



FOUNDED 1945

# AMERICAL NEWSLETTER

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

OCT. - NOV. - DEC. 2002

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

THE AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION - 82 PHYLLIS DRIVE - SOUTH YARMOUTH, MA 02664



## HOLIDAY GREETINGS

**Commander**  
Richard L. Scales  
[REDACTED]  
Oakley, IL 62552  
[REDACTED]

**Exec. Council Member**  
William K. Maddox  
[REDACTED]  
Portland, TX 78374  
[REDACTED]

**Chaplain**  
Rev. William T. Elliott  
[REDACTED]  
Hope, MI 48628  
[REDACTED]

**Chapter Commander**  
Northwest Region  
David E. Hammond  
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Beaverton, OR 97005  
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**Sr. Vice-Commander**  
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Orlando, FL 32839  
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**Exec. Council Member**  
Tommy B. Poppell  
[REDACTED]  
Panama City, FL 32401  
[REDACTED]

**Chaplain**  
Rev. Perry M. Woerner  
[REDACTED]  
Fredericksburg, TX 78624  
[REDACTED]

**Jr. Vice-Commander**  
William S. Bacon  
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San Antonio, TX 78250  
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**Exec. Council Member**  
Edward W. Marsh  
[REDACTED]  
Jones, MI 49061  
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**Chaplain**  
Rev. Richard J. Shannon  
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**Chapter Commander**  
Southeast Region  
Robert Kapp  
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**Finance Officer**  
Spencer M. Baba  
[REDACTED]  
Kinnelon, NJ 07405  
[REDACTED]

**Exec. Council Member**  
Donald A. Shebesta  
[REDACTED]  
Woodbridge, CA 95258  
[REDACTED]

**Vietnam Historian**  
Leslie Hines  
[REDACTED]

**Chapter Commander**  
New England Region  
Roland T. Castranova  
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**Adjutant**  
Bernard C. Chase  
[REDACTED]  
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**Exec. Council Member**  
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Great Lakes Region  
John L. Mathews  
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Leslie Hines  
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**Exec. Council Member**  
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[REDACTED]  
Mt. Prospect, IL 60056  
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**Scholarship Chair**  
Robert G. Short  
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**Chapter Commander**  
Far West Region  
Richard A. Merlin  
[REDACTED]

**Judge Advocate**  
Mike Twomey  
[REDACTED]  
Tallahassee, FL 32310  
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**Exec. Council Member**  
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Isleton, CA 95641  
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**Product Sales Director**  
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[REDACTED]

**Chapter Commander**  
East Region  
David D. Eichhorn  
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**Sergeant-at-Arms**  
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**Chapter Commander**  
Central Midwest Region  
David A. Chrystal  
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www.americal.org

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[REDACTED]

**Webmasters**  
Anthony E. Greene  
[REDACTED]

**Kevin M. Sartorius**  
[REDACTED]

Dear members,

The summer has come and went. I hope everyone had safe and pleasurable time. With a chill now in the air it will not be long before the leaves start changing to the most beautiful colors and the days start getting shorter. This is the time of year that everyone starts thinking about the holidays that are just around the corner.

With all that has been happening around the world with the thoughts of war and to what now is taking place around the Washington DC area, let us not forget about the men and women that are fighting for us and the freedoms that have been enjoyed by all. This is the greatest country in the world and it took the bravest and most courageous men and women in the world to make it that way and keep it that way. So let me say

Thank You to each and everyone of you. I will be saying a special thanks to all the people in the military today with a prayer.

Since becoming the National Commander I have been learning what it takes to do the job and the responsibilities that come with the title. I am a slow learner and I will make a few mistakes but with the help of the PNCs and all the officers I will do the best job that I can. It may not be pretty but it will get done.

With that I will say Happy Holidays to all.

Rich Scales, National Commander  
Co. B, 3/21<sup>st</sup> Inf.

### AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION - 2003 REUNION - LITTLE ROCK, AR

Dear members,

Arkansas is called the Natural State because of its beauty. The Natural State's six geographic regions are filled with outdoor beauty, colorful history, and diversity. Arkansas has numerous national parks, rivers and streams, a park where you can dig for diamonds, a stunning cavern complex, three mountain top parks, a botanical garden, civil war battlefields, museums, restoration village teaching Arkansas history, and many more too numerous to name.

In the Little Rock area there are dozens of "must see" places to get a sample our great State's history. Arkansas Air Museum, Museum of Natural Resources, Arkansas State Capitol Building, Vietnam War Memorial, Medal of Honor Memorial, the Old Statehouse and the General MacArthur Museum are only a few.

The reunion dates are June 26, 2003 thru Saturday, June 28, 2003. We will be staying at the Doubletree Hotel, one of Little Rock's most luxurious hotels, located at 424 W. Markham, in downtown Little Rock. The hotel rate will be \$89 per room per night plus taxes. Additional persons in the room are at no charge.

This location is on the banks of the beautiful Arkansas River and within walking distance to the River Market. The River Market is an exciting public food market and, relaxing entertainment center. It houses more than 17 permanent merchants who offer fresh from the oven pastries, hand roasted coffee, smoked barbecued beef, chicken, and turkey. They also feature Mexican, Japanese, Middle Eastern and Central European cuisine. I hope that made you hungry.

The Schedule is not totally complete as yet but it looks like the following:

**Wednesday** June 25, 2003  
Visit and Hospitality

**Thursday** June 26, 2003  
Local Walking Tours as desired; Hospitality

**Friday** June 27, 2003

Tour of Old State House Museum; Tour of Little Rock Air Force Base – Home of the C-130, 119<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing; River Market for southern fried catfish and entertainment

**Saturday** June 28, 2003

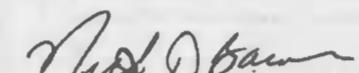
Women's Tour; General Meeting; Memorial Service; Dinner and Program

Our Friday night fish fry will be in clear view of the glittering lights reflecting from the Arkansas River. We will be entertained by the soothing sounds of a top class Jazz band led by world class saxophone player, Mr. Tommy Henderson. The Mayor of Little Rock Jim Daily and Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee will welcome you to the city.

I plan to have General Wesley K. Clark, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, commander of 37 NATO and other Nations participating in operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo – "A fellow Americal Soldier" as our Keynote Speaker at the Saturday night dinner.

These details are just a part of what we are putting together for your 2003 Reunion in our great State. More information and a registration form will be in the next issue of the Americal Newsletter. Keep up to date on reunion news on the internet at [www.americal.org/reunion.shtml](http://www.americal.org/reunion.shtml).

See you real soon.



Nick D. Bacon  
B-CO 4/21, 11<sup>th</sup> L.I.B.

### Last minute request for help

At the request of National Commander Riecharl Scales: Mr. Frank J. Delimba, E 5031 Mountain View Rd., Ironwood, MI, 49938 is looking for information. He states that in the action during which Walter E. Stanik was fatally wounded there never was a body count of enemy casualties. There was a significant number of enemy dead as a result of a well choreographed entrapment of the Japanese forces. Mr. Delimba is trying to find the date of this action and develop a scenario of what took place. Please contact Mr. Delimba if you are able to be of assistance. Your assistance is appreciated.

### A word of caution:

The ADVA website has been very beneficial in reuniting veterans of the Americal Division. Veterans can leave their contact information on several of the pages to include the Electronic Directory, the Web Locator, and the guestbook. Posting information on one of these pages may lead to contact with a long lost buddy. Please be advised that anyone with access to the internet can view your posting and obtain your e-mail address. Be suspect of anyone who contacts you and asks for you to send them money. Quite often they will offer an unsuspecting and trusting person a way to get rich quick. If it sounds too good to be true it is probably a scam. Please delete the offensive e-mail.

## ADJUTANT'S NOTES

**TAPS TAPS TAPS**

101 MEDICAL CO. B  
Mrs. Ralph Bouchard  
Port Charlotte, FL

182 INFANTRY MED DET  
Mrs. Thomas P. Crowe  
Dedham, MA  
April 21, 2002

101 MEDICAL CO. B  
Mrs. Ralph Bouchard  
Port Charlotte, FL  
June 6, 2002

182 INFANTRY MED DET  
Mrs. Thomas P. Crowe  
Dedham, MA  
April 21, 2002

164 INFANTRY F CO.  
Mrs. Leonard Drabus  
Omaha, NE  
April 11, 2002

221 FA C BTRY  
Mrs. Edward L. Kalat  
Frankenmuth, MI  
September 22, 2002

182 INFANTRY D CO  
Mrs. George P. D. Merrill  
Newburyport, MA  
August 2002

125 QUARTERMASTER  
Mrs. Joseph A. Thompson  
Winchester, MA  
July 25, 2002

11 LIB 4/21 INF  
Mrs. Robert A. Witter  
Annandale, VA  
July 26, 2002

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## REINSTATED MEMBERS

Mr. William J. Bechtel  
198 LIB H/17 Cav  
Cheekwaga, NY  
#Les Hines

Mr. Raymond Berryman  
11 LIB D/3/1 Inf  
Baker City, OR  
#Bernie Chase

Mr. John D. Creamer  
164 Infantry A Co.  
Longview, TX  
#R. Castranova

Mr. James G. Fuller  
198 LIB 5/46 Inf  
Roseburg, OR  
#W.E. Smith

Mr. Dave J. Benedict  
11 LIB 1/20 Inf  
B. Syracuse NY  
#R. Castranova

Mr. Ernest R. Cassell  
196 LIB HHC/3/21 Inf  
Kaneohe, HI  
#Brian Mulcrone

CSM Herb Duvernay  
23 Adm  
Cupertino, CA  
#Bernard Earl

Mr. Michael D. Hart  
23 HHC S T  
Kill Devil Hills, NC  
#Dwight Fanshaw

Mr. Joseph W. Ignarski  
132 Infantry E Co.  
Albuquerque, NM  
#Lewis C. Turner

Mr. Donald L. Malone  
198 LIB D/1/52 Inf  
Concord, CA  
#R. Castranova

Mr. Patrick W. Merten  
14 Com Avn Bn.  
Woodstock, GA  
#R. Castranova

Mr. Albert F. Riley  
101 Med  
Rochester, MA  
#Self

Mr. H. Edwin Simmers  
23 M.P.  
Bellingham, WA  
#Don Ballou

\*\*\*\*\*

**NEW LIFE MEMBERS**

Mr. James B. Adams  
23 Hdq R&V  
Elberton, GA  
#James Lewellen

Mr. Joseph F. McDonough  
246 FA Hdq Bty-Lai 182  
Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ  
#Self

Mr. Woodrow "Woody" Rucke  
198 LIB A/1/46 Inf  
Elberton, GA  
#William Schneider

Mr. David L. Gibson  
198 LIB D/1/6 Inf  
Baedwell, KY  
#Don Ballou

Mr. Edward A. Odom  
11 LIB C/4/3 Inf  
Livonia, MI  
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Merle R. Young  
11 LIB 4/21 Inf  
Towanda, PA  
#Viet Mag Memb Com

\*\*\*\*\*

## NEW MEMBERS

Mr. Leland Annes  
23 M.P.  
Nashville, TN  
#Rich Merlin

Mr. Adam Bihun  
198 LIB B/5/46 Inf  
Chicago, IL  
#Bob Kapp

Mr. Donald B. Cook  
17 Cav H Troop  
Bomoseen, VT  
#Ron Davis

Mr. William R. Cooper  
198 LIB C/1/6 Inf  
Asheville, NC  
#Bobby Floyd

Mr. William Dupray  
116 AHC (Hornets)  
Ellington, CT  
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Mike Fetsch  
198 LIB C/1/14 FA  
Silver Springs, MD  
#Don Ballou

Mr. John G. Francis Jr.  
11 LIB HHC/6/Art  
Frankfurt,  
#Bernard Chase

CSM Jackie L. Bevel (Ret  
196 LIB A/2/1 Inf  
Kenedy, TX  
#Bill Bacon

Mr. Robert W. Cigrand  
130 Q.M.  
Ocala, FL  
#Wayne M. Bryant

Mr. Howard D Felter  
196 LIB HHC/4/31 Inf  
Fairfield, CA  
#Ron Davis

Mr. Mario R. Fonseca  
11 LIB E/4/21 Inf Recon  
Anadia,  
#William G. Urban

Mr. Arthur Fritz  
Vietnam  
Mountain Home, TN  
#Jim Buckle

\*\*\*\*\*

## ADJUTANT'S NOTES

Mr. Timothy J. Hatten Sr  
198 LIB B/1/52 Inf  
Wooster, OH  
#Conrad

Mr. Robert M. Holt  
198 LIB D/5/46 Inf  
Lincroft, NJ  
#Joe Donovan

Mr. Robert McLellan  
11 LIB D/1/20 Inf  
Bricktown, NJ  
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Willie L. Plear Jr.  
198 LIB E/5/46 Inf  
Rockville, VA  
#Self

Mr. Leonard E. Schoenbor  
198 LIB B/1/52 Inf  
Livonia, MI  
#Conrad Giebel

Mr. Paul M. Stanisewski  
198 LIB B/1/52 Inf  
Portland, ME  
#Conrad Giebel

Mr. Ramon B. Vega  
198 LIB H Tr/17 Cav 2  
Safford, AZ  
#David Taylor

Mr. Norman Walker  
246 FA Hdq Btry  
Totowa, NJ  
#Elmer F. Wright

Mr. Norville H. Wildes  
196 LIB Heli Unit  
West Allis, WI  
#Ron Davis

\*\*\*\*\*

## Paul B Stimson

It is my sad duty to report to you that my husband, and one of your members, Paul B. Stimson, passed away on September 8, 2002.

Paul served with Headquarters Company, 132nd Infantry Regiment during World War II.

I would appreciate it very much if you would continue sending the Americal Newsletter. I enjoy it very much.

Sincerely,  
Joann M. Stimson

## \*\*\*\*\*

## ATTENTION - ATTENTION - ATTENTION

Please check the mailing label on your Newsletter. Your dues are paid up until the date beside your name.

If you know of a member that has passed away or that is ill please notify your Adjutant at:

Adjutant Bernard Chase  
[REDACTED]  
South Yarmouth, MA 02664

## \*\*\*\*\*

## JAMES D. H. MOORE

Dear Mr. Chase

I am writing to inform you of my husband James D.H. Moore's death on February 22, 2002, in Mountain Home, Arkansas. He was a Hospice patient and died at home of congestive heart failure. He had increasing health problems over the last 14 years following heart bypass surgery.

Jim was a very proud veteran of World War II, New Caledonia, Guadalcanal, and Fiji Islands. He was in the Americal Division, field and coast artillery battalion, I think, the 259th as I found a copy of an issue of the "SCOPE" dated 6-12-44 still among his personal papers. Many of his favorite stories are about his patriotic service to his adopted country. He was buried with full military honors in the veterans section of our local cemetery.

He was always teaching and coaching swimming and diving, working mostly with children and teens, throughout his working career. Because he loved children, he drove a school bus for 10 years after he "retired."

I am enclosing dues for three years, I enjoy reading the Americal Newsletter. I am learning about things my husband mentioned from others' point of view and about the war.

Thank you,  
Sally E. Moore

Ed Note: James Moore served in the 244th Coast Artillery. The 3rd Battalion of the 244th redesignated the 1st Battalion, 259th Coast Artillery and was attached to the Americal Division.

## \*\*\*\*\*

## FRED G. DAVIS

Dear Mr. Chase:

It is with deep sorrow I write to inform you of the 13 July 2002 sudden death of my husband, Fred G. Davis, who is a member of the Americal Division Veterans Association.

Fred G. Davis died suddenly at his home on 13 July 2002 of Sudden Cardiac Death. He was born 15 June 1924 in Nashville, Davidson County, Tennessee, and was 78 years of age at death. He was a Retired Chief-Director of the Metropolitan Nashville Fire Department, having retired from this position in 1987.

Fred G. Davis served in Company G, 182nd Infantry Regiment of the Americal Division. Fred dictated to me in October 1993 his own account of his service with this Division in the Philippines. If this is desired information for this Association, please advise me and I will forward his account to you. He was wounded on Cebu and was a walking miracle the remainder of his life.

Fred was delighted, in March 2001, to locate data that there was an Americal Association and immediately wrote for information and joined. He enjoyed the Americal Newsletter and I am so sad that he did not live to attend one of the annual conventions.

Very truly yours,  
Betty D. Davis

## CHAPTER NEWS

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

COMMANDER  
Richard A. Merlin  
Riverside, CA 92516

SEC/TREAS  
Gene McGrath  
Pahrump, NV 89041

Vice Commander - Don Shebesta  
Sergeant-at-Arms - Curt Rothacker  
Chaplain - John Bowley

## 2002 REUNION

Warm sunshine and the beautiful new Atlantis Hotel welcomed 55 members, spouses, and guests to Reno for the annual Far West Chapter Reunion held from September 29th to October 2nd. As always, a favorite activity was spending time in the hospitality suite on the top floor enjoying the company of old friends and meeting new ones.

Monday the majority of attendees took a sightseeing bus trip to historic Virginia City, followed by a visit to Tyson Ranch. Ranch owner John Tyson, a fellow Vietnam veteran, greeted us on horseback. He sang the National Anthem while the 23rd MP's provided the color guard. There was a cattle-working demonstration followed by a delicious barbecue lunch.

New Chapter officers for 2002-2004 were elected at the business meeting. They are: Rich Merlin, Commander, Don Shebesta, Vice-Commander, Gene McGrath, Secty/Treas, Curt Rothacker, Sergeant-at Arms, John Bowley, Chaplain.

A dinner banquet with musical entertainment provided the grand finale of our gathering. It was an inspiring moment as everyone stood and sang America the Beautiful. Vice-Commander Don Shebesta welcomed everyone on behalf of Past Commander Larry O'Boyle, who was unable to attend for health reasons. We all wish Larry a speedy recovery. Further remarks were made by local District Court Judge Steve Kosach, an Americal Vietnam veteran and new member of our Chapter. Outgoing Chapter officers were recognized for their service, and new Chapter officers were sworn in by Sergeant-at-Arms John Bowley. Past Far West Chapter Commanders were given awards for their faithful and dedicated service: Lloyd Morrell, 1972-1991, (Founding Chapter Commander); Joe Feeler, 1991-1993/1994-1995 (Posthumous); Lou Turner, 1993-1994; John Bowley, 1995-1996; Pat Tognoli, 1996-1998; Don Shebesta, 1998-2000; Larry O'Boyle, 2000-2002. Our new Commander, Vietnam veteran Rich Merlin, provided the "Over and Out" concluding remarks. The raffle drawings were a huge success. Members provided many unique items for prizes, and the odds at winning were much better than in the casino.

