIL.COM)

Comment: I am looking for any information (especially pictures) about the two "guntrucks" that I built while I was in Chu Lai B Company 23rd S&T Bn. 70-71. The trucks had painted on names that the drivers put on. I remember that one was called "GUNFIGHTER" and the other one might have been "MAVERICK" but, I'm not sure. They had double 1/2" steel walls with sand bags in between. I put plenty of 50 and 60 mounts on them. I was a mechanic in the big tin building next to QL-1. Spec 4 Palmer. I was really proud of those trucks and I hope they helped save some lives.

**Author :** Robert Swasey

E-mail : [rswasey@police.stoneham.ma.us](mailto:rswasey@police.stoneham.ma.us)

Comment: I served with C Battery 3/16th Artillery April 15, 1971 to Feb 21, 1972. I was on the guns with Sgt. Dean Lazzaro (not sure of last names spelling) from Chicago? Then SSgt. Edwards took over as the gun chief. I was from Boston, MA area. I still see Sgt. Howard "Herbie" Hernandez, from Los Angles, CA, every year. I still keep in touch with Sgt. Bob Pelly, who was rushed to the Navy Hosp. in Da Nang from Firebase Rawhide (Hill 65) for his appendix. I would like to hear from anyone from the battery.

**Author :** Ronda Clohessy

E-mail : [rclohessy74@yahoo.com](mailto:rclohessy74@yahoo.com)

Comment: I am looking for anyone that would have been in Viet Nam under or with Staff Sgt. Victor Guerra around the period of October 27, 1969. Location would have been near hill 55 Diem Ban District, Quang Nam Province. specifically on the date of October 27, 1969. SGT Mjr Guerra was in the 3rd Battalion 1st Marines, Company "L" Please email [rclohessy74@yahoo.com](mailto:rclohessy74@yahoo.com) with any information. We are trying to help a well deserved Vet receive the Medal of honor that we truly believe he is entitled to. again thank you in advance.

**Author :** William Paul Gruendler

E-mail : [william.gruendler@gmail.com](mailto:william.gruendler@gmail.com)

Comment: I was 2Plt, Charlie Company 1/20, 11Bde OPCON to 198th and to C Troop, 1-1 Cav on September 25, 1971. At 1500hrs Charlie Company 1-1 Calvary at BT044391 while on move to Night Defense Position spotted 105mm artillery around with pressure type detonator, was blown in place. At 1800hrs Charlie Company at BT060390, while CROSSING A STREAM AT A VILLE with Charlie Troop 1-1 Cav detonated unknown type of booby trap (homemade) with the results of 6 US WIA (E) ... Dust Off was completed at 1908hrs. Charlie Company reports SGT Michael J. Holien, SP4 Lenny R. Russell, SP4 Nick E. Rodriguez and PFC Orrin V. Johnson were attached to the 95th Evac Hospital. ... WHO were the TWO 1-1 Cav WHA? A 2LT and his RTO. Please contact me. Thanks and God bless

**Author :** Jerry Polson

E-mail : [jerryvpolson@gmail.com](mailto:jerryvpolson@gmail.com)

Comment: Looking for any one from the 196th that worked with my brother, ret CSM Doug Cunkelman. thank you and God bless.

**Author :** James Baird

E-mail : [jamesnbaird@yahoo.com](mailto:jamesnbaird@yahoo.com)

Comment: Looking for addresses/phone for HHB1/82 ARTY members in service from 12/68-2/70.

**Author :** Alan Hess

E-mail : alanhess1@gmail.com

Comment: I was the TTY repairman on Bayonet from 7/70 till we moved into Chu Lai for stand down of the 198th. I have been looking for Cruse, Bayshore, Looser, and anyone else. I had been at the repair center in Chu Lai from 1/70 to 7/70. I am also looking for Barry Arlin who went to Hawk Hill as tty repair. Would be great to hear from anyone.

