

<p>Excerpts  <u>"In Search of the Warrior Spirit"</u>            by Richard Strizzi Heckler            N. Atlantic Books            Novato, California            Copyright 1990</p>		
New Guy	The Experience	The Veteran
		Awareness
		Loving Spirit
		Peace
		Contemplative
Inexorably drawn to face the abomination by Conrad		
Heart of darkness		
	Strength, integrity, defeating inner demons	
	NVA, small unit tactics	
	Simplicity, heart	
		Courage, selflessness, loyalty, commitment
		Myaguetz, loss of warrior spirit, dignity
Vicit tecum		
	A communication, layered meanings, brimming with moral questions	
	Christian fundamentalism vs. Asian philosophy "Many spokes to wheel"	
	Control follows awareness	
	Initiatory trial of harassment	
Glide, energy and intent		
Graceful, daring		
		Reconciling feelings
	Enemy is to be killed, hurt, by caring, instinctive and trained	
	Life & death = love & power	
	Probe inconsistency, find vital point, unleash predator, measure response, express concern	
		Phil Coputo "Death will not alter the course of war"
Fear, vulnerability, patriotism and duty		
	SLA Marshall, social, logical and statistical level, not passion	
Human longing to experience courage, selflessness, heros, service, transcendence		
Warrior ancestor skills		
Discover what needs war answers		
Taoist virtues-resistance yielding, effortless effort		
	The opponent is within	
		Dignity, compassion, integrity
Denial of vulnerability		
	Avenge	

New Guy	The Experience	The Veteran
	Heroically suffering losses, some victories, no lucky breaks, scorned by public, nobility of suffering and path of self realization, integrity of facing own demons	
		To embody our deepest values in the flesh
		Compassion, to be vulnerable
Pursuit of danger to display physical courage		
Not supposed to cry, endure, be strong, not carried away by emotions, keep bottled up		
		Asked to pay attentions to feelings, deepen and expand awareness
	To concentrate under pressure, common humanity, compassion on our humanity	
	Real experiences, mentally, physically	
	Consciousness = choice	
Sacred Warrior to serve		
	Dark God of war to destroy me if I fall unaware	
	Not considering politics of science	
	Conflict	
		Resolution of conflict
Perceived human need "incredible urge to be right"		
	Conscious choice, paying attention, yellow light for intent green light of action	
	Pay attention, Stay awake, be aware	
		Warrior Code
		The imperishable elements of Loyalty, Integrity, Intensity, Compassion, Service, Calmness under fire
		Patience
	Strength of will	
	Aware of limitations	
	We're all acolyte warriors until tested in combat	
	We beseech Mars, the God of War to deliver us to the crucial battle field that will redeem us into the terrifying, immediacy of the moment	
	We long for the encounter with what will ultimately empower us with dignity and honor	
	Spiritual emptiness, an inner hunger impels men into combat	

New Guy	The Experience	The Veteran
	Where there is no fanfare about loyalty	
	Fatigued, exhausted, inside there is an aliveness, trembling, between dread and pleasure	
		Showing fear
		Comrades in arms
		Unite in an experience and openness
Ethics of responsibility first start within us		
	Commitment, Whatever it takes	
	Emotional life and death	
Official state of mind		
	The conscious is disengaged from the chatter	
		Inducive to excellerated learning, creative problem solving, over-efforting creates muscle tension moves us out of multi-dimensional alpha state into a more linear beta state
	Combat veterans block the ties alfa state to cope against stress and to defend against openness, preventing relaxation	
		Our society relies on war to fulfil certain needs and reflects a spiritual poverty of our society
		The American military ending. Care and feeling are there, but don't get too attached. You'll have to leave
	Death, the ultimate fear, But only comes to claim you. Sometimes he appears, Maybe as a threat, Maybe as a warning, not claiming you. His brother in darkness, that malevolent spirit of war, known by many names, This time it was Vietnam. You saw his reflection etched in the faces Of those who faced him, with you. The closer the spirits swarmed, The more alive and determined I became, Not me, Not this time....	

