

Joe Anderson

Dean Hearsh

ISG ~~Pravet~~ Funkhouser

Commo Sgt Pravet

XC 1LT Bob Radell

other officers & NCOs

Fredi

Douglas Young

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 26, 2003 8:01 PM
To: webmaster@tallcomanche.org
Subject: Charlie Company

Doug:

I enjoyed talking to you, also. I had to search back in my memory to recall some of the events in 1967, but once I got warmed up, things seemed to come to mind. Here are some of my memories from 1967.

You asked if I could remember events on the day that Ray Stottler was KIA by AK 47 fire. I can remember a few details. That morning, we moved out about 0300 from a position about 2 or 3 km from our objective, a village on the plain near Bong Son, as I recall. Up until then, we had moved as a company during daylight hours or had air assaulted into or near our objectives. This was during a phase in operations when we were interdicting infiltrating NVA to keep them from massing for an attack on a major objective. Intelligence wasn't very good. Basically, we seemed to be searching villages at random. Our normal mission for this type of operation was to cordon off a village to prevent NVA or VC in the village from escaping. After we would establish a cordon, the RVN National Police, the "white mice," would chopper in and search the village. An American AID (Agency for International Development) advisor was always with them. The white mice would question villagers and search the area for evidence of NVA or VC presence or movement. We would often round up a few of the enemy using these tactics. But, we weren't as effective in the cordon and search technique when we moved in during daylight hours, including air assaults at dawn. The enemy could see us coming and sometimes fled from the area before we could conduct effective operations in and around the villages.

It seemed to make sense to move in before daylight and establish our cordon before dawn. The troops were not used to moving as a company at night, but after we did it a few times and were successful at surprising the enemy, it became routine. We got very good at it and could move into a position at night without even causing a dog to bark.

On this particular morning, we moved on a direct azimuth to the objective with platoons in column, ranger style, leaving the weapons platoon with one mortar at our previous position for indirect fire support. I remember that it was an uneventful operation and the white mice had come and gone when we began to move out of the area in early afternoon. As an aside, that morning our headquarters medic treated a little girl and a couple of women who had been injured a day or two before, unrelated to our operation. Our company docs helped where they could.

While we were moving out of that position, a burst of AK 47 fire killed Stottler and wounded two others. We immediately set up an LZ and medevaced the wounded while two platoons searched the village for the weapon, its owner and any other enemy. We did not find anything, unfortunately.

We continued for several days with the cordon and search operations in and around that area using the same tactics of moving at night. We had some successes and, thankfully, had no more casualties during that phase.

A few days later, Charlie Company conducted an amphibious assault like the one described by another contributor. It may have been on the same coastal village. The objective was a long and narrow fishing village, about 1 km from south to north on the beach of the So. China Sea Coast. The village was only a couple of hundred yards deep from west to east. A river, too wide and deep to walk through, separated the village from the main plain on the west. All we had to do was seal off the north and south ends of the village and quickly get some troops across the river to cover the river with machine gun fire.

The element that sealed the north end of the village took automatic weapons fire while a machine gunner was swimming a borrowed small fishing boat across the river. I was told that he never missed a stroke under fire; got his weapon in position and laid down a base of fire while the rest of the squad came across in fishing boats to his position. All of this took place within a very few minutes after we landed on the beach from two "mike" boats just before first light. The mike boats were small landing boats that had a capacity of up to about fifty fully equipped soldiers. Navy swift boats supported us with mortars, although I was a little skeptical about calling in mortar fire

from a rolling deck. We didn't have a need for them, as it turned out. The operation was successful. Charlie company captured a few NVA soldiers as well as other items during the search phase. And, the Asst. Division Cdr., BG Irby visited us to get a look at the operation.

I can also give you the names of most of the leaders of C 2/5 when I turned over command to CPT Dean Learish. (Learish died in 1981, according to the West Point Register of Graduates.)

In October 1967, headquarters section consisted of myself, CPT Jack Yeagley, company commander; 1LT Bob Radell, XO and 1SG Edmund Funkhauser. Our commo chief was SGT Pravet. I wish I could remember the name of our Hq doc. He was a special forces trained medic and a conscientious objector. He didn't carry a weapon but he was one of the most courageous men in the company.

