

PRESERVING AMERICAS FREEDOM: WORLD WAR II – KOREA – VIETNAM



AMERICAL NEWSLETTER



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

Founded 1945

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The Americal Newsletter is the official publication of the Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA). It is published each calendar quarter.

OCTOBER-NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2004

Editor-In-Chief Emeritus: James C. Buckle

Editor-In-Chief: David W. Taylor

Vietnam Editor: Gary L. Noller



As I begin my term as your new ADVA National Adjutant, I look forward to serving all ADVA members in this capacity.

I pledge to continue the fine traditions of this office that Bernie Chase, the former adjutant, performed so well during his many years of service to the ADVA.

Our newly appointed Executive Council members will continue to work with the incumbent members to make the ADVA one of the best veteran's organizations around.

As with any major transition of organizational leadership, there are a number of issues to be worked out over time. During the past six months since taking over as National Adjutant, the major issues I've worked on are:

- Transition of the nonprofit organization status for adjutant mailing to my location.
- Setting up the process for preparing and mailing membership cards and new member welcome kits.
- Setting up the maintenance process for the ADVA membership roster.
- Establishing a new postal address for national Adjutant communication.

Of the transition areas listed above, the postal address for National Adjutant is now in place. The post office to be used for membership questions and related adjutant correspondence is listed on the inside cover of the newsletter (ADVA Directory), in the lower right corner.

At the time of this newsletter issue, I expect these transition issues to be complete.

For any membership or dues payment, changes of address questions, please contact me using the Post Office box address listed in the directory, or please contact me via the e-mail address listed under my name in the directory. Please include your phone number and/or e-mail address to speed up our service to you.

Roger Gilmore
National Adjutant

ATTENTION ATTENTION ATTENTION

If your annual membership renewal was due September 2004, and you have not received your renewal notice and new membership card, contact the National Adjutant.

TAPS TAPS TAPS

221st Field Artillery

Mr. John Copponi
Marshfield, MA
September 21, 2004

Mr. Edwin Saarni
Howell, MI
Date Unknown

164th Infantry

Earl L. Cherrey
409 6th Street
Fairview, MT
Date Unknown



MAY THEY
REST
IN PEACE

Editors Note: If you wish to reply to an article in the Americal Newsletter that only lists an e-mail return address, you can receive assistance by contacting one of the newsletter editors. Write or call one of the editors and give them your request. They will forward your message via e-mail and obtain additional contact information.

The newsletter staff welcomes all letters and comments from ADVA members. Please include a phone number and/or e-mail address to help us contact you in a timely manner if we have questions about your letter.

WORLD WAR II:

Dear Editor,

If you would be so kind as to assist me in my quest to locate two friends of a gentleman I know. Mr. John J. Lippiello served with the Americal Division at the end of WWII. He was then transferred to the 1st Cavalry Division when the Americal was deactivated. He served in the Yokohama area of Japan in 1945-46.

The men we are trying to locate are Mr. Joe Perillo and Mr. Tony Barrera. They were either from New York or an adjoining state. Any assistance you can provide is greatly appreciated.

David Pepin

Dear Editor,

I am the son-in-law of Teresita Belo. She has been eagerly trying to find her father, Mr. Pedro Rodriguez. I have been furnished with the following information regarding him:

- Place of birth: Floresville (San Antonio) Texas
- Date of birth: August 3 or 8, 1923.
- Last known address: Floresville, Texas.
- Dates of military service: March 1945 – December 1945 (Philippine service)
- Locations of military service: Americal Division Philippines, Leyte and Cebu (Basak Cebu Station) or Americal Division (X Corps) 164th Infantry Regiment.

My mother-in-law has a photograph of Mr. Rodriguez in his uniform. I sure hope that there will be a favorable feedback from one of your readers!

Anthony Francisco (Granada Hills, CA)

Gentlemen,

I need to tell you that a member of your Americal Division has transferred to the 1st regiment, 1st Division of GODS COMPANY. Dad (J.J. Lanthrum) was always proud of his service in the Americal Division in Guadalcanal, Philippines and Solomon Islands and frequently told stories of things he saw, did, learned and experienced. I think his favorite story was that he was the most transferred enlisted man in the Division. Dad was never one to take orders very well and I inherited that trait from him. The USMC and I did not think alike either.

Although I enjoy your newsletter it brings up memories I am working to put behind me. If there is any time or money left on dad's membership would you please use it to benefit the Americal association as you see fit.

Tim Lanthrum (son of J.J. Lanthrum)

Dear Mr. Taylor,

I am writing you to ask your help in finding out some information about my father's service with the Americal Division in World War II.

Dad's name is Martin J. Edwards and he was a T5 in the 164th Infantry Regiment. He joined the division while it was in Fiji and went on to fight in Bougainville, Leyte and the Southern Philippines. Among other things he earned the Bronze Star and the CIB.

What I could like to find out is his battalion and company. If I had those I could follow through his service and try to understand a bit more of what he went through during his youth.

When Dad came home he became a logger in northwest Montana and sawed trees until his death in 1982. He almost never talked of the war and even when he did it would be only a passing reference to something very general. All these years later I am approaching his age when he died and I think of him at 20 and the things he saw and had to do and I cannot imagine myself in his situation. I miss him very much.

If you could help me with his battalion and company and anything else you care to share I would appreciate it very much. Thank you.

Dr. Lance J. Edwards

Butte, Montana 59702

Editors Note: If any WWII Vet could help Dr. Edwards, please contact him. I have provided some book references for him and some contacts with the 164th Regiment Association – Dave Taylor

Editors Note: The edited letter below is being republished by request of Jim Buckle. The author of the letter, Michael Ruffolo, requests WWII Veterans write to Senator Dole if they agree with Mr. Ruffolo's request to correct an oversight at the WWII Memorial.

October 4, 2004

Office of Senator Dole
C/o Alston & Bird, North Building

Washington, D.C. 20004

Dear Senator Dole:

I am writing this letter to you in your capacity as National Chairman of the World War II Memorial on behalf of the brave and valiant men of the 37th Division with whom I proudly served as a Staff Sergeant, and then as a Platoon Sergeant, in Company K of the 148th Infantry, 3rd Platoon, during the battles of Bougainville and New Georgia, in the Solomon Islands campaign, and at Luzon in the Philippines.

As detailed by the noted military historian, Harry A. Gailey, in his book, *Bougainville 1943-1945, The Lost Campaign*, The Solomon Islands Campaign, including the battles of Bougainville and New Georgia, was under the command of Admiral Halsey. Admiral Halsey's Army Commander was Air Force Lieutenant General Millard Harmon, who controlled the 37th Army Division, the 43rd Army Division, the 25th Army Division and the Americal Division. In addition, Major General Clayton Vogel commanded the U.S. Marine ground elements consisting of the 1st and 3rd Marine Divisions, one Raider regiment, six defense battalions, one paratroop regiment and service troops. Altogether there were approximately 275,000 men under Halsey's command.

Together, we all served, fought and died heroically in two important battles that directly contributed to the success of the Solomon Island Campaign and final victory in the South Pacific.

(Ruffolo Letter to Bob Dole – continued)

So it is with much pride and great anticipation that I came from Chicago, IL to attend the opening ceremony commemorating the World War II Memorial. Once there, I found the Memorial to be an inspiring, sacred and moving tribute to the heroism and the great sacrifices of the American soldiers whom served with distinction in World War II.

The Memorial is, no doubt, the result of the inspiration of Roger Durbin and Marcy Kaptur, and the many years of collaboration among all the branches of the Armed services, both houses of Congress, memorial design experts and noted military historians. The result of those inspired efforts is a World War II Memorial that all who served can be proud of, that the families of those who died in service to their country can find strength and peace in; and that generations of Americans to come will be inspired by, humbled by and learn from.

But, imagine the disappointment, shock and sadness I felt, when I searched in vain for any specific reference to the memory of the battles of Bougainville and New Georgia at the World War II Memorial. These pivotal and hard fought battles were not inscribed in the memorial's coping stones along with the names of the other battles in the Solomon Islands Campaign – Guadalcanal.

When I returned home I contacted the World War II Memorial offices in Arlington, Virginia. The senior officer on duty there explained that the Memorial Committee had a choice in recognizing individual battles by name or not listing any battles to avoid an oversight. Obviously the committee made the choice to identify only certain battles to be engraved on the coping stones. I sincerely believe that this choice was a terrible mistake that must be corrected to include the battles of Bougainville and New Georgia, as well as other battles where so many served so bravely and at such a cost.

Although it was explained to me by the World War II Memorial Senior Officer (a) that there are several general references and collective tributes within and throughout the Memorial to those who fought and died in jungle warfare; (b) that in particular there is now no way to carve the names of Bougainville and New Georgia into the coping stones for lack of room and design constraints, and (c) further that, in his opinion, the addition of the battles of Bougainville and New Georgia would then certainly lead to other battles, yet "un-championed", that would also have to be included, I was not persuaded from deeply feeling that a great disservice has been done to the memory of those who served in these two battles.



(Pictured above from left to right: Mrs. Nightengale, Jack Laffey, Paul Laffey, Virgil Box, John Nightengale, Bernie Chase, Jacci Putnam – Bernie's daughter – Lenny Oliver, Mrs. Oliver, Grace Laffey. Missing is Jack Smith, who took this picture)

The World War II Memorial is a magnificent tribute, but it remains unfinished and incomplete until all that served are properly remembered. The just cause of making sure that all are fittingly remembered is not limited just to the inclusion of the battles of Bougainville and New Georgia, of which I so fervently believe, but for insuring the lasting memory and sacred honor of all who served, fought and died for so great a cause as the world has known.

Sincerely,
Michael Ruffolo

Libertyville, IL 60048

Editors Note: Jim Buckle also adds, another oversight recognized by a number of Veterans is with the portion of a speech by Roosevelt on one of the columns, declaring war on Japan. He ended his speech with a sentence that included the word "God" in it. That sentence was omitted.

VIETNAM:

Dear Americal Friends

I am writing regarding the upcoming annual 46th Infantry Regiment "Torch Light" Memorial at Fort Knox. I was with the 1/46th Infantry Battalion of the 196th LIB from Sep 69-Sep 70. I was there while LTC's Craig Coverdale, Peter J. Foss and Richard F. Carvell commanded the battalion. Much of the time I was adjutant and had almost a daily obligation to associate with the 27th Surgical Hospital, 23rd Evacuation Hospital and other medical units. I personally witnessed those "Sisters of Mercy" who often wore those "mis-sized" jungle fatigues.

As you may know, the 2005 46th Regiment Torch Light Memorial will be held March 28-31, 2005 at Fort Knox, Kentucky. I'm told by Col. Dick Carvell, that he will furnish details of the events as soon as they are reasonable finalized. If anyone is interested please contact me by e-mail and I'll provide more information once it's known.

Bob Nivens (US Army, Infantry – Retired)
Former Adjutant, 1st/46th Infantry battalion, RVN

Dear Comrades:
Bernie Chase here. I want to let you know that on Thursday, July 1, 2004, a group of C221 F.A. ex-members visited one of their buddies, Jack Laffey, who resides in a nursing home in Rockport, Mass. Jack Smith arranged for our get-together to reminisce about old and new times. A Great time had by all!

To the Americal Division Veterans Association:

Thank you! Thank you! THANK YOU!

I am reminded of the grace of God when I am blessed as the Americal has blessed me. As for all college students, times are tough and any financial gift is appreciated! This scholarship, however, makes the coming year of school not only more bearable, but possible!

I am inexplicably indebted to your service to our country and deeply moved by your compassion to give in this way.

Thank You!

Melissa-Ann Camp

(Granddaughter of Conrad Paul Krueger, 164th Inf. Guadalcanal)

Gentlemen:

I was so happy and pleased to receive the scholarship award. It will be a big help in covering some of the expenses of my first year at the University of Maine and it will ease my parents' burden.

My Grandfather, Joseph Ritz, who sponsored me, offers his thanks as well. He feels the scholarship award is recognition of his World War II service in the Americal Division.

