



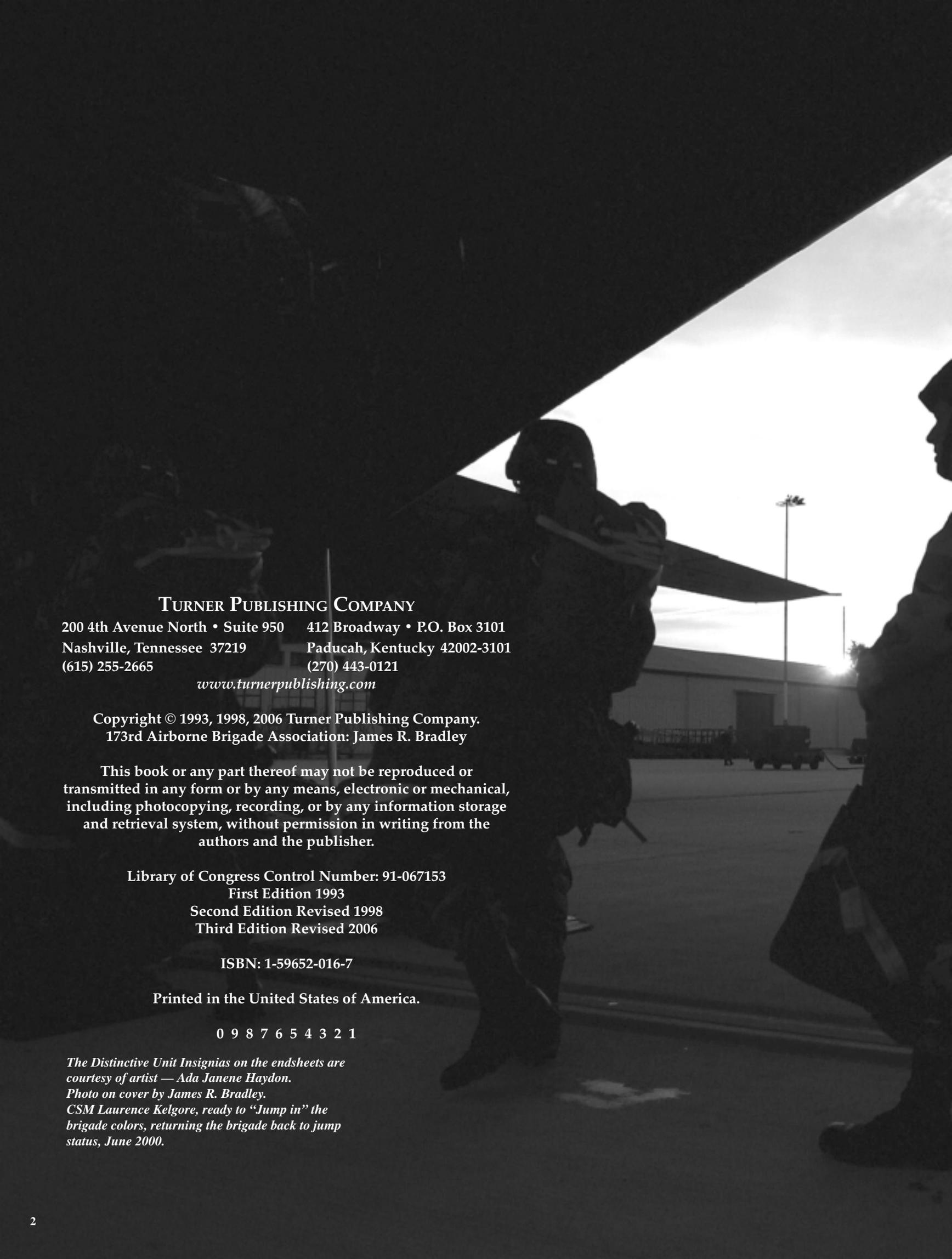
**173RD
AIRBORNE
BRIGADE**

Sky Soldiers

Third Edition

Turner[®]
PUBLISHING COMPANY

Nashville, Tennessee • Paducah, Kentucky



TURNER PUBLISHING COMPANY

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www.turnerpublishing.com

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173rd Airborne Brigade Association: James R. Bradley

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Library of Congress Control Number: 91-067153

First Edition 1993

Second Edition Revised 1998

Third Edition Revised 2006

ISBN: 1-59652-016-7

Printed in the United States of America.

0 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

The Distinctive Unit Insignias on the endsheets are courtesy of artist — Ada Janene Haydon.

Photo on cover by James R. Bradley.

CSM Laurence Kelgore, ready to “Jump in” the brigade colors, returning the brigade back to jump status, June 2000.

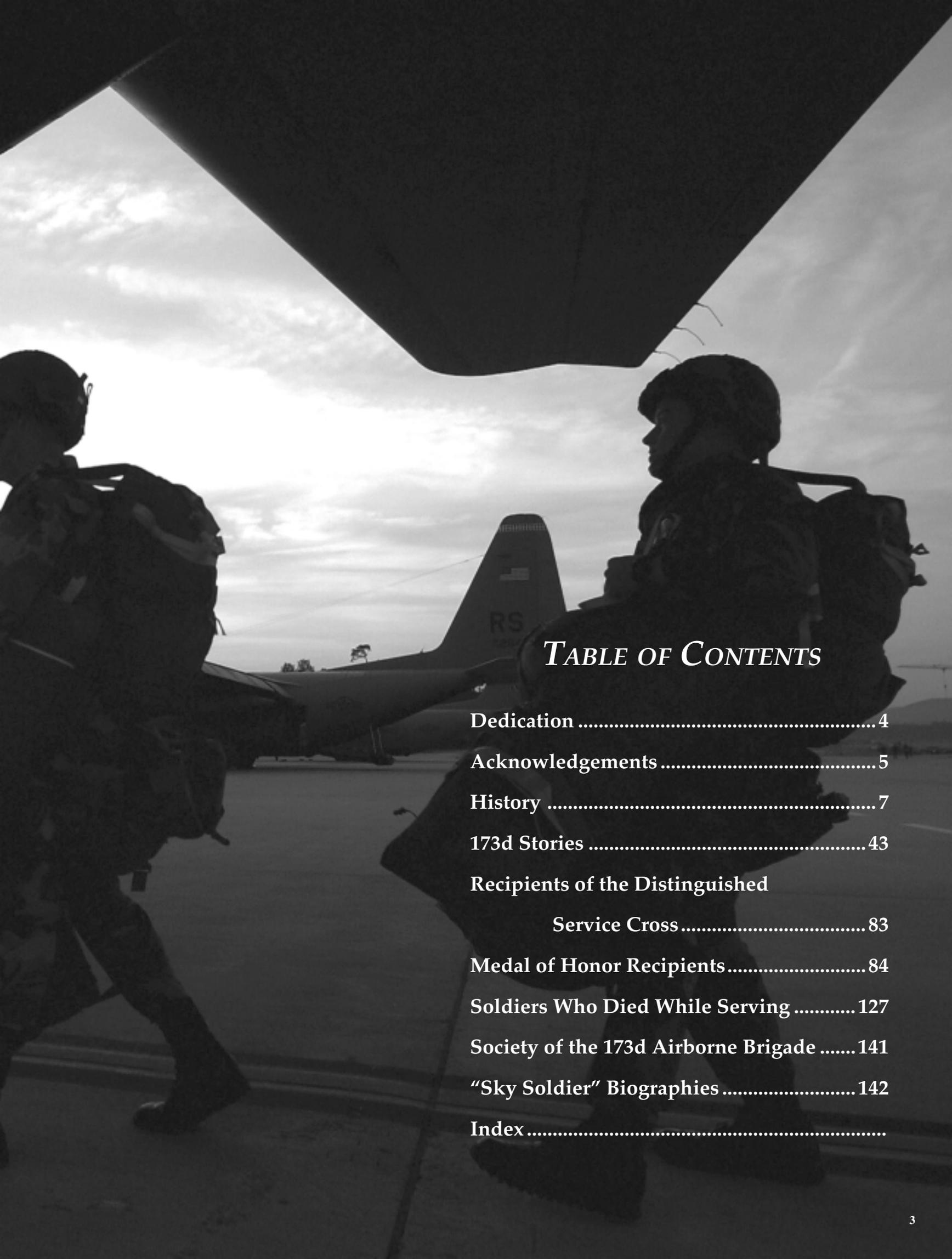


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DEDICATION

12 June 2005

Exactly five years ago today, Veterans from the 173d Airborne Brigade gathered on the parade field at Caserma Ederle, Vicenza Italy, to help uncase the colors of the most valorous, most respected brigade in the army. Those of us fortunate enough to be there will remember that day and the jump that followed for the rest of our lives.

Bringing the 173d Airborne Brigade back on active duty reversed a 28-year old mistake—it should never have been retired in 1972. Sky Soldiers serving in the original brigade sacrificed to make the brigade an undeniable legend in the history of the Army. The first combat unit deployed to Vietnam, its legacy of heroism exists because Soldiers, non-commissioned officers and officers invested uncommon courage, conspicuous valor, and sacrificed to make this brigade the most modern, mobile, forward thinking and devastatingly lethal strike force in the Army. No patch was feared more than the wing and bayonet of the 173d. It was through shared adversity, sacrifice and the great accomplishments in close combat that bonds Soldiers in this brigade—like brothers—closer than any other brigade in the army.

You gave the brigade its undisputed reputation—out front, on the move and deadly; a force that by the sheer will of its men accomplished every impossible mission it was given. Together you paid heavily for the distinction of being Sky Soldiers—with 13 Congressional Medal of Honor recipients (twice the count in any brigade in history); 43 Distinguished Service Crosses, and now regrettably 1,731 Sky Soldiers who sacrificed their lives while accomplishing their mission.

When we hung the 23 battle streamers on the brigade's colors five years ago, each of us recognized the daunting responsibility of carrying the proud lineage of the 173d Airborne Brigade forward into the 21st Century. Yet we were up to the task. The following day we jumped from ten C-130's to christen the brigade colors—back on jump status after being dormant at Ft Campbell for 28 years. Minutes after the jump we formed the brigade on the drop zone and MG (RET) Williamson passed the colors—as its first commander, to the present, back on jump status and on point for the Army. I looked him in the eye as we grasped the colors and promised to him and the veterans of the brigade that we would never let you down. It was a monumental day for all of us.

Today, five years later, the brigade continues to make good on that promise. Its combat jump into Northern Iraq was perhaps the most strategically important combat operation of the early phases of the war. When the 4th Infantry Division (MECH) was denied its northern axis through Turkey, that left the 173d as the sole conventional force north of Baghdad. Besides being the largest combat parachute assault since WWII, the brigade's presence in the north was pivotal to ensuring the enemy divisions north of Baghdad didn't reposition to reinforce against US and coalition forces approaching Baghdad from the south. A year after returning from Iraq the brigade deployed again and commenced combat operations in Afghanistan; only the third brigade of 40 in the Army to fight in both Iraq and Afghanistan. At its inception in Okinawa, today and into the future, the 173d remains on point, taking the fight to the enemies of this nation and will remain the most distinguished brigade in the Army.

This book is dedicated to the magnificent Soldiers and leaders of the 173d, past, present and future. Through sheer determination, bravery and sacrifice, it is they (you) who perpetuate the magic spirit in this brigade, setting it apart from all others. We carry this spirit forward in tribute to the 1,757 Sky Soldiers who were taken from us in the line of duty—and we will never let them down.

James C. Yarbrough
BG, USA
11th Commander of the Brigade

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The opportunity to work with Turner Publishing was presented to me by Ken Gaudet in 2003. As the previous author of the "Sky Soldier" pictorial history books, the first edition printed in 1993 and later the second edition in 1998. Ken asked if I would take on a new project of developing a historical calendar project. I agreed and this led to the 2004 calendar (Okinawa, Vietnam, Italy, Iraq), the 2005 calendar (Combat Edition - Vietnam & Iraq) and the upcoming 2006 calendar (The War on Terror).

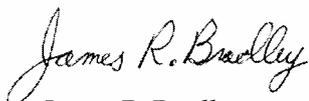
With the reactivation of the 173d Airborne Brigade in 2000 and the War on Terror, it was only a matter of time before the 3rd Edition would come out. It wasn't long before Sky Soldiers and Turner Publishing were asking when I would put it together. At the time I agreed to do this, the Brigade was just going down range into Iraq. I knew they were making history and wanted to capture it for all the new generations to come and still keep our old history intact.

With the help of numerous Sky Soldiers, past and present, I was able to develop a basic outline for this edition. With Sky Soldiers on the battle field as I write this edition, there will be some history I can not record because it is yet to be written or released for security reasons.

I want to thank the Brigade Commanders; General Yarbrough, Colonel Mayville and Colonel Owens for their support. I want to thank the Brigades Public Affairs Office for the assistance it has offered and all the Combat Photographers and journalist from the 173d Airborne Brigade (past and present) and SETAF PAO for their efforts. I want to thank the individual Sky Soldiers that sent me their photos. I also want to thank Bill Klinger - a combat infantryman, a fellow Sky Soldier, who served with the 4th Battalion, for his advice and support. Also none of this could have been done without the prior work of Ken Gaudet. I especially want to thank a special lady, a Sky Soldier wife and mother ...Elizabeth, my wife, for all the hours she put into typing the jump manifest and listening to my ideas.

Finally to all Sky Soldiers from Okinawa, Vietnam, Fort Campbell, Italy, Iraq and Afghanistan, you are the best in the world as documented by your accomplishments. As the words to the Sky Soldiers March read ...*lift your head and hold it high, the 173rd is passing by.*

Airborne, All the Way


James R. Bradley

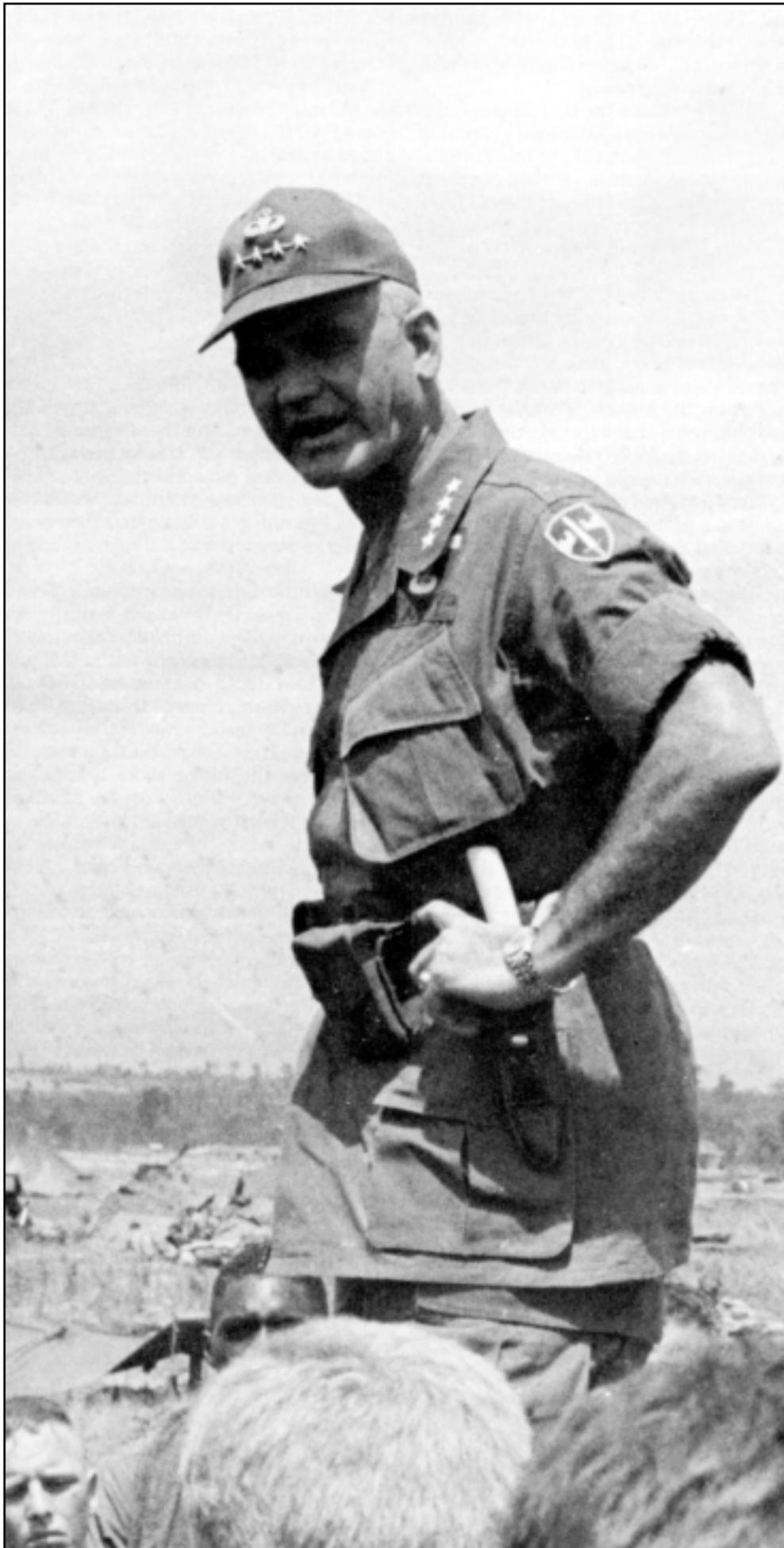




*HISTORY OF
"THE HERD"*

Under fire on Hill 823.





INTRODUCTION

In the early days of May 1965 the first major US Army ground unit was to be committed to Vietnam. That unit, the 173rd Airborne Brigade, was a quick reaction force on temporary duty (TDY) and soon to be replaced by an airborne unit from the United States. The brigade's tour of duty ended on 25 August 1971, six years and three months later.

From the airfield at Bien Hoa and landing at Vung Tau, to the Hobo Woods, from Hill 820 and the Battle of the Slopes, to Hill 875 and the Tiger Mountains, the Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade put the mission of their unit and the lives of their fellow fighting men above themselves.

From the airfield at Bien Hoa and landing at Vung Tau, to the Hobo Woods, from Hill 820 and the Battles of the Slopes, to Hill 875 and Tiger and Monster Mountains, from the 506th and Happy Valleys to the An Lo and An Do valley, from Que Nhon to AN Khe, from the sands and deserts of Iraq, to the snow and mountains in Afghanistan, the Sky Soldiers of the 173d Airborne Brigade put the mission of their unit and the lives of their fellow troopers above themselves.

This book is dedicated to the paratroopers of the 173rd:

- To the privates, their young lives changed forever, taking on the heaviest of the burdens of manhood for the first time and coming through it with their heads held high.

- To the buck and staff sergeants, the squad-level leaders, those tough, proud men who pushed their troops to the limit because they knew that anything less would cause unnecessary casualties. The men who pushed the troops hard and themselves harder.

- To the first sergeants and the sergeants major, those crusty old soldiers whose leather hides, born of previous wars, covered hearts of gold, and a deep love for the line trooper.

- To the lieutenants, the platoon leaders, those young men, barely in their twenties, who were called upon to lead, perform and inspire without the benefit of prior combat experience.

- To the captains, often on their second or third tour, with combat infantry experience, the men who led and directed the line companies.

- To the field grade officers, the platoon leaders of Korea who planned operations and commanded battalions.

- To the generals, line soldiers of World War II who shouldered the heavy burden of sending younger men out to fight and die.

- To all of those who served and continue to serve with the 173d Airborne Brigade.

INTERVIEWS

1. Major Bill Kurtz, currently the Deputy Logistics Officer for the Colorado National Guard, served as the S-2 (intelligence officer) of the 4th Battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade from January 1971 to June of that year.

At that time, the 4/503rd worked out of LZ English near Bon Song in Ben Dien Province. The NVA, though present in regimental strength in the AO, was limiting its operations primarily to platoon sized units. "The strategy was to mass in small formations, strike, then disappear, leaving us with no target to retaliate against. Our patrols frequently encountered booby traps, grenades with trip wires and land mines were not uncommon, along with the usual fare, such as punji pits - you would think that a punji wound would not be a big deal, but, due to the severity of the infections, the wounded man usually had to be evacuated out of country."

"We tried to locate strong points, or a large cache, but it was very infrequent that we found one. I believe that the NVA and the VC knew that we would be pulling out soon and they were simply laying back and playing a waiting game.

"Our casualties were infrequent compared with the earlier years in the brigade. Once we lost five KIA out of a Long Range Patrol (LRP) team of nine men. The more common casualties were the results of snipers or booby traps. I remember a captain, a company commander, who in fact was headed for the helicopter to go on R&R. He was walking along with one of his platoon leaders, giving him last minute instructions when he stepped on a land mine. It cost him his leg and put the platoon leader, who incidentally was the S-3's (operations officer) brother, in sorry shape.

"Sapper attacks were the enemy's preferred method of hitting fire bases or rear areas. These attacks, along with mortar attacks, are impossible to defend against, though we sent out patrols to counter them and to harass the enemy.

"When I became the Battalion S-2, the S-3 was running the LRP teams. I was able to convince him that, due to their intelligence gathering mission, I should run them directly. He conceded the point and I used intelligence from previous patrols, cross-referenced with information from the ARVNs, to plan future patrol routes. I would frequently go out with a team and stay at least 2-3 days in order to get a feel for what was happening on the ground. It was very common to find deserted camps, old cache sites and abandoned rafts, but it was uncommon, during this period, to find the enemy himself. I distinctly remember, however, having the feeling that we were being watched.

"Troop morale was very high, granted there was a great deal of frustration over the fact that troopers would see a buddy killed or maimed by a sniper or a booby trap and not have a target to retaliate against. How-

ever, these troopers were absolutely reliable in the field, as an officer, I always knew that my flanks were covered. There were no "Hip-pies in uniform" in the 173rd Airborne.

"Later in my tour, we were assigned to Cam Ranh Bay. We would come in from the field, still dressed in dirty OG107s (jungle fatigues) and still packing weapons to have a drink at the Officers' Club. The REMFs (Rear Echelon Mother F—s) resented the fact that we were in 'their' O-Club, despite the fact that we were the ones risking our butts to secure theirs.

"One of my friends was a 'spotter' and flew his Birdog (OV-10) in support of ground operations. I flew with him whenever I could and used to carry my M-79 grenade launcher which I would fire out of the window at targets of opportunity. I doubt that I ever hit anything, but it sure felt good. One day we were out flying when we spotted a clothesline next to a massive tree. There were no buildings or villages anywhere near, so we figured that the VC must be drying their clothes. There was a FAC (Forward Air Controller) flying above us and he dared my buddy to 'blow up that tree.' We came in right on the deck and missed with our first shot. This led to some good-natured ribbing from above, and when we came in for our second pass, I could have sworn that we were going to hit the tree head-on. We didn't hit it, but when we came around again, the tree and the laundry were gone.

"I remember how beautiful the country was. The South China Sea, the coastal plain, and especially the green jungle, the inland mountains and the waterfalls.

"The rice farmers out in the countryside really were not concerned about anything but growing their rice and living their lives. I don't believe that they cared about the objectives of the war, as long as they were left alone.

"My tour in Vietnam was fulfilling, I felt that I was doing what I came in the Army to do. The thing that was really difficult was to come back to the US and try to take training exercises seriously, after the 'real thing' they didn't mean much and I found myself being very bored.

"Most of all, I missed the camaraderie, the positive attitude of 'work hard' to accomplish the mission, then 'play hard and raise

hell' when the mission is over. Those guys didn't do anything halfway and the friendships I made there will last forever."

2. SFC Dale Caddick, currently the operations sergeant for B Company 5/19th Special Forces, Colorado Army National Guard, still throws his aged frame out of perfectly good airplanes. SFC Caddick served with B/4/503rd from March 1969 until March 1970. He was detailed to a LRP team for part of his tour.

"I remember an operation if it had a name. I didn't know it, but it was right outside a little town named Ban Sagn. We were on a company-sized sweep with the ARVNs when we were hit by two companies of NVA. One ARVN platoon was wiped out, maybe three or four made it. Our team of six survived, due to skill, luck, coordination and intelligence reports, we knew that we would be hit by two companies and we gave the ARVNs a heads up, but they choose to ignore the warning. The next morning we found 15 or 16 weapons and some blood trails, but no bodies. We called in a Cobra (gun ship) and had him saturate the surrounding area with 8mm. Shortly after this action, the NVA wiped out an entire village.

"The VC were very cunning. I remember an operation with B Company in early March 1969, when we came under fire from a sniper. We were advancing against his position when the commander had the company reserve air-landed between our position and the sniper. It turned out to be right in the middle of a minefield and we took several casualties. During the firefight the VC were jamming our frequencies.

"There was another operation where we had set-up an ambush and caught an NVA platoon. When the ambush was initiated, we killed their point man with a claymore, but we did not initiate with the other claymores. The NVA outflanked us and we learned the hard way.

"I had a good friend we called 'Frag' because he blew up an enemy bunker one night and lit up the sky. He was killed 18 days before his tour would have been over, and he earned a Silver Star in that action.

"I left B Company later in March 1970. The night after I left, the entire company was ambushed with heavy losses. I found out from



LZ English, 1970. (Courtesy of Mark Okazaki)



Larry Smith looking over the bunker line at LZ English. (Courtesy of Larry Smith)



LZ English at Bong Son, 1969. Picture was taken from Airborne Express Quarters. Across the main road is the Motor Pool and Headquarters Company. (Courtesy of Bob Gill)

SFC Bob Lowe that my replacement had been killed in the action. He'd only been there a few days.

"Looking back, I feel that the American soldier of today is much better trained than we were then. The officers and NCOs are better qualified. We had too many 'shake and bakes' mixed in with the old soldiers.

"We called the new soldiers 'cherries,' they came in scared and, if they lived, went out hardened.

"I'd like to say 'hi' to Joe, if he reads this, hope we can get together."

CHAPTER I HISTORY OF THE 173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE WORLD WAR II

The 503rd Parachute Infantry Battalion was activated in August 1941. Subsequently, after Pearl Harbor, on 24 February 1942, the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment, consisting of the 1st and 2nd Battalions was formed at Fort Benning. The 3rd Battalion was formed in June 1941 after the regiment had been moved to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. At approximately the same time, the 2nd Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Edson D. Raff received orders for England.

In October the remainder of the regiment, under secret orders, boarded troop trains at Fort Bragg, and on the 2nd of that month, sailed from the West Coast aboard the freighter *Paula Laut*. The freighter sailed to Panama where they picked up the 501st Parachute Battalion, which became the 2nd Battalion of the regiment. The entire unit then sailed to Queensland, Australia where they trained for combat, before being flown to Post Moresby, New Guinea on 18 August 1943. The unit's first combat mission was a parachute assault on and around the airfield located at Nebzab, New Guinea to cut-off and prevent the Japanese from retreating. Colonel Kinsler, the commander of the regiment, gave the 1st Battalion, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John Britton, the mission of jumping directly on and securing the airfield

proper. The 2nd Battalion, under Lieutenant Colonel George M. Jones, would jump to the north of the airfield, secure the town and Gabsonkek and protect the regiment's north flank. Finally, the 3rd Battalion, of Lieutenant Colonel John J. Tolson, would jump on the village of Gabmatzung.

Should the Japanese stationed at Lae be in a position to ward off the attack of an Australian unit, the 3rd Battalion would be in position to defeat them.

Prior to the operation, the regiment conducted a rehearsal jump, incorporating the 54th Troop Carrier Wing, and on 4 September, the troopers were briefed on their actual mission.

On 5 September, after a slight delay due to fog, the regiment jumped on the objective. This mission, the first Mass Tactical Combat Jump of World War II, was a success. Unlike many of the later drops, such as Normandy and Operation Market Garden, every unit involved in this operation jumped right on target.

In 1943 the Japanese invaded Noemfoor Island. They used slave labor to build three airfields, and by July of 1944, an estimated 3,300 Japanese soldiers were on the island.

Following their combat jump in September 1943, the 503rd was returned to Queensland, Australia for training, before being shipped back to New Guinea.

The 158th Regimental Combat Team landed on the island on 2 July 1944. Though the initial resistance was light, the ground units acquired intelligence which indicated that several thousand additional Japanese infantry had recently landed on the island. This development led to the commitment of the 503rd, commanded by Colonel Jones who had been the 2nd Battalion Commander at Nedzab.

The 503rd took off from Hollandia on the morning of 3 July 1944. They flew aboard 41 C-47 Dakotas of the 54th Troop Carrier Wing. The 1st Battalion, commanded by Major Cameron Knox, was the committed unit, and the regimental commander hung out the door of the lead aircraft as the overall jump master for the mission.

The DZ was a runway, 5,000 feet long and 100 feet in width, with a cleared area, covering another 75 feet on each side. The initial

plan called for the troop transports to fly two abreast over the DZ. General Patrick, the ground commander, sent a message advising that the runway was still congested with amphibious assault vehicles and suggesting that the aircraft cross the DZ in single, rather than double file. The message never reached the 503rd.

Colonel Jones leaned out the door of the lead C-47 over the ocean. He was completing his 360 degree check and waiting to spot the island and the DZ. As he looked down at the water, he felt that the aircraft was too low. Knowing that it is very difficult to judge altitude over water and knowing that the combat jump was planned at 400 feet above ground level (AGL), he decided that the aircraft was at the proper altitude and declined to raise the issue. In fact, the C-47s were at 175 feet, and a disaster was only moments away.

The 1st Battalion jumped over Kamiri Airdrome at 1000 hours on 3 July. Half of the men in Colonel Jones' aircraft were critically injured. The battalion's radio operator broke both of his legs, and Major Knox, the battalion commander, suffered a broken foot.

It is prudent to conduct combat jumps at lower than training altitudes, simply to reduce the amount of time that paratroopers are exposed to ground fire and to allow them to become an effective fighting force a significant number of seconds sooner.

However, when you conduct a jump at 175 feet, the troops who are lucky will have an operating shock and will experience what is usually half an oscillation, often violent, which will slam them into the ground. The less lucky will hit terra firma before their parachutes are fully deployed at all.

The 1st Battalion jumped 739 men on 3 July 1944. Of these, 72 were injured, with 31 suffering from severe fractures. Any trooper will tell you that the unit as a whole was lucky that more men were not hurt.

On 4 July, the 3rd Battalion, commanded by Major Erickson jumped the same DZ, but in single file and at 400 feet AGL. Their losses were minimal. The 2nd Battalion landed by sea. Some intense fighting followed before the Island of Noemfoor was secured.

The most significant action in the World

War II annals of the 503rd was their daring airborne assault on the island fortress of Corregidor in Manila Bay. In a most literal sense, they fulfilled General of the Army MacArthur's promise, "I Shall Return."

Prior to staging on the island of Leyte for its Philippine Campaign, the 503rd was reinforced by the 462nd Parachute Field and was redesignated as the 503rd Regimental Combat Team.

The 503rd RCT conducted an amphibious landing to secure the island of Mindoro in December 1944. In January, they attacked and secured the Island of Palawan.

The American Garrison in Corregidor had put up a tenacious fight against the Japanese 1942, both before and after the daring escape of then General MacArthur. Under the command of Major General Wainwright, the garrison fought on until their ultimate surrender on 5 May 1942. In February 1942 the island

held a historic significance, in addition to being the source of frequent shelling against maritime traffic in and out of Manila Bay. For these reasons, the decision was taken to mount an airborne assault to recapture Corregidor.

Sixth Army designated 16 February 1944 for the assault. Colonel Jones was appointed as the "Rock Force Commander" with two of his battalions to conduct an airborne against the Rock. Simultaneously, the 3rd Battalion of the 34th Infantry Regiment was to conduct an amphibious landing in support of the 503rd.

The Japanese garrison was commanded by Captain Akiri Itagaki of the Imperial Navy, who had some 5,000 troops at his disposal. Increasing the risk was the fact that the majority of his troops were Imperial Marines, some of the best combat troops that Japan could muster. US Intelligence estimated prior to the operation, pegged enemy strength at about 600, a serious miscalculation.

To complicate matters, the only available DZ was the Topside area consisting of what was once a parade ground and a golf course. This area was a length of approximately 600 meters and a width of about 450 meters. With the exception of a narrow peninsula which extended to the east through Malinta Hill, itself no choice landing spot, any paratroopers who missed the DZ would land either on steep cliffs, or in the ocean.

Colonel Jones came up with a daring plan, which due to a limited number of aircraft and a six second DZ, was probably the only workable option open to him. The 51 available C-47s would fly two abreast over the DZ and drop six men per aircraft on each pass. This was the best way to get troops on the objective, but it would be painfully slow, and the slightest variation of wind, missed spot by a jump master or aircrew mistake would cause extensive casualties and reduce the number of troops who could be brought to bear on the objective. PT boats were stationed offshore to rescue jumpers who landed in the ocean and the troopers were loaded down with heavy gear such as mortars which are normally dropped separately.

The jump was conducted at 500 feet, a compromise between the regulation mandating combat jumps of 600 feet (determined after the 503rd's experience at Noemfoor Island), and the need to reduce offsets due to wind drift. A large number of troopers were slightly injured after being dragged by the 25 knot winds. Many made unwelcome contact with the piles of concrete left from the artillery preparations in the topside area. One group of soldiers, blown off-course, landed on a cliff, directly adjacent to the Japanese commanders bunker. They organized, attacked the position and killed Captain Itagaki in the opening minutes of the battle.

Lieutenant Colonel John Ericson, with his 3rd Battalion led the first wave assault with the mission of securing the Topside DZ and of gaining plunging fire against the enemy positions below. Colonel Jones, with his command element jumped with this initial force. Despite 25% casualties, the Americans controlled the DZ area within an hour of the first paratrooper hitting the ground.

The amphibious assault was timed to commence immediately after the airborne assault. The first wave came ashore at Black Beach virtually unopposed due to the surprise factor created by the totally unexpected attack from the sky. The second amphibious wave of the 24th Infantry came under intense Japanese fire before the 503rd, supported by naval gun fire, was able to suppress the enemy positions.

The 2nd Battalion of the 503rd, augmented by Battery B of the 462nd, Service Company jumped at 1240 hours to reinforce the positions on Topside. Simultaneously the 3/34th Infantry began to dig in on Malinta Hill, located at the base of the Eastern Peninsula.

On February 16th and on into the 17th, the Japanese conducted numerous small-scale probing raids against the American positions.



The 503d Parachute Infantry including the 501st Parachute Battalion and "A" Company, 504th Parachute Infantry arrived at Cairns, Queensland from Panama on December 2, 1942. (Courtesy of Ken Gaudet)



Paratroopers of "B" Company, 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade take cover as an F-100 roars in for an air strike. The "Geronimo" Infantrymen made contact with the VC in dug in positions, marked their location with smoke, and called in close air support on Operation Cedar Falls" in the "Iron Triangle." (Courtesy of Donald C. Hall)



Thanksgiving Dinner, 1965. Vietnam. (Courtesy of Robert L. Stokes)

The 1/503rd, augmented by A Battery of the 46th FFAB, made an amphibious landing on Black Beach on February 17th. Casualties were light.

In the late evening of February 17th, the Japanese launched a banzai attack in which some 50 of their soldiers were killed by US Forces. This was followed by an early morning attack on Malinta Hill which resulted in heavy casualties on each side.

At sunrise, some 600 Japanese came out of their caves and hiding places to attack the US positions on Topside. The fighting was vicious, often hand-to-hand. Soldiers on both sides fought valiantly, with the men of the 503rd RCT and supporting units gaining the upper hand and winning the battle. Private Lloyd McCarter was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during this fight. Approximately 500 Japanese were killed. US losses were 33 KIA and 75 wounded.

Throughout the 18th and 19th of February, the paratroopers systematically hunted down the Japanese who, almost to a man, either fought or committed seppuku (ritual suicide). It is important to note that with almost 5,000 Japanese confirmed dead during this operation, less than 20 surrendered. The Japanese fighting man of World War II would approach combat with the intent of using weapons and tactics to gain a military victory. However, once his situation became desperate, he would participate in futile banzai charges or would commit seppuku. According to the Code of Bushido (the Code of the Warrior), the profession of arms had a simple end, victory or death. Suicide was the only atonement for failure.

By the 19th of February, the majority of surviving Japanese were in Malinta Tunnel, which had been General MacArthur's and later Major General Wainwright's headquarters. The term survivor here must be viewed in the context of the fact that Malinta Tunnel had been heavily bombarded prior to and throughout the attack. An unknown number of enemy troops were sealed forever in the ruins. This number was expanded dramatically on February 20th, by a series of underground magazine explosions and the resulting cave-ins. A few survivors made their way

to the far eastern end of the island to a thin finger of land known as East and Hooker Points.

By the 26th of February, the paratroopers had advanced to Kindley Field, adjacent to Monkey Point, just west of Hooker Point. During close fighting near Monkey Point, over 100 Japanese detonated an underground ammunition magazine. The explosion killed all of the Japanese, along with 52 American soldiers who were in hot pursuit. An additional 144 US troopers were wounded in this action.

The island fortress of Corregidor was finally secured on 27 February 1945, at a cost of 225 American lives. The 503rd RCT and its supporting units to include the 3/34th Infantry suffered 645 WIA.

In March 1945, the victorious paratroopers assembled on Topside. Their commander, Colonel Jones, reported to General Douglas MacArthur of the Army, "Sir, I present you Fortress Corregidor." The general, that great battle captain, replied, "Have your troops hoist the colors to its peak, and let no enemy ever haul it down."

CHAPTER I - HISTORY 1963-1965

Organized as the 173rd Airborne Brigade on 25 June 1963, the 173rd traces its lineage to the proud tradition of the 503rd Parachute Infantry of Corregidor fame. The original mission of the unit, under the command of Brigadier General Ellis W. Williamson, was to act as the Pacific Command (PACOM) Quick Reaction Force.

Originally stationed on the island of Okinawa, the brigade trained extensively in guerrilla, and jungle warfare, using diverse sites such as Thailand, South Korea and Taiwan. The frequency of airborne operations during this period led to the name, "Sky Soldiers."

In early 1965, the security of allied airfields in South Vietnam was one of the considerations in President Johnson's decision to commit the 173rd Airborne to this small Southeast Asian nation. The Brigade Head-

quarters received an alert to airlift two battalions to Vietnam on 14 April 1965. The 173rd was to be augmented by an Australian Battalion which would deploy to Bien Hoa in June.

On 5 May 1965, 38 sorties of Military Airlift Command (MAC) were flown out of Kadena and Naha Air Bases in Okinawa, their destination was Bien Hoa and Vung Tau, South Vietnam. The remainder of the brigade arrived in Vietnam by sea. The 1st and 2nd Battalions were followed by the 4th Battalion, which arrived in-country in June 1966, and the 3rd Battalion which was in-country in October 1967.

CHAPTER II - COMBAT OPERATIONS The Early Years

Initially, the 173rd was assigned to defend the Bien Hoa Air Base. Brigadier General Williamson, when asked on 5 May 1965 how soon he would commence action against the VC, replied, "Tonight." Sure enough, the first patrols were sent outside the perimeter that very night. Areas of responsibility (AOs) were assigned, defensive fire plans set-up and artillery batteries were kept on alert, waiting for calls for fire from the forward observers deployed with the combat patrols. Aggressive patrolling is a technique which substantially enhances the security of an installation by denying the enemy the ability to operate securely within striking distance of an objective. In this case, the Sky Soldiers routinely patrolled to a distance of 15 kilometers from the base, with company-sized operations often being the norm. The static defense of a fixed installation allowed the Brigade Tactical Operations Center (TOC) to pre-plot locations and pre-plan fires with elevation and deviation settings predetermined for indirect fires on a given set of grid coordinates. The paratroopers might go out on foot, by vehicle or by air assault. The VC never knew where, when, how many, or how long they would stay.

In late May, Brigadier General Williamson decided that the 173rd was ready to conduct its first battalion-sized operation, so the 2/503rd was lifted into a set of Landing Zones (LZs) east of the air base, where they conducted a sweep through thick jungle terrain. This operation was supported by the 3/319th Artillery, E/17th Cavalry and D/16th Armor.

Toward the end of May 1965, the 173rd deployed the majority of its assets in a massive airmobile operation. The 1/503rd and the 2/503rd led the way as three different objectives were assaulted. The Area of Operations (AO) covered was south of the junction of the Song Be and Dong Nai rivers.

The 173rd was organized into three task forces: TF SURUT, consisting of the 3/319th Artillery, E Troop, 17th Cavalry and one platoon each of engineers and administrative/support personnel; TF DEXTER was made up

of 2/503rd, plus attached engineers; finally, TF BOLAND consisted of the 1/503rd and their attached engineers.

TF SURUT infiltrated onto LZ BLUE in an airmobile assault which followed an intense air prep of the area. As soon as they were in place, six 105mm howitzers were laid and began firing in support of TF DEXTER 5 imminent assault of LZ Red. Twenty-four hours later, supported by artillery from LZs Blue and Red, TF BOLAND began its assault into objective WHITE.

Throughout this operation, resistance was light. The Sky Soldiers killed seven VC and destroyed numerous bunkers and supply caches, but were unable to corner the enemy in any significant strength. The pattern that was beginning to emerge at this time against the VC in the south was that the enemy would not stand and fight, but would, in the classic mode of the outgunned guerilla fighter, simply hit at the time and place of his choosing, then fade away. When surprised or confronted in his own back yard, the VC counted on being able to escape.

By the 1 June 1965, the 173rd began to expand further its original defensive mission in the Bien Hoa area. It was time to move into War Zone D, across the Dong Nai River, north of the brigade's original AO. The 173rd was reinforced by the 1st Battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment (URAR). The cadre of this unit was seasoned with experienced officers and NCOs who had served against guerrillas in Malaysia and were eager to apply their lessons learned against the VC.

On 13 June, the 1/503rd, augmented by the A/3/319th Artillery was ordered to move to assist the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) which was in heavy contact with the VC. This battalion task force set up blocking positions in the area of the town of Phuoc Vinh and its airstrip. TF 1/503rd conducted aggressive patrolling throughout the area, and demonstrated its ever improving ability to respond quickly and with sizable force when called upon.

The 1/503rd was moved from Vung Tau back to the brigade compound on 19 June, just prior to the 173rd's initial operation into War Zone D, a rounded VC stronghold where

the enemy trained, rested, resupplied and cared for his wounded. The 2/503rd provided the spearhead for a quick-moving search and destroy mission which kicked off on the morning of 23 June. The Sky Soldiers were hot on the trail of the VC. Hot fires and warm chow were found as the 173rd swept through an area just south of the Dong Nai River. Several tons of rice were destroyed, along with bunkers and supplies. Some VC suspects were questioned, but there was no fighting. The 173rd proved to the VC and to the South Vietnamese that War Zone D was not impregnable.

As new US ground units arrived in Vietnam, the 173rd was assigned to clear and secure their designated bases prior to the units arrival. The first such mission involved securing a base area for the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division. This mission was accomplished on 25-26 June by the Australian 1/RAR.

On 27 June, the brigade participated in the first joint US-ARVN operation of the war. Nine battalions were involved in this mission which penetrated deep into the western part of the Tan Uyen area of War Zone D. The operation, which lasted for four days, consisted primarily of battalion-sized sweeps, resulted

in 25 VC KIA, the destruction of some 200 tons of food supplies, and significant intelligence information.

Beginning on 6 July, the 173rd attacked War Zone D again, this time striking just south of the 27 June AO. Both battalions, augmented by the Australians and by the 48th ARVN Regiment worked together to accomplish this mission. The 3rd Battalion of the 48th was under the direct command of a US officer, another first of the war. This operation resulted in some 400 VC casualties, the destruction of over 100 tons of rice, and about 300 VC buildings. This was the first major engagement between the VC and the 173rd. The brigade definitely emerged with the upper hand by destroying a hard-core VC battalion.

On 17 July, the 161st Field Battery of the Royal New Zealand Army (RNZA) arrived in-country.

TF 6A, consisting of 3/319th, E/17th and D/16th, cleared Highway 15 in Phuoc Tuy Province during the 28 July to 2 August time frame, thus demonstrating that the stranglehold which the VC held on many of the nations roads could be broken. They also provided for the resupply of the ARVN garrison at Binh Gia near Vung Tau. This was the initial move, which was followed up by a B-52



Camp Kubaski, Okinawa, Alert for South Vietnam, April, 1965. (All four photos courtesy of Dan Ojedia)

strike in the Vung Tau area, which was in turn followed by a massive airmobile assault involving 75 helicopters which air-landed the 2/503rd, then the 1/503rd. This feat was accomplished by the 145th Aviation Battalion.

The 2/18th Infantry, 1st Infantry relieved E/17th and D/16th from their security mission, allowing them to commit to active support of the brigade. During this operation, the Low Level Extraction (LOLEX) system was used to resupply brigade troops from the air. By its participation in this operation, the 173rd, once again, proved that there was no stronghold that the VC could hold against US troops, and they also put the VC on notice that the Sky Soldiers could move and operate throughout the country, with massive force and on short notice.

The brigade again invaded War Zone D on 7 August with the 1/RAD acting as the prime element in a search and destroy mission. There was light contact with the Australians killing four snipers and destroying several VC camps.

On 10 August the 173rd received a warning order for possible movement to the Pleiku area. The movement order followed and within hours, the lead elements of the brigade were wheels-up in C-130s and C-123s to relieve the siege of the Special Forces CIDG Camp at Du Co, about four kilometers from Cambodia. The VC strength in the area was estimated to represent regimental strength. The 173rd acted as a reserve and secured the Thanh Binh Pass, freeing ARVN forces to press through to the besieged camp. The 173rd conducted a total of 43 company-sized, 116 platoon-sized and 22 squad-sized operations to relieve the VC pressure on the ARVN, and to allow the ARVN relief column a secure passage back to Pleiku.

In early September, the 1/503rd, supported by C/3/319th and E/17th were ordered to Kontum. During this operation, VC activity decreased to an 18 month low. Once again, the VC chose to simply leave an area when the Sky Soldiers were operating there. During this operation, the 173rd turned much of its efforts towards civic action. Some villages were serviced by medics who treated over 5,000 patients and several schools were repaired. At the end of the month-long operation, the 173rd elements moved back to Bien Hoa.

From 14-28 September 1965, the 173rd deployed elements into the Ben Cat sector for search and destroy operations consisting of saturation patrolling. In four days, the 1/503rd, following an airmobile infiltration destroyed two VC hospitals, a signal school, and several training camps. C/1/503rd captured 62 Soviet sniper rifles, 36 radios, 4,500 ChiCom grenades and 91 bangalore torpedoes. The VC lost 46 KIA, 80 captured. Some 9,000 enemy documents and 500 pounds of medical supplies were destroyed. Additional VC camps were located and recorded for future destruction. As a result of the combat operations, 17 village chiefs, some of whom had not been to their villages in over a year, returned. Elections and religious ceremonies were also held.

From 4-6 October 1965, the 1/503rd, supported by 3/319th conducted another search and destroy mission in the War Zone D AO. The VC suffered 15 KIA and a great deal of material damage.

The 173rd moved into the Iron Triangle in force on 8 October, following the first B-52 strike of the war in support of ground troops. The lightning strike resulted in 106 VC KIA, along with significant collateral damage. At the conclusion of this operation, the brigade commander, Williamson, declared, "The Iron Triangle is no more."

The brigade received its own aviation company on 19 October 1965 - A Company, 82nd Aviation Battalion provided a much needed asset. From 21-27 October, the 2/503rd and B/3/319th cleared the preparation for the establishment of the US 1st Infantry Division in that area. Contact was light.

Operation Hump, conducted from 5-9 November 1965, produced significant enemy contact. On the fourth day of the operation, the 1/503rd encountered a large enemy force. C/1/503rd was the first combat formation to make contact and was soon enveloped by the VC. Company B, moving up to secure Company C's flanks found itself in a desperate fight to secure its own flanks. Company A moved against the enemy's left flank and the 173rd Brigade found itself locked in battle with a main line VC regiment. Just after noon, B and C Companies consolidated their lines and called in heavy indirect fire and air support. Then the attack was rejoined against the entrenched enemy positions. The VC left their trenches and counterattacked. They were mauled by the 173rd leaving 403 KIA on the battlefield and numerous additional blood trails. The majority of the enemy KIA were killed by US small arms fire, proving once again that the most effective weapon in a fire fight is the American infantryman.

The 173rd moved three infantry battalions, four artillery batteries, the cavalry troop and the command section by air to Vo Dat to commence Operation New Life. The brigade's mission was to prevent the rice harvest in the area from falling into the hands of the VC. Also involved in the operation were two infantry battalions and support elements from the 1st Infantry and the ARVN 10th Division. The 1/503rd was airlifted into the northwest corner of the operational AO and



Armed with a .45 caliber pistol, a 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry paratrooper emerges from a Viet Cong tunnel. The enemy base camp was thoroughly searched and later destroyed by the 173rd Airborne Brigade Engineers. (Courtesy of Donald C. Hall)

proceeded to conduct night saturation patrols. For the first time, the brigade used the Long Range Patrols (LRPs), these small patrols would usually be infiltrated by helicopter deep into the enemy rear where they would operate independently for weeks at a time providing intelligence to the larger formations and calling indirect fire and Tac Air to harass and destroy enemy formations. Operation New Life resulted in 207 VC who rallied to the ARVN cause.

Without missing a beat, the brigade moved on to Operation Smash on the Courtenay Rubber Plantation some 50 kilometers southeast of Bien Hoa. The 1st and 2nd of the 503rd, in addition to the 1st/RAR began saturation patrolling. On the morning of 18 December 1965, the recon platoon of the 2/503rd, followed by C Company, encountered a stubbornly defended VC trench system supported by numerous machine guns. Company B smashed into the enemy from a different direction and overran the enemy position. The VC lost 62 KIA before abandoning the field of battle.

The brigade spent a few well deserved days in garrison to celebrate Christmas, host the Army Chief of Staff and enjoy the Bob Hope Show.

Operation Marauder marked the new year with a swift move into the Plain of Reeds area of the Mekong Delta, marking the first time that US troops had operated in large formation in this part of the country. The 1/503rd and the 1/RAR were airlifted into positions adjacent to the Oriental River. The next morning, the 2/503rd was airlifted into LZs east of the river and began a series of saturation patrols towards the river. The 2nd Bat-

talion fought through a series of fortified enemy positions using tear gas, air strikes and artillery support to clear the enemy positions. On the night following the battle, the VC melted away leaving 93 dead on the battlefield. The 1/503rd, during their mop-up west of the Oriental River, rounded up 326 VC suspects.

Operation Marauder was wrapped up on 8 January 1966, with a total of 111 VC KIA. The VC 267th Battalion, along with the headquarters element of the VC 506th Battalion were decimated.

Operation Crimp kicked off before Operation Marauder was even complete, the 173rd was intent on keeping pressure on the enemy. Crimp was the largest US operation to date and was focused on the Hobo Woods region of Binh Duong Province. This region was the purported VC headquarters for Military Region 4 which directed VC actions against the Saigon area. The Australians made contact first, and after heavy fighting, the RAR and the 173rd unmasked an extensive set of underground tunnels, captured several 12.7mm anti-aircraft guns, and more than 100,000 pages of documents. There were 128 VC killed, 91 captured and 509 suspects were detained. The Military Region 4 Headquarters was destroyed. CS gas was used to spike the tunnel network and render it useless for the foreseeable future.

The first year was wrapped up with Operation Roundhouse in which the 1/RAR conducted successful missions destroying huge caches of VC food in the Phuoc Loc area.

During the first 10 months that the 173rd Airborne served in Vietnam, along with its supporting units, it proved that it could beat the VC at their own game. The brigade destroyed the equivalent of one VC regiment, and two battalions of VC surrendered or rallied to the ARVN, rather than fight the 173rd.

Operation Silver City kicked off on 9 March 1966, with the 173rd and elements of the 1/RAR conducting a heliborne assault near the Song Be River in War Zone D. During the first few days, the units conducted screening operations which lead to the discovery of huge quantities of food, munitions, bunkers, and tunnel systems. On 16 March, the 2/503rd was attacked from four directions by the 501st VC Battalion. The troopers held their perimeter while inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. The VC chained some of their machine gunners to their weapons to ensure effective fire against the paratroopers. The 1/503rd reinforced the 2/503rd and between them the VC Battalion was decimated. The mop-up patrols counted 302 VC KIAs. Seven Americans were killed.

In the middle of April, Operation Denver was designed to reduce the steady infiltration of VC into War Zone D. This mission concentrated on the Song Be Sector in northern Phouc Long Province. Eagle insertions



Two "Sky Soldiers" of the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, rush through waist-high Elephant grass and brush as a second lift swoops onto the landing zone during a Heliborne Assault of Operation "Sioux City" in War Zone D. The two week operation was the fourth for the 173rd in the V.C. stronghold since the brigade's arrival in Vietnam, May 5, 1965. (Courtesy of Donald C. Hall)

and show of force patrols in VC areas yielded 34 tons of rice caches and over 2,000 documents.

Operation Dexter, beginning on 4 May 1966, demonstrated that the VC hold on War Zone D of a year earlier was drastically diminished. VC presence had been greatly reduced.

On the first day of Operation Hardihood, the Brigade Task Force deployed to the Vung Tau area. Reconnaissance and ambush patrols were immediately dispatched. On 19 May, the 1/503rd engaged an enemy force of 50 VC, killing 20. On 21 May, the 1/503rd launched an all out assault on a set of VC positions discovered the day before. The enemy broke and fled leading to the discovery of an intricate tunnel network. The entire operation resulted in 48 VC dead, with some 100 suspects captured.

Throughout the summer of 1966, the 173rd continued to take the fight to the enemy. Operations Hollandia, Yorktown, Aurora I and II were conducted, keeping pressure on the enemy. In August, during Operation Toledo, the deserted 5th VC Division HQ was located and destroyed along with vast amounts of supplies. Over 125,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, and 50 tons of rice were captured or destroyed.

The 4/503rd deployed to Dau Tieng, some 65 kilometers northwest of Saigon in mid-September 1966 to provide support to the 25th ARVN Division. Simultaneously, the rest of the Brigade deployed to the Xom Cat region on Operation Sioux City. The 173rd made light contact and uncovered food,

weapons and maintenance caches loaded with truck parts. This discovery enabled the brigade to terminate a massive VC resupply effort underway in the region.

From 10 to 17 October 1966, the 1/503rd, supported by 3/319th Artillery, D/16th Armor and E/17th Cavalry conducted a convoy security operation designed to allow the 3rd Brigade of the 4th ID to move from Vung Tau to Bear Cat, a route along which at least eight villages were known to have VC committees. The 4th Infantry troops reached their destination without incident.

On 29 November 1966, as a part of Operation Waco, Task Force Sutton (1/503rd, E/17th Cavalry, D/16th Armor and C/3/319th) discovered and destroyed a VC base camp designed to support 300 troops.

Meanwhile, the 4/503rd relieved the 2nd Battalion of the 26th Marine Division on a 58 day mission in the Da Nang area. This mission consisted of constant patrolling and convoy security.

The Iron Triangle was penetrated in January 1967 by all three of the 173rd's Battalions. Supported by tunnel rats, they swept the entire area, leaving 185 enemy dead at the end of Operation Cedar Falls. E/17th Cavalry accounted for 73 of the VC KIA total.

On 30 January, E/17th Cavalry again spearheaded a mission into War Zone D. Operation Big Spring was conducted by the 1st, 2nd and 4th Battalions of the 173rd along with the 1st Brigade of the 9th Infantry Division. Twenty-six base camps, 1,000 bunkers, 24 tons of rice, some weapons and 79 VC KIA were the result.

OPERATION JUNCTION CITY



Operation Junction City, 22 Feb. 1967.

Get Ready - Inboard personnel, stand up - outboard personnel, stand up - hook up - check static lines - check equipment - sound off for equipment check - stand in the door - Brigadier General John R. Deane Jr. stood in the right door of the C-130, loaded down for the combat jump. Eight feet away, Lieutenant Colonel Robert H. Sigholtz waited for the final jump command in the left door.

It was 22 February 1967 and the 2/503rd Infantry was leading the 173rd Airborne Brigade in the first combat jump of the Vietnam War. The 1st and 4th Battalions flanked the airborne operation with an airmobile infiltration of their own. The objective was the supreme headquarters of the Viet Cong in the south.

The time-honored routine is familiar to every paratrooper. In this case the Marshaling Area Control Officer (MACO) briefing, the pre-dawn rigging of equipment and parachutes, the Jump Master Personnel Inspection (JMPI) where the JMs with meticulous skill and speed go over every part of each soldier's main parachute, reserve and equipment. Each, "Stick," or group of jumpers who will exit the aircraft together, sits in a row on slab at the departure airfield. They use the buddy

system to help each other get up then waddle under the weight of some 120 lbs. of parachute and combat gear to the ramps of the Hercules transports. Four rows of troopers are packed into the webbed seats and the ugly, yet beautiful, dolphin-nosed flying crates leap into the air.

Young paratroopers fidget nervously, while the old hands sleep soundly as the C-130s hurdle towards their Drop Zones (DZs). Then, on final approach, the load masters open and check their doors, then yell, "Your door, Jump Master." The JMs stomp on the jump platform, run their hands under the top and along the trailing edge of the door, then, showing only heels and knuckles, they thrust themselves into the slipstream at 125+ knots and complete their 360 degree checks.

In the lead bird, the JM steps back inside; yells over the roar of the engines, "STAND IN THE DOOR!" He takes the static line from the commander of the 2/503rd, pins it against the door, leans his head back outside, makes his final spot, glances at the light which is now green and with a vicious slap on the hip shouts, "GO!"

As the men of the 2/503rd make a vigorous exit, the prop blast catches them and rips

at their clothing, just before the end of a 4-thousand count, the T-10 inflates and the risers jerk sharply as 780 parachutes open against the sky. Each man works two-riser slips to steer him towards his designated portion of the DZ. Just before landing, he turns into the wind and either does a perfect Parachute Landing Fall (PLF) or guarantees himself a sore anatomy.

Airborne infiltration is simply a means of reaching the objective and once on the ground the paratroopers of the 173rd jettisoned their gear, assembled with their units and proceeded with the jobs of ground infantry in combat. A Company made almost immediate contact with the enemy. Other soldiers were racing to setup and fire the artillery pieces and mortars which were dropped on the second pass.

The purpose of Operation Junction City was to block the escape of the VC formation to the refuge of Cambodia with the airborne infiltration, then to pin and destroy the enemy in place. The primary accomplishments of the operation were to destroy the Viet Cong's Central Office of Vietnam (COSVN) Public Information and Signal Centers. In addition, 266 VC were confirmed KIA.

