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AMERICAL NEWSLETTER

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

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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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2002 - 2004

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ADVA National Adjutant
Bernard C. Chase
[REDACTED]
John L. Insani (Colonel, USA, Ret.); 11th LIB
Alexandria, VA

Dear members,

This is the start of one of the great adventures of my life as National Commander of the Americal Division Veterans Association. I have held different positions in many organizations and have seen and learned a few things along the way. With the help of the PNCs and the members of this fine organization I will learn a lot more.

I believe in having fun but only after the work is done. I hope that I can get a lot of the work done before our next reunion so that I can meet and have fun with everyone. That is what is so nice about having reunions, meeting with old friends, making new ones, and enjoying the time and memories with each other.

This is a great organization and I will do my best to uphold the great traditions. See you in DC in November. Have a great and safe end to the summer months.

Richard Scales; 3/21st Inf., 196th LIB
National Commander

215, NL 450 766
P.S. The ADVA is looking for a National Historian (WWII). If anyone is interested in this position please contact Jim Buckle or Rich Scales. W. Mark Durley held this post for many years and did a fantastic job. Mark passed away earlier this year and will be greatly missed. We extend our condolences to his family and friends.

P.S.S. Les Hines, Vietnam Historian, is looking for some help in a number of different areas. He would like help producing videos and DVDs. He is also looking for someone around the Washington, DC area to help obtain items from the National Archives. Les needs assistance in transcribing written documents to electronic files and in proof reading these files.

If you would like to help Les with research and other projects please give him a call. His number is in the ADVA directory on the front page of the newsletter. He has taken on this great task and would appreciate all the help he can get.

Memorial Day at Arlington Cemetery and the Wall

Members of the Americal Division Veterans Association paid their respects at the American memorial in Arlington National Cemetery on Memorial Day, May 27. After visiting the cemetery the group honored the Americal's fallen heroes at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. PNC Ed Marsh led the group.

The Americal veterans laid a wreath early Monday morning at the memorial in Arlington. They then went to the Korean War Memorial in Washington, D.C. to place a wreath near the flagpole at the head of the memorial. At 1:00 p.m. the group participated in the annual observances at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Jan C. Scruggs, Master of Ceremonies at the Wall ceremonies, recognized the Americal veterans from the podium. The Honorable Bob Dole, keynote speaker for the event, also recognized the Americal group. He chatted, shook hands, and posed for a photo with the Americal veterans at the conclusion of the ceremony.

The beautiful and memorable service included an Armed Forces Color Guard, remarks by Vietnam veterans Brig. Gen. G.B. Price and Gen. Barry McCaffery, a stirring address by Senator Dole, the bagpipe playing Amazing Grace, and finally the playing of Taps. Mother Nature graced the event with extremely hot and humid weather that reminded the Vietnam veterans of the weather they endured in Vietnam.

Also participating at the wreath laying at the Wall were Sr. Vice-Commander Jon Hansen, Erwin L. Russell, John L. Insani, and Regina Talley. Talley's brother was killed in Vietnam while serving with the 1/46th Infantry, 196th LIB.

Memorial Day was observed by Americal for the first time on May 30, 1868 as Decoration Day. During those early celebrations, Americans paid tribute to the nation's fallen Civil War soldiers by decorating their graves. Decoration Day later became Memorial Day. In 1971 Congress declared Memorial Day to be a national holiday to be celebrated on the last Monday in May.

While some military organizations continue to observe Memorial Day on May 30, the Americal veterans celebrate on the last Monday of May. Annual wreath laying ceremonies by the Americal group will continue at Arlington National Cemetery, the Korean War Memorial, and at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. When the WWII memorial is finally built the Americal group plans to add it to the annual ceremonies on Memorial Day and Veterans Day.

We wish to express our thanks to all who attended these ceremonies. We hope to see you in November for Veterans Day.



Senator Robert Dole, Ms. Regina Talley, and PNC Ed Marsh present the ADVA wreath at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.



Ms. Regina Talley, PNC Ed Marsh, Sr. Vice-Commander Jon Hansen, and ADVA member Erwin L. Russell pay respects at the Wall on Memorial Day, 2002. Photos by Col. John L. Insani (USA, Retired).

ADJUTANT'S NOTES

TAPS	TAPS	TAPS
198 LIB 17 CAV TR H	182 INFANTRY E CO.	3142 ORDNANCE MM AUTO
SSG Wilbert R. Bandy Fayetteville, WV October 2002	Mr. Robert K. Brown Pembroke Pines, FL November 25, 2000	Mr. Clive G. Stewart Denison, TX December 21, 2001
182 INFANTRY E CO.	164 INFANTRY L+HQ	538 QUARTERMASTER
Mr. Joseph David West Roxbury, MA January 19, 2002	Mr. W. Mark Durley Fresno, CA March 24, 2002	Mr. Meade D. Thompson Sylvania, OH December 1, 1997
164 INFANTRY BAND	164 INFANTRY K CO	AMERICAL DIVISION
Mr. Arthur L. Ford Jr. Watertown, SD March 8, 2002	Mr. Edward Gaik Chicago, IL Date Unknown	Mr. Max Wineinger Sr. Raleigh, NC July 7, 2002
196 LIB B/1/46 INF	182 INFANTRY D CO.	*****
Mr. Johnny F. Garlic Elizabethtown, KY May 2002	Mr. Jack M. Hills Tuscon, AZ June 16, 2002	Mrs. Margaret A. Amendol Associate Boston, MA #Don Ballou
182 INFANTRY E CO.	132 INFANTRY D CO.	Mr. William Andrescavage 11 LIB B+E/1/20 Inf Rock Cave, WV #Bob Kapp
Mr. David Joseph West Roxbury, MA January 19, 2002	Mr. John J. Kosky Milwaukee, WI March 3, 2002	Mr. Donald W. Bailey 196 LIB A/4/31 Inf Covington, KY #PNC Gary L. Noller
132 INFANTRY HDQ/2	23 INFANTRY DIVISION	Mr. Dorman L. Baird 198 LIB C/1/14 Arty Boaz, AL #Edward Cloutier
Mr. Kenneth E. Kunstman Chicago, IL December 17, 2001	Mr. Mark Mackie Roslyn PA Date Unknown	Mr. Fred L. Battle 11 LIB D/1/20 Inf Louisville, KY #Cliff Barger
182 INFANTRY HQ/3	221 FIELD ARTILLERY	Mr. Tim Bennett 11 LIB C/4/21 Inf Windsor, IL #Bob Kapp
Mr. James E. McCollom Boynton Beach, FL May 18, 2001	Mr. Robert F. McGann Woburn, MA September 28, 1999	Mr. Edward Bergmann 523 Signal A Co. Dansville, NY #Bob Kapp
21 RECONN	244 COAST ARTILLERY	Mr. James W. Daucher 198 LIB 23 M.P. Savage, MD #Rich Merlin
Mr. William J. McLaughlin Marston Mills, MA July 12, 2002	Mr. James D.H. Moore Mountain Home, AR February 22, 2002	Mr. Paul Dunphy 1 Cav !/B Troop Schoharie, NY #PNC Gary L. Noller
ASSOCIATE	247 FIELD ARTILLERY	Mr. Loren W. Ellis 164 Infantry F/2 Blomer, WI #Don Ballou
Mr. Harold Moore Frankston, TX August 12, 2001	AMERICAL DIVISION	Mr. Robert Ferrera 121 Med Bn Miami, FL #http://www.americal.org
182 INFANTRY E CO.	Mr. Walter M. Mussante Tracy's Landing, MD June 23, 2002	Mr. Kirk Forman 723 Main E Co. Leonard, MI #Don Ballou
Mr. Paul E. Muse Arkport, NY June 13, 2002	182 INFANTRY F CO	Mr. Joseph Gummeringer 164 Infantry 2/D La Cruces NM #Jim Buckle-164
182 INFANTRY H CO.	Mr. Joseph A. Papa West Newton, MA June 27, 2002	Mr. John P. Howlett 11 Arty H/1/13 Chatham, NJ #PNC Gary L. Noller
Mr. Herbert Nelson MA March 2002	125 QUARTERMASTER	Mr. Roy D. Rosenberger Struthers, OH February 3, 2002
164 INFANTRY B CO.	164 INFANTRY F CO.	Mr. Donald J. Smock Evansdale, IA December 11, 2002
Mr. Juan S. Rodriguez San Marco, TX June 12, 2001	Mr. Louis Jardim 23 M.P. Cumming, GA #Rich Merlin	Mr. James S. Lance 132 Infantry A-T Julian, CA #Tom Knott
164 INFANTRY		
Mr. Milton C. Shedd Newport Beach, CA May 24, 2002		

ADJUTANT'S NOTES

Mr. Robert A. Landis 11 LIB HHC/A 4/21 Inf Colonial Heights, VA #PNC Gary L. Noller	Mr. Paul J. Laskowski 198 LIB C/5/46 Infantry Plainville, CT #Carl I. Greenwood
Mr. Barry J. Levitch 23 Div Arty HHC (SIGC) Scottsdale, AZ #Don Ballou	Mr. Daniel J. Mack 196 LIB C/1/46 Inf Argyle, TX #Ron Ellis
Mrs. Cecil L. Malone Associate St. Cloud, FL #Jon Hansen	Mr. Frank Mastrovanni 123 Avn Bn 16 CAG Castle Point, NY #Bob Kapp
Mr. Doug McCord 18 M.P. Georgetown, LA #Rich Merlin	Mr. David N. Mendenhall 14 Arty B/C/1 14 Arty Manchester, CT #Frederick Benoit Jr.
Mr. Paul S. Miller 196 LIB E/2/1 Inf Baldwinsville, NY #Roy Anderson	Mr. James Moser 11 LIB 1/20 Inf Lewisville, AR #John B. Finch
Mr. Don Nasco 198 LIB C/1/52 Inf Franklin, NC #Bob Kapp	M/Sgt William F. Ozburn (56 Inf Lansing, MI #Theodore M Rahl Sr.
Mr. David A. Paur 198 LIB 23 M.P. 11 LIB Price, UT #Rich Merlin	Mr. Lloyd Porter 11 LIB D/1/20 Inf New Castle, PA #James R. Cottam
Mr. James B. Prince Jr. 56 Arty D Btry Elm City, NC #Art Cole	Mr. Dean S. Purcey 11 LIB C/3/1 Inf Grand Rapids, MI #Kass Kornegay
Mr. Steve A. Runice 11 LIB D/1/20 Inf Lone Rock, WI #Cliff Barger	Mr. Joe Smith 52 Inf C/1 St. Petersburg, FL #Bob Kapp
Mr. Melvin Spencer 198 LIB C/1/6 Inf Solon, OH #Raymond Donsante	Mr. Barry Spring 11 LIB D/4/3 Madison, OH #Don Ballou
Mr. Lawrence Sullivan 101 Med Milton, MA #Don Ballou	Mr. Roswell T. Swanson 23 M.P. Hampton, VA #Rich Merlin
Mr. Kenneth F. Teglia 14 Arty B/1/14 Div Arty Vernon Hills, IL #PNC Gary L. Noller	Mr. John J. Tonihka 52 Infantry 1/E Recon Grand Round, OR #Self
Mr. Deano Vandernoot 196 LIB D/4/31 Morriston, FL #Vance Van Wieren	Mr. Robert Voelsing 198 LIB E/1/6 Inf Mooers Forks, NY #PNC R. Castranova
Mr. Richard G. Waggoner 198 LIB 1/52 Inf Newell, IA #John Mackay	Mr. Jay F. Walker 23 M.P. Hendersonville, NC #Rich Merlin
Mr. Lorne White 198 LIB D/1/6 Inf Kodiak, AK #Ron Ward	Mr. Dennis S. Zupka Amical St. Pete FL #Bob Kapp

HAVE YOU CALLED THAT BUDDY YET?
Tomorrow may be too late!

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

Mr. Michael D. Burnes 11 LIB A/4/3 Inf Shapleigh, ME #Ed Marsh	Mr. Joseph Mullen 182 Infantry A Co. North Eastham, MA #Richard Gallant
SFC Carl E. Richardson 11 LIB HHC/4/3 Inf Harker Heights, TX #Fred H. Chinni	Mr. Vance A. Van Wieren 196 LIB D/4/31 Inf Fennville, MI #R. Castranova

REINSTATED MEMBERS	

Mr. Claude W. Balkey 132 Infantry M Co. Orland Park, IL #R. Castranova	Mr. Michael D. Burnes 11 LIB A/4/3 Inf Shapleigh, ME #PNC Ed Marsh
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Mr. Arthur Castillo 198 LIB C/E/5/46 In Ridgecrest, CA #PNC Gary L. Noller	Mr. Tyler J. Harper 196 LIB C/2/1 Inf Oklahoma City OK #Bill Bacon
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Mr. Edward A. Hertzing 1 Cav B/1/1 Pueblo, CO #DAV Viet Vet Nat Mem	Mr. Joseph R. Hill 198 LIB E/1/6 Inf Bethany, OK #R. Castranova
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Mr. Robert D. Hull 23 Arty Gr 42 Arty Grant City, MO #R. Castranova	Mr. John E. Michalik 11 LIB C/4/3 Inf Colonial Heights, VA #Memb. Committee
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Mr. John B. Peterson 247 F.A. Hdq Btry Cazenovia, WI #Art Cole	Mr. David E. Williams 198 LIB C/1/46 Inf Rock Falls, IL #Ron Ward
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ARE YOUR DUES PAID??
Check That Address Label
YOUR DUES ARE PAID UNTIL THAT DATE!!

We have many members that are behind in their dues and it will be necessary to drop them from the rolls and also the mailing list to receive the Americal Newsletter. Please check the address label on the cover of this Newsletter. Your dues are paid up until that date.

The names and addresses of the newly elected officers that will serve the ADVA for the next two years are listed in the directory inside the front cover of this issue. The names of the men appointed to assist in running the ADVA for the next two years are also included.

ATTENTION - ATTENTION - ATTENTION

If you know of a member of the ADVA or anyone that served in the Americal Division that ill or has passed away please notify your Adjutant.

CONTACT
Adi. Bernard Chase
[REDACTED]
South Yarmouth, MA 02664

HAVE YOU JOINED A CHAPTER YET?

SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

SCHOLARSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS IN EXCESS OF \$10.00

James Tassi - Dr. Edgar Goldenthal
 Ralph Antonelli - Edward Smith
 John Bezuyen - Donald Stevens
 Raymond Brady - Brig Gen John Grubbs (Ret)
 James Sheehan - Laurence McNamara
 Dan George - Thomas McAndrews
 Richard Merlin - John Flanagan
 David Germain - Julio Silva
 Dr. R. Gordon Williams - Bobby Preston
 Earl Cook - James Donovan
 Peter Gallagher - Paul Stiff
 Esther Barbieri - Walter Cullen Jr.
 James and Margaret Flynn
 K.T. Meaney - J.S. Logan
 Spencer Baba - Floyd Nicholas
 Maj Gen Hugh F.T. Hoffman Jr. - Robert Beschle
 Stephen Maluk - Daniel Zoller
 Dan Straight - John Moran
 Todd Regan - Stanley Anderson
 Wayne Bryant - Nathan Bates
 Julia Diehl - M.L. Binda
 Herbert Page - William Gerber
 Col Robert Liddell (Ret) - Larry Watson
 Russell Marceau - William Laurie
 Ed Klosterman - Ed Forrest
 Kin Cantor - James Rhodes
 Gordon Aleshire - Joan Nardone
 William Packett - PNC Edward Marsh
 Gerald Borysiak - Charles Swanson
 Max Hartwick - Steven Kosach
 Robert Alexander - Scott Smith
 Charles Bell - Gerald Butler
 Hyman and Phyllis Forman
 William O'Neil - Charles Kleinhagen
 Robert Brenner - John Gasper
 Charles Stirling - Edward Allen
 Ted Block - Carroll Staton
 Phil Haymaker - David Kasper
 James Sarnese - Robert Wood
 Dan Bates - Larry Gilliland
 Gerald Knowles - Paul Terry
 Gerhart Mehner - Robert Amass
 Maj. Barton Berry (Ret) - Robert Weatherly
 Randy Murphy - John Rorabaugh
 Mike Kosteczko - William Bruinsma
 Joe Alejandro - James Wark
 Walter Keely - Raymond Vargo
 Harold Werner - Eduardo Martinez-Torres
 Ferald McDonald - Joe Buss
 Malcolm East - Bruce Hundley
 John Head - Maj. Edwin Denney
 Timothy Coffey - Elmer Wright
 Kirk Foecking - Morris Spadaccini
 Dan Smith - John Hofer
 Charles Horton - Roger Gilmore
 John Barry - Cameron Baird
 Neal Mortimer - Nat Nutongla

 THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!!

