



AMERICAL NEWSLETTER

FOUNDED 1945

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

JAN – FEB – MAR 2000

Editor-in-Chief: James C. Buckle
Vietnam Editor: Gary L. Noller
Published Quarterly

THE AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION P. O. BOX 1381 BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02104



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Scholarship Chair

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Veterans Association

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Fredericksburg, TX 78624

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Chapter Commander

New England Region

Roland T. Castronova

Peabody, MA 01960

Web Site (Internet)

www.americal.org

AMERICAL NEWSLETTER

ADJUTANT'S NOTES

PAGE 1

MONTHLY A.D.V.A. MEETINGS

MAY 20, 2000
Americal Museum
Worcester, MA
10:00 A.M.

JUNE 2000
National Convention
San Antonio, Texas
10:00 A.M.

I would like all members possible to attend the May 20, 2000 meeting in Worcester to assist in counting the ballots. Refreshments will be served.

NEW MEMBERS

Kiev Re-enacting Clu "Ft
Associate
01042 Kiev
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Vincent Anzyzeski
11 LIB B/1/20 Inf
East Haven, CT
#Don Ballou

Mr. Daniel R. Barrett
11 LIB D/1/3 Inf
Evansville, IN
#Ron Ward

Mr. Bobby D. Blum
198 LIB C/5/46 Inf
Houston, TX
#Don Ballou

Mr. Ernest Jr. Briggs
523 Signal Bn. A Co.
Brooklyn, NY
#R. Castronova

Mr. John D. Brown
198 LIB B/1/46 Inf
Ormand Beach, FL
#Frank Marriott

Mr. Alexander P. Cameron
123 Avn Bn A Co.
Ozark, AR
#Don Ballou

Mr. Lloyd T. Carr Jr.
123 FA E Btry
Anaheim, CA
#Don Ballou

Mr. Ralph G. Cooksey
198 LIB B/1/6 Inf
Inverness, FL
#W.A. McMurtray

Mr. James Cosner
198 LIB 5/46 Inf
Akron, CO
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Edward A. Davis
198 LIB D/5/46 Inf
Bloomington, MI
#John Hansen

Mr. Robert A. Dyson
196 LIB D/3/21 Inf
Wappinger Falls, NY
#Don Ballou

Mr. Anthony J. Amatulli
11 LIB
Naspeth, NY
#Thomas Brown

Mr. Lorenzo J. Avilla
11 Sig Plt HG HG
Fontana, CA
#Art Cole

Mr. Gary M. Biehl
23 Div Arty 14 Arty /C
Kelso, WA
#Don Ballou

Mr. Tom Brandstrom
198 LIB B/5/46 Inf
Mt. Vernon, WA
#Jon 'Doc' Hofer

Mr. Allan Briton
11 LIB B/2/1 Inf
Boise, ID
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Donald Buschman
245 F.A. Bn. Hq/Btr
Derby Line, VT
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Barry Carol
198 LIB HHB/1/14 Ar
Aberdeen, NJ
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Larry G. Chilcutt
11 LIB A/3/1 Inf
Bunker Hill, IN
#Ed Marsh

Mr. Donald E. Cooper
26 Eng HHC-B Co.
East China, MI
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Paul H. Craig
328 Radio Research Co
Mountain Home, AR
#Self

Mr. Patrick J. Duffy
11 LIB 6/11 Arty
Pittsburgh, PA
#Don Ballou

Mr. Albert Elizondo
46 Inf E/5/46 Recon
Elmendorf, TX
#Art Cole

Mr. Eugene R. Emerson
11 LIB D/E/4/3 Inf
Cincinnati, OH
#R. Castronova

Ltc. Adrian Fitzpatrick
20 Inf Hq/D/1/20
Athens, GA
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Edward P. Grabowski
Associate
Palestine, IL
#Don Ballou

Mr. Peter A. Hammersen
37 Port Surg Hosp
Fredericksburg, TX
#Bill Bacon

Mr. Michael R. Heil
1 Air Cav D/1 sqd
Eagle, WI
#Mike Iverson

Mr. Dale Lemke
18 Arty Hd/3/18
Howell, MI
#Jim Buckle

Mr. Kelly B. Lundy
746 AAA Gun Bn
West Munroe, LA
#Art Cole

Mr. Dennis L. Martzall
21 Recon
Akron, PA
#Self

Mr. James J. McQueen
523 Sig Bn 156 Sig Plt
Manchester, NH
#John W. Anderson

Mr. Bill Ochs
21 Inf B/3/21
Monson, MA
#196 Locater-a-Brother

Mr. Gary Patton
196 LIB B/2/1 Inf
McDowell, KY
#Art Cole

Mr. Charles A. Porter
23 Admin
Hendersonville, TN
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Edward L. Scott
221 FA Bn Ser Bat
Atchison, KS
#Hiram McAdow

Mr. Noah H. Stump
82nd Arty
Rocky Mount, VA
#Self

Mr. Bruce A. Veltre
198 LIB B/5/46 Inf
Winchester, VA
#Don Ballou

Mr. Dan Young
198 LIB A/1/52 Inf
Anchorage, AK
#Michael Dachille

Mr. Herman L. Fitzgerald
23 Amer Dis. Com.
Alexandria, VA
#Ed Marsh

Mr. John A. Gibbons
11 LIB F Troop/1 Cav
Alamo, TN
#John Hansen

Mr. Stan Grimes
56 Inf B/6/56
Fort Morgan, CO
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Kenneth R. Harpe
23 S+T B Co.
Mocksville, NC
#John Anderson

Mr. James A. Hopkins Sr.
198 LIB B/1/46 Inf
Wenatchee, WA
#Art Cole

Mr. Joseph C. Liberti
23 Div Hq G-2 HHC 635
Fairfax, VA
#Jon Hansen

Mr. Steve Maluk
26 Eng E Co.
Staton Island, NY
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Danny D. Matas
11 LIB E/Recon/4/21 Inf
Richlands, VA
#Jerry Dickerson

Mr. Patrick G. Mockler
196 LIB 1 Cav B /1Sq
Vernon, VT
#Art Cole

Mr. Victor O. Oliver
198 LIB D/1/46 Inf
Baltimore, MD
#Self

Mr. Daniel G. Plata
82 Arty Hdq/1/82
San Antonio, TX
#Bill Bacon

Mr. Gary L. Raymond
Hdq Co.A Chu Lai
Ponte Verda. FL
#Don Ballou

Mr. Gary C. Stolp
196 LIB Band HHC/5/46
Muskogee, OK
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. John H. Sutcliffe
Friend
Bourne, MA
#Jim Buckle

Mr. John H. Willman
196 LIB C/4/31 Inf
Tucson, AZ
#Mart McClellan Jr.

Mr. Harold B.L. Zimmerman
Friend
St. Johns, MI
#Bernie Chase

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

- Mr. John Alejandro
8 Cav F Tr - B/4/31
Springfield, MO
#Gary L. Noller

Mr. Dennis M. Bush
198 LIB D 1/6 Inf
Canton, MI
#Jim Mc Bob Thornton

Mr. Dwayne E. Hancock
1 Cav I Troop/1/1
Olney, IL
#Gary Warn

Mr. Phillip G. Haymaker
198 LIB H/17 Cav
Waukegan, IL
#John R. Geib

Mr. William B. Mounsey
132 Infantry K Co.
Evergreen, CO
#Art Cole

Mr. Herbert L. Overstree
16 Arty B/3/16 Arty
Macon, GA
#John R. O'Bryan

Mr. Tommy J. Skiens
11 LIB C/4/3 Inf
John Day, OR
#Self

Mr. Raymond D. Vargo
198 LIB 1/6 Inf
Renfrew, PA
#R. Castronova
- Mr. Arthur E. Boessneck
721 Ord 22 Ord
North Olmsted, OH
#Bernie Chase

Mr. Eugene Gainey
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
APO AE
#Don Ballou

Mr. John C. Hart
198 LIB B/1/6 Inf
Indianapolis, IN
#John Hansen

Dr. Donald V. Johnson
198 LIB 46 Infantry
Easton, PA
#Fred Cowburn

Mr. Timothy J. Nicholson
11 LIB
Long Beach, CA
#R. Castronova

Mr. Harold N. Robinson
11 LIB A/6/11 Arty
Savannah, GA
#Don Ballou

Mr. Richard Sweeney
196 LIB A/26 Eng
Laurel, MD
#Ed Marsh

Mr. George A. Xiaru
196 LIB A/3/21 Inf
North Miami, FL
#Don Ballou

REINSTATED MEMBERS

- Mr. Temple L. Ancarrow
14 Avn Bn 178 ASHC
Sandston, VA
#Michael D. Hart

Mr. William A. Brown
11 LIB HHC/4/21 Inf
Bartlett, TN
#Fran Marriott

Mr. David L. Coursin
8 Cav F Troop
Madisonville, TN
#Memb. Com.

Mr. Albert P. Duncan
132 Inf HQ/S
Tallassee, AL
#Castronova-Ed Hayes

Mr. Bobby L. Floyd
198 LIB B/1/6 Inf
Burnsville, NC
#R. Castronova

Mr. Glen A. Lippincott
21 Infantry A/3/21
Sciota, PA
#R. Lippincott

Mr. Paul P. Miele
182 Infantry F Co.
Waltham, MA
#Jim Buckle
- Mr. Phillip E. Bigham
11 LIB D/4/3 Inf
Pleasantville, OH
#R. Castronova

Mr. William E. Chrest Jr
196 LIB
Ovid, MI
#Self

Mr. David J. Degou
198 LIB A/5/46 Inf
Burlington, MA
#Memb. Com.

Mr. James J. Eddington
39 Eng
Iselin, NJ
#Paul Santogeanis

Mr. Roderick L. Hargo
23 Americal Hdq. PAD
Dayton, OH
#R. Castronova

Mr. Edward H. McDermott
1 Cav C Troop/1/1
Lowell, MA
#Terry Babler

Mr. Markham Morgan
11 LIB 1 Cav Tr E
Quincy, FL
#Helpline 12/96

- Mr. Daniel F. Noncek
182 Infantry 1/HQ
Sun City, AZ
#Jim Buckle

Mr. Paul C. Stiff
23 M.P.
Troy, MI
#R. Castronova

Mr. Michael J. Thyne
198 LIB H/17 Cav
Fairbury, IL
#Ron Ward - Jim Buckle

Mr. Eddie D. Walker
11 LIB Hq/B/4/31 In
Lone Star, TX
#Carlson-Mulcrone
- Mr. Gary A. Pratt
198 LIB
Jefferson, OH
#Self

Mr. Dennis E. Thornton
196 LIB D/4/31 Inf
Sheffield, PA
#Membership Committee

Mr. Glenn F. Underwood
21 Mech. Cav
Wildwood, FL
#Castronova-Hines

TAPS TAPS TAPS

- 23 MILITARY POLICE

Don Blanco
Springfield, MO
May 18, 1997

182 INFANTRY E CO.

Gilbert O. Dempsey
Franklin, MA
January 22, 2000

21 RECON

Alonzo Essick
Promise City, IA
August 27, 1999

198 LIB 1/6 INFANTRY

Cecil L. Malone
St. Cloud, FL
June 1, 1999

132 INFANTRY G CO.

Edward T. Ozzie
Park Ridge, IL
August 31, 1999

132 INFANTREY I CO.

William Pukalo
Canterbury, CT
November 7, 1999

57 ENGINEERS A CO.

Robert Tinnell
Tucson, AZ
November 30, 1999
- 121 MEDICAL BATTALION

Anthony J. DeYeso
Quincy, MA
November 25, 1999

245 FIELD ARTILLERY

William J. Diggins
Buffalo, NY
May 25, 1997

132 IINFANTRY 125 QM

James Logalvo
Rolling Meadow, IL
August 8, 1999

221 FIELD ARTILLERY

Robert F. McGann
Woburn, MA
September 27, 1999

57 ENGINEERS

Joseph Pirett
Lenox, MA
Date Unknown

221 FIELD ARTY A BTRY

Thomas Shaughnessy
Belmont, MA
October 13, 1999

132 INFANTRY I CO

Pete Tossio
Crete, IL
Date Unknown

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

If you know of a buddy that has passed away or that is ill please notify:

Aid. Bernard Chase
[Redacted]
South Yarmouth, MA 02664

HAVE YOU CALLED THAT BUDDY YET?

COLONEL HENRY A. DOHERTY

Colonel Henry A. Doherty died August 1, 1999 at the Metro West Medical center in Natick, MA. He was 88 years old.

Born in Boston, he lived in Revere for forty years before moving to Needham twelve years ago.

He graduated from the Massachusetts Military Academy in 1939. During World War II he served in the Pacific with the 121 Medical Battalion, Americal Division



Following his retirement from the Military in 1971, Col. Doherty became supervisor of the South Postal Annex in Boston.

He was a member of the Needham VFW Post 2498, the Needham American Legion, the Knights of Columbus and the St. Josephs's Church Prayer Group.

He was the husband of the late Carmela C. (DiModica) Doherty. He leaves one son, four daughters, sixteen grandchildren, and nine great-grandchildren.

Burial was at the Woodlawn Cemetery, with full Military Honors.

The following letter was received by Ron Ward, Chairman of the ADVA Scholarship Fund.

Dear Mr. Ward:

My name is Lara Sweedo. My grandfather is Peter Messina. I am a past recipient of one of your organization's academic scholarships. I am writing to thank you and to share with you some of what I have accomplished.

In 1996, I graduated *magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa from the University of Notre Dame with a Bachelor of Arts in English. I then attended the Dickinson School of law of the Pennsylvania State University where I became editor The Dickinson Journal of Environmental Law and Policy. While attending Dickinson I was inducted into the Woolsack Honor Society and received the National Association of Women Lawyers Outstanding Student Award. In May of this year, I graduated *cum laude* from dickinson with my Juris Doctor. I have successfully passed Pennsylvania's bar exam and am currently working in the Pennsylvania court system as a Judicial Clerk.

Please thank your members on my behalf for their generosity. They have helped me to make my dreams come true.

Very truly,
Lara Sweedo

DONATIONS TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Edith Heckman
in memory of
Sgt/Major Walter F. Heckman

Alice Mullen
in honor of
Dr. Robert Muehreke

Patricia Quinn Moffa
in memory of
James A. Quinn
D/3/21 Inf 196 LIB
KIA October 29, 1970

Captain Lou Blumengarten
"CPT B" 16th CAG

DONATIONS TO THE WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

PNC Ronald Ward
PNC Gary L. Noller
Gabriel R. Robidart
South Pacific Buddies Association
Rev. William Elliott

Sonja Busi
in memory of
John Busi

John Poletsky
Claude Mook Jr.
MSG. Howard W. Walker
Alfred Guttag
Don R. Boeck

2000 AMERICAL NATIONAL CONVENTION 2000

Holiday Inn Select - Airport
[Redacted]
San Antonio, Texas
June 15-16-17-18, 2000

See center fold of this issue.

SEND IN THOSE RESERVATIONS NOW!!!

2001 AMERICAL NATIONAL CONVENTION 2001

Cleveland Marriott Airport Hotel
Cleveland, Ohio
June 21-22-23-24, 2001

2002 AMERICAL NATIONAL CONVENTION 2002

This Convention will be a change from the usual.
The dates will include Veterans Day
November 11, 2002

WILLIAM F. MCGOLDTICK - NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER

COMMANDER SEC/TREAS
Roland T. Castronova Bernard Chase
Peabody, MA 01960 So.Yarmouth, MA 02664

New England Chapter Christmas Party

On Saturday, December 4, 1999 about fifty five members and wives attended a Christmas Party at the Americal Museum in Worcester, MA. We were expecting over eighty people to attend this party as the had indicated they would do so.

On Friday evening December 33, 1999, there was a tragic fire in Worcester, Mass., where six Worcester Fire Fighters lost their lives in the line of duty. This fire was just two blocks from the Americal Museum and the highway near the Museum was shut down so that the Worcester Fire Department could proceed to find the bodies of the six Fire Fighters. On the radio and TV people were told to avoid this area if possible. Many of our members heard these warnings and stayed home.

Those that did make it to the Museum had a great time. There was plenty of food and the food that was left over was taken to the Homeless Veterans Shelter located next to the Americal Museum. Ten of the ladies went home with a Christmas Poinsettia that they won in a raffle.

The Museum is coming along fine. Three additional small rooms have been just recently refinished, and the members who are part of the Museum work group are in the process of adding more memorabilia to these rooms.

Our next get-together, like this, will be on Saturday, May 20, 2000. For members who would like to attend please notify Al Doig, 117 Hillview Road, Westwood, MA 02090. Tel: [REDACTED]

Dues for the New England Chapter are \$5.00 a year and are due and payable in May of each year. Make checks payable to N.E Chapter ADVA and mail to Bernard Chase, 82 Phyllis Drive, South Yarmouth, MA 02664.

On Wednesday, December 15, 1999, Bernie Chase while playing in a golf tournament at the Bass River Golf Course, South Yarmouth, Mass., scored a hole in one on the par three 155 yards sixth hole. Bernie shot a seventy eight that day, one shot over his age to lead his team to victory. This is Bernie's third hole in one in over fifty years of playing golf.

EASTERN REGIONAL CHAPTER
DC DE KY MD NJ NY OH PA VA WV

COMMANDER VICE COMMANDER
Bill Gold David Eichorn
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Baltimore, MD 21209 Fleming, OH 45729
Tel: [REDACTED]

Joe Tunis - Secretary
Al Barbieri - Treasurer
George Yates - Sergeant-At-Arms
Everitt Williams - Chaplain

Our September Chapter Reunion is being worked on by Jay Flanagan, (who is also Chapter Coordinator for National), and is his good wife, Mary Ann. What I have heard so far sounds great. The

location planned is Wildwood Crest, New Jersey, in the mid September which is a bit off-season but this makes it very reasonable. Included on the package will be top quality lodgings, breakfasts, several dinners, a boat ride, a visit to Cape May, NJ and a trip to an Atlantic City Casino with some bonus money back to help us break the bank there.

The planned dates are September 19-22 and are pretty definite but not set in stone. I suggest our members, and any members of other Chapters that care to join us in several days of good comradeship, set these dates aside. Should there be any change you will be informed just as soon as possible.

Let me stress, that we welcome our WW II veterans who always make a good showing, we are particularly anxious to see a good turnout by our Vietnam veterans member and prospective members. We need you and want you!

Our Eastern Regional Chapter will be the sponsor of the National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio in 2001. Plans are in the works and some great doings appear to be in the offing. Keep your eyes on coming Newsletters for details.

Our best to all members of our fellow Chapters.

Bill Gold

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL CHAPTER
IL, IN, MI, MN, WI

COMMANDER ADJ/FIN OFF
John Mathews Terry Babler
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Verona, WI 53593 New Glarus, WI 53574

The Great lakes Chapter just finished up attending activities at the Winterfest R&R Festival in New, Glarus, Wisconsin on Jan 14-16, 2000. We had a great attendance for the entire week end. We were involved in all activities.

Our Great Lakes semi-annual meeting will be held on Jan19-20-21, 2001 in New Glarus, Wisconsin for the 15th Winterfest. The Chalet Landhaus Motel will have a new conference room and indoor pool. We expect a very good attendance for this event next year.

Besides the National Americal Convention, our Chapter will again be attending Kokomo's Indiana 18th annual Veterans Reunion being held September 14-17, 2000. We will be setting up a hospitality tent and will be set-us in the vendor's tent with a sign up sheet and will take a group picture at the main flag. Last year we had over 100 Americal Veterans attend. The grounds itself had over 45,000 veterans attend last year. Ron Davis has reserved the Americal 40 campsites on the grounds. for information on camping call 765-628-0297. Tell them you want the Americal area. Or stay in the many motels in the area. There is a shuttle bus service from the hotels to the grounds. This Reunion fills up fast---if planning on going--make your reservations NOW.