New Guy	The Experience	The Veteran
	Determination, destruction, barrenness	
Deepening of faith through hopelessness, despair, resignation, acceptance, determination, duty, miracle of prayers answered or a question of experience and qualifications		
	Acceptance of death is indeed the end of all things, circumstances beyond control	
	Laughter, released tensions, a rare sharing of human warmth	
	Senselessness and dreariness	
	Time passed in killing rats	
		Could not reconcile war and religion
	Nearness of enemy brings changes in every man, the mysterious force brings alertness, aliveness, voices are different, bodies are full of readiness, animal reflexes on edge	
Drawn to embrace the action, drawn inescapably, irresistibly		
	Tense waiting, watching, profound exponential growth in senses, an electric current of its own	
	Relaxed days, mission, alternated with danger	
		Through the hell of war, sweetness of peace
	At the end of the day, the NVA had heart with a single pistol left, still shooting	
		Moral decline, social wounds of war included VD, babies, drugs, fraggings and racial strife
		Veterans share guilt of survivors, why me, why them, they returned prematurely aged with a reverence of life, a sense of emptiness, need to comprehend experiences as they relate to the individual, the war and the nation
Seeking manhood at the price of innocence lost, psychic wounds		
	Drinking and sex to obliterate the meaninglessness	
		Love, contentment, peace, happiness
		Men of honesty, dignity, courage

<p>Excerpts from  <u>"Achilles in Vietnam"</u>          by Jonathan Shay, M.D., PhD          Atheneum          New York, 1994</p>		

Moral world of the soldier-his culture understands what is right, betrayal by commanders and leaders

The modern world - the meaning of dead to the defeated is a bitter, unhealed wound. The U.S. had been defeated but won every battle.

For veterans, the unanchored dead continued to hover.

The sense of betrayal equating defeat with abandonment by God and others.

Personal devaluation

For some, war was a cause. Willing to put your life on a line

What is at stake is lethal danger and fear of it

With distribution of risk ever unjust

Indignant rage

Soldier's rage

Indignant rage-from social betrayal-through violation of what's "right"

Soldier's grief-battle nourishes human attachment then amputates

There is a passion of care among men fighting together

Death of Nelson was a blow longer lasting since there was no opportunity to communalize grief

Suppression of social grief work

Rage replaces grief

Survivor's guilt enters

Grief-Guilt merge in a close relationship in a friend's death

Revenge-get more even

Reviving the dead

P. 138

The Vietnam era, generations, 53,100,000

Men - 26,800,000

Served in military during Vietnam era, 8,615,000

Served in Vietnam, 3,145,000

Served in combat, 776,000

Wounded, 321,000

Died, 58,000

Attributing blame, predictability is death

Flying by the book will get you killed when the enemy knows the book

Virtually all treatment methods direct a survivor to construct a personal narrative

Tragedy brings us to cherish our mortality, savor, and embrace it

War itself creates situations in which physical survival contradicts moral survival

The time horizon in the future has shrunk to a few hours and to the timeless shelter of death

Narrative time is built into the very structure of the family of languages to which English belongs.

This may form part of the enormous difficulty that many survivors of severe trauma have in putting their experience into words.

Survivors of severe trauma have difficulty in putting there experience into words, their experience is \_\_\_\_\_ in a language that insists on "was" and "will be". The trauma world knows only "is".

Peer recognition, which allows survivors of trauma to grasp that they are not freaks and "do not have to go through it alone", usually leads to communication of experience in words, not action.

When a healing community of combat veterans forms, the heralds staff can be picked up from the dirt and veterans find they can once again speak without acting.

Individual experience seems to be spoken and heard as part of the discourse of mutual affirmation and recognition.

The task is to remember <sup>and to grieve -</sup> rather than relive and re-enact ~~and to grieve~~.

For veterans this means grieving not only the dead but also their own lost innocence in both its meanings, as blamelessness and as unawareness of evil.

"All who hear should understand that no person suffering can be measured against any other person's suffering."