Very Thankfully Yours,
Kevin William Ritz



(Left to right: WWII Vet Joseph Ritz and Kevin Ritz)

Dear Mr. Robert Short:

I, Philip Hake am very proud to have been selected for an ADVA scholarship for the 2004-2005 school year. I would like to thank very member of the ADVA and above all my grandfather, Donald Eichelberger for this scholarship. I will be a sophomore at Pennsylvania State University majoring in Mechanical Engineering.

Sincerely,
Philip Hake



(Left to right: Philip Hake with Grandfather Donald Eichelberger.
Philip was the 5th place winner)

Dear Mr. Short:

As a recipient of the ADVA scholarship, I wish to extend my whole-hearted gratitude to you and the Americal Division for making this scholarship possible. I am extremely thankful to receive this award. It is a tremendous help to make ends meet for the coming school year.

I am a Human Resource Management major and I will be a junior this fall. In my past work experience, I have seen a great need for good managers who continuously try to improve work conditions for their employees. My desire is to fill this void. With this scholarship, I am able to continue in school and pursue my goal of improving the business world.

Once more, thank you very much supporting my education through this scholarship.

Sincerely,
Bethany Andrzejewski



(Left to right: Lawrence Andrzejewski, 1st/52nd, 198th LIB - Vietnam
and daughter Bethany)

Dear Mr. Short and the Application Committee:

Thank you so much for the very generous five hundred-dollar scholarship. I am very honored and it is greatly appreciated. The money that I was awarded will be put to great use in the fall, when I return to the University of Michigan to begin my second year. I plan on putting the money towards purchasing my books, which seem to grow increasingly more expensive every year. Thank you again.

Sincerely,
Jeanne Biliti

Dear Mr. Short:

Thank you for the continued support of the Americal Scholarship Fund. After a successful first year at Knox, I am looking forward to a busy sophomore year as a laboratory assistant in the Psychology Department. My current major is pre-veterinary medicine.

The picture below shows me between my grandfather (left), Burdette Burch (132nd Infantry, Cebu City and Japan, platoon leader) and my father Jim Burch (HHC and A Company, 26th Combat Engineers, Chu Lai, Sergeant), both Americal Division members.

Your grant will cut down on the loans I am incurring, and I remain grateful for your generosity.

Sincerely,
Martha Burch



Dear ADVA:

Thank you so much for your generous gift. Members of the ADVA have already given so much of themselves to their fellow Americans, yet they continue to give more! The only way I can repay you is to use the scholarship wisely, to further my education and become an honorable citizen such as the role models in the ADVA.

I hope one day to give to others the gift that you have blessed me with. Thank you not only for the scholarship, but for the freedom we Americans have as a result of your service. It will not be forgotten.

Sincerely,
Bethany Fawkes



Bethany Fawkes with father Ray Fawkes (82nd Arty – Vietnam)

Dear Robert G. Short:

I would like to thank you for the scholarship that I have been awarded from the Americal Division veterans association in the amount of \$500. This award is extremely important for me because it means so much to my father. Again, I would just like to say thank you!

Sincerely,
Abigail Colicchio



(Abigail, second from right with mother, brother and her father Anthony, who served with the 3rd/18th artillery, Vietnam)

Dear Mr. Short and the ADVA Scholarship Committee:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the ADVA for selecting me as a recipient of one of your scholarships this year. Your generosity is greatly appreciated and the scholarship will certainly be helpful to my family and me. I am entering my fourth year as an Environmental Science major and my brother is entering his first year of college to become a high school English teacher.

My grandfather, Leonard A. Oliver, 221st FA C battery (WWII) and I have always been very close. He saw this as his special way of possibly being able to contribute to my education. It meant so much to me to be able to tell him I got the scholarship and to know how happy and proud it made him.

I would again like to thank all of the members of the ADVA for awarding me this scholarship.

Sincerely,
Erin Hatch

Dear Mr. Short and the ADVA Scholarship Committee:

I would like to thank the ADVA for awarding me a scholarship this year. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. It is a true honor to be selected for this award and it will be a great help to my family and me in paying for my education. My goal is to be a high school English teacher.

Sincerely,
Kendall Hatch



(Enclosed please find a picture of my sister Erin, my grandparents and me taken at my High school graduation. My grandfather served in WWII with the 221st Field Artillery)

Dear Mr. Short:

I am greatly honored and appreciative to have been selected for the Americal Division Veterans Association scholarship. Since I attend the Ohio State University this scholarship money will certainly help offset the cost of college. I can not begin to tell you how truly thankful I am to have received this money. I feel like in some way I have contributed to my grandfather and father's legacy of how honorable they and other veterans were to have fought in past wars.



Paige Schroeder with father Michael (11th LIB - Vietnam)

Dear Mr. Short:

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to learn more about the Americal Division and the honor of awarding me with the AD scholarship. Next fall, I am attending the University of Mississippi and I know that the scholarship will definitely assist my financial necessities. I acknowledge receipt to the Americal Division scholarship, and I am overjoyed to be awarded such a distinct honor. Thanks again, and I hope that the Americal Division will continue to contribute time and effort to collegiate scholarships.

Sincerely,
Greg Van Volkenburg



Greg Van Volkenburg

Dear Americal Division Veterans Association:

I am gracious to you and the Americal Division and can not tell you how meaningful this award means to my father as well. I plan on graduating in the future with a degree in International Business and French and once again feel blessed to have been selected for this award.

Sincerely,
Paige E. Schroeder

I applied for this scholarship in honor of my grandfather. He was a great man who did wonderful things in his life. Winning this scholarship makes me feel closer to the grandfather I never knew. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Laura McGoldrick



Laura McGoldrick

Dear Mr. Short:

Please accept my deepest gratitude for being awarded a \$500 scholarship from the Americal Division Veterans Association scholarship fund.

I begin my second year at the College of Staten Island with more confidence than I began my first year. Part of this confidence comes from the encouragement and support given to me by family, friends and my "extended family", the Vietnam veterans of the Americal Division.

I can assure you that the faith you have placed in me will not be in vain. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Sasha Maluk



Stephen Maluk (26th Engineers, Vietnam) with daughter Sasha

Dear Mr. Short:

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you and all of the committee members for choosing me as an ADVA Scholarship recipient. I was very honored when I received notice of this award. That means a lot to my grandfather, Ed Loeb, and me that you have this wonderful program to aid the children and grandchildren of the Americal Veterans. This scholarship will help me realize my dream of becoming a Pharmacist. Once again, thank you.

Sincerely,
Stephanie Loeb



Ed Loeb (21st Recon Troop - WWII) with granddaughter Stephanie

Dear Mr. Short:

I would like to thank you and the scholarship committee for my generous scholarship of \$500. It will be helpful in paying for my tuition at Western Illinois University. I will continue to work hard putting your gift to good use! I have enclosed a picture of my father and me. Again, thank you very much for your kindness.

Sincerely,
Brian A. Gates



Brain Gates with father, Kenneth (C Co, 1st/46th, 196th LIB, Vietnam)

Dear Mr. Short:

I would like to write this letter to show my appreciation for the ADVA Scholarship that was awarded to me. It is hard to express how much this means to my family and me. My dream of becoming a teacher is that much closer, thanks to the help you have given me. My grandfather, my sponsor, was very excited to learn of the award. He has a very distinguished and long military career, and I am proud that I was able to earn the award because of it. Enclosed is a photo of my grandfather and me.

Again, I want to thank you and let you know that you have made a difference in my life, my education and my future. I will always be grateful for it.

Sincerely,
Tracy Andrews



Frank Cohee Jr. (23rd S&T-WWII) with granddaughter Tracy Andrews

Dear Mr. Short:

I am very pleased to have received an ADVA scholarship. This will go a long way in helping me reach my goal of receiving my Associates Degree. Thank you again for considering and awarding me an ADVA scholarship.

Yours Truly,
Lynn Marie Robbins



George Robbins (11th LIB - Vietnam) with daughter Lynn

Dear Mr. Short and Americal Scholarship Committee:

Wow! Thank you so much for the scholarship this year! This is my second time winning and I am humbled and honored that you would choose me again. Every little bit helps when one is attending college, so I really appreciate this support.

Thank You!
Johanna Swanson



Charles Swanson (1st/52nd Bn, 198th LIB - Vietnam) and daughter Johanna

Dear Mr. Short:

With the help of the ADVA my daughter Kate is off to Knox College and thriving. The association has our deepest gratitude. Pictured below is myself with Kate by my Army Reserve Center.

Again, please accept our family's appreciation for the award and for the very existence of the association.

Very truly Yours,
Tom Glen



Tom Glen (4th/3rd, 11th LIB - Vietnam) with daughter Kate

Dear Mr. Short and the ADVA:

I would like to thank the American Division Veterans Association members for awarding me a \$500 scholarship. I am truly grateful for this financial help as I begin college this fall at the University of Pittsburgh.

Sincerely,
Christine Trout

Pictured to the left are Christine Trout and her grandfather, Kermit E. Trout, 26th Signal Company, WWII.



Dear members of the ADVA:

In my four years of college, I have been blessed with the wonderful gift of a scholarship from your association three times. Each time the feeling of excitement and great appreciation increases. Your generosity has been felt through every opportunity you have given me by helping me to attend college. As I graduate this May, I hope that the members of this association know that they are a big part of my walk across the stage. Thank you again for this amazing scholarship!

Thank You,
Courtney Smith

Pictured left is Courtney Smith and her father, Dantzler Smith (HHC-C/1 Cavalry 123rd Aviation - Vietnam)

Dear Mr. Short:

We were excited to be awarded scholarship grants from the American Division Veterans Association. Please accept our gratitude and thanks to you and the organization from the bottom of our hearts. We especially appreciate being recognized by the men and women of the Americal who have made so many contributions to our country. Our grandfather and sponsor, Felix R. Kirk, former 1st Lieutenant, 247th Field Artillery, sends his thanks and appreciation as well. It is truly an honor to be chosen by you for these awards.

Sincerely,
Jenna & Claudia Saric



Pictured left is Claudia Saric (left), grandfather Felix and Jenna Saric (right)

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

COMMANDER John "Jay" Flanagan [REDACTED]	VICE COMMANDER Conrad Steers [REDACTED]
Cranford, NJ 07016 Tel: [REDACTED]	Hicksville, NY 11801 Tel: [REDACTED]
SECRETARY Joe Tunis [REDACTED]	TREASURER Mark Deam [REDACTED]
Lake Ariel, PA 18436 Tel: [REDACTED]	Sidney, OH 45365 Tel: [REDACTED]

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

The chapter had an outstanding Annual Reunion in Bowling Green, Kentucky, October 7-10, hosted by Wendell Strode, D/1/20, 11th LIB, Vietnam. Wendell is the Executive Director of the National Corvette Museum in Bowling Green.

We had 77 total attendees, with 47 Vets (9 from WWII) and 30 Guests. Thursday we toured the National Corvette Museum and were treated to a catered dinner at the museum, eating amongst the rare and beautiful Corvettes that had been produced through the years. After dinner we were treated to entertainment by the "Company B Singers", two young ladies who sang patriotic songs and later, we saw a specially prepared video presentation about the history of the American.

Friday we toured the only Corvette manufacturing plant in the USA and were treated to a BBQ at Wendell's home, an 1869 Homestead. Saturday we toured the Patton Museum at Fort Knox and lunched at the Forts Central Dining facility. Afterward the Vets took a tour of Abraham Lincoln's Birthplace. Wendell hosted dinner, once again, at his homestead where we also held our annual meeting.

Our able Commander, David Eichhorn, wanted to take a break so our Vice-Commander, Jay Flanagan was elected as the new commander and Conrad "Connie" Steers was elected to replace Jay as the new Vice-Commander.

Next years annual chapter reunion will be held at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, most probably in late September. Dave Taylor and Darryl "Tom" Smith will host the event. They will let us know in a few months what the dates will be. Also, it was decided the Eastern Regional Chapter would host the 2007 ADVA Annual National Reunion. The location will be Buffalo, New York.



(Upper right) Aimee Miller (left) and Bobbie Jo Lee (right) comprised the "Company B Singers" who sang patriotic tunes for the group in the Corvette Museum auditorium after dinner, Thursday night. (Middle page) Wendell Strode, American Vet and Executive Director of the National Corvette Museum (left) stands with David Eichhorn, ERC Chapter Commander, next to a 2005 Corvette. (Lower left) The 1869 Homestead of Wendell Strode who sponsored the Friday and Saturday night dinners at his residence. The house is also a Bed & Breakfast and American Vets passing through Bowling Green, Kentucky can inquire about staying there. Contact Wendell at [REDACTED] or the website: www.1869homestead.com.