Our Chapter expresses sincere thanks to the committee for their efforts in arranging such a successful and fun filled event. All of us especially want to convey an extra special thank you and our greatest appreciation to Chairpersons Larry Levy and his wife Pat for giving unselfishly of their time in providing for our convenience, comfort, and entertainment.

The 2003 Reunion of the Far West Chapter will be held September 28th to October 1st in Laughlin, Nevada. All are invited.

## HOUSEKEEPING

Please send address and telephone number changes to your Far West Chapter Secretary/Treasurer, Gene McGrath in addition to the National Headquarters.

This will allow us to keep our Chapter roster current and insure that you will receive the Canon and other mailings. We are also now compiling an e-mail address list. Let us know if you would like to be included and receive a copy of this list. It can be sent to mc2some@usintouch.com.

## 2003 DUES

Chapter dues are based on the calendar year and are due in January of each year. Individual statements are not sent. Our minimal dues of \$10 allows us to keep in touch by publishing our Newsletter, the Canon, and helps keep the cost of our annual Reunions low. Please help save your money, which will not have to be spent for reminder post cards.

Please make your check for \$10 payable to ADVA Far West Chapter and send to:

Gene McGrath  
[REDACTED]  
Pahrump, NV 89048

Thank you for your continued support.

## TAPS

It is with regret and sadness that we note the passing of our comrade and fellow veteran Milton Shedd on May 24th of this year. Milton served from September 1943 to December 1945 with the 2nd Bn., 164th Infantry. His assignments were with E Co., Recon., as Bn. S-3, and as G Co. Commander. We offer our prayers and sympathy to his widow Peggy and family.

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

COMMANDER  
John Mathews  
Verona, WI 53593

ADJ/FIN OFF  
Terry Babler  
New Glarus, WI 53574

The Great Lakes Chapter was the host of the National Reunion held this past November in Washington, DC.

It is the hope of the committee that all who attended had an enjoyable experience.

Terry Babler  
Chairman

\*\*\*\*\*  
NORTHWEST CHAPTER  
AK, WA, OR, ID, MT, WY

COMMANDER  
Dave Hammond  
Beaverton, OR 97005

\*\*\*\*\*  
WILLIAM F. McGOLDRICK - NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER  
MA, NH, VT, ME, CT, RI

COMMANDER  
Roland T. Castranova  
Peabody, MA 01960

SEC/TREAS  
Bernard Chase  
South Yarmouth, MA 02664

## CHAPTER NEWS

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

COMMANDER  
David Eichhorn  
Fleming, OH 45729

VICE COMMANDER  
Jay Flanagan  
Cranford, NJ 07017

SECRETARY  
Joe Tunis  
Lake Ariel, PA 18436

TREASURER  
Mark Deam  
Sidney, OH 45365

Leo Orfe - Sergeant-At-Arms  
Everitt Williams - Chaplain  
Visit our web site at:  
<http://home.who.rr.com/sidneyalum/advaerc/>

Our annual Reunion, September 24 thru 27, 2002, was held in Scranton, Pennsylvania. The Reunion attendees were taken by bus to each scheduled site.

## I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THE RAILROAD...

This is the tune that will have deeper meaning for the attendees of the 2002 Reunion in Scranton, PA.

Our first day was spent at Steamtown National Historic Site: the only National Park dedicated to the history of steam locomotion. Lead by a tour guide we saw a working roundhouse, a restoration shop, and a demonstration of a turntable and given a short train ride.

Breaking for lunch, we were taken to Cooper's Seafood Restaurant. Cooper's nautical theme atmosphere was fascinating to all. We ate in the Whale Room with a full size replica of a whale hanging over us.

Our next excursion brought us to Electric City Trolley Station and Museum. This is an impressive collection that preserves the history of the electric trolley system that began in Scranton. An electric trolley ride, recently re-opened, capped off the visit.

## SIXTEEN TONS..WHAT DO'YA GET

This is the other tune that will ring a bell of new realization after having visited the Lackawanna Coal and Mine Tour and the Anthracite Heritage Museum.

These tours made an impact on our realization of how difficult a job it was to work in a mine.

A former miner took us 300 feet down into the earth to explore the winding caverns of an actual mine. Alice Mullen remarked that she never thought about the hard work in bringing the coal to where she just shoveled it from a pail into her furnace, as a child. Leo Orfe also expressed his shock at learning that young boys worked long hours in deplorable conditions. He called it 'slave labor'.

## A TIME FOR RELAXATION AND REMINISCING..

Our free time and evenings were spent in a very roomy, accommodating hospitality lounge. Chairman Bob Cudworth had food and drinks available and plentiful. It has become a tradition with our Chapter meetings for Warren and Adele Reed to add their unique touch in the form of Virginia peanuts. There was also a raffle of very beautiful gifts that Adele Reed donated, lovingly, after our meeting and banquet. We thank and appreciate you both.

A Norwich Terrier, called Monty, greeted a stream

of visitors who came to see him as well as Helyn and Bob Granoff in their hotel room.

When Debby Gold came from Philadelphia to spend time with her parents, Bill and Harriet Gold, she was wearing a very attractive red, white and blue knitted wool scarf with the Americal Southern Cross Stars. A duplicate scarf was raffled off at the banquet and was won by Eileen Tunis. They are the creation of Harriet Gold. Thank you Harriet.

At our dinner banquet and business meeting the slate of officers were all re-elected for the coming year. Some various locations were suggested for Reunion 2003. We were unable to decide on a specific location. A motion was made to leave the decision up to the Chapter officers.

Mementos of the Reunion were given to each attendee in the form of a genuine piece of anthracite coal. "Black Diamonds" with the Americal insignia.

We had a total of 43 attendees. Of these, 14 were World War II vets, 9 were Vietnam vets, 2 were widows of World War II vets, and the rest were family and friends. This was the first reunion for 5 of the vets, 1 from World War II and 4 were Vietnam vets.

Joe Tunis  
Secretary

\*\*\*\*\*  
CENTRAL MID WEST CHAPTER  
ND, SD, KS, NE, MO, IA

CHAPTER COMMANDER  
David A. Chrystal Sr.

Centralia, MO 65240  
email [REDACTED]

I have been appointed by the National Commander, Richard Scales, to be the new Commander of the Central Mid West Chapter.

I am looking for volunteers to assist me in running the Chapter and also for Chapter officers. If you are interested please contact me at the above address.

Every ADVA member in the Chapter area will be receiving a letter from me shortly.

David A Chrystal Sr.  
Chapter Commander

\*\*\*\*\*  
SOUTH MID WEST REGIONAL CHAPTER

COMMANDER  
Cameron Baird  
Stonewall, TX 78671

VICE COMMANDER  
Bill Bacon  
San Antonio, TX 78250

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

The 2003 National Convention will be sponsored by the South Mid West Chapter in Little Rock, AR

Doubletree Hotel - Little Rock, Arkansas  
June 25 - 28, 2003

Watch for the January-February-March 2003 issue of the Americal Newsletter for full details

SAVE THESE DATES

## IN MEMORIAM

In Memory of Joseph Papa  
John McDermott  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Mahoney  
Peter & Kristin Reed  
Millie Warren  
Joseph & Janet Sullivan  
Ed & Julias Lorenz  
Dianne Macdonald  
Francis & Shirley Rallo  
Armando & Mary Rossi  
Frances Bancroft  
Thomas & Mary Ellen Herring  
  
On Memory of Helen McQuade  
Robert & Patricia Salah

E Company and Medical Detachment  
in memory of  
Thomas P. Crowe

\*\*\*\*\*  
SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS IN EXCESS OF TEN DOLLARS

Vern Fetch  
Theodore Milgroom  
Grant Finkbeiner  
Stephan Dant

\*\*\*\*\*  
2002 SCHOLARSHIP FUND REPORT

Contributions to the ADVA Scholarship Fund this year totaled a little over \$21,000. Our by-laws allows us to award scholarships totaling half that amount, or \$10,500. After awarding this year's scholarships, the fund assets total approximately \$95,500 at the start of the fiscal year of July 1st. Once the fund assets total \$100,000, the by-laws allow us to award scholarships totaling all contributions for the year plus any earnings on the \$100,000.

The drawing for the \$250 raffle prize will be held at the ADVA Reunion in November.

We had thirty-six applicants for scholarships this year compared to twenty-three applicants in 2001. An independent selection team of three educators reviewed all of the applications. The selection team felt that every single one of the applicants was worthy of our assistance. Unfortunately, they had to make some tough decisions. ADVA scholarships for 2002 have been awarded to the following individuals.

The first place award of \$3,000 went to Nicholas Sweeno. Nicholas is from Schnecksville, Pennsylvania and was sponsored by his grandfather, Peter Messina, who served in World War II with the 221 Field Artillery. Nicholas attends the University of Notre Dame.

The second place award of \$2,000 went to Katie Buss. Katie is from Lincoln, Rhode Island and was sponsored by her father, Joseph Buss, who served in Vietnam with the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry, 198 LIB. Katie attends the University of Vermont.

The third place award of \$1,500 went to Kyle Peterson. Kyle is from Luck, Wisconsin and was sponsored by his father, Roger Peterson, who served in Vietnam with the 23rd Military Police. Kyle is attending the University of Wisconsin-Barron County.

Four fourth place awards of \$1,000 each were awarded to the following individuals:

Julian Janssen. Julian and his family recently moved from Piti, Guam to Raleigh, North Carolina. Julian was sponsored by his grandfather, Walter Ensminger, who served in World War II with the 3rd Battalion, 164th Infantry. Julian will be attending North Carolina State University.

Erin Hatch. Erin is from Georgetown, Massachusetts and was sponsored by her grandfather, Leonard Oliver, who served in World War II with the 221st Field Artillery.

Brett Feltes. Brett is from Elburn, Illinois and was sponsored by his father, Michael Feltes, who served in Vietnam with the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, 11 LIB. Brett will be attending the University of Illinois.

Laura McLean. Laura is from Orlando, Florida and was sponsored her grandfather, Nicholas Sheely, who served in World War II with the 3rd Battalion, 132nd Infantry. Laura attends Belmont University.

I want to personally thank the ADVA members and associates who have given so generously to the Scholarship Fund. The financial assistance that our organization is providing these extremely talented young men and women is a great way to honor all who have served with the Americal.

Respectively submitted,  
Bob Short, Fund Chairman

\*\*\*\*\*  
To the Americal Division Veterans Association:

My sincere thanks for the scholarship which the ADVA has awarded me. I can't possibly overstate how helpful this money is to my family and I.



Peter J. Messina and his grandson Nicholas

I currently am a senior American Studies major and Italian minor at the University of Notre Dame. I am applying to graduate school for international relations, and hope to one day work either for the government or for a non-profit organization. My sister, Laura, was a previous winner of the scholarship, and just got married on September 14. She works in Blue Bell, PA as an attorney.

Once again, I deeply appreciate your generous gift.

Sincerely,  
Nicholas Sweeno

## Dear Mr. Short and the Scholarship Committee:

Thank you very much for awarding me the second place scholarship. I truly appreciate the Americal Division's generosity towards the younger generations trying to further their education. This scholarship money will certainly help to "put a dent in" the thousands of dollars in loans that I have already begun to accumulate after completion of only one year of college. After my eight years of pricey college living I am hoping to become a veterinarian. Without the contributions from such openhanded associations like yours, this goal would be nearly impossible to achieve.



Katie and her Dad, Joseph Buss

Thanks again.

Sincerely,  
Katie Leigh Buss

\*\*\*\*\*  
Dear Mr. Short:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you and the ADVA for the scholarship I received in the amount of \$1,500.



Roger Peterson and his son Kyle

This will take care of my first semester tuition at U.W. Barrow County. I am grateful and honored to receive this award.

Sincerely,  
Kyle A. Peterson

## Dear Mr. Short and the ADVA Scholarship Committee:

I would like to thank you for awarding me a \$1,000 scholarship this year. It is a true honor to be selected for the award, and is a great help to my family and me in paying for my education. Also, I can't tell you how much it means to my grandfather, Leonard Oliver, 221st FA C Battery. He has always shared with me his stories of the Second World War, creating a close bond between us. My Grampie saw this as a special way he might be able to contribute to my education. Telling him I got the scholarship, and seeing him so happy, and proud of me means more than anything. I cannot thank you enough for this scholarship, and the joy it has brought my family.



Leonard Oliver and his granddaughter Erin

Thank you again for protecting and serving our country, and for the scholarship.

Sincerely,  
Erin Hatch

\*\*\*\*\*  
To Members of Scholarship Committee and the ADVA:

I am proud of the Americal Division Veterans Association and what it is doing with the youth of our nation in supplying a scholarship to assist them with their financial needs.

I am also proud of my grandson, Nicholas Sweeno, for his scholastic achievements and in winning your scholarship. He is a senior at Notre Dame and will be taking International Studies after he graduates. I am sure that he will not let you down.

You may recall that his sister, Lara Sweeno, was the very first recipient to be given a scholarship from the ADVA. She graduated Sum Cum Laude from Notre Dame, went to Dickinson Law School and graduated Cum Laude in getting her Law Degree. After being a law clerk for Judge Johnson of the Pennsylvania Superior Court is now a lawyer working for an Insurance Company.

PNC Peter J. Messina

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AMERICAL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS  
SEE NOTE ON BOTTOM OF NEXT PAGE

## \*\*\*\*\*

## SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

Dear Mr. Short:

I feel truly blessed to be a recipient of the ADVA Scholarship award. As a veteran of World War II, my grandfather, Nicholas Shealy has without a doubt upheld the ADVA standards. His ongoing spirit, ambition, and determination have given me a respect and admiration of the men who fought for our country. Through him, I have gained an understanding for the importance of National pride. The ADVA scholarship award not only encourages younger generations to uphold patriotism but to further their education as they begin to carry out their goals and dreams, as it has done for me.



My utmost passion for music and theatre has led to my studies at Belmont University where this grant will be well spent. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for this great opportunity and for being selected to receive this scholarship.

Sincerely,  
Laura McLean

\*\*\*\*\*

## IN MEMORIAM

Stephan & Donna Thompson  
in memory of  
Joe Papa

Marguerite Thompson  
in memory of  
Joseph Thompson

## SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS IN EXCESS OF TEN DOLLARS

Ron & Donna Ellis  
Peter & Julia Messina  
Domenic Pantaleo

\*\*\*\*\*

## AMERICAL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

If you are interested in applying for an Americal Scholarship please contact:

Mr. Robert Short

Kalamazoo, MI 49009

All Scholarship applications for next years awards must be received by May 1, 2003.

Contact Mr. Short as soon as possible for the necessary applications.

Dear Mr. Short and members of the ADVA:

Thank you for the \$1,000 scholarship. I have received the check and given it to North Carolina State University to defray tuition expenses. This has been very helpful to me at this time because my family is also relocating to North Carolina and we have had many unforeseen expenses in our moving process.



Julian and his grandfather, Walter E. Ensminger

I am looking forward to beginning my college career. I know it will be a broadening experience and will open many doors to my future. Through the scholarship, the Americal Division Veterans Association has provided a key to my success.

Sincerely,  
Julian Janssen

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Mr. Short:

I want to thank you and your committee for selecting me as a recipient of the ADVA Scholarship Fund. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. This scholarship will significantly help me pay my college tuition. Thank you.



Sincerely,  
Brett Feltes

## WEB LOCATOR

These and other locator requests are at [www.americal.org/locator/](http://www.americal.org/locator/) with thanks to Anthony (Tony) Greene.

Looking For: James Wilson, B Btry., 6/11<sup>th</sup> Artillery, 1969. Contact: Richard Niemann, 3910 Sunflower Ave, Sheboygan, WI 53081

Looking For: Anyone, A Btry., 1/14 Artillery, 68/69. I remember Dale Easterling, Tom Wilson, Julian Brisbane. Contact: James J. Hendricks, Jr.; 59 Odeon Court, Parkville, MD 21234, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Jimmy D Gandy, 23 MP Co., 1970. Contact: Doug Waggoner, [REDACTED]

Looking For: John Kenneth Clough and James Glasper, HHB, 3/82d Arty., 1971. Contact: Robert Powell, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone who knew Keith Oflanagan, Task Force Oregon, 68-69. Contact: Don Novak, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Joe Foice, F troop 17<sup>th</sup> Cav., 1969 to 1970. Contact: James Payne, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Jon F Wolfe and David Phillips, Aug-Nov 69, anyone Recon 3/21<sup>st</sup> Inf. late 68-late 69. Contact: Kenneth McParland, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Sgt. Carr, WIA March 1969, SGT Maurice Moehring, May 1969: 723rd Maint. Bn. Contact: Tom McCauley, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Lt Mills, Sgt Fittings, Sgt Basler, Sgt Reches, Sgt Chapple, Sp4 Tony Martin, anyone, 1st Platoon, B Co., 2/1<sup>st</sup> Inf., 66-67. Contact: Don {Doc} O'Brien, [REDACTED]

Looking For: James Wilson, B Btry., 6/11<sup>th</sup> Arty., 1969. Contact: Richard Niemann, 3910 Sunflower Ave, Sheboygan, WI 53081

Looking For: Anyone, A Btry., 1/14th Arty, 68/69. Contact: James J. Hendricks, Jr., [REDACTED]

Looking For: Sandy Snow, Hubert Stamps, Richard Ayala, Ronald Holden; 1969; 198th, 1/6th, A Co., 3rd Squad, 1st Platoon. Sgt. Don "Moe" Maze would like to make contact. Contact: Brett King, [REDACTED]

Looking For: 164th Infantry, Co. C, 1st Bn., shipped out of San Francisco, CA. in 1943. Contact: Ben Rosalez, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Warlords, Co. B, 123rd Avn. Bn 3/68-9/68 & 5/69-5/70. Contact: Hal {Mike} Gray, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone who knew 1LT Cecil L. Wright, Co C, 5/46<sup>th</sup>, 198th LIB wounded on March 22, 1969. Contact: Garret B. Kremer-Wright, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone who knew my dad, Fred (DOC) Meagher, Co. B, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn., 182<sup>nd</sup> Inf. Regt. Contact: Steve Meagher, [REDACTED]

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23, 1/1st Cav. Contact: Bob Groh, [REDACTED], Big Rapids, MI 49307

Looking For: Anyone in Luthers Animals Recon Unit, 1/52nd 198th LIB, 1968. Contact: Erik Caudill, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone, A Btry., 1/14 Artillery, 68/69. I remember Dale Easterling, Tom Wilson, Julian Brisbane. Contact: James J. Hendricks, Jr.; 59 Odeon Court, Parkville, MD 21234, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Floyd Capistrant, Co. D, 26th Engr Bn., 1968, and Svc Btry 3/18th Arty., 1967. Contact: Jim Sundquist, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Jimmy D Gandy, 23 MP Co., 1970. Contact: Doug Waggoner, [REDACTED]

