



AMERICAL NEWSLETTER

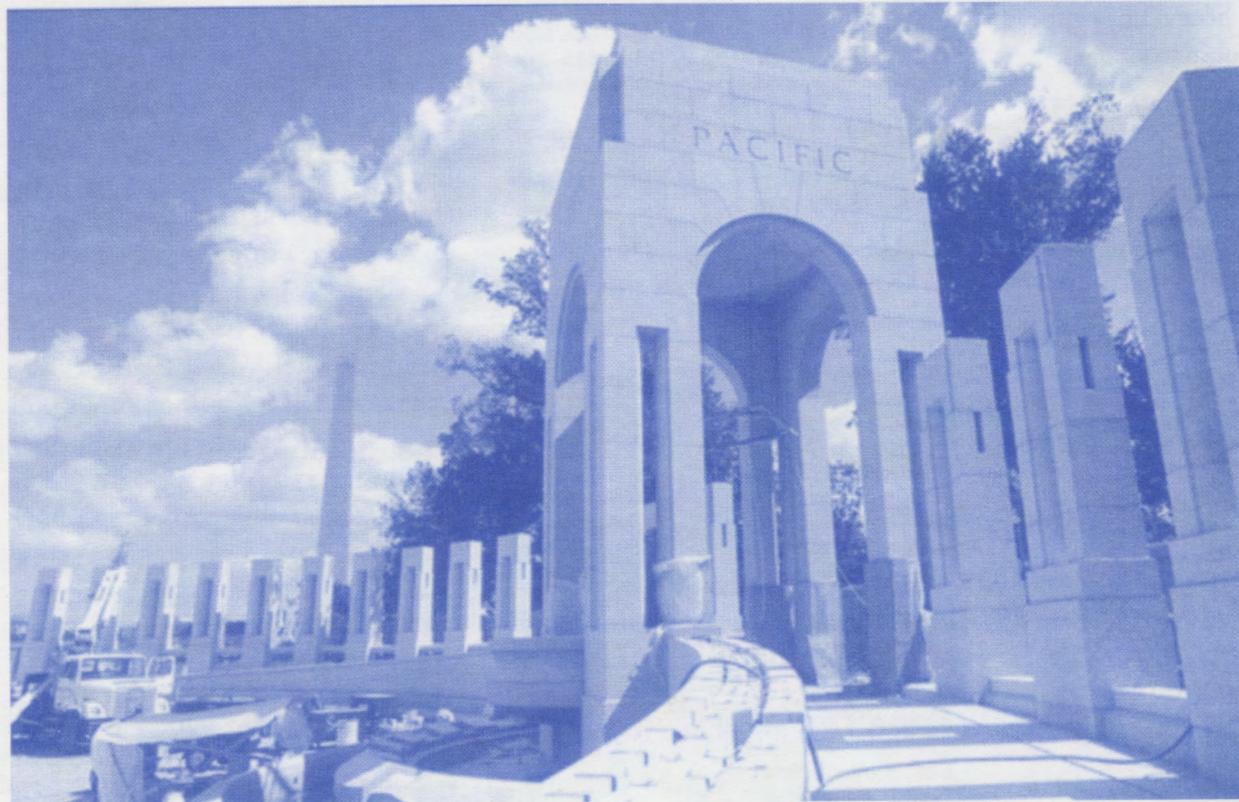
DEDICATED AS A LIVING MEMORIAL TO ALL VETERANS OF THE AMERICAL DIVISION

FOUNDED 1945

January – February – March 2004,

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Vietnam Editor: Gary L. Noller
Contributing Editor: David W. Taylor

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



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NATIONAL WWII MEMORIAL

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[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]

Chapter Commander
Central Midwest Region
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[REDACTED]
Centralia, MO 65240
[REDACTED]

NOTICE

Send new applications and dues renewals to Ronald R. Ellis, Asst. Finance Officer. Do not send any mail to the former P.O. box in Boston. It is no longer in use. Send mail for general delivery to Richard Scales, National Commander.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION

Dear members,

Several important changes are taking place in the way the ADVA handles certain business items. Please read the following information and keep it handy for future reference.

Boston P. O. Box no longer used

The ADVA will no longer receive mail at the Boston, MA post office box. Although this address has been used for a long time it has received very little mail in recent years. Please direct all ADVA mail to the appropriate officer. If in doubt, send mail to the attention of the National Commander.

Visa and MasterCard for purchases and dues

The ADVA is now able to accept payments through the use of Visa and MasterCard. Payments for product purchases and dues can now be accepted by charges to these credit cards. If you want to pay with Visa or MasterCard simply include your credit card number and expiration date on the product order form or dues payment.

Assistant National Finance Officer appointed

PNC Ron Ellis has been appointed to the post of Assistant National Finance Officer. Ron will work closely with Spencer Baba, National Finance Officer, to handle the receipt and deposit of ADVA national funds. Any payments to the ADVA national treasury need to be forwarded to Ron Ellis. His address is [REDACTED], Henderson, TX, 75652.

Send dues to Asst. National Finance Officer

New member applications and annual dues renewals will now be sent to the Assistant National Finance Officer Ronald Ellis. In the past, these payments were sent to the National Adjutant Bernie Chase. Bernie will continue to keep membership records and issue renewal notices but he will not collect dues. Ron will forward applications and renewal information to Bernie so records can be updated.

Dues increase

The ADVA annual dues for Vietnam veterans have been increased from \$12 per year to \$15 per year. Annual dues for WWII veterans remain at \$12 per year. The three-year option has been discontinued. Life dues remain the same, \$75 for veterans age 75 or more, \$165 for veterans under the age of 75. This is the first time that dues have been increased in many years and is the result of increasing costs related to the operation of the association.

Richard Scales
National Commander

ADJUTANT'S NOTES

TAPS	TAPS	TAPS
82 Arty A Btry	182 Infantry	D/H/M/
Ralph G. Adams	John T. Algeo	
Fitchburg, MA	Brewster, MA	
May 2003	December 20, 2003	
125 Quartermaster	20 Infantry	C/1/20
Joseph A. Anderson	Jimmie W. Batchelor	
Marlborough, MA	Nashville, NC	
December 19, 2003	December 13, 2002	
182 Infantry	132 Infantry	I Co.
Henry Burak	James W. Congdon	
Stoughton, MA	Ventura, CA	
Date Unknown	April 18, 2003	
101 Quartermaster	164 Infantry	D Co.
James G. Driscoll	Eugene H. Hill	
Braintree, MA	Grand Forks, ND	
November 20, 2003	October 14, 2003	
182 Infantry A-T	247 Field Artillery	
Gregory G. Karahalis	James S. Key	
E. Falmouth MA	Pilot Mountain, NC	
January 2, 2004	February 20, 2001	
221 Field Artillery	82 Chem Mor Bn	
James M. Kitterick	Paul Klenk	
Brighton, MA	Mansfield, MA	
Date Unknown	August 22, 2003	
Associate	198 LIB	B/1/6 Inf
Glenn E. Klingaman	William A. McMurtry	
Lakewood, NJ	Knippa, TX	
September 6, 2003	November 28, 2003	
221 Field Artillery	182 Infantry	H Co.
Antone C. Tavares	Leo H. Volta	
Fairhaven, MA	West Bridgewater, MA	
March 27, 2003	December 19, 2003	

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

Ben Osborne
William Pautzke
Wallace Pfaff
Myles Rivard
John L. Samson
Clarence G. Schultz
LeRoy E. Smith
John B. Vaneedenburg
Eldred E. 'Red' Welch

Benjamin Parkos
Ted Peterson
William Reem
Juan S. Rodriguez
Raymond Sawyer
Milton C. Shedd
Donald J. Smock
Clifford J. Weber
Harold Ziesche

NEW MEMBERS

Mr. John R. Arruda Jr.
198 LIB C/5/46 Inf
Swansea, MA
#Don Ballou

Mr. H.W. Bartee
23 Div Hfq
Denton, TX
#Self

Mr. Ronald W. Bingamon
198 LIB A/1/52 Inf
Kingmont, WV
#Terry Babler

Mr. Dave E. Blair
11 LIB A/B/E/1/20 Inf
Lemoore, CA
#John McKnown Jr.

Mr. Donald L. Brittain S
1 Cav C Trp
Lewistown, PA
#Terry Babler

Mr. Gary Dent
196 LIB HHC/4/31 Inf
Watertown, WI
#Terry Babler

Mr. Larry Dollarhide
Echo Company Hill 4-11
Sparta, MO
#Self

Mr. Theodore R. Fisher
132 Infantry 2/F
Sinking Spring, PA
#Kermit E. Trout

Mr. Thomas B. Glen Jr.
11 LIB A/4/3 Inf
Centerville, IN
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. William Grady
198 LIB C/5/46 Inf
Columbus, GA
#Self

Mr. Charles Herbst
523 Sig Bn A Co.
Salisbury Center, NY
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Joseph S. Howell
14 Arty C/1/14 Arty
Murpreesboro, TN
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Robert W. Haines
1 Cav C Tr C/1/1
McLean, VA
#Self

Mr. Kurt D. Hoffman
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Glendora, CA
#John McKnown

Mr. Herke C. Joffer
188 Main Hdq Main Spt
Brookings, SD
#PNC Gary L. Noller

ADJUTANT'S NOTES

Mr. Jerry R. Jorgensen
6 Tower Det
Folsom, CA
#John W. Anderson

Mr. Vic Kornaski
196 LIB 23 MP Co.
Mt. Carmel, PA
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Ronald H. Markus
11 LIB D/1/20 Inf
Jackson, NJ
#Vincent Ventorino

Mr. Therman M. McCormick
196 LIB B/2/1 Inf
Benicia, CA
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Richard L. Morris
11 LIB C/3/1 Inf
Graceville, FL
#Don Ballou

Mr. Joseph T. Novotry
11 LIB A/1/81 Arty FO
New Prague, MN
#John McKnown

Mr. Albert R. Pannell Sr.
23 Div Arty
Prince George, VA
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Henry Rose Jr.
1 Cav 1/1 Hq Troop
Milan, IN
#Terry Babler

Mr. Donald W. Schulenber
182 Infantry M Co.
Fayetteville, NY
#Art Cole

Mr. James E. Sweeney
196 LIB D/4/31 Inf
Oak Ridge, NJ
#Don Ballou

Mr. Darrell L. Walker
11 LIB C/4/3 Inf
Harrisburg, IL
#Bill Allen

Mr. Donald M. White
198 LIB B/5/46 Inf
Elizabeth City, NC
#Self

Mr. Hugh J. Williams
82 Arty E/1/82
Lakewood, OH
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Kirk J. Kirkland
23 Military Police
Denham Springs, LA
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. John P. Lexau
11 LIB E/5/3 Inf
Rosemont, IL
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Ronald W. McCauley
132 AHC
Nicholasville, KY
#John W. Anderson

Mr. Alan K. Milton
196 LIB A/1/46 Inf
Tewksbury, MA
#William Schneider

Mr. Roger Nordstrom
198 LIB C/5/46 Inf
Elk River, MN
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Dennis M. Orthmann
14 CAB 174 AHC
Ellensburg, WA
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Joseph Ritz
721 Main
Delmar, NY
#Self

Mr. Roman Sapyta
?
Boynton Beach, FL
#William Mansfield

Mr. John E. Sprague
198 LIB B/1/52 Inf
Millis, MA
#PNC Gary L. Noller

Mr. Edward A. Taggart
246 F. A. C Btry
Wyomissing, PA
#Kermit Trout

Mr. John D. Weber
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Ft. Worth, TX
#John McKnown Jr.

Mr. Austin A. Wilcox
11 LIB HHC/1/20 Inf
Troy, NY
#Don Ballou

Mr. Mark Winslow
?
Waukesha, WI
##Self

ATTENTION - ATTENTION - ATTENTION
Check the dues date, after your name, on the address label on this Newsletter. This date means that your dues are PAID UP UNTIL THIS DATE.
If you do not agree with this date check with the Adjutant immediately.
There has been some misunderstanding on this and also the dues cards that are mailed out when you dues are due. Your dues card is not activated until receipt of your check and then your dues are paid until that date on the card.

REINSTATED MEMBERS

Mr. Wilfredo Y. Ascencio
198 LIB B/1/6 Inf
Abilene, TX
#Don Ballou

Mr. Thomas J. Brown
198 LIB HHC 11 MP
Upper Darby, PA
#Wallace H. Nunn

Mr. Robert R. Fields III
198 LIB C/26 Eng Bn
Cross Lanes, WV
#Art Cole

Col. Richard D. Heroux
196 LIB
Wake Forest, NC
#Self

Mr. Frederick E. Nordt
11 LIB D/1/20 Inf
Bridgehampton, NY
#Michael R. Ackerfield

Mr. Ralph Williams
26 Engrs C Co.
Sacramento, CA
#Maurice Henson

Mr. Frank L. Bechtold
1 Cav 1 Sqd A Troop
New Matamoras, OH
#Sam Hyman

Mr. Emory E. Carico
198 LIB Hdq
Bristol, TN
#Paul Stiff

Mr. Gary Gardner
1 Cav A Troop
Woodhaven, MI
#Bill Allen

Mr. John J. Moran
11 LIB A/1/20 Inf
Dumont, NJ
#John McKown

Mr. Sam Rice
11 LIB A/3/1 Inf
Toulon, IL
#Self

Mr. Clayton D. Brown
182 Infantry G Co.
Aloha, OR
#Self

Mr. Wayne M. Bryant
196 LIB C/1/46 Inf
Greensboro, NC
#Ron Ellis

Mr. Bruce L. Morton
11 LIB B/E/3/1 Inf
Louisville, KY
#Castronova & Babler

Mr. John A. Murphy
1 Cav 1/B Troop
Yonkers, NY
#John Anderson

Mr. Terrence J. Siemer
16 C.A.G. HHC
Columbus, OH
#R. Castronova

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

Ltc John G. Woyansky Re
196 LIB A/2/1 Inf
Colonial Heights, VA
#Don Ballou

LAST ROLL CALL
182 Infantry

Lional St. Pierre
Howard P. Eden
Michael J. Zammitti
Harold H. Hancock
Kenneth R. Esvelt
Anthony Andre
George De Grange
William J. Daley
Ralph Fortier Sr.
Charles P. Piekos
Donald E. Biel
John R. Patterson
George J. Neveras

D Company
C Company
E Company
C Company
C Company
Anti Tank
Hdq/2 Bn
C Company
C Company
C Company
D/A Company
L/K Company
C Company

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

CHAPTER NEWS

CENTRAL MID WEST CHAPTER
ND SD KS NE MO IACHAPTER COMMANDER
David A. Chrystal Sr.Centralia, MO 65240
email:cryweasel@worldnet.att.net

The Midwest Chapter is on the move. We are recruiting new membership, planning a National Reunion in 2005, looking for people to fill leadership rolls. Recently we sent a letter to Americal Veterans in the Midwest Chapter area. We need members, volunteers, for Vice Commander, Sec/Treas, Sgt-at-Arms and Chaplain. Plans for the 2005 National Reunion in Kansas City are well underway. We have selected the dates of 16-19 June 2005 and are in the process of securing the Headquarters Hotel. In Kansas City we are truly "AT THE HEART OF IT ALL" -- more to follow.

David A Chrystal Sr.
Chapter CommanderFAR WEST CHAPTER
AZ, CA, CO, HI, NV, NM, UTCOMMANDER
Richard Merlin
Riverside, CA 92505
SEC/TREAS
Gene McGrath
Pahrump, NV 89048Vice Commander - Kirk McFadden
Sergeant-at-Arms - John Bowley
Chaplain - Paris Tognoli

REUNION - REUNION - REUNION

Everything is rolling along well for the upcoming Americal Reunion in Reno this June. We started off expecting about 600 people to attend, but it looks like there is a lot of excitement for this Reunion and things are taking off. We could have 800-1000 people at the Americal Reunion. Many units are pushing for large attendance by their units, all trying to get about 100 of their members to Reno. Those units are B Co. 1/52 198th, 1/20 Inf., 5/46 Inf., 2/1 Inf., 1/1 Cav, and the 23rd MP Co. As a matter of fact the 1/1 Cav and the 23rd MP Co. have made a bet of 10 cases of beer, for who will have the most members at Reno from their unit. In addition we will have the largest contingency of WW II vets at this Reunion than they have had for many years. Large in part due to the Far West Chapters large WW II veterans membership.

Rooms are going fast. We started out booking 400 rooms for the main nights, as of Jan. 13th, with five months to go, 48% of our room block has already been booked, because this is Rodeo weekend in Reno, it is expected that all rooms in Reno will be sold out. so get your room booked ASAP

Saturday morning will be reserved for business meetings. There will be the Americal Executive Council meeting, the Americal General membership meeting and our Far West Chapter meeting. Times and places will be announced at the Reunion. Saturday afternoon we are having an on site memorial ceremony.

Saturday night will be outstanding. We will have a great dinner and be entertained by the "Silver Tappers". those of you that attended our Far West Reunion in Laughlin in 2001, will remember them well, except this time there will be 10 of them.

We have also booked a great 6 piece band called "Route 66". They play and sing music from the 40's, 50's, 60's, 70's, and 80's.

We have a few special guests coming and are working on a few more. Two of our Americal Medal of Honor recipients have accepted our invitation and will be our guest, Jim Taylor and Bill Bacon. Maj. Gen. Lloyd B. Ramsey (Ret), Commander of the Americal 60-70 will travel from Virginia and will be our guest speaker on Saturday night. Our National Chaplain Rev. Perry M. Woerner, WW II, will attend and participate in our functions.

It's going to be a great time. Don't miss out. Book your room NOW and send in your registration,

Richard Merlin
Chapter CommanderGREAT LAKES REGIONAL CHAPTER
IL, IN, MI, MN, WICOMMANDER
John Mathews
Verona, WI 53593
ADJ/FIN OFF
Terry Babler
New Glarus, WI 53574

The Great Lakes Chapter would like to thank everyone that attended the 18th Annual Winterfest All Veterans Reunion and Festival in New Glarus, Wisconsin. We had about 400 in attendance. We had people from 21 states. Next years Winterfest will be held on January 15-16-17-18, 2005. It's time to reserve for next year. If the hotel is full get on the waiting list right away. The hotel is the Chalet Landhaus Inn and the number is: 1-800-944-1716. Say it's for Winterfest 2005.

So are you ready for another Operations LZ-Oceanside II All Veterans Reunion in Florida? The Great Lakes Chapter is one of 6 sponsors for this event. It will be held at the Holiday Inn Oceanside Resort at Melbourne Beach. There are plans for two outside events at night in the pool deck area for Wednesday and Thursday nights. In addition, the Florida Vietnam Veterans Reunion will start on Friday, April 23, through Sunday April 25, 2004. Don't miss this one, it will be a good time! All events are free at the hotel and at the Florida Reunion.

And of course, Rich Merlin is planning a great Reunion in Reno, Nevada on June 24-25-26-27, 2004. Many special events and activities are planned. The Great Lakes Chapter will definitely be at this one! Again, don't miss this one - make your reservations now!

We will again set-up at the Kokomo, Indiana Reunion, again in the big tent. The dates for Kokomo are: September 16-17-18-19, 2004. In 2003 we had close to 100 for the Americal in attendance. Over 30,000 attend this Reunion. A very good time!

For those of you that may not be a member of the Great Lakes Chapter yet: the dues are \$5.00 a year which covers two Newsletters a year. For all current members, please check your mailing labels. If your dues expire by 2003 November, your dues are due now. If you prefer, go ahead and pay for two years.