2LT (Jim, I believe) Arnett was a platoon leader. I heard that Arnett was seriously wounded late in '67 during operations around Camp Radcliffe. 2LT Dennis Zambano was 2d platoon leader. As another writer mentioned, he was killed in October by an enemy grenade. The other rifle platoon leader was 2LT (don't remember first name) Stanford.

PSG Martinez was a platoon sgt. who was wounded and evacuated to a hospital in Qui Nohn (sp) after I turned over the company. I visited him in the hospital during a liaison trip from the 1st Cav Hq (I was assigned out of Charlie Company to Div G-3 Operations because of a promotion to Major). Martinez told me that he and several others had been wounded during a night attack. He mentioned SSG Locke as one of the casualties. PSG Potlongo was a platoon sgt. in another platoon. SSG Furedi was another senior NCO. Furedi was a Hungarian who said he took part in the 1958 Hungarian revolution. He was also an acting platoon leader at one time.

SSGs Hickey, Mable, McCarson, Beal, Locke, Edmands and Abercrombie were also leaders in the rifle platoons.

Our 4th platoon (sometimes a maneuver platoon, sometimes a maneuver platoon as well as company trains) consisted of fewer troops. The platoon leader was 2LT "Ski" Kapacewski. SSG Kumangai was also in this platoon, I believe. The platoon sgt., PSG Jimmy Shoemaker was the company's all around utility hitter. He had taught mortars at Ft. Benning and had been with the company for several months. SSG Hite was the supply sgt.

Mentioning Furedi brings back a story. When were on firebase security duty at LZ English, some of the NCOs acquired several cases of steaks from a mess tent of a unit at LZ English. Shoemaker, Funkhauser and I grilled the steaks on converted 55 gal drums that had been cut in half lengthwise and configured as BBQ pits. They had been made in a maintenance facility somewhere and were around the area. We found some charcoal and wood somewhere. The steaks turned out to be very good. We had enough for all the troops on the perimeter and started to send seconds out. Unfortunately, we didn't keep an accurate count of the misappropriated steaks and we ran out after serving seconds to all the troops except part of Furedi's platoon. Furedi came back to Co HQ immediately, mad as hell that everyone but his platoon (he was acting platoon leader then) got seconds. I promised him that his platoon would be first in line for any future bennies, but I couldn't make him happy. I could only apologize for poor planning. It was one of the major crises during the time I commanded the company.

Another story that comes to mind was when we were on security duty at LZ Two Bits. A sapper attack was in progress in another sector. The 1/9 Cav S-3 (in charge of security for the LZ) called me on the horn and asked me if we could put some illumination on the area under attack. We hadn't established a grid except in our own sector, but I told him we would give it a shot. Shoemaker immediately took the mortar by the bipods, eyeballed the general azimuth and elevation, pivoted the mortar around, planted the bipods; adjusted the elevation by a WAG and ordered the gunners to fire. Within seconds of the initial call from the S-3, the sky was lit up like a night football game. The S-3 said the rounds were right on target. The defending troops had good fields of illuminated fire. We kept the sky lit up and the element defending that sector peeled several sappers with satchel bombs off the wire the next morning.

As for call signs, I was "Mad Merlin," usually called just "Merlin." The Bn had call signs related to the King Arthur legend. The Bn CO, LTC Joe McDonough, was "Fierce Crusader," or "Crusader." Alpha Co, CPT Clay Pratt was "Singing Sword." He was usually called "Swinging Sword" or just "Sword." Bravo and Delta companies had something with Galahad and Lancelot, as best I can remember. The Bde CO, COL Karohs was "Storm Cloud."

Those are some events and facts that come to mind on this Memorial Day, 2003 – nearly 36 years later.

Jack Yeagley

5/31/2003

Seagley



West Point

~~SZ before~~

went to Div G-3, Asst ops office

Another tour? No

Retired as - 29 years COL

Dates left?

Where 1st Sgt - Field or Rear

8-9 years before VN

had commanded twice before

Dear Leavish ^{class} -162

Deceased

Joe Anderson

1/12 66-67 Sitor, 2 BS w/ V

70 Another Lt, 3 BS w/ V

1998