173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE COMBAT JUMPERS

The following individuals made a combat parachute jump on 22 February 1967 in the vicinity of Katum, Republic of Vietnam, GO 444, 12 March 1967

This is a copy of the official record and it includes double names and double ASNs as listed on the record

OPERATION JUNCTION CITY

NAME	GRADE	ORGANIZATION	NAME	GRADE	ORGANIZATION
Sigholtz, Robert H	LTC	HHC 2d Bn Abn 503d Inf	Roehl, Gary	PFC	
Proffitt, Edward A	SGM		Lester, Michael	PFC	
Fischer, Duane	SSG		Dombrowski, Larry	SGT	
Scott, Samuel	SGT		Mahone, James	SGT	
Cole, Kenneth	SP4		Powell, Marcus, N	SSG	
Hatcher, Drayton	PSG		Taylor, Robert	SP5	
Gardner, Cicero	SGT		Cortez, Miguel	SP4	
Radmann, Bruce	SP4		Pendleton, Ronald	PFC	
Shotts, Donald C.	PFC		Parker, Harold	SP4	
DeSaulles, Norman	PFC		Johnson, David	SGT	
Rocha, Richard	SP4		Corbitt, Alfred	SSG	
Taylor, Robert W.	SP4		Nixon, Milton	SSG	
Burnette, Larry G.	SP4		Allen, Johnny	PFC	
Phillips, Don	MAJ		Harris, John	SGT	
Dockery, Williard	SFC		Booker, Richard	PFC	
Keaney, John	CPT		Chase, Walter	SGT	
Kughn, Cecil R.	SP4		Warnic, Ben	PFC	
Jaynes, Richard	SGT		Leader, William	PFC	
McDonald, Elson, D.	PFC		Morris, Robert	PFC	
Byers, Terrence	PVT		Dillon, James D	CPL	
Willoughby, Lawrence	CPT		Hand, James	PFC	
Kendall, Robert	MSG		Leibowitz, Bruce	PFC	
Sims, Deborah	SGT		King, Harold	SP4	
Haggard, Roy	SP4		Myers, Donald	SGT	
Beaver, Gerald	PFC		Ham, William	PFC	
Guty, Robert	1LT		Miller, Ira D.	SP4	
Nesse, David	1LT		Smith, Donald	CPT	
Jurkis, Joseph S.	CPT		Roundtree, John	SSG	
Hassler, Gerald	SP4		Richardson, Charles	SP6	
Newland, Leslie	SP4		Grant, Frederick	SP5	
Durham, Clyde	PFC		Wallace, Raymond	SP5	
Crowe, Marion	SSG		Gleason, Arthur	PVT	
Kelley, Donald	SP4		Bowman, Edward	SGT	
Lumbrazo, Andrew	SP4		Willoughby, Lawrence	CPT	
Moffett, Herert	PFC		Howard, Robert	PSG	
Gantt, Nethcnie	SP4		Wenzel, Thomas	1LT	
Brown, Joe	SGT		Crews, Tim	SP5	
Tipton, Doyle	SP4		Saigh, Gregory	SP4	
Larson, George	SP4		Smith, Willam	PFC	
Kuitert, Gary	SP4		Fisher, Alton	PFC	
Fuller, John	PFC		Harvey, Jack	PFC	
Dee, Manfred	PFC		Jackson, Cecil	SP4	
White, John	PFC		Martz, Leroy	PFC	
Sanders, Donald	PFC		Stickler, Rexford W.	1LT	
Cohen, Thomas	SP4		Mitchell, Gerald	1SG	
Guerra, Pedro	SP4		Watson, Henry	MAJ	
Meunier, Glenn W	SSG		Griffin, David	SP4	
Maya, Jesse	SP4		Mills, Jerome	SP4	
Strambersky, Robert	PFC		Thompson, Gary	PFC	
Johnson, Daniel	PFC		Smith, Charles	PFC	
Abernathy, Ronald	SP4		Allen, Eddie	PFC	
Castaneda, I, Felomeno	PFC		Clark, Gene	PFC	
Scarino, Augustino	PFC		Drayton, Johnny	SP4	
Wright, Evander	PFC		Whitehead, Curtis	SP4	
Gray, Frank	SGT		Mcfalee, Jose	PFC	
Johnson, James F.	PFC		Wilson, James	PFC	
Rodriquez, Santos	SSG		Warner, Larry	SFC	
Hudson, Jack	SP4		Najera, Richard	PFC	
Bowe, Clarence	SP4		Abraham, Thomas	1LT	
Holmes, J.T.	PFC		Carter, Timothy	PVT	
Razer, Clifford	PFC		Hicks, Dortch	PFC	
Donohue, Thomas	PFC		Harmon, Kenneth	SSG	
Fernandez, Gilbert	PFC		Dineen, John	PFC	
Sapgnola, Chrles	PFC		Snider, Billy	PFC	
Detten, William	SGT		Vaglio, Rafel A.	SSG	
Warbalow, Elmer	SP4		Mavroudis, Stergios	1LT	
Johnson, Robert	SP4		Skorupa, Norgert D.	SFC	

NAME	GRADE	ORGANIZATION	NAME	GRADE	ORGANIZATION
Fitzroy, James	SP4		Hostack, Leon	PSG	
Short, Lee V.	SP4		Williams, Richard L.	SSG	
Van Wagner, Raymond	SP4		Esua, Plmer M.	2LT	
Patton, George	SP4		Lucas, Roert	PFC	
Elders, Sylvester	PFC		Schramm, Nicholas	PFC	
Lindsey, William	SP4		Green, Charlie	SGT	
Dillard, John	SP5		Wheeler, Joseph C.	PFC	
Rice, Harley G	SP4		Cleveland, Wayne	PFC	
Borba, Robert	PFC		Kelley, Stephen	SP4	
Hall, Albert	PFC		O'Leary, Bartholomew	2LT	
Lee, Luther	SP4		Adair, Dennis	PFC	
Chain, Willie	PFC		Moore, Ronald C.	SP4	
Owen, John J	1LT	Co A 2d, Bn ABN 503d Inf	Richard, John	SP4	
Anderson, Donald E.	SP4		Watson, Leon	PFC	
Duncan, Dallas	PFC		Walker, Charlie	PFC	
Fike, Woodrow	PFC		Bentz, Edward	PFC	
Gregory, Ronnie	PFC		Farrow, William	SGT	
Wilson, Raymond E	SP4		Pendarives, Sylester	PFC	
Isom, Terry R.	PFC		Vellozzi, Lauren J.	SP4	
Burns, Charles W.	PFC		Gilbert, Willie	SP4	
Harris, Greg N.	PFC		Scott, Walter	SP4	
Levart, Michael	PFC		Palmer, David	SP4	
Perkins, Paul S.	PFC		Newport, Daniel	SP4	
Sanchez, Rickie	SSG		Torres, Francis	PFC	
Kelly, John	SP4		Tyson, Arthur	PFC	
Copper, Jackie	SP4		Henley, Gonzale	PFC	
Rogers, Denis	SP4		Kapatanakos, Glenn	PFC	
Wiseman, Larry L.	PFC		Weissenbacher, Warren	PFC	
Hart, Lannon	PFC		Dickman, Gregory	PFC	
Teufel, Thomas N.	PFC		Mickna, John R.	SSG	
Crowder, Alonzo	PFC		Burnette, Thomas	PFC	
Wilson, Terry	PFC		Taylor, Thomas	SP4	
Deloach, Loyd	PFC		Hood, Bobby	PFC	
William, Richard	SGT		Engle, Russel	PFC	
Whiteman, Ronald	PFC		Stephens, David	SP4	
McEachin, Jonh R.	SP4		Spear, Patrick	PFC	
Young, Joseph	SP4		O'Rourke, Edmund	PFC	
Booth, Robert L.	PFC		Schaub, Melvin G.	PFC	
Hall, Leon	PFC		Reece, Gary J.	SP4	
Craig, Gary P.	PFC		Pigion, Louis F. Jr.	1SG	
Gibson, Burrell	PFC		Goudia, Kernell	SP4	
O'Kelley, Rick	PFC		Ulloa, Francisco	PFC	
Fumerton, Arthur E.	1LT		Hunt, Paul L.	PFC	
Degregio, Danial	PFC		Emery, Walter, K.	PFC	
Walder, Ephron	SGT		Bertrand, Arland A.	PFC	
Kajuawsky, Robert	PFC		Card, Vincent W.	SSG	
Green, Larry	PFC		Quarterman, Theodore H.	SP4	
Carrier, William	PFC		Schwartz, Charles	PFC	
Barse, Randolph	PFC		Brown, Harvey	PFC	
Florence, Theddis	PFC		Marles, Jeff	PFC	
Tucker, Ronald	PFC		Elliot, Harlen	SP4	
Bobowski, Jan	SSG		Gerber, Robert	PFC	
Everson, Wesley	SSG		Nicholls, William H.	PFC	
Reynolds, William	PFC		Minchew, Roy A.	SP4	
Hershman, Walter	SP4		Adams, Mack J.	PSG	Co B 2 BrAbn 503d Inf
Tyree, Edward M.	PFC		Kaplan, Kenneth	CPT	
Macum, David G.	PFC		Wood, Harris	SGT	
Austine, Mark	PFC		Cleland, Harry T.	SP4	
Cutbirth, Harry	PFC		Oury, John M.	SP4	
Lytwyn, Michael	PFC		Grossman, Gary J.	SP4	
Reyes, Johnie	SSG		Knapp, Thomas J.	PFC	
Gonzales, Leroy	SSG		Mitchell, Robert	1LT	
Crawford, Dana	PFC		Banks, Holly	PFC	
Henderson, Carl	SSG		O'Donnell, Richard B.	SP4	
Renfro, Norman	PFC		Marable, Martin H.	SGT	
Smith, David	SP4		Brown, Donald W.	SGT	
Macko, John	SP4		Penrod, Arthur	PFC	
Morales, Diaz	PFC		Schwartz, James	SP4	
Schultz, Peter	SP4		Ross William A.	PFC	
Funches, Henry	PFC		Winters, Jon	SP4	
Carns, Edwin H. J. Jr.	CPT		Elgin, Robert G	SP4	
Johnson, William	SP4		Mathews, Gordon	PFC	
Menke, Theodore	SP4		Wirth, David N.	SGT	
Ernst, Gary	PFC		Richburg, Jerry	SP4	
Laster, Leroy	PFC		Jaugerui, Eulalio	PFC	

NAME	GRADE	ORGANIZATION	NAME	GRADE	ORGANIZATION
Minore, Frank	PFC		Latham, Billy R.	SP4	
Patrick, Gary T.	PFC		Duncan, Phillip	PFC	
Major, Henry	SP4		Roybal, Teddy	PFC	
Payne, Jesse	SP4		Caruso, Joseph	SP4	
Shoemaker, Sammie	PFC		Maples, Francis	PFC	
Smith, Mathew V.	PFC		Cunningham, Richard	SP4	
Tanner, Leonard	PVT		Cassidy, Raymond	PFC	
Reid, William B.	PFC		Boisvert, Kenneth	SP4	
Strode, James H.	PSG		Tippa, Joseph	PFC	
Yates, Reinald	SP4		Bills, Steven	PFC	
Shirley, James	PFC		Arnold, Dale	PFC	
Fitzgerald, Eldon	SSG		Campbell, Kenneth	SP4	
Scrimager, Samuel	SGT		Perez, Melvin	PFC	
Brzostowski, Sigmund	SP4		Pruden, Linwood	PFC	
Stevens, Wilber	PFC		Dysart, Berttis	SSG	
Jardine, Gene	PFC		Scarola, Frederick	SP4	
Johnson, Dennis C.	PVT		Blankston, Johnnie	SP4	
Bell, James H.	SP4		Toland, Dwayne	SP4	
Brown, George	SGT		Paternostro, James B.	SGT	
Smith, Richard	PFC		O'Bryn, Bill	PFC	
Rodriguez, Carlos	SP4		Kreutz, Leonard	PFC	
Austin, James G.	PFC		Englis, Raymond	PFC	
Bright, Ralph	SGT		Davis, Joe	PFC	
Young, Edward	SP4		Kruger, Richard	PFC	
Gooch, Calvin	SGT		Brooks, Johnnie	SGT	
FAlcey, John	PFC		Duhon, Chester	PFC	
Smith, Gary D.	PVT		Peraliz, Isador	PFC	
Baker, Dale W.	SP4		Schmuck, Hemut	PFC	
Massa, Richard	PFC		Smith, William B.	PFC	
Carter, Edmund	PFC		Kapule, Wilfred	SGT	
Henges, Randall	PFC		Thornhill, Jesse	PFC	
Chapin, Norman	PFC		Cruz, Gerald	SP4	
Seman, James D.	PFC		Johnson, Phillip	PFC	
Valvarez, Jose	PFC		Kohaya, Bobby S.	PFC	
Benton, Lester H.	PFC		Sizemore, Earl	SGT	
Townsend, Jack	SSG		Hopkins, Elmo	SP4	
Daniels, Olen	SGT		Fitzanko, Steven	SP4	
Dillard, Oliver	SP4		Pierce, Lynwood	PFC	
Capalbo, Kenneth A.	Sp4		Nolden, Joseph	SSG	
Chavis, Jimmy	SGT		McMaan, Troy C	PFC	
Monforti, Richard	PFC		Crane, Richard	PFC	
Adams, James	PFC		Beck, William	PFC	
Keith, James	PFC		Parks, Peter	PFC	
Lucas, Levi	SP4		Wilson, Chester	SP4	
Flowers, Jimmy	PFC		Williams, Willie T.	PVT	
Holman, Delano	SP4		Gist, Rogers	SGT	
Grant, Edward O.	PFC		Dulin, George	SSG	
Wright, Alden	PFC		Sebastian, Gerald	SGT	
Ludas, Michael	PFC		Dean, James R.	PFC	Co C 2d Bn Abn 503d Inf
Boggs, John S.	PFC		Balderos, Joe R.	CPL	**
Feedham, Donald F.	1LT		Gordy, Charles M.	SSG	
Rowell, Harold B.	SSG		Smeding, Peter M.	SGT	
Bice, Randall	PVT		Lietabert, William	PFC	
Hoover, Ernest L.	PFC		Lynch, Peter	PFC	
Blackshear, Clarence	SP4		Lorrington, Kenneth M.	SSG	
O'Neal, Larry	SP4		Blattenberger, Richard	SP4	
Lindsey, J.B.	PFC		Wood, James C.	PFC	
Rowlette, Lee	CPL		Hines, John G.	PFC	
Hatcher, Thomas U.	SP4		Melton, Clayton E	SGT	
Banot, John F	PFC		Langham, Daniel W.	PFC	
Brawley, Don	SP4		Garcia, Pedro	SP4	
Fox, Robert C.	1LT		Drish, George R.	PFC	
Dearman, Wayne R.	PSG		Tuttle, Lloyd	PFC	
Lewis, Donald L.	1SG		Kuhl, William	PFC	
McGill, Willam F.	1LT		Meeks, Richard L.	PFC	
Cullen, Kenneth A.	2LT		Supove, Peter	SP4	
Thompson, Alex	SSG		Culp, William F.	PFC	
King, Samuel	SP4		Welch, Stephen M.	PFC	
Perry, Leamon C.	SP4		Henderson, James R.	PFC	
Smith, Larry	PFC		Catozzi, Paul H.	PFC	
Harris, Michele E.	PFC		Torres, Secundine	PFC	
Routt, Ruin R.	SGT		Coles, Joseph T.	PFC	
Bly, Charles	SP4		Oged, Wallace	PFC	
Perez, Roberto	SP4		Constantino, Michael	SP4	
Long, James R.	PFC		Plunkett, Braxton	SSG	
Tomlin, Melvin	PFC		Hendon, Charles W.	SP4	

NAME	GRADE	ORGANIZATION	NAME	GRADE	ORGANIZATION
Guyer, Albert M.	1LT		Foote, George	PFC	
McDonald, Charles	PSG		Barrs, Talmadge	SP4	
Alexander, Douglas M.	SP4		Handley, Larry C	SGT	
Dove, Bennie S.	SSG		Felix, Lorenzo	SP4	
Demboski, Bruce C.	PFC		Jenson, Daryl R	SP4	
Soule, Dennis L.	SP4		Hill, Robert L	PFC	
Garvin, Patrick X.	SP4		Prouty, John	PVT	
Horton, Bill W.	SP4		Hart, Berry	SP4	
Bonill, Ricardo	PFC		Callahan, Welborn Jr.	1LT	
Carter, Preston H.	PFC		Saez-Ramirez, Angel	SSG	
Keller, William J.	PFC		Alandt, Charles	PFC	
Cacaddan, Roger, D.	PFC		Green, Moses	SP4	
Johnson, Ronald D.	SP4		Moore, Douglas E.	SGT	
Mims, Marin	PFC		McIntyre, James F.	SGT	
Lefler, James I.	PFC		Parris, Vernon	PVT	
Ellenwood, Russel O.	PFC		Smith, James A.	PFC	
Jenkins, William H.	SSG		Stephens, Warren A.	SP4	
Montague, James W.	SP4		Koston, Daid	SP4	
Malone, Michael L.	PFC		Skiles, James A.	PFC	
Bradley, Willie C.	SP4		Anthony, Kionell S.	PFC	
Magwood, Nathaniel	PFC		Gilbert, Joseph	PFC	
Thompson, Robert Jr.	PFC		Bothwell, Frank E.	SGT	
Watson, Lamont W.	PFC		Craig, Norris	PFC	
Garacia, John	PVT		Hollis, Joseph Jr.	1LT	
Fabisch, Keith	PFC		Wilson, Raymond	PFC	
Rader, Phillip	PFC		Adams, Johns	SP4	
Martino, Robert	SP4		Drake, Michael J.	PFC	
Davis, Edward	1SG		Bennett, Charles	PFC	
Bigger, Floyd	PFC		Vasquez, Selvester J.	PFC	
Walls, Calvin	PFC		Curran, Paul W.	PFC	
Wilson, Herbert Jr.	PFC		Garrison, E. S.	PFC	
Ebald, Michael L.	PFC		Gould, Richard L.	PFC	
Staler, Johnny R.	SP4		Jones, Robert	PFC	
Walker, John F	PVT		Baura, Garyl	PFC	
Carroeon, John G.	PFC		Kores, Gary D.	PFC	
Castillo, Jaime	PFC		Mountel, Robert	MAJ	H&S Btry 3d Bn 319th Arty
Cartagena, Angel L.	PFC		Weigand, Leo	PFC	
Fluck, James C.	PFC		Sappington, Charles	SP5	
Collins, Clifford C.	PFC		Schwartz, Harold	SP4	
Blizzard, Kenneth D.	SSG		Nordin, William	LTC	
Crney, Thomas P.	CPT		Biggs, Homer	SGM	
Henry, Cecil O.	SGT		Dixon, Allen C. Jr.	MAJ	Co A (Admin), 173d Abn Bde
Iglio, Charles J.	SP4		Ragus, Morris E.	SSG	H&S Btry 3d Bn 319th Arty
Paul, Alfred J.	1LT		Cole, Robert H.	CPT	
Konen, David E.	SSG		Day, Dennis	SSG	
Santelli, Robert	SP4		Worington, James	CPT	
Donastorg, Alfonso	PFC		Grant, Charles	PFC	
Brown, Julius	SSG		Solie, Terrence	PFC	
King, Nathaniel	SGT		Anderson, Charles C. Jr.	CPT	A Btry 3d Bn 319th Arty
Loser, Ronald E.	SP4		Zanon, George, J.	SFC	
Mitchell, Linwood	SP4		Pascarella, Frank	1LT	
Wolfe, Paul E.	SP4		O'Neal, George H.	1SG	
Castello, Leroy D.	SP4		Oney, Henry L.	SFC	
Hill, Michael K.	PFC		Camus, Glyn	SGT	
Norman, Martin C.	PFC		Jones, Arceidus	SGT	
Garrett, Walter J.	SP4		Evans, James L.	1LT	
Seeley, William L.	SP4		Pate, O'Neal J.	SFC	
Sneed, Charlie Jr.	PFC		Brooks, John	SSG	
Farmer, Michael L.	PFC		Mitchell, Willis	SSG	
Nicholson, Sim C.	PFC		Salazar, Paul	SGT	
Lewis, James R.	PFC		Williams, Tommy	SGT	
Murray, James	SGT		Cruz, Guadalupe	CPL	
Cox, George T.	SGT		Cersosimo, Anthony	CP:	
Ross, George A.	PFC		Asbury, Clinton	SP4	
Tyler, James L.	SP4		Baker, Hilbert	SP4	
Jenskins, Alvin, F.	PFC		Rogers, George H.	SSG	
Hall, Clarence	PFC		Hardy, Richard	SGT	
Harris, Nathaneil	PFC		Cruz, Peter	CPL	
Frierson, David	SP4		Drake, Randall	CPL	
Holloway, William H.	PFC		Lindsay, Arthur	SP4	
Gyant, Charles	SSG		Matthews, Robert	SP4	
Bayne, Joseph P.	PFC		Bogan, Jimmie	PFC	
Allen, Odell	PFC		Caryle, Dennis	PFC	
St Julien, Leander	PFC		Chackel, Gino	PFC	
DePue, Robert F	PFC		Calderon, Juan	PFC	
Sharp, Craig	PFC		Pearson, John	SGT	

NAME	GRADE	ORGANIZATION	NAME	GRADE	ORGANIZATION
Davis, Andrew	CPL		Warner, Edmund H.	PSG	
Woods, Cleophus G.	CPL		Stout, Timothy N.	SGT	
Call, Kenneth	SP4		Wilson, Lewy	SP4	
Foreman, Eugene	SP4		McCarthy, Richard T.	PFC	
McManus, David	SP4		Wright, Henry L.	PFC	
Roerts, Billy	SP4		Aherns, Henry M.	PFC	
Ward, Bruce G.	SP4		Ogaard, Dennis R.	PFC	
Hale, Robert W.	PFC		Gwinn, Donald O.	PFC	
Harris, Franchot	PFC		Ingram, John D.	SP4	
Young, Raymond	SSG		Darling, Gregory	MAJ	
Davis, Ronald	CPL		McCateer, Peter	CPT	
Rose, Keith	SP4		Green, Charles T.	SFC	
Chriswell, Truman	PFC		Dingess, John F.	SGT	
Cortez, Alfred	PFC		Delgado, Enrique	SGT	
Glen, Thomas	PFC		Rivers, Herbert L.	SP4	
Dinardo, Paul	PFC		Means, Alex Jr.	SP4	
Ferek, John	PFC		Taglis, Dean B.	SP4	
Evans, David	PFC		Ortiz, Barborso	PFC	
Furnish, Raymond	PFC		Nest, Richard B.	PFC	
Gipson, Roosevelt	SGT		Jennings, Walter R.	PFC	
Grant, James	SP4		Peters, Elmer	LTC	
Gatlin, Carlton	PFC		Crump, Roger L.	MAJ	
Golbeski, Philip	PFC		Clark, Paul C. Jr.	CPT	
Jennette, Roert	PFC		Carr, Milton, B.	CPT	
Johnson, William	PFC		Ward, Peter H.	CPT	
King, Wesley	PFC		Waye, Harold A.	MSG	
Lindberg, Steven	PFC		Ashwood, Benjamin H.	SFC	
Look, Elmer	PFC		Langley, Stanley D.	CPL	
Lomez, Jimmy	PFC		Reiper, Peter L.	PFC	
Pinkston, Hugh	PFC		Curvan, Leonard J.	PFC	
Stroup, Kenneth	PFC		Siska, John R.	LTC	
Sutterfield, Gerald	PFC		Munsil, Richard G.	PFC	
Tapia, Richard	PFC		Boyle, David J.	1LT	
Watson, Delando	PFC		Anderson, James L.	MAJ	
Webb, Leonard	PFC		Toomer, Jerry	SP4	
Winberg, James	PFC		Stewart, James	SGT	
Zarate, Ignacio	PFC		Mulherin, James	SP4	
Miller, John A.	PFC		Patton, Berry	SP4	
Pinn, Reginald D.	PFC		Secora, Michael	PFC	
Renteria, Davaid	PFC		Krolinkowski, Gary	PFC	
Rines, Buck	PFC		Lobdell, Barry	PFC	
Sause, John	PFC		Crigmyle, Arthur	PFC	
Shortlidge, John	PFC		Reed, John J	PFC	
Smith, Arthur	PFC		Summers, Clarnece	PFC	Engr Co 173d Abn Bde
Stewart, John	PFC		Owens, James D.	SGT	
Dorsey, Thomas	1LT		Pereir-Rivera, U.	SGT	
O'Conner, Thomas	SGT		Newton, Michael E.	SP5	
Sturdevant, Thomas	SSG		Barton, Richard B.	SP4	
Shoemaker, Jerome	2LT		Nelson, James B.	SP4	
Denham, Charles	PVT		Collier, Melvin T.	PFC	
Wiggins, Alvin	SGT		Swedenbord, Paul A.	PFC	
Kiaka, Henry	SP4		Batiste, John J.	PFC	
Norlander, Gary	1LT		Robinson, Clarence	PFC	
Hayes, Thomas	PFC		Higgins, Michael R.	PFC	Co A (adm), 173d Abn Bde
Deane, John R. Jr.	Brig Gen	HHC,173d Abn Bde (Sep)	Holland, Douglas C.	SP4	
Mozden, James P.	CPT		Gigliello, Xavier, J.	LTC	
Mrsich, Robert A.	SGM		Walker, Conrad N.	MAJ	
Bethke, Gerald H.	MAJ		Epley, Louis P. Jr.	SP4	
Funderburk, Rupert A.	SP4		Hall, Donald C.	PFC	
McCoy, George V.	MAJ		McKay, Jeffrey S.	1LT	
Matchette, Claude R.	CPT		Waters, Charles J.	CPT	
May, William K.	MSG		Foot, Lester, M.	1LT	172d, MI Det, 173d,Abn Bde
Beisswanger, Robert F.	SGT		Burgess, Peter D.	CPT	
Haupt, Joseph	SP5		Starsiak, Richar P.	1LT	
Himma, Einar	LTC		Phillips, Alan B.	CPT	Trp E 17th Cav,173d, Abn Bde
Mountcastle, James L.	SFC		Callaghan, James T.	CPT	19thTASS CPBO, Bien Hoa AFB
Utzman, Charles D.	MAG		Burrow, Henry W.	LTC	
Marchant, Charles	SP5		Jacobs, Emelindo A.	SP4	16th Sig Det II Field Forces
Palmer, William T.	MAJ		Ferguson, Robert L.	SP5	** B Med
Rine, Dana W.	MSG				
Friend, Bernard D.	MAJ				
Armstrong, Jackie D.	SFC				

Not on original list

**Confirmed by DD 214

THE BATTLE OF THE SLOPES

The Battle of the Slopes began as a routine search and destroy mission involving the 2/503rd Infantry.

Their mission was to move against enemy forces in the Area of Operations south of the Dak-To Special Forces Camp. The Operations Order called for A Company and C Company, 2/503rd to infiltrate the QO by helicopter between 18 and 20 June 1967. B/2/503rd was to remain in reserve.

There was nothing routine about the ending of this battle.

The Annamite Range of Kontum Province was defined by steep, muddy ridges, usually covered by triple canopy jungle. In the early summer, these mountains were under the constant assault of monsoon rains. The overriding effect created by the combination of topography, climate and vegetation was dark and foreboding. Cover and concealment were excellent for the defender who laid in ambush.

Movement was slow and difficult for military formations who moved cross-country. Movement along the established trails was an invitation to quick death.

During the period from 18 to 21 June, neither company reported enemy contact. On 21 June at 1700 hrs, A Company received orders to return to the Dak-To base camp.

Shortly after 0630 hrs on 22 June, as A Company was moving out from their overnight site, the point squad made the decision to use an open trail. Within minutes, they walked into five NVA soldiers crossing the trail. The units engaged each other. It was 0658 hrs.

The battle area was steep, triple canopy jungle with dense undergrowth adjacent to the trail. The crescendo of automatic weapons fire exploded through the brush as Captain Milton, the company commander, ordered 2nd Platoon to move to the assistance of the point squad. After a brief but intense firefight, it became clear that 2nd Platoon would be unable to link up with the point squad.

Milton then ordered the 2nd Platoon to move uphill approximately 60 meters to a more defensible position where they were joined by 3rd Platoon who assumed responsibility for the eastern half of their ridge perimeter.

Just after 0800 hours, the A Company perimeter came under attack from an NVA platoon. This attack was repulsed, then renewed, necessitating a call for air strikes along the eastern side of A Company's ridge position at 0820 hrs. from Colonel Steverson.

Captain Milton called for gunship support at 0835 hrs. This support thwarted the enemy attack briefly, but at 0850 hrs., the NVA attacked with renewed intensity in company strength. This attack was directed against the northwest sector of the perimeter. Casualties, at this point, were mounting on both sides, the situation was becoming increasingly desperate and, at 0900 hrs., Captain Milton ordered his 1st Platoon, held in reserve, to attack through to the now surrounded 2nd and 3rd Platoons.



A sortie of Huey "slicks" lifts off as a Chinook lands in the background. (Courtesy of Don Hall)



Searching for "Charlie," at the same time, secretly hoping you never find him because, when you do, all hell breaks loose! All your senses, including fear, are heightened at moments like these. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)

Initially, Captain Ron Leonard, the commander of C Company was ordered by the battalion commander to remain in place and be prepared to move. The men of C Company having heard the sounds of battle. Interspersed by periods of heavy silence, could well imagine the predicament of A Company and were ready at approximately 1130 hours, when the order came from battalion to move to the relief of A Company. Leonard, well aware of the threat, moved his company below the ridge and deployed them in a diamond formation with the point squad and platoon followed by a platoon spread out on each flank. The Weapons Platoon followed in the rear ready to provide indirect fire support at a moments notice. Leonard moved his company at the quickest possible pace while maintaining security and staying well below the trail. Progress, however, was painfully slow and it took the formation most of the afternoon to travel little more than three kilometers. Shortly before 1700 hrs., C Company arrived at the LZ which A Company had cleared the previous night.

Meanwhile, Colonel Stevenson alerted B Company, the battalion reserve at Dak-To, to prepare to move in support of the embattled units. At 1000 hours, A Company reported that the platoon leaders of the 1st and 2nd Platoons were dead, the platoon sergeants were wounded and the two platoons combined were down to 15 effective. Their situation was desperate and just before Milton lost all radio contact at 1034 hours, the 2nd Platoon Sergeant, who was the ranking survivor had radioed his decision to withdraw to the Company Command Post with his survivors. Captain Milton requested that air strikes be terminated and replaced with artillery in order to maximize cover for the withdrawing forces while minimizing the danger to that force as it moved.

B Company 2/503rd was inserted into a small LZ about 300 meters north of A Company's position. The 2nd Platoon, their lead element, moved off the DZ at about 1030 hours, but due to the NVA presence was unable to link-up with A Company.

Shortly after 1100 hours a small group of survivors, lead by A Company's 2nd Platoon Sergeant made its way to the company CP. At this moment in Captain Milton's perimeter, there were 35 wounded protected by about 30 combat effective fighters. Just before noon, the company commander decided to move his perimeter back up the ridge to a more defensible area.

There were two enemy assaults on A Company's new position from 1200 to 1300 hrs. While some of the Sky Soldiers fought, others attempted to clear a pickup zone, in hopes of getting some of the wounded out. During this action Milton was wounded, and a partial resupply was dropped on the half-completed PZ.

Just after 1200 hours, B Company 2/503rd was on the ground and moving to the relief of A Company when they were engaged directly by a platoon of NVA and detected an enemy flanking movement which forced



The Cavalry rides while the Infantry walks. Grunts of the 503d watch while Troop E, 17th Cavalry rides by on a patrol between Pleiku and Kontum in the Central Highlands. May, 1967. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)



Airlift — A sortie of Huey "slicks" make an approach to an LZ. (Courtesy of John Hosier)

them into a defensive perimeter. The enemy area was pounded by fighters dropping napalm and 500-pound Cluster Bomb Units.

C Company finally arrived at the old landing zone, hacked out by A Company the night before. The LZ had been salted with CS gas crystals and the troopers had to don their gas masks which turned out to be useless due to faulty filters. After crossing the LZ many of the troops were vomiting from the effects of the CS gas.

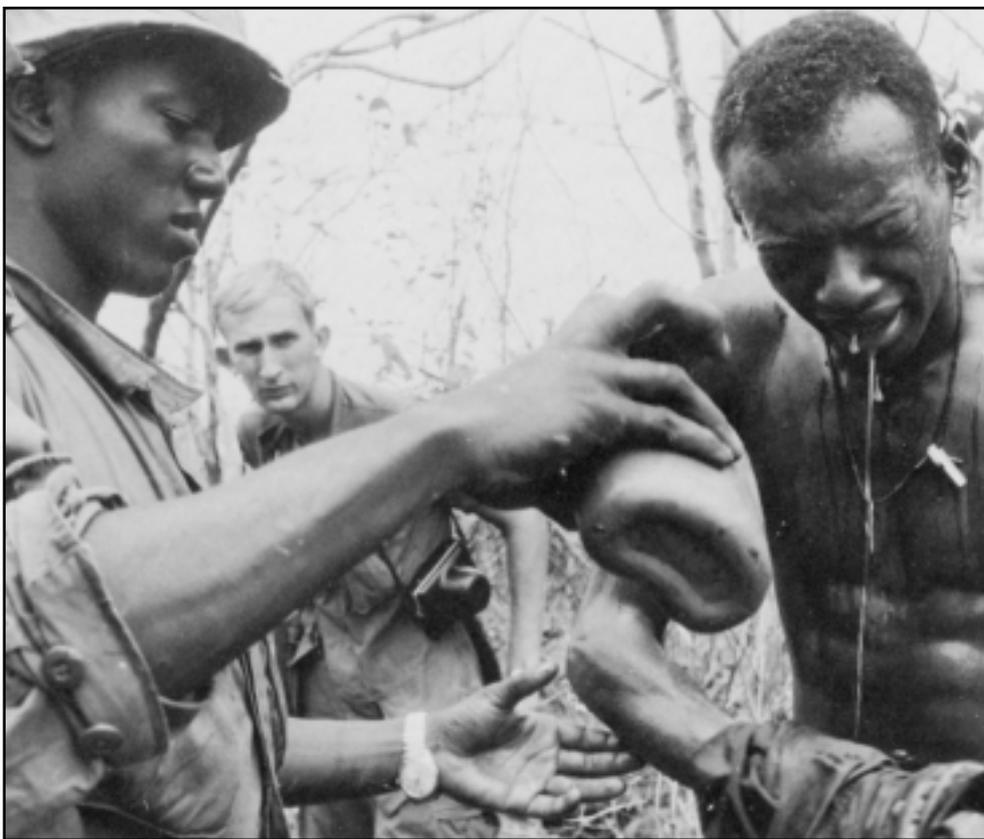
Finally, at 1420 hours, with the help of a ground guide, C Company hooked up with A Company's Command Post. They found

the wounded company commander with his Weapons Platoon and a few other survivors several hundred meters up the hill from where his line platoons had been attacked. Over a hundred men in A Company 2/503rd were missing.

The battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Edward Partain landed adjacent to A Company's CP and directed Leonard to attempt to reach the hill with a heavy note of caution, "I want you to probe down the hill, but break off if you have contact, don't throw good money after bad." C Company attempted to link-up with the lost platoons, but



173rd Airborne Brigade Paratroopers anxiously await an incoming dust off helicopter during a search and destroy operation. (Courtesy of Donald C. Hall)



A "tunnel rat" gets a douse of water from a buddy. (Courtesy of Don Hall)

to no avail - they were met with a hail of bullets from the 24th NVA Regiment dug-in on both sides of the trail. The enemy was able to affect plunging fire from the uphill side of the trail. Throughout the night, C Company awaited an NVA attack, an attack which never materialized. The night instead was quiet - punctuated only by occasional shots and screams as the NVA executed the wounded. In the morning Partain ordered another attempt at reaching A Company's fighting position. Lieutenant Matt Harrison, West Point

Class of 1966, led his platoon carefully towards the ambush site. As the troopers edged closer down the hill it became apparent that the enemy had vanished during the night. As the lead elements of B and C Companies moved into the killing zone, the extent of the carnage unfolded like a bad dream. Seventy-six Sky Soldiers lay dead. In one location 18 Americans lay in a clump where they had fought their last.

Matt Harrison found the body of Lieutenant Don Judd, a classmate from West

Point. One of the surviving soldiers recounted the last minutes of the lieutenant's life. As one of his men lay screaming from the pain of a gut shot, Don Judd, ignoring strong warnings from the first sergeant, rushed from cover to assist the wounded soldier. He was cut down before he ever reached the man's side.

Looking further, Matt Harrison discovered Lieutenant Rich Hood, another West Point classmate. Hood had been shot, at short range, in the back of the head. At the time of his death he had nothing left to fight with but trip flares. Lieutenants Don Judd and Rich Hood were both posthumously awarded the Silver Star.

The manner in which Rich Hood died raises the specter of cold-blooded murder as practiced by this NVA unit. The findings of the medical examiner show that 43 of the dead had fatal wounds to the back of the skull. Along with the reports of the few survivors who feigned death and of the members of the relief column, this provided irrefutable evidence that the NVA systematically executed the initial survivors with a wanton disregard for the laws of land warfare for human decency.

The final roll-call for the 2/503rd Airborne Infantry showed 76 KIA; 23 WIA; 0 MIA. One ARVN and two CIDG troopers were killed.

The enemy unit, identified by intelligence as the K-6 Battalion of the B-3 Front, previously the 6th NVA Battalion of the 24th NVA Regiment suffered 106 KIA by body count with an additional 407 KIA by estimate.

The Battle of the Slopes was over, and the Battles of Dak-To had just begun.

CHAPTER III THE BATTLES OF DAK-TO THE BATTLE FOR HILL 830

In June 1967, the 4/503rd was rapidly airlifted to Dak-To. This action was a direct response to the level of contact established by the 2/503rd in the Battle of the Slopes, concluded 22 June 1967. All elements of the 173rd in the Dak-To region were under the operational control of the 4th Infantry Division, though Military Assistance Command Vietnam retained final approval authority over the commitment of the paratroopers. US forces faced four NVA regiments, the 32nd, 66th, 88th, and the 95th. Although the 32nd was not encountered by the 173rd during this series of battles, they were held in reserve just over the border in Cambodia where they served as the NVA reserve and always had to be considered in the battle planning process. The commander of the 4/503rd, Lieutenant Colonel Lawrence W. Jackley put together a task force consisting of three line companies, augmented by engineers, scout dog teams and Montagnard trackers. It had been over a month since the start of the rainy



PFC Raymond C. Wilson grimaces in exertion as he helps Spec/4 Carl Fishburn lift a 200-pound bag of peanuts onto his shoulder. The paratroopers, both members of "A" Company, 2nd Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, were carrying the bags to vehicles which would transport them to the Brigade's base during Operation "Sioux City" in War Zone D. The bags of peanuts were part of a 47-ton cache found by the "Sky Soldiers" during the operation, their fourth in the Viet Cong stronghold since their arrival in Vietnam, May, 1965. (Courtesy of Donald C. Hall)



A former Viet Cong turned "Chieu Hoi" takes advantage of an offer of clean clothes, soap and water from paratroopers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. The Vietnamese man emerged from a tunnel and turned himself in to the Americans under the South Vietnamese Government's Amnesty Program of "Open Arms." He then volunteered to lead the paratroopers to a supply cache hidden deep within a tunnel complex in the Iron Triangle during Operation "Cedar Falls." (Courtesy of Donald C. Hall)



173rd Airborne Brigade paratroopers fire a 60mm mortar at Viet Cong snipers. Receiving fire on the landing zone during a helicopter assault, the infantrymen immediately deployed and rained mortar rounds on the enemy positions during Operation "Junction City." (Courtesy of Don Hall)

season and the hills were slick, wet and treacherous. Movement for a paratrooper loaded down with his combat equipment was agonizingly slow. The Task Force moved for several days encumbered by the extra eight of wet uniforms and equipment. The senior NCOs were worried that the tack of following a magnetic azimuth instead of using the terrain features to select the most defensible route would put the unit in jeopardy.

Bravo Company was leading the task force on 10 July, when they came across a heavily traveled elephant trail. A Company moved uphill to cover the left flank of the Task Force. They were about 200 meters up Hill 830, and still unsure of whether the sounds that they had heard around the crest of the hill were monkeys or the enemy, when that question was decisively answered. The sharp piercing sound of small arms and machine gun fire split the air, accompanied by the dull thump of mortar rounds hitting the bottoms of their tubes. A Company, commanded by Captain Philips, a cool-headed lanky soldier who walked with a long wooden staff which gave his an appearance not unlike that of John the Baptist, had walked straight into a series of NVA positions.



Brigadier General, John R. Deane, on line. (Courtesy of Don Hall)

B Company, located down the hill, immediately began to clear the wounded. The command group, attempting to move to A Company's position walked straight into NVA fire. Major Williams, the S-3, along with the radio telephone operators (RTOs) and the artillery forward observers (FOs) were killed. The B Company Commander, who was also the Taskforce Commander was wounded and evacuated. The Task Force was temporarily left without leadership and without indirect fire support.

D Company seized the initiative and moved from their position on the far right flank to smash into the NVA from a right angle to A Company's original axis of attack. This attack broke the NVA, who dispersed in small groups, dragging their dead and wounded slipped into the jungle.

B Company, now commanded by 1st Lieutenant Peyton Ligon, consolidated and re-organized around the LZ. A Company, still led by Captain Philips, moved inside B Company's perimeter. Captain Philips, as the senior survivor was ordered by Lieutenant Colonel Jackley to assume command of the Task Force in the field. Two senior NCOs, 1st Sergeant Pappy Schroder of A Company, though wounded, and 1st Sergeant Lawrence Okendo of B Company, worked feverishly to bring in medevacs to secure the perimeter, and to redistribute ammunition and prepare the troops for a possible counterattack. That night passed slowly, as a thick, cold blanket of fog settled over the perimeter. Sergeant Beach, who was on A Company's point as they attacked Hill 830 and who was moved into the perimeter after dark making his evacuation impossible, died from a head wound during the night. The NCOs tried to keep the wounded quiet to keep the location of their positions from the enemy. Finally, the long night was over and the evacuation of the dead

and wounded could continue. Lieutenant Colonel Jackley, Sergeant Major Ted Arthurs and the battalion surgeon were aboard the first chopper. The battalion commander ordered the troops back up Hill 830, where they found 10 dead NVA and captured one prisoner. The next day C Company moved into the positions, while B Company was airlifted back to Dak-To. A and D Companies continued to run operations in the area.

They discovered extensive trench networks along the military crest of Hill 830. On 12 July, D Company discovered a single network consisting of 60 bunkers with supporting foxholes. In short order two more bunker complexes, some with two feet of overhead cover were discovered.

The final losses for the 4/503rd were: A Company-10 KIA, 32 WIA; B Company 1 KIA, 24 WIA; D Company 1 KIA, 2 WIA; HHC 2 KIA, 4 WIA. They lost 10 by body count and one POW.

1st Sergeant Pappy Schroder of A Company, who had been creased in the head by a bullet, but still played a significant role in re-organizing his troops within the B Company perimeter, was still experiencing pain in his back about a week after the action on Hill 830. Upon further medical examination it was discovered that a bullet had lodged in his back. Like a true paratrooper, he had the bullet removed and returned to duty.

THE BATTLE OF NGOK KOM LEAT

In early November 1967, the 4/503rd, now separate and under the command of Colonel James H. Johnson, was ordered by Major General William R. Peers, the commander of the 4th Infantry Division, to move west of Dak-To, to the Ben Het area and set-up a base of operations. C/4/503rd cleared

the road, then set-up a defensive position for the rest of the battalion.

Concurrently, on 2 November 1967, Sergeant Vu Hong, a scout with the 66th NVA Regiment, surrendered to the ARVN, and claimed that his unit had been selecting positions for mortars and rocket launchers around the construction site at the CIDG camp at Ben Het, which was adjacent to the 4/503rd's positions. This gem of intelligence proved to be accurate and also proved to be one small part of a larger NVA plan to send four infantry and one artillery regiments against the Dak-To and Tan Cranh areas. The engineers of the 173rd produced such a rapid build-up in constructing a base for both themselves and the CIDG Special Forces-lead irregulars that they forced the NVA to change plans. The NVA had intended to await a US attack, then defend-in-place following a conventional scenario. The rapid build-up forced the NVA to deploy.

On the morning of 6 November, D/4/503rd moved out from Fire Base #12 in a southwestern direction towards Hill 823. The point man, SP4 Moss spotted an NVA trooper carrying an AK-47. He dropped the soldier with a burst of M-16 automatic fire. The time was 11:30, the Battle of Ngok Kom Leat Ridge had begun.

Prior to the initial contact, Captain Baird, the D Company Commander, well aware that human feces and comms wire had been spotted, had his rifle platoons moving by bounding overwatch, with one squad occupying a protected position and laying down a base of fire, while another moved forward. It was Lieutenant Burton's 2nd Platoon which made first contact, after which the company commander ordered him to pull back into a company defensive perimeter. At this point in time, the company was strung out over several hundred meters, so the lead platoon moved back down the trail under heavy fire, trying to link up with the trailing elements. Lieutenant Burton's platoon now found itself in a hot firefight with an estimated NVA company. Tactical air was unavailable, so helicopter gunships were called in to relieve the pressure on the 2nd Platoon. This support, along with fire from the 319th Artillery and the platoons own organic machine gun fire, enabled the platoon to rejoin the company perimeter. As tactical air became available about 1330 hours, the NVA positions were plastered with 250 lb. bombs, napalm and strafing runs. As soon as the air strike subsided, a part of the perimeter was attacked by two NVA squads who rushed the perimeter firing their AK-47s on full automatic. SP4 James D. Shafer was killed in this attack and two other Sky Soldiers were wounded. Shortly thereafter, the NVA attacked the opposite side of the perimeter. This attack was repulsed without losses. A final NVA attack resulted in Captain Baird and Captain Lawrence L. Clewley being wounded. Captain Baird remained in command, Clewley's RTO, SP4 Ernie L. Fulcher assumed the responsibility of calling in indirect fire. Another wave of fighter/bomber strikes broke up a final NVA attack by drop-



Our Vietnamese Interpreters, also called "Kit Carson Scouts," help evacuate a wounded paratrooper of the 2/503d in the hills of Dak-To, June 1967. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)

ping ordnance so close to the paratroopers that they could feel the heat and concussion from the bombs.

During this entire action, three soldiers from the 2nd Platoon, Sergeant Michael Plank and Edward Smith, assisted by SP4 Leroy Rothwell occupied a listening/observation post (LP/OP) about 20 meters to the front of the platoon's position. The purpose of their position was to provide early warning for the rest of the platoon. What in fact happened was that they found themselves squarely in the middle of the firefight. Plank and Rothwell were wounded and moved back inside the perimeter. Sergeant Smith stayed along, pouring flanking fire into the NVA positions. As the NVA returned fire, SP4 Madison sprinted to Sergeant Smith's position to deliver a badly needed resupply of M-79 and M-16 ammunition. Sergeant Smith shot an enemy sniper out of a tree approximately 40 meters to his front. Rothwell then rejoined Smith and helped. The three men poured rifle fire into two full NVA squads who rushed through their position leaving four dead behind.

A little after 1500 hours, another NVA el-

ement moved against the rear of the perimeter, which was manned by the Montagnard Scout. This attack was thwarted-and as the NVA were preparing for another attack, a 250 pounder fell directly on their position killing about 15. Sniper fire continued for a couple of hours, but the NVA attack was broken. At 1800 hours, A and D Companies consolidated their companies into one perimeter under the command of Captain Muldoon of A Company.

D Company loses totaled 5 KIA and 18 WIA. The NVA lost 28 KIAs by body count with an additional 32 estimated.

THE BATTLE FOR HILL 823

Captain George Baldrige, the Commander of B Company 4/503rd was ordered by Colonel Johnson to conduct a heliborne assault onto Hill 823 for the purpose of establishing security for the forces located at Fire Base #12. He was informed that the LZ could well be hot as the NVA 32nd and 66th Regiments were in the area. These regiments were battle hardened and tough. Their only weakness was that they were short on resup-

ply. The assault was set for 6 November 1967, with an intensive tac air prep consisting of 250 and 500 pounders plus cluster bombs and strafing runs. Due to the thickness of the bamboo and the triple canopy jungle, Colonel Johnson requested two additional air strikes to clear the area for the slicks. When the lead elements of B Company hit the ground, they found considerable NVA equipment debris indicating that the enemy had been caught unawares by the air strikes. They also found that the shattered undergrowth guaranteed movement. By 1400 hours, the company had established a perimeter around a bomb crater near the southern base of the hill. The 3rd Platoon set out their LPs some 40 to 50 meters west of their positions. PFC Louis Miller and Bickel were taken under fire as they made their way to their LP. Miller was killed and Bickel wounded. Lieutenant Darling, 3rd Platoon leader, accompanied by his RTO, SP4 Corbett and PFC Clarence Miller, made their way out of the perimeter to assist Miller and Bickel. All three were taken under fire by an NVA platoon and killed. PFC Bickel despite severe wounds was attempting to crawl back up to the platoon perimeter when he was shot again and killed. Shortly thereafter, an NVA squad attempted to attack the 3rd Platoon. They were caught in a cross-fire from 2nd and 3rd Platoons. All of the NVA were killed.

The 2nd and 3rd Platoons formed a perimeter around the edge of a bomb crater, with B Company CP located to the inside. The crater was about 30 meters in diameter, and while it offered some protection against enemy small arms fire, the NVA had sufficient cover to crawl close enough to the rim to toss hand grenades into the crater. To counter this problem, Platoon Sergeant Riley of the Weapons Platoon kept up a barrage of 81mm mortar fire within 15 meters of the perimeter to discourage the NVA from coming too near. To this point in the battle, seven Americans had been killed and 13 wounded, all in the first hour of the battle. However, at about 1600 hours, the B Company CP received a direct mortar hit which wounded Captain Baldrige, 1st Sergeant Jerry Babb and six troopers. As a result, Colonel Johnson ordered his pilot to set down and pick up the most seriously wounded. The battalion commander, along with his artillery FO and his sergeant major remained on the ground until Captain Ron Leonard and 1st Sergeant Lawrence Okendo arrived to take control of the situation on the ground.

Just after 1700 hours, a fierce fight developed after several NVA advanced to within 5 meters of the perimeter. SP4 Thomas blew an enemy soldier's head off with an M-79 grenade launcher at point blank range. The ensuing hand grenade fight lasted throughout the night with both sides holding their rifle fire to conceal their positions. "Spooky," the AC-47 gunship that could stay on station for hours and was such a welcome sight to isolated Special Forces camps was called in and proceeded to hose the NVA positions around the crater, in addition to dropping flares to illuminate the NVA positions.



Scout dog teams were trained to alert at movement and enemy activity. (Courtesy of Don Hall)

At 0400 hours the next morning, members of the 3rd Platoon detected the NVA massing for an attack. A quick artillery response broke up the NVA concentration, but one NVA squad managed to penetrate the perimeter between the 1st and 2nd Platoons. The Weapons Platoon in a carefully calculated fire mission dropped mortar rounds right on top of the NV-9, within the perimeter, wiping out the squad.

Sergeant Cabrera, who was the platoon sergeant of 1st Platoon moved to check one of his wounded troops just before daybreak. A flare from the AC-47 illuminated him and an NVA shot and killed him with an RPG-7 rocket. Two NVA were killed in the ensuing exchange. Major Scott, who was directing TAC Air strikes had B Company's positions marked with smoke at first light, then proceeded to call in a vicious parade of helicopter gunships, and F-100 bombers to pound the NVA positions. Despite the air power, the NVA continued to attack.

Later in the morning, Captain Leonard sent 2LT Hugh M. Proffitt with a patrol to the front of the 2nd Platoon's area. About 10 meters out, the patrol discovered some 20 NVA bodies. Their uniforms were new. Their equipment and arms were the best that North Vietnam had to offer. As the patrol moved farther from the perimeter, they were taken under fire twice with the 81mm of Weapons Platoon silencing the enemy on both occasions. This patrol even discovered a ladder up into a tree that provided an excellent vantage point for the enemy FOs and snipers who had used it. Sergeant Wiggins was almost killed when one hidden under the body of his dead comrade laying in the entrance got off two shots before being killed himself.

At about 1400 hours another patrol from C/4/503rd discovered a deserted NVA CP which was equipped with, among other things, US Claymore antipersonnel mines.

During this action, the NVA had rifles and a good deal of additional equipment. The paratroopers did not find much enemy food. B Company was infiltrated from Hill 823 at 1700 hours on 8 November 1967.



The view from inside a "Huey" on a helicopter assault near Dak-To. November, 1967. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)



The body of a North Vietnamese soldier recovered from a shallow hastily dug grave, lies along the escape route to Cambodia the day after the Amush of Alfa Co. 2/503d by the 66th NVA Regiment in the hills near Dak-To. 22 June 1967. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)

THE BATTLE FOR HILL 882

The 1/503rd, while conducting search and destroy missions during the early part of November 1967 was maintaining virtually constant contact with the NVA. On the night of 17 November, A Company spent the night in an abandoned NVA trench network on the east side of Hill 882. Early the next morning, after being resupplied they set off on a slow and deliberate search and destroy mission. The 1st Platoon was in the lead, moving forward 100 to 200 meters at a time using a clover leaf method which consisted of fanning out and covering the platoon's front and forward flanks in a meticulous fashion designed to minimize the chance of the unit being caught by surprise. Speed was sacrificed for security and enemy contact was expected. Just before noon the point element came upon an NVA trench network that was littered with fresh, bloody, ChiCom field dressings. The company pushed on advancing uphill towards the southwest. When the unit was just shy of the summit of Hill 882, the Company Commander formed his perimeter before sending 1st Platoon forward. Captain David A. Jesner was sure that enemy contact was imminent.

2LT Robinson, the 1st Platoon leader, moved his troops up through heavy underbrush until they closed on the top of the hill. At the top, the platoon began to form a perimeter. Before they were finished, PFC Brown spotted and shot an NVA soldier moving off the trail downhill to the south. On contact, the remainder of the company moved forward to join the 1st Platoon, which was just sending a patrol out to the south and then to the north where they spotted a squad of NVAs moving on the platoon perimeter. A Company consolidated the perimeter occupying positions left by the brigade during Operation Greely in mid-October. The remainder of the battalion, consisting of C and D Companies closed on the position, with A Company occupying the western portion of the perimeter and the other companies filling in behind them. Apparently

the NVA were waiting for the entire battalion to occupy the position, for almost as soon as they were in place, the NVA opened fire with mortars, grenades, rockets and snipers. The NVA were well camouflaged in position. Captain Jesner called in air strikes and artillery which were so close that they wounded one Sky Soldier. These strikes also were successful in helping to clear fields of fire for the 173rd and in beginning to decimate the NVA ranks. The 1st Platoon took the brunt of the first wave assault by the NVA, suffering several wounded. One of the medics, SP4 Withers gave PFC Hughs, who was seriously wounded, mouth-to-mouth for more than two hours to keep him alive. Another medic, SP4 Dyer ran to help Sergeant Baum, a wounded squad leader. Though shot in the leg in the process, Dyer continued to move Baum towards cover until he himself was killed by a shot to the head. PFCs Bruce and Hale delivered murderous M-60 fire against the enemy, moving from one position to another to confuse the enemy as to their location, and causing substantial casualties among the NVA. At this point in the battle, Captain Jesner moved the 1st Platoon's perimeter back some 25 meters in order to tighten the line and fill the gaps created by the wounded. PFC Hale was hit by a grenade and wounded at this point in the action. In fact by this time in the battle, only three members of the 1st Platoon were not wounded or dead. Even the seriously wounded remained on-line and continued to fight. Sergeant Baum was left behind when the line was tightened. Lieutenant Robinson tried three times to reach him and bring him back into the perimeter. Baum shouted, "For God's sake, Lieutenant, don't come out here. There's a machine gun behind that tree." Sergeant Baum, who had been shot seven times finally died, still trying to crawl back to the perimeter.

About 1830 hours the wounded were gathered in the center of the perimeter. An NVA rocket landed next to them, wounding several more soldiers.

As darkness fell, the NVA launched a

barrage of mortar fire, then withdrew into the night. Shortly, the wounded and the dead were evacuated. The unit was resupplied and the fight for Hill 882 was over.

The 1/503rd suffered six KIA, and 29 WIA, mostly in 1/A/503rd. NVA losses were 51 KIA by body count.

THE BATTLE FOR HILL 875

In early Fall 1967, enemy activity began to escalate in the Central Highlands. Intelligence reports indicated that the Dak To region was threatened by six NVA regiments and, once again, the 173rd Airborne was airlifted into the area. This time, the operation was code named, MacArthur.

Though American staff planners were unaware of it at the time, this buildup was part of a gigantic deception designed to draw US combat strength away from the cities in order to help ensure the success of the "Tet Uprising" scheduled for January 1968. There was feverish activity as Dak-To was enlarged to accommodate the forces earmarked to be stationed there.

Contacts with the enemy became more frequent as the month of November opened. On 10 November, Lieutenant Jerry Cecil was conducting a patrol with his platoon in the Tri-Border region near Ben Het when he suddenly found his unit pinned-down. They had walked into the open end of U-shaped ambush, and the quick, decisive action of the platoon leader in recognizing the ambush at the last second and ordering, "Open Fire!" was all that kept the unit from being wiped out. This firefight, which lasted most of the day before the platoon could be evacuated, resulted in all but one American being killed or wounded. The unit verified 154 enemy dead.

Units of the 2/503rd located a deserted hospital complex that had been used by the NVA. The size of the complex, combined with the fact that there were extensive amounts of medical litter scattered about, confirmed that the NVA had been taking heavy casualties in recent battles.



A "grunt" stays low and takes cover. (Courtesy of Don Hall)



M-60 gun team. (Courtesy of Don Hall)



A fallen Sky Soldier gets a lift from his fellow soldiers. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)

A Company 2/503rd, while on a reconnaissance mission on 12 November made contact with an enemy unit of undetermined size. When Captain Michael J. Kiley tried to maneuver his platoons to outflank the NVA trenches and gain the high ground to their rear, the enemy, with surprising speed, very nearly surrounded A Company. Kiley reacted quickly, withdrawing his unit below and out of small arms range of the NVA positions. Air strikes were called in and at 1430 hrs., contact was broken.

Though it was unclear at the time, the near-success of the NVA's flanking maneuver was to have tragic consequences on Hill 875. Travel some 18 kilometers from Dak-To on a magnetic azimuth of 265° (southwest), in an area just short of the Cambodian border and you will find a hill, marked on a standard 1:25,000 scale topographic map, by its elevation, 875 meters. The hill was covered by triple-canopy hardwoods and bamboo.

A Special Forces B-Detachment, conducting operations on 18 November, discovered an extensive network of NVA trenches located atop Hill 875. After suffering 10 wounded, the SF Detachment withdrew, called for and adjusted indirect fire and air strikes against the enemy trenches. They did not know that these trenches, built months earlier, were covered with up to ten feet of earth and log overhead cover. In addition, the positions had the advantage of six months of jungle growth to enhance their camouflage.

November 19 dawned without a cloud in the sky. The 2/503rd's Battle Plan called for a two company assault against the 2/174th NVA Battalion dug-in atop the hill. Captain Harold J. Kaufman, the ground commander, issued his frag order as the artillery preparation pounded the NVA. At 0940 hours the Sky Soldiers moved forward and upward with C Company on the right (northwest) and D Company on the left (northeast). The at-

tack was up the north slope, with a trail designated as the boundary between companies. Each company in turn, attacked with two platoons and held one in reserve.

A Company having rotated off the battalion point the day before, drew the assignment of securing the rear and of cutting out and securing a DZ for the purpose of resupply/reinforcement and for the exfiltration of the wounded and the dead.

In the assault element, each airborne infantryman carried four hundred rounds of 5.56mm for his M-16 assault rifle. Every grenadier had 30 HE (high explosive) rounds for his M-79 grenade launcher.

Each M-60 machine gunner could call for 1200 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition from his platoon and each soldier carried frag grenades, trip flares and colored smoke canisters. Many also carried Claymore antipersonnel mines.

Lieutenants Buck Thompson and Pete Lantz each lead a platoon in the assault. The troopers could feel the enemy and when, just before 1100 hours, the NVA opened fire they were ready. In those first moments of battle, SP4 Kenneth Jacobson, the point man for D Company's 2nd Platoon, was killed, as was the medic who moved to his position in an attempt to help him. At the same time, C Company's SP Haggerty, a medic, was cut down as he attended to a wounded trooper. Sergeant Shipman, SP4 Jacobson's squad leader, assisted by SP4 Charlie Hinton and SP4 Farley, attempted to locate the enemy. While behind them, the Sky Soldiers dropped their rucks, closed their ranks and began their assault against the NVA positions. The NVA poured automatic weapons and grenade fire over the paratroopers causing many casualties. Each company covered its forward boundary with colored smoke as markers for the pilots and artillery forward observers who fired in advance of the lead units, lifting

and shifting those fires as the lead platoons used bounding overwatch techniques to move against the enemy.

(The squads would move forward as artillery and air strikes pinned the enemy down just to their front; an overwatch squad behind cover would fire against trench positions, while a sister squad moved forward to find more cover, then the second squad would provide fire suppression while the first squad "bounded" forward.)

Sergeant Shipman, along with Sergeant Deebes and Page took the bunker from which the original contact had been made, then moved on more grenades from the bunker which they thought they had just neutralized. Sergeant Johnson and his squad encountered the same problem. The NVA had dug tunnels connecting each of their fighting positions, giving them the capability of reinforcing a position without exposing themselves to US fire.

At about this time several artillery rounds fell short wounding four troopers in D Company. The attack began to stall and Captain Harold Kaufman, the C Company Commander ordered his troops to consolidate, but in the confusion not everyone got the word. Some pulled back and dug in while others continued to press the attack. Lieutenant Smith, D Company's 3rd Platoon Leader was cut down by enemy fire as he lead his troops in an assault that reached the main NVA trench line.

At the bottom of the north slope of Hill 875, Captain Kiley had ordered A Company to set-up and defend a U-shaped perimeter designed, both to protect the battalion's rear and an LZ which troopers proceeded to hack out of the jungle. Due to the fact that contact uphill was heavy, combined with the fact that he did not expect heavy enemy concentrations against A Company, Captain Kiley ordered 2nd Platoon to follow and maintain

contact with C Company, while 3rd Platoon was given the same assignment in support of D Company. At about noon the NVA began to move formations off the west slope of Hill 875, down pre-cut trails and around the flanks of A Company. It is prudent in a situation such as this to set-up a Listening Post (LP) which is intended to provide early warning of an enemy attack. This precaution had been taken, four men were manning the LP when, just after 1400 hrs, the NVA were spotted by PFC Carlos Lozada who yelled, "Here they come." With Lozada were SP4 John Steer, PFC Anthony Romano, and the fire team leader, SP4 James Kelly. Lozada, without regard for his own life, fired repeatedly into the NVA ranks, killing more than 20 of the enemy and allowing his fellow soldiers to move up the hill in a disciplined manner. The NVA were making a suicidal attack reminiscent of the Japanese in World War II. Kelly ordered his fire-team to fall back, but as he did his weapon jammed and Lozada stood up firing his M-60 machine gun deliberately from the hip. When Lozada's M-60 ran out of ammunition, despite covering fire, the NVA surged forward and killed Lozada. SP4 Eugene Bookman, and PFC James Howard and James Spellers had moved down from

the 1st Platoon to assist the LP personnel in making it back to the company perimeter. The shot that fatally wounded Lozada, hit Steer in the back, but he and Kelly threw hand grenades and fired their M-16s as they moved back up the hill. Bookman and Howard were wounded in this action, and Speller was killed. The survivors moved back into the A Company perimeter. PFC Carlos Lozada was awarded the Medal of Honor for the selfless and deliberate manner in which he allowed his fellow soldiers to live without regard for his own life.

As the first mortar rounds hit the LZ, the Weapons Platoon quickly set-up a defensive perimeter. Captain Kiley ordered his 2nd and 3rd Platoons to move back downhill to reinforce the 1st and Weapons Platoons. Lieutenant Thomas Remington, with his 2nd Platoon along the west flank attempted to comply, but the platoon was cut to pieces as the NVA launched a brutal kamikaze attack. Remington was shot in both arms and both legs, his platoon sergeant, Aron Hervas, killed several of the enemy before dying himself from a shot through the head. SP4 Frank Stokes and PVT Ernesto Villereal were also killed.

Captain Kiley, along with five of his men

formed a small perimeter and fought to the death as scores of NVA swarmed over their position. SP5 Taylor, a medic and SP4 Young, the Radio Telephone Operator (RTO) died in this part of the action.

The consistency of reports strongly indicate that the troops who took part in this attack were heavily drugged. Many bumped into trees and tripped drunkenly as they moved forward. The enemy soldiers were laughing wildly or sporting idiotic grins as they pressed their weird, frenzied attack.

The survivors including Lieutenant Richard Busenlehner, and Sergeants Stacy and Lyons made it all the way down to the Weapons Platoon and helped move some of those personnel back up to C Company's perimeter.

Shortly after 1500 hours, C Company reported that they were surrounded by an estimated 200-500 enemy soldiers. The perimeter was under heavy small arms, rocket and mortar fire. Between 1500 and 1630 hrs., three helicopters, attempting to resupply the besieged Sky Soldiers, were shot down and the men on the ground were subjected to deadly sniper fire from the surrounding trees. A gutsy aircrew from the 335th Assault Helicopter Company finally managed to drop an



Artillerymen of B Battery, 3d Battalion, 319th Artillery, 173rd Airborne Brigade fire away at entrenched Viet Cong positions. (Courtesy of Don Hall)



A 173rd Airborne Brigade Machine Gun Team provides covering fire as paratroopers check out a Viet Cong base camp. (Courtesy of Donald C. Hall)



The grim remainder of Alfa Co. 2/503d after being ambushed on June 22, 1967, in the hills near Dak-To. The attacking unit was the 66th NVA Regiment. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)



ammunition resupply within 20 meters of the perimeter. Lieutenant Pete Lantz led a small group of men in a recovery effort. They had managed to retrieve most of the critical ammunition when Lantz was felled by a sniper's bullet.

Father Charles Watters, a Catholic Chaplain and a previous winner of the Bronze Star for valor under fire, now showed the grit and courage of a man who cared, above all, for the soldier. Repeatedly, he rushed from cover to carry wounded men back into the relative safety of the perimeter. Though wounded himself he worked with a vengeance to save other wounded and labored tirelessly to soothe the last moments of the dying. Major Watters was awarded posthumously, the Medal of Honor.

The entire afternoon saw an increasingly accurate and deadly stream of artillery and TAC air pounding into the ranks of the NVA. Lieutenant Matt Harrison of A Company, who had been medevaced from the field several days previously was alerted by the battalion commander to stand-by to go back in and assume command of the company after the death of Captain Kiley. During the afternoon, he flew over the battle area in a Huey which was unable to land due to the intense ground fire. Back at Dak-To, Matt happened to overhear the voice of one of his West Point classmates, Lieutenant Buck Thompson on the radio had been wounded three times in the action, the last time while carrying his platoon sergeant to safety. Buck, a classic joker, admonished Matt to write him up for the Medal of Honor if he didn't make it back so that his son could attend West Point. This was the last time the two old friends would ever talk.

Matt Harrison was ordered to prepare to rappel into the perimeter in a Swiss seat, suspended from a Huey in flight. He couldn't believe his ears, for he knew that in the intense fire which was bringing down helicopters, a man suspended in mid-air could not survive. Just prior to take-off a senior officer with a cool head intervened to save Matt from what would have been his last flight.

As the sun was setting, the wounded and dying of the 2nd/503 had been placed in the center of the perimeter, a position that up until that moment had been the safest possible. Throughout the afternoon, the TAC Air and gunship assets that pounded the NVA positions had used a southeast to northwest azimuth to guide their approach. Shortly after the last light of day had faded, an F-100, flying from northeast to southwest streaked over the perimeter and dropped its 500 pounder right in the center of the Battalion Aid Station. Forty Americans died, among them Charles Watters and Buck Thompson.

In the wake of this bombing mistake, the NVA sensing quick victory, hit the Sky Soldiers with a vicious assault, but the paratroopers, enraged by the death of their buddies, fought back with that vengeance so characteristic of the embattled American infantryman. The perimeter held.

Lieutenant Thomas Remington,

wounded earlier in both arms and both legs recalls the rage he felt at seeing this fluke of friendly fire cause such death and destruction. He searched frantically for a radio and finally reached Mike Coffas of the 319th Artillery Battalion to whom he described the situation.

With most of the unit's leadership either dead or wounded, the men looked to those junior officers and NCOs who were still able to function for that vital example combined with command and control so essential for survival. Lieutenant Bart O'Leary, though seriously wounded commanded D Company and kept radio contact with all elements of the 173rd Airborne. Platoon Sergeant Peter Krawtzwow took command of C Company. Lieutenant Sheridan commanded what was left of A Company.

As the battle wore on, the transition from a controlled operation to a series of small fights for survival began to manifest itself. Of 16 officers in the 2/503rd who began the Battle for Hill 875, by the morning of 20 November, eight were dead and the others were all wounded. There was a stalemate with the enemy and during the long lulls between firefights, the Sky Soldiers and the NVA exchanged insults. The lack of water and ammunition was critical. The resupply situation was this bad despite the fact that, at this point in the battle, 11 American helicopters had been shot down. The fighting throughout the night had been so close quarter that daylight revealed some 50 NVA bodies lying close to the 173rd perimeter. Many of the bodies were within several meters of the paratroopers' fighting holes.

Major William Kelly, the 2/503rd's Executive Officer had orders to infiltrate the battle positions on Hill 875, to reorganize the committed units, evacuate the wounded, and,

if possible, exploit the tactical situation. With him were Matt Harrison of A Company and the XO of C Company. This command group was driven away from the LZ on several occasions, but finally managed to land at 1800 hours. Earlier in the afternoon, a patrol sent out from D Company with the mission of finding and neutralizing the NVA snipers who were shooting down the Hueys, received one KIA and three WIA for their efforts.

Meanwhile, B Company, 4th Battalion, moved out from Firebase 16 with a 100-man column. This company, as it moved to the relief of the embattled elements on Hill 875, was commanded by the same man who had moved to the relief of A Company, 2/503rd the previous June. The captain's name was Ron Leonard and he deployed his force in the



"Medic!" (Courtesy of Don Hall)



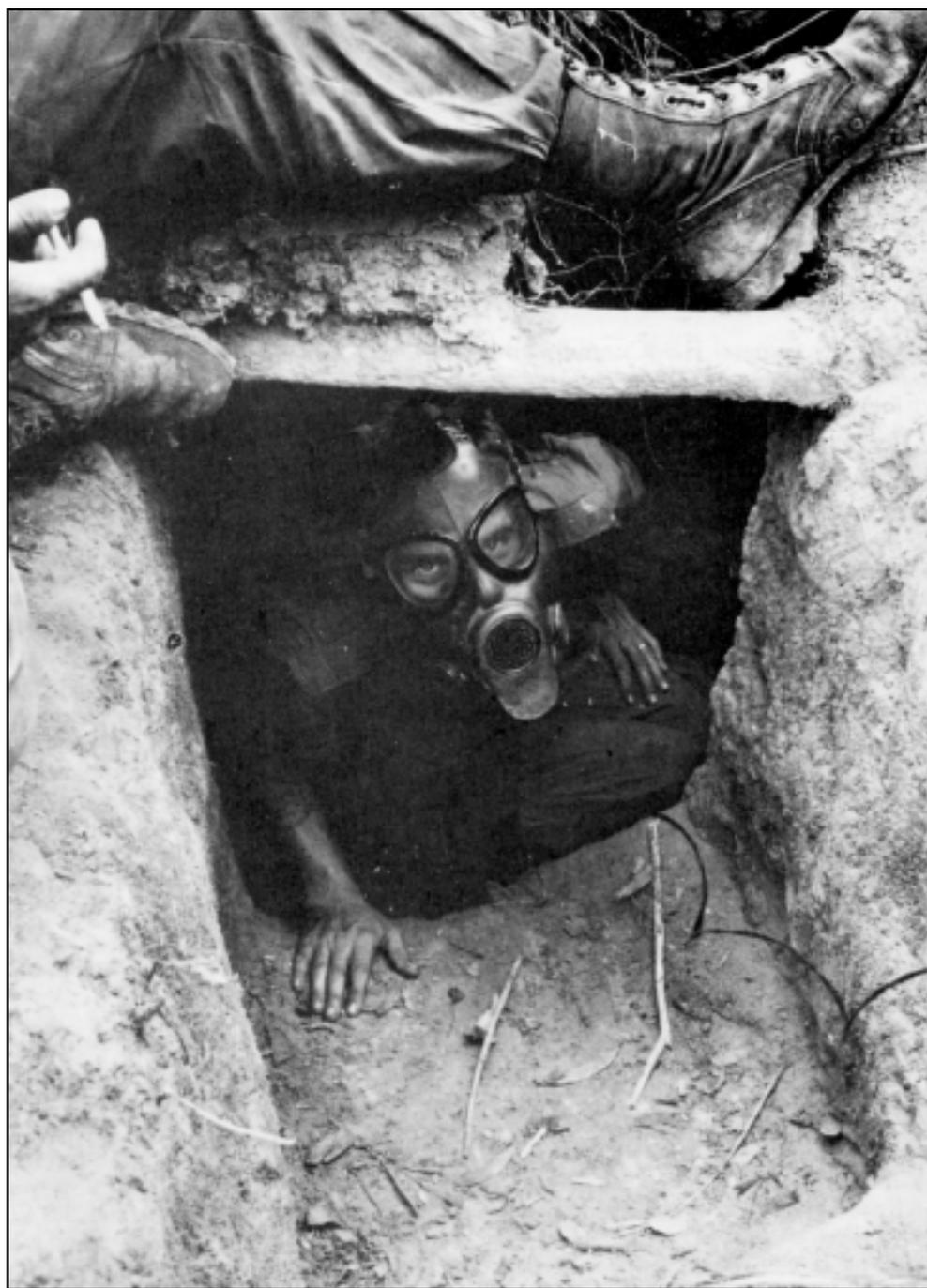
"I get by with a little help from my friends." (Courtesy of Don Hall)



An NVA bunker on Hill 875 still intact after 5 days of bombardment by our aircraft. The paratrooper is not dead ... just exhausted. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)



Remember when your "Walkman" was a bit heavier? The real object of this exercise is to see how quickly you can get back on your feet! (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)



Checking out bunkers after tear gas was used. (Courtesy of Don Hall)

same prudent diamond formation that he had used then. Leading the 3rd Platoon at the head of the diamond was Lieutenant Alfred Lindseth. It took B Company 4/503rd most of the day to reach A 2/503rd's original position. They found piles of enemy dead as they approached the location of Carloci Lozada's LP/OP. Further up the hill they found Carlos still clutching his M-60 machine gun, and from that point the ground was littered with the intermingled dead of two nations.