Expand background

Expand descriptions early on

Expand history (Washington, \_\_\_\_\_, Peace Talks)

Describe FAC flights

October 19, hit burn, damaged \_\_\_\_\_ bad LZ

Expand Corp HQ Visit QuiNhon

\_\_\_\_\_

Gordy Expand Beep down. Tell of mortar \_\_\_\_\_, tried \_\_\_\_\_

(TM - I can't read the middle of the page)

A defined risk is acceptable, even anticipated, planned

risk without control, exposure, is the ultimate terrifying reality,... uncontrolled risk is the most sincere form of mortality awareness, when events occur, time slows, to an unlikelike quality, every inch of the rotor blade overhead is visible with each revolution, tracers float by like neon green \_\_\_\_\_, at 900 feet per second velocity. Words are spoken with a \_\_\_\_\_ voice, but you don't need to hear them, you already know their message. Sensitive controls become slowed to static movement, is this it, when time slows to a stop.

\_\_\_\_\_ indignant wrath stemming from violations of what's right.

Horror, fear, grief are \_\_\_\_\_, Rage becomes a lifelong disability to some

Arising from a sense of social betrayal

Moral luck - Compassionate understanding did not exist. Death of friends teaches you not to be close.

RR-Expand \_\_\_\_\_ - you won't recognize your wife - expand - call home

Who's the audience

Put together personal exp/overall times/ \_\_\_\_\_

Tripping up to \_\_\_\_\_

Use really too much

Want to feel like you're there

Explain terms/jargon

Tone

Verbs slip

more looking back

Seeking the conflict

Coming of age

Service, sacrifice, vulnerability

Attempt to change fate

Accomplished change

Attained \_\_\_\_\_ goals, the encounter

Witness to continued losses

Survivor's grief

Losses continue after return home

Indelibly etched in psyche

Haunted by sightings of Nelson

UHPA - shock, \_\_\_\_\_

Nelson, Moreira funeral - closure, anchored

Review of Lam San 719, \_\_\_\_\_ to Persian Gulf

\_\_\_\_\_



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Drawn to embrace the action, drawn inescapably, irresistibly
Seeking manhood at the price of innocence lost, psychic wounds
Meaning, Depth, Resonance, Twist
Meaning to the experience
Acknowledge others
Lessons Learned
Message to relatives

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Determination, destruction, barrenness, War Evans
No pretext to _____
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News, Stanly Karrow's series, my movies
Love, contentment, peace, happiness
Men of honesty, dignity, courage

Questions for Ken Mayberry:

Was Ken wounded at Ripcord? Did he and Rayburn go back in a second Huey into the pick-up zone?

Come up no slack frequency - 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Woodchucker

Woodcutter

Poopsie

Major Head/redhead, Rutledge told he can't have blade strikes anymore, then denied in LZ in fear of blade strike and Cunningham told him to go ahead and accept the LZ's and accept the blade strikes.

Kid named Mike Cunningham from Juno, Alaska, had a handful of medals ready to go home but not old enough to buy a drink. He won the soldiers medal for flying in 100 miles-an-hour winds, rescuing 20 and 30 Vietnamese civilians at a time during a typhoon.

Mears was a pilot on Ripcord with Doan, his co-pilot. Mears got on tail end of the Ghostriders circling and did not go into the landing pad. At that moment, Doan decided he'd never back off or refuse a hot LZ. It would cost Doan being shot down five times in the coming year. New Years was Baby Sanh's roommate in flight school.

Doan took a rocket the day he left. He pulled Rutledge into the bunker with him. Then, when no others hit, he calmly walked out, dusted himself off and left. Rutledge believes there was a "D" model converted to an "H" model, number 496 or number 469. He said the pitot tube was on the nose not on the top of the Huey fuselage. That was the difference.

When Rutledge came home, he watched on TV and saw the Phoenix hootches exploding as the ARVN's were attacked there in 1972. He said there was a Lt. Brea and a Lt. Fast Eddie Stafire there with him. Rutledge phone number is (805) 588-0861.

He said the Phoenix plaque was a large wooden plaque about 2 feet by 3 feet that hung over the stage in the officer's club. On the 28th or 29th, someone read a deal about the Phoenix renewing itself in flames. One of the last nights in Vietnam, a large number of them gathered in the club, a number of them were ROTC types with college backgrounds. They suggested burning it and returning it to the flames. Rutledge and others decided to include writing the names of those they could remember, as well as all the Phoenix call signs on the back of it. They toasted it as it burned.