Our Chapter dues are \$5.00 a year. There are two Newsletters a year. One in June and one in December. The Newsletters fill you in on what is going on. To renew or join send your check to: Terry Babler, Adjutant, Great Lakes Chapter, [REDACTED], New Glarus, WI 53574

FAR WEST CHAPTER
AZ, CA, CO, HA, NV, NM, UT

COMMANDER SEC/TREAS
Don Shebesta Paris Tognoli
Woodbridge, CA 95258 Isleton, CA 95641
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

The Far West Chapters annual Reunion was held October 17-29 in Las Vegas, Nevada. Entertainment was provided by ninety-three (93) dancing girls of Sun City (LV) Dance Company. A one hour show with a military theme was presented by the ladies ranging from 52 to 90 years of age. The show was fantastic and was well received by all attendees.

The year 2000 Reunion will be held in Loughlin, Nevada on October 1-3. All ADVA members and guests are invited. Details will be provided when plans are finalized.

Since our last Reunion in October 1999 we have experienced an increase of 11% in new members. However, the dropout rate is 13%. We are continuing our effort in this area and are trying to determine why the loss of members. The 13% does not include those deceased. any ideas from from other Chapters will be welcomed.

To all FWC members, Chapter dues are now due!

We'll see you all in San Antonio in June.

ARTHUR R. WOOD CHAPTER
SOUTH EAST CHAPTER
AL, FL, GA, NC, SC, TN

COMMANDER SEC/TREAS
Robert (Bob) Kapp George P. Dakin
[REDACTED] [REDACTED]
Tampa, FL 33615 Deltona, FL 32728

Once again our Annual Meeting will be held in Melbourne, Florida in conjunction with the Vet Reunion at Menard Park. We will under the blue canopy in the middle of the Campground "A" on Saturday April 8th at 2:00 P.M.

Refreshments will be available.

Last year several members joined our Chapter and we do hope to see them again this year.

If you need more information or directions please call Bob Kapp at [REDACTED].

NORTHWEST CHAPTER
AK WA OR ID MT WY

COMMANDER
Dave Hammond
[REDACTED]
Beaverton, OR 97005
Tel: [REDACTED]

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: an informal Chapter meeting will be held in the Portland area on April 22, 2000, to be followed by meetings in Seattle and Boise in the fall. Please give me a call to RSVP and for further details. all help will be greatly appreciated.

The ADVA flag was displayed and carried at the Vietnam Memorial on a rainy Veterans Day in Portland, Oregon. The results I had hoped for

came true. With my son carrying the flag, my wife Christie and I were approached by four different Americal Vets. Two were with the 11 LIB and two with the 198 LIB. Two were already ADVA members and the other two had not heard of our organization and took membership applications to join. The Americal colors made two local television stations and we received a small write up in the Oregonian Newspaper. Keep spreading the Americal word and displaying its colors!

Dave Hammond

FAR WEST CHAPTER NEWS ITEM

the following story was carried in the Oregonian Newspaper:

November 11, 1999--At the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, early Thursday, the short service was noteworthy for the shortage of attendees. And the presence of a recruiter.

No, not that kind of a recruiter. this one was Dave Hammond of Cedar Hills, who walked the area with his wife, Christie, and 13 year old son, Paul, who was carrying the red flag, with the blue crest of the Americal Division. Hammond is a veteran of Charlie Company, 5th Battalion, 46th Regiment, 198 LIB, which fought in the Chu Lai area during the Vietnam War.



Paul and Dave Hammond at the Vietnam Memorial Portland, Oregon

"We brought the flag just so we could attract other Americal soldiers," Hammond said. "I knew if I flew it, others would notice. Up until last few year there's been a stigma attached to being a Vietnam veteran, but now we're at the age where we can get together again."

Ron Cannon of Corbett noticed the flag and came over. Darned if he didn't come from the same unit as Hammond. The two veterans laughed and traded good-natured needles, and as they parted they decided that yes, they would get together again.

ATTENTION

All Chapters are self-supporting with the exception of a small stipend given them from National Headquarters. It is necessary for each Chapter to charge dues in order to pay for postage, supplies, etc. However, you must be a member in good standing with the ADVA before you are eligible to join a Chapter.

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER NEWS ITEM

At the Christmas party held by the New England Chapter Jan Turner was presented with a beautiful fruit basket by PNC Al Doig, in recognition of her loyalty and many hours of labor she has put into the Americal Museum.



L-R:PNC Robert Thornton, Nelson Dion, Jan Turner, PNC Al Doig. Seated: Bob Beschle, PNC Ken Turner.

Her husband, PNC Kenneth Turner, seated on the right, is the Curator of the Americal Museum.

SOUTH MID WEST REGIONAL CHAPTER

COMMANDER Ernest B. Carlson
SEC/TREAS Malcolm East
Fredericksburg, TX 78624 Lumberton, TX 77656

Alfred (Bruce) Mobley - Sergeant-at-Arms
Rev. Perry M. Woerner - Chaplain

The initial plans are all in place and we are preparing to host the Americal Division Veterans Association Nation Convention in San Antonio, Texas.

Holiday Inn Select
June 15 - 16 - 17 - 18, 2000
San Antonio, Texas

You will be able to enjoy the Riverwalk along the San Antonio River and also a visit to the Admiral Nimitz Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas. Full details are in the center fold of this issue. Bill Bacon is the Chairman of this Convention.

SEND YOUR RESERVATIONS IN IMMEDIATELY!

Hug Somebody,
Ernie Carlson

FROM YOUR EDITOR

I have several apologies to make for the last issue of the Americal Newsletter. On Page 2 the obituary for Colonel Henry A. Doherty displayed the picture of Mr. and Mrs. Domenic Pantaleo and the picture of Col.Doherty was displayed on Page 30 under the heading 'Guadalcanal Campaign Veterans Reunion'. The articles will again be printed in this issue and the pictures will be put in their proper places.

Second--An article appears under the heading of, "To Whom It May Concern, on Page 21. I have this credited to Frank Paris as his personal experience. This is WRONG. Frank Paris is the person that sent in the article. It was not supposed to be a story of his personal experiences Mr. Paris wrote to me after reading the Americal Newsletter and wanted it understood that he WAS NOT a POW. He states in his letter--'AT NO TIME WAS I A POW..THIS WAS NOT A TESTIMONY OF ANY EXPERIENCE OF MINE. THESE BRAVE, DEDICATED MEN ARE TO BE ADMIRIED AND RESPECTED FOR THE ORDEAL EACH SUFFERED AT THE HANDS OF THE ENEMY. He further states, "To attempt to put myself on the same venue as the defenders of liberty is a vile, low life attribute. In fact I strongly recommend a book, 'Stolen Valor', I strongly support the context of the article I sent you and do not shrink from that stand."

Vietnam Editor, Gary Noller tells me that this article has been tossed around the computer networks for quite some time.

If any one can validate the stories about Jane Fonda I would certainly appreciate hearing from them. (The good news is that Ted dumped Jane).

Third--I have been questioned about the facts of the story, "Living Hell at Camp #3", that appears starting on Page 27. As with all long articles that arrive, I have a friend computerize them onto a disk and I have them available when I have available space or when they might be appropriate. I then keep the hard copies on file with the senders envelope attached. However, when I searched my file for this article by Paul Acland the senders envelope was not attached so I am lost as to who sent in the article. I am doing a search and any information I find will be in a later issue of the Newsletter.

Fourth--On Page 22 under the heading, 'The Cover Story' a statement is made about the picture on the cover. When I delivered the Newsletter to the printer he determined that a copy of the card sent in by Jack Olgesby would not reproduce well. It seems the paper the card was printed on was too thin and the the material on the reverse side would show through. So, a rapid decision had to be made on the spot. A previous cover was resurrected from his files, the date changed and again used.

Now--All these errors were due to personal reasons. My only daughter was diagnosed with cancer over a year ago. She had the best care available but by October of 1999 the doctors declared her cancer as terminal.

I rushed to get the Newsletter finished and to the printer so that I could spend as much time with her as possible. I used material that I already had on computer disks and I am afraid I did not check them as well as I usually do. The pictures were transposed because I did not get back to the printer to check the proofs. I told him that I would be out of town and gave him permission to run the Newsletter without the having proofs checked.

After dropping the Newsletter off at the printer I headed to my home town of Wakefield to be with my daughter. She passed away two days after Thanksgiving.

I am indeed sorry for those errors.

In closing I wish to thank my many friends for all the sympathy cards that I have received

Jim

REUNIONS REUNIONS

AMERICAL DIVISION FIELD ARTILLERY REUNION
World II - Korea - Vietnam

April 27, 28, 29, 2000

Howard Johnsons Inn
Savannah, GA 31401

For full information and details write:

Elbert R. Horton
Timberlake, NC 27583-9191

ALL VETS REUNION

Kokomo, Indiana
September 14 - 17, 2000
For information on camping call:

L COMPANY - 182nd INFANTRY

March 25, 2000

Robert Doucette
Lynn, MA 01904
Tel

Any and all members of the 182nd Infantry Regiment are invited to attend. If you plan to attend please contact Bob at the above address for directions and information. Or call Jim McCarthy at 508-485-3641.

E COMPANY - 182nd INFANTRY REGIMENT

Kernwood Restuarant
Lynnfield, MA
May 24, 2000

If you are interested please call:

Jim Buckle
East Harwich, MA 02645-1470
Tel

26th YANKEE DIVISION

June 1-2-3, 2000
Hampton Inn
Westport, MA

This is the 81st annual Reunion of the Yankee Division Club. Anyone who served in the 26th (Yankee) Infantry Division is welcome to attend.

CONTACTS
Sam Thompson -
Ed Loonie -
Mike Bollino -
Helen Tasselari -

FAR WEST CHAPTER

October 1 thru 3, 2000
Loughlin, NV

More Info: Don Shebesta

EASTERN REGIONAL CHAPTER

September 19 - 22, 2000
Wildwood Crest, New Jersey
CONTACT
Bill Gold

164 INFANTRY

Do You Know this Man?

I am looking for anyone who served with JOHN LUCAS, my Grandfather. He recently passed away. He joined the 164 Infantry in late 1944 and saw action on Leyte and Cebu, winning a Bronze Star.

Please contact:

Gerald J. Ruglio
Chicago, IL 60638

H COMPANY - 132nd INFANTRY

Looking for anyone that served with H Company, 132 Infantry on Bougainville and Cebu.

Pleas contact:

Howard Ward
Meridan, MS 393

132nd INFANTRY

Looking for friends of Arthur Hodan, my Dad. He was wounded and listed as MIA on Guadalcanal. He recovered from his wounds and was assigned to MAG 25. Contact:

Martin Hodan
Albany GA 31707

PFC STANLEY A. MACH

Looking for anyone that may have known my uncle, PFC Stanley A. Mach. He was KIA on Bougainville on April 7, 1944. Please contact:

Ed Grabowski
Palatine, IL 60067

HEADQUARTERS - 2nd BATTALION - 182nd INFANTRY

Looking for anyone that served with me in Headquarters, 2nd Battalion, 182nd Infantry.

Please contact:

George W. DeGrange
Burlington, IA 52601

BATTERY C - 221st FIELD ARTILLERY

On August 20, 1999, eight former members of Battery C 221st Field Artillery, met Virgil Box son of J.D. Box a former member of C/221 F.A. Bn. in World War II. Virgil had written to ADVA Headquarters seeking information from any one who knew his father in World War II. Letters were exchanged and Virgil made it known that he would be in Massachusetts in August. On August 19, 1999, thirteen former members of C-Battery gathered to meet Virgil. A foul up in flight plans prevented Virgil from being there on the 19th. He arrived on the 20th. Eight of those present on the 19th returned on the 20th. Others could not return on the 20th because of previous commitments.



L to R Front Row: Jack Smith, Harold Wilkerson, Virgil box, Otis Mailhot, Joe Nolan
L to R Back Row: Bernie Chase, John Ford, Gordon Fletcher, Jack Laffey

A great lunch was enjoyed by all. Many pictures were shown and quite a few war time stories were told and all in attendance had a great time. Virgil left the meeting knowing a great deal more about his father's World War II experiences.

G COMPANY 182nd INFANTRY

In the last issue on Page 30 that was entitled "Company A - 132 Infantry" really interested me. The writer tells about chicken on the island of Cebu. If it were not for the chicken, we probably would have starved to death on that island of Cebu. I was first scout for G/182nd and not only was I to look for Japs but I was also to keep my eyes open for chickens. We always used a carbine to shoot chickens because using the M-1 would completely eliminate that poor chicken. When we shot a chicken, we would use our helmets as the pot and place in it the bacon we got with our 10 in 1 rations. After the bacon was all melted down to grease, we would place the chicken, less the feathers, into that hot grease for a time. When we thought it was done, we would reach in and take a bite of that greasy chicken. If the meat was tough we would place it back in the pot to cook some more. I think we had the original recipe for the first Kentucky Fried Chicken,

Keep up that great Newsletter--I enjoy reading it over and over.

Kenneth Vander-Molen

GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN VETERANS REUNION
by Dom Pantaleo
101st Medical Regiment

The GVC held its 18th annual Reunion Sept 7-11, 1999 at the Omni-Severin Hotel in Indianapolis, Indiana. Approximately 270 members plus wives and guests attended. This was my first GVC Reunion and I was greatly impressed. I plan to attend all future Reunions.



Dom Pantaleo receiving his credentials from Pat Nureneberg, Registration Chairman.

Tours included the Indy 500 Track, Fred's Military Armor Display, and a tour of the tanker planes with lecture by crews, from Grissom AFB.

On September 10th the GVC annual Memorial Service was held at the Indiana War Veterans Memorial Building. Colonel/Chaplain Edwin N. Griffin, Americal Vietnam veteran, gave the invocation and delivered the eulogy. A soloist sang "the Battle Hymn of the Republic". Representatives of the Army, Marine Corp, U.S. Navy and Coast Guard called the roll of the dead. The U.S.M.C. Color Guard posted the Colors. With spot lights on the Color Guard, members and guests stood at attention and said the Pledge of Allegiance--quite an emotional scene. 1st Lt. Eva Marie Kelly, U.S. Medical Corp Reserve, recited Theodore O'Hara's, "Bivouac of the Dead". This was followed by a recitation in unison, of the words to 'Taps' led by Chaplain Griffin.

The annual business meeting was held Saturday afternoon. During this meeting the annual election of officers, for the coming year, was held.

Also that afternoon the annual GVC church service was held at the hotel, conducted by Fr. Murphy.

On Saturday evening the GVC's 18th annual Reunion Dinner-Dance was held featuring a Big Band playing music of the Big Band era. During the Dinner-Dance the out-going President Joe Kiwak handed over the gavel to in-coming President Bill Carol.

Ted Blahnik, Editor of the Guadalcanal Echoes for many years, was given a purse of money in recognition of his service, as he retired from a job he has done so well.

the Americal was a part of a mighty team effort at Guadalcanal and its members are welcomed into membership in the GVC. Remember, "It isn't the cost of belonging, it's the price you paid to be eligible".

180th FIELD ARTILLERY - 247th FIELD ARTILLERY

I just received the current issue of the Americal Newsletter which I have gone over and enjoyed. It seems the pages from the Old Guard are getting less and less because so many have passed on to the here-after.

On Page 31 of the Newsletter, the list of ships should have included the USNT Neville. That is the ship I was on from New Caledonia to Guadalcanal, from December 10, until December 14, 1942. I seem to remember four ships in the convoy but I can't recall the escort. We did meet a cruiser on the way that had been badly shot up. Someone said it was the New Orleans.

The ship listed as #27, USS Gen Lang Fitt, (correct designation is General W.C. Langfitt), is the one I came home on. It had comfortable quarters and you almost had to run to keep up in the mess line. It wasn't the smoothest riding ship but it was built to carry troops. The Navy operated with Marine guards but you know the Army--we had to have guards to.

I might mention that this ship had left Leyte, the day before I boarded it, headed for the States as it had been out for thirty days and was short on rations and had 500 survivors of all services board. It had pulled in to some island for the night and then was sent back to Leyte to pick up 1500 of us that were waiting in a CASU Camp. We convoyed then to Hollandia where they would not give us any food unless the Captain would take on 1500 hospital patients from the General Hospital there. You talk about battle casualties--we had them. Anyway, we were given the green light at Fincheshaven for a straight run to the States. After a false hope of a Hawaii visit, it was announced one day that we were ninety miles from Hawaii, the ship soon sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge and we docked in San Francisco on April 10. We were processed on Angel Island and then we were ferried across the bay to Oakland. Here we boarded a troop train for our journey across the States to Fort Bragg. While I was on a 21 day furlough the war in Europe ended. I was then sent to Miami for R&R and then back to Fort Bragg for discharge--June 7, 1945.

And so ended my tour of duty with the Americal. I had arrived at Camp Edwards on December 4, 1941 and the 180th Field Artillery returned from Carolina maneuvers on December 6, 1941. From there it was Brooklyn, New York to board the Argentina for a journey through the Panama Canal on our way to Australia. After a short stay in Bendigo it was back aboard ship that took us to New Caledonia.

When the new battalions were formed I went from A Battery, 180th Field Artillery to the 200th FA to the 221 FA and finally to A Battery, 247th FA.

I saw action on Guadalcanal and after a stay in Fiji it was action again on Bougainville. After Bougainville came Leyte and from here I made the rotation list and began my journey home.

I had been a truck driver, cannoner, recorder, acting corporal gunner, KP and guard. Finally just before going to Leyte I was made T/5.

Wilbur Henley

ARE YOUR DUES PAID?

HOW I SAW IT

I am enclosing some data on the Americal and I send thanks for publishing my article.

The article I am sending covers the battle for Hill 260. I know the artillery forward observer that was up in that look-out tree was KIA. The Nips were tough bastards. I know its nuts but I still hate them.

The only thing that really aggravates me further is "Dug-Out Doug" There were ten Army Divisions in the battle for the Philippines; Americal, 37th, 1st Cav, 45th, 24th, 43th, 32nd etc. We killed 275,000 Nips and suffered 60,000 casualties and Douglas MacArthur took all the credit. At least the Marine Corp (excellent units) got credit for what they did. But, like you, they can't take the Americal away from us.

Incidentally, The 132nd Infantry, of which I was a forward observer with and the 182nd Infantry caught HELL in the Philippines. I believe it was C Company, 182nd Infantry, that was on a hill when the Nips blew it up causing upwards of 100 casualties.

John J. McGraw
A Co. 132nd Infantry

Ed Note: I cannot agree with your assessment of General Mac Arthur. For instance: in all of the amphibious landing made up the coast of New Guinea, and they were numerous, less than 100 men were KIA in the initial landings. His plans were to cut them off and "let them wither on the vine". How would you have liked to have been in Tarawa with Marines? I feel Mac Arthur's tactics brought many of us home with a whole skin.

It was an eastern spur of Go Chan Hill, later named Watt's Hill, that exploded and caused heavy casualties to A Company, not C Company, of the 182nd Infantry.

I do not hate the Japanese soldier. I have a lot of compassion for them. Their government sent them out there poorly trained, poorly equipped and poorly led. I said to a former Japanese soldier that I met, "we respected the Japanese soldier for his bravery. He would charge into a wall of fire when ordered to." He replied, "We were not that brave. If you did not kill us our own officers would." Their government lied to them and betrayed them. (Sounds kind of like Vietnam).

SOUTH PACIFIC BUDDIES ASSOCIATION
1st Battalion - 182nd Infantry

Four members of the 1st Battalion Buddies Association attended the Christmas Party put on by the New England Chapter of the ADVA in the Americal Museum in Worcester Massachusetts. They were Al Hudon, Joe Law, Stanley Anderson, and Elliot Carey,

A great time was had meeting old friends and making new ones and the luncheon was excellent.

There was quite a bit of excitement in the area surrounding the Museum due to the fire that claimed the lives of six firemen. There were fire trucks everywhere and it was difficult finding our way around to get to the Museum.