At this time I wish to thank everyone that supported our drive to raise money for the Americal Scholarship Fund. You were most generous.

This was our most successful year yet. \$21,000 was raised to help the children and grandchildren of Americal veterans obtain their dreams of a college education.

Thank you,
 Bob Short
 Chairman

IN MEMORIAM

Carlo and Peggy Pola
 PNC Ed Marsh
 Joseph Papa
 Ruth Holley
 David and Barbara Smith
 Richard and Anne Carr
 Gary Noller
 Peter and Julia Messina
 in memory of
 Joe Chin

James Buckle
 in memory of
 Joseph Papa

Jeanne Young
 in memory of
 BG George H. Young

E Company and Medical Detachment

in memory of
 James P. Nardone
 Robert C. Brown
 Robert K. Brown
 Roger Pine
 Edgar J. Amirault
 Henry Maroney
 Jack McGlynn
 Estel Campbell
 Fred Rodekamp
 Carl Cutler

Dan and Bonnie D'Agostino
 Paul and Patricia McHugh
 John and Grance Laffey
 John and Corrine Queen
 Big Y Food Inc.
 Richard and Alice McQuade
 James Temple
 Maurice and Rosemarie and Family
 In Memory Of
 Helen McQuade

Peter and Julia Messina
 In Memory Of
 William McLaughlin

In Memory Of Joseph Papa
 Linda Furbush
 Judith Peterson
 Linda, Jonathon and Jamie Bretz

Christine Colburn
 Theodore and Mary Goguen
 Catherine Kulevich

Jack, Debbie, John and Jessica Donovan
 Kevin and Helen Curry
 Mr. & Mrs. Joy

Beth Ann Joy
 Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Joy
 Mr. & Mrs. R.F. Loomer

Nonantum Children's Christmas Party Assoc.
 Josephine Belliveau and Family
 Francis Murphy
 The Parrella Family

SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

The trustees of the Americal Scholarship Fund have authorized me to award seven scholarships totalling \$10,500. I have contacted the winners and their names will be announced in the October-November-December Americal Newsletter.

Robert G. Short
 Chairman

CHAPTER NEWS

CENTRAL MID WEST CHAPTER
 ND SD KS NE MO IA

CHAPTER COMMANDER
 David A. Chrystal Sr.
 [REDACTED]
 Centralia, MO 65240
 email [REDACTED]

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

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

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

David A Chrystal Sr.
 Chapter Commander

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

COMMANDER
 Larry O'Boyle
 Rancho Santa Margarita
 92688

SEC/TREAS
 Gene McGrath
 Pahrump, NV

Vice Commander - Don Shebesta
 Sergeant-at-Arms - John Bowley
 Chaplain - Paris Tognoli

2002 REUNION 2002

Atlantis Casino Resort - Reno, NV - Sep29 - Oct 2

Planned events: Tour of historic Virginia City, lunch at Tyson Ranch, reception in Hospitality Suite, raffle, banquet dinner, business meeting with election of officers.

Registration forms were mailed to all Chapter members in April. Reunion Chairman: Larry Levy, 69 Rimfire Circle, Reno, NV 95808, Tel. [REDACTED].

Committee Members: Larry Levy (Chairman), John Bowley, Kurt McFadden, Don Shebesta, Pat Tognoli.

PLEASE JOIN US!

Are you a member of the ADVA who lives in Arizona, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico or Utah? If you are not also a member of the Far West Chapter you're missing out! We are a growing group of 140 who enjoy camaraderie with each other and our families at annual Chapter Reunions. Each year's Reunion is held in a different place and features varying fun filled activities. Our nominal dues of \$10 per calendar year helps keep the member cost of our Reunions low, and also makes it possible to send our own newsletter, the Canon.

For membership application forms contact Don Shebesta at [REDACTED].

To re-instate and unpaid, lapsed membership contact Gene McGrath at [REDACTED].

MAIL CALL

Victor Crowder has written that he must resign his membership for health reasons. He would still like

to hear from his Americal buddies who would like to write or call him at:

Victor I. Crowder
 [REDACTED]
 Ojai, CA 93023
 Tel. [REDACTED]

We were deeply saddened to hear of the deaths of fellow Chapter members and friends Mark Durley in March and Jim Simpson in June of this year, Mark served in the 164th Infantry and Jim served in the 182nd Infantry. We offer our heartfelt condolences to Katherine Durley and Evie Simpson.

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

COMMANDER David Eichhorn [REDACTED] Fleming, OH 45729	VICE COMMANDER Jay Flanagan [REDACTED] Cranford, NJ 07017
SECRETARY Joe Tunis [REDACTED] Lake Ariel, PA 18436	TREASURER Mark Deam [REDACTED] Sidney, OH 45365

Leo Orfe - Sergeant-At-Arms
 Everitt Williams - Chaplain

The September 24 to 27, 2002 in Scranton PA, will be the main event of the year anticipated by our Chapter members.

We will be looking forward to forming new, refreshing memories of a Reunion not marred by the events of the Sept. 11th meeting of last year.

Our itinerary includes a coal mine tour which has become a popular curiosity following the miraculous rescue of the nine miners in western Pennsylvania. We will also see the Railroad Museum Steamtown National Park, The Electric City Trolley Station and Museum and take a trolley ride.

Reunion chairman Robert Cudworth has put together an eventful package that includes bus transportation to every scheduled sight.

Everyone attending is sure to bring home some fond memories. Reservation deadline is September 12, 2002 Interested? Contact:

Robert F. Cudworth
 [REDACTED]
 Moosic, PA 18507-1532
 Tel. [REDACTED]

Joe Tunis
 Secretary

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

COMMANDER John Mathews [REDACTED] Verona, WI 53593	ADJ/FIN OFF Terry Babler [REDACTED] New Glarus, WI 53574
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September 19-20 2002 - Kokomo, IN - 20th Annual Veterans Reunion. Locator/Sign in at big tent on Friday and Saturday. The GLC will be doing the Americal National Tent this year. See last newsletter for more details or call Terry Babler.

LETTERS FROM THE OLD GUARD

ROY'S RAIDERS
G Company - 182nd Infantry

To the Gang: We called ourselves Roy's Raiders, nothing official, just a house name. It all started with the fact the 2nd Platoon of G Co. 182nd Infantry, (it seemed at the time) was called on to do more patrolling than any other platoon in the Company--we felt like a bunch of raiders, and Lt. Roy, our platoon leader was such a nice guy, we named the platoon Roy's Raiders and it stuck with the media.

This letter has come about because I received the surprise of my life when a letter arrived a week or so ago from one of the Raiders by the name of Ed Gekosky, a close buddy of mine. I was shocked as I heard a long time ago that he had passed away.

Opening the letter I found that it was from Ed Gekosky Jr. Somehow he had located me with his computer (Americal Website) and thus started a new friendship. I called Ed Jr. and we had a very long and nice get together over the phone.

The next thing I knew I received a beautiful hard covered book, 'BOUGAINVILLE The Forgotten Campaign 1943-1945 by Harry A. Gailey. I never knew that such a book existed.

I had just received the book and was involved in a project and have not had time to read it or write to Ed Jr.

Ed, I hope you read this and understand why I am late in responding. I am sending this to the Americal Newsletter to let all the other Raiders know there are some of us still around and kicking. Stay well and I will be in touch.

Pat Farino

ROY'S RAIDERS
G Company - 182nd Infantry

My father, Edward John Gekosky, deceased 1970, left me with some WW II pictures and newspaper cutouts. The most intriguing one was an undated newspaper picture but the name of the newspaper was cut out.

I managed to find the picture on microfilm in my County library and it was dated December 12, 1944 and I was told it appeared all over the country.

(This picture was titled, "THE LAST OF A GALLANT FORTY-THREE", and the caption read, "The remaining eight members of 'Roy's Raiders,' veterans of the long and bitter war on Bougainville, are shown at a base somewhere in the Pacific. Left to right: Sgt. E Gekosky, Kulpmont, PA: Pfc. S.L. Gonzales, San Angelo, TX: Sgt. T.f. Marion, Charlestown, WV: Sgt. H.P. Simmons, Whitman, MA: Lieut. Richard L. Roy, Mountain Lake Park, MD, for whom the group was named: Sgt. R. L. Egler, Rockford, IL: Sgt. J.G. Morton, Portland, OR: and Sgt. H. K. Norman, Columbus, GA.) (The picture would not reproduce)

The Americal website helped me determine that Dad was in the 182nd Infantry, Company G. I have read ten or so books tracing his path through the Pacific, including 'Under the Southern Cross'.

The Americal website locator service allowed me to find Dad's friends, T.F. Marion and Clayton Brown, both Company G. 'Brownie' steered me to Jack

Morton. The discussions also helped lead me to Pat Farino, all among 'Roy's Raiders', 2nd platoon, G Company that arrived on bougainville December 25, 1943. As the picture shows, my Dad, Jack Morton and Frank Marion were still standing as the battle for Bougainville wore on. The balance of the forty three men were KIA, MIA, WIA or otherwise out of action.

I believe Brownie and Pat Farino were WIA on Bougainville. Dad, Jack and Brownie went on to Leyte, Cebu and then to Japan--among the few to go all the way.

I was fortunate to meet Jack and Brownie at a luncheon that we held in May 2002, at the Secret Garden Inn in Eugene, Oregon.



LtoR: Ed Gekosky, Clayton Brown, Jack Morton, and Julia Gekosky, my mother.

What an inspiring event! A privilege to meet genuine war heroes, that knew my Dad, and told me about my Dad.

This event gave me a little piece of Dad back and was something I could share with my family, children and grandchildren. I had some of Dad's WW II pictures and they gave me some of Dad. The stories make me appreciate Dad more, now, than ever before. the books and stories on the Americal in WW II have led me to a respect level reserved for true heroes.

Thank you,

Edward Gekosky

HEADQUARTERS BATTERY - 246 FIELD ARTILLERY BN.

I am the former T/5 Ralph L.A. Larson and I served with the wire section of Headquarters Battery, 246th Field Artillery Battalion in the Solomon Islands and the Philippines. I was always up front in liaison when we were making any combat landings, as I had the wire detail for our fire direction center. I was rotated out in March 1946 while stationed in Japan. Would like to hear from anyone that remembers me. Contact:

Ralph L.A. Larson

[REDACTED]

Lancaster, CA 93535

email: [REDACTED]

LETTERS FROM THE OLD GUARD

program at Harvard. Reluctantly he gave up the Cavalry.

Soldiers' Chorus

I was a farmer's boy pitching up the hay,
Worked from the crack of dawn, til the end of day,
Along came a captain, of the cavalry,
And said to me, "My boy, won't
you come along with me?"

(Chorus) Singing "High Laced Boots, and a coat of
fine O.D. (Olive Drab)
If you're rough enough and tough enough,
You can join the cavalry

I joined the outfit in the month of May
They taught me to salute, and always sir, to say,
They gave me a pistol, a rifle and a boot,
And took me up to Wakefield,
and taught me how to shoot.

(Chorus)

So, here's to the cavalry, the fairest of the fair
You can tell them by their buttons
and shining spurs they wear,
And when there's trouble brewing,
that's difficult to meet,
Just call out the cavalry,
they'd rather fight than eat.

(Chorus)

Ed Note: The above letter was received from Bill McLaughlin on June 20, 2002. Bill passed away three weeks later on July 12.

Bill frequently contributed articles to many Army and veteran's Newsletters. Information that he provided on Army service and other historical events will be missed.

C COMPANY - 132nd INFANTRY

I am writing this letter on Memorial Day 2002 and I am thinking about my platoon leader 1st Lt. Nolan from Louisiana. He was killed during the last WW II action of our Division.

This occurred on August 5, 1945 at the Suso River on Cebu, Philippine Islands. The following day the A Bomb was dropped on Hiroshima and shortly after that the Japanese surrendered.

I believe that Lt. Nolan was the last WW II KIA of our Division.

Frank L. Kremsner

M COMPANY - 164 INFANTRY
Do You Know This Man?

Eldridge Bates would like to contact anyone that served with him in M Company 164th Infantry. Contact him at:

Eldridge L. Bates

[REDACTED]

Dalton, GA 30721

Telephone: [REDACTED]

HAVE YOU JOINED A CHAPTER YET?

HUMOR IN UNIFORM
746th AAA Gun Bn.

These are some of the humorous or maybe even 'raunchy' events that transpired during WW II in the Pacific between December 7, 1941 until December 1945.

Our unit was the 251st Coast Artillery that was sent to Hawaii in October of 1940 to bolster anti-aircraft protection for the Pearl Harbor region. In February of 1944 the designation was changed to 746th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battalion consisting of four batteries each armed with four 90mm AA guns, four .50 caliber water cooled machine guns, one radar set computer and a generator.

EVENT #1 Nandi Fiji Islands

Shortly after Pearl Harbor our unit was sent to defend the airstrip being built near Lautoka, Vita Levu, Fiji Islands.

One member of Battery D had volunteered to be a 'dog robber', or wait on the officers when they were eating their meals. He was a middle-aged man of slight build, a mean tempered non smiling P.F.C. named Scherer. One evening while playing cards he excused himself saying he needed to use the latrine which was located about forty yards away. The other card player became concerned when he failed to appear for quite some time and were about to search for him when he appeared in the doorway covered with s---and pieces of toilet paper and a horrible stench!

Everyone scattered and he was banished to the shower for several hours. No one wanted to be anywhere near him for several weeks!

He was unaware that a new latrine had been built and the old site had as yet not been filled. Falling into the old latrine he was fortunate to not have drowned and then being carried on the "missing in action" list.

EVENT #2 Bougainville

On Bougainville Island in the Solomons in April 1944 our Commanding Officer of Battery D had one of his gun crews set up to demonstrate to our Battalion Commander, Colonel Long, the speed in which the crew could respond to an air raid alert and show how many rounds could be fired in a 60 second time period. Our Battery Commander Captain Nolan was a very much despised officer. He was mean, nasty, belligerent, and always trying to catch anyone not doing their duty as he thought it should be done. He was known to everyone by the endearing term "Bunny Butt" for his nasty habit of continually scratching his behind.

Bunny Butt forgot to inform the gun crew that only dummy ammunition, or blank shells, were to be used for the demonstration, and after he gave the gun crew the order to fire, 20 live 900mm shells were thrown into the sky arching and exploding over the ships in the harbor. frantic calls from the navy were received at the Battery switchboard informing Captain Nolan about his error. Luckily no one was injured but a lot of smiles were observed on the gun crews' faces as "pompous" Bunny Butt was dressed down by the Colonel for his inexcusable mistake!

EVENT #3 Bougainville (Latrine Story #2)

Bunny Butt and I did not have a very good relationship. I never disobeyed an order but I always felt that I had the right to question one if I felt it might be hazardous to one's health or well being.

We had 125 men in Battery D and that required setting up several eight seater latrines around our gun position. I entered one of these one day to find Bunny Butt about to leave. I took the far corner seat and discovered that he had left his fatigue cap with Captain's bars on the next seat. It took me only seconds to rip the bars from the cap and throw the cap into one of the empty latrine holes. Just as I was closing the cover on the hole, Captain Nolan came barging in demanding to know if he had left his cap behind. Of course I "innocently" answered that I hadn't seen it, and he left.

I returned to my tent, showing my buddies my "prize" and very proud of the fact that I had debarred Bunny Butt!

EVENT #4 Bougainville

When the Australians took over control of Bougainville island after we had been there ten months, our truck drivers were told that they would have to change their driving habits and start driving on the left side of the road.

One of our truck drivers, known only as "Stanley from St. Louis" had proven his ability as an exceptional driver, time after time, during our stay on the island. The day we landed, our LST had gotten hung up on a sand bar which left about 100 feet between the beach and the LST. All of our trucks had been equipped with snorkel tubes so they could be driven through several feet of water without drowning out the engines. The water between the beach and the LST was about four feet deep but Stanley was willing to make the run to the beach. We had a special truck - cab over engine with military frame and wheels and a 22 foot bed to carry our height finder which was part of our anti aircraft equipment. The truck had been loaded at Guadalcanal to the very top of the bows with gun ammunition, kitchen equipment, and all manner of heavy tools. Stanley revved up the engine yelled "all clear" and Stanley came down that ramp and through the water and was up on the beach, headed for the jungle before we got him to stop.