Looking For: John Kenneth Clough and James Glasper, HHB, 3/82d Arty., 1971. Contact: Robert Powell, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone who knew Keith Oflanagan, Task Force Oregon, 68-69. Contact: Don Novak, [REDACTED]

Looking For: John P. Foley and Melvin Spencer, C Co., 1/6th, 198<sup>th</sup>, 1967-1968. Contact: Mark L. Deam, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Joe Foice, F troop 17<sup>th</sup> Cav., 1969 to 1970. Contact: James Payne, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Jon F Wolfe and David Phillips, Aug-Nov 69, anyone Recon 3/21<sup>st</sup> Inf. late 68-late 69. Contact: Kenneth McParland, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Sgt. Carr, WIA March 1969, SGT Maurice Moehring, May 1969: 723rd Maint. Bn. Contact: Tom McCauley, [REDACTED]

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Looking For: James Wilson, B Btry., 6/11<sup>th</sup> Arty., 1969. Contact: Richard Niemann, 3910 Sunflower Ave, Sheboygan, WI 53081

Looking For: Anyone who knew Keith Oflanagan, Task Force Oregon, 68-69. Contact: Don Novak, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Joe Foice, F troop 17<sup>th</sup> Cav., 1969 to 1970. Contact: James Payne, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Jon F Wolfe and David Phillips, Aug-Nov 69, anyone Recon 3/21<sup>st</sup> Inf. late 68-late 69. Contact: Kenneth McParland, [REDACTED]

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Looking For: Anyone who knew Keith Oflanagan, Task Force Oregon, 68-69. Contact: Don Novak, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Joe Foice, F troop 17<sup>th</sup> Cav., 1969 to 1970. Contact: James Payne, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Jon F Wolfe and David Phillips, Aug-Nov 69, anyone Recon 3/21<sup>st</sup> Inf. late 68-late 69. Contact: Kenneth McParland, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Sgt. Carr, WIA March 1969, SGT Maurice Moehring, May 1969: 723rd Maint. Bn. Contact: Tom McCauley, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone, Co. E, 5/46 198 early 1970 and later in Co. A, 5/46. Contact: Gary Campbell, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Members of B Co., 2nd Plt., 1/52<sup>nd</sup>, 198<sup>th</sup> LIB, 7-69 to 7-70. Contact: Glen Barrus, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Any one that was on the track with me when John Futo was K.I.A., track

84029-9742, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Any one that was on the track with me when John Futo was K.I.A., track

84029-9742, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Joe Coleman and Raymond Escamilla, LZ Gator 1969-70, Contact: Mike Gallegos, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Robert Mikula, D.E. Marshall, Co. B, 723rd Maint., late 1968-1969. Contact: Tom McCauley, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone, Co. C, 4/21<sup>st</sup> Inf., 164th Infantry, knowing Staff Sergeant Edward E. Feininger from Dickinson, North Dakota. Contact: Chris Bremseth, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone, CPT David Winsby or Jerry King or anyone, Co. C, 4/21<sup>st</sup> Inf., 164th Infantry, knowing Staff Sergeant Edward E. Feininger from Dickinson, North Dakota. Contact: Chris Bremseth, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone who served with Sgt. Don Moe Maze, Co. A, 1/6<sup>th</sup> Inf., 198<sup>th</sup> LIB, April 68-April 69, especially looking for: Sandy Snow; Hubert Stamps; Richard Ayala; Ronald Holden; Ron Hettinger or Hettinger; Archie Sapp & Herm Williams. Contact: Brett King, [REDACTED]

Looking For: Anyone who knew my dad, Fred (DOC) Meagher, Co. B, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn., 182<sup>nd</sup> Inf. Regt. Contact: Steve Meagher, [REDACTED]

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Looking For: Anyone who served with Sgt. Don Moe Maze, Co. A, 1/6<sup>th</sup> Inf., 198<sup>th</sup> LIB, April 68-April 69, especially looking for: Sandy Snow; Hub

Dear editor,

The following is a narrative of a conversation that transpired between the undersigned and Brian D. Connolly on 21 August 2002.

Mr. Connolly called me on advice of his VA Service Officer James Jewell who had spoken to me earlier about Mr. Connolly's case. Mr. Jewell was unable to confirm Mr. Connolly's story and his claim languishes at the VA. Mr. Connolly states the following:

From 6 Oct 1970 until 5 Oct 1971 I was assigned to Battery C, 6th Bn, 11th Artillery, 11th LIB, Americal Division, RVN. The unit was a 105-mm howitzer unit with guns having an oval base plate rather than a split trail. I was a Sp4 Class, MOS 13A20.

Around February and March 1971 our unit was stationed on LZ Liz (not far from LZ Bowman). One of my duties was to go to the rear area of the 11th Arty at Chu Lai Air Base and fetch supplies for the battery. At one particular run to Chu Lai, the date of which I do not remember (only that it must be in Jan or Feb '71), we were ambushed by the VC about halfway between Liz and Chu Lai on Hwy 1.

We had two vehicles with us: one 3/4 ton and a 2 1/2 ton truck. The 3/4 ton was driven by a soldier whose name I do not remember assisted by Sgt. Sills or Sells. I drove the 2 1/2 ton with Sp4 Willie White as assistant. (Assumed not sure. White usually accompanied me but don't know if he was with me that day.)

The VC must have sprung the ambush prematurely (or detonated a buried charge) allowing only one of the three vehicles on the road into the killing zone. The 3/4 ton was wiped out and St Sells was KIA, with the driver assumed WIA. Dust-off from Chu Lai med-evacuated the casualties and we returned with the 2 1/2 ton to LZ Liz.

The VA is not able to verify this incident and therefore will not grant me service connected status. I am suffering from PTSD. Any help in verifying this incident is greatly appreciated.

My current address is: Brian D. Connolly, [REDACTED], Cohoes, NY 12047 Ph: [REDACTED]

Jan F. Milles; Co. D, 1/6th Inf.  
Red Hook, NY

Dear editor,

Please reference the above comrade and his situation with the VA. Since I sent you the narrative of my conversation with Connolly I have found Steven C. Sells who served with the 6/11th Arty in the 11th LIB during the time in question. He did not die in the ambush as Connolly assumed. I just wanted to give you a heads-up and I will keep you in the loop on anything I find out.

Jan F. Milles; Co. D, 1/6th Inf.  
Red Hook, NY

Dear editor,

I was stationed in the Canal Zone during 1954-1957. I was a Platoon Sergeant in 516th Transportation Car Co. at Ft. Amador. After a year and a few months I transferred to an anti-aircraft artillery battalion (90mm) on Chiva Chiva Trail. I believe this was the 276th AAA Bn, which was attached to the 23rd Division.

I have a problem. All of my photos, commendations, uniforms, etc. were burned in a fire at my mother's house in Maine. I cannot find anything on the internet about the 276th. Is it possible that you could help me?

I am searching for information on the 23rd Division in Korea. I was in Korea from 1951-1953 with the Heavy Equipment Field Maint. Co. in Yangu, North Korea.

Larry Roberts

*Editor's note: The 23rd Infantry Division was activated during the Korean War era and was stationed in Puerto Rico and the Canal Zone. This time period was 1954-1956. The 23rd Inf. Div. was not active in 1951-53. The 23rd Infantry Regiment was in combat in Korea as part of the 2nd Infantry Division. The differentiation of the 23rd Inf. Div. and the 23rd Inf. Regt. during the Korean War era is a source of confusion. Any readers that are able to help clarify this distinction or who are able to help Larry are asked to contact the Vietnam Editor.*

Dear editor,

I am conducting research on my brother who unfortunately was killed in Vietnam in 1969. Specifically, I am trying to locate individuals or records that may show how he spent the last months of life. Any information or help you can provide would be great. The details I know are: George Gerald Carlough, Corporal, KIA 22 January 1969, Quang Ngai Province, hostile from wounds received when a booby trap detonated. He was assigned to Co. D, 4/3rd Inf., 11th LIB. Thank You.

Jim Carlough

Dear editor,

I am looking for anyone who knew Peter Mark Komarowski. Peter was in the 196th LIB, 2nd Bn, 1st Inf, 3rd Platoon when he was KIA in Quang Tin on 6 Feb 1970. I am his older sister. If you can tell me the circumstances of his death or just any stories, I would be grateful.

Mary Louise Walker; [REDACTED]  
Perry Hall, MD 21128

Dear editor,

My friend and I are currently trying to trace any details on his late uncle, CSM John McCamley. We both reside in Scotland and recently obtained some details from the National

Personnel Records Center. We have found out that CSM McCamley served with HHC, 1st Bn, 6th Inf, 198th Inf. Bde. as Operations Sergeant beginning March 13, 1971.

We were wondering if you, or any members of your association, recall John McCamley. If so, would it be possible to forward any details on to us. Thanks.

Nick Reville

Dear editor,

I am trying to find information about my friend Daniel J. Hommel. He was in Co. D, 1/52nd Inf, 198th LIB. He was killed in Quang Tin Province on 25 May 1968. Any help you can give me would be greatly appreciated.

Bob Beecher

Dear editor,

I have been creating a website for the 3rd Platoon, 23rd M.P. Co. I invite everyone to visit my site and please sign the guest book. The website is coming along and I have added some new pages. It is a long way from being finished but it should be presentable by 1 April 2003. I would appreciate your comments on the site.

Please keep in touch. It would be great if you could make a reunion. Visit the website at [www.geocities.com/dutch3rdpl/](http://www.geocities.com/dutch3rdpl/)

Dutch DeGroot; 23rd M.P. Co.  
Mt. Prospect, IL

Dear editor,

I have been very active in US/Vietnam affairs for more than 14 years. I am sending you two web addresses. The first is the memorial that the Vietnamese people are constructing in California. The second provides links to hundreds of VN photos.

<http://www.vnwarmemorial.com/>

<http://cards.webshots.com/cp-32191769-plmX-album/47565981FGPSGX>

John Wills; 1/52nd Inf.  
O'Fallon, MO

Dear Readers,

The Americal Newsletter is interested in hearing from you. Let us know if you have a request that you would like published in a future edition.

The Americal Newsletter needs your personal stories in order to preserve the history of the Americal Division. Send your submission to one of the editors listed in the directory.

Manuscripts and photos cannot be returned. Let us hear from you soon.

## SSG William A. Baird Prisoner of War

William A. (Bill) Baird passed away on July 30, 2002 in Fredericksburg, OH. Baird served in Vietnam with Co. A, 3/21st Inf., 196th LIB. He was taken prisoner of war in 1968 and held in captivity until 1973.

ADVA member Larry Watson, Wooster, OH, obtained a personal account of Bill Baird's ordeal. Larry remembers, "The last time I saw Bill was at a 4th of July parade. I was marching in a color guard with our local VVA chapter. Bill was carrying a POW/MIA flag in his motorized wheelchair."

Bill suffered the loss of his wife Kathy earlier in 2002. Our condolences to the Baird family and friends. May he rest in peace.

William A. (Bill) Baird was born on June 7, 1949. He enlisted in the United States Army on August 15, 1967 in Cleveland, OH. He underwent basic training at Ft. Knox, KY and advanced training at Ft. Polk, LA. He departed for Vietnam from Ft. Lewis, WA on January 2, 1968.

Baird was assigned as an infantryman with the 196th Light Infantry Brigade of the Americal Division. He took part in patrols, search and destroy missions, guard duty, and fought in the Tet Offensive in March 1968.

About 3:00 PM on the afternoon of May 6, 1968, thirty men of Baird's company went out on patrol. They were close to the demilitarized zone on the border of North Vietnam. Bill was pointman and a good 20 feet ahead of the rest of the men. They had no idea they were walking into an ambush. While walking on top of a dike in a rice paddy, Bill stepped on a land mine. The explosion not only rendered him unconscious, it also alerted the Viet Cong and a firefight broke out.

Three hours later Baird regained consciousness and heard the action going on. Men were yelling, screaming, and shooting. An artillery barrage was going on and planes were overhead. Bill began to take stock of where he was and realized he must have stepped on a mine. There was no one near to help him. He tried to stand up but discovered he had no feeling from the waist down and through his efforts he passed out again.

As darkness approached things quieted down but Bill suffered the trauma of being wounded and left alone. Eventually he heard the voices of Vietnamese approaching. He had no idea if they were friendly or not. Then as they came upon him he heard, "Chu Hoi", surrender or die.

The Vietnamese surrounded Baird and when he told them he was injured they did not believe him. They told him, "Americans are sneaky, lie, and can not be trusted."

Several times they tried to make him stand but he could not. He then felt a sharp pain and a ringing in his head and discovered that they had shot him. Fortunately the bullet hit no vital point, entering his neck and exiting out his ear.

Finally convinced that Baird could not walk, the Vietnamese made a makeshift stretcher and drug him along with them. After dragging him for three or four hours they stopped and gave him a bowl of rice. Traveling to the north they proceeded to show him off at all the villages they passed through and the people would kick and spit at him. This went on for most of a month.

Since there were no formal names for prison camps or locations, the American prisoners gave the camps names that suited them. The first organized camp that Bill was taken to was called "Port Holes" because the cement building had one door, a single light bulb hanging from the ceiling, and round windows around the walls like port holes on a ship.

## P.O.W.

Bill remained here for a month and then was moved on to a camp known as D-1. Not knowing where he was geographically, he thought he might be close to the South China Sea because he was often given fish. It was here that he saw his first American. He was a Green Beret and a dentist but he didn't seem to want anything to do with Baird and did nothing to help him. After two months Baird was moved by truck to another place that he called the "Rock Pile". There were huge piles of rocks and debris that he thought might have been from bombings. This was only a stopover and after a month he was moved to the "Plantation Gardens."

Some prisoners called this prison the "Chicken House" or "The Farm". Prisoners were housed in three buildings in a row, like chicken houses, on one side of the plantation. The large mansion housed the Viet Cong officers and their offices. Prisoners would be taken to the "Big House" for interrogation, brain washing, or punishment. Bill thinks he was not beaten as much as others because he became a showpiece for any dignitaries who came through. For this reason they allowed him to live. He remained at the "Plantation Gardens" for four years before moving to the famous "Hanoi Hilton" in January 1973.

After being tortured, starved, and kept in isolation most of his captivity, Baird was moved from the "Hanoi Hilton" to a large building similar to a large airplane hangar. Located here were between two and three hundred Americans, many of them pilots. Seeing someone who had been with two

or three years earlier and had believed had been executed was indeed a surprise. All of the activity, talking, and carrying on was upsetting to the guards who could not understand the Americans.

While at the "Hanoi Hilton" the prisoners were told of the American actress Jane Fonda who had come to Vietnam as a friend of the Communists. This was played up with those collaborators who made up the Peace Committee.

The prisoners knew of the negotiations between the two governments and rumors about being liberated were strong. Food became a little more plentiful and fluctuated from the earlier diet of one bowl of rice and a cup of water to three or four bowls of rice a day. It was rare to have any meat but now they were given bread, which they had never had.

On March 7, 1973 the Viet Cong told them to prepare to move. They had done this many times, taking their few possessions, but this time they were allowed only what they wore. They were told of the negotiations at the Paris Peace Talks and that they were going home.

During his five years of captivity malaria, dysentery, worms, and malnutrition caused Bill to lose between 30 and 40 pounds. He departed for the United States in March 1973 from Hanoi, North Vietnam by C-141 aircraft, arriving at Clark Air Force Base, Philippines. He spent time at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii and spent six months at the Army hospital at Phoixville, Pennsylvania. He was discharged from Phoixville Medical Center on September 27, 1973.

For his service, Bill was awarded the Vietnam Service Medal, Overseas Medal, Purple Heart, and Prisoner of War Medal.

## For further reading

You can read about the experiences of Americal Division veterans held as POWs in Vietnam in Frank Anton's book *Why Didn't You Get Me Out?* Mr. Anton has graciously provided copies of his book to the ADVA.

You may purchase a copy of this book by sending \$12 to Mr. Wayne Bryant, ADVA Product Sales Director, 4411 Dawn Rd., Greensboro, NC, 27405.

America POW stories are also included in the book *Survivors, American POWs in Vietnam* by Zalin Grant. Amazon.com shows this book as out of print. However, used copies are available on Amazon.com.

Amazon.com also shows a book called *Survivors: Vietnam POWs tell their stories* by Zalin Grant. I do not know if this is a reprint of the previous book or if it is an entirely new book.

Please let the Vietnam Editor know of other books that tell about American POWs.

-GLN-

## One Day In The Life ... of the Americal Division

May 12, 1969 was another day for the Americal Division in Vietnam. While each soldier experienced the day as it looked from his own "foxhole", here is the war that day as seen from division headquarters.

David W. Taylor

## Daily Staff Journal

0001 Journal Opened  
0106 198<sup>th</sup> Brigade reports rocket fire on refugee camp in its area of operations, at 2330.

0110 C Troop-1<sup>st</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Cav received 5 mortar rounds and 3 RPG rounds on night position (at 0055).

0235 B Troop-1<sup>st</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Cav received small arms fire and 1 - 82mm rocket round (Hawk Hill) at 0150. At 0245 Guard Post #24 reports 4 rounds of 82mm mortar landed 300 meters in front of position.

0300 D Company, 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> battalion at 0215 (LZ San Juan Hill) received 4 rounds of 60mm mortars. Flashes spotted, artillery returned fire with unknown results.

0330 Company G, 75<sup>th</sup> Ranger LRRP Team observed rockets being fired (at 0315); called in artillery.

0340 C Troop-1<sup>st</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Cav hit with small arms fire, 8 rounds of 81mm mortars and 5 RPG rounds at 0325. 1 soldier wounded.

0400 B Company, 26<sup>th</sup> Engineers at Tra Bong Special Forces Camp received 9-10 60mm mortar rounds (at 0100).

0515 3<sup>rd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> ARVN battalion (196<sup>th</sup> LIB area of operation) hit by mortars (at 0400). 2 soldiers killed, 1 wounded.

0515 Recon-4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> battalion (11<sup>th</sup> LIB), hit by 12- 60mm mortar rounds and AK-47 fire. 5 soldiers killed, 3 wounded.

0515 1<sup>st</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> battalion (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) at Tien Phuoc hit with 4-6 B40 rockets and 16 81mm mortar rounds at 0325; No casualties.

0515 2 plt/H-Troop/17<sup>th</sup> Cav (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) received small arms fire and 1-82mm mortar round. 1 armored track damaged but could still fire. 4 wounded from H troop and 1 wounded from 5<sup>th</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> battalion.

0530 3<sup>rd</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB), LZ Center, hit at 0137. Received 8-10 82mm mortar rounds, unknown number of satchel charges, hand grenades and 2-3 RPG rounds. 2 soldiers killed, 24 wounded. Fire Support base had 4 bunkers damaged. 4 NVA killed. Captured: 1 RPG Rocket launcher, 1 AK-47 and 23 hand grenades.