Elliot Carey

WHY WAS THE BOMB DROPPED?

Below is a picture of what the Americal would have had to face, among many other things more deadly, once they were ashore on any of the islands that make up Japan--women with bamboo spears.



As the troops moved inland every house and barn would be become a mini-fortress. Woman and children would be using every type weapon available--sticks, stones, spears, farm tools--as long as they killed an American they could die for the Emperor.

In China the Japs used live prisoners tied to a post, for bayonet practice. This was done so that the soldier could get the feel of live flesh and could be taught to withdraw the bayonet rapidly so as to be ready for the second man.

That is why the bomb was dropped--to save the lives of thousands upon thousands of American and Allied soldiers.

Elliot Carey
182 Infantry D Co.

A COMMON LANGUAGE

M Company, 132nd Infantry reached Yokohama on September 8th aboard the USNT Goodhue, (APA 170). Our first stop was a barracks said to have been previously occupied by Japanese Marines. It was bug-infested and most of us moved outside after the first night. Later we stood guard at an ammunition dump and went on pass into Odawara.

In time an order came down to move off to the west, into the mountains, within about 12 miles of Mt. Fuji. We were told we would be spread out in towns and villages to guard the civil records until the civilian authorities could be reorganized under occupation control.

Another soldier and I were dropped off in a tiny village built along one side of a mountain road. There was no room for houses on the other side of the road; the land gave way and fell some 2-3000 feet. A translator had a few brief words with the village police chief. We were told we would take up residence in the one-room police station, located roughly in the center of the village. The police chief, his wife, a young son and an even younger daughter lived behind the station in several rooms. There was a doorway to their quarters, covered with a curtain.

We tried to talk with the family but they knew

almost no English and we knew no Japanese. A Japanese/English dictionary appeared and we attempted to converse one word at a time. It was next to useless; we were reduced to smiling, bowing with a lot of head nodding. The policeman's wife was kind enough to bring us green tea and I developed a taste for it which remains with me to this day. My companion was less enthused about tea and would dump his cup into a potted plant when the wife left. I wonder to this day if the plant survived or thrived on it's daily tea bath.

In time we became concerned because no one passed our door. We assumed that the normal commerce of the village would require the people to move up and down the only street in town. Then the police chief, who had been spending a lot of time at night moving about the town, started looking up the word in the dictionary like "upset," "uncertain," and "fearful." We started feeling insecure.

In the morning, the son appeared from behind the family curtain carrying a baseball. a softball actually. I swung my arms up as though I was swinging a bat and he went behind the curtain again to bring out a small wooden bat. I knew then that we had found a common language. I took him by the hand with bat and ball and we went out into the street. My companion remained behind guarding the mysterious records whose location had never been revealed!

I was the designated pitcher and fielder, the boy the batter. We started a "make your own rules" multicultural baseball game. I saw him smile for the first time (when he hit the ball over my head and made me run down the street). Soon, a door opened nearby and another young boy appeared. He moved, head bowed, not looking at me, to within talking distance of the batter. The batter turned to me hands out and palms up as if to say "Can he play?" I pointed to the field behind me and our team now had three players. Before the day ended, we had gathered seven or eight players and continued the game every day thereafter, weather permitting. We occasionally lost a ball over the edge and down the mountain side, but another would appear from one or another of the nearby houses. We suffered little difficulty with the language difference. Small boys are evidently born with the inherent ability to scratch out a base mark with the side of the sole of a shoe and seem to know instinctively that three strikes are out and three outs retire the side!

After the games started, the town came alive and people started to travel back and forth in front of the police station. True, they took the far side of the road! Several stopped to attempt to talk to us. The most successful of these was a man who said he had worked in Chicago, before the war, at the Chez Paree night club. Since I was from Chicago, I took a special interest in that discussion.

In time, the truck which brought us returned. With a minimum of time, we were loaded and hustled away. We were told the Americal had been recalled to the States and that was the reason for the sudden withdrawal.

I don't remember the name of the town or the names of the individuals including my partner. Our minds were centered on going home. It was a pleasant way to end active duty.

W.H. Borling
M/132 Infantry

FOCUSING ON ONE OF A MILLION
By Tom Hennessy

For some reason, Monday did not have the feel of Memorial Day. Even as the shadows lengthened into twilight, I still had not felt that small tug of the soul the holiday usually brings,

My column had reflected that. It told how and where and why Memorial Day got started, but said nothing about those for whom the day is dedicated; the more than a million Americans who died in our wars since the Revolution.

In the living room, out TV flickered with the tape-delayed telecast of a Memorial Day program in Washington.

That was when it happened.

Maybe it was something Gen. Colin Powell said. Maybe it was a strain of patriotic music wafting over the Capitol grounds. But whatever the cause, something inside clicked. A little slice of memory fell into place, and again I could see the 48 limestone walls on which 39,279 names are inscribed.

They are the names of Americans who fought in the Pacific Theater during World War II. And who died there. And whose remains were never found.

Nearly 40,000 people. Vanished for eternity, forever young in the memories of those who had known them and had waited for them.

Stretching from the walls were sweeping, manicured lawns--grown from only two chunks of Maryland sod flown across the ocean nearly 50 years ago.

And dotting the lawns were markers' thousands of crosses and Stars of David, more military markers than I had ever seen in a cemetery up to that time.

MOST MEMORABLE SITE

The place was the Manila American Cemetery and Memorial, located in Matakai, a suburb of the Philippine capital. P-T photographer Leo Hetzel and I had stopped there in 1985, near the end of a 3-week trip to World War II battle sites.

We had been to such places as Tarawa, its beaches strewn with rusting guns and landing craft. And Guadalcanal, where 40 years after the war, radio messages still alerted islanders to the dangers of live ammunition. And Saipan, where a Kentucky Fried Chicken now occupied the approximate patch of sand on which a Long Beach friend, Harold Wilcox, had been wounded in 1944.

But none of those battlegrounds quite touched us as did the cemetery at Matakai. The sheer volume of markers was overwhelming. How could we possibly convey the spectral feel of this place to readers who had never seen it?

ONE AMONG MANY

It has been said that the best way to comprehend devastation is to focus on just one of its victims. Surveying the ocean of markers, I chose one that was perhaps 50 yards away, the third in a long row of markers. Whatever name appears there, I will write about that person, I thought. Walking to it I read:

Jackson L. Cannell Jr.
T/Sgt 182 Inf Americal Div
Massachusetts Feb 25, 1945

"In the last February of the war, the Americal Division was in the Philippines, I later wrote. "He must have died there standing or crouching in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Had he been a few feet away, had he survived the remaining six months to the war's end, Jackson Cannell might have been in Massachusetts at that very moment, vacationing with the grandkids at the Cape or sitting with pals at Fenway Park.

It would be dishonest to say his name has haunted me in the years since Matakai. In truth, I had to dig through old clippings to find it.

But next Memorial Day, I will try to remember him, Jackson Cannell. And the millions of others.

Taken from the Long Beach, CA Press-Telegram
(Sent in by James R. Daly)

COMPANY D - 132 INFANTRY

I was supposed to be pilot and my duty was to fly an observation plane for the Infantry. However, these duties were taken over by the 67th Fighter Squadron and I was taken out of the 132 Infantry and assigned to the 67th Fighter Squadron by guess who? 1st Lieutenant Thomas Jonathon Jackson Christian III.

Lieutenant Christian was a direct descendant of "Stonewall" Jackson of Civil War fame. He returned to the States from the Philippines and I never saw him again.

He later was sent to Europe and was shot down while flying a P-38. He did not survive and his remains were never found. However, he is identified along with his ancestors at Stonewall's grave in Lexington, Virginia.

Although I was in the Americal for only a short time I do look forward to reading the outstanding Americal Newsletter.

Maj. Charles E. Allard

101st MEDICAL REGIMENT BAND

I have heard from all of my guys from the 101st Medical Regimental Band--O'Neil, Riley, Shea, and Dom Pantaleo. All is well with them. Who would have thought fifty seven (57) years ago that we would make it to 2000.

My wife and I attended the 1992 Convention in San Antonio and we are looking forward to this one in the year 2000.

Yours in comradeship,
Jack Vander Beck

Ed Note: Jack still remains active in the Kings Point Maritime Association Inc. This organization is for parents and friends of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy. Jack is also President of the organization.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES?

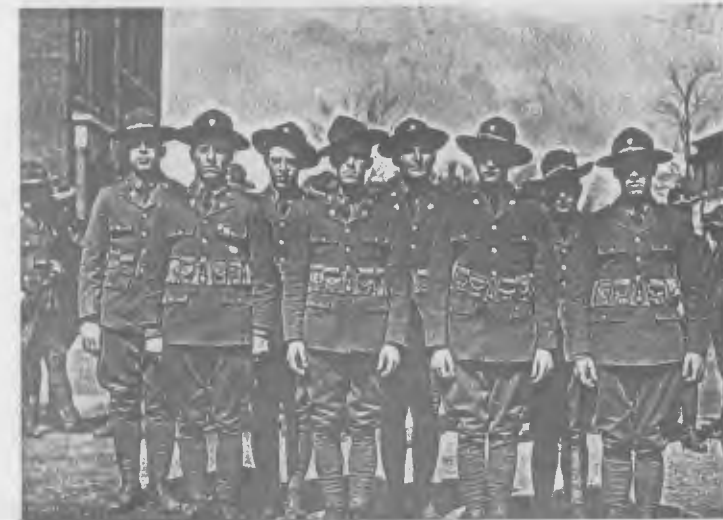
CHECK THAT CARD NOW!

THE DATE ON YOUR CARD IS THE DUE DATE.

F COMPANY - 182 INFANTRY

Thirty five years ago on 21 January 1941, our local outfits, Co. "F" & Hq Co. 2d Bn. 182 Inf. were inducted into the U.S Army for a year of active duty and did not come back until 1945 when World War II ended. They marched from the Armory to the railroad station for the train to take them to Camp Edwards on the Cape.

We are pleased to show pictures of some of our members just before boarding the train..



The three above are Paul Miele, George Barron, & John LeVert as they looked while waiting for the train. They all rose up to 1st Sgt. and were decorated for bravery overseas in the Pacific area against the Japanese.

(Taken from a program put out by the Bicentennial Committee of Waltham Massachusetts in 1976. The article was sent in by Ltc. S. Vinciullo who started his Army career with F Company)

WHAT THIS ISLAND OF BOUGAINVILLE IS REALLY LIKE

Bougainville Nights:

Nights on Bougainville are dark, long and full of noises as you lie on your cot in a jungle clearing. There are four species of frogs emitting weird sounds. One laughs, one cries and a third thrills you in song. An indefinite fourth variety does his best to convince you he is moaning. Crickets snap all night. Clumsy hornbills fly around trees with wings whirring. There is an opossum with a rat like tail. It squeaks. Occasionally, until 9:45 p.m. you can hear the more familiar moan of Bing Crosby or Dinah Shore on recordings as soldiers lucky enough to have radios tune in on a one-lung local station WSSO "Voice of Bougainville."

As far as any limelight on Bougainville is concerned, the war is over. Strategically, we have held this island since shortly after the Marines and Army invaded it in November, 1943. Only once since then has the spotlight focused on this 3500 square miles of mountainous jungle and that was during during the Battle of Bougainville in March of this year (1944).

But The War on Bougainville has not ended by a damn.

Precious Perimeter;

Two Army Divisions guard the sector of Empress Augusta Bay, the 37th and the Americal. Roughly the size of our beachhead in Rome, Italy. The perimeter is roughly 13 miles long and around 6 miles throughout it's thickest, and about 6 miles at it's beach base. This is our hold on an island 110 miles long and 20 to 35 miles wide. It gives us three air fields, constructed since our landing in November of 1943. They are the Torokina on the coast, used for fighters and bombers and transports, and two strips at a place called Piva. One 7,000 feet long is used for heavy and medium bombers.

At that time it was decided to dig in and hold this area as an air and naval base rather than pursue and destroy widely dispersed units of the Jap Army. Prominent among these units was the blood-red shoulder patch of the vaunted Sixth Division, infamous for the Rape of Nanking.

Battle Story:

Against this perimeter the Japs launched their furious, suicidal attack in March, 1944. Today fully 6 months later, visitors can tour this area, virtually unchanged line in perfect safety and see a battlefield exactly as it was during the three weeks of fighting. Only unexploded mine fields have been re-claimed by the jungle and within those green masses, still lie the skeletons and equipment of the Japs who died there.

You can drive out past the front lines and right up to Hill 260, where the Americal Division went out and met the enemy before it reached their perimeter. Climbing over abandoned pill-boxes and along worn communication lines, and trenches you reached the charred and broken stump of the "Most expensive tree in the world." Once a large and flourishing banyan at the crest of the hill, this tree and it's surrounding area was the scene of a pitched 19-day battle, that eventually sent the punch-drunk remnants of the Jap force reeling back into the jungle. Their hopes of cracking the Americal perimeter banished.

The battle was bloody, costly, with the Infantry as usual footing the bill. One Company of a veteran outfit returned from Hill 260 with 83 percent casualties. But when the battle was over many hundreds of Japs and parts of bodies were packed in the little area. The close range at which the battle was fought is shown in the story of a Company approaching the hill for the first time. They called back for mortar to cease firing, because "they're falling only 20 yards in front of us." Two days later the same Company was dug in on the Hill and a few trial rounds of mortar were dropped in near them. "How close are they falling?" asked the mortar officer. "Within twenty yards!" was the answer. "Get some more right in there," yelled back the officer on his telephone.

The Japs fought fanatically all the way. Hill 260 is a good example, an area 100 yards square on Bougainville. Trying to win it, and hold it-which the Japs couldn't, cost one thousand, one hundred seventy-three dead.

On Hill 260, Bougainville, overlooking the Torokina River, there's a blackened riven stump of a tree, a banyan. Once a towering giant supporting the American Artillery OP. Just before dawn on March 10 the Japs attacked, they boiled around the huge roots. A few yards away our men fought them off, using flame throwers, bangalore torpedoes, artillery, cannon, mortars, small arms fire, and

cans of blazing gasoline. For eighteen days the Japs fought fanatically, clinging like leeches and burrowing among the gangling roots of the large tree. Then it's heart, eaten out by flames and shrapnel, the banyan tree crashed, forcing the Japs, minus it's protection to slink back into the jungle. Left behind were five hundred forty one dead, only a part of the Japs total dead.

The final stage of the Hill 260 operations consisted of digging out the Japs from a maze of holes and tunnels around and under the banyan tree. Flame throwers, plus a weird contraption such as a thing rigged up by a Navy CPO, and an Army WOJG. They constructed a pump with a 100 foot hose to spray gasoline on the Nips.

During the actual fight for the Hill. the Artillery used more than a million dollars worth of shells, while the Infantry used over 600,000 rounds of rifle and machine gun ammunition, tossed 10,000 grenades and lobbed in 20,000 rounds of heavy mortar shells.

"The highest priced tree in the world"---which the Japs could not buy by such a fabulous offer of lives---stands today as a grim reminder of that intense and bloody battle. Today there is a slight haze of green from jungle sprouts on Hill 260, but not a tree or bush lives in that blasted jungle area.

The Wages of Rape;

The Jap 17th Army, which had helped in the Rape of Nanking in 1937, paid for that barbarism on Bougainville, when in their attacks they tried to crack the perimeter. The fanatical Japs made their final payment on the 25 of March, when they were gathering for their fourth assault. American guns devastated an area two-thousand by twenty-eight hundred yards where they were massing. In forty eight minutes five thousand shells (115-tons) tore into enemy territory who had survived the three assaults. That was the enemy, the end of the Jap 17th Army.

Japs were strewn around, in the jungle beyond, they lay like rotten fruit on musty ground. In the month since the assaults began, they had lost three-thousand five-hundred dead. Twenty for every American killed, and many more yet that will never be counted. Bull dozers were used to bury the Japs.

Invincible Mortification;

Lt. General Masatame Kande, Commander of the Sixth Army Division, recently issued this lyric of the day to his troops:

To avenge our mortification since Guadalcanal
Will be our duty true and supreme.
Strike, strike, and strike again
Until our enemy is humbled forever
Brighten with the blood of the American Devils.
The color of our renowned insignia
The cry of victory at Torokina Bay
Shall resound to the shores of our beloved Nippon.
We are invincible
No foe can equal our might
To obtain our aims we must always attack
And our enemies we must smite
Danger comes soonest when it is despised
Caution and prudence will bring no relief
Serve in silence and bear all pain
The shame of our souls will give us strength
To preserve our nation and our glory.

The war here in the past month has been mostly a war of waiting. The Japs hungry, ill-clothed and

short of weapons and ammunition, are waiting for ships that will never come in. We're waiting just to see that they don't escape or to be ready for them should they have the want to try another of their ill-fated assaults.

Our patrols are constantly nipping at them, while our road blocks, far out beyond our own lines, prevent them from moving up toward our perimeter in any force.

No. The war on Bougainville is not over by a damn sight.

E. J. Zagiba
H/182 Infantry

(Written on January 12, 1945 on Bougainville)

2nd BATTALION HEADQUARTERS - 182nd INFANTRY

I enjoy the Americal Newsletter very much, especially reading about the different stories of happenings during the Cebu campaign.

The sad part is that I don't remember any of my Buddies' names. I served with two other men from Iowa and all three of us lived within forty five miles of each other, but didn't know each other until we met overseas.

Pfc. Wilfred Fedler was KIA on May 24, 1945. Clarence Nuss Jr. was severely burned two days later and was evacuated from the island. I worked at the Regimental ammo dump until the first of July 1945 when I was taken sick and was sent to a General Hospital on Leyte. In the middle of August I left the Philippines for home.

If anyone remembers me I would be most happy to hear from you. Write:

George W. DeGrange
[Redacted]
Burlington, IA 52601

I'm very proud to have served with the Americal Division.

When General Powell was Chief-of-Staff and I first saw him in uniform and I noticed he Americal patch on his shoulder I got goose bumps about what he and the Division stood for.

George W. DeGrange

33 INFANTRY DIVISION - 132nd INFANTRY REGIMENT

I would like to hear from anyone from Chicago that was with the 33rd Infantry Division in 1941.

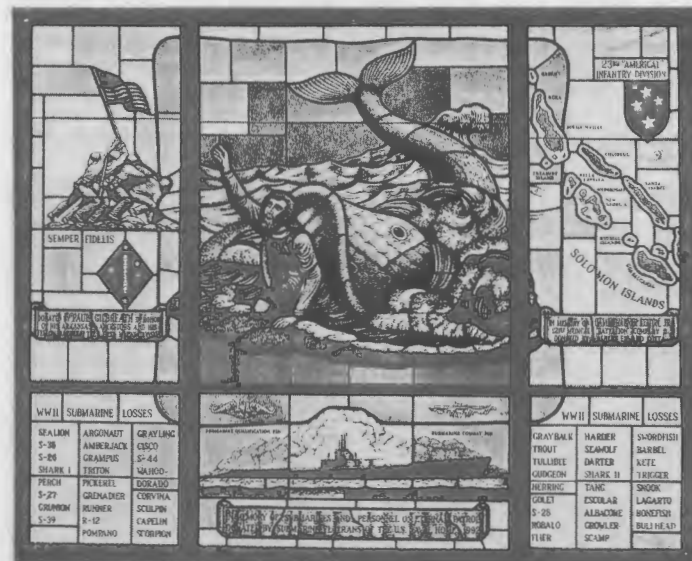
I was from Chicago and enlisted in the 33rd Division and was sent to Camp Forest, Tennessee. Here I was placed in Headquarters Company of the 132nd Infantry Regiment.

When the War broke out I served with this unit in Australia, New Caledonia, Guadalcanal, Fiji, and then Bougainville. I was injured on Bougainville and was sent home.