EASTERN REGION CHAPTER REUNION, BOWLING GREEN, KENTUCKY (Continued)



(Top left) Guthrie Freedom Tower, Western Kentucky University (WKU) campus. (Top right) University President, Doctor Gary Ransdell, spoke to Americal Vets during their lunch on the WKU campus. Pictured is (left) Connie Steers (4th/21st, 11th LIB - Vietnam), Dr. Ransdell and Terry Siemer (16th Aviation - Vietnam). (Lower left) Americal WWII Vets gather for a photo at the Strode Homestead on Saturday night. (Lower right) ERC Chapter Commander Dave Eichhorn (left) presents a special citation to Leo Orfe (221st Field artillery - WWII), Chapter Sergeant-At-Arms, who is a Chapter Founding Member.



HAVE YOU JOINED A CHAPTER YET?

There are **two** great ways to reunite with comrades who share a common bond:

- **Keep your Americal Division Veterans Association membership current!**
- **Join the chapter in your area for regional reunions and events that are closer to your home.**

Each of the above requires separate memberships but both are very affordable and offer the opportunity for great times and developing great friendships.

JOIN YOUR AMERICAL CHAPTER TODAY!

SOUTH MID-WEST CHAPTER AR LA MS OK TX

COMMANDER
Cameron F. Baird
[REDACTED]
Stonewall, TX 78671
Tel: [REDACTED]

We are pleased that chapter member Roger Gilmore has ascended to the position of national Adjutant. He has been a strong supporter of the chapter for a long time and his services to the association will be top notch. Of course it is hard for anyone to fill the shoes of Bernie Chase, but there is no doubt that Roger will do a good job for us.

All Americal Veterans are encouraged to attend the 18th Annual TET Reunion in Abilene, Texas on Saturday, February 14, 2005 (the weekend after Superbowl). The gathering is open to all Veterans. It is held at the Taylor County Fairgrounds, and will feature a ceremony, entertainment, a great BBQ meal and multiple vendors. A chapter meeting will be held in the hall at 1300 hours. Rooms are available at the Whitten Inn at a discount rate of \$39 per night; mention the TET Reunion for the discount rate. Phone number is [REDACTED].

The Southern All-Veterans Reunion held last May near Henderson, Texas was long on ambition by way short on attendance. A substitute event for Americal Vets in the eastern portion of the chapter area is now being planned and will be announced soon.

Sick call: Alfred (Bruce) Mobley (182nd Inf.) Fredericksburg, TX
Jack Walker (198th LIB) Nacogdoches, TX

CENTRAL MID-WEST CHAPTER ND SD KE NE MO IA

COMMANDER
David A. Chrystal Sr.
[REDACTED]
Centralia, MO 65240
Tel: [REDACTED]

Well, everything is rolling along for the 2005 National Reunion in Kansas City next year. Although we have been hampered by computer problems we think we have them resolved and are moving forward. If you volunteered to help and I have not contacted you there will be the probability that your message was not received. Please send me another e-mail or give me a call (cell phone 573-819-0796). We have plenty of jobs and really need people to especially help with computer skills.

Chapter membership continues to grow. Membership cards have gone to the printers. Articles for the newsletter are welcome. Just send them to me and away we go.

Rooms are being booked and the registration form is being published in this newsletter issue. Send your registration in soon to avoid the rush. About the time that this issue hits the streets we will have the Kansas City Royals 2005 Home Schedule and if the Royals play at home on Fathers day (Sunday, 6/19/05) we plan to offer a day at the ballpark to all our members that would like to stay over and enjoy a day at the ballpark. We are also planning a day of golf and expect to have more details next issue.

ONCE AGAIN, IF YOU CAN HELP WITH EITHER THE CHAPTER OR THE REUNION, PLEASE CONTACT ME.
Dave Chrystal

GREAT LAKES REGIONAL CHAPTER IL IN MI MN WI

COMMANDER
John Mathews
[REDACTED]
Verona, WI 53593
Tel: [REDACTED]

ADJ / FIN OFF
Terry Babler
[REDACTED]
New Glarus, WI 53574
Tel: [REDACTED]

Our chapter would like to invite everyone to our 19th Annual Winterfest R&R – All Veterans Reunion & Festival on January 13-16, 2005 in New Glarus, Wisconsin. Special guests include Col.

David Taylor who served as a platoon leader with the 5th/46th Infantry, Americal Division. He will be the featured speaker at the banquet Saturday night and Congressional Medal of Honor Recipient Sammy L. Davis will also be in attendance. Last year we had people from 23 states in attendance. Make sure you have Reunion & hotel reservations in advance as this banquet will sell out. Contact Terry Babler for details ASAP. Phone is [REDACTED] or preferably, e-mail at: [REDACTED]

It has come to our attention that many Veterans around the USA would like us or the Americal Association to check on doing something for the 25th Anniversary of the Vietnam Wall (November 11, 2007). We will discuss this at the Kansas City national Reunion.

For those of you who may not be a member, our dues are \$5.00/year, which covers a spring & fall newsletter. For all current members, please check the mailing label on the cover of the chapter newsletter to see if your dues have expired.

Guided fishing trips are available. Shopping, restaurants, bars, open air market zoo and science museums are all within walking distance or take the light rail.

A brief meeting will be held in Kansas City to discuss the reunion. Anyone willing to lend a hand please give me a call.

Dave Hammond – [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

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

COMMANDER
Paul Stiff
[REDACTED]

SECRETARY / TREASURER
Allen Feser
[REDACTED]

Port Charlotte, FL 33949
[REDACTED]

Lindenhurst, NY 11757
[REDACTED]

Charlie hit us! He hit us fast and he hit us hard! He did major damage!

Then, as if that wasn't enough, Francis and Ivan came in to deliver more hurricane force powers across our AO. Many of us lost the comfort of our homes for a few days or weeks. For some, the finished repairs are still a long way off. But those of us who can read this, we are the lucky one's.

It is sadly reported that a brother Americal veteran, Jay Walker, was killed on 9/17/04 as the strong winds of Hurricane Ivan passed through his hometown of Hendersonville, North Carolina. He was in bed asleep when a tree fell on his home, taking his life. Jay served in the 23rd MP Company at Chu Lai's POW Cage, 69/70. May he rest in Gods peace.

The storms also did considerable damage to the beachfront hotels along the Melbourne coast area. The Holiday Inn that we have been using for LZ Oceanside had its outside walls removed. It is under reconstruction and I've been told that completion and re-opening should be sometime soon after the first of the year. We are in contact with the hotel managers and they are keeping us informed of the progress. We hope to have a block of rooms reserved during the Melbourne, Florida Veterans Event, April 22-24, 2005. We will do our best to keep you informed on hotel information long before April. For those of you online, I can be reached at [REDACTED] or please write to the SE Chapters address for updated information.

During the Melbourne Veterans Event, near the vendor's area in the city's Wickham Park, the ADVA will have an Americal Welcome Tent. Our National Commander, Jon Hansen and Southeast Chapter members will host it. There you'll find many items from the ADVA PX along with some good friends to sit down with and relax.

Jerry "Doc" Anderson will be hosting the main site of the Southeast Chapter during the Melbourne Event. He'll have a site in the Wickham Park's campground area and you are all welcome to come by for a cold drink and a little rest and a lot of good talk. We plan to have group pictures taken at one o'clock on Saturday at Doc's site. Please join us! Thanks! Paul Stiff.

NORTHWEST CHAPTER AK WA OR ID MT WY

COMMANDER
Dave Hammond
[REDACTED]

Beaverton, OR 97005
Tel: [REDACTED]

It's not too early to mark your calendars for the 2006 ADVA Reunion to be held in Portland, Oregon, June 22-25. A downtown waterfront hotel is booked. Tours are in the planning stages. Come see the beautiful Pacific Northwest. Ocean beaches are a two-hour drive from the hotel. Mt. St. Helen's and Mt. Hood are an easy drive.

NEW ENGLAND CHAPTER MA NH VT ME CT RI

COMMANDER
Arthur G. Cole
[REDACTED]

Wakefield, MA 01880
Tel: [REDACTED]

We will be publishing updated information about the Americal National Museum in the next issue.

FAR WEST CHAPTER AZ CA CO HI NV NM UT

COMMANDER
Richard A. Merlin
[REDACTED]

SECRETARY / TREASURER
Gene McGrath
[REDACTED]

Riverside, CA 92503
Tel: [REDACTED]

Pahrump, NV 89048
Tel: [REDACTED]

Vice Commander: John Bowley
Sergeant-at-Arms: Curt Rothacker
Chaplain: Pat Tognoli

The Far West Chapter is very proud to have hosted the ADVA national reunion in June of this year in Reno, Nevada. The committee worked hard for 18 months to put together all the logistics and details, but our efforts were rewarded with an outstanding and well attended event. Thanks to all that made this a success.

We are also proud of three of our chapter members who have been elected to national offices: Don Shebasta – Jr. Vice Commander; Richard "Doc" Flowers – Executive Council; and Lloyd Morrell – Executive Council.

Our chapter quarterly newsletter has also been improved as a multi-page piece in color and graphics.

Presently we stand at 131 members who enjoy camaraderie at our annual chapter reunions. Our next one is scheduled for September of 2005 in San Diego, CA. More details will be forthcoming and all are invited to attend. We also welcome national members who are not chapter members to join us. Contact our Secretary/Treasurer, Gene McGrath (contact information in the chapter information box above) for an application form.

I am looking forward to continuing an enjoyable and rewarding time in my second term as Chapter Commander.



22nd Annual Vietnam Veterans Reunion – Kokomo, Indiana

One of the oldest and largest Vietnam Vet reunions saw many Americal Vets come together, once again, as the 1st/1st Cavalry Association and Americal soldiers reunited on September 16-17-18-19, 2004.



Americal Vets gather for their annual group photo at the Kokomo gathering; The next reunion dates are September 16-17-18, 2005. Americal Vets can contact Dick Forrey. Phone: [REDACTED]. E-mail address: [REDACTED].

Or web: www.hcvvo.org.

**Kokomo, Indiana Reunion (continued)**

(Upper left) "Oh say can you see, by the dawns early light." Annual flag raising ceremony on Saturday morning. (Upper right) Americal Vets gather in the eating area to reminisce. (Lower left) ADVA Past National Commander Ed Marsh is one of the many Americal Vets who makes it a point to be in Kokomo. (Lower right) Left-to-right are Bob Short, National Commander Jon Hansen and fellow Vet ready to sign up Americal attendees at the Kokomo reunion to the Americal Division Veterans Association.

ADVA KANSAS CITY REUNION 2005HOTEL RESERVATIONS

Make your hotel reservations directly with the Kansas City Downtown Marriott. Call [REDACTED] and identify yourself as being with the Americal Division Veterans Association. Room rates are \$89.00 per night. Rooms can be reserved after 7 July 2004. Cutoff date is 9 May 2005. The hotel is located next to the convention center in downtown Kansas City close to I-70 and I-35 junctions and 20 minutes from the Kansas City International Airport, KCI Shuttle operates every thirty(30) minutes from the airport to downtown at a cost of \$23.00 round trip per person.

AIRLINE INFORMATION (12% DISCOUNT AVAILABLE)

Midwest Airlines [REDACTED] (Discount Code CMZ6350)

American Airlines [REDACTED] (Discount Code A4165AI)

AUTO RENTAL

Hertz in conjunction with Midwest Airlines [REDACTED] Code CV#02R30003

Avis in conjunction with American Airlines (ask clerk on the phone when booking flight)

MEMORY BOOK (Delivered approximately 90 days after the reunion.)

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

HARLEY DAVIDSON TOUR (FRIDAY, 6/17/05, 7:45AM-11:00AM) See how sportsters, V-Rod and Dyna-Glides go from the drawing board to the street. Whether you like to wear black leather jackets or just enjoy a ride with the wind in your hair, This new Kansas City production facility will interest and amaze you.