At the bottom of the finger that led to the summit of Hill 875 flows a small creek. The soldiers of the 4th Battalion stopped here to fill their canteens, they knew that the 2/503rd as well as themselves desperately needed that water. Moving through the rubble of war, the men of B Company wasted no time closing with the men already on the hill. It was 1700 hours when the relief column moved into the existing perimeter and began to reinforce the original positions.

Earlier, when Matt Harrison had landed on the DZ, he couldn't believe the scene he surveyed as he tried to get a grasp on A Company's disposition. He described it simply as, "The third circle of Hell." Bodies and body parts were strewn everywhere, the wounded groaned and asked for help. Enemy soldiers were firing on the Sky Soldiers from as little as 20 meters away and the thud of NVA mortar rounds being dropped down their tubes was clearly audible. Matt found Tommy Remington whose first request was for water. It was impossible to determine exactly where friendly lines stopped and enemy lines began. Matt helped to put some of the dead including Carlos Lozada, Captain Kiley and Buck Thompson into body bags. They became part of a four foot high wall that helped provide cover for the living.

The two additional companies of the 4th Battalion, following along the route used by B Company arrived within the perimeter at around 2000 hours on 20 November. Their presence meant that two battalions were squeezed into an area little larger than a football field. Throughout the night the enemy



Insertion by rappelling, an attempt to line-up with the beleaguered paratroopers who were locked in battle with the NVA on Hill 875. November, 1967, Dak-To. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)



A Paratrooper of the 1/503d helps a wounded trooper to safety during a firefight with the NVA on Hill 882. 18 November 1967, near Dak-To. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)

kept up the sniping and the indirect fire, though he was apparently unwilling to attack the reinforced perimeter in strength. The enemy conducted a "Stand-to" at dawn, and at 0700 hours on the 21st, they launched several volleys of 60mm and 82mm mortar fire against the perimeter.

Later in the morning the 4th Battalion was ordered to attack the summit of the Hill. The attack was under the command of Captain Leonard and was to be spearheaded by B Company in the center, with A Company on the left and C Company on the right. The preparation of the objective consisted for F-100, 105mm, 155mm, 8" Howitzers and 175mm guns. Buff (B-52) strikes were requested, but denied due to the "Danger Close" nature of the mission. B-52 strikes were normally kept three kilometers away from friendly troops. In this case, friendly troops were only yards away from where any supporting fires could be effective. Fifteen tons of high explosive (HE) was dropped on the top of the hill in order to soften up the NVA positions.

The attack was postponed to allow additional time for TAC Air and artillery to do its job. Finally, shortly after 1500 hours, B Company moved out. They met heavy resistance and were decimated by sniper, automatic and rocket fire. Lieutenant Moore, the platoon leader of B Company's 1st Platoon, finally figured out that the fire was coming from tiny slits in the NVA bunker system, but by this time he could account for only one third of the men who had started the attack. Moore tried to call Leonard, but his RTO was killed and his PRC-25 (a backpack radio) rendered useless as the platoon leader held the handset to his ear. PFC Mason, also of the 1st Platoon, stood up and fired his M-60 machine gun into the trees, killing two of the enemy and momen-

tarily stopping the vicious enemy fire. Eventually, Lieutenant Moore was wounded by rocket fire. To the left, B Company's 2nd Platoon managed to reach the main NVA trench line only to be driven back. In this engagement Light AntiTank Weapons (LAW) proved to be ineffective against the enemy positions as were the limited number of properly armed flame-throwers. Under the cover of darkness, Captain Leonard ordered the battalion to withdraw to the original perimeter in order to allow for maximum effectiveness of supporting fires. The Sky Soldiers bowed, but unbroken sang a ragged chorus of, "Blood Upon the Risers," a song dear to the heart of every American paratrooper from his first days at Fort Benning through the rest of his life. By early morning on 22 November the 4th Battalion had lost 15 killed, 108 wounded and 4 MIA. The seriously wounded were evacuated while the walking wounded helped to reinforce the perimeter.

Throughout the day on the 22nd, the troopers on the hill received sporadic mortar fire, but the only offensive operations were patrols. Meanwhile, General Abrams, MACV, Deputy Chief of Staff, Major General Peers, Commander, 4th Infantry Division; Brigadier General Schweiter, Commander 173rd Airborne Brigade and Col. Johnson, Commander of the 4/503rd huddled to decide their strategy for the remainder of the operation. The 2/503rd secured their portion of the perimeter, consolidated their equipment; redistributed their ammunition and totaled their casualties. The 2nd Battalion, up to this point in the battle, had suffered 86 KIA, 130 WIA and had 3 MIA.

The final assault was planned for the morning of the 23rd. C Company would lead on the right with B Company on the left, and A Company in reserve, well alerted this time

to the need to secure against flank attacks and well aware of the need to ensure that bunkers previously assaulted were, in fact, secured. The 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division would conduct a supporting attack up the southwest slope.

At 1100 hours the attacking elements moved out. They faced a little resistance, as the majority of the NVA troops had slipped away during the night. Sergeant Major Lawrence Okendo, with Major Scott, found themselves ahead of the rifle platoons on the left flank. While there was fire to their right it was quiet, for the moment, on their sector of the battlefield. The two soldiers, along with their RTOs, took cover just shy of the military crest of the hill.

Moments later they were passed by SFC Gates, the platoon sergeant of the 1st Platoon of B Company, who, with six of his soldiers, moved through the objective and took up a position just over the crest of the hill. Minutes later, SFC Gates and five of his men were killed by a mortar round. Sergeant Major Okendo pulled the sole wounded survivor back behind the small knoll he was using for cover.

The limited resistance encountered during this attack consisted of an NVA rear guard element. Captain Leonard was wounded in the leg during this operation, but refused to relinquish his command. It took the Sky Soldiers 20 minutes to reach the top of the hill, where, yelling "Geronimo" a time honored Airborne door exit tradition, they secured the objective.

Matt Harrison moved about the litter and debris of Hill 875, as he worked at a handwritten roster of the missing. He focused on the name of one of his West Point classmates, Peter Lantz. Total US losses during the Battle for Hill 875 were 107 KIA, 282 WIA and 10 MIA. So ended MacArthur.

CHAPTER IV COMBAT OPERATIONS The Later Years

Brigadier General H.S. Cunningham, formerly an ADC of the 101st Airborne Division assumed command of the 173rd on 9 August 1969. The focus of the war was shifting, President Nixon had announced the first withdrawals of American combat units. Effective in May 1969, the 173rd stopped launching large-scale offensive operations against the VC and NVA. In addition they were charged with the mission of supporting the Vietnamese Government's Pacification Program in the northern district of Binh Dinh Province.

This did not mean, however, that the 173rd was out of the fighting business. Early in September the 3/503rd rejoined the brigade replacing the 1/50th Infantry. As intelligence began to mount indicating a growing enemy threat in the brigade's AO, the 173rd was supplemented by first the 1/12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division, and then by the entire 2nd Brigade of the 4th ID.

Near the end of October, D Company, 16th Armor which had compiled a remarkable combat record with the 173rd, was deactivated. E Troop, 17th took over its equipment and its mission. In December the brigade was further reinforced by the 3/506th Infantry (Airborne) of the 101st Division.

Brigade forces working with Vietnamese forces, retook and rebuilt Highway A3 linking the coastal communities of Hoai Nhon with inland agricultural communities. An Quang hamlet near the coast was rebuilt and accommodated 157 families by the end of October. This after constant fighting between the VC and US/ARVN troops over the years had driven the people from their homes.

Phu Thu, a fishing hamlet represented another success story. The VC had prized the area as a base due to its easy access to both the coastal region and to mountain hideouts. A joint 173rd/ARVN security force moved into and secured the area in late October.

There was a certain amount of boredom among the aggressive paratroopers who were accustomed to fighting hardcore enemy formations in the mountains, but there was also the advantage of being able to stay in the same location for extended periods of time. This enabled the Sky Soldiers to develop a level of trust with the local inhabitants which had been impossible up to this point.

The primary level of VC activity in the 173rd's AO during this period consisted of kidnapping and assassination directed against local government officials and of mining and booby trapping trails used by allied forces. The troopers continued to confront the enemy in patrol-sized actions.

Late in December, Brigadier General Cunningham said, "Enemy attention to our activities in itself a strong indication of our success. Eight months ago, the VC and NVA operated primarily with their logistics elements, concentrating on sustenance for their forces. The enemy was not concerned about sustaining a large military effort in this area because he had effective control of rice production. Only a fraction of the 2nd VC Regiment and the 18th NVA Regiment was active in the area. Since that time, his attention to our activities has grown in direct proportion to our success." General Cunningham went on to explain that the 22nd NVA Regiment had also begun to operate in the An Lao Valley, threatening the Pacification Program. "Our intelligence indicates that the VC-NVA continue to build up their forces and are doing their utmost to mount significant operations against us. We are effectively denying the en-

emy the support he needs to wage offensive operations."

In November a marked increase of communist activity began to be directed against the 173rd, and the enemy mounted a series of probing attacks against the paratroopers. An attack against Fire Bases Mahoney and Stinger on 3 November resulted in brigade forces from the 3/319th and 4/503rd killing 30 enemy troops.

Flyers from C Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry spotted four enemy troopers running into a cave. B/3/503rd was inserted into the area and found a large cache of ammunition weapons and food. One VC was killed and 30 suspects (27 were later confirmed to be VC) captured. One of the captured VC led troopers to another large enemy cache.

The enemy shelled the Brigade Headquarters on 11 November with some 40 mortar rounds, supported by recoilless rifle fire. A/4/503rd killed 10 VC and captured another when the enemy attacked their company command post. Captain Richard F. Timmons, the company commander, attributed the success of his unit to the alertness of his LP/OPs and perimeter personnel. The Brigade Aviation Platoon killed nine VC during a late evening reconnaissance flight near the end of November. The 3/503rd spent Christmas conducting search and destroy missions in the Crow's Foot area. In January, the 2nd Brigade of the 4th ID left the 173rd to return to its parent unit.

The Pacification Program continued to progress in the 173rd's area into 1970. Schools were built, clinics opened and more and more civilians began using them. The engineers kept improving roads and bridges. The MPs opened joint police stations with the ARVN/MPs. The 1st Battalion worked in Phu My; the 2nd Battalion in Hoai Nhon, the 3rd, augmented by the 3/506th, worked in the An Lao Valley; and the 4th Battalion conducted operations in the Tam Quan district.



Brigadier General H.S. Cunningham assumes command of the 173rd Airborne Brigade from Brigadier General Barnes at LZ English (Barnes on left).



"Cobra" (Courtesy of John Hosier)



Taking "One Zero." (Courtesy of Don Hall)

REFLECTIONS

Bien Hoa, South Vietnam, 22 January 1966: Behind the terse reports of "American Paratroopers" and their operations, there are countless stories and incidents that are seen only through the eyes of those who are there.

Each day is filled with fleeting moments of courage, and hours of boredom and routine that push men through the good, the bad, the pleasures, the hardships, the moments of truth that are found only in war.

Life is intense and real for the American "Sky Soldiers" who came to Vietnam after being weaned on the jungles of the Philippines, the rice patties of Taiwan, and the cold mountains of Korea. Beneath the uniformity of the drab jungle fatigues is a cross section of the nation. The heaviest load is upon the young enlisted man. His experience in life has not yet begun. Still in his teens or barely out of them, he has become old in many ways in Vietnam.

You only have to glance at the little fellow and you automatically wonder how he got to be a paratrooper. There he stands, clutching a mortar base plate, the heavies piece of equipment around, waiting for the column to push on again. No complaints from him, only a laugh and a retort to a buddy who is razing him about his size. He has to dig the deep holes that offer him protection, only to fill them up when he moves on. He has no idle time, with weapons to be cleaned and oiled, over and over again under the relentless humidity and rain. Nighttime offers only hours of mental alertness listening and watching for an enemy who claims the night as his own.

Someone said that the thing that makes a man jump from an airplane, also makes him wear a neater uniform, try a little harder, and carry a heavier load. Part of his load are C-rations, surely the most constant aspect of his day. There are 12 different meals and no one likes them all. The question inevitably arises why someone can't add at least twelve new meals. There is no doubt that those rations keep you going. It's just that sometimes you think, there must be a better way to go.

Then there is the heat. At times it feels as though the sun is going to burn the shirt off of your back. It probably would if it weren't for the sweat that pours off your body. Relentless as it is, the strength-sapping heat is part of every day. The Southeast Asia sun literally beats a man to his knees.

The rain brings water to the streams, life-giving water. It also brings leeches, fattening themselves on your blood. A lighted end or a dab of insect repellent will get their bloated bodies off you. Even in the dry season, wet feet are a way of life. Is everybody going to go home with web feet?

It isn't enough to tell a young soldier what he must do. He must be shown. That is the sergeant's job. Responses other than that instant too often result in the one commodity a sergeant can't afford, casualties. Success is also measured in that simple word.

As the day grew late in the hot frustrating patrol, and spirits were sagging, the experienced sergeant came into his own. He knew his men, which one to chew out, which one to give encouragement, a reminder to a man who had lost a careless buddy, a mention of food to another. Up and down his squad he went, his strength reaching out to each man until they looked like a fresh patrol just starting out.

The tell-tale radio antennae of command and control appear, and with them is always an officer, sending orders or waiting for them. He is the brain behind the tactics-young lieutenants who have trained, trained and trained again for this guerilla war, tough company commanders who know what to do with 180 men deep in Viet Cong territory, and the "Colonel" the man behind it all who directs his columns to find and kill the enemy. These are the men who lead their paratroopers. It makes no difference whether they come from the Officer Candidate Schools, from the colleges or from West Point. They are all professional soldiers and this environment is the test of their profession.

There was a battle, a hill bristling with the enemy and the lean, hard company commander gave the order to flank that position. One squad moved across the stream, followed by another. The fire danced around the big Georgia-bred platoon leader as he zig-zagged. Paratroopers, his paratroopers, were hit and went down. But they drove on in the exploding steel and flying shrapnel.

One by one the platoon reached the enemy trenches. Some awfully good paratroopers died on that hill, but those who did, did so assaulting an enemy that they were deter-

mined to destroy. Paratroopers die, but they are never beaten.

The colonel later walked among the wounded, thanking them. One paratrooper, wounded in the face, was unable to talk. The colonel spoke to him and told him to reply, and as the colonel got up to leave, the trooper, with a great effort, mouthed the word, "Airborne." For their colonel they will walk into the face of death.

Back at the base, the sounds of war, the sun, the leeches, are briefly forgotten. The stories are told of the battles, but somehow, they are detached. Soon they must go out again.

Why are they paratroopers? Why do they volunteer? Deep within each man are the restless urgings that prompt him to step forward when the sounds of guns are heard. To some, the patriot's cry is a reason for scorn. But to us, there has never been a more noble sound.

It is answered by men from every walk of life, from every corner of the land. The cry has always been answered and always will. "We risk our lives, not for medals, praise or glory. We risk life for life itself."

Captain Richard D. Chegar of Kokomo, IN, 173rd Airborne Brigade

"Sergeant Brown is dead, sir!"
Courtenay, Vietnam, 14 January, 1966. Bravo Company had to fall back.

They had stumbled into an ambushing roost of VC who were fortified inside camouflaged rows of freshly dug trenches. Over the ditches, suicide snipers had been lashed



PFC Max Sprague, a rifleman with "A" Company, 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, shares his candy with a young Vietnamese girl as her father smiles approvingly. The two Vietnamese were members of a small hamlet evacuated by the paratroopers to a refugee center. (Courtesy of Donald C. Hall)



to observation trees to direct knee-high fire against the approaching Yanks.

The boys from B made several crawling assaults under iron sleet towards an enemy they could not see and positions they could not locate.

Grenades popped like thunder. Automatic weapons fouled the air.

But it was no use. Wet with rain and sweat, dirty with mud and blood, Bravo Company broke contact, regrouped and took combat census.

"Anybody missing?" a lieutenant whispered.

"Sergeant Brown," someone answered.

"Where is he?"

"Sergeant Brown is dead, Sir."

The group fell silent. Jim Brown - dead. Some shook their heads in anger. Others crossed themselves and swallowed.

Then, as the rain began to fall faster, the aching troops scooped away wet leaves and sat on the damp ground. Ammunition was counted, C-ration tins sprung open - medics with ashen faces wandered from man to man.

It had been a dirty go. They had battled blind, outnumbered and unprotected. Every officer in the unit had been wounded and scores of their men with them. Only one failed to escape, however. The sergeant - Jim Brown, of Fayetteville, NC, a 30-year-old husband.

"Dammit!" a man muttered.

"He musta been hit more than once," somebody guessed.

"I saw grenades falling all around

"He took a lot of shrapnel."

"Who saw him last?"

"I saw him go back because he couldn't find a buddy."

"Dammit."

The sergeant had indeed gone back for a friend, but not before being thrice torn open by the enemy arsenal.

His squad had crawled with 50 yards of the unseen trenches before an antitank shell had blasted the first rip in his body. It was a hollow thump of an explosion that left Brown with vertigo.

He kept moving, however, and 25 yards later, he took a second set of fragments from a grenade. Again, he shook it off and moved closer. Again, he was opened up by the shattering effect of a hand thrown bomb.

Finally, he was ordered back. But then a man in his squad couldn't be found. Sergeant Jim Brown crawled into hell once more.

The rain had continued throughout the night and those of Bravo Company who slept at all, slept wet and nervous. Artillery zeroed in on the VC trenches after dark and shelled them throughout the night. At dawn, Air Force jets flew in to drop their bombs.

Sergeant Brown was in the target area. The men wondered if they would ever find his body.

By mid-morning, all combat had ceased and the jungle was quiet. The sun rose and the thicket steamed. Silently the boys from B collected their gear for an air evacuation.

Suddenly, one of them heard a noise. He turned his head and blinked his eyes. A few yards away a man approached awkwardly, his eyes red, his face white, his clothes caked with stains of blood.

"Hey GIs," the man cried.

Dazed, frightened, sick with confusion, he was near collapse.

But Sergeant Jim Brown was by no means dead.

REFLECTIONS (PART II)

"GI's Widow Presented Medal Of Honor"

Washington (UPI) Sergeant Larry S. Pierce earned the Medal of Honor 20 September 1965.

"President Johnson has awarded the second Medal of Honor of the war to an Army Sergeant who threw himself on a grenade to save his men.

"Johnson presented the nation's highest honor for bravery Thursday to the widow of Staff Sergeant Larry S. Pierce, 24, of Wasco, CA.

"The President promised Mrs. Pierce and her three children that "None of us shall falter in our purpose until we have secured the kind of world for which Sergeant Pierce gave his young and gallant life.

"Pierce died 20 September 1965, near Ben Cat, South Vietnam, when a patrol he was leading was ambushed by the Viet Cong. The men of Pierce's platoon put the communists to flight, but as they gave chase, the sergeant spotted a grenade on the road. It was too late

to throw the grenade aside or to warn the others in his squad. Pierce threw himself on it as it exploded. He was credited with saving the lives of his comrades.

"Pierce became the 2,196th American serviceman to receive the award, formerly known as the Congressional Medal of Honor. It was established 104 years ago to recognize military men who risk their lives, "Above and beyond the call of duty."

"The first Medal of Honor to be awarded in the Vietnam conflict went to Army Captain Roger H.C. Conlen, a member of the Army's elite Special Forces counter-insurgency troops. He received it on 5 December 1964.

"Johnson said that while men like Pierce defend the ideals of freedom, "We at home must be worthy of their sacrifice. We must be united in our purpose to create a world where terror will not go unchallenged, where aggression and violence will shatter on the rock of our courage and conviction."

Thanksgiving Day And Hell On Hill 8751 Hill 875, Vietnam (AP)

The chaplain stood on Hill 875 Thursday and said, "You ask me what there is to be thankful for on this day. I am thankful that these men here are alive and that we accomplished our mission."

The chaplain is Major Roy Peters, a Roman Catholic assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade. He came to Hill 875, southwest of Dak To and only three miles from the Cambodian border after the Brigade's 2nd Battalion chaplain, Major Charles J. Watters, was killed in action on the hill.

Chaplain Peters was at the front when the paratroopers made four attacks on the hill. He was there when they took it on Thanksgiving Day.

"I have always preached a lot about hell," he said, "But I had never seen it until these last three days."

Chaplain Peters sang mass on the slope of Hill 875 immediately before the Thanksgiving Day attack. Three soldiers were receiving communion when North Vietnamese mortars opened up. The three men hit the ground on their bellies, but the chaplain moved forward and gave them communion anyway.

The men on Hill 875 made it clear how they felt about Chaplain Peters. SP5 Lynn Morse, a medic, told Chaplain Peters, "You're lucky to be alive after what you've done." Then turning to a newsman, Morse said, "You can't say enough about that man. He is an inspiration to all of us, Catholic, Protestant, or whatever." The chaplain, a tall, slender, graying man, said, "Part of the hell here has been getting out the dead and wounded. Trying to do what you can for them."

Chaplain Peters said he had given absolution of the dying to more men than he could



Sgt. Jim Bradley, Troop "E" 17th Cavalry.



Private First Class Carlton P. Brown, a machine gunner with "E" Troop, 17th Cavalry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, pauses to seek signs of the Viet Cong in the dense foliage. The paratroopers were pursuing a fleeing Viet Cong Force after light contact had been made on a road clearing operation. The towel around Brown's neck is used to mop sweat off of his face in the steaming, tropical jungle. (Courtesy of Donald C. Hall)

remember. "I was giving the Last Rites to one boy when the doctor raised up his hand and said, 'I'm sorry, he's dead Father.'"

That was part of Thanksgiving Day on Hill 875, but Chaplain Peters looked back to the man whose post he took here. During the day, the paratroopers found equipment that had belonged to Father Watters. One of them found his chalice and brought it to Chaplain Peters.

"If you want to talk about men," the chaplain said, "there was a real hero."

"750 Chutists Drop Into Zone C In 10 Minutes" War Zone C, Vietnam, 23 Feb 67 (AP)

The American paratroopers had been waiting for this moment all their days in Vietnam. The plane doors were open and below was enemy territory. Morning sunlight cut the mist glistening from the rice patties 1,000 feet below. Thirteen planes streaked into the Drop Zone which was 6,000 feet long and 1,000 feet wide, on the northern edge of War Zone C, a Viet Cong stronghold along the Cambodian border.

Zone C is believed to hold a major VC Headquarters, and this operation was the first combat parachute jump of its size since the 187th Airborne Combat Team jumped in Korea in 1951.

The sky blossomed with hundreds of olive green chutes, and the 173rd's 2nd Battalion of the 503rd Infantry floated to the ground 75 miles northwest of Saigon. Their mission: To block escape routes into Cambodia.

Colonel Bob Sigholtz, of Washington D.C., commander of the 2/503rd said before the assault, "The VC probably will have noticed our build-up around War Zone C. We

hope to land right on top of something trying to get into Cambodia." Surprise was a prime requirement.

Colonel Sigholtz, the second man to jump this day, behind Brigadier General John Deane of San Francisco, the brigade commander who wore the only white chute in the sky. Within 10 minutes after Deane touched ground, the full 750 man battalion was on the ground. The only resistance came from isolated snipers at one of the Drop Zone.

The 13 C-130s made two runs dropping half their troops and equipment each time. Brigadier General William C. Moore of Waco, Texas, Commander of the 834th Air Division which flew the C-130s, commented, "Beautiful, beautiful drop."

Other aircraft then dropped, the heavy equipment, 105mm artillery pieces, mortars, vehicles and supplies. Within the hour, everything was ready for battle.

Light jungle fringed the landing zone and spread away in all directions, growing increasingly dense.

Smoldering craters dotted the DZ, the results of repeated air strikes including B-52s from Guam had pounded it for nearly two hours, up to within five minutes of the first jump.

Trails cut across the open terrain, marked by apparently recent tracks of oxcarts and trucks. There was strong hope throughout the Task Force that the VC had been surprised. Several Regiments of the National Liberation Front's hard-core 9th Division had recently been spotted in the area. The first paratroopers had long since tensed in the doors of the C-130s, others poised down the aisles behind them. "Jump!" the jumpmaster had cried with eye-blinking speed, less than a second apart, the men of the 173rd Airborne Brigade plunged through the doors and plummeted toward enemy territory. They were all on the ground before 9 a.m., 22 February 1967.

REFLECTIONS (PART III)

"Death, Fear in Step With Plodding GIs" Xuan Loc, South Vietnam (AP)

by John Nance

Eyes peered from faces grizzled with whiskers and crusted with dirt. Men stared vacantly into space or into the mud and the leaves that oozed around their ankles. Arms and faces were scratched. Trousers were torn. Uniforms were stained with sweat, mud and red clay.

C Company of the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry 173rd Airborne Brigade had come in from nine days and nights in the jungles near Xuan Loc. The official report said they had killed 20 Viet Cong and suffered light losses themselves in Operation Yorktown.

The statistics were not impressive. There had been no major battles, no big finds of supplies or fortifications or documents. But Charlie had known death and fear and nine days and nights of grueling jungle warfare.

Every day there was a scorching sun that - turned the jungle steamy and drained men's strength. Every day there were monsoon rains that drenched men, soaked their weapons and equipment. There were exhausting searches into the depths of jungles thick with thorny bush and walls of bamboo. There were fights with the VC who hid and hit when least expected. Every night there were probes by guerrillas that made sleep impossible and nerves raw.

The severest test came one day shortly after dawn. Thin light filtered through the jungle canopy. Charlie Company stirred through the mud to break camp. Suddenly, bursts of enemy fire seemed to come from every direction. A Claymore mine blasted

through the trees. Snipers fired from concealed positions. Grenades ripped through the bush. The company dug in while cries came from the wounded on both sides in the thicket. The VC tried to break through the American defenses, but each time they were thrust back. Medics sprawled in the mud to work over the wounded. Superior firepower finally forced the VC to break contact and retreat. Artillery shells crashed into the jungle and followed their withdrawal while explosions shook the earth. The sounds of fleeing wounded reached the paratroopers.

Charlie Company counted 15 VC bodies, some only a few feet from American foxholes. Four paratroopers died, all in the first onslaught of fire. The men watched wounded buddies lifted away in helicopters. The dead, wrapped in ponchos followed.

Two days later, another band of guerrillas attacked from concealed positions. The paratroopers plunged to the ground and began pouring fire into the trees and bush. The VC, slipped away, leaving one American dead.

The jungle was so thick that no helicopter could come in. Four men carried the dead man, wrapped in his poncho. Within the hour, monsoon rains poured down, turning the ground slick. The men carrying the dead soldier struggled over slippery trails and waded

through the thick muck. They often stumbled, slid and dropped to their knees. The rain pelted down for an hour, then thunder and lightening signaled heavier torrents, that came down in sheets. At times the men could see only a few yards ahead. The company emerged into a clearing and headed for the high ground above a shallow valley. Machine gunners above them opened up and pinned them to the ground. Darkness came and the rain stopped. A helicopter clattered down and lifted the dead soldier away.

On other nights, the rain didn't stop. Men huddled in their foxholes. As some kept watch, others wrung streams of water from their clothing. Then they dressed again, wrapped themselves in a wet poncho and tried to rest.

"We've got to get more sleep," said Captain John Leide of Auburn, NY, "One or two hours a night is about all we've been able to pull." But the nightly strain on nerves didn't let up.

A squad sergeant in an ambush position had just counted his troops when an extra figure appeared against the sky. The sergeant lay flat and waited. The shape moved directly toward him and when it was about 10 feet away, he pressed the trigger of his automatic rifle. It jammed. The figure leaped and firing erupted all around

him. It blazed for 10 minutes as the men crawled and fired in the darkness at the unknown number of enemy.

When the firing died, searchers found a body with a pistol and an American-made carbine beside it. The man, dressed only in black shorts, carried papers promoting him to first lieutenant in the Viet Cong forces.

On the ninth day, the company was ordered to the base camp of the battalion artillery. The sun boiled down as the troops moved out of the jungle in two long columns. As they neared the camp, the men in the lead sped up the pace. Rest was not far away.

Near the end of a column, a team carrying the tube and base plate of an 81mm mortar began to falter. A sergeant bawled at them, "You keep going, you keep going! You're not going to come this far and fall out now. Don't let me hear any man say he's tired, you get tired when I say you can get tired, and I'm not saying it. Pick it up, pick it up, we're almost there."

Half an hour later, Charlie Company trudged past the troops guarding the base camp. Under the shade of the trees in a rubber plantation, the men flopped to the ground. They threw off their helmets and dropped their packs.

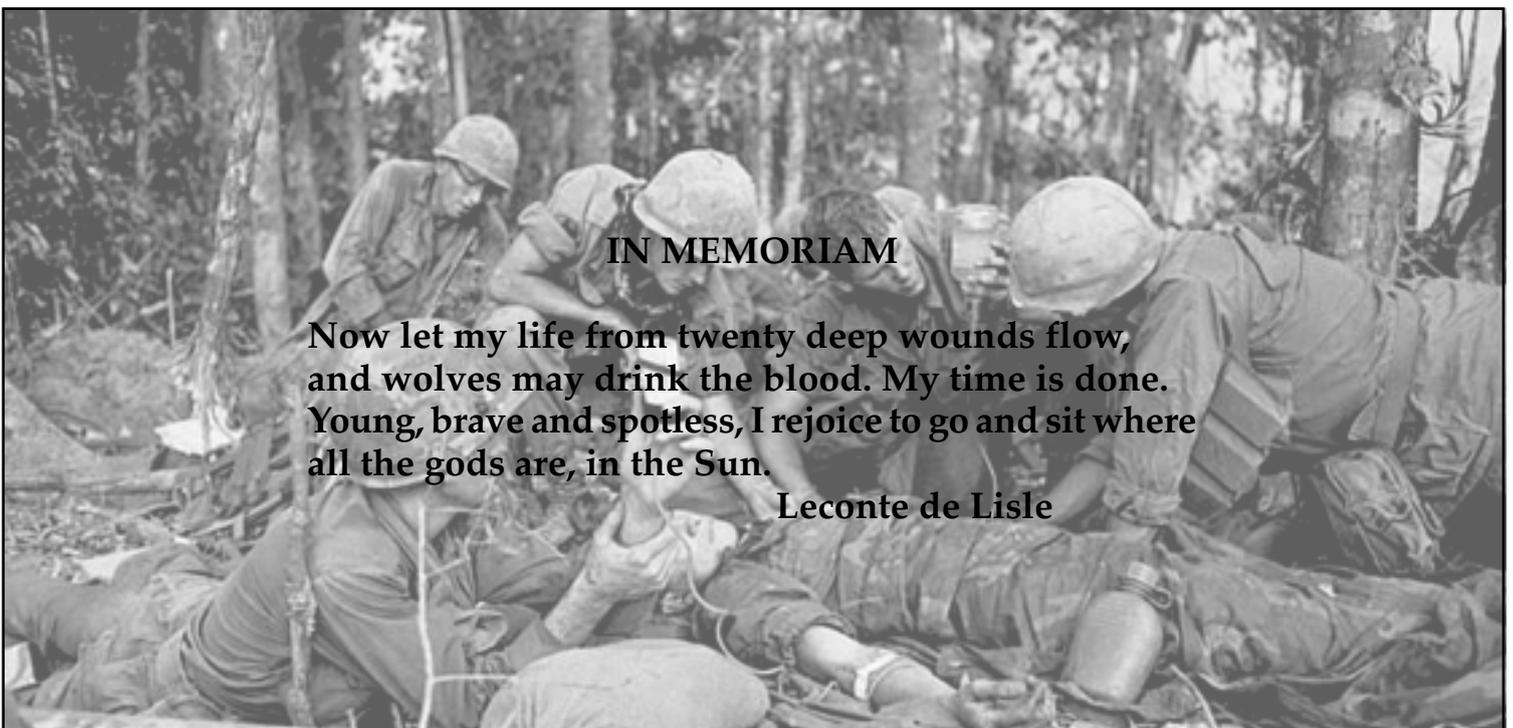
Charlie Company could relax for awhile...



Yet another definition of "Fast Food," here a trooper of Troop E, 17th Cav uses a pinch of C-4 explosive (which burns very nicely) to heat a can of C-Rations in the Central Highlands. June, 1967. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)



The Mohican Haircut, a popular trend with the paratroopers of WWII is seen here on an R.T.O. as his CO calls in the "Sit-rep" near Pleiku, May, 1967. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)



IN MEMORIAM

**Now let my life from twenty deep wounds flow,
and wolves may drink the blood. My time is done.
Young, brave and spotless, I rejoice to go and sit where
all the gods are, in the Sun.**

Leconte de Lisle



*A paratrooper of the 2/503d tries to determine where the sniper fire is coming from in the hills near Dak To. June, 1967.
(Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)*



173d STORIES

173rd Jungle School

by Jack Tarr

One of the common ties for troopers who joined the "Herd" after February 1967 was the 173rd Brigade Jungle School.

Brigade Commander, General John Deane, directed the start-up of a comprehensive in-country training program as the tours of the originally deployed battalions were close to ending and casualties were thinning the ranks.

Replacements were arriving at a rate of 75-250 a week and General Deane didn't want them put in combat until they'd had thorough training. Two officers and 12 NCOs were selected from the line battalions to staff the new school. All had been in-country at least eight months and the commandant and two NCOs were on their second tour.

Beginning in mid-February, all new arrivals to the brigade were required to complete Jungle School. Only field grade officers were exempt.

The Jungle School was set up with several tents and bleachers behind the 2nd Battalion each. Each Monday, 100 to 250 new troopers reported for the 5-1/2 day course. They carried their assigned weapon, full field gear, Cs and two full canteens. The cadre wore distinctive camouflage cowboy hats. Each class was broken down into squads and platoons with new officers and NCOs filling

all leadership positions. An experienced Jungle School officer or NCO was a "TAC for each unit.

The first four days consisted of practical, "hands on" training in key combat skills so graduates would be able to "hit the ground running" when they joined their unit in the field. Training included: map and compass reading, formations, day and night patrols, ambushes, counter-ambush, defense, communications, etc. The new troopers were familiarized with LAWS, M-60s, M-79s and Claymores. They zeroed their weapons, went through a "quick reaction" course and a booby-trap lane. They learned about VC tactics and civic action.

They wore full gear all day. Moving between training areas was done on the double. By the time of the 18-hour combat operation Friday and Saturday, each trooper was comfortable with his gear and was well on his way to being acclimated to the humid conditions.

Culmination of the training was a carefully planned combat operation in the jungles surrounding Bien Hoa Air Base. The day portion was a sweep of several kilometers, with defensive positions and ambushes set up at night.

The platoons moved separately through the jungle calling in check points. Late in the afternoon, they arrived at the designated company base camp and secured a company perimeter. Choppers were called in to bring in hot chow and water.

At dusk, clearing patrols swept the perimeter and ambushes slipped out. The next morning, clearing patrols again checked the perimeter and the ambush patrols returned. After foxholes were filled, the platoons returned to base camp to clear gear and be debriefed.

At least twice, the new troopers got into firefights with VC outside the airbase. The first



173d Airborne Brigade paratrooper takes cover as enemy sniper fire opens up. The Sky Soldiers attacked, overran and held the enemy base camp. (Courtesy of Don Hall)

time, a cadreman, SFC Rodriguiz, was seriously wounded. The next week, the cadre devised an elaborate string of ambushes using several "drop off" ambushes on known VC movement routes. That night, two of the ambushes were tripped and three VC were killed with no US casualties.

By early June, almost 40% of the brigade had rotated to the States. Several thousand new troopers who completed Jungle School fit right into their units in the field. Those who set up and served in the Jungle School prevented many casualties to 173rd troopers.

Contact: 482nd NVA Battalion December 1969

by 1 Lt. David E. Haag

Unusual is the only word I know of to describe to you the following experiences I had in Vietnam, which began when I reported to the 173rd's training camp in the A Shau Valley. I was told I was being assigned to the 1/50 Mechanized Infantry Unit. The 1/50 Mech had been attached to the 173rd for the firepower and mobility of their M-155 Armored Personnel Carriers (APC provided). Having never been near an APC, I was more than skeptical of the assignment. Could an APC function effectively in rice paddies and jungle terrain? When I arrived at the 1/50th Mech base camp in Phan Thiet, however, I was very impressed with what I saw.

The platoon I was to command had four APCs, better known to the men as tracks. Each track had a .50 caliber machine gun as its main armament, and an M-60 machine gun mounted on each side at the rear of the track. The two M-60s could fire to the front, rear, their respective sides, and were detachable. There was also an M-60 inside each track for the squad to hump, and enough ammunition to win the war ourselves. It didn't take a mathematical genius to figure out our platoon had four .50s and twelve M-60s. The tracks could swim thru the rice paddies, and bulldoze most of the trees and brush we encountered. I thought I had died and gone to heaven.



Television star Chuck Connors gazes at an ambush-Vietnam style, at the 173d Airborne Brigade Jungle Training Course, Bien Hoa. Captain Jack K. Tarr, School Commandant, points out where the bushwhackers lay in wait. Lt. Jim Wood is in the center. Spring 1967. (Courtesy of Jack K. Tarr)



Motorman



Needless to say with this incredible firepower and mobility, the troops created some unique uses. To clear a landing zone in a wooded area for example, a driver could pull the brake on one side of the track while gunning the engine and let it spin in an ever widening circle knocking down trees up to 12 inches in diameter. Or to clear a field of fire for a night perimeter, the .50 cal. was used to knockdown trees the size of your arm. The ingenuity of individual creativeness never ceased to amaze me.

Life with the 1/50th Mech however, was not the heaven I envisioned. We pulled more than our share of combat assaults either humping in, or being inserted into hot landing zones by helicopter. Nightly listening posts and ambushes were SOP because at night the tracks were sitting ducks for rocket propelled grenades. We were constantly on the move throughout our area of operations (AO), and never stayed at the same night perimeter more than two nights before moving on. I could count on one hand the number of times I left the field to go into base camp during my tour.

In December 1969, our G2 had unconfirmed reports of an NVA unit sighted in the Binh Thuan sector of our AO. Since that was in range of our platoon, we got the assignment

to recon it with some help from the "Boys down under." Four Australians arrived that day on our resupply helicopter. The plan was for Aussies to ride into the area on our tracks and drop off into the bush when we circled back. Just before nightfall, they called on the radio. They had just watched a company size unit set up camp in the valley right underneath their position. This was a regularly Army NVA unit from the 482nd NVA Battalion. They carried machine guns, heavy mortars, radios AK-47s and backpacks. We didn't sleep that night because we knew what was coming.

Everything went as planned and they set up on a ridge overlooking a valley. During the night we got our orders. Our platoon was to be the hammer (sledge hammer) in a hammer and anvil maneuver. We were in position before first light. At first we must have sounded like a freight train coming down that valley to the walking NVA. When we made contact it sounded like all hell broke loose. All the .50 cal. and M-60 machine guns firing at the same time with four tracks rolling on line literally cut down everything in sight. Results of that contact: killed, 20 VC; captured, 6 POWs, 2 60mm mortars, 1 Russian machine gun, 16 individual weapons and 3 radios.

After the action was over, some one brought me a notebook they had found on an NVA officer that they told me was written in some kind of code. When I opened it I was dumbfounded. Up until that point I had always considered the enemy to be barbaric. What I was holding in my hands was a notebook in which this NVA officer was practicing

integral calculus problems while fighting in the jungles of Vietnam. I had struggled with integral calculus on a college campus. I had to look into the face of this man! His death mask told no stories, but I knew as I looked at him the incredible intelligence we had just destroyed. I was numbed by that experience, and it still troubles me to this day.

That night we set up our night perimeter on the NVA's campsite, and put out several ambushes and listening posts. All thru the night we heard voices of separated NVA and groans of the hiding wounded trying to find each other. We killed several NVA that tried to walk into our perimeter.

Next morning I took out a patrol to look for survivors. That was the last patrol for Bill Whitlach and me. We made contact and I took an AK47 bullet through the knee. That same round after passing through my knee then hit and mortally wounded Bill who was next to me. I would like to dedicate this article to the memory of Sergeant William Whitlach, Moundsville, West Virginia.

Condensation Of A Monograph Logistical Support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) In Vietnam

May 1965 - May 1966

by (then) Major Carlton P. Weidenthal

"The Support Battalion Is What Makes Us Separate"

With its deployment from Okinawa to Vietnam in May 1965, the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) became the first US Army ground combat unit to be committed to the war there.

Like the brigade itself, the 173rd Support Battalion (Airborne) was unique in that at the time of its activation, it was the only such unit



We get there any way we can. (Courtesy of Charles E. Canisius)



The spoils of war — a grim reminder. (Courtesy of Charles E. Canisius)

in the Army. In addition to a Headquarters & Headquarters Detachment, four organic companies with a total strength of over 630 provided division level support in the areas of administration, medical, supply and transportation and maintenance. Four special staff officers oversaw the technical operations of those units in the areas of supply, parachute maintenance, transportation and maintenance.

Thus, this battalion made the 173rd truly separate since it provided the logistical services and support that gave the brigade its staying power.

After deployment, the Administration Company was attached to the Brigade Headquarters. As the Australian and New Zealand units arrived and were attached to the 173rd, their logistical elements, the 1st Australian Logistic Support Company and the New Zealand supply and maintenance platoon, were attached to the Support Battalion and their subordinate elements integrated into their counterpart organizations by functional area.

Initial Logistical Support

Brigade units deployed with three days of accompanying supplies. The US Army Support Command, Vietnam (USASCV) G-4 personnel agreed with a logistical support plan wherein the brigade would ship a reserve level of supplies from Okinawa to sustain itself for about 30 days. POL was an exception and sufficient POL was available at the storage tanks at Nha Be to support brigade requirements.

An estimated 30-day level of ammunition involving approximately 1,500 tons composed of over 90 line items was shipped from Okinawa.

Follow-up stocks included 30 days of C-rations and 15 to 30 days of general supplies and repair parts. The bulk of these follow-up stocks was shipped and began to arrive in Saigon on 9 May. As requirements for items needed immediately arose, information was relayed to supply personnel in the rear detachment on Okinawa. There they submitted requisitions to the depot, drew the items and

loaded them on the C-130 that was available to the brigade for one sortie per day from D3 through D90. In addition to follow-up supplies and items required immediately, personnel replacements, mail and additional items of TOE equipment were flown to Bien Hoa on the daily "milk run" C-130.

Although soldiers of the 173rd were prepared to eat C-rations for 30 days, we drew B-ration items supplemented with fresh fruits and vegetables within a few days following the unit's arrival in Vietnam. A-rations were soon available.

As the brigade became settled and prepared to conduct offensive operations away from its base camp area toward the end of its first month in-country, logistical support was being provided by a combination of issues of supplies from Okinawa with delivery at Bien Hoa or the Port of Saigon and picked up by Support Battalion personnel at storage sites in the Saigon area.

Support Of Combat Operations

With the initiation of search and destroy operations involving one or more maneuver battalions with supporting artillery and other combat support elements, where the force was deployed from the base camp, came the requirement to establish techniques for the daily resupply of such a force.

Initially these operations were logistically supported directly from the base camp area. The Support Battalion established and operated a resupply helipad in the base camp area. There, unit representatives set up their supply trains operations. The Support Battalion element, primarily Supply and Transport (S&T) Company personnel, moved supplies from their storage area and issued the brigade supply officer with a close approximation of supply requirements. Since assault troops going into an operation by helicopter carried only a one-day level, this resupply operation had to be established on D-Day or early on D+1 at the latest.

Transportation of supplies to the committed units involved the use of organic helicopters. The UH-1B, and later UH-1D "Hueys" were used for this job. It required

anywhere from 12 to 40 sorties daily to resupply an infantry battalion. Unit supply personnel organized their supplies of ammunition, water, rations, general supplies and POL into "Huey" loads for their committed elements, either at company or platoon levels. The appropriate number of helicopter sorties were allocated to each unit requiring resupply by the Support Battalion OIC of the resupply operation.

Medical evacuation (medevac) of casualties was directly from the area of operations to the brigade clearing station using the medevac helicopters normally provided by an Army air ambulance detachment based at Tan Son Nhut. At the time the 173rd arrived in Vietnam, "Dust-off" was the call sign of the supporting air ambulance unit. Later, when a new Signal Operation Instruction (SOI) was published and implemented, the call sign was changed, but all units had learned to associate medevac with "Dustoff" and that name stuck. It remained so throughout the war. During these operations at least one "Dustoff" would be positioned at the 173rd clearing station so that it could rapidly respond to medevac requests from the committed units. A standard format for these requests was published and all units could call for a "Dust-off" ship over the brigade command or administrative radio nets. Medical personnel at the clearing station received these calls and the "Dustoff" helicopter was dispatched immediately.

The 3rd Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) had been set up in the 173rd's base camp area and, while this was a general support type unit, it was not uncommon to have the more seriously injured personnel flown directly to the MASH. At times, injured men were also evacuated directly to the field hospital in Saigon. The determination of the receiving facility was made by qualified personnel aboard the "Dustoff" ships. All brigade battalions had a medical officer assigned. Their employment during operations was at the discretion of the battalion commander. On occasion these medical officers accompanied their units, while on other operations they worked at the clearing station



A relaxing moment while defending a perimeter. (Courtesy of Charles E. Canisius)

while medical aidmen (medics) accompanied their units.

Maintenance was performed by maintenance company personnel in their regular operating area. Items requiring repairs, usually small arms and radios, were evacuated through normal maintenance channels using the resupply helicopters for transporting the items to the base camp area.

As operations were initiated at greater distances from the base camp area, flying times increased. It became necessary to reduce the overall time for resupplying committed units using the same number of helicopters allocated for this job. The solution was found by adopting a technique whereby a forward logistical base would be established in the vicinity of the area of operations. As a rule of thumb, this forward base was to be established when operations were conducted more than 25 kilometers, or about 15 minutes flying time, from the base camp. The deployment of the brigade CP was also an influencing factor.

The forward logistical base was formed with components from Medical, S&T and Maintenance companies. A clearing station was deployed, but the brigade clearing station was retained in the base camp to act as the backup medical facility. The S&T Company provided the majority of the personnel in the forward area to move stock and issue supplies, and a maintenance detachment, task organized for each operation, was deployed. The OIC of this forward logistical base was normally the Support Battalion Executive Officer.

Use of fixed-wing aircraft, ranging from "Caribou" to C-130s, for movement of the bulk supplies dictated the establishment of this forward base near an airfield. This normally created no problems and there were alternate methods of resupply if none was available.

The 173rd exercised its capability to resupply itself by parachute drop. Aerial resupply operations were conducted that involved the use of C-130s, C-123s, CV-2s and "Hueys." The low-level extraction (LOLEX) technique was employed on several occasions. The Support Battalion's Air Equipment Support Platoon (AESP) played the dominant role in these operations since they rigged the loads, trans-

ported them to the departure airfield, loaded them aboard the aircraft, and then, flying on the resupply missions, "kicked" the loads over the drop zone. The aerial resupply capability of the 173rd was appreciated by the other US units. On at least one occasion when elements of the 1st Infantry Division were heavily engaged during an operation, the Division G-4 asked that the 173rd rig, load and drop ammunition, water and rations to their units. The AESP had the supplies ready for loading before the aircraft even arrived at Bien Hoa. From that time the AESP maintained a standard load of supplies rigged for parachute drop that could be dropped to the 173rd units or any other unit, upon request, on very short notice. On another occasion, a 173rd unit was in heavy contact after dark in War Zone D. Rates of fire were so great that it was estimated the unit would need ammunition before dawn. The AESP was called upon to rig loads for drop from "Hueys" with flashlights on each load so that the infantrymen could locate them on the ground. Twelve loads were ready in two hours.

Unit S-4s set up their battalion trains, to include kitchens, at the forward logistical base. During the lengthier operations, every unit fed one A-ration meal per day. The rations were issued to the units in this forward area, cooked by unit mess personnel and packed in "mermite" cans, then ferried forward to committed companies and platoons with their daily resupply of other items.

Supervision of the planned logistical support was the job of the Brigade S-4. Due to numerous administrative tasks, the S-4 office at the base camp had to remain operational even when the remainder of the CP deployed, but an S-4 officer representative and small party always accompanied the CP.

In addition to establishing and operating the forward logistical support base during combat operations, the Support Battalion Commander was charged with base camp security. To accomplish this mission, he coordinated the efforts of the personnel in the units' rear detachments, and with his personnel comprising the bulk of the troops, maintained the defensive perimeter. Additionally, he

formed a maneuver unit that could react to an attack anywhere around the brigade's area.

The Support Battalion provided yet another service that was available to maneuver units during operations. Special demolition teams were formed and trained. These teams were on call to be transported into objective areas to destroy rice caches, VC tunnels or other facilities requiring destruction with larger amounts of explosives.

Consumption Data And Adjustment Of Supply Levels

From the first battalion-size operation, supply consumption data for the operational force were maintained. As additional supply experience was gained, data was updated and revised. After three months of operations, they were submitted to MACV for review and use in their planning for logistical support of incoming units. Shortly thereafter, US Army, Vietnam (USARV) prescribed a standard format and directed the submission of this data which had become invaluable for planning purposes. Later, representatives at the Department of Army level expressed an interest in how the data was accumulated and used. They were impressed with what a relatively small unit could do in this area.

For various task forces that the brigade might be called upon to deploy, three operating conditions were described. The task forces ranged in size from an entire brigade task force to a cavalry troop task force and the condition's were:

- (1) Search and Destroy - deployed from the base camp - in contact with the enemy.
- (2) Same as (1) but not in contact.
- (3) Defensive posture in base camp.

After the first eight months in Vietnam, the data remained constant and was found to be extremely useful in planning for contingencies and planned operations.

To say that there were no problem in logistically supporting the 173rd during the time frame involved in this paper would be over-emphasizing the "can do" attitude that made this brigade a nationally recognized unit. Certainly there were situations that existed or that arose that caused concern, but these were overcome by a combination of hard work at the operational level, using sound management techniques and common sense at the staff levels and command action. The brigade policy was one of "do all we can for ourselves, then, if necessary, call for help." The opposing school of thought is "the squeaking wheel gets the oil." The 173rd did not squeak and it did get its fair share of the "oil."

The infantrymen learned the hard way during that first year in Vietnam. The troops in the brigade who were responsible for supporting the maneuver units learned just as much.

The greatest praise that could be bestowed upon the men who supported the 173rd Airborne Brigade was summarized by the brigade commander when he stated, "Never once have I been required to modify or even slow a tactical operation from the lack of logistical support."

Fellow "Sky Soldiers - Airborne"

by Dominic John Siracusa

I finally got to Vietnam in March 1968. After completing the 173rd Airborne Brigade Jungle School at An Khe, I was assigned to the 3rd Platoon, 173rd Engineer Company and joined them in Kontum. Shortly thereafter, the brigade moved to Bong Son. While we were at Bong Son I worked with the line companies of the 3rd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, the 1/50th Mechanized Infantry, and the 17th Cavalry doing demolition work, clearing landing zones and mine sweeping. On one occasion while mine sweeping for the 17th Cavalry, doing demolition work, clearing landing zones and mine sweeping. On one occasion while mine sweeping for the 17th Cavalry, just outside of Bong Son, we were ambushed and one combat engineer I was teamed up with was killed and another seriously wounded. Myself and another combat engineer were lucky enough to escape uninjured. Every morning we in the engineers cleared Highway I between Bong Son and L.Z. Pony checking for mines and booby traps.

A short while later the 3rd Battalion moved out again, this time to Bao Loc, and we in the 3rd Platoon, 173rd Engineer Company moved out with them. We continued working with all the line companies of the 3rd Battalion throughout my time in Bao Loc. When we first arrived in Bao Loc there was relatively nothing there. I remember the old French bunker that stood alone in the field. It was octagon shaped and made from logs and dirt. We built up and fortified Bao Loc and at the same time continued working with the

grunts of the 3rd Battalion. I was there when the Viet Cong attacked Bao Loc with mortars and rockets and sent sapper teams into the compound destroying much equipment and killing a couple of troopers and a one-arm homeless Vietnamese boy who were in the large bunker that was destroyed at the main entrance.

I made a lot of good friends, soldiers who were truly dedicated to their jobs, while assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Unfortunately time and distance has its way of limiting many of us to just memories. I want to say hello and "AIRBORNE ALL THE WAY" to all the "SKY SOLDIERS" I proudly served with in the 173rd Airborne Brigade in the Republic of South Vietnam.

Dominic John Siracusa
RA 11 811 230
173rd Engr. Co.
173rd Abn. Bde.
March 1968 - March 1969

Cresant Valley - 4 June 1970

by Michael K. Cox

Co. B - 1st Bn., 503rd Inf.
Comd. Captain Richard H. White
First Sergeant Camillo Gonzales

Time - 0230 hrs.
Date - 4 June 1970
Place - Cresant Valley, Binh Dinh
Province, Republic of Vietnam

In the early morning hours of 4 June 1970 the weapons platoon under the command of

Lieutenant Jethro Matthews consisting of 12 men came under attack by mortar, automatic, and small arms fire from a larger force estimated at 35-40 NVA. Three NVA sappers succeeded in penetrating the perimeter of the camp. The enemy threw grenades at a guard bunker killing SP4 John F. Tillou and severely wounded SP4 Tafoyia. Sergeant Larry Metheny killed all three of the NVA sappers. The NVA then stuck bangolor torpedoes in the wire in an attempt to over run the camp. The bangolors did not go off. Artillery and helicopter gunships were called in by Platoon Sergeant Willie Boggan.

Contact continued until 0500 hours, but the rest of the platoon laid down a blanket of fire on the enemy until contact broke. The enemy then tried to make it back up into the mountains but ran into an ambush that was sent out that night. Staff Sergeant Anthony Pansini and SP4 Thom Sonnenberg killed two more NVA in this contact when the NVA pointman tripped over Sonnenberg firing as he fell. Sonnenberg returned the fire and killed him as he fell over him. Pansini then killed the next NVA soldier that was directly behind the pointman. The enemy dispersed and contact broke.

For his valor the platoon recommended the Silver Star for Sergeant Larry Metheny. SP4 Tafoya died of his wounds on 7 June at 67th Evac. Hospital in Qui Nonh.

(Note: SP4 Sonnenberg and Staff Sergeant Pansini never received awards for their valor in the ambush that was sent out that night. Social security numbers can be provided, if anyone can help give these soldiers of the 173rd proper recognition. Please contact Michael K. Cox.)

Combat After Action Interview

Submitted by Jack E. Peckett

A/3/503 Abn. Inf., 173rd Abn. Bde.
(Separate), XOM DAP, 27 Dec 1967

Department of the Army Headquarters
173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), APO San Francisco 96250.

AVBE-SC/MHD

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Interview - A/3/503rd Infantry, 27 December 1967.

1) Name and Type of Organization: A Company, 3rd Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate).

2) Inclusive Dates of Operation: 27-28 December 1967.

3) Location: Map Sheet 6835 IV, Dong Xaun, Xom Dap BQ 900784.

4) Control and Command Headquarters: 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) S3.

5) Persons Being Interviewed: See Enclosure 1.

6) Interviewing Officer: Captain Frank C. Foster, Commanding Officer, 24th Military History Detachment, 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate).

7) Tank Organization: 3rd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne).

8) Supporting Forces: USAF TAC Air on call (308 TAC Fighter Sqn.), B/5/27th Artillery, A/6/27th Artillery, 105mm (element of 3/319th Artillery (Airborne), 4.2" mortar and helicopter gunships (355th Assault Helicopter Co.), Brigade Reaction Force D/4/503d Infantry and a two-man engineer team was attached from the 173rd Engineer Company.

9) Background Information: A Company was to conduct a combat assault by helicopter into a landing zone in AO Enfield, A, B, C and D companies had been conducting search and destroy operations in the Tuy Hoa area



Hot chw. We never had it so good. (Courtesy of Charles E. Canisius)



A little personal hygiene. Sky Soldiers always look good! (Courtesy of Charles E. Canisius)



Troopers of Troop E 17th Cavalry making friends in a Montagnard village near Kontum in the Central Highlands, May 1967. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)

protecting the rice harvest since November. A Co. is authorized six officers and 176 enlisted men. The company employed the morning of the 27th with four officers and 119 enlisted men. The weapons platoon did not make the assault but were deployed where they could support. Each paratrooper deployed with nine meals, three LRRP and six C-ration in his rucksack in addition to his poncho, poncho liner, air mattress, extra socks and toilet kit. M-16 rifleman carried four hundred (4) rounds of ammunition (15 to 20 magazines per man); M-60 machine gunners carried 1,600 rounds of ammo, spread through the squad; M-79 grenadiers carried 50 rounds of HE; and all the men carried at

least two M-26 frag grenades and two smoke grenades. Three to four claymores were carried per squad.

The terrain surrounding the actual LZ was wood covered hills on three sides. The entire LZ was walled by a hedge growth and the LZ itself was depressed about two feet like the surface of a billiard table in relation to the cushions. The surrounding trees were 30-40 feet high and covered with thick scrubs and vines. The weather was clear and hot on the 27th of December.

10) Intelligence: Suspected NVA/VC elements (size unknown) of the 95th NVA Regiment were believed to be in the area. Visual reconnaissance aircraft flying over the area had received fire. ROK and ARVN forces reported enemy elements were growing food in the area. ROK and ARVN forces had been mauled by ambushes in recent operations in the area.

11) Mission: the 3/503d Inf. was to commence operations in AO Enfield. B/5 27th Arty. was to be heli-lifted from FSB Clara to the FSB near the Dong Tre Special Forces Camp commencing at 0700

hours. The 3/503rd Inf. would conduct four combat assaults into four LZs. All combat assaults would be preceded by air and artillery preparations. B/3/503rd Inf. would conduct a CA in an LZ (BZ 883808) at 0905 hours. C/3/503rd Inf. would conduct a CA into an LZ (BQ 874790) at 0945 hours. D/3/503rd Inf. would conduct a CA into an LZ (BQ 903793) at 1025 hours. A/3/503rd Inf. would conduct a CA into an LZ at BQ 856773. Headquarters elements would be lifted to FSB 4 and the 4.2" mortars would be lifted to a mortar base at BQ 915754. The mortar base would be secured by a Camp Strike Force from the USSF Camp at Dong Tre. All units but C/3/503rd Inf. (BQ 960566) were located at FSB Clara.

12) Concept of the Operation and Execution: The Company Commander, Captain Jack E. Peckett, had plenty of time to brief his platoon leaders and NCOs. Earlier the CO had made an aerial recon of the four companies different LZs and the three alternate LZs. All officers and noncommissioned officers down to squad leaders were briefed and carried 1:50,000 scale maps of the area.

A Co. was the last of the three companies flying from FSB Clara to depart. (The sand and dust caused by the helicopters blew into a few men's rifles and ammo, bags, later causing them to jam on the LZ). D/3/503d Inf. was lifted from FSB Clara to Dong Tre beginning at 0745 hours and closing at 0945 hours. Meanwhile B and C Co. conducted their CAs into BQ 883808 and BQ 874790 respectively.

C Co. received fire on the LZ and returned fire with unknown results. At 1550 hours, C Co. was extracted from the LZ and brought to the Dong Tre Special Forces Camp. B Co. made negative contact on their LZ and moved off south. D Co. conducted their CA from Dong Tre into a LZ (vic 921755) at 1115 hours. No contact was made on the LZ but as the company started moving they were taken under heavy fire from the northeast, east and southwest and received rifle grenades.

A Co. was already airborne when Captain Peckett radioed a change in LZs to the platoon leaders. A Co. was diverted to a completely new LZ and its new mission was to conduct a CA, then move north to reinforce D/3/503rd Inf.

As the helicopters landed the dismounting paratroopers were immediately taken under heavy automatic weapons and grenade fire from the south and east sides of the landing zone. Snipers high in trees opened up from three sides. The platoon and squad organizations became a somewhat intermingled and squad leaders, platoon sergeants and platoon leaders reformed their elements out of these men closest to them.

The initial disorganization was not unlike the dispersion encountered during a parachute drop. The 1st platoon, under 1LT Willard Droke landed near the middle of the LZ slightly more to the northern end and on the western side of a clump of trees dividing the northern half of the LZ down the middle. The platoon initially started moving north to secure that end of the LZ. Captain Jack Peckett determined his most immediate problem was the southern end of the LZ so he instructed Lieutenant Droke to turn his 1st Platoon (mixed with a few men from the 2nd Platoon) around and started south moving towards the western wood line.

If you think of the LZ as about twice the size of a football field and as a reference the center of a clock at mid-field, the movement and terrain can be easier to imagine. As the 1st Platoon approached mid-field or the 3 o'clock - 9 o'clock line, there was a small burn which ran from the 9 o'clock (western) edge to center field. Once across this burn the thin shield of trees ended which ran from almost

the northern end of the LZ (12 o'clock) to the center of the LZ. The three NVA bunkers located at 3 o'clock about 5-10 meters back into the eastern wood line had a clear field of fire after this burn was crossed. There was also intermittent enemy fire coming from the wood line area from 9 o'clock to 6 o'clock. A 6 o'clock on the southern end of the LZ another screen of trees ran 30-40 meters straight north up the LZ. Thus the LZ was split down the north-south axis by a line of trees and scrub except for a 30-40 meter gap just below center field and a 20 meter or so gap at the northern end. Most of the wounded were hit crossing the open areas in the center. The 1st platoon crossed the burn heading south and came under accurate enemy fire. Lieutenant Droke then inclined west towards the cover of the western wood line and pushed down south to the area of the plowed field in the southwest corner of the perimeter (from 6 o'clock to 10 o'clock) and Lieutenant Droke, although badly wounded had set up his platoon CP along the western wood line between 8 and 9 o'clock, where he was later joined by Captain Peckett.

Captain Peckett had landed in the northwest portion of the LZ, and then moved to the southern portion of the LZ where he stayed temporarily and finally to the western tree line to set up his CP. Lieutenant Dan Kerckhoff, the FO attached to the B Battery, 5th Battalion of the 27th Artillery, was pinned down by fire from the eastern NVA bunkers and separated from Captain Peckett when he moved through the southern portion of the LZ. Having been diverted into a different LZ from the preplanned LZ, Lieutenant Kerckhoff and his RTO (PFC Ronald Gill) were unsure of their location. Lieutenant Kerckhoff contacted the air observer from the 3/319th Artillery who was overhead and had him bring in the initial rounds against the eastern side of the LZ. Lieutenant Kerckhoff then radioed corrections and passed on troop locations. Lieutenant Kerckhoff's IFFV's Battery B had displaced to support the combat assaults and between supporting D/3/503d Infantry's contact and A Company's they expended their 600 round basic load. Lieutenant Colonel George Fisher, the Brigade S3, had to make a hasty resupply by CH-47 to the rapid firing artillery men of the 27th Artillery to ensure continuous artillery support. In addition, the brigade moved a battery of 175mm guns up in supporting position.

The 2nd Platoon came in just behind the 3rd Platoon except that they landed near the center of the eastern side. They immediately came under heavy automatic weapons fire from the four NVA bunkers about 5-10 meters back in the woods at 9 o'clock. Several men rushed right upon the bunkers and were killed, others were wounded. The 2nd Platoon concentrated on these bunkers and fanned down, towards the southeast to secure that side of the LZ. By combination of a well disciplined, high volume of fire power and an aggressive hand grenade assault the four bunkers were wiped out after about an hour and a half of fighting. The paratroopers

to the southeast engaged and knocked out small groups of NVA/VC and snipers who were also in bunkers.

The 3rd Platoon which had landed in the center of the field moved with part of its force against the eastern bunkers in combination with the 2nd Platoon. The rest of the platoon pushed north and northeast to secure the wood line working through the tree screen that ran from the center of the field northward. A napalm strike landing at the northeast corner of the LZ had knocked out the enemy in the six bunkers there. A few men from the 1st platoon and Company Headquarters covered the men from 11 o'clock to 12 o'clock. It took the company between 45 minutes to an hour to work their way into the tree line and another two hours and half to three hours to silence the enemy positions. The NVA/VC broke complete contact around 1630.

Artillery fires were placed on enemy positions to the east and Captain Peckett called in air strikes on the high ground to the northwest and east where suspected enemy reinforcements would approach. Helicopter gunships covered the company between the air strikes. Close to 2,000 rounds of artillery were fired. Fifty air strikes, carrying napalm, 500 lb. high-drag bombs, cluster bomblets and 20mm cannon were flown in support of the company.

At 1223 hours, D/4/503rd Inf. (the Brigade Reaction Force) had been alerted for movement. They were lifted by CH-47 to Dong Tre at 1330 hours and became OPCON to Task Force 3/503rd Inf. upon closing at 1400 hours. D/4/503rd Inf. conducted a combat assault into a LZ at BQ 918775 at 1437 hours and moved northwest generally along SUOI DAP River arriving at A Company's position at 1620 hours. The two companies evacuated the wounded and established a night laager site. Between 0230 hours and 0400 hours, the morning of the 28th, their perimeter was harassed by sporadic hand grenade attacks (estimated 21 grenades thrown). Two paratroopers were wounded and medevaced at first light. A Company continued search and destroy operations with light contact to the south for the next several days before moving back to PHU HELP as Brigade Reaction Force.

The following are individual descriptions of the combat assault as related during a combat interview on 1 January 1968.

Lieutenant Drokes: "We orbited south of the LZ because of an air strike which was supporting Delta Company. Once the strike was over we went in fast. There as no problem getting the men in. As soon as we got out of the helicopter I heard firing to the north but couldn't see anything."

Captain Peckett: "On the morning of 27 December A/3/503d left FSB Clara at 1130 hours on a combat assault north of the Song Ki Lo River to set up a blocking position. During their heliborne assault, Delta Company made contact. They got heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire moving off the LZ and sustained about 15 casualties. Our

alternate mission was to go to an alternate LZ to reinforce one of the other companies in event this happened. Subsequently, we were ordered to go into LZ #3 about 3 MMS south of Delta. The place we went in was called Xom Dap, named for a village a little south of the LZ. The 1st Platoon was to secure the northern section of the LZ and hold that position. Flight path of the helicopters was south to north. The first lift in consisted of the 1st platoon (-) and the company command group. When I got off the helicopter I immediately heard incoming small arms fire. I called the Battalion CO (Lieutenant Colonel John R. Cleland) and told him the LZ was red. We landed in the northwest portion of the LZ and initially moved to the west. I got my bearings and determined most of the firing at this time was coming from the south and west. We moved to the tree line and by this time the 2nd flight had come in with 3rd Platoon and that is when I observed the first wounded man (PFC Harry M. Harmon from the 3rd platoon). Sergeant Earnest Poole was with him and the medic attending him was PFC Sears. At this time Sergeant Poole was trying to direct the rest of the squad over to the area where the fire was coming from and to shift towards the southern portion of the LZ."