0530 A Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> battalion (198<sup>th</sup> LIB), LZ Buff, hit at 0123 with 40-45 RPG and mortar rounds, 150 rounds of 82mm & 60mm mortars. Sappers entered perimeter and occupied some bunkers for period of time. Perimeter reestablished, contact broken at 0405. Estimate force of 2 VC



companies. From B/26<sup>th</sup> Engineers 1 killed & 4 wounded. From A/1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> 7 killed & 13 wounded. 25 VC killed.

0550 HQ, 5<sup>th</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> Battalion, LZ Gator (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 0123 hit by 75-100 RPG & mortar rounds. Ground attack plus unknown number of sappers penetrated perimeter. 4 soldiers killed, 10 wounded. 1 of soldiers killed was LTC Alfred Barnes, Battalion Commander. 1 VC killed & 1 sapper killed.

0620 C Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) hit by 20 rounds of 82mm mortar fire (at 0315). 1 killed, 8 wounded.

0620 B Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) hit by 2 hand grenades (at 0305). 5 wounded.

0620 D Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) received small arms fire (at 0435). 1 wounded.

0620 A Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB), at LZ Liz hit by 3-82mm mortar rounds.

0630 B Company, 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB), at LZ Debbie hit by 2 rounds 60mm mortars (at 0445). 1 wounded from D Company, 19<sup>th</sup> Engineers.

0640 B-1<sup>st</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Cav (LZ Hawk Hill) hit by 10 - 122mm rockets (at 0626). 1 wounded and moderate damage to one track.

0645 11<sup>th</sup> LIB HQ at LZ Bronco at 0130-0515 hit by 16 RPG's, 30 mixed 60mm & 81mm mortars, 10 75 Recoilless Rifle and 11 140mm rocket rounds. 1 soldier killed, 16 wounded.

0700 A Company, 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> battalion (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 0125 received 12-15 rounds of 81mm mortar fire. No casualties reported.

0730 C Company, 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) engaged 2 VC at 0620. 1 VC killed.

0735 C Company, 39<sup>th</sup> Engineers (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) hit at 0240 by est. 25 VC. Satchel charges destroyed 1 bunker. 3 soldiers killed, 6 wounded. 23 VC killed, 3 detained, sent to LZ Bronco by 2<sup>nd</sup> ARVN elements. Captured 3 AK-47's, 1 AK-50, 1 38-cal pistol and 1 flare pistol.

0750 A Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) reference ground attack reported 0530, on 1 dead VC found dog tags w/name Timothy J Campbell. EM was a member of Delta.

1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> and medevaced to USA on 27 April according to records.

0800 D Company, 4<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) killed 1 VC at 0600. Found 15 pounds of rice.

0800 3<sup>rd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> ARVN battalion (196<sup>th</sup> LIB area) on LZ Ross hit with 25 rounds 81mm mortar. 1 soldier killed, 1 soldier wounded. 0810 D Company, 5<sup>th</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> battalion (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) observed two VC carrying a litter patient. Engaged and killed 2 VC and captured 2. Captured 81mm mortar base plate and M-16.

0820 B Company, 39<sup>th</sup> Engineers filled crater and opened lane of traffic on Highway 1. Continuing mine sweep.

0830 D Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) found rocket launcher site (coordinates given), fresh trails, 88 shipping caps.

0840 26<sup>th</sup> Engineers report two road culverts blown (locations given), but road is passable.

0845 D Company, 5<sup>th</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> battalion, (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) requests tracker dog for one day. Dog/handler will be picked up at LRRP pad 0900.

0850 B Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) detonated M-26 grenade with trip wire rigged as a mine at 0810. 2 soldiers wounded.

0927 LZ Professional (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 0905 hit with 2 mortar rounds.

0930 Battalion TOC, 1<sup>st</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> LZ Professional (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) hit with 10 RPG rounds at 0915. 2 soldiers wounded.

0930 123<sup>rd</sup> Aviation Aero Scouts report 0700 1 VC evading and received light 30 cal fire; observed numerous trenches & spider holes (locations given). At 0725 report 50 sampans under brush at NE side of river plus tunnel entrances and green shirt. At 0745 observed trench line with triple strand barbed wire. At 0755 observed recently vacated 51 cal machine gun position plus tunnel entrances. At 0805

observed 1 hut with green poncho, blood stained shirt and 1 mama san with weapon. Received light MG fire. At 0810 observed 1 hut with barbed wire and trench line around hut. 1 VC evaded. At 0820 received 30-cal machine gun fire. At 0845 observed 5 VC evading.

0940 Division TOC: 9<sup>th</sup> Marines request security for An Tan bridge tonight. Passed request to 198<sup>th</sup> LIB, secure with 1 platoon.

0955 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) LZ Baldy hit with ground attack at 0124 from unknown force of VC/NVA. Received small arms fire, RPG's and sappers. VC were inside the perimeter. 4 soldiers killed and 25 wounded. 37 VC/NVA killed. Captured: 3- AK-50's, 7 RPG's, 6 AK-47's, 1 M-79, 1 45 Cal Pistol, 25 satchel charges, 125 hand grenades and 1 Bangalore torpedo. One bunker took 2 RPG rounds with minor damage. Minor damage to buildings and tents. Several cuts in perimeter wire.

1035 Division Tactical Operations Center received incoming rounds, alert condition yellow at 1014. At 1020, initial report from Chu Lai Defense Command (CLDC) 4 rockets hit.

1042 C Troop, 1<sup>st</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Cav. At 0750 had M-48 tank hit with RPG round through gun tube. Result: 4 wounded; vehicle not combat loss. At 0900 3 tracks received RPG fire. 3 soldiers killed, 3 wounded. B Troop moving to reinforce C Troop. 1 soldier MIA.

1055 B Company, 19<sup>th</sup> Engineers (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) found roadblock of rocks & metal 300 meters long. Checked out & cleared; found road blocks of trees buried in ground, checked out and cleared; found 20 pounds of leaflets, evacuated to LZ Bronco.

1100 A Company, 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> battalion, at 0940 found 2 large huts, 5 punji pits with 100 punji sticks in bunkers, miscellaneous writing material & documents. Paper documents were sent to LZ Bronco.

1100 D Company, 5<sup>th</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> battalion (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) added to incident at 0630: 2 RPG rounds, 8 Chi Com grenades, 1 81mm mortar round, 1 pair wire cutters and 1 wallet with ID & letters sent to LZ bayonet.

1100 C Company, 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 0920, received small arms fire from 2-3 positions. Returned fire with 1 soldier wounded. At 0950 1 wounded. At 1015 1 soldier killed, 4 wounded. At 1055 received 6-7 82mm mortar rounds, negative assessment at this time. At 1115 have engaged estimated NVA company in green uniforms. Estimate 30% of US force killed or wounded. Receiving heavy machine gun, mortar and RPG fire.

1115 A Company, 5<sup>th</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) detonated unknown type mine at 1023 (location given).

1420 C Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) finds cache of enemy weapons while searching village (location given).

1422 B Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) Hoi Chanh working with company detonated mine. Evacuated to 312<sup>th</sup> Hospital.

1425 19<sup>th</sup> Engineers (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1120 in convoy received small arms fire. 1 soldier killed, 1 wounded. 1 VC killed.

1425 Recon, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1015, while following blood trial, found 1 VC wounded. VC attempted to evade, VC killed.

1425 C Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) observed 1 VC evading into tunnel. Threw hand grenade. 1 VC killed, medical supplies found.



1140 Blue Ghost to conduct visual recon of rocket pocket ASAP until further notice. Estimated time on station 45 to 60 minutes.

1145 Popular Forces & 1<sup>st</sup> Plt/F Troop/17<sup>th</sup> Cav received 800-1,000 rounds of heavy automatic weapons fire at 0945. Observed large number of VC at (locations given). Black Ace 32 observed large number of VC with neg. weapons or equipment.

1148 A Company, 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1100 detained 1 Viet male, no ID, extracted to LZ West.

1150 D Company, 4<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> 1t 1005 killed 1 VC, negative weapon or ID.

1153 A Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 0950 observed 3-5 NVA evading. Called in arty, negative results.

1155 Battalion TOC, 1<sup>st</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> at 1116 helo received unknown amount of automatic weapons fire with one hit in tail rotor blade, aircraft continued to fly.

1200 1<sup>st</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Cav B Company, HQ Det reports at 1115 1 UH-1C received small arms fire and 1 hit in rotor shaft.

1200 11<sup>th</sup> LIB TOC LZ Bronco received at 1200 approximately 3 140mm rocket rounds. 1 hit HQ Co mess hall; 1 wounded.

1230 A Company, 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) captured 1 NVA Chu Hoi. Evac to LZ Bronco

1230 D Company, 5<sup>th</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) received sniper fire (1 wounded). 1 VC killed, 1 AK-47 captured.

1312 C Company, 39<sup>th</sup> Engineers at 0810 completed culvert (coordinates given). Road passable.

1315 F Troop/8<sup>th</sup> Cav at 1300 (location given): 8 cylinders with bunker & spider holes. Work recently completed. Blue Ghost confirms same siting.

1350 27<sup>th</sup> Surgical Hospital received 1 122mm rocket in sub sector 7.

1350 D Company, 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) hot with 10 60mm mortar rounds, San Juan Hill (at 0215). 3 soldiers wounded.

1355 B Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) hit with 2 PRG rounds and small arms fire at 1235.

1420 C Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) finds cache of enemy weapons while searching village (location given).

1422 B Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) Hoi Chanh working with company detonated mine. Evacuated to 312<sup>th</sup> Hospital.

1425 19<sup>th</sup> Engineers (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1120 in convoy received small arms fire. 1 soldier killed, 1 wounded. 1 VC killed.

1425 Recon, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1015, while following blood trial, found 1 VC wounded. VC attempted to evade, VC killed.

1425 C Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) observed 1 VC evading into tunnel. Threw hand grenade. 1 VC killed, medical supplies found.

1445 Chu Lai Defense Command hit with small-arms fire received in sub sector III, bunker 305. Notified 198<sup>th</sup> LIB.

1500 C Company, 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> (11<sup

1720 174<sup>th</sup> Abn (11<sup>th</sup> LIB AO) at 1710 received small arms fire. 1 wounded. 1725 A Company, 4<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1625, while checking local population 10 Vietnamese said they would walk to Hau Duc because VC would kill them because they didn't have rice. A/4-31 evacuated 750 lbs. of rice before moving people.

1730 From TOC, 11<sup>th</sup> LIB, at 1715 convoy received small arms fire on way to LZ Bronco from LZ Charlie Brown. 1 track hit, 3 trucks burning. Air Force observer in the air. 1 ammo truck destroyed, 2 tanker trucks destroyed. 2 soldiers killed, wounded from E troop, 1<sup>st</sup> Cav. 1 killed from 63<sup>rd</sup> Trans. Bn. and 1 killed from 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup>.

1750 B Company, 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> at 1730 killed 2 NVA, captured 1 AK-47 & 1 unknown type machine gun.

1800 D Company, 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1638 killed 3 NVA, captured 1 30-Cal machine gun & 2 AK-47's.

1825 B Troop, 1<sup>st</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> Cav., at 1540 hit by rocket round. 8 wounded. Vehicle combat loss.

1840 Tam Ky Support Ship CHIC at 1810 received 20 rounds mixed 60mm mortar & RPG. 8 National Police wounded. Called artillery on suspected location, negative assessment.

1901 E Troop, 1<sup>st</sup> Cav., (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1803 2 wounded from RPG rounds. Soldiers treated in field and back to duty.

1905 C Company, 4<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1642 observed 5 VC with packs and weapons, arty called in with unknown results.

1910 4<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) from Hiep Duc District Chief reporting his unit movement. 1915 From 3<sup>rd</sup>/82<sup>nd</sup> Artillery at 1910 LZ Center taking mortar fire and CS gas. 2005 received 5 rounds of mortar fire (unknown type. 4 rounds were duds.

1945 Quang Ngai, I Corps: Entire 1<sup>st</sup> Corps is on Grey Alert.

2000 D Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1800 started search of south slope outside perimeter of LZ Professional. Found 20 NVA killed, 9 AK-47s, 2 RPG rocket launchers, 2- 7.62mm Soviet pistols and 100-150 ChiCom grenades in baskets. Will continue search in the morning.

2005 S-5 of 2<sup>nd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1755 reports Vietnamese child led S-5 personnel to a trench area used for staging area last night. Clothing and paper revealed the unit designator was 123.

2013 D Company, 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1605 killed 3 NVA and captured 2 M-16s.

2015 S-5, 4<sup>th</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) reports that 1 national Policeman & 9 Government personnel departed LZ Karen at 1900. They are to search for info/intel & will return at 1200 on 13 May.

2015 196<sup>th</sup> LIB, LZ Baldy: Bunker #24 at 1900 observed 10 VC with packs going into wood-line 1,000 meters away.

2030 B Company, 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup>, at 1655, received small arms fire. 1 soldier killed.

2035 A Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) update to journal entry made at 0530: totals are as follows: 27 NVA KIA; 7 B-41 rockets, 6 B-40 rockets, 96 ChiCom hand grenades and 11 bangalore torpedos, 4 AK-47's and 2 RPG launchers.



2050 D Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) & 3 Plt, H Troop, 17<sup>th</sup> Cav at 1815 hit a mine made of 105mm round. 2 wounded from Delta. As dust off was leaving area it received small arms fire and crewmember wounded. Delta engaged suspected sniper with 106 recoilless rocket and 2 US soldiers were killed from back blast of 106<sup>th</sup>: 1 from Delta and 1 from H Troop.

2057 A Company, 5<sup>th</sup>/46<sup>th</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1850 received grenade & small arms fire. 1 troop broke arm when he jumped into foxhole.

2115 A Company, 4<sup>th</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> (11<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 2020 received 8-9 RPG rounds and small arms fire.

2115 F Troop, 17<sup>th</sup> Cav., (196<sup>th</sup> LIB), LZ Baldy at 2035 observed 1 NVA trying to get out of the perimeter. 1 NVA killed.

2115 Binh Son (198<sup>th</sup> LIB AO) District Headquarters received 5-6 60mm mortar rounds outside the perimeter.

2130 USMC CAP Team 1-2-5 at 2100 killed 1 female VC with AK-47.

2150 USMC CAP Team 1-1-4 and 1-1-1 at 1710 detonated mine. 2 Marines wounded, 2 Popular Force wounded.

2208 USMC CAP Team 1-2-5 at 2100 engaged 3-5 VC. Killed 1, captured 1 AK-47, 1 pack, 2 magazines and 1 poncho.

2230 3<sup>rd</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 1845, LZ Center received 30 rounds of 82mm mortar fire. 2 wounded. Artillery returned fire in grid ... resulting in secondary explosion.

2240 3<sup>rd</sup>/21<sup>st</sup> (196<sup>th</sup> LIB) at 2005 observed lights moving NW, engaged with M-79 with unknown results; info from S-5 Hiep Duc; PF & RF confirmed 2 civilians killed, 2 wounded. Reliable agents spotted 80 VC in khakis with weapons. At (location given)

spotted 2 VC through starlight scope, engaged with 81mm mortar.

2245 III MAF COC, I Corps received report that Quang Tin was under direct fire attack & ground probe. Spooky on station at present time. At 1600 received 10-60mm mortar rounds, resulting in 6 PF wounded and 1 USMC wounded and 20 civilians wounded. At 2200 observed movement, Spooky fire, negative results.

2305 A Company, 1<sup>st</sup>/52<sup>nd</sup> (198<sup>th</sup> LIB) LZ Buff at 2155-2220 received 15 mortar rounds and unknown number of ChiCom grenades. Returned with Artillery & mortars.

2315 2d ARVN Division Tam Ky made contact at 1100 with estimated 35 VC. 4 VC were killed, 1 taken prisoner.

2400 Ops Summary: Commencing at approximately 0115 hours enemy forces launch coordinated attacks throughout the American Tactical Area of Operations. The attacks were characterized by extensive employment of indirect fire weapons and sapper elements against US/ARVN installations and Republic of Vietnam population centers. The attacks by indirect fire were followed by ground probes at several locations. The American Division suffered moderate to heavy casualties with light damage. At first light, counter-offensive operations against attacking forces were initiated with moderate enemy contact encountered in both operation Frederick Hill and operation Iron Mountain. Throughout the American Tactical Area of Operations heavy casualties were inflicted upon enemy forces.

American Daily Totals: 48 killed in action; 179 wounded in action requiring evacuation; 57 wounded in action (minor); 1 missing in action; 60 VC killed in action; 111 NVA killed in action;

Appreciation is gratefully given to Les Hines, ADVA Vietnam Historian and Jim McQueen for providing this document to David Taylor for preparation of this article.



## OPERATION LZ/DC VETERANS DAY



(Above) Far left behind the registration table is Judy Babler and far right behind the table is Terry Babler, A Troop, 1/1 CAV, Reunion Planning Committee member and inspiration behind this years reunion. (Right) John Mathews, 1/14<sup>th</sup> Artillery, Reunion Planning Committee member and Master of Ceremonies.



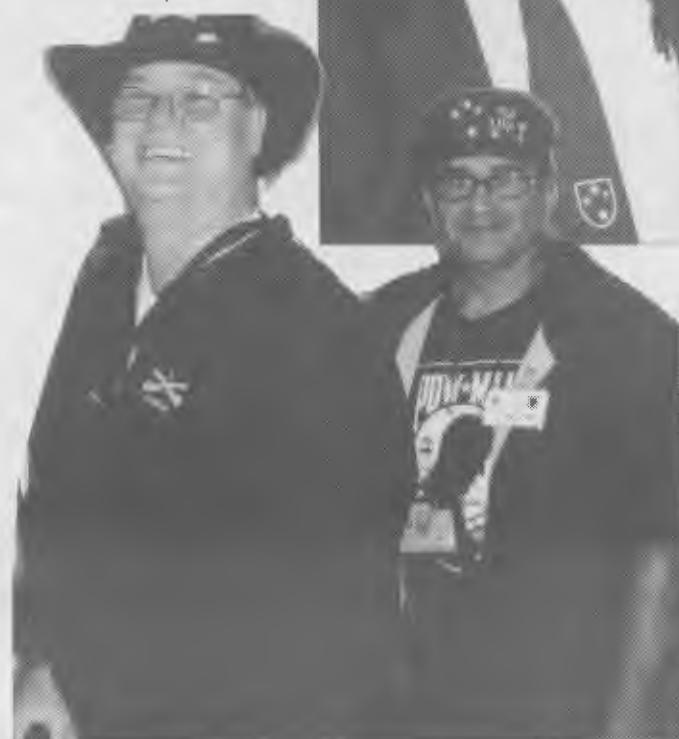
(Left) Ron Ellis presents ADVA Lifetime Achievement Awards to John Insani (shown), Alfred Doig and Ken Turner. Ron Ward also received a special Commanders Award for his creation of the ADVA Scholarship Fund. (Right) Nationally known VietnamVet and popular singer Britt Small entertains the Troops.