Terry

CHAPTER NEWS

ARTHUR R. WOOD CHAPTER
SOUTH EAST CHAPTER
AL, FL, GA, NC, SC, TNCOMMANDER
Robert (Bob) Kapp
Tampa, FL 33615
SEC/TREAS
George P. Dakin
Deltona, FL 32728

The next South East Chapter meeting and election of Chapter officers will be held on Saturday, April 24, 2004 during the Florida Vietnam Veterans Reunion that will be held in Wickham Park, Melbourne, Florida.

Chapter Commander Bob Kapp's motorhome will be parked in the camping area. Please check in with him.

For up-dates on this event contact Bob Kapp at bobkapp3@aol.com or Paul Stiff a pstiff3@aol.com

Bob Kapp
Chapter CommanderEASTERN REGIONAL CHAPTER
DC DE KY MD NJ NY OH PA VA WVCOMMANDER
David Richhorn
Fleming, OH 45729
Tel: [REDACTED]
VICE COMMANDER
Jay Flanagan
Cranford, NJ 07017
Tel: [REDACTED]
SECRETARY
Joe Tunis
Lake Ariel, PA 18436
TREASURER
Mark Deam
Sidney, OH 45365Leo Orfe - Sergeant-At-Arms
Everitt Williams - Chaplain
Visit our web site at:
<http://home.woh.rr.com/sidneyalum/advaerc/>

PLANS PROGRESS FOR ERC REUNION

Chairman Wendall Strode has reserved the Hotel for October 7 - 10, 2004 in Bowling Green, Kentucky. He has also made final arrangements for meals, bus travel and tours of the Corvette plant and National Corvette Museum. Also on the agenda are tours of Fort Knox, Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace and Guthrie Bell tower.

Up to date information will be posted on the Chapter website:

<http://home.woh.rr.com/sidneyalum/advaerc/>

From the Reading Eagle Newspaper Memorial Day coverage:

Special bonds link Americal Veterans in this county. Veterans Day hold special meanings for Kermit Trout and Robert C. Kelly who share memories of combat and the Americal Division. Trout served during WWII, Kelly served in Vietnam. The kinship between generations serving in the Americal has drawn Kelly and Trout to some of the units reunions that have been held in eastern U.S. for about 20 years. Kelly said the reunions draw a mixture of both generations, and figures the Memorial for Trout's war is one last thing his generation can do for Trout's generation. "They did everything and asked for nothing. It's time to give them respect."

As a result of the Reading Eagle review we heard

from Ed Taggart, a retired editor of the newspaper. He states that it took him almost 60 years to find out there was an Americal Division Veterans Association. He has made contact with Kermit Trout and Bob Kelly and is now anxious to meet with Field Artillery veterans.

The Americal Field Artillery Veterans will be meeting in Asheville, NC May 4 - 7, 2004. For more info contact: Robert Miller

Joe and Eileen Tunis
Secretaries

NORTHWEST CHAPTER
AK WA OR ID MT WYCOMMANDER
Dave Hammond
Beaverton, OR 97005
email: [REDACTED]

NOTICE TO ALL MEMBERS

The Far West Chapter will host the 2006 Americal National Reunion in Seattle, Washington.

If you are willing to help please contact Commander Dave Hammond at the above address.

OPERATION OCEANSIDE II - ALL VETERANS REUNION

April 21-22-23-24-25, 2004

Holiday Inn Oceanside Resort
Melbourne Beach, Florida

This event in conjunction with Florida's 17th annual Vietnam Veterans Reunion at Wickham Park in Melbourne, Florida.

EVERYONE IS INVITED

Holiday Inn Melbourne Oceanside Resort-2605 North A1A, Indialantic, Florida (Melbourne and Cocoa Beach area), 45 Minutes from Orlando. Hotel has: Free parking/valet service, Hotel shuttle to Melbourne Airport and back. Hotel rates are: One standard room of 2 double beds is \$77.00 Oceanside rooms \$139 and suites \$189. All rooms have a tax of 10%. Room rates are good for 3 days before and 3 days after. When calling mention you are with: Operation LZ/Oceanside II All Veterans Reunion for special discount rates. Call [REDACTED] or local [REDACTED]

Wed. April 21 - Jamskin me Crazy, night on pool deck ocean side 5-10 P.M. (Free event) - DJ inside Al's Sports Bar and other entertainment. Sign up for Friday night gator patrol on air boat.

Thurs. April 22 - Operation LZ-Oceanside party on pool deck.

Friday, April 23 - Gator Patrolling at night Night boat gambling. Hospitality room opens.

Sat. April 24 - Reunion continues at Wickham Park, Group picture at Bob Kapp's camp site at 1:00 P.M. Hospitality opens at Jim Bartelt's room.

WHEN ARRIVING AT HOTEL GET SCHEDULE FOR ANY CHANGES & UPDATES AT FRONT DESK.

For more information: Ron Lewis [REDACTED] - Don Belke [REDACTED] Terry Babler [REDACTED] - pointman1@tds.net

YOU CAN BOOK YOUR ROOM NOW!

SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS

College and vocational scholarships are awarded annually to children and grandchildren of ADVA members. Applications must be received by May 1 to be considered for this year's scholarship awards. Awards will be finalized when the scholarship fund trustees meet at the annual reunion in Reno in June.

The scholarship application is now available online. From the ADVA web site (www.americal.org/), select "ADVA" from the list of options listed on the left side of the home page. A drop-down menu will appear. Select "Scholarships" and then "Scholarship Application." An application may also be obtained by contacting the scholarship fund chairman Robert Short at:

[REDACTED]
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Phone: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

Completed applications and required supporting documents must also be submitted to Mr. Short at the above address.

THE FOLLOWING NAMED MEMBERS DONATED MORE THAN TEN DOLLARS TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Earl Cook
in memory of
Dr. Robert Muehrcke

James Gales	-	Andrew Teague
Jack Masucci	-	Mark Knepp
David Fort	-	Salvatore Vinciullo
Carl Greenwood	-	David Germain
Venice Owens	-	Jerry Comer
Thomas Fields	-	Jerry O'Connor
Charles Knapp	-	Herbert Page
Bruce Sexton	-	Louis Blumengarten
Don Boeck	-	John Shea
Nicholas Ostapchuk	-	Col. W. Alexander
Steven Palmer	-	Rev. Tex Ralls
Bruce Rosin	-	Leslie Martinson
James Wark	-	Leonardo Rodrigues
Marcia Sears	-	Miriam Cappers
Jim Rogers	-	Michael Maier
Larry Scull	-	Laurance See
Victor Crowder	-	Benjamin Kelly
LTC John Tripp (Ret)	-	Spencer Baba
Paul Terry	-	James Gaffney
Ted Block	-	Raymond Wahl
Robert Beschle	-	Albert Drantz
Kirk Foecking	-	Bob Brenner
Chester Carlock	-	Raymond Fox
Tim Vail	-	MG Lloyd Ramsey (Ret)
Edward Den Braven	-	William Dawson
Bill Bacon	-	Thomas Bradbury
Victor Lander	-	Robert Williams
Robert Duesterhoeft	-	Carmen Santoro
Herman Stephenson	-	William Gold
Jack Vanderbeck	-	William Mansfield
Charles Wilke	-	Maj Barton Berry (Ret)
Reynaldo Mendoza	-	Paxson Payne
Col Richard Stephens	-	Kenneth Turner
Scott Smith	-	William Chisholm
Gary Roschevitz	-	James Sheehan
Josephine Papa	-	D.R. Murphy
Kenneth Melesky	-	Earl Russell
Raymond Brady	-	Paul Feeley
Leonard Lantz	-	Ephraim Close
Jim McFarlen	-	James Lyons
Allen Hoe	-	Russell Marceau
John Flanagan	-	George Fitzpatrick
Steve Parkman	-	Paul Bialoncik

William Illingworth	-	Harold Werner
SFC J.C. Humphries (Ret)	-	Gerhart Mehner
Rich Merlin	-	Gerald Loughman
Joseph Buss	-	Edward Smith
James O'Boyle	-	Nancy Pizzuto
Robert Carrigan	-	John Grubbs
Robert Miller	-	Robert Hynson
Kermit Trout	-	James McDaniel
J.S. Logan	-	John Biliti
Mike Brown	-	Steven Parten
James Tassi	-	Hyman Cohen
Richard Larson	-	Dennis Baum
John Furbush	-	John Smith
Charles Bell	-	Windell Naylor
Tom Brown	-	Richard Friedemann
		Floyd Nicholas

Johanna writes: Dear Mr. Short and Committee,

Thank you so much for the scholarship. It will be used to further my education at Hope Colland in Holland, Michigan, and I am so honored to be chosen. It means a lot to me and I really appreciate it.



Mom - Johanna - Dad - 198 LIB C/1/52 Inf

Sincerely,
Johanna Swanson

INFORMATION NEEDED ON APPLICATION

Completed application forms together with all the required enclosures must reach the Chairman at address he designates no later than May 1st of each year. The application form requires the following of the applicants: name, address, Social Security Number (SSN), marital status, date of birth, place of birth, high school attended, high school graduation date; father's name, occupation and SSN; mothers' name, occupation and SSN; if sponsored by ADVA member, members name, dates with the Americal, unit, and highest rank or grade; if parents are deceased, name and address of guardian, name and address of school to be attended; applicant's signature.

This is the information you should have ready upon receipt of your application. More and complete information will be received with your application. Apply to:

Robert G. Short Chairman

[REDACTED]
Kalamazoo, MI 49009
Tel: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]

WWII Memorial
dedication ceremony
expected to draw
thousands of vets

Nearly 59 years after the end of World War II, the National World War II Memorial will be dedicated in Washington, D.C., on Saturday, May 29, 2004.

The Memorial Day weekend celebration on the National Mall will culminate an 11-year effort to honor America's World War II generation. The memorial was authorized by Congress in 1993. Construction began in September 2001 after several years of fund raising and public hearings.

The official dedication celebration will span four days and will include a WWII-themed reunion exhibition on the National Mall staged in partnership with the Smithsonian Institution's Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, a memorial service at the Washington National Cathedral, and an entertainment salute to WWII veterans from military performing units. Other related activities in cultural venues throughout the city are expected.

Information on activities is available by calling the memorial's toll free telephone number at [REDACTED] or on the WWII Memorial Dedication website at www.wwiimemorial.com.

Dedication Ceremony

The memorial will be dedicated on Saturday afternoon, May 29, at 2 p.m. Gates will open at 11 a.m. Two hours of lively pre-ceremony entertainment beginning at noon will take attendees back to the wartime era through music, video images, newsreel clips, and reminiscences of the time. Big band and swing music will be highlighted along with a patriotic finale. Musical groups from the armed forces will entertain.

The dignified dedication that follows will recognize the important addition of the memorial to the National Mall and pay tribute to the service and sacrifice of the WWII generation. President Bush has been invited to receive the memorial on behalf of the nation. Other dignitaries will participate in the ceremony, including former Senator Bob Dole, who served as the voluntary national chairman of the memorial fund-raising campaign.

Tens of thousands of veterans, family, and friends are expected to attend the dedication. A ticketing system will be used for two of the events – the Dedication Ceremony and the Salute to WWII Veterans – to give priority to members of the WWII generation and to provide as much seating as possible for those whom the memorial honors. Tickets can be ordered on the website listed above.

National World War II Reunion

The Smithsonian Institution Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in partnership with ABMC will produce a National World War II Reunion. This open-air, tented activity will be open daily, Thursday through Sunday, May 27-30, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Reunion will be staged on the National Mall from 3rd to 7th Street, NW, between the Smithsonian's Air & Space Museum and the National Gallery of Art. The event is free and open to the public. Tickets are not required.

WWII generation member: one for the WWII honoree and two guests. Additional guest tickets may be requested, but these guests will be seated where space is available. Members of the WWII generation will be given priority for seating. Due to space limitations, tickets to events are not guaranteed.

Tickets for the Salute to Veterans at the MCI Center are no longer available. Your name may be added to a wait-list if you wish.

Visitors are advised to use public transportation to travel to The Mall for dedication events. Parking will be limited. The WWII Memorial is located between the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial at the east end of the Reflecting Pool.

The Americal Division Veterans Association is expected to have a hospitality tent somewhere on the mall during the WWII Memorial Dedication ceremonies. Please consult the ADVA website at www.americal.org for latest news.

Americal tree wounded in
Arlington National Cemetery

By Col. John Insani



During our Veterans Day wreath laying at Arlington National Cemetery we noticed that the Americal tree next to the Americal monument was wounded. Male deer caused the wound during this year's rutting season by rubbing their antlers on the tree. About eight inches of the tree's bark were rubbed off. Several other trees in Arlington were wounded in the same manner. Arlington authorities expect that the wound will heal over in the spring. If it does not heal over then the authorities have assured me that the tree will be treated and/or replaced at no cost to the ADVA.



Wounded Iraq War veterans in the front row of Veterans Day 2003 ceremonies at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Making a connection

Regina Talley knows the cost of war. Her brother, Floyd G. Talley, was wounded in Vietnam on December 6, 1969. The family was initially notified that he was missing-in-action. Regina thought to herself, "How can the Army lose my big brother?"

But the worst was yet to come. Floyd Talley, a medic with Co. D, 1/46th Inf., died of his wounds on December 8, 1969. Regina and her family were shattered. Floyd was the oldest son and greatly admired by his younger siblings. They laid him in his final rest just a week before Christmas.

The dedication of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. in 1983 visibly changed the way many Americans thought of the Vietnam War and its veterans. It also gave grieving families a much-needed memorial to those they lost.

Regina Talley became a frequent visitor to The Wall. She was there for many reasons. She came to remember and honor her brother. She came in search of veterans who knew Floyd in Vietnam. Her many visits led her to become a volunteer for the National Park Service. She is often seen at The Wall in the familiar yellow hat that volunteers wear.

Through the years she has met many Americal Division veterans. She is a great help in coordinating efforts for the wreath laying ceremonies at The Wall on Memorial Day and Veterans Day. In 2002 she attended the ADVA national reunion in Washington, D.C.

In recent months Regina has become connected to another part of the veterans community. In September 2003 ADVA member Kevin Kavanaugh contacted Regina and asked her to visit Walter Reed Army Medical Center and check on someone.

Kavanaugh, a veteran of Co. D, 1/46th Inf., is employed by the Veterans Administration in Wisconsin. A fellow employee, Susan Sonnheim, R.N., was wounded September 21, 2003 in Iraq while on duty as an M.P. Sonnheim's wounds were inflicted by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) as she checked out a suspicious object along a roadway.

Sonnheim lost an eye to the blast and had shrapnel wounds in her arms, legs, and face. A flak vest protected her upper body and probably saved her life. She was evacuated to a hospital in Germany and then to Walter Reed in Washington, D.C. She is expected to recover from her wounds.

Regina made many more trips to visit wounded soldiers at Walter Reed. She generally takes a few snack items for the vets and plays cards and talks with them. She has come to know the veterans and their families very well.



ADVA Sr. Vice-Commander Jon Hansen, PNC Ed Marsh, and Regina Talley at the Americal plaque in Arlington National Cemetery.

In November she told the vets of plans for the upcoming Veterans Day activities at The Wall. The vets were excited and expressed a desire to attend. Many of the wounded are ambulatory and are allowed to leave Walter Reed for short trips in the local area. Regina decided to make arrangements to transport them to the Veterans Day ceremony.

As time for the event grew closer the list of interested veterans grew longer. Regina ran into a problem obtaining enough people willing to drive the vets to the memorial service. She explained this to Kevin Kavanaugh. He told her to arrange for limousine service for the vets and he would help pay for it. Additional financial support came from ADVA member Bob Short, a veteran of Co. C, 1/46th Inf.

On November 11 a total of seventeen wounded vets made the trip from Walter Reed to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. ADVA PNC Ed Marsh helped escort the wounded vets to their seats in the front row. They received a rousing standing ovation when their presence was announced from the podium.

The day was very dramatic for all involved. Many of the Iraq War vets were in tears as they witnessed the memorial observance to those lost in Vietnam. They were also struck by the reception that they received from the Vietnam vets. They were surprised by the standing ovation that they received. One later asked Regina, "Why did they do that for us?"

Regina has continued her visits to the veterans at Walter Reed. On some occasions she has gone to a shopping mall with them. Often the wounded vets are spotted by shoppers and become the object of attention. Some of the vets told Regina, "We just want to be treated like we are normal."

She has connected to the families of veterans through her own experience of loss. She knows the tragedy experienced by the families of the wounded and the dead. She met a soldier named Ryan Young who had suffered a severe wound but was expected to recover. Tragically, Ryan died of a blood clot to the brain. Regina stayed up all night with Ryan's grieving widow. If not for Regina's involvement, the young widow would have been left all alone.

Regina says, "The officials at Walter Reed are not prepared to fully handle the needs of families of veterans. Too often the families are left alone without necessary assistance." As a result of this situation, Regina has combined efforts with others to organize a group called Vet Connect. This group will connect Vietnam veterans to the Iraq veterans and their families and provide much needed support.

Needless to say, this connection is welcomed by the Iraq war vets and fulfills a pledge from Vietnam vets to never turn their backs on the next generation of veterans.

More locator requests

Looking For: Paul Boyer, 23rd Admin Co-AG Spec Correspondence, 1969 and early 1970. Contact: Wally Clause, [REDACTED], SW, Willmar, MN 56201

Looking For: Patrick Murray, Thomas Stoddley, Charles Yelvoyon, Harold Moody, others, 3/1st Inf., Co. E, Recon, 11/69-11/70. Contact: Larry Dollarhide, [REDACTED], Sparta, MO 65753

Looking For: Pelicans, Co. A, 123rd. Avn. Bn., 4/70 -12/70. Contact: Vaughn Campbell, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Mustang, OK 73064

Looking For: Anyone, Co. B, 4/21st Inf., Nov. 70-Standdown. Contact: Ed Deverell, [REDACTED], Aurora, CO 80018

Looking For: Perry Smith, Lt. Yamato, Cpt. Meeker, anyone, C/3/1st Inf., 11th LIB, 5/69 to 4/70. Contact: Richard L. Morris, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Graceville, FL 32440

Looking For: Lee Zigifus, A/1/46th Inf., 196th, 71-72. Contact: Michael Garcia, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Evergreen, AL 36401

Looking For: Major Arthur E. Parker III, Company Commander, Co. B, 1/20th Inf. from May to Sep 1970. Contact: Gordon Lynch, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Sun Lakes, Az 85248

Looking For: George Dowdy, Walter Jackson, anyone with the 57th Scout dog handlers with 196th LIB or 198th LIB. Contact: Garth Redmond, 427 High Street, Highspire, PA 17037

Looking For: Ken Daken, Americal Division Finance Office, late 1968 thru March 1970. Contact: Greg Straub, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Cleona, PA 17042

Looking For: Anyone, HHC and D Co., 1/6th Inf., from 4 Oct 67 to 10 Jul 70. Contact: Howard W. Walker, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Loveland, CO 80537

Looking For: Robert (Bob) Pike, Steve Altman or Anyone, 3/16th Arty., HQ Btry., 70-71. Contact: Rob Raleigh, [REDACTED]

Looking For: James Cutts, James Krajicek, John Walsh, Jr., Richard Brown, WIA July 2, 1969; A Co., 3/1st, 11th LIB. Contact: Bob Miller, 67 Gannett Rd., Farmington, NY 14425; [REDACTED]

Looking For: 1/82nd Arty., HHB, 1970-71. Shoemaker, Sweeney, Courtney, Hetzer, Henderson, Jones, McCarthy, Boyd, Bonsness, Metz, Cronia, Big Red Malone, Bickett, and Hardigree. Contact: Bill Chace, [REDACTED], Phoenix, AZ 85032

Jose Garza, Jr.

