

**Doug Young**

**From:** Roger Vincent [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 11, 2006 7:43 PM  
**To:** webmaster@tallcomanche.org  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** C Co 2/5 in 1971

Hello,

Your website is great and so fitting that I found it on Veteran's Day. I was with the 2nd platoon of Charlie Co 2/5 in 1971 and remember much of the history that is on your web site. I am almost certain that the man whose sketches you have included in May and August is Will Bullas of San Francisco. His nickname towards the end of his tour in the fall of 1971 was the Colonel's son as he was assigned to the battallion commander as his RTO in the helicopter. He can be reached at [REDACTED] or through his website at willbullas.com. He is a very successful artist these days.

During my 11 months 10 days in Viet Nam, there was so many accidents, near misses, etc. that it is amazing that more weren't killed by friendly fire. The two deaths that you have reported in 1971 were the only two that I can remember happening in the field.

In your history of April 1971, you have a report on the death of Rene August Zimmerle (Augie to his fellow platoon members). I still have a fairly clear recollection of the night he was killed. In my mind's eye, I can still see our newby green ROTC LT standing with a strobe light in hand directing the Medivac crew in the lowering of the jungle penetrator to take away the body. I'll try to stick to the facts in the following paragraphs as best I remember them with interjecting my own feelings. Fortunetly for the platoon, no bad guys were in the area or they would have had a turkey shoot that night.

APRIL 13, 1971

The second platoon of Charlie Company were set up a few clicks from the rest of the company. Just prior to dark each evening, a squad size patrol was sent out of the night FOB to ensure there were no enemy in the immediate area. Typically, after the patrol returned, each squad would then send out 2 men to set trip flares and and claymore mines in the squad's sector so that the platoon would have defensive coverage around the perimeter.

Unfortunetly on the night of April 13th, a new platoon leader gave orders to one squad to set out their trip flares prior to the return of the last patrol. The squad leader was unaware that there a patrol was still outside of the FOB. Augie and another man were sent out to set trip flares. Shortly thereafter the patrol, which was returning from their sweep around the FOB, saw two figures in the dusk and mistakenly thought that they were Viet Cong soldiers. Augie was hit in the neck by M-16 fire and died shortly thereafter of his wounds. The other soldier with him was able to avoid the fire and rushed back to the FOB. As soon as the patrol got to Augie and realized what had happened, the platoon medic, William Rathjen, went to Augie's aid but it was too late as he had died. A night time Medivac helicopter extraction of the body was made using a jungle penetrator.

Roger Vincent

11/11/2006

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