Shortly after the Australians put the new driving rules out, a bunch of us were on the back of the cab-over with Stanley driving down the main road, on the "right side" of the road headed for the ammo dump. In the distance on the same side of the road, an Australian truck was headed toward us head-on, and we were getting as little anxious as to which driver, the Aussie or Stanley, would finally give in to avoid a head on collision. At the very last minute the Aussie pulled off the road, bumped along into a ten foot deep ditch along-side the road. As Stanley drove "triumphantly" by the Aussie was standing on top of the hood of his truck yelling, "You Bloody Bastard" and Stanley could be heard mumbling, "We built these G-damn roads so we should make the rules, not you!!"

EVENT #5 Cebu-Babag Ridge-Raunchy Story

When our unit landed on Cebu island in the Philippines, we were assigned the task of occupying a series of caves and tunnels that had recently been cleared of Japanese by the Infantry.

The Infantry used flame throwers to get some of the Japanese to come out of the tunnels and their badly burned corpses could be found just outside the entrances. To keep down the stench and flies that were concentrated around the bodies, we sprayed them with diesel fuel until burial details could come up.

RECOGNIZING WWII AMERICAL VETS
By Lynn Hart

I don't know the person who wrote the article in the April-May-June 2002 Americal Newsletter about the 101st Medical Regiment-209 AGF Band, but it was very interesting. I always thought that someone in a military band lived the best of lives that a GI could live. This article showed me how wrong that was.

I am an avid reader of WW2 and other military related books. I read only non-fiction when it comes to war stories. I watch many documentaries about WW2, the Vietnam War and the Korean War.

I certainly have nothing but high regard and honor toward the Marine Corps and the men who fought in any conflict with the USMC. There is no doubt that the Marines in Pacific sacrificed greatly in their combat rolls on the islands.

The other night on the History Channel I watched a show about PT boats. It covered Guadalcanal and the fighting in the nearby islands. It seemed to me that the Americal Division veterans are not getting the notice they deserve for their contributions.

When reading about any Pacific combat it seems like the Marines were the only service fighting at the time. I know that our WW2 vets know what they and the Americal Division did during the fighting. They may also know that they are not going to be recognized nationally as contributing to the defeat of the Japanese.

It burned my butt that these men gave so much and have been so forgotten by the television and books. I always enjoy reading about the Old Guard and I am proud of what each of my Americal WW2 friends did for our country in those terrible times. I salute you all.

I served with H Troop, 17th Cavalry, 198 LIB and also HHC, the 198 LIB during 67-68. I have also watched many shows about fighting in the I Corp and as most of you know it seems that the Marines were the only warriors in I Corp. If I am not mistaken the Americal was the largest combat division in Vietnam. About the only mention the Americal gets is Calley and My Lai. I know that Vietnam vets and WW2 vets both know the difference from what the public sees and what actually happened.

I want to tell all WW2 vets, especially the Americal vets, that I know that you were exposed to many dangers in the Pacific Islands during the war. I know that you suffered the loss of Americal brothers and we will not forget those men who gave all. Remember, dying for your country is not the worse thing to happen to someone. ----

Being forgotten is.

Ed Note: Thank you Lynn--we, the "Old Guard" needed that! The article about the 101st Medical Regiment was written by John L. O'Neil. I forgot to add the by-line.

During my thirty three months overseas I only saw one man from the media. Actually he was with another Division but he visited the 182nd Infantry Regiment because it contained a Company from his home town.

The 164th Infantry Regiment from the Americal was the first Army unit to engage in offensive combat against the Axis powers in World War II. Have you ever read that any place?

We were served dehydrated potatoes, dehydrated eggs, dehydrated onions, all to conserve space and weight in transport. Then, number ten cans were shipped labeled; Chili Con Carne, with out Beans. This added up to a number ten can of mostly water. I could never figure that out.

Leonard (Sack) Owczarzak

INSTRUMENT OF SURRENDER

We, acting by command of and in behalf of the Emperor of Japan, the Japanese Government and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters, hereby accept the provisions set forth in the declaration issued by the heads of the Government of the United States, China and Great Britain on 26 July 1945, at Potsdam, and subsequently adhered to by Union of Soviet Socialist Republic, which four powers are hereafter referred to as the Allied Powers.

We hereby proclaim the unconditional surrender to the Allied Powers of the Japanese Imperial Headquarters and of all Japanese armed forces and all armed forces under Japanese control wherever situated.

We hereby command all Japanese forces wherever situated and the Japanese people to cease hostilities forthwith, to preserve and save from damage all ships, aircraft, and military and civil property and to comply with all requirements which may be imposed by the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers or by agencies of the Japanese Government at his direction.

We hereby command the Japanese Imperial Headquarters to issue at once orders to the Commanders of all Japanese forces and all forces under Japanese control wherever situated to surrender unconditionally themselves and all forces under their control.

We hereby command all civil, military and naval officials to obey and enforce all proclamations, orders and directives deemed by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers to be proper to effectuate this surrender and issued by him or under his authority and we direct all such officials to remain at their posts and to continue to perform their non-combatant duties unless specifically relieved by him or under his authority.

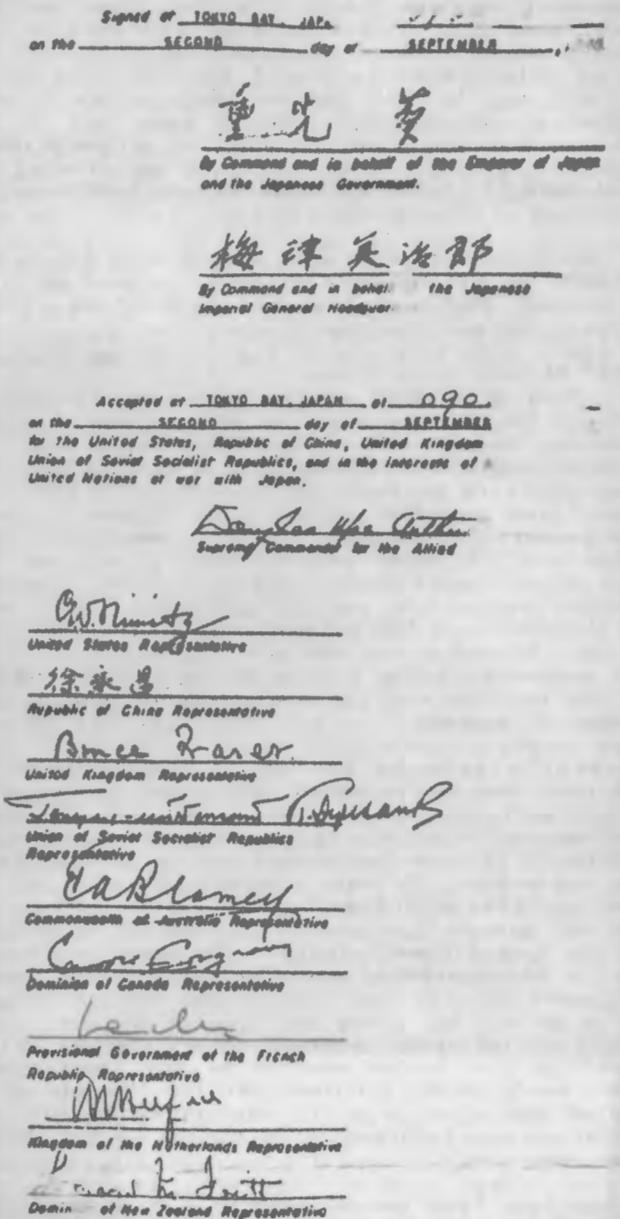
We hereby undertake for the Emperor, the Japanese Government and their successors to carry out the provisions of the Potsdam Declaration in good faith, and to issue whatever orders and take whatever action may be required by the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers or by any other designated representative of the Allied Powers for the purpose of giving effect to that Declaration.

We hereby command the Japanese Imperial Government and the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters at once to liberate all allied prisoners of war and civilian internees now under Japanese control and to provide for their protection, care, maintenance and immediate transportation to places as directed.

The authority of the Emperor and the Japanese Government to rule the state shall be subject to the Supreme Commander of the Allied Powers who will take such steps as he deems proper to effectuate these terms of surrender.

THE END OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

After 1364 days, 5 hours and 14 minutes, World War II, Pacific, ended officially at 0904 September 2, 1945 with the signing of the Instrument of Surrender on the battleship USS Missouri, anchored in Tokyo Bay. This is an exact copy of that document, which ended the costliest war in history.



On board to sign and/or observe the signing were representatives of the allied nations. Signing on behalf of the Japanese were Foreign Minister Mamoru Shigemitsu who signed on behalf of the Emperor of Japan (top right signature) and General Yoshihiro, who signed on behalf of Imperial General Headquarters (lower top right). The ceremony was conducted by General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander. Signing for the United States was Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific and Pacific Ocean areas. The signatures below his are as follows: Gen. Hsu Yung-Chang (China), Admiral Sir Bruce Fraser (United Kingdom), Lt. General Derevyanko (Soviet Union), General Sir Thomas (Australia), Colonel Moore Cosgrove (Canada), General Jacques Le Clark (France), Admiral C.E.L. Helfrich (the Netherlands), and Air Marshal Isiti (New Zealand).

General MacArthur stated the purpose of the occasion and an expression of hope for the future: "It is my earnest hope--indeed the hope of all mankind--that from this solemn occasion a better world shall emerge out of the blood and carnage of

the past, a world founded on faith and understanding, a world dedicated to the dignity of man and the fulfillment of his most cherished wish for freedom, tolerance and justice."

Admiral Nimitz, remembering those who gave their lives in the Pacific War said: "They fought together as brothers in arms; they died together and now they sleep side by side. To them we have a solemn obligation--the obligation to insure that their sacrifice will help make this a better and safer world in which to live."

Ed Note: The above article is from a copy of the 'Instrument of Surrender' that was sent in by Irving Isaacson.

I thought it would be appropriate to run it at this time to celebrate the fifty seventh (57) anniversary of the surrender that is coming up on September 2, 2002.

This past August 7th was the anniversary of dropping the BOMB on Hiroshima. There was not a word about it in the local paper and I am certain that the media will not feature the surrender on the front page--it will be tucked away inside of the paper if at all.

There have been books written about this "Forgotten" battle or that "Forgotten" battle--someone should write a book about the "Forgotten Victory!"

I am convinced that the people reporting on the news these days were either in college protesting the Vietnam War or they were just out and out draft dodgers.

These same people are in our schools teaching revisionist history and everything that is wrong with our country.

I would appreciate it very much if any member sees and article in the Newspapers on September 2nd about the surrender, they would clip it and send it to me.

If you read the 'Instrument of Surrender' you will understand the Japanese were treated fairly and became a strong nation industrially and economically under the terms of the surrender. As a matter of fact, if you judge by the number of Japanese cars you see on the highways and byways, you might even think they won!

And that reminds me--some of those car manufacturers made money off the backs of Americal POW's and have never made restitution for this misdeed.

September 2, 2002 is the anniversary of VJ Day. Mark it on your calendar for you won't see anything in the Newspapers to remind you.

NOW HEAR THIS!!!

"This year will go down in history. For the first time a civilized nation has full gun registration! Our streets will be safer, our Police more efficient and the world will follow our lead into the future."

1935 Adolph Hitler

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES?

GEORGE C. MARSHALL FOUNDATION'S

World War II - Korean War Memories Project

The George C. Marshall Foundation has launched a new Memories Project to collect and preserve personal World War II and Korean War experiences from veterans and civilians who lived during those years, to include stories, letters, diaries, anecdotes, original writing such as songs and poetry, photographs, and artifacts. These war-time memories will be indexed and made available to families, visitors, scholars, and researchers through the George C. Marshall Foundation Library/Archives and Research Center.

Marshall Foundation Pres. Albert J. Beveridge III, states, "We believe that the memories of those who served in World War II and the Korean War, in all of the services--Army, Air Corps, Air Force, Navy, Marines Corps, and Coast Guard--as well as those who were part of the arsenal of democracy on the homefront, are worth sharing and saving. The war-time experiences of a generation that speaks to us of duty and honor, sacrifice and accomplishments, should be preserved and cherished as reminders of all that Americans today owe to these men and women."

Your voice is among those of a generation that has given so much, yet experience tells us that you have much more to share. All who lived during the World War II and the Korean War years are encouraged to share their memories. All personal recollections of wartime experiences on land, sea, or in the air, at home or overseas will be welcome.

There is no limit to the length of your personal narratives. We hope you will have some war-time anecdotes or experiences that you can describe in detail, with specific names, dates, and places.

PLEASE CALL OR WRITE FIRST:

CALL: [REDACTED]

WRITE: Joellen K. Bland
Director, Memories Project
George C. Marshall Foundation

[REDACTED] Lexington, VA 24450

E-MAIL: [REDACTED]

ARCHIVES FIND TEN MILLION 'LOST' RECORDS
Source: Veterans Benefit News

The medical treatment and hospitalization records of nearly ten million World War II and Korean War era veterans have been located by the National Archives. The records were thought to have been lost. The records, which cover the years 1941-45 and 1950-1954 for the Army and Air Corps, may involve personnel from other services who were treated at Army facilities. Veterans whose claims have been denied because of documentation problems may now be able to reopen their claims based on these records. Accordingly, each DSO should get word out to our veterans population about this discovery. More information may be obtained by writing to:

National Personnel Records Center

NPRC/NCPMF-C

[REDACTED] St. Louis, MO 63132

VALOR TOURS
GUADALCANAL - SOLOMON ISLAND
AUGUST 2 TO 16, 2003

This popular annual expedition departs from Los Angeles for Henderson Field and includes battle sites of Guadalcanal, ceremony at the War Memorial on the anniversary (August 7th) and a seven day cruise through the Solomon Islands. From \$4100 per person and includes most meals, cancellation insurance coverage and air fare. Escorted by Bob Reynolds, President of Valor Tours, Ltd. Call for a brochure at 1-800-842-4504 or email valortours@msn.com

E COMPANY - 182ND INFANTRY



Sitting: George Correll - William Combs
Standing L to R: James Cook - Rex Cooprider
Willard Collinsworth

This picture was taken in Honshu, Japan in 1945. Willard Collinsworth was made aware of the ADVA through the Americal Website and email.

Willard trained in Fort McClellan, Alabama and joined the Americal on Leyte. His grandson, Michael, writes for his grandfather:

My grandfather told me that when he first arrived in the Pacific he landed on Leyte. Although Leyte was secure in June 1945, he said that his first day there that they were told to line up in stagger formation and chow was brought up to them on trucks. He said that he noticed a lot of commotion near the trucks and went up to see what was going on. There was a Japanese dressed up in a G.I. uniform trying to get something to eat. The Jap was almost beaten to death--everyone just wanted to get a piece of that Jap!

The next day He was shipped to Cebu where he joined E Company, 182nd Infantry, Americal Division. He stayed with this Company until it was disbanded in Japan.

Willard Collinsworth had never heard of the ADVA until learning of it through the Website. Is there an old buddy you would like to find? Try the Americal Website or write to the Americal Newsletter. We might just find him for you.

NOW HEAR THIS!

Letter to the Editor
Fredericksburg Standard/Radio Post
Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

Dear Sir:

How rapidly the "freedoms" we so proudly defended are being brushed aside by the courts. This ruling by the Ninth Circuit Court really is an insult to patriotic Americans.

If my memory serves me correctly, this same body in another decision some thirty years ago ruled that the motto "In God We Trust" on our coins and currency was not objectionable and did not in any way tend to the establishment of religion in these United States of America.

Our flag and the pledge of allegiance are a vital part of our great country. One has the right to refrain from reciting the pledge if they so choose.

Monuments of granite and stone are a fitting tribute to our brave men and women and who defended our country. But instilling loyalty and patriotism into the hearts of our young people is equally important. The pledge of allegiance and respect for Old Glory are important.

Sincerely,
Perry M Woerner
WW II veteran

Ed Note: Rev. Woerner is a Chaplain of the ADVA

ATTENTION - ATTENTION - ATTENTION

In the Apr-May-Jun 2002 issue of the Americal Newsletter, starting on Page 26, was a story entitled, "101st Medical Regiment - 290th AFG Band". Your Editor neglected to give credit to the author of that article.

It was John L. O'Neil. John served with the 101st Medical Regiment on Guadalcanal and this story was from his personal experiences.

A SOLDIERS THOUGHTS IN WORDS
by James Standish

In the deep blue Pacific, far away
The Lord must have lost his temper, one day;
And in his wrath he thumbed his nose
and on this spot an island rose.
A hell on earth believe me pal,
This place was named Guadalcanal

A place where every man is weaned,
On bright yellow pills, called Atabrine
Where a torrid sun curses flaming red,
And makes a man wish he were dead.
A spot where each man draws his lot;
Of fever, jaundice, and tropical rot.