I am working with Richard Coffelt and another vet in identifying company level units for all 58,000 Vietnam KIAs. Our work to date is at: <http://www.virtualwall.org/docs/vwdbase.htm>

We only have about 400 Army left to do and one is SFC Jose Garza, Jr. He died of wounds from a booby trap on 5/18/69. His major unit is listed as Americal and his MOS was 11B. I would like to contact anyone who knows Garza's company and battalion. Please contact Dick Arnold at [REDACTED]

William "Bill" Trombley

I am looking for anyone who knew my father, SGT William "Bill" Trombley. He was assigned to the 23rd S & T motor pool and drove a wrecker. I would just like any information from anyone who remembers him. He was in Chu Lai from 1968-70.

He recently recovered from service related leukemia. Thank you for your help. Please contact William Trombley, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], FPO AA 34099

Gene "Geno" Chenault

I am looking for Gene (Geno) Chenault. I believe he was from Port Charlotte, Florida. He served with Americal Division from 1969-71. I have no clue what unit although he may have been Recon.

I have a newspaper clipping showing him kneeling at The Wall looking for his fallen comrade, Bob Kerrey. He appears to be a large man with light colored hair. He was probably interested in motorcycles.

I recently purchased his bikers vest with all of his veterans' patches on it from E-Bay. I don't know if he is still alive or not. I bought his vest because I too served in with Americal in Co. B, 4/21st Inf., 11th LIB until 1971. I wear it in honor of all who served with Americal.

I would like any information at all on the man who belonged to this vest. Please contact Kenneth D. Cain, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], Paso Robles, CA 93446

Robert "Bob" Stivers

I am seeking information about my uncle Robert W. Stivers (Bob). He was in Vietnam from May 69- June 70. and was assigned to 196th LIB, 3/21st Inf. His MOS was 11B20. I do not know his company. to.

He never spoke about any of his experiences but since he passed away I have been trying to gain some insight into his past. I have the Purple Heart that he was awarded. It would be great to find a roster of his unit. Please Contact Aaron M. Wright, TSgt, USAFR, 931 AMXS, McConnell AFB, KS, 67221

Please contact Andrew Teague, [REDACTED] Taylorsville, NC, 28681. Thank you for your help.

CPT Gerry A. Harr

A scholarship fund in memory of CPT Gerry A. Harr has been established to benefit Army ROTC cadets at Oregon State University. Captain Harr was killed in Vietnam on July 3, 1971 while serving with Co. A, 1/46th Inf., 196th LIB.

The scholarship fund was established by Pamela Harr, CPT Harr's widow, and Michael Rainbolt, retired Professor of Military Science at Oregon State University. Gerry Harr received his officer's commission at OSU.

COL Richard F. Carvell, USA, Ret., former commander of the 1/46th Inf., knew Harr and helped him get an assignment to the 1/46th. Carvell speaks highly of CPT Harr. "I was heart broken to hear of his loss. Harr was a great, heroic officer. He was the best!"

Anyone wishing to donate to the scholarship fund can do so by making their check payable to the Benton County Foundation and mailing it to [REDACTED], Corvallis, OR 97330. Indicate in the memo that the check is for the Captain Gerry A. Harr Memorial Scholarship.

LZ Gator

I am looking for: 1/6th Inf. veterans who helped construct LZ Gator. I am writing a book about the 5/46th Inf. on LZ Gator. Gator was built by the 1/6th Inf. prior to the 5/46th arriving. Anyone there at the time please contact David Taylor, [REDACTED]

Medina, OH 44256

1/82 FA Vets

Veterans of the 1/82nd Arty should check our web page on news of a reunion to be held in August 2004. We have almost 1500 names on our lists. If your not one of those let us know, we want to identify and locate all of you. See the website at <http://vets1-82fa.tripod.com/>.

Please contact Ron Griffin, [REDACTED]

Oshkosh, WI 54901

Co. B, 3/21st Inf., 1970-71

I would like to hear from any of the following officers of Co. B, 3/21st Inf., 196th LIB, during 1970-71:

Captains Leon Woodyard, Benny Wedding, Gerald Tanghe, and Robert Kreger. Lieutenants Lewis McGee, Earl Smith, Lynn Ballard, Willie Clements, David Alexander, Orlando Marconi, Ronald Eppling, Darrell Pricer, John Rouse, Joseph Wilkes, Ray Minich, Jack Bailey, Peter LeDuc, James Casey, Paul Kelly, Michael McCrary, and James Dawling.

Please contact Andrew Teague, [REDACTED] Taylorsville, NC, 28681. Thank you for your help.

SFC Domingo F. Morado
Co. A, 3/21st Inf., 196th LIB
13 May 1969

I am looking for anyone that knew SFC Domingo F. Morado. He was killed-in-action while serving with Co. A, 3/21st Inf., 196th LIB. I am helping his daughter. I served with Co. D, 4/31st Inf., 196th LIB in 1970-71. Please contact: Danny Yucker, [REDACTED] Dade City, FL 33523 [REDACTED]

SP4 Harry R. Italiano
Co. C, 5/46th Inf., 198th LIB
3 June 1969

I am looking for anyone who knew SP4 Harry R. Italiano, killed-in-action on June 3, 1969. He was assigned to the Co. C, 5/46th Inf., 198th LIB. Harry and I grew up together in Suitland, MD, and were closer than most brothers. I understand that he was KIA somewhere in Quang Ngai provence. I have discovered that on that same day seven others were KIA from the 198th LIB. If anyone can provide some information as to what the details were and what the units mission was on that day I would be grateful. God Bless. Please contact Michael Howard, [REDACTED]

Julian Ernest Marque
Co. A, 4/3rd Inf., 11th LIB
15 February 1971

I am looking for anyone who knew Julian Ernest Marque. He was killed-in-action on 15 February 1971 while serving with Co. A, 4/3rd Inf., 11th LIB. The location of his death was Nui Ba Lao mountain. Please contact Joe Marquez, [REDACTED], Greenville, SC 29607 [REDACTED]

Ervin Proctor
Co. B, 1/46th Inf., 198th LIB
September 13, 1968

I am looking for anyone who served with Ervin Proctor, my brother. He was in 1/46th Inf., 198th LIB, from June 1968 until he was killed-in-action on September 13, 1968. He died in Quang Ngai Province. The information I have is that he was riding in an APC when it was attacked by mortar and rocket propelled grenades. I think others also died with my brother. Please contact: Bonnie Proctor Russell, [REDACTED], Maryville, Tn 37801 [REDACTED]

They are not forgotten. May they rest in peace.

SGT Gordon William Hough
Co. E, 4/3rd Inf., 11th LIB
1983

I am looking for anyone who served with my father, Sgt. Gordon William Hough of Tampa, FL. I know he was at Schofield Barracks in early to mid-1967. He attended Language School. He received a Bronze Star for actions taken on 6 March 1968 while serving with E Co., 4/3rd Inf., 11th LIB. My father passed in 1983 when I was 12. I'd just like to know what he and the brave men and women he served with were like. From an ex-Navy man too all of you, thanks and God Bless. Please contact Drew Hough, [REDACTED]

CPL Robert Carl Runge
Co. D, 1/20th Inf., 11th LIB
23 November 1970

I am looking for anyone who served with CPL Robert Carl Runge, D Co., 1/20th Inf., from 7-17-70 to 11-22-70. Rob was WIA on November 11, 1970 and died on November 23, 1970. He was fatally wounded in the Quang Ngai Province by a booby trap. I would like to know if anyone has any photos of Rob while he was in Vietnam. It will be 33 years this November but my images of Rob will never fade away. Please contact Duane Bozic, [REDACTED]

Jim Kardos
Co. D, 3/1st Inf., 11th LIB
4 September 1969

I am looking for anyone who knew Jim Kardos from Virginia. He was killed-in-action on September 4, 1969 while serving with the Co. D, 3/1st Inf., 11th LIB. He was 20 years old. He was only in-country 3 weeks but I would love to hear from anyone who may remember him. I'm his sister. Please contact Claudia Kardos, [REDACTED]

Editor's note:

The requests for information on this page were taken from locator requests on the Americal Locator at www.americal.org/locator/. In some cases, individual unit information was taken from the Coffelt Database and dates of casualty obtained from www.no-quarter.org.

174th Assault Helicopter Co.

I started single engine-single rotor UH1D school in September 1965 at Ft. Eustis, Va. Most of Class #3 was assigned to the 10th Avn. Grp. at Ft. Benning, Ga. We were either assigned to the 176th Avn. Co. (176th AHC) or the 174th Avn. Co. (174th AHC). Both units were billeted in the same area near the OCS School.

The 174th shipped overseas sometime in 1966. We shipped to Tuy Hoa in 1967. We operated as far south as Phan Rang, at least as far east as Ban Me Thuot, and as far north as Qui Nhon and Pleiku. We worked with outfits such as the 4th Inf., the 24th Inf., the White Horse, and Tiger ROK Division. We had at least one mission with the 1st Cav. We moved North to Duc Pho with the 101st and the 24th Inf. in May 1967.

"I want to thank the mayor and the town of Glen Cove for remembering my brother-in-arms, Dennis Murray. You are honoring a person wholly worthy of such a memorial.

"I have wanted to meet his family with anticipation and with reservation. With anticipation because I want to tell them that their loved one did not die in vain, but was at the forefront of the struggle against forces whose ultimate goal is to enslave all mankind. And with reservation, because of my feelings of guilt that I have come back and Dennis did not.

"Dennis was killed when his armored vehicle passed over a mine during a very intense battle not far from Danang. Shortly after we began to gather Dennis' belongings I came upon a beautiful greeting card with red letters and hearts sent to him by his wife. I picked up the card, read the heartfelt sentiments, and then in a type of rage, I tore the card into pieces and threw it back into the smoldering ruins.

"I suppose I was hoping that the impulsive act would help to cover up my grief and also to symbolize the end of my friendship with Dennis. I cannot tell you how often I have regretted tearing up the card. I have wished so many times that I had brought it back to his family and to tell them that they meant so much to him.

"Tearing up the card did not help to heal my sorrow, but today I feel blessed that I have met those who most loved Dennis and who were most loved by him. My wife Anie and I thank you for hospitality and warm welcome. You honor all Vietnam veterans today, because you have dedicated this memorial to my dear friend Dennis Murray."

Your stories are needed! Pay dues to the Asst. National Finance Officer

Please help preserve the history of the Americal Division. Send your stories to Gary L. Noller, Vietnam Editor, [REDACTED] Kerrville, TX 78028, e-mail to [REDACTED]. Photos are welcome but cannot be returned. The deadlines for the next few issues are April 20, July 20, October 20, and January 20.

Southern Vietnam Veterans Reunion scheduled for May

The 1st annual Southern Vietnam Veterans Reunion will be held just south of Henderson, Texas on May 14-16, 2004. We have campgrounds from primitive to RV spots available. You can even rent an Indian TeePee upon availability. We are starting somewhat like Kokomo only on a smaller scale. There are many Vietnam veterans in this part of the country that have never been to a function like this.

The promoter is working real hard to make this a success I encourage all Americal Division Veterans to come and join us. The Vietnam Era band Vettz from Ohio has committed to be our feature band for Saturday night. We will have food venders as well as venders selling all sorts of military type items. Look us up on the internet at www.cratercraze.com and checkout our facilities.

PNC Ronald R Ellis

Operation LZ-Oceanside II

ADVA member and 1/1st Cavalry Association president Terry Babler is once again organizing a fun event for all veterans. Operation LZ-Oceanside II All Veterans Reunion is scheduled for April 21-25, 2004 at Melbourne Beach, FL. The event will be headquartered at the Holiday Inn Oceanside Resort and will be held in conjunction with the 17th Annual Florida Vietnam Veterans Reunion. The reunion is held at nearby Wickham Park in Melbourne, FL.

LZ Oceanside II features a special standard room rate of \$77 per night plus tax. Guests should make their own hotel reservations by contacting the Holiday Inn Melbourne Oceanside Resort, [REDACTED] Indialantic, FL. When calling be sure to mention you are with the Operation LZ/Oceanside II All Veterans Reunion to get the special discount rates. Reservations can be made by calling [REDACTED]

The event requires no pre-registration fee. Special attractions include pool parties, a hospitality room, veterans activities at Wickham Park, and a special airboat gator patrol. Event sponsors include 1st Squadron/1st Cavalry Association, 23rd Military Police Assn., Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Chapter, Great Lakes Regional Chapter Americal Division (WI, IN, IL, MN, MI), and VietNow National.

For more information call Terry at [REDACTED] or email [REDACTED]

Future national reunions

2004- Reno, NV. Rich Merlin
2005- Kansas City, MO. Dave Chrystal
2006- Portland, OR. Dave Hammond

May 26, 2003

Dearest Ronnie,

On this very special day, my thoughts go back to the day you were born, our first and only son. I prayed that God would bless you with good health and that with God's help your dreams would be fulfilled. With your love of life and desire to never waste a minute, this was happening for you. Then our country needed you to serve; this you were very proud to do. You wanted to do what your country needed you to do, then you wanted to come home and have a beautiful home and have a family of your very own.



Ronald Ward Herd
Co. B, 4/21st Inf., 11th LIB
KIA 5 August 1970

I knew when you went to Vietnam things would change. I knew the possibilities. Ronnie, your sister Connie and I had gone to the post office to mail you a package. I thought before we would be mailing you another package, you would be home, and you were; but not the way we had hoped. You only had 23 days then you would have your time served.

As we turned onto our street, I saw the military car sitting in front of our house. I knew my heart was going to be broken. When I got out of the car, I felt as if my very life was draining from my body. I could hardly stand on my feet.

I am a Christian, and I knew God would strengthen me in time. He has, but your absence will always be felt. You will always be kept alive in our hearts, in our memories, and our conversations. We will always wish for you. We also know that you are with our Heavenly Father and that you are at peace.

Ronnie, you know we have always been a close family; we always will be. You gave your all to help make this possible. I remember your words when your father and I were discussing our feelings and thoughts about the Vietnam War. You said, "Mom, we have to do this or communism will take away our freedom." You did all you could. My prayers are that more people will become aware of the cost of FREEDOM and respect it more, and HONOR all who have given so much to preserve it.

Ronnie, in one of your last letters, you were so anxious to get home. You mentioned the days you had left in Vietnam and then you

The above letter was written by Mrs. Ann Herd for Memorial Day, 2003. Her son, Ronald Ward Herd, was killed-in-action on August 5, 1970 while serving with Co. B, 4/21st Inf., 11th LIB, Americal Division. Ronald was 21 years old when he died.

Mrs. Herd is a member of the Gold Star Mothers of America, Inc. and currently holds the position of 1st Vice-President. In 2005 she is expected to become the president of the association.

The Gold Star Mothers of America, Inc. is an organization of mothers who have lost a son or daughter while serving in the

said, "God has taken care of me this long, he will take care of me the rest of my time over here." We have to think in God's merciful way, He did take care of you. I was assured that you were shot in the chest, that you died quickly and did not suffer. I have to console myself in this. There are many things worse than death. I know we will be together again; this is God's promise. Your father passed away a few years after you were killed, so you must be enjoying each other. I will bet you have been talking about some of the wonderful fishing and hunting trips you had together.

A group of Vietnam veterans who are known as the "Dusters, Quads, and Searchlights," had a desire to take any Gold Star Mother to the site where her son or daughter was killed for a personal little memorial. When I first read about this in our newsletter, I could not think about going. I was afraid it would be too emotional. After a while, I thought how could I not go where my son spent his last minutes alive in service to his country that he loved and respected so much.

The Dusters who accompanied the four of us Gold Star Mothers to Vietnam were very caring, compassionate men. They were concerned about our safety and comfort. We could observe them remembering things that happened while they served in Vietnam.

The Vietnamese were kind and friendly to us and helpful. As Mike, Bob and our guides and I walked down the trail that led us through rice fields, watermelon patches and passed the cattle through the ditch and into the thick bushes and trees, I felt if I looked real hard I might be able to see you. I was remembering the pictures you sent home to me. The scenery looked the same. I felt like calling out to you. As we walked on into the thick brush, Ronnie, Mike assured me that you were there on August 5, 1970, the day you were killed. You seemed so close to me. Spiritually, you are always close to me.

As we, Mike, Bob and myself stood in this spot close to the thick brush, I asked Mike and Bob to hold my hand because I wanted to pray to your Heavenly Father. I wanted to thank Him for letting us have the joy of having you with us for the twenty-two years of your life. I thanked Him for the Dusters who made our trip to Vietnam possible and asked God to take us all home safely. And Ronnie, I said a prayer for you. I thanked you for being such a wonderful son. Ronnie, you never gave us one heartache while you were growing up. I told you to never forget how much everyone who knew you loves you.

I could not help wishing that I could have carried your cross for you. It will always grieve me that I could not be there to hold you and comfort you at your homecoming. This is the way we are supposed to look at death. But, oh Ronnie, how you are missed.

I promise I will visit the Veterans Hospital and do anything I possibly can for any of your comrades. I feel you will be proud to know this. Every time I am around a Vietnam veteran, I wonder if he could have been with you at the time of your death. Not to question him, but just to know someone who was with you. This would give me a certain kind of peace.

When I speak to some of your friends, this is what I hear, "that you were more patriotic than they were, and that you were a real inspiration to them." What a way to be remembered.

My dear son, if you could be at your Nation's Capital and see this Memorial Service you would be so overwhelmed.

The love I feel for you will always be tucked deep in my heart.

Mother

military. The organization's motto is "honor the dead by serving the living." They regularly participate in local and national veterans events and provide services to veterans and their families.

The organization receives no government funds and is requesting public donations to continue their work. Donations can be sent to Gold Star Mothers of America, Inc., Headquarters, 2128 Leroy Place NW, Washington, D.C., 20008.

See Mrs. Herd's website at www.goldstarmothers.us/ for more photos. Thanks to Carl J. Zarsyski for his assistance with this story.



Americal Division veterans gather for a group photo at the 2004 Winterfest in New Glarus, WI

Americal Division veterans were well represented at the Winterfest 18th Annual All Veterans R & R Reunion & Festival. The event was held January 15-18, 2004, in New Glarus, Wisconsin. New Glarus, population 2000, is known for its various Swiss festivals throughout the year. Shops, bars, restaurants, and lodging are all located within walking distance of one another.

Winterfest began in 1986 as a community event. In 1987 Wisconsin Vietnam Veterans Chapter 3 took over the organization of the festivities. Fifty-three veterans attended that year. WVV Chapter 3 has organized every Winterfest since 1987. Among the organizers are John Mathews, Brian Miller and Terry Babler.

The 2004 Winterfest had an attendance of approximately 400 people representing 21 states. As many as 28 states have been represented in any one year. About one-third of the attendees this year was Americal Division veterans and families. Over 110 were in attendance at the Saturday night banquet.