"The company came in fast in four separate lifts. The first two lifts of the four ships and the last two lifts of five ships. The LZ was about twice the size of a football field and practically divided into three separate fields by a hedge growth which ran the length of the field unbroken except for a 40-50 meter gap in the southern end and a smaller gap at the northern end of the field. A plowed field occupied the southwestern corner of the LZ."

Captain Peckett noted that the area to the southwest (in the vicinity of the plowed field) was not secure and this became his primary concern since he believed this was where the enemy was and seemed to be where most of the firing was coming from at that time. He ordered the 1st Platoon to swing around (1st Platoon had originally been given the mission of securing the northern end of the LZ) and move south along the western edge of the wood line. However, as the 1st Platoon moved south they came under small arms fire from snipers and from the three NVA bunkers on the eastern side of the field. The 1st Platoon, along with some members of the 2nd Platoon who had mixed in with them during the initial confusion of the landing, began to take casualties. One of the men, SP4 Hugh Monahan, was seriously burned when a trip flare he was wearing was hit and caught fire. Staff Sergeant Raymond E. Bell who was immediately behind Monahan caught the burning paratrooper and rolled him on the ground to get the fire out. While helping, Sergeant Ball was wounded in the leg but he still continued to try and put out the fire until he was wounded again.

Captain Peckett: "At this point the assault of the southern wood line halted. I moved up and kicked a couple of people and told them to get moving and let the medics get Sergeant Bell and Monahan. My RTOs

tried to follow me and were hit. He went back to them and was momentarily pinned down. SP4 Bruce Halls radio had been destroyed by a bullet. The loss of his RTOs hampered the CO since he had only FRC 25 to monitor three nets (Company Command Ret., Battalion Command Net and the Dustoff Net). My RTOs were SP4 Bruce Hall and SP4 Michael Beebe."

PFC Lamar Kings: "We didn't know it was a hot LZ. We just got out of the helicopter and started walking north. Then somebody yelled the 2nd Platoon's hit."

Sergeant Billy Caton: "After getting off the choppers, I started moving my squad down south off that open area and my M-79 man got hit. SP4 Robert Tanzi was one of the first to get hit in the open field. After he got hit PFC Gary Schwellenbach went over and started fixing him up, and we started moving a little bit and got on the squirmish line with the 1st and 2nd platoons. At this time we started picking up a whole hell of a lot of casualties there. They were getting hit all over. We were going to try a fire maneuver on the open area south at which time we caught firing from three sides; hell from bunkers from the east of us, snipers from the west and taking in fire from the south, in which time we finally got down to the wood line with Sergeant Hayes and me. Sergeant Hayes, started going out and policing up the people in the open area. Sergeant Hayes continued to police up the wounded in the open area. The troops did a fine job, but there wasn't much we could do in the middle of the LZ. We started out that way and then we were told to go to the east and go around the little tree line in the center and head south. By doing this, my squad was leading out. We were the 1st squad and when we had to turn around, we were in more or less a column. By this time all four squads were mixed in together and the NCOs were more or less taking whoever was available at the time and closest to them. We moved down just about where the plowed field was and the first man I saw get hit was Tansi, then following him was James McCormick. He got it in the arm and hand. PFC Schwellenbach went to aid McCormick and while he was doing that the rest of the platoon moved up to the south wood line and tried to connect with the 2nd Platoon which was on the eastern side. When I saw Schwellenbach again he had been shot in the leg. PFC Schwellenbach ran out of morphine so I went and gave him a hand. He told me to stay there with McCormick while he ran back to the small tree line in the center of the field. He said that is where company aid men were and was going to see if he could get some morphine. He started to get pinned down before he could back. I don't know where he got the morphine from but he didn't go all the way back. He must have picked it up from PFC Knox's medic bag and came running back to me about 20 meters. We were trying to get some of the snipers to the west of us, and we shot one sniper out of tree there. I moved over to where the CO was and that is when I got myself and SP4 Girouard pinned

down. PFC James Taylor tried to get over to Schwellenbach who had been wounded giving aid to PFC Ted Holliman, at which time he got hit t w i c e . Schwellenbach then aided Taylor. It was one great big mess up there in the woods. After we got in the woods we eliminated most of the fire to the south and 2nd Platoon eliminated the bunkers, and over in the western woods we finally got all three of the snipers. There were a lot of people in the bunkers and we tried to get them out with M-79 but they were no good because the brush was too close. It was too damn thick in there so we used M-16s. Over to the west every time someone would get up he would get hit. Myself and SP4 Girouard were moving around this area trying to feel out those snipers and we were the only ones that didn't get hit. The snipers were very good and I would say they were battle veterans. It seemed as if all of these NVA troops had been in quite a bit of combat."

Sergeant William Boyce: "One thing, before you went back to help Schwellenbach your squad has already gotten to the wood line because we had the wood line secure before anyone started getting back to the wounded people. Then we started picking up the fire to the west and quite a few men went over there to try and eliminate that. It was more or less an hour before it was actually well spread out and sure. When Schwellenbach got it in the leg, I left McCormick to put a bandage on his leg. Schwellenbach said 'I'll take the morphine and give it to McCormick. I got to help the other guys on the other wood line over here on the west side.' He and I both were under fire so we decided if we both got up and ran at the same time it would confuse the sniper and we might have a better chance. We started to get up but it didn't work. Schwellenbach started crawling along in the plowed area and got about 10 meters from me and got hit in the side because I heard something like a thump and he grabbed his side and rolled over so I called out and asked him if he was all right. He waved his arm and kept crawling. I went back to McCormick and started patching him up a little better and then another medic came and I went back up to my squad at the southern wood line. A lot of fire was coming in and we couldn't see over in the eastern side and wasn't exactly



A paratrooper of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) and the monkey he captured in the Iron Triangle sit atop an armored personnel carrier waiting to move out on a search and destroy mission. The monkey, named "Sam," was recently promoted to PFC for his action of Operation "Cedar Falls." (Courtesy of Donald C. Hall)

sure where the fire was coming from. We all started firing directly into the wood line south as you look east. At this time I don't believe there were too many NVA down there because during the whole operation I didn't see any NVA, VC or nothing. (They were all well camouflaged and in bunkers). At this time everyone was getting low on ammunition. For most of us the majority of our ammunition was in our rucksacks. We had dropped them in the wood line in the center of the field. PFC James Taylor was sent back to get M-79 ammo and any other ammunition he could find in any of the rucksacks. After PFC Taylor had left, Sergeant Hayes our platoon sergeant said we had to get the wounded men out of the field or the snipers would finish killing them. Sergeant Hayes along with SP4 George Bisson and Staff Sergeant Clarence Adams went out and started dragging people off the field. I saw Sergeant Hayes bring three back in on his back while fire was still coming in. About this time Taylor come back with the ammunition and we started getting the fire from our front. Sergeant Hayes and Sergeant Adams both went back out to bring in more wounded, at this time Sergeant Adams got shot in the leg and Sergeant Hayes brought him back and while they were back there a mortar round or something went off. Staff Sergeant Joseph Willson, Sergeant Hayes and SP4 Cain caught pieces of this exploding round. From 6 o'clock to 11 o'clock the LZ was secured by the 1st Platoon and may have been gaps but the 1st Platoon had this area."

SP4 Thomas Girouard: "As the 1st Platoon moved to the wood line, PSG Hayes was trying to tie in the flanks. There wasn't much security on our right flank (between 11 and 12 o'clock). We saw snipers were shooting in. We marked their position with smoke grenades and air strikes took care of the snipers."

Captain Peckett: "The first air strike came right in about 1430 and was right where we called it."

PFC Clyde Morrison: "When SP4 Claude Gates got hit in the open field we figured we were in the killing zone and we'd have to get out of the killing zone. So we moved towards the southern wood line."

Sergeant Billy Caton: "When the Dustoff (medevac helicopter) came in near the plowed field the WIA were standing out waiting. The Dustoff came under heavy fire and had to pull out. I heard they counted 200 holes in it when they got to Dong Tre."

Captain Peckett: "The only enemy artillery was two mortar rounds which landed down near the southern end of the LZ."

SP4 Casciato: "Down to the southeast section we heard voices and found a trail cut in a T and some were cutting back into the area we just cleared. SP4 Dobbins and myself fired some rounds into the area and after checking it out found three KIA. They had one AK-47 and two SKS."

SP4 Jerome Lyford: "The next day on a clearing patrol we found where VC/NVA had been laying in the grass smoking and waiting next to a trail near the southwestern edge of the LZ."

SP4 Frank Wykofka: "1st squad, 3rd Platoon landed just in the center near the hedge line. We started receiving fire from the bunkers so the squad split up. Sergeant Ernest Poole saw the burning copter and a wounded door gunner inside, Sergeant Poole and SP4 Roger Palmer pulled the door gunner out and carried him to safety."

"The Captain told the 2nd Platoon to move south. Men were starting to get hit all around us. I put 25 M-79 rounds in the hedge line. Sergeant Poole and Sergeant Wessolek helped Staff Sergeant Walker attack the enemy bunkers (at 3 o'clock). Sergeant Poole was wounded helping."

"Most of us had about 200 rounds on our person. Some men had 400, the rest was in our rucksacks. Most of the men carried claymore bags full of magazines."

Staff Sergeant Joe Turner: "When we entered the northern position we found there had been an air strike there. I think they started pulling in more people when the choppers landed. We didn't have too much trouble up in the northern end."

Captain Peckett: "I believe the air strikes and artillery blocking files kept most of their reinforcements out."

The 3rd Platoon had come in right behind the 1st Platoon and immediately came under fire from three NVA bunkers inside the eastern wood line. The 2nd Platoon came in on the fourth and final lift and as one of the last helicopters came in, it was hit and caught on fire.

PFC Michael Heishman: "When we came into the LZ we didn't know it was hot for no one had told us in the chopper. We didn't even know the chopper was on fire. When we hit the ground we ran directly into those bunkers (3 NVA bunkers in the eastern wood line). When we got off the chopper we no-

ticed it was on fire so we started moving as far away as we could and got in the brush line. This put us about in front of the bunkers and we could hear the gooks talking. We couldn't determine how many were up there, but they were definitely putting out some fire power and they were putting a hurt on the guys on the far wood line by the plowed area (1st platoon) because of the clear field of fire across there. Then we started picking up B-79 rounds and we didn't know where they were coming

from. We thought maybe some one was shooting from across the other side of the perimeter, but we came to find out Sergeant William Mathews killed a gook that had a M-79."

Sergeant Walker: "Myself, my two RTOs, one medic, FO and two privates from one of the rifle squads, landed almost 75 yards from the berm. We were directly in front of the three eastern bunkers and their machine gun fire. First squad landed behind us (Sergeant Owens) and ran up on the machine guns resulting in three KIA. At the time I didn't know there was a gap with a tree - here, here and here. PFC Michael Fuller ran up between the trees and was hit in the throat, and while trying to take cover was hit in the back; the fire was coming from the bunkers. The machine guns at the bunkers were placed on top instead of inside. Between the two bunkers was a spider hole with one NVA in it; he was throwing hand grenades and that was it; he had no weapon but plenty of hand grenades. Fuller took a round in his helmet and it came out without hitting him, and he took several rounds along his bandolier chewing up four ammo clips. I don't know if the ammo went off or not, and Fuller took a round in his leg. He was bitching they hit him in his leg and said 'They got me in the leg Sarge, kill the slant eyed f---!' He wasn't concerned about his leg, he said 'We've got to get them!' over on this side were myself, SP4 Michael Heishman, SGT John Norr, PFC Julio Morin; we landed over here slightly to the left of one bunker. At this time we thought there was only one individual, because of the slow rate of fire. What we didn't know was he had a clear view of the fire of A Co and was shooting at random at anyone who moved. Due to large number of hand grenades, we eliminated this bunker and with good M-16 fire we eliminated all the people in this area. Down in the area to the right of the bunkers Sergeant William Mathews had a quick draw contest; needless to say, Sergeant Mathews won and one of the dead NVA had a M-79.



Next we'll get us a Tiger and an Elephant. (Courtesy of Hugh S. Cunningham)

SP4 Heishman said 'Sarge we are getting M-79 fire, but I didn't believe him until after we had captured the M-79 from the NVA Sergeant Mathews shot. I didn't know where A Co was. Heishman was on the radio and could not contact anyone for 20 minutes, finally, he got Captain Jack on the alternate. I was wondering where the hell my Company Commander was. We threw 12 grenades at one bunker and still the fire kept coming. Out of the bunker of seven we pulled out, five were NVA. One individual had a new uni-

form and equipment. PFC Fuller and Sergeant Ben Owens got in one area. They jumped from their helicopters from 6-12 feet because of the fire. One trooper's M-79 was not going far enough to arm itself (18 feet or more to arm itself). All men were using good marksmanship and good fire discipline. The NVA in the bunkers had a wide view of the fire zone and were able to have shot a gnat if it moved."

"We never really saw the NVA/VC. We fired at sound. We leveled our weapons six inches off the ground and worked the entire area over. We secured the entire eastern side by sweeping fire and the eastern side was vital because those three bunkers in the middle had seven automatic weapons. It was our fire power and Charlie's poor maintenance which over came them. Several of their AK-47 magazine springs failed and sand jammed some of their weapons."

Lieutenant Kerckhoff (FO): "When we hit the LZ near the trees in the center, we started receiving fire from the east. Then a machinegun pinned us down in the center. We didn't know exactly where we were so we contacted Captain Shirley Draper Jr., the 3/319th Arty. LND, who was flying overhead. Captain Draper put the rounds in and we adjusted them in on the east."

PFC Ronald Gill: "We told him if the rounds got too close. At one time the artillery blew trees on the LZ, beautiful!"

Lieutenant Kerckhoff: "We had D/4/503rd Inf. moving in from the south and air strikes to the west so we put blocking fires to the east. The only trouble we had was spotting the first rounds. The LNO kept asking us if we saw them."

PFC Ronald Gill: "He finally understood when I told him 'Sir, every time I lift my head they try to shoot it off.'"

PFC Arthur Bailey: "When we took off, wind from the copters got dust and sand in

our rifles, even with the dust cover closed. Sand jammed cartridges in the rifles and magazines. My weapon jammed three times, the ejector was sticking. When the round fired the shell casing expanded. One of our problems was that some of our ammo was in our rucksacks. Weapons were jamming on dirty ammo."

"We should have had more than one medevac chopper. Next time don't everybody get hit when we only have one dustoff (laughter). Most of our medics and RTOs got hit. RTOs should carry their radios in their rucksacks or under them with the airdrops down. The M-79s weren't effective in close combat. Rounds didn't go far enough to arm itself. The grenadiers should carry .45 automatics. Grenadiers would prefer shotgun adapters, none had them at the time."

PSG Hayes: "I think the men want to carry LAW's again, before we turned them back in."

1SG Earl Canales: "One lesson we learned, let the medics help the wounded. We can do more for them by securing the area rather than running back and patching them up."

Staff Sergeant Rois Black: "We could use some shotguns. I'd buy my own if they'd let me."

PFC Steve Leighty: "Carrying machine gun ammo is a problem. Wrapping it around you isn't good, it gets dirty. Boxes are usually strapped on ruck sacks and you can't carry them very well with both hands full. If you carry it in claymore bags the rounds get kicked out, regular ammo pouches are not big enough. We need some long pouches like the ARVN's have for MG ammo." I went with some 30 round magazines. Another thing, you can't put 20 rounds in a 20 round clip, 18 is max."

Staff Sergeant Walker: "M-26 grenades are OK but not for knocking out bunkers. WP grenades may be our concussion grenades. Some M-16s were jamming from the sand gotten on the LZ, but most cleared after 7 or 8 rounds were fired. Some said dirty ammo caused jamming. On the M-79 they said they could have functioned better if they had the shotgun adapter but that requisitions were slow and they were hard to get."

Captain Peckett: "The medics did a wonderful job. PFC Gary Schwellenbach, the 3rd Platoon's medic, was a good example. He administered aid to PFC James McCormick under fire. He was hit in the leg but continued to help the wounded. He was hit again in the chest but still crawled over to Staff Sergeant Clarence M. Adams and aided him. He was killed giving mouth to mouth resuscitation to PFC Holliman. SP4 Karras and SP4 Whitley went around the entire perimeter aiding the wounded."

"During the 27-28th of December we counted 57 NVA/VC bodies. Our losses were 11 KIA and 29 WIA, besides the wounded door gunner." (The Air Force later estimated that they killed over 200 with cluster bombs.)

"There are a few thoughts I would like to add: The force that Delta had run into was

moving to the southeast. (We found a large base camp area, at least battalion size, on the high ground to the southeast a couple of days later). They were setting up a horseshoe type ambush when my company landed on top of them. The way the bunkers and snipers and mortars were set up indicates this very strongly. The immediate reaction of the air and artillery foiled their plans - not enabling the enemy to reinforce the ambush site. The gun chips effectively reduced the snipers in the trees."

The bunker fighting was quite hairy. Staff Sergeant Walker and his first squad assaulted the four bunkers at 9 o'clock four times with hand grenades and automatic weapons before they were knocked out. In the bunkers we found 18 dead NVA. Their bodies were literally torn to shreds from the grenades. Some were still alive, in fact one crawled away and was hit with a full magazine of M-16 ammo (Staff Sergeant Walker's) as he crawled. We found him 200 meters away later that afternoon. Private Fuller, Sergeant Owens, Sergeant Heeren, and PFC Minor were killed in the taking of the bunkers. The bunkers in the southeast corner of the LZ were not as difficult to take. Staff Sergeant Sallette kept a steady volume of M-60 fire on them while a group of men from the 2nd Platoon and the company commo section maneuvered on them. One man, PFC Cobbins killed five there with his M-16. He ran out of ammo, picked up an AK-47 and killed two more. The bunkers in the northeast corner were pretty effectively wiped out by a direct hit of napalm on them. Several of my 3rd Platoon's troopers had bright red faces for a couple of days. We found some badly charred bodies around them."

"The 3rd Platoon consolidated almost the entire northern half of the LZ. SP4 Roger Palmer at one point observed a group of about 20 NVA trying to maneuver to the west. He cut down on them with his M-60 and got 15 of them. A half hour later the NVA were trying to carry these dead away on poles. Palmer got two more of them. This section of the LZ got a lot of grenade fire that night. Upon arrival of morning, the bodies were gone."

"We captured a total of 48 rifles - both SKS 50s and AK-47s, two machine guns, one Chicom pistol, one caliber .45 pistol and one M-79 grenade launcher. There was several hundred rounds of ammunition. There were over 50 hand grenades, about a dozen satchel changes, three bangalore torpedoes, two B-40 rockets, 10 pounds of TNT and a great deal of personal gear."

I think we caught the enemy before he had fully set up their ambush. The forces on the east were ready but those on the west and south were just moving into position when we hit the ground. They tried to consolidate but were severely hampered by the air and artillery. We never closed with the enemy on the west and southwest as we did on the east. This was primarily because the ones on the west were primarily west of the stream and were in trees. Once we secured the wood line, the air and artillery completely blocked the en-





emies capability to withdraw or to reinforce. The ones that were close to us had no choice but to fight to the finish. The amount of ammunition and grenades we found indicated that they were far from out of ammo. D/4/503rd Inf. arrived just as contact was broken. They made negative contact during their approach to the LZ."

"At one point we received two or three mortar rounds - that's all. Yet we found three mortar positions to the northwest that had been hit by air. I think we could have been hurt by the mortars, but the air and artillery knocked them out."

Notes:

1) For his extraordinary heroism, PFC Gary Schwellenbach was later awarded the Distinguished Service Cross, posthumously.

2) When I met Captain Nick Garbarino, the A Team commander at the Dong Tre Special Forces Camp, six months later, he told me that NVA prisoners captured in January 1968 told him that two battalions of the 95th NVA Regiment were almost destroyed in this action. Most of the casualties came from air strikes. He also said that they had information that led them to believe that aspects of the operation had been passed to the NVA by local ARVN spies and that the bunkers on A/3/503's LZ, which were only a day or two old on 27 December, were prepared to ambush an expected air assault by American paratroopers.

3) When I reached Lt. Droke's position, he had already been badly wounded. As I was talking to him he was hit again in the chest. As he was hit he gasped and grabbed his chest. He shouted, "I'm shot in the heart! I'm shot in

the heart! I shouted back at him, "Shut the f— up Drokes, if you were shot in the heart you'd be dead." He gave me a bewildered stare and answered: "You're right sir. It's just a sucking chest wound!" Even in the midst of all this, we both laughed. Droke was back with the 3/503 in May 1968.

4) In the last five years, Alan Hodder, one of those wounded on 27 December, has made an effort to contact all of the original members of A/3/503. To date he has found around 70 of them. Of those 70, more than 30 have attended one or more of the 173rd's annual reunions. The first matter they all talk about is what happened on 27 December. Our collective memories of the events add a great deal to this transcript which was collected in about two hours with only about 60 of those who were at Xom Dap participating. Hodder, who was in the 2nd Platoon, fell in front of the bunker and killed at least two of its occupants. He still has the bullet riddled helmet he wore into the air assault.

5) It still amazes me how well my company performed at Xom Dap. We were surrounded by an NVA force that was larger than us and positioned, to a large degree, in bunkers with overhead cover. We were in an open field. Our original LZ was changed, yet, the men fought the NVA and beat them. Certainly, the artillery and air support were a major factor in this result. But more importantly, the company's hard six months of training done at Fort Bragg for six months before our arrival in Vietnam in October 1967, was the most decisive element in the battle. In a situation where the deck was stacked totally against them, the men reacted as a

team. It was them who turned "apparent defeat into an overwhelming victory."

Hill 823 - 6 November 1967

by William R. Daniel

"B" Co. was supposed to make helicopter assault on Hill 823 on 6 Nov 1967 early morning, but the jungle was so thick that more air strikes and artillery were used to try to clear a LZ - still only one helicopter at a time could get in. Broken rifles, rucksacks, etc. were laying around as we started up the hill. We went over the hill to set up our perimeter and started digging our foxholes when the NVA hit our OP. Lieutenant Darling and several others started out to the OP, but he changed his mind and told my assistant, ammo bearer and me to provide covering fire for him. "We didn't belatedly follow him down the hill as a book called "Seven Firefights In Vietnam - Three Companies At Dak-to" had stated.

When the lieutenant and men got out of sight in the jungle, the sound seemed to increase a hundred fold with rockets, rifle fire and machine gun fire in the direction they had gone. We started to get incoming fire so we jumped in a bomb crater to our left. The medic who went with Lieutenant Darling made it back with one of the LP men (Miller) and got in the bomb crater with us. There was a total of five men now in the bomb crater (myself, assistant machine gunner, ammo bearer, medic and one of the Millers from the out post).

Incoming had really started to intensify—rockets, rifle fire, machine gun fire, grenades.

Three grenades went off in the bomb crater with us. I saw two of them but the third one is the one I believe that I got the most damage.

While all this was going on I remember a NVA soldier jumping up behind a small damaged tree about eight feet in front of the bomb crater. He raised his AK-47 to shoot the men over to my left. I started spraying the tree down with M-60 machine gun fire. I remember the NVA starting to fall, but I can't remember him falling all they way down. Right after that the M-60 jammed and a round exploded in the chamber leaving part of the casing in and I couldn't get it out. The assistant gunner had left the extra barrel on his rucksack which was about 15 to 20 feet away.

The company had closed its perimeter up behind us. We were trapped in the bomb crater with the company firing out over us and the NVA firing in and throwing grenades; it was kind of hard for us to do much except watch for gooks jumping up around the crater or throwing grenades in on us.

I guess our mortars started firing out over our heads but they were to far away because the gooks were between us and where the mortars were going off. I heard the company commander yell to throw some smoke because he was calling in air strikes. I took the last smoke grenade we had and place it at the

edge of the bomb crater. I wanted them to get as close as they could. It sure was a wonderful sight when the jets started coming in.

The firing started dying down so I started yelling "Bravo 3rd Platoon" over and over again. All of a sudden Chief Richards came flying over the edge of the bomb crater like John Wayne. He grabbed the M-60 to shoot but I told him it was jammed. He threw the barrel down, jumped up and ran to the rucksack to get the other barrel. He put the M-60 back together and started spraying all around. About this time several other guys came out and surrounded the crater to protect us. We had part of a M-16 magazine left, no grenades, no 45 ammo, no smoke grenades. I was the only one to walk out of the bomb crater by myself. The rest of the guys were wounded to badly. They loaded us up on a medevac chopper and took us to Pleiku. From what I heard later that was the last chopper the gooks would let in or out that day.

I had four major wounds and numerous other small wounds from grenade shrapnel. They told me at the 8th Field Hospital in Pleiku that I had a gunshot wound to the left foreleg and shrapnel wounds to the left foreleg and stomach. They said I would be operated on there and then sent to Japan for a short stay in the hospital there, then shipped back

to the States. I never got out of Vietnam. I was in three different hospitals: Pleiku, Nha-Trang, and Qui Nhon for about 35 days, then sent back to my unit for the rest of my tour.

Talk to be read at the Fort Bragg Chapter Society of the 173rd Airborne Brigade

by Ellis W. Williamson

Good evening. Many consider me to be the grandfather of this organization. I had wanted so badly to be with you as one of your speakers tonight, however that is not possible. I will try not to make this too long.

I will talk principally to the newest members whom I believe are largely from the 319th Artillery.

My first experience with the 319th scared me silly. As a colonel on my first airborne assignment, I arrived on the island of Okinawa. We had organized the brigade on paper and were just receiving our men and equipment. Thirteen days after arrival, I was called to General Caraway's office where he pinned on my first stars of a general officer. When I arrived back at the headquarters building and



stepped out of my sedan, the 319th started firing a gun salute. It surprised me so much that I almost took cover in the nearest ditch. I stood there dumbfounded, not knowing whether I was supposed to just stand at attention or salute. They then gathered around and we cut a huge cake. I later learned that the kitchen crew had baked a cake every day that week just to be sure it would be fresh. The troopers liked me. I got credit for ordering them cake every day.

When we first got to Vietnam we set up our defenses around the airfield at Bien Hoa. It was fun watching the pilots come in to land their old propeller planes. We could always tell if it was an old pilot or a new one. The old boys would come in at about 4,000 feet, get right over the field and spiral in and plop onto the field. The younger ones would come in on a gradual glide path. As they got low enough to approach the field the enemy would always fire at them from the jungle areas nearby. About the third night near dark a couple of the younger pilots were fired at and got mad about it. They whirled around and fired back. Soon we had a real donnybrook going on. Each firing at the other with little or no possibility of doing any damage. One of my soldiers described it as trying to fertilize a 40 acre field with a fart. After this had gone on for about 20 minutes I called the US senior advisor to the airfield commander and told him that if he would move the planes out of the way I would take care of his problem.

I got all of our artillery pieces and all of our mortars and had every tube pump out six rounds just as fast as they could. Not another peep came from the jungle. The next morning the senior advisor called and said, "Hearing those big old guns last night was just great. You know, after listening to them for a few minutes, for the first time in months, I got up enough nerve to go to bed sober."

My next experience with the 319th was something that probably has never before or since happened in the annals of warfare. We planned our first large scale stab into the jungle areas of War Zone D. No friendly troops had been there for years. We wanted to catch an enemy force that was operating in the southern tip of the jungle. There were several openings where we could make helicopter landings. I wanted to use as many as practical to enhance our chances of catching the enemy force. I had only three maneuver battalions and my plans needed four. The area was well beyond artillery range from our base camp, so we had to set up a fire support base. I picked an area for the fire support base. I then quote MADE unquote another battalion. I dismounted the cavalry, dismounted the tank company and took the artillerymen away from their guns. I gave them two days to brush up on infantry tactics and firing their individual rifles. Using Airforce fighter planes and Army helicopter gunships we prepared the landing zone and our quote maneuver battalion was landed. I stayed on the ground with them just long enough for them to get organized and call for their artillery howitzers. I then radioed for my command helicopter and started

the first infantry battalion toward its objective. Just as we landed the 319th reported that they were ready to fire. They fired one quote ranging round unquote. A fragment of it took off the end of my aide's nose. I issued one command, "Cease fire, damn it." Everyone swore that the gunners had the correct data on the guns, so I let my better judgement and unit pride get the best of me and accepted their explanation that the maps were inadequate and the guns were several hundred yards from where they showed on the map. Anyway the 319th has the distinction of having made an assault landing with its gun crews to secure its own firing positions.

My advice to all of you active duty personnel is to learn all you can about the heritage you have from the past and then to bust your butts to improve it.

Sorry I can not be with you tonight. Have fun and have one for me.

(The following is written at the request of Russ Ward for the new members of the Society during their induction at Fort Bragg, NC the last week in February 1990.)

To our new members of the Society of the 173rd Brigade. Welcome.

You have just become members of one of the most unusual organizations ever. The 173rd Airborne Brigade (Sep) (with emphasis on the word Separate) was truly a unique unit. It was the only one of its kind in the entire US Army. We were on the active Army role only 10 years but during that short time we made a name for ourselves that is unequalled by any other unit.

The society exists for specific purposes. First, we honor those who died in our service. Second, we assist our former members and their offsprings through our Scholarship and Encouragement Fund and other activities, and last we just plain have fun associating with one another.

We have our International Society plus 13 chapters all over the United States and Australia. We do our things such as chapter meetings each quarter plus our national convention each year. This year in July in Washington, DC, we celebrate the Silver (25th) Anniversary of our being the first US Army ground combat unit to enter Vietnam and the Golden (50th) Anniversary of the formation of the first US Army parachute platoon. Join us if you can.

Through out the year our chapters do things such as: 6,000 pairs of shoes for needy children; painting the homes of dozens of senior and needy citizens; a summer camp for under privileged children; and commemorating the memory of, our Medal of Honor Winners by naming libraries, stadiums, boulevards and recreation centers in their memory.

To you of the 3rd Battalion, 319th Artillery Parachute Regiment, we are proud of what you did in Panama. You have done your part to continue our traditions. You are now going through a change of command. The best way for you to honor your departing commander is to show your professionalism by demonstrating your skills and unquestioned support of your new commander.

Welcome to all of you. We are proud of you and are expecting you to do your part to keep up the beat of the drum.

Airborne - All The Way
Ellis W. Williamson
Major General
US Army (Retired)
President Emeritus

The "Elephant"

by Terry H. Jones

Immediately after the 1968 TET Offensive began, the 1st Battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade was airlifted into Ban Me Thuot at the special forces camp. At that time, the NVA were inside Ban Me Thuot.

We were told that ARVN troops would retake the city and that the 1st Battalion would air assault to a position outside the city and act as a blocking force to cut off any enemy attempting to flee.

"D" Company was given point and my platoon (1st Platoon) was given point for the company. The battalion (3 rifle companies) was to air assault onto one hill, secure it, and then proceed to another hill where it was expected the headquarters for the NVA was located.

We were given instructions to call in "hot" or "cold" LZ and then immediately proceed towards the other hill. Numerous helicopters were being used to drop off the battalions; and if we did not start immediately towards the objective, 300 plus men would be seen crowded together in a small space.

Upon landing and determining no hostile fire, I gave the point element the direction to go and we moved out. After traveling into the bush approximately 300 yards, the point element opened fire.

The ensuing radio transmission went something like this.

"Lima 1, this is Lima 6, what are you in contact with? Over." "This is Lima 1, an elephant, over."

"This is Lima 1, it looks like a pretty big elephant, over." "This is Lima 6, did you say element or elephant? Over." "This is Lima 1, I said elephant; the kind with four legs and a trunk; and he's wounded! Over."

I then moved to the lead of the point element with one of my machine gunners, Jesse Salcedo.

By this time the company commander, Captain Tom Needham, was pushing us to dispatch with the wounded elephant so that we could safely move out. Too many men were still crowded onto the original hill we had air assaulted onto. Captain Needham did caution us though to be careful since the elephant was wounded.

Laying on the ground approximately 25 yards away from the elephant with nothing between it and us except bamboo, I was more than a little concerned on how fast the elephant could cover that distance if it charged.

Jesse Salcedo dropped the elephant with a burst of M-60 fire to the head. The elephant tried to get back up, and one move burst finished it off.

As we approached the elephant, I was wondering why it hadn't charged or fled. We soon discovered why. It was chained to a tree. Evidently the NVA in the area were using it to transport supplies and had stashed it there.

After detaining the entire battalion, discovering the chain was embarrassing. Knowing that patrols travel single file, I quickly backed off about 50 yards and then proceeded towards our objective by going around the elephant. The rest of the battalion followed and this prevented them from finding out about the chain.

The Fight For Dak To Hill 875

by Michael E. Creamer, 1983, courtesy of Martha Creamer, 1992

In late October 1967, captured documents and information given by enemy defectors revealed that the North Vietnamese Army was building up for a major offensive in the Central Highlands. An NVA division, composed of some five seasoned regiments, had moved into Vietnam from its Cambodian sanctuary. Its target was the Special Forces camp at Dak To, which was troublesome obstacle in the NVA infiltration route to the densely populated, rice-rich Coastal Plains. A key element of their plan, intended to give them a propaganda victory, was to draw an American reinforcing unit away from the open lowlands to the eerie, remote mountains and "annihilate" it. The first part of the North Vietnamese plan went like clockwork; they did draw away a unit. The second part blew up in their faces: That unit was the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

The Herd, minus the 3/503rd Infantry and D/16 Armor which stayed to continue operations on the coast, as put under the operational control of the US 4th Infantry Division and began Operation "MacArthur" in early November. Constant, massive sweeps were made through the steep mountains to "Find, Fix, Fight, and Finish" the teeming North Vietnamese. There was heavy contact

nearly every day, and fire support ranging from mortars all the way up to B-52 bombers was used with good effect to shatter the concentrated enemy forces. The fighting swirled and eddied throughout the thickly jungle hills for almost three weeks until the Vietnamese decided that they had enough and began slipping back across the Cambodian border to lick their wounds. The American units kept up the pressure, searching for and trying to block the enemy escape routes. One NVA regiment that had been held in reserve, the 174th, was ordered to dig in on a remote hill and make a last-ditch stand so that two other regiments could make good their escape. The chosen hill was covered with bamboo and tangled triple-canopy jungle that concealed precipitous "lung-buster" slopes. The hill had no name, and was known only by the map marking that gives its height in meters: 875.

The 2/503rd found itself on Hill 875 on Sunday, November 19th. Throughout the weekend they had found a number of enemy base camps in the area, and the men had a feeling that something big was about to break loose. They were right. Delta Company reached the crest of the hill around mid-day, and as the company began to push off across a ridgeline that was the hill's dominating feature, it became embroiled in a fight against a large, strong, and cleverly concealed system of trenches and bunkers. Several men were lost.

Alpha Company began to move back down the hill in order to clear a landing zone so that the wounded could be evacuated and extra supplies and ammo brought in. As they negotiated the steep slopes, a large NVA unit caught them with a swift and vicious flanking attack. Realizing that the company couldn't hold off this onslaught, Alpha's commander ordered his stunned unit back up the hill to rejoin the battalion.

One paratrooper, PFC Carlos Lozada, knew that the withdrawing troops would be cut to pieces unless someone remained behind to cover them. He ignored the pleas of his comrades to pull back and, instead, held

his ground, a grim, solitary figure lashing machine gun fire into the NVA who were by now closing in on three sides from only yards away. Before he fell mortally wounded, his blazing M-60 killed at least 20 of the enemy and disrupted their attack, allowing his buddies to escape the trap without being slaughtered. This heroic and selfless act won PFC Lozada the Medal of Honor.

The three companies of the Second

Battalion linked up and, assuming that they were surrounded by a regiment, established a 50-yard perimeter on the crest of the hill. "Jesus, they were all over the place" one trooper later told Newsweek correspondent Edward Behr, "in bunkers and tied in trees and everything." The Sky Soldiers called for an air strike to soften up the NVA positions and began regrouping for another assault.

Luck, however, had abandoned the paratroopers. One of the supporting F-100 Supersabre fighter bombers swooped in low, and released a 500-lb. bomb too soon. It crashed into the small perimeter and exploded, killing more than 20 of the unprotected paratroopers and wounding dozens of others. The North Vietnamese, however, were relatively untouched by the air strike. Their bunkers were 30 feet deep in some cases and protected by yards of earth and logs. Gloating, they took full advantage of the tragic mishap.

Rippling sheets of automatic weapons fire tore into the American position, punctuated by the crash of mortar rounds. Wave after wave of NVA troops attacked furiously. The desperate troopers hung on tenaciously, fighting for their very lives. Eleven of the battalion's 13 medics were dead, and only one was able to work on the mounting number of wounded. Father Charles J. Watters, the battalion's dedicated chaplain, did what he could to fill the gap, exposing himself time and time again to drag wounded paratroopers back from the perimeter or hurriedly scraped holes in the ground. Finally, he too was struck down by the murderous hail of fire and spent his final breaths giving the last rites to his dying boys. Father Watters became the second paratrooper to win his country's award for valor that day.

Meanwhile, the brigade commander, Brigadier General Leo Schweiter, directed the effort to aid his besieged troops. Airstrikes pounded the swarming enemy on the average of once every 15 minutes.

The gunners of the 3/319th Artillery filled in the gaps, slinging rounds into the smoking breeches of their 105mm Howitzer until their arms ached and went numb. The artillerymen had their own hands full as well: North Vietnamese regulars attacked the firebase, and were driven off only when the gunners cranked their pieces down and let go at point-blank range. Helicopters braved curtains of fire in successive attempts to resupply the paratroopers and rescue the wounded, but the cunning NVA gunners drove them off every time, crippling 10 choppers. A relief force, the 4th Battalion of the 503rd, set out from a firebase a mile-and-a-half away, stripped of all but the essentials to give them as much speed as possible.

On the crest of 875, the cauldron boiled on throughout the night and into Monday. The men were out of food and water now, and the wounded moaned helplessly through parched lips. Men burrowed in between the bodies of dead buddies to gain some meager protection from the constant rain of hot steel



Medical Platoon - 1st Bn. 503rd Infantry.

and the bitter chill of the Highland night. "They were hitting us with mortars and recoilless-rifle fire all night," said one survivor. "Everybody was trying to get underground. Every time you tried to dig, you put your shovel in somebody. The dead were everywhere." Still the troopers held. It was hold or die.

The 4/503rd relief column fought doggedly against backbreaking terrain, a feverishly determined enemy, and an ever-diminishing element of time to reach their brother troopers before they were overrun. The first rescuers reached the perimeter at dusk on Monday, but the enemy fire was so intense that it took until ten o'clock that night for the entire force to get into the tiny position. The scene, ghastly beyond all belief, shocked the relieving paratroopers. More than 70 dead lay in the confined area, sprawled face-down in the torn earth or staring sightlessly up in the moonlit sky. The wounded begged for water, but the men of the 4th Battery had none to give. They had drained their canteens during the tortuous climb up the hill. Torn fragments of flesh and strips of blood-sodden clothing, both American and North Vietnamese, lay on the ground and hung from the splintered trees. Eight of the 2nd Battalion's officers were dead, the other eight wounded. The enemy fire now died down a bit. Perhaps they were demoralized by the reinforcements, or perhaps they were waiting for an ammo resupply, but the rest of the night passed in relative quiet. It wasn't to last very long.

At dawn on Tuesday, the mortars began slamming in again. Flat-trajectory fire from recoilless rifles whip-cracked in as well, churning the already blasted earth. The NVA would put in five or six rounds at a time from positions as close as a hundred meters away and then moved before their positions could be registered for the US fire support. The troopers worked frantically to deepen their holes. Wounded men were hit over and over again. A scout dog handler and his beloved German shepherd perished together in the same hole. One platoon that had started up 875 on Sunday with 27 men was down to nine by noon on Tuesday. Jet aircraft screamed in at treetop level to lay huge, whooshing fireballs of napalm as close to the paratroopers as 30 meters. Peter Arnett, a veteran AP correspondent, was with the troopers now, and his dramatic on-the-scene-dispatches electrified Americans at home, riveting them to the front pages.

Late on Tuesday afternoon, a landing zone was finally cut near the base of the hill, and the wounded started out for evacuation. Men who were peppered with shell fragments carried the legless in litters rigged from ponchos. Blinded troopers stumbled down the hill, their hands on the shoulders of the men in front of them. The helicopters began to land, and it took two hours for the 140 injured paratroopers to be lifted out. All the while, enemy mortar men pumped rounds into the jungle, searching for the landing zone. More choppers came in, carrying food, water, and desperately needed ammunition.

The brigade's combat engineers came in, too, carrying demolition charges and flamethrowers. There was still a ridgeline to be taken. The massive fire support had only begun to crack the enemy's diabolical fortress. Everyone knew that the stubborn bunkers would have to be taken out one by one, man to man. Technology had expended itself. This was an infantry fight.

The survivors of the two decimated battalions refilled their ammo pouches, greedily wolfed down their first food and water in days, and began to look with new resolve at the enemy positions. As the food filled their growling stomachs, the flickering fires of a reborn airborne spirit began to fill their hearts. They might be exhausted and bloody, but they were far from finished. They were still paratroopers, and now it was the enemy's turn to suffer!

As the light of day faded away, a new light blazed on the hill crest: that of the flamethrowers. Under cover of darkness, with the heavy torches, grenades, and a courage that bordered on the supernatural, the troopers began to advance over the terrain that now resembled a haunted moonscape. The first obstinate bunker fell, and then another. The fighting was brutal and bitter, with no quarter asked nor given. An American grenade thrown into a bunker would be answered with one by the Vietnamese. Enemy soldiers howled in frantic counterattack from zig-zag trenches to be cut down by popping M-16s. Foes died within feet of each other. The carnage continued through Wednesday. Slowly the NVA realized that they could not win against the hollow-eyed, clenched-jawed demons that they faced. They could kill them, but they couldn't stop them. The remnants of the NVA regiment began pulling out, carrying their wounded and their hundreds of dead with them. Resistance began to lighten. When the 173rd made its final assault just before noon on Thursday, only a last diehard squad remained to oppose them. It was over.

The weary paratroopers sat and contemplated the blood-soaked hill. Each man



looked to whatever greater force he thought had enabled him to survive while so many had died, and offered numbed gratitude.

It was a fitting time to do so.

It was Thanksgiving Day.

Later, outside of the medical tent at Dak To camp which he had just left after talking with the wounded, one of the Herd's sergeant majors told a magazine reporter about the battle. His voice kept catching with emotion. "Those kids in there," he blurted out, "they kept holding up their thumbs and saying 'Airborne.' They're good kids." Then he turned away and wept.

The Jump Into War Zone "C"

by Michael E. Creamer, 1983, and courtesy of Martha Creamer, 1992

By early 1967, the 173rd had won an impressive array of battle honors. The men of the brigade did not, however, wear the airborne's ultimate laurel, the tiny gold star on the Parachutist's Badge that signifies an actual battle jump into enemy-held territory.

The parachute assault is the hallmark of the airborne, the reason for its very existence. All of the lore and tradition, all of the specialized equipment, and all of the grueling training are centered around the unique ability of the paratrooper to strike the enemy when and where he least expects it by leaping from an aircraft in flight.

Airborne units have traditionally attracted a unique type of soldier. He must have courage to overcome the fear that jumping itself generates. He needs uncommon determination, for he may be called upon to fight for days or weeks on end until a link-up with other units can be accomplished. He has to be individualistic and self-motivated, because the chaos of a combat jump may require him to fight on alone or with a small group if he is separated from his unit. The select few who passed the rugged initiation of Jump School and serve with airborne units are invariably high achievers, constantly testing themselves, constantly searching for new challenges. The troopers of the Herd were no exception: They wanted a combat jump!

One man was particularly eager for combat "blast." He was Lieutenant Colonel Robert H. Sigholtz, the charismatic commander of the 2/503rd. An aggressive fighter, he had given his unit the unofficial nickname of the "WE TRY HARDER" battalion, and had written to obtain lapel buttons with this phrase from the Avis Car Rental Company. When they arrived - printed in 10 languages - his young troopers wore them with humorous pride. Sigholtz insisted that the men keep their parachuting skills sharp, and had arranged two practice jumps for them. He knew that his boys wanted a genuine battle jump, and he kept his eyes open for an opportunity to turn their wishes into reality. In February, he found one.

Operation Junction City was to be the largest US offensive so far in the war, a multidivisional sweep through War Zone "C" north of Tay Ninh. Its purpose was to locate COSVN, the Central Office South Vietnam. This was no less than the Supreme Headquar-

ters of the Viet Cong, the brain that controlled the octopuses many tentacles. If COSVN could be found and destroyed, the VC would suffer a major setback because their operations were highly dependent on rigid planning and control. The 1st, 4th, and 25th Infantry Divisions and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment would launch a massive, horseshoe-shaped sweep through the region where COSVN was believed to be. The 173rd Airborne Brigade was to take up positions near the Cambodian border and act as a blocking force, cutting fleeing VC units off from their traditional last resort sanctuary. The Herd's assault was the operation's kick-off, and the 2nd Battalion was chosen as the lead element.

Lieutenant Colonel Sigholtz studied his mission. Getting his battalion into place would require some four hours and 120 chopper loads. That much lengthy activity would dissipate much of the critical element of surprise, giving the Cong a head start for their inevitable escape attempt. The troopers on the first few lifts might find themselves hard-pressed by large numbers of the enemy until more of their buddies could arrive. The best way to maximize the success of the blocking force and minimize casualties was to get the full force in quickly, and the quickest way was by parachute. The troops were ready and eager, the equipment was available, and the relatively flat, open terrain was suitable for jumping, so why not go for it? Sigholtz presented his case to the brigade commander, Brigadier General "Uncle Jack" Deane, who agreed and won approval from the operation's overall commander, LTG Jonathan O. Seaman. Weather permitting, the huge push would begin with the first US combat parachute assault in 15 years.

The plans were concocted in strict secrecy. The troops weren't informed of the historic event until the day before the jump, and even the jumpmasters and the Air Force pilots weren't given the co-ordinates of the actual drop zone until shortly before they boarded the aircraft. Chief Warrant Officer

Howard Melvin, a veteran of four combat drops in WWII, was given the responsibility of getting the necessary supplies and equipment into the 1,000 by 6,000 foot dried rice paddy that was chosen as "Drop Zone Charlie." This was a risky proposition. During WWII, cargo had arrived on the DZs by glider, a system that resulted in considerable loss of lives and equipment. Gilders had been phased out in the 1950s and replaced by the technique of delivering everything, even artillery pieces and vehicles, by cargo chute. It had worked fairly well during maneuvers, but had never before been attempted in combat. Much of the success of the operation, therefore, would hang on the skill and ingenuity of the Riggers, the men of Company "C" (S&S) of the Support Battalion.

Several hours after daybreak on 22 February 1967, thirteen C-130 aircraft droned in formation to the small clearing near the Cambodian border. Seated inside, burdened by heavy loads of weapons, ammo and equipment, were 780 men of the 2nd Battalion, C Battery of the 3/319th, and a support contingent of engineers and MPs. They were in high spirits, astounding the aircrews and accompanying journalists by singing the lusty Airborne theme song, "Blood on the Risers." Jumpmasters leaned out of the open doors scouting the area, the powerful slipstream distorting their faces into bizarre masks. The planes began their descent to the jump altitude of 1,000 feet, the red lights came on, and the familiar jump commands began.

"STAND UP!" The troopers rose and grabbed the anchor line cables that ran the length of the aircraft, bracing themselves against the sway.

"HOOK UP!" There was a clanking rustle as they clipped their yellow static lines into the cable and inserted safety wires into the metal hooks.

"CHECK STATIC LINES!" The hooks were slid and jiggled to test their integrity. Every trooper checked the line of the man in front of him, to be sure that it ran properly over his shoulder. If it was under his arm, the jumper would be severely injured and almost certainly dragged, helpless, behind the aircraft.

"CHECK EQUIPMENT!" The troopers quickly used their free hands to make sure that their gear was tightly secured in place.

"SOUND OFF FOR EQUIPMENT CHECK" One by one from the front of the plane rearward, the troopers bellowed forth their status. "Twenty-nine Okay" "Twenty-eight Okay" "Twenty-seven Okay." If a man had a problem, he would remain silent and place his hand on top of his helmet, signaling for the help of one of the assistant jumpmasters. The count worked toward the doors until the last man stamped his foot, gave an "okay" signal with his hands, and yelled "All Okay!"

Now there came a pause. Last minute assembly instructions and words of encouragement were given. The jumpmasters took last looks out of the doors, checking the line-up to the drop zone. They could see orbiting



Hill 875



Private First Class David Curley, a clerk with the 173d Airborne Brigade, crouches in his foxhole while continuing his administrative work in the brigade forward base camp. The headquarters area had received several rounds from Viet Cong snipers on a recent road clearing operation, south of Saigon. (U.S. Army photo courtesy of Donald C. Hall)

helicopter gunships making their final runs over the treeline that bordered the clearing, and they used the drifting smoke from the B-52 and fighters were kept at high altitude to reserve fuel until needed. Inside the aircraft, the tension was electric. Some men mentally viewed the exit and landing positions that they had been taught so well at Fort Benning. Others prayed. This one was for real, for keeps. What would they find? Would stabbing lines of green tracers from enemy machine guns rip upward into their chutes? Would the DZ be pre-registered for the murderous VC mortars? They all knew from hard experience that the enemy was adept at constructing tunnels and bunkers that withstood an amazing amount of aerial punishment. Every man was aware of the heavy casualties taken on every previous combat drop. Those facts had been flung in their faces over

and over again in Jump School to frighten away the weak-willed. Would they continue this grisly pattern or break it?

"STAND IN THE DOOR!" howled the jumpmasters. In the lead plane, General Deane shuffled into his position in the right door, and Lieutenant Colonel Sigholtz took the left. They crouched slightly, hands on the door edges, eyes on the horizon, ready to spring up and out into the blasting wind. In the other twelve planes, other men did likewise. The aircraft slowed to dropping speed and rocked and dipped in the buffeting turbulence. All eyes were on the set of twin jump lights. Throats tightened, chests pounded, and sweaty palms tightened on static lines. Suddenly the red lights winked out and the green ones flashed on!

"GO! GO-GO-GO-GO-90!" For the first time since the Korean War, American para-

troopers hurtled in a rush from their aircraft, plunging toward enemy-held territory. They piled out of the twin doors, one atop the other, screaming their count, "ONE, ONE THOUSAND, TWO, ONE THOUSAND; THREE, ONE-UUGH!", and grunted as the opening shock of the chutes shuddered their bodies. The sky blossomed with hundreds of olive-drab, mushroom shaped T-10 parachutes. Men looked up to check their canopies, making sure that they were intact. They gasped with the overwhelming effect of the adrenaline rush known only to paratroopers: indescribable excitement from the violent twisting drop, exhilaration at the sight of the merciful, rescuing open parachute, undying amazement at the wondrous sense of buoyancy provided by the gently undulating canopy, and sheer chest-popping pride at realizing that, by craxy, they had done it once again! Airborne!

There was some sniper fire as the men descended but, all things considered, resistance was light. The troopers hit the waiting earth and quickly formed up. There were only a few reported injuries, and they were mostly of the sprain-and-strain variety that are an accepted part of even Stateside practice jumps. One trooper's chute hung up in a tall tree at the edge of DZ. He pulled the ripcord of his reserve, intending to climb down the suspension lines and canopy to the ground, but the reserve wouldn't reach. Next he began to cut some of the reserve lines loose in order to tie them together into an improvised rope. As he was doing so, a sudden breeze caught the extra chute and pulled him loose from the tree. He landed hard, shaken but unhurt and giving his buddies a chuckle. Meanwhile, Alpha Company made contact with the VC probe that had done sniping and silenced it.

The next pass of the C-130s brought howitzer, mortars, and ammo. The crews raced to their places, and the tubes were rapidly ready to put out fire support. A half-hour later, the big Herky Birds came in once more, using the low altitude cargo delivery system to sling-shot more supplies to the men on the ground.

It had all gone off without a hitch. It took only 10 minutes to get all of the troops onto the DZ, and within an hour they had gotten their fire support functional and had been supplied. The stunned Viet Cong had been completely surprised! Even the touchy heavy drop had been perfect. Not one piece of the 60 tons of equipment or one case of the 40 tons of supplies had been lost or wrecked.

The 1st and 4th battalions now assaulted by helicopter onto nearby landing zones, under the protection of their air dropped howitzers, and "Junction City" was rolling strong. The 173rd destroyed the COSVN Public Information Office for Psychological Propaganda, and the COSVN signal site, as well as killing over 300 enemy soldiers. The majority of the COSVN staff was able to escape the sweep, but the important headquarters had taken a severe beating and was forced to re-locate itself inside Cambodia, far from the scene of the battles it was supposed to con-

trol. Once again the Herd had given Charlie a bloody nose, and the brigade was at last truly "Airborne - All The Way!"

Two Who Were Glad They Said Yes

by Larry Paladino

They asked, "Are you sure you want to do this?" But to themselves they said, "This guy must be nuts."

Those recruiters from Minnesota and Michigan looked at the backgrounds of their latest catches and somehow felt cheated.

Hard sell went out the window.

"You want to go airborne?"

"You want to jump out of airplanes and be an infantryman?"

The answer in Minneapolis from Dan Ojeda was, "Yes!"

The answer in Detroit from Larry Paladino was, "Yes!"

The question from the leg desk NCOs in both cities was, "Why?"

There's no way guys from stable backgrounds, having some college and good IQs would want to be infantry paratroopers.

No drug or alcohol hangups. No criminal records. No draft notices.

Perhaps a check of area mental institutions was in order. Maybe these two already jumped from a tall structure and landed on their heads.

The recruiters listened to the philosophies. Still, though, they tried persuasion.

"How about clerical training?"

"Cooks' School?"

"Mechanics?"

"Medical work?"

"There are so many things you can do other than jump from planes, climb hills, take long marches and dig fox holes."

It became clear. The neophytes were terminally gung ho.

Two more names were scrawled on the dotted lines.

Two recruiters were a signature closer to their quotas.

Basic training here they come:

Run. Crawl. Climb. Spit-shine. Clean. Run. Shoot. Run. Yawn. March. Run. Peel. Wash. Clean. Polish. Thrust. Push-ups. Chin-ups. Pull-ups. Yawn. Climb. Run. Learn.

Advance Individual Training here they come: Run. March. Listen. Learn. Run. Push-ups. Chin-ups. Pull-ups. Peel. Wash. Camp. Yawn. Run. Map. Dig. March. Listen. Learn.

For most it was time to settle down. Earn stripes. Take leaves.

A respite at home. Old friends. Old schools. Relax. Then, for some, it was off to Fort Benning, Georgia.

Jump School. Run. Run. Run. Push-up. Chin-up. Pull-up. Run. Run. Run. Watch. Fall. Swing. PLF Ropes. Tower Jump. Rope Climb. Run. Run. Stand in the door. Push-ups. Listen. Real jump. Rewards. Pride.

On the first day there they were told to look to their left and right. Those guys probably wouldn't be there next week.

The washout platoons always were jammed. But the washout did K.P. No K.P. for Ojeda. None for Paladino.

Silver Wings upon their chests and those of Akers, Anno, Bowley, Cabral, Creger, Farrell, Foster, Glick, Gulley, Hankins, Harris, Jarocki, Lacroix, Love, Lungarelli, McBride, Robillard, Rodriguez, Seavey, Wilfong, and Wills.

There were others, perhaps forgotten now, but with strong wills, determination, winning attitudes

What's next? Almost all assignments sounded good: Panama, Ojeda and Paladino got Okinawa. Some new unit called the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate). Details later.

Fly to Oakland. Wait. Troop ship S.S. Sultan - big and gray.

It pulls away from the dock and heads toward the Golden Gate Bridge. Tony Bennett was there on the loudspeaker singing, "I left my heart in San Francisco."

Some would never see it again.

Close quarters. Swaying decks. Swabbing. Rocking. For some puking. Movies at night up top. Lots of water.

Then, rising like a sea monster in the mist, Diamond Head. The most beautiful sight for those who'd hardly been anywhere yet - Hawaii. Pearl Harbor. Who wants off?

The impatient chose the day's pass in Honolulu. Ojeda, Paladino, Foster, Wills, Jarocki, Hankins chose to take their day off when the Sultan hit Tokyo.

Change script for yen. Scoshi cab to the train station. Hey, this looks like where we get off.

Ginza lights. Shopping. Restaurant, with pillow-on-the floor seating.

Back on the ship. A few more days and there's Okinawa, Japanese island whose World War II history wasn't that far removed. Do these people resent us? Doesn't seem so.

Replacement barracks at Sukiran were quiet. A week to wait. It was like a week-long pass. But then assignments: Ojeda to the 1st Battalion, 503rd Infantry of the 173rd at Camp Kue. Paladino to the 2nd Battalion at Sukiran.

Separated pals in the Army's first separate brigade. Occasionally bumping into each other, but going separate ways. Eight months of training. Jungles. Jumps. Rice paddies. Hill humping. War games.

Big operation in Taiwan. Storm. Jump injuries. Team with Chinese paratroopers, who dub 173rd troopers "Sky Soldiers."

Ten days of C-Rations and the same fatigues. Hills. Rappelling. Marching. Sloshing. Pineapple fields - and raw mouths after satiating ravenous thirsts.

Lizard-covered walls. Forging swamps and rivers. Constipation. "Fighting." Umpires naming "casualties." Peanut field encampment. No passes.

Back to Okinawa. Back to paradise. To the slot machines at the PX. To the Fort Buckner theater. To Stillwell Fieldhouse for boxing matches or basketball games. Paladino and John Wills giving fencing exhibitions at the USO Club.

Regular visits to the bars in Koza, Fatima,

Naha. For some, to the pawn shops and girls named Michiko or Kaiko.

Soon, more operations. Habu Canyon. Cane fields. Rice paddies. Pineapple fields. Jungles. Pay jumps at Yomitan, with old WWII runway down the middle. Try hard to land in potato fields.

What was it all for?

Rumors.

"We're going south."

Then the word came. We were going south - Vietnam. Tomorrow. One-day's notice. Cancel all passes and leaves. Pack up. Get live ammo this time. The 173rd is about to become the first army combat unit sent to Vietnam.

May 5, 1965. Leave Naha. Paladino and the 2nd Battalion land at Bien Hoa aboard C-130s, a few days after advance party. Ojeda and the 1st Battalion arrived at Vung Tau. Load M-16s. Spread out. Head out. March toward first base camps.

Second battalion in Hobo Woods, an old rubber tree plantation. Able command of Captain Lombardo - "Ranger Roy."

Who are those people in black pajamas over there. Viet Cong? Maybe. Always be suspicious. Patrols, fire ants, mosquitoes, heat, monsoon rains wiping out useless little trenches around pup tents.

Look at that bombed out building. Has there been a war going here, or something?

Soon, move to permanent areas. Build wooden floors and set up squad tents. 1st and 2nd Battalions still far apart. Ojeda in headquarters company of 1/503 and Paladino in headquarters platoon of Co. B of 2/503rd, having previously been M-60 machine gunner in 2nd Platoon. 1st Platoon eventually moved to Bien Hoa.

The first firefight. The first casualties. Morning reports with funny letters: KIA, MIA, WIA. Friends bleeding. Some dying. Company commanders changing often due to wounds - but all of them top notch.

Brigadier General Ellis Williamson sees the Sky Soldiers through the early traumas. Before the brigade's nine-year Vietnam tenure was to end, 12 would win the Medal of Honor, 6,000 would earn Purple Hearts and the families of 1,533 would see their surnames carved in the black granite wall in their nation's capitol.

"Fire Brigade" they said. Wherever something going on, send the 173rd: Mekong Delta, Pleiku, Central Highlands, Iron Triangle, War Zone D.

There are three infantry battalions now: 1st, 2nd and 1st Royal Australian Regiment. How ya do'n, mate?

Then there are the engineers, 17th Cavalry, 16th Armor, 319th Artillery, with the 161st Field Battery of the Royal New Zealand Army and the Australian Artillery joining the miniature division. Eventually there would be 3rd and 4th American infantry battalions. Early operations were limited and called "OPORDERS." They evolved into full-blown, well-coordinated operations with special names: "New Life," "Smash I," "Marauder," "Crimp," "Roundhouse," "Junction City," and more.

There were a few jumps - for pay, but punctuated by sniper fire. Ap Don drop zone had a village on one side, mine field on another, ancient cemetery on a third side. And a smelly water buffalo watering hole in the middle.

Later 173rd generations would experience America's first combat jump since Korea. And bitter battles such as Dak To, which was to earn a Presidential Unit Citation for the brigade.

Helicopters, not parachutes, though, became the standard assault mode. Search and destroy. Yet also build a "Peace" chapel. Round up the enemy and his weapons. But help an orphanage or pull a baby, still breathing from an old well.

Ambushes, including one while some watched a "Hello Dolly" USO show. Punji stakes. Tunnels. Firefights. Scorpions. Pit vipers. VC. Truces that give the enemy time to reinforce, rearm. Then more casualties. Tougher operations.

Occasionally, a break. A Bob Hope show. Martha Raye. A pass to Saigon.

How about a Playboy Magazine playmate of the Year visit? She came, Jo Collins and her aide, to visit the 2nd Battalion's Bravo Bulls who earned the visit by ordering a lifetime subscription. Only Lieutenant Jack Price, who wrote the letter, was with others wounded in a field hospital. "GI Joe" goes there. A few kisses help ease the wounds.

On to see the rest of the Bulls. They're coming back from the boonies, arriving at the helipad. Grimy. Sweaty. Tired.

"Greet Miss Collins on behalf of the company," Captain Romie L. Brownlee tells his RTO Paladino as they are met. "Yes, sir," is the response. Photographers record a kiss that sizzles Stars & Stripes.

Such respites helped troopers bear their burdens. So did R&R - rest and relaxation to places like Vung Tau in-country, or Hong Kong, Bangkok, Singapore, Sydney, Manila, or Tokyo out of country.

One year. That was the tour - if you could survive that long. Ojeda and Paladino survived - and took the same 707 flight home to San Francisco before going out to the 101st Airborne at Fort Campbell, KY. "Scream'n Eagles" now.

Ojeda, et al, visited West Point to teach cadets the essence of airborne. Paladino visits the hospital for three months with a broken back due to a Mae West. Recruit riggers that week, he was told.

Too bad. Missed unit's trip to Norway. Soon, the three-year enlistment of both troopers comes to a close. Back to Minneapolis for Dan. Back to Detroit for Larry - Into the business world for Dan. The world of sports writing for Larry.

Also for Ojeda, reserve duty to keep a finger in the pie. And a VFW command, plus activism that would include commissioning of a Sky Soldier statue for display at Fort Benning, Minneapolis and USO headquarters in Washington, DC.

A football game and two baseball tournaments would send Paladino into Minne-

sota over the years that followed, and thus reunions with Ojeda. But the biggest reunion came in 1985 in Washington, DC, when both were together for the 20th anniversary of the 173rd's deployment to Vietnam.

A White House visit. Marine barracks parade. Banquet. Pentagon trip. "The Wall." Audience with Joint Chiefs Chairman Vecsey.

Dinner with 1SG MacDonald. A beer with Specialist Rascon. A handshake with old platoon mates Canady, Moulaison, Minahane, Logan, Schimpf. A mini-reunion with Jo Collins, as Playboy shoots a video for cable TV.

Old friends. Old stories. Camaraderie. Laughter. Tears. Smiles. Parades. Banquets. Salutes. Memories.

"Are you sure you want to do this," they recall their recruiters saying.

"Yes," they remember responding.

And "yes" they still believe.

Vietnam Stories

by Charles E. Canisius

#1 - Chopper sees medic.

It seemed like our platoon was rough on medics, it seemed like every time we turned around we had a new medic, so when we got a new one we would see if there was anything he needed practice in, if he hadn't done anything in a while (like one medic said he needed practice with stitches, he hadn't had any reason to stitch anyone up lately). So, we'd go up to the lieutenant and suggest a patrol and just maybe bring back somebody for interrogation or see if we could find out anything about where Charlie was. The lieutenant said, good idea and on the way back or in the process of getting the person or persons we might have an accident with a tree or run into a tree or something along this line.

We'd come back to the lieutenant and the lieutenant would ask what happened and we'd tell the lieutenant that they'd run into a tree. The lieutenant would say "take him to the medic and have the medic stitch him up and take care of him." We try to take care of our medics, you know, give them what they needed and wanted to practice, just so they would have a little experience before they started practicing on us.

#2 - Medics

We went out on a patrol and came across a village and decided to take a break, so all of sudden we heard a big ruckus and everything, and we found out what it was. The medic called the interpreter over and got everybody from the village around and told the interpreter that if the person who stole his pack of cigarettes didn't return them in 5 minutes he was going to burn the hooch down. So the interpreter told the villagers and one thing led to another and then we gave the medic cigarettes, he had cartons of cigarettes, but he wanted that pack that was taken from him, so we didn't think much of it. Five minutes later there was a funny smell in the air, we turned and this one hooch was in flames. Well, one thing led to another, the company commander, was a battalion interpreter there. He came out, got with the lieutenant to see what had happened and they had it just about completely ironed out except they asked the medic what happened and the medic said, "the gook took my cigarettes so I burned the hooch down" which made the lieutenant and everybody just put their heads in their hands, and it ended up costing, I think, a water buffalo to calm down the villagers.

#3 - Prisoners

It seems like at the battalion they



A young paratrooper growing old before his time, catches a few moments respite on an LZ near Pleiku, May 1967. (Courtesy of Paul "Bones" Butler)



Bill Workman

couldn't understand why everybody we brought in says "Gee, I number ten at night time but number one in the daytime." Example would be like this: one MVA nurse that we caught. It was late in the evening and we took over this hooch, and the platoon leader and sergeants strung their hammocks, while we all slept on the floor. A couple of us were guarding the prisoner and the sergeant couldn't understand why about every five minutes one person would leave the room and when he came back another one would leave the room, etc... for most of the night. In the daytime when everyone was giving our prisoner chow and cookies (just about anything we had, we were giving her) he still didn't catch on until the next day when the whole platoon was in line before the medic getting some penicillin shots. Then he finally put 2 and 2 together and we got the reputation of being number 10 at night and 1 in the daytime.