For freedoms sake, we came to fight,
Four our peoples sake, we fought with might.
For justice sake, we made them run,
For our children's sake, the fight we won.
Four our country's sake, we were willing to roam
But now for God's sake, send us home.

Jim Standish
L Co. 182 Infantry

VETERAN OF TWO WARS AND ONE CONFLICT



Retired First Sergeant Ray E. Poynter speaks to his grandson's kindergarten class Thursday about Veterans Day. Poynter served in World War II, Korean War and two years in Vietnam, winning more than 21 medals and 31 certificates from commanders under which he served. Nov 5-11 was designated as "National Awareness Week" by the Senate for Veterans. In addition Poynter also spoke to several other classes, showing the children his medals.

121 MEDICAL BATTALION

The only place that I did not go with the Americal Division was to Japan as I was on my way back to the USA on an Army transport when the BOMBS were dropped on Japan. If I had known that the Japanese were going to surrender I would have stayed, but everybody said we were going to invade Japan.

I was on the Americal Division Championship Baseball Team. The 121 Medical Battalion won the championship in 1944 while we were on Bougainville Island. Each member of the team was given a small medal in the shape of a baseball diamond showing a player batting and on the back it said, "Americal Division Champions 1944".

I lost the one that was given to me. Could anyone inform me as to what I can do to obtain another one? There should be records that would verify that I was a member of that team. Each medal had the players name on the back.

I would also like to contact three of my buddies. They were Lou Latino, Louis Muir and Richard Jones, all from Worcester, MA.

Please contact me at:

Robert Ferrera

[REDACTED]
Miami, FL 33173

HAVE YOU CALLED THAT BUDDY YET?

AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY



The above is a picture of the sign that dedicates the section of Interstate Highway 91 that crosses western Massachusetts from Connecticut to Vermont.

Arthur Pope, a former member of C Company, 182nd Infantry, decorates this memorial sign every Memorial Day.

IN MEMORIAM

Joseph A. Papa

The veterans of the Americal and especially F Company, 182nd Infantry, have lost a true friend.

Joseph Papa has been the king-pin in keeping the members of F Company together since the end of World War II.

For many years he was instrumental in arranging an annual dinner dance for the F Company veterans and for the past several years this has been an annual luncheon.

At any of these affairs one could expect to be greeted by Joe's smile and his warm personality.

Joe passed away after a brief illness on June 27, 2002. His wife and family requested that any Memorial gifts be made to the Americal Scholarship Fund.

He will be missed.

A SOLDIER'S STORY

The rifleman fights without promise of either reward or relief. Behind every river there's another hill--and behind the hill another river.

After weeks or months in the line only a wound can offer him comfort of safety, shelter, and a bed. Those who are left to fight, fight on, evading death but knowing that with each day of evasion they have exhausted one more chance for survival. Sooner or later, unless victory comes, this chase must end on a litter or in the grave.

General of the Army

Omar N. Bradley

LETTERS FROM THE OLD GUARD

BOUND FOR AUSTRALIA AND ADVENTURE
By Bill McLaughlin

Fifty years ago at this time, a lot of us local boys were at sea approaching Australia.

After a year's training at Camp Edwards with the 26th "Yankee" Division, (remember 'Goodbye dear, I'll be back in a year, cuz I'm in the Army now'?) our group had been split off and sent to the South Pacific.

Known simply as Task Force 6814, we were the first unit of any size to leave after Pearl Harbor was bombed. We had come back from Carolina maneuvers to our home barracks here on the Cape December 6, 1941. Next Day was Pearl Harbor, and by mid-January we were on our way. We boarded a long troop train in the dark and traveled out from Camp Edwards, over the loop now used by the Bay Colony Railroad trash train, down to Brooklyn Navy Yard.

Our ships, most still being converted from luxury liners to bunk crammed troopships, had been armed hurriedly with machine guns and World War 1 cannon. The Naval Armed Guard, fresh from boot camp at Great Lakes Station was new both to the sea and machine guns. Their gunners' mate leader asked some of us to join them, so we stood watches and manned the guns for the 37-day trip.

From the January winter in New England to the tropic heat of the Canal Zone took three days. Several sub scares took our over worked destroyers racing around the convoy like sheep dogs protecting their flock. Once through the Canal (our ship, the Moore-McCormick Line Flagship barely fit) we picked up the cruiser Honolulu, damaged in the raid on Pearl Harbor, but repaired in time to escort us through the Pacific.

Life on shipboard was crowded and often monotonous, but our bands played Sunday fore and aft, and amateur shows and boxing matches were well received. Crossing the equator called for King Neptune and his court to make us all shellbacks. One of our nurses from Worcester was his beautiful queen.

Water was rationed and saltwater showers were no treat, so, when a rain squall was sighted in the clear Pacific air, the convoy would steer through it while all the GI's stripped, and rinsed like mad. Off Bora Bora, we heard the Philippines had fallen to the enemy. Things were looking worse all the time in the Pacific war.

Approaching Australia we ran into a storm in the Tasmanian Sea, with combers coming green over the bow and ships disappearing from sight in the troughs. Half the four thousand soldiers on the ship got seasick. I never did.

One lad had a portable radio, and we set it up to hear music from Australia. After considerable squawking and screeching through the static, a band was heard. Straining, we made out the tune--"Harbor Lights." Their Hit Parade, it seemed, was pretty much the same as ours.

Coming into Melbourne, two of us climbed to the roof over the crow's nest on the foremast. What a view! Pulling alongside a dock we could see crowds of people standing, waving and cheering like mad. Scant weeks before, 40,000 of their lads had been captured by the Japanese when Singapore had fallen. We were the first evidence of American aid and they loved us. We learned much later that President Roosevelt had refused a request that our force be sent to Malaya to aid the British there.

That narrowly we escaped capture at the very outset of the war,

One Aussie officer was waving his broad-brimmed hat in circles, letting out cowboy yells. Others threw packets of their cigarettes, while our boys threw some of ours in return--much to their later regret on sampling the local brands.

Coming ashore we were whisked off into the countryside by train to a former gold mining town called Bendigo, where we spent a delightful 10 days. (living in private homes). It was the only time in my life that I slept in a feather bed. We still remember the stay and the friendly people, fondly.

It was the beginning of a great adventure. I was 21 and little knew that 3 1/2 years of war and five campaigns lay ahead before ever we boarded a ship again to return home.

Ed Note: This article was written about ten years ago by Bill and it appeared in the Cape Cod Times. I thought this an appropriate time to run this story again in memory of Bill.

The above clipping from the Cape Cod Times was sent to me by Douglas Higham who served with E Company, 182nd Infantry from the days of Task Force 6814 through the Leyte campaign.

ATTENTION - OLD GUARD - ATTENTION

Reading some of the articles in this Newsletter should bring back some fond memories, or maybe not so fond memories. Reading Bill McLaughlin's story about his journey to Australia aboard a 'luxury' ship should stir up some memories.

I was on the Santa Elena and according to some of the directions that were posted in various places, left over from its days as a luxury cruise ship, there was a swimming pool on board! That was true. But--while being converted to a troop transport the pool was boarded over and made into a latrine!

Let's hear about some of your surprises on your cruise to Australia.

Not only about Army transports but about you experiences, some may be sad and some may be funny. We would like to hear them.

In this issue there are stories from the Infantry Soldier, the Medics, the AAA units. How about some stories from the Engineers, Artillery, Quartermaster, M.P.'s and Signal Company.

DO IT NOW!!!

Jim

ATTENTION - ATTENTION - ATTENTION

This is for all the "OLD Guard" that are planning on attending the Reunion in Washington, DC in November. Dave Taylor is planning on conducting interviews with as many of the "Old Guard" as possible. He will arrange for a meeting place and will post the time and place at the Americal Reception desk.

If you have any particular actions please bring notes on dates and others involved.

VIETNAM NEWS NETWORK

11 LIB - DELTA COMPANY - 1/20 INFANTRY

We had a wonderful and successful 2002 Reunion the week end of April 26th. This year we had 35 men attend, with many wives, 19 of whom were new. Our honor for the longest distance traveled to come to the Reunion goes to Don and Marsha Hotch, who came all the way from Haines, Alaska. We were all very happy to see Don--you may recall he was one of the two survivors of the March 1, 1969 Chopper crash. Along with Don and Marsha, the following folks were new attendees: Jeffrey Colvin and sons, Gary and Bonnie Dorsey, Tom and Tonia Ebert, Freddy and Deborah Falgoust, John and Colleen Geib, LC and Sharon Gillins, Coahel and Martha Hall, Elmer Hall, John Wayne Handly, Joe and Joan Knuesel, Harold Morrison, Pete and Freda Pounds, Toby and Cindy Prodgers, Bobbie, Diane and Eddie Renew, Steve Runice and son, Dwight and Penny Sommar, Wendall and Jan Strode, and Cliff and Mary Jo Tholen. (My apologies if I missed anyone.)

Some of us began arriving on Wednesday, more on Thursday, with practically the whole crew together for our Friday night buffet dinner at the Holiday Inn, complete with DJ playing songs from our era.

We held our Memorial Service on Saturday morning at Patriot Park to honor our fallen brothers, including a 21 gun salute by M/Sgt. Harold Morrison and the Tennessee National Guard. We read the names of 65 of our lost brothers--it was a moving service. Most of you received the list of our deceased. If you remember any additional names, not currently on the list, please notify us and those names will be added.



Front Row: Pete Pounds, John Gelb, Dwight Sommar, Jim White, Cliff Barger, Alan Conger, John Ewing, Freddy Falgoust, John Handy, JD Kitzer Second Row: Jeff Colvin, James Yeary, Jack Hayden, Erskine Wade, Don Hotch, Fred Battle, Gary Dorsey, Tom Ebert, Steve Runice, Bob Hatten, Joe Knuesel Back Row: Roby Prodgers, Jason Wright, Bruce Moore, Coahel Hall, Mac McLellan, LC Gillins, Danny Hanna, Denis Sperry. Not Pictured: Harold Morrison, Bobby Renew and Wendall Strode.

Lunch was held at the Holiday Inn followed by a riotous auction. Sherry Barger (our supreme leader, in the event you didn't know) had prepared a number of embroidered shirts, jackets, and soft brief cases for the auction and John Ewing

auctioned the items. Don Hotch kept those bids up and we raised \$655. Afterward, we presented two Delta Company certificates of appreciation, signed by all the men present. One certificate went to Sharon Gillis, who lost her brother, Sgt Larry Tyler, in 'Nam in '68. The other went to Sherry Barger in appreciation for the tireless work she has provided to us for the Reunions. Without Sherry we would not be together as a group.

All present at the Reunion had a great time and we encourage those who didn't attend to try to come to our next Reunion in two years. It is really great to see old friends again.

Our next Reunion will be held at Pidgeon Forge again, in two years.

Your Forever Friends,

Cliff and Sherry Barger

[REDACTED]
Boulder, CO 80303

Tel: [REDACTED]

DO YOU KNOW THIS MAN?

I am writing seeking information on a David Apodaca. He served with the Americal Division in Vietnam as an infantryman and he later served in the 1st Cavalry Division in the Gulf War. I believe he may be living in Texas.

I collect military memorabilia and acquired some items that belonged to him. I would like to know more about him and his service.

Sincerely,

John Richardson

[REDACTED]
Copperas Cove, TX 76522

VIETNAM - VALOR TOURS - VIETNAM

April 18 - May 4, 2003

Operated by Valor Tours, Ltd., this tour departs from San Francisco. It mixes war history with local culture. escorted by Ambassador James Rosenthal, you will visit Ho Chi Minh City, the Mekong Delta, Hue, Dong Ha, the DMZ and Con Thien, Danang, China Beach, old port of Hoi An, Hanoi and Halong Bay. Cost \$2995 per person, twin share includes cancellation insurance coverage, most meals and air fare. call for brochure at 1-800-842-4504 or email valortours@msn.com

AMERICAN RED CROSS 'DONUT DOLLY'

Did you know that there is an American Red Cross 'Donut Dolly' website? The address is, www.donutdolly.com. There are many photos from the Americal AO, a guest book, scrap book, history and locator etc. and other information.

Patty Bright Fortenberry, the person behind the website, served with the Americal, as I did, '68 and '69.

"Larry" Young Hines

OPERATION LZ/DC 02 - (WASHINGTON, D.C.)
Americana Division & 1ST Squadron /1ST Cavalry National Reunions

REGISTRATION FORM

NOVEMBER 8-12, 2002 (VETERANS DAY WEEKEND

Hotel Reservations: Make hotel reservations directly with the Doubletree Hotel.

The hotel is located on [REDACTED], Arlington, VA.

Make your reservations by calling toll free [REDACTED] or hotel direct - [REDACTED]

Ask for: OPERATION LZ/DC 02

Reunion room rate is \$99/night plus tax for 2 people to a room - Kids free -each room has 2 doublebeds. The special room rate is good Nov 6 thru Nov 13. Reservations will be taken up to Oct. 18, 2002 or when the hotel block is full. Please make your reservations early so you don't get left out.

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ Nick Name: _____

Spouse or Guest name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Unit(s) _____ Date(s) of Service: _____

(Friday thru Monday, November 8-11, 2001)

REGISTRATION FEE: Number of people _____ X \$20 = \$ _____

Registration fee provides gift, nametag, hospitality rooms with free items in room, free events, meeting rooms. ONE Reunion shirt included in Registration (Advance Registration Required)
Your size shirt is: _____ An additional gift (to be determined) will be provided to guests.

(Saturday, November 9, 2002)

BANQUET/SATURDAY BANQUET: 4:30 PM-11:00 PM

Number of people _____ X \$35 = \$ _____

Special guests, music by Rich Mosher-196th Infantry. Buffet meal & other surprises.

MEMORY BOOK: Remembrance Book of your weekend _____ X \$15 = \$ _____

Check registration on your photo shot of your group. All photos will be taken all day Saturday and at Banquet

(Sunday, November 10, 2002)

BUS TOUR: 10:00 am-2:00 PM Number of people _____ X \$25 = \$ _____

Tour includes trip to Arlington Cemetery for ceremony at Tomb of the unknowns, Dedication of the Americana Plaque, includes brunch at Ft Myers price of meal included, group picture at Lincoln Memorial steps, 1 hr around the memorials, and other selected sites on the tour as time allows.

(Monday, November 11, 2002)

BUS TRIP TO THE MEMORIALS: 11:30 am -3:30 PM

Number of people _____ X \$15 = \$ _____

Trip to the wreath laying ceremony and other memorials events on the Mall grounds. Trip there and back. If time allows we will stop at Union Station for lunch for 1 hour (Meal not included in price)

(Monday, November 11, 2002)

OPERATION LZ/DC ALL VETERANS DANCE: 6:00 PM-11:00 PM

Number of people _____ X \$20 = \$ _____

Music by Veteran -Britt Small from Skidmore, MO - well known veteran for entertaining veterans at many reunions Some free beverages, snack food, special guests, Presentations, surprises, etc. Music starts at 7PM till 11PM Seating for only 600.

ADD UP AND THE FINAL TOTAL IS: \$ _____

Send this form with check to: Terry Babler, DC 2002 REUNION, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] New Glarus, WI 53574 (You will receive your registration confirmation in your

Welcome Packet at the registration/info desk at Doubletree Hotel) MAKE CHECKS

PAYABLE TO: OPERATION LZ/DC 02

OPERATION LZ/DC 2002 - WASHINGTON, D.C.
November 8 - 12, 2002

NEWS FLASH - NEWS FLASH - NEWS FLASH

I have good news and bad news. First the good news. As of today, August 4, 2002, the Doubletree Hotel is full. This means they are not taking any reservations unless they get a cancellation. So, should you decide to wait and try again later, you may get a room. Now for the good news. I have contacted the hotels listed below for additional rooms. Although your room would not be at the Doubletree where the Reunion is being held, they are within a reasonable distance. I would strongly suggest that you make your reservation as soon as possible,

When booking room reservations make sure you mention:

"Operations LZ/DC 02"

Some hotels give the same rates before and after the Reunion.

Embassy Suites 1300 Jefferson Davis Hwy., Arlington, VA

Call [REDACTED] or hotel direct 703-979-9799 - \$109 per night + tax. 1 block from Doubletree. Full breakfast free in the morning, 2 room suites that sleep up to 3 people. 5:00-7:30 P.M. each night free beverages of choice and snacks at hotel etc. Near Metro, free airport shuttle, indoor pool, restaurant.

Crown Plaza Washington National Airport 1489 Jefferson Davis Hwy. Arlington, VA Call [REDACTED] or direct [REDACTED] - \$99 per night+tax. On site parking, pool shuttle to/from airport.