Among the Americal veterans were Great Lakes Chapter officers and members; ADVA National Commander Rich Scales; Chapter Commanders Bob Kapp, John Mathews, Rich Merlin, and David Chrystal; Executive Board members John Murphy and Terry Babler; and Past National Commanders John (Dutch) DeGroot and Ed Marsh

"Early birds" arrive on Thursday for a gathering at a local pub. Events kick-off on Friday with hospitality rooms, the famous Burning of Winter ceremony complete with Swiss singing and Alphorn blowing, and a night-time parade down Main Street. In spite of occasional inclement weather, including one year with 70 below zero wind chill, the parade has never been cancelled. A dance at the fire station closes out Friday night.

The Village-Wide Poker Run starts on Saturday. Veterans gather playing cards from local businesses and then play their best five. Over 50 prizes were awarded from prizes donated by businesses in New Glarus. A fundraising auction is held at midday and provides necessary funding to ensure the success of Winterfest. Over \$8,000 was raised from the auction in 2004. Funds are used to bring in special guests such as Diane Carlson Evans, founder of the Women's Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Donations are also made to local charities such as scholarship funds, food pantries, the Vet Center, battered women's shelter, and New Glarus Fire Department

The main event is the Saturday banquet at the New Glarus Hotel. This year a comedian provided entertainment for the program. This was followed by a raffle and dance on Sunday morning the hotel restaurant was filled with veterans and their families for a final visit

and goodbye. Many old friendships revisited and new friendships made.

Veterans like the town's friendly atmosphere, small town appeal, and the many events planned especially for them. The community of New Glarus has come to view veterans as a dedicated and profitable group to have in town. The dates for the 19th annual event are January 14-17, 2005.



PNC John (Dutch) DeGroot posing by a Vietnam photo of himself in a New Glarus pub. Dutch is a well known out-of-town celebrity.

For the past ten years there has been a running bet between Green Bay Packer fans living in New Glarus and Dutch DeGroot of Chicago. Dutch is an avid Chicago Bears fan. The winner of the bet is the one whose team scores the most points during the regular season. So far the Packer fans have won the bet every year. To pay the bet, Dutch, has to wear Packer clothing during the Winterfest activities.

Americal veterans will undoubtedly turn out again for next year's Winterfest. For more information on the 2005 event, contact Terry Babler. Information and photos for this story was provided by Terry Babler, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry, 1970.

NND873541
 DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
 HEADQUARTERS, 196TH INFANTRY
 BRIGADE (LIGHT) (SEPARATE)
 APO San Francisco 96256
 AVBFSC 16 February 1968
 SUBJECT: Combat Action Report (RCS
 AVDF-GC 1)
 TO: Commanding General Americal
 Division
 ATTN: AVDF-GC (DOT)
 APO S.F. 96374

1. NAME OR TYPE OF OPERATION:
 WHEELER/WALLOWA

2. DATES OF OPERATION:
 3 - 10 January 1968

3. LOCATION:
 MAP Vietnam 1:50,000, Series L7014, sheet
 6640 III, grid AT9024 to AT9927, SONG LAU
 River Valley from HIEP DUC to NUI LAC
 SON.

4. COMMAND HEADQUARTERS:
 196th Light Infantry Brigade

5. REPORTING OFFICER:
 196th Lt Inf Bde - COL Louis Gelling;
 2-1 Inf - LTC Hammond, Lyman H. Jr.;
 3-21 Inf - LTC Champlain, Allen R.;
 B Co - CPT Connally John F.;
 A Co - CPT Yurchak, Paul N.;
 C'Co - CPT Thomasson, John T. (WHA);
 B Co - CPT Belcher, Roland (KHA);
 4-31 Inf - LTC Cully, Frederick R.;
 A Co - CPT Byers, Larry R.;
 B Co - CPT Speer, William L.;
 C Co - CPT Stringham, Joseph S.;
 D Co - CPT Richards, James F. (WHA)

6. TASK ORGANIZATION:
 The control headquarters was the 196th Light Infantry Brigade with no units detached. The following units were attached/OPCON.
 1st Squadron, 1st Armored Cavalry (-) C Troop,
 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry.

7. SUPPORTING FORCES:
 Forces used in support of the 196th Light Infantry Brigade during this operation consisted of air strikes from the 3rd Combat Support Group and artillery from the following USA artillery battalions:
 3d Bn, 82 Arty (105 How);
 3d Bn, 16th Arty (155 How);
 3d Bn, 18th Arty (8" How and 175 Gun), and
 1st Bn, 21st Arty (105 How).

a. USAF: The Air Force flew 16 (37 sorties) preplanned missions, 15 (32 sorties) immediate missions and 21 radar directed missions against troop concentrations, supply routes and routes of egress. The Air Force gunships and flareships were used in support each night of the operation providing continuous illumination of the battlefield and suppressive fires during enemy attacks. Three B-52 strikes were flown against troop concentrations in the area immediately west of the operational area with unknown results.

b. USA Artillery: Army artillery accounted for 141 enemy killed while fire 12,960 rds against enemy forces and enemy routes of egress.

8. INTELLIGENCE:

a. Weather: During the period 3 - 10 January 1968 the weather in the area of operations was influenced by the northeast monsoon. Increased cloudiness and ceiling of 5,000 feet were common with ceiling of 2,000 feet occurring during periods of darkness and early morning hours. Visibility of zero to three miles was common in the early morning hours on the mountains and in the valleys of the operational area while afternoon visibility increased to 5 - 7 miles.

b. Terrain:

(1) Observation and fields of fire - The rice lands offered excellent to poor fields of fire with the limiting factors being the numerous dikes, the low hills offered excellent fields of fire while the mountains and valleys which are characterized by brush and grass 1-3 meters high offered fair to poor observation and fields of fire. Air observation was good in the rice lands and poor in the heavily canopied forest.

(2) Cover and concealment - Concealment was poor in rice land with fair cover provided by the paddy dikes. Cover and concealment in the rolling plains was excellent to poor depending on vegetation and relief. Excellent concealment and fair cover was provided in the mountain forest.

(3) Obstacles - Obstacles to foot traffic were provided by flooded rice paddies and dense vegetation in the mountains.

(4) Key terrain features - High ground on either side of the valley controlled avenues of approach and offered excellent observation and fields of fire. Populated areas were considered key terrain to the enemy.

(5) Avenues of approach - Streams and valleys offered adequate avenues of approach for foot traffic in all directions. In the heavily canopied mountain areas, helicopter landing zones and airborne drop zones were limited.

c. Enemy capabilities, strength and disposition:

The enemy was capable of launching a Division size attack (2nd NVA Div) along the western and northwestern border of the Brigade AO, while reinforced Bn sized attack capabilities in the northeastern part of the Brigade AO were possessed by the 70th Main Force Bn supported by two local forces companies and one Bn from the 3d NVA Regiment. One local forces Bn and five local force companies were capable of harassing friendly operations. Village and hamlet guerrillas also possessed a harassing capability and were capable of supporting main force/NVA units in terms of resupply and fortification. Enemy disposition and strengths the first week of Jan 1968 were as follows:

UNIT STRENGTH LOCATION
 2nd NVA Div 7,700; HQ 700 AT8831
 33rd Arty Regt/2nd NVA Div 1,800 HQ 125
 AT9231
 GK 30 Sig Bn 220 AT9132
 GK 31 AA Bn (12.7mm) 380 AT9231
 GK 32 RR Bn (75mm) 200 AT9429
 GK 33 Mort Bn (81/82mm) 230 AT9032
 GK 40 Engr Bn 200 BT1739
 1st MF Regt/2nd NVA Div 1,700 HQ 350
 AT8724
 40th Bn 450 AT9028
 60th Bn 450 BT0621

70th Bn (Independent) 350 BT2337
 90th Bn 450 BT1331
 21st NVA Regt/2nd NVA Div 1,800 HQ 300
 AT9439
 60th Bn (AKA -11th Bn) 500 AT9540
 70th Bn (AKA-22nd Bn) 500 AT9839
 70th Bn (AKA-33rd Bn) 500 AT9940
 3rd NVA Regt/2nd NVA Div 1,600 HQ 300
 AT8833
 1st Bn (AKA-7th Bn) 450 BT2739
 2nd Bn (AKA-8th Bn) 450 AT9034
 3rd Bn (AKA-9th Bn) 450 AT8935
 Main Force Units
 105th Bn 410 BT1042
 409th Sapper Bn 300 BT1912
 70th Co/409th Bn 120 BT2118
 Local Force
 72nd Bn 275 BT2118
 V-14th Co (AKA-K-53) 100 BT2514
 V-15th Co (AKA-K-51) 100 BT1836
 K-52nd Co 100 BT1419
 K-54th Co (AKA V-12) 100 BT2324
 74th Co 120 BT2116
 75th Co (AKA K-55) 110 BT3128
 78th Co (Poss) 120 BT2346

9. MISSION:

Search for and destroy enemy forces within the SONG LAU River Valley and interdict enemy movement along the valley from HIEP DUC to NUI LAC SON.

10. EXECUTION:

On 2 January 1968 the Brigade conducted extensive S&D operations throughout the AO. A CA was conducted by C/4-31 into a cold LZ vic AT94213. Significant enemy action was confined to the interdiction of highway #1 at two locations, (BT217362 and BT264277), by destroying the culverts at those locations.

Reference MAP #1
 - night locations 2 Jan 68. At 0145 on the morning of 3 Jan 68 LZ's ROSS and LESLIE came under attack and shortly thereafter FSB WEST reported incoming hand grenades and mortar rounds.

Reference MAP #2
 - night locations 6 Jan and planned movement on 7 Jan 68. There was no significant ground contact reported on 7 Jan. However shortly after midnight TAM KY came under a mortar attack and at 0200 CHARGER HILL received 18 mortar rounds. On the night of the seventh LZ's ROSS and LESLIE reported incoming mortars/rockets and at 2305 word was received that DA NANG was under rocket attack.

Reference MAP #3
 - day movement and night locations 7 Jan 68. Reference MAP #7
 - B/4-31, D/3-21 opns on morning of 8 Jan 68. On the morning of 8 Jan 68 D/3-21 and B/4-31 started sweeping opns as shown on MAP #7. By noon D/3-21 was in position vic AT958265

where they stopped for lunch. One of the helicopters resupplying D/3-21 at lunch reported observing 10 VC vic AT959268. D/3-21 sent 3 10 man teams (1 from each plat) north to check this out. They were soon followed by the D/3-21 command group and shortly behind them the remainder of the company less the weapons platoon.

Reference MAP #8
 - 31 position. Contact was broken and the link-up completed at 0611 and both companies started sweeping operations in the area of contact. D and C companies lost a total of 4 KHA, 14 WHA-evac and 2 WHA-minor. Enemy casualties are unknown. During the remainder of the day 4-31 Inf was reinforced by two rifle companies. C/2-1 Inf conducted a CA into an LZ secured by A/4-31 vic AT961262 while A/3-21 walked into 4-31 AO through the NUI LAC SON NFZ.

Reference MAP #3
 - day movement and night locations. During the daylight hours of 5 Jan 68 units in the 4-31 AO, in particular C/2-1 Inf reported SA, AW, and A/A fire periodically. However, no firm contact was gained during daylight hours.

Reference MAP #4
 - night locations 5 Jan 68. At 1800 hrs C/2-1 came in contact at their night location in what was to be the longest sustained contact of the NVA offensive. The Co. commander and one platoon leader were the first casualties and shortly after they were dusted off the company was heavily engaged with the enemy (1856) and trying to move south. C/2-1 Inf's situation deteriorated rapidly and within 2 hours (2040) the company reported their perimeter had been penetrated. A/4-31 was moved from night positions to reinforce

C/2-1 and by 044 6 Jan 68 had completed the linkup and was itself taking casualties in the continuing attack. A/4-31 and C/2-1 remained in heavy contact until 0431. At 0545 A/4-31 reported that they received fire only when they tried to move in search of personnel from C/2-1. This type of delaying and harassing fire continued as late as 0915 hrs. At 0930 6 Jan 68 C/2-1 Inf was declared combat ineffective having suffered 19 KHA, 28 WHA-evac, and 32 WHA-minor vs. 186 enemy KIA (BC), and was returned to the 2-1 FSB. 4-31 Inf was reinforced by two rifle companies during the afternoon of 6 Jan with B/2-1 conducting a CA into an LZ vic AT965265 and D/3-21 CAing into vic AT966264. D/4-31 returned to FSB WEST and B/4-31 moved from the FSB to replace D Co in the valley.

Reference MAP #5
 - night locations 6 Jan and planned movement on 7 Jan 68. There was no significant ground contact reported on 7 Jan. However shortly after midnight TAM KY came under a mortar attack and at 0200 CHARGER HILL received 18 mortar rounds. On the night of the seventh LZ's ROSS and LESLIE reported incoming mortars/rockets and at 2305 word was received that DA NANG was under rocket attack.

Reference MAP #6
 - day movement and night locations 7 Jan 68. Reference MAP #7
 - B/4-31, D/3-21 opns on morning of 8 Jan 68. On the morning of 8 Jan 68 D/3-21 and B/4-31 started sweeping opns as shown on MAP #7. By noon D/3-21 was in position vic AT958265

where they stopped for lunch. One of the helicopters resupplying D/3-21 at lunch reported observing 10 VC vic AT959268. D/3-21 sent 3 10 man teams (1 from each plat) north to check this out. They were soon followed by the D/3-21 command group and shortly behind them the remainder of the company less the weapons platoon.

Reference MAP #8

- movements after lunch 8 Jan 68. At vic AT959258 D/3-21 received SA fire from the west and 10 men were sent to suppress it. The remainder of the company continued north across the river and then SW and crossed the river again. At this point the company came under intense SA, AW and mortar fire from vic AT953271. The company was split during this action and shortly thereafter (1448?) radio communication with the company was lost. A/3-21 was sent north to assist D/3-21 and at 1331 gained contact vic AT955268

with one platoon of VC with one 60mm mortar and five machine guns. B/4-31 was also in contact at this time on the high ground NE of D/3-21. By 1845 all contact was broken and A/4-31, A/3-21 and D/3-21 had linked up vic AT960269. C/4-31, B/2-1 and B/4-31 had linked up vic AT965272. D/3-21 and A/3-21 suffered 13 KHA, 5 WHA-evac, 13 WHA-minor vs. 70 enemy KIA (BC).

Reference MAP #9
 - night locations 8 Jan 68 (B and C/3-21 Inf located at AT992292)
 The situation in the valley during the night was quiet but FSB WEST reported continued sporadic mortar fire.

TASK ORGANIZATION -
 LISE - B/4-31, C/4-31, B/2-1
 HERMAN - A/4-31, A/3-21, D/3-21
 Reference MAP #10

- contact on 9 Jan 68
 On the morning of 9 Jan Task Force LISE and HERMAN started sweeping toward the west from their night locations. Both Task Forces had a 200-400 meter front and had one flank on the river. C/4-31 was on the northern flank of LISE and A/3-21 was the northern flank of HERMAN. At 1025 C/4-31 started drawing heavy SA and AW fire from their north, and at 1117 A/3-21 gained heavy contact from the north. A/4-31 moved from their position on the southern flank of HERMAN to each flank of A/3-21 and together D/3-21 broke contact and moved SE at 1205. With the remainder of Task Force LISE providing covering fire from their south, C/4-31 moved south, joined B/4-31 and B/2-1 and Task Force LISE moved south of the river breaking contact. The remainder of the NVA Offensive consisted of sporadic mortar fire directed at TF HERMAN and FSB WEST during the night of 9-10 Jan 68. Shortly before nightfall on 9 Jan (1600) D/2-35 Inf arrived at FSB WEST to provide additional security there and Task Force BRAVO (B and C 3-21) from the 3-21 Inf moved into the high ground north of TF HERMAN and LISE and established night positions as shown on MAP #11.

Reference MAP #11

- night locations 9 Jan 68
 11. RESULTS:
 Friendly losses. Enemy losses.
 64 US KHA 191 VC KIA (BC),
 92 US WHA-evac 238 NVA KIA (BC),
 112 US WHA-minor 1
 0 gas masks captured,
 28 individual wpns captured,
 3 crew-served wpns captured,
 45 HG captured,
 299 small arms rds captured,
 2.5 tons rice captured.

12. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS:
 a. Operations against the NVA regulars during the period 3-10 Jan 68 indicated a significant difference in the type operations conducted by the NVA as opposed to the Viet Cong. The NVA are well equipped, well trained and will stay and fight whenever they are dug in or when they gain an advantage over an American unit. These operations indicated the NVA will attempt to have small groups of soldiers fire on an American unit and then withdraw from contact. Units which pursue the enemy force are frequently ambushed, cutoff from the main body and then engaged with heavy volumes of direct and indirect fire.

b. During the period 3-10 Jan 68 heaviest contact was made during the hours of darkness. The full effectiveness of available combat support was not realized because supporting agencies had difficulty identifying limits of unit positions. The currently available pyrotechnic devices were found to lack effectiveness when units are under fire and require immediate support.
 c. All types of air support were required in order to resist enemy attacks during the early part of Jan 68. The concentration of all resources in a localized area operating on the supported companies frequency created a complicated control problem as well as hazardous conditions for air supporting agency due to the possibility of being hit by friendly artillery/mortar fires.

13. RECOMMENDATIONS:
 a. When operating against confirmed NVA forces units should not pursue retreating enemy forces with less than a company sized force. Two company task force operations are advisable so that the companies within reinforcing distance of each other.

b. It is believed that electro luminescent tape and strobe light, Light Marker Distress FSN 6230-06705209 would prove to be a more satisfactory means of positively identifying friendly front lines than the methods presently being used.

c. Air support agencies should be controlled on the fire direction net of the Inf Bn being supported. This would allow all aircraft to be kept abreast of friendly fires through the Bn's artillery LNO as well as allow the supported Co. direct communications with the supporting agency through the company's Forward Observer's radio.

FOR THE COMMANDER
 11 Incls: THOMAS M. FINNEGAN
 Maps I - 11 ILT, Infantry, Asst Adj

Hats off to Ron Leonard of the 25th Avn. Bn. for obtaining these documents for the Americal Division Veteran's Association.

You can purchase a compact disc (CD) containing hundreds of documents related to the history of the Americal Division in Vietnam. Documents can be opened and read on computer word processors such as MS Word and WordPerfect.

Send \$15 for each CD to Mr. Les Hines, Vietnam Historian, [REDACTED] Des Moines, IA, 50312.

ADVA RENO REUNION EVENT DESCRIPTIONS

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Make your hotel reservations directly with John Ascuaga's Nugget Resort Hotel Casino. Call [REDACTED] and identify yourself as being with the Americal Division Veterans Association. Room rates are \$85.00 per night. The hotel is located on Interstate 80 and just 10 minutes from the Reno-Tahoe International Airport. The Nugget also offers free shuttle service.

AIRLINE INFORMATION (10% DISCOUNT AVAILABLE)

American Airlines [REDACTED] Discount code S5464AD
Southwest Airlines [REDACTED] Discount code H0306

AUTO RENTAL

Avis 1-800-331-1212 Discount code AWD-D003737

MEMORY BOOK (Delivered approximately 90 days after reunion)

First Class, professionally upgraded, in full color, at least 24 pages including individual, unit, and event pictures.

TAHOE TOUR (FRIDAY, 6/25/04 8:30AM-3PM)

Scenic Lake Tahoe Tour. At an elevation of over 6200 feet, with an average depth of well over 900 feet, the lake is the highest, deepest alpine lake in the world. Visit Emerald Bay, the most photographed natural setting in the world. Feed Rainbow Trout at the Truckee River Headwaters. Enjoy some of the fabulous estates built on the lake. You will pass by the Kaiser Estate, where Godfather II was filmed. A lunch stop will be made at a lakeside restaurant where you'll enjoy a spectacular view.