KANSAS CITY HIGHLIGHTS TOUR (FRIDAY, 6/17/05, 10am - 3PM) A driving tour of Kansas City will acquaint visitors with the historic buildings, the newly erected federal courthouse and the government square. A stop at Lewis and Clark Point, The Steamboat Arabia Museum, The Hallmark Crown Center, Union Station (wherever 80% of the service men and women of WWII passed through, The majestic Liberty Memorial (dedicated to those who lost their lives in WWI), The famous Country Club Plaza (more than 170 boutiques and shops, modelled after Seville, Spain) and a drive along Ward Parkway will acquaint you with the homes and estates of some of the city's most prominent citizens.

FRIDAY NIGHT BARBECUE IN THE PARK (FRIDAY, 6/17/05, 6PM-9PM) Barney Ellis

Park Downtown across from the hotel. A sample of the Famous Kansas City Barbecue. Local artists will provide entertainment for your enjoyment.

TOUR -A VISIT WITH THE PRESIDENT, (Saturday, 6/18/05, 10AM-3PM) A driving tour of Independence, home to the 33rd President, Harry S. Truman. You will see the old square, the churches, the unusual Temple and Auditorium of the Community of Christ, The Truman Library and Museum, The renovated cars of the President. Guests will enjoy lunch at the Stephenson's Apple Farm Restaurant.

TOY AND MINATURE MUSEUM TOUR, (SATURDAY, 6/18/05, 10am-3pm) Toy and Miniature Museum. Some of the country's finest miniature craftsmanship and antique toys on display in a beautiful old home on the KC, MO campus of U of Mo. Scissors cut, clocks wind, and musical instruments can be played. Then on to the Country Club Plaza, the first planned suburban shopping center in the country. 170 shops in a 14 square block area.

SATURDAY NIGHT DINNER DANCE (6/18/05 6pm-10pm) A world class award winning buffet dinner. Live Band and Dancing. Entertainment and much, much more. Recommended dress is business casual.

Reunion Chairman

Dave Chrystal

[REDACTED] (Home)

[REDACTED] (Work)

[REDACTED] (e-mail)

AMERICAL DIVISION VETERANS ASSOCIATION
NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI JUNE 15-19, 2005

Last Name _____ First Name _____

Spouse or Guest Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ War served with Americal _____ Unit _____

REGISTRATION: Early Bird Special

Before 5/1/05: \$20 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____

After 5/1/05: \$30 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____

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

TWO OPTIONAL BUS TRIPS FOR FRIDAY, 06/17/05, CHOOSE ONE ONLY:

HARLEY TOUR: \$30 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
 7:45AM - 11AM, does not include lunch

OR

KC TOUR: \$40 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
 10AM - 3PM, does not include lunch

FRIDAY NIGHT BARBECUE: \$30 PER PERSON X 3 OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
 6PM - 9PM

TWO OPTIONAL SPOUSE BUS TRIPS FOR SAT, 6/18/05, CHOOSE ONE ONLY

VISIT THE PRESIDENT TOUR: \$50 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
 10am-3PM, includes lunch

OR

TOY AND MINATURE TOUR: \$35 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
 10AM-3PM, does not include lunch

SATURDAY NIGHT DINNER DANCE 6/18/05

\$35 PER PERSON X # OF PEOPLE () \$ _____
 6PM- 11PM

TOTAL: \$ _____

Reunion Chairman

Dave Chrystal

[REDACTED] (cell)

[REDACTED] (home)

[REDACTED]
 Centralia, MO. 65240

Together Again ... After 58 Years



(Left to right) Jack Warkow and Bill Chisholm, Battery B, 221st Field Artillery Battalion, Cebu, P.I. around June 1945 (Photo courtesy of Jack Warkow).



(Left to right) Jack Warkow and Bill Chisholm, together again, Anaheim, California, February 2004 (Photo courtesy of Jack Warkow).

Story upon story is told in the Americal Association about veterans contacting buddy's they served with during their time of war. These special bonds of friendship are unlike any other.

Jack Warkow, Americal WWII Vet, often thought of a special friend that he had not seen since November 1945, as their occupation duty in Japan was drawing to a close. Then, about three years ago he saw his friend's name appear in the Americal Newsletter under "New Members". His buddy, Bill Chisholm, had only recently learned the Americal had an association. Warkow contacted Editor-In-Chief Jim Buckle who provided him Chisholm's address (phone number unlisted) and a letter was sent. In short order phone calls were exchanged and plans were made.

Jack and his wife Jean took a cruise this past February from Miami through the Panama Canal and up the coast of California to San Diego. At long last Jack Warkow reunited at Bill Chisholm's Anaheim home. Warkow carried with him a photo of them together while on Cebu (upper left). Warkow's memory of Cebu is still vivid. He recalls, "this photo on Cebu was shot in the middle of our battery street. You can see the conical tops of our tents on the right side. The tents held about six cots as I recall. We had wooden flooring and electric lights (power provided by the battery's own generator). The fight for Cebu was in a holding pattern, the Japs being isolated in the interior hills. Around July 1945 we were already preparing for the invasion of the Japanese home islands (Operation Olympic) and our 155mm Howitzers were already wrapped in cosmolene to protect them from the ravage of the salt air and water during the sea voyage to Japan. And that's the way it was for Battery B."

Warkow decided to "recreate" their photo on Cebu and had another "buddy shot" taken at Chisholm's Anaheim home (lower left). He notes, "as you can see, we haven't changed a bit."

AMERICAL WORLD WAR II VETS
SEND YOUR STORIES & PHOTOS FOR
PUBLICATION

This is just a reminder from the Americal Division Veterans Association (ADVA) to send any information or remembrances you have to David Taylor, ADVA World War II Historian and newsletter Editor-In-Chief.

We want to place your stories in "LETTERS FROM THE OLD GUARD", such as the story which appears on this page and others. Original photos will be returned. We will make copies of the photos you send and return your original copy.

We Want Your Stories and Memories

- Send your photos, memorabilia and stories. You can type or write your comments.
- Include your address and phone number so we can follow-up as we prepare your story.
- My contact information is as follows:

David W. Taylor
ADVA World War II Historian
[REDACTED]

Medina, Ohio 44256-2908
Telephone: [REDACTED]
E-mail: [REDACTED]

LET US HEAR FROM YOU SOON!

BOOK REVIEW
"Combat Officer: A Memoir of War in the South Pacific".
Charles H. Walker (Random House 2004)

Charles Walker was an Infantry 2nd Lieutenant with the 164th Army National Guard (North Dakota) Regiment, when activated for war in 1941. By late October 1945 he returned home from war with the rank of Major. In his almost four years as a combat officer with the Americal Division, Walker served as a weapons platoon leader, rifle platoon leader, company commander and battalion executive officer. His H Company weapons platoon and command of E Company – Infantry, saw heavy fighting on Guadalcanal, the Fiji's, Leyte and Cebu. His tour of war ended in Japan with occupation duty. Walker led from the front. While leading from example he was awarded three Silver Stars and the Bronze Star.

But "Combat Officer" is more than a book about Chuck Walker's combat experience. It's a gut wrenching story of man's inhumanity to man; of cowards & hero's; of bold improvising and useless regulations. It's a book that takes a fascinating look into the mind, leadership, tactics and weapons of the Japanese soldier, as seen from Walker's point of vantage. Walker pulls no punches and accurately places blame on senior officers where and when it is deserved.

As an infantry officer in Vietnam, the book "Combat Officer" took me on another ride into war. I saw similar experiences as my own: senior officers "showboating" for awards; unnecessary casualties from irrational orders, poor tactics or carelessness. I also saw successes in battle from good leadership, proper use of supporting fires, guts and determination. What seemingly is a difference between the South Pacific Theatre and Vietnam – that the WWII Americal soldier could reach some "closure" after defeating the enemy on an island, is not a difference at all. The move from Leyte to Cebu on LCVP's is essentially the same move from LZ Baldy to Hiep Duc in Huey's; Just a ride to more jungle and more enemy.

"After the men spread out, the first mortar shell whizzed through the trees above us- the second was also high. They failed to explode. Yelling Japanese were rousted from their beds. The remaining mortar shells were on target, destroying one nipa hut after another. Our men were all shooting. Japanese ran everywhere attempting to escape; six ran past me so fast I could see nothing but their bobbing heads. They ran smack into Wells, who was covering the escape trail with his BAR. As I knelt in a firing position, a Japanese I hadn't seen ran straight at me, jumping over me as he headed west. One of Bruce's men shot him as he passed."

I heartily recommend this book for Americal Vets of both wars. Just published in paperback form, it is available at Barnes & Noble, Walden's and other bookstores. I ordered mine on line at Amazon.com for \$6.99. Walker relates, "I started the book for my children. My wife Hetty and I have four girls and one son. As I have kept in touch with so many buddies in the military, it grew and grew. It was to be published by Presidio Press a couple of years ago, but then Random House bought Presidio, so it got set back a couple of years."

After the war Walker was a bush pilot in Ontario, Canada for 10 years, then returned to the USA and served for twelve years as a county commissioner. Now retired, he concentrates on writing historic stories about the military and pioneering. He lives in Pembina, North Dakota.

Despite his near-death experiences in WWII Walker pushed his luck as a bush pilot as well. As he plans his next writing assignment he muses about the past. "I have had a remarkably lucky life, both as a civilian, in the Army and flying in the bush. I had a heart attack in 1974 and now have a pacemaker. I know someone up there has cared for me!"

One caution before beginning the book. Get your chores done for your spouse and finish what you promised for the kids. Or find a spot where you can hide. Once you join Walker's unit, you'll be committed to staying until the fight is over.

David W. Taylor



Charles Walker on Bougainville 1943 and in Pembina, North Dakota, 2004.



164th Infantry Regiment
"Je Suis Pret" – "I Am Ready"
North Dakota Army National Guard

When the regiment was mobilized, it numbered 1,723 members (108 officers, 1 warrant officer and 1,614 enlisted).

The regiment spent nearly 600 days in combat and suffered 325 KIA's and 1,193 wounded in action. The following decorations were awarded to regimental members:

- 1 Navy Cross
- 6 Distinguished Service Crosses
- 89 Silver Stars
- 199 Bronze Stars
- 6 Legion of Merit
- 10 Soldiers Medals
- Approximately 2,000 Purple Hearts
- Presidential Unit Citation (Navy)

Jungle Football Remembered

Ed Taggart

"Daddy, what did you do in the war?"
 "I played in the Army-Navy game."

That little exchange many years ago was between my 10-year-old daughter, Vickie, and myself. Several years later she bragged to a youthful beau that her father played in the Army-Navy game.

"No", I laughed when she told me, "not THE Army-Navy game!"

The 1944 service battle I was referring to was played on a grassless clearing in the jungles of Bougainville. No pads, no helmets, no cheerleaders. It was a night game under dim lights, well attended by several thousand GI's, sailors and Marines, but no television or sports reporters, nor even a most valuable player award.

Football came to Bougainville in the fall of '44 following an almost perfect season by the Americal division's all-star softball team. Neither the Seabees nor the Army Engineers put their heavy equipment to good use when they cleared the heavy vegetation away to make a regulation size football field only a short walk from several artillery units. C Battery of the 246th Field Artillery battalion was bivouacked in the shadow of the field's goal posts.

At first our battery team arranged games within the battalion. Lt. Silverman was C battery's coach. It was touch football, six men on a team, and all the regular rules of football were in play – except tackling, of course. Because of the proximity of the field, C Battery probably played more games than any other outfit on the island. We were still undefeated by the time a 246th Battalion team was formed with Lt. Edward "Scrapper" Farrell as coach. The talent level was improving.

Scrapper had been an outstanding fullback at Muhlenberg College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The 33-year-old Farrell was short, stocky and tough, and still fast for his size. He had been seriously injured in 1939 in a truck-car accident in which a woman was killed. Previously to that he had short stints with both the Brooklyn Dodgers and the Pittsburgh Steelers in the National Football League.

Still spoiling to compete in 1944, Scrapper only occasionally sent himself in to play on the battalion team as a replacement for his best player, quarterback Elwood "Elbow" Stark.