Hotel Inn National Airport 2650 Jefferson Davis Hwy, Arlington, VA. Call [REDACTED] or direct [REDACTED]. On site parking, full service restaurant, shuttle to/from airport.

Once you have secured a hotel don't forget to send in your registration featured on a previous page. Forms must be received by October 1, 2002

AMERICAN AIRLINES GROUP RATE

American Airlines- 10% off from any place in the country, when you lock into a fare 60 days before, 5% when 30 days before. Call 1-800-433-1790 Meeting Service Desk, Reference "Operations LZ/DC with Authorization NO. A21N2AA.

United Airlines - 10% off from anywhere in the country. when you book 60 days before, 5% when 30 days before. Call [REDACTED] Convention-Meeting Services Desk. Reference "Operation LZ/DC with Meeting Tour code #594SY.

SEND IN YOUR PHOTO

A slide show will be made up from pictures you send in--get a photo of then and now, in any form, electronic or hard copy. (Copy of original photo). See Apr-May-Jun 02 Americana Newsletter-Center Pages- for full details.

LZ Motown 2002

LZ Motown was a mini reunion held on July 5-6, 2002 in Southgate, Michigan, a suburb just south of Detroit. It was the first Great Lakes ADVA reunion ever to be held in Michigan.

I have attended the memorial service at the North Wall in Windsor, Ontario, a few times in the last five years. I thought this event would be a great catalyst for a mini reunion here in Michigan.



ADVA members gather at the North Wall in Windsor, Ont., July 6, 2002

The wall was built with money raised by the Michigan Association of Concerned Veterans (MACV) to honor the Canadians who served and who died fighting with US Forces in Vietnam. The wall was offered to every major city in Canada. All except for Windsor refused to have the memorial built in their city. Windsor is located directly across the river from Detroit, MI.

The Canadian Vietnam veterans group stated in January that they were going to drop the ceremony because of a lack of interest. When we offered ADVA Great Lakes participation they agreed to continue it as long as we would come. They put together a touching ceremony.

Our group went to the ceremony on a rented bus. It was driven by a Korea veteran grunt from the 37th Infantry Division. He insisted on buying us refreshments when he discovered he was chauffeuring an infantry division reunion.

We went to the ceremony at the wall and then to a free lunch at the Canadian Legion hall. We then headed back to USA for a steak cookout at VFW Post 9283. We had a great time conversing and listening to a folk singer in the donated hall.

National Commander Ron Ellis, PNC Ed Marsh, Chapter Commander John Mathews, Chapter Adjutant Terry Babler, and others from Americal Division were in attendance. Paul Stiff (23rd M.P. Co.) and I organized the reunion with help from Gary Gardner (1st/1st Cav.) and many people at the VFW and Canadian Vietnam vets group. This will be an annual event.

We had comrades from as far away as California, Texas, and Georgia. The Great Lakes region Americal vets were also well represented. There are 107 names on the North Wall. They deserve to be remembered. The Americal remembered them on July 6th.

Bill Allen; 11th LIB
Great Lakes Chapter Jr. Vice-Commander

Clarification and apology from the newsletter editors

Several pages of the April-May-June 2002 issue of the Americal Newsletter were not in the correct order. The story MEMORIES by Tom Waterbury begins on page 14 and continues on page 23. The story ARTILLERY COMBAT LOG by Alan States begins on page 20 and continues on page 19. The editors apologize for these errors.

2003 Blue Ghost Reunion

F Troop, 8th Cavalry (BlueGhosts) will have a reunion on April 3-6, 2003 in Kansas City, MO. The reunion will be held at the Holiday Inn Kansas City International Airport, [REDACTED], Kansas City, MO. 64153. Shuttles are available to and from the hotel.

Hotel reservations can be made by calling [REDACTED]. Reservations must be made by March 2, 2003 to get the special rate of \$69 per night. Rates are good for the period of April 2-6, 2003. Reservations made online need to use the code BGR.

A banquet will be held on Saturday, April 5 at 6:30 pm. This will include a buffet meal, guest speaker, raffle, and auction. The cost of the banquet ticket is \$30 each. For a registration form or for more information please contact Mr. Richard DuBois, Blue Ghost 2003 Reunion, [REDACTED], Fairfield Glade, TN, 38558-2739.

Visit the BlueGhost website at www.blueghosts.com.

John (Doc) Anderson; F Troop, 8th Cav.
Paso Robles, CA

Americal vet leads VFW post

VFW Post 4092, St. Simons Island, GA, has elected Michael F. Browning as Post Commander. Post 4092 is comprised of 100 veterans from WWII through Bosnia. The post is very proud of its new commander and his service in Vietnam.



VFW Post 4092 Commander Michael F. Browning and family
Browning is a veteran of E Troop, 1st Cavalry, 11th LIB. He is a project manager for Owens and Pridgen Contractors.

Jim Harnett; VFW Post 4092 Historian
St. Simons Is., GA

NSDAR Medal of Honor awarded

The Anne Bailey Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution awarded the prestigious NSDAR Medal of Honor to Colonel Richard F. Carvell (USA, Ret.) The award ceremony was held in St. Albans, WV on June 8, 2002.

Carvell commanded the 1/46th Infantry of the Americal Division in 1970. In accepting the award Carvell honored the service of CPL Steve Blaskovitch and LT Johnny Krebs who were killed near Hiep Duc on June 8, 1970. The 1/46th fought fierce battles in the Hiep Duc Valley for a period of six weeks in May and June of that year.

Carvell also stated "Three of my men from that battalion (1/46th Inf.) are in the audience today. It is with pride that I share this honor with LT Phil Tops of New Jersey, LT Dennis Powell of Piqua, OH and LT John Clark of Tampa, FL." -GLN-

Dear editor,

I served with Co. A, 3/1st Inf., 11th LIB. and with Btry. D, 1/82nd Arty. on LZ Dottie in 1969 and 1970. About four years ago a WWII Americal veteran invited me to a reunion of WWII, Korea, and Vietnam artillery vets. The WWII veteran is Elbert Horton.

Elbert is now 83 years old and lives in Timberlake, N.C. He is recovering from a minor stroke and has decided he cannot do the reunion activities any longer. But he is willing to help. The group, mostly WWII vets and their wives, unanimously elected me to carry on their tradition. Elbert started the reunion over 20 years ago.



Artillerymen Bob Miller (left) and Elbert Horton
We Vietnam veterans are needed to carry on traditional reunions and participate as officers in organizations such as the American Legion and the VFW. We must do our part together.

Next year's Americal Division Field Artillery reunion will take place in April 2003 in Pidgeon Forge, TN. We hope for a good turn out of WWII, Korean, and Vietnam veterans.

Write to me expressing your desire to attend. Most likely the time will be around the third week in April. The reunion is unregimented. We usually meet daily at a hospitality room in the hotel. A group trip and a Saturday night group farewell dinner will be held.

A head count of those interested in attending needs to be made now so a number of hotel rooms can be reserved in advance. Specifics of the reunion will follow at a later date. Please include your mailing address and e-mail if you have one. I can be contacted at 67 Gannett Rd., Farmington, NY, 14425. My phone number is [REDACTED] and my e-mail is [REDACTED].

Bob Miller; Btry. D, 1/82nd Artillery
Farmington, NY

Dear editor,

I am trying to locate someone that may have known my cousin Paul Gutierrez Gonzales. He was killed on June 11, 1969 while serving with the 198th Light Infantry Brigade. Please call me at [REDACTED] or page me at [REDACTED]. Thank you for your help.

Gloria Palmberg

Dear editor,

I am seeking anyone who knew my brother, SP4 Earl LeRoy Poole, killed in action on March 28, 1970. Earl was born on August 20, 1948 at Acworth, GA. He served with 1/6th Inf., 198th LIB. His unit may have been Co. C and/or Echo Recon. I was ten years old when he was killed. Please write me at 1769 Little Refugee Rd., Waleska, GA 30183. You may call me at [REDACTED].

Paul Poole
Waleska, GA

Dear editor,

I am looking for Paul Sims and Captain Dimsdale. I was a platoon leader with 2nd platoon, Co. B, 1/46th LIB, 198th LIB from October 1968 until March 1969. Write to me at [REDACTED], Phoenix, AZ, 85076. Call me at [REDACTED] or e-mail at [REDACTED].

James E. Jordan; Co. B, 1/46th Inf.
Phoenix, AZ

Dear editor,

Thanks for your speedy reply to my question about the order of battle. The 555th Engineer Company (May 1967) deployed to Chu Lai in October 1967. It was redesignated as Co B, 26th Engineer Battalion (Americal Division) on 1 Apr 68 at LZ Bayonet. The company officers at the time were CO CPT John M. O'Connor, XO 1LT William F. Barry, 1st Plt 2LT James Larsen, 2nd Plt 2LT Chester Briggs, 3rd Plt 1LT Donnie Wright, 1st Sgt 1SG Robert Elson.

Bill Barry; 555th Engr. Co. /Co. B, 26th Engr. Bn.
Spring, TX 77379

New address for Vietnam Editor

Dear members,

Robin and I have relocated from Blue Springs, MO to Kerrville, TX. I know some of you have had difficulties contacting me in the past few weeks. The information below is now effective. My new job keeps me on the move quite a bit but I will still be able to keep up with messages and correspondence. E-mail is a great way to stay in touch. Please let me know how I may be of service. Thank you.

Gary L. Noller, Vietnam Editor
[REDACTED], Kerrville, TX 78028

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**VISIT US AT WWW.PURPLEHEART.ORG
CALL US TOLL FREE AT [REDACTED]**

**-OR-
E-MAIL**

BILL BACON (A 2/1, 196TH '69-70)

Born To Honor, Ever At Peace

American nurse 1LT Sharon A. Lane was the only American servicewomen killed as a result of enemy fire during the Vietnam War. Each year on June 8th, she is remembered on the anniversary of her death.

David W. Taylor

Each June 8th, on the anniversary of her death, a memorial service is held at Aultman Hospital, Canton, Ohio to honor that institution's most famous alumnus.

Sharon Lane graduated from Canton's South High School in June 1961 and shortly after, entered the Aultman Hospital School of Nursing where she graduated in April 1965. She joined the U.S. Army Nurse Corps in April 1968.

Sharon Lane took her Officers Basic Course at Fort Sam Houston in Texas and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant on June 14, 1968. Three days later she reported to Fitzsimons General Hospital in Denver, Colorado where she worked in three outlying TB (tuberculosis) wards. While at Fitzsimons, 2LT Lane received her promotion to First Lieutenant and was transferred to the Cardiac Division's Intensive Care Unit and Recovery Room. On April 24, 1969, she reported to Travis Air Force Base in California with orders for Vietnam.

HELLO VIETNAM

1LT Sharon Lane arrived in Chu Lai, Vietnam on April 29th and reported to the 312th Evacuation Hospital. Initially assigned to the Intensive Care Ward she was soon assigned to work in the Vietnamese Ward. She worked 5 days a week (12 hour shifts) in this ward and in the sixth day worked in the Intensive Care Ward.

The 312th Evacuation Hospital had been an U.S. Army Reserve hospital from Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Created in 1924, it served in both World War II and the Korean Conflict. President Johnson's April 1968 call-up of 20,000 reservists had included the 312th Evacuation Hospital; the only medical unit to be activated in the April 1968 call-up. The hospital became fully operational in Chu Lai, Vietnam on October 1st, 1968.



"The hospital is equipped to handle 250 patients. We had 250 plus we were getting 50 a day and sending out 50 a day. We have really been getting patients through – both GI's and Vietnamese ... surgery has been going on continuously for 3 days and nights. One doctor has gotten 6 hours sleep in 3 days. The offensive is really on"

-- Letter Home from Sharon Lane

Philip Bigler, in his biography of 1LT Sharon Lane ("Hostile Fire: The Life and Death of First Lieutenant Sharon Lane" - Vandamere Press) notes, "Despite the overwhelming challenges of wartime medicine, the nurses (whose average age was just 23 years) were forced to personally confront the sober realities of their own mortality. Even though the 312th Evacuation Hospital had a remarkable 98 percent save rate, the fragility of life was painfully apparent in the reality of gaping chest wounds, traumatic amputations, brain wounds and patients gradually suffocating to death over several days from the so-called 'wet lung syndrome'.

"...Start nights tomorrow so don't have to get up early tomorrow. Nice thought. Still very quiet around here. Haven't gotten mortared for a couple week now..."

-- 1LT Sharon A. Lane's Last Letter from Vietnam (June 4, 1969)

As the hospital staff attended to those wounded by the rocket, and others worked to clear the wreckage, several helicopters began arriving with casualties from the field. One of the helicopters had Viet Cong prisoners and it was refused permission to land.

Lieutenant Silvia Lutz, part of the medical team of doctors and nurses whom attempted to resuscitate Lt. Lane, moved her body to the back of the Emergency Room. A screen was placed in front of her body lying on the stretcher. Throughout the morning doctors, nurses and others in the hospital staff paid their respects by the screen, offering their prayers. The hospital was stunned. "Nurses were not suppose to die".

"I have lost a wonderful daughter"

-- John Lane (June 11, 1969)

"At 5:30PM, June 8th, John and Kay Lane sat down in the family's living room to watch the evening news, the McGee Report". The dominant story remained the Midway Island conference and the optimistic news of the impending first American troop withdrawals and its potential for breaking the deadlock in the Paris peace talks. Frank McGee also reported on the fighting in Vietnam, briefly noting that there had been an overnight enemy attack launched against the American base at Chu Lai. The casualties included some dead but no further details were available. Likewise, the 2nd Surgical Hospital at Lai Kai had been attacked by 122-mm rockets and the 247th Medical Detachment had come under 87-mm mortar fire during the night. Thirty-nine Americans died this day in Vietnam.



(Above) Statue of 1LT Sharon Lane outside the south entrance to Aultman Hospital, Canton, Ohio. (Below) Grave marker at Sunset Hills Burial Park, Canton, Ohio.



The name of Sharon A. Lane is engraved on the black granite Panel 23 W, line 112 of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, "The Wall", in Washington DC along with more than 58,000 of her fellow soldiers.



"Mr. Lane, who had been resting on the sofa, sat upright immediately but said nothing. Chu Lai, after all, was a massive military complex. The chance of anything happening to Sharon was remote. Besides, she was safely stationed at a well-marked hospital of no military significance, and it was protected by every rule of engagement.

"After the news was over, Mr. Lane went downstairs to the basement bathroom to take a shower so that he and his wife could go out for Sunday dinner. Just a few minutes later, an Army sedan drove up to the Lane's residence and a somber military officer got out and walked up to the front door. Mrs. Lane frantically called down to her husband, fearing that something dreadful had happened to Sharon. When she opened the door all she could ask was, "Is she dead?" The officer replied simply, "Yes." With Mr. Lane at her side, the officer awkwardly offered a few words of condolences but could provide no details or specifics about the circumstances of Sharon's death. When he finally left, the Lanes were alone with their grief – there was neither honor nor glory for being the parents of the only nurse to have been killed by hostile fire. All they felt was the overwhelming sense of loss and despair" (Bigler – "Hostile Fire")

EVER AT PEACE

A memorial service was held at the Little Chapel at Chu Lai on June 10, 1969 and a Catholic Mass was held June 11, 1969. Services for 1LT Sharon A. Lane were held in Canton, Ohio on June 14, 1969. Her burial was at Sunset Hills Burial Park in Canton.

1LT Sharon Lane was buried with full military honors and was awarded:

- The Bronze Star with "V" for valor
- The Purple Heart
- The National Defense Service Medal
- The Vietnam Service Medal
- The Vietnam Campaign Medal
- The national Order of Vietnam Medal
- The Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross (with Palm)

1LT Sharon Lane has been honored in many ways since her death. Some include: The Fitzsimons Army Hospital named its Recovery Room the 'Lane Recovery Suite' in her memory in 1969. On May 23, 1970 the 1965 Graduating Class from Aultman's School of Nursing placed a plaque, picture and poem by a classmate in Morrow House (the nursing school residence hall) in her honor. On May 29, 1973 (Memorial Day) the William F. Cody Garrison #50 of the Army/Navy Union dedicated a statue to 1LT Lane in front of Aultman Hospital.

This statue was built with funds raised in the community and is one of the first Vietnam memorials constructed in the United States.

On May 26, 1986, the Canton, Ohio Chapter 199 of the Vietnam Veterans of America officially became the "Sharon Lane Chapter #199". There are two roads named for her: One in Denver, Colorado, the other at Fort Belvoir in Virginia. In September 1995, Fort Hood, Texas dedicated the Sharon Lane Volunteer Center.