## ANNUAL NATIONAL REUNION

TOGETHER AGAIN!

"But we in it shall  
be remembered;  
We few, we happy  
few, we band of  
brothers;  
For he today that  
sheds his blood  
with me shall be  
my brother"



## ANNUAL NATIONAL REUNION

Sunday, November 10, 2002 – Arlington National Cemetery



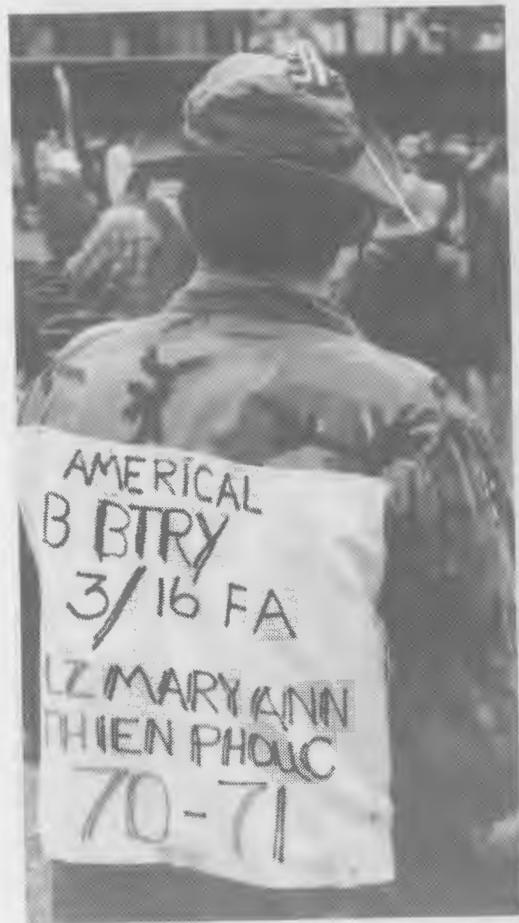
(Left) Wreath laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. (Left to right): Rev. Perry Woerner, Col (Ret) John Insani, National Commander Elect, Richard Scales, Major General (Ret) Lloyd Ramsey, one of the divisions' commanders in Vietnam. (Below) Presentation of the permanent American Division marker at Arlington. (Left to right): Colonel Insani, National Commander Richard Scales, General Ramsey and Past National Commander Ed Marsh.

## ANNUAL NATIONAL REUNION

Veterans Day – November 11, 2002 – 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Wall



Thousands, young and old, gave homage at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial



Some Gave All ... All Gave Some



The Americal Wreath was presented at the Wall as part of the ceremony, by: (left to right) Bill Bacon, Richard Scales, Jim Buckle, Ed Marsh and Jon Hansen

Top photo:  
Americal Division  
veterans at Kokomo



Bottom photo:  
1/1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry  
veterans at Kokomo



Photos by Terry Babler

## KOKOMO 2002

The Great Lakes Chapter ran the Americal table at Kokomo, IN on Friday and Saturday, Sept. 20-21st. We had 85 guys in the Americal sign in at the table. I'm sure a lot of people did not sign in that should have.

We had a group picture of all the Americal Division vets by the big flag on Saturday at 3 p.m. Attendance was great!

National Commander Rich Scales was in attendance. Past National Commanders and Chapter Commanders attending included Ed Marsh, Bob Kapp, and John Mathews. The Americal did have a area for camping.

Ron Davis, Bob Kapp and Ed Marsh secured a area for the Americal.

Seventeen guys attended from the E Troop, 1st Cav. As many as 40 guys from the 1/1<sup>st</sup> Cav. attended this year.

On Friday we had a hell of rainstorm. A tornado touched down a

few miles away in Andersonville, IN. We were warned about the weather and the main tent was cleared. Everyone was told to go in the big shed for cover. There were some scary moments but we never got hit.

Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday were great clear days. Saturday was packed. An estimated crowd of 30,000 attended the whole weekend.

The dates for the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Vietnam Veterans Reunion in Kokomo reunion in 2003 are Sep. 18-21. I recommend making reservations early for hotel or camping areas.

That's about it! I will return to Kokomo next year. This is always a big event. Make plans to attend in 2003.

Terry Babler; 1/1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Squadron  
New Glarus, WI

Dear editor,

The new Junior Vice Commander-in-Chief of the VFW is John Furgess. I was stationed with him in Chu Lai with the Americal Radio Research Company.

We left Ft. Hood as the 601st Army Security Agency Detachment, 198th Lt. Inf. Bde. We went by train and then by ship. We arrived in Chu Lai in 1967. I was the company clerk and John was the Executive Officer.

James "Jim" Wark; Americal RR Co.  
Lufkin, TX

Dear editor,

I just found the 'report' on FSB Mary Ann after thirty years. I was at Chu Lai pulling guard the night you guys got hit. I was in the Americal Band and Support Unit. That night I came off line then played the piano at

the HQ chapel for the Sunday service.

I remember it well. I was pretty pissed off after pulling a lone guard on one of the wet, crappy bunkers on the south end of the base. My radio didn't work, there weren't any ops checks, and every other bunker was vacant. A whole company could have walked in and I won't have seen them. It was as if no one even knew I was there and didn't really care.

I remember walking back to HQ. By the time I got to the chapel I was ready to bite some ass when someone yelled at me to help unload a duce-and-a-half.

The cargo was four or five guys from Mary Ann. We tried to fix them up, put them in the aluminum coffins, pinned medals on their helmets, and did a service. I remember playing a piano suite by Eric Satie (Tres Gymnopées). Then I listen to the Lt. Col. tell us about their achievements and why they gave their lives. It was one of the worse times

of my life. From that point on, everything changed. I withdrew and only trusted my buddies, hated the lifers, the Army, the Nam.

I had it easy, you guys did it for real. You took it and then took it again. I wish I knew the names of the guys that I played for that rainy screwed up day. I can still see them, their young bodies covered with mud and blood. We tried to give them the honor they deserved. Every time I hear that work by Eric Satie I see those helmets and medals. I remember the pain. I didn't weep then, but I do now.

When I look at the flag on my wall at home, I remember Mary Ann and what was lost. So much, so long ago, on a muddy jungle ridge. I hope all our brothers, sons and daughters will honor the sacrifice that took place at Mary Ann. Go with God.

Dean Bishop; Americal Band

## The Long-Shot Warriors: Americal Snipers in Vietnam

The Americal Divisions sniper organization began late during the division's Vietnam tenure. While it experienced the same issues as other Army sniper organizations, snipers proved their worth in the field.

David W. Taylor

### Early Beginnings

America's adoption of the sniper concept began with its development as a nation. Washington and his commanders recognized they had neither the manpower nor firepower to fight the British Army at close quarters. The American's use of the Pennsylvania Long Rifle was an effective weapon for its hit-and-run tactics. A British ordnance expert had stated, "no man would ever be killed by a musket at 200 yards by the person who aimed at him". But Continental sharpshooters could pick off British commanders behind their main lines at ranges of 200 to 250 meters.

During the War of 1812 Commander Oliver Perry employed Kentucky infantrymen armed with long rifles to sweep the decks of the British fleet. America's marksmen, in place of firepower, were most efficient at the Battle of New Orleans. On January 8, 1815 more than 8,000 British soldiers attacked a force of half that size commanded by General Andrew Jackson. 2,000 of Jackson's men carried Kentucky (formerly known as "Pennsylvania") long rifles and began engaging the attacking British at several hundred meters. More than 1,500 British soldiers were killed in a humiliating defeat at a cost of 60 Americans.

Advances in munitions for "long-shot warriors" continued and sharpshooters were used effectively by both the North and South during the Civil War. The most prized targets on both sides were artillery crews and senior officers. Among the many developments brought on by the Civil War, such as trench warfare, was the stark reality that "being visible was being vulnerable".

Frontiersmen and buffalo hunters provided the superior marksmanship in the Indian Wars. For example, in June 1874, several hundred Comanche Indians attacked about thirty buffalo hunters and merchants at an isolated trading post. They drove them away with long-range 50-caliber Sharps rifle fire, prompting the Indians to observe the Sharps as "the gun that shoots today and kills tomorrow".

Michael Lee Lannings book, "Inside the Crosshairs - Snipers in Vietnam", notes: "the term sniper probably originated with the British Army in India, where officers hunted snipes, a slender-billed bird related to the woodcock. Snipes, fleet of foot and wing, were difficult targets, and shooters proficient at hitting them became known as 'snipes'. The British then began referring to well-aimed shots both toward and from the

enemy as snipes, and those who fired the rounds as snipers".

World War I saw the German Army most committed to the concept of snipers on the battlefield with its superior gun manufacturing, a tradition of training men in marksmanship and the best technology in optics and telescopes. Germany fielded large numbers of trained snipers. Britain countered with snipers of their own, drawn primarily from big-game hunters. American and Canadian forces also employed snipers from their ranks. The World War I battlefield placed senior officers well out of range of artillery thereby placing the primary targets for snipers, on both sides of the trenches, as front line officers and regular infantrymen.

World War II was mostly devoid of sniper activity until the German siege of Stalingrad in late 1942. German and Soviet snipers made movement inside the city extremely deadly. By early 1944 British sniper schools were established to prepare expert marksmen for the Normandy invasion in August. The unofficial definition of British sniping became "the art of drilling round holes into square heads". The American Army largely left sniper training and employment to individual units. Japanese snipers in the Pacific Theatre tended to establish their positions in the tops of trees. While most snipers established a credo to "shoot and scoot - and live to shoot again", Japanese soldiers were prepared to die for the emperor. Therefore their treetop positions became their final positions once they were spotted.

During the Korean Conflict the North Korean Army was not at all reluctant to use snipers. The American Army and Marines took up the challenge by designating their best marksmen as snipers and providing the best rifles and munitions they could find. But no official school existed to train snipers or sniper teams in a formalized way.

### Army Snipers: Vietnam

The Vietnam War required adaptive thinking in tactics, weapons and operational procedures to fight this "different kind of war" but the US Army was slow to adopt the sniper concept.

The systematic training and employment of sniper teams began when Major General Julian Ewell assumed command of the 9th Infantry Division in February 1968. Prior to his assuming command Ewell convinced

the Army to explore the formation of a formalized sniper program in Vietnam.

In 1967 the US Army Marksmanship Training Unit (USAMTU), Fort Benning, Georgia received the mission to evaluate sniper operations and weapons in Vietnam. During April and May of that year sniper equipment arrived for most of the combat units in-country, including the 196th Light Infantry Brigade (separate). The 196th had actually established an in-country sniper school of limited duration in Chu Lai, for the purpose of fielding a number of modified M-14's for that purpose. Sniper activities were evaluated from July through October. In February 1968 the final report was issued recommending a formal approach of instruction and operational procedures be established. Of note for Americal veterans was the fact the report noted: "The highest enemy KIA to man-days ratio occurred in units that were operating primarily in the central highlands, coastal plain and southern portion of the northern highlands of RVN". Much of this type of geography would be the domain of the Americal Division.

The task for establishing the first formal sniper school (9th Infantry Division) fell to Major Willis L. Powell and eight noncommissioned officers from the USAMTU who arrived in June 1968. Powell's credentials made him well suited for the mission. Powell had more than 20 years experience in the Army as a NCO and officer and served a previous tour as an ARVN advisor. He also had years of experience in competitive shooting at the national and international level.

By early 1969 the Army sent additional marksmanship teams to Vietnam to train snipers. But concurrent with this late but rapid acceleration of the sniper program, the "Vietnamization" of the war began the transfer of major troop units back to the USA. By now Powell was back at Ft. Benning training additional instructor teams to go to Vietnam to train snipers at the division level. Powell, looking to the close-knit marksmanship community in the Army hand-selected the officers and NCO's to run each team.

### The Americal Effort Begins

Captain Virgil Umphenour arrived at Fort Benning in January 1970 with 9 hand-selected NCO's who were to form one of two sniper training teams scheduled for activation that month. Umphenour had served in the Marine Corps for four years, then the Arizona Army National Guard,

active duty OCS at Ft. Benning, then airborne and ranger schools. When the requirement came for more sniper instruction teams, Umphenour was the commander of the 18th Airborne Corps Rifle & Pistol Team (Ft. Bragg) and 82nd Airborne Division Training School XO.

After forming up his instruction team at Ft. Benning in January 1970, Umphenour's group flew to Saigon then to Chu Chi to spend some time with the 25th Infantry Division's sniper team. Most were former 9th Division team cadre whose Vietnam tours had not expired when the 9th Division was transferred back to the states.

Umphenour arrived at the Americal Division headquarters in Chu Lai in early March 1970. Through a classified supply program known as "Ensure 240", his and other division sniper training teams were provided the weapons and training supplies in advance of their arrival. Using the course instruction developed by Powell while at the 9th Division the year before, and reviewed with each sniper training team at Ft. Benning, Captain Umphenour and his group were "up and running" within a week upon arrival at their training site located at the divisions Combat Training Center.

The Sniper Training Team and its students insulated themselves because of their specialized mission. The team bunked together and constructed a "sniper bar" for themselves and their students.



All battalion commanders were to submit nominations for sniper training, with the goal of accepting approximately 20 students per class. Umphenour noted, "we had three key selection criteria for the school: First, they must have served at least two months in the field as infantry. Second, they must have fired expert on their most recent rifle qualification and third, they must be a volunteer". Aware of the propensity for some field commanders to send "undesirables" as a means to "shape up or ship out", Umphenour estimates "90% were real volunteers and just a few undesirables. Some of those so-called

undesirables took an interest in the sniper concept and did well".

While the primary mission of the Sniper Training Team was to train snipers, having a core group of experts in marksmanship within the division provided other benefits as well. Shortly after the first class graduated, an infantry company had been ambushed by the NVA and took heavy casualties, despite using up most of their ammunition. Newly assigned Assistant Division Commander Brigadier General Ted Mataxis was concerned. Recalls Umphenour, "General Mataxis wanted me to go and sit down with the company and find out why they couldn't hit what they were shooting at. We found out their rifles were not zeroed and gave basic instruction in marksmanship. Then we found they still weren't doing well, their rifles fired so erratic they couldn't hit a very liberal target group - 8 inches at 100 meters." Upon closer inspection Umphenour's team found the rifle barrels were worn out. "We attributed that to two things", he recalls, "first the dust blowing in the barrels over time from helicopters and second, the 'mad minutes' the units fired which used periodic tracer rounds, and the phosphorous from those rounds eroded the barrels". As a result of that finding, Mataxis ordered that all weapons in the division be test fired. "This caused quite a stir with the Maintenance Battalion Commander", remembers Umphenour, "but we were proven to be correct". As a result, sniper training was suspended for one month and sights were fixed (many were found inoperable) and all rifles were test fired. The findings from that one rifle company were duplicated in many parts of the division. 5,000 barrels had to be ordered in a "Red Ball Requisition" which arrived from the states in a matter of days.

Training for a sniper class lasted approximately three weeks. The time varied slightly based on equipment availability and timely arrival of students. While the core of the program focused on marksmanship effectiveness, other subjects such as radio procedures and calling for artillery fire were thoroughly covered. Because of their secluded positions, sniper teams in the division often spotted larger groups of NVA/VC than could be prudently engaged by single shot rounds. Here, the ability to call in indirect fire support often paid off in big dividends.

The students soon adopted an unofficial sniper tab that was worn above the Americal patch. Other divisions had adopted the same approach. Umphenour recalls, "we noticed the unofficial tabs and recognized them as a form of esprit de corps. We just looked the other way."

The standard sniper weapon was a 7.62mm M-14 "accurized" rifle, using an

"Adjustable Ranging Telescope" (ART) and special 7.62mm M118 National Match Ammunition collectively designated as the XM 21. Starlight Scopes were also assigned for use in limited visibility periods. The doctrine called for two-man teams (both snipers) a radio operator, one M-60 machine gunner and one M-79 man for security. The effectiveness of the program began to take shape. In May 1970 Captain Umphenour sent his first report to the U.S. Army Marksmanship Training Unit at Fort Benning, which covered a 10-day period:

#### Update Information on Sniper Program AMERICAL DIVISION

1. To date, this division has 57 snipers within combat units.
2. To date, sniper actions are listed below:

Time	Sight	Terrain	Range Fired	Kill	Wound
1630	ART	Trail	450	1	-
1900	Star	Trail	500	2	-
1930	Star	River	200	2	-
1200	ART	Woods	650	1	-
1215	ART	Jungle	75	2	-
1400	ART	Jungle	45	3	-
1715	ART	Hill Top	500	2	-
0815	ART	Paddy	900	1	-
0515	Star	River	250	1	-
0530	Star	Riv. Bank	500	2	-
0100	Star	Paddy	100	1	-
1415	ART	Trail	700	5	-

### Long-Shot Warriors

All division snipers were debriefed when they periodically returned to the sniper school to have their weapons checked and re-zeroed. Through the debriefings the training team learned if and how their snipers were being effectively employed. Typical missions were to deny enemy access into infiltration routes, being inserted prior to unit air assaults to take out VC/NVA who may fire on the helicopters, calling on snipers to take out single targets out of range of M-16's ... and "stay behind" missions.

Captain Umphenour recalled one incident where a trained sniper excelled in both roles as a sniper and artillery forward observer: "There was this PFC Salas in the 196th Brigade who was at a night defensive position (NDP). He saw a VC leading a group of 18 NVA a far distance from his position. He called in artillery fire and then, to hold them in place, began shooting at them to pin them down. He killed one NVA on his 5th shot. After the action the commander of the NDP actually measured the distance. Salas made his kill at 1,600 meters".

One of the most effective Americal snipers was SSG Fidel "Papa Leach" Serrano, of the 3rd/1st battalion, 11th LIB. This native of Caguas, Puerto Rico entered



**American Sniper Class #2 Circa April 1970. Instructors are in front with some of the students. (Photo courtesy of Denis Bourcier)**

the Army in 1961. His first Vietnam tour was with the 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne in 1967-1968, where he saw much action around Cu Chi, up in Hue and by the DMZ, which included the heavy fighting during Tet 68. He returned to Vietnam after a short stint at Fort Bragg, and was assigned to the newly formed Americal Division and the 3<sup>rd</sup>/1<sup>st</sup> battalion, 11<sup>th</sup> LIB where he remained for three years until the division stood down.

Serrano was one of the graduates of the first sniper class at the Combat Center and oversaw the sniper teams in his battalion. He recalls, "we always operated in teams of no less than 2 and no more than 5 men. Sometimes I would go out with one other man for protection. Other times a team would go out with two snipers, an RTO and two weapons men for protection".