Elbow was a sophomore quarterback with Michigan State University before being called up for service. An elbow to the eye in a bar fight provided him with a nickname that survived the war. As C Battery's medic, he carried a newspaper photograph of the 1940 Michigan-Michigan State game showing him being knocked upside down by a blocker as All-American Tom Harmon ran by.

My football experience in Philadelphia was not quite so lofty. A few months before I joined the Army in 1942 I was an end for the Oaklane Yellow Jackets in the Pop Warner Conference, 150-pound division.

Elbow and I hooked up for quite a few touchdowns in the 10 or so games we played together. Our battalion team lost one game to an infantry squad, name forgotten.

Somebody in Special Services got the idea to hold an Army-Navy game. Possibly it was Scrapper Farrell who pushed the idea because he ended up holding tryouts for the Americal team and became its head coach. Quite a few players from the division came to the field to show what they could do. Having the Scrapper as our coach during the season, Elbow and I probably had the inside track when he pared the pack down to twelve players. We both made the starting lineup. The only other member of the team I knew very well was Rob Holdbrook, the starting center. We met when he was taking basic training at Fort McClelland, Alabama and I was on the training cadre. He had played semi-pro football in New England ... Connecticut, I believe.

I don't remember the exact date of the game, but I believe it was in late November or early December. The day it was scheduled, the worst electrical storm of the year hit our side of the island that afternoon. Lighting struck the tents of Sgt. Vincent Monte, Battery C carpenter and a younger replacement. Our medic, Elbow Stark made futile attempts to revive them before taking them to the field hospital where they died.



Photo from the Philadelphia Inquirer documenting the Americal football game. Ed Taggart is kneeling in the front row, on the left.

There, dozens of others were being treated for lightning burns. Stark was in no condition to play football that night, so everyone agreed to postpone the game till the following evening.

As usual, it was a warm night. Most of the players secured some lightweight footwear after having played our earlier games in GI shoes. Other than that there was no equipment, except for white and blue T-shirts to differentiate the teams.

I don't remember a lot about the game except the size of the crowd – at least five deep all around the field behind a strewn cable line. Generator-powered lights circled the field. At one earlier game big aircraft spotter lights were used to reflect light off low-hanging clouds. At 160 pounds I was not exactly the Americal's answer to Reggie White as a pass rusher. Navy had an Annapolis blocker who stood like concrete as I bounced off him. That I remember. I also recall one of the officials with thighs like logs who could run faster backwards than most of the players could forward. He had majored in football at Baylor I was told.

Elbow threw for two touchdowns and I caught several passes, but dropped one that went through my fingertips as I reached over the end zone cable. We won 19-0.

Elbow, as a medicine man with access to alcohol, provided the main ingredient for our post-game punch. Where the party was held I've forgotten, but I recall we were near the quarters of a general who allowed us to party most of the night before blowing the whistle.

I'll always remember something Elbow said that night as we drank and laughed and remembered the previous night's tragedy: "Last night was the worst night of my life; ironically, tonight's been the best."

The division played one more game against the Marines but they had few units from which to build a decent squad. It was an easy victory for the Americal, about 55-7.

The last I heard of Elbow was when I was at Penn State and he had returned to Michigan State. He wrote to tell me he joined the track team as a javelin thrower and he was coming to Penn State for a track meet. We had a few hours together but after college we foolishly lost track. Maybe this tale will serve to connect us again. After many years I learned that Scrapper Farrell was a high school football coach in Lebanon, PA, only 30 miles from my home in Reading. I waited too long to call him and he died some years ago.

If any other members of the team read this article, I'd love to hear from them (redacted), Reading, PA 19609-1716.

Action in the Solomon Islands

(Excerpts from a memoir written by W.H. Stone, "Bill Goes To War". Stone was an officer in the 246th Field Artillery Battalion)

Guadalcanal — December 1942

Our troopship dropped anchor several hundred yards offshore. It was early morning – a bright and sunny day. From the ship I could clearly see the shore line – a narrow sand beach with rows of coconut trees in the immediate background. The enemy was nowhere in sight. We climbed into Higgins Boats for the trip ashore, followed by our equipment.

Capt. Holloway, our Battery Commander, met us as we landed, and guided us to our bivouac area with instructions to dig in before dark. He had preceded us to the island several days earlier.

That night the war came to Hq. Btry. The Japs greeted us with a heavy aerial bombardment – the first of many to follow. Daybreak found the men furiously digging for better protection.

The HQ. Btry. went to work. The wire section established communications with all of the division field artillery battalions. Radio equipment was set up and tested. The meteorology section floats its first weather balloon. All routine tasks are performed as practiced in training.

But wars are never fought as planned – the practice of war is subject to enemy action, the availability of men and equipment and to actions required to reach the enemy.

So why should I be surprised when on the first day on the island I was ordered to report to Henderson Field, climb in a SBD Dive Bomber, for a flight over enemy territory to direct artillery fire on enemy targets. I was trained to direct artillery fire – no problem there – but I had never been in a plane or flown any higher than I could jump. I had never seen the enemy and speculated on what I was about to find. But I went up as ordered.

From the air, the jungle looked dense and forbidding. This first flight went well and nobody seemed to want to "fire" me so I continued to fly other missions as needed.

On one mission the pilot spotted a Jap artillery field piece and decided to take it out. He dived (I followed in the back seat) and dropped the bomb on the weapon and destroyed it. No big deal, but somehow it made the papers back in the states.

I should stop and explain why I was in a dive-bomber in the first place. This was early in the war. We had not received the light aircraft and the pilots normally called for in the organization tables and designed for aerial observation. So, we used what was available.

Marine pilots would make a bomb run to Rabaul on New Britain Island, bomb the Japs and return. Then one dead-tired pilot would have the pleasure of taking me up for an observation flight.

Probably my most interesting aerial observation assignment was orders to direct fire from the guns of a Navy destroyer. When I received the job all I could visualize was a moving ship "bobbing" up and down in the ocean and me trying to aim it at a land target. How do you do that? The Navy said in effect, "Don't worry, we will handle that problem."

The target was Jap soldiers dug in, in a ravine between two steep mountain ridges. These ridges were so steep that our field artillery could not reach the target. From the bay, Navy guns could shoot up the ravine and do the job. A Navy destroyer was selected to do the job. In spite of some doubt on my part, the destroyer placed their rounds on the target, as I directed, in an efficient and timely manner. The operation proved to be a success.

Later that day the infantry through the ravine and eliminated the remaining Japs – so we thought. Capt. Holloway and I decided to walk through the ravine to review the damage. We were both armed with the standard .45 Cal. Pistol and Capt. Holloway had one hand grenade. Dead Japs were everywhere. Some from the shelling, others from infantry rifle and grenade fire. As we turned to leave, a Jap appeared blocking our return (one missed by the infantry). Capt.

Holloway dispatched him with our only hand grenade. We left the area without further incident.

Most aerial flights returned by noon. I spent the afternoons working with the communication problems, which were always present. The radios were not always reliable. It was essential that wire contact be available at all times. Nightly bombings often damaged the wire network, calling for immediate repairs to be made.

The danger and pressure of the job was always present, but the men never complained. Malaria, jungle rot, loss of sleep, heat and fatigue took its toll.

A daily dose of Atabrine was required to ward off the symptoms of malaria. For some, it did not work well. The men began to lose weight and turn yellow.

Our mail finally caught up with us in mid-January 1943. A two-month's accumulation since the last mail call. Collie's daily letters were a joy to read. In addition, I received a package. Collie sent a small "Brownie" camera along with film and solution for developing the film. Most of the pictures in my scrapbook were taken with this camera or another small camera owned by Robert Correll. We shared pictures with each other.

The Japs continued their nightly bombing runs and we continued to repair damaged lines. A radar site was finally installed on the island. Most of us had never heard of one but we soon learned that when it worked, we had a warning that the Japs were coming as much as 40 miles out.

The Japs continued to reinforce their troops on the west-end of the island. They were making one last desperate effort to hold onto the island. Bombing had increased and pressure was increasing on the front lines.

During the third week of the month, coast watchers reported a large convoy of ships headed for Guadalcanal. It was feared that the Japs planned a major landing – possibly in the vicinity of Henderson Field. Hopefully our Navy could stop them. If not, we had a problem. All available troops were placed along the beach creating a defensive line to protect to protect the airfield. Lunga Point stood naked after the available troops were positioned. Guess who got that assignment? My 100 men and me equipped .03 bolt action rifles, and two .30 Cal. Machine guns. We dug in and waited. As night wore on, the Japs appeared but fortunately for us, the Navy intercepted the convoy at Salvo Island, a few miles away. From our positions we could see Navy shells exploding as the fight got underway. The Japs finally decided to break off the engagement and retreat. Before long it was daylight and the Navy had saved us the ordeal of an invasion. We received orders to return to our base.

By the first of February the eastern and southern areas around Henderson Field were secured. The badly beaten enemy troops had withdrawn west to Cape Esperance.

The enemy still occupied the north coastal area from the Matanikau River to Cape Esperance. That was our next objective (the destroyer shelling of the ravine described earlier was part of this operation).

Our troops pushed west but not without casualties. The Jap resistance was stiff – suicidal at times. Sniper fire was evident – coming from the tops of trees. The Japs were strapping themselves to the tops of coconut palms to slow our advance with no hope of not being killed.

By February 9th it was over. We had reached Cape Esperance – the enemy had been effectively eliminated. The Jap Navy slipped in under cover of darkness and picked up the enemy remnant.





Texas Tech University Vietnam Center staff, left to right: Stephen Maxner, Archivist, Assistant Director; James R. Reckner, Ph.D., Director; and Richard Burks Verrone, Ph.D., Assistant Archivist, Oral Historian.



Ty Lovelady, Assistant Archivist, author, and Dr. Verrone examine items donated to the Vietnam Archive by the author. Items included letters written home to author's parents and an uncle.

A visit to the Texas Tech Vietnam Center and Archive

By Gary L. Noller, Vietnam Editor

On October 4, 2004 I was fortunate to be able to visit the Texas Tech Vietnam Center and Archive in Lubbock, TX. I was on my way back to Kerrville, TX from visiting relatives in western Kansas. I decided to take an extra day to drop off some items for the archive, meet the staff, and view the facilities.

Dr. Richard Verrone, Assistant Archivist and Oral Historian, made a presentation to the members and officers of the ADVA at the annual reunion in Reno, NV in 2004. He also wrote an article about the Vietnam Archive, Oral History Project, and Virtual Vietnam Archive for the AMERICAL NEWSLETTER (Jul-Aug-Sep 2004, pp 25-26).

In the previous article Dr. Verrone stated "The Archive accepts donations as small as a single page or item or as large as hundreds of boxes. Donations do not have to be organized and do not have to pertain to a famous person, event, or organization. We accept any manner of material to include documents, photographs, slides, books, periodicals, films, audio recordings, artifacts, and anything else related to America's experience in Southeast Asia or Southeast Asian history."

The Vietnam Archive is seeking to establish a working relationship with the ADVA and its members. At the current time, members are encouraged to provide historical information to ADVA Vietnam Historian Leslie Hines. This request will not change. (See *Historian status report* in this issue.) Members may also copy these items to the Vietnam Archive.

I dropped off several items while visiting the archive and effectively created the Gary L. Noller Collection. Among the items that are now preserved are about 50 letters home that I wrote to my parents and an uncle, pay stubs, promotion orders, awards and decorations certificates, original DD-214 and discharge, immunization record, personnel file, R & R information, and PCS orders.

While going through my items I found a few things that I did not remember I had. One letter home was written on the cover flap of a C ration meal carton. I also found the slip of paper I was given at the Kansas City Entrance and Examination Center that told me I was fit for military service. I also did not expect to find an original DD-214 that was signed by me in blue ink.

I also provided copies of the AMERICAL NEWSLETTER dating back to 1987. Although I did not have a complete set I only missed one or two editions. I also found some old reunion programs and letters that I had received from ADVA members. I am still holding on to my old uniforms, Vietnam photo album, and the display my brother had made of my awards and decorations. These will go to the Vietnam Archive at the appropriate time.

The main reason I donated items to the archive is to preserve them and to make them available to others who have an interest in Vietnam War history. I often hear of veterans' medals showing up on E-bay or other auction sites because families have no interest in their preservation or meaning. I am now confident that my memorabilia will be well taken care of for generations to come.