Sharon Lane's father, John Lane, died on August 6, 1979. Her mother still lives in North Industry, Ohio, a surrounding community of Canton. Sharon Lane has a brother Gary Lane, a sister Judy (Tritt) and numerous nieces and nephews that she has never seen.

"I am nearest God when I am privileged to touch, with a healing hand, His violated image on earth."

When one draws Gods attention, one also draws His fire."

-- 1LT Sharon A. Lane
U.S. Army Nurse Corps

Children Affected by War

(Right) Two of 1LT Sharon Lane's Vietnamese patients at the 312th Evacuation Hospital, Ward 4, Chu Lai. This photo was sent home by Sharon in early June, 1969.

(Below) Four of Sharon Lane's nieces and nephews, as they participate in the annual memorial ceremonies honoring an aunt they had never met.



(Above) Mother-To-Mother: Mary Cirelli (left), State Representative, presents an Ohio House of Representatives proclamation to Mary Kay Lane, mother of Sharon Lane, during ceremonies on June 8, 2002. In the middle is one of Sharon Lane's nieces she has never seen, who watches her grandmother. (Right) Prior to the ADVA 2001 Annual Reunion in Cleveland, a grave-side ceremony was held with members of the reunion staff and Mrs. Lane. Ron Ellis, ADVA National Commander, presented Sharon's mother with this plaque, making her an honorary member of the American Division Veterans Association. (Below) Members of Vietnam Veterans of America Sharon Lane Chapter #199 (Canton, OH) stand as honor guard throughout the June 8th ceremonies.



BORN TO HONOR ... EVER AT PEACE

Sharon Lane's biography: "*Hostile Fire. The Life & Death of First Lieutenant Sharon Lane*" (Philip Bigler – Vandamere Press) contains detailed photos and descriptions of the 312th Evacuation Hospital in Chu Lai as well as a personal look at the life of the hospital staff.

The book can be purchased for \$25 (postage paid) by sending your check to the order of THE SHARON ANN LANE FOUNDATION, Post Office Media, Pennsylvania 19063.

The Sharon Ann Lane Foundation has been active in perpetuating the memory of her service to Vietnamese children and adults who were once her patients. The foundation has been working with Vietnamese doctors and nurses to erect a clinic in her honor. The clinic will be located in Tam Hiep, Nui Thanh District, Quan Nam Province, an area near Chu Lai. For more information contact The Sharon Lane Foundation at the address above or:

Telephone: [REDACTED]
E-mail: [REDACTED]

www.sharonannlanefoundation.com

“Up Country” ...A Journey Back To Nam

Vets who feel an inner call to return to Vietnam are increasingly playing out Nelson DeMille's fictional book, “Up Country”... a story about a Vietnam veteran, who returns to Vietnam and relives his past. Here are the thoughts of one Americal vet who returned in April 2002.

Mitchell W. Samples (as told to David W. Taylor)

Mitchell “Mick” Samples served with the 5/46th Infantry Battalion, 198th Light Infantry Brigade from June 1968 to April 1969. This West Virginia native had attended the Non-Commissioned Officers Instruction Course (NCOIC) prior to his assignment to Vietnam.

Sergeant Samples pondered his time in Vietnam for the past 10 years ... with a growing desire to return and touch his past. In April 2002 he returned by himself for 14 days. His thoughts as he tried to reconcile the past with the present, are presented below.

ARRIVAL ... HANOI

“ My flight schedule required me to arrive in Hanoi. I was nervous and spooked ... didn't know what to expect. The customs officials were lined up in a row, each sitting in a glass enclosure wearing their uniforms with their yellow stars. Behind the officials were guards with AK-47's. They may have been customs officials but to me they were still the NVA. It was a little unsettling, after all those years; I still looked for my M-16. I was sure these officials would find something wrong with my paperwork but they waved me through.”

Samples spent two days in Hanoi before flying south to DaNang. During that time he visited a number of sites in the capitol city, including Ho Chi Minh's body displayed under glass like Lenin's body in Moscow. “The one thing that bothered me the most was that flag, with the yellow star in the middle. They flew that flag everywhere. If there was a shithouse in the middle of the street they flew that flag. There is something about that flag I didn't like. It was a constant reminder that represented the enemy to me, even to this day”.

Mick Samples stayed several days in the ancient city of Hoi An, near Danang. From his hotel he would make the trips that formed the basis for his return to Vietnam. To visit three sites that held special meaning for him: My Lai, LZ Gator and Hill 97.

MY LAI

July 7, 1968 saw the 5/46th Infantry battalion in its heaviest combat since arriving in Vietnam in late March. The battalion was heavily engaged in combat in and around My Lai, as part of a clear and search operation. Samples' B Company air assaulted near the village of My Khe to serve as a blocking force. This was Samples' first operation in the field. As his helicopter descended to 15 feet above the ground it came under heavy small arms fire. He could see most of the company pinned down by heavy fire coming from a tree line. Casualties were laying everywhere. Not yet pinned down himself, he and an M-60 machine gunner headed for the closest point to the tree line. Working their way up under the cover of brush and trees, they spotted an enemy bunker with 8-10 VC in black pajamas darting in and out of the bunker. Samples and his gunner engaged the enemy position and knocked it out. As they dragged back one of the enemy who was still alive, Samples was knocked over by the concussion of an enemy hand grenade. Now crawling, they desperately made their way back to their platoon, just keeping ahead of a helicopter gunship strafing the area behind them.

Samples: “I couldn't find the area where I landed that day ... it was a God-awful amount of fire. We lost some good men. But My Lai was the area we supported so I went to see it. I didn't know what to expect.”



Monument at My Lai
(Photo courtesy of Mitchell Samples)

“When I walked to the site where the massacre took place there was a tall memorial. At the base of the memorial were 12 to 15 European teenagers with 2 to 3 adults. All of them were sitting at the base of the memorial ... looking like the world had just come to an end. They were somber, no one was speaking. I hoped one of them would say something to me ... ask me if I was an American...ask me what I thought about what happened here. I wanted to tell them what was on my mind. There were two sides to this story ... and you people were not with me.”

“Inside a building nearby were many of the photos made famous by American journalists, all carefully arrayed to paint a harsh picture of what Americans did here. But I was upset. I wanted to ask those there, where were the pictures of the atrocities committed by the NVA and VC? I walked away from the site. The image that My Lai portrays to the world did not change my image of a brutal and cunning enemy.”

LZ GATOR

LZ Gator was the base camp of the 5/46th infantry battalion, which was located astride Highway #1, approximately 10 kilometers south from the southern edge of the division base at Chu Lai. The battalion's area of responsibility extended east across Highway #1 to encompass the notorious Bantangan Peninsula; south of Gator to the province town of Binh Son and the Tra Bong River; west across the lowlands to the mountains and northwest into the “Rocket Pocket” or “Rocket valley”, the area the enemy launched rockets into the division headquarters at Chu Lai.

During the battalion's two-year tenure on LZ Gator, sappers had penetrated the bunker-line on several occasions, including killing the battalion commander during one penetration in May 1969. Typically one rifle company would man the bunker-line while the others operated in the field. The bunker-line was also manned at night by the artillery battery on Gator, and various support troops, which were stationed on the LZ. For many soldiers of the 5/46th, LZ Gator was their only “home” in Vietnam.

Samples: “I knew from the moment I stepped out of the car stopped on Highway #1, I was back at Gator. The short walk on the dirt road from the highway to the base of our perimeter brought back many memories. Much of the east side of the perimeter was gone, the earth removed through the years, to be used elsewhere.”

“On the southeast edge of Gator stood a Viet Cong cemetery. It was spooky standing there, very quiet. I thought to myself, ‘where is the monument or marker to remember us?’ There was nothing to tell people we were here ... of course”

“I walked up the side of the hill and came upon portions of one of the helicopter pads. It was quiet on top of the hill ... windy. I had a lot of memories of this place, some bad but a lot of good memories. This was our home from the field. Good things to remember ... returning from the field, taking a shower and walking to the mess hall in the early morning to get a hot meal. Those early morning breakfasts were special ... bacon and sausage and powdered eggs. I loved those powdered eggs! After C rations for weeks at a time the mess hall on Gator was like a fancy restaurant in New York! Cold milk, SOS, eating with my squad.”



“Our bunker overlooked Highway #1. We believed we had one of the fanciest bunkers on the hill. We worked hard to fix it up, lots of Playboy centerfolds on the walls. One day we were playing cards when the tarp covering our door opened and in walked a one-star general with 3 to 4 aides. I called attention, the general looked at our pictures, walked to the front opening of our bunker with our clean M-60 machine gun loaded, ready to go. He looked at the view of Highway #1 then turned to walk out of the bunker. He nodded to our ‘wall paper’ and said, ‘damn nice pictures ... you have a good set-up here’, and left.”

HILL 97

One more site had to be visited that remained etched in the mind of Sergeant Samples. Hill 97 was located West of Tam Ky, north of the battalions assigned area but was occupied by most of Samples' Bravo company which had been severely depleted in strength, with one platoon on an adjacent hill. On the evening of August 28, 1968 it was overrun by NVA regulars. Samples had thought that night they would all perish ... and had to return to that ground ... to live a part of it again.



"As we left the road that took us close to Hill 97, we saw a hooch ... a little better condition than I remember them from 1968, even though it was still fairly primitive: dirt floor, grass roof, clay walls. An old lady was there. My guide asked if she recalled any soldiers on that hill nearby 30 years ago? She answered 'yes ... a long time ago', although she couldn't remember if they were government soldiers or Americans. At that point I tensed up and became excited."

"It took us 40 minutes to walk up the hill through the heavy underbrush. I had a short sleeve shirt on and the long grass was cutting my arms ... memories again of long ago. The top of the hill had areas that looked like they had been cut while other areas were overgrown by heavy brush. At the center of the hilltop, the area where the company command group would be, we found an indentation. It was a fairly good size, square in shape but the sides had eroded away. From there I walked to the north side of the hill, the direction of the attack and discovered more holes which resembled our fighting positions."

"That night the NVA hit one of our M-60 positions, killed the gunner and his assistant. We called the gunner 'combat'. A good man. Another man on that hill whom I knew, his name was Tom Thomas. He had been wounded and cried for help, but no one could reach him because the NVA were among us. He kept calling, 'Mom ... come get me'. We found him dead the next morning."



Another soldier was out of ammunition, saw the NVA approaching and rolled on his back like he was dead. The NVA placed his foot on his chest (he thought that would be the end of him) reached down and took off his watch, then walked on. A Spooky C130 Gunship fired flares and mini-guns around the perimeter much of the night. The next morning I walked up to the top of the hill, saw several bodies, one guy with sandy blond hair, crawled up in the fetal position."

"It was starting to rain and we decided it was time to leave the hill. As I walked past a foxhole, something caught my eye. It was either an unexploded mortar round, or an RPG round sticking out of freshly dug dirt. Apparently whoever was digging there discovered it and didn't do anymore digging. I kneeled down to take a picture and I could here my guide saying, 'don't touch ... get back'

"The rain was getting heavier. As we descended from the hill I suddenly felt a pain of guilt. I had been so excited about finding that hill ... 34 years later, the foxholes, some traces of sandbags, a portion of a firing mechanism to a claymore mine, that I almost forgot the significance it held. Halfway down the hill I stopped and turned to look back up. I said a short prayer, then ended with 'I'm sorry Combat ... I'm sorry Tom'. The rain kept pouring down."



Mick Samples – 1968
(Photo courtesy of Mitchell Samples)

"I went back for some inner peace but I don't think you can spend a year in combat, see a lot of bad stuff, live with it for 30 to 32 years, then return for 14 days and get closure. It just doesn't happen."

Vietnam is not past history; it will be in our lives every day in some small way. Each day there are things that happen that will make us think of that place: sights ... smells ... sounds. Vietnam will never leave us"



"These Are Stories of Our Lives"

Nationally syndicated cartoonist Tom Batiuk brought attention to the Americal Division's Fire Support Base Mary Ann and Vietnam vets during his Memorial Day series, 2002.

David W. Taylor



CRANKSHAFT

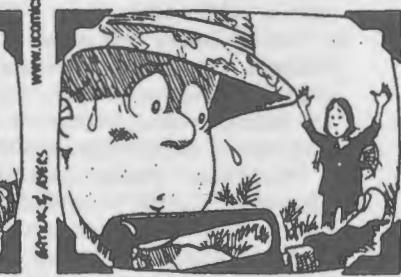
'MY JOB HERE AT FIRE SUPPORT BASE MARY ANN IS TO HELP CORDON THE PERIMETER...'



'SO FAR IT'S BEEN PRETTY QUIET...'



'AND WE HAVEN'T ENCOUNTERED ANY ENEMY REGULARS!'



By Tom Batiuk

FUNKY WINKERBEAN



By Tom Batiuk

FUNKY WINKERBEAN



By Tom Batiuk

"I tell stories ... but they need to be based on real life". Nationally syndicated cartoonist Tom Batiuk brought Vietnam and Fire Support Base Mary Ann to the nation's attention, in a series of cartoon strips leading up to the week of Memorial Day.

Batiuk, an Ohio native, graduated from Kent State in 1969 and began teaching arts and crafts at Elyria Junior High School, west of Cleveland. "It was during my early teaching years that I first created the "Funky Winkerbean" series. What I draw and write about in that series is based on my own school experiences. The "Crankshaft" series was a spin-off of Funky, where I created a school bus driver so I could deal with older people, specifically my parents generation."

Although Batiuk, as a teacher, did not enter military service he was touched by the war none-the-less."A couple years ago I returned to Kent State. The shootings had taken place outside my dorm."

"Part of telling the story of the shooting at Kent State we invented a

Funky Winkerbean and Crankshaft Copyright 2002. Reprinted with permission from Tom Batiuk

character, Timothy Meckler, for Crankshaft and placed him in a National Guard unit that was at Kent State. We intended to bring Meckler back and show him eventually going to Vietnam but we had to be certain his tour fell into a certain time frame.

Where could I place him? What would work? It was while we were asking ourselves those questions that our research led us to the story of Fire Support Base Mary Ann. And it fit."

Batiuk invented flashbacks for his characters, which allows him to transcend time periods and offer very

compelling stories. "It allows me to place my characters in a realistic context. I first did this several years ago depicting a July 4th celebration. When the fire works started the vets had a hard time dealing with the explosions and loud noise."

"The Vietnam War was omnipresent in our lives" Batiuk reflects. "World War II was often portrayed by cartoonists, especially Milton Caniff. No one is doing that now about Vietnam and we need to be reminded of this important event of our generation."

TET Offensive 1968

By Thomas Motley

My name is Thomas Motley, also known as Action, a nickname given to me in Vietnam by my second commander, Jerry Quesenberry. I served with 1st platoon, C Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Armored Cavalry from March 1967 to March 1968. My rank was Specialist Four. Our unit was attached to the Americal Division shortly after arriving in Vietnam in August 1968.

During January 1968 our platoon was stationed at Tam Ky. There was a platoon of CBs also stationed with us. They were 150 yards west of our position between our northern and southern lines of defense.

Our platoon consisted of ten vehicles. Three tanks (Charlie 14, 15, and 19) and seven APCs of the scout section (Charlie 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, and 18). Charlie 10 was the platoon leader's track and Charlie 11 was the other half of his squad. Charlie 12 and 13 were the second squad while Charlie 16 was the LT's track. Charlie 17 was the infantry squad's track and Charlie 18 was the motor track.

LT King, fresh out of West Point, was in command of our platoon of 47 men. Five of the 47 were on R and R. LT King split our platoon into three sections each consisting of two APCs and one tank. Charlie 10, 11, and 14 were pulling bridge duty north of Tam Ky. The LT's track and Charlie 17 and 15 were on the north side of our perimeter. My track was Charlie 12. We were stationed with Charlie 13 and 19 on the south side of the perimeter approximately 300 yards from the LT's position. We were guarding two 155-mm SPGs (self-propelled guns).

It was 4:00 am when I went on guard duty in the track commander's (TC) hatch. I was only on duty for five minutes when I observed a huge fireball in the night sky. At first I thought that the stupid fools finally started using nuclear weapons. I did not know whether to wake the rest of my crew or to let them die peacefully in their sleep. Later on it would be revealed that the ammo dump at Chu Lai was blown up creating the fireball that I observed. That explosion was the signal to start the Tet offensive.

I ran into the bunker to wake the rest of my crew and get them mounted. Then I went back to my post at the TC hatch. All of the sudden the radio came alive. It was Charlie 10 calling Charlie 16. He was reporting that both bridges on the north and south sides of his position were blown up at the same time. Rockets, mortar rounds, machine gun fire, and recoilless rifle rounds started pounding our position. As I watched it looked like the Fourth of July.