Serrano was the consummate sniper warrior. He preferred the jungle to everything else and adhered to critical lessons learned while with the 101<sup>st</sup>. He and his teams "packed hard". "Some men in the field liked to pack a lot of useless stuff" he recalls. "Things such as writing paper, letters and gifts from home, etc. I would tell them you can't kill VC with paper". He required his teams to carry gas masks and CS gas canisters. His 101<sup>st</sup> experience told him it was the best way to break off close contact. Lots of ammunition, rations, water, hand grenades and smoke grenades. The snipers carried even more: Their modified M-14's (XM 21), Adjustable Ranging Telescope (ART), starlight scope and special match ammunition. Serrano also carried a silencer for his XM 21 and a modified M-79 (prepared by the armorer at the sniper school) with shortened barrel for shooting CS canisters.

Serrano's first kill remains etched in his mind. While working with his company he shot an NVA officer and retrieved some

very high up, had a great view of the area and the soldiers up there could radio us about any enemy movement."

#### **The Phase-Out Begins**

Major Lones Wigger became the second Officer-In-Charge of the Americal's sniper program. This Montana native entered the Army out of ROTC in 1961 and was assigned to the Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning. He won the Gold and Silver Medals in target shooting at the 1964 Olympics in Japan. Wigger served his first tour in Vietnam in 1967, as an agricultural advisor in the Delta.

Wigger's team arrived in Vietnam in January 1971, less than a month after Umphenour's group rotated back to the states. But instead of moving directly to Chu Lai to pick up the program, they were re-routed northwest of Saigon for two months to train Vietnamese officers as cadre to begin their own sniper training (Vietnamization was in full swing). They also helped the Vietnamese construct their own sniper training range. Wigger recalls, "I don't think they ever trained snipers because they could not get the XM 21's (modified M-14's) which we used. Apparently the brass felt they may fall into the wrong hands and be used against us".

Upon arriving in Chu Lai two months late, Wigger's team picked-up where the others left off. Reporting to the Combat Center's CO, he also had a strong line of communication to the ADC, General Mataxis. Like Umphenour, Wiggers found Mataxis very enthusiastic about snipers and gave him full support. Unfortunately for Wigger and his team, Mataxis departed shortly after his arrival. Command attention was drawn to other areas as the draw down of American forces increased and holding down casualties became a primary focus.

One of the primary lessons of the Americal Division's sniper experience was no different from other divisions in Vietnam. A division sniper program needed high-level interest and support to function effectively.

Wigger's sniper training team was surprised at the body language from those who volunteered for training. "Most didn't believe I had much to say", he recalls. "They considered us as REMFs and Lifers. I told them that in two weeks they would be getting first-round hits at man size targets, at 500 meters every shot. Knowing the Army's general lack of marksmanship interest compared to the Marines, I could agree with them that they thought I was blowing smoke". After several days of training the students became enthusiastic as they learned from qualified NCO's and developed confidence in their equipment. Notes Wigger, "they were very competitive between themselves during record days.

They were champing at the bit to get back to the field and apply what they learned".

The respect sniper students gained for their instructors carried over once they left. When they returned periodically to re-zero their weapons and have the gunsmith go over their guns, they tended to stay with the sniper-training cadre rather than spend time in their battalion rear. Wigger: "They wanted to rub shoulders with my NCO's and tell their stories".

Wigger's NCOIC was SFC Burl Branham. This two-war veteran was from the Appalachian Mountains of Eastern Kentucky. He served in the Korean War with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division and saw most of his unit wiped out. At age 20 in Korea he was appointed Master Sergeant. In 1966 he served his first tour in Vietnam with the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division as a Platoon Sergeant in a tank battalion.

As the withdrawal in forces from Vietnam grew, moral continued to decline and drug usage increased throughout Vietnam. But Wigger remembers, "we had an unwritten rule that if a sniper was caught using drugs he was dropped from the program and required to turn in his rifle". Wiggers used his R&R to return stateside where he qualified for the US Shooting Team and participated in the Pan American Games in Calle, Columbia. On another TDY tour he shot in the National Matches at Camp Perry, Ohio.

SFC Branham insured the quality of the sniper training in Chu Lai was maintained as he saw his beloved Army melt down from the lack of political will. Continuously snipers would return from the field for re-zeroing their weapons and related how they were not being fully utilized due to the command emphasis on keeping casualties down.

Throughout the sniper program within the Americal, some men decided they could not kill one-on-one in the highly personal manner created by the Adjustable Ranging Telescope. Branham recalls two snipers who returned to the school and asked to go back to being regular grunts. Branham: "That happens. They were good men. We had them turn in their equipment and go back to their units. Sometimes ... that's just the way it is". Snipers were also "marked for life". Standard procedure was to forward to the FBI all sniper names who successfully graduated.

The strong reliance on superior firepower in Vietnam never culturally gave the Army's sniper program the opportunity to fully realize its potential. Branham recalled that one night a number of VC were seen at a distance outside the Chu Lai defenses. He offered to send snipers with star light scopes. Instead, gunships were used to saturate the area. Only one VC body was found.

Like Umphenour's team before him, Wiggers team provided added value beyond the sniper mission. "We provided refresher training for new arrivals at the Combat Center in basic marksmanship. We gave them classes in basics and took them to the range with our M-16's to show them the importance of zeroing their rifles. Unfortunately many, once assigned to their respective battalions were assigned weapons and went directly to the field without zeroing those rifles." Remembers Wigger's, "I tried to get the G3 to allow them to draw their personal weapons before they came to refresher training so we could zero all the soldiers before they went to the field, but was turned down as being too inconvenient and required too much paper work."



**Left: Denis Bourcier and fellow sniper (Photo courtesy: Bourcier)**

Late in 1971 most of Wiggers sniper training team were rotated back to the US when the 198<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Brigades stood down. Major Wigger and Sergeant First Class Branham transferred the sniper program to Danang and the 196<sup>th</sup> Brigade. They brought in two shooter instructors they knew who were assigned to the 196<sup>th</sup> to continue some sniper training capability, if required. In December 1971, Wiggers and Branham rotated home. The Americal Division and its sniper program were no more.

#### **Where Have the Soldiers Gone?**

**SFC Burl Branham** returned to the Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning in December 1971 where he coached 5 National Championship Teams in marksmanship. In 1974 he was tasked to organize a team for shotgun shooting, which he did. He retired in 1977 as a Master Sergeant but continued his coaching function as a civil servant. From its beginning in 1974 until his retirement from

civil service in 2000, Branham's shotgun teams won 4 Olympic Medals, 35 National Championships and 18 World Championships. He lives in Columbus, Georgia.

**SGT Denis Bourcier** left active duty in November 1970 and returned to college, earning his Ph.D. in Toxicology and specializing in Occupational Health & Safety. For a number of years he was a university professor then, for the past 15 years he has been a health and safety manager at Boeing. Recently he left Boeing with four associates to start AVChem, a chemical management services company. He resides in Kirkland, Washington.

Bourcier's [web site](#) for **American Snipers** can be accessed through the **American** web site: Dial in [www.americal.org](http://www.americal.org). On the Home Page double click on "Links". Then scroll down to "Companies" and double click on **American Division Snipers**.

**SSG Fidel Serrano** returned to stateside duty at Fort Reilly, Kansas after deactivation of the Americal Division. But he decided that the stateside Army was not for him. He missed his beloved jungle and the independence of the sniper mission. He returned to Puerto Rico where he worked in construction and the hotel industry until his retirement in 1989. He lives in Las Piedras, Puerto Rico.

**CPT Virgil L. Umphenour** completed his Americal tour in December 1970 and shortly after departed active duty (he had been on an extended tour from the Arizona Army National Guard). He moved to Alaska and joined their Army National Guard, serving in a variety of positions until retiring in 1981. In 1987 he started a big game hunting and fishing guide business – "Hunt Alaska" which he runs today with his son Eric out of Fairbanks. His guided tours can be referenced on the web: [huntnaskawithus.com](http://huntnaskawithus.com).

**MAJ Lones Wigger** returned to the Marksmanship Unit at Fort Benning, Georgia. He participated in the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, winning his second Gold Medal in target shooting. Wigger remained in the Marksmanship Unit until 1987, when he retired as a Lieutenant Colonel. He went to work for the National Rifle Association which was the governing body for Olympic shooting in the US, serving as Director of Operations at the Olympic Training Center for the shooting sports, retiring from that position in 1994. He lives in Colorado Springs and is a consultant for the US Shooting and Federal Cartridge Co.

## The best I have ever done

I was sent to Ft. Campbell, KY on February 21, 1966 for Basic Combat Training (BCT). The Drill Instructors (DIs) were Special Forces Rangers that already served a tour of duty in Vietnam. In the final three weeks we received jungle combat training.

I was assigned to Charlie Battery, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 11<sup>th</sup> Artillery at Ft. Campbell, KY for Advanced Individual Training (AIT). From May to October 1966 we spent all of our time in the boondocks of Ft. Campbell. We did fire missions and learned to be fast and accurate. We fired three shells in eighteen seconds. Those were 90 pound high explosive (HE) shells. I was trained in the Fired Direction Center (FDC) as a radio operator and chart operator.

The officers in our battery were "Airborne" and we were considered second class citizens. We went together to Vietnam as a unit on a troop ship across the Pacific Ocean. We arrived in Vietnam in November 1966 at Vung Tau.

Let me emphasize that we never had a base camp in Vietnam. The first stop for Battery C was at Go Dau Ha, northeast of Saigon. The battalion commander's goal was to fire one million rounds during the first year and three rounds every eighteen seconds.

I must transgress for a minute. I got into heated arguments with a 90 day wonder 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant over the accuracy of harassment and interdiction (H&I) points. I did not care for H&I fire. The next day I found myself on No. 2 gun section.

Battery C participated in direct artillery support during Operation Cedar Falls in the "Iron Triangle" along the Vietnam-Cambodian border. This was located in Tay Ninh Province. Between fire missions we were kept busy filling sandbags for placement around the guns and around the defensive perimeter. Vietnamese kids were always around wanting to help. Their help was in the form of leaving hand grenades in the sandbags.

I believe Battery C was involved in a very short but hot operation in the Hobo Woods. Late one night our gun received small and heavy weapons fire from the perimeter. I was laying on the ammo and the powder and I could feel the heat of bullets going about three feet above my head. We turned the gun around at point blank range and fired several HE rounds. One bag of green powder blew the hell out of the VC.

In April 1967 we were airlifted by helicopter to southern I Corps. We were located on a hill west of Duc Pho. Some

infantry vets who have seen my Vietnam photos in recent years have told me that the hill was named LZ Cork. The 2/11<sup>th</sup> Artillery was one of the first units to form Task Force Oregon. We provided direct artillery support for the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces unit, the 173<sup>rd</sup> Airborne Brigade, the 4<sup>th</sup> Vietnamese Infantry Division, and the 196<sup>th</sup> Light Infantry Brigade.

Between fire missions two guns each would be pointed to the west, south, and north. The things that happened to me on LZ Cork have kept me scared my whole life. During one fire mission we provided intense fire support for a platoon of Special Forces Rangers who were caught in a crossfire by the North Vietnamese Army (NVA). All of the battles that we were involved in were with the NVA. The Special Forces called artillery in on their own position for thirteen straight hours. After the battle a body count was taken and hatchet squads sent in. Hundreds of NVA bodies were found as well as bodies of Communist Chinese and Russian advisors.

The NVA finally figured out where the deadly artillery fire was coming from. Late one night we received incoming rocket and mortar fire. The NVA walked the rounds up to within 50 meters of our gun section. The NVA were also trying to overrun our position with sapper squads. We survived the attack because of our accurate artillery fire and the very brave and outstanding job of the infantrymen. I want all the infantrymen out there to know that from the bottom of my heart I can never say enough to them for saving our ass. May God bless you. I should not have survived that night.

Guns No. 1 and No. 2 were sent fire missions which I believe were on the Ho Chi Minh Trail along the border with Laos. These were the most intense fire missions of the entire war. For approximately 48 to 72 hours we joined B-52 bombers and Air Force fighters in supporting a Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) caught in intense enemy fire. This mission has haunted me for thirty-five years.

While on guard duty one night I saw flares go off in front of my bunker. I was about to fire my M-16 rifle when I got an order not to fire. I did not have permission to defend myself.

I transferred to Battery A, 3/16<sup>th</sup> Artillery at the end of July 1967. We were located just outside Chu Lai on Artillery Hill. The officers of this battery were the finest that I have ever been associated with. I was put back in the FDC as a chart operator.

An officer from battalion headquarters provided us with inaccurate H&I coordinates one night. After firing on this H&I point we found out that this was the location of an Americal Division infantry company. There

were many casualties. This is very hard for me to deal with.

I left Vietnam on December 7, 1967 from Cam Rahn Bay airport. My participation in the Vietnam War was one of the finest things that I will ever do in this life. What I remember best is saving American lives and infantry troops. God Bless You to all that saved lives on LZ Cork.

Doug Uehling; 2/11<sup>th</sup> Arty and 3/16<sup>th</sup> Arty Almena, KS

## Murphy's Laws of Combat

- If your sergeant can see you, so can the enemy.
- If the enemy is within range, so are you.
- Incoming fire always has the right of way.
- What can be seen can be hit, what can be hit can be killed.
- There is no such thing as an atheist in a firefight.
- The best way is never the easy way.
- The easy way is always mined.
- No combat-ready unit has ever passed inspection.
- There is no such thing as a perfect plan.
- The buddy system is essential to survival- it gives the enemy someone else to shoot at.
- Never share a fighting position with anyone braver than yourself.
- If your advance is really going well, you are walking into an ambush.
- When you have secured an area, don't forget to tell the enemy.
- If at first you don't succeed, call in an airstrike.
- Never forget that your weapon was made by the lowest bidder.
- Military Intelligence is a contradiction in terms.
- Whenever you lose contact with the enemy, look behind you.
- Friendly fire isn't.



## Vietnam after thirty-four years

By Chuck Hitzemann

My wife, my stepson, and I spent two fast-paced weeks in Vietnam from May 1-13, 2002. We visited sights in the north and in the old I Corps from the DMZ south to Chu Lai. Obviously, a lot has changed and some things are still the same.

We arrived from Bangkok at Hanoi's new airport terminal, a large, cavernous building with few people. We met our knowledgeable, personable, English-speaking guide, Mr. Loc, who was with us throughout the trip. We spent the next two days in Hanoi, a very busy city.

We took the overnight train from Hanoi to Lau Cai, on the Chinese border for a visit to the mountain towns of Sapa and Ba Cha. Visiting the hill tribe settlements, one goes back several centuries. These are very interesting places to visit and the tourist invasion hasn't started yet. The roads are primitive but the view was worth the climb.

Taking a side trip from Hanoi to Halong Bay and Haiphong, we saw a tremendous amount of industrial growth. For a young person who is willing to live a non-Western life, Vietnam today might be a place to make a small or large fortune.

### The South

We flew to the Phu Bai Airport, gateway to Hue and sights north to the DMZ. Here we met our guide for the south, a 35 year-old Chu Lai native. Hue 2002, a huge Asian festival, was underway and the town was alive. After sightseeing at the Citadel, where there is no mention of the 1968 massacre, we drove north on Highway 1 to Dong Ha. Along the way, we stopped for a photo at Camp Evans, now just a vacant area. The Quang Tri military airfield is just an open space along the road.

Dong Ha today is a crossroads town (Highway 1 to the North and Highway 9 west to Laos) and we were told it has 100,000 people. We didn't see them. A cottage industry appeared to be "DMZ" tours and AI had a long talk with one enterprising man on a motorbike who would have gladly taken me out. He whispered that Americans were Number One while looking over his shoulder. Since we already had our arrangements made, we said "so long" until next time. Our next stop was the 3/21 AO in May 1968.

Note: From May 1-16, 1968, 3/21<sup>st</sup> Inf. Was OPCON to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Regt. at Cua Viet. Description of 3/21<sup>st</sup> action is found in two books: *The Magnificent Bastards* by Keith William Nolan and *Through the Valley* by James M. Humphries.

We left Dong Ha just after first light. A short distance north of town a modern highway sign indicated a right turn to Cua

Viet, 17 km away. My thirty-four year old map didn't show this road and we were told it was about five years old. Crossing the new bridge over Jones Creek, I could see the 3/21<sup>st</sup>'s battalion headquarters, now a grove of trees along the Cua Viet River.

Stopping at the bridge, we asked a woman to verify our location, and she confirmed we were at Ma Xa Chanh. She was 58 years old and had been a VC. Her husband had been an NVA regular. He is still alive and they were now farmers. While talking with her, at least 30 women and children gathered around us. The kids were jumping around and laughing and all wanted their picture taken. The beach at Cua Viet looked unchanged from 1968.

Backtracking to the west, we found a small road to the north, shown as a trail on my map. Driving north, we met an older woman who was walking back home to Lam Xuan East, a 3/21 objective. She led us to the village, with lots of trees and lush vegetation. A 45-year-old Lam Xuan East native, she recalled evacuating the area and then returning to find everything destroyed. Today, there wasn't a hint of what had happened here in the '60s. The village is a collection of masonry houses and a school. It was dead still that morning and the old bridge over Jones Creek made for a "postcard" picture.

We next headed north toward Nghi Ha. Nothing looked familiar. Rice harvest was in full swing with people all over their paddies. My photos from 1968 show the place as a moonscape. Arriving at what was Nghi Ha, our guide and some teenagers confirmed that we were at the right place.

After the war, the "people" decided to change the name from Nghi Ha to Gio Than (meaning reunited village/progressive village). We saw masonry houses, a billiard hall and the largest building, the "Peoples' Committee" headquarters (party HQ). We didn't find any signs of the Nghi Ha church, from which the bell was taken back to LZ Center. My wife and I said a prayer at the Nghi Ha crossroads, took pictures of the panorama and headed northwest back towards Jones Creek and onto an improved road shown on my old map. We had spent about three hours in the AO where 3/21 lost 29 KIA, 130 WIA, and killed over 500 NVA. There was absolutely no remnant of war visible to us.

From the DMZ, we drove south on Hwy. 1 to DaNang and the 196<sup>th</sup> LIB area of operations. We passed LZ Baldy, now a Vietnamese army base. No photos were allowed, our local guide cautioned. Baldy looked familiar. A few kilometers down the road we came to LZ Ross, a portion of which is now an NVA cemetery. The caretaker came out to greet us and let us in. He said we were the first Americans to visit since the war ended in 1975. He said he had

been a member of the local force- not VC- in an administrative job. The scenery looked familiar. The bald tops of the mountains were all green. At the road junction near Nui Loc Son, an older woman remembered the American doctors who would come to the village with medicine. She said a few Americans have come through over the years, but we were the first in 2002.