VIRGINIA CITY (FRIDAY, 6/25/04 9:30AM-2:30PM)

Virginia City – once The Richest Place On Earth. Explore the history of the Great Bonanza Trail and the gold-seekers who blazed the first trails for the new settlers in the area. You will be escorted through the town – see historic mines, the old red light district, and the mansions built by the mine owners. Optional individual activities include mansion tours, or exploring the old-time shops and gambling halls still in operation. A lunch stop will be made in Carson City.

FRIDAY NIGHT RODEO (6/25/04 7PM-9PM)

"Americal Goes To The Rodeo!" Billed as the richest and wildest in the West, the rodeo is about 5 miles from the hotel. Shuttle buses are included and will be available from 5-11PM. Part of the rodeo experience includes the many different food booths, western booths, and arts and crafts booths located at the rodeo. Your ticket also admits you to the carnival located at the rodeo. The actual rodeo runs from 7-9PM, so you have plenty of time to enjoy some great food and beer. Light jacket recommended.

DONNER AND TRUCKEE TOUR (SATURDAY, 6/26/04 8:30AM-1:30PM)

At a crossroads of Western History, the Donner-Truckee area is rich in pioneer lore. A visit will be made to Donner Memorial Historic Park and its fine museum. It was here during the winter of 1846-47 that members of the famous westward-bound "Donner Party" played out their tragic rendezvous with destiny. After the museum, you will head to Truckee to browse the unique shops that only Truckee has to offer, then head for your lunch stop in historic downtown Truckee.

ART TOURING (SATURDAY, 6/26/04 9AM-12PM)

Centered in the Reno/Carson City area, you will be pleasantly surprised by the diversity and quality of the art available in Reno. Whether you are interested in gallery hopping or a serious collector, you'll find that each gallery and studio is unique. Among the studios to visit are a sculpting studio, weaving/basket making studio, watercolor gallery, tapestry gallery, and a wearable arts studio. The tour will visit those galleries and studios featuring the best available exhibits. Lunch is not included with the tour.

SATURDAY NIGHT DINNER DANCE (6/26/04 6PM-11PM)

A world class, award winning buffet dinner with carving stations and a dessert bar second to none. Live Band and Dancing. Entertainment featuring the "Silver Tappers" and much more. Recommended dress is business casual.

Make check payable to: "Americal Far West Chapter" and mail to:
Pat Levy [REDACTED]

Spanish Springs, NV 89436-7266

You will receive confirmation of your payment by mail.

Reunion Chairman
Rich Merlin
[REDACTED] (Home)
[REDACTED] (Work)
[REDACTED] (E-mail)

AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM RENO, NEVADA JUNE 24-27, 2004

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Spouse or Guest Names _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ War served in with Americal _____ Unit _____

REGISTRATION: Early Bird Special

Before 5/1/04: \$20 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____

After 5/1/04: \$30 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____

MEMORY BOOK: \$20 PER COPY X # OF COPIES () \$ _____

TWO OPTIONAL BUS TRIPS FOR FRIDAY, 6/25/04, CHOOSE ONE ONLY:

TAHOE TOUR: \$55 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
8:30AM – 3PM, includes lunch

VIRGINIA CITY: \$35 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
9:30AM – 2:30PM, includes lunch

FRIDAY NIGHT RODEO: \$25 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
7PM – 9PM, Shuttle Buses: 5PM-11PM

TWO OPTIONAL SPOUSE BUS TRIPS FOR SAT, 6/26/04, CHOOSE ONE ONLY:

DONNER & TRUCKEE TOUR: \$35 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
8:30AM – 1:30PM, includes lunch

ART TOURING: \$45 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
9AM – 12PM, lunch not included

SATURDAY NIGHT DINNER DANCE 6/26/04: \$35 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
6PM - 11PM

TOTAL: \$ _____

Make check payable to:
"Americal Far West Chapter" and mail to:
Pat Levy [REDACTED]

Spanish Springs, NV 89436-7266

You will receive confirmation of your payment by mail.

Reunion Chairman
Rich Merlin
[REDACTED] (Home)
[REDACTED] (Work)

To a soldier in Iraq

© Gary L. Noller

Dear Mike,

I wanted to write a few things for you as you go to war in Iraq. I hope that something in what I say will be useful to you. I learned many things when I was in the Army and I hope I can provide you with a little free advice and wisdom. I wrote on ten things. Maybe there should be more, maybe less. Use what you like, disregard the rest.

I wish you luck on your assignment and I will pray for you safety. Please let me know if I can do anything to be of service. Please take care of yourself and your buddies.

Uncle Gary

1. Do your best. That is all you can do.

This may sound too simple. It is what my mother told me when I left for Vietnam in 1970. But I used this advice over and over. When confronted with a situation that demanded much of me I simply resorted to do my best. It always worked.

If you do your best you will never have to doubt yourself. You will never have to wonder if you did what you should have done. No one can fault you for being a failure.

I may have slipped slightly a time or two, but I am happy that I can look back on my actions and know that I was not slack. It was not always easy. In fact, quite often it was very difficult to do my best. But the rewards were worth the effort.

2. Rely on your faith.

It is okay to ask God for guidance and to pray for his assistance. You can have peace of mind if you rely on your faith in God to protect you and to comfort you. Participate with others in your religious beliefs. It will bring you strength. Remember the old adage, "There are no Atheists in foxholes." If there is ever a time that you need a belief in God, this is it. Do not be afraid to use it.

3. You family will always support you.

You are the one that is traveling to a distant land but you are not going alone. Your friends and family will always be with you. In some ways they will be at a great disadvantage. You will know what is going on but they will not. Always stay in touch with them.

You can expect to receive letters of support and will be kept up on news of what is going on at home. Some of this will seem trivial compared to what you face each day. But it will also indicate that home is still a "normal" place and will be there when you return.

Do not be afraid to tell your family what you want them to know. Ask them for things that you need. They will never let you down.

4. Use your skills wisely, acquire new ones quickly.

The Army has provided you with the best training in the world. Use all of the things that you know and that you have been taught. But understand that the things that you know now are only part of what you will need to know. You must quickly learn much more. Take knowledge from those who have been there before you. Use your own ability to learn new skills. Never stop learning and never stop applying your new skills.

5. You really are a lot stronger than you think.

You never know how strong you are until you are tested. You have had challenges in your training and experiences but they are not great compared to what you will encounter. But you have not yet begun to tap your strength. You will be able to do things that will amaze yourself. You will find that you can go longer without sleep, without food, without water, and without a bath than you thought possible. You are at the top of your physical and mental form. You will be pushed to the limit and you will succeed. In later years you will only wish that you were as sharp as you were when you faced these tremendous demands.

6. Be there for your buddies, they will be there for you.

It is almost impossible to make it by yourself. But you are not alone in the boat. There are others around you that are in the same situation as you. You must band together and help each other to overcome the obstacles of the day. When one is weak, the strong must pick up the load. When your buddy needs it you will give him the food off your plate, the shirt off your back, and the sleep from your rest. I guarantee he will do it for you.

You must watch for each other's safety. You only have eyes in the front of your head. Your buddy is your eyes in the back of your head. At times you will literally stand back to back to protect one another. You will get to know your buddies better than you have ever known anyone in your life. You will forge friendships that will last the rest of your life. You will maintain your humanity through your close association with your buddies. What you won't do for yourself you will do for your buddy.

7. Always keep your values.

You have acquired important values through your family, your religion, your school, your community, and the military. Always keep these values. There is a right and there is a wrong. You know the difference. This will not change because you are far from home and in demanding situations. Right is still right, wrong is still wrong. Do not let new and unfamiliar circumstances cause you to question your

values. Do not accept the values of those that are weaker than you. Do not give in to the pressure of a tough situation and go along with something you know is not right. Do the right thing. You know what it is.

8. Follow good leaders, be a good leader.

It is always hard to know why leaders do the things they do. But you will always know a good one when you have one. Rely on their competence and their skills to accomplish the mission in the safest and most efficient manner. Follow a good leader anywhere he may go. He will look out for you.

You may not like your leader. But you still must follow his instructions as long as they are valid. But remember, a poor leader cannot make you do anything that is wrong.

Be a good leader to those that are given to you. They need clear instructions and unwavering support. They will do what they see you do. You must be a shining example of conduct and performance. You must take care of your subordinates. You have the power to get them the things they cannot get for themselves. Provide them with the things they need to accomplish their mission.

9. It doesn't take a hero.

That is the title of the book written by General H. Norman Schwarzkopf. Thousands of U.S. military are deployed in defense of our country. They are already heroes. They need not do anything but be themselves.

Be yourself. Do not try to be someone you are not. You may look and feel like Superman but he is just a fictional character. You will do a magnificent job just being yourself. Heroes do not end up heroes by trying to be heroes. They end up heroes by just being themselves.

10. Do it for something bigger than yourself.

There is something bigger than you that needs you. Your country needs you. Your buddies need you. The success of your mission needs you. Not everyone will do what you will do. You have recognized the need and you have accepted a selfless role.

Not many chose to do what you have chosen to do. That is what makes you a better person. You can be counted on to say, "Yes" when asked to do the difficult. You may not look upon yourself as significant, but what you will do will be significant.

Your rewards will be many. You will have the respect and gratitude of the nation you protect. But mostly you will be rewarded with a knowledge of yourself that is hard to achieve any other way. You will be able to stand in a crowd and stand taller than anyone else. You earned your freedom, and you earned theirs.

Editor's note: SGT Mike Unruh is serving with the 25th M.P. Co. in Kirkuk, Iraq.

Larry O'Boyle

ADVA Sergeant-at-Arms

In 1992 I attended the Americal Division Veterans Association national reunion held in Topeka, KS. I arrived about noon on Thursday and signed in for my registration packet. Not much was going on in the lobby so I decided to go to the hospitality room. There were a few people scattered about but the room was mostly quiet.

There was a cash bar in the corner so I went over to buy a beer. The bartender was chatting with a white haired gentleman that I did not know. The topic of conversation was a two-dollar bill with the word SAMPLE stamped on it.

I received my beer and was turning away from the bar when the gentleman I did not know handed me one of the two-dollar bills and asked me if I had ever seen one before. I said that I had although I did not know why it was stamped with the word SAMPLE. The fellow told me it was stamped that way because that is what it was and that I could keep it.

I was confused but at the same time I was intrigued. I introduced myself. The other gentleman introduced himself. He was Larry O'Boyle. We went to a nearby table and began a conversation.

One thing we had in common was that we both lived in California. I lived in Long Beach and Larry lived in Rancho Santa Margarita. Larry told me of his family's move from the East to California and his success in the check cashing business. I told him about my many job transfers, my present work in the Port of Long Beach, and how living in California was a bit of a culture shock for a native Kansan.

Larry and I passed each other from time to time in the next few days. We would stop and chat about the reunion activities. We had a good time. Before leaving the reunion Larry asked me for my address. He said his family was having a reunion in a few weeks and he would send me an invitation. I gave him my address but I really did not expect to receive an invitation to somebody else's family reunion.

But a couple of weeks later I received an invitation in the mail to attend the O'Boyle family reunion. I was to be held at Larry's daughter's house just a few miles from where I lived. I thought to myself, "If he has the sincerity to ask me to his family reunion then I will just have to go."

The reunion was well underway by the time that I arrived. I was greeted at the door by one of Larry's relatives and introduced to everyone. I met Larry's wife Gloria and their children and grandchildren. Several friends were there too including a few WWII Americal veterans. Everyone was having a great time and I immediately felt at ease.

I enjoyed meeting everyone and conversing with them. One of Larry's daughters asked me how I knew him. I told her that we were in the same Army division. This brought a quizzical look. I finally figured it out and added that we were in different wars.

The day went fast and everyone had a great time. I was very happy to have finally made some friends in California. I did not seem so alone anymore.

I did not stay in Long Beach very long. In late 1993 I moved to New Mexico and after a few months there I moved to Texas. But I stayed in touch with Larry and Gloria. I made two or three visits to California in the next few years and was happy to be invited to stay with Larry and Gloria. I was even able to attend another of their family reunions.

Each time I visited the O'Boyles I would get special treatment. One time Larry took me to the pier at San Clemente and drove me past Richard Nixon's former home. I also remember going with him to a rental house near the ocean that he was showing to prospective tenants. One night we made a couple of stops to pick up checks from his son's stores in Orange County. We then proceeded to deliver them to a place in the north part of Long Beach. I don't think Larry ever had an idle moment.

On another visit I met Larry's boyhood friend from Philadelphia. I think his name was Pete. He was staying a few weeks with Larry and Gloria because he did not like the winter weather back home. We sat up until 11:30 PM having great conversation. Then Larry said, "Are you ready to go?" I thought he meant go to bed but he meant go out to get a beer. I think we finally got to bed about 2:00 AM.

Larry always had his standard quips and lines. He loved to explain that "Póg mo thóin" was Celtic for "God bless the Pope." Of course, it didn't mean that at all. It means, "kiss my backside."

Larry loved having a good time and everyone loved being around him. But Larry also had another side that he probably did not show very often. I remember sitting with him at his kitchen table during one of my visits. Somehow we began to talk about our experiences during our war service. I told him of one particular day that was very hard for me. We had a forced march several miles, all night and all day, to get to an objective. The march was very hard and many were getting sick and dropping out from exhaustion. I told him how we had to help each other to struggle up a particularly tough hill. I looked over at Larry and he had tears running down his cheeks. I reached over and squeezed his hand but I never asked him why he was so affected by my story.

Larry was not perfect and he had his share of hardships in life. But he deeply loved his wife and family and was a true and loyal friend. He told me many times how he met Gloria and how they got started out. He loved to tell about the success of his children and grandchildren. On several occasions he told me that if I ever wanted to go into the check cashing business to let him know and he would help me do it. He and Gloria were always making plans to take trips to see family and friends.

Larry passed away in July 2003. I regret that Larry is gone. I wish we had many more years to visit with one another. But I know he is in a better place and we will see him when our time comes. But I have learned from Larry and I am a better person for knowing him. I try very hard to make friends of strangers and to be closer to friends and family I already have. This is what I saw Larry do and it is one of the reasons I will always remember him. He is in my thoughts and prayers.

Gary L. Noller
Vietnam Editor

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164th INFANTRY - MEDICAL DETACHMENT

I am looking for anyone that knew my Dad, Salvatore (Sam) Danna who served with the 164th Infantry, Medical Detachment, 1942-1945, from the Boston, MA area. Contact:

John Danna

Westmont, NJ 08108
email: [REDACTED]

COMPANY B - 182nd INFANTRY

I am looking for anyone that knew my father, 2nd Lt. Nataniel T. Toole. He was killed-in-action on March 15, 1945 while assigned to Co. B. 182nd Infantry Regiment on Cebu. If you knew him or have any information on him, please contact:

Thomas W. Toole

Coalville, UT 84017

COMPANY E - 182nd INFANTRY

Would like to contact anyone that served with my father, Charles (Charlie) Benson Skeen on Bougainville during the battle for Hill 260. Please contact:

Charlene Contant

Greenfield Park, NY 12435

SGT. DOLPHUS COLBERT

I would like to contact anyone that knew my father, Sgt. Dolphus Colbert. I found a photo of him with an Americal Division patch on his uniform and have started a research as to where he served during World War II. I know that he served on Bougainville. I know that he was awarded a Bronze Star during that campaign.

He served in Korea in the Air Force and later served in Vietnam, retiring in 1969. He passed away on December 7, 1987 from the effects of Agent Orange.

I submit this request with respect and reverence for those who served in this superb Army Division. I hope someone will contact me with any memories or stories they may have of my Dad.

I also served as a pilot in the air force and my son is presently in basic training and will serve in the Texas Air National Guard---three generations! Contact:

Capt. Edward Colbert

Arlington, TX 76016

Tel: [REDACTED]

101ST MEDICAL REGIMENT

I am looking for anyone that knew my father, Maurice E. Sullivan. He passed away in 1988 and was very proud to be an Americal vet. He was involved in activities right up until his death. Unfortunately, we never talked much about his service time. He started out in Camp Edwards on Cape Cod and was on New Caledonia, Guadalcanal, Fiji and Bougainville. I would love to hear from anyone that knew my father or any stories about him. Contact:

Nancy Murphy

Milton, MA 02186

132nd INFANTRY

I am looking for anyone that knew Pfc. Lloyd Franklin Melson, killed-in-action on Bougainville on March 27, 1944. I think he was assigned to A Company. He also served on Guadalcanal. I would like to contact anyone who knew him or who knows what unit he served with. Please contact:

Roger L. Melson

Bonifay, FL 32425

COMPANY K - 182ND INFANTRY

I would like to contact anyone that knew Pfc. Edwin J. Harris, 1941-1945.

Please contact me at:

Diane Harris

Hinsdale, MA 01235

Telephone: [REDACTED]

email: [REDACTED]

CAMOUFLAGE CLASS

By late July 1945 the Americal Division was well into training for the invasion of Japan. My unit, 2nd Platoon A Company, 182nd Infantry was attending a class on camouflage. We were seated on a small hill looking across a valley. About one hundred yards (100) out to our left stood a Philippine house with a small porch. About fifty feet (50) in front of the house, the Lieutenant who was holding the class, had placed two men in some bushes - one in camouflage clothing and the other with a regular uniform, to prove to us the advantage of camouflage.

And so the stage was set. The Platoon seated looking across the valley at the small house and the Lieutenant, with his back to the scene. the door of the house opened and two young girls came out on the porch and began to wave and flirt with the two soldiers. The two men responded with some flirting of their own and soon ran across the fifty feet and joined the girls on the porch. The Lieutenant talked on and on about camouflage. We sat with poker faces, while the girls and the soldiers disappeared inside of the house.

These lectures usually last about fifty minutes so the men had a good idea how much time they had. But the Lieutenant finished early and asked how many of us could see the man in the regular uniform or in the camouflage. We all said that we could not see anybody, so he turned around and looked and said, "that's funny, I can't see anyone either and I know where I placed them". At that moment the door opened and the men dashed back to where they had been in the bushes. The Lieutenant said, half out loud to himself, "What were those two doing in that house"? Just then the two girls came back out on the porch still waving and smiling at the two soldiers, and they in turn waved back. The Lieutenant just stood looking in disbelief for a moment or two, then said, "I leave you men alone for five minutes and off you go running after some girls. Now I have to call the Provost Marshal and have them moved out of there" We all pleaded to let them stay to no avail, that afternoon they were gone.

Joseph Mullen
A Company, 182nd Infantry

I COMPANY - 182nd INFANTRY

I want to congratulate Edward John Gekosky Jr. regarding his article entitled, 'Footsteps-A Walk With My Dad Part II'. It certainly was well written and informative.

However, I would like to add that there were others than G Company in that action with the bayonet attack on Babag Ridge.

My company which was I Company was also involved and possibly other elements that I am not aware of. At that time what was left of I Company was commanded by our 1st Platoon leader, Lt. Donald White, later Captain. For some reason I happened to have been first scout for the Company that day. We also thought the hill was called Hill 21.

It is true that we could make no headway once we got just below the Jap trench line. The hill was practically bare and the angle of the ground was such that you couldn't see any of the enemy and had no targets to shoot at. We tried throwing grenades but had no idea as to how far to throw them. We also tried a flame thrower.