During my war time service I was known as Edward P. Kwiatkowski and have since changed my name to Edward P. Wyncott. If you remember me please write to me at:

[Redacted]
Tampa. FL 33615

JONAH AND THE WHALE



This beautiful window is located on the east wall of the Chapel. The center panel of the window depicts the Biblical story of Jonah's journey. We see Jonah being released from the belly of the whale to further serve God.

Jonah had been sent by God to deliver God's Word to Nineveh. He had refused. After spending three days in the "Great Fish's" belly, he realized the error of his ways. Following his release from this "first submarine," his preaching in Assyria brought the entire capital city to repentance.

The upper left panel of the window depicts the famous raising of the American flag on Iwo Jima in 1944. The gallant efforts of the U.S. Marine Corps is well documented in world history. This battle became a turning point of the war. Great losses were incurred on both sides before American forces secured the island and won the battle.

This panel of the window was donated by Paul Gilbreath, a combat Marine veteran who lived through this battle and others during his career in the Marine Corps. He dedicated this panel in honor of his Arkansas ancestors and fellow Marines of the First Marine Division. Additional donations were made to this panel by other Resident U.S. Marines at the Naval Home.

The upper right panel of this window depicts the Solomon Islands and the shoulder patch of the 23rd Americal Infantry Division of the U. S. Army with four stars on a field of blue. The stars are arranged in the form of the Southern Cross, a constellation that can be seen only in the southern hemisphere, indicating the Division was "born" south of the equator. The name *Americal* is derived from a combination of *American* and *New Caledonia* where the Division was formed and stationed prior to the invasion of Guadalcanal.

During World War II, the Americal Division saw combat action in the Solomon Islands (Guadalcanal, Bougainville) and the southern Philippines (Leyte, Cebu, Bohol, Oriental Negros). After the surrender of Japan, it served in Yokohama as an occupation

force. During the Korean conflict it was stationed in the Caribbean. It also served with distinction in Vietnam.

The panel is in memory of James W. Kelton Jr., a fatality of the 121st Medical Battalion, Company D. This panel was donated by Resident Albert E. Cotta who served with the Americal Division until June 1945. After serving in the U.S. Army, he enlisted in the U.S. Navy.

The lower three panels of this window are dedicated to the 3,505 officers and enlisted men who sacrificed their lives on submarines during World War II. The names of the 52 submarines lost, in order of their loss, are shown around the silhouette of a fleet type submarine.

On the left, above the submarine stern, is a replica of the "Submarine Qualification Pin," rigged out and a dolphin on each side of it. The pin is fondly referred to as "Dolphins" and is awarded to submarines who successfully complete a long and arduous program. Failure to complete the program results in transfer to surface craft. The pin bonds submarine sailors, regardless of the time period, into instant "Esprit de Corps" and rapport upon recognition by both officers and enlisted men.

On the right, up above the submarine bow, is a replica of the "Submarine Combat Pin." It is awarded to crew members who complete a successful patrol in enemy waters, that is, the sinking of an enemy vessel, bombardment of an enemy shore target, rescue and removal of American or Allied personnel from behind enemy lines including downed aviators, or penetration and reconnaissance of enemy harbors and beaches. Each silver star on the pin indicates five successful patrol runs.

Chaplain Hicks' suggestion of "Jonah and the Whale" as the central religious motif was enthusiastically accepted.

These panels dedicated to those lost on eternal patrol were donated by resident submarine veterans of World War II: James P. Duffy, Theodore O. Gillman, Richard J. Halloran, John J. Hurley, Walter J. Killough, William R. Lockemby, Joel W. Lowery, James A. Matthews, Forest J. Sterling. An additional donor was Michael R. Halloran.

(This stained glass window is in the Chapel of the Naval Home, Armed Forces Retirement Home, Gulfport, Mississippi. Note the First Marine Division is in the opposite corner. Not my idea but a welcomed coincidence, because as you know we relieved the Marines Division starting in October and took care of their wounded prior to that, in August. If any ADVA member is in the Gulfport area please stop by, ask for me and I will give you a tour).

Al Cotta
D/121 Med. Bn.

Ed Note: This picture and story is in a beautiful brochure that Al sent along. The many stained glass windows that decorate the Chapel are shown in color. There is a story and list of donors with each window. I shall forward it to the Americal Museum

THE WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL FUND

Send your contribution to:

Adl. Bernard Chase
[Redacted]
South Yarmouth, MA 02664

C BATTERY - 221st FIELD ARTILLERY

Enclosed is picture of me holding a gold Jap Buddha in each hand. It has taken 55 years to finally tell this story for the first time.



I was always fascinated by the shine of gold and the only gold that I had owned was a gold High School ring.

On the island of Oriental Negros in the Philippines I almost had some Jap gold teeth. Captain Fred Williams stopped me from acquiring the gold teeth before I could do it. He said "no" and recited a bunch of rules about warfare. Looking back now, it seems pretty rough, but those were rough times. The Captain and I had both shot a Jap but I had figured that because I had fired the last shot that the teeth were mine.

Later when we landed in Japan, after the surrender, the same Captain gave us a break from the march through the city of Yokohama. Much of the city had been destroyed but one concrete building, off to the right of the street, was still standing.

I entered the building and found a bathroom. It was indeed different since some of the fixtures were built into the floor. The next door I opened led into an office and everything seemed to be shining gold. It was a Shrine of some kind--a beautiful sight to see! On each side of the main altar were these gold Buddhas. Using my bayonet I pried them up and put them in my pack.

This has been like a confession for me and looking back on this incident I am sorry. Perhaps they should be returned.

These Buddhas are made of beautiful hand carved wood, and covered with gold leaf, not solid gold.

Leo Orfe

101st MEDICAL REGIMENT - AMERICAL BAND

On re-reading the April, May, June 1999 issue of the Americal Newsletter, I would like to advise you that using the Boston College football song, "For Boston", for the parody, "Australia" was not written by Jerry Martel. It was written by CWO Joseph L. O'Neil and first played by the 101st Medical Regiment Band on board the Santa Elena in January 1942. (See page 4, 101st Medical Regiment Band History at the Americal Museum.)

I was a very good friend of Jerry's as he performed most of his shows with our band. Also, if I remember correctly, the "Atabrine" parody was co-written by Jerry and bandsman Pete Terry.

None of this takes anything away from the great entertainment that Jerry provided over the many months on New Caledonia and the 'Canal, as he deserves tremendous credit for his performance and super talent.

Sincerely,
John O'Neil S/Sgt.
Division Band

DEFEND YOUR FLAG

You have fought on foreign soil to protect your FLAG. It is now time to rally around your FLAG again and protect it literally. This year the U.S. Senate will vote on an amendment to the Constitution to protect the FLAG from physical desecration. The House of Representatives has already voted, "YES" The vote for the amendment is short just two (2) in the Senate.

I was really surprised to learn that the two Senators from North Dakota have both voted against the amendment. I have written to both of them explaining what the citizens of North Dakota, who served in the 164th Infantry during World War II, have done to protect their FLAG on the field of battle.

Write to your Senator NOW--especially the members from North Dakota.

Address your letter to:

Senator Kent Conrad [Redacted] Senator Bryan Dorgan
[Redacted]
Washington, DC 20510

YOUR SUPPORT IS CRUCIAL TO VICTORY

NOW HEAR THIS

That was a great issue of the Newsletter you put out recently. The story "Living Hell at Camp #3" seemed to be the answer to a patrol Mark Durley took part in while on Bougainville, up north on the island. He never knew what it was about but he received a Bronze Star for his part in the patrol. He said that Australian records were sealed for a longer time than American ones, so he couldn't check it out. I'll write to him, but, I have it verbatim from him in my book, "The Americal Generation".

On the list of ships Ken Turner has I didn't see the name of the ship the 221st Field Artillery took from Fiji to Bougainville. It was the SS Titania. All others we used were there.

My book, "The Americal Generation" is now available. If you are interested in purchasing a copy contact me at:

W.J. McLaughlin
[Redacted]
Marston Mills, MA 02646

HAVE YOU CALLED THAT BUDDY YET?
TOMORROW MAY BE TOO LATE!

CLASS IN 2000

THE ADVA REUNION
SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

JUNE 15-18, 2000
PRE-REGISTRATION

LAST NAME _____ FIRST NAME _____ NICKNAME _____
SPOUSE ATTENDING? Y / N SPOUSES FIRST NAME _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
RESIDENCE PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____
FAX _____ E-MAIL _____
AMERICAL UNIT(S) _____ (REGIMENT/BRIGADE) _____
DATES OF AMERICAL SERVICE (FROM) _____ (TO) _____

REGISTRATION \$15 PER PERSON (NO OF PEOPLE _____)

GOLF SCRAMBLE \$50 PER PERSON MEMBERS ONLY
FRIDAY JUNE 16, FIRST TEE TIME IS 1300 HOURS. LIMITED TO THE FIRST 124 REGISTRANTS.
REGISTRATION MUST BE SUBMITTED NOT LATER THAN MAY 15, 2000.

FREDERICKSBURG TOUR \$30 PER PERSON (NO OF PEOPLE _____)
BUS LEAVES HOTEL AT 0830 HOURS ON FRIDAY, JUNE 16 AND RETURNS AT 1730 HOURS SAME DAY.
FARE INCLUDES BUS, MUSEUM ADMISSION, AND LUNCH AT THE ALTDORF BIER GARTEN. MINIMUM
OF 57 PEOPLE PER BUS. REGISTRATION MUST BE SUBMITTED NOT LATER THAN MAY 15, 2000.

SPOUSE'S SAN ANTONIO TOUR \$30 PER PERSON (NO OF PEOPLE _____)
TOUR LEAVES THE HOTEL SATURDAY MORNING AT 0830 AND RETURNS AT 1530 AND INCLUDES
SITE SEEING AT MISSIONS CONCEPCION AND SAN JOSE, THE ALAMO, SUNKEN GARDENS
2 HOURS FREE TIME ON THE RIVERWALK, AND THE MERCADO. FARE DOES NOT INCLUDE LUNCH.

FRIDAY NIGHT BBQ BUFFET \$25 PER PERSON (NO OF PEOPLE _____)
MEAL INCLUDES BAR B QUE BEEF BRISKET, SMOKED SAUSAGE, POTATO SALAD, COLE SLAW, BEANS,
BREAD, TEA, COFFEE, COBBLER. AFTERWARDS WILL BE A SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER AND A WESTERN
BAND PLAYING TUNES FROM THE 40'S, 50'S AND 60'S.

SATURDAY NIGHT BANQUET \$25 PER PERSON (NO OF PEOPLE _____)
MEAL INCLUDES A TRADITIONAL TEX-MEX MEAL OF ENCHILADA, TAMALES, TACO, RICE, BEANS, TEA,
COFFEE AND FLAN FOR DESSERT. THERE WILL BE A SPECIAL PRESENTATION BEFORE THE BANQUET.
THE BANQUET WILL BE FOLLOWED BY GUEST SPEAKERS. FINISH THE NIGHT DANCING TO A SWING
BAND PLAYING YOUR FAVORITES FROM THE 40'S, 50'S AND 60'S. LIMITED TO FIRST 300 REGISTRANTS,
REGISTRATION MUST BE SUBMITTED NOT LATER THAN MAY 15, 2000.

TOTAL _____

MAIL YOUR REGISTRATION AND CHECK TO MALCOLM EAST, 9 BRIARCLIFF LANE, LUMBERTON, TEXAS
77657-7401.

PLEASE CONTACT THE HOLIDAY INN SELECT, AIRPORT DIRECTLY AT _____, FAX AT _____ OR CALL CENTRAL
RESERVATIONS AND MENTION HOLIDAY INN SELECT AND THE AMERICAL AT _____. WE HAVE BOOKED 225 ROOMS AT \$75
PER NIGHT PLUS TAX FOR THE REUNION. ONCE THE ALLOTMENT IS TAKEN, ROOMS ARE AVAILABLE THROUGH ALAMO TRAVEL
GROUP. GAIL GENTHER AT _____.

THE AMERICAL IS COMING TO SAN ANTONIO

CLASS IN 2000 PURO SAN ANTONIO!

Come see San Antonio! One of the four
very unique cities in the USA! See the Alamo-
cradle of Texas liberty- old Spanish missions-
the Riverwalk- Ft. Sam Houston- and much,
much more!



The whole family will enjoy the Riverwalk
for shopping and wonderful dining. Try the
Tex-Mex at La Paloma or Rio Rio. Party with
the crowd at Howlin' at the Moon or Fat
Tuesday. Take the kids to Fiesta Texas and
see Shamu at SeaWorld.

Spend some time on the Texas Gulf Coast
at Corpus Christi. See the Lucky Lex, the
WWII aircraft carrier and the State of Texas
Aquarium- and miles and miles of beaches!



Visit and shop in romantic Old Mexico.
See Laredo, Gateway to Mexico, the Mercado,
shops, fine dining, and much, much more. It's
only a three hour drive from San Antonio for
great bargains!



Take a short drive to the Texas Hill
Country. Visit historic Fredericksburg, home
of the Admiral Chester Nimitz Museum,
formerly the Nimitz Hotel, and the newly
opened George Bush Gallery of the War in the

Pacific. Walk down Main Street and visit the
unique shops. Be sure to sit down at the
Altdorf Bier Garten for an authentic German
meal.



Then take a short drive to Luchenbach and
see the good ol' boys picking and grinning.
From there, do a little antiques in Comfort,
TX. And if you still want more, see the plate
display while dining at PoPo restaurant just of
IH-10. Tell 'em Bill Bacon sent you. No
freebies, but great food
nestled away in the trees.

Is golf your game?
Then come on down
and bring the sticks.
Municipal courses
to the Cantera and
Tapatio Springs.
The links await you.



Meet your friends
from the Americal.
Dining, dancing, and
camaraderie are available
to you. So make plans now to attend Class in
2000, the ADVA convention and reunion in
San Antonio, TX, June 15-18, 2000.

GOLF SCRAMBLE TOUR HISTORIC FREDERICKSBURG VISIT BEAUTIFUL DOWNTOWN SAN ANTONIO

TOURS! TOURS! TOURS!

Take the bus to Fredericksburg, TX where
you will visit the Admiral Chester Nimitz
Museum of the War in the Pacific. See the
Americal on display in the museum and on the
Peace Wall. Visit the newly opened George
Bush Gallery. Shop the many unique stores of
restored downtown and lunch at the authentic
German restaurant, the Altdorf Bier Garten.



Visit the Alamo, Cradle of Texas liberty,
Mission San Jose, Mission Concepcion, and
shop the Riverwalk and the Old Mexican
market, the Mercado. See the Japanese
Gardens and historic Ft. Sam Houston where
Ike met and married Mamie.

ENTERTAINMENT!

Two step under the stars
with a real western swing
band playing your favorite
country and western music
from the '40s, '50s, and '60s. And dance
Saturday night away to the sounds of Big
Band. Stop in the video room to see films of
WWII and Viet Nam narrated by the men who
were there.



Not one but two hospitality rooms for you
to reminisce with our friends! Texas Bar b
Que on Friday night served poolside.
Authentic San Antonio Tex-Mex at the
Saturday night banquet.

AND MORE!

Enjoy a golf scramble on Friday afternoon at
the Ft. Sam Houston Golf Course. See the San
Antonio Buffalo Soldiers and listen to their
tales of the Indian Wars. Visit the US Army
Medical Museum and the Ft. Sam Houston
Museum.



For all your travel needs, contact the Alamo
Travel Group, Gail Genther, at _____
_____, _____ FAX _____
The Alamo Travel Group is an official sponsor
of the ADVA hospitality suite.

Holiday Inn Select, Airport; 77 N.E.
Loop 410; San Antonio, Texas 78216;
_____, _____
Fax. \$75 per night plus tax.

Bill Bacon, Convention Chairman
9335 Laurel Grove; San Antonio, Texas

Fax; E-mail: _____

BOUGAINVILLE

The largest of the Solomon Islands is 127 miles long and 49 miles wide and is traversed lengthwise by a mountain range called the Emperor Range in the north and Crown Prince Range in the south. Good harbors are at Kieta, Buka Passage and Buin on the south end and on west coast there is a good anchorage in Empress Augusta Bay.

The Island was discovered by Louis de Bougainville in 1768 and came under the control of a German trading company in 1882 and was a German possession from 1889 to 1914. It was taken by the Australians in World War I and was included with New Guinea in a 1920 mandate.

The Japanese occupied Bougainville in 1942 and they developed harbors and airfields. It was bombed by Allied air forces in 1943 and landings were made by the 3rd Marine Division on November 1, 1943 on the beaches of Empress Augusta Bay. The 37th Infantry Division landed on November 8, 1943, to take up defenses on the left of the Marines. The Americal Division began landing on Christmas Day, December 25, 1943 and gradually relieved the Marines on the right sector of the perimeter. This perimeter basically extended inland as far as the Torokina River with the 132nd Infantry on the right flank extending to the Bay, the 182nd Infantry in the middle sector and the 164th Infantry on the left flank where they tied in with the right flank of units from the 37th Infantry Division.

A main line of defense was established and airfields were built for the purpose of bombing New Britain and other Japanese installations within range. Outposts, such as Hill 260, were established outside of the perimeter. Ambushes were set up outside of the perimeter and patrols were constantly active. The goal was to hold the perimeter and protect it against any Japanese assaults. This goal was accomplished at the cost of many casualties and much hardship.

Their mission completed the Americal turned there duties over to units of the Australian Army in early 1945.

The war had bypassed Bougainville by now and the Japanese, after suffering many defeats, had moved back over the mountain range and settled down trying to raise food and stay alive while waiting for the ships that never came.

The Australian generals made an ill advised attempt to retake the entire island in 1945. The troops suffered many casualties any many questions were asked by the Australian government and the people. But, that is another story.

Following the war the island and surrounding islands gained their independence along with the island of New Guinea and this group of island is now known as Papa, New Guinea.

Huge deposits of copper, and other metals, was found on Bougainville. A huge copper mine was established and Bougainville became the wealthiest part of the new found country. Some time in the mid 1980's terrorist brought the huge copper mine to a standstill and up until this time the island is in a turmoil--basically it seems that Bougainville wants independence from Papa, New Guinea.

Most books touch very lightly on the battle for Bougainville and only the soldiers, sailors and Marines that fought there really understand what

it was like. This issue carries many stories about the battles fought on Bougainville by the Americal men that were there. These were strategic battles and March is the 56th anniversary of the most costly battles.

This issue is dedicated to soldiers of the Americal that fought and died there.

WORLD WAR II MEMORIAL

Have you made your contribution to the World War II Memorial as yet? The Americal Division Veterans Association has voted to contribute \$5,000 to the Memorial Fund and it is hoped to raise \$5,000 more from the membership. If you wish to contribute please send your check made out to ADVA Memorial Fund and mail it to:

Adj. Bernard Chase
[redacted]
South Yarmouth, MA 02664

ESPIRITO SANTO

The group of islands known as the New Hebrides are now known, since Independence on July 30, 1980 as Vanuatu. From 1906 until independence the islands were governed by a condominium by the French and British governments. Espirito Santo is the island at the northern end of the chain and this is where the Americans set up a base to support the Guadalcanal campaign. Many years after the war evidence is the occupation may be seen everywhere.

MILLION DOLLAR POINT: It is said that the American Army offered the New Hebrides government unwanted equipment for ten cents on the dollar. The local government could not or would not pay this fee so the equipment was bulldozed into the sea. At low tide much of this equipment is visible and has become a tourist attraction and a popular spot for scuba divers and snorkelers.

SS PRESIDENT COOLIDGE: This troop carrier sank after hitting one of our own mines. Luckily only two lives were lost in the sinking. This area too has become a favorite spot for scuba divers for it lies in quite shallow water. There is much war time equipment still aboard but the only thing that has been salvaged from the ship was thousands of gallons of oil, in the late sixties.

The government has talked about turning the area into a National Park in a bid to stop souvenir hunters. There is a memorial to the men lost on the side of the road, near the final resting place of the ship.