July, 1971, a Phoenix Nighthawk was armed with 6 M-60 machineguns strapped together. The 7.62 mini-gun was inoperable, as was the night scope. It was a make-do thing with McKeaney and Grau flying it. A medevac mission was called at night and it was a hot extraction. Because Cobras are not available, and there was bad weather, the medevac could not attempt the approach. General Berry had issued a general order that if medevacs attempted landing in hot LZ's without two Cobra gunships on hand, the pilot would lose his wings. This was because the pilots would have flown anywhere, anytime, under the auspices of medevac. They were simply losing too many aircraft. That became the general reason for the order. The grunt on the ground kept calling, "this man has a sucking chest wound." It meant he would die within an hour, or hour and thirty minutes if he was not taken to a hospital, only 20 minutes away by helicopter. Grau looked over at McKeaney. McKeaney with his perverbial smile said, "OK, let's do it." They commenced the mission, extracted the wounded GI and took him to the hospital. They would later receive a DFC for it.

Major Lloyd was shipped in from the States specifically to lead the largest airborne invasion since Normandy. The Phoenix company had been selected at general levels stateside to lead the airborne invasion. Words that still excite the adrenaline rush are clear left, fire, cleared hot, PZ, LZ, coming hot, redline and overspeed.

I need to expand the concept of moral luck. Expand Soyland. Soyland knew that they were extremely desperate to demand the hot extraction and have him shot down on top of them. The experience of Phoenix with gunships on either side, he accepted the call. The gunships can't help while at a hover.

The "word" of Soyland down believed killed was a kick in the gut. It was pain piled on top of Stewart, Doody, Nelson, Moreira, Baldwin and Finn. But, if it could happen to Nelson, I now believed anyone could get it.

Every disaster feared, happened.

The impact of age of combatants. The younger were more likely willing to do anything.

Nelson's death, travesty of fate, Phoenix ascendent, ascension, ascendancy.

Sloniker served with 174th Assault Helicopter Company while it was standing down in June, 1971. It included the Dolphins and the Sharks.

Families were angry at Sloniker, assuming he was part of the bureaucracy, keeping them in the dark.



Many veterans wanted to move on.

Hell of an experience with no social value, compartmentalization of Army, military bureaucracy related to the need to know.

Need to get the information on Alcorn and Amos surviving both crashes. The two crashes Alcorn survived were \_\_\_\_\_?

Ascension, survivor aspects of Huey, the nightmare, Amos and Alcorn, nobody left a trail like Mike King did. What keeps me there by Sloniker. Nelson not getting his feet wet in the monsoons.

\_\_\_\_\_ Valley, ICorps, tribulation, travesty, transgression, seeked out, hunted, found, engaged and killed. Da Nang diary by Colonel Tom Yarborough. Covey FAC. Has good style in LRPS by Dennis Foley.

Published in 1994. At the Hurricanes Eye, by Greg Walker, is another good one. Desert Storm Special Forces, Chapter 5, is At the Hurricanes Eye by Greg Walker. The NVA headhunter battalions trained by Chinese.

Gary Wigle has an Airforce book, Cease Fire to Myaguez is a chapter in Search and Rescue.

Sloniker, through Don Peterson's tapes helped resolve the exact locations of Stewart, Nelson, and Soyland. They had found all three locations but they were confused in thinking the North Vietnamese were lying to them about Soylands location.

Glide path, imaginary becomes real and becomes one with the Huey.

Arlington, there was a sense of commonality with the families present there. Kids long hair, probably same music, college aspirations, missed family events for 20 years. In our political descent, we divided and conquered ourselves from within, forgetting the basic tenants of our resolution.

The Myaguez, Search and Rescue by Gary Wigle, Da Nang Diary by Tom Yarborough, LRPS by Dennis Foley, At the Hurricane's Eye by Greg Walker.

The most forgotten victims left behind in memory, left behind by the bureaucracy, with no recognition of their losses, and no attempt to reconcile their feelings. The families. Criticism for writers, where were you when the page was blank, what was your response when I asked you to help. Dealing with emotions 20 years later shakes up a lot of unwanted feelings and requires dealing with things that have been put aside for so long.

Probably half of all Sorties flown after 1967 were against the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

Expand the concept of moral luck. The word of Soyland, down, believed killed, another kick in the gut, pain piled on top of other deaths. But if it could happen to Nelson, then it could happen to anyone.