**Author :** Steven Whaley

Email : whaleysteven\_w@cat.com

Comment: I grew up in the same town as John Kellett (Galva IL). He was Galva's only KIA in Vietnam. He was in Vietnam from Dec. 20 1967 to June 17 1968 serving in the 1st platoon 196th Light Infantry Brigade, Co. D-3, 21st Infantry. I'm trying to find out if anyone remembers him. I'm writing a book to honor his memory and the memories of all the men who served in Vietnam. John has no family left.

**Author :** Robert J. Johnson

Contact: 488 Tegarden Rd., Apt. 214, Gulfport, MS 39507: 228-383-6393 Comment: Seeking anyone who served with me in the transportation trucking unit in Chu Lai, 1967-68. We worked at the MAG-13 Air Field in the cargo section.

**Author :** Jack Hobson

Email : rhobson@columbus.rr.com

Comment: Seeking information about a helicopter crash. In July 1968 a chopper was attempting to take off from an LZ pad on Hill 54. It was loaded with troops and the tail section became tangled in commo wire. The chopper crashed into a 155 gun section of A Btr., 3rd How., 16th Arty. Several men were killed and wounded.

**Author :** Alan Van Loenen

E-mail : avanloen@sunflower.com

Comment: I served in Vietnam Mar 71 to Nov 71. Was a FO for 1/20 Inf; all companies except I think C company. After leaving the "bush" was a FDC Officer for A Btry 3/82 Arty. Two of my Arty Recon Sgts names were Dennis Mastercola (Abe) and Larry Mitchell (Squeakie); everyone had nicknames. My of course was "FO" and "oldman" because I was 25 yrs old when an FO for 1/20. When an FDO I helped close do a few Firebases one being "Fat City". When I left Vietnam A Btry 3/82 was on "Monkey Mountain" by the Da Nang airbase. We were the only artillery defense for the city of Da Nang when I left Vietnam. Would like to hear from anyone that remembers the "red-haired" FO for 1/20 Inf or FDO for 3/82 Arty-- Mar 71 - Nov 71.

**Author :** Gene Gray

E-mail : dgene721@hotmail.com

Comment: Looking for anyone in B Co. 8th Support 196 Light Infantry Brigade (Aviation Section) Chu Lai 1967, 68, 69 Especially WO Jim Cox

**Author :** David Morgan

E-mail : warsawdavey@yahoo.com

Comment: Looking for Robert Kramer. Bravo company 1/20 11lib Americal Div.

**Author :** Tom Schneider

E-mail : tom2lin@live.com

Comment: I'm seeking info on PFC Dennis R. Moreno, KIA 12/14/1970. He was in Co D 5/46 198th. I was with Co C 1/46 196th at the same time. We came from the same hometown in Nebraska. His wife was a classmate of mine. He was in Vietnam about 3 months.

**Author :** Kurt McFadden

E-mail : kurtdmc@sbcglobal.net

Comment: I joined recon 1/6' 198th in May 1968. I was in the field with several of the originals. Sgt Slugger, Don Black, and Scrowmouski. I will never forget them. I was with others but can't remember their names. 5/68 to 5/69; E co Recon 1/6 th, 198 th LIB

**Author :** David Ballard

E-mail : david.ballard52@icloud.com

Comment: I was assigned to B Trp 1/1 Cav from Nov 71 until standdown, in Mar 72. Cpt Ernest T Bubb was the Co and Lt Hirsh was my platoon Ldr. Do you have pics? Love to see any. We were reassigned to Co C 2/1 Inf and later the 3/21 Inf until standdown I'm Aug 72.

**Author :** Robert Carlson SFC E7 Ret

E-mail : RobertC2u@oneplaceonly.com

Comment: I was the Mess Sgt in the HHC 3rd BN 16th Arty. Americal Div in Vietnam 3 Oct 1969 to Jul 70. If there is anyone that was there during that time could you please email me. I am looking for some picture date from that time, mine got lost in a move. Thank you

**Author :** Gary Antill

E-mail : garyantill@hotmail.com

Comment: Co b 1/6 198 Inf brigade feb 68 to feb 69 looking for guys that remember me started on m60 then rto then machine gun sgt; some of the names I remember: bunch, linda, hanselman, batiest, coop, ross, buckey.