I know that after dark, maybe around 11 or 12 P.M. the whispered command came down the combined companies line to fix bayonets, which we did. The Japs heard this and just dumped all kinds of explosives on us, such as satchel charges. We ran up the hill firing at the Japs as they stood up lighting the fuses and we must have killed a lot of them because at daylight the trenches were filled with dead Japs. I remember running and being knocked flat and got up and started running again. Also, we were passing grenades up the hill to the guys ahead.

Not a lot of us reached the trench line. I don't know how many were left in I Company when we started up the hill, I think maybe about 40 and I think about 9 of us reached the trench. Most everybody was wounded and Doc Gillespie was killed. I don't know any more than that about the casualties.

The next day wasn't much better because we were all pinned down all day, in our foxholes, by machine gun fire from the surrounding hills.

Sometimes I wonder if a few napalm bombs or a good shelling by our artillery could have accomplished the same thing.

Any way, I wanted to mention my comrades in I company and our Platoon Leader as having also been in that action.

Warren Saunders

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

The Media always reports that the "people have the right to know". I pose this question--"WHY DOES THE MEDIA REFER TO THE PEOPLE IN OUR COUNTRY AS FRACTURED AMERICANS?"

The Europeans, Asians, Africans, Mexicans and even the Canadians refer to us as "AMERICANS". By the Media we are called African-Americans, Mexican-Americans, Irish-Americans, Italian-Americans, etc. The Media also uses the term Jewish-Americans, Muslim-Americans and Catholic-Americans.

I am surprised the ACLU lets the Media use Fractured-American references. It would be interesting to get some voice from our patriotic politicians why, they to, refer to us as Fractured Americans. It is because their free use of the term will hopefully get them elected?

If we are trying to unite all citizens wouldn't it be better to call us as we are, simply, AMERICANS!

Edward L. Lesniak
Destroyer Escort
Sailors Association

REUNION - REUNION - REUNION

164th INFANTRY REGIMENT

September 17-18-19, 2004
Valley City, North Dakota

CONTACT

Patricia Drong Reunion Sec/Treas
Sanborn, North Dakota 58480
E-Mail: [REDACTED]

GUADALCANAL ONCE AGAIN A MILITARY SITE
By Richard C. Paddock
Los Angles Times-October 19, 2003

HONIARA, Solomon Islands-Six decades after U.S. soldiers landed on Guadalcanal to drive out the Japanese, foreign troops have come back to this South Pacific nation, this time to halt years of ethnic fighting.

The quick-and bloodless-restoration of law and order by heavily armed, five nation force led by Australia has won enthusiastic praise from the public.

The troops arrived in July at the invitation of the prime minister and parliament, and quickly took control of Honiara, the capital, and much of Guadalcanal. Without firing a shot, they arrested the country's most feared rebel leader and confiscated thousands of weapons, and began investigating corrupt government officials.

"People are very pleased to see the intervention here," said Victor Alikivara, 51, an unemployed electrician. "People venture everywhere now and go to places that used to be dangerous. the longer the intervention force stays the better it will become".

Ethnic Fighting

Since 1998, the former British colony has been plagued by fighting between two of the country's main ethnic groups: natives of Guadalcanal and immigrants from the island of Malaita. The conflict has claimed hundreds of lives and forced 30,000 to flee their homes.

The deployment of 2,225 troops and police officers from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga, and Papua New Guinea is the first step to rebuild the country. The multinational force is committed to remaining for a decade if necessary.

"The Solomon Islands was on the verge of becoming a failed state," said Nick Warner, an Australian diplomat who is serving as a special coordinator of the Solomon Islands intervention force. "I think we got here just in time."

The intervention signals an effort by Australia and New Zealand to play a greater role in the South Pacific, where several island nations struggle with poverty, graft and lawlessness.

Some Australian policy makers have called for a Pacific Union modeled after the European Union, with shared currency-Australian dollars-and greater police cooperation. But others accuse Australia of bullying smaller nations and attempting to "re-colonize" the Solomon Islands.

In August Australian Prime Minister John Howard visited the country for six hours and praised the multinational effort. "What we have achieved so far is only the first stage," said Howard, the first Australian leader to come to the Solomon Islands in a decade. "The next stage is a frontal assault on corruption and poor governance.

U.S Remembered Warmly

The Solomon Islands, 1,200 miles northeast of Australia, gained independence from Britain in 1978. With nearly 1,000 islands and more than 500,000 people, it is one of the largest nations in the South Pacific.

Older residents here still remember the United States warmly for its part in freeing the islands from the Japanese during World War II.

Some of the heaviest fighting of the war was on Guadalcanal where more than 1,700 U.S. soldiers and 20,000 Japanese died in 1942 and 1943. Dozens of sunken warships lie offshore in what is now called Iron Bottom Sound.

With the wartime construction of the Solomon Island first airport, the town of Honiara became the postwar capital, drawing immigrants from other islands and sowing the seeds of conflict.

Today, the country is mired in poverty, with most people subsisting on the crops they can grow and whatever fish they can catch. Nearly 80% of the population is illiterate, and government corruption is endemic. Most of the forests have been logged and the timber shipped abroad.

In 1998, fighting broke out between Guadalcanal natives, who had long believed that their land had been overrun by outsiders, and Malaitans, who had come to control much of the country's economy, government and police department.

Malaitan forces, backed by some police officers, staged a coup in 2000, but sporadic fighting continued in many parts of the country. Earlier this year, the Malaitan-dominated government recognized that it had little chance of restoring order and accepted an offer from the Australian-led coalition.

When the first troops landed July 24, they moved quickly to take control of Honiara and outlying districts of Guadalcanal.

Another of the mission's successes was negotiating the surrender of Harold Keke, the brutal leader of a native Guadalcanal faction that had been responsible for much of the violence. Keke, a former police officer who had refused to sign the peace accord, gave himself up when he realized that it would be futile to fight the Australians.

(Thirteen Australian C-130 transport planes landed troops on Henderson Field while the HMAS Manoora docked offshore and barges shuttled equipment, supplies and other troops ashore).

This article was copied from the Philadelphia Inquirer and sent in by Jack Warkow,

DR. ROBERT C. MUEHRCKE
"A GREAT AMERICAN"

Dr. Robert C. Muehrcke was born on August 4, 1921, passed away on November 9, 2003 in Waterloo, Wisconsin. Bob joined the Illinois National Guard in 1939 as a member of the 132nd Infantry Regiment which was inducted into the U.S. Army on March 1, 1941. The Regiment trained at Camp Forrest, Tenn., and participated in massive Louisiana maneuvers in the summer of 1941.

Following Pearl Harbor, the 132nd Infantry was one of the first units to begin offensive operations in the Pacific Theatre as part of Task Force 6814 leaving New York Harbor on January 22, 1942, a mere 46 days after Pearl Harbor, on a trip thru the Panama Canal to Melbourne, Australia. After 37 days at sea and a short stay in Australia, the 132nd Infantry Regiment was sent to secure the French Island of New Caledonia by preventing the Japanese landing and cutting the ocean supply lines from the U.S.A. to Australia and New Zealand. In the latter part of 1942 the 132nd Infantry was shipped to the Island of Guadalcanal to combat the battleworn and canny Japanese. Sgt. Muehrcke and the Regiment were now part of the famed Americal Infantry Division. After Guadalcanal was secured the Americal Division was shipped to the Fiji Islands, regrouped and then off to the Torokina River battles on Bougainville, Solomon Islands.

After Bougainville was secured Sgt. Muehrcke was sent to Ft. Benning, Georgia and received a commission as a 2nd Lt. and shipped to the battle scarred Island of Okinawa, 96th Infantry Division where he led his platoon to take the famed Conical Hill. Sgt. Muehrcke was wounded three times and awarded a Bronze Star with oak leaf Cluster for valor. Other awards included the Purple Heart and

the Combat Infantrymen's Badge.

Immediately after WWII, Bob Muehrcke registered at the University of Illinois and graduated with the Degree of Doctor of Medicine. Later Dr. Muehrcke became a professor of medicine at Rush Medical College and Director of Medicine Education at West Suburban Hospital Medical Center, Oak Park, Illinois. He published more than 135 clinical and research articles and several books. Three of his sons are physicians.

In 1985 Dr. Muehrcke, with assistance from his Army buddy, Joe Micek, published a book titled, "Orchids-in-the-Mud", a saga of the 132nd Infantry Regiment, Americal Division. The book relates to stories of civilian soldiers. (464 Pages)

Another major accomplishment started in 1989 when Dr. Muehrcke, with the assistance from his former Army buddy Joe Micek, (now an accountant), organized the "Guadalcanal Solomon Islands War Memorial Foundation". Over \$500,000 was raised by the Foundation with another \$500,000 furnished by the American Battle Monuments Commission. A very impressive, huge, Memorial Monument was built on the Island of Guadalcanal near the capital city of Honiara, on Skyline Drive, overlooking the Matanikau River. On August 7, 1992 a formal dedication of the Memorial Monument took place. (the 50th Anniversary of the landing on Guadalcanal). Many nations participated in the dedication ceremony and over 20,000 people were in attendance.

"ORCHIDS IN THE MUD"

If you head southwest from State Street, (a country mile or two) and travel through the sunset like a crimson cockatoo, you'll land your magic carpet where bougainvillea grows, where the frangipani blossoms and the monsoon downpour blows, the kunai grass grows deep upon the Numa-Numa trail, and the rusted junk of combat lies in the monolithic scale, a thousand souls are sleeping through the mist of years, and a thousand mothers waited through thousand nights of tears, be careful lest you step upon an undiscovered dud or you'll meet the everlasting and be an orchid in the mud.

(Sent in by Joe Micek, 132nd Infantry Regiment)

THE BORROWED COMPASS RETURNED

I served with Company G, 182nd Infantry from April 1944 through March 1945. I was Platoon runner under Lt. Michael (Rosie) O'Dea and Sgt. Monahan on Bougainville, Solomon Island and Leyte, PI.

On February 20, 1945 on Leyte, we were in the rear area and were called into combat when a Japanese main line of resistance was discovered in the Ormac Corridor. During the operation, G Company was held up by Japanese resistance for several hours when the Battalion commander ordered us to "proceed at all costs" on the morning of March 5th. Early that morning Lt. O'Dea asked me to scout out an escape route in the event we needed to make an orderly withdrawal. This was a wise decision because that route was used when we were forced to withdraw when we were being out-flanked by the enemy.

Before I left on the mission Sgt. Monahan loaned me his jackknife and compass; upon my return we were already moving out into an offensive attack on the Japanese. Thus Sgt. Monahan's property remained in my possession. During the withdrawal

I was wounded and had to be evacuated, eventually returning to the States. Following surgery I woke up to find my billfold, last letter from home and Ed's knife and compass wrapped up in my GI hankerchief. The beat up old knife is long gone but I held on to the compass for almost fifty-nine years always hoping it could be returned to its rightful owner.

In the last issue of the Americal Newsletter I read an article by David Colamaria, the oldest grandson of Sgt. Ed Monahan. I was delighted to have made contact with Ed but sad to learn that he had passed away in 1991, with the help of our Editor, James Buckle, I made contact with David and was not only able to share recollections of my association with Ed, but also to mail him the compass which he was delighted to receive. This brings closure to the long borrowed compass which is now where it belongs - with Ed's family.



L-R: Ken Lachmann, Unknown, Larsen, Arria, McMahon, Pvt. Woodward on log.

I would be delighted to hear from any of my old buddies. My address is:

Kenneth C. Lachmann

Albuquerque, NM 87111-1238

Tel: [REDACTED]

COMPANY E - 132nd INFANTRY

A business friend of mine located in Honiara, Guadalcanal, sent me an E-Mail indicating that a dog tag was found near Hill 27, Mt. Austen.

Further research through our records indicate that the dog tag belonged to Charles J. Bierbrodt, Co. E, 132nd Infantry Regiment, KIA on Hill 27.

We would appreciate your putting this information in the next issue of the Americal Newsletter. Perhaps someone, friends, family or relative would be interested in getting the dog tag.

Joseph G. Micek
Co. G, 132nd Inf Regt.

"Going Home" ... The Americal Final Edition ... Sunday, November 4, 1945

Published by the Americal Divisions I & E Section in Japan, here are some excerpts and caricature art provided in the final edition of the division's newsletter, issued shortly before its return to the U.S.A.

Edited by David W. Taylor

(Newsletter provided by Americal WWII vet Donald Buschman)

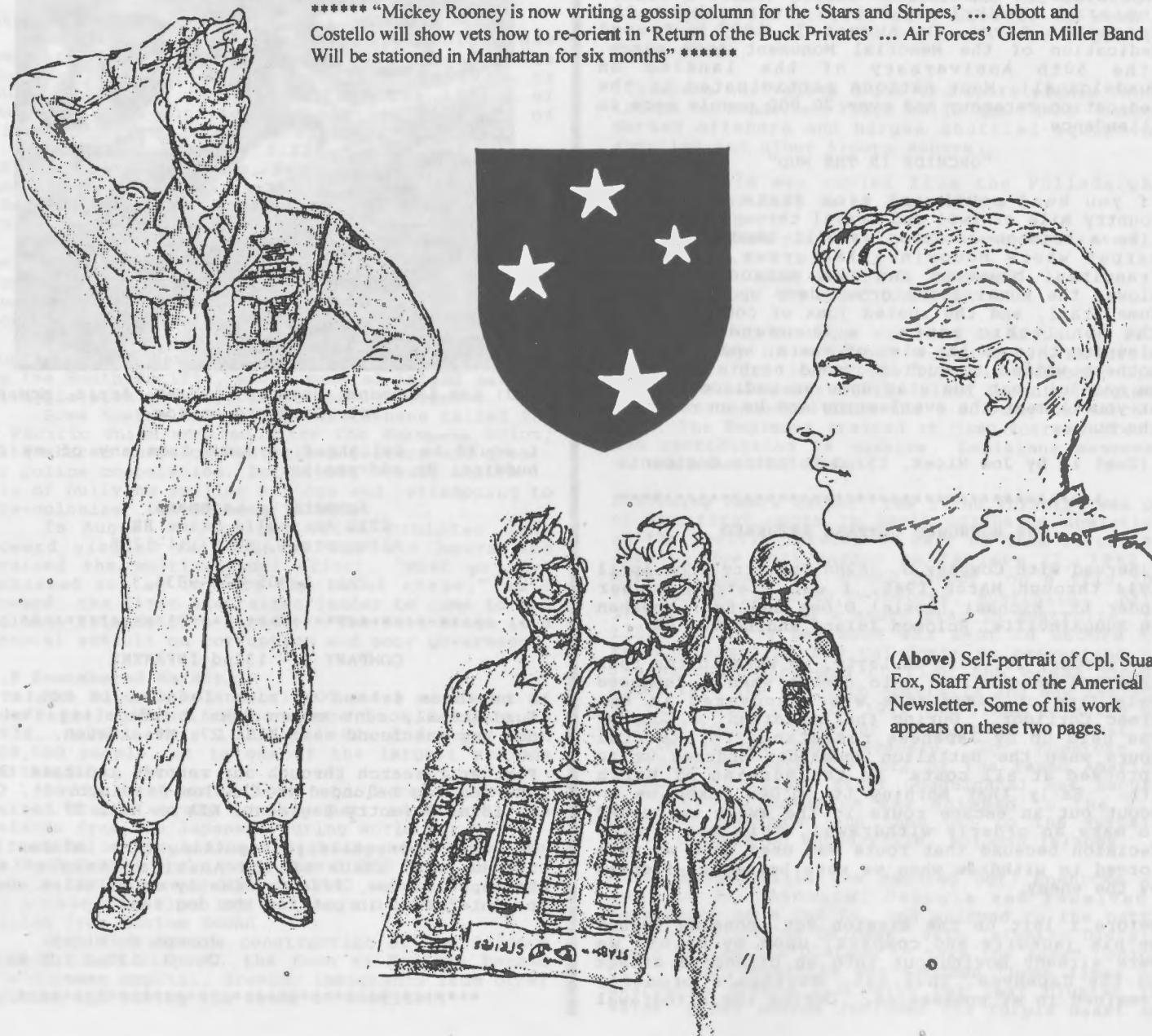
***** "It has been a source of deep pride and satisfaction to me to command this splendid division. In the course of nearly four years overseas, you have never once failed to carry out an assigned mission. By your courage and determination, you overcame tremendous obstacles to win important victories over a skillful and determined enemy. The names of the islands, on which you fought and defeated the enemy -- Guadalcanal, Bougainville, Leyte, Cebu, Negros, and others -- stand as a tribute to your guts and fighting skill.

It was a further tribute to your record that you were chosen for one of the earliest and most important occupation jobs. During your two months in Japan, you have acted with admirable restraint and have set an example for other occupation troops.

As the division prepares to leave for the United States, I would like to express my pride in your achievements; to congratulate you on a job well done; and to wish you good luck in the future." **William H. Arnold, Major General, United States Army** *****

***** "San Francisco appears to have the inside track on being chosen the headquarters of the United Nations organization but its competitors are turning on the heat. It's been voted that the permanent headquarters of the new world organization should be in the United States but the exact location is as yet undecided. China and Australia are in favor of San Francisco but Philadelphia is also receiving strong consideration ...*****

***** "Mickey Rooney is now writing a gossip column for the 'Stars and Stripes,' ... Abbott and Costello will show vets how to re-orient in 'Return of the Buck Privates' ... Air Forces' Glenn Miller Band Will be stationed in Manhattan for six months" *****



(Above) Self-portrait of Cpl. Stuart Fox, Staff Artist of the Americal Newsletter. Some of his work appears on these two pages.

ABOVE THE THRONG -- "There are some men who will be remembered quickly and warmly whenever two or more Americal veterans gather for a postwar chat. They were unusual; they were outstanding in some respect; they differed from the usual run of the mill, yet they were entirely human ...

... **S/Sgt. Jesse P. Drowley**, from Luzerne, Michigan, 132nd Infantry squad leader awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his extraordinary heroism in the tank battle at the mouth of the Torokina River on Bougainville on January 1944 ...

... **Captain Raymond Ross** of Medford, Oregon, holder of the Silver Star with one oak leaf cluster and the Bronze Star with two oak leaf clusters, was the leader of the famed 164th Infantry's 'Dime-A-Dozen' club. He was called the most fearless patrol and platoon leader in the Pacific, and later, as Company Commander, leading his entire unit in front line actions ...

... **Sgt. Gerry Martell** of Cambridge, Mass., as a member of the Division Special Services entertained both front-line and rear troops in more than 3,000 performances on Guadalcanal, Bougainville and Leyte. He will long be remembered for his parody, 'My Devotion' and his song 'Atabrine, My Atabrine.' ...