#4 - Horse Shoe Valley

We had reports that a battalion went into this area on a search and destroy recon and couldn't come up with anything so they got the impression that maybe a platoon could do what a battalion couldn't. There was the reported 18th MVA regiment stronghold, aerial photos of 15' concrete walls in front of caves, and various items. The object was the 1st Cavalry was supposed to go along the

base and be our support and we were supposed to land on top. Then the company was supposed to split by platoons and spread out. The first platoon was to make contact, then the other three platoons would link up and go to that platoon. It was basic theory but for one reason or another the cavalry couldn't get in. The platoon that I was in was the only platoon to make contact. We came across a cooking area about large enough for about 100 MVA. When we sent out security and checked it out, we came across another cooking area of about equal size. Before we went any further, we stopped right where we were to check the area out. The 2nd cooking area still had warm ashes in it, and that's when we got hit. I think our platoon had about 17 people in it at that time, and we suffered 50% casualties. We had one dead and the rest were wounded. The guy who was sitting right in front of me was the one who was killed; his name was Joe. The guys on each side of me were wounded, so the normal thing was to return fire. We were pinned down and we really could not see anybody or couldn't really see where the rounds were coming from. We finally got some air support and some medevacs came in. The 1st one took a couple of the wounded. The 2nd medevac was shot at, but made it out of the area before being shot down. The 3rd one picked up the remainder of the wounded and on the way out picked up fire. It made it back to base but was listed as shot down so it couldn't fly any more. They won't take dead bodies, so the decision had to be made - were we going to stay the night or were they going to come and take us out. The story we got was that Charlie got on the radio and said "you get those guys out of there or they won't be alive by morning." The other three platoons were having such a hard time getting to us and the company commander was so disgusted with the way it was going that he took point. They still couldn't get to us, so the decision was made to pull us out. We had to go about a click or so to a PZ. We got chased off the first one, but found another that was better for chop-

pers to come in and they picked up everybody. I got into the last chopper and as the chopper was pulling away, we could see a human wave assault coming over the top of the mountain into area. The next day they were talking about us going back in and we told them "no way, not like we did earlier, we wouldn't want to do it that way." I guess they just decided to do a B-52 strike and they pounded that base pretty good.

I have a problem. When the moving wall came around I couldn't find Joe's name because I didn't know his last name, when it happened or the month or anything. If some of your readers or someone from the Herd could help me out with a date or the last name I would appreciate it.

The First Vietnam 1965-66

by MG Ellis W. Williamson (Ret)

I Oversold The Case

My unit was the first US Army ground combat unit to arrive in Vietnam. It was 1965 and the enemy was pretty well able to go anywhere and do most anything he wanted to. After clearing a small area and attaining security adequately enough to not have to stay in a hole most of the time when not moving, I set up a small tent and about eight of us ate our meals in what we dignified by calling it the general's mess. The mess was in fact a hole in the ground about 10 feet long, six feet wide and five feet deep. We had a tent over it so it could be blacked out, as we usually ate the evening meal well after dark. This permitted me to get together with my staff and go over the situation with adequate light.

At one of our first meals I told my officers a little joke that I had just heard. It was about the Catholic girl who fell in love with a Jewish boy. Her parents would not hear of a wedding so the girl set out to convert her friend to her religion. Each evening she would explain to her mother that he was becoming more interested. Without exception she felt that each day they were coming close to seeing in the same light. One evening she came home crying her eyes out. She told her mother that she had over sold the case, "He's going to be a priest."

The next day General Westmoreland, our boss, came in for a visit. After reviewing the tactical situation with us, the general said that he just had to tell us a cut little joke that he had just heard. He proceeded to tell us about the Catholic girl who fell in love with the Jewish boy. All of us were perfectly attentive. When the punch line came we broke down in laughter - right on cue.

After General Westmoreland left I expressed my admiration for all the others. I said they great to have held back until the punch line. I mentioned that I knew that some of them were not regular Army officers and hoped that when they went back to civilian life at least one of them would go on the stage. With that, one of my staff officers spoke up

and said, "Oh! It was easy. Most of us heard that joke at least a month ago."

No Problems, Just Situations

After being in Vietnam a few weeks I told my staff that I did not want to hear any more discussions about problems. I said that in fact we didn't have problems. We had situations that demanded the attention of men with our capabilities. I said that if we didn't have challenges all of us could be replaced by corporals or less. A short while later one of my staff officers came up and announced, "General, we don't have any problems yet, but one of our situations is getting rather grave."

Birthday Party Every Week!

This next account is not funny but is a great tribute to the American young man. After we cleared the enemy from our base camp area we started going out into the jungle to drive the enemy farther back so he could no longer attack heavily populated areas and then escape to his base camp before day light. All of a sudden we were struck by a deluge of messages right out of Washington. A soldier had been killed and it came to light that he was only 17 years old. After being condemned for having allowed just a kid to go into combat it was pointed out that we were 100% volunteers and that our laws permitted men to volunteer for service at 17, although we did not draft until age 18. Word came back. "We agree. You are well within the law, however all men not 18 years old will be withdrawn from combat and sent back to the United States immediately." I withdrew them and reported back to Washington that I had 299 in base camp but also had a morale problem on my hands. All the men were completely incensed by their having been pulled out of their units. They insisted that they had stood up to the strains of combat and that no one could accuse them of being less than men. I stalled for two days checking records, etc. I was hoping that something would happen to save me from humiliating these young men. When they continued to insist on staying I sent another message back explaining the situation and stated that these people would consider their return to the United States to be a betrayal by our higher command. I was given a reprieve. We received permission to let these men stay in Vietnam if they insisted. If they stayed they had to remain at base camp and could only be used for base security if the base was attacked. Each one of them knew that all the paper work had been prepared so that all he needed to do was to say the word by noon any day and he would be on a plane for home the next morning. Our base camp was at Bien Hoa Air Base, therefore our people saw the planes coming and going every day. As time went on we had a birthday party every Thursday and those who had become 18 years old during the week joined their units on Friday. All 299 men stuck it out and joined their units at the ripe old age of 18 years plus no more than one week.

Yes, She Really Is A Woman - The Great White Father

We moved about 300 miles up north and had quite an experience with entirely different people. One of our first encounters was with Pat Smith. She was a tall, raw boned American female doctor who was running an entire hospital that tended the mountain tribesmen. She had so much respect for her work that neither of the fighting sides would bother her establishment. One of the first stories she told was how a couple of the Vietnamese nurses had followed her down to the river when she took a bath. They came back and reported, "Yes, she really is a woman."

Her hospital had two wards of 20 beds each. She had over 150 patients, however her hospital beds were not full. Her patients would rather sleep out on the lawn. When one person came to the hospital, the entire family came along to nurse and to provide company. Pat was still using the drip ether into a mask method to put patients to sleep for operations. She said it was not unusual at all for her nurse to drop to the floor asleep before the patient was knocked out.

One day a patient came in with acute appendicitis. The patient was told that an operation was necessary at once. The patient said that she had to go home first. She soon returned with the witch doctor who had told her that the operation was okay but the witch doctor had to stand right by the patient during the operation to keep out evil spirits while the patient's body was open.

Our men really went to work. They painted her entire building after patching the walls and ceiling. They completely rewired the electrical system and they fixed a refrigerator that had not worked for a long while.

Pat told us that we had done so much that if she just could have a can of beer, life would be perfect. We got her a six-pack and some dry ice. She sat down and said, "Watch me enjoy this if you must, but please don't ask me to share."

When we started to leave, Pat Smith was asked if there was anything else we could do for her. She said she wanted newspapers. I told her that they were three days old when we got them and by the time we could get them up to her they would be quite old. She said, "What difference does it make. I'm going to use them for baby diapers." From then on we had a light plane fly over about every 10 days and drop bundles of old papers. I wrote a friend back in the United States who was vice president of a pharmaceutical company and from then on Pat had her much needed drug supplies.

Just before we left a tribal chief came running up. He was exhausted. He had actually run for over 15 miles to get to us. Shortly after we had left his village, the enemy had come in and had shot up the area. An 8-year-old girl had been badly wounded and the chief just knew that our doctors could save her. We called a doctor and jumped in a helicopter with the chief. When we arrived there was much sadness. The little girl had died. The doctor went over, pushed the grieving mother aside and examined the girl. He looked up and said that she was not dead, that she had a scalp wound that had bled a lot but she was not even in danger. With the use of smelling salts he brought her around. Words cannot describe the excitement in the village. They were completely convinced that the doctor had brought her back from the dead. I looked down and said, "Doctor, you are really the great white father of this mountain." He came forth with a great burst of



SPC Alfred Roscon (middle), MOH Recipient



Combat Assault, 1/503 173d Abn. Bde., July 4, 1968. (Courtesy of John Hosier)



laughter before I realized what I had said. My doctor was a black man.

As we were leaving after about six weeks in the area, the Province Chief was asked what he wanted most. His answer was simple, "Stay with us." He then said, "If you can not stay with us then leave me just 12 sergeants and I will make each one of them a village chief and things will be better very soon."

Why Didn't You Tell Me A General Was Flying This Thing

I finally got to the place where I could fly a helicopter quite well but I still needed a lot of practice. Every time there was a lull in the action my pilot, my aide and I would take off just for practice flying. I practiced land-

ings, which is the hardest part, on any field I could find that was not being used and was considered to be reasonably safe from enemy action. One day we were down around Bear Cat, which was a Special Forces training camp. While we were practicing touch and go we received a radio call, "Hey, Buddy in that helicopter, this is Major Stevens on the ground near the landing strip. You seem to be just screwing around, how about picking me up and letting me make a jump?" I radioed back that it was okay and he ran for his parachute. When we picked him up he already had his chute on. He jumped in the rear with my aide. The major was very exacting about high he wanted to go and exactly how fast he wanted me to fly and from which direction I would

approach the field. In fact, he was so demanding that he was irritating. When we got almost to the right altitude the major turned to my aide and said, "Who is flying this helicopter?" When my aide told him, his face turned red and he said, "Why in the hell didn't you tell me a general was flying this thing?" At that, he was out of the plane, miles from where he wanted to be, but away from the general whom he hoped would not remember his name.

Generals Make Me Nervous

After we had been in Vietnam a few weeks an air observer reported sighting a large enemy cache of supplies deep in the jungles of War Zone D. He described large piles of food, munitions and all kinds of equipment. Additional observers were dispatched at once to confirm before committing air strikes to the target. Other observers reported that they could see nothing. The next day our enthusiastic observer came back with what appeared to be a wild description of many things, but everyone else came back saying, "We can't see anything." Our observer would not give up, so I went over the area with him. He pointed and described, but I could not confirm anything. I stared until my eyes hurt, but nothing would appear. The observer was so sure that I decided to commit a rather large force on the ground to find out. If the stocks of supplies were anywhere near as large as our observer thought, there was no question but that the enemy was planning a big move somewhere nearby.

After adequate air strikes to suppress the enemy around the area our assault helicopter force was landed. There was no enemy in the area, but there it was, piles and piles of supplies. We had found by far the largest enemy supply dump of the war all because one very young observer was sure he was right and would not be deterred by the fact that others could not see.

The supplies were heavily booby trapped. We called in our bomb demolition teams and they went to work. After several hours I checked with one team that was disarming booby traps right and left. They had been at it about six hours when I asked a young sergeant if that kind of tedious work didn't make him nervous. His reply was, "Those bombs don't make me near as nervous as having a general watching me does."

Beyond The Veil

by Mark Lampe

I was 20 years old on my first pass to Saigon, having spent the previous months in War Zone "D" on counter-insurgency operations with my unit, the 173rd Airborne Brigade. I shuffled into a bar not far from the waterfront, and picked a table with a commanding view of the windows and doorway. The Viet Cong guerrillas were known to throw grenades and satchel charges into places GIs frequented, and I wanted to see it coming! The overhead fan whirred slowly

away in an effort to keep the hot, smoky air moving. Noon temperatures hovered at 110 degrees with matching humidity. I felt as if I was in a large plastic bag in a sauna, each breath seemed like an accomplishment. Crusty white salt deposits had formed around the pockets of my fatigue shirt even though I had put it on fresh that morning. A bottle of something cool and wet seemed to be in order. As I started on my third icy "Ba moi ba" beer, my head began to throb. An attractive Vietnamese woman approached my table and asked if she could join me. I consented and bought her a "Saigon Tea," and we began a friendly game of 500 Rummy.

Flies landing on the tops of my hands lapped the beads of sweat that had formed there. My thoughts drifted to the places where flies are born, the piles of human waste and the corpses I had seen in recent days. My friend Daniel, who I had known for 22 months, had told me just prior to the last operation that he would be home for Christmas. We had been together on Okinawa during the early days of the formation of the brigade. Daniel was a nice kid from the mid-west. He always seemed to have a cheery disposition regardless of the circumstances, an unforgettable personality attribute under such daily adversity! As he drove his jeep down a lonely road, a command detonated Chinese Claymore mine snuffed out his young life. Steel balls half an inch in diameter tore through the backs of the seats, his passenger being practically eviscerated on the dashboard. Daniel jumped out, ran 15 yards, and died. Something inside me died with Daniel that day! I'm not adequately able to describe the commingled feelings of anger and hurt. He had not cared for the bars and warehouses that others frequented back on Okinawa. We all chided him for being "religious," but I secretly admired him for the strength of his convictions.

The Vietnamese woman, sensing my inner turmoil, brushed against me, and in a soft voice said, "Come with me GI and I will make you feel good, you will be happy again." Swept in the loneliness and despair of the moment, I went with her hoping to find relief and solace. The clean wholesome young man was gone. All that was left was a hollow shell, older than my years and filled with violence and all manner of evil inclination.

Months later, I was encamped across a dirt road from a forward fire support base of the Brigade's 3rd Battalion, 319th Artillery. We were just outside a small Vietnamese hamlet named Bien Cat, which was located on one corner of a notorious Viet Cong stronghold known as "The Iron Triangle." All day long I helped break down loads of ammo and supplies that were being delivered "low level extraction" by Caribou aircraft. Their wing tips snapping the tops off of trees, a small chute dragged the palletized loads out off the aircraft's tailgate, and they plopped on the ground in a cloud of dust as the plane passed overhead. The 105mm Howitzers boomed unceasingly with fire missions all

day and into the night. That night the artillery battery began to draw a large volume of incoming enemy small arms fire from the opposite side of the hill. The air across the road was lit up like Christmas from tracers. I looked at "Duc," our interpreter, a diminutive Vietnamese man formerly a professor of mathematics at Saigon University, who looked too small to be packing the large frame .45 auto on his hip. He said, "If the VC get me I will be decapitated." Suddenly the woods behind us exploded with withering bursts of small arms fire. I grabbed my M-16 rifle, flipping the switch to full auto and began to return fire. In the next instant brilliant flashes of tracer rounds cracked past my head; it seemed as if someone was clapping ping-pong paddles over my ears. Someone had me in his sights! In that brief moment I knew that I was going to die. I recall my voice, an octave higher than normal, "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus." It was a request rather than cursing, unusual behavior for an avowed agnostic. Another trooper jumped aboard a disabled tracked vehicle and commenced to chop the woods to pieces with the quad .50 caliber machine guns. It was all over in a few short minutes. I had been embarrassed and a little concerned that someone may have heard me calling on Jesus over the din of battle. In the earlier days of the brigade on Okinawa, I had striven to develop a certain hard facade, a macho mystique. Suddenly my self image and inner confidence had been shattered. I had walked through the valley of the shadow of death, stepping through the veil. I had seen the face of death and lived. I had to deal with the fact that, in spite of my superior training and equipment, I was susceptible like the others who had been killed.

Recalling the early days on Okinawa and how all of us had such a high degree of training and pride in our paratroop unit, I was always irritated at those who made the sign of the cross before exiting the aircraft during a parachute jump. I had been trained to have confidence in myself and my equipment, and had come to look disdainfully on those hypocritical last minute offerings made by seemingly weak people. Now my own trust sys-



Testing of CH-47 assault ladders in base camp at Bien Hoa. (Courtesy of Paul Epley)

tem was shattered and in disarray. I had been exposed to my own weakness, and it left me realizing that I was alone and naked.

I left the Army in 1968 and returned Stateside. Moving about aimlessly from one job to another, I used alcohol excessively, had several shallow relationships, and indulged in several violent bar fights. I closed the S.E. Asian chapter of my life with the realization that life is like a stream crossing - the footsteps of life wash away downstream in time and become "water under the bridge." There is nothing we can do that will change or alter the past. Meanwhile, we live in the present and look to the future. Anyone who lives in the past is bound by it and eventually becomes controlled by its ghosts.

Laura was a lovely girl. I had known her since she was 14 years old. She was now 22 and I was 26. We fell in love and were married in a simple church ceremony. Our first son, Chris, was born barely 10 months later, and Eric was born after another three years. We had begun to attend a non-denominational Christian church. The day came when I realized that Jesus had heard me calling in desperation so many years earlier. As I acquiesced to the knowledge that Jesus is indeed the Christ and the Son of the Living God, a light went on in my heart and my life suddenly took on a new dimension that I had not formerly been aware existed. The real reason for life had become manifest to me, sig-



Operation Junction City. (Courtesy of Paul Epley)



C Co. 3/503, 173d Abn. Bde., Toy Hoa, November 1967. (Courtesy of John Hosier)

naling the beginning of a new chapter in my earthly pilgrimage.

Of Bully To Grace

by Sgt. Gary W. Thayer

I was the gunner in the 106 with a recoil-less rifle (jeep loaded) carrying quite a few high explosives. In early June 1969 after completing half of our road patrol and security check, our team stopped outside FSB. While in the village we saw some shops with a small crowd of people - a Mama San of one little shop had a nice supply of goods, so we stopped to take a look. In my team there was one new guy, or FNG. The FNG was looking at a knife (actually a survival kit) with a sharpening stone. At first, the FNG picked up the knife, looked at it and then put it back down. Shortly after, an Arvin picked up the same knife. The FNG quickly grabbed it out of his hands and yelled at him while putting the blade up to his neck. I saw this and said to the FNG, "Put that knife down!" putting this new guy in his place (which was called crapping in his helmet). He let go of the villager, who walked away with tears in his eyes, taking along three companions.

We continued to walk and talk for a while and went across the street, which was a dirt road lined with small dirty houses. We just happened to go into one house and looked up where three Arvins, one with a bar and two with M-1 grenades stood inside the door. To my left I saw the Arvin from earlier was holding a M-26 with the pin pulled and he was still crying. I was scared. I knew what he was going to do; he planned to throw the M-26 into my jeep. At that point I started to softly cry and yell "No, no." A little girl, no more than four or five years old, came in and stood next to him. I knew he did not understand my language, and still crying I pointed to the grenade in his hand, then to me and gestured with my hands, "That will blow you up." I then pointed to the little girl and whispered, "No, no." I was still crying when he gently put the pin back into the frag and with tears in his eyes turned and went out of the hooch.

At this point, Sergeant Buis yelled, "Let's saddle up," from outside. He kept yelling that some of the people were very upset and angry. I can't remember his words anymore, I just ran back to the jeep, got in from behind and we started to pull out quickly. But just before we left the same Arvin ran up to me, grabbed my right hand and with tears streaming from his red eyes, whispered, "thank you, thank you." This is the truth I will carry with me until the end of my soul.

If he had blown up my jeep, he would have certainly killed me and most likely half our squad, his own village, and his beautiful child. We, the Americans, would have probably come back to retaliate by bombing the entire village. God knows, for some reason, it didn't end that way.



Troops of the 173d cooking a duck with Joe Diaz watching. Iron Triangle, Aug/Sep 1965. (Courtesy of Joe Diaz)



Inf. Truck 35 3rd Plt. E/17 Cav. 173d Abn. Bde. with c/2/503rd troopers on board en route to the An Lao Valley from LZ Beaver, March 16 1970. (Courtesy of Lanny E. French)



"E" troop, 17th Cavalry.

Forward Observer - 81mm Mortars

by Mike Tanner, C/4/503, June 1967-68

I spent my first month in the bush as part of a mortar crew. I was gunner, when the platoon sergeant "volunteered" me to be the next FO for the 1st Platoon. He said, "It'll only be for 30 days at most, then I'll get you a replacement." I believed him.

I spent a week with Sergeant Biston on OJT, and the next several months on my own with Lima Platoon. I was really "green." I practiced calling in fire-missions and choppers. I practiced reading the map and compass. I wanted to be prepared for when my time came to perform.

I considered my job as life-saving. I envisioned keeping all the guys in the platoon safe behind my wall of mortars. It scared me that I might forget some little detail. I didn't want to be confused in battle, calling a protective fire-mission.

The first time I came under fire, I was part of a platoon sweeping the rice paddies. Two or three VC opened up on us. I heard the popping and cracking, but couldn't imagine I was under fire. First Lieutenant Naughton jerked me down on the ground beside him.

He was amazed that I didn't realize the danger. He talked me through my first real "Fire-Mission!" I called into my PRC-25 radio.

"Three Zero, this is Three One. Fire Mission! Over."

Three Zero was the fire direction controller, of the mortar platoon. He'd calculate whatever information I could give him and come up with the right directions for the gunsights and firing charges.

"3- 1, this is 3-0. Give me your position over." He answered. All other radio traffic would cease during the initial moments. All radio-ears were tuned to the FO, or whoever else was on.

"3-0, 3-1, my position is grid coordinates 123456. I have a squad of VC in a tree line. Azimuth 123 degrees, a distance of 200 meters. Give me a marking round behind them, over." I said.

"3-1, 3-0. I have your position at grid 123456. Victor Charlie at 123 degrees, distance 200 mikes. Is that correct? Over."

"This is 3-1, that's affirmative. Over."

"Roger 3-1. Ready to fire, at your command."

"3-0, 3-1, Fire. Over."

"3-1, 3-0, Fire! Marking round on the way. Over."

A half minute later, I hear the marking round hit and see some black smoke puff-up. It's always behind them and to the left.

"3-0, 3-1, drop 1-5-0, right 1-0-0. Fire for effect when ready."

"Roger 3-1. Drop 1-5-0, right 1-0-0. Wait."

"3-1, 3-0. Rounds on the way. Over."



Another half minute and the tree line disappeared in a cloud of dark smoke. The sniper fire had been quickly blown away by the response of the squad closest to them. The riflemen opened up, followed by an M-60 machine gun, then the M-79 grenades hit their mark. Any VC not hit by them would cer-

tainly be hit by the six or eight mortar explosions.

"3-0, 3-1. Perfect hit, on target. Mission complete. Over."

"3-1, 3-0. Roger on target, mission complete. Over and out."

It looks awful tame on paper. I guess you had to be there. We all know Hollywood can't duplicate the action.

I'd wake up on a typical day just before dawn. After checking in on the radio, I'd get ready for the morning cloverleaf patrol to search outside the front of the perimeter. The lieutenant's RTO, the platoon sergeant's RTO and myself rotated some of these patrols if they weren't too far away. The close-in patrols didn't need an FO with them. The farther ones did.

Upon returning, there was usually someone with hot water, if you had coffee. Then the morning "poop" meeting took place. The lieutenant or platoon sergeant would go over our assignments for the day. The group was necessarily kept small, just the three squad leaders and the FO. Sometimes the medic would be included.

Our squads rotated all patrols, ambushes, LPs, OPs, water details, etc., so everyone had an equal chance at everything including the point team (suicide squad).

All those dangerous jobs, rotated every third day over 300 days, equal a hundred times on each point, ambush, etc. That's somewhere around a thousand possibly life threatening missions.

We were re-supplied on November 5, 1967, at our night "harbor site." DuWayne Dubb, PSG, LaGuana's RTO, received a banana nut cake in one piece and decided to share it with me. It was our desert after the hot chow which the cooks heli-lifted out to us. We talked about the wide NVA trail and

the VC camp our company had found during the day. We also bragged about our mother's home cooking and he had definite proof.

I woke up sick to my stomach and with a headache on November 6. We needed to joke about it because of the tension in the air we both felt. We'd heard the news that the NVA were strong in our area. Contact was expected. We weren't scared, we just intuitively sensed that our present quiet day wouldn't last.

I was to be the FO on point that day. We'd be reinforced with a platoon of ARVN. First Lieutenant Naughton would be in charge. It was a bit unusual for the point team to be larger than a platoon, but other than that, it would be a "normal" day on point.

Dubb suggested that we trade jobs for the day. He was to travel with the rest of the platoon and PSG Laguana, 1-200 meters behind the reinforced point team. He thought I was too sick and would be a hindrance on point.

It hadn't occurred to me, but he was right. He explained that the lieutenant could call in a fire mission if needed, and that he was the lieutenant's regular RTO. He got the lieutenant's approval and we switched.

The day was sunny and hot for November. Quiet really, in fact we discussed how it seemed all the animals were gone. The wind wasn't even around. It was just hot, still, and too quiet. We'd been moving slow all day and that gave me enough rest time to keep up. By noon I felt normal again.

Late in the afternoon, automatic fire and grenades shattered the peace. We crouched on the trail to await whatever developed. I moved to the front of the file with PSG Laguana. There, we expected to be ordered into the battle immediately.

It was a thunderous explosion of sound, a major ambush. Dubb came on the radio call-

ing for help. "They're everywhere." Help us."

Captain Connelly spoke to him, getting the situation. DuWayne's voice was so terrified, I strained at obeying my orders to wait. The captain was heeding the lesson of June 22 and didn't want us rushing into a larger horse-shoe ambush.

PSG Laguana, huddled next to my ear, was listening in to the radio communications between Dubb and the captain. At one point the sergeant grabbed my handset and told the captain we wanted to go up there and help. After a quick pause, he said "Lead the way."

What he didn't know was that we had already started our run when we jumped up and hollered

"Let's go." I really felt proud. That was the motto of my old unit at Fort Bragg, the 325th Glider Battalion. I'm nostalgic that way. Let's go and everyone did. Not one paratrooper hesitated charging into that firefight.

The forward observer was up front where he was supposed to be. Well, at least I was charging as fast as I could. We had all dropped our rucksacks to run faster. Platoon Sergeant LaGuana and I arrived together with Lima Platoon on our heels.

We came to 1LT Naughton first. He was sitting back against a tree, propped up is more like it. Firing his Car-15 with one hand and directing us with his other. The guys behind us spread out left and right, establishing a hasty half circle.

Half-way up the hill, Dubb's radio went silent, but the firing continued. When I saw the lieutenant, the first thing I thought of was, "Where's Dubb?"

"Everyone charged to the front. He went further than anyone. He'll be the last body you find. Give me your radio." He kept firing while the platoon sergeant began dressing the lieutenant's wounds. His left knee was a shat-



3rd Platoon, Delta Company, 4th Battalion, 503rd Infantry 1968.

tered bloody/white mass and he'd lost three fingers.

"Sir, you're too shot up to handle the radio. You'll be in too much pain," I began protesting. A true radioman won't give up his radio easily. It's his only link to what's going on. It's his purpose for being there.

"Just give me the damn radio and go check on your buddy." He ordered. "You guys move up on the left."

OK, OK," I thought. "I'm not needed here anyway." I set my radio next to the lieutenant and charged into the bamboo clusters and underbrush. I ran downhill looking for an American GI. I didn't think of whether to use my rifle or grenades first on contact. I could only think of him and why wasn't there anyone else around. "Dubb, if I'd have been here, I hope I would've acted just like you. You must have been terrified, but you did your job and more trying to protect others and kill the enemy. I could almost hear the echoes of his angry scream

..."Aarrgh..." as he faced his enemy.

It was dark when I finally found him. He was laying on his back, under a tree limb. Knocked out cold, obviously. I tried to revive him, but instead got a handful of goo. The back of his head wasn't there. I was shocked! He had been shot.

After quickly checking my perimeter and hearing and seeing nothing, I wondered what to do. I cursed him out for being such a good airborne infantryman. I wondered what to tell his mother. I prayed to God to turn back the morning's job-trade. I could be killed and Dubb could find me. Yeah, do that God. No one would know. But, darn you Dubb, why did you have to die? You're my friend.

I came out of my trance and licked my hands off, rather than spread his remains on the ground. I also hoped that maybe his courageous, good spirit would live on in me. I then baptized him according to my Catholic faith. It was the least I could do and the only thing that gives me solace today.

I went back up the hill, drained, alone. I saw two guys looking for wounded and told them where Dubb was. Then I wandered around until I got just inside our new perimeter. Pitch black darkness, because there was

no moon yet. I crawled behind a cluster of bamboo about eight feet thick. I laid there in a daze, not knowing where my radio was or anyone else.

I couldn't sleep at all, no one did. Spec-6 Doc Hesper worked on the wounded all night under a curtain of ponchos held up by the tiring arms of paratroopers. They were standing to create room and trying to block out any light from escaping. If the enemy caught a glimpse of light, it was sure to draw deadly fire. They gave their full protection, regardless.

Doc Hesper worked on Staff Sergeant Willie Wright for most of the night. He had a gut or chest wound and was barely hanging on. Word filtered around all night on their progress.

Puff, that magic airplane, fired his tracers in front of my position all night. Sometimes they seemed only five meters away beyond the bamboo. I felt very secure while that went on. If he'd have sneezed, he'd have ripped me

a new opening, but he didn't. I hoped I was in God's hands and soothed my troubled mind, praying the rosary over and over and listening for gooks.

Staff Sergeant Wright died before sunrise, as did PFC Sherman Jones and Eddie Stevens. Two or three others were wounded. Which was the whole team of Americans on point. I wasn't aware of any ARVN wounded, in fact, they disappeared. I think they were moved away from us for their own protection. We were bloodied, scared and angry, looking for any Vietnamese to kill.

Forever 18

by Meho (Deros) Hukarevic Sr., D Btry. 3/319 173
Abn. (Sep.)

I remember we were in a beautiful valley like the one in my hometown in the UP of Michigan, and I think it was April 1969. I can't remember where because we moved around



SP4 Kenneth McAugh prepares a Christmas tree that he received in the mail while on a clear-and-search mission with the 2d Battalion 173d Airborne Brigade. Also in the package was a note saying that the tree was sent a mite early to make sure it got there by Christmas. (Courtesy of Jon Housier)



Setting up shop. (Courtesy of Paul Epley)



Left to right: Steve Lalime and Tom Westorp. Okinawa, 1963. (Courtesy of S.R. Lalime)



Left to right: Keith Fabish, Batt. RTP: 1st Lt. Shoemaker, Art FO: 1st Sgt. Parks: Doc Henry, Company Medic: Capt. Thomas Carney. Behind: Eric Hitchcock, 4.2 FO Charlie Company CP, C/2/503, late April 1967. (Courtesy of Wayne Tuttle)



Men of the 2/503d advance at Tuy Hoa, 1967. (Courtesy of John Hossier)



Taken in war zone D, cleaning out a VC tunnel [Charlie's place]. (Courtesy of John Garcia)

a lot. We never stayed in one spot very long. I was attached to D Battery 3/319 Artillery. I went over to a four-deuce mortar pit and was telling some jokes to three guys I just met. A couple of slicks came in and landed, and a few minutes later we heard the thump of mortars leaving their tubes and the sound of them coming down; they weren't ours. They started to explode near the choppers and were walking to the back of the firebase. I started running back to my parapet when all of a sudden there was a blast right behind me. My ears were ringing and I felt a sharp pain in my back and left leg, but I kept on hoofing. As I approached my gun emplacement, I saw some smoke at the top of the hill in front of my howitzer. I called out to the guys, "I see smoke!" I said, "charge seven direct fire," and locked in on where I saw the smoke. We pumped out about 10 rounds right on the money. The mortars stopped and we checked things out. The slicks received some minor damage and were repaired there. I later found out the three guys that I had been laughing with beside their mortar pit were killed by the blast that blew out my ears seconds before. As I stood over their body bags, I remembered Herman Parker who was killed by

a sniper while we sat on a bunker during monsoons in the Special Forces camp in bambi tuitt (sic). The bullet went past my head and hit his; he died in my arms, forever 18.

Back in 1994, I went to see his parents in Gray Summit, MO, after many attempts and turning back because of guilt on my behalf. They were relieved to know he died in no pain, and I was freed from my guilt. We get nowhere living in the past but learn nothing by trying to forget it either.

Hooray For Cherries

by Ron Ray

I was a squad leader, sergeant E-5, promoted somewhere in the Pacific Ocean on the USNS William S. Weigel, as we were traveling to Vietnam. (At the 1996 reunion in California, I learned we are now known as "The Boat People.") We arrived in Vietnam at the end of October 1967.

As a battalion of cherries (new replacements), some time was consumed in acquiring the basic jungle skills necessary to effectively pursue our duty. By December 27 we had not seen any significant battles. We'd

spent nearly eight weeks in the bush, ran across several booby traps, climbed through much jungle and even experienced a few small skirmishes, but were not truly tested.

On December 24, Christmas Eve, thinking a cease fire was in effect, we lagged early. With extra time, my bunker mates and I twisted a belt of M-60 ammo around a tree behind our foxhole. The object was to make the tree look like a striped candy cane. I performed this feat often as a kid for money on the neighborhood trees - using red plastic tape and tin foil. Somehow our tree at the foxhole didn't seem quite the same until one of us got the idea of applying foot powder for a snow effect - perfect. The next morning, a man from the neighboring squad wandered out from his bunker into the sun and was shot through the head. He died instantly.

On the night of the 26th we were called into the base camp in preparation for another heliborne assault. I was assigned three replacements: Francis D. Greenwood, Indiana; Dan Thomas, Oregon; and I believe the third man was Harrington. Now they were the "Cherries."

Early in the morning of the 27th, we were ordered to prepare for the assault. Although I was given no intelligence on the enemy, I could see something different in the air. A slight tightness in the lieutenant's eyes, the platoon sergeant's manner a little more serious, and for the first time since we arrived in the Nam, we had enough lift ships to put the entire company in the air at the same time.

As usual, each squad was assigned a Huey. We were to take off and land in the same pattern. The pattern allowed the squad leaders to assume responsibility of a section of a circular perimeter of defense once we exited the Hueys. My sector was roughly from one o'clock to three o'clock. As we came in for a landing, I could see the vegetation of the ground would not allow the Hueys to land in the proper pattern. The lift ship that was carrying the squad intended to secure my left flank landed a good distance down range and further to the left of its intended position, leaving a huge gap in our perimeter. We exited the choppers, ran the 15 meters to the tree line and took up our positions.

There was a small gap in the six or seven foot high brushwood with a small field of fire. I ordered the M-60 gunner to set up at that spot. Greenwood was his assistant. With my squad in place, I proceeded to move into the gap to the left front in order to link up with the missing squad. As I walked, I mused at why we had not received the customary landing zone preparatory artillery and gun ship fire. I walked out 20 to 30 meters and came upon a well used trail. A trail about a meter wide, well traveled. I felt we could be in a serious bind if something came down that trail. I quickly returned to the squad. As I came around the bushes I saw the M-60 gunner had set up but too far out into the field of fire. He was exposed. I learned later that he was only 17. He had lied about his age.

That trail was just eight meters to our front and not visible because of three foot

hedges, but I knew of its existence. Within 60 seconds three men, NVA regulars, ran right up to us 15 feet away. Wearing uniforms, pith helmets, back packs, camouflage and carrying AK-47s, it was obvious they were the point element and more would be on the way. Being the first time I had seen the enemy alive, the only thing I could think of doing was to yell at the men to shoot, and I immediately began shooting myself. All three of them went down, I think I might of hit one or two of them.

When the NVA went down my men began firing, I jumped down just to the right of the opening in the hedges, centered in the middle of the squad, and all hell broke loose. Return fire poured in on us. The M-60 machine gun fired one round and jammed. The gunner and Greenwood were hit immediately. The gunner began yelling and screaming, "I'm hit, I'm hit, Greenwood is dead," as he crawled back behind the bushes with us. Greenwood had been hit in the head and died within seconds. The machine gun lay 8-10 feet in front of Harrington, who was just on my left, Klindt being just to the left of him. AK-47 rounds were screaming in all around us, blasting brushwood trunk stalks to bits and sending bits of vegetation into our faces. At least a squad of NVA had maneuvered to within 20 feet of us and were pouring on the fire. We were returning fire round for round. The machine gunner continued to scream and drew fire to us but we could not get him to be quiet. All the lead flying seemed less than a foot off the ground.

After a few minutes of this, Harrington asked me if I wanted him to retrieve the machine gun. I wasn't going to risk another casualty at that time. The machine gun lay on a highly contested piece of real estate. I asked Harrington if he could see the M-60 clearly. His reply was affirmative. I told him to just watch it and don't let the NVA get their hands on it.

Soon Chicom grenades began flying over the bushes right on to our position. We lay on a flat, level and sandy surface. The grenades landed just in between Harrington and I, exploding within a few seconds of landing. Each time one would land one of us would yell, "grenades." I would throw my arm around my helmet and tuck my chin into my chest.

The blast would slide me six or eight inches further away into the sand. They landed within six feet of me. There were nine in all before they stopped. I was hit in the left leg and right foot by two, one was a dud. I don't think anyone else was hit by them. At some time it dawned on us we could reciprocate in kind, and ours were much more powerful. The effects were audible from the cries of our foes and brought some relief.

Eventually Sergeant Vic Tejera (TJ) came running over to assess the situation. In a short conversation he ascertained there was a large gap in our defenses. The enemy was in very close and we were taking casualties. TJ said he would get us help and began to run off to our left, I believe to look for the "missing link," then I remembered the dud Chicom grenade. I yelled "TJ, watch out for that grenade." He

froze in place with his foot literally on top of the grenade, removed his foot, turned and grinned at me saying, "Hey, thanks man," then took off.

Eventually, after we had cleared the area to our front somewhat, one of our men ran up to me and in a derogatory manner, quarried me as to why I hadn't run out to retrieve the machine gun. I grumbled to him "If you want it, get it yourself." He retrieved it with no trouble, throwing it down to my right. One of my men to my right was the smallest man in the squad, so I ordered him on the gun. His reply was " _ you man, I'm not getting on that machine gun." I ordered him again and he refused. I was thinking of my right to shoot him for refusing a direct order in combat when Klindt said, "Screw this!" jumped up, ran over to the machine gun, picked it up, fired a three round burst and immediately took two AK-47 rounds in the chest.

A medic had already been to our aid taking care of the machine gunner. Now we needed one in a hurry and the calls went out. Our platoon medic was there within a few minutes. Many squads were taking casualties now as the fight had spread around the perimeter. Klindt was treated and moved to the center of our makeshift fort for medevac. I asked a medic to look at the wounds in my leg and foot. He pulled off my boot and checked my leg, saying they weren't too bad and the bleeding had stopped.

When Klindt was shot the reports from the gun sounded close and up high, as though they came from 15 feet in the air. I began to realize there could be a man in the trees. We were keeping our firing low, thinking they were hugging the ground like us. I asked trusty Harrington, still next to me, to do a "John Wayne." I asked him if he could hold a grenade, let the spoon fly off and count '1,000, 2,000' before he let it go. I wanted an air burst far enough out so as not to hurt us. No problem. The effects were immediate and obvious.

After the blast there came a loud cry and a crash through the bush as the body fell to the ground. Got ya. Hooray for Cherries.

A period of time had passed with us persistently putting fire to our front and the situation had stabilized. I also began to worry about my ability to stand and fight if a counter attack were launched. I didn't know then but I probably could of run 10 miles if it were forced upon me.

I informed a member of the squad that I was moving to the center of the perimeter for a medevac. After a few meters of crawling a medic ran over to me and took another look at the wounds. During the inspection the platoon leader ran over and asked if I could shoot. I replied I could. He asked if I would stay if he needed me, and I replied I would. The lieutenant said, "Wait here," and took off. The medic shuffled me into a depression.



Loading wounded in the chopper. (Courtesy of S. Elders)



John Hosier, B Company, 2/503, reading a letter from home, An Khe, February 1968. (Courtesy of John Hosier)

A short time later the medic returned and moved me to the center of the perimeter for evacuation.

The center of our defenses were used as the headquarters section of our company and a collection area for WIA and KIA. In addition there was a small clearing for the medevacs and re-supply choppers. Around the senior medic lay five or six wounded and a few dead. The medics were working feverishly trying to save Klindt. One medic was administering mouth to mouth when a mass of green bile fluid came back out into his face, but Klindt was hanging on.

Although we were still under heavy fire at least one medevac and one re-supply ship had made it into our little pad. The machine gunner had been medevaced and we had more ammo. Eventually the wounded were informed another medevac was going to try to get in. I didn't know if I was to go out on it or not, there were others worse off than me. Finally, a chopper came in and landed. The incoming gun fire increased. Klindt and other wounded were loaded and the platoon sergeant yelled at me to get on. I still didn't know if I could walk, so I started to crawl. A couple of men came over, grabbed me and threw me into the side chair where the door gunner would have been. I was on the starboard side of the chopper and another wounded man was sitting to my right. As we lifted off, at about 30 feet a NVA machine gun opened up. I touched and covered my face. We began to take hits. I looked out and we were flying over rice paddies. It was a bright sunny day. Sitting right next to the cargo section of the chopper I saw Klindt laying on the floor. He was heaving. I yelled to the medic next to Klindt to do mouth to mouth. Klindt died before we got to the hospital. He may have taken another round when we pulled out.

As my wounds were not life threatening, I had to wait until two or three in the morning before they would treat me. The spinal tap was a God send. Six weeks later, I was back in the bush, and 80% of the men in my platoon were strangers.

No Man's Land

Submitted by Retired Colonel George W. Krause

The following entry was made in the 2nd Battalion (Airborne) 503rd Infantry's History, "On 27 June 1970, at grid 930038, Stag I was engaged by 10 VC resulting in three US WIA, two PF KIA and one PF WIA."

My recollection of this event is as follows: It was early afternoon on 27 June 1970. A couple members of my tactical operations group and I were heading north in the An Lao Valley in my Command and Control (C&C) helicopter, when we overheard a request for a "Dust Off" (Medical Evacuation Helicopter) from a 2nd Battalion tactical unit. It was from Stag I, a small battalion advisory unit to the Vietnamese Provisional Forces (PF). All available aircraft, except for my C&C helicopter, had been diverted early that day to the south where a large engagement with the NVA was on-going.

Stag I, reported that all of the US soldiers were wounded, one seriously, and they needed help now. I directed the pilot, Lieutenant Colonel Lewandowski (unsure of last name), the air field commander at LZ English, to head for the engagement site. We soon arrived at the engagement site, and a query to the RTO on the ground indicated that they were not receiving any ground fire at this time. The decision was made to go in for the pickup. Captain Jennings (BN S-3) and one of the door gunners were assigned to pick up the wounded, while 1st Lieutenant Rodriquez (artillery liaison officer, 3/319 Artillery (ABN), Sergeant Turner and I would provide cover and protection for the helicopter during the evacuation process. With Lieutenant Rodriquez and Sergeant Turner still providing cover, I turned to assist in the evacuation of the wounded. The RTO, who acted so calm on the radio, was severely wounded in the right arm. I had to cut away his radio backpack harness, to ease his lift into the helicopter. Since the helicopter would be overloaded, two dead and four wounded, Lieutenant Rodriquez, Sergeant Turner and I remained at the ambush site until the battalion's ready reaction platoon could be inserted to take over the ground mission. During the evacuation operation, the remaining PFs disappeared, leaving the three of us in "No Man's Land" with a group of civilians we had detained in vicinity of where the ambush was executed. With Lieutenant Rodriquez and I providing security, Sergeant Turner, without regard to his personal safety, was investigating the site where the explosion took place. There was evidence of a 105mm round and several smaller rounds having been detonated along a well worn trail by wires leading into the brush line. Sergeant Turner followed the wires into the brush and found two sets of four batteries at the other ends of the wires. The ambush site had been well prepared some time in the past as the wires were covered by overgrown and dead grass, and there was no sign of fresh activity outside the area where the batteries were found. At that time I recalled that on our airborne approach to the engagement site, Sergeant Turner had pointed out to me, two civilians moving rapidly to the north away from the engagement site. It is conceivable that these two individuals were responsible for detonating the explosives at the ambush site. We remained at the ambush site until the battalion's ready reaction force had landed and assumed responsibility for further investigation of the ambush.

Both Lieutenant Rodriquez and Sergeant Turner performed in an exemplary manner and were recommended for awards for valor.

May 19, 1994

Dear General Williamson:

Reference our conversation this date concerning Staff Sergeant Al Turner. I can only assume that the Staff Sergeant Al Turner who we have discussed is Edwin A. Turner, who we all knew as "Al" Turner. I was really shocked upon reading of his death under the

block "In Memorandum" of the winter issue of the Sky Soldier. This reaction was mild in comparison with my feelings after having read and reread An Open Letter For The 173rd Abn. Bde. Members, written by Al's widow, Debbie. Staff Sergeant Al Turner was an outstanding soldier who served me well during our overlapping tours in 1970 with the 2nd Battalion (Airborne) 503rd Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, in the Republic of Vietnam. I commanded the 2nd Battalion from January 10, 1970 until October 1, 1970. Staff Sergeant Turner was assigned to the battalion most, if not all, of the time covered by this period of my command.

Shortly after assuming command of the 2nd Battalion, Al Turner was selected by me to be my driver/RTO. When he had free time he would be in the Tactical Operation Center (TOC), learning about the battalion's intelligence collection effort and operation of the TOC. This eagerness to learn coupled with his training with Special Forces made him an outstanding operations specialist. He soon was promoted to sergeant. After a short period of outstanding performances, as both my driver/RTO and part-time operations specialist, he was promoted to staff sergeant and re-assigned as an assistant operations sergeant working in the Battalion TOC. This little scenario lets you know how rapidly he learned and how valuable he was to me and to the battalion. During tactical operations he was always the true professional, extremely knowledgeable of his job, always prepared for any emergency, and fearless in facing the unknown.

After an engagement on June 27, 1979, Sergeant Turner was recommended for the Bronze Star for Valor. I believe, however, that he was awarded the Air Medal with "V" Device for heroism. I don't have any record in my personal file to confirm this award. For my conduct during this engagement I was awarded the Air Medal with "V" Device (fifth Oak Leaf Cluster) by Headquarters 173rd Airborne Brigade, General Orders Number 2337, August 30, 1970, TC 439. This latter information may be helpful in locating Staff Sergeant Turner's award.

Sincerely,

Colonel George W. Krause, USA, Ret.

The 3rd Radio Research Unit

1st Det., 173rd Abn. Bde.

May 1965

by SP5 Scott C. Brewer, 3rd RRU, 1st Det., 1965

At the time that the 173rd Airborne Brigade was deployed from Okinawa to Bien Hoa Air Base in May 1965, it was decided by Army command to send an intelligence support unit, from the States to be attached to the 173rd. Within days a communications intelligence unit of 48 men capable of field operation was deployed from Fort Campbell, Kentucky in two elements. The first element, led by Staff Sergeant Richard "Dick" Hurlbut,

flew directly to Bien Hoa Air Base on a Navy Reserve C-130. The aircraft dropped the men, vehicles and equipment at the far end of the runway with all engines running and took-off again within five minutes. The second element consisting of the majority of the unit personnel and full equipment, including five large CP tents, four three-quarter trucks fitted with communications intercept gear in rear-mounted vans, four jeeps with trailers, portable generators, gas cans, barbed wire, 50 cots, air mattresses and mosquito nets, M-16s, and two machine guns arrived in three days by an airlift of seven C-130s. It was obviously a high priority action, as was the deployment of the 173rd. The second element of the unit arrived at Tan Son Nhut Air Base and spent about two days at the 3rd Radio Research Unit while checking out equipment and loading all gear into the jeeps and trailers for the 30 mile trip to Bien Hoa Air Base.

The intelligence support unit became the 3rd Radio Research Unit, 1st Detachment, with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, and arrived at Bien Hoa in mid to late May 1965. The purpose of attaching the unit to the brigade was to monitor enemy communications in the area of Bien Hoa Air Base, primarily live voice communication, and to provide direct combat intelligence support to the brigade. When the unit left the States, there were 48 men, including five Vietnamese translator-interpreters. Two additional translator-interpreters from the 3rd RRU at Tan Son Nhut were assigned to join the 3rd Radio Research Unit, 1st Detachment and served at Bien Hoa with the 173rd. The operation was highly classified and all personnel in the entire unit were advised not to discuss the unit activities with other members of the brigade. The unit had its own camp surrounded by three coils of barbed wire. The men had meals and took showers with the brigade, but otherwise operated out of sight for security reasons. It was not surprising that no one at the reunion in Rochester, Minnesota, in June 1995, recognized the 3rd Radio Research Unit, 1st Detachment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, as shown on this author's name tag, except Major General Ellis Williamson who commented, "Oh sure, you guys were up there near the end of the runway surrounded by barbed wire. There were only two or three people in the whole brigade who knew where you were or what you were doing."

Of the 50 men in the unit, all were enlisted men except the unit commander, 1st Lieutenant Moore. Of the 49 enlisted men, about half were men at grades E-5 to E-7, and most of those were highly experienced career men. There were so few PFCs and E-4s that E5s were added to the guard roster within the first week after the unit arrived. There were four guards on guard duty each night from dark to 6:00 a.m. Two guards walked the perimeter of the camp in opposite directions, and the other two were on watch in the bunkers where the machine guns were mounted. The guards changed positions every hour.

As for the unit operations, the interpreters spent long hours in the vans with ear phones on, while searching the intercept radio channels for live voice. Each van was equipped with a reel to reel tape deck which allowed the interpreters to record live voice conversations. The tape could then be replayed over and over and the speed slowed down to aid in translating the message for significant information. The channels of communication to the brigade were not known by the troops, as there was no open contact with the brigade a quarter of a mile away. In time, a pattern in the frequency of live voice communications became observable and there were people in the unit who studied this. The verbal contacts were usually not random, but followed a pattern of communicating on the hour, quarter-hour or half-hour.

Unlike most others in the brigade, the 3rd RRU personnel had three hot meals a day and a cold shower. The unit ate at the brigade mess, which was equipped with stand-up plank tables and overhead canopies for shelter from the rain. The food was great and mail-call was always a welcome event. In addition, the men in the unit slept on Army cots with air mattresses and mosquito nets. There were four tents with 12 men each and a fifth command post tent for the 1st sergeant and 1st Lieutenant Moore.

As the 173rd Airborne Brigade was the first Army combat unit into Vietnam, the 3rd Radio Research Unit, 1st Detachment, was the first attempt in Vietnam to attach a communications intelligence unit to a combat unit and to provide direct combat intelligence support from the field. The Army apparently found the unit to be successful and to provide the necessary intelligence support to the 173rd. When the 1st Air Cavalry Division arrived in Vietnam in the Fall of 1965, a similar intelligence support unit was attached to the 1st Cavalry, as well as to the 1st Infantry Division and undoubtedly other units. The 3rd RRU, 1st Detachment, was attached to the brigade as an intelligence support unit immediately after the deployment from Okinawa in May 1965, and continued to exist under various names during the entire tour of the brigade in Vietnam. The unit grew in size but remained a surprisingly well-kept secret known by few. The 3rd Radio Research Unit, 1st Detachment, was indeed a part of the history of the 173rd Airborne Brigade.



Guarding the Ammo

by SFC Larry T. Russell

SFC Russell was nominated for the Silver Star for his participation and demonstrated courage while on this two-gun raid with C/3/319th.

In short, while en route to the raid location, our chopper pilot realized that our "bird" was overloaded. It was determined that the sling load/ ammo pallet, located under the Howitzer, would have to be set down, and someone would have to get off and guard the ammunition. After the gun and crew were set down at the raid site, the chopper would return and pick up the downed cargo.

Because of my rank, Sergeant E-5, I didn't have to be the one to leave the chopper - one of my subordinates could have been ordered to do it; but instead, I left the safety of the CH-47 and stood guard in an open field, next to the pallet of ammunition.

Armed with only the basic armament (remember, the chopper was to come back within an hour), I found myself still protecting the ammo 49 hours later. With little water and no food, I decided that it was now time to take action. Because the 105mm artillery rounds were accompanied with fuses, my first attempts were to destroy them. After digging a hole and putting in the fuses, I took several hand grenades, pulled the pins, and the blast/ concussion disfigured the fuses. I then tried to disable the rounds with my three last grenades, but my efforts were futile.

I knew that the locals had been watching me, and that word was being passed on to the enemy that I was there with the ammo. I had to get help. Under the cover of the third night's darkness, I attempted to scatter and bury the rounds. I then set out and followed



Top of the mornin' to 'ya. (Courtesy of Paul Epley)



Waist deep in Leech City. (Courtesy of Paul Epley)

a faint set of vehicle tracks that I had noticed during the second day. I walked for two days, and just prior to stopping for the night, stumbled into my worst nightmare - I became entangled in some wire. In my struggle to get free, "trip-flares" were ignited. Lit up like a Christmas tree, and struggling like crazy, I heard the sound of ultimate death. That sound was the charging of automatic weapons and a .50 caliber machine gun round being "racked." My thoughts were of eminent death, but then I heard a long awaited voice, an American shouting "Halt, who goes there." The next voice commanded those invisible soldiers to hold their fire until some questions were answered correctly. I stood motionless, hands in the air, cut and bleeding from the barbed wire, and answered the questions that only an American could know. Finally, a deep voice in the background (the camp commander) said, "Hold your fire, this man's an American, go get him." I had stumbled onto a US Cavalry (Mech) compound.

After debriefing, plenty of food and water, a much needed shower and clean clothes, I led a heavily guarded convoy back to where my adventure began. All of the rounds/fuses were retrieved (three had to be forcibly taken from a local villager), then, after a few more days of rest and several debriefs, I began the long journey back to my unit.

I later discovered that the members of my outfit had given up on me; they thought I was dead. Because of logistics and distance, it took several days to return to my unit. It was a tearful yet joyous day in the lives of a group of Americans a long way from home.

My battery commander (C/3/319th), Captain Joe C. Mayfield, nominated me for the Silver Star Medal. I never received it or any other recognition for my achievements. Once Stateside, it was felt that possibly the Silver Star had been downgraded to a Bronze Star with the "V" Device, but it has never been given either. I departed the Republic of Vietnam in early 1970. I retired July 1, 1990, as sergeant first class, after more than 22 years of continuous active service, with an impeccable record.

Thinking Of A Friend

by Steve Piotrowski

It was 25 years ago that we first met. I was scared and lost, the typical "cherry," and you were an old timer. Actually, I found out later that you had only been there a few months more than me, but those months had made you one of the old-timers.

In thinking back on those days, I am not sure if we became friends because we had so much in common, or if we became friends because we were thrown together as squad mates and "hooch" mates. I do know that we became friends with a depth of feeling that I have never had before or since. We shared everything everyday. We shared the ponchos that made our tent, we shared our food, we shared our cigarettes, and most importantly, we shared our thoughts.

We shared our thoughts of home, the fu-

ture, the past, fast cars and faster women. We laughed at the possibility of death, but only to cover our fear that we would join those we had seen die. We helped each other get over the rough times, and laughed together at the good ones. We helped each other with the stories we tried to write home to let people know what this place called Vietnam was really like. Neither of us had gone past high school, but we both knew that we were going further in the future.

Even though you were there months before me, you stayed with me throughout that frightful year. You didn't have to, but you extended your tour for another six months and stayed by my side in the jungle. I tried to extend another three months so we could go home together and meet each others friends and families. They wouldn't let me stay because I didn't have any more time left in the Army. So you applied for another extension and transferred to the rear. We left the field on the same bird, me with a week to go before heading home and you with eight months more in-country, but to a "safe" job in the rear. We spent one last week together and parted with hidden tears.

I made it home and was treated like all the rest. I started to freak out and couldn't understand why they all blamed me for doing my duty. You finished your time in Nam and went to Benning for a year. We kind of lost track of each other for a couple of years, but when I planned a trip out your way, I called around until I found you.

It was four years later that we got together in your home. We talked and sang the old songs, you still playing that beat up guitar and me still unable to carry a tune. My new wife saw how deeply connected we were, but also saw how hard the memories were to deal with. It was wonderful to see you again, but it was painful, too.

Neither of us had made it that far yet. I had tried college for a couple of years and dropped out. I think the fact that I wasn't ever sober had something to do with it. You said you had gotten a couple of semesters in, and were going back again that fall. I met your folks, I met your friends and you met my wife.

After a few days I had to leave and go back to work. You needed to start school, but we promised again to write. I heard from you once, and I sent some cards and notes after that, but never heard from you again. The letters were not returned, so I figured you would get around to writing some day. I had moved a couple of times and figured you wouldn't know how to reach me.

The other day I decided it was time to close the gap. I did some checking and couldn't find you. I found someone with the same last name in your little hometown in Idaho. I thought it might be your folks, so I called to see.

I talked to the lady who answered the phone and said, this is Steve Piotrowski, from Wisconsin, and I am trying to locate a friend from long ago. She asked if I was the professor and started to cry. I knew I regretted making the call at that moment. She asked her dad



A Company 3/503, 173d, LZ North English, June 1968. (Courtesy of John Hosier)

to talk to me and he told me the story. He told me that after you died they tried to find my address, but couldn't. He talked about staying in touch with his squad-mate from WWII, and how different and difficult Vietnam was. I told him I was sorry to open old wounds and he said not to worry, that it was important for me to know that he understood our friendship.

He might understand, but I don't. Why would you do that to yourself without trying to reach me. How can you leave me alone after all that we went through. I know it has been 18 years since you died, but I always felt that if I really needed you, I could find you and you would still be there. I just knew that all I had to do was call and you would talk and listen, sympathize and laugh, and then, even if all was not well, it would be better.

Sergeant James Westmoreland, Friday night I got drunker than a skunk. I drank a shot of Southern Comfort and bought you one too. I still find Southern Comfort disgusting, but it was what you carried with you in your ruck, and almost every night we took one little nip to remind us of the better things in life. I haven't drank it since, but to salute your memory, one shot for me and one left on the bar for you. I cried a lot, I swore a lot, and I let myself feel a hurt that I keep hidden most of the time. Westy, you were my best friend ever,



B Company, 2/503, 173d, Smoke Break near Kon Tum. (John Hosier)

and you will always be. You may be gone, but you will remain alive in my memory. You were never a hero to the outside world and neither was I. We were just two kids doing our duty and sharing an experience that will live with me forever.

Westy, rest in peace. Airborne.

The Professor, RTO, C-3-5-3-173rd Airborne Brigade Separate, 1969-70. In memory of Westy, 173rd, 68-70 Vietnam, died in 1976



Frank Aragon, Al Duran (KIA 7/69), Serna, and John Sotelo, Bong Song June 1969. (Courtesy of Frank Aragon)



Steve "French" Francis, Ernie "Chico" Cortez, Keith "Rabbit" Maier and Gary Bobo at Blue Beach near Quin Nhon. (Courtesy of Keith Maier)



Left to right: Peter Supove (deceased 1968), Charles Kryzkowski (deceased 1976) and Wayne Tuttle, C/2/503 luxury dining. (Courtesy of Wayne Tuttle)

and I found out on February 18, 1994. Things will never be the same again. Good-bye good buddy.

It Happened Near Dak-To

by PFC Clarence Johnson

I had been with the Second Battalion two weeks in Pleiku, when the word came down

that we'd be moving to Dak-To in the Central Highlands. Dak-To was to be our forward base and our next area of operations. Reports were that there was heavy enemy movement in the area. The same day we left Pleiku, the battalion set up a perimeter next to Dak-To airstrip.

The next day we choppered out into the hills and made our presence known. We had been humping the hills a few days with no enemy contact. On June 21st, we came across a complex of bunkers; the type of bunkers we

couldn't see until we were on top of them - the only kind "Charlie" made. These bunkers seemed to be no more than a day old, as the dirt around the bunkers was still damp and had just been abandoned when we arrived.

After we found the bunkers, we moved to another location and settled in for the night. That night we were given orders to return to the Dak-To airstrip the next day. We were to get a day or two of very much needed rest.

My squad and platoon were to lead the company back down the hill to our new base. First squad, Second Platoon, were counted on a lot to be the point element. The fellows in the squad were experienced and very capable of leading point for the company. Maybe even proud of the fact that we were assigned the task.

The next day, about half an hour after daybreak, the first squad started down the trail towards Dak To. Our point man carried an M-16 rifle. The second man was our sergeant and squad leader - a leader in every sense of the word. He was confident and respected, demanding the same qualities of his men. The sergeant carried an M-79 grenade launcher. I carried a M-16 and was the backup for this seven man squad.

We must have traveled 200 meters from the rest of the company, when a short burst of M-16 rounds went off, followed by an explosion. The explosion was a grenade from the M-79 the sergeant was carrying. As I proceeded toward the front, the men were hustling back and shooting into our left front. There was sporadic fire coming from our left front. Seven of us took cover behind a clump of bamboo trees in a semi-circle position to weigh this sudden development. We were firing our M-16s and holding our own, until we started taking rounds from our left flank. The enemy fire was beginning to get heavy. To put it mildly, it was past time to get out. When we picked up to rejoin the company, we continued to maintain a line of fire; the second squad had reached us by this time with the rest of the platoon. Our immediate action was to line ourselves facing the left flank and left front. Two M-60 machine guns were in place and began pouring out the fire power. The enemy had fire power of its own and began to use it, as the shooting became intense on both sides.

My squad members were killed instantly from an extremely heavy barrage of enemy fire. I scrambled for better cover and lost contact with the second squad, becoming separated from the rest of the company. I was out there alone.

As my mind raced, my throat began to get heavy and tight. I knew my time had come. I couldn't call for help, not with my weapon in my hand. I was going to die as a soldier, an airborne soldier. I kept firing my M-16 and crawling my way up to the platoon. Before I could get back on line my M-16 jammed and couldn't eject the spent cartridge. I got a bamboo shoot down the barrel but couldn't free the shell casing. I discarded my M-16 and picked up another lying a few feet away. This weapon was also jammed, so I tried to eject

the shell casing with another bamboo stick, but it was no use.

It was very hard to move out of my position, even though I knew I had to move. After a time, I finally managed to rejoin the platoon and get another M-16 and ammunition.

The enemy fire seemed to cover every square foot of our area. This was evidenced by the bodies and weapons lying in what had become half a perimeter. We were taking fire from all sides, except directly behind us. The enemy was coming out of the dense jungle, trying to overtake us. It was now apparent that we were fighting an NVA unit.

Smoke grenades were set out to mark our position for an air strike. RTO were down, radio communication becoming nonexistent. One M-60 became silent and the other was so hot, it could only sputter out its rounds.

I heard a voice directly behind us shouting out commands. I turned around to see our platoon sergeant take a round to the side of his face, leaving a deep gash in his cheek. The sergeant didn't seem to be affected in any degree and kept on fighting.

I moved to a different location and two other guys, only to be pinned down by sniper fire. One of our radios was lying about eight feet from me. My intention was to crawl and get the radio, but the man beside me said, "Let the radio go." I stopped, and seconds later the radio shattered into pieces. The radio was riddled with bullets, as well as the area around the radio, where I would have been had I not stopped.

Our guns had become silent, it was now only a matter of time. The NVA could make their assault at any moment. We had to take out the sniper, or die trying. We shot a burst of rounds in the area of the sniper and thought we had quieted him. We then started crawling towards the hill we had come down that morning. As we made our way up, we came upon three troopers going the same direction, dragging two wounded. We helped with the wounded and began to crawl up the steep hill, getting into better cover and what seemed like safety, when the two wounded were hit with many rounds from another sniper. These men died instantly, still in our grasps. We fired in the direction of the sniper, which gave us time to find better cover. I was bringing up the rear, knowing that I had only a few rounds left, but the important thing was that we were moving up the hill and could hear M-16s going off. Finally, we made contact with the rest of the company.

Early that evening we had a company formation for headcount. There was one man left to each of the three squads in my platoon. There were 33 men standing in formation, 22 June 1967.



Troopers of 3/503 Company, 173d Abn. Bde., North English, Spring 1968. (Courtesy of John Hosier)



Da Lat, 2/503, 1968. (Courtesy of John Hosier)



2/503d, 173d, near Tuy Hoa, Fall 1967. (Courtesy of John Hosier)



Stephen Limo from Queens, NY 1/503d, "The Gun" Operation Greene Sure, April 1971. (Courtesy of John Stormzand)



Sky Soldiers March

Bend your head, and shed a tear,
 For your son, who serve so dear
 Faith and Guts and Rifle Butts,
 Left a trail, of blood stained dust.
 Chorus
 So here we are, Where we belong,
 173rd, So proud and strong
 Lift your head, and hold it high,
 173rd is passing by.
 Aussie Diggers, Fight with us too,
 "Duty First" they say, Their words are true
 In Jungles deep, They showed us how,
 We say "VC come fight us now".
 So here we are, Where we belong,
 173rd, So proud and strong
 Lift your head, and hold it high,
 173rd is passing by.
 Sweat upon, Their sun-burned brows,
 173rd has shown them how
 War zone "D" we met our test,
 Mekong Delta, We are the best.
 So here we are, Where we belong,
 173rd, So proud and strong
 Lift your head, and hold it high,
 173rd is passing by
 To Nui Dat, the "Tigers" came,
 With the "HERD" the won great fame.
 Dak To and Tet, We won and died,
 "Jungle of screaming souls" the NVA cried.
 So here we are, Where we belong,
 173rd, So proud and strong
 Lift your head, and hold it high,
 173rd is passing by
 My wife who waits, at home so true,
 I sing this song, my dear for you.
 Tell our son that I fight Brave,
 For Freedom Land which we must save.

Why?

by Robert W. Costigan, Combat Medic '68, '69, '70

Looking into the sun, I cry.
 A taste of hate fills my mind,
 and the question remains the same.

Each second that passes by,
 the sun no longer shines
 and out of darkness, I ask "why?"

The heartbeat of a wild horse is inside me now,
 and just like the wind, I must run.
 Good luck, a voice keeps saying, while inside,
 my heart keeps praying!
 Am I to live, or am I to die?
 It doesn't really matter.
 With one last look into the open, I'm on my way.
 Life, just like time, is mine to save!

Hands covered with blood,
 I repair a man as red ants bite my neck.
 Looking into his eyes, I read his mind.
 That tells a story so well,
 of all his dreams he left behind.

Time is getting shorter, I must move on.
 I'll be back shortly, so just hang on,
 and from a face filled with pain
 comes a smile and a whisper of "thanks."

Again I move, out of fear, I cannot say!
 Blinded by my own sweat, I make my way.
 "Take it easy Soldier, you're O.K."
 Just wish I could tell myself that!
 And as my hands cover with blood once again,
 I keep telling myself "Hurry." There's no time to lose.

Suddenly, everything turns cold and dark.
 Sitting back, I cover his head and just ask, "why?"
 and wonder, "Who's turn is it next to die?"
 And the red ants are still biting at my neck,
 my eyes, still blinded by my own sweat,
 and my question still remains the same,
 WHY?