**Author :** Carl Yates

E-mail : cyatesgrdpd49@gmail.com

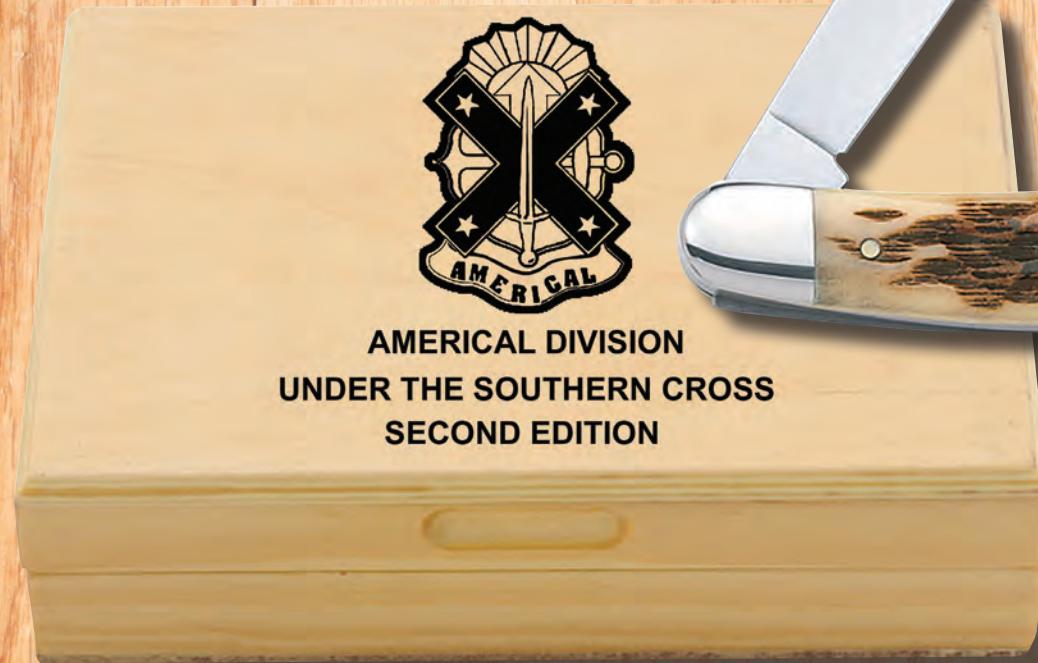
Comment: To anybody who is interested please contact me on my email. I was on LZ Liz from 9/70 to 9/71 with 1st Platoon, C Co 1/20th, 11th Bde. I have some old orders from back then that I am going to send to the Locator to see what happens. I do not remember very many of the guys names I was with. Thanks for your help.

**Author :** Harvey Goodchild

E-mail : harvgood@gmail.com

Comment: On July 12 1970 I Was the Arty FO (from B-Btry 3/82 LZ Center) assigned to C -3/21st Inf. We Lost 3 KIA and several wounded in Firefight including Cobra Airstrike and later same day on Mines/booby traps on a Hilltop as we went to Night Lagger. This was North of Rd from Tam Ky to Tien Phouc (433?) We'd Pulled Rd. security for a Convoy and then sent a Platoon on with convoy for security so we were kinda "under strength" anyway. BAD DAY ! We were patrolling to North of that Rd. someplace when all this Went Down - what a mess ! Thank God for Dustoffs ! Sorry to hear one of Our FO's was Blown away later as described subsequently. I'd replaced a Lt. Barker or Barker that had also been killed up in Heip Duc in Feb or March of 70 I was told? Lot of Combat for C - 3/21st & God Bless those GUYS - Nunez, Wicks, and Drane having given their last measure of devotion that day. I can NEVER FORGET and remain Thankful I was assigned to FDC at Tien Phouc firebase by August with Our General Support/Heavies the rest of My Tour (Til May 71) Those who were Light Infantrymen - and those sharing their burden and sacrifice - NONE BETTER or Braver.

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Membership in the ADVA is open to all officers and enlisted personnel who have served with the 23rd (Americal) Infantry Division in an assigned or attached status during the following periods of service:

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<b>Panama</b>	<b>1954-1956</b>
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