There were many explosions going off. Most of the rounds hit by the LT's position. I counted at least 30 rounds that hit close to

Charlie 18. I was amazed that none of the rounds hit the track. I called on the radio to Charlie 18 but no one answered. Finally I saw the TC running out of his bunker and mount up on his track. Then the rest of the crew came running out and mounted up. They immediately started firing 50 cal rounds and mortar rounds toward the enemy.

By that time the rest of my crew was mounted up. I looked at the area in front of our track and I noticed six people in black clothing moving towards our position. I pointed this out to my TC, SGT Wright. He told me to shoot them. I fired a burst from my M-60. My first burst was short. I took aim again. My next burst got one in the upper body. I watched as he fell to the ground. The other five jumped in a trench for cover. As one stuck his head up I fired another burst. I hit him dead center in his head. Another one ran for cover towards a building nearby. I fired another burst from my M-60 and cut him down before he could reach the corner. The other three disappeared out of sight.

We listened to the radio as LT King was calling for air support. Our side of the perimeter wasn't receiving any fire. Most of it was directed at the motor track and the LT's position. I heard Charlie 15 on the radio and say that a recoilless rifle round hit his tank. The LT's track also took a disabling hit and it could not move any more.

As we listened to the radio Charlie 10 reported spotting a battalion of VC moving across the rice paddy in a column formation. The enemy was 200 yards in front of Charlie 10 headed in our direction. They were carrying weapons and waving their flags like they didn't have a worry in the world.

The platoon sergeant ordered Charlie 11 to fire at the end of the column, Charlie 14 to fire at the center of the column, and his track to fire at the front of the column. The tracks inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy that caused them to break up and abandon their attack on our position.

As the fighting raged on all we could do was to listen to the radio reports. We had to maintain our position in case the enemy tried to mount an attack. At about 7:00 am I radioed LT King and asked him if he needed any help. We were not receiving any fire on our side. He told us to stay where we were and to continue to guard the two 155-mm SP guns. I radioed to him to let us at least send Charlie 19 as we did not need this track at our location. LT King approved this move. As Charlie 19 pulled out its tank commander began cussing me out. I told him that his fellow troopers were in trouble and needed help so he should quit his bitching and go support the others.

As the firing started to let up a little, I looked around and asked Donald Wedekind where SGT Wright was. He replied that he dismounted and moved to the east end of the camp. I looked over and saw him. He was 75 yards east of our track. He waved at me and signaled that he needed ammo for his M-14 rifle. I grabbed a can of M-60 ammo which is the same caliber as the M-14. I ran it over to him. We proceeded to

take the rounds apart and reload his magazines. As we were reloading, I asked what he was doing there by himself. He replied that he saw some VC moving around by the buildings and he was trying to nail a couple of them. I grabbed the pair of field glasses that SGT Wright had with him and I scanned out the area 300 yards from our position. SGT Wright couldn't get a shot at them so I grabbed my M-79 grenade launcher and fired off a round. We watched the round travel in the air and hit behind the hootch. I didn't know if I hit anyone or not, but I was sure that they got a big surprise when that round exploded. I continued to scan the area when I spotted a person trying to take cover behind a stone wall close to one of the buildings. I could see part of his leg sticking out. I relayed this to SGT Wright and with his M-14 he fired off a round. This was about a 275-yard shot. The round missed by two inches. I told him to adjust his fire one-inch up and two inches to the right. He fired again. This time he struck the person in the foot. The VC tried to move his leg in some more but there was still some showing. I told SGT Wright where to aim. He held his breath and fired another round striking his target in the heel. The next round fired was a tracer. I watched as it curves around the wall. It must have hit a gas tank. There was an explosion and huge fireball. The VC jumped up. His clothes were on fire. As he started to run towards us SGT Wright prepared to fire again. I told him to let the VC burn. I watched him through the field glasses as he took his jacket off. That is when I noticed that he was a South Vietnamese soldier. He jumped into a trench that was 200 yards in front of our position. Now I felt responsible for him being wounded and I knew he needed help.

There was still a lot of firing going on all around the area. Gunships were firing overhead. The VC still had control of the buildings in front of us and the areas to our north and south. I felt that if this allied soldier didn't get help soon that he would get finished off.

I started to take my helmet and flack jacket off. SGT Wright asked what I was doing. I told him I was going to try to get to the wounded soldier before he got killed. SGT Wright said he would go. I said no. Wright was a much better shot with the M-14 and I could run a lot faster than he could.

I had about 150 yards of open field to cover with VC in front of me, the CBs behind me and to my right, and a sergeant who really didn't like me for personal reasons covering my back. I felt that my chances of getting to this wounded Vietnamese soldier were very slim. I felt that I could either get shot from the front, from the side, from above, or get a bullet in the back. So I paused for a moment and

prayed to God asking for his help in order to reach the wounded person.

As I got up and started to run towards our wire I saw some VC headed to the CBs camp 150 feet to my left. I pulled out my .45 and fired off a full clip at them only to realize that they were out of my range. I got up and started to run for the wire again. As I reached the wire I had to look for any traps that may have been set by some of the other troopers. When I saw it was clear I climbed over the wire armed only with my .45. I ran to the wounded soldier. It was weird. I knew there was firing going on all around me. But it was like an invisible force protected me and no rounds came near me. As I reached the wounded soldier I scoped him out to make sure he was friendly. He looked at me with his hands in the air so I wouldn't shoot him. I jumped into the trench with him. I checked out his wounds and bandaged them to best that I could. I then picked him up in my arms and proceeded to carry him back to our lines.

About three-quarters of the way back I saw SGT Wright standing outside the wire. I asked him what he was doing. He replied that he figured I needed help. I replied that what I really needed was covering fire. He took the wounded soldier from me and proceeded to carry him to the Seabees medic for treatment.

I headed back to my trench to get a little rest. Only then did I realize what I just did. I thought to myself how lucky I was and that I was some kind of hero. Only I didn't do it to be a hero. Someone needed my help and I was just grateful that I was able to reach him and get him back for some treatment. After resting for a few minutes I got up and headed back to my track and got back into the firefight.

There were three guys on my track when I reached it. They were George, known as George of the Jungle, Donald Wedekind, and Jim Lupichuk. They were firing their M-16s and M-60s. I asked them why no one was manning the .50 caliber. Don replied that it wasn't firing properly. It only fired one round at a time. I got on the .50 and tried it. He was right. I got out of the hatch and tried to adjust the barrel of the gun. It was hot and I burned my hand on it. I took my shirt off and wrapped it around the barrel so I could adjust it. The gun still wouldn't fire correctly.

I spotted a VC setup in the middle of the rice paddy and run towards the tree line. I loaded one round into the .50, took aim at the enemy, and fired. It was a tracer and I watched as it struck the enemy in the middle of the back. The enemy fell to the ground.

Shortly afterwards Donald and Jim dismounted and went to the LT's track to give him a hand. That just left George and me on Charlie 12 to cover the right flank. I didn't have a clear field of fire because the

bunker was blocking my view. So I dismounted my M-60 and put it in front of our track. George asked me what I was doing and I told him. He then dismounted his M-60 and joined me on my left. WE had a mound of dirt in front of us for cover. I told George to cover the area in front of us from 9 to 12 and that I would cover from 12 to 3. This gave us a 180-degree field of fire. The LT called us on the radio. George went to answer it as I stayed to cover our area. When George got back I asked him what the LT wanted. He replied that the LT wanted us to fall back and regroup with what was left of the rest of the platoon. I asked George what his reply to the LT was. George's answer made me real proud of him. He answered to the LT that the LT should regroup and come help us because we were not going to give up our position in the face of the enemy.

I told George "Good for you." Then I went and retrieved a case of hand grenades from our track. When I got back I told George to shoot anyone who moved in front of us for as far as I was concerned there were no friendlies in front of our position.

We laid down a field of fire and sprayed the entire front of our position. We then fired into the tree line beyond the rice paddy in case the VC were trying to regroup and counterattack. I noticed a hut in the tree line and said that it would be a good place for an enemy command post. I said "Let's put some rounds into it just in case." We both fired about 50 rounds into the hut.

We started to run out of ammo for the 60s. That is when SGT Barnes and another sergeant from the CBs came driving by in a jeep. They had some old rusty rounds left over from the 1st Air Cav who were stationed here before us. I asked him what he expected us to do with these rounds. He replied that we should use them as they were all that there was to be found. He said that everyone was running out of ammo. I took the ammo belts, about eight of them. I loaded my M-60 and told George to get his head down in case my gun exploded. The old rounds fired okay and I asked them to try to find some more. Barnes replied that there was no more ammo. I told him that after this was all gone that all we had left was small arms, hand grenades, and whatever weapons we could improvise to fight the enemy. I was even prepared to blow up our track before I would allow the VC to have it. I hoped to take a lot of them with me.

It was about 15 minutes later that we heard the LT call for air support. He was in contact with two Phantoms from Chu Lai. He told them to make a bombing run 100 feet in front of our perimeter going east to west. He also told them to be careful because we still had some men on the front line. This bombing run would put bombs

125 feet in front of George and me. The pilot radioed the LT to warn us of the plan. The LT replied that we were not by the radio but were listening to the conversation. I just prayed that the pilots were good flyers. As the jets approached we heard the wing commander telling his wingman to stay close to his right side as they made their approach. We watched as they approached and released their napalm right in front of our position. What a show that was. We watched as the bombs flipped end over end. Just before they hit the ground I yelled, "Duck!" We both ducked our heads as the bombs hit. The burned the entire area in front of us.

After the air strike things started to wind down. I figured Charlie had enough of us. He couldn't overrun our perimeter and was taking too many losses. They retreated. I looked around our perimeter and noticed that there was only three of us still on the front line of defense. George, myself, and one tanker who manned the .50 on Charlie 15.

I scouted around the area and noticed at least 15 dead VC scattered around one bunker on the west end of our compound. There were bits and pieces of bodies laying all around. Later I found out that the CBs spotted them running into the bunker and sent a squad with a bazooka to take them out. They fired point blank into the bunker and blew the hell out of them. I sure was glad we had the CBs to protect our left rear flank.

About half an hour later several of us were sitting around our bunker being grateful for still being alive. SGT Wright came over and told me to come with him. I asked him what he wanted. He replied that he and I were going to pick up all the unexploded rounds laying around our area. I asked him if he was kidding. He replied that he wasn't kidding and that the rounds had to be picked up so no one would accidentally step on one. I asked "Why me?" He replied that it was because I liked to blow things up. I replied "Yea! I like blowing things up, not picking things up." He told me to quit griping and to come on. I told him okay but that he should stay close to me so that if I got blown up he would get blown up with me. I also told him that I would pick up the mortar rounds and that he could pick up the grenades not knowing if they had slow fuses or not.

WE gathered up over 50 unexploded rounds and piled them in a ditch. I was never so scared in my life as I was when I picked up the rounds. I move ever so slowly, trying to be as steady as I could and not tilt the rounds and jar the firing pins. After an hour or so of gathering all the rounds that we could find I placed two one pound sticks of C4 explosive on them and proceeded to blow them to hell.

Afterwards I went back to my bunker and watched as two of the old tank commanders were doing the same thing on their end of the compound. I watched as they exploded some rounds. One round went straight up in the air and started back down on them. I never saw two old, overweight men get up and run so fast in my life as they did then. It was a kind of funny sight to see.

After it was all finally over we counted three KIA and thirteen WIA. We had three vehicles knocked out of action. Among all of our positions we inflicted over 150 killed on the enemy. There was an unknown number of enemy wounded. We learned that a battalion of VC had attacked us and that the section doing bridge duty engaged another battalion that was headed towards us that morning. I hated to wonder what would have happened if the second enemy battalion had reached us and engaged us in battle. I may not be here writing this story. My name might have been included with those on the great wall.

The next day a chopper landed at our camp. Some one star general dropped in on us. I asked him what brought him to our camp. He replied that he wanted to see our R & R center. We all laughed and replied "Right, R & R center."

For our actions that day our unit was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation along with many personal medals. I received a Bronze Star with V-device for my actions to rescue the South Vietnamese soldier. I learned later that SGT Wright had put me in for the Silver Star but it was denied because another witness to the event was needed.

I was amazed that SGT Wright put me in for the medal. After all, we still disliked each other. I guess that after that day we both had greater respect for each other's courage.

Thomas L. Motley, C Troop, 1/1st Cav. Rochester Hills, MI

Send your stories for publication in the Americal Newsletter

The Americal Newsletter depends on your stories and articles. Please tell us about your time in the Americal Division as well as events that you enjoy today.

Submissions may be edited for length, clarity, and style. You may include photos if you like. All submissions will be archived and cannot be returned.

Forward your items to the Editor-in-Chief or the Vietnam Editor. See the directory on the front page for addresses. E-mail items are gladly accepted.

Documenting the Experiences Of Our Veterans

The American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress has begun a project to collect the stories and experiences of America's war veterans. The Veteran's History Project encourages war veterans, their families, veterans groups,

communities, and students to videotape the recollections of veterans' time in service. It also calls for the copying of written materials such as letters and diaries relevant to the personal histories of veterans. National partners with the project include the VFW, American Legion, AARP, AMVETS, and Disabled American Veterans.

The Veterans' History project covers World War I, World War II, and the Korean, Vietnam and Persian Gulf wars. It includes all participants of those wars – men and women, civilian and military. It documents the contributions of civilian volunteers, support staff, and war industry workers, as well as the experiences of military personnel from all ranks and all branches of military service.

All Americans are encouraged to participate in this project. By interviewing veterans or war workers, we honor people who served our nation during difficult and dangerous times. Veterans can interview each other by comparing their experiences. Students can interview veterans and others involved in a war effort in their communities. Grandchildren can ask their grandparents to share their memories.

If you have access to the Internet, go to www.loc.gov/folklife/vets to get more information about the Veterans' History Project. Otherwise, call [REDACTED] or fax [REDACTED]. Or, you can email [REDACTED]

This public service article was published in the Coleridge Blade of Coleridge, NE in May 2002.

ADVA Oral History Project seeks Americal veteran's stories

Several Americal veterans responded to the request for oral histories for the ADVA Oral History Project. Their stories can be seen at on the internet at the address: www.americal.org/oralhistories/index.shtml

Histories can be offered in any form: hand written, typed, e-mail, electronic file, audio tape, or video tape. Mr. Robert Bischoff, HQ& HQs Co., 1/46th Inf., is assisting in transcribing stories into electronic format. Contact Gary Noller for more information on this project.

Now who's a hero?

By Tom Russell

On September 30, 1966 I was drafted into the U.S. Army in St. Louis, MO. In the process I met my future brother-in-law. We went through basic together at Ft. Hood and went to Vietnam to serve with the 17th Cav., 198th LIB. I married his sister a few years after he and I returned from Vietnam.

But this story isn't as much about me as it is about my son. My family has served in all branches of the U. S. military in WWII, Korea, and Vietnam. We never questioned why, right or wrong. We were always taught to respect authority be it a police officer on the street or a nun at school. I would not change a thing. I would even serve again if asked.

My oldest son Shawn was always intrigued with the military. He questioned me and as well as any old vet he met. He asked about being in the service; jobs, actions, weapons, and the like. It did not matter. He wanted to know everything. Shawn volunteered at the VA hospital, participated in reenactments, restored military vehicles, and collected militaria.

To him I was a hero. I told him a story that interested him very much. He wanted to document my action and see if he could get me a Bronze Star. While on a mission my unit ran a Marine officer who had his leg blown off by a mine. The officer was on a stretcher ready to be evacuated. Before he could be put on the waiting chopper we began to take sniper fire.

The chopper needed to be loaded but no one was moving. Another soldier and I got up and proceeded to load the stretcher onto the chopper. In the process I hooked the officer's injured leg on a strap hanging from the chopper. My act inflicted more pain. This resulted in the only time that I have ever been cussed out by an officer.

My son believes that my actions in helping to evacuate the wounded officer were heroic. I am sure that the officer would have done the same for me. It just wasn't that big a deal. It was just one American helping another. I have often wondered if they were able to save the officer's badly wounded leg.

In 1999 Shawn graduated from West Point. He then went to Ranger training and is now a Lieutenant with the 82nd Airborne, 505th Regiment, in Afghanistan. He is up for Captain in October of this year and has intentions to make the service his career.

I feel that I was drafted on September 30, 1966 and met my future brother-in-law for a reason. That reason was to have a son named Shawn who would become my hero and serve his country proud.

Tom Russell served in the 17th Amd. Cav., 198th LIB. He resides in St. Paul, MO.