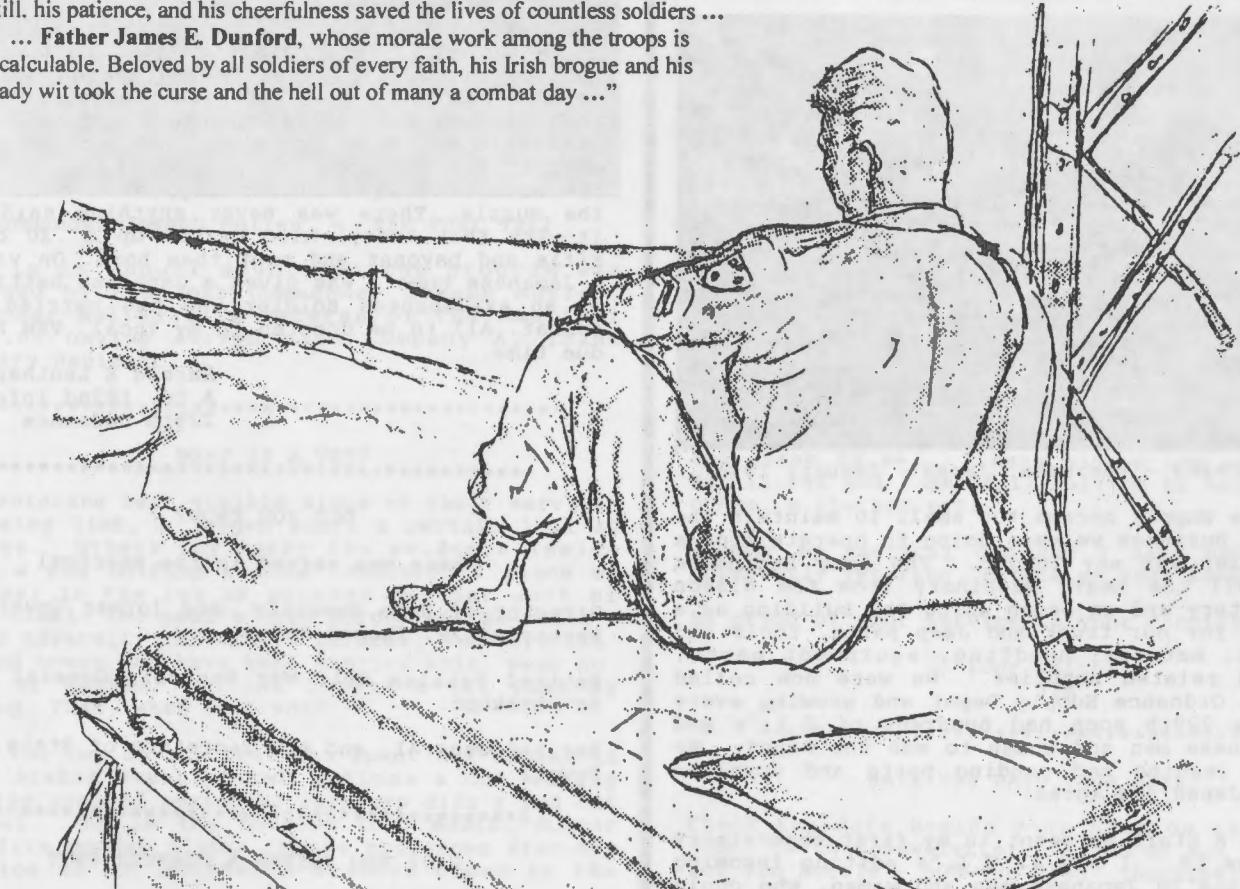
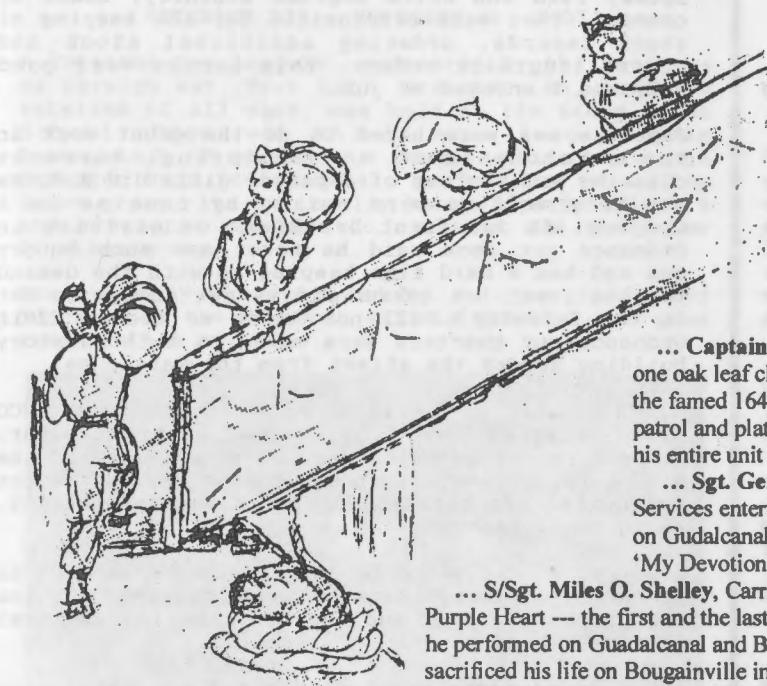
... **S/Sgt. Miles O. Shelley**, Carrington, N.D., awarded the DSC, the Silver Star, the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart -- the first and the last ones posthumously -- as a small reward for the countless heroic deeds he performed on Guadalcanal and Bougainville. With many of his most heroic acts unrecorded, Miles sacrificed his life on Bougainville in May 1944, so that the rest of the platoon might withdraw unharmed, by calling in artillery on top of him when he lay helpless and out of reach. 'Shelly Field' on Bougainville is named for Shelly ...

... **Major Daniel O'Rourke**, Fond du Lac, Wis. Rose from private to Company Commander in the same company in the 182nd Infantry, then became Bn. Exec. Off. Before returning to the U.S. from Cebu. He performed spectacularly at Hill 260 in Bougainville, where his Easy Company won the Unit Citation ...

... **Pfc. (later Sgt.) David Fonseca**, Grove Hills, Mass., was a member of the 26th Signal Company when he chose the name 'Americal' from 'Americans in New Caledonia' ...

... **Lt. Col. John V. Belmonte**, Chicago, Ill., surgeon, who was a company commander in and later commanding officer of the 121st Medical battalion, never rested, sometimes for as high as sixteen hours at a stretch, until he was certain every wounded soldier was off the operating table and well on his way to recovery. Working under hazardous conditions that all jungles present, and combat makes it even more challenging, his skill, his patience, and his cheerfulness saved the lives of countless soldiers ...

... **Father James E. Dunford**, whose morale work among the troops is incalculable. Beloved by all soldiers of every faith, his Irish brogue and his ready wit took the curse and the hell out of many a combat day ...



229th ORDNANCE SUPPLY DEPOT

I arrived in Yokohama, Japan aboard the U.S.S. Samuel Chase APA 26, on September 8, 1945, tying up at the one and only pier.

On October 3, two other G.I.'s and I were called to the Orderly Room of A Company, 182nd Infantry and asked if we desired to be transferred to Automotive Ordnance having some previous automotive schooling and repair experience. All three of us were accepted. We packed up our gear and reported to Battalion Headquarters from where we were taken, along with thirty others, to the 191st Mobil Ordnance Depot Company.

The 191st Ordnance was located at the Nisson Truck Factory. A very large building on Yokohama Bay. The 191st Ordnance was set up to receive and issue automotive parts and equipment out of semi-trailer vans.

The Nisson plant had not been damaged by bombing or fire. Next to Nisson was a Standard Oil Refinery--still all intact and still running. Most everything else for eighteen miles, from Yokohama to Tokyo, had been totally destroyed by fire bombs.

The G.I.'s manning the 191st Ordnance had gone overseas four years earlier and were all fat and lazy from having the good life in the rear area for the entire war. They were sent home in December 1945, as a unit, to be home in time for Christmas. The G.I.'s from the Americal Division had received about eight weeks of on-the-job training, from October to December. Now the thirty replacements from the 182nd Infantry were to be the new NCO's and run the 191st Ordnance. Promotions were monthly from Pfc., T/5, T/4 and finally S/Sgt.



Hal Leuthard - Yokohama, Japan - January 1946

Our Mobile Supply became too small to maintain the volume of business we were doing to operate from a semi-trailer van any longer. The Army Engineers removed all the heavy machinery from the Nisson Truck Factory and we began using the building as a warehouse for our truck and Jeep parts, tools and equipment, material handling, equipment parts, paint and related supplies. We were now called the 229th Ordnance Supply Depot and growing every day. The 229th soon had hundreds of G.I.'s and many Japanese men and women to man the Depot. We were now issuing and sending parts and supplies all over Japan and Korea.

I was now a Staff Sergeant in my first supervisory job at age 19. I had 12 G.I.'s editing incoming vouchers and 30 Japanese men and women, who could

speak, read and write English fluently, under my command. They were responsible for the keeping of stock records, ordering additional stock and controlling back orders. This became very good duty and I enjoyed my job.

Japanese men were hired to do the grunt work in the warehouse such as janitoring, barracks cleaning and a group of Japanese girls did K.P. We ate very well--no more eating by rank as in A Company. At our first breakfast on arriving in Ordnance our cook said he never saw such hungry men and had a hard time keeping up with the demand for his great hot cakes. Did we get enough to eat in the Infantry? Hell no! After we became 229th Ordnance our quarters were moved to a three story building across the street from the warehouse.

As time went by we received a barber shop, NCO Club, Enlisted Mens Club, Chapel, movie theater, dispensary, dance hall, and USO shows. We had the good life. By now, after six months, my jungle rot had healed. No parades, no marching, inspections, as in the Infantry.

However, we did march to and from our work area to present a military image to the Japanese. Our job was Ordnance Supply and the men from the Americal were very good at it.

After I was promoted to Sergeant I was able to go down to the motor pool and check out a Jeep for my own travels. I no longer had to travel by Japanese trains. I managed to see a lot of the country side and had many adventures during my year in Japan. My good friend, also from A Company, told me he went home with the Americal Division in December of 1945. He missed all the fun! I would not trade my year of duty in Japan with all the fun and many adventures I had, for anything. It was also a wonderful learning experience to work in Ordnance in a supervisory capacity. I even learned to speak some Japanese.

On September 7, 1946, almost a year to the day of landing in Japan, I finally had enough points to go home and started my rotation stateside. A truck load of Japanese rifles, bayonets and swords were delivered to us as souvenirs at our request. I managed to take home .25 caliber rifle buried in the middle of my barracks bag, with a sock over the muzzle. There was never anything said about it--Try that today! Also crated up a .30 caliber rifle and bayonet and sent them home. On visiting a Japanese home I was given a Japanese battle flag by an ex-Japanese soldier who had carried it in combat. All to be donated to my local VFW Post in due time.

Harold E Leuthard
A Co. 182nd Infantry
229th Ordnance

DID YOU KNOW?

These men served in the Americal
Director of Home Security, and former Governor of Pennsylvania, Thomas Ridge.

Retired Persian Gulf War General, General Norman Schwarzkopf.

Retired General, and now Secretary of State, Colin Powell

HAVE YOU JOINED A CHAPTER YET?

VETERANS DAY - NOVEMBER 11, 2003

A Veterans Day program, sponsored by the Veterans of Foreign War, Post 9917, Brewster, MA, honoring veterans of all wars, was held at the Stony Brook School, Brewster, MA. An hour long program consisted of patriotic songs played by the Brewster Band followed by a performance of a tap dance group, the nationally known Bayside Skippers and a veteran speaker who spoke of his World War II experiences.

The ceremony was followed by an Open House and luncheon at the VFW Post 9917 in Brewster. A good time was had by all.



Commander Joseph Mullen - VFW Post 9917

This is an annual event and the program was arranged by the Post Commander Joseph Mullen. Commander Mullen is a veteran of the Americal Division having served with Company A, 182nd Infantry Regiment.

WHAT IS A VET?

Some veterans bear visible signs of their service: a missing limb, a jagged scar, a certain look in the eye. Others may carry the evidence inside them: a pin holding a bone together, a piece of shrapnel in the leg or perhaps another sort of inner steel: the soul's ally forged in the refinery of adversity. Except in parades, however, the men and women who have kept America safe, wear no badge or emblem. You can't tell a vet just by looking. Then, what is a vet?

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 loud mouth, dumber than five wooden planks, whose overgrown frat-boy behavior is out weighed 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 POW who went away one person and came back another - or didn't come back at all. He is the Quantico drill instructor who has never seen combat - but has saved countless lives by turning slouchy, no-account rednecks and gang members into Marines, and teaching them to watch each other's backs. He is in the parade - a riding Legionnaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand. He is the quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by. He is the three anonymous heroes in the Tomb Of The Unknowns, whose presence in 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 sunless depth. He is the old guy bagging groceries at the supermarket-palsied now and aggravatingly slow - who helped liberate a Nazi death camp and wishes all day long that his buddies were still alive to hold him when the nightmares come.

He is an ordinary and yet extraordinary human being - a person who offered some of his life's most vital years in the service of his country, and sacrificed his ambitions so others would not have to sacrifice theirs. He is a soldier and a savior and a sword against 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 his country, just lean over and say, "Thank you". That's what most people need, and in most cases it will mean more than any medals they could have been awarded or were awarded. Two little words mean a lot, "THANK YOU".

(Sent in by Robert E McPherson - 164th Infantry)

HAS THIS HAPPENED TO YOU?

Several times in the past year I have been approached by people and thanked for my service to my country.

I have a Veterans plate on my car and one day while I was parked at a nearby beach I had a woman come up and thank me. This also happened another time while putting groceries into my car at the local supermarket.

I also have an Americal decal on my car. Twice, while parked I have had Americal veterans come up and speak to me, I have signed one up, a World War II vet and I am still waiting to hear from the other, a Vietnam vet.

I wear my Americal cap and I have had two men, apparently veterans, salute as they passed by,

Be proud of your service to your country.

Your Editor,
Jim

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES?

Check the date beside your name on the address label of this Newsletter. If you do not agree contact Jim Buckle - [REDACTED]

SPECIAL BOND LINKS AMERICAL VETERANS
by Mary E. Young

Training and survival instincts took over when bullets and explosions pounded the jungle or enemy snipers started firing from trees.

One generation experienced it in the Pacific Islands in World War II.

Another generation experienced it in Vietnam.

But today, two veterans—one from each war—share a bond that has more to do with the unique unit in which they served than the similarities of the conditions in which they fought.

Kermit E. Trout of Robeson Township is 83. He served more than three years as a radio operator in the Pacific.

Robert E. Trout of Robeson Township is 58. He served one year as a Medic in Vietnam.

Both men were in the Americal Division, a special wartime Army unit.

Today is Veterans Day—the day set aside to honor the men and women who served their country, as the Americal did.

Trout and Kelly said their bond goes beyond what one veteran usually feels for another.

That special connection comes, they said, from watching fellow soldiers die on the other side of the world while serving with a put-together unit that served along side the Marines on the front lines.

"You had to be there to feel it." Trout said.

As the soldiers from the Americal began returning to the United States after more than three years overseas, they did not seek out recognition, he said. They just wanted to get on with their lives.

"Everybody was busy getting married and raising families." Trout said. "The first thing you wanted to do was forget about the war. We had been through the Depression. Times were better. We were building homes."

But the war memories washed over him back in the late 1960s and early 1970s as he watched the Americal in action in Vietnam on the nightly news.

"My heart went out to them every night on the news," said Trout, who by then had three sons, two of them old enough to be drafted. "I think I died a little every night."

His words touched Kelly.

He said he had to choke back the tears because Trout's words evoked the image of a news magazine cover published during the Vietnam War. It showed dead bodies being loaded onto trucks.

"People who had not even been notified yet recognized some of the bodies he said." "I don't believe in this embedding, like the war in Iraq. You really don't want to see how people die. They don't die quick or pretty."

Memories like that one drive Kelly to seek sponsors to pay for a bus to take World War II veterans to Washington in the spring when a memorial honoring them will be completed and dedicated.

Vietnam veterans got their memorial in 1982, just nine years after the last U.S. troops left Vietnam, because, unlike World War II veterans, they pressed for it, Kelly said. They felt they needed it because they could not claim a victory.

"World War II veterans had a clearly defined goal," he explained. "They knew what they were doing. They knew if they didn't do it, the whole world would suffer. But with Vietnam, just like right now, people had second thoughts."

But the World War II veterans deserve recognition, too, Kelly said. The two generations did serve in similar conditions but many of those in the world war remained overseas for three or more years instead of the usual one-year tour in Vietnam.

The kinship between the generations serving the Americal has drawn Kelly and Trout to some of the unit's reunions that have been held in the eastern United States for about 20 years now.

Kelly said the reunions draw a mixture of both generations, but the number of World War II soldiers who attend is dwindling.

Trout said he is among those who no longer will be able to go because his health is not so good. Nor will he be able to go to Washington for the memorial dedication.

"The Vietnam veterans are going to have to take over," he said. "In a few more years there's not going to be too many World War II vets around."

Kelly figures the memorial for Trout's war is one last thing his generation can do for Trout's generation.

"They did everything and never asked for anything," he said. "It's time to give them that respect."

Trout said the memorial is a wonderful thing.

But it's also important to remember that soldiers don't fight to be honored as individuals, he said. They fight because they honor their country.

"The memorial makes me feel good," he said. "But that isn't why we went. We went because of Pearl Harbor."

Maybe the memorial will serve as a reminder that people in this country have their freedom because men and women have fought wars to preserve it, Trout said.

"World War II is the last time I can remember in my lifetime that this country was united," he said. "There was no politics in it. Everybody forgot about that. You didn't worry whether you were a Republican or a Democrat or Socialist or Independent. Everybody was united. Boy, could we use that today."

(This article appeared in the Reading Eagle, Reading, Pennsylvania on November 11, 2003 and was sent in by Joe Tunis - Eastern Regional Chapter)

(Ed Note: Kermit Trout served in the 26 Signal Company and Robert Kelly served in the 196 LIB)

HAVE YOU CALLED THAT BUDDY YET?
TOMORROW MAY BE TO LATE
DO IT NOW!

57th ENGINEERS

During World War II while I was on Guadalcanal, South Pacific, there was a Catholic Church on Cape Esperance, from which the Nuns had been evacuated.

The Japanese were using the church as their Headquarters and because of this the Army planes had bombed the church.



At the entrance to the church grounds there were two statues on pedestals and they stood over six feet tall. The church had been constructed of cement blocks and had been completely destroyed leaving a large crater. One bomb had landed between the pedestals on which the statues stood, leaving a crater that was filled with water, -- the statues remained untouched.

Today the two statues stand in front of the Holy Cross Cathedral in Honiara.

Sent in by William Trubiano - 57th Engineers

CAVES, CAVES AND MORE CAVES

During the course of history, caves in one way or another, have affected our lives. Early man sought the shelter of caves to protect themselves and their families. Caves provided protection from the weather and from large prehistoric beasts roaming the world. Many carvings were left on the walls of caves giving us a pictorial view of their every day lives. Several years ago a shepherd in Israel discovered jars containing lost scrolls of the bible in a remote mountain cave,

Military history contains many incidents down through the ages, where caves were used to conceal or carry out offensive actions against a determined enemy. Caves can and do resist massive bombardment or frontal attacks. Because of the aura of mystery surrounding them caves have become a tourist attraction in many countries.

The recent events in Afghanistan have brought about a resurgent of interest in caves. The Taliban and the Al Qaeda forces have taken advantage of their mountainous region, where hundreds of caves have been used to carry out their murderous agenda of terrorism against the free world.

In April 1945, our unit, B Btry, 746 AAA Gun Bn. was called to take offensive action against the Japanese troops that had holed up in caves and tunnels above the city of Cebu, in the Philippines. The Americal Division that had been

attempting to liberate the island, but was delayed and held back by the Japanese in the caves above the city. Their sporadic firing of 75mm guns and 20mm and several large caliber naval guns that had been captured from the Americans precluded any forward movement. The Americal called in the Air Corps and several flights of B-24's commenced several days of saturation bombing of the Japanese positions to no avail. The Japanese simply retreated into their caves. Americal Division artillery then lobbed hundreds of shells outside the cave entrances, with negative results.