Phoenix ascendancy  
Phoenix ascension  
Phoenix tribulation  
travesty of fate  
Phoenix sanction  
Phoenix apocryphon  
Phoenix resolve  
wages of war  
temptation  
tempest  
transgression  
travesty  
Woodstock One-Three  
Recon Six-One  
Phoenix Five-One  
Hummingbird 7

Both Ken Mayberry and Dean Grau want Clifford Baade's name out of the document. Grau wants any reference to Baade removed. He was intentionally listed as a non-combat casualty, ground related. It was assigned intentionally so that the Chaplain would have no idea how he died, even though it was suicide. Young 19 year olds had ostracized him as a REMF unintentionally. Rayburn's name needs to be out of the book, except when with Ken Mayberry. Davis and Mears, Mears agrees with the use of his name. Davis has not been contacted. Dean Grau said Major Lloyd, then 40 years old, was told to leave home in the States and lead the largest airborne invasion since Normandy. He told the Phoenix the night before, "I'll be in the lead aircraft, right seat, flying with you." He was a great American, according to Grau. Grau did not like him when he gave him his standards instructor pilot ride with the company.

Warrior spirits akin Carrie Dean, anti- and pro-war living together happily 20 years later. Grau and Doan had a near mid-air collision with a Loach, thought they had meshed blades. Close enough to see the cockpit lights as they passed. Doan considered that the closest to getting killed, even though he had been shot down five times.

The DFC flight with Grau and McKeaney. A medevac could not land because of a lack of two Cobra gunships

on station, since it was adjacent the A Shau Valley. A general order by General Berry would remove the wings of any medevac pilot who landed without gunship cover. Since they didn't have two Cobras, Grau and McKeaney were flying the Phoenix Nighthawk. The GI on the ground called, "You're a Phoenix bird, I know you'll come get him, he's got a sucking chest wound and is gonna die." The man had an hour to live and was only 20 minutes from the hospital. McKeaney with his perverbial smile looked over at Grau, "Let's do it." They would receive distinguished flying crosses for it. It occurred on July 29, 1971.

The war effort. Politicians were simply interested in getting re-elected. That included both Johnson and Nixon. They were fundamentally dishonest from Grau's view. Captain Holmes was white as a sheet when he found Baade. Doody's death was an unsettling experience. Grau had a close friend who was also a close friend of Doody's. Grau had put off the phone call to discuss the death of Doody for six months. The day he called his friend, he found out that his friend had died that very day in a traffic accident.

Need to mail a copy to Pat McKeaney.

Keep the name, address and phone number of Phil Rutledge: Phillip L. Rutledge, 2116 Jewetta Avenue, Bakersfield, California, 93312, (805) 588-0861.

According to Grau, the Phoenix were best at Camp Evans. The Phoenix "were better". They demanded better skills. The toughness of the missions demanded the highest skills. They had the best safety record and the worst environment in Vietnam. There was never a mutiny or refusal to accept a mission. Most casualties and aircraft losses were suffered by the Phoenix.

Don Mears had incredible luck in his tour. Dean Grau (612) 645-1679. Bobo survived Mears' crash but died with Stewart. Alcorn survived two jumps that killed the pilots. Describe Nelson daintily jumping over mud puddles.

The younger the man, the more likely he is to accept the death dare.

Need to mail a copy to Mr. J. Pat McKeaney, 1251 Regency Place, San Jose, California, 95129. Need to get a letter to Alcorn.

Rutledge - Corregidor mentality in last months.



RIPCORD TAPE

Flight path Cathryn Gladiator \_\_\_\_\_

At 3:36, \_\_\_\_\_, with 30 seconds separation

Position call, POL at Camp Eagle inoperative.

VHF Dragon 0-3.

2-4 off Evans over Jack

South/southeast at Ripcord. Turn on lights to show lead.

House, "Keep the damn things going."

Sealed \_\_\_\_\_

Rider 1-6, 0-6, 1-0

Recorded in \_\_\_\_\_ Camp Evans of Ghostriders

Phoenix call 1-3-0 to right turn. 2200 at blue line

Phoenix 1-4 out of PZ 2-7-0, "This is Phoenix (House). The other briefers are not up. It's pretty strong (fire) west of Ripcord. I hate to keep this damn thing going, but give me your POB."