Turning east, we drove by Nui Loc San. A busy market was underway at a road crossing near the base of Nui Giai. We got directions about how to get near Hill 348 (LZ Center) and traveled on a new road that led us to the base of Center and eventually around it south side past Anui Hoac, Nui Vu and on to Tam Ky. We stopped at a farm just west of Center. The farmer, probably around 45 years old, remembered 1965 and seeing the first Marine helicopters land in the rice paddies to our front and the marines assault on Center. His family moved a few kilometers to the safe area (Nui Loc Son no fire zone) where they lived until the war ended. He said an American MIA team had spent two weeks combing the area some time back. Otherwise, he had seen no Americans since the war ended. Of in the distance from where we were talking was a sizeable, modern dam, which the farmer said was used for irrigation. Agricultural production appeared to be doing quite well.

The bald knob of LZ Center today is covered with trees, as is LZ West. Only LZ East (Nui Vu) still has a bald top. I heard after we returned to the States that gold is being mined at the top of Nui Vu.

After Sunday lunch in a busy restaurant in Tam Ky, we drove south to Chu Lai. The strip along Highway 1 looks about the same as in 1967. Nearing the former Marine airbase, our guide cautioned me to take no photos as the site is now an army training post. Approaching from the south I saw a platoon of soldiers marching along the road carrying shovels at right shoulder arms. No rifles, but shovels. We were allowed to climb to a small hill on the west side of Highway 1, the site of a huge monument to the "great victory over the Marines" on May 26, 1965. From this spot, we could see the 196<sup>th</sup>'s former headquarters to the south and the aircraft hangars on the airfield to the east. The hills look just the same. Enjoying a coke in a cabana on the Chu Lai beach, we were told a large oil refinery will be built outside Chu Lai and significant commercial and residential development will follow.

We headed north on Highway 1 to Hoi An, and the trip home from DaNang the next day.

Chuck Hitzemann served in Vietnam from July 1967 to July 1968 as an artilleryman with 3/82<sup>nd</sup> Artillery supporting the 3/21<sup>st</sup> Infantry. He now lives in Virginia.

## VIETNAM NETWORK

## Living Hero: Bill Allen

For Military.com 1.7 million readers

By Eva Kandarpa

The mail to Honduras was slow and Bill Allen was pressed for time. He had just three days to board a plane in Honduras and head to Detroit, Michigan to report for military duty at Fort Wayne.

In 1968 war was being waged in a far-off corner of the world called Vietnam. Young men from throughout the United States were receiving draft notices calling them to their patriotic duty. Allen was barely 18 years of age but he was determined to do what his country had asked of him.

"I was helping my stepfather with his cattle ranch in Honduras when I received my notice. The mail was so slow there that I had three days to report for duty instead of the normal four weeks. I had no thoughts of running to Canada. I felt it was my patriotic duty. My uncle, father, and grandfather had served in the military."

After Allen was inducted at Fort Wayne he was sent to Fort Knox for basic training. He was then moved to Camp Polk in Louisiana for infantry training. Known as "Tigerland", the camp had a reputation for being the best training a young man could receive in preparation for the jungle warfare of Vietnam. Allen received intensive weapons and map training, first aid instruction, and booby trap detection—techniques and instruction that were all designed to save his life.

In November 1968 Allen left for battle in Vietnam. But even with all of his training, Allen still felt shocked and unprepared for what he encountered.

Allen's plane landed at Long Bien. He was welcomed to Vietnam by the sights and sounds of the airport being shelled. "When they opened the door to the aircraft, I will never forget the oppressive heat and the musty smell; it was like something was rotting. They were shelling the airport and I had to run out of the airplane immediately and find cover in a nearby bunker."

Allen received the official title, Rifleman LB, and the unofficial title, "Grunt". He and the other grunts were laughed at and teased. But this bullying resulted in a tightly knit group of young soldiers who found solidarity in the fact that they were constantly picked-on.

After a few days in the muggy heat of Vietnam, he had learned the system of counting days. Those with the fewest days left in their service were treated with envy and respect.

Long Bien was only a holding tank for new troops. The men brought there were used as replacements for the injured and fallen. Allen was set to join the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division, but asked the Replacement Officer to consider changing his assignment so that

he and a friend, Greg Goszkowski, could stay together. To accommodate his request, the officer placed him and his buddy in the 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade, Americal Division.

"This was not a smart move. They told us that we would be able to stay together if we went up north. We agreed without even looking at a map. They call the area 'Indian Country' because it was a wild unfriendly place with continual combat. I should have guessed as much when the officer made sure our insurance was together," recalls Allen.

Allen's first days with the 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade were pleasant. The Division Headquarters in Duc Pho had tents, a mess hall with hot food, a small field hospital, and an aircraft landing strip. This all changed when he was sent out for his first mission.

Operation Vernon Lake 2 sent Allen and his brigade to LZ Cork to chase the Third North Vietnam Army (NVA) regiments. They were stationed at the top of a mountain at the Laotian border.

Although the temperature reached 110 degrees during the day, they were met with bitterly cold, rainy nights—something that none of them had expected in such a tropical climate. He and the other 80 men walked up and down the mountain every day looking for NVA regiments. The men dug holes every night so that they would be sheltered while they slept. For four months straight the men patrolled the area without a bath, change of clothes, or hot meal. Army supply planes dropped cans of food to the exhausted troops.

Allen recalls, "LZ Cork was the armpit of the universe. I think the supply-choppers found us only because we smelled so bad."

Every day the men were shot at and ambushed. At night they were constantly mortared. Men were injured and killed daily. Not a day passed free of battles and skirmishes. Those who survived the battle fell prey to sickness and disease. By the time the unit was relieved many of its members were suffering from trench foot, a condition where their feet would crack open from constantly being wet.

"When we were finally relieved and brought back to the base, I felt like I was on vacation. We had bunkers to sleep in every night and we ate hot food once a week," recalled Allen.

At the base, Allen's duties changed to patrolling the valley and sweeping the area for mines. Booby traps and land mines were discovered daily by he and his colleagues and often these discoveries were accidental. Men suffered serious injury during these searches.

Nine months into his service Allen received a serious wound. During a battle, a rocket grenade hit him. His injury was further aggravated by a high fever of 104. After moving from hospital to hospital, Allen was sent back to the United States to Walter Reed Hospital in Washington D.C. It was

there that he was diagnosed with both malaria and dysentery.

Allen's poor physical condition led to an assignment at Fort Knox. He trained ROTC officers for Vietnam. He received the CIB for serving thirty or more days in battle.

Today, Allen looks back at his experience with mixed-emotions. The Vietnam War was a place where he received many emotional scars and had to face the reality of losing people who had to grow very close to. But, despite these facts, Allen does not regret his involvement in the war. "I felt that I was doing what I should do, what my country asked me to do," states Allen.

What Allen remembers the most are the relationships and bonds that were formed in Vietnam: "We would risk everything for each other without even thinking about it. It was a bond beyond just simple brotherhood. We experienced things together that no one else could ever really understand."

Today, Allen works for a computer company. He also runs a historical website that documents the work of the 11<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade. He is an officer of the Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA) and stays heavily involved with the organization.

Recently he received a state appointment by the VFW as a result of his initiative in helping the families of those stationed in Afghanistan. Allen collects sundry items and coupons for the soldier's wives and children. "I know what it is like to be in the field for months at a time. I want to help the troops in any way that I can, especially the grunts. Once you are in the military, you are never really out," explains Allen.

Allen also extends a charitable hand to children in need throughout the world. As a Shriner, he works to help people everywhere. He also continues the work of his mother as Vice President of the Ruth Paz Foundation. The foundation works to aid orphanages and fund free hospitals in Honduras.

With every day that passes, Allen continues to remember his time in Vietnam. Since 9-11, he has thought a lot about what it means to be a part of this country's military history and continues to be a proud, contributing patriot.

"I have traveled the world and have seen how we help everyone. The fact that America was attacked because our beliefs appalls me. If I could, I would be out on the front line fighting for this country."

It is this attitude that carries Allen through life, making him a true patriot, proud citizen of the United States, and a real life hero. But, Allen takes offense to the idea that he is a hero, simply stating: "The real heroes are those who gave their lives fighting for our country."

To learn about the Ruth Paz Foundation, visit <http://www.honduras.com/ruthpaz/>. To learn more about the 11<sup>th</sup> LIB, please visit [http://www.netwater.org/11TH\\_LIB/](http://www.netwater.org/11TH_LIB/).

## LETTERS FROM THE OLD GUARD

F COMPANY - 182nd INFANTRY  
A tribute to Joe Papa

This past April the veterans of F Company enjoyed their annual Reunion made possible by the committee members of Paul Miele, Joe Rando, Chairman Frank Rourke and Joe Papa. In closing, Joe Papa referred to the pleasant "good-byes" and with God's willingness, be back next year for more fun and enjoyment.

It's with deep regret that we report Joe's passing away. He will be greatly missed by his buddies of long standing.

Joe was the enthusiastic supporter of all things pertaining to the Company F association. His generous help in the organization's activities was always present. His occasional letter that kept us informed of Co. F activities, touched our minds and our hearts.

As a soldier he excelled in leadership and performance. As a staff sergeant of F Company he capably performed his duties and executed his responsibilities in an excellent manner.

His overseas service included his participation in the Guadalcanal and Bougainville campaigns. He was wounded in action on Bougainville where he earned the Purple Heart. He was also awarded a Combat Infantrymen's Badge, Bronze Star Medal, Presidential Unit Citation (Navy) and an Asiatic-Pacific Theater ribbon with two battle stars.

His heroic deeds in combat will never be forgotten by his living buddies.

Joe was always a great supporter of the Americal Scholarship Fund. It was requested that any memorial gifts to be made, be given to this organization in memory of Joe.

In conclusion, this capable soldier and first class citizen will be greatly missed by all of us.

Joe really enjoyed the game of golf and below is a photo with his golfing partners and friends.



Lto R: Frank Lavalle, Frank Rourke, Ducky Rallo, Joe Papa. Joe Rando and Paul Miele.

Letter was written by Sal Vinciullo and sent in by Frank Rourke.

## K COMPANY - 132nd INFANTRY

When I was a member of K Company, 3rd Battalion, 132nd Infantry, I met the most unusual officer that I ever ran into during my time in the service—three years of active duty, nine years of reserve—and I met him at the most unlikely time and place. We were trying to take the main objective above Cebu City. During four or five attempts we were getting pounded by those 20mm-40mm pom-poms, which were on a narrow gauge railroad track in the caves. The P-38's flew over with some napalm and pushed the Japs on down the island. When they lifted the air attack, we started up the hill in the afternoon with a 37 man patrol. We came across a few Japs which we took out of the caves with grenades. We passed one cave and a Jap fired on us. We threw a few grenades in on him and then went up to the edge of the cave to check it out. As we were watching the cave a tall "older" gentleman came over to me and said he would like to kill a Jap. I took one look at him and saw he was a Brigadier General. I said. "Sir, you are in the wrong place. We have not taken this hill yet." He crawled to the edge of the cave on one side and I was on the other side. He took out his pistol and fired a few rounds into the cave and about this time the Jap came alive and fired back, just missing his head by inches. He ducked back and threw a white phosphorous grenade in to silence the Jap. Then I observed the General more closely and saw that he had on a star of a Brigadier General and the crossed cannons of the artillery. I then told him how many times his Artillery had saved our asses on Bougainville, Leyte and Cebu. I said, "Sir, you are the first General I have seen since I've been overseas. You take good care of yourself!" He said he was looking for a good observation post to direct his 155's and 105's. I also told him that none of us would be here today if it were not for the accurate fire they put down each night. The thumping of those big 155's in front of your slit trench made you feel a lot better at night.

I am looking anyone who was with us on that first patrol to the top of the mountain. Do any of you Americal vets remember this man's name and what became of him? I know he was the most surprising person I had ever met in the war. Where he came from, I do not know, nor do I know where he went after we left the cave. I would guess he was in his late 30's or early 40's at that time and he was tall and slender. He had a lot of guts! I would like to hear from anyone who could shed some light on this man.

Max E. Hartwick

State College, PA 16801

## MUSEUM NOTES

This is to acknowledge the receipt of an original copy of an Americal Newsletter from "The Southern Cross" Volume 1 - No 3 June 1947,

It was sent in by Albert E. Cotta and will be welcome addition to the Americal Museum.

Al Cotta served with the 121 Medical Battalion, Company D, during World War II.

Thanks Al!

Arthur Cole  
Museum Curator

## WHAT IS A VET?

He is an ordinary an yet extraordinary human being--a person who offered some of his life's most vital years in the service of his country, and who sacrificed his ambitions so others would not have to sacrifice theirs.

He is the POW who went away one person and came back another..or didn't come back at all.

He is the cop on the beat who spent six months in Saudi Arabia sweating two gallons a day making sure the armored personnel carriers didn't run out of fuel.

He is the barroom loudmouth, whose overgrown frat-boy behavior is outweighed a hundred times in the cosmic scales by four hours of exquisite bravery near the 38th parallel.

She (or he) is the nurse who fought against futility and went to sleep sobbing every night for two solid years in Da Nang.

He is the Parris Island drill instructor who has never seen combat...but saved countless lives by turning slouch no-account rednecks and gang members into Marines, and teaching them to watch each other's backs.

He is the parade-riding Legionnaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand.

He is the career quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by.

He is the three anonymous heroes in the Tomb Of The Unknown Soldier, whose presence at the Arlington National Cemetery must forever preserve the memory of all anonymous heroes whose valor dies unrecognized with them on the battlefield or in the ocean's deep sunless deep.

He is the guy bagging groceries at the supermarket -palsied now and aggravatingly slow...who helped liberate the Nazi death camp and who wished all day long that his wife were still alive to hold him when the nightmares come.

He is a soldier and a savior and a sword against the darkness, and he is nothing more than the finest, greatest testimony on behalf of the finest, greatest nation ever known.

So remember, each time you see someone who has served our country , Just lean over and say: THANK YOU

That's all most people need, and in some cases it will mean more than any medals they could have been awarded or were awarded.

And Remember:

It's the soldier, not the reporter, who gave us freedom of the press.

It's the soldier, not the poet, who gave us freedom of speech.

It's the soldier, not the campus organizer, who gave us freedom to demonstrate.

It's the soldier, who salutes the flag.

Who serves others with respect to the flag.

And whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protester to burn the flag.

## AMERICAL STANDS STRONG

## NEVER FORGET

September 11, 2002, or December 7, 1941  
October 13, 1942 (164th Lands on Guadalcanal)

It was on May 4, 1942, the first day of the Coral Sea Battle. Some of us who had come over to the Pacific War with Task Force 6814, prepared for battle. We were sure the Japanese were headed for an invasion of New Caledonia on their way to Australia. It was the first major battle since the Philippines invasion in early 1942, and was termed "indecisive" since there was no clear winners, but the results were: 1 Japanese destroyer, 2 auxiliary minesweepers, and damage to another destroyer, a mine layer, a transport, and a cargo ship. It may have been indecisive for the bean counters, but it meant we were saved for another day.

The following battle of Midway, when the Japanese code has been broken, and which was the first of the "Carrier Battles" and one which destroyed much of the Japanese Air Force, clinched the deal on the ocean. It was a long way uphill, but the Japanese learned we could fight, and in a terrible way.

Many of the 164th men in the communication sections could hear the American Fighter pilots talking on their radios during the fighting in the Coral Sea Battle.

The 164th Infantry and all other units of the Americal Division were ordered into their prepared defensive positions as the Japanese forces were expected to land in New Caledonia. The 2nd BN 164th went into position at St. Vincent's Bay, 1st BN was on the left and the 3rd BN at Tontouta Airbase. The rest of the Americal moved into their assigned positions.

The Navy carried out a very tough battle and defeated the Jap forces. Had the Japs won the battle, New Caledonia would have been captured and the supply lines to Australia would have been cut. Intelligence reports indicated the next Jap invasion would have been the Fiji Islands. Had the Japs captured the Fiji Islands, this with New Caledonia, would have isolated Australia. Thanks to the Navy winning the Coral Sea Battle, saving New Caledonia.

The ocean highway to victory started at Guadalcanal, August 7, 1942, following the battle of Midway. The Battle of Midway changed the American attitude toward the war in the Pacific. This was a clear cut victory for the American navy and nearly destroyed Japanese air power due to the loss of so many carriers.

However, we still had "Washing Machine Charlie" harassment at night on Guadalcanal and the massive air raid in March 1943 as we left for Fiji, but compared with what might have been, we were indeed lucky. (Taken from "The 164th Infantry News.")

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## THE TERRORS OF FIGHTING IN THE PACIFIC

Most of what the American and Australian public knew about the isles of the Southwest Pacific had been invented by movie script writers. Even as the Japanese were pictured as a blinky eyed toothy Gilbert and Sullivan race, so the South seas was an exotic world where lazy sea breezes whispered in Palm fronds and Sadie Thompson seduced

missionaries and native girls dived for pearls wearing sarongs like Dorothy Lamour.

In reality, the proportions of the women were closer to those of duffle bags.

It is true that most Pacific veterans could recall scenes of great natural beauty. The white orchids and screaming cockatoos in Papau's dense rain forests or the smoking volcano in the region of Bougainville's Empress Augustus Bay, or Saipan's lovely flame trees--but they weren't there as tourists. They were fighting a war and the more breath taking the flora looked the more dangerous amphibious landings turned out to be.

Some islands were literally uninhabitable. Army engineers went to survey the Santa Cruz group for possible airstrips were virtually wiped out by cerebral malaria, and battles were fought under fantastic conditions. Guadalcanal, Leyte, and Bougainville were racked by earth quakes. Volcanic steam hissed through the rocks of Iwo and Bougainville. On Bougainville bulldozers vanished in the spongy bottomless swamps and at the height of the fighting on Peleliu temperature were 115 degrees in the shade. On New Britain sixteen inches of rain fell in a single day. In November of 1944 the battle for Leyte was halted by a triple typhoon and a month later another storm sank three American destroyers.

Lurid setting produced bizarre casualties. Twenty five Marines were killed at Cape Gloucester by huge falling trees. Ship wrecked sailors were eaten by sharks. Nipponese sailors swimming ashore after the battle of the Bismarck Sea were carved up and eaten by New Guinea head hunters and others were eaten by their comrades.

The jungle was a cruel to defeated soldiers, who, as the war progressed were usually Japanese. If they were surrounded by only ferns, snakes, crocodiles, and cannibalism were left to them.

These facts were taken from William Manchester's book, "American Caesar", Douglas MacArthur 1840-1964.