QUONSET HUTS: These can be seen in town and scattered on the surrounding plantations. Many have been converted into homes--some with a front porch. Most of the huts have been taken over by indigenous families and are in sad repair and will have to be abandoned as they become weakened by rust. Others are used as warehouses.

The French Cinema occupies a Quonset hut. The seats are canvas and it is not unusual for a patron to find himself suddenly sitting on the floor.

All around town can be seen large expanses of concrete, no doubt once where buildings stood. Other sites on the outskirts of town have been completely reclaimed by the jungle.

A Random Act of Kindness

W. Warren Freeman and Russ Carnahan
By Cecilia Rothenberger

In this fast-paced day and age where modernity is letting technology take over the work of humans, random acts of kindness and pure philanthropy are rarely seen. Occasionally, however, one is fortunate enough to meet people with stories, truly humanitarian in nature that, in a brief moment, can restore a sense of faith in mankind. This is our first story of a random act of kindness.



W. Warren Freeman in WWII uniform

This summer, a simple act of kindness deeply affected the life of W. Warren Freeman, an ailing World War II veteran. Freeman had been suffering from a rare form of cancer and in April was hospitalized for three and a half weeks. Upon his release, he was still determined to attend a reunion of his military unit, the Americal, in St. Louis. Freeman and his daughter, Patricia Price, wanted to copy old photographs of his years in the war, serving in the Philippines and Japan. However, they had not anticipated the high cost of duplicating photographs, which one shop quoted at more than \$1,000.

Upon calling Legal Eagle on Augusta Road, Price spoke with Russ Carnahan and discovered that the copies could be done in time for the reunion of her father's division, and that Russ would deliver them to her at work. When he arrived, photos in hand, she asked him how much it would cost her. To her astonishment, Russ replied, "Anyone who would put their life on the line for their country deserves a lot more. I just want your dad to know that I haven't forgotten."

Arriving home, Price told her father what had occurred, and when he heard what Russ had said, he cried. Together, father and daughter bought Russ a book called *The Greatest Generation*, by Tom Brokaw, and glued a photograph of Freeman in uniform, in 1944, to the first page. The initial meeting of these two men, along with the book and a note of thanks, left both speechless, with lumps in their throats.

Then, on August 5, I had an opportunity to meet Freeman and Carnahan, and invited them to lunch, which had been offered by Jersey Mike's Giant Subs & Salads.

We looked at the historic pictures and heard a bit Freeman's reminiscing about the war, the letters from his wife, his friends in the service. Warren Freeman and Russ Carnahan had forged a unique relationship in the short time they had been acquainted, a testament to the raw power of a random act of kindness. Mr. Freeman passed away on August 21, knowing that his service to our country was deeply appreciated.

October 1999 Greenville (SC) Magazine

Reprinted with permission.

Dear Gary,

My dad (now 85) was in the original group that formed the Americal Division. They were sent to Australia, then to New Calidonia. He was one of eight Army men who went ashore with the 1st Marine Raiders on Guadalcanal. He survived that hell as a forward artillery observer and spent the entire war with the Marines.

All his medals and ribbons are Navy. He is the only one of those eight men surviving today. When he dies, a small piece of history goes with him. He is Army to the core but has great respect and admiration for the Corps. He even forgives me for joining them in 1965.

I am sure he would like to know if anyone is still around. He doesn't talk much about the war and since I have seen his pictures, I understand why. They were starving and virtually naked, facing Banzai charges from 100 yards away. They had to put palm logs under the tailpieces of their 105s to depress the barrels down enough to fire them at the Japanese as they came screaming out of the jungle.

He has pictures of guys sitting, totally exhausted, with piles of bodies and body parts around them, eating the food taken from the dead Japanese. They ate fishheads, rice, drank Jap beer and saki when they could find it. The preferred weapon was the Thompson submachine gun with the stick magazine. The 45s could chop through the foliage and most of the fighting was done a very close range.

Their clothes literally rotted away and most of the time they were fighting naked, caked with mud and wet all the time. Everyone had malaria and a host of other nasty tropical diseases. At night the land crabs were "feasting" on the dead bodies and they could hear them fighting over the meals.

These guys went to war with virtually no equipment or support. They made fake machine guns out of wood and dowels painted black to fool any spies that might have been watching them board their troop transports. There were two ships sent to war after Pearl Harbor. One group was given heavy winter gear and the other group was given tropical gear. My fathers group was given the heavy stuff and was sent to Australia. The other ship with the tropical stuff was sent to Ireland (in Winter!) This was done, again to fool the other guys as to where these troops were headed.

When they arrived in Australia, they were billeted all around the Melbourne area in private homes. My dad was sent to Bendigo, a small town 100 miles north of Melbourne. They were really spread out to prevent a sneak attack from wiping them out. Another very interesting fact was that when they arrived in Melbourne, they were told by the locals that their arrival was known over two months before they arrived. There were also warehouses filled with tropical gear and ammo waiting for them. Interesting when you consider how soon after Pearl Harbor they left for war.

This kind of stuff tends to support the idea that our "leaders" really did know before hand that Pearl was going to be bombed. My dad has a lot of stuff that would be very interesting to the guys but he does not like to talk about the war. I will talk to him and see if he will allow me to share some of his photos. These old black and white Kodak box camera shots are still in great shape.

Ken Orr, [redacted]
Hermosa Beach, CA, 90254

Dear Editor,

Please publish this in the locator section of the AMERICAL NEWSLETTER. I am looking for anyone from Co. C, 1/20th Inf., 11th LIB, 4/69-3/70. Thanks.

Robert Yancey, [REDACTED], Laurel Hill, NC, 28351

Dear Editor,

My wife and I have been contributing to the My Lai Peace Project since meeting Paul Hayden at the first Americal reunion I attended two or three years ago in Worcester, MA. Paul had served in my company after I was wounded and returned to the world.

The organization recently set up the Pho Khanh Loan Fund for the Duc Pho area where most of us from the 11th LIB served. I have earmarked all future donations for that fund.

This involvement has been good for my own healing process and I feel a lot of other Nam vets might be interested in knowing about this.

Terry Maloney, Co. C, 3/1st Inf., 11th LIB [REDACTED] Marstons Mills, MA, 02648-1567

Dear Editor,

I had a very close friend that was KIA, Feb. 23, 1969 in SVN, Province of Quang Nagi. As close as I can figure out he was a member of the Americal Division, 11th LIB, 4/3rd Inf., D Co. I would like to find out if this information is correct. Also did anyone out there serve with him? We both graduated from high school in St. Johns, MI in 1967. Thanks. God bless and welcome home.

Stan Helms, [REDACTED], St. Johns, MI 48879

Dear Gary,

The 112th Regimental Combat Team was assigned duty on New Caledonia. Known as the "Little Giant of the Pacific," the 112th Cavalry Regiment, part of the 56th Cavalry Brigade, Texas National Guard, was mobilized for active duty on 18 November 1940. The regiment was stationed at Fort Bliss, El Paso, and in February 1941 was sent to Fort Clark at Bracketville to relieve the 5th United States Cavalry. The regiment participated in the Louisiana Maneuvers and patrolled the border with Mexico until shipped overseas on 8 July 1942.

The regiment disembarked at Nuemea, New Caledonia, on 11 August 1942, where it was attached to the Americal Division. The regiment, after turning in its horses, landed on Woodlark Island without opposition and provided security for Navy Seabees while the Seabees built an airstrip.

So, do you know any accounts in the Americal Division's history of the attachment of the 112th to the Americal while on New Caledonia? Also, do you know of any of the names of Chaplains who were assigned to the Americal Division during its stay on New Caledonia?

Steve Summers, [REDACTED], Bristow, OK 74010 [REDACTED]

Dear Editor,

My name is Richard Godin and I live in New Caledonia. I so happen to have quite a few pictures of military activity in New Caledonia in WWII. Go to the internet and have a look. It took me quite a while to get the pictures, scan them, convert them and send them to Photoloft.

Just check <www.photoloft.com> under New Caledonia - WWII. Please feel free to send this address to as any of your buddies and WWII pals. You can copy them, save them, send them, do as you please.

Richard Godin, Noumea, New Caledonia E-mail [REDACTED]

Hi Gary,

I'm writing because of what I think to be a fraudulent text was printed in the last newsletter. I understand that all the facts all the time cannot be authenticated but this one was easy.

The text appeared as broadcast e-mail about 2 months ago. It was anonymous and was about Jane Fonda's behavior in North VN. Further in the text is a testimony from a Francis Paris or Frank Paris of capture and torture at the hands of the Vietnamese. According to the DoD database and in the list published in "Honor Bound- American Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia 1961-1973", which lists all prisoners, civilian and military, the name Francis Paris or Frank Paris does not appear.

Unhappily, it has been my experience since I returned from VN in '68 to have met people who claim to have done something or other, usually of a fantastic nature, but in reality were not in VN or even in the service! These people who perpetrate this lies are deserving of our anger and disgust for trying to steal the honor of others but are more deserving of pity, that their lives are so meaningless to them that they have to fabricate something that would generate awe.

Frank Hickman, B Co., 3/1, 11th LIB, '68 Lakeville, MN

Dear Editor,

I served with Co. B, 523rd Sig. Bn. on LZ Baldy in 1969. I would like to find

information about an incident that happened there sometime during the summer of 1969.

There was a night ground assault on the firebase by what I think was NVA regulars. Many enemy were reported killed and maybe one American was KIA.

I would like verification that the attack occurred, the date it occurred, and information on enemy and U.S. casualties. Maybe someone can direct me to a good source of information. I need this to help me verify my VA claims. Thank you very much.

**James J. McQueen
Manchester Veterans Center
[REDACTED], Manchester, NH, 03104**

Dear Editor,

I am trying to find information about the involvement of Americal Division units in Operation Pegasus in April, 1968. This operation was to relieve the Khe Sanh combat base. I would like to know how far north and west Americal units were at this time. Your help is greatly appreciated.

**Larry Jordan, [REDACTED]
Kansas City, MO 64109**

Dear Editor,

I am sending copies of old newspaper clippings and photos that I hope you can use in the newsletter. I would also like to thank Mrs. James R. Waldie for writing me a very heart-felt letter informing me of the passing of COL James R. Waldie, a founding father of the 198th LIB and a great leader of men.

**Michael A. Gardner, 198th LIB
Bronxville, NY**

Dear Editor,

I am interested in going back to Vietnam to visit the sites I was at. 2001 is the 30th anniversary of Lam Son 719. I thought there might be a group with the ADVA or other veterans' unit organization making plans.

If not, I have contacted a group run by some ex-marines that do tours into I Corps area including Khe Sanh and the Chu Lai. I have been thinking about going back for several years but the price for this tour is beyond my reach. If there are any others with ADVA who would be interested, I am hoping we might get some kind of group rate for a trip geared specifically to Lam Son 719 and the Americal AO. I appreciate any help you can give me.

**Ron Griffin, Btry. A, 1/82nd Arty
[REDACTED] Oshkosh, WI. 54901**

Dear Editor,

I would like the ADVA to incorporate the fact (from the AMERICAL magazine) that over 150,000 men & women served under the "Southern Cross" in Vietnam. I think that this number would give people a better perspective of the scope of the Americal Division's contribution in Vietnam.

**Les Hines, 123rd Avn. Bn.,
ADVA Vietnam Historian
[REDACTED]**

Dear Editor,

I was assigned to Btry. B, 1/14th Arty., 198th LIB. Our battery commander was Capt. John Hughes. My gun crew chief was CPL Tom Wilson. On Feb. 23, 1969 I got wounded when our battery came under attack at LZ Gator. Many of the particulars are very vivid. However, for the love of me, I can't remember the names of the two GI's who were on guard duty with me that night. I can even remember Capt. Hughes visiting me at the 64th medical hospital. I can remember telling him what happened, how one of the men died and the other got wounded. Can you help me?

**James J. Hendricks, Jr., B, 1/14th Arty.
[REDACTED], Parkville, MD, 21234**

Dear Gary,

I would like to correspond with anyone who served with 1st Plt., Co. A, 1/6th Inf., 198th LIB, April-June 1968, especially RTOs. We are Vietnam War re-enactors and we would like to get in touch with real veterans of the unit we portray.

We do not re-enact their battles. We adopt their uniforms and equipment and we study their war history. You can send e-mail to <mlp@ua.net>.

Max L. Popov

UKRAINE

Dear Gary,

My name is Robert M. Adams. I'm a Vietnam veteran, 70-71, Co. D, 5/46th Inf., 198th LIB. In fact, toward the end of my tour, I was one of the color guards at the stand-down ceremony for the Americal Division. Plus, I extended my tour to take part in TFA (Task Force Americal), the group that was involved in the final pull-out of Chu Lai. We processed and shipped its equipment to DaNang for final processing.

The reason for writing to you is to express my sincere appreciation for the help that I received to locate a number of my comrades that were wounded in Vietnam. I owe this debt to Mr. Donald (Cowboy) Van Estenbridge of Waymart, PA. As you may know, he helps to maintain the VN Military

Records Recon page

<www.americal.org/locator/laddonv.htm>.

The three of four times that I have made requests to this gentleman, his response has been quick, friendly, and accurate.

I am in the final edit of a novel that I have written (TRIPWIRE) that centers on my tour of duty in Americal country. I owe a special debt of thanks to Cowboy for his part in helping me to achieve this goal. I wanted to pass this on to you to thank you for making this loyal American available to me and to the thousands of others who would otherwise have nowhere to turn.

Robert Adams

Dear Gary,

It was certainly good to hear from you. I was beginning to feel like an orphan because I went through the website and all I learned was that the Americal moved on to Guadalcanal and left me behind, not even in the Americal anymore, which I had not realized.

We came over and on to New Caledonia as Task Force 6814D. I was a sergeant in the 50 cal. machine gun section. Our howitzers were sunk off the coast of Florida, so we borrowed some "eyeteen" pounders from the Australians while we were shifting cargo in Melbourne.

I only know that we were issued Americal patches and told that, as you know, the name came from a combination of America and New Caledonia. I spent 39 months on that island, going crazy, and I have a million personal stories which I am writing up in a kind of memoir.

Thanks for letting me know I didn't dream the whole thing. I would be happy to correspond with other WWII veterans who were on New Caledonia and may remember anything about what we did there..

Loyd Carr

Anaheim, CA, 92804, 714-776-6079

Dear Editor,

I had a great day today at the traveling wall. I met Mrs. Clara Hill, the mother of Tommy Hill. He was killed in Vietnam. His unit was Co. A, 2/1st Inf., 196th LIB. Mrs. Hill is very anxious to contact anyone who knew her son.

She can be contacted at [REDACTED] New Castle, AL, 35119. Contacts can send me an e-mail if they like. Thanks again and if I can help you or the Americal association in any way, please call on me.

Gerry Howard, E-mail

Dear Gary,

And I should include James Buckle. I belong to all the "big" veterans associations and get their monthly magazines. Usually scan through them looking for anything I should comment about- positive or negative.

I just got your newsletter (4th Qtr. 1999) today and could not put it down until I had read every word of it. It was wonderful and I was so mesmerized by the articles and the letters. You should be proud of it.

I shed a tear here and a smile there, but mostly I felt a comradeship with the folks writing in and the articles that was like family. Too bad the other "magazines" aren't as focused on the news as well as you are instead of selling shoes and slacks.

I am searching for information on an uncle who was captured in the So Pac and was being transported to JAPAN and the ship did not show the red cross indicating that it carried POWs. Our own Air Corps sank it and many more. Problem is that I have no information on him other than that his last name was Nelson. What I am seeking now is what ever organization notifies next of kin in these matters. We all know about the dates and etc. He was born in Arkansas and lived there and in Oklahoma. Had to enlist most likely in Oklahoma, or drafted.

**Chaplain Bill McDonald
198th LIB & Div. Arty.
[REDACTED], Savannah, MO, 64485.**

Dear Editor,

I have been trying to reconstruct my father's service during the war. He was Marvin Oston Payne, Tech Sergeant (T/4), assigned to the Service Co. of 147th Inf. Regt. He did not speak about it very much. I only recall one anecdote he told about being on Guadalcanal and having to dodge shrapnel that was falling as a result of AA fire against Japanese planes.

He was in the Pacific Theater of Operations for 48 months. The 147th was transferred from the 37th Infantry Division in April, 1943. I believe it was assigned or attached to the Americal Division. My father was on Guadalcanal, New Caledonia, Saipan and Iwo Jima, among others.

When asked what he did during the war he would usually say that he was just a company clerk. At my father's funeral in 1985 my uncle told me that my father had in fact been assigned to one of the squads that dug the Japanese out of their bunkers and caves. I am hoping to find as much history as I can about the campaigns and battles that my fathers' unit was in during World War II.

**Paul Payne, 310-377-5629
[REDACTED]
Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275**

Looking For: Anybody, in C-3-1 from 70-71. Contact: Greg (Blue) Miller [REDACTED]
Bloomington, In, 47401, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Anyone, Co A, 4/3, Aug 70-24 Nov 70. Contact: Scott Smith, [REDACTED]
Fairhaven, MA, 02719, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Bob Besso, Mike Glassform, or anyone, C Co., 4/3rd 10/70 - 8/71. Contact: Mike Shinn, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Redwood City, CA, 94061, [REDACTED]
Looking For: CPT Jerry Green, Commo Officer, 4/21 Inf., 1970-71 and Ray Sisko, HHB, 6/11th Arty, 70-71. Contact: Ron Green, 18 Sandy Circle, Dearborn, MO, 64439, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Anyone, Recon, E, 4/3, 11th LIB, the only Americal unit to get the PUC. I was Recon, E, 4/3 platoon leader March-May '69. Contact: COL Thomas N. Bedient, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Carolina, PR 00979
Looking For: Shorty the mechanic, A Co. 26th Engrs, 1967-1968. Contact: Dennis Uzzell, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Hartville, MO, 65667
Looking For: James Leeper and Anyone, B Co., 5th/46th, 198th, March 1968 March 1969. Contact: Gary C Stolp, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Muskogee, OK, 74403, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Cecil Rial, 123rd FA, 33rd Div., IL Nat'l Guard, then Task Force 6814D, landed in New Caledonia, 3/42. Contact: Loyd Carr, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Anaheim, CA, 92804, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Anyone who served with John Lucas, my Grandfather. He recently passed away. We found he had served with the 164th. He joined the unit in late 44, saw action on Leyte and Cebu, winning a bronze star. Contact: Gerald J. Ruglio, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Chicago, Illinois, 60638
Looking For: Brig Gen Donaldson, ADCG Manuver, 1969-1970. Col Leslie J. Stottle, USA Ret, [REDACTED], Honey Grove, PA, 17035, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Rejean Poisson, Co. A, 123rd Avn. Bn., 12/67 to 12/68. Contact: Bob Wolf, [REDACTED], Granger, IN, 46530, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Anyone, H Co., 132nd Inf, Bougainville, Cebu. Contact: Howard Ward, Mississippi [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Meridian, MS, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Paul Ramperger; or anyone, C Co., 3/21, 196 LIB, July 1970 to Febuary 1971; HHC, 3/21, 196 Infantry, Febuary 1971 to July 1971. Contact: Bennie Martin, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Pontotoc, MS, 38863