*be the one to*

Ghostriders blue line by Phong Dien/blueline by Jack

30 minutes to go. Approximate 2,000 feet, 30 second separation.

Black widows will be lining up. They're back at Camp Eagle now with no orders.

Home route of earlier draw left of Drew. Will have to sneak in through the fire. Lightning - 3 suppressive fire out Chalk 1-3 up off 5-13 off 5/13th. Redskin 2-4. Lightning-2. Griffin 9-3 Echo.

State high ground, due east of Ripcord is where we want the rockets. Pretty white stuff on top of Ripcord according to one Ghostrider. Ghostrider 1-6, "Mortar fire hitting all areas of pad, 5 to 10 meters of pad, all the

way down the hill." Lightning-3, "Going top pad, drop off one more hit just right beside the pad. Going around" Lift Master Comanchero 1-1, Griffin 9-3 Echo, "Did a Slick just get shot down." "No, he was hit by a mortar sitting down."

Chalk-7's taking small arms fire. 100 meters out of LZ. They're leading it on the pad. Abort. No, I've aborted three times already. I'll just continue on.

I'll leave it up to you, go in if you can. Ghost rider lead.

Two birds going in. Others around. Background roar is jamming of radios by NVA. Liftmaster, "going to 1-5-5 position. Can't get in there for Chinook. Going to 1-5-5 north of position north of Chinook. Chalk-10 just took mortars in the LZ. Chalk-12 taking fire, short final. POL just went up with a mortar hit."

Lightning-3, "Next ship, top pad, logger pad, north of Chinook area. Got mortars, aircraft hit landing. At 50 minutes. 6-3-7 short final. Heading POL in top at POL. 6-4 half mile final. Ghost rider 2-4 taking hits. Heading back in the Charlie med. Don't follow me. Aircraft has stuck pedals. Gonna put this thing down on the middle of the active."

One going to med, one aircraft Evans runway without pedals. \_\_\_\_\_ is hit. \_\_\_\_\_ is shutting down at Currahee. Checking for hits.

Expand comments.

Cataldo, LAM SON 719, had 120 helicopters in one mission. On March 4, 122 UH1's were hit and 20 destroyed. On March 3, and 20th of March, the two worst days in Army Aviation history. 29% of all UH1 losses occurred. 21 destroyed and 85 derosed.

"Someone went down, someone went after."

### Lessons Learned, 101st Airborne Division

Detachment B-52, 5th Special Forces group (A) Operation Barbara Glade. Started May 15. Deep covert reconnaissance tactical exploitation. Withdrew from Ripcord due to casualties, indirect and anti-aircraft fire. There were enemy ground attacks. Withdrew and then began offensive in the Airborne Bradley area where supplies and Chache sites, logistic locations of NVA, were located. The US 2nd Battalion 506th Infantry was extracted on July 23. Helicopter crews in a three month period lost 29 killed, 70 wounded. April 1, 1970 through July 30, 1970.

Aerial flame Sorties were eight to ten 55-gallon drums. On May 30, LZ's were flames. Six Sorties caused 27 large secondary explosions. Bulk CS2 missions carrying 55-gallon drums were dropped from 4,000 feet. CS was dropped against suspected mortar and automatic weapons positions at LZs.

The B-5 DMZ front. Enemy had telephone lines running from Laos, northeastward into Quang Tri Province, north of the A Shau. O1D Bird Dogs were giving nighttime missions for sighting mortar flashes. They directed artillery and airstrikes, which reduced the intensity of the attacks.

The 101st Airborne had 424 aircraft authorized.

Engineer Battalion constructed LZ's, cleared fields of fire, constructed bunkers, landing pads, logistic pads, and any other construction necessary.

\*\*\*\*\*WTM: You stated on the tape that you have a table for me to type here. I did not get one.\*\*\*\*\*

Acoustic sensors monitored. The NVA and VC were heard monitoring US forces radio. Engineers started prefabricating bunkers, latrines, showers and other structures and then lifted them to firebase. They were positioned by helicopter after dozers had cleared the way.

On the 28th of April, Company B of 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry killed 15 NVA, recovered an M-60, M-79 and PRC25 radio.