The Vietnam Archive has asked the ADVA to allow it to do two specific things. The first is to be allowed to scan all past and future editions of the AMERICAL NEWSLETTER and place them in the Virtual Archive. This would allow internet users to read the newsletters anytime, anywhere. The second is for the Vietnam Archive to be designated as the official repository of ADVA records. This would include meeting minutes, Adjutant's and officers' communications, and other business items relating to the conduct of business of the ADVA. A decision on these two items is expected to be made at or before the 2005 reunion in Kansas City.

I would like to return to Lubbock on March 17-19, 2005 to attend the Fifth Triennial Symposium. This event will host veterans, scholars, historians, and students of the Vietnam War. For more information on the symposium schedule and events, and for any other information you desire on the Vietnam Project, please consult the TTU Vietnam website at www.vietnam.ttu.edu.

Texas Tech University's Vietnam Archive and Oral History Project photos



Clockwise from top left: 1. Dr. Richard Verrone examines one of the thousands of photographs held in the Vietnam Archive at TTU. Photographs and other documents are stored in acid-free containers. 2. Verrone with a South Vietnam flag that a veteran donated. Uniforms hang on a rack over Verrone's shoulder. Each box of artifacts has a photo of its contents and a label attached to the end of the carton. 3. Verrone opens a one of the hundreds of cartons of microfilm and microfiche now available at the Vietnam Archive. 4. Laura M. Calkins, Ph.D., Assistant Archivist and Oral Historian, view the transcription of a veteran's oral history on a computer monitor. (All photos by the author.)

Historian status report

By Les Hines, Vietnam Historian

There was a point 12 years ago when I felt very alone working on the American Division history. Today there are many people diligently working on collecting and preserving the history of the division.

Dan Young, Conrad Giebel, John Boyer, and Buddy Sadler are making outstanding contributions for the 1/52nd Inf. history. The transcription of the June 1968 S2/S3 journal leaves only 14 months remaining for 1/52nd's time in Vietnam. We nearly have 24-hour coverage in text format for their entire time in-country.

I have had many issues with work and family this past year and it is good that others have been able to step forward. In the past two months there has been a great deal of material received.

The following is a report on progress since September 2003.

The information on the 1/52d Inf. has been great. Dan Young has provided even more support by handling, copying, and paying mailing costs to redistribute materials to keep the team re-supplied when they completed their assigned tasks.

I received a copy of the 1970 1/20th Inf. album from Robert Kraft. This has been scanned so that the images are now available from CD-ROM. A companion spreadsheet has been created with names of the people matched to the images scanned.

Also received were 1,770 pages of 1971 4/3rd Inf. daily journals from Michael D. Burne, formerly a medic with A/4/3. Michael drove all the way from Maine so that I could make copies of his materials.

In September I attended a D/4/3 Inf. reunion. The reunion doubled in size from the previous year to 50. At the reunion I connected with Bruce Flaherty. He had scanned many 4/3rd Inf. daily journals from 1968-71 to four CD-ROMs.

I have copies that he will allow me to provide to ADVA members. Currently Bruce has plans to obtain scanned images of daily TOC journals from the National Archives (I have told Bruce that we will spend some of the Historian Budget to help cover his expenses.)

I have also received two examples of 1/20th Inf. Sykes' Regulars battalion newsletter from 1970 from Dan Marin. I have received other 1/20th materials from Bob Behnke.

I recently met with Dr. Verrone of Texas Tech University while he was in Des Moines at a 101st Abn. Div. function. We discussed the disposition of archival materials contributed to the Texas Tech Vietnam Archive.

Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive seems like a dream come true for all Vietnam veterans. We need to take advantage of this facility. However, I want our association to do many things for itself while we are still

able. The effort to transcribe the materials is above and beyond what will ever be done by Texas Tech and the government. Also the PDF files created by Dutch DeGroot are way above anything anyone else has done.

When I started transcribing materials I knew that the archival materials would someday be available as scanned images. However, the materials would probably not be transcribed. Transcribing allows text searches in the documents. In just a few minutes I can scan for stories or information regarding dates or units or names from the files we have created for the ADVA. This would take days or weeks if the search were done through scanned images.

Another advantage is that some documents are very hard to read from the scanned image. With a little time and effort the sometimes-illegible words can be determined and the information made readable.

The Texas Tech process will scan images and the document name and type will be indexed so it can be viewed on the internet. Postage will be paid to ship materials to Texas Tech, but the materials sent are considered donations. As such, they will remain at Texas Tech permanently.

I will submit expenses of just over \$150.00 for the copying the 1971 4/3rd daily journals. I also had expenses for around \$50 to copy and mail the 1970 casualty reports to the membership committee. (The latter was to be charged to membership). I have also sent a couple of 1/20th Bn newsletters recently transcribed to Paul Stiff to determine if they would be of use to membership. There are many names and hometowns listed on these two documents. Paul can evaluate if this is of any use. If this is worth pursuing there are hundreds of documents like this in the ADVA database that can be processed.

You can obtain a copy of the Vietnam history database on computer CD by contacting the ADVA Vietnam Historian. Please enclose a fee of \$15 to help cover the cost of copying and mailing the CD. Any surplus proceeds will be used to obtain more documents and materials. Please indicate if you use .doc or .wps files on your computer.

The Vietnam Historian requests your assistance in obtaining additional information and materials for the database. In particular, please send items such as battalion daily staff journals (S2/S3 reports), company morning reports, brigade and battalion newsletters, newspaper and magazine articles, photographs, video tapes, and the like.

Please contact Les Hines prior to sending any materials to ensure proper handling.

Requests and submissions can be sent directly to Mr. Les Hines, ADVA Vietnam Historian, [REDACTED] Des Moines, IA 50312; [REDACTED] Send e-mail to [REDACTED]

Historical records provide resource for membership drive

A substantial membership drive is underway with the goal of signing up hundreds or even thousands of new ADVA members. Under the leadership of Southeast Chapter Commander Paul Stiff, thousands of letters will be sent to prospective members.

Assisting in gathering names and addresses are Les Hines, Terry Babler, Dan Young, Dan Malin, Buddy Sadler, Terry Wyrick, Conrad Giebel, Mark Deam, Dave Taylor, Gary Noller, and others. Letters will be sent to each potential member inviting them to join the association.

The project was hatched at the Executive Council meeting at the 2004 reunion in Reno, NV. Stiff commented that he thought it was time to mount a renewed effort at gaining members. Putting his words into action, he volunteered to lead if others would follow.

Galvanized by Stiff's challenge and pledge to organize the efforts, others began to search for names of American Division veterans that served in Vietnam. It is estimated that there are at least 100,000 Vietnam veterans that served in the division. It is probable that many of these do not know of the existence of the ADVA.

Multiple sources were used to develop a list of names. These included promotion orders, awards and decorations orders, permanent change of station orders, newspaper and magazine articles, casualty reports, company rosters, and daily staff journals. These documents provided names, hometowns, and other vital information that can be used to search for the veterans.

After the information was gathered a variety of techniques were used to try to match the names with current addresses. The use of computers and the internet is especially helpful in this task. Sometimes it is as simple as looking for a current phone number given the veteran's name and home of record. Many times it is much more difficult than that.

Stiff estimates that it may be possible to match as many as 80% of the names to current contact information. He admits that the job has turned out to be much more than he initially perceived. "There have been days where I thought I would run a few in the morning and then stayed at it for twelve hours," he said.

The hurricanes in Florida put a damper on Stiff's efforts. He had to take a three-week break to repair damage to his property in Port Charlotte. He notes, "That put my goals behind some."

But he sees the advantages of increasing the membership of the ADVA. It will strengthen the association and reunite veterans. He comments, "Many veterans have not had contact with anyone they served with since leaving Vietnam." Paul Stiff intends to help change that.

"To Save A Life" ... The Medical Units In Support of the American

The Division's Medical Support Was Second To None. And The GI's Will Never Forget It.

David W. Taylor



Dustoff arriving at the 27th Surgical Hospital, Chu Lai, 1970
(Source: Maureen Robinson – American Nurse)

The placement of the new hospital facilities in Chu Lai on the Ky Ha Peninsula allowed medevac helicopters to approach from the sea unimpeded by other air traffic from the airbase. The hospital was, in fact, erected upon an impressive bluff with a panoramic vista of the South China Sea. But its geographic proximity to two viable and tempting military targets, the American Headquarters and the Marine airbase, put the hospital at high risk from attack by 122-mm rockets. Before long hospital personnel cynically began calling their Chu Lai location as "The Rocket Pocket", a name which grunts would also use for the low-lying valley to the west of Chu Lai, where the rockets were launched.

The 2nd Surgical Hospital was constructed from the remnants of an earlier and smaller naval hospital. Cement, plywood, sand and tin served as the primary building materials with a series of white Quonset hut structures making up the main medical wards, operating rooms, pharmacy and labs. Sandbagged covered bunkers were also located throughout the hospital area in the event of enemy rocket or sapper attack. Support staff and off-duty personnel mainly used the bunkers. On-duty doctors, nurses and medics remained with their patients, with a few M-16's nearby for personal defense. When vacant, the bunkers served as a home to Chu Lai's ever-increasing rat colony.

By the summer of 1967 the 2nd Surgical Hospital was providing quality care to the soldiers of Task Force Oregon and to local villagers wounded in the war or with medical complications, which were life threatening.

The 27th Surgical Hospital

The 27th Surgical Hospital was formed during WWII in May 1943 as the 27th Portable Surgical Hospital and, like the American Division, served in its formative years in the Southeast Pacific area in Australia, New Guinea, the Philippines and Japan. Deactivated at war's end, it was reactivated in 1955 until 1958.

The hospital was reactivated again in March 1963 and was attached to the 43rd Medical Group, Fort Lewis Washington. It departed Fort Lewis on March 4, 1968, arriving in Chu Lai March 27th, just after the massive TET 1968 offensive. The hospital was declared fully operational on April 13, 1968 and its table of organization called for 27 officers, 40 officer nurses and 95 enlisted personnel. Additional surgical capability was provided by the attachment of the 616th Medical Company. The hospital was equipped to handle 135 bed patients. It was located southwest of the Marine airfield and about three miles away from the beach and the 2nd Surgical Hospital, which would soon be replaced by the 312th Evacuation Hospital.

While much smaller – by design and mission – the 27th Surgical Hospital provided a dedicated surgical capability to American soldiers and Vietnamese civilians. It would eventually be closed in May 1971 as part of the Army's "Vietnamization" of the war.

The 312th Evacuation Hospital

The TET offensive of February 1968 had devastating consequences for the communist forces, where over 40,000 were estimated to have been killed in heavy fighting throughout South Vietnam. It also had dire repercussions for the American psyche. At the end of March President Johnson announced he would not seek reelection and on April 8th he issued a reserve call-up for some 20,000 reservists to active duty. Among the reserve units activated was the 312th Evacuation Hospital from Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

This unit had first been created in 1924 and served during both World War II in Europe and the Korean conflict. The 300 soldiers, physicians, nurses and other personnel were instructed to report to their armory and given just one month to make all the personal and professional arrangements before being shipped to Fort Benning, Georgia for 17 weeks of additional training.

By the time it arrived in Chu Lai on September 23, 1968, the 312th Evacuation Hospital had achieved some fame as the only medical unit to be called up by President Johnson's April call-up. The unit possessed a high degree of cohesion since the entire staff knew each other as friends, neighbors and co-workers. The 312th also possessed a "liability", in that all its personnel were scheduled to rotate home after 12 months. A similar problem existed throughout the Americal Division and was solved by the process of "infusion", moving some personnel to other units and bringing in others that had longer tours of duty in front of them. For the 312th, this meant infusing regular Army nurses, doctors and staff. The easy-going, country atmosphere of citizen soldiers melting with regular Army counterparts brought on interesting interpersonal relationships. But the professionalism of completing the medical mission was never compromised. The 2nd Surgical Hospital was re-deployed to Lai Khe, further south and next to the Cambodian border. By October 1, 1968, eight short days after its arrival, the 312th Evacuation Hospital was fully operational.