Looking For: Dave, Sgt. Arruda, Co. C, 5/46th, 198th LIB, 6/10/70. I was your medic that night. Contact: Art Castillo, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Ridgecrest CA 93555
Looking For: Anyone, 1st/6th Inf, 198th, Recon, 1969-1970. Contact: Doug (Yogi) Burford, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Lawrenceville, GA, 30043,
Looking For: John W Cummings, 1/46, C Co., Ft. Hood, TX, 3-10-66, Americal Div., 1/6 Inf. Contact: Frank Chant, 3rd [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Woodbury, NJ, 08096, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Dale Hatcher, Davis Lane, B Co., 26th Engrs, Nov 1968 - Oct 1969. Contact: Jerry Tegtmeier, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], NE, 68134
Looking For: Anyone, E-Troop, 1/1 Cav., 3/68-11/68. Contact: Al Sneyar, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Beulah, MI, 49617, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Robert (Bob) Wjtcumb, 11th LIB, 4/21 Bn, Co. D, May 1970-April 1971. Contact: Jim Wimberley, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Dundee, FL, 33838
Looking For: Motor pool and/or FDC guys, A Btry., 6/11th FA, 11th LIB, Aug 68 to Aug 69. Contact: Harold Robinson, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Savannah, GA, 31405, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Douglas Clearwater and Joe Barhorst, C Btry, 6/11 Arty, 1970-1971. Contact: Drew Fontenot, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Church Point LA, 70525, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Freinds of Arthur Hodan, my dad, with the 132nd Inf. on Guadacanal. He was wounded and listed as missing in action. He recoverd from his wounds and was assigned to MAG 25. Contact: Martin Hodan, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Albany, GA, 31707
Looking For: Anyone, LZ Baldy, 15 Feb 69 To Oct 69. Contact: James J. McQueen, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Manchester, NH, 03104
Looking For: Members of Co. G, 75 Inf. Rangers, July 1969 to March 1970. Contact: Jose L. Rosado [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Bronx, NY, 10473,
Looking For: Anyone who may have known PFC Stanley A Mach, my uncle, killed on Bougainville on 4/7/44. I am searching for anyone who may have served with him. What happened on Bougainville on April 7, 1944? The history of the Bougainville campaign states that hostilities ceased at the end of March '44. Contact: Ed Grabowski, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Palatine, IL, 60067

See more at [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone, 67 to 68, Co. C, 523rd Sig Bn. Contact: James H. McGuigan, 4407 72nd Ave, Landover Hills, MD 20784, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Looking For: D Co., 3rd/21st (Black Death), 69-70. Contact: Daniel Phillips, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Tallassee, AI, 36078, 334-252-8741
Looking For: Anyone, Co. A or E, 1/20, 11th LIB, 69-70. Contact: Wayne Dabney, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Chickasha, OK, 73018
Looking For: King, 196th LIB, 3/21, D Co. (BLACK DEATH). Contact: Mike Walker, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Cedar Creek, TX, 78612
Looking For: Clyde Metz, 2/68-2/69, E Trp., 1st. Cav. 11 LIB. Contact: Philip N. Ewing, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], de Carlotta, Tucson, AZ, 85704
Looking For: Rudolph Yap, C Co., 2/1st, 196 LIB, 1969-1970. Contact: Sgt. Everett Graves, Jr. (Bear), [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Norton, VA, 24273
Looking For: John Dewing, A Co. 4/3 Inf., 1970-1971. Contact: Tom Williams, 213 Taylor Rd., Richfield Springs, NY, 13439 [REDACTED]
Looking For: Anyone, C Co., 1/46, Oct. 70 - Oct. 71, also anyone on Fire Base Mary Ann the night of the attack Mar. 28, 1971. Contact: William G. Cahill, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Hilton, NY, 14468
Looking For: Emil Kettlehutt, John Martinez, Bob Titus, Tom Bush, Gerald Plotke, Freddy Lewis, Avent, Francis Brennan and others, 198th LIB, 1/6, A Co., 10/67-10/68. Contact: Don D. Kaiser, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Baytown, TX, 77520, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Anyone, B. Co., 1/6th, 198th, 1/71 to 6/71. Contact: Will Ascencio, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Abilene, TX, 79603
Looking For: Tom Martiniano, A Co., 1/46th, 198th. Contact: John Miner, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Ponca City, OK 74604, 580-765-
Looking For: Anyone, 9/71 - 4/72, C Trp., 1/1 Cav. Contact: Dave Hill, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Emmaus, PA, 18049, [REDACTED]
Looking For: Anyone, B Co., 1/52, 1967, sailed aboard the USS Gordon. Contact: Dougals McGarraugh, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED], Perryton, TX, 79070,
Looking For: Kenny Crowell, H-Troop, 17th Cav., 198th LIB, Aug 68-June 66. Contact: David L Broome, 3520 Brock Rd., Gainseville, GA, 30507, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Thanks to Tony Green for locator posts.

198th Inf. Bde. Has New Crest



The spirit and readiness for combat of men of the 198th Inf. Bde. has been captured on the unit crest recently approved by the Department of the Army.

The new insignia depicts a "reversed S" of flames crossed with a portion of a rifle at fixed bayonet emblazoned over a blue shield arched at the top and bottom. The tongues of the flame allude to the brigade's firepower and the bayonet, a basic infantryman's weapon, symbolizes the carrying of the fight directly to the enemy. The blue and white on the shield represent the traditional colors of the infantry.

The U.S. Army Institute of Haraldry has initiated action for the manufacture of the new crests and they will be worn by the soldiers of the brigade soon.

New Infantry Brigade At Fort Hood
Termed Unique

The commander of the 1st Armored Division's newly-activated 198th Inf. Bde. predicted recently that the brigade will be "unique in the annals of Ft. Hood."

Colonel James R. Waldie, former commander of the division's 3rd Bde., said his new unit will train "using current proven Army practices with a special orientation towards Southeast Asia."

The Department of Defense release which announced the formation of the brigade also said the unit- Ft. Hood's newest_ has been earmarked for future movement to Southeast Asia.

"The brigade will be unique for Ft. Hood, and especially so for the 1st Armd. Div., in that it will be the first infantry unit the division has ever seen which is not mechanized," Col. Waldie said.

Many of the foot soldiers in the unit are organic to Ft. Hood, having participated in both Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training here. "I don't expect to have any trouble filling the slots created by the brigade's formation," the commander said. "Since the original publicity I have received countless requests from soldiers throughout the country who want to join us."

The brigade is already staffed by many Vietnam returnees. Most outstanding among them is Captain Francis X. Brennan, who has already earned three Bronze Star Medals, each with "V" device, and the Vietnamese Gold Cross of Gallantry.

"We are extremely pleased that the Department of Defense has already announced the role of this brigade as being one of preparation for movement to Southeast Asia.

"I feel this knowledge is a definite morale factor for the men. It also gives their training more meaning than it might have had, by giving them a definite goal," Col. Waldie said.

As for the training itself, Col. Waldie predicted that it also will be "unique." "Basically, we will be stressing the skills of the individual soldier which have been the same since the time of Caesar. But there will nonetheless be the special slant towards preparing the men for conditions in Southeast Asia," he explained.

"We intend to restress the small unit tactics so vital to the infantryman, but we also plan to train on the battalion and even the brigade level, which has not been done to date within the division."

Col. Waldie, who saw combat on the Rhineland and in Central European theaters, said he is "absolutely looking forward" to his tour within the new brigade.

"It's something every soldier looks forward too."

(Transcribed from a newspaper article believed to be from a Ft. Hood post newspaper circa the formation of the 198th Inf. Bde. in 1967. Thanks to Michael A. Gardner, Bronxville, NY.)

Americal Headquarters ETS's

(From 26 Nov 71 Southern Cross Vol. 4 No. 45 Page 1)
By MSG Bill Pickett

CHU LAI (Special) "Four years ago the Americal Division was born in battle ... in one of the most violently contested areas of Vietnam. Today we look back with satisfaction at the complete accomplishment of our mission."

With these words Major General Frederick J. Kroesen, 23d Infantry Division (Americal) commander, set the stage for the standdown of the division headquarters, the last in the division to case its colors.

The division awards ceremony Nov. 11 at Chu Lai climaxed four years of battle for the Americal Division, at one time the largest division in the Army, with the largest Tactical Area of Interest in Vietnam. More than 1000,000 men served with the division in the southern portion of Military Region I during that time, helping to drive the enemy out of the populated coastal plain and mountain settlements and training Regional Popular Forces.

"Those who have served honorably with this division have earned a self-satisfaction and pride that comes from serving with the best, and attaining the most difficult goals," the general noted.

He did not sidestep the fact that members of the division share collectively an unfortunate reputation, "... caused by the few in our numbers who make mistakes, some tragic, some careless, some notorious."

"But," he added, "we do share also the credit for an unexcelled record and uncounted thousands of acts of valor, acts of compassion and a significant contribution to the attainment of the objectives of the United States in this war."

Participating in the ceremony were infantrymen from the three brigades of the division: the 11th, 196th and 198th; artillerymen representing the Americal Division Artillery; aviation personnel of the 16th Combat Aviation Group; and men of many skills from the Division Support Command. Also represented was the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry; 26th Engineer Battalion and the 523d Signal Battalion.

General Creighton W. Abrams, CG, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, was the reviewing officer. Sharing the reviewing stand with General Abrams and General Kroesen were Lieutenant General Hoang Xuan Lam, CG I Corps and Military Region I; Lieutenant General William J. McCaffery, deputy CG, U.S. Army, Vietnam; Lieutenant General Welborn G. Dolvin, CG, XXIV Corps; and Major General Nguyen Van Toan, CG 2d ARVN Infantry Division.

(This copy was donated by Paul B. Parham and is the last issue of the Southern Cross before the Americal Division stood down from Vietnam. Forwarded to editor by Les Hines, Vietnam Historian.)

The Moving Wall: Beaumont, TX

By Malcolm East, ADVA Jr. Vice Commander

The moving wall was recently in Beaumont, TX. Our local VVA chapter assisted with the various ceremonies and a veterans board to talk with history students from a number of area schools. The board consisted of vets from WW2, Korea, Vietnam, and Desert Storm. The kids asked pretty tough questions and got straight up answers.

Beverly did the opening ceremonies. We had POW-MIA ceremonies and Candlelight Vigil. Beverly and I helped out with that as well as the closing on Sunday afternoon. We also had a Ride To The Wall by a bunch of the local motorcycle clubs. It was a very moving weekend. A number of items were left at the Wall. Most notable was a Silver Star left by a young man who was too young to remember his father when he was KIA.

There was a poem left at the wall which we read at the POW-MIA ceremonies. I thought I would pass it along. I think there a little of all of us in this poem.

Vietnam, Vietnam--- I just can't seem to let you go
By Eddie Guillory; Port Arthur, TX.

Vietnam, Vietnam I just can't seem to let you go,
for many reasons that you and I are the only ones that know
No matter how I try to erase you from my mind,
You are like the wind You keep blowing in from time to time.

It has been many, many years since I told you good-bye
Still yet I can't shake you no matter how hard I try.
I came to you so very young and fresh
You put my life and soul to a very hard test.

If I believed in or not of what I was told to do,
For human rights or whatever the reasons I was sent to help you.
So young, So young, not quite a man,
I was still sent to a war torn land.

Death all around me day and night,
Day in and day out it was fight, fight, fight.
Bodies being sent home day and night
Something that will never be forgotten it was a horrible sight.

Some were new friends that I got to love and know,
But death came knocking and I had to watch them go.
I had to kill people that I nor-loved or hated at all
But in war you are told that matters not at all.

War is hell, believe me that I can say,
But to have peace sometimes there's no other way.
Vietnam, Vietnam you are still deep down in my soul,
The years have come and gone and I should've forgotten you

It's easier said than done, part of me left there and part of me stayed there,
I keep trying to erase you from my mind, but you keep hiding, hiding there somewhere
Some of the vets I know let you go and have moved on,
I keep trying and trying to move on and be strong.

But Vietnam, Vietnam, I just can't seem to let you go.
For many reasons that you and I are the only ones that know.
To all war vets who are still just as I
Way back in your minds, do you ever wonder, will those wars ever die?



46th Inf. Regt. Torchlight Ceremony and 1/46th reunion, March 27-28, 2000

The annual 46th Infantry Regiment Torchlight Ceremony will be held at 19:30 on March 27, 2000, at Ft. Knox, KY. The memorial service is organized by the current day 46th Inf. to honor those who have died at any time while serving in the 46th Inf. The 1/46th and 5/46th were assigned to the Americal Division in Vietnam.

The service will be held at Memorial Grove near the Copple Center. COL Richard Carvell (USA, Ret.), Honorary Regimental Commander, will address the gathering. The ceremony will be followed by a reception hosted by battalion members. All 46th Inf. veterans are cordially invited to attend.

The 1/46th Inf. reunion will be held on March 27-28 at Camp Carlson, KY, just outside Ft. Knox. A memorial service will be held at 10:00 a.m. at the main lodge. This annual reunion was started by William Walker, C/1/46, as a memorial to those killed on FSB Mary Ann on March 28, 1971. All veterans of the 1/46th Infantry are invited. Walker can be reached at [REDACTED]

Dear Editor,

We are requesting information on our relative Joe Cisneros. He was with the 1/14th Arty., 198th LIB and later with HHC, Americal Division. We are interested in contacting people he had served with. If possible, please send information on the 1/14th, especially related to where the unit was located in Vietnam. Thank you very much.

Rita & John Cisneros, [REDACTED] Lancaster, PA, 17602,

Dear Editor,

I am trying to find veterans that fought with my son Larry Jordan. He was killed on April 12, 1969 while assigned to Co. C, 1/52nd Inf., 198th LIB. An enemy rocket injured several soldiers, including my son. Although severely wounded in the lungs, Larry helped medics with the other wounded until he became too weak. I would like to talk with anyone who saw what happened that day.

I am a veteran of the 121st Inf. Regt, 8th Inf. Div, and served in the Hurtgen Forest in WWII. Thanks for your help.

Richard Jordan, [REDACTED], Darien, IL, 60561-5040

instructor, a veteran NCO, was explaining hand grenades. As part of his demo, he had a box of grenades on a table. He took one of the round cardboard holders with a grenade in it and pulled off the tape securing the two halves together, as you would a new out-of-the-box grenade. He held the grenade up: "This is an M-26 fragmentation grenade..." At the end of his spiel, he pulled the safety pin and held the spoon to show the final safety and talked about that. He then let the spoon pop off and threw the grenade toward the class... It rolled under the bench where Nick and Bill were sitting. At this time, the instructor stepped on a button on the floor and set a charge off outside the building. There was a loud popping sound and then the second explosion of the live grenade going off inside the classroom..." While the captain was giving this account, Feasel said, a jeep sped up to the headquarters across the street and someone commented, "The cover-up has begun."

Bob Short, who was with the 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry, gave me this version: "The story I remember hearing [in the bush] was that the instructor usually tossed a dummy grenade into a group of trainees to scare them. This time he accidentally tossed a live grenade and realized it immediately. He started screaming at them to take cover, but they thought it must be a joke, so they didn't move. "After my year in the infantry, I stayed in Vietnam for six more months as an instructor at the Americal Division's Combat Center. The incident in which your cousin was killed was still being used as an example of how not to conduct classes with new arrivals."

I turned to officers for an explanation. The name on the condolence letter Nicky's parents received was Lt. Col. Robert C. Bacon, listed as the commandant of the 23rd Adjutant General Replacement Company. He had arrived at Chu Lai several days after the explosion, he told me, and only briefly filled the commandant post. He remembered the letter but said the signature at the bottom wasn't his. He had refused to sign it, saying the accident didn't happen on his watch and he knew nothing about Nicky. Apparently in the interest of expedience, he said, someone forged his name.



David Vendetta with local farmer at site of accident (1998)

The company commander, Capt. Edward R. Canady, told me that he believed someone had deliberately replaced the instructor's training grenade with a live one. The instructor, whose name Canady couldn't recall, was a staff sergeant in his mid 20s. He had used the same grenade nearly every day for months, keeping it in a metal container in a locker separate from live ammunition. His routine was a get-your-attention gimmick. He'd pull the safety pin and roll the grenade at the men to test their alertness, see how they'd react. But someone switched grenades on him. "They never determined who did it," Canady said. "It was never explained to me or anyone I know of."

What about the instructor? "He went bonkers," Canady said. "I don't know what became of him." But Canady said Capt. Thomas C. Kerns might know. He was the officer in charge of the Combat Center's instructors. Unfortunately, Kerns said he didn't remember the blast. "Logic says I was there," he told me, "but I don't recall a thing." Besides, he said, the use of grenades, either live or

inert, "was not part of the course of instruction." When I asked him about instructors tossing disarmed grenades at new arrivals, he said, "My instructors did not do that."

Though the daily records for the 16th Combat Aviation Group didn't mention the incident, I called the headquarters company commander anyway. He was Capt. Stanley L. Bartlett, and his signature was on the Morning Reports for the week of the grenade explosion. Bartlett said he didn't have firsthand knowledge of the blast, but word of it was "all over" Chu Lai. He heard that a Vietnamese helper had laid out all of the instructor's props in the classroom that morning, then disappeared and was never seen again. But that was only a rumor.



Vietnamese guide with map shows location of 91st Evac in Chu Lai

The incident was mentioned in a newsletter distributed by Americal Headquarters to the headquarters companies, Bartlett said, and by the aviation group commander at one of the weekly safety meetings. Other than that, all Bartlett could say was that he had gone through the same instruction when he arrived at Chu Lai late in 1968. The instructor threw a grenade and yelled, "Look out!"

"He was angry that most of us sitting there didn't do something," said Bartlett, who sat in the front row of the classroom. "He gave us a lecture. I told him, 'C'mon, you're not going to use a live grenade in here.'"

The Americal's commander, Maj. Gen. Lloyd B. Ramsey, told me that he remembered the explosion, because it was the worst training accident that happened while he was at Chu Lai. He said an investigation failed to determine how the instructor's grenades got mixed up, concluding the blast was an accident. "I did not see a report," he said, "but I was briefed on the results."

In May 1998, I went to Vietnam to search for the meaning of Nicky's death. With the help of a government guide, a compass, and pictures and maps Americal vets had sent me, I found the hard ground of the LZ Bayonet rifle range. A farmer who had been with the South Vietnamese army remembered where the classroom had stood, and pointed out the place. I knelt there and touched the sand. There is no trace of the plywood building, just scrub brush and eucalyptus trees.

My guide then took me to the site of the 91st Evac, on the bluff above the beach, where I looked out on the South China Sea, soft as Vietnamese silk. Aside from concrete foundations, there was no evidence – for as far as I could see – that there had been a huge American presence here 30 years ago. But when I closed my eyes against the broiling sun, I saw ghosts that never left. There was Nicky, lean and hard as nails, and like the others who died here, so young.

How did the accident happen? I'm not sure I'll ever know.

—David Vendetta

David Vendetta is writing a book about his cousin. His address is: [REDACTED], Allentown, PA, 18104-5511; Phone [REDACTED]; e-mail: [REDACTED]. An article he wrote about his trip to Vietnam is on the Internet at www.mcall.com/html/decades/16303.htm.

In honor of all the brave grunts, I write this short story. It took a long time, but the memories are everlasting and close to my heart. I am very proud that I served with the 1/46 (Professionals) 198th LIB 1967-68. This experience changed my life over the 30 years that have passed. As this century comes to a close and a new one begins, I ask myself many questions about the road ahead. We learned a lot about war and the destruction it brings upon human life. I pray that this new millennium will bring peace to all mankind.

The Day We Shipped Out

by Michael A. Gardner, Co. A, 1/46th Inf., 198th LIB, 67-68

After training all winter and most of the summer at Fort Hood, the orders finally came down. No more waiting; we were ready to go. The 1/46 Inf. BN was shipping out from Texas, flying to Oakland and boarding a US Navy troop ship. Some of us were a little nervous, but most of us were shipping out as one unit, together, which helped a lot.



We boarded the U.S.N. Upshur around midnight, each one of us with a duffel bag and an M-16, all our gear in hand. We were directed to different levels of the ship. Down the metal stairs we went, one by one, deeper and deeper in the ship. The 4th level was where my bunk was located, just around the bulkhead. Boy, was I tired. To my great surprise, I didn't have a bed to sleep in. Instead was a hammock, about 4 feet off the ground. The ship was packed with what I estimate to be about 800 grunts, 800 hammocks and 12,000 miles to go. We were traveling express. There would be no stopping now.