On 17th of May, a CH47 was shot down with five KIA west of Nancy. On the 18th of March, a Phoenix bird went down with four crewmen and two passengers. Five died south of O'Riley. A crewchief was thrown from the wreckage. On the 19th of May, two trucks, a 2.5 ton and a 5 ton, were destroyed by Rangers east of Torch, southwest of \_\_\_\_ Tavern.

Gary Alcorn survived Soyland's crash and a chase by the NVA. An angel, the voice of a dead aunt, told him

Gary Nelson's Story  
Shot down May 27, 1971

it would be okay. He survived the night and was picked up the next morning. Phone number is (913) 796-6941.

Mike (Walter) Amos, (304) 755-5310, was crewchief with Herndon and Swanson. Captain Herndon was killed and Captain Donald Swanson was killed on the 18th of May, south of O'Riley.

+  
Neil Dody, (301) 273-7571

Bruce Bender, (602) 425-4123

Don Davis, (708) 668-1533

(615) 745-6757  
901

Larry Frasier

Michael Amos crewchief  
- Athens, Tenn

(304)  
755  
8027

Ronda

10:30

6:

2 hours

Between June 26 and July 7, 1970, page 1-69. 117 aircraft hit, one shot down, 12.7mm, 19 derosed as salvage. July 1, through July 7, 160 rounds of 60 and 82mm mortars hit along with 75mm recoilless rifle fire. 21 US wounded. 30 NVA were killed in action with US casualties, 13 killed and 104 wounded. On July 1, 15 rounds of 82mm, 15 rounds of 75mm, 4 rounds of 82mm had 15 US wounded, firing 105mm counterfire. On July 4, page 1-72, US unit was overrun by NVA sapper company. 15 NVA were killed vs. 7 US KIA including a company commander. 6 were wounded, 1 missing in action out of the platoon. The Company Commander was killed outright. The medic organized defense. It was a night out of the movie, Platoon. July 8, the NVA occupied Hill 1000. Believed to be the source of mortar fire from bunkers. Companies C and B from the 2nd, 506th Infantry could not dislodge them. M72 Law destroyed only one of several bunkers. 2 US KIA, 4 wounded in action. July 10, 8 attacks on Ripcord, 2 US killed, 17 wounded. July 11 - 16, ground action in the hills 1000 and 805 suffered 10 US killed, 52 wounded versus 12 NVA.

Page 1-78:

July 21, 2nd Battalion, Airmobile 502nd Infantry was removed to Camp Eagle from the ground surrounding the lowlands of Ripcord.

On July 23, the 3rd Brigade directed extraction of the 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry from Ripcord and vicinity. Extractions began at 0545 and ended at 1214 hours.

Company D, 2nd Battalion, 506th Infantry, was inserted to assist in the extraction of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 506th. The hot extraction began at 1305, completed without casualties or damage at 1401 on the 23rd with TAC airstrikes underway during the move.

There was 74 US Airforce, Marine, Navy, Air Sorties. Continuous ARA and tube artillery. Troops returned to Evans, Ripcord had received 34 standoff artillery attacks in four days. On the 19th through the 22nd, 51 TAC airstrikes were used with 74 total TAC airstrikes being used on the final day during the evacuation. On July 21, one medevac crashed and burned in the field below Ripcord. A second medevac took fire, killing one crewmen

and wounding another, returning to Camp Eagle in an unflyable condition. A third aircraft from A Company, 158th, was hit, caught fire in the pickup zone and crashed. Six others took hits and returned unflyable.

On the 22nd, 12 US KIA, 61 wounded. During the extraction, one CH47 was shot down, 8 took hits, that left 4 \_\_\_\_\_ unflyable as salvage only. At 7:45, the extraction delayed by mortar fire, delays until 9:35 due to airstrikes and artillery. Infiltrating one UH1H at a time for the evacuation on July 23. Several hundred rounds impacted in 4 hours. 3,000 meters, 12,000 feet. Two miles is the 80mm mortar range.

Baldwin received ground fire, middle of the DMZ. Position YD113725 on September 20. There were nine US killed, one wounded in action. Company C, 158th Aviation Battalion. The Ranger team of the 1st of 5th Infantry Mechanized, page 79. One US wounded, August/September 1970.