Philip Bigler, in his book, "Hostile Fire. The Life & Death of First Lieutenant Sharon Lane" helps to capture the essence of the challenges faced by doctors and nurses in the hospitals that supported the Americal. Sharon Lane was a nurse in the 312th Evacuation Hospital when, on June 8, 1969, a 122-mm rocket slammed into the 312th hospital and killed her, the only nurse in Vietnam to die by hostile fire.

In his description of the day-to-day activities of the 312th Bigler writes, "The human residue of modern war was shocking to even the most experienced medical personnel. In the single year that doctors and nurses were stationed in Vietnam, they handled more amputations, head injuries, gunshot wounds and exotic diseases than they would see in a lifetime of medical practice in the United States. 1LT Mary Mentzger, a young nurse from Columbus, Ohio, volunteered to go to Vietnam shortly after completing nursing school. She vividly recalled her own abrupt introduction to trauma cases at Chu Lai's R&E. (equivalent to Emergency Room). As she was undergoing her routine orientation at the hospital (the 312th) shortly after reporting for duty, a medevac helicopter radioed that it would be arriving shortly with a casualty. Almost simultaneously, the roar of helicopter blades drowned out all other sounds as several corpsmen raced through a blinding cloud of dust to the hospitals' helipad. Moments later, they returned with a stretcher bearing a severely wounded GI. It was obvious that he was a muscular, well-built man over six feet tall, but his features were totally obscured by blood, dirt and sweat. He was already in serious distress and having profound difficulty breathing. With each gasp for breath, he inhaled instead more of his own blood so that he was literally choking and drowning in his own fluids. In a panic he began to thrash around wildly, fear evident in his eyes, while four male corpsmen physically restrained him. One of the hospital doctors quickly performed a tracheotomy, while other hospital staff cut away the soldier's clothes and started an IV of saline solution to reverse shock. Finally able to breathe, the patient calmed down and was quickly carried off to surgery.

DANGER
Helicopters Can Kill You

1. Never approach from direct front or rear.
2. Keep down to five feet or lower.
3. Approach all planes' right middle section door.
4. Stay clear of chopper's rear.

Don't Lose Your Head – Use It



The whole incident, in what seemed to be almost a choreographed stage play, had lasted just a few minutes. Later that day, Lieutenant Mentzger encountered the same soldier in the ICU (Intensive Care Unit), now anesthetized, medicated, bandaged, and well on his way to recovery. For the hospital, it was just another routine case, but the results had nevertheless been nothing short of miraculous.

The Americal Divisions' medical support units saw first hand that, even in a war zone, the unexpected often became the norm. Not only did they experience the casualties of combat, but also the casualties of civilians stepping on mines, medical emergencies among civilians and soldiers and the ever present disasters of accidents with the "machines of war" that were unrelated to combat. The 312th experienced this first hand when a Fairchild C-123 transport plane, loaded with GI's enroute for home, crashed shortly after takeoff at the Chu Lai airfield. The 312th was suddenly faced with a steady stream of casualties, many who were severely burned and died shortly later. In Vietnam there were just too many ways to die. Signs on the hospital helipads reminded the medics to proceed with caution when off-loading casualties:

I can see the placid Chinese Sea,
And hear the splash of timeless waves
Upon the ancient sands,
And sense these nature's elements
Bear witness to wars immemorial
In this troubled land.

plague. With the full knowledge their patients would receive virtually no health care once they left the Chu Lai hospitals, American doctors tended to keep their Vietnamese patients longer than normal to increase the odds of a full recovery.

Most Army hospitals in Vietnam, like those in Chu Lai's evacuation hospitals, permitted family members of the patient to stay in the hospital while the relative was being treated. They usually slept on the floor under the bed of the patient and helped with the feeding and caring of the patient.

Enemy prisoners of war (POW's), VC and NVA brought in for treatment tested the mettle of hospital staffs. Under the Geneva Convention these soldiers were entitled to medical care. They suffered from the usual wounds of war as well as a number of diseases from their harsh environment in the jungles. The NVA and Viet Cong had a deep-seated bitterness towards the United States and the South Vietnamese Government.

Hospital wards at the evacuation hospitals were also reserved for Vietnamese patients. Generally, most of the medical staffs did not want to work in this area and few were ordered to do so. Language difficulties were matched with a feeling of resentment of civilians in a war where friend and foe, enemy and ally, were indistinguishable, Vietnamese civilian patients were seen by some as being complicit in their support for the VC. Too many soldiers were being brought in with missing arms and legs from mines and booby-traps stepped on in villages while villagers looked on. The cultural differences of peasants in an agrarian society meeting up with the medical care of an industrialized society required a special person to staff the Vietnamese wards. For example, hospital staff had to insure their Vietnamese patients would not climb up on the wash sinks and urinate in them. They had never seen sinks before and assumed that was their purpose.

American medical policy towards the Vietnamese civilian population was motivated primarily by the humanitarian oath of medical personnel, but it was also intended to help win "hearts and minds" as American and South Vietnamese forces attempted to gain a greater control of the country. Not only were war injuries cared for but medical treatment of civilians included difficult pregnancies, goiters, cleft palates, intestinal parasites, tuberculosis, malnutrition, cerebral malaria, tetanus, and even rabies and bubonic



91st Evacuation Hospital, Chu Lai, 1971. View from the nurses quarters.
To the left is the hospital (Source: Maureen Robinson – Americal Nurse)

The 91st Evacuation Hospital

The 91st Evacuation Hospital traced its lineage back 51 years to the organization of Mobile Hospital Number 6 on September 4, 1918 in Paris, France. The unit was redesignated the 91st Evacuation Hospital on September 1, 1942 and served in North Africa, Sicily and landed on Utah Beach on D+4 in the D-Day invasion. By the close of the war in Europe it was located in central Germany.

The 91st was deactivated in November 1945 and reactivated in March 1963 at Fort Polk, Louisiana. It departed Fort Polk in November 1966 and arrived at Vung Ro Bay on December 14, 1966. It was moved to Tuy Hoa and opened mid-March with 100 beds. By mid-June they had a capacity of 300 beds.

On July 15, 1969 the 91st Evacuation Hospital was relocated at Chu Lai to take over the facilities of the 312th Evacuation Hospital, which departed Vietnam on August 1, 1969 after 312 days in country, arriving back in Winston-Salem North Carolina on August 2nd and formally deactivated on August 7th.

In addition to its tasked hospital functions, the 91st also operated a dispensary/out-patient service, which provided medical care for the thousands assigned to units on the Chu Lai base.

Winning Hearts and Minds

In addition to supporting the Americal units in the field and the Chu Lai base, hospitals also participated in the larger arena of civic action. The 312th conducted Medical Civic Action Patrols (MEDCAPS) at the nearby villages of An Ton and Samhi. After the 91st became established, MEDCAP operations

Editor's Notes: Sources for this story included:

- "Hostile Fire. The Life & Death of First Lieutenant Sharon Lane". This book provides an in-depth look at the 312th Evacuation Hospital. Copies can be purchased from The Sharon Ann Lane Foundation, [REDACTED], Media, PA 19063 or e-mail: [REDACTED]
- "To Save A Life ... The 67th Medical Group 1970-71" (US Army Publication)
- Consultation and photos provided by Maureen Robinson, Americal nurse (27th Surgical Hospital April 1970 – May 1971 & 91st Evacuation Hospital May – September 1971).

My return to Chu Lai

By Joe Altamari

I was assigned to the 132nd Assault Support Helicopter Company based in Chu Lai from June 1969 to May 1970. I flew as a crewmember on a Chinook helicopter. I was 19 years old when I arrived in-country and I turned 20 during my tour.

Now hit the fast forward button in life and advance 35 years. I find myself with a wife of 32 years, two grown daughters, and I am the Sales Director for a company that manufactures plastics blow molding machinery.

It was determined that I take a two-week trip through Asia to develop some new business opportunities. It started in Korea, took me to China and Thailand, and ended up in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon). There I met with representatives of Vinamilk, the largest dairy in Viet Nam. They were in need of new packaging equipment.

You can imagine my apprehension as the Thai Airlines flight made the final approach to the still used U.S. air terminal. The landscape from the air was still as lush and green as I remembered, although noticeably missing were the plumes of recent artillery fire and helicopter air traffic. Off to one side of the runway in the distance I could see old reventments used to house our fighter jets many years ago.

Stepping off the plane I was immediately struck by that familiar wall of heat that I remembered from 35 years ago. It is still hotter than ever! But missing too was the stench that my olfactory system recalled of human waste and diesel fuel burning. It seems as though they have found a better way to deal with sanitation since we left.

I was greeted with smiles and efficiency while passing through customs. I know I stood out as an American and wondered how this could be. Where was the animosity that I expected? As it turns out, less than forty percent of the current population was living in Viet Nam during the war.

After clearing customs I was met by our sales agent, Ms. Ha, a thirty-something Vietnamese woman who runs a trading office just outside of the airport. As is the custom in many communist countries, she is treated with respect and as an equal.

Her father was a former high-ranking NVA officer. Her situation was not unlike others that I met during the trip. I guess political systems are the same world over: to the victor go the spoils.

My business meeting was scheduled for early afternoon. It was only 9:00 AM so I had time to go to the office and the hotel. During this time I had the opportunity to see Saigon. It now has skyscrapers and eight million people live there.

The old MACV headquarters is now the Vietnamese Police headquarters. My hotel was the Sofitel, a French five star chain with

rooms for \$75.00 per night. It was directly across from the old U.S. embassy. From my hotel room I could see the remains of the helipad on the roof of the embassy that was used to evacuate the last troops. The building is now a community college.

I had my meeting with the Managing Director of Vinamilk, another woman with communist party and NVA ties. She was very pleasant and at the end of the meeting asked if this was my first visit to Vietnam. I guess she could smell the fact that I was a returning veteran. She smiled and welcomed me back and wished for me a pleasant stay.

My sales agent has a brother-in-law who is a tour guide for returning soldiers and foreigners. I arranged for a Saturday and Sunday trip to Danang, Chu Lai, Quang Nai, Tam Ky, and My Lai.

We were to fly via Viet Nam Airlines to Danang on Saturday morning and travel to Hoi An where I would stay at the Vih Hung resort. This was a place not unlike a Sandals resort with a swim up bar in the pool, air conditioned rooms, cheap beer (\$1.00 per can), and pretty good food.

On Friday night I wandered around the area near my hotel. I felt completely safe and noticed that everyone was smiling and at ease. I never got that feeling 35 years ago. People always seemed sad and on alert.

I also witnessed a young couple getting married in a local restaurant, western style. The groom was wearing a tuxedo and the bride a full white gown similar to what you would see here in the U.S. In my year tour I never saw a wedding, only funerals, and that struck me sharply.

My arrival into Danang was similar to Saigon. They use the old American base and the revetments are still standing. I toured Red Beach, China Beach, and climbed to the top of Marble Mountain.

After an exhausting day we returned to Hoi An to get cleaned up and enjoy a relaxing dinner in the old French colonial town. It was left unscathed during both the French and American wars. It was used as a location backdrop in the movie "The Quiet American" to represent old Saigon.

The next day I awoke early and was filled with anticipation. We were going to Tam Ky, Chu Lai, Quang Nai, and My Lai. Tam Ky was bustling early this Sunday morning with ladies buying goods from the market. There were numerous parades and rallies all weekend long, as the elections were that day and I could see people voting all day long.

We finally arrived at Chu Lai. The remains of the old front gate are now an entrance to a local police station. I took some old photographs with me for reference. The 132nd was located on the beach down from division headquarters. I could approximate my location and probably got to within 100 yards of where I lived.

The beach was deserted except for a small shack selling beers and snacks. There were just a few young teenagers there, not even giving me a second look. There is nothing left of the old base, nothing to indicate that we were ever there. The old runway is just a long rut with no vegetation and just a few concrete reventments standing.

They are trying to revive the port and there is construction beginning on a road and industrial park. A regional airport will open in 2005. I stood there and swore I could hear the constant thump of helicopter traffic and the roar of Phantoms taking off. I could see soldiers working on the flight line, stripped to their waists, greasy and dirty from repairing the Chinooks.