As you might guess, this was the first time that I was ever on a ship. I was never even on a wooden rowboat, much less a US Navy troop ship. The U.S.N. Upshur was a vintage World War II vessel. If only this ship could talk; the stories it would tell of all the battles she fought and all of the young men she carried.

The next day came fast. We were up on deck very early that day. As we all know, in the Army hurry-up wait is a golden rule; even on ship it's the same. As I was leaning over the side of the ship, I noticed the crowd of people on the dock below. By now, the sun had rose a little higher. Around noon, more people assembled on the docks. They were waving up at us, waving good bye and shouting good luck to their loved ones. I heard "Stars and Stripes Forever"; the Army Marching Band was getting closer, the volume growing louder as they approached. The music is so familiar to all of us.

Some of my buddies were joking around near me. "When are we going to move?" was the big question on everyone's minds. I continued to look over the side of the ship. Everyone on board was now leaning over the side, waving, shouting and throwing all of their coins loose to the people below.

The ship started up its engines as the smoke stack bellowed out thick smoke. The ship's crew was in position. The lines were untied. Forward and aft I could hear them shouting out orders everywhere. "This is it," I said to myself.

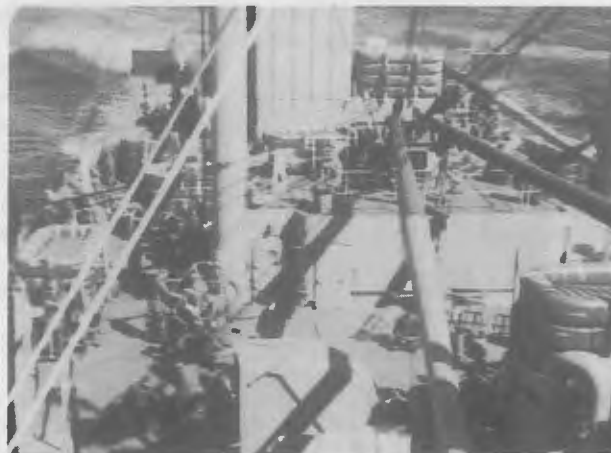
My buddies were shouting. We started to move.



As the ship started to move away, the dock got smaller and smaller. The seagulls followed us into San Francisco Bay and soon we were under the Golden Gate Bridge heading towards the great Pacific.

Life aboard the ship was very dull at times. Poker and Blackjack were very popular. We would also bet on seeing another plane in the air or ship at sea, but after a week in the Pacific Ocean, nobody wanted to bet anymore. That ended real fast.

Everyone on board had a job to do. My job was KP (sullary). I had to clean all of the metal meal trays. I remember one time when the ship hit a bad storm while breakfast was being served. Everyone on board carried a paper bag at all times in the event that they got seasick. I remember that I had a busy day cleaning metal trays; that was a truly brown paper bag day.



During the day, with weather permitting, we stayed out on the deck exercising. It was a real joke while the ship was rolling about, but we managed. When work was done, we stayed out on deck sunning and playing cards. There was always a card game to get into. I wrote many letters, too. You couldn't mail them out, but it made the time pass. Sometimes, I would just stare into the ocean or look at the horizon, hoping that maybe a ship would pass or a plane would fly over to wave to.

Traveling south, the ship passed into warmer waters as it crossed the Equator. The temperature started to climb. Some dolphins were following our ship. In the Army, you learn to live for today and not worry about tomorrow. Today is the most important day of your life. You are alive and you are well.

I know that there are many more stories to be written and much more to commit to paper, not only my stories but from others who were there. To all you grunts, don't wait - let's hear from you!

DEATH IN A CHU LAI CLASSROOM

My cousin Nicky was the only soldier I knew who went to Vietnam. At the height of the war, he joined the Army and learned to fly helicopters. He went overseas in the summer of 1969, gambling he'd survive a year. But he lasted only 11 days with the Americal Division before a fatal grenade accident. His parents and the rest of my relatives never knew the exact circumstances of his death.



Warrant Officer Nicholas L. Venditti

I decided to find out. The search brought me a mass of documents, put me in touch with dozens of veterans who provided pieces to the puzzle, and ultimately lured me to Chu Lai so I could stand where Nicky had stood. But five years later, the full story of what happened to Warrant Officer Nicholas L. Venditti remains a mystery.

Nicky arrived in Vietnam on the Fourth of July and was assigned to the 16th Combat Aviation Group at Chu Lai. The telegram his parents received said only that he was grievously wounded six days later, on July 10, in an orientation building at LZ Bayonet. "During a period of classroom instruction, instructor unknowingly discharged a live grenade." Nicky was evacuated to the 27th Surgical Hospital, where his left leg was amputated below the knee. A day later, he was transferred to the 91st Evacuation Hospital. He died there July 15.

The blast also claimed the lives of two other men - Specialist 5 Timothy T. Williams, who was killed instantly, and Nicky's friend, Warrant Officer Wilbur J. "Billy" Vachon III, who hung on till July 17. About 30 others were wounded, I've been told, eight or 10 of them seriously.

Who was the instructor? Why did he have a live grenade? Was there an investigation, and what did it find? My cousin's personnel and casualty files shed no light. But his parents showed me a condolence letter the Army sent them. It described the incident in more detail, saying in part: "On the morning of July 10, 1969, Nicholas was attending a class on the use of grenades at the Americal Division Combat Center located at the division's base camp at Chu Lai... At 10:15 a.m., the class instructor removed the safety pin from a hand grenade that was thought to have been disarmed for instructional purposes. However, the grenade detonated when he threw it to the floor of the classroom. Nicholas received serious fragment wounds from the resultant explosion." That was the Army's account. But still, how could this have happened? Was there a written record?



Tim Williams



Billy Vachon

Army accident reports are destroyed after six years, the National Personnel Records Center told me, so the one I needed was gone - if it ever existed. Rich Boylan at the National Archives helped me, searching Inspector General investigations and other files, many of which were incomplete, but he found nothing. Unit daily journals noted the incident only briefly. It wasn't mentioned in the Americal Division's operational reports, and the Army Crime Records Center repeatedly claimed to have no file on the case. To learn anything more, I'd have to find soldiers who were at Chu Lai.

The first was Nicky's best friend in the Army, a fellow chopper pilot named Tony Viall. He told me that he and Nicky rode a truck from the Combat Center to the LZ Bayonet rifle range and filed into the orientation building with two other warrant officers, Billy Vachon and Tom Sled. The four sat together up front, on a bench with their backs to a table. Infantrymen filled the benches behind them.

A sergeant talked about grenades, pulled the pin on an M-26 fragmentation grenade and tossed it. Viall watched it roll under the table, between Nicky and him. "All along, instructors had been using duds," he said, "and so we didn't react to it. We just kind of halfheartedly said, 'Well, here's another one.'"

Tom Sled reached back and under the table, figuring he'd grab the "egg frag." But it arced away from him. "One of those guys back there will get it," he thought, and he started to turn and face the front. But behind the warrant officers was a combat engineer who knew about grenades, and he knew this one was live the moment it left the instructor's hand.

Pvt. Sam Pilkinton of the 26th Engineer Battalion saw the sergeant reach into a box of what appeared to be newly shipped grenades and pull one out. Pilkinton felt uneasy but thought, "He has one that he's already shot the fuse on." When the instructor pulled the pin and the spoon flew off, Pilkinton heard a pop. "There was fear in my heart," he said, "and I got right outside. It was my instant, gut reaction when I heard the detonator go off, lighting the fuse. I knew the grenade was going to go off in five seconds."

The explosion showered the men with a thousand metal fragments. Tom Sled and Tony Viall were badly wounded in the legs, so the war was over for them before they could fight in it. They were hospitalized, then sent home. Tim Williams, Billy Vachon and Nicky Venditti were sent home, too - for their funerals.

One day I got an e-mail from former chopper pilot Larry Feasel, who said he'd been in Nicky's class at the Combat College but skipped the session on grenades and hung out at the barracks. "Around 3 p.m., a captain whose name I don't remember came into the tent. He was pale white and very upset, almost on the verge of breakdown. He said there had been an accident in the classroom."

The captain had been in the class and had flecks of blood on his face and clothes. Here's the story Feasel said he told: "The

James pulled pitch. The Loach leaped into the air, turned left and climbed in a tight spiral over the hill.

At about 200 feet, the small aircraft was baptized in a searing, white light as all six 105-howitzers fired directly below them. The bright flash blinded the Loach's occupants. A deafening boom immediately followed that was loud enough to easily penetrate the sound proof helmets worn by James and Jenkins.

Time seemed to stand still as James yelled out "HOLY SHIT, I CAN'T SEE."

The aircraft bucked in the air. James instinctively jerked up on the collective causing the nimble Loach to go straight up. The aircraft hovered high over the hill then began drifting down in a dangerous, low speed flight. As the pilot prayed, *God please let me see and please keep this thing flying.*

After what seemed like an eternity, James began to regain his vision. He scanned the instruments with blurred eyes and saw they were at 700 feet, 35-knots airspeed and descending slightly. He nudged the nose over slightly and stabilized the aircraft in a normal 60-knot climb. He took a deep breath and thought to himself, *Everything is OK. I can see. We are still in one piece and flying. We are going to make it unless our own guys shoot us out of the air.*

As the pilot got the aircraft into a nominal flight attitude, SGT Jenkins screamed into the FM radio at Battery Operations: "CEASE FIRE, CEASE FIRE."

"Ah, Roger 'One-Three,' ah, standby one," came back the reply over the FM radio.

The battery's operations people knew Jenkins. They called him for Hook and Slick support. The Sergeant found himself panting. He willed himself to relax as he thought, *"Those bastards will find themselves dealing with one really pissed off OPS NCO tomorrow. They will be hard pressed getting any extra perks from me for awhile".*

The Loach headed away from the hill and was swallowed by the darkness. James barked at Salvation Control on the UHF radio and then switched frequencies to complain to the Major still manning the radios at Div Arty Air OPS. The Major said he would call Battery OPS on Stinson and personally chew them out. *You do that* thought the shaken aviator.

All the way home, folks on the radios said something like, "Oops, sorry, you were definitely under a 'check fire.' That was a screw up, a big 'Charlie Foxtro'". Sorry about that. Anything we can do?

James and Jenkins ignored the weak attempts at consolation as they flew home to Ky Hai. They landed and hovered into a revetment. James and Jenkins found a group of Loach drivers and crew chiefs waiting for them in the Operations Hootch. They were anxious to hear all about it.

(Copyrighted by author)

Two Incidents

I was stationed in Chu Lai in 1971, arriving there in late September. I was assigned to Co. B, 2/1st Inf., 196th LIB. Two memorable incidents happened in late October or early November.

The first occurred while I was with the company mortar platoon. We were pulling security duty while an engineer unit was standing down. It may have been the 26th Engineer Bn. They were partying every night and rightly so. Since I was a newbie with only a few weeks in-country I could of only dream of when I would be that short.

One afternoon we were playing spades when someone yelled that there were five soldiers drowning in the South China Sea. I ran down to the beach and saw some guys out a few hundred yards and yelling for help. I immediately jumped in and swam out to one of them.

As I reached him he clasped my hand as if we were shaking hands. He pulled me right under. About the same time a Lieutenant and another soldier got there. The drowning soldier kept pulling the three of us under.

The Lieutenant gave an order to us to leave the drowning victim because he would take us all down. I tried to body surf back to the beach. It was my first time swimming in the ocean. My life flashed before me very slowly. It was surreal.

The First Sergeant tossed a life ring towards me. I missed it the first time. The next thing I remember I woke up laying on the beach. I was sent to the hospital and checked out okay. Unfortunately, the five soldiers all drowned.

I am interested in talking with anyone who remembers this incident. I would like to get in touch with the families of the victims, especially the one I tried to save. I was the last person that saw him alive.

The second incident occurred shortly after the first one. Once again I was playing spades with my partner Harold "Tex" Durham. Suddenly we heard a single gunshot.

I ran to a nearby hootch and found a guy propped up on his cot. Blood was splattered on the wall. I took the field dressing from the band on my helmet and applied direct pressure to the wound. A medevac was called for the dying soldier. He died as the helicopter lifted off for the hospital. Rumors had it that the victim was playing Russian roulette.

I do not know who he was. But I remember these events very clearly. I can close my eyes and back there once again. Maybe knowing the names of the guys who died and finding their families will help me obtain closure.

James W. Gales, 1001
Glendale, WI, 53217,

Firebase Locations

On the southern border of the Americal AO was the 173rd Abn Bde AO. Sa Huynh (Sam Hi) was a Navy port where a lot of supplies for the Americal came from. LZ Charlie Brown was close to help protect it.

Up Hwy. 1 was LZ Debbie (LZ Thunder later). In between Debbie and Charlie Brown to the west was LZ Don. In the mountains west of LZ Debbie was LZ Jeff and Ba To.

Heading north on Hwy. 1 again was LZ Bronco/Duc Pho. If you drew a line from Duc Pho west by southwest to Ba To there were these bases approximately on this line: OD Lake, LZ Mitt; and LZ Jeff.

Going straight out west from Duc Pho was San Juan Hill. North on the highway from Duc Pho was LZ Liz and LZ Max. Further north was LZ Dragon which was pretty close to Mo Duc. If you went west between LZ. Max and LZ Dragon you got to Minh Long (LZ Crunch) which had a CIDG camp.

Going quite a bit further out was LZ Cam, then way out was the Penny Arcade valley. (You can guess why the helicopter people called it the penny arcade.) Going west from LZ Dragon quite a ways was LZ Amy and LZ Warrior. Warrior was north of LZ Cam.

Again on Hwy. 1 going north from LZ Dragon was LZ Snoopy. West between these two bases was LZ Bulldog. West of LZ Snoopy was LZ Cork. North from LZ Snoopy was LZ Goldie. Not far west of LZ Goldie was LZ Manassas. North of LZ Goldie was Quang Ngai City, home of the 2nd ARVN Division. Going on a line generally west and a little south from Quang Ngai City was LZ Pepper, LZ Chevy, and Ha Thanh.

North from Quang Ngai was Son Tinh. Along the Song Tra Khuc river going west was Tooth Lake and the Horseshoe area. Northwest of the Horseshoe area was Happy Valley. The Pinkville area was to the east of Son Tinh near the coast.

The next LZ near Hwy. 1 was LZ Dottie. In between Son Tinh and LZ Dottie going west was Tinville North and Tinville South. LZ Stinson (formerly LZ Buff) and LZ Clemson were west and north of Tinville north. Going east of LZ Dottie and a bit south was LZ South, and along the coast was Hill 26. LZ Minuteman was north of Hill 26 on the Batangan Peninsula.

North of LZ Dottie was Binh Son. Going west between these bases were LZ George, LZ Sue, and Tra Bong (LZ Cindy). The next base LZ Gator. West of here was LZ Chippewa and LZ Pineapple. To the east along the coast was LZ Paradise. The next base was LZ Bayonet, home of the 198th LIB who protected my rear so I could sleep at night.....which is what I am going to do now. Les Hines, Vietnam Historian

Night Mission

By Darryl James

1800 Hrs., Div Arty Air Operations

It was getting dark, SGT Jenkins flipped on the lights as he and the OPS Officer, CPT James, prepared to close the office for the night. James was down to his last nine days in Vietnam. His tour with the Americal had been spent as a Light Observation Helicopter (LOH or Loach) pilot for Division Artillery.

Suddenly, the door popped open. His CO, a Major, rushed in and shouted, "James! I just got the word, they need a FADAC computer on FSB Stinson- right now."

"Sir, it's nearly dark," replied the Captain. "We don't fly a night tactical mission unless a formal TAC E (Tactical Emergency) is declared. Sir, we can take the computer to Stinson first thing in the morning. This happens all the time. They usually wait."

Night flying in Vietnam was inherently dangerous. The mountainous terrain and the dark waters of the South China Sea often did not provide a visible horizon for the nighttime pilot. This caused many to get disoriented and die. Because of this danger, DIVARTY Air always used two pilots at night.

The Captain's thoughts were interrupted as the Major barked, "I'll declare a TAC E."

"You can't do that. Sir, only the Colonel or the XO can do that."

The Major snarled and grabbed the phone, and the Captain began to worry. James turned toward Jenkins and said, "Sarge, send a runner up the hill and see if you can find someone who's, ah, not drink—ah, I mean available."

"Yes Sir."

Five minutes later, CPT James learned that all the Loach drivers were at the club playing liar's dice and slinging beers while wondering where the "short-timer" was.

This is turning ugly thought James

The phone rang. The Major snatched it and said, "Yes Sir." He looked at the Captain with a half smile and said, "You got your TAC E, James. Division is sending over a FADAC. Now get someone to take it out to FSB Stinson."

"Yes Sir, but it looks like you and I will have to fly this mission. Everyone is at the club."

"What!" he shouted. "Why isn't someone available? Shouldn't we have someone on standby? Surely this isn't how you run things around here, Captain James."

"Sir, this TAC E is unusual. Heck, this is only the 5th or 6th TAC E since I've been here. It's rare for us to fly anything other than a scheduled admin mission at night."

"Well," replied the Major, sitting down and composing himself, "I'll need to stay here and man the radios."

This is getting worse by the minute, thought James.

The door opened and an out of breath Spec 4 said, I have a FADAC for the Major.

"O.K." said SGT Jenkins, "Ah, I, I guess you better send it down to the flight line."

The Captain turned back toward the Major and said, "Sir, SGT Jenkins can work the radios. Two pilots are needed for safety at night. It's our SOP. I'll do the flying, but I really need you to sit in the left seat. Two set of eyes—"



CPT Darryl James poses beside his Loach prior to a mission in Vietnam

"No," interrupted the Major, "I need to stay here to manage things." He looked up and said sharply, "Captain, if all your buddies are ah, inebriated, then do it yourself. It's your deal, now get it done."

That was uncalled for thought the Captain. *They're not drunk, just having drinks before dinner. I wonder—maybe this turd can't fly very well. Or maybe he is just plain scared. Either way I don't think I want him flying with me tonight.* James looked at Jenkins who stared without expression at the wall. "Would you like to go, Sergeant?"

Jenkins looked back at the Captain and smiled, "Sir, I would Love to."

They grabbed their chicken plates, M-16's, 38's, and survival gear and walked down to the flight line leaving the Major to man the radios.

After preflighting, they watched the Division technicians load a large aluminum suitcase—the FADAC computer—in back.

They treated it like it was a case of precious gems.

The Loach climbed to the east over the foamy surf of South China Sea and almost immediately turned left toward Chu Lai Bay. It leveled off at 200 feet as required to stay below the fast movers' airspace. James was surprised when Ky Hai control immediately gave him clearance to continue climbing. *No jets tonight?* thought the pilot.

Twenty minutes later, they came to the position where they had to turn inland away from the sanctuary of Highway One. They turned west and James thought he could hear his butt cheeks pucker. It was pitch black toward the mountains.

Every now and then they saw small dull specks of light and the faint glow of campfires. Their eyes picked up lines of pink tracer flashes. Friendlies, they hoped. They saw none of the green tracer flashes from the ammunition the VC preferred. Each in their minds could see green tracer lines reaching up to them in their small, vulnerable helicopter. Things seemed quiet below them. Suddenly the darkness ahead was interrupted by a salvo from the 105-howitzer battery on Stinson. The sight was spectacular with the hill now only twenty miles ahead.

"Looks like a firework show at Disneyland, Sir," SGT Jenkins said over the intercom.

"Big fireworks," the Captain replied. "Well we certainly can't miss the hill, now. Right?"

"Yes Sir. Just as long as they stop when we get there."

"They will."

As they got closer, James forced himself to keep his eyes inside the cockpit. Staring at the artillery flashes would ruin his night vision. He would need sharp eyes to land on the dark hill.

James slowed to 60-knots and began descending over the hill in a left, corkscrew pattern. Jenkins chatted on the FM radio with battery operations and confirmed their check fire. James closed his eyes to retain his night vision and flashed the landing lights twice to allow the battery to see the Loach.