James R. Daly  
182nd Infantry

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## A COMPANY - 132nd INFANTRY

Dear Editor-in-Chief:

My husband, Albert Duncan, was in World War II in the Americal Division and in the July, August, September 2002 issue of the Americal Newsletter, Page 9, I agree with everything Lynn Hart said. Those men were exposed to many dangers in the Pacific Islands fighting for all of us, but it seems like they have been forgotten. It is positive that they are not going to be recognized nationally as contributing to the defeat of the Japanese.

Everyone ought to be able to read about Hill 260. It would make you shudder to hear it.

In October of 1944 my husband, Sgt. Albert B. Duncan of Company A, 132nd Infantry, led a night patrol into Japanese occupied territory. Lt. Robertson, their platoon leader, warned the patrol to be careful. The patrol cut their way through the jungle and soon disappeared. After several hours the patrol was challenged by a Japanese sentry. The sentry was instantly killed. A fire

fight followed. A second Japanese sentry appeared and he was killed. The patrol members covered one another as they withdrew. At 2330 the entire patrol returned--without suffering a single casualty!

It makes me shudder when my husband tells me of hiding in a foxhole, trying to get a short nap, in water up to his waist.

If people could hear stories that my husband and the other men could tell--then they would appreciate the men that fought so hard for America and gave their lives, are just as important as are the other wars. But this day and time, they are hardly recognized at all.

Let's just thank God for all the men that fought for us and uphold the Americal Division too, because so many people never heard of them.

Thank you for letting me get this off of my chest.

Mrs. Albert B. Duncan  
Tallassee, Alabama

Ed. Note: Thank you for writing. We can thank our educational system and our news media for failing to mention what these men did for our country. The local papers in this area did not even mention the Japanese surrender back in August and I am sure they will not mention December 7th.

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## GUARD DUTY

Before joining the Americal on Cebu, the writer spent a week at the 1st Replacement Depot, 657th Replacement Co., on Luzon.

While there, I drew a 24-hour tour of guard duty on the camp's perimeter. When we were given our assignments, the sergeant of the guard gathered us together and set the rules. As I recall, he said:

"the enemy has been infiltrating the camp in search of food. You must watch for them both entering and leaving camp."

"Keep moving while on your assigned sector."

"If you need help, fire three rounds."

When we got out to the perimeter, my sector was about 500 feet of open high ground with thickets of trees on either end. It was a bright moonlit night.

The corporal of the guard handed me two rounds of ammunition saying, "We're a little short tonight."

I can still recall the night I was told to parade out in the open, on a bright moonlit night, looking for the enemy in all directions at once, while prepared to fire my two rounds three times, if I needed help.

There would be considerably more serious matters to follow, before the bomb was dropped and the war ended, but guard duty on Luzon was memorable.

Bill Borling

Ed Note: Bill served in K and M Company of the 182nd Infantry and also M company of the 132nd Infantry.

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## M-1 RIFLE FOR THE AMERICAL MUSEUM

The American Legion Post 308, Orleans, Massachusetts, has loaned for display purposes, an M-1 Rifle, to the Americal Museum in Worcester, MA. The loan is made for an indefinite period of time.

Joseph Mullen a member of Post 308, American Legion, and also a member of the Americal Division Veterans Association having served with A Company, 182nd Infantry, made the presentation.



Picture above--left to right--Ken Turner, former Museum Curator, now retired, Joe Mullen, Art Cole, present Museum Curator and Jan Turner.

The presentation was made on September 10, 2002.

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## DO YOU KNOW THIS MAN?

## 164th INFANTRY - CANNON COMPANY

I am looking for a man by the name of Foust that served with the Cannon Company of the 164th Infantry during 1944-1945. Contact:

Thomas J. Boyd Jr.

[REDACTED]  
Ebro, FL 32437  
Tel. [REDACTED]  
email [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

## C COMPANY - 164TH INFANTRY

Members that were with the Company when we shipped out of San Francisco, CA in 1942. Contact:

Ben Rosalez

[REDACTED]  
Antioch, CA 94509  
email [REDACTED]

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## DO YOU REMEMBER?

While putting together the October-November-December 2002 issue of the Americal Newsletter several thoughts came to mind:

In October, sixty years ago the Americal earned a spot in history. On this date, October 13, 1942 the 164th Infantry Regiment landed on Guadalcanal and became the first Army division to engage the Axis powers in offensive action in World War II.

On November 12, 1942, sixty years ago, the First and Second Battalions of the 182nd Infantry Regiment went into combat. This Regiment, the oldest in the United States Army once again was taking up arms to protect our country, as it had done in every war in which the United States had been involved--starting with the Revolution and up through World War II.

On December 25, 1943, fifty-nine years ago units of the Americal began going ashore on Empress Augusta Bay, Bougainville, Northern Solomon Islands. The units that were ashore that night received a welcome from Japanese bombers.

And this brings to mind a new innovation for the infantryman! Before leaving Fiji the troops were given new jungle equipment and that included a jungle hammock. Now this was a piece of equipment that would give more comfort to the infantryman, especially when on patrol. The hammock could be suspended between two trees and keep the soldier off the wet ground. The hammock also included a 'roof' that was attached to the hammock with mosquito netting and when suspended over the hammock made a complete enclosure for the soldier that which he could zip himself, be off of the wet ground, and be protected from mosquitoes. And--beneath the hammock there were two strap from which the soldier could suspend his rifle and keep it dry.

Once we were ashore and before darkness fell, the soldiers had strung their hammock between two trees and had it prepared for a good night's sleep. Soon it was time to turn in and then we climbed into our hammock, closed the zipper and perhaps thinking on much happier Christmas days, tried to get some sleep.

Sleep did not come right away as a few rifle shots could be heard somewhere within the perimeter, and then--the bombers came over and the bombs came screeching down. Here in the dark of night, there was much tossing and turning, frustration, and cursing while trying to find the handle on the zipper. Finally, after many tense moments and much anxiety, the netting was unzipped and with one lunge the soldier fell out of the hammock and landed in a heap on the ground.

That was the last time hammocks were strung between two trees! With shooting going on and bombs falling one felt like a fish caught in a net with no escape.

However, after we were dug in with logs and sandbags overhead and a cot underground, the hammocks found their place. They were great resting on the cot with the 'roof' suspended to protect against water and dirt that filtered through the logs--and a net to keep out the mosquitoes.

Do you remember those jungle hammocks?

Jim

## REMEMBRANCES OF V-J DAY, AUGUST 14, 1945

In the latter part of July 1945, our unit was engaged in patrolling and manning road blocks in the north and north central part of Cebu Island in the Philippines.

The 7,000 or 8,000 Japanese who survived the initial battle for the island, which began in April of 1945, were engaged in a game of hide and seek, seeking to elude the American forces which were attempting to corner or capture them. They were still a potent force capable of extracting high casualties on anyone they came in contact with. After the war ended Japanese servicemen had held high hopes to the very end, that their government would come to their rescue and evacuate them from the island.

Toward the end of July we were told by our commanders that we would soon be given amphibious training for the planned invasion of the Japanese homeland. We already had received new tracked vehicles that were to pull our new 120 MM AA guns that had been delivered to the docks of Cebu City.

Our original unit had been at Pearl Harbor and had experienced the Japanese attack. The majority of us now had almost 30 months of overseas duty and had earned several battle stars in our journey across the South Pacific, the Solomon Islands and the Philippines. We were aware of the heavy bombings of Japan by the B-29's, and that we were approaching the final phases of the struggle but were completely unaware of the atom bomb, what it was or what it would do.

The day the Japanese announced their surrender we first heard ships in Cebu City harbor firing their guns and sending rockets up into the evening sky. Then all the local churches started to ring their bells. We then knew something important was happening and our first sergeant went through our area announcing that the Japanese had accepted the surrender terms.

Our first reaction was overwhelming joy at the thought on not having to be involved in the invasion of Japan and the knowledge of our being able to return home to our loved ones after serving our country thousands of miles from our homes for almost two and one-half years.

It took almost a week to convince the 6,000 or 7,000 Japanese on Cebu that the war was really over. They had to be provided with radio communications to hear their Emperor declare it was so.

There were some delicate arrangements that had to be made by the Commanding General of the Americal Division to specify where the surrendering Japanese troops were to appear and bring along their weapons.

When this was arranged the Americal Division left the island for occupation duty in Japan. A section of our unit was given the task of collecting the weapons the surrendering Japanese were bringing in, then searching the troops for any hidden weapons, papers, money, etc. after which they were loaded on trucks for transportation to the base's POW camp several miles south of Cebu City.

Battery D was given the assignment of running the POW camp. Newly arriving Japanese prisoners were given the opportunity of showering, given clean clothes, assigned a tent and issued cots and blankets. Medical treatment was also provided.

They were then given a hot meal, prepared by their own cooks, were given orientation talks as to what the camp rules were and what their duties would be.

They were not required to work but could volunteer to work unloading ships at the Cebu City docks for which they would be paid a small salary and were advised as to when they might be expected to be returned to their homes in Japan.

The camp usually had a population of 2,000 to 2,500 prisoners at a time. We never experienced any problems with the prisoners. No one tried to escape. They seemed to be very happy that the war was over and they were going home. We had one incident where a Japanese officer was attempting to force fellow prisoners to perform close order drill, but our C.O. reminded him that the war was over and only physical exercises, "calisthenics" would be allowed.

When most of the Japanese troops had been processed for their return, our group was loaded aboard LST ships and taken to Tacloban, Leyte. We disposed of all of our equipment and were processed for our return to the United States.

On December 17, 1945 we boarded the USS Thomas Jefferson for our trip back to the Golden Gate and San Francisco. A very happy group of GI's arrived in San Francisco on December 2, 1945, ready and willing to resume civilian life again, thanking God again and again for allowing us to arrive home "safe and sound".

Let us remember the men and women of World War II.

Ask any World War II veteran or family member about freedom and you'll get a ready answer. To then freedom is something to protect, cherish and hold on to. Should we celebrate freedom? The answer is a clearly resounding YEA!

So, strike up the band, light the fireworks, break out the Red, White and Blue and raise "Old Glory" high. this day and every day, celebrate America's freedom.

Leonard Owczarzak  
746th AAA Gun Bn.

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## THE INVASION OF JAPAN

Did you know this:

The Southern Force, consisting of the 1st Cavalry Division, the 43rd Division and the Americal Division would land inside Ariake Bay at beaches labeled DeSoto, Dusenbury, Essex, Ford and Franklin and attempt to capture Shibusaki and to capture further inland, the city of Kanoya and its surrounding airfields. (Taken from "Top Secret" by James Martin Davis).

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## HELP HELP HELP

In the next issue I would like to feature the battle for Bougainville and would like to have a story on the occupation of Japan. I need to hear from men that were there.

Also, I would like to know if your local paper prints anything on December 7, 2002 about the attack on Pearl Harbor. This seems to be forgotten by the News media.

Thanks,  
Jim

## 247 FIELD ARTILLERY - SERVICE BATTERY

In the last issue of the Americal Newsletter I was sorry to hear of the passing of my old friend Frank Mufich. It brought back good and bad memories.

On our "Famous Cruise" going overseas, Mufich, Joe Svetlich, Smitty, and myself were talking about what we would do if our ship was hit by a torpedo. Joe said, "I'm not a good swimmer." Mufich said, "Not to worry, you stick with me and I'll save you." It so happened that it almost came to be true. One day our ship gave out five blasts on the horn. A destroyer in the middle of the convoy turned around and came toward our ship dropping depth charges. Mufich, the guy that was supposed to help Svetlich, already had one foot over the ship's rail, leaving Joe behind. Nothing came of the incident, so we continued on our way.

Joe Svetlich said to Mufich, "I'm so glad you were going to help me." We had a good laugh over that.

Another time while driving a truck, Mufich was my helper, we came up behind a truck that was carrying a load of meat. "Wow" I said to Frank, look what's in front of us. You get out on the hood and stand on the bumper and get some of that meat at any cost." Which he did. He put it on the hood, I slowed down and then came to a stop. We put the meat in the back of the truck and hauled it back to our kitchen. This was the first fresh meat we had to eat in months!

Our food was rationed every week but was gone in four days. I told Smitty that the next time we were to go for rations we would take two trucks and while I kept the Sergeant busy he was to take anything he could. We did this every week, taking turns.

One time we were able to get two cases of apples and two cases of oranges and another time two fifty pound bags of flour and a crate of candles. We were lucky to have a very good cook and with the flour he made Hot Cross Buns the next day.

Jack Masucci

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## M COMPANY - 182ND INFANTRY

I was in M Company, 182nd Infantry that was part of Task Force 6814 and the story in the last issue of the Americal Newsletter, the reprint of Bill McLaughlin's, 'Bound for Australia and Adventure', did jog my memory.

My unit left New York aboard the J. W. McAndrew. The J. W. McAndrew was not exactly a converted luxury liner. In fact it wasn't even close to being a luxury liner as it has seen service between South America and New Orleans transporting coffee beans. During this service she had a crew of twenty seven (27) officers and men. Task Force 6814 was to be her first duty carrying troops and she was to carry twenty seven hundred (2700) from Brooklyn to Melbourne, Australia.

When we boarded the J.W. McAndrew they were still putting the finishing touches on her conversion. The main thing that caught our attention was the welding of a three inch (3") gun to the deck and a Navy crew aboard to fire it if required. A few days after leaving Brooklyn the Navy gun crew requested permission to fire the weapon as they had never fired it and needed the practice... They

fired it and the base broke loose from the deck and that was the end of the 3" gun.

Whoever was responsible for determining the supplies for the trip must have been very new to his job. We were on two meals a day for the trip and this meant that the boys wanted more food and they went to the PX. With the exception of cigarettes and coke the PX ran out of supplies before we reached Panama. While we were docked over night at the Pacific end of the Panama Canal the PX staff went ashore to replenish supplies. The weren't very successful as their purchases lasted only a matter of hours.

We had thirty (30) days to go when we left Panama although at that point we did not know what our destination was. Eating our meals was quite an enjoyable experience. As there wasn't a formal dining room we had the pleasure of eating our meals out on deck. If it was raining of course the food in our mess kits got a little soupy but remember, we were on two meals per day so we ate soup. When we had the main meal of the day there were times when the smokestacks belched big hunks of black soot that could be very difficult to avoid as they would land right in the middle of our mess kits. But then, again, you were pretty hungry so you used your spoon to flip it over the side. Infantrymen just learn to cope.

We grew more and more hungry as the food was a combination of too little and quite often not palatable even when hungry. Most soldiers find a way to overcome problems and this became a time for ingenuity. Our quarters were right under the galley and stairs led directly from our quarters to the galley area. We soon learned that the bread was baked in the late evening and then taken from the bakery area in a bin on wheels to the kitchen area. The night finally came when action was required. We lined up every two or three feet from our quarters and up to the top of the stairs where we waited patiently for the sound of those wheels. At the exact time the group of men at the top of the stairs sprung into action and attacked the rolling bins, loaves of bread started flying down the stairs from one man to the next. A great many loaves of bread disappeared that night but hunger pains were not a problem for a couple of days.

Several days before we pulled into Melbourne the ship's crew was observed throwing a great many crates of fresh fruit overboard. It had spoiled.

Ted Mathey

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## 132ND INFANTRY REGIMENT

Looking for anyone that served in the 132nd Infantry from 1942 to 1945. contact:

Paula Killeen Jonker  
[REDACTED]  
Oak Forest, IL 60452  
Tel [REDACTED]  
email [REDACTED]

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M COMPANY - 164th INFANTRY  
ould like to contact members of M Company, 164th Infantry Regiment. Contact:

Chris Bremseth  
[REDACTED]  
Lakeville, MN 55044  
email: [REDACTED]

## MY CHRISTMAS

As we lay in the mud on Christmas Eve,  
Out in the dampness with a whispering breeze,  
The stealthy crack of the twigs and the brush  
Blends with the sound of our breath as we rush,  
Oh, so close to the front.  
Through the still, damp night, each man walks his  
post,  
With thoughts of his loved ones back home on the  
coast,  
When suddenly bursting forth with a deafening  
roar,  
Hell break loose on the front once more.  
Every field piece and mortar spreading death with  
shells,  
The rat-a-tat, tat of Bren guns, then bells,  
Warning torn men, the condition is red,  
And bombs from above will soon scatter our dead,  
This is the life at the front.  
The fear that we have no one will know,  
We never admit it as forward we go.  
While fighting for freedom and return to the  
States,  
We're crowding the region of those ol' pearly  
gates  
But we'll carry on at the front.  
We've been gone for a year now, we hope not in  
vain.  
Suffering hardships and unbearable pain.  
We take this all gladly for our country so true;  
Ever in mind is that red, white, and blue.

(Written by Jack Masucci and sent in by  
John Crnkovich)

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## FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

JOHN A. BOWLEY  
MILITARY HISTORY  
NOVEMBER 1939 - JULY 1970

I enlisted in the Massachusetts National Guard. 26th Yankee Division on 1 November 1939. I was assigned to D Company. 182nd Infantry Regiment. located in Lowell, MA. Trained as a Guardsman until the unit was called to active duty in January of 1941 and moved to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts. Attended school at Fort Benning, GA and then participated in Army maneuvers while attached to Fort Bragg, North Carolina.



PFC JOHN A. BOWLEY - 1941

In January 1942 shipped out of New York via the Panama Canal to Australia and then onto New Caledonia. Took commando training with the Aussies while here and in November 1942 my unit landed on Guadalcanal where we were attached to the 1st Marine Division. At the finish of this campaign we left Guadalcanal, passed through the New Hebrides and landed on Vila Levu in the Fiji Islands in March of 1943.

I was then returned to the States as a member of a cadre for training jungle fighters. Was assigned to several different bases among them Camp Stoneman in California with the 6th Armored Division, Camp Walters, Texas, an infantry training center and Camp Barkley, Texas, a basic training center.

After leaving active duty, I joined the Illinois National Guard. I went back on duty as an engineering officer and was assigned to the Air force in Alaska in 1951. Left active duty again in 1954 and moved to California in 1963. There I joined the California National Guard and was assigned to the 40th Armored Division. In 1967 I went back on active duty and headed for Vietnam where I was assigned to the Engineers. In 1969 I was medevac back to the States. After a stay at the Naval Hospital in San Diego, CA, I was on liaison duty with the Navy. In July 1970 I was medically retired from the Army at Fort MacArthur, CA with the rank of Captain.



CAPTAIN JOHN A. BOWLEY - 1970

I was wounded once on Guadalcanal and twice in Vietnam.

The branches of the Army I served in were: Infantry, Armor, Medical, Service Corps, Ordnance and Engineer Corps.

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## COMPANY B - 182ND INFANTRY REGIMENT

Looking for anyone that knew my Dad, Fred (Doc) Meagher. contact:

Steve Meagher  
[REDACTED]  
Petersham, MA 01366  
Tel: [REDACTED]  
email: [REDACTED]

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