COMBAT OPERATIONS IN VIETNAM

- Combat Operation; HUMP 5-9 November 1965 War Zone "D"
- Combat Operation; NEW LIFE 21 November - 17 December 1965 La Nga River Valley
- Combat Operation; SMASH 17-23 December 1965 Phuoc Tuy
- Combat Operation; MARAUDER 1-8 January 1966 Hua Nghia Province
- Combat Operation; CRIMP 8-14 January 1966 Binh Buong, West of Hobo Woods
- Combat Operation; ON GUARD 17-21 January 1966 Di An, Phu Loi
- Combat Operation; PHOENIX 26 February - 22 March 1966 Binh Duong & Bien Hoa Province
- Combat Operation; SILVER CITY 9-22 March 1966 Long Khanh Province
- Combat Operation; DENVER 10-25 April 1966 Song Be, Phuoc Long Province
- Combat Operation; DEXTER 4-6 May 1966 Tan Uyen
- Combat Operation; HARDIHOOD 16 May- 8 June 1966 Phuoc Tuy Province
- Combat Operation; HOLLANDIA 9-17 June 1966 Phuoc Tuy Province
- Combat Operation; YORKTOWN 23 June - 8 July 1966 Long Khanh Province
- Combat Operation; AURORA I 9-17 July 1966 Long Khanh Province
- Combat Operation; AURORA II 17 July - 3 August 1966 Long Khanh, Binh Tuy Lam Duong Province
- Combat Operation; TOLEDO 10 August - 7 September 1966 Phuoc Tuy & Binh Tuy Provinces
- Combat Operation; ATLANTIC CITY 13-22 September 1966 Dau Ting Airfield
- Combat Operation; SIOUX CITY 26 September - 9 October 1966 Xom Cat
- Combat Operation; ROBIN 10-17 October 1966 Phu My to Bear Cat
- Combat Operation; ATTLEBORO 7-20 November 1966 Minh Thanh
- Combat Operation; WACO 25 November - 2 December 1966 Bien Hoa Area
- Combat Operation; WINCHESTER 8 October - 4 December 1966
- Combat Operation; CANARY/DUCK 7 December 1966 - 5 January 1967 Phu My to Bear Cat
- Combat Operation; NIAGARA /CEDAR FALLS 5-25 January 1967 Cau Dinh Jungle & Iron Triangle
- Combat Operation; BIG SPRINGS 30 January - 16 February 1967 War Zone "D"
- Combat Operation; JUNCTION CITY 22 February - 15 March 1967 Tay Ninh Province
- Combat Operation; JUNCTION CITY II 20 March- 13 April 1967 Minh Thanh
- Combat Operation; NEWARK 18-30 April 1967 War Zone "D"
- Combat Operation; FORT WAYNE 1-4 May 1967 War Zone "D"
- Combat Operation; DAYTON 5-17 May 1967 Phuoc Tuy Province
- Combat Operation; CINCINNATI 17-23 May 1967 Bien Hoa / Long Binh Area
- Combat Operation; WINCHESTER 23-31 May 1967 Pleiku
- Combat Operation; FRANCIS MARION 1-18 June 1967 Pleiku
- Combat Operation; STILWELL 18-22 June 1967 Dak To / Kontum
- Combat Operation; GREELEY 18 June - 14 October 1967 Dak To / Kontum
- Combat Operation; BOLLING 19 September 1967 - 31 January 1968 Tuy Hoa / Phu Hiep
- Combat Operation; WALKER 16 January 1968 - 31 January 1969 An Khe
- Combat Operation; COCHISE 30 March 1968 - 31 January 1969 Bong Son
- Combat Operation; DARBY CREST 1 February - 15 April 1969 The Crescent of Hoai An District
- Combat Operation; DARBY TRAIL 1 - 16 February 1969 Bong Son
- Combat Operation; DARBY MARCH 1 February - 6 March 1969 Tuy Hoa
- Combat Operation; STING RAY 6 - 10 March 1969 An Khe
- Combat Operation; DARBY PUNCH II 10 March - 24 May 1969 An Khe
- Combat Operation; WASHINGTON GREEN 15 April 1969 - 1 January 1971 Binh Dinh Province
- Combat Operation; GREENE LIGHTNING 1 January 1971 - 21 April 1971 Binh Dinh Province
- Combat Operation; GREENE STORM 5 February - 15 March 1971 Binh Dinh Province
- Combat Operation; GREENE SURE 17 March - 21 April 1971 Binh Dinh Province

Recipient of the Distinguished Service Cross

The Distinguished Service Cross is awarded to a person who while serving in any capacity with the Army, is distinguished by extraordinary heroism not justifying the award of a Medal of Honor; while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States; while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing or foreign force; or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing Armed Force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. The act or acts of heroism must have been so notable and have involved risk of life so extraordinary as to set the individual apart from his or her comrades.

Listed in order of date awarded

Name	Rank	Unit	Date of Award	Order No.
DAVIS, Eugene R.	SPF	B-2/503d-173d	July 7, 1965	302/65AP
VARMENT, Dixon G.	SP4	A-1/503d-173d	October 5, 1965	45/66AP
FULTON, William B.	SP4	1/503d-173d	October 5, 1965	17/66AP
WILLIAMSON, Ellis W.	BRIG GEN	173dABNBDE	November 9, 1965	27/66DA
GIPSON, Robert P.	SP4	B-2/503d-173d	March 16, 1966	5951/66RV
FIELDS, Lloyd Jr.	SSGT	E/17Cav-173d	April 13, 1966	219/66AP
DEANE, John R. Jr.	BRIG GEN	HQ173dABNBDE	January 9, 1967	1853/67RV
SEVERSEN, Daniel J.	1st LT	B-4/503d-173d	January 16, 1967	1064/67RV
HAYDEN, Phillip P.	1st LT	C-2/503d-173d	February 1, 1967	2388/67RV
FIELDS, Elija	PL SGT	E-1/503d-173d	February 8, 1967	4454/67RV
CAMPBELL, Keith A.	SP4	HHC-1/503-173d	February 8, 1967	1178/67RV
STOWELL, Robert D.	1st LT	E/17Cav-173d	March 3, 1967	2321/67RV
LITWIN, Robert R.	PL SGT	A-2/503d-173d	June 22, 1967	5285/67RV
BOROWSKI, John C.	PFC	A-4/503d-173d	July 10, 1967	4665/67RV
JORDAN, Daniel W.	1st LT	A/173ABNBDE	July 10, 1967	4802/67RV
SABEL, Joel M.	SP4	HHC-4/503d-173d	July 10, 1967	4663/67RV
HOLLAND, Charles J.	SFC(SSGT)	E17Cav-173d	August 18, 1967	15/68DA
CECIL, Gerald T.	1st LT	C-1/503d-173d	November 11, 1967	1410/68RV
SHAW, Gary F.	PFC	C-1/503d-173d	November 11, 1967	1487/68RV
MARTIN, Larry	SGT	D-1/503d-173d	November 11, 1967	698/68RV
KELLEY, Jerry C.	SP4	C-1/503d-173d	November 12, 1967	1140/68RV
ROGAN, James P.		B-2/503d-173d	November 13, 1967	1079/68RV
ROBINSON, John R.	2nd LT	A-1/503d-173d	November 18, 1967	837/68RV
BOEDECKER, Billy E.	PFC	A-1/503d-173d	November 18, 1967	1419/68RV
LEONARD, Ronald R.	CAPT	B-4/503d-173d	November 20, 1967	611/68RV
MURREY, Tracy H.	1st LT	C-4/503d-173d	November 20, 1967	400/68RV
GARCIA, Edward.	SP4	B-4/503d-173d	November 21, 1967	873/68RV
SCHWELLENBACH, Gary R.	CPL(PFC)	A-3/503d-173d	December 27, 1967	(P)57/68DA
JOHNSON, James H.	LT COL	HHC4-/503d-173d	January 30, 1968	2247/68RV
JUSTINIANO, Victor A.	PFC	B-3/503d-173d	March 3, 1968	3600/68RV
HELMICK, Robert F.	CAPT	D-16Armour-173d	March 4, 1968	1196/69RV
BULLARD, Karl L.	1st LT	B-2/503d-173d	May 5, 1968	3765/68RV
BRISCOE, Charles H.	CAPT	173dABNBDE	June 17, 1968	31/71DA
PONDER, Billy W.	SR SGT	C-2/503d-173d	August 23, 1968	5424/68RV
REEDER, Phillip D.	PVT	C-1/503d-173d	September 26, 1968	5750/68RV
ANAGNOSOTOPOULOS, James	PFC	HHC-1/503d-173d	February 27, 1969	4758/68R
BEERS, Jack B.	PI SGT	B-3/503d-173d	April 7, 1969	1278/69RV
WILLIAMS, Harold D.	SSGT	C-75thInf-173d	August 1, 1969	4389/69RV
FLOYD, Robert G.	SP4	C-3/503d-173d	March 31, 1970	2067/70RV
DOLAN, James E.	SP4	B-1/503d-173d	May 25, 1970	4504/70RV
BURBANK, Kenneth R.	SGT	E/3/503d-173d	August 28, 1970	5305/70RV
OVERWEG, Robert D.	SGT	B-1/503d-173d	September 19, 1970	5248/70RV
McDONALD, Martin T.	SP4	HQCO-2/503d-173d	April 10, 1971	32/72/DA

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS OF THE 173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE



CPL TERRY T. KAWAMURA

Rank and organization: Corporal, U.S. Army, 173d Engineer Company, 173d Airborne Brigade, Republic of Vietnam

Place and date: Camp Radcliff, Republic of Vietnam, 20 March 1969

Entered service at: Oahu, Hawaii

Born: 10 December 1949, Wahiawa, Oahu, Hawaii



Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Cpl. Kawamura distinguished himself by heroic action while serving as a member of the 173d Engineer Company. An enemy demolition team infiltrated the unit quarters area and opened fire with automatic weapons. Disregarding the intense fire, Cpl. Kawamura ran for his weapon. At that moment, a violent explosion tore a hole in the roof and stunned the occupants of the room. Cpl. Kawamura jumped to his feet, secured his weapon and, as he ran toward the door to return the enemy fire, he observed that another explosive charge had been thrown through the hole in the roof to the floor. He immediately realized that 2 stunned fellow soldiers were in great peril and shouted a warning. Although in a position to escape, Cpl. Kawamura unhesitatingly wheeled around and threw himself on the charge. In completely disregarding his safety, Cpl. Kawamura prevented serious injury or death to several members of his unit. The extraordinary courage and selflessness displayed by Cpl. Kawamura are in the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

MAJ CHARLES J. WATTERS

Rank and Organization: Chaplain (Major) Charles J. Watters, Company A, 173d Support Battalion, 173d Airborne Brigade.

Place and Date: The vicinity of Dak To,

Republic of Vietnam, on 10 November 1967

Entered service at: Fort Dix, New Jersey

Born: Jan 17, 1927, Jersey City, NJ

Citation: Chaplain (Major) Charles J. Watters, Company A, 173d Support Battalion, 173d Airborne Brigade, distinguished himself by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life during an assault in the vicinity of Dak To, Republic of Vietnam, on 10 November 1967. Chaplain Watters was moving with one of the companies when it engaged a heavily armed enemy battalion. As the battle raged and the casualties mounted, Chaplain Watters, with complete disregard for his own safety, rushed forward to the line of contact. Unarmed and completely exposed, he moved among, as well as in front of, the advancing troops, giving aid to the wounded, assisting in their evacuation, giving words of encouragement, and administering the last rites to the dying. When a wounded paratrooper was standing in shock in front of the assaulting forces, Chaplain Watters ran forward, picked the man up on his shoulders and carried him to safety. As the troopers battled to the first enemy entrenchment, Chaplain Watters ran through the intense enemy fire to the front of the entrenchment to aid a fallen comrade. A short time later, the paratroopers pulled back in preparation for a second assault. Chaplain Watters exposed himself to both friendly and enemy fire between the two forces in order to recover two wounded soldiers. Later, when the battalion was forced to pull back into a perimeter, Chaplain Watters noticed that several wounded soldiers were lying outside the newly formed perimeter. Without hesitation and ignoring attempts to restrain him, Chaplain Watters left the perimeter three times in the face of small arms, automatic weapons, and mortar fire to carry and assist the injured troops to safety. Satisfied that all of the wounded were inside of the perimeter, he be-



gan aiding the medics applying field bandages to open wounds, obtaining and serving food and water, and giving spiritual and mental strength and comfort. During his ministering he moved out to the perimeter from position to position, redistributing food and water and tending to the needs of his men. Chaplain Watters was giving aid to the wounded when he himself was mortally wounded. Chaplain Watters unyielding perseverance and selfless devotion to his comrades were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Army.

PFC CARLOS J. LOZADA

Rank and organization: Private First Class, U.S. Army, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade

Place and date: Dak To, Republic of Vietnam, 20 November 1967

Entered service at: New York, New York

Born: 6 September 1946, Caguas, Puerto Rico

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Pfc. Lozada, U.S. Army, distinguished himself at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty in the battle of Dak To. While serving as a machine gunner with 1st Platoon, Company A, Pfc. Lozada was part of a 4-man early warning outpost, located 35 meters from his company's lines. At 1400 hours a North Vietnamese Army company rapidly approached the outpost along a well defined trail. Pfc. Lozada alerted his comrades and commenced firing at the enemy who were within 10 meters of the outpost. His heavy and accurate machine gun fire killed at least 20 North Vietnamese soldiers and completely disrupted their initial attack. Pfc. Lozada remained in an exposed position and continued to pour deadly fire upon the enemy de-



spite the urgent pleas of his comrades to withdraw. The enemy continued their assault, attempting to envelop the outpost. At the same time enemy forces launched a heavy attack on the forward west flank of Company A with the intent to cut them off from their battalion. Company A was given the order to withdraw. Pfc. Lozada apparently realized that if he abandoned his position there would be nothing to hold back the surging North Vietnamese soldiers and that the entire Company withdrawal would be jeopardized. He called for his comrades to move back and that he would stay and provide cover for them. He made this decision realizing that the enemy was converging on 3 sides of his position and only meters away, and a delay in withdrawal meant almost certain death. Pfc. Lozada continued to deliver a heavy, accurate volume of suppressive fire against the enemy until he was mortally wounded. His heroic deed served as an example and an inspiration to his comrades throughout the ensuing 4-day battle. Pfc. Lozada's actions are in the highest traditions of the U.S. Army and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

PFC JOHN A. BARNES III

Rank and organization: Private First Class, U.S. Army, Company C, 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry 173d Airborne Brigade

Place and date: Dak To, Republic of Vietnam, 12 November 1967

Entered service at: Boston, Massachusetts

Born: 16 April 1945, Boston, Massachusetts

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Pfc. Barnes distinguished himself by exceptional heroism while engaged in combat against hostile forces. Pfc. Barnes was serving as a grenadier when his unit was attacked by a North Vietnamese force, estimated to be a battalion. Upon seeing the crew of a machine gun team killed, Pfc. Barnes, without hesitation, dashed through the bullet swept area, manned the machine gun, and killed 9 enemy soldiers as they assaulted his position. While pausing just long enough to retrieve more ammunition, Pfc. Barnes observed an enemy grenade thrown into the midst of some severely wounded personnel close to his position. Realizing that the grenade could further injure or kill the majority of the wounded personnel, he sacrificed his life by throwing himself directly onto the hand grenade as it exploded. Through his indomitable courage, complete disregard for his own safety, and profound concern for his fellow soldiers, he averted a probable loss of life and injury to the wounded members of his unit. Pfc. Barnes' extraordinary heroism, and intrepid-



ity At the cost of his life, above and beyond the call of duty, are in the highest Traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

PFC MILTON L. OLIVE III

Rank and organization: Private First Class, U.S. Army, Company B, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade

Place and date: Phu Cuong, Republic of Vietnam, 22 October 1965

Entered service at: Chicago, Illinois

Born: 7 November 1946, Chicago, Illinois

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Pfc. Olive was a member of the 3d Platoon of Company B, as it moved through the jungle to find the Viet Cong operating in the area. Although the platoon was subjected to a heavy volume of enemy gunfire and pinned down temporarily, it retaliated by assaulting the Viet Cong positions, causing the enemy to flee. As the platoon pursued the insurgents, Pfc. Olive and 4 other soldiers were moving through the jungle together when a grenade was thrown into their midst. Pfc. Olive saw the grenade, and then saved the lives of his fellow soldiers at the sacrifice of his by grabbing the grenade in his hand and falling on it to absorb the blast with his body. Through his bravery, unhesitating actions, and complete disregard for his safety, he prevented additional loss of life or injury to the members of his platoon. Pfc. Olive's extraordinary heroism, at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in the highest traditions of the U.S. Army and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of his country.



SGT LARRY S. PIERCE

Rank and organization: Sergeant, U.S. Army, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade

Place and date: Near Ben Cat, Republic of Vietnam, 20 September 1965

Entered service at: Fresno, California

Born: 6 July 1941, Wewoka, Oklahoma

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty. Sgt. Pierce was serving as squad leader in a reconnaissance platoon when his patrol was ambushed by hostile forces. Through his inspiring lead-



ership and personal courage, the squad succeeded in eliminating an enemy machine gun and routing the opposing force. While pursuing the fleeing enemy, the squad came upon a dirt road and, as the main body of his men entered the road, Sgt. Pierce discovered an anti-personnel mine emplaced in the road bed. Realizing that the mine could destroy the majority of his squad, Sgt. Pierce saved the lives of his men at the sacrifice of his life by throwing himself directly onto the mine as it exploded. Through his indomitable courage, complete disregard for his safety, and profound concern for his fellow soldiers, he averted loss of life and injury to the members of his squad. Sgt. Pierce's extraordinary heroism, at the cost of his life, are in the highest traditions of the U.S. Army and reflect great credit upon himself and the armed forces of his country.

SPC4 ALFRED RASCON

Rank and organization: Specialist Fourth Class, U.S. Army, Reconnaissance Platoon, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)

Place and date: Republic of Vietnam, 16 March 1966

Born: 1945, Chihuahua, Mexico

Citation: Specialist Four Alfred Rascon, distinguished himself by a series of Extraordinarily courageous acts on 16 March 1966, while assigned as a medic to the Reconnaissance Platoon, Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate). While moving to reinforce its sister battalion under intense enemy attack, the Reconnaissance Platoon came under heavy fire from a numerically superior enemy force. The intense enemy fire from crew-served weapons and grenades severely wounded several point squad soldiers. Specialist Rascon, ignoring directions to stay behind shelter until covering fire could be provided, made his way forward. He repeatedly tried to reach the severely wounded point machine-gunner laying on an open enemy trail, but was driven back each time by the withering fire. Disregarding his personal safety, he jumped to his feet, ignoring flying bullets and exploding grenades to reach his comrade. To protect him from further wounds, he intentionally placed his body between the soldier and enemy machine guns, sustaining numerous shrapnel injuries and a serious wound to the hip. Disregarding his serious wounds he dragged the larger soldier from the fire-raked trail. Hearing the second machine-gunner yell that he was running out of ammunition, Specialist Rascon, under heavy enemy fire crawled back to the wounded machine-gunner stripping him of his bandoleers of ammunition, giving them



to the machine-gunner who continued his suppressive fire. Specialist Rascon fearing the abandoned machine gun, its ammunition and spare barrel could fall into enemy hands made his way to retrieve them. On the way, he was wounded in the face and torso by grenade fragments, but disregarded these wounds to recover the abandoned machine gun, ammunition and spare barrel items, enabling another soldier to provide added suppressive fire to the pinned-down squad. In searching for the wounded, he saw the point grenadier being wounded by small arms fire and grenades being thrown at him. Disregarding his own life and his numerous wounds, Specialist Rascon reached and covered him with his body absorbing the blasts from the exploding grenades, and saving the soldier's life, but sustaining additional wounds to his body. While making his way to the wounded point squad leader, grenades were hurled at the sergeant. Again, in complete disregard for his own life, he reached and covered the sergeant with his body, absorbing the full force of the grenade explosions. Once more Specialist Rascon was critically wounded by shrapnel, but disregarded his own wounds to continue to search and aid the wounded. Severely wounded, he remained on the battlefield, inspiring his fellow soldiers to continue the battle. After the enemy broke contact, he disregarded aid for himself, instead treating the wounded and directing their evacuation. Only after being placed on the evacuation helicopter did he allow aid to be given to him. Specialist Rascon's extraordinary valor in the face of deadly enemy fire, his heroism in rescuing the wounded, and his gallantry by repeatedly risking his own life for his fellow soldiers are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

SPC4 DON L. MICHAEL

Rank and organization: Specialist Fourth Class, U.S. Army, Company C, 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade

Place and date: Republic of Vietnam, 8 April 1967

Entered service at: Montgomery, Alabama

Born: 31 July 1947, Florence, Alabama

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Spc4 Michael, U.S. Army, distinguished himself while serving with Company C. Spc4 Michael was part of a platoon which was moving through an area of suspected enemy activity. While the rest of the platoon stopped to provide security, the squad to which Spc4. Michael was assigned moved forward to investigate signs of recent enemy activity. After moving ap-



proximately 125 meters, the squad encountered a single Viet Cong soldier. When he was fired upon by the squad's machine gunner, other Viet Cong opened fire with automatic weapons from a well-concealed bunker to the squad's right front. The volume of enemy fire was so withering as to pin down the entire squad and halt all forward movement. Realizing the gravity of the situation, Spc4 Michael exposed himself to throw 2 grenades, but failed to eliminate the enemy position. From his position on the left flank, Spc4. Michael maneuvered forward with 2 more grenades until he was within 20 meters of the enemy bunkers, when he again exposed himself to throw 2 grenades, which failed to detonate. Undaunted, Spc4 Michael made his way back to the friendly positions to obtain more grenades. With 2 grenades in hand, he again started his perilous move towards the enemy bunker, which by this time was under intense artillery fire from friendly positions. As he neared the bunker, an enemy soldier attacked him from a concealed position. Spc4. Michael killed him with his rifle and, in spite of the enemy fire and the exploding artillery rounds, was successful in destroying the enemy positions. Spc4. Michael took up pursuit of the remnants of the retreating enemy. When his comrades reached Spc4 Michael, he had been mortally wounded. His inspiring display of determination and courage saved the lives of many of his comrades and successfully eliminated a destructive enemy force. Spc4. Michael's actions were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect the utmost credit upon himself and the U.S. Army.

SPC4 MICHAEL R. BLANCHFIELD

Rank and organization: Specialist Fourth Class, U.S. Army, Company A, 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade

Place and date: Binh Dinh Province, Republic of Vietnam, 3 July 1969

Entered service at: Chicago, Illinois

Born: 4 January 1950, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Spc4. Blanchfield distinguished himself while serving as a rifleman in Company A on a combat patrol. The patrol surrounded a group of houses to search for suspects. During the search of 1 of the huts, a man suddenly ran out toward a nearby tree line. Spc4. Blanchfield, who was on guard outside the hut, saw the man, shouted for him to halt, and began firing at him as the man ignored the warning and continued to run. The suspect suddenly threw a grenade toward the hut and its occupants. Although the exploding grenade severely wounded



Spc4. Blanchfield and several others, he regained his feet to continue the pursuit of the enemy. The fleeing enemy threw a second grenade which landed near Spc4. Blanchfield and several members of his patrol. Instantly realizing the danger, he shouted a warning to his comrades. Spc4. Blanchfield unhesitatingly and with complete disregard for his safety, threw himself on the grenade, absorbing the full and fatal impact of the explosion. By his gallant action and self sacrifice, he was able to save the lives and prevent injury to 4 members of the patrol and several Vietnamese civilians in the immediate area. Spc4. Blanchfield's extraordinary courage and gallantry at the cost of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.

SPC6 LAWRENCE JOEL

Rank and organization: Specialist Sixth Class (then Sp5c), U.S. Army, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade

Place and date: Republic of Vietnam, 8 November 1965

Entered service at: New York City, New York

Born: 22 February 1928, Winston-Salem, North Carolina

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life above and beyond the call of duty. Spc6. Joel demonstrated indomitable courage, determination, and professional skill when a numerically superior and well-concealed Viet Cong element launched a vicious attack which wounded or killed nearly every man in the lead squad of the company. After treating the men wounded by the initial burst of gunfire, he bravely moved forward to assist others who were wounded while proceeding to their objective. While moving from man to man, he was struck in the right leg by machine gun fire. Although painfully wounded his desire to aid his fellow soldiers transcended all personal feeling. He bandaged his own wound and self-administered morphine to deaden the pain enabling him to continue his dangerous undertaking. Through this period of time, he constantly shouted words of encouragement to all around him. Then, completely ignoring the warnings of others, and his pain, he continued his search for wounded, exposing himself to hostile fire, and, as bullets dug up the dirt around him, he held plasma bottles high while kneeling completely engrossed in his life saving mission. Then, after being struck a second time and with a bullet lodged in his thigh, he dragged himself over the battlefield and succeeded in



treating 13 more men before his medical supplies ran out. Displaying resourcefulness, he saved the life of 1 man by placing a plastic bag over a severe chest wound to congeal the blood. As 1 of the platoons pursued the Viet Cong, an insurgent force in concealed positions opened fire on the platoon and wounded many more soldiers. With a new stock of medical supplies, Spc6. Joel again shouted words of encouragement as he crawled through an intense hail of gunfire to the wounded men. After the 24 hour battle subsided and the Viet Cong dead numbered 410, snipers continued to harass the company. Throughout the long battle, Spc6. Joel never lost sight of his mission as a medical aidman and continued to comfort and treat the wounded until his own evacuation was ordered. His meticulous attention to duty saved a large number of lives and his unselfish, daring example under most adverse conditions was an inspiration to all. Spc6. Joel's profound concern for his fellow soldiers, at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty are in the highest traditions of the U.S. Army and reflect great credit upon himself and the Armed Forces of his country.

SSG CHARLES B. MORRIS

Rank and organization: Staff Sergeant (then Sgt.), U.S. Army, Company A, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)

Place and date: Republic of Vietnam, 29 June 1966

Entered service at: Roanoke, Virginia

Born: 29 December 1931, Carroll County, Virginia

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. Seeing indications of the enemy's presence in the area, SSG. Morris deployed his squad and continued forward alone to make a reconnaissance. He unknowingly crawled within 20 meters of an enemy machine gun, whereupon the gunner fired, wounding him in the chest. SSG. Morris instantly returned the fire and killed the gunner. Continuing to crawl within a few feet of the gun, he hurled a grenade and killed the remainder of the enemy crew. Although in pain and bleeding profusely, SSG. Morris continued his reconnaissance. Returning to the platoon area, he reported the results of his reconnaissance to the platoon leader. As he spoke, the platoon came under heavy fire. Refusing medical attention for himself, he deployed his men in better firing positions confronting the entrenched enemy to his front. Then for 8 hours the platoon engaged



the numerically superior enemy force. Withdrawal was impossible without abandoning many wounded and dead. Finding the platoon medic dead, SSG. Morris administered first aid to himself and was returning to treat the wounded members of his squad with the medic's first aid kit when he was again wounded. Knocked down and stunned, he regained consciousness and continued to treat the wounded, reposition his men, and inspire and encourage their efforts. Wounded again when an enemy grenade shattered his left hand, nonetheless he personally took up the fight and armed and threw several grenades which killed a number of enemy soldiers. Seeing that an enemy machine gun had maneuvered behind his platoon and was delivering the fire upon his men, SSG. Morris and another man crawled toward the gun to knock it out. His comrade was killed and SSG. Morris sustained another wound, but, firing his rifle with 1 hand, he silenced the enemy machine gun. Returning to the platoon, he courageously exposed himself to the devastating enemy fire to drag the wounded to a protected area, and with utter disregard for his personal safety and the pain he suffered, he continued to lead and direct the efforts of his men until relief arrived. Upon termination of the battle, important documents were found among the enemy dead revealing a planned ambush of a Republic of Vietnam battalion. Use of this information prevented the ambush and saved many lives. SSG. Morris' gallantry was instrumental in the successful defeat of the enemy, saved many lives, and was in the highest traditions of the U.S. Army.

SSG GLENN H. ENGLISH JR.

Rank and organization: Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army, Company E, 3rd Battalion, 503 Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade

Place and date: Phu My District, Republic of Vietnam, 7 September 1970

Entered service at: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Born: 23 April 1940, Altoona, Pennsylvania

Citation: SSG. English was riding in the lead armored personnel carrier in a 4-vehicle column when an enemy mine exploded in front of his vehicle. As the vehicle swerved from the road, a concealed enemy force waiting in ambush opened fire with automatic weapons and anti-tank grenades, striking the vehicle several times and setting it on fire. SSG. English escaped from the disabled vehicle and, without pausing to extinguish the flames on his clothing, rallied his stunned unit. He then led it in a vigorous assault, in



the face of heavy enemy automatic weapons fire, on the entrenched enemy position. This prompt and courageous action routed the enemy and saved his unit from destruction. Following the assault, SSG. English heard the cries of 3 men still trapped inside the vehicle. Paying no heed to warnings that the ammunition and fuel in the burning personnel carrier might explode at any moment, SSG. English raced to the vehicle and climbed inside to rescue his wounded comrades. As he was lifting 1 of the men to safety, the vehicle exploded, mortally wounding him and the man he was attempting to save. By his extraordinary devotion to duty, indomitable courage, and utter disregard for his own safety, SSG. English saved his unit from destruction and selflessly sacrificed his life in a brave attempt to save 3 comrades. SSG. English's conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the cost of his life were an inspiration to his comrades and are in the highest traditions of the U.S. Army.

SSG LASZLO RABEL

Rank and organization: Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army, 74th Infantry Detachment (Long Range Patrol), 173d Airborne Brigade

Place and date: Binh Dinh Province, Republic of Vietnam, 13 November 1968

Entered service at: Minneapolis, Minnesota

Born: 21 September 1939, Budapest, Hungary

Citation: For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty. SSG. Rabel distinguished himself while serving as leader of Team Delta, 74th Infantry Detachment. At 1000 hours on this date, Team Delta was in a defensive perimeter conducting reconnaissance of enemy trail networks when a member of the team detected enemy movement to the front. As SSG. Rabel and a comrade prepared to clear the area, he heard an incoming grenade as it landed in the midst of the team's perimeter. With complete disregard for his life, SSG. Rabel threw himself on the grenade and, covering it with his body, received the complete impact of the immediate explosion. Through his indomitable courage, complete disregard for his safety and profound concern for his fellow soldiers, SSG. Rabel averted the loss of life and injury to the other members of Team Delta. By his gallantry at the cost of his life in the highest traditions of the military service, SSG. Rabel has reflected great credit upon himself, his unit, and the U.S. Army.



LOST AWARDS / ORDERS

One of the biggest complaints I have heard over the years from Sky Soldiers of the Vietnam era, is about lost awards or orders. Of all the veterans I work with, the Sky Soldiers seem to voice this complaint more than others. To understand the reasons for this we must first look at the awards process.

Usually someone in the chain of command decides that you warrant an award. Then they initiate the paper work, through the chain of command to get you your award. Once the chain of command approved it, you would get the orders and your award. If this is so, then why are Sky Soldiers so unhappy?

Many times a soldier received their awards long after the action and many times in an unceremonial way (I have seen ARCOMs and Bronze star come in the mail to a soldier in the field). If the soldier loses his orders and or if a clerk in the rear fails to record the award on Form 2 in the service record, then it is not in your Army record.

Another problem were impact awards. These awards are usually made shortly after the event that warranted the award. An example is, after an action, the colonel flies out to see the troops and get a first hand account of what happened. Impressed by what he hears about you from your chain of command, he turns to his adjutant and asks for (an example a) Bronze star medal. He pins it on your uniform right there in the field

awards you a medal (personally, you would have preferred some sleep, a hot shower and some cold beer, but the medal will have to do). Later when out processing the Army you find that you were never awarded a bronze star. So what happened? Someone dropped the ball, either the adjutant or some clerk never processed your paper work.

To make things worse, the Brigade redeployed back to Fort Campbell in 1971. All the records available at that time were then put on a ship bound for the U.S. The troops flew home. Many troopers were discharge within hours of arriving in the states. So if a question of your record (awards) came up, there was no big pile of records for the clerks to look through. Most records were on the boat getting ready to be shipped to the U.S. "Don't worry, when your records come in, we will send them to the records center in St. Louis. There they will match up your orders with your records," you were told. In most cases that never happened. Why you ask?

Because while the boat with all the records was waiting to be fully loaded in Qui Nhon harbor in Vietnam, the Viet Cong sunk it. Yep, the boat with our records tied to the pier, sunk. It took a while for the records to be recovered, then re-scheduled to be put on another boat bound for the U.S., and finally arriving at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. The only problem was that the Brigade was by now on



the verge of de-activating. Old damaged records were not a priority. They were supposed to be sent onto St. Louis, but many just disappeared. Because some rear echelon clerical personnel or lost impact awards or records that were sunk, then delayed and finally a deactivated brigade, it is no surprise that Sky Soldiers complain more than orders about lost awards.

Now what you may not know is that there is a time limit of 2 years on awards. But "Lost Awards" have no time limit. So if you can find your old Platoon Leader or Commander and if he remembers you and that he put you in for an award and its some how got "Lost," then he can re-submit your award and it is possible to get a lost award after all these many years.

CHAPTER V - DEACTIVATION

On 25 August 1971, as part of the winding down of the Vietnam War, the 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep) was deployed to Fort Campbell, Kentucky. The brigade was not only the first US Army line combat unit to enter the war, it was the last to leave. Units, returning from the field, received the word of the redeployment and quickly moved to Cha Rang Valley. In a few days, units boarded flights that took them straight from Phu Cat AFB in the central highlands to Fort Campbell, Kentucky. No parades, crowds or welcome banners awaited the troops and many arrived in the dead of night. Sky Soldiers were quickly taken to a big hanger and processed. Many soldiers were offered early out and discharged on the spot. Those with one year or more left on duty stayed as the Brigade was then filled with replacements, mostly non-combatants.

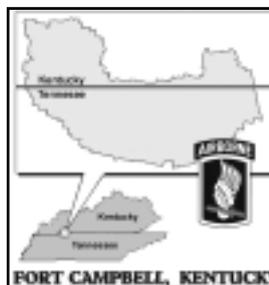
Now came a hard time in Sky Soldiers history, a period of readjustment into a peace time all Volunteer Army. Battle hardened troopers were not use to making formations, shining boots or doing PT. The transition was rough to say the least. In October 1971 the Brigade made one Jump while at Fort Campbell.

The Army was in a state of change and draw down. The Brigade was ordered deactivated and the Sky Soldiers of the 173d Air-



Jump on to Los Banos Drop Zone by 173d Airborne Bde., 1 Oct 1971.

borne Brigade were to become the 3rd Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Mobile). The brigade was deactivated on 14 January 1972 at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. During more than six years of continuous combat, the brigade earned 14 campaign streamers and four unit citations (includes two Vietnamese citations; the cross of gallantry medal and the civic ac-



Memorial was erected at Fort Campbell on 4 October 1973 in honor of those who Served, Fought, Fallen and continue to Serve.

tion medal). The Brigade completed the only line combat jump in the Vietnam War. Sky Soldiers serving in Vietnam received 13 Medals of Honor, 43 Distinguished Service Crosses, 1736 Silver Stars and over 8,200 Purple Hearts. There are 1,731 Sky Soldiers' names on the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington D.C. .

CHAPTER VI - REACTIVATION

With the end of the Cold War in Europe and the stand down of the Berlin Brigade, this left the European Theater of Operations without a light infantry brigade. It was decided that the U.S. Army Southern European Task Force (SETAF) would provide a force to conduct forced entry and or peace support operations throughout the SETAF area of operations. In 1993 the SETAF Infantry Brigade (Airborne) was created as Europe's 911

Then in 2000, Army planners decided that something larger than a "light" Infantry Brigade was needed for the changing environment in Europe and Africa. The Army needed a full Airborne Brigade that could be that regions quick reaction force. With the help of fellow Sky Soldier still on active duty, the Army did not have to look too hard to decide on Westmoreland's old *Fire Brigade* - the 173d Airborne Brigade.

Then on 12 June 2000, almost 18 years after its deactivation, the 173d Airborne Brigade was reborn. Like a rising of the legendary Phoenix, the SETAF Infantry Brigade (Airborne) was reflagged. That Monday morning, the colors of the 173d were uncovered after sitting in a foot locker at Fort Campbell these many years. Sky Soldiers from Vietnam were on hand to witness history. Each "Veteran" was asked to come forward and attach a battle streamer to the Brigade colors, symbolically tying to old Brigade to the new Brigade. Soon the 173d Airborne Brigade colors flew again before a new generation of Sky Soldiers standing in formation, except this time it was on Hoekstra field at Casmera Ederle in Vicenza, Italy.

The next day, the Brigade made a mass tactical jump. The colors that flew in Vietnam were jumped in by the Brigade Command Sergeant Major. The Brigade was Airborne again.

The now activated 173d Airborne Brigade included a Headquarters and Headquarters Support Company, a Forward Support Company (FSC), D Battery of the 319 Field Artillery Regiment (Airborne) and the 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment - the Red Devils (Fury from the Sky). The Brigade quickly added a Combat Support Company (CSC) followed later by the 173d Recon Company.

Most of that year was spent training up the troops into a new combat ready fighting unit. The unit first deployed to Grafenwöhr, Germany where Sky Soldiers were able to qualify with all their weapons. Then came deployments to Bosnia, Kosovo, Hungary, Tunisia, Morocco, Czech Republic, and Grafenwöhr again.

Then on 25 January 2002, the Brigade added a second line battalion. The 2nd Battalion, 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment (the Rock) was reactivated and re-joined the HERD.

With the War on Terror in full swing, the Brigade was anxious to join the fight as it continued to train up for the upcoming fight everyone knew would come. Training took on a new purpose as the Brigade was now part of an Army at war.

On 16 October 2002, the 173d Recon Company became the 74th Infantry Detachment (LRSD). LRSD - the Long Range Sur-



Reactivation on 12 June 2000



Jump on Juliet Drop Zone, Italy

veillance Detachment is a direct descendant of the old 74th Infantry Detachment LRRP (Long Range Recon Patrol) of the 173d Airborne Brigade in Vietnam. On 14 March 2003, The Brigade had officially achieved Initial Operating Capability (IOC), it was ready for whatever mission the Army could throw at it. It would not have long to wait...



173d begins training in Grafenwöhr, Germany.



Soldiers walking on DZ.





Training in the Czech Republic



STORIES

THE STORY BEHIND THE REACTIVATION OF THE 173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE

Colonel Jim McDonough (formerly Lieutenant McDonough of Bravo Company, 4th Battalion 503rd Infantry) had the privilege in January of 1994 to be assigned to the Southern European Task Force (SETAF) in Vicenza, Italy, with the mission to start up a separate airborne brigade comprised of available American forces forward deployed in Italy and ready them for service as the European Theater's quick reaction force for the Balkans, most of Africa, and a significant piece of the Middle East. We pulled together the 3rd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry, organized with Delta Battery, 3rd of the 319th Artillery, and its various combat and combat support elements into an airborne combat team, a newly formed Forward Support Company, a separate rigger detachment and a reconstituted Headquarters and Headquarters Company. To this we added the 13th Military Police Company and the Echo Company, 502nd Aviation Battalion – a strong company of CH 47 lift helicopters – and called it the SETAF Infantry Brigade (Airborne).

From the beginning the vision was to recreate the 173d. We wrote the Army's Institute of Heraldry suggesting just that, and made our case up the chain of command all the way through SETAF to the Commander in Chief, US Army Europe, and the Chief of Staff of the Army. We designed unit colors, originally paid for out of our own pockets which seized on the winged lion symbol of the Vicenza region of Italy where we resided, emphasizing the wings and working in, gradually, a bayonet. We wrote former patrons of the 173d, such as General William Westmoreland, to seek their help and advice.

This was not an easy thing for the U.S.

Army in Europe to accept. For more than 40 years of the Cold War, the American Army there had been dominated by armor. It was prepared to fight the Soviet hordes, and armored warfare on the plains of Europe was seen as the key. Even though times were changing – the Iron Curtain had come down, the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact had dissolved – the tank was still seen as the main combat unit for the European theater. Armies, even our own, do not accept change easily. Instinctively, US Army Europe resisted the standing down of armored units and, at the same time, creating in their place an airborne brigade.

But reality has a way of dictating terms. The need for rapid deployment demanded a quick – meaning airborne – reaction, combat force, flexible enough to reorganize on the fly (literally). It was clear, therefore, that the SETAF Infantry Brigade was secure. To turn it into something as awe-inspiring as the 173d, we quickly realized, meant that actions would have to speak louder than words. We built our reputation, therefore, on the spirit of aggressiveness, toughness, and commitment that epitomized the élan of the 173d.

In short order we picked up a multitude of tough contingencies – the evacuation of exposed military and diplomatic missions in Croatia, Macedonia, Algeria, and other places. We worked with the 6th Fleet's Marines and ships, qualifying our helicopters to land, refuel, and operate from their platforms. We deployed contingents to work with allies throughout our area of operations, we rehearsed mass airborne drops and the ground operations that would follow them, and we developed contingency plans that stretched from Eastern Europe to Botswana. By the summer of 1994 we deployed to Rwanda, Uganda, and Zaire to deal with the triple threat of genocide, civil war, and cholera. In 1995 we were activated for Operation Daring Lion, a mission that would have placed us between Bosnian and Muslim forces deep in



the Balkans at places like Srebrenica, Gorazde, and Zepa. The training and over two dozen live fire rehearsals for that operation alone put the Brigade into the headlines, from the Wall Street Journal to Soldier of Fortune Magazine. In late 1995 and early 1996, the airborne combat team of the SETAF brigade became the vanguard of the 1st Armor Division's and the U.S. Army's move into Bosnia. Upon withdrawal in the spring of 1996 it was deployed yet again to secure American embassies in imminent danger in West Africa. And so it continued, the establishment of a record worthy of a great unit.

In the end, the Army saw fit (in June 2000) to reflag the SETAF Infantry Brigade as the 173d Airborne Brigade at Caserme Ederle, where it is headquartered today, comprised of the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry, the 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry, the 173rd Engineer Detachment, Delta Battery, 3rd Battalion of the 319th Artillery, the 501st Forward Support Company, the 173d Brigade Recon Company, and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 173d Airborne.

Excerpts from remarks given by Colonel (Ret) James R. McDonough to the Society of the 173d Airborne Bde 10 July 2004 – Daytona Beach, Florida



2nd Battalion, 503rd PIR re-joins the Brigade



Ready

WOMEN OF THE 173D

There is one constant in the universe and that is Change! The Army of today is not exempt from this and so it should not come as a surprise that there are female Soldiers and female Paratroopers today. The 173rd Airborne Brigade has female sky soldiers in it.

1st LT Leslie Balfaqih a Military Police Corps officer and a Russian Linguist, served with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. On her (unlucky) 13th jump she fractured her left ankle that left her with a Titanium plate. On her 14th Jump, she leaped into 173rd Airborne history. On 13 June 2000 at 1500 hours she was third to exit the 7th aircraft in a group of eight C-130 aircraft over Drop Zone Juliet in Italy. Unknowingly Lt. Balfaqih became the first female Sky Soldier to jump with the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

She is pictured above shortly after the Jump and wearing an M.P. Brassard, that she wore during the jump that was also worn by a fellow M.P. Sky Soldier in Vietnam (Tom Kelly, MP Platoon 6/65 to 9/66).

During the Deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, female Sky Soldiers were there besides their Airborne Brothers.

Female Sky Soldiers also paid the price of service, living in poor housing conditions, facing the heat, the separation from families along with mortar and IED attacks.

At the time of this writing the current Support Battalion Commander in Afghanistan is LTC Cynthia Fox.



1st Female Sky Soldier



13 June 2000



Purple Heart Recipient, SPC Evelyn Pereira-Vas



Iraq



LTC Cynthia Fox



Afghanistan



CHAPTER VII - IRAQ



Planes waiting on the ramp at Aviano, Italy.

Operation Iraqi Freedom started on 20 March 2003. With ground forces moving in on the south toward Baghdad, the plan was for the 4th Infantry Division to move its heavy armor using the northern route through Turkey. However, when the Army was denied access through Turkey, the Brigade became the obvious choice to establish a presence in northern Iraq.

The Brigade received the word to prepare for an airborne assault. Operation Northern Delay initial objective was Bashur airfield which was approximately a four and half hours flight from Aviano, Air Force Base in Italy. This removed the need for in-flight refueling and reduced the fatigue of the paratroopers who would need to hit the ground running.

Seventeen C-17 Globemaster III aircraft were allotted for the initial assault along with the accompanying heavy drop package.

Enemy forces in the Brigade's area of operation consisted of the 5th Regular Army Corps in the vicinity of Mosul and the 1st Republican Guard Corps in Kirkuk. Three divisions from each corps were poised in defensive positions along the "green line" with one division defending each city. The unconventional threat in the vicinity of Bashur Drop Zone included shoulder fired air defenses weapons and anti-aircraft artillery fire possibly manned by the terrorist group Ansar Al Islam.

Three days prior to the airborne assault, a USAF MC-130 received heavy anti-aircraft artillery east of Bashur Airfield that put 15 large holes in the aircraft that prevented it from continuing to Bashur.

The operation began on 25 March when a 16-man reconnaissance element from the 74th LRSB and SOF Forces were inserted via an MC-130.

Then on that cloudy, pitch-black moonless night on March 26 2003, paratroopers of the 173d Airborne Brigade along with nine members of the 250 Forward Surgical Team, members of the 2 Bn - 10th SFG, ODA (-), 4th ASOG (USAF) and Combat Controllers of the USAF 86th Expeditionary Contingency Response Group were ready. At about 30 minutes out, the inside aircraft light were switched from white to red ...the



time was close. At twenty minutes came the words these paratroopers lived forGet Ready!

The paratroopers ran through there jump commands and stood with their static lines "hooked up" watching the red light at the jump door. The Globemasters flying at 30,000 feet entered enemy air space. While in the approach path, the initial aircraft, carrying 10 paratroopers and 5 heavy drop platforms, received anti-aircraft artillery fire from suspected 40mm systems in the vicinity of Mosul. The drop zone below was nestled in a valley surrounded by mountains. Then like hungry birds of prey, the C-17s dove down to 600 feet. The paratroopers standing up, hooked up, knees' started to buckle from all their weight and G-forces as the aircraft pulled out of the dive. The doors opened to a deafening sound as wind and dust filled the aircraft. The Green

light came on as the cries "Go!" "Go!" "Go!" rose above the noise of the jet engines. One by one, dressed in desert camouflage they quickly disappeared into the darkness of the night.

The paratroopers had less than one minute to exit the aircraft due to the local terrain and tactical situation. Thirty six paratroopers did not make it out the door in time and were forced to return to Aviano with the aircraft. It took less than 25 minutes for all of the Globemasters to drop their loads. It didn't take long for the paratroopers to reach the ground. The "Muddy" landing they expected turned out to be greatly underestimated, as many Sky Soldiers became stuck waist deep. Cold, wet and enveloped in darkness, the Sky Soldiers felt good to be on the ground. Using night vision goggles, they searched for a special flashing beacon, their assemble area.



1,005 paratroopers assembled at Aviano Air Force Base and were briefed by Colonel Mayville, the current Brigade Commander. "America is asking you to make the world a better place ...by jumping into the unknown for the benefit of others. Paratroopers ...our cause is just and victory is certain. I want you to join me tonight on an airborne assault." The paratroopers of the HERD bearing heavy loads of weapons and equipment weighing in excess of 100 pounds loaded the aircraft anxious to do their duty.



Once airborne, paratroopers focused on the mission.



The force dropped into the airfield near Harir, about 45 miles northeast of the Iraqi city of Irbil. The force included the following units; HHC 173d Airborne Brigade, 1st battalion 508th Parachute Infantry, 2nd Battalion 503rd Parachute Infantry, 501st Forward Support Company, 173d Combat Support Company, 74th LRSB, D Battery 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment and Humvees equipped with 50 caliber machine guns and grenade launchers.

This was the largest combat paratroop assault since World War II. By dawn the Sky Soldiers, found themselves surrounded by green fields and mountains. Later the Bashur airfield was secured and Air force C-17's landed another 1200 Sky Soldiers and their vehicles. A total force of 2200 soldiers and 400 pieces of equipment arrived in the first 96 hours.

The Brigades airborne assault opened up the Northern Front against the Iraqi Army and created a credible conventional force that essentially fixed two Iraqi Corps from reinforcing against American forces moving near Baghdad.

The Brigade then continued operations into northern Iraq and secured the city of Kirkirk.



Next Stop Iraq



Sunup after the jump

COMBAT OPERATIONS OF THE 173d AIRBORNE BRIGADE IN IRAQ 2003-2004

Operation Northern Delay (26 MAR 03)
 Operation Option North (15 APR 03)
 Operation Peninsula Strike (7 JUN 03)
 Al Sulaymaniah Raid (4 JUL 03)
 Operation Ivy Serpent (11 JUL 03)
 Operation Ivy Needle (2 AUG 03)
 Operation Swift Bayonet (28 SEP 03)
 Operation Bayonet Lightning (2 DEC 03)
 Operation Bayonet Lightning II (7 DEC 03)
 Operation Bayonet Lightning III (19 JAN 04)

UNITS ATTACHED TO THE 173D AIRBORNE IN IRAQ

4th Air Support Ops Group
 64th Military Police Company
 *86th Expeditionary Contingency Response Group
 *250th Forward Surgical Team (ABN)
 404th Civil Affairs Battalion
 506th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron
 (EOD)
 554th Military Police Company
 Tactical Psychological Operations Detachment
 1050
 1st Bn, 12 Infantry, 4th ID
 201st Forward Support Company, 1st ID
 110th Military Intelligence Bn, B Co
 201st FSC of 1st Infantry Division
 509th Signal Battalion, 7th Signal Brigade
 *Jumped in with the 173rd



Mortar crew setting up on drop zone.



Fighting position on the drop zone.



"Move Out"



Out on patrol.

OPERATION NORTHERN DELAY

Department of the Army, HQs, 173d Airborne Brigade, Unit 31401, Box 88, APO, AE 09630
Permanent Orders 145-19 24 May 2004

Announcement is made of the following award:
Award: **Bronze Star Combat Parachutist Badge**
and the Award: **Arrow Head Device**

Dates(s) or period of service: 26 1700Z March 2003 to 26 1773Z March 2003 at Bashur Drop Zone Northern Iraq Authority: AR 600-8-22, paragraph 7-25, Approval Authority dated 29 May 2004

Reason: For participation in a parachute assault landing into enemy controlled territory.

Format: 320

FOR THE COMMANDER:

10 Chalks = 969 Jumpers

CHALK	# 1
HANLEY ROBERT MICHAEL	MAJ
HUGHES BRIAN	CPT
GASPARD JOSHUA MICHAEL	2LT
MCGINNIS MICHAEL EUGENE	PFC
GUIDRY JONATHAN MAURICE	SPC
KENNEDY BRIAN JOSEPH	PFC
VIEN RICHARD MICHAEL	PFC
MANGINE NICKOLAS ALBERT	SPC
HANSEN JASON C	1LT
TORRES OSCAR	PFC
SPRINGSTEEN ERICKSON	SSG
CARNEY STEPHEN ANTHONY JR	SGT
MILLS ERIC LEE	PFC
STHILAIRE SHAUN MICHAEL	SGT
SALADOR RHYAN	SPC
MARSTELLA JERRMIAH SCOT	PFC
KIDD DANIEL JON	SSG
KEENER BENJAMIN CHRISTOPHER	SGT
MANN ROBERT JASON	SGT
REIDY MARTIN JOSEPH III	CPT
VIPOND JASON ALAN	SPC
CUIROZ CHARLIE LUCIANO	PFC
MYRES NEIL JONATHAN	1LT
GOOLSBY LANCE MATTHEW	SGT
RODRIGUEZ BRANDON G	PFC
BERNOT CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL	SSG
CATO CHRISTOPHER LEE	SSG
LAWRENCE DUSTIN ALAN	PFC
MORRIS JOSHUA ALAN	SSG
KOBELKA STEPHEN WOLF	SPC
EMMONS MICHAEL JOSEPH	SFC
FOOTE MATTHEW D	SSG
O'NEIL BRADLEY A	MAJ
BROOKS TODD A	LTC
ORTIZ LEO ANTHONY B	SRA
GUNTER WILLIAM WADE	CSM
MAYVILLE WILLIAM CHARLES JR	COL
CDRICK DEVRON T	SGT
BUCK EDWARD FORREST JR	CPT
LABOYCORTES EDWIN	SPC
LARSON PAUL LEO	CPT
SCHMID JAMES R	CPT
RATHOUN BRIAN JAMES II	SSG
WHITE DEPEK CHARLES	PFC
FESMIRE DREW CHRISTIAN	PFC
HAMRICK BRADLEY C	SPC
SPEAR RONALD	SSG
ESPINOZA SERGIO	SGT
TINSLEY JOHNNY LEE	SPC
ALAMEDA FRANCISCO DIEGO	PFC
CAULY DUANE EZRA JR	SGT
THURMAN DANNY LEE	PFC

AUSTIN DANIEL LYNN	PFC
NUNEZ DANIEL JESUS	SSG
ARDNER SHANE PAUL	SPC
KRAJIECK ANTON JAMES II	SGT
BOWMAN RAY WILLIAM	PFC
TURNER CARL O	PFC
INGRAM JAMES DANIEL	SPC
LAPPEDAARD JUSTIN WILLIAM	PFC
BURGOSERPA ALBERTO I	PFC
VAZQUEZ PHILIP	SPC
STANLEY TIMOTHY ALAN	SGT
HARDYWAY JONATHAN TERELL	SPC
ROSARIO JOEL ANTHONY	PV1
GONZALEZ JAMIE JOSE	SGT
SOUTHERLAND MICHAEL TERHENO	SSG
GALVAN ALBERT	SGT
SCRIVENS BENNIT BRUCE	SPC
WERLEY CHARLES SCOTT	SPC
ROWELL RICHARD ALLEN	PFC
MARTIN DAVID BENJAMIN	PFC
HANKINS BRIAN JASON	PFC
MAGANA JOSE ANGEL	SSG
CLARK NATHAN ROBERT	PFC
BURNS LARRY JAMES	PFC
WELLS JAMES ANTHONY	SPC
KOCH ROBERT DAVID	2LT
HOLBROOK CHRISTOPHER DAVID	PFC
SILVACRUZ AXEL J	SSG
BRUENS JOSHUA ANDREW	SGT
SWARNER TYLER ROMAR	SPC
JACKS SAMUEL PAUL	PV2
CLARK RYAN DOUGLAS	PV2
BRYANT RICHARD SEAN	SPC
HEDGEPEETH WENDELL JR	SGT
WATERSTRIPE MICHAEL PAUL	SPC
MARKER JUSTIN TROY	SPC

CHALK	# 2
VOGEL STEPHEN F	LTC
TUNNEL HARRY DANIEL IV	SGT
BROWN JAMES MICHAEL	SGT
TYNDALL ADAM MARK	SPC
HOOPER BRIAN ERIC	CPT
HOWARD JACKY SHAY	CPT
SANGSTER BENJAMIN FRANKLIN	CPT
RIKER RANDY RAY	CPT
HAYNES JASON GILBERT	SGT
COKE GARTH	SGT
FRANKLIN DAVID BRETT	PFC
HARDEN KYLE JOHN	PFC
GILLISON DANIEL ROBERT	PFC
WARREN DUSTIN ALLEN	PFC
PATTERSON MARK ALAN	SSG
BAUGHMAN JEFFREY ALLEN	SFC
DEGENHARDT CLAYTON JOHN	SFC
EHRESMAN MARK THEADORE	SSG
BURR PETER ERNEST JR	PV1
LATIMER ERIC SHANE	SFC
AVILA ORN	SGT
HINKKANEN JACOB PAUL	SPC
OAKES KEVIN	SFC
SHELTON CHRISTOPHER RANDALL	SGT
MENESES THOMAS	SPC
MENDEZ IVAN ALFREDO	SPC
BRZAK SCOTT ALLEN	SFC
RAMIREZ CHRISTOPHER	PFC
ADAMKSI MICHAEL JOHN	CPT
FRANCESCHINI WILFREDO	1LT

DECOUDRES TIMOTHY ALLAIRE	SSG
CUNDIFF WILLIAM EMMETT JR	SPC
NICHOLSON JOSEPH JEREMY	SSG
BENZER JOSEPH WILLIAM	SPC
REED JONATHAN SAHNGER	PV2
BAUS ERIC AMMON	CPT
DAHL CHRIS ANTHONY JR	SPC
TUTTLE MYRON GEORGE	SPC
STOCKING STEVEN ANDREW	SPC
CROCKETT DAVID EDWARD IV	SSG
LIVINGSTON JAMAR BURNETT	SPC
ISSERTELL JOSEPH DAVID	1SG
WILLIAMS VERNON CHRIS II	SSG
BRIGNOLI STEVEN JAMES	1LT
JACKSON CHRISTOPHER JOSEPH	PFC
ANDREWS MATTHEW ADAM	SPC
THOMAS RICHARD D	CPT
HARTLESS JEFFREY SCOTT	SGM
KILBRIDE JOHN PATRICK	CPT
WALLACE PHILLIP EDWARD	SSG
WALTER SAMUEL NELSON	SGT
PEOPLES WILLIE CORNELIUS JR	CSM
MORTATI GAETANO ANTHONY	SGT
BARDEN JEREMY K	1LT
GUDERSKI CHRISTOPHER G	1LT
BRANNEN ROBERT MARSHAL	PFC
LEVESOUF MICHAEL JOHN	SSG
CULPEPPER THOMAS MICHAEL	1LT
PEREZ ERNESTO	2LT
THOMAS DARRELL SHANE	SGT
HERRERA PHILIPS APOLLONO	SPC
HERPER EARL ALEXANDER	PFC
KELLER SEAN NOEL	SSG
MOUER JOSEPH MICHAEL	CPT
JAMISON BRIAN MICHAEL	CPT
STORIE STEPHEN MICHAEL	PFC
FARROW HAROLD HERBERT	SSG
YOUNG JASON ROY	SSG
PARDO ROBERT ALFREDO	SSG
CROSS JOSEPH RAYMOND	SGT
HARDY WILLIAM GREGORY	PV2
CONNELL PATRICK SEAN	SSG
SMITH CARSON MCCAY	PFC
PEREZ CRUZ EDILBERTO A	PV2
RIDGEWAY JASON RANDALL	CPT
PAINTER CREW ALBERT	PFC
ROCK KERRY JOSEPH	SPC
SQUILLINI MICHAEL ANTHONY	CW2
REFFEOR JONATHAN EDWARD	SSG
UNDERWOOD JAMES PATRICK	SPC
SONNENTAG MICHAEL JOHN	PV2
DAUGHERTY BRAIN DOUGLAS	SGT
ALAREZ ROBERTO HORACIO	SSG
WORKMAN ZACHARIAH JOSEPH	SGT
HASSANIEN TAMER MA	SPC
MACDOUGALL JOHN DAVID	PFC
THOMAS KYLE GREGORY	PFC
FEGELY MELVILLE KENNETH	SPC
MARINO CHARLES FRANCIS	SPC
HUND JAMES JEFFERY	PFC
SANCHEZ ROBERT LEE	MAJ
BLACKBURN KYLE CHRIS	SPC
CORBITT BRIAN JOHN	PFC
HILLER DARREN MATHEW	SGT
JACOBS WILLIAM GLEN II	CPT
HOYE TIMOTHY CHARLES	MSG
KNIGHT RYAN	SSG
MONTALVO GUADALOPE	SSG

LAPORTE DWIGHT ROBERT	SSG	ROBINSON BRANDON J	PFC	SHELTON RYAN	CPT
MAUNZ JAMES E	CPT	ZIMMER JOHN RAYMOND	SSG	SWAN JOSHUA ROBERT	PVC
BAKER BRIAN THOMAS	SSG	KELLY SHANE P	2LT	VANSICKLE JEFFREY BRETT	1LT
SPARKS JUSTIN CHARLES	SPC	ESTEBANESALAS DORIAN F	SPC	WAGONER MARK PAUL	CPT
		CAMPBELL FREDERICK CORNELIUS	SPC	WEAVER JASAN KIP	SSG
CHALK	# 3	KAHLER MATTHEW RYAN	SSG	WATTS WALTER FRANK JR	SGT
OSTLUND WILLIAM BRIAN	MAJ	PEREZ ERNESTO FLAVIO	PFC	MINUCCI JOSEPH II	SGT
REYNA THOMAS STEVEN II	SPC	LUDIN ROBERT BURNETT	SPC	ALLEN JEFFREY DON	PV2
CANNON DAVID TILLMAN	SSG	HOLMES DUSTIN DEAN	PFC	BAZER JONATHAN FREDRIK	SSG
CLEMENTS MICHAEL WAYNE	SGM	EZERNACK TROY SHANE	SPC	BENDER JOHN JOSHUA	SPC
ASKEW VINCENT EDWARD	SFC	CONDIT F H THEODORE	SGT	BUTLER JARON BLUE	PFC
LAPE DAVID EDWARD JR	PFC	PERSON JAMES ANDREW	2LT	CAVATAO DAVID ANTHONY	SSG
LESTER TOMMY LEE JR	SSG	SCHLOTHAUER DANIEL ALLAN	SGT	CHRISTIAN MICHAEL LAWRENCE	SSG
STALEY DARRELL EDWARD JR	PFC	MILQUIST JASON THOMAS	SGT	CODY STEVEN JOSHUA	SPC
TAVAREZ ABEL EMILIO	SSG	GROVE JOSHUA CHARLES	PFC	CRENSHAW AARON EDWARD	SSG
CARLSSON GLEN ERIC	CPT	LOCKHEAD ERIC DENNISON	PFC	CUMMINGS AARON D	1LT
KARAHHARISIS JOHN JAMES	PFC	HUSKINS BRANDON TY	SGT	ELLIS CHRISTOPHER HOWARD	SSG
NAVASMARTINEZ CARLOS N	SGT	BADEN MATTHEW DANIEL	SPC	FOGLEMEN MICHAEL FERREL	SPC
OLVERA ROGELIO RENE	PFC	KRUSE MATTHEW JAMES	PFC	GARACIA TIMOTHY RYAN	PFC
TEIGUE RICHARD CHARLES	PFC	FTACEK MICHAEL DAVID	SSG	GRIFFEY JEFFREY KENNETH	SGT
SEWLEY BRANDON DAVID	SGT	PERRY BRANDON JOHN	SSG	GUERRERO JOHN MANUAL	CPT
RUIZ NATIVIDAO	SSG	FRENZEL MICHAEL REID	MAJ	HANCHETT CHARLES WILLIAM	PV2
YOUNG DREW ALLEN	SPC	DIBIAS JOHN BRIAN	CW2	HENMAN CHAD ANDREW	PFC
HARRILL PHILLIP BENJAMIN	PV2	GOWAN ROBERT EDWARD LEE III	MAJ	HERNANDEZ ANGEL RICARDO	PFC
ALVAREZ GILBERTO	SPC	CUBBAGE ADAM THOMAS	CPT	HERNANDEZ JAIME ROSAURO	PFC
ASHURST MICHAEL BRANDON	SFC	EVANCIC MICHAEL	CPT	HORMANN JUSTIN PAUL	PFC
HADLOCL KYLE HERMAN	CPT	BATTA CHRISTOPHER	SMSGt	HAUSER PAUL JOSEPH	SPC
GONZALES JUAN JOSE	SFC	WEART STEVEN K	COL	JONES LEE TOM	PFC
KIM KYUSIK	SPC	CZARKOWSKI KEVIN MICHAEL	1LT	LOMBARDI ALBERT ANTHONY III	SGT
BAGBY JOHN VINCENT	1SG	GAVULA DAVID LAWRENCE	PV2	LUGO FRANKLIN B	SSG
BECKER JORDAN M	1LT	RUNDQUIST ERIC K	MAJ	LUTZ THOMAS RALPH	CPT
WRIGHT BENJAMIN WEST	CPT	CANNON JAMES LOUIS	SSG	MARTINEZ ANTHONY ISAAC	PFC
RICHARDS AIRE CHRISTIAN	CPT	DANIELS WILLIAM WAYNE	PFC	MCDOUGALL JOHN D	1LT
FRAZIER JUSTIN LEE	SPC	PILOW DANIEL JOSEPH	SGT	MCELYEA ROBERT SAMUEL	SGT
GONZALEZ MANUEL	2LT			MORGAN BRANDON SCOTT	PV2
ORTIZHILL JORGE LUIS II	SFC	CHALK	# 4	MORSEBACH WILLIAM PAUL	PFC
LEE LAWRENCE	2LT	ALEXANDER DITSEN CARVEY	SPC	CAKES CHRISTOPHER WARREN	PV1
KEMP MICHAEL EDWARD	SPC	ALJEHANI JASON MORRIL	PFC	ORBAN JOSEPH ROBERT	SPC
RAGOONANAN AMAR RAMNAN	SGT	AMES CHET DOUGLAS	PV2	RICE EARL LESLIE	CSM
LUCAS ERIC MICHAEL	SPC	BARLETT DANIEL WAYNE II	PFC	RODENBURG GREGORY ALLAN	PFC
HEBERT JUSTIN W	SPC	BEGAY BYRON RAY	SPC	SIMON HECTOR III	SPC
LEVY JASON EDWARD	SSG	BETANCOURT ROGELIO	SPC	SPARKS MICHAEL SHAWN	SGT
FREESE THOMAS FREDERICK	CPL	BIGGS ERIC RAYMOND	CPL	SPRAGUE SCOTT ANTHONY	PV2
HOLMES MANNIE LEE II	SPC	BUTLER NATHAN JOSEPH	SPC	STODDARD TRAVIS SANTRELL	SPC
MAZZA NATHAN CHRISTOPHER	PFC	CAGNO ANDREW DUNCAN	SGT	SUMMERFIELD JEREMY JOHN	PFC
SCHUETTE DEVIN LEE	CPL	CAMPBELL MICHAEL RYAN	PV1	TAFFOYA CHRISTOPHER GORDEN	PFC
PINGLE CHRISTOPHER LEE	PFC	CARACCILO DOMINIC JOSEPH	LTC	TODOROV TIMOMIR STEFANOV	SPC
LEAMONT BRANDON JOHN	PFC	CLARK JOSHUA MICHAEL	SPC	TUSA JOHN THOMAS	SPC
HIGGINS CONAN KOSEPH	TSG	CLINE BRANDON CHRISTOPHER	PFC	TUTTLE JAMES JOHN	PFC
ANDERSON BLAINE	MSG	CURTIS ROBERT O	2LT	WEIK RICHARD WESLEY	MSG
ROOS BENJAMIN AUGUST	SGT	DESSECKER MICHAEL WAYNE	SSG	WHALEY PATRICK SHAUN	SSG
BIGGS CHRISTOPHER ADAM	SGT	DODD MICHAEL LEE	SPC	ZAWADSKI ALEXANDER	SGT
BELLEW BRIAN WAYNE	SPC	GEORGE RANDY ALLEN	MAJ	ADKINS EMMETT CHARLES II	SGT
LITTY JON JOSEPH	1LT	HARPER BRIAN ALLEN	SPC	BARTLETT MICHAEL ORHAN	SPC
RITZMANN CHRISTOPHER	CPT	HARRELL JONATHAN NORWOOD	PFC	MILES MATTHEW ERIC	SSG
CAMPBELL DALE EUDON	SGT	HARRISON GEORGE PAUL	SPC	DEIBEL COREY BRONSON	SGT
NARANJO CARL ERNEST	SGT	HARRISON TALON JATONY	SGT	MOWER CLIFFORD LAMAR	SGT
NELSON CHARLES CODY	SPC	JAMES JEREMIAH LEE	SPC	CHOAY CHRISTOPHER	SPC
HAYES STEVEN CHRISTOPHER	PFC	JOHNSON JAMES CHRISTOPHER	SPC	LYTLE ASHLEY	PV1
MALISH RICHARD GLADE	MAJ	KUNASEK BRIAN L	PFC	WISEMAN MICHAEL L	SGT
MEDINA ABRAHAM JR	SSG	LAWRENCE ADAM GLEN	PV2	KLEPAC KEVIN JEFFERY	PFC
LOPEZ VICTOR JAVIER JR	SSG	LIKINS ROBERT ANTHONY III	2LT	KAGAN DAVID	SPC
WOOD DAVID WAYNE	SSG	MCCLURE KYLE MICHAEL	PV2	MCDONALD MASON JAMES	SSG
KUCFRAK DANIEL WILLIAM II	PFC	MORGAN JAMES ELMER III	SPC	BARNHILL RYAN MITCHELL	SPC
CAYNOR DAVID MICHAEL	PFC	PERKINSON PATRICK KENNEDY	SGT		
GARRETT BEAU P	2LT	PRICE KENJIM	2LT	CHALK	# 5
MILTON RONALD JOE	SGT	REIBSOME RICKY LEN	SGT	SPENCER JOHN W	2LT
JENSEN TIMOTHY JAMES	SGT	ROUSE HAROLD DEAN	2LT	LANTHIER JASON MICHAEL	PFC
ERNEST ANDREW ELI	PFT	SANTOS NIOGEL RAFEL	PFC	LANDRE JASON WILLILAM	SPC
MONTOUR JOSEPH ALLEN	1SG	SHAFFER ALLAN MICHAEL	PFC	MAY PETER GRISWOLD	PFC
TURNER PRINCE LEE JR	SSG	SHANNON MATTHEW JUSTIN	PV1	ROBBINS KASEY LYNN	PFC