Recognizing WWII Americal Vets

By Lynn Hart,

I don't know the person who wrote the article in the April-May-June 2002 Americal Newsletter about the 101st Medical Regiment-290th AGF Band, but it was very interesting. I always thought that someone in a military band lived the best of lives that a GI could live. This article showed me how wrong that was.

I am an avid reader of WW2 and other military related books. I read only non-fiction when it comes to war stories. I watch many documentaries about WW2, the Vietnam War, and the Korean war.

I certainly have nothing but high regard and honor toward the Marine Corps and the men who fought in any conflict with the USMC. There is no doubt that the Marines in the Pacific sacrificed greatly in their combat roles on the islands.

The other night on the History Channel I watched a show about PT boats. It covered Guadalcanal and the fighting in the nearby islands. It seems to me that Americal Division veterans are not getting the notice they deserve for their contributions.

When reading about any Pacific combat it seems like Marines were the only service fighting at the time. I know that our WW2 vets know what they and what the Americal Division did during the fighting. They may also know that they are not going to be recognized nationally as contributing to the defeat of the Japanese.

It burns my butt that these men gave so much and have been so forgotten by the television reports and books. I always enjoy reading about the Old Guard and I am proud of what each of my Americal WW2 friends did for our country in those terrible times. I salute you all.

I served with H Troop, 17th Cavalry, 198th LIB and also HHC, 198th LIB during 67-68. I have also watched many shows about fighting in the I Corp and as most of you know it seems that the Marines were the only warriors in I Corp. If I am not mistaken the Americal was the largest combat division in Vietnam. About the only mention the Americal gets is Calley and My Lai. I know that Vietnam vets and WW2 vets both know the difference from what the public sees and what actually happened.

I want to tell all the WW2 vets, especially the Americal vets, that I know that you were exposed to many dangers in the Pacific Islands during the war. I know that you suffered the loss of Americal brothers and we will not forget those men who gave all. Remember, dying for your country is not the worst thing to happen to someone. Being forgotten is.

Searching for friends of Michael Lynn Mitchell

By Mary Anne Weeks

I am addressing this to the veterans of the Americal Division. I am seeking your assistance on behalf of my daughter.

I am the mother of Michelle Lynne Mitchell. Michelle is the proud daughter of SP4 Michael Lynn Mitchell. Michael was sent to Vietnam and assigned to Co. A, 1/6th Inf., 198th LIB. He was killed in action on February 7, 1969. Michelle was only 5 months old when her father died.

Since she turned 18 years of age Michelle has been on a quest to learn as much as she can about her father. She especially wants to know about his time in Vietnam and how he died. For many, many years, as it was with you veterans, we had to keep silent about our connection to the war. We had no one to turn to.

One day we found four other 'orphans' on a TV show seeking information about their fathers. The necessary connection was the 'buddies' who served with their dads. The connection is you, the veterans.

Michelle was the fifth founding member of what is now the Sons and Daughters In Touch (SDIT). Since those early beginnings the membership in SDIT has grown to over 2,000. More orphans are still coming forward.

Michelle has appeared on CNN, been featured in Parade Magazine, been a speaker at Vietnam veterans' reunions, and has had numerous newspaper articles written about her experience. More importantly, she speaks at schools in the Tampa area. She talks about her father and Vietnam. She talks about healing and reaching out.

Michelle has been in contact with some of her father's Vietnam friends. She lovingly calls them her uncles. But she has yet to meet most of them. I know the ADVA has a reunion in Washington D.C. in November, 2002. Michelle wants to be there to meet her father's friends.

Michelle's funds are limited because she is recently divorced and supports her child. As the proud mother of Michelle, I am seeking any veterans who are willing to assist Michelle attend the reunion.

I have been in communication with Doc O'Connor and know that there are plans for a get-together of the Gunfighters (1/6th Infantry) at the reunion. This would be the perfect opportunity for Michelle to meet her father's buddies. Please contact me if you can help.

Thank you for your time and consideration. God Bless America!

Mary Anne Weeks

[REDACTED] Seffner, FL 33584

Dear editor,
The enclosed article from the September 10, 1969 *Southern Cross* was sent to me by F. Weller Meyer of Potomac, MD. PFC Jimmie R. Green was a member of Co. A, 4/3rd Inf., 11th LIB. Members of our unit believe that PFC Green may have been nominated for the Medal of Honor. We do not believe he or his family ever received it. Perhaps we can get him some long overdue recognition by reprinting the article.

Ron "Kurly" Krul; Co. A, 4/3rd Inf.
Tonawanda, NY

11th Bde.'s TOC, A Monument To Heroic Courage

LZ Bronco - The 11th Inf. Bde.'s new Tactical Operations Center (TOC) was formerly dedicated in memory of PFC Jimmie R. Green (Keota, Okla.) in a colorful ceremony held here.

In November of 1968, while serving as a rifleman with A Co., 4th Bn., 3rd Inf., Green gave his life in defense of freedom and to save the lives of his fellow soldiers.

CPT James R. Grube (San Jose, Calif.), 11th Bde. Assistant Adjutant, gave an eloquent (sic), moving eulogy on behalf of the fallen soldier.

The brief ceremony included remarks from the Division Commanding General, MG Lloyd B. Ramsey and COL Jack L. Treadwell (Snyder, Okla.) 11th Inf. Bde. Commander.

Music was furnished by the Division band and Chaplain (MAJ) Clyde J. Wood (Birmingham, Ala.) led the invocation and benediction. The ceremony was concluded with a ribbon cutting by MG Ramsey and COL Treadwell officially opening the 11th Bde's new nerve center.

A narrative of Green's heroic actions that earned him the nomination for the honor is as follows: During the early hours of November 27, 1968, A Co. came under intense and accurate hand grenade and small arms attack in their night defensive position. Green saw two grenades fall a few feet from a position near him. Leaving the safety of his own position, he ran under intense automatic weapons fire to knock one of his comrades down and shield him from the subsequent explosions with his own body. This unselfish act of courage fatally wounded the soldier but saved the life of a fellow soldier and perhaps several others.

A simple gold plaque was unveiled at the conclusion of the ceremony in mute tribute to Green's action above and beyond the call of duty. (11th IO)

Photo caption: MG Lloyd B. Ramsey, Commanding Officer of the Americal Division, snips the ribbon formally opening the 11th Bde.'s new TOC. The general is assisted by COL Jack L. Treadwell, CO of the 11th Inf. Bde.

Dear Les,

I read in the April-May-June 2002 Americal Newsletter about your request for missing copies of Americal publications. Perhaps I can be of assistance.

I served with the 1/52 Inf., 198th LIB from 11/69 to 11/70 and I would be interested in reviewing these publications for 1969-70. As grunts we seldom ever saw these publications. After I got out of the field I did have access to numerous publications and I brought home several copies of the *Southern Cross*.

I have seven of the issues that you are missing. They are complete, eight pages each. I'm not sure I want to give them up because they are a great keepsake. Do you return the publications when you are finished?

Here are the issues I have:
08 May 70; 29 May 70; 19 Jun 70; 26 Jun 70; 03 Jul 70; 31 Jul 70; 04 Sep 70

Conrad Geibel
1/52nd Inf., 198th LIB

Dear Les,

I have COPIES of some of the newsletters listed in the latest Americal Newsletter. I obtained the copies of Volume 3 from The US Army Military History Institute. If you would like to have them, please let me know.

I have August 7, 1970; August 21, 1970; August 28, 1970; September 4, 1970; September 18, 1970; September 25, 1970; October 9, 1970; October 23, 1970; October 30, 1970; and November 6, 1970

I am looking forward to hearing from you.

Pat Moffa
Associate Member

Dear Conrad and Pat,

Hoo Eeee! This is exciting. You are the first big hit on items that are not available anywhere in the government Archives. These issues are very important to our Americal Division history. I would certainly return the issues to you. But I would recommend that you carefully make Xerox copies of the *Southern Crosses* and mail copies of them to me at this address: 817 41st St., Des Moines, IA, 50312-2609.

The issues that I have transcribed copies of the *Southern Cross* are available on CD-ROM in Microsoft Word format. The transcription is only the text with descriptions of the photos. I can make copies of the originals/copies of *Southern Crosses* and other publications that you find of interest. Thanks for your valuable assistance.

Les Hines; 123rd Avn. Bn.
Vietnam Historian

Dear Les,

I was a dustoff pilot with the 54th Dustoff in support of the Americal Division from August 1967 to September 1968. This was the period during which Major Pat Brady, our operations officer, earned the Medal Of Honor. He is named in the Medal of Honor list on the Americal website

The 54th Medical Detachment (Air Ambulance) arrived at Chu Lai on or about 21 August 1967 as a unit from Ft. Benning. We located at Ki Ha heliport on the north end of Chu Lai. We maintained two field sites at LZ Baldy and Duc Pho to ensure rapid response time for medical evacuation. We were not organic to the Americal Division but belonged to the 44th Medical Brigade.

In August 1967 the 2nd Surgical was initially located directly next to the Ki Ha heliport on the south side. It was later, I'm guessing about May or June, that the 2nd Surg moved its flag to northern I Corps in the area of Hue/Phu Bai as the 27th Surg was established on the Chu Lai western perimeter. The Evac hospital arrived, again I'm guessing, between December 1967 and February 1968.

We often came under attack by 122mm rockets and mortar fire. As far as I can remember none of the surgical hospitals were ever hit. However the 91st Evac Hospital ICU was hit by a 122mm rocket killing Sharon Lane, one of our nurses.

Some of our personnel infused with other air ambulance units in II Corps and III Corps and we received personnel from them in trade. Some of us extended our tours one or two months. This was to prevent everyone from leaving at the same time after twelve months. The remaining personnel DEROSED in September to November of 1968. The 54th, as far as I know, continued to support the Americal Division until the end of the war. I know they were still there in 1970 and 1971 during my second tour in II Corps.

Chuck Schenck; Dustoff 51
Westampton, NJ

Dear Chuck,

I appreciate the description of the 44th. I have placed it in a file on the ADVA database. I have one possible correction for you. My maps indicate that the 2nd Surgical/27th Surgical hospitals were units that administered the hospital outside the Chu Lai gate and the 91st Evac and the 312th Evac hospitals were administrators of the hospital near the seaside bluff. I am not the expert as you served in the unit. Provide an update if you think that a correction should be made.

Les Hines; 123rd Avn. Bn.
Vietnam Historian

MORTARED

By Tom Waterbury

In October 1969 I was the new platoon leader for Delta Company. I had only been in the field about a month and part of that time I had spent just tagging along. I took over the 3rd platoon from LT Duke who had spent only one month in the field before being moved to a rear area position.

This was my third mission in Vietnam and my first mission as a small unit commander. Our entire company was going on a combat assault (CA) by chopper into the mountains. First we headed out over the South China Sea, then back toward the mountains, then back over the sea. Where were we going? I had no idea.

As it turned out, our destination was a suspected hot landing zone (LZ). Smoky, a chopper with a smoke-making device attached was going to lay down a smoke screen. It was like going into a cloud. When we landed I had no idea where we were. The men were spread out in an open field with only the tall grass and wild flowers for cover. We took a few rounds as we landed but that was it. I looked around and all I could see was mountains towering above me on three sides.

My RTO informed me that Captain Holmes, the company commander, was on the horn. Holmes said, "First platoon is on the mountain to the south, second on the mountain to west, I'm with the fourth platoon on the mountain to your north, and you're in the valley!"

Thirty NVA soldiers had been spotted in the area my platoon now occupied. My instructions were to stay there for the night. I think we were the bait. It had to be one of the worst locations to set up. On top of that, the night air was cold and it was dark - and I do mean dark. The NVA apparently didn't think they could handle us because we had an uneventful night. We were lucky.

Early the next morning I was given new orders. The entire company was to move into the foothills to an area known as the 515 Valley. We were to set up a blocking position. Charlie Company was sweeping toward us and we were to be in position to intercept any NVA or VC that were evading.

The undergrowth was very thick. We had to cut our way down a mountainside. After an hour we had only gone about 50 meters. At that point I decided to follow a small stream that flowed to the foothills. It could have been a fatal mistake because of the lack of cover, but we had to make it to our blocking position on time. The stream was only a couple of feet wide and it was easier moving down the mountain that way.

We came to a waterfall that we had to go around. While straddling the small stream helping my men across, my feet slipped out from under me. Suddenly I was on my back in the stream, heading backwards, banging off the rocks. The next thing I knew I was in midair. I fell thirty feet down into a calm pool of water. Luckily for me the water was about ten feet deep. I was stunned from the fall, but as I popped up to the surface I saw SGT Frye trying to get to me. He was getting ready to dive in to rescue me when he remembered he couldn't swim!

I struggled to get to the edge. I slipped my arms out of the shoulder straps of my seventy-pound rucksack and pushed it ahead of me as I swam. It was a good thing I was a strong swimmer. By the time I got to the edge, a couple of my men had worked their way down to help me. I then noticed my M-16 was missing. It was easy to spot in the crystal clear water, so one of the men dove in to retrieve it from the bottom. The cold water felt so good in the sweltering heat. After we secured the area several men took a quick dip to cool off.

After a short rest we continued down the stream. We finally made it to the bottom and were in our blocking position with 15 minutes to spare. The rest of the company was nowhere in sight. In fact, they had only chopped a trail about halfway down the mountain and didn't reach the bottom for another four hours. Needless to say, the sweeping movement by Charlie Company didn't net much. We had a small area blocked but the rest was wide open.

Later that day we were taken by Chinooks to Highway One. My platoon moved east toward the ocean to set up in a small wooded area surrounded by rice paddies. We were in a rural development (RD) area with several villages nearby.

It had been a long hard day and the men were worn out. They didn't want to dig foxholes but I insisted. That night we were mortared. Three rounds hit inside our perimeter. I checked the area. "Anyone hit?" I yelled. SGT Hernando said he had been hit along with PVT Maldinaro. PFC Shaw came running and said that PVT Iggy had been hit badly. I called for a medevac and artillery.

We spotted flashes from the mortar and I requested artillery. The lieutenant in charge of artillery refused to fire into a RD area. He said he was not going to take responsibility. I understood that RD areas were normally off limits for artillery, but we were under fire. That changed the rules as far as I was concerned. I told the lieutenant, "Give me a fire mission now!" After he refused again I threatened him with bodily harm. He said I would have to take all

responsibility for the action, to which I answered, "Fine."

After another fifteen minutes artillery fire finally pounded the enemy area and a medevac was on the way. We saw a chopper circling so I assumed it was ours. I had the wounded gathered to the edge of our perimeter. It was pitch black and we had to provide a signal for the chopper. I walked about 50 yards to a dry rice paddy. My heart raced as I stood alone in the middle of the rice paddy with a strobe light flashing in my hand. God, was I nervous!

The chopper wouldn't come down. I was getting more than a little angry. I didn't want to be a target for any longer than I had to. Finally, another chopper arrived. It was the medevac. The first chopper heard our call and was trying to help by locating us for the medevac. The medevac came in and landed within 10 feet of where I stood. The wounded headed quickly to the chopper were loaded within minutes.

PVT Iggy had died that night. He was only 19 years old and had processed into the company the same day I had. He was the first casualty under my command. I've thought about him many times since that night and wondered if I could have prevented his death. I think of things I might have done differently. Maybe he wouldn't have been killed if we hadn't moved in before dark. All I know is that he died and I felt responsible.

The next day battalion headquarters sent out an investigation team to see if I had screwed up. The first things they checked were the foxholes. It was a good thing I had insisted that the men dig them. PVT Iggy had gotten out of his foxhole to relieve himself when a mortar hit right beside him. It was just bad timing. The other injuries were minor. In fact, one of the guys that went in didn't have any apparent injuries. PVT Ward, on the other hand, had taken a piece of shrapnel in one of his eyes and didn't report it. He was concerned that we might get overrun and wanted to stay to help.

We searched the village from where the mortars had been fired. We isolated the villagers so they couldn't converse with each other and then SGT Frye interrogated them. It was always the same thing, "No bic." (I don't understand.) I felt that their covering up for the VC was the same as their working for them, so I ordered the hooches burned. I did allow them to move their belongings first.

It might sound drastic, but I knew the village would be back to normal within a week. Even so, the locals had learned that if they messed with me there would be a price to pay.

Eligibility for Membership

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

World War II	1942-1945
Korea War (Caribbean)	1954-1956
Vietnam War	1967-1973

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

Dedication

ADVA is dedicated as a LIVING MEMORIAL to all veterans of the Americal Division and is pledged to foster true American patriotism, social and welfare activities for all members, allegiance to the United States Government, and its flag, and to perpetuate the traditions and history of the Americal Division of the United States Army.

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AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION
Bernard C. Chase, National Adjutant

[REDACTED]
South Yarmouth, MA 02664

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