We drove down Highway One to My Lai. The road has been raised six feet to overcome the flooding that occurs during the rainy season. Most of the landscape looked familiar, and had not changed in 35 years. It was a drastic contrast to Saigon which is fully modernized.

Along the way I noticed that every village had a monument to their war dead, much like you would see here. I guess respect for the memory of lost soldiers is universal.

We finally made our way to My Lai where a memorial and museum were erected to commemorate what happened there. Unfortunately it was even documented by our own investigation. Before returning, I wanted to take something there to leave and maybe purge me of some of my memories. I had photographs that I had taken of My Lai while flying support missions for the team from the Army conducting the investigation.

I could stand directly over the ditch where the bodies were found. There were memorial plaques strewn about where houses used to stand identifying the people who were killed there. It was the only time I felt uncomfortable during my visit. I guess 35 years later it easy to see though the fog of war.

It finally struck me that I should leave these photographs with the curator of the museum. They thankfully accepted and I guess it validated their position, but also showed that we as a country recognized the wrong and did not condone it.

I really did not know how I would handle returning to Viet Nam. I attended a high school in Philadelphia that lost 27 former students to this war. Our city lost over 600 men. I was fortunate enough to always find a good job, had a happy family life, and the support and understanding of a good wife. I always felt sorry for the vets that did not have this. It must have been difficult, not just for them but their families as well.

I returned at peace with myself and the Vietnamese people.

FROZEN IN TIMEBy Marie Gantenbein
For Jerry, KIA, 11th LIB

I stand far off from the things so near
Parts of the inner me that I find frozen in
time.

To the Great I Am I cry,
"Bring me freedom and wholeness for the
parts frozen in time."

I stand far off from the pain of the past
"That was just yesterday - so new and fresh."
It is watered by the news tonight and the
reports tomorrow

Those things done long ago and thoughts
from ancient times
Those things that today are still frozen in
time.

What happens today touches the ice
And shock waves strike the pictures frozen in
time.

I remember the faith broken,
The price paid and the chanting voices.
The voices that pierced to the heart,
The arrows that still remain.

Some gave all and some still do
Some wounds heal,
Some just freeze over and remain for years.

I stand in today and look back,
There is the heart frozen in time,
To God I cry for freedom and wholeness
He shows me the scenes frozen in time.

He points to me standing watch.
He pulls back the curtain of what I do not
want to see.

He touches the things frozen in time.

I pull back,
I cannot,
But in time I know I will be free
From the power of all that is frozen in time.

Someone must stand watch over the ones
who are here but
Still have never come home.

The VA regular and the man in long term.

Someone must love from afar
The forgotten woman who lost all,
She who was never known.

The Mother or Dad who gave their child -
There was no thank you

There was no tribute.

No comfort of "For God and Country"
But the nightly news reported - NVA dead -
Cong were killed

So the protests continued and they were the
heroes upheld
But the trooper and lover were lost in the
noise

The trooper and lover were reviled and still

I remember the faith broken,
The price paid and the chanting voices.
The voices that pierced to the heart,
The arrows that still remain.

Some gave all and some still do
Some wounds heal,
Some just freeze over and remain for years.

I stand in today and look back,
There is the heart frozen in time,
To God I cry for freedom and wholeness
He shows me the scenes frozen in time.

He points to me standing watch.
He pulls back the curtain of what I do not
want to see.

He touches the things frozen in time.

I pull back,
I cannot,
But in time I know I will be free
From the power of all that is frozen in time.

Newsletter feedback

I really enjoy the newsletter! After reading the April-May-June 2004 issue, I corresponded with SFC Kugler in Iraq. I too had been in Chu Lai when Typhoon Hester hit in October 1971. SFC Kugler sent me some Iraqi money with Saddam's picture.

In the latest issue, under New Members, I was sponsor for Doctor (not Mr.) Bruce W. Usher, who is not only my cardiologist and friend but also an Americal veteran. He is the Professor of Cardiology at the Medical University of South Carolina and a great guy! He saved my life in 1996 when I had my heart attack on the operating table.

I later found out we were both former members of the Americal Division....every visit is like old home week! I used to take issues of the newsletter and then last time I told him he owed it to his fellow vets to join this wonderful organization. When I showed him my copy of the book I received which is signed by General Milloy, it really brought back memories for him as a young doctor with the 23rd Medical Battalion.

The only other thing about this latest issue, is the Memorial Day "2005" article

with PNC Ellis and Secretary Tom Ridge....should have been 2004. Keep up the great work!

Millard (Harvey) Heistand
23rd Infantry Division Transportation
and Task Force Americal, 1971

46th Infantry Regiment

I had a great visit with 1/46 Infantry at Fort Knox last week. I was the Guest Speaker/Reviewing Officer for B Co, 1/46 basic graduation. I also observed training and did tentative planning for the March 2005 events.

First, the graduation was impressive. Approximately 500 dependents were in attendance, coming from as far away as Korea to attend the graduation. The class was comprised of trainees from ten different countries/regions--some as either immigrants or sons of immigrants--hailing from Vietnam, Korea, Mexico, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Puerto Rico, Germany, England, Scotland, and of course, the United States. None from the midwest.

Four had prior service, two in the army and two in the navy. Two have wives who are serving. Four are college graduates. All of the rest are high school grads and above. Eight are single parents. One will train to be an officer, one a warrant officer. About 40%-50% of class will deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Training now includes much time on IED's (improvised explosive devices), convoy and check-point operations (which is tough stuff in Iraq), urban fighting, quick fire, extensive patrolling, and more time in the field. Practically all movement is done from a tactical formation, with weapons at the ready, when carried, including moving in around the company area. All are volunteers. It was an impressive group!

The following is a brief outline for the events and ceremonies at the end of March.

Monday, March 28: FSB Mary Ann

memorial service as traditionally held at Camp Carlson. This will be planned by Bill Walker and Lanny Gilliland.

Tuesday, March 29: Presentation to current 46th Inf. leaders by Vietnam veterans of the 46th Inf. Social to follow

Wednesday, March 30: Observe training, lunch at dining facility, dedication of Hiep Duc and Kham Duc training facilities, dinner at dining facility, regimental change of command, Torchlight Ceremony.

Thursday, March 31: Graduation ceremony, Co. C, 2/46th Infantry (BCT).

For the sake of our great unit and the camaraderie each reunion brings, let's try to make this gathering at Knox a big one.

COL (Ret.) Richard F. Carvell; 1/46th Inf.

11th Light Infantry Brigade

My dad, CSM Joseph W. Walsh, Jr., was in the American Division in Vietnam. He passed away about 18 years ago. Needless to say, I miss him terribly. I have an 11-year-old son who is trying to understand who his Pappa Joe was. I would like any information about my father's service and I would like to contact anyone who may have known him. Thank you for your assistance and thank you for your service for our country.

Patricia Walsh- Richter
[REDACTED]

Editor's note: Mr. Les Hines, ADVA Vietnam Historian, has determined that CSM Walsh was brigade Sergeant Major of the 11th Light Infantry Brigade. COL Oran K. Henderson, brigade commander, awarded Walsh his promotion stripes. Walsh joined the 11th LIB in November 1966.

I have a friend, Lee Arthur, whose father served in the 11th Lt. Inf. Bde. in Vietnam. His father, who was awarded the Silver Star and the Bronze Star, is now deceased.

We would like to know if there is a website or other listing of the 11th LIB Silver Star recipients that also gives the citations for awards. Thanks for your help.

Jesse R. Harris, Jr.
[REDACTED]

Co. B, 1/20th Inf., 11th LIB

My name is Eric Simmons. I am the son of Herman Moore Jr. My father served in the 11th LIB. I was only six months old when he was killed. I would like to contact anyone who was close to my father or who can remember him. I would appreciate any small story or information that can be shared. Thanks in advance for your consideration of this request

Eric Simmons
[REDACTED]

Co. A, 2/1st Inf., 196th LIB

I am a veteran of the 3rd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. I am interested in any information regarding a friend, Gary Hosko, who was killed March 19, 1969. Gary served with A/2/1st Inf. 196th Inf. Bde. He had not been with the unit very long.

Robert Judd
[REDACTED]

123rd Aviation Bn.

I was in Chu Lai from October 1969 through November 1979 with HHC and Co. A, 123rd Avn. Bn. I was assigned to the fire department crash and rescue. I wonder why

it is so hard to information about those of us that were there during that time.

I have yet to see anyone or anything about the crash and rescue units. We were there. I would like to obtain information about my unit and contact former buddies. My MOS was 51M20 and 11B20.

Valentin R. Cortez
[REDACTED]

5/46th Infantry

I would like to obtain copies of battalion daily staff journals for the 5/46th Infantry. I was assigned to this unit in 1968-69.

Charles Sciph
[REDACTED]

723rd Maintenance Bn.

I am not a Vietnam vet. I am a Gulf War 1 veteran and I served twelve years in the military. My father served at Doc Pho with the 723rd Maint. Bn. in 1969-70. His name is Rodger "Ray" Leydig.

We are looking for anyone who served with him in Vietnam. His health is very bad and he would like to talk to one of his brothers before he passes away.

He is very proud of his 21 years in the Army, and so am I. He is my hero and I would do anything for him. If anyone can help, please contact me as soon as possible.

Jeff Leydig
[REDACTED]

94th Supply and Service Bn.

I am trying to locate any records, names, etc. of the 94th Supply and Service Bn. I was in Chu Lai from approximately September 1967 to March 1968.

I have claim with the VA which was denied because they can't verify serving in Chu Lai. We were attached from the 1st Log, 31st Supply Co., 96th S&S. Our hootches were near MAG 13 Marine air wing.

Joseph L. Curatolo
[REDACTED]

23rd Administration Co.

I am seeking information on Rufus Wolcott Ashby who served with the 23rd Administration Company in 1970. He was from the San Antonio, TX area and passed away in 1993. I purchased a box of his military items at an auction in the UK and I would like to learn more about this man.

Ashby was in the Army during WWII in which he received the Silver Star and other awards. He was in and out of the service a few times and was once in the Air Force. He was originally an enlisted man but later

became an officer. He served as a Captain and as a Lt. Colonel in the Texas National Guard. He was serving as an MP at this time.

In Vietnam he served with the 23rd Admin. Co., Dy/w AG Reenl and Repl Det. His job was described as student and senior career counselor. He was wounded in the head and back when an RPG hit his bunker at 2005 hrs on April 6, 1970. He was sent to the 198th LIB aid station on LZ Bayonet.

Included in his many awards and decorations are two Bronze Stars, an Air Medal with V device, and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. He has 24 medals and 53 awards. I have about 500 pages of his military records but I would still like to know more about him. I would very much like to contact anyone who personally knew him. I feel that he is an unsung hero as many veterans are.

Thank you for any information you may be able to provide.

Jonathan D. J. Maguire, MBE
Royal Irish Regiment
Sion Mills, County Tyrone, Ireland
jonathan@maguire6352.freeserve.co.uk

In memoriam

I regret to inform you of the death of Alfred Burton, a member of the Americal Division in Vietnam in 1967-1968. I served with Al and I wanted to have this notice published in the newsletter. You can contact me at [REDACTED]

Kenneth H. Lewis
Manassas, VA

23rd S & T Bn.

I wish to thank you for printing my item on Vietnam convoy duty in the April-May-June 2004 edition of the newsletter. I would like to make one correction. I was not a driver of the gun truck called "Abortion". I was asked to drive it but I declined to do so.

As a result of the article in the newsletter I received letters from three people. One was a very close friend in Vietnam. I would still like to contact others who knew me at that time.

I also have an address change since the last letter. Please note my correct address below. Thank you for your assistance.

Jerry Blaine Calhoun; Co. B, 23rd S & T
982495
[REDACTED]

Reidsville, GA 30499-9700

The Americal Newsletter is in need of your personal stories for publication. Items can be sent hand-written, typewritten, or by e-mail. Photos must be copies. Send Vietnam stories to Gary Noller, Vietnam Editor, [REDACTED] Kerrville, TX 78028



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

Eligibility includes those who served with Task Force 6814 (WWII) and Task Force Oregon (Vietnam). Branch of service is immaterial.

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The ADVA is dedicated as a LIVING MEMORIAL to all veterans of the American 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 American Division of the United States Army.



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