BURRE PAUL JONATHAN	SSG	MONROE MICHAEL ATWOOD	SPC	SMITH JAY BRENT	CPT
GONDECK BENJAMIN LEE	PV2	BURROW THOMAS LEE	SPC	SNYDER JEREMIAH DON	SPC
SHARKEY KEVEN DAVID	SGM	DEAKMAN CALEB HENRY	PFC	DURBIN ROBERT ALLAN	SSG
VERMILLION CHAD D	2LT	DILLON RYAN SCOTT	CPT	ETHERIDGE MICHAEL DAVID	SGT
PRICE MICHEAL WAYNE	SSG	MORIN RADOLFO	SGT	FUCHS LEONARD MARITIN IV	SGT
PLANAS JEFFERY RAFAEL	SGT	BLACK NICHOLAS HARDING	SPC	GRANT ERIN NATHANIEL	SPC
CUMMINGS NATHAN CHRISTOPHER	PFC	SPIELHAGAN BERNARD C III	SSG	HALVORSEN WILLIAM REED	PFC
BALLOU JASON EMMERSON	PFC	GRUESER SHAWN MICHAEL	SGT	HARRIS RICKY GREGG	SSG
DAVIS CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL	PFC	GROSS MANNY EDWARD	SGT	HATTON PHILLIP KYLE	PFC
AGUIRREOSORIO ROBERTO	SSG	PUIGRUIZ MICHELL	SGT	HIMROD JAMES NATHAN	SPC
HALL SAMUEL REGOLI	SSG	BORLOCK HORACE J JR	SPC	HOFFER AARON JAMES	SGT
JONES LEIGHTON CHRISTIAN	PFC	ORTIZMONTES HECTOR JAVIER	PFC	HOGAN TIMOTHY SEAN	SSG
REEDY GARY W JR	CPT	ISAACS RUSSELL ALLAN	SGT	HOWE JESSE LYNN	SPC
SALTUS ARTHUR RONALD	SFC	WILKISON AUSTIN SPENCER	SPC	HUSKETH JESSE LEE	SPC
BEESON SCOTT ALAN	SSG	CHAVEZ GREGORIO ARMONDO	SFC	LEE ROBERT PAUL	SSG
PEDDOYCORD ANDREW CHARLES	PFC	SMITH BLAKE ORIEN	SGT	LINDERMAN ROBERT THOMAS	PFC
HODAPP THOMAS RICHARD	SGT	WOLFERT ERIK ANDREW	SGT	LODOLO LANCE ANTHONY	PFC
FLETCHER JACOB SAMUEL	PV2	PRIDGEN RANDOLPH JR	SFC	MANANA ROMMEL EMILIO	SPC
HILL DAVID VERNON JR	PFC	DOHR SHAWN MCMANAMON	SFC	MAROIS ALEXANDER CHAIANGLEE	SGT
STOCKARD WILLIAM SHANE	SSG	BURNETT DAVID ALEXANDER	PFC	MARTIN EUGENE LYNN	CPT
GONZALEZ TERRY JOSEPH JR	SPC	LIDDICK SCOTT ROBERT JR	PFC	MCDONALD CARL ADAM	SFC
DAVIS CAMERON J	SSG	HINTON GAVIN MICHAEL	PFC	OAKLEY BRYAN SCOTT	SGT
KNIGHT GREGORY EARL	CPT	BALL MICHAEL	PV2	OROURKE TROY KENNETH	PFC
BROWN AARON MATTHEW	PFC	GARGAS EDWIN THADDEUS JR	SFC	PERRY JOSHUA LEN	PV2
GIBBS JONATHAN CLARKSON III	MAJ	WALTER GEORGE	CPT	QUIROS MIGUEL A	SFC
ORTIZ VALENTE	SSG	HORTSMANN JACOB PAUL	SFC	STANTON WILLIAM MICHAEL JR	SFC
CASTRO FRANKIE JAMES	SFC			STORMS AUSTIN MICHAEL	PFC
SINGLETON TYLER JAMES	SPC	CHALK	# 6	SZCZEPANEK ZACHARY JOSEPH	PV2
SERNSTEIN DAVID R	1LT	DILANIAN KENNETH JACOB		TOBIAS CHRISOPHER CASTILLO	PV2
TRAVIS BYRON JOE	SPC	ADDISON CARLON HARDY II	SFC	WATSON TIMOTHY ROBERT	MSG
FAHNESTOCK COREY DWAYNE	SGT	AVERY JASON F	SPC	DIEHL JESSE SETH	PFC
STRIBLING MICHAEL CORIN	SFC	BAUMMUR PAUL DAVID	SPC	BROWN MATISON RUSSELL	PV2
DUARET ANTHONY DAVID	SPC	BLACKMORE BRANDON VICTOR	SPC	CUTSHALL DAVID LEE JR	SGT
VOGEL LELAND WESLEY	SPC	BOURNE JONATHAN EDWARD	SPC	ANDERSON SETH ERIK	PV2
TRUCLOVEC JOSHUA MARL	PFC	BROWN CHRISTOPHER JOEL	SPC	ANWAR YAMIM IBN	SGT
SKRAPKE ALLAN WAYNE	PFC	BRANDY WILLIAM DOUGLAS	CPT	BARNES BENJAMIN D	SGT
BAGGETT JEREMY KELLY	SGT	CAHILL SCOTT VINCENT	SPC	BARRIOS JUAN M	SFC
TASHIMA BRIANJAY MITSURU	SPC	CAMPBELL DONALD MALCOM JR	MSG	BAYANG ANDREW	SGT
MCCORMICK CHAD WESLEY	SPC	COCKMAN JASON WINFRED	1LT	BENTLEY GLEN ARTHUR II	SGT
CHAVEZ GREGORY MICHAEL	PFC	DENNY MICHAEL JUSTIN	PFC	BEILEFFLOT BRYAN LEE	PFC
DILLARD JEREMY TODD	SSG	ESPINOZA JEFFERY GUADALUPE	SPC	BOYD JAMES CRAIG	SGT
NEWMAN ROBERT CLIFTON	SFC	FRISBEE SHAUN THOMAS	SPC	BRUMELY TIMOTHY CARLTON	SPC
BRADFORD JEREMY PHILLIP	SGT	GAUDETTE BRIAN JOSEPH	PFC	CALDWELL JOHN ANDREW	SSG
NORTHROP KENNETH PAUL LAMAR	SPC	GOINGS KEITH JAMES	PFC	CAMPELL CHRISTOPHER JOHN	SPC
PERRY ANTONIO J	SPC	GRIFFITH LEON DEXTER	SGT	CINI ROBERT LEE	SSG
BRASHER DAVID EDWARD	SSG	HAGELPITT BRENT W	1SG	COWDEN MICHAEL CHEYNE	SPC
CUEBAS EDWIN MARCUS	SGT	HALLIBURTON JAMES ALLEN	SPC	DEVOR CHRISTIAN JAMES	PV2
HUDSON WILLIAM UTAH JR	SGT	HANDO THOMAS J	1LT	DOLES JOHN GLEN	SGT
COLTON JONATHAN MICHAEL	PFC	HERST JONATHON PATRICK	SPC	RAMIREZ FRANCISCO	SGT
CHANDLER CARL DAVID JR	SGT	JELENIOWSKI JAMES CRAIG	SPC	REED RICHARD ALLEN	SPC
LAFFERTY THOMAS MICHAEL JR	PFC	JENSON ANTHONY DALE	PV2	RODEN SEAN MICHAEL	SPC
KREZELAK JUSTIN DOUGLAS	SGT	LANG JOHN KARL	MAJ	RODRIGUEZTORRES ALEXIS	SPC
SHORT ANDY LEE	PFC	LATTIMORE NERI PARSHUR	PFC	ROY TANNER J	1LT
NELSON JONATHAN DAVID	PFC	LINDOCRG MICHAEL JOSEPH JR	PFC	SOKOLOWSKI STEPHEN WACY	SPC
MUHCNEN EVAN CRAIG	SPC	LINNE RYAN COLT	PV2	STONE GEORFFERY THOMAS	SGT
MADISON ADAM ANDREW	SPC	LOVETT BARRY FRANKLIN JR	SGT	WATTS CHRISTOPHER LEE	PV2
GRAY DAVID ANTHONY	PFC	MARINO SCOTT ALLAN	SGT	WOODY GAVIN WARD	CPT
MARIN DANIEL MONCAYO	SPC	MCCARTHY CORY MICHAEL	SPC	GUERINGER JASON ADAM	SFC
KING NICHOLS ALLAN	PV2	MEDINA ANTHONY CARLOS	SGT		
OSBECK CRAIG WILSON	SPC	ODOM MARK WELD	MAJ	CHALK	# 7
VASIL CARL GARRETT	SSG	ORTIZ JUAN ANTONIO JR	PFC	SHINNERS MICHAEL JAMES	MAJ
SANCHEZ CHRISTOPHER DANIEL	SGT	OTEYSTEPHENSON COLE CASSIDY	SPC	BAYSORE THOMAS ALLEN JR	SPC
INGRHAM NICHOLS AARON	SPC	PALACIOS ERIK MICHAEL	SPC	BEDNAR JOEL GIBBONS	SGT
LEHNHART WILLIAM ROBERT	PFC	PARFITT JOSEPH ANTHONY	SPC	BUNTING WILLIAM SCOTT	PFC
HIGGINSOTHAM WILLIAM	SGT	PASION JAY ECHIPARE	SSG	ZOLE COREY GENE	SGT
TAYLOR GREGORY SCOTT JR	PFC	PERKINS JOHN OLIVER JR	PVC	BRYAN DANIEL LEE	PV2
YOUNG MICHAEL RAMEY	PFC	ROBERTGE MATTHEW JOHN	SSG	FULLERTON LUKE JAMES	SSG
WOOD CHRISTOPHER SMOKIE	SSG	SAHAGUN LANDON T	SSG	KOLLAR RICHARD THOMAS	SGT
MENDOZA TONY	MSG	SALAVAR KENNETH ALSERTO	PFC	WEISKITTEL CHRIS	SSG
AGNES KEVIN WAYNE	CPT	SABANO NICHOLAS WILLIAM	SPC	KORP DANIEL HERBERT JIMMY	SGT
SOOKBIRSINGH GEARRY TERRELL	SPC	SHONE ZECHARIAH SAMUEL	SPC	WORKMAN THOMAS ISAAC	PV2

COX BARRY JAMES	PFC	ARELLANOARIAS JOHN PAUL	SFC	EDWARDS MICHAEL STEPHEN	SPC
HUNT LESTER ALLEN JR	PFC	ALVARADO RONALDO ANTONIO	PV2	ELLISON JOEL P	2LT
KING TROY EDWARD	PV	DEACONSON DAVID NICHOLAS	PV2	MAZUR JOSEPH MICHAEL	CPL
MONGE ANDRE SILAUHENT	1LT	HOPKINS JONATHAN J	1LT	CALDWELL LAMONT A	SFC
MULLINS DONALD GENE JR	SGT	ARENDTS JACOB GLENN	PV2	JETER MELVIN B	1LT
UNDERHILL WILLIAM GABRIEL	PFC	OAKS DUTIN RYAN	PV2	HOLLAND DARYL BRADLEY	SPC
RASER JOSEPH RAYMOND	PFC	WILMINGTON RYAN ANDREW	PV2	OGAN JAMES CAYLAN	SPC
STEWART TIMOTHY JOHN JR	PFC	OAKES JOSEPH ROBERT	SPC	CHARLESWORTH SHAYNE LEE	SGT
JEANS RAYLAND ROBERT	SGT	JACQUEZ ANTHONY JOHN	SGT	SALINAS JUAN JOSE	SGT
PERO CHRISTOPHER FRANK	PFC	BUNKER LEON WILLIAM	SGT	MARRERO RICARDO	SPC
JUAN LLAWRENCE WADE	SSG	NEEL JESSEE LEE	SPC	SHCAFER MICHAEL WAYNE	SPC
BOLAND TOBY JOHN	SFC			ROMAN JOVANY	PV2
FAHERTY SHAWN PRTRICK	SPC	CHALK	# 8	HARMON MIKIE DALE JR	PFC
PEARSON ZACHARY MATTHEW	SSG	HEINERICI EDUARDO	SPC	COUTURIER GREGORY M	2LT
WILLIAMS ADAM JOHNATHAN	PV2	LEALAYALA RENE ALEXANDER	PV2	CALKINS DAVID SAMUEL	PFC
MOTLEY DAVID JOSIAH	SSG	CREIGHTON PHILLIP JOHN	SGT	EVANS GEOFFREY ALLEN	SGT
COLEMAN JERI GEORGE	SFC	BOOZER JAMES AARRON	PV2	BAUMAN ZAACHARY PORTER	SPC
ODELL ROONEY DWAYNE	SSG	SAPOZNIDOV DIMITRI	PFC	MOWERY JONATHAN WILLIAM	SPC
WALL DAVID TRISTAN	PFC	GORDON LAWRENCE FRANCIS JR	SPC	ZIMMER JAMES PAUL	SGT
DEUBECK CURTIS ALLAN	SPC	PFEILSCHIEFTER JUSTIN LEE	SGT	LEDoux ANDREW ALLEN	PV2
CARRILLO JOSEL MOISES JR	SPC	TREGUBOFF DUSTIN PETER	PV2	WEISTER JAEMSON EDWARD	PV2
WADDELL DERRON LESHON	SGT	KAZANCHY KARL LANE	SPC	MALONEY MICHAEL CHRISTOPHERE	SPC
WIGHTMAN JONATHAN WILLIAM	SSG	CLIFTON DEREK DRAKE	SSG	RIOSREYES JOSE R	SGT
PATUTOA VITO BOB	SPC	PETERSON KENDALL RAND	PV2	DOMINGUEZ KENNETH ALLEN	1LT
ESPENHOVER ADAM STEPHEN	PV2	SANTANASANTANA JESUS	SGT	JAMES ERIC NATHANIEL	SGT
CAMBELL GABRIEL	PSC	STODOMINGO KARLO COSTALES	PFC	CROSS DAVID JOSEPH	PV2
BUSKE MATTHHEW WAYNE	PFC	BURKE CODY PATRICK	PFC	MCWHORTER JAMES MICHAEL	SSG
CORREA GABRIEL MARTIN	SPC	BARRON WILLIARD EARL	1LT	SMITH TRAVIS EDWARD TAYLOR	PFC
BAUM JEREMY CRANDALL	SSG	GREEN ROBERT LEE	SPC	BEYL GRANT MICHAEL	SGT
BESSETTE SCOTT M	SPC	CAMSELL TYRUS LEE	PFC	LUDWIG JEFFREY LOUIS	SPC
ROSEBERRY CORY JAMES	PFC	PUCKETT JAMES ROBERT	PFC	SWANSON ANDREW MCLEAN	SPC
WIPPERMAN BRENT DOUGLAS	SSG	BAXLEY JOHN WILLIAM	PFC	SMITH ROBERT JOSEPH	SGT
HOUCHENS TYSON CHARLES	PFC	CONNELL ADAM CHARLES	PFC	FEHL JOEL DAVID	SSG
ROMESBERG JASON EDWARD	PFC	COFFEY JUSTIN STEELE	SPC	CHARO CHRISTOPHER ADAM	SGT
MILLER MARCUS P	PFC	REED PAUL HENRY	PFC	FRALEY JAMES BRITAIN	SPC
BOURNE THOMAS EARLE III	PFC	PULASKI ANDREW JAMES	SPC	ROCKWELL NICHOLAS ALLEN	SPC
HILLA DAVID THOMAS	SGT	CURRY MICHAEL SEAFRED JR	SFC	TORRES VICTOR	PV2
MONTI JONATHAN D	1LT	ORTIZ MICHAEL JOHN	SGT	THOMPSON ZACHARY LYN	PV2
PAZJOSE FRANCISCO JR	SPC	NEWMYER BRET ALAN	PFC	SPENCER DAVID PATRICK	SPC
ESCALERA RAUL	SPC	COOK MITCHELL LEE	SGT	TEDETON SCOTT ANTHONY	SGT
BRYANT MASON L	SFC	PATRICK AARON JASON	PFC	KELLEY CHET	TSG
CAMPBELL DAMION GARLAND	SPC	SPOOR RICHARD GEORGE	PFC	BARNETT FRANKLIN	SSG
RODRIGUEZ ANGELO JOSE	PFC	KIRSCHMANN ELIJAH	SPC	RIVERA NOEL MAUEL JR	SFC
BAYER BRIAN DOUGLAS	PFC	STINGER HARRRY KAPPAS III	LTC	NEAL JONATHAN KEITH	SGT
GRAVES BRIAN THOMAS	SGT	DEVINE JOHN GLENDEN	MAJ		
WICKS JOHN FRANKLIN III	SPC	GIBBS KARL JOSEP	SFC	CHALK	# 9
PAZSYLSKI ROBERT J	1LT	KALEFF RYAN ALLEN	PFC	RIVERA ELLIOTT ENRIQUE	SPC
ANGULO ALFREDO	SPC	AYOTTE MICHAEL LANDARD	PFC	MAYO CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL	SPC
CUESTAVALERIO WILL OMAR	SPC	BRADFORD DARRELL D	SGT	GOKEY WILLIAM ALLEN	SGT
SHANNON ANDREW MICHAEL	SGT	WATSON RALPH JAY JR	PFC	DAVIS JEREMY LAWRENCE	PFC
CALVO JORGE	SPC	JAMES ADAM DEAN	PFC	CAMERON ROONEY DEWAYNE	SGT
ESPINOSA GUILLERMO	SPC	PRATT JOSEPH LEWIS LEE	SGT	KNIGHT PHILLIP HARLAN	PFC
BERRY RALPH KENNETH	PFC	CADY AARON J	PFC	PRATT CARL PATRAICK	SFC
STONE STEVEN JAMES	SPC	NIX BARRY WAYNE JR	PFC	OLDENBURG MICHAEL JOHN	SPC
DEAN RICK ELDON	SFC	RICE CHRISTOPHER DAMON	PV2	KING JOSEPH EARL	SPC
GARCIA SOLOMAN DEWAYNE	SPC	ANDERSON ROBERT JOHN	SGT	PEREZMARTINEX NICHOLAS	SSG
BOLLAND GLENN SCOTT	SPC	NATHAN TONY LABARON	SSG	GARRISON JAYSON RAY	SGT
BIRD JONATHAN DOUGHLAS	PFC	BURGESS CHARLES MICHAEL	CPT	GOOD NATHAN ROBERT	SGT
HUNTER COREY TERRELL	SPC	BROOKS JONATHAN PETER	SGT	TETRAULT GARRETT JOSEPH	PFC
YANG MITHCELL H	SrA	BEERS JASON	CPT	ROCCO JOHN ANTHONY	PFC
MARTINEZ FAUSTINO T	SSG	SPAITS DAMAIN	SSG	CLINE JUDD REECE	PFC
STERNBERG NICHOLAS A	CPT	SCHABBHAR GEORGE E V	CPT	GUTIERREZMARTIN ANTONIO	SGT
HENSON ROBERT P	SMSgt	VETTEN BILLY SCOTT	SSG	WATSON CHARLES STUART	SPC
BRAUNE JOSHUA W	SSG	MICHAEL STEPHEN LEOPOLD	MAJ	PRICE JOSEPH CHRISTOPHER	SSG
ZARUMAREMACHE MARCO VINICUI	SPC	RINGGENBERG DIRK DALE	CPT	LLAMAGUTIERREZ MARIO A	PFC
HANSEN WILLIAM GRANT	1LT	PRYOR RICHARDO ANTHONY	SSG	MAHLIK JASON LEE	SPC
DELMAR BENJAMIN	TSG	ROSSI CHRISTOPHER JOSEPH	SPC	FITZ SAMUEL LEE	SGT
SCOTT JEFFREY	SSG	LIGHTMAN MICHAEL ROBERT	SSG	PERRY CHRISTOPHER JOSEPH	SPC
LENINGTON WILLIAM EDWARD	SSG	SANDIFER ROBERTO CHARLES	PFC	HOY BRIAN DICK	PFC
PAPKE MATTHEW EDGAR	SGT	LLEWELLYN JASON LEE	SGT	PETTIGREW BRANDON EDWARD	SPC
VERESPEJ JASON ANTHONY	SPC	DEVEYDT MICHAEL JOHN	SGT	BENNETT RICHARD CRAIG	SGT

SCOTT RICHARD GRAHAM	SPC	GRAFTON STEPHEN	PFC	SCHULTZ DAVID GORDON	PFC
CAYABAYAB LEONARD QUNTOS	SGT			HOSKINS WILLIAM D	PFC
BATEMAN JASON EMORY WINTON	PFC	CHALK	# 10	STEPHENS TONY LEE	SPC
MOULTON DAMIEN ADAM	PFC	CAMP RYAN MICHAEL	PFC	BERKOSKI MAR ANTHONY	SPC
JOHNSON JASON STANLYEY	SPC	YBARRA STEVEN REYNALDO	PFC	MORROW DEMARLO ANTWAN	SPC
WHITELOW THOMAD EARL GERMAR	PV2	POST NICHOLAS HUNGER	PFC	STRAUSS KEITH ROBERT	SPC
CONLEY ANDREW CURTIS	PV2	SUMMERS PATRICK SHANNON	PFC	JOYNER PHILIP RANDOLP	PFC
BLAKE ANDREW CRAIG OMAR	SSG	NINO ARNULFO JR	PFC	QUNITANILLA SONNY CRUZ	SGT
MACK CLINT EDWARD	SGT	GLENNE CALEB RAY	PFC	HARPER JUSTIN ILES	SGT
GEOFFERT FRANKLIN DWIGHT	PFC	GOLDSWORTH WILLIAM	PFC	COLLITON ROBERT HENRY	SGT
AUTTONBERRY JAMES ALLEN	SSG	WEST BRADLEY CHRISTIAN	MAJ	REYNOLDS WILBUR LEWIS JR	PFC
DANFORTH JOSHUA WAYNE	PFC	WINSTEAD JUSTIN WAYNE	SGT	ABARCA ADDRIAN ALEXIS	SGT
FRENANDEZ ROBERTO III	PV2	HORN BRIAN MARTIN	SGT	LOPEZ OSCAR JR	PFC
TANO ANTONIO	PFC	BRAMMER JEROD ALAN	PV2	GODI ERIC PAUL	SGT
URQUHART JOSEPH VERN	PFC	ALVAREZ REINALDO	PFC	LANGHIRT MICHAEL JOSEPH JR	SGT
SAMUEL WESLEY ANDREW	PFC	PULLEN GEORGE RODNEY	SSG	ROBINSON RHCISTOPHER WAYNE	SFC
DALTON RANDALL ALLEN	SGT	MARTIN CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL	SPC	LANFEAR RAYMOND CLIFFORD	SFC
VELASQUEZ HILARIO ANDRES	SSG	GAMBINO MATTHEW PAUL	PFC	PERRY ANDREW STEVEN	PFC
HOUSE KEITH RICHARD	SPC	CROSS BENJAMIN CHRISTOPHER	PV2	HERMAN THOMAS ARNOLD III	SPC
CUMO ROBERT ANGELO JR	SSG	ROCHA JUAN DANIEL	SGT	RIOSMONTALVO ALEX	SPC
LINDEN JAKOB ALBERT	PFC	PETRY CARDSON ALAN	PFC	PAPPANO ROBERT BRANDON	SGT
RUDELLE GARY H	MSG	DUS SEBASTIAN DAMIAN	SSG	LOPEZ FRANCISCO PANCHO	SPC
LEE JARRETT S	1LT	AMARAZ HUGO	SGT	ASHRY MICHAEL JAMES	PFC
RIDEAU ADAM JOSHUA	SPC	MCMILLAN MERIDETH RACEAN	SGT	CANTRELL STEVEN EDWARD	CPT
BLANEY JOSHUA CHARLES	PFC	REYNOLDS PAUL ANTHONY	PV2	ZIENTEK FRANK N	SSG
LOPEZ MELVYN	SSG	GAFFNEY EDWARD JAMES JR	SPC	JONES ACE W	SSG
PAQUETTE SCOTT ANDREW	SGT	STARK ROBERT JOSEPH	PV2	DESFUANDERSON FEDERICO	SSG
FORAN DARRELL ARVALYN	CPL	HOLLIDAY JAMES CONRAD	SGT	SHEET MICHAEL	SRA
MOND DANIEL DUNCAN	SPC	TYSON JAMES CHRISTOPHER	PFC		
SNYDER REUBEN CONRAD	SSG	OROZCO KEVIN ELI	PFC		
GITTHENS JONATHAN MARIT	SPC	LINCOLN ARRON JAMES	SGT		
MARSHALL JASON CHRISTOPHER	PFC	JOHNSON JEREMY DOUGHLAS	PFC		
HOWELL RICHARD DALE	SPC	KELLYWOOD JOHNNY S	PV2		
BROWN NICHOLAS WILLIAM	SPC	CUTLER DAVID WAYNE	SGT		
LAMORA JOHN PAUL	SGT	ROGERS TIMOTHY JAMES	PFC		
FLORES ALEJANDRO R	SSG	ZALESKI STPHEN LOUIS	SSG		
VERDUGO DANIEL ENRIQUE	SPC	LAUER FRANK GREGORY	SFC		
GILBERT HARTLEY THOMAS JR	SPC	KRUEGER NATHAN EDWARD	SPC		
WALKER ADAM JACOB	SPC	ESQUIBEL OSCAR	SPC		
THOMPSON RASSUN DAVION	SGT	SPORT SHANE CHRISTOPHER	SSG		
REISSETTER KEVIN ALLAN	SPC	CORELLA RENE GERARDO	SGT		
GREGORY JASON FORGA	SGT	SHCNERRE MICHAEL THOMAS	SPC		
ROBERTS JASON GREGORY	PFC	KINDART RYAN JAMES	PFC		
RUSSELL PHILLIP JASON	SPC	VOLINE STEPHEN JOHN	SSG		
GREGG JEREMY DANIEL	PV2	VOLZ JODY DAVID	SSG		
LABRIOLA THOMAS RICHARD	PFC	OAKE BRAD ALAN	PFC		
MASSEY MONTE EDMUND	SGT	CLAYTON MARTY KEITH	PFC		
MANDFIELD NICHOLAS CHRISTO	PFC	ROLLING NICHOLAS ALEXANDER	1SG		
ERLER CHRISOPHER	SPC	CASTILLO ALEJANDRO RENE	SSG		
SCHERREY JEFFREY BENTON	PV2	VALENTIN JUAN CARLOS	SSG		
CAPRIO JOSEPH FRANK III	SPC	MAUS WILLIAM K	MSG		
GARCIA CHRISTOPHER	SGT	HOYT ROBERT E	TSG		
WILLIAMS CHRISTOPHER JOHN	PFC	BATES JASON BOYD	SSG		
MAHRER BRADLEY PAUL	PFC	GRONKE DANIEL ANTON	SFC		
MOORE JASON ANDREW	PFC	CAMPORESE RAFAEL	2LT		
ABRAHAM JONATHAN	SPC	ARDING JASON REED	SGT		
GRABINSKI MICHAEL STEPHAN	SGT	SAMPS TIMOTHY JOEL	SGT		
CROSAY EDWARD JOHN	SGT	SANCHEZ GREGORY LEE	SPC		
WILDER IAN RICHARD	PFC	SWANSON JACOB GREGORY	PFC		
HEIM LUKE WILLIAM	PFC	DEAN COLEMAN SAMUEL	PFC		
LEAF JACOB WILLIAM	PFC	LOERA GABRIEL	SSG		
SINGER MARIO SEBASTION A	SGT	RUIZANDALUZ LUIS	SFC		
DENNIS STEPHEN GRODON JR	SSG	FREEEBORN MATTHEW JOHN	PFC		
MCINTOSH JAMES STANTON	PFC	LOVELL GARLAND STEWART	PV2		
HARNESS CHAD BRYAN	SPC	ORTIZ RAFEAL ARTURO	SSG		
KNOLL, LARRY R	SSG	ALLEN JEREMY NATHAN	PFC		
CREMEANS CHARLES A	MSG	WELLER MATTHEW ISAIAH	PFC		
BURNS ROBERT WALKER JR	SSG	MORA FABIAN	SPC		
NOVAK ROBERT CHRISTOPHER	SFC	TUCKER MARK RANDOLPH	PV2		
DOLAN DAVID	SGT	SQUIRES THOMAS LAURENCE	SPC		
NELSON JOHN PETER	SGT	ELLIOTT RICHARD ANDREW	PV2		

PARATROOPERS THAT WERE MANIFESTED BUT DID NOT GET TO JUMP			
CHALK	NAME	RANK	UNIT
1	GRIMM	SPC	1-508
1	BICKFORD	SPC	1-508
1	HARRY	1LT	2-503
1	NIDAY	SPC	2-503
1	DALLMANN	SFC	2-503
1	CHAMBLESS	SPC	1-508
1	WALSH	SPC	1-508
1	BROOKS	SPC	2-503
1	MILLER	PFC	2-503
1	SILVIS	SPC	D-319
1	ADAMS	SGT	2-503
1	PERKINS	SSG	2-503
1	MONTGOMERY	SSG	2-503
1	GONZALEZ	SGT	1-508
4	PENA	SFC	2-503
4	AYALA	SFC	2-503
4	WELCH	PFC	74th
7	RICE	SPC	1-508
7	BEAR	PFC	1-508
7	JOHNSON	CPL	1-508
7	WARD	SPC	1-508
7	ORTIZ	SGT	1-508
7	HILDEBRANDT	SSG	1-508
7	BOWMAN	SGT	1-508
9	EVANS	PFC	2-503
9	CYLC	SGT	1-508
9	SHULER	SGT	1-508
9	JOHNSEN	PV2	HHC
9	JACOBSEN	PFC	1-508
10	BRADY	SPC	2-503
10	HOGG	PFC	CSC
10	SARANTES	SPC	CSC
10	GOMEZ	SGT	CSC
10	MCBRIDE	SGT	1-508
10	ARMSTRONG	PFC	1-508
10	BEAUCHAMP	SGT	1-508

STORIES

PENINSULA STRIKE

Story and photos by SFC Todd Oliver,
SETAF Public Affairs

The men and women of 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry, 173rd Airborne Brigade, are feeling the heat. One soldier's watch, with a built in temperature gauge, says it's 134 degrees.

Who cares. 134, 130, 128 ... with body armor on, sitting in armored Humvees, they just become numbers. It's just hot, hotter than anything most people can imagine.

"It's like turning on a hairdryer and holding it inches from your face," remarks one paratrooper, sweating profusely.

Yes, it's hot. Bottled water, if not cared for and tended to, quickly turns so hot as to make it impossible to drink. Almost impossible, that is. If you don't drink out here, bad things can and do happen.

The paratroopers are unconcerned though. They handle the heat in a matter of fact manner. They all know they have to drink water, they know they have to be ready for anything and they know that their mission is just about to start.

While Kirkuk once seemed a boring, tedious place to be stuck, far from the comforts of home and the arms of loved ones they now view it with an almost loving affection.

Safe houses with air conditioning units and refrigerators await their return.

For now though they sit and wait on an Iraqi Airfield, waiting for darkness. As the mid afternoon inferno slowly, almost begrudgingly, gives way to cooler night temperatures the paratroopers line up vehicles and prepare their attack.

As night falls and the earliest hours of morning creep in the vehicles roll out with a vengeance, kicking up the fine dirt power into an enormous cloud that covers everything, every crack and crevice, every inch of everything.

Everyone is hyper alert, everyone is ready, everyone is nervous. Everyone who has any brains is scared, if only just a little bit.

Tracer rounds fly low over rooftops and the sounds of automatic gunfire crack through the drone of the convoy. Then again as the fire is returned and again a third time is what can only be, well who knows what that can be.

Something's happened, something up ahead, something to the convoy. Something's happened.

Nothing stops. Everything keeps rolling, making turns, zipping down streets, around obstacles, around corners and then into the fight.

Or rather, where the fight just was.

As the lead element, Able Company, continues to push towards its objective it drives through the site of the firefight that occurred seconds before. The bodies of paratroopers are on the ground, pulled close to barriers to afford them protection, being worked on by medics.

No one is sure if they are alive or dead. They are wounded, who knows how bad, there isn't time to determine that. As soon as you see them, you've driven past them and on into the city. If this were a work of fiction, some paperback novel titled 'men of guts and honor' or 'sacrifice city' the rest would be a tale of fierce, bloody battles. But this isn't that and the rest of the story, to borrow from Paul Harvey, works out a bit differently.

"The mission of 2-503d Inf (Abn) was a direct action, a direct attack on an assailant area known to have enemy actions," said Lt. Col. Dominic Caraccilo, commander 2-503d Inf (Abn) toward the conclusion of the seven-day mission. "There have been a number of strikes in the last few weeks and the 4th Infantry Division commander decided to do some deliberate attacks in this particular area, surrounded by the Tigris river, to destroy, detain or seize any high value targets that are suspected to be working in the area."

Now that it's almost over and the paratroopers are preparing to move back to Kirkuk from this small Sunni enclave just north of Baghdad there is a sense of celebration in the air. Chickens, purchased at a local market through the interpreters, are grilling in the backyard of a temporary safe house alongside the Tigris river as the brutal sun finally starts to set. Sodas are being iced down and more than a few hands of spades are dealt. Caraccilo himself is in a good mood and occasionally tackles one of his staff officers between cigars and hands of spades, played with his sergeant major, his executive officer and his S3. The colonel and his sergeant major win, in case you keep track of that sort of thing.

Besides the search for and capture of high-ranking Ba'ath party officials the operation was also meant to show a strong U.S. presence in an area that, until recently, had been the site of one U.S. death per day on average, Caraccilo explains, taking a break from the din of the radios that constantly chatter. Even mid hand in a game of spades he runs into the house several times to monitor this patrol or that checkpoint.

No soldiers assigned to the Rock, as the 2-503d Inf (Abn) is known, were killed. Four soldiers were wounded, none seriously, when their vehicles drove through an ambush that erupted only seconds earlier. A fifth soldier was also injured when he fell from a rooftop during the operation.

"We also wanted to show a U.S. presence in an area that has yet to be covered by a U.S. force," Caraccilo said. "Forces have driven over this area but no U.S. personnel have driven or patrolled or conducted any kind of military operation inside this particular peninsula."

"The intent was to come here and go after some specific individuals, knowing perfectly well that most of the time when something like this is based off of human sources that the chances are your target won't be there



Lt. Col. Dominic Caraccilo, commander 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry (Airborne), 173rd Airborne Brigade, checks a map while speaking with Chosen Company Commander, Capt. Arie Richard during Operation Peninsula Strike. The operation, which included more than 400 paratroopers, resulted in the capture of more than 50 members of the Feydayeen organization.



A convoy vehicle rolls through the night during Peninsula Strike.

when you arrive, none the less there has been a lot of action here so we know there are some unsavory figures. We had to screen more than 400 detainees in just the first two nights," he explained.

And the screening paid off.

More than 50 of those 300 have been confirmed as Feydayeen, Caraccilo explained. "That's a big deal. These people that we're looking for are still husbanding the old regime as a way of life. By removing a pocket of Feydayeen soldiers we've done a pretty big thing."

While no one was willing to call the locals here friendly there was a change in their demeanor over the course of the mission. While The 173d comes in full force they are quick to change tact's, talking to leaders, talking to merchants and explaining why they are there, listening to concerns and generally trying to make everyone feel more at ease.

"I really do think that there are some unfriendly people here that don't like Americans but I think you would find that anywhere in Iraq or even any part of the world," he said. "But I think that mostly in this area the people are just confused. Confused and scared. When you come in here with 8 large helicopters, a battalion of Bradley fighting vehicles and a bunch of paratroops to swarm the area you scare some people. You hit them hard but then you pull back and you go out and you start talking to them and you tell them what you're there for."

And the colonel isn't above doing some of that talking.

"I sat yesterday having tea with some of the people here. We were driving by and they

waved at us and invited us inside for tea. We just talked to them. We described what it was we were doing and why. Come to find out two of the individuals had just gotten out of (an American) jail in Tikrit. Where else in the world can you sit with people you just detained for questioning and drink tea?" he said laughing.

It's a struggle to understand the culture. I think we're starting to figure it out. Once you understand the conditions, the right and left limit, I think you can get a lot accomplished."

SOLDIERS ATTACKED WHILE ON OPERATION PENINSULA STRIKE

Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Todd Oliver, SETAF Public Affairs

KIRKUK, Iraq – Four soldiers from the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry (Airborne), 173rd Airborne Brigade were injured when the vehicle they were traveling in drove through an ambush during the first hours of operation peninsula strike.

None of the injuries was life threatening and all injured soldiers are expected to make full recoveries.

Specialists Tamer Hassanien, Kobie Johnson and John Oldenburg all sustained non-life threatening wounds to the arms. Pfc. James Volpe was treated and released back to his unit.

"We took the point last night and departed with a non tactical vehicle and a Humvee in the lead," said 1st Lt. Willard Barron, Scout Platoon Leader. "Enroute we didn't know that we would encounter an ambush."

"We passed two traffic control points on the way," Barron said. "As we continued the march we were about 400 meters from another traffic control point when a call came over the radio to maintain a 20 Kilometer per hour speed limit. I checked ours and put my microphone down and that's when a barrage of gunfire just came over. It was instantaneous, just like someone had planned it."

In a witness statement First Sgt. John Bagby stated, "I heard and saw tracer rounds from the top of a roof, of what was later determined to be a police station," it read.

"They planned it, it had all the triggers of an ambush," Barron continued. "I was in the second vehicle, in the passenger side."

The second vehicle in the convoy was the vehicle that took all the hits. While the civilian vehicle up ahead of it, carrying many of the battalion's scouts, escaped unharmed.

"My driver was shot immediately. He tried to drive through it but he was shot



in the arm that he was driving with. Then two in the back, providing security, were also hit."

Both Bagby and Barron felt that the non-tactical vehicle in front of the Humvee was likely the target of the attack but, being the smallest vehicle in the convoy, it was missed which in turn allowed the bullets to rip into Barron's vehicle.

"Up or down, left or right just four more inches and I could have been ten toes up," Barron said pointing at his vehicles' windshield, which clearly shows 3 bullet holes. "The lord was watching over us."

"As our vehicle continued to roll we pulled the other two victims in the back off. I took them and laid them down on the side of the road when the commander's vehicle pulled up and asked us what's up. I told them we needed their help and that we needed to get these two guys out of here. We put those two up on the vehicle and rolled down the road about 150 meters to the military police unit that was operating a traffic control point. That's where we conducted our medical assessment and medical treatment."

Fortunately medical help was quick in arriving.

"A special forces medic was there in second and the delivery of the medivac request was so fast that by the time we got them on the vehicle, moved them the 150 meters, had taken them back off the vehicle and conducted our initial assessment of their wounds the medics were there," Barron said.

"Johnson was being treated for, initially, two gunshot wounds to the right shoulder. I was holding his left hand because I didn't want him to know what was going on. It was about five minutes before he realized how bad it was," he said.

All three soldiers that required further medical care are expected to make a full recovery.

OPERATION BAYONET LIGHTNING

Story by Sgt. First Class Todd Oliver

AL HAWIJA, Iraq — A CD titled "17 Love Songs" isn't exactly what you would expect to hear playing from a portable CD player in the back of a cargo humvee crammed with paratroopers who are armed to the teeth.

"Seventeen love songs for 11 guys," one of the Soldiers jokes as they roll back toward their assembly area before departing on the ride back to their safe houses from the small, troublesome city of Al Hawija.

Indeed, the crooning of Marvin Gaye does seem strangely out of place here. One might expect to hear some faster, harder music from heavy metal bands like Drowning Pool or Aenima. None of the paratroopers even seem to notice as they sing along with the music, while their humvee bounced down the rutted streets under the yellow glow of antiquated street lamps.

It was a strange ending to a three-day mission for the men of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry, "The Red Devils."



Soldiers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade, raid the home of a suspected Ba'ath Party member during Operation Bayonet Lightning on Dec. 2. Operation Bayonet Lightning is a 173rd Brigade level joint cordon operation to locate and question persons of interest and a show of force in the Iraqi city of Al Hawija. Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Suzanne M. Jenkins



First Sgt. Toby Boland, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry, searches for identification documentation in the home of a suspected Ba'ath Party member during Operation Bayonet Lightning on Dec. 2. Operation Bayonet Lightning is a 173rd Brigade level joint cordon operation to locate and question persons of interest and a show of force in the Iraqi city of Al Hawija. Photo by Air Force Staff Sgt. Suzanne M. Jenkins

The mission included almost all of the 173d Airborne Brigade's paratroopers. They netted more than 50 possible "bad guys," and confiscated several automatic weapons, three Improvised Explosive Device making kits, a large cache of rocket-propelled grenades, and various other items devious intent.

A few hours earlier, the commander, Capt. John Kilbride and First Sgt. Toby Boland, along with the men, had searched a house looking for a Senior Ba'ath party member. It was one of many houses they searched that day, but this one was a little more special than the others.

Before the search the Battalion commander, Lt. Col. Timothy McGuire jokes with the First Sergeant.

"I call him Colombo," he laughs giving the first sergeant a playful punch. The nickname may be fitting. Boland and his men were responsible for the capture of one of Saddam's senior bodyguards a few weeks ago. Boland spotted the man in a crowd near his house when he discovered a photograph inside the house that matched. It was an impressive piece of detective work.

McGuire is the new battalion commander replacing Lt. Col. Harry Tunnel who was badly injured in an ambush a few months ago. McGuire fits right, illustrated by the easy back and forth conversation with his commanders and staff. He has got an infectious laugh and seems genuinely good-natured. The "Joes"

miss Tunnel. You can tell when they talk about him. But McGuire is one of them; there is no doubt in any Soldiers mind.

Boland himself is a tall guy, well built, and with a good sense of humor. He rarely seems to get angry but when he does, look out. He has an easy-going swagger and constantly sings random lines from songs.

Even though he's a big guy, Boland has a way with people that make him seem less intimidating. When questioning a family about the whereabouts of their husband and father, he's able to do it with a smile. He even manages to finagle a smile from the family's children.

He seems nice, until his patience runs out, and no one here has an abundance of patience right now. The night before was spent sleeping in vehicles or on the rocky ground during a clear but very cold night at Forward Operating Base McHenry. It was cold, uncomfortable and noisy. Sleep, what little there could have been, came only out of exhaustion.

But back to the house.

It's a well-built, big place by Hawija Standards. Outside, in the small courtyard that even the poorest hovel has in Iraq, sit 9 or 10 children, three women in their mid-30s and two grandmothers. They are all seated on lawn furniture in a semi circle while Boland's men search the place. Only one man was found at the residence, he's wearing a neck brace and is separated from the rest outside on the street.

"Does the baby need anything," Boland asks through an interpreter. He's the father of two girls and a boy himself. There's a hint of sympathy and understanding in his voice as he waits for the mother of the infant to reply.

There's really no way to describe this house search process to someone who is reading this from the comfort of home, the office or anywhere. It's a vulgar and disgusting act if the occupants of the house are innocent. If they're guilty of attacks against coalition forces though, it's perfect and right on the money.

Imagine 10 strangers, all with automatic weapons, entering your house while you're held at gunpoint outside. Imagine them opening every kitchen cabinet, every dresser drawer, and looking into every crack and crevasse. Even the paratroopers acknowledge what may seem like a violation. "Hell, I'd be pissed off if I lived there and someone did this to my house," one remarks later after the search is over.

An exceptional amount of chatter comes from the mothers and grandmothers. The interpreter, let alone Boland, has a hard time getting a word in edgewise. Nearly every question posed is met with an answer that is irrelevant and argumentative.

"Are there any weapons in the house?" Boland asks only to be told, "My husband is not home."

"Who lives in the first bedroom?" Boland asks. "I don't know," someone replies.

"You don't know who lives in a bedroom of your own house?" Boland asks.

"It's not my room," is the reply.

Even the simplest question is met with answers like this.

Finally, Boland has had enough and he separates a small boy from the women and the rest of the children. The boy is about 10 years old. "A brave little kid," Kilbride remarks.

Kilbride is a small man. Maybe 5-foot 6-inches and 145 pounds if he's wet. He's not what one might expect for an infantryman — let alone a paratrooper — to look like. But spend five minutes with him and you quickly realize he's all business when it comes to this sort of thing. Kilbride seems like an easy going kind of guy, as if nothing can get to him. He's in charge, but there's nothing boastful about this. It's a matter of fact sort of thing.

Inside the house the questions continue with the boy.

"Where does your family hide their rifle? It's okay, everyone is allowed to have one in their house and we want to make sure there is only one," Boland asks.

"We don't have any guns," the boy replies

"Where is your father?" Boland asks.

"He's at work," he says.

"Who is the man outside with the neck brace?"

"He's my uncle"

"Which room does he sleep in?"

"That one," the boy points.

The questions are not harsh nor are they scary. Boland squats down to the kids level so they are both eye to eye and removes his Kevlar helmet. He does his best not to come across as an ogre, even playing with the kid a bit here and there in, an effort to keep the boy calm. Boland's approach, and the kid's bravery, prevents the boy from melting down into a crying fit. The boy is on the edge though and tears well up occasionally while he's talking.

Meanwhile, Boland's interpreter is being slowly driven insane, between asking questions of the boy and dealing with the women who are becoming increasingly agitated with the search. The women are very demanding, very persistent, very angry, very loud and very upset.

When one woman is allowed to get food, water and clothes for the children, the older women erupt in a fit of rage. Under the old regime any women separated from the group like this would surely be raped and the two grandmothers illustrate they are having no part of this.

A frustrated young paratrooper, built like a brick wall, is trying to prevent the women from entering the house. The women fear the one woman will be raped or be beaten into giving information and are insistent on being allowed to accompany her. The interpreter does his best to explain to the women that nothing will happen to the one woman, but this tact seems as effective as talking politics with a dog. It's a "no win" situation and finally she is allowed to accompany the younger woman.

Back in the other room, the kid has finally had it and erupts into tears. It's his father the paratroopers are looking for after all.

"He's just protecting his dad," Kilbride says. "Hell I'd do the same thing."

When the tears start, the boy is returned to his mother. It's a lot of pressure and a lot of questions to pose of such a young boy and the men of Charlie Company understand. Many of them have children the same age.

In the end, not much is discovered. Found are an AK47 and several magazines of ammunition that the family swore they didn't own, didn't hide and, were about to tell the American's about. The father never comes home and his whereabouts are never discovered.

"You have to be a bit of a detective," Boland said. "There are only two rules here. The first rule is that everyone is lying and the second rule is that everyone has weapons. You have to do your best to be a detective. How many rooms are there here with male clothing in them and how many males does the family say is living there? Look at the photos. Is there anyone that should obviously be in the house but isn't? You have to ask the same question of different people in separate places and compare the answers with them."

The man outside may never know exactly how close he came to being detained. The zipper cuffs actually go on his wrists at one point when Boland catches him lying for the third time.

"I told you three lies and you're going to jail," Boland tells him.

The man has just finished telling Boland that he doesn't live in the house they are searching, but the women and the boy have already confirmed for Boland that he does indeed live there.

Even the simplest of questions, "do you live here?" is sometimes met with the most pointless, outlandish lie imaginable. It makes little sense to the men of Charlie Company, why they just don't answer the easy questions honestly. They know they will eventually get to the truth.

The man is released since there isn't much in the house that interests the paratroopers in their pursuit of Saddam loyalists and terrorist elements. The AK47 is a 'ho-hum' find; they're as common in Iraq as are grains of sand. Every family has one here, like finding a microwave in an American's kitchen.

The man is released and the first sergeant does his best to assure the family that they didn't mean anyone harm, just looking for people responsible for attacks against Americans, Iraqi Police and Iraqi citizens.

While the search has been intrusive and confrontational, it's important to note that had this been Saddam's soldiers, the search would surely have been a different. Insurgency, or even the suspicion of such, was cause for bloody violence under the old regime. A lie in Saddam's era was met with the cutting out of a tongue and homes were often leveled in the process of searching. It was a kingdom of fear and brutal oppression after all.

It's after all this drama, the Marvin Gaye tunes come out. It does actually fit the mood, easy going and relaxed as if the adrenalin pumping beats of anything heavier would

only frustrate the end of a frustrating night. It's a strange ending to a strange little tale in a strange country halfway across the world.

OPERATION IVY CYCLONE

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Ædd Oliver

NORTHERN IRAQ — Paratroopers want to fight back.

Water wants to flow downhill, the sun wants to rise in the morning, and death wants to take us all eventually. And paratroopers, when a fight comes to them, want to fight back.

Perhaps the only thing better than fighting back, in the mind of a paratrooper, is to fight first.

The 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Battalion (Airborne), better known as "The Rock," hasn't had it easy in Iraq. But no one, no unit at least, has had it easy. The Rock's problem is that its enemy is unheard — at least until it strikes — and it is unpredictable.

The enemy in Kirkuk strikes from the roadside. It strikes from a pile of garbage, or it strikes from discarded soda cans. It even struck once from the body of a dead dog. It strikes without warning and without mercy.

An estimated 60 percent of the Rock's more than 40 wounded in action were a result of this enemy: the Improvised Explosive Device. Usually placed along a well-traveled road and detonated by remote control, IEDs can have a devastating effect against even the most vigilant of convoys. Constructed from abandoned mortar rounds or artillery shells, they rip through the strongest of materials, shredding vehicle and body alike. Even the mention of having driven past a suspected IED can cause one to pause and think.

And when the dust has settled after an IED strikes, there's no one left to take the blame. Those that detonate the devices fade away in the confusion and horror they've created.

But the Rock isn't crippled, far from it. They're a battalion of paratroopers and if the fight won't come to them, well then they'll just have to take the fight to the enemy.

In the early hours of a cold yet sunny Monday morning the Rock did just that; they fought first. The Rock, along with a few 173rd Airborne Brigade's Delta Battery cannons and two Air Force A-10 Warthog airplanes, set out with a vengeance against those that would harm them. Operation Ivy Cyclone, a 4th Infantry Division-wide attack, was in full effect for The Rock on Nov. 17.

"It was kind of a three-pronged approach," said 2-503rd Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Dominic Caraccilo, the day after the attacks. "The first thing we wanted to do was to deter enemy and anti-coalition forces from using the open areas surrounding Kirkuk and the airbase. Second, we wanted to show our capabilities, shooting from inside the sectors where we think the enemy is operating, using mortars and artillery right there in the area the enemy is operating from, hitting their sanctuaries. Finally, we wanted to seize the IED makers and their supporters.

"We knew that there was a lot of activity in the southwestern parts of the city of Kirkuk. We knew that activity was in the form of emplaced 107mm rockets aimed at targets that included our soldier's safe houses and the airbase itself."

"We were fairly successful," he continued. "We got one guy that had 12 different remote controls (from toy remote control cars) which is pretty significant. They take them out of the cars and use them to detonate the IED."

Caraccilo and his men think there might be one key former regime loyalist in the city that pieces together the whole IED. They think this man, or small group of men, pay someone to provide them the remote control devices, pay another person to supply the ammunition, and pay others to place the actual IED itself.

The mission netted 13 individuals for The Rock. While some of them are certain to be found innocent and subsequently released, portions of them are most definitely 'persons of interest'.

"The guy with the 12 remotes was a fairly significant catch. We actually caught 13 guys and four of them were known Fedayeen members. The jury is still out on the rest of them, they're still being interrogated, but I think this is going to have a significant effect on things."

In addition to the raids, the Rock also did something that might seem kind of odd: they cleaned the streets.

It can be hard to describe to anyone from a westernized country the amount of plain filth that lines the streets in some neighborhoods of Kirkuk. The city has only recently had its fleet of garbage trucks replaced and many neighborhoods still dump their trash in the streets to burn at night. These piles of trash can be an attractive hiding place for the people intent on placing IEDs.

"We actually cleaned roads where there had been a significant amount of IEDs found," Caraccilo said. "We just brought bulldozers out and pushed the trash out of the way. While this doesn't prevent them from hiding IEDs it deters them by making it harder for them. We're now going to start burning the excess vegetation in the medians of the street. We're going to make this problem die on the vine by killing the guys that provide the money and supplies and by making it very hard to emplace the IEDs. Get rid of the guy that's doing it, but also get rid of his geographic capability."

Back in the city, artillery, mortars and A-10 aircraft pound targets on the outskirts of the city, laying waste to the buildings the attackers were believed to have used. Explosion after explosion from the artillery rocks the still morning air and the distinctive sound of an A-10's chain gun punctuates each aircraft's approach.

It's an awesome sight and an awesome sound. The area they are hitting so relentlessly, three small hilltops and a small building, are empty. Empty or not, the message is clear: you can be hit anytime, anywhere.

As the pounding continues, the men of the Rock fanned out inside the city hitting the



Paratroopers with Battle Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne) break into a house in search of improvised explosive device construction materials. The search was a part of Operation Ivy Cyclone. Target houses and individuals were searched or apprehended during the citywide mission.



Paratroopers of "The Rock" search a hastily abandoned house for signs if the family living there is tied to a recent string of attacks on civilians and Coalition Forces. Target houses and individuals were searched or apprehended during a citywide mission titled, Operation Ivy Cyclone.



A paratrooper with Battle Company, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne) guards detainees during Operation Ivy Cyclone. Ivy Cyclone targeted individuals believed to have a part in a recent string of improvised explosive device and rocket attacks against Iraqi police, Iraqi civilians and coalition forces.

houses where the people responsible for the attacks were believed to have lived. It is a huge, coordinated effort, meant to send a clear message to those that meant them harm.

"We're looking for anything suspicious," said Sgt. First Class Sean Dohr of Battle Company, 2-503rd Inf (Abn) as he and the members of his platoon finished searching yet another house. "Anything that could be used to make IEDs. Wires, explosives, remote control devices, even photos of individuals, is what we're looking for. Really, anything that will give us more information about who these guys are. What their names are, what their patterns are, anything really."

Dohr and his platoon methodically go from house to house. Not every house, but houses that they have gathered intelligence on and are believed to be hiding anyone or anything suspect.

"These people work in small cells," he said. "They are usually trained by individu-

als that live outside the city of Kirkuk. They come here and train people on how to put these things together. That's who we're looking for, the guy that's been trained to do it and is now being paid to do it."

It's here at Dohr's level that the success is most plainly apparent. It's also here that success will most likely be felt; eight soldiers in his company have been injured by IEDs.

"This has been a great success," he said. "We have pictures of these guys now, that we didn't have before. This kind of information is invaluable. We can give these photos to other units, to guys manning traffic control points. We now have a face to match the people we are looking for."

Dohr's company commander, Capt. Bill Bundy, echoes those thoughts.

"Today's mission was basically a cordon and search," said Bundy. "We've experienced a lot of IEDs and rocket attacks in these areas, so we've gone through looking for any kind of material that would be associated with those things."

IEDs — their construction, use and financing — are a complicated affair. The matter is further confused in that separate people handle each step of the process in separate areas.

"You've a guy that makes the initiators and another guy that assembles those to the explosive devices and then they hire a third guy to emplace the bomb and then another guy throws the switch. We hope that some of the guys we got today know the others."

Sadly, the culprits aren't quick to give each other up to the Americans.

Success or no success, Bundy and his men actually live inside the area they're searching. Besides trying to ensure that no soldier or resident of the neighborhood is hurt in an IED attack, and IEDs do maim and kill innocent civilians almost daily, they have the added burden of trying to be good neighbors, even as they are rifling through someone's bedroom dresser.

The days of kicking in doors, or more dramatically, blowing up a building into a million small pieces with plastic explosives, are all but gone now in Kirkuk. That tactic is reserved for only the direst of cases. Rock soldiers routinely knock first now and speak briefly to house owner before beginning their search.

"It doesn't matter if we go to the wrong house," Bundy said. "It doesn't matter, as long as you don't break down the door to the house. On most of them, we knock first. Generally, if we do go to the wrong house, and that does happen, the people inside understand. The Saddam regime was so tyrannical that people are used to getting smacked down and bouncing back from it. So they are somewhat understanding. They know we're looking for bad people."

Things are better in many parts of Iraq, or at least in Kirkuk. A leisurely stroll through a marketplace turns up a wide assortment of goods either forbidden under Saddam's rule or unobtainable because of sanctions. Prices are showing signs of normality. While the lo-

cal currency, the dinar, has surely been beaten back and forth over the past years, it is becoming stable and the jobs here in the city pay living wages. One cannot stand on a rooftop and without counting dozens and dozens of satellite dishes. While satellite dishes by no means describe (or prescribe) normality and stability, they may be looked upon as a sign that some areas are changing for the better. Even owning a dish a year ago was a surefire trip to prison.

"Every time we change our profile it has an effect on the IED attackers. A few months ago, we changed our profile by not driving during the hours when they were hitting us and it had a huge effect," Bundy said.

"Now we're going to change that profile again by changing the geography of the city: cleaning up the trash, cleaning up the roads, burning the vegetation in the medians and then hitting hard at where we think their sanctuaries are. The jury is out. I don't know if it will have an effect, but you've got to think that if you are going after them hard like this, it's going to have some sort of effect."

MORTAR PLATOON

By Brandon Aird, 173d PAO

Hidden in a valley surrounded by snow-covered mountains in Northern Iraq is Headquarters and Headquarters Company Mortar Platoon, 2nd Battalion, 503rd (Airborne) Infantry Regiment. The 2-503 is deployed to the region as part of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. The mortar platoon jumped into Northern Iraq under the cover of darkness March 26. Their equipment was heavy dropped minutes before they jumped out of C-17s airplanes onto the objective.

"We provided and continue to provide accurate and timely indirect fire to any support element," said Sgt. Zach Workman, a squad leader in 2-503 HHC Mortar Platoon. "Our mission is to protect our troops with indirect fire support and protect the airfield for future airborne operations."

"The drop zone was covered in grass," said Pfc. Jesse Wallace, a member of mortar platoon. "Beneath that grass was at least a foot of mud. Everything was covered in mud." After the jump mortar platoon meet up at the rallying point and found their vehicles containing their equipment. While the platoon waits to be called on for indirect fire support there's a lot of downtime. "We spend our time doing lots of things," said Pfc. John MacDougall, a saw gunner in the mortar platoon. "We tell jokes, talk about quantum physics and even try to catch this mouse that's been taunting us." "I'm definitely glad I'm here," said Binder. "I'm fulfilling my dream to be in the Army as a infantryman

Everything is going smoothly so far, said Workman. The only thing out of the ordinary is the terrain. "It's a lot different than I expected," said Pfc. William Binder, a member of the mortar platoon. "We're surrounded by snow covered mountains." "Everywhere you look its green," said Spc. Tamer Hassani, 120mm gunner. "It's a beautiful country."



"I fell a couple of times with my rucksack on," said Capt. Steve Cantrell, 2-503rd Chaplain. "I looked like a turtle trying to get up, because all I could do was kick my feet and move my arms," he added laughing. Cantrell stops by mortar platoon on a daily bases and gives field religious service for anyone who wants to participate.

PARATROOPERS DEAL BLOW TO TALIBAN IN REMOTE VALLEY

By Pfc. Jon H. Arguello

QALAT, Afghanistan (Army News Service, May 9, 2005) – Paratroopers engaged a Taliban force last week in a remote valley of southeastern Afghanistan, and after an outnumbered scouting party was reinforced, dealt what was described as a significant blow to the insurgents. The May 3 battle in the Arghandab Valley of the Deh Chopan district, about 175 miles northeast of Kandahar, was part of the Coalition's spring offensive, dubbed "Operation Determined Resolve," with the aim of denying sanctuary to insurgents in preparation for fall elections, said a spokesman for Combined Joint Task Force 76. Initial reports indicate about 20 insurgents were killed and one wounded in the battle. One Afghan National Police officer was killed and five wounded, and six U.S. service members were wounded.

Intel leads scouts into steep, narrow valley The battle took shape after scouts in the Zabul Province received intelligence reports that insurgent forces happened to be in the same area. A group of seven Coalition scouts and 14 Afghan National Police headed toward the suspected location. "We had been working with local police," said Staff Sgt. Patrick Brannon, scout squad leader from Jacksonville, Ill. "Some of the information we had received led us to 18,000 DshKa heavy machine gun rounds, so we new their information was legitimate." Further intelligence reports placed 80 – 150 Taliban operating in the area. "We were informed that the Taliban were threatening the people for cooperating with Coalition forces," said Brannon. "We moved east through a valley," said Spc. Joseph Leatham, from El Mirage, Ariz., describing the movement toward the Taliban position. "We were surrounded by walls – steep cliffs. It was a very uncomfortable feeling."

Afghan man complains of beating

Ten minutes into the voyage, an Afghan man approached the convoy. The man had been recently released by the Taliban after having been beaten and threatened with execution for cooperation with Coalition forces. "The guy said he was about to be executed and that there were about 30 Taliban in the area," said Sgt. Nick Pak from Tampa, Fla. "He had a note around his neck threatening the people and demanding that there be no schools." While explaining what had happened, two Taliban members were spotted and identified by the man. Once confirmed as Taliban, the Afghan National Police opened fire. Almost simultaneously, the convoy began receiving small arms fire from multiple directions. The scouts received approval to engage the enemy and sent a sniper team to an over-watch position.

Outnumbered scouts return fierce fire

"As soon as we got to the top, we got RPG and small arms fire," said Spc. Nicholas Conlon, a scout sniper from Bridgewater, Mass. "Pieces of rocks were breaking off all around us," added sniper team leader Sgt. Derek Huss, from Deer Park, Wash. "One [RPG] hit real close." At this point, all the scouts were engaged in a heavy exchange of fire. The scouts attempted to seal off the objective so the enemy could not escape. The fierce exchange was ordered to continue so that reinforcements could trap the Taliban and eliminate them. The outnumbered scouts engaged and re-engaged the insurgent forces three times before reinforcement from friendly forces could arrive.

HMMWV hit by RPG

"The enemy was trying to overrun our truck, so we broke contact," said Brannon. As the Scouts tried to maneuver into a better position, one of the Humvees took several rocket-propelled grenade hits and burst into flames. "I yelled 'You're on fire! You're on Fire!' to the other truck," said Pak. The truck's gunner continued to fire his .50-cal machine gun as the Humvee was engulfed in flames. "The truck was on fire but Leatham was still rocking the .50-cal," said Pak. "The truck started rolling backwards," said Leatham. "I was still shooting and Sergeant Huss was trying to stop the truck. Sergeant Brannon was providing cover fire so I could get out of the vehicle."

Helicopter attempts to land reinforcements

"We were pinned down pretty bad," said Sgt. Michael Ortiz, the assigned medic from Denver. "At that point, Chosen Company tried to land but they couldn't." "I laid down suppressive fire with the Mk-19 so the bird could land," said Pfc. Nathan Reilly, from Greensburg, Pa. "The landing zone was really hot and they couldn't land." As much as the scouts laid down cover fire the landing zone was taking too much fire for the reinforcements to land. The scouts, who had been engaged in the firefight for more than two and a half hours, watched as the CH-47 Chinook aborted the landing and flew away. "You can't imagine how scary it is to be in a fire fight like

this and after two and a half hours of fighting, to see the support leave," Ortiz said.

Paratroopers land in hot LZ

"The scouts were in contact and at that point we were a QRF," said 1st Lt. Les Craig from Erie, Pa., and platoon leader of 1st Platoon, or the "Bullies" as they are called by Chosen Company. Chosen Company is part of 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne), who were operating in the area. The 2-503rd was part of the Southern European Task Force originally based in Vicenza, Italy, and now part of CJTF-76 in Afghanistan. "We got reports that the landing zone was hot while we were in the air," said Craig. "The other friendly forces that had landed were already in contact." The helicopter finally was finally able to land and 1st Platoon's "Bullies" poured from the Chinook ready to relieve the embattled scouts.

