



# 2011 Mid-Year Report

## 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation, Inc.

1 July 2011

### 2011 Honors Ceremony

"We're here today to live these words: 'The Fallen Will Never Be Forgotten.' With this message, BG (R) Jim Yarbrough set the tone for the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation's 'Honors Ceremony' conducted on 11 June at the Brigade's Memorial.

Jim spoke to the audience about the quality of the Sky Soldiers who served in the Brigade throughout the unit's existence, the pride that each took in serving in this great unit, and the willingness of warriors to sacrifice for each other when demanded by circumstances.

The Honors Ceremony opened with a Color Guard provided by the 198th Infantry Brigade presenting the colors to the nearly 150 participants and spectators. Don Dali, the moving force behind the design and construction of the Memorial, discussed its symbolism and acknowledged the many talented contractors who made the structure a reality.

The first fallen warrior honored was Clinton A. Cook, who fell on 28 April 1970 in Vietnam. His name had been omitted from the granite panels during the initial dedication ceremony. Craig Ford silently removed the strip of cloth to reveal, 41 years after his death, the name of this fallen warrior.

His mother, Alma Cook, flew from Alaska and was joined by her other son Bruce. When Clinton Cook fell in 1970, Alma was never made aware of the circumstances of his death. It was not until this ceremony that she met with Sky Soldiers who served with her fallen warrior and obtained closure on this unresolved portion of her life.

Following the unveiling of Clinton Cook's name, the audience's attention focused on the granite panel honoring the OEF X fallen. Floyd Riester removed the black cloth covering the names of nine Sky Soldiers who fell in Afghanistan in 2010.

On a segment of a granite panel designated for the OEF X fallen, the names of Lucas T. Beachnaw, Nicholas S. Cook, Russell F. Madden, Matthew R. Hennigan, Louis R. Fastuca, Vinson B. Adkinson III, Raymond C. Alcaraz Jr., Matthew E. George, and James A. Page were revealed.

Following the unveiling of the OEF X fallen, attention shifted to the granite panel containing the names of Sky Soldiers who have been awarded the Medal of Honor. Karen Riester removed a cloth covering the name of Salvatore A. Giunta, the fourteenth Sky Soldier so honored by the nation

as Ray Ramirez read the Citation accompanying the Award.

SSG. Giunta spoke of being honored to have served with Sky Soldiers of the quality and caliber of those whose names were added to the list of the fallen, and of the sacrifices of the families who had lost their sons.

Following the presentation of a wreath by Sky Soldiers and Gold Star family members, the firing party rendered final honors and taps echoed across the grassy knoll on which the Memorial stands.

In addition to Alma and Bruce Cook and SSG Giunta, we were honored to have in attendance Donnie and Bridget George and seven members of their extended family. Their son Matthew fell on 31 August 2010. Alma Murphy's son, Ray Alcaraz Jr., fell on the same day as Matthew George. Alma Murphy, accompanied by her husband Paul and her other Sky Soldier son SFC Lucas Gonzalez, honored the Foundation by their presence. Martin Madden, father of Russell Madden, along with his wife Pamela and daughter Lindsay, were also present for the Ceremony. Russell fell on 23 June 2010. (Visit our website for more pictures of the Honors Ceremony.)

### Introducing the Spartan Club

More than 2,300 years ago, 300 Spartans stood in a rocky mountain pass at Thermopylae and for seven days held off the mighty Persian army, allowing Greek forces to muster and eventually defeat the invaders. 300 warriors preserved the cradle of civilization. Three hundred Spartan Warriors made a difference!

The 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation needs the support of 300 warriors to preserve and maintain our Memorial.

The Foundation has two basic requirements. The first is to pay the annual maintenance requirements for the memorial (electricity, water and landscaping). The second basic requirement is to establish an endowment fund sufficient to pay for repairs and infrastructure costs for the memorial over the long term as well as for adding new information to the 30 granite panels.

While not required on a scheduled basis, periodic upgrades will be required to maintain our memorial in a

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Gold Star Families and Guests Honor the Fallen



The Fallen Will Never Be Forgotten

**Introducing the Spartan Club (from page 1)**

condition worthy of the heritage of the 173d Airborne Brigade. We need 300 warriors willing to preserve our legacy and maintain our memorial.

We ask each Spartan Club Commander to pledge \$200.00 or more for each of the next ten years. We ask each Spartan Club Centurion to Pledge between \$173.00 and \$199.00 for each of the next ten years. We ask each Spartan Club Lancer to pledge between \$25.00 and \$172.00 for each of the next ten years. Each Spartan Club member will receive periodic communications regarding events held at the Memorial, as well as receiving recognition in our annual programs and reports.

As with the Spartans at Thermopylae, the burden of preserving our memorial and heritage is shared equally regardless of position, title and rank. Membership in the Club will be limited to 300 and is open to all Sky Soldiers, their families, commercial sponsors, Association Chapters, and military and patriotic organizations. As in the past, we hope that you will accept this challenge and support your memorial.

Spartan Club application forms are available on the 173d Airborne Brigade memorial Foundation Web Site ([www.173dairbornememorial.org](http://www.173dairbornememorial.org)) or can be obtained by contacting either Floyd Riester at [Ries173ABN@aol.com](mailto:Ries173ABN@aol.com) or Ken Smith at [kvsmith173@gmail.com](mailto:kvsmith173@gmail.com).

**173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE  
MEMORIAL FOUNDATION**

% COL (R) Kenneth Smith  
1160 Lake Royale  
Louisburg, NC 27549-7089



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**INFORMATION AND CONTACT DATA**

**FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE MEMORIAL  
PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT  
[www.173dairbornememorial.org](http://www.173dairbornememorial.org)  
OR CONTACT US BY MAIL AT:  
The 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation  
1160 Lake Royale  
Louisburg, NC 27549**

**MEMORIAL FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
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Make Checks payable to the "173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation" and mail them to the address above.  
Donations may also be made electronically—please visit our Website for more information.

The 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation, Incorporated, is a Georgia Corporation. It has been designated a 501(C)3 entity by the Internal Revenue Service. Donations may be tax deductible. Please consult your accountant.