The pilot could now make out the gun emplacements and hootches below. Everything appeared quiet. A ¼ ton truck's headlights blinked and then stayed on lighting up a sandbag landing pad. The Loach descended toward the pad, turning tightly to stay over the relative safety of the hill.

This is turning out to be a piece of cake, thought the pilot.

They landed to a hover on the pad and settled softly in. James kept the Loach light on the skids, ready to depart as soon as the FADAC was off-loaded. Some guys grabbed the metal suitcase and threw an identical one on board.

THE CHARGERS
196th LIGHT INFANTRY BRIGADE
(A Book Review)

CHAPTER 1 - Unlike most paperbacks, Charges, an illustrated history of the Vietnam War sports full photo color cover and back with informational and small photos. Vibrant and colorful blue backgrounds sky in background with a standing Charger, crossed bandolier of 7.62 mm tags, a P-38 dangling-hard hat with cover and an elephant stare. The Author is outlined on Pg 158, the last page of the book. The 196th Patch in full page colorful glory greets the reader; along with a successive full two page color tributes on water, air and by operation. The first being Junction City, largest to date, and in 1966 largest to date. Dust offs and POW Camps paint the picture of the many facets of Vietnam; but none more thrilling than the two page Sunrise over Nui Ba Den - The Black Virgin. Pictures of the early years in country, before Task Force Oregon...Pg 15 Table of Contents. Before TF Oregon, Berry covers first shot, Pg 17; Black Virgin Pg 23; First in the Field 29 Pg-50 Pg. Operations Attleboro 1, & Cedar Falls are described, general in nature, highly factual. During the Task Force Oregon Operation and Americal formation Chapters Academy of War, Pg 51; Blood in the Valley, Pg 71; Miracle of Arms Pg 97; Harvest of Death Pg 115; deal with these time frames from massive move Northward into Chu Lai and I Corps. Heavy Load 137 Pg. describes the Vietnamization process and operations until Final Shots, Pg 151. Discusses the last days in DaNang and TF Gimlet after the Americal...some Units 3-2-1; 2/1 & 1/46th were still in country until Jun-Aug 72. Berry starts the First Chapter off by throwing the reader into the day to day combat encounters of the Charger Companies; 2/1, 3-2-1-, 4/31st, F Trp 17th Cav...as was done in Hal Moore's "We were soldiers once...and young" and as Nolan accomplishes, immediate action. Part of a Combat Brigade whose Units would spend 2,200 days in Vietnam; 66-72.

CHAPTER TWO - BLACK VIRGIN ...7 mi. NE of the 1/196th LIB Camp was Nui BA Den, the 3,235 foot mountain looked down upon the endless miles of flat plains...The mountain looked much closer than that...a far cry from Ft. Devens, when on 15 Sep 65, Col Frank S. Conaty orders' were read--to train and retain; normally a unit receives replacements with basic and advanced (individual) training mos. Training Forts ie. Dix, Ord, Knox, Jackson etc. were running at full steam to fill units earmarked for deployment to Vietnam in 1966. Conaty and a sprinkling of experienced Korea and WW II Cadre...and within weeks new recruits, half draft & half enlisted , most with H.S. Diplomas, came pouring in the Induction Centers...and halfway around the World...the 2nd NVA Div. in the jungled hills Oct 15,1965...of the annamite chain activating 1st & 21st RGTS...five months later the 3rd NVA Rgt. would join them...The 196th LIB & 2nd NVA Div were each unaware of the others preparations...As these two Units were destined to try to kill each other countless times in the years ahead. Pg. 26.

The original complement was 3 Inf Bn's, a Jeep Mounted Cavalry Troop, one Arty Bn of towed 105mm Howitzers with support Bn., Eng & Sig Co. + supporting Units. The 196th LIB was the first of several brigades; A light yet nearly self-sustained force. These troops are referred to as "The Originals"...Returning from leave, equipped, loaded and sailed for one month on ships, USNS Patch & USNS Darby to Viet Nam...Infantry Battalions descended from an old line of regular Army Units...Mar 1791 2/1st; May 1861 3/21st (3-2-1); 4/31st Jul 1916.

Upon arrival, before welcoming ceremonies at Yat Ninh, Gen. Wm Westmoreland sent the 196th LIB, a new Commander, Bg. Gen. Edward H. Saussure, West Point 1941 Arty; CO Gen. Weyands Asst. Div Co 25th Inf. Div; Conaty Dpy Co 196th Inf. Bgd, Light.

CHAPTER - 3 - FIRST IN THE FIELD WHICH COVERS OPERATIONS ATTLEBORO 1 & II; CEDAR FALLS AND JUNCTION CITY,

Pg. 39 -Medal of Honor PFC John F. Baker with story.

Pg. 40 - Unofficial Unit Insignia, Charger Shield & Mounted Rider; Enemy losses at Attleboro, many black and white Photos & maps designating general AO's. A good general rundown of the 196th LIB before Task Force Oregon, which commenced by flying North to I Corps.

CHAPTER - 4 - PHASE TWO...Academy of War highlighted by a good colored jungle patrol picture with locator maps. A short history of Gen. Wm. Westmoreland's OP's - Plans for the Marines movement North to the DMZ...formation of Task Force Oregon using the 196th LIB along with seasoned brigades & battalions of the 101st AIB, 1st Cav 25 & 4. Division in relief of the Marines in and around Chu Lai...In reality it was the largest AO in I Corps, over 800 Sq. Mi.

Pg. 51...A move of major proportion was being planned & on Apr 8-9 1967 flew North from Tay Ninh in C-130's- 353 Sorties flying 3,452 men, 973 vehicles & 8,285,000 pounds of cargo...rear elements took 33 more loads and larger loads were floated from Saigon to Chu Lai. In less than one week the Chargers relieved the Marines; commanded by Maj. Gen. Bill Rosson. Pg. 55 The Northern part of Viet Nam from Chu Lai back westward into the "Hills" towards the Laotian border and Northward to the DMZ, would now become home to the 196th LIB until the end of the war. The Mission clear; to secure the Chu Lai Base, Airstrip, Ports, & other U.S. Installations, ie; Bridges, Roads and Rivers.

Pg. 56...Early in the life of TF Oregon, Gen. Rosson attached two first class combat units to the 196th LIB; 1/14th Inf. "The Golden Dragons, 3rd Bgd 25th Inf. Div. and the "Blackhorse" 2nd Squadron from the elite 11th Cav Rgt. The 196th LIB Hq. became accustomed in controlling many more units than its organic three Battalions...from 6-7 or more.

Pg. 57...Beautiful two page color river scene; April 7, 1967 Combat Log Thurs.-77-entries color photos, very good.

Pg. 60..."With the addition of the 2/11th & 1/14 the 196th LIB was strong enough to push far out into the countryside around Chu Lai, while securing Chu Lai. TF Oregon used its' three brigades in an active roll to control the populated areas of Quang Nam, Quang Tin & Quang Ngai Provinces."

1st Bgd 101st Airborne was committed around Tam Ky...Westward into the hills, into former sanctuaries of main force VC & 2nd NVA Div.

3rd Bgd. 25th Inf Div pushed MF VC & NVA off balance around Duc Pho and Quang Ngai; and in the middle the 196th LIB did the same. May 20, 1967 Brig. Gen. Frank H. Linnell would take over as CO of the 196th LIB; Gen. Rosson was selected for his 3rd star; Gen. Westmoreland CO VN offered Gen. Knowles, and a second star to command TF Oregon

and he accepted. Linnell graduated from West Point in 1941 and led infantry forces in New Guinea & Luzon, finishing WWII as a Bn. CO LTC; commanded infantry units in Korea & Santo Domingo.

Lt. Gen. Lew Walt, CO III Mar Amp Fc (MAF) who commanded TF Oregon gave Linnell his most clear and sound advice--"Don't let our Planes & Choppers get rocketed, mortared or sapped and I don't care what the Army says!" Good Colorfac, Helix & AF shots.

Pg. 65...OPS around Tra Bong in Aug 67 "Cinnamon Harvest" (67pg) The Brigade enjoyed tremendous support & co-operation from other U.S. Units. It's five forward support Air Controllers (FACS) & their men were led by Maj. Robert H. Laurine, call sign "Helix".

Pg. 68..."Men had to learn quickly by experience...to ensure this learning was not in blood, the Charger Academy was established..learning practical tips for survival..the Academy saved time & casualties in the line units, made new men (FNG) productive instead of liabilities." (pg.69) Tom Grabowski, C/2/1st & 4,000 men like him, 18-19 years old campaigned through the summer & into Autumn 1967...As heavy rains (15-20"/24hrs) came & gone, searing heat blazed the three brigades, turning mud to dust...and in late September, '67, Task Force Oregon was transformed into the Americal Division..Gen. Koster assuming command in October. CHAPTER - 5 - "BLOOD IN THE VALLEY" - The Que Son Valley & the NVA offensive-Oct 28, 1967 the order to relieve the 196th by the 198th LIB in Chu Lai; the 196th LIB would in turn relieve the 101st, 1st Bgd NW of Tam Ky by Nov 21st. They were flying South to Phang Rang; as the 198th LIB Troops took over Chu Lai the Chargers slipped West of it Northerly neighbor the superb 3rd Bgd of the 1st Cav. Div.

"The Que Son Valley was contested by everyone; but belonged to no one...it's ground soaked, and to be soaked with the blood of Vietnamese and American men."

Pg 73...Thanksgiving 1967; TF Dorland; FSB West Center & East; B 3-2-1 & C 4/31st. Medal of Honor. Lt. James A. Taylor; Song An Tan River Oct/Nov 67; Hills 35 & 63. Pg. 78-79...Nov 23-24th , night of Pg. 80, " Cpt Dan Mellon's men swept and cleared the battlefield twice more...killing three more NVA; capturing 56 weapons, equipment - 151 enemy KIA. "Thanksgiving was then flown in" pg. 81.

Pg. 82...Three major base camps-firebases-East, West, & Center were the focal points used to flush out the enemy in the Queson Valley in 67/68. Base camp description & tactics; The 196th began a pattern of continuous combat patrols...Battalions assigned a large AO: subdivided by rifle companies...each Co deciding on patrol routes & methods...Patrols always remained within the seven mile range of 105mm Howitzers of 3/82nd Arty for immediate support.

Pg. 83...In early 67 an intelligence windfall was reaped deep in the Que Son Valley by B Troop 1/9th Cav...A first rate aerial Recon Unit-"The Blues" were inserted & best described in Matt's "Brennan's War"...They had developed a 3rd NVA Rgt. Section Hg., 2nd Div NVA, who lost nine officers of a total kill of 17, one a full Col. All the officers were on a hill overlooking LZ Ross, complete with battlemaps, etc. Pg 84;...Included in the plan overlooking 3/1st Cav FSB at Ross were approach routes, assembly areas, attack positions...just as if it had been drawn at Ft. Benning.

Symbology forecast a heavy assault on the FSB & soon...Is the NVA at the Mouth of the Que Son Valley--The Christmas truce was 3 weeks away.

Pg. 85...All units were briefed to expect the NVA attack at year end...The brigades in Que Son would prepare as if enemy forces would attack...given past behavior...he would probably break one of the truces or attack immediately afterward.

LZ Ross belonged to the 3rd Bgd First Air Cavalry...It was FSB West's nearest neighbor deep in the valley. Cpt. Krohns forecast;,,,Thus began a week of continuous unrelenting combat between RGTS of the 2nd NVA Div and two U.S. Bgds...neither rain nor darkness saw the fighting abate...pg. 87. The Cav kept their heads up...they were ready for the Sappers, killing 242 enemy in one night and losing only one American.

Pg. 89...Extracts Jan 5-6-1968, "Typical entry in the combat journal; I wouldn't call it typical. C 2/1st Byers Company found Charlie Company--almost dissolved from the heavy fighting; 12 men were KIA and 43 wounded, including Lt. German. The Company had repulsed continuous assaults including three human wave attacks by enemy rifle companies...fighting continued for the rest of the night...12 more U.S. WIA...Choppers and Medivacs couldn't get in. Sunday night 122 mm rockets and mortars crashed down at Ross and Leslie. Monday fighting intensified; TF Oscar & TF Byers; pg 93-95. By the AM of Jan 11 the NVA offensive in the Que Son Valley was over--the brigade had lost sixty-four men; the enemy leaving 429 bodies on the battlefield--hundreds more in the 3/1st Cav AO next door...Troops of all Units had fought well in the muck & blood of the dark green valley.

CHAPTER - 6 - MIRACLE OF ARMS...The Tet offensive started early on Tuesday 30th Jan 1968. Farther North DaNang & Hoi An were hit hard with rocket fire, followed by ground attacks; NVA-VC Units captured Hue, Vietnam's 3rd largest city & former Imperial capital. DaNang now became a focal point for the 196th LIB which now had 6 Bns to deploy, plus the 1/1 Cav. Pg. 97.

Enemy troops, 1st Rgt. 2nd NVA Div were taking control of the ground immediately South of the air bases N-S runways and threatening the huge Marine/Army helicopter base at Marble Mountain. Marine forces were hard pressed to hold DaNang (pg.98) the Americal was ordered to help out...pg.99 1/6th LtCol. Wm. J. Baxley, B & W PIC "regulars" 100/101 Pg.LRRP's--deeper and longer stealth; KHE SANH, Mid April, into the ASHAU...For more than two years the NVA had built up a strong base area in the valley-32mi/ SW of Hue. Pg. 102/03... OP Delaware...3-2-1- was detached from Bgd. Reserve...May 1st up to the main Marine base camp 3rd Marine Div vic Dong Ha, fighting beside Marines for two weeks.

May 6, 68, Buck Nelson 2/1 Co; Operation Golden Valley; Medal of Honor, Nicky D. Bacon, Pg 105 Kham Duc Defense & Evacuation; 106 Westmoreland; Nelson; Grabowski; Medal of Honor, MOH Finnis D. McCleery, pg. 107-108 MOH Lt. Col. Jackson; 110-111 Evacuation details, 112 pg.

Pg. 113--Adding to the family...Since Apr 67, TF Oregon have added; 1/1 Cav., 4/3rd, 1/6th, 1/52nd, 1/46th, 4/21st, 2/35th, C 7/17th Cav, 51st LRRP, 5 6th ARVN Rgt., RF-PF, CIDG, Mike Forces, 10th Combat Tracker...At the end of May 68, command of the 196th LIB. Lou Gelling had been in the job nearly seven months--longer than the norm at that time...

CHAPTER - 7 - HARVEST OF DEATH - Col. F. "Fritz" Kroesen commanded from May 68-May 69 the longest combat tenure, also spanning a period of profound change, pg. 115. Col Kroesen was a WWII Co CO and Bn CO, 187th AIB Regimental combat team. "The men understood that they were safer, more secure, by staying on patrol & keeping the enemy off balance...The Americal Division pushed enemy troops farther West into the mountains than ever before."

TF Cooksey was formed under the command of BGD Howard Cooksey, the Americal AST Div Co. One experienced Battalion 4/31st, with two relatively new ones, 4/21st & 4/3rd. In OP Pocahantas, Jul 7 68, across the Song Thu Bon River, West of Hiep Duc & Song Tranh. Pg. 116--The 196th LIB had an AO that exceeded 800 sq. miles...and from Aug to Oct 68, relied on Helicopters for re-supply & long periods of carrying heavy loads in the jungled hills...by mid Sep. Americal Forces were brought in from far West locations as the Northeast Monsoon would prevent Choppers OPS in the mountains.

Pg. 118, 119...B & W full two pages - Charger Hotel, Donut Dollies, 120-121 Operation Golden Fleece, Autumn 68; Pg. 123 MOH PFC. M. J. Crencenz Hiep Duc-Nov 1968.

Jan 1969...Hiep Duc Refugees...Thousands of Viet Nam refugees move back into Hiep Duc and their ancestral homes...most fleeing in 1965 from Hamlets in and around Hiep Duc; this was a high point for the American Operations in the Song Thu Bon Valley. It was evidence that aggressive patrolling could hold an area and deny it to the enemy.

Pg. 123...Plans to attack Tien Phuoc-CIDG Camp & Hoi Lam. Capital of its district; established in 1965--detachment 1-102. A hard surfaced road led from Tien Phuoc to Tam Ky 16 miles Eastward, to the provincial Capital at Tam Ky. 124-125. From its start Marines in 67 and 196th Lib Forces in 69 have been engaging enemy forces in and around Tien Phuoc and Tam Ky. MOH Thomas J. McMahon.

At the same time as ferocious fighting came to a head for the 196th at Tien Phuoc, Sec. Def. Laird, Melvin announced "Vietnamization" of the War, pg.126-127 CPT Carrier, Co C 3-2-1.pg 128 MOH PFC Daniel J. Shea FSB Center May 12 Tam Ky; 1/cav "Briefing" B & W Photo; pg 134 Jun-Aug Hiep Duc Valley; into the valley...By Sep it was over and after Ho Chi Minh's death on Sep 6, LZ/FSB Siberia was attacked on the 12th. Pg. 135, the rest of the 1969 year saw no major battles. In the 196th LIB, AO AS Col. James B. Lee, succeeded Col. Tackaberry in Nov. as 196th LIB CO.

CHAPTER - 8 - HEAVY LOAD Pg. 137 - Apr 70 Col. Jim Lee's tour as CO of the 196th was up and Col. Edwin Kennedy succeeded him. In May & Jun of 70, Siberia was again the target, manned by the 4/31st; MOH Robert C. Murray. Pg 138 series of Hiep Duc contacts and return to Kham Duc in OP Elk Canyon-1 for the 2/1st; LZ Mary Ann--map/details; making of Mary Ann, pg 141; 142-43 Olints comments with B & W photo. "I could not believe how professional the men acted...each man knowing his job and was proud of what he was doing." 144-45 Olints patrolling West of Mary Ann. No major battles were fought in 1970 and early in 1971 Recon patrols found caches of 102mm Chi Com Rockets aimed at the Mary Ann. Clear evidence of an impending attack. Enemy Sapper attack of Mary Ann, Mar 27th-28th, pg. 148-49.

CHAPTER -9 -FINAL SHOTS - pg. 151 Contraction and shutdown as Gen. Abrams sent Maj. Gen. "Fritz" Kroesen back to Chu Lai, Jul 7 1971 to take command of the Americal...and despite many attacks Hiep Duc was still thriving.

Pg.154...The first Brigade to leave was the 11th LIB Oct 5, 71 with 4/31st "Polar Bears on the 11th of Nov; the Americal and the 198th LIB stood down--the 196th LIB remained based out of DaNang and Jan of 72 Hiep Duc was again reported lost again. In Jun 72 the Professionals left, followed by 2/1st and then 23 Aug the Gimlets of 3-2-1 left Viet Nam, the last Combat Infantry Battalion to leave.

B/1/6 Infantry - 198 LIB

A few lines to let you know I appreciate the ADVA printing my story in the Americal Newsletter, (Jul-Aug-Sep 1999, Page 30). I want no recognition for myself but for my unit, 198th LIB Americal Division. We got a lot of bad raps, especially the 1st of the 6th. I'm here to tell you we all did our part the best we could under the circumstances.

Yes, there were some bad eggs, but then, aren't there in every unit?

Also I want to inform you that I will be back in the Audie Murphy, VA Hospital, San Antonio, Texas. On the 19th of October I will have my right kidney removed.

In April of 1998 I had heart surgery at Audie Murphy in San Antonio.

In July of 1998 it was discovered that I had a blockage of the right ureter. So, they did a repair job on the right side in February 1999. However the repair job did not take and so now they are going have to take the kidney out on the right side.

I don't want any fan mail. All I ask for is your prayers.

The ADVA means a lot to me. I always look forward to the next issue of the Newsletter, hoping I will make contact with one of my old Army buddies.

God bless the ADVA, in my opinion, one of the best organizations on earth.

Sgt. William A. "Mac" McMurtray

Knappa, TX 78870
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