The Americal then remembered how our units accurate long range 90mm AA guns, had assisted in wiping out Japanese gun positions on Bougainville in 1944. The call went out for our unit to located on Leyte to pack up and head for Cebu. We arrived by invasion landing boat and immediately proceeded to a pineapple field with an excellent view of the mountain range and the Japanese cave positions. We were observed by the Japanese, as we were setting up our 90mm guns to fire on their positions. They sprayed us with 20mm shells. Fortunately they were poor shots.

Their firing gave us the location of the cave openings. We responded with 3 days of firing missions, with our 90mm point detonating shells traveling at 2800 feet per minute muzzle velocity, entering and exploding within the caves. the few surviving and demoralized Japanese occupiers fled to the northern part of the island or surrendered. The Americal was then free to continue to liberate the island.

I recently wrote a letter to Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, detailing our cave closing operation, hoping that similar actions by our troops in Afghanistan might assist them with their cave closing agenda.

Leonard Owczarzak
B Btry 746 AAA Gun Bn.

MY ARMY CAREER
by
Victor G. Lander

I have some great news for you! I have been contemplating writing down a few of my memories, and, have just reread the Americal Newsletter, and feel compelled to refute some of the articles I read, but first I want to tell anyone that served with me or remembers me, about my recent activities. On November 30th, I celebrated my 90th birthday by throwing a party, and what a party! Over 200 guest were invited and more than 148 showed up. I had three tables of memorabilia, consisting of twelve albums covering my life from childhood until now. Three of them covered my life in the military from a private in the Illinois National Guard, Co. B, 132 Infantry until I retired as a Lieutenant Colonel, Corps of Engineers. In addition I had a few souvenirs of my stay in the Pacific for forty-two months, The most notable souvenir was a Japanese sword. I have given numerous items to the Americal Museum in Massachusetts and to the Admiral Nimitz Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas.

Going into the military service in February of 1942 I thought I would be satisfied if I attained the rank of corporal at the end of my enlistment. President Roosevelt had said that he hated war, his wife, Eleanor, hated war, and that his son, James, hated war and that America was not going to get into any war. Little did he know!

Everyone who has served in the military believes that his service is unique, and so do I. My service started as a private in Co. B of the 132nd Infantry, 33rd Division. After a 10 months training in Camp Forrest, Tennessee the Japs decided to bomb Pearl Harbor, which they did in a dastardly sneak attack December 7th, 1941, which turned the whole world around for me and every other American. On January 12th, 1942 I found myself on the way to New York harbor embarkation point, with a stop-over in Indian Town Gap, to bring us up to our T.O.E. (Table of Organization and Equipment). My company rode to Jersey City, New Jersey in cavalry horse trailers, took a ferry to New York harbor, walked up a gangway and found ourselves on the Cristobal, a former plush cruise ship, still being changed to a troop ship.

We left port on Friday, January 23rd, 1942 at 5:30 A.M., guarded by two blimps and a few destroyers. We went down the east coast and through the Panama Canal with the broad Pacific before us. We sailed for 34 days until we reached Melbourne, Australia. My regiment was sent to Ballarat, Victoria, Australia, where I was billeted in the home of Ken and Mary Douglas and their son, David, a little boy about six years old. Back to Melbourne and we boarded another ship, the McAndrews, for a trip to New Caledonia, an island off the northeast coast of Australia, some 35 to 45 kilometers wide and about 330 kilometers long. After working three days unloading the ship we were ready for our trip up the island to the town of Voh, where we were to bivouac and set up seaside defensive positions and keep a lookout to the ocean where we could see to the horizon from a low mountain. It was manned 24 hours a day. Later Co. B 132 was reunited and traveled to the Plain de Gia, an airfield under construction 24 hours every day. We dug fox holes and shelters at the ends of A and B runways, dug holes to bury ammo boxes of 30.03 caliber ammunition. I saw the first B-17's and the first B-26 land on the field.

About this time the powers-that-be decided that they needed more commissioned officers and decided to get them from what they had on hand. They started an Officers Training School at Camp Stevens in Noumea, the capital city of New Caledonia. The lieutenant of my platoon, 1st Lt. Odai, told me to apply, which I did, and I got orders to report to Camp Stevens. After a week of classes and lectures we were sent to another regiment for further training. I was sent for training to "F" Company of the 182nd Infantry Regiment commanded by 1st Lt. "Moon" Mullin. Other officers were Lt. Salvatore Vinciullo, the finest infantry officer I ever knew. We took over a platoon and were responsible for the training and welfare of a platoon of soldiers, censoring mail and making out training schedules, etc. Returning to Camp Stevens most of us received our commissions as 2nd Lieutenants at a ceremony. Our commissions were handed to us by Brigadier General Alexander M. Patch. We remained in Camp Stevens for a few days while they decided where we would be sent. At the school I had three tent mates; Fred Kucera from B Company, my closest friend ever. We had been privates, corporals, sergeants and commissioned together. He was killed on Guadalcanal. Arthur J. Lazazaro, from A. Co. 182nd Regiment, who was also killed on Guadalcanal, and Thomas Lynch from the 164th Infantry Regiment, who was wounded on Guadalcanal, sent to New Caledonia Hospital and later returned to the division. Of the four green officers I was the only one who had only three days in the hospital for malaria.

While waiting for assignment to our new duty I talked three of my friends into accompanying me to

the dock where we had landed March 12th, 1942. Two aircraft carriers, The Wasp and the Hornet were at anchor and I wanted to see what they looked like at close quarters. We boarded a launch, got to the Hornet, climbed a long stairway to the deck, saluted the Flag and the officer of the deck. He arranged for an escort to conduct us for a tour of the ship. First stop, the mess hall—extraordinary; the barber shop with six barber chairs; the confectionery shop, fifteen flavors of ice cream; the officers' mess which left me gasping; linen tablecloths, linen napkins, beautiful glasses and more silverware than I had ever seen. I thought to myself. "Lander, how could you pass up something this plush to lay around at night in the rain and mud, the mosquitoes in the infantry?" Just a few months later it was all laying on the bottom of the Pacific Ocean.

My next tour of duty was my assignment to "H" Company 132nd Inf. Regiment, a heavy weapons company of the 2nd Battalion. About three days late returning to our bivouac after a day of training, I received a notice to report to Battalion Headquarters, which I did. I received news from Lt. Col. Ferry that I had been assigned to the 57th Engineer Bn. Lt. George Fisher picked me up the next morning and we arrived at bivouac area for Bn. Headquarters near LaFoa. I was assigned to Bn. Headquarters as Bn. Motor Officer. Battalion Headquarters was commanded by Capt. Joe P. Driscoll. John P. Tierney was Battalion Supply Officer and Warrant Officer Art Sagan was Battalion Motor Supply Officer. About this time the Marines were fighting for their lives on Guadalcanal so the 164th Infantry was shipped there and the rest of the Division was alerted for early dispatch to help hold the island. Headquarters Co. did not arrive on Guadalcanal until December 8th, 1942. If you were there you remember the mud, the rain, the air raids, the mosquitoes, and the tenacious Japs, the reason for all of it. As motor officer it was my job to keep all the trucks, jeeps, bulldozers, graders and draglines going, which meant cannibalizing parts from wrecked and bombed vehicles to keep others going as re-supply was practically nonexistent, as getting requisitions back to the United States and then supplies ordered back to us, sometimes took months. Also everything going on in Europe had priority. We, in the Pacific, were looked at as an adjunct of a bigger war. "Hold them Boys 'til we whip the Germans and Italians" was the attitude of the upper echelon. No one on Guadalcanal will ever forget "Washing Machine Charlie's" nearly nightly air raids. One night the bombs missed the airfield and fell in the encampment of about three hundred natives from the island of Malaita, about forty miles east of Guadalcanal, barely visible on the horizon. The next morning all the remaining workers were found at the tip of Guadalcanal, the nearest point to their home. It was the engineers job to apportion the workers to different organizations that needed their help like ordinance section, stacking ammo, bombs and spare parts. The Quartermaster who needed help with all he had to oversee, division headquarters, the medics and of course the engineers who used them in building the roads in the quagmire that was Guadalcanal. That's another story.

The Japanese finally gave up and evacuated about 13,000 of their soldiers and the battle for Guadalcanal was over. The cost in lives was horrendous. Killed in action, 533; wounded in action, 902; missing in action, 4. My regiment had about 465 killed or wounded. Four of my squad of "B" Co. 132 Inf. were killed.

In March, 1943 the Division was retired to the

Fiji Islands for rest and recuperation, and to fill up our depleted rank of officers and men. Our 57th Engineer Battalion received 10 new officers and enough men to bring us to nearly full strength.

Fiji was a delightful place for rest and recuperation after Guadalcanal. No air raids, no bombs, no alerts and no Japs to worry about, although what we had experienced in the "Canal" triggered nightmares in quite a few of us. Fiji was a repetition of basic training, because so many new replacements, with a lot of information on jungle warfare passed to them from veterans of the "Canal". The nights were delightful: peaceful, quiet, no bombs, no artillery fire, just snores from our tent mates; really idyllic, except that you were not with your loved ones.

After about ten months our orders came for our next engagement with the enemy. Assignment, Bougainville, the island at the head of the slot supposed to be guarded by 50,000 men based in the area around Kieta. We landed on the Empress Augusta Bay area on the opposite side of the island without a shot being fired at us, as the marines had cleared the area of organized resistance. The marines had landed in the area on November 1st and had driven the Japs from the immediate area and had a fighter airfield and bomber airfield under construction. Our infantry regiments immediately took over the perimeter defense from the marines.

The combat situation was rather quiet for the next few months, daily patrols and long distance patrols to keep aware of the Japs intentions. During this time the engineers were busy building roads, helping with fortification, supplying the Division with potable drinking water, running a sawmill turning out lumber for floors for the hospitals, timbers for bridges, lumber for Quartermaster to keep rations, clothing and all the other supplies that keep an army functioning. It was estimated that Company "C" of the 57th Engineers turned on 2,580,000 board feet of lumber. Captain Howard Elliott, "B" Company Commander was evacuated from Bougainville, due to recurring bouts of Malaria, and I was put in charge as Acting C.O. of the Company. I got a call from Capt. Rader of the 245th Artillery to meet him with a security detail at a road junction behind "A" Co, 182nd Inf. We were guided through a double apron barbed wire entanglement. We traveled through a cleared field of fire area, waded through the Eagle River about a foot deep and 20 feet wide, crawled up a bank and started through the jungle headed for Hill 260. This hill was forward of the M. L. R. some half mile or more. Climbing and scrambling up to the crest we found the top of the hill defended by troops, about a reinforced platoon in size. After looking the situation over, Capt. Rader picked out a tree and asked me if we could build a platform there. I said we could and made arrangements with his sergeant to carry the lumber for building the observation platform to the hill and turned the job over to Sgt. Nickerson of the 57th Engineers. Some three days later Sgt. Nickerson asked if I would like to see the ladder and platform, so I did the routine again. Climbed up the hill, got up the ladder and platform, which was about 16 feet square. There were two cots, as it was manned 24 hours, four telephone switchboards, a B.C. scope for long range viewing and a good view. To the left was Mount Bagano, always smoking, and at night it lighted up low clouds. Straight ahead was the scoured out bed of the Torokina River. The river itself was about 40 feet wide normally but after some of the torrential rains, it grew to

five times that wide. Normal rainfall for Bougainville was about 250 inches per year. Looking to my right was the broad expanse of the Pacific Ocean. When I looked over my shoulder I could see the road system and bivouac areas of the Division and the body of water which was Empress Augusta Bay.

A Jap patrol was ambushed and in the map case of the officer killed was an order stating that the Japs were going to attack the perimeter on Japanese Army Day, which is near the 15th of March. Well they did and the main objective was Hill 260. The next few weeks were a brutal "give and take" affair. We gave it up and the Japs took it and they gave it up and we took it about four times. Finally the Japs gave it up and pulled back to their side of Bougainville. Our losses were terrible but the Japs were about three-fold greater. You have to give the Japs credit for fortitude, however, because they had to break down their artillery pieces into sections they could handle and carry their mortars, shells, hand grenades and ammunition by hand about forty miles over mountain trails and through the jungle.

Things quieted down for a period of time until the General decided that all the new recruits, who had arrived after the battle for Hill 260 and had come to make up the losses in the Division, needed to have a little jungle training and decided to do a little pushing out into enemy territory. To do that he decided to go through the adjoining divisions area up the Laruma River valley. The 57th Engineer Battalion had a big part in the operation. I commanded "C" Co. at that time and it was "C" Co. that was assisting the infantry and the artillery operation. It was our job to facilitate the artillery in cleaning the dense forest enough so that firing in any direction except straight up the river would have clearance enough for the shells to clear the area and not detonate, practically in their faces by hitting the overhanging trees. It was also necessary to support the infantry in their pursuit by building an adequate roadway. In following the infantry up the Laruma River "C" had constructed seven timber trestle bridges; because the road had to be constructed some times on one side and some times on the other side due to conditions. We finally came to a constriction in the river and had to start blasting solid rock. We worked around the clock with our motorized air compressor truck. We drilled dynamite holes all day and blasted at dusk, then drilled all night long and blasted at dawn. It was slow going. I was ordered back to Battalion Headquarters by Bn. Comdr. Lt. Col. Lenox for a Bn. Officers picture and while there it started raining on Bougainville. We had an average of 250 inches of rain a year. Anyone there will remember those rainstorms vividly. This one was a lulu. It swept all seven of our bridges down to the ocean, overturned one of our trucks on its way up river with the evening meal aboard. One of Co. "C"s men drowned and was never found despite a long search of the river. A couple of the men spent the night on the river bank and wound up sleeping in a native village with natives.

About this time the defense of Bougainville was turned over to the Australians and New Zealanders and very soon we were on our way to our next destination, and that was Leyte. I was promoted to Captain. My Captain when I first came to the Bn. had been promoted to Lt. Col. and had taken command of the Bn. After Col. Lenox of the Engineers and other officers and men, commanding the Division had returned to Hawaii to Cadre a new division. Col. Driscoll had the adjutant cut orders, relieving me from command of Co. "C" and assigned

LETTERS FROM THE OLD GUARD

me back to Bn. HQ as Liaison Officer, over my most vigorous protest, however, as I had really enjoyed commanding a Company.

Well, back to Leyte. The infantry was given the job of clearing out the Ormoc Valley Corridor, as was expected. The engineers were expected to get roads in shape to take food, ammo, and all other supplies; set up water points and do all other engineering duties. I was detailed to take over a rock crushing compound that the Colonel thought wasn't being run efficiently enough to supply all the road material that was needed. We did not have many killed or wounded on Leyte and after about six months we regrouped and were alerted for our next objective.

I was detailed to be the Loading Officer of an L.S.T. (Landing Ship Tank), a sea-going ship with two decks; the lower deck for supplies of every kind and the upper deck for all sorts of vehicles: 6 X 6 trucks, jeeps, bulldozers, water trucks, water trailers and ambulances. I attended a two day school to plan the layout of the decks to fit the vehicles that would be assigned to this ship. My Col. of the Engineers wanted me to load every piece of Bailey Bridge I could as he did not know how much bridge material we would need when we reached the island of Cebu. The Bailey Bridge components are an eight foot by six foot component that hitch together by pins and bolts, making a treadway to span a ravine or stream. Other things loaded on the lower deck were tons of ammo of all kinds, drums of oil and gasoline and all kinds of supplies needed by a division on the march. The last things loaded in the lower deck were four Amphibs (Ducks) that could take off from the ship when the outer doors opened and the ramp lowered, even in deep water. When the L.S.T. was finally loaded, I had been awake for 54 hours without sleeping. I fell into a bunk and did not awaken for 16 hours. When I awoke I found out that they had a hard time getting the ship off the beach. Finally they put another ship in deep water and had to winch it off the beach.

The landing on Cebu was a combat landing. It was the first time I had seen rockets used and watched in awe as they fired toward the shore. We could not get to shore as we were too heavily loaded. The ship had been designated a hospital ship and they started bringing in the wounded who mostly had foot and leg wounds as Talisay Beach had been heavily mined. The piers were finally cleared and were able to start the unloading process. Cebu City had been the most modern city I had seen on any island where we had fought. I remember seeing a J.C. Penny, a Singer store and our Headquarters Co. took over the large Coca Cola building. All had bomb and shell holes in them as they had been bombed and shot up by us.

The engineers had a deadline of D+3 to get the Cebu airfield into use, but every time we got our equipment near the field we were shelled heavily from the overlooking Babag Mountains. Finally Col. Driscoll ordered us to go to a nearby island named Mactan, where there was a fighter strip that the Japs had built. I was put in charge of getting the airfield in operation and started moving equipment. The first time the grader operator started grading the surface, the tip of his grader blade caught the tip of a 100 pound bomb, standing upright and pulled it out of the ground. We stopped everything, went back to Cebu and got all the mine detectors and went over the whole surface area of the field, and all the surrounding cleared areas. If the wheel of the grader had run over the top of the bomb it would have blown the wheel off the grader, possibly injuring the operator. The

Japs had not left the strip to us "scot-free". We put the field in operation without any further problems.

I met Joe E. Brown, the comedian, as he was leaving after entertaining the troops on Cebu. Col. Driscoll had other jobs for me, but they are other stories.

I had started in B" Company of the 132nd Infantry, sent to "F" Co. of the 182nd Infantry for 30 days as an officer candidate, commissioned back to "H" Co. of the 132nd, detailed to the 57th Engr. Bn. H.Q. Co. to Co. "B", to CO."A" 57th Eng., to CO."C" 57th Bn., back to Hqs. Co. as Liaison Officer, a total of nine different assignments, which must be some kind of record for such a short period of time. I remember so many of the men and officers with whom I have been associated. They were a wonderful, brave, patriotic, God-fearing, long suffering multitude of citizen soldiers who gave so much, and some gave it their all. You must remember that we had been in the South Pacific for over three years and six months after the conclusion of hostilities with an additional several months of occupational duty in Japan.

I left the Division in late May and had a long boat ride back to the U.S.A. and on to Battle Creek, Michigan. I was finally terminated in late January, 1946. I stayed in the Reserves for the next nineteen years and retired as a Lt. Col. of the Corps of Engineers. Not too bad for a citizen soldier who thought that getting to the rank of corporal for his year of service was a good goal! Little did he know what was in store for him in the five years ahead.

If any readers of this article remembers me, please let me know. My address:

Victor G. Lander

Haines City, Florida 33844

REUNION - REUNION - REUNION

Company E and Med. Det. 182nd Infantry
May 16, 2004

E Company has held a Reunion almost every year since the end of World War II and during this time has accumulated funds so this at this years luncheon the Citizens Scholarship Foundation of Wakefield and the Reading Scholarship Foundation will each receive a \$10,000 grant.

The \$10,000 grant to the Wakefield Foundation will be in the name of John Natile and Charles DeCecca. These two men were Medics from Wakefield and were killed in action on Guadalcanal. They were the first losses suffered by the Medical Detachment.

The \$10,000 grant to the Reading Foundation will be in the name of Parker Kimball who was killed in the line of duty on New Caledonia and Charles Parry who was killed in action on Guadalcanal. These men were the first losses suffered by E Company.

If you are interested in attending this luncheon and presentation contact Jim Buckle for more info.

James C. Buckle

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Vietnam War	1967-1973

Eligibility includes those who served with Task Force 6814 and Task Force Oregon. Branch of Service is immaterial.

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