Monday, January 9, 1995

Phone conversation with Gary Alcorn (913) 796-6941

I talked with Gary Alcorn tonight. He told me that he had a basically good memory of what went on. He said he was thrown or blown out and only flew with the Phoenix four or five times, but it was the last time he flew with them. He had to go out as door gunner then help the crewchief at the end of the day. Then he had to go work on his own Cobra at the end of the day. His Company Commander was not happy about him flying with the Phoenix.

He remembers the aircraft descending and was told to look for hand signs to show him where the guys were on the ground. As they came to a hover, he said, "I've got them at the 630 position," meaning the three green berets were opening their hands to the sky to give him the signal. At that instant, Dale Pearce had thrown his hands up in the air as he was apparently hit in the chest and then he collapsed forward. In the same instant, a B-40 impacted the rear of the aircraft behind the doorgunner blowing him clear of the aircraft as it folded the tail boom alongside the fuselage. The aircraft rolled to the right. Gary was knocked unconscious. He thought he had lost his right eye because it was covered with blood. He woke up with his head lying downhill in a fetal position with his feet pointed uphill. As he rolled over his side, he found a flashlight. His gun was lost with the aircraft. The aircraft was no where in sight. He said the hillside was so steep he had to keep his feet planted to prevent from rolling or falling down the hill.

He had been knocked unconscious and he had no idea for how long. He found a piece of heavy brush that he thought was good concealment. At dark, he heard AC130's flying overhead and all night long. He also heard helicopters. He picked up a banana leaf and tried to use it with a flashlight to funnel the light like a strobe light. Another team had since been inserted at the aircraft wreckage downhill from him. He did not hear any airstrikes coming in or any other fire. He gave an SOS by flashlight towards the AC130. Coincidentally, the green beret team was doing one at the same time. The aircraft overhead told him to turn it off so they could shoot up the other one, thinking it was NVA trying to draw him in, thinking Alcorn was the NVA. As fate or luck, he didn't turn his back on and he didn't get shot up. He heard one gun shot and saw people running through the brush so he headed back up to the original LZ.

He climbed up and began resting on a ravine bluff. He saw a building in the valley and saw a man running with a white t-shirt on, jumping between banana plants going down the steep hillside. Rockets impacted all around the west around him, so he went further westward to a stream and climbing up and crawling where he could to get away from the fire. \_\_\_\_\_ exploding at the bottom of the hill on a little \_\_\_\_\_. He went down the hillside in the elephant grass. The elephant grass would interweave itself in the wind to create small tunnels so he could crawl through. It was a very large field, about 1,000 to 1,500 meters wide. As he was trying to get through the



elephant grass, a B-56 Airforce Canberra bomber came over at the treetops dropping napalm at eye level to him. He slid down the hill on his belly and crossed a small trough towards a tree that was five or six inches in diameter and 15 feet tall. A wall of fire came running his way from the napalm. He was praying it wouldn't get him. The aircraft was shooting up the ground front of the wall of flame in case any NVA were trying to run out of it. He had flames on one side of him and aircraft shooting up the ground on the other side. He began crying and praying and in his words, he heard a "voice speaking in my head". His grandmother's voice, who had died a couple of years earlier. "It'll be all right. It'll be all right." She had said it to him twice. At that point, a sense of calm came over him.

\*\*\*\*\*Earlier you said it was his Aunt\*\*\*\*\*

As he looked up, Skyraiders were bombing at the edge of the flames. He ripped off his boxer shorts from his pants and he could see the face of the Vietnamese pilot. But the pilot did not see Gary. With more guns coming out of tunnels, pointing to the sky, and then hiding from the bombers, Gary decided to wait until the fire reached the ravine he was in and jump through it. He was totally exhausted and ready to die. He closed his eyes and laid back. Then he looked up and saw an Airforce O2 Skymaster. He waived at it and then the aircraft banked off. A few minutes later, a Phoenix helicopter picked him up. Who was the Phoenix who picked him up.

He thought he was there for two nights and it turned out he was there for only one night. He believes that it was attributed to being knocked out and unconscious for a while.



2nd  
 Get Swanson  
 W/1 Phyllis in House

Swan  
 moved up legs! Don't know why  
 - Alice toward Fritz

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