Although 1st Platoon didn't receive any immediate fire, suspicious activity was all around.

"I was trying to get a feel of where our Soldiers were," said Craig. "We knew there were bad guys but we didn't know where they were," said Sgt. 1st Class David Cavataio, the Bullies' platoon sergeant from Chicago. "We set up security and started pushing up."

Taliban takes cover in village

Soon after setting up an over-watch position, insurgent forces were spotted. "When we got clearance and confirmation that they had weapons, we opened fire, but they opened up on us at the same time and the exchange started," Cavataio said. The plan was to systematically clear one of the nearby villages of danger, explained Craig. "From the south part of the town, we began clearing the village from east to west," said Craig. "There were high walls and locked doors everywhere." The Taliban had sealed the village to make it difficult for Coalition Forces to clear by barricading and locking all doors and gates. The platoon had to make use of sappers to get through the mud hut maze. The platoon, left with little choice, bypassed clearing the hamlet and pushed through to the edge of the village into an orchard.

Platoon takes RPG, machine-gun fire

Craig's Soldiers received a volley of rocket propelled grenades wounding Pfc. Mathew King in the leg. "The round didn't explode," said Craig. "The fins cut into his leg and the round landed ten to fifteen feet in front of me and the RTO (Soldier carrying the radio)." Craig and his men continued to move forward through withering machine gun fire seeking cover behind trees and rocks. "I thought, 'the only way we will get through this is if we push forward,'" said Craig. "It was raining branches in the orchard. My RTO tried to move forward and when he got up, a tree basically fell on him." The paratroopers were pinned down until a machine gunner put down enough suppressive fire for the Soldiers to move forward toward the enemy. "Specialist Lewis fired a 200-round burst and that bought us a couple

of seconds to bum rush the objective," Craig said. "We approached the enemy but we thought all the guys were already engaged because no one was responding."

Creek bed enables surprise approach

The element closed in on the enemy undetected, moving parallel to a sunken creek with steep rocky slopes. As the team moved past the bunker to make a limit of advance, Capt. Dirk Riggenberg, Chosen Company's commander, moved into Choay's old position between the wall and the bunker. Chosen's commander received fire from a well-concealed position along the creek wall. An alert M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon gunner moved to into position and ended the fight. By the end of the battle, more than 17 enemy combatants had been confirmed killed by Chosen Company, nine captured and more possibly killed by the 2-503rd scouts.

Enemy ferocity surprised some

"I expected there to be stiff resistance but not as severe as this," said Riggenberg. Chosen Company's first sergeant, though, said he wasn't surprised by the enemies' dedication. "They've been fighting for so many years," said 1st Sgt. Scott Brzak. "They have nothing to lose and everything to gain." The effect the battle has had on his Soldiers is a positive one, said Brzak. "The Soldiers now know that they can depend on and trust the buddy to the left and right of them," Brzak said. "They know their buddy will lay down their life for them. They also now know how the enemy operates and can pass this experience on to the rest of the company and the battalion."

After-action report positive

All wounded ANP and U.S. Soldiers were evacuated to Kandahar Airfield for medical treatment. They were reported in stable condition. Two U.S. wounded Soldiers were treated and returned to duty. The other four Soldiers were transported to Landstuhl Medical Center in Germany for further treatment and are reportedly in stable condition. Six insurgents were detained and questioned. The village leader was also detained after villagers reported him as a Taliban member. Coalition forces are also meeting with local leaders to coordinate assistance to the village. A number of questions have been raised as to the significance of the battle. The ferocity with which the insurgent fighters defended their position is atypical of the hit and run and improvised explosive device tactics the Taliban had been using since being removed from power. "This is going to force them to rethink their strategy," Riggenberg said. "I think our tactics will force them to fight and die or surrender. I think we put them on their heels. They now know that the American Army still has the energy to hunt them down."

(Editor's note: The Army News Service added information to Pfc. Jon Arguello's story from a CJTF-76 news release and telephonic reports from Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.)

CHAPTER VIII REDEPLOYMENT / RETRAINING

Vicenza, Italy Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Airborne Brigade began arriving home from Iraq in February, 2004.

After a short debriefing, Sky Soldiers were reunited with family members.

After a one year deployment, they arrived over a three week period. A ceremony was held on March 16th to officially welcome them home.

Then after the Sky Soldiers completed an intensive reintegration process and taken some much needed leave, they begin the process of preparing the Brigade for its next deployment ...Afghanistan.



Welcome Home



Soldiers getting off of plane, "Coming home."

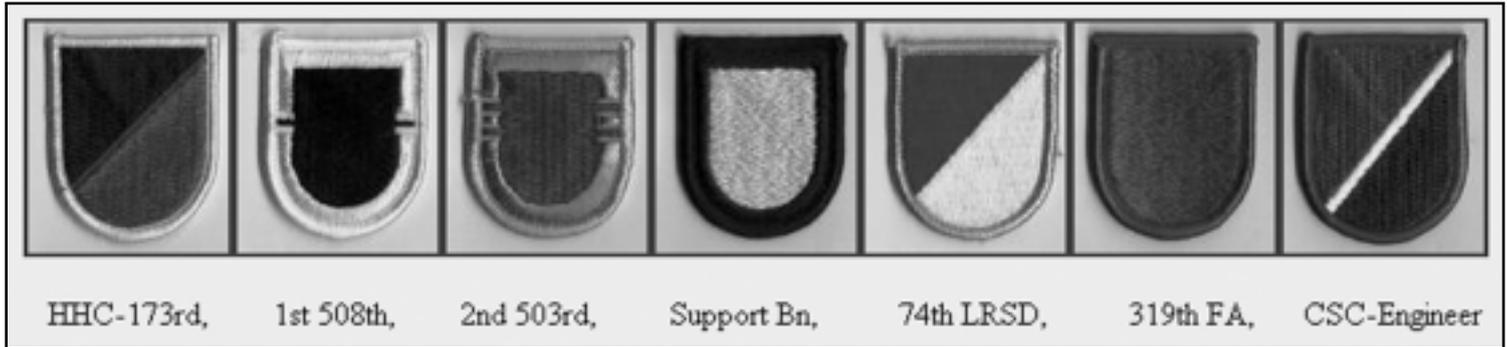


Soldiers walking past the plane, "Leaving the Freedom Bird."

This involved getting replacements as soldiers moved onto new assignments and new soldiers arrived to be trained by battle hardened veterans. Besides training in Germany, the Brigade transformed the old 501 Forward Support Company (FSC) into the 173d Support Battalion (Airborne). The Brigade was now bigger and more ready for its next mission.



Soldiers on parade field. "Welcome Home Ceremony"



Unit flashes of the 173d Airborne Brigade



Helicopter landing. "Troops ready to be Airborne again."



Helicopter taking off. "Troops ready to be Airborne again."



Helicopter in flight. "Airborne again."



Italy



Airborne troops land in the drop zone used by their grandfathers on June 5, 1944. Photo by Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service



Italy

Sky Soldiers also got back into the “air,” as this was to be their first jump since Iraq.

Troopers of the 173d also got to jump into the Normandy celebration in France,



Germany



Grafenwöhr, Germany



Germany



Germany



Germany



Germany



Germany



Germany



Italy



Italy



Italy

More jumping before heading back to Grafenwöhr, Germany for more training.

Later, as the Sky Soldiers assembled back in Italy they had the chance to meet up with some old Sky Soldiers who told them "Well Done."

Now they are ready for their next combat role ...in Eastern Afghanistan.



Colonel Sigholtz Talks with a Young Trooper as the Colonel Owens looks on.



Troopers Listen to the Old Sky Soldiers



CHAPTER IX - AFGHANISTAN

Sky Soldiers of the 173d were again called to battle, except this time instead of Deserts and Valleys; it would be Mountains and Snow. In February 2005, the 1st Battalion of the 508th Parachute Infantry were the lead elements of the Brigade to arrive on the Eastern front on the War on Terror.



Arriving soldiers to this raw, rough environment described the area as "Biblical". The first patrol got bogged down in mud.

Later the whole Brigade arrived

After settling in, the brigade begin performing humanitarian mission while conducting combat patrols on the Eastern front. Units included Headquarters -173d Airborne Brigade, 1st Battalion of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment (The Red Devils), 2nd Battalion of the 503rd Parachute Infantry Regiment (The Rock), The 173rd Support Battalion -Airborne (Bayonet Support), Delta Battery of the 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, Combat Support Company (Engineers) and 74th Infantry Detachment (Long Range Surveillance Detachment).







Hunting with the 2/503rd in Shah Wali Ko, Afghanistan on June 22, 2005



Commanders talk



Crossing a River



HISTORIES

2ND BATTALION (AIRBORNE), 503RD PARACHUTE INFANTRY HISTORY

On December 16, 2001 the 2nd Battalion (Airborne), 503rd Infantry was assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade and reactivated on January 25, 2002 in Vicenza Italy. Less than one year from its activation, the ROCK deployed to Operation Rapid Guardian 2001 in Kosovo. On 26 March 2003, the Battalion conducted a night combat parachute assault into Bashur, Iraq; exactly 40 years after its initial assignment to the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

During Operation Iraqi Freedom, the ROCK seized the airfield as part of the brigade allowing the coalition to open the northern front. On April 10, 2003, the ROCK attacked south to seize the City of Kirkuk. After seizing a series of objectives (LEE, HANCOCK, MCCLELLEN, and CHAMBERLAIN), the battalion established 12 operating bases in the city. From 10 April 2003 until 19 February 2004 the ROCK conducted daily security patrols, countless raids against Fadayeen and Baath party pockets of resistance, and established numerous civil projects in order to demilitarize the city. These projects included establishing a police force and fostering normalcy within the community. On June 9, 2003 the battalion was attached to the 3rd Combat Team, 4th Infantry division during Operation Peninsula Strike where it conducted a series of raids in the central Iraqi city of Al Dulu Yah. Upon returning to Kirkuk on June 13, the battalion continued to conduct combat patrols, raids against anti-coalition forces, and out of sector attacks to places like Halabjah, Haweja, Tuz, Taza, and the Zaab. In February 2004, after 11 months of combat operations the ROCK began its redeployment to Italy having left behind a functional police force and a stable environment in the city of Kirkuk.

In March 2005, The ROCK arrived in Afghanistan as part of Enduring Freedom where they continue to serve today; sadly seven Rock soldiers were killed in action. To date with combat operations in Afghanistan continuing, ROCK soldiers stand ready to accomplish any mission with the esprit and élan that it has demonstrated in the past.

HISTORY OF THE 1ST BATTALION 508TH PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT

In September 1942, MAJ Roy E. Lindquist began planning the activation of the unit he was to command. On 20 October 1942, at Camp Blanding, Florida, the 508th was born. They primarily came from the 502nd Parachute Infantry



and the 26th Infantry Division. By mid-December, the 508th Parachute Infantry reached full strength. In February 1943, the regiment adopted the "Red Devil" emblem and the battle cry "Diablo" (the Devil) as they moved to Fort Benning for parachute training. In March, the 508th was moved to Camp Mckall, North Carolina, where they trained until December.

On 28 December 1943, the regiment boarded the U.S. Army Transport James Parker and set out to join the convoy across the Atlantic for WWII. On 9 January 1944, the James Parker docked at Belfast, Ireland and the 508th commenced training throughout Great Britain. During Operation Overlord, the regiment was responsible for the Southwest portion of the 82nd Airborne Division sector in Normandy. Their primary targets were bridges over the Douve River, located in Brienville and Beuzeville-la-Bastille. Clouds and heavy anti-aircraft fire caused the formations to break up and many of the planes to stray off course. Despite these obstacles, 2,056 Red Devils jumped into Normandy on 6 June 1944. The paratroopers hit the ground, assembled into small groups, and started establishing themselves in the most strategic positions possible. The regiment focused on three particular targets: the bridges over the Mederet River at La Fiere and Chef-du-Pont, and Hill 30, a small knoll on the west bank of the Mederet. On 12 June 1944, the Red Devils returned to England after suffering 1,161 casualties out of 2,056 paratroopers.

At approximately 1330 hours on 17 September 1944, the Red Devils jumped into Holland as part of Operation Market Garden. Although initial resistance was light, heavy fighting followed for days. In November, the regiment returned to England for another rest, but soon found itself on 16 December 1944 in Ardennes. The 508th found itself against 12 German divisions in the famous "Battle of the Bulge." On 29 January 1945, First Sergeant Leonard Funk earned the Medal of Honor for rescuing approximately 10 paratroopers from German capture by killing over 45 German soldiers and wounding the rest. As a result, President Harry Truman awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor to Leonard Funk.

The 508th returned home on 24 November 1946, and was later inactivated at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. A Company was reactivated in April 1951 and by 1964, the 1st Battalion had been reformed and reactivated. On 20 April 1965, the Red Devils received a mission to restore peace and provide security to the Dominican Republic under Operation



WWII "Red Devil" and IRAQ "Red Devil"

Power Pack. Despite slow progress and bitter fighting, the paratroopers succeeded and returned home to the U.S. in July.

With the outbreak of the TET offensive, the 508th was on the move again. On 15 February 1968, led by Colonel Alexander Bolling, the regiment began arriving in the Republic of Vietnam. The Red Devils played a major role in Operation Yorktown Victor and many others. The paratroopers served in Vietnam for over 22 months sacrificing 212 soldiers.

On 25 October 1983, U.S. Army Rangers jumped into Grenada to rescue American medical students. By the morning of the 27th, the Red Devils arrived to take part in Operation Urgan Fury. Within days, the People's Republican Army had surrendered and Cuban and Soviet personnel on the island were expelled. The battalion remained as a peacekeeping force and returned on 11 November 1983 to Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

In January 1985, the Red Devils deployed again as a multi-national observer force in the Sinai Desert. For a six month period, the battalion served as part of an eleven nation force in accordance with the Camp David Treaty. Following the Sinai, the battalion was inactivated at Fort Bragg, North Carolina and relieved from assignment to the 82nd Airborne Division.

On 10 July 1987, the 1-508th was withdrawn from the Combat Arms Regimental System and became part of the 193rd Infantry Brigade (Light) in the Republic of Panama under the United States Army Regimental System. The 193rd Infantry had reorganized on 04 December 1986, with a reaffiliation of its two infantry battalions and a field artillery battalion. As a result, the 187th Infantry became the 1-508th Infantry, regimentally affiliated with Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

On 20 December 1989 at 1600 hours, the battalion received the executive order to put Operation Just Cause into effect. The battalion commander ordered the front gate of Fort Amador shut down. On 21 December 1989, the 1-508th, known as TF Devil, cleared the Amador Yacht Club, Amador Marina, La Boca, and Balboa Housing Area. After conducting a relief in place with the Rangers, TF

DEVIL conducted numerous follow-on missions including perimeter security and acted as a QRF for any contingencies, which included conducting reconnaissance for possible weapons caches, mine fields, and other violations of the cease fire.

The 1-508th returned to active duty at Fort Kobbe, Panama until 1994. In compliance with provisions of the Panama Canal Treaty of 1977, which mandates U.S. Forces withdrawal from Panama by noon, 31 December 1999, the Red Devils officially inactivated on 15 October 1994.

On 27 April 1996, the Red Devils traveled to Italy and officially reactivated as the 1-508th Airborne Battalion Combat Team. The battalion participated in numerous training and contingency operations throughout the EUCOM Area of Responsibility including Kosovo, Tunisia, Hungary, Poland, Germany and many others. On 12 June 2000, the Red Devils became a part of the Sky Soldier team as the 173rd Airborne Brigade was reactivated in Vicenza, Italy.

On 26 March 2003, the battalion participated in the largest combat airborne operation since WWII as 447 Red Devils jumped into Bashur DZ in Northern Iraq as a part of Operation Iraqi Freedom. For 12 months, the 1st Battalion (Airborne) 508th Infantry conducted combat patrols and civil affairs engagements in Kirkuk, Al-Hawija, Al-Zaab, Taza/Layland, Daquq, and Tuz. Three Red Devils gave their lives during combat operations in Iraq.

The Red Devils are continuing the proud 62-year legacy of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment as they conduction combat operations in the Global War on Terror. On 25 February 2005, the Red Devils deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom IV. At the time of this writing, with troops in the field, seven Red Devils gave their lives in Afghanistan.

173D SUPPORT BATTALION (AIRBORNE)

The 173d Support Battalion was Constituted 26 March 1963 in the Regular Army as the 173d Support Battalion, and assigned to the 173d Airborne Brigade and activated 25 June 1963 on Okinawa. It was



deactivated in January 1972 when the Brigade was removed from active service at Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

Its' rebirth started 1 July 2004, when 15 soldiers from the deactivating 51st Maintenance Battalion from Mannheim, Germany, joined 140 members of the 501st Forward Support Company (FSC), 173d Airborne Brigade, to form the 173d Support Battalion (ABN) provisional.

From July 27 to Sept. 4, the 173d Support Battalion (ABN) provisional, stood up four companies. Platoon A (Supply & Transportation), Platoon B (Maintenance) and Platoon C (Medical) of the old 501st FSC became companies in the new battalion. Add in a headquarters company and the 173d Support Battalion has about 325 personnel.

Training exercises in Hohenfels and Grafenwöhr, Germany, quickly followed the battalions' stand-up. Then the battalion had to pack and ship its equipment away for its upcoming deployment to Afghanistan. In the meantime, dozens of troops came to Vicenza to join the battalion.

After seven months, the battalion officially shrugged off its provisional status on March 16, 2005 and became the 173d Support Battalion (Airborne). A week later, the first of the 173d Support Battalion's soldiers arrived in Afghanistan.

Assigned the duties of providing logistic support for Kandahar airfield in Afghanistan and for the entire (Regional Command) South, the Battalion commanded by Lt. Col. Cynthia Fox, provides support to the line units of the Brigade. The 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry Regiment is in Paktika province, hours away from Kandahar airfield and the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry Regiment with much of its forces at Forward Operating Base Langham. To date the 173d Support Battalion provides continued support to the Sky Soldiers of the 173d Airborne Brigade in Operation Enduring Freedom.

HISTORY OF THE DELTA BATTERY, 319TH AIRBORNE FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT

The unit was organized in August 1917, at Camp Gordon, GA, as Batter C, 319th Filed Artillery Regiment. The Battery served with distinction in the 82nd Infantry Division during World War I and was awarded battle streamers for Lorraine, St. Miheil, and Meuse-Argonne.



After the war, the battalion's colors were cased until March 1942 when the 319th was reactivated at Camp Clairborne, LA, again as part of the 82nd Infantry Division. When the division changed over, being redesignated as the 319th Glider Filed Artillery Battalion.

After training in North Africa, Battery C participated in the Sicilian invasion and was awarded its first Distinguished Unit Citation for its achievements in face of bitter enemy attacks. The battery's second citation was





Afghanistan

earned during the Normandy beach invasion when it fired thousands of shells to secure the Douve and Mereret Rivers. More battle streamers were added to its colors when the 319th glided into Holland in September 1944 and supported the 82nd Airborne division during the battle of the Bulge in December.

In April 1959, Battery C, 319th Airborne Artillery set the records for the Army on entering "Fire of Effect" after a heavy drop. The cannoners derigged and assembled their equipment, set up the Fire Direction Center, established communications and went into "Fire for Effect" after adjusting on a target of opportunity within 14 minutes and 50 seconds after the last man left the aircraft.

In June 1960, Battery C, accompanied the 2nd Airborne Battle Group, 503rd Infantry to Okinawa. When the 173d Airborne Brigade was organized there years later in June 1963,

the battery formed the nucleus of the present 3 battalion, 319th Artillery.

The three firing battalions of the 173rd consisted of; 3rd battalion of the 319th Airborne Field Artillery, the 161st Field Battery of the Royal New Zealand Army (RNZA) and the 105mm Battery of the Royal Australian Artillery (RAA). All batteries fire the 35 pound 105mm projectile at ranges up to 11,000 meters.

3d Battalion, 319th Field Artillery was the first U.S. Army artillery unit engaged in combat in Southeast Asia. At 0530 hours on 5 May 1965, the first of over 150 sorties of C130 aircraft loaded with equipment of the 173d Airborne Brigade landed at Bien Hoa Air Base from Okinawa. In direct support of the Brigade was the 3d Battalion (Airborne), 319th Field Artillery. The men of the 319th had a jump of two months on fellow "Redlegs", which enabled them to compile an impressive list of firsts. One of the most important was the firing of the first field artillery round by a U.S. Army unit in Vietnam from the base piece of Battery C during a registration.

Battery A participated in a combat jump into Katum, 60 miles northwest of Saigon, on 22 February 1967, with other elements of the Brigade. This operation included a heavy drop of all of the Battery's howitzers. Later the Battalion moved into Binh Dinh province where its guns provide support for the Brigade. Prepared to fight as infantry, the Redlegs secured their own firebases.

3d Battalion participated in numerous campaigns during the Vietnam conflict, and returned to the United States on 23 July 1971. The unit was awarded its third Presidential Unit Citation, its first Meritorious Unit Commendation, the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, and the Republic of Vietnam Civil Action Honor Medal and twelve battle streamers. On 14 January 1972, it was relieved from assignment to the 173d Airborne Brigade and assigned to the 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky

With the reactivation on 12 June 2000 in Vicenza, Italy of the 173d Airborne Brigade, Delta Battery, now part of the 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, came under the control of the 173d Airborne Brigade.

Paratroopers of the D Battery, 319th AFAR jumped in Operation Northern Delay on 26 March 2003 and served one year in Iraq.

They deployed back to Italy in March 2004. After reintegration, replacement of personnel and retaining the Battery again deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom in Eastern Afghanistan.

At the time of this writing the Battery continues combat operations but sadly two "Redleg" was killed in action.

HISTORY OF THE 74TH INFANTRY, (LONG RANGE SURVEILLANCE DETACHMENT)

The 74th Infantry Detachment (LRP), formally the 173rd Airborne Brigade Separate (LRRP) (Provisional) assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), later became Company N (Ranger), 75th Infantry.

The 173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate) deployed to the Republic of Vietnam on 5 May 1965, the first army "combat" maneuver element to arrive in Vietnam. It quickly became apparent to Brigadier General Ellis W. Williamson that a reconnaissance element was needed to supplement Troop E, 17th Cavalry who were mounted troops and had the mission of providing road security and were ill equipped or trained to perform dismounted reconnaissance missions. General Williamson tasked the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 503rd Infantry to ask for "Volunteers" to form the Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) detachment.

The LRRP detachment became a permanent part of Troop E, 17th Cavalry in June 1966. Many of the original members of the



Vietnam



Italy



Iraq

LRRP platoon were trained at the 101st Airborne Division RECONDO school at Ft. Campbell, KY. Additional training of the volunteers was On the Job Training (OJT) and at the RECONDO school at Nha Trang. Many of these volunteers never had the chance to attend any formal training as the 173rd Airborne Brigade was constantly on operations throughout the III Corps and II Corps areas of the Republic of Vietnam, however infiltration and extraction techniques were refined and were SOP for the duration of the LRRP's operations in Vietnam.

On 12 June 2000, the 173d Airborne Brigade was reactivated at Vicenza, Italy and its organization included the 173d Recon Company. On 16 October 2002, the 173d Recon Company became the 74th Infantry Detachment (LRSD). LRSD - the Long Range Surveillance Detachment is a direct descendant of the old 74th Infantry Detachment LRRP (Long Range Recon Patrol) of the 173d Airborne Brigade in Vietnam.

Operation Northern Delay began on 25 March when a 16-man

reconnaissance element from the 74th LRSD and SOF Forces were inserted via an MC-130 into Northern Iraq. This was followed by a mass combat jump on 26 March 2003 which also included the additional LRSD troopers. Sadly one LRSD trooper died in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Detachment deployed back to

Vicenza, Italy in March 2004 and reintegrated and retained for its next mission.

In March 2005, the 74th LRSD deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom in eastern Afghanistan. At the time of this writing one 74th Infantry Sky Soldier was killed in action performing combat operations.



Italy



Afghanistan

ARTICLES

1/508 SETTLES IN FOR NEW MISSION IN AFGHANISTAN

Story by Sgt. Adrian Schulte, CJTF-76 Public Affairs

FOB ORGUN-E, Afghanistan — Lt. Col. Tim McGuire, commander, 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 173rd Airborne Brigade, and Task Force Fury, is noticeably excited when he talks about his battalion's new mission in Afghanistan.

The 1/508 have settled into their new home at Forward Operating Base Orgun-E, outside the town of Orgune in the Paktika province of southeastern Afghanistan.

The paratroops, who began arriving at the FOB March 1 and took over responsibility March 12, will be stationed at the forward operating base for the next year as part of Task Force Fury.

The battalion, along with other elements from the 173rd, fell in on the position occupied by elements of the Hawaiian-based 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division.

"We are really pleased with the living conditions here," McGuire said. "Our predecessors did a great job of building up the FOB for us."

"It's a piece of cake compared to Iraq," said Pfc. Robert Beall, a forward observer for Alpha Company, 1/508, who spent time in northern Iraq with the battalion. "This place is nice. We have power constantly, the phones work, we have the Internet and we have running water so you can take a shower everyday. The living quarters are pretty good. We have a lot of guys in there, but if you can't live in close quarters for a year, how can you expect to work with them? It's a little crowded, but nothing we can't work with."

"It's definitely a notch above what we left in Iraq," said Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Holland, platoon leader, Co. A, 1/508th. "[The 25th] left it in good order so we moved right in, it was really easy. All we are doing is improving on something that they have already made great for us, so it's a great place."

For the next year, the Red Devils of the battalion will be responsible for the Paktika Province. The province is approximately the size of Vermont and shares a 600-kilometer border with Pakistan.

"We are extremely prepared," McGuire said. "We have spent the last year preparing for this mission. A large percentage of the battalion was in Iraq and those Soldiers who have joined us since our return from Iraq, many of them come with experience from Iraq and Afghanistan. So we are ready, well-equipped and very eager to get out and build upon the success of the units that have preceded us here."

The Soldiers of the 1/508th will be working hand-in-hand with the Afghan government, the Afghan National Army, the Afghan Police and most importantly with the Afghan



Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffery Hof (left) and Lt. Col. Timothy McGuire uncase the 1st Battalion (Airborne), 508th Infantry Regiment, colors during a transfer of authority ceremony March 12, at Forward Operating Base Orgun-E, Afghanistan. Photo courtesy of Staff Sgt. Bradley Rhen

people to ensure the long-term peace and prosperity of the region, McGuire said.

The transition has been very smooth for the Red Devils as they adjust to their new environment and responsibilities.

"This has been the best relief-in-place transition I have taken part of," McGuire said. "The Wolfhounds from the 25th Infantry Division did a great job. They have really done a great job getting us out among the people so we can learn from their year's worth of experience."

The troops are prepared and looking forward to the adventures that lay ahead, McGuire said.

"The Soldiers are excited by the mission. They realize the importance of Afghanistan on the Global War on Terror. We have a chance here to show this entire region that democracy and rule of law works, and that the people benefit."

Task Force Fury's area of responsibility is a large one that will keep the Soldiers of the 1/508 busy and engaged for the next 12 months.

"In the next year, I'm looking forward to going out there and seeing my whole sector," Holland said. "I've already been out there for eight days and I haven't seen enough. I want to go out there and I want to be able to see every town and check it out. There will be a lot of good experiences for my Soldiers and myself. Morale is really high. The Soldiers are new in sector and they are pumped to get out there and start doing things and seeing what is around."

While the troops are excited about what lies ahead, they are aware of the challenges as well.

"There is an enemy out there and we are fighting an insurgency," McGuire said. "We are going to fight and win this insurgency because we are focusing on the people. The Afghan people are committed to peace and they are committed to working together for



Soldiers from Delta Battery, 173rd Airborne Brigade, sling load a M119 105mm howitzer to a CH-47 Chinook helicopter at Forward Operating Base Orgun-E in southeastern Afghanistan March 12. The paratroops, along with the 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment and other elements of the 173rd, are a part of Task Force Fury and will be responsible for the Paktika province for the next year. Photo courtesy of Sgt. Adrian Schulte

prosperity. We are going to work hand and hand with the government. One of our challenges will be helping to empower and enable the government and the Afghan security forces. It's just continuing to extend the reach of the central government and show the Afghan people that their future lives are better with the rule of law, democracy and freedom by working closely with the international community."

The terrain of the Paktika province is an unforgiving one and will continue to pose a challenge through the next year. It has been an especially harsh winter for the Afghan people and the weather is wreaking havoc on the countryside. For troops who rely on large,



A convoy transporting fuel and Soldiers stops briefly during a light dust storm on its way to FOB Lagman where the 2nd Bn., 503rd Inf. (Abn) assumed command and control from the 2nd Bn., 35th Inf. April 10 in Zabul province.

brawny humvees to get around, the lack of roads will pose a challenge in a country that often relies on alternate modes of transportation such as mules.

"One of our challenges will be the lack of infrastructure here," McGuire said. "Some of the roads right now are more rivers or tar pits of mud, so we will put a lot of effort into working with the Afghan officials to improve crossing sites and roads throughout the area."

"Maintenance is going to be a big challenge," Holland said. "The terrain out there... there aren't any real roads, except for actually in Orgune itself and some of the other major places in our sector. But down south, there really aren't a lot of roads. You drive down wadis and you drive over large rocks so you go out there with your maintenance team and you're fixing stuff."

The Red Devils are in place, settled and ready for the year ahead. They will be working with the Afghan people to help improve this war-torn country.

"The Afghans are committed to close relations with the U.S. and improving their life," McGuire said. "They have had 25 years of war here. They are ready for peace and they are ready to work hard to achieve it."

2ND BN., 503RD INFANTRY ASSUMES CONTROL

Story and Photo by Spc. Jon Arguello, CJTF-76 Public Affairs Office

QALAT, Afghanistan — The 2nd Infantry Battalion from the 173rd Airborne Brigade, based in Vicenza, Italy, is now firmly situated in its new home in Afghanistan.

Sunday, April 10, the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry Regiment, of the Hawaii's 25th Infantry Division (Light) transferred authority of Zabul province in Southeast Afghanistan to the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne). Now deployed throughout the province, the battalion is fully involved in stability and support operations in this Afghan-

Pakistan border province.

The battalion's road to deployment started in Vicenza when the 2-503rd Inf (Abn) or Task Force Rock, as the battalion is now called, departed from Aviano Air Base in Northern Italy in late March. From Aviano, the battalion's paratroopers took a commercial charter flight to Manas, Kyrgyzstan, where severe weather delayed onward movement.

Soldiers were held up in transition tents until U.S. Air

Force C-17 Globemaster and C-130 Hercules transport aircraft could fly the Soldiers into Afghanistan for the battalion's second year-long deployment in three years.

In a ceremony at the police headquarters in the provincial capital of Qalat on April 10, the Zabul provincial leadership welcomed Lt. Col. Mark Stammer, battalion commander of TF Rock, and said goodbye to the outgoing commander of the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry, Lt. Col. Scott McBride from the 25th ID out of Schofield Barracks in Hawaii. The ceremony took place in front of a large crowd with the tribal elders of Zabul province in attendance.

Governor Delbar Arma said that as much as he regretted losing Lt. Col. McBride, he looked forward to building as good of a relationship with Lt. Col. Stammer and that he knew there was still room for the relationship between the Afghan government and Coalition forces to grow.

"It's incredible how well the 2-35 established a working relationship with the Afghan leadership," said Stammer. "It's important that we build on this relationship. Cooperation is the foundation that Afghanistan and the Afghan people will build their young democracy on."

Stammer said by working together, the Coalition and the Afghan government will improve security in the Zabul province. "With security, we can look to the future and the tangible benefits the Afghan people so richly deserve," Stammer said. "We will build bridges between people torn apart by war and roads to the future."

Stammer also mentioned a top priority of both the Afghan government and Coalition forces is the ability for Afghanistan to prosper independently—without Coalition assistance—as well as the task force's goal of making Zabul Afghanistan's model province.

Although the ceremony took place April 10, the Rock has been extremely active since its arrival at Forward Operating Base Lagman

on April 2. Both Battle and Chosen Companies are stationed here while they maintain smaller outposts in the northern part of the province. Able Company is stationed at FOB Sweeney, which is a four-hour drive southeast of Lagman in the Shinkay district. Both Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) are in Southern Afghanistan.

The battalion has been operating at a high tempo as it garners the institutional knowledge that the outgoing unit developed over the course of a year.

"There is a lot of work involved with a relief in place like this," said Capt. Dave Rowland, the battalion's chief of operational plans. "It's not like having to build the base from scratch, but Soldiers have to transition into their jobs, sometimes learning processes different than they are used to or using equipment they aren't familiar with. At the very least they have to get accustomed to the new environment."

Of the 10-day relief in place operation, the first 5 days consisted of "right-seat-ride," where 2-503rd personnel rode along and observed the way 2-35 operated. During the following 5 days, 2-503rd jumped into the driver's seat for left-seat-ride, while 2-35 leadership remained behind to offer pointers and background information on the unique environment in Afghanistan, said Rowland.

"The transition was challenging," said Staff Sgt. Mark Flint, 2-503rd's communications non-commissioned officer in charge. "But it went really smoothly, more so than I expected. There were some kinks, nothing ever goes perfect but overall, it went very smoothly."

The smooth transition was due to a lot of planning and training that took place over several rotations to Grafenwöhr and Hohenfels, Germany, in preparation for the brigade's deployment. However, the transition is also attributable to an emphasis on high standards by the unit and chain of command.

"From the time we jumped into the Rock," said Flint referring to the battalion's jump into Corregidor, nicknamed "the Rock," during World War II, "this unit has held up to really high standards. In a year from now, you'll see some incredible changes just because we were here."

Beyond work, the Rock's paratroopers have a transition of a more personal nature to go through.

"It's hard to be away from family for a year," said Flint. "But there's a bigger picture involved. We're showing people in another part of the world that there is a different way to live. We are giving people new options. There are some rough times, but when you think about the fact that we are bringing the Afghan people choices they never had before, you see the bigger picture."

As hard as the transition may be, the paratroopers from the Rock seem to look forward to the challenge, and more importantly, have a deep appreciation of their roles in Afghanistan's future and their own place in history.

PARATROOPERS REPEL AMBUSH DURING WEEK OF HEAVY FIGHTING

"It was the longest 100 meters of my life"
Story and photos by Pfc. Jon H. Arguello

DEY CHOPAN, Afghanistan — In an intensive week of successful combat operations, 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne) came away with several victories and tangible results demonstrating not just the awesome warfighting capabilities of Task Force Rock's paratroopers, but their exceptional composure under fire.

As Battle Company was climbing mountains chasing insurgent and Chosen Company won a victory in a large clash, a convoy carrying the battalion commander and sergeant major was ambushed and engaged in a fierce firefight that left one American injured and an unknown number of injured insurgents in the Zabul province.

"It was the worst I've seen in 22 years of service," said Command Sgt. Major Jeffrey Hartless, the battalion sergeant major from Amherst, Va. "From the first Gulf War to my last deployment in Iraq, I've never been in a firefight like that."

The convoy was moving between units and as the roads got rough, the vehicles became separated by more than 100 meters. At that point, the two parts of the convoy were attacked simultaneously by several rocket propelled grenades.

"I yelled, 'IED! IED!,' but it was actually an RPG," Hartless said.

"Right after the command sergeant major said 'IED,' a hail of bullets came down," said Spc. Edwin Laboy-Cortes, from Fayetteville, N.C.

The paratroopers dismounted and were immediately fired upon by small arms and

then machine guns. Bullets ripped through the Humvee's roof, blowing out gauges and riddling the truck's interior frame with holes.

"We got out of the vehicle and bullets were flying through it," said Hartless. "We didn't think of closing the doors until a little later."

"I couldn't see the lead vehicle while we were engaged in our firefight," said Hartless. "Hankins was the closest to the door and I told him to get the handset."

Spc. Brian Hankins, from Martinez, Calif., jumped into the Humvee to retrieve the radio. Ten minutes into the firefight the realization communications between the vehicles was temporarily disrupted would lead the sergeant major to believe the worst.

"I couldn't get anybody on the radio. I thought they were all dead," Hartless said.

The paratroopers were under heavy fire and everyone reacted to the fire with fire of their own. The exchange of heavy fire didn't allow for instant communication.

"The fire was so intense, it took everyone we had to fire," said scout Staff Sgt. Randall Austin from Glendale, Ariz. "It became shoot first and communicate later. We thought they were dead and they thought we were dead."

Soon the convoy took a casualty.

"I was behind the truck shooting next to Capt. Wright and he stopped shooting back and moaned - then he turned to me and said 'I'm hit' and went down," said Laboy-Cortes. "I started treating him. He was coherent and calm the whole time."

Capt. Benjamin Wright, from Metamora, Ill., began calling in his own nine line report. The nine-line, a radio report describing the injury and whether or not medevac is necessary, was finished by Laboy-Cortes

The trail of the incoming RPGs gave away the enemy's position; Staff Sgt. William Terry, from Montclair, N.J., put a barrage of MK19 fire on the location that suppressed the enemy fire.

"I couldn't believe how well the Soldiers reacted to the ambush," Hartless said. "The ambush site was well planned and ranged, but the Soldiers were incredible."



Bullet holes riddle this Humvee caught in an ambush on the 2nd Battalion, 503rd Infantry (Airborne) battalion commander's convoy recently.

"'Wojo' was on it," said Austin, referring to Spc. Thomas Wojtowicz. "Before I knew what was going, 'Wojo' was firing the .50 cal and Walker was feeding him ammo. They went beyond my expectations."

"I saw the two explosions from the RPGs and I started firing," said Wojtowicz, from Chicago. "I knew what area the fire was coming from but I couldn't see anybody, so I'd light up that area and the fire would stop but it would start coming from another area."

No matter how much training the paratroopers have had, considering the circumstances of the ambush, the performances of the Soldiers is inexplicable.

"When I asked Hankins to get the radio, he didn't hesitate," said Hartless. "He dove into the Humvee with bullets flying into it and grabbed it without hesitation. The quick reaction by Laboy was also amazing. Even Capt. Wright's response to his own injury was outstanding."

"I was worried but I knew I had the biggest gun out there so I had to keep it up," Wojtowicz said.

When the decision was made that the casualty had to be taken out of the kill zone, the sergeant major devised a plan to put the truck in reverse with the casualty inside, while Laboy-Cortes and the sergeant major would run along the truck for cover.

"It was the longest 100 meters of my life," Hartless said.

Eventually, contact was broken, close air support would come and the enemy would dissipate into the mountains with their wounded.

No matter how well they fended off the attack, Task Force Rock's paratroopers have a much better understanding of why it is important to stay alert.

"I take my job very seriously, I stay alert and pay attention to the details," said Wojtowicz.

"You really have to go out there and do what you're supposed to be doing," Austin explained. "They are dead set on killing us, but that's not going to happen."

Whether it was the amount of training, the airborne frame of mind or the composure of the Soldiers that day, there is no doubt, all of their quick, selfless actions played a part in bringing every Soldier on the convoy back to base alive.

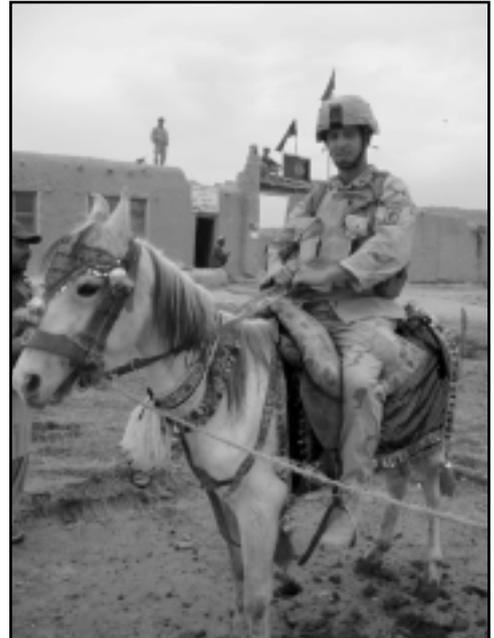


Command Sgt. Major Jeffrey Hartless illustrates the ambush on his convoy in late April. It was the excellent action to the well-planned attack that prevented multiple casualties. One US Soldier was injured in the firefight.

ANIMALS OF AFGHANISTAN

During every deployment, soldiers are always attracted to animals and try to make pets of them. Afghanistan is only different in that we put some of these animals to work.

Whatever happened to just plain old Cats and Dogs!



CHILDREN OF AFGHANISTAN

Soldiers everywhere always reach out to help children, here are some examples.
Children are children all around the world



CHAPTER X - HISTORICAL FACTS

IN REMEMBRANCE

JOHN FREDERICK TILLOU JR.

John, better known as "T," was from Arizona and was one of the most experienced troopers in Bravo Co., Satan Platoon. He took special care of two "FNG" Sergeants. "T" taught the two NCOs how to survive in Vietnam. He was killed in action on 4 June 1970 during a rocket attack. He was awarded the rank of corporal and a Bronze Star with "Valor" Device for that combat action.

Sergeant Ken Gaudet and Sergeant Frank Massey will always remember their comrade in arms. John Frederick Tillou Jr.

BILLY FERRELL

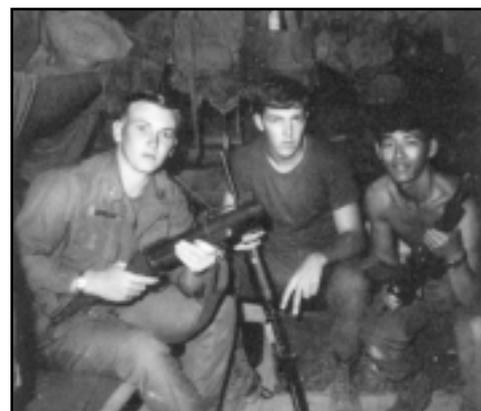
Billy was a member of Bravo Co., 1/503 Satan Platoon. Billy always would volunteer to walk point or pull security. During the firefight in which he was killed, he performed his task as a soldier with the greatest courage and total disregard for his safety. Billy was awarded the Silver Star. He is missed and never forgotten by his friends, Sergeant Ken Gaudet and Sergeant Frank Massey.



Cpl. John Frederick Tillou, Jr. (T) Bravo Co 1/503rd Satan Platoon KIA 04 June 1970. (Courtesy of Frank Massey)



At left, SP4 Billy Ferrell holding scoped M-16; At right SP4 Julius Alejo, bravo Co 1/503rd Satan Platoon, Ferrell KIA 29 May 1970. Posthumously awarded the Silver Star for gallantry. (Courtesy of Ken Gaudet)



Cpl. Terry Kawamura (at right) holding the SKS the night before his action for which he received his Medal of Honor. (Courtesy of Dr. Loren Little)



Memorial service for eleven men of B Company 3/305 Airborne Infantry killed in action in April 1969. (Courtesy of Paul Epley)

SKY SOLDIERS OF THE 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE

1 FEB 2006

When brave men have fought and died, there is little we can add to the quiet testimony of their sacrifice - Abe Lincoln



Photo "Agony of War" by Paul Epley

— Gone but not forgotten —

AARON, EUGENE ALLEN
ABERNATHY, DANIEL OWEN
ABERNATHY, ROBERT WILLIAM
ACHOR, TERRENCE WILLIAM
ADAM, HOSEA DENNIS
ADAMS, CLARENCE MATTUE
ADAMS, MERRITT
ADAMS, MICHAEL EDWARD
ADAMS, PAUL VERNON
ADAMS, STEVEN JACK
AGUILAR, RUDOLPH RENE
AIKEY, TIMOTHY WAYNE
ALANDT, CHARLES BYRON
ALDERMAN, WINFRED
ALDRICH, LAWRENCE LEE
ALEXANDER, WILLIAM LEE
ALLEN, DAN S III
ALLEN, DANNY RAY
ALLEN, JOHNNY JR
ALLEN, ROBERT SAMUEL
ALLEN, TERRY LEE ODIS

ALMEIDA, EDWARD JOSEPH
ALSTON, RUBEN CLEVELAND
ALVAREZ, BERNARDO RODRIGUEZ
AMADOR, RAYNALD JIMENZ
AMATO, RICHARD C
ANDERS, EDWARD JAMES
ANDERSON, ARTIS WESLEY
ANDERSON, CHARLES C JR
ANDERSON, ERLING ALTON
ANDERSON, IVY THOMAS
ANDERSON, LEE E
ANDERSON, LEWIS CARL
ANDERSON, STEVE
ANDREWS, ARTHUR LEE
ANDREWS, COLEY L
ANTHONY, LIONEL S
APPLETON, DANNY ELBERT
ARMSTRONG, EVERETT
ARNOLD, JAMES
ARNOLD, LOUIS GEORGE WASHI
ARRINGTON, JOHN ROBERT

ASEP, MICHAEL
ATKINS, DOUGLAS PAUL
AUDILET, FRANKLIN DELANO
AUER, EDUARD ADOLPH
AYERS, CARL BRACY JR
AYERS, JOHNNIE MARVIN
BACKES, BRUCE RICHARD
BAILEY, SCOTT JAY
BAKER, ROBERT BENTON JR
BAKER, WALLACE EDWIN
BALDONI, LINDSAY DAVID
BALES, CHARLES ROBERT
BAMVAKAIS, JOHN ROBERT JR
BAN, HERMAN HALEMANU
BARDEN, EDWARD
BARKER, JEFFREY LAWRENCE
BARNES, ALLEN ROY
BARNES, JOHN ANDREW III
BARNES, JOHN HENRY
BARNES, MARVIN DONALD
BARNES, MITCHELL ODELL

BARNETT, CARL TAYLOR
BARNEY, ALEXANDER LORENZO
BARNHART, CARL RAY
BARR, JAMES DAVID
BARRETO, LUIS JR
BARRINGTON, PAUL V JR
BARRON, DANNY LANCE
BARTH, THOMAS FREDRICK
BARTLETT, ARTHUR WAYNE SR
BARTOLF, NOEL MICHAEL
BARTRAM, GERALD EDWARD
BASNIGHT, RALPH WOOD
BASSIGNANI, WILLIAM JOHN
BATCHELOR, CHARLES EDWARD
BATCHELOR, MARTIN T JR
BATES, MELVIN CARROLL JR
BATTERSON, JOHN PEDDIE JR
BAUER, GREGORY CHARLES
BAUM, DOUGLAS BRUCE
BAXLEY, DENNIS WAYNE
BEACH, MYRON STANLEY JR
BEALL, CHARLES RICHARD
BEAUCHAMP, JOHN HENRY JR
BEAVER, JAMES CLARKE
BEAVERSON, HAROLD A JR
BECKER, JAMES FRANCIS
BEDSOLE, CHARLES ARTHUR
BEERS, JACK BLAINE
BELANGER, GEORGE
BELL, ARTHUR FREDERICK
BELL, CHARLES ARTHUR
BELL, DAVID THOMAS
BELLAMY, SIMMIE JR
BELTON, JAMES
BENNETT, CHARLES HERMAN
BENZ, ROBERT JOSEPH
BENZING, BRUCE MARTIN
BERNHART, CARL HANS
* BERNSTEIN, DAVID R.
BERRY, CHARLES RAY
BERRY, CHARLIE E
BERRY, DAVID JOE
BERRY, ELMER EUGENE
BERRY, JAMES CRAIG
BERRY, JAMES GRAYSON
BERRY, MALCOLM CRAYTON
BERTHEL, JOHN JOSEPH
BEST, ARTHUR
BEST, NEAL IRA
BETCHEL, DAVID BROOKS
BEVERFORD, TIMOTHY WAYNE
BICKEL, ROBERT JOHN
BIERNACKI, JAMES RICHARD
BIFFLE, JOE LESLIE JR
BIRCO, JOSE GOTERA
BIRD, KENNETH ROBERT
BIRDWELL, GEORGE ALFRED
BISHOP, WILLIAM BUEL II
BIXBY, JACK DENTON
BLACKSHEAR, JAMES GUY
BLACKWELDER, KIT
BLACKWELL, ROY JAMES JR
BLAIR, TERRY LEE
BLANCHFIELD, MICHAEL R
BLANTON, BILL EDWARD
BLENKINSOP, WILLIAM DARWIN
BLOOM, LAWRENCE CLIFFORD
BLY, ROBERT TILDON
BOCK, JERRY CHARLES
BODELL, KENNETH A
BODISON, JAMES CALVIN
BOEHM, WILLIAM JOSEPH
BONEY, ALLEN LEWIS

BONNEY, JOHN CLAIR
BOOTS, STEPHEN ELDON
BORJA, JUAN SANTOS
BORNMAN, DONALD WAYNE
BOROWSKI, JOHN C
BOROWSKI, WAYNE ROY
BOSSOM, JOHN AUSTIN
BOTTOMS, HAROLD GENE
BOWEN, RAYMOND LEWIS JR
BOWERSMITH, CHARLES GEORGE
BOWMAN, ROBERT MICHAEL
BOYD, ROBERT RAY
BOYD, SAM HENRY
BOYKIN, PRENTIS BARNEY JR
BRADFORD, SHERMAN DUANE
BRADLEY, ROBERT RICHARD
BRADLEY, THOMAS REUBEN
BRAITHWAITE, ARNIM N
BRANCATO, MICHAEL GEORGE
BRANCH, DAVID WESLEY
BRASIER, CHARLES DAVID
BRAYBOY, BRYANT JR
BRENKER, ECKHARD GERHARD
BREWER, THOMAS COLEMAN JR
BREWINGTON, HARVEY JR
BREWSTER, CARL WARDEN
BRICE, WILLIAM FRANCIS JR
BRIGHT, RALPH NORTH
BRIGMAN, BILLY DEAN
BRISCOE, LARRY
BROCK, THOMAS DEAN
BRONCZYK, LAWRENCE JOSEPH
BRONSON, THOMAS CARL
BROOKS, JESSIE MICHAEL
BROOKS, LARRY EUGENE
BROWN, DAVID CARLTON
BROWN, HARVEY LEE III
BROWN, HERMAN
BROWN, JAMES SCOTT
BROWN, KENNETH LLOYD
BROWN, LARRY
BROWN, MARION C
BROWN, NATHANIEL
BROWN, RICK SAMUEL
BROWN, WARREN GENE
BROWN, WILLIAM LEROY
BROYLES, LANHAM ODELL
BRUYERE, PETER NORBERT
BRYANT, MAURICE HERBERT
BRYSON, TERRY ADAM
BUCCILLE, RICHARD GARY
BUCZYNSKI, GREGORY THOMAS
BULLARD, KARL LEE
BULLARD, KENNY WAYNE
BULLOCK, RICHARD WILLIAM
BUNKER, DAVID ELVIN
BURCH, CLIFFORD GARLAND
BURDETTE, HILBURN M JR
BURDETTE, LANNY JOE
BURGANS, RICHARD
BURGESS, DONALD RAY
BURKHART, WALTER GUY
BURNEY, DAVID FRANK
BURNLEY, JOHN MOORE
BURNS, ERVIN L
BURNS, LEONARD WESLEY
BURR, DANIEL LEE
BURROUGHS, WALTER L
BUSCH, ERIC PETER
BUSENLEHNER, RICHARD THOMAS
BUSTOS, MIKE GARCIA
BUTLER, ALBERT JR
BUTLER, EARLIE JAMES JR

BUTT, GARY
BUTTS, DARRELL WAYNE
BYRD, BILLIE
BYRNS, GERALD WINSTON JR
CABBAGESTALK, EUGENE
CABE, PAUL PHILIP
CABRERA, JOAQUIN PALACIOS
CADIEUX, THOMAS PAUL
CAGLE, RANDY GRAHAM
CAIRES, CLYDE JOSEPH
CALLAHAN, WELBORN A JR
CALMESE, ALBERT
CAMARENA-SALAZAR, EDUARDO
CAMAROTE, MANFRED FRANCIS
CAMPBELL, CARLIN MARTIN JR
@ CAMPBELL, DAMION G
CAMPBELL, DAVID DANA
CAMPBELL, JERRY RAY
CAMPBELL, KEITH ALLEN
CAMPBELL, THOMETT DARTHAN
CAMPBELL, WILSON
CAMPION, EUGENE MICHAEL
CAMPOS, MAGNO
CANAPP, GARY EDWARD
CANDRL, BRUCE CHARLES
CANNING, RICHARD BRUCE
CANNON, HENRY TUCKER
CANNON, RONALD LAMAR
CANTU, ERNESTO SOLIZ
CAPASSO, JOHN ALAN
CARDONA, RONALD WILLIAM
CAREY, RONALD DUANE
CARLONE, JOHN JOSEPH II
CARLSON, JAMES BLAIN
CARLTON, LAVALLE ERNEST
CARMICHAEL, SAMUEL LEE
CARPENTER, DOUGLAS JOE
CARRILLO, GEORGE J JR
CARTER, GREGORY
CARTER, HARRY GIBSON
CARTER, LEONARD JAMES
CARTER, WALTER CORBIN
CASSIDY, RAYMOND SENTER
CASTILLO, THOMAS
CATES, WILLIAM LLOYD
CAVANAGH, ARTHUR
CAVER, JOHN WAYNE
CAVINEE, RONALD C
CERVANTEZ, EDWARD EDDY
CHANNEL, BILLY GENE
CHATMAN, NATHANIEL
CHAVARRIA, JOHN MAREZ
CHENOWETH, AUSTIN RAY
CHESTER, HENRY J JR
CHIASERA, AUGUST JR
CHRISTY, GILMORE WILSON
CHRONISTER, JAMES VIRGIL
CISNEROS, MARIO ALVAREZ
CLAEYS, EDWARD ORAN
CLARK, JOHN JAMES
CLARK, LORENZO
CLARK, ROGER WILLIAM
CLARK, RONALD CLEVELAND
CLARK, THORNE M III
CLARKE, IRVIN JR
CLATFELTER, ROBERT DENNIS
CLAYTON, CURVIN
CLAYTON, TOMMY MAKIN
CLEVERLEY, WILLIAM BERT
CLICKNER, MICHAEL
CLIMER, DAVID LEROY
CLINE, RODNEY BARRETTE
CLINGERMAN, JOSEPH ALLAN

COATES, EMORY THERON
COCHRAN, ROBERT MC LAIN JR
COFRAN, WILLIAM EARL
COGGINS, LARRY FRANKLIN
COILEY, CHARLES ROBERT
COKER, JAMES LEE
COLES, GEORGE EUGENE JR
COLEY, BRUCE EDWARD
COLGLAZIER, DONALD ROBERT
COLLINS, ELTON BRADLEY
COLLINS, JAMES WILFORD
COLLINS, JEROME LISTON
COLLINS, JULIUS JR
COLLINS, WILLIAM ANDERSON
COLLINS, WILLIAM ELICE JR
COLON-SANTOS, RAFAEL
COLVIN, GENE FRANCIS
CONNERS, LEE ALEXANDER
CONNIFF, THOMAS JOSEPH
COOK, DAVID RICHARD
COOK, JIMMY LEE
COOKE, CALVIN EDWARD
COOKE, LARRY HOUSTON
COONS, GREGORY MAC
COOPER, GARY ROBERT
CORBETT, LINWOOD CALVIN
CORBETT, THOMAS LOUIS
CORFMAN, DARYL RAYMOND
COTNEY, ELMER EUGENE
COUCH, HAROLD EUGENE
COUNIHAN, MICHAEL BRENDAN
COWAN, HAROLD EUGENE
COWDRICK, HORACE W JR
COX, GEORGE TOLLOVAR
CRABTREE, MICHAEL ANDREW
CRAIG, CLAYTON GEROME
CRAIG, WILLIAM THOMAS JR
CRANDALL, RODNEY ALLEN
CRANSON, ROBERT DORIAN
CRAWFORD, JOHN NELSON JR
CREWS, CHARLES RICHARD
CRIPE, JACK LESTER
CROCKETT, FREDDIE ISIAH
CROOM, HUBERT
CROSS, BENNIE LEE
CROSS, JOSEPH ALEXANDER
CROSDALE, JACK LEE II
CROZIER, DAVID PAUL
@ CRUZ, JOSEPH
CUBIT, BILLY RAY
CULLEN, KENNETH ARTHUR
CULLEN, MARK JAMES
CULWELL, JIMMY LEE
CUMBO, LINWOOD RAY
CUNNINGHAM, BRUCE WAYNE
CUNNINGHAM, WALTER WAYNE
CURRAN, PAUL WILLIAM
CURTIN, JOHN HENRY
CURTIS, JOSEPH PAUL
CUTRER, MARVIN EUGENE
CUTTING, JERRY WOODROW
D AGOSTINO, JOHN
D AGOSTINO, JOHN R JR
D ENTREMONT, LARRY AIME
DAIGLE, BRADLEY TIMOTHY
DAILEY, GERALD LEE
DALE, DENNIS HUMPHREY
DALOLA, JOHN FRANCIS III
DANIELS, CHARLIES
DARBY, JIMMY EARL
DARDEN, PAUL L JR
DARLING, ROBERT HARRY
DARRIGAN, RAYMOND MAURICE

DAUGHTON, JOSEPH D JR
DAVENPORT, ROBERT MALCUM
DAVIS, CHARLIE
DAVIS, GERALD EDWARD
DAVIS, MARCUS RAYMOND
DAVIS, SHERMAN PONDEXTER
DAVIS, WILBERT CLAUDE
DE HERRERA, BENJAMIN DAVID
DE LA CRUZ, FERNANDO
DE LOACH, LLOYD DWAIN
DE MARSICO, MICHAEL JAMES
DE PRIEST, DAVID WAYNE
DE RISO, LESTER MICHAEL
DEAL, FLOYD ANDREW
DEAN, ANTHONY WILLIAM
DEDEAUX, ALDON JAMES
DEDMAN, TONY
DEEDRICK, CHARLES ORVIS JR
DEERINWATER, BRUCE EDWARD
DEGEN, ROBERT PAUL
DEL CAMP, ADRIAN LEROY
DEL GRECO, VICTOR JR
DELANO, MERWIN A JR
DEMPS, HENRY VAN
DENNISON, CORTLAND ELLIS
DESCHENES, THOMAS ALFRED
DESROCHERS, ROBERT ALAN
DEUWERLING, WILLIAM JOSEPH
DEWEY, JAMES ELLIOTT
DIANDA, CASIMIRO
DICE, ROBERT FLOYD
DICKERSON, JOHN GREEN III
DICKERSON, WILLIAM CLINT
DICKEY, JAMES WHEELER
DICKINSON, DANIEL ALBERT
DICKSON, MARK LANE
DIXON, TERRENCE GLADE
DOLAN, JAMES EDWIN
@ DOLES, JOHN G
DOMINE, MANUEL DE LEON
DOMINIAK, HOWARD STANLEY
DONLON, MICHAEL
DORING, LARRY ALLEN
DOSECK, RICHARD ALLEN
DOWD, CARTER WAYNE
DOWDY, RUFUS JOHN
DOWNING, JOHN FREDERICK
DOZIER, DEBROW
DRAKE, MICHEAL JOHN
DROWN, DAVID ALAN
DUBB, DEWAIN V
DUCKER, RONALD DWIGHT
DUCKETT, JOSEPH L JR
DUFFY, THOMAS BENEDICT JR
DULAC, MALCOLM CYRIL
DUNBAR, JOHN MICHAEL
DUNCAN, KENNETH EUGENE
DUNCAN, RONNIE MARSHALL
DUNFORD, FRANK BELLEW III
DUNN, GREGORY LYNN
DURAN, ALFONSO MARQUEZ
DURHAM, JOHN MELVIN
DYDYSKI, STEPHEN MICHAEL
DYE, TIMOTHY ELDEN
DYER, JOSEPH FRANCIS JR
DYER, MARTIN BARRY JR
EBALD, MICHAEL LEO
ECKER, ROBERT RAYMOND
EDDY, RICHARD NELSON
EDWARDS, GEORGE RAY FAYFIE
EDWARDS, STEVEN FRANK
EGAN, TIMOTHY JAMES
EIDSON, SAMUEL ARLEN

ELLIOTT, ARTHUR FLOYD
ELLIOTT, ROBERT THOMAS III
ELLIS, HARRY JOSEPH III
ELLIS, JAMES LEE JR
ELLIS, JAMES MARION
ELLIS, MICHAEL LE ROY
ELLSWORTH, NEIL ROBERT
ELMORE, GARY LEWIS
EMBREY, GRADY KEITH
EMMERT, JAMES RICHARD
ENGLE, RUSSEL WARREN
ENGLISH, GLENN HARRY JR
ENGRAM, RANDAL CLYDE
EPPERSON, ROY ALLEN
EPPS, LAMONT GEORGE
ERICKSON, KENT DOUGLAS
ERICSON, WILLIAM F II
ERVIN, JERRY LYNN
ERWIN, ARTHUR ALBERT
ESCARENO, ARMANDO
ESPARZA, FELIX JR
@ EZERNACK, TROY S
EVANS, CECIL VAUGHN
EVANS, JAMES LARRY
EVANS, JAMES WILLIAM
EVANS, WADDEL
EVANS, WILLARD JAMES
FABRIZIO, JAMES
FARLEY, JAMES CABELL
FARMER, CHARLIE WILL JR
FAVROTH, CHARLES
FELDER, JESSE CLARANCE
FENNESSEY, DAVID LEE
FERA, JOHN ANTHONY
FERENCE, MICHAEL WILLIAM
FERGUSON, JAMES DONAHUE
FERGUSON, JERRY ROGER
FERGUSON, LOWELL VERNON JR
FERGUSON, MICHAUEL DON
FERRARO, DAVID ALLEN
FERRELL, BILLY
FERRULLA, ROBERT SAMUEL
FIELDS, HERMAN THURSTON
FIELDS, JULIAN THOMAS
FIELDS, LLOYD JR
FILIPPELLI, ALFRED ANDREW
FINCH, TERRY DEAN
FINNEY, BOBBY LEE
FLADRY, LE ROY EDWARD
FLECK, ROBERT LEE
FLEMING, WILLIAM ELGIN JR
* FLETCHER, JACOB S
FLETCHER, LON M
FLORES, RAMON JR
FLORES-JIMENEZ, ANGEL RAMO
FLOREZ, TONY MANUEL
FLOYD, JAMES WALTER
FLOYD, LONNIE ALLEN
FLOYD, ROBERT GENE
FLYNT, JAMES WILLIAM III
FOGLE, LARY DALE
FOLEY, JAMES WILLIAMS
FOOTE, PETER
FORDHAM, JERRY LEE
FORE, WILLIAM C
FORKUM, GARRY MICHAEL
FOSTER, BYRON JAMES
FOSTER, DANIEL WILLIAM
FOSTER, STEEN BRUCE
FOSTER, WILLIE FRANK
FOX, GARY DUANE
FOX, ROBERT CHARLES
FOX, THOMAS AMISS

FOY, THOMAS WALTER
 FRAKES, JERRY ALLEN
 FRANCIS, PAUL JAMES
 FRANCKOWIAK, JOSEPH RALPH
 FRANK, JOHNSON FRANCIS
 FRANKLIN, LAWRENCE ANDRE
 FRANKLIN, WILLIE
 FRAZER, KENNETH CHARLES
 FREDERICK, JAMES CARL
 FREDERICK, LAMAR DONALD
 @ FREEMAN, DANIEL L
 FREEMAN, DAVID HAROLD
 FRIAR, FREDDIE LYNN
 FRICKE, PATRICK LOYAL
 FRIEND, GARY RALPH
 FRIGAULT, JOSEPH O
 FRITTS, FREDERIC WILLIAM
 FROEHLICH, NORBERT LOUIS
 FUJIMOTO, DONALD SHUICHI
 FULLER, FLOYD EDWARD JR
 FULLER, JOHNNIE CHESTER
 FULLER, MICHAEL DAVID
 FUNSTON, JOSEPH ERNEST
 FURNEY, WILLIS LEE
 FYALL, VERNON ROBERT
 GADDIE, DAVID JR
 GAFTUNIK, ROBERT ERNEST
 GAINES, MELVIN CLYDE
 GALLAGHER, FRANK R
 GALYAN, TROY ALEXANDER
 GAMBLE, HENRY HWEY
 GARCIA, JOE ROBERT
 GARCIA, JUAN MANUEL
 GARCIA, PEDRO INCARNACION
 GARCIA, RAMON
 GARCIA, RAYMOND JR
 GARDNER, JACK ELROY
 GARDNER, JAMES EDWARDS
 GARNER, JACKIE WAYNE
 GARRETT, ALLEN MORGAN
 GARRETT, HENRY WAYNE
 GARRISON, EARL STANLEY
 GASKINS, WILBUR CORNELL
 GASKO, ROBERT JOHN JR
 GASTON, ROSS ALLEN
 GATES, RICHARD PALMER
 GAYMON, STEPHEN H
 GEARHART, DONALD LEE
 GENTRY, BOBBY LEE
 GENTRY, DENNIS WAYNE
 GENTRY, TERRANCE NEIL
 GEOGHAGEN, GEORGE EDDIE
 GEORGE, GERALD LEE JR
 GERALD, WILSON TRUMAN
 GERMAIN, JAMES THOMAS
 GEROME, MICHAEL ANTHONY
 GETTER, WAYDELL
 GHEE, JAMES FITZROY
 GIBSON, BURRELL
 GILMORE, RONALD
 GILRAY, ROBERT BRUCE JR
 GIPSON, ROBERT PAUL
 GIUSTA, JOSEPH MICHAEL
 GIVENS, ROY NATHANIEL
 GLADDEN, MICHAEL JAY
 GLASSCOCK, DAVID LEWIS
 GLEASON, ARTHUR A
 GLIDDEN, ROBERT WAYNE
 GLOVER, FREDDIE BEE
 GLOVER, LARRY RAY
 GODOY, PETER JR
 GOFF, ALAN SHERMAN
 GOHEEN, RICHARD H
 GOIAS, EVERETT WILLIAM
 GOLD, ERIC STUART
 GOLDMAN, HAROLD
 GOLSON, ANTHONY
 GOMEZ-DIAZ, RIGOBERTO
 GOOCH, CALVIN LIONEL
 GOSSETT, WILLIAM O
 GOUGH, LINWOOD
 GRAHAM, HARVEY GENE
 GRAHAM, JAMES HENRY
 GRAHAM, KENNETH ERROL
 GRAVES, EDWARD STEPHEN
 GRAVES, FRANK
 GRAVES, JERRY LEE
 GRAY, HERBERT HOOVER
 GRAY, JOHN TERRY
 GRAY, ROBERT ALLEN
 GRAY, WARREN
 GREEN, MOSES
 GREEN, RICHARD AL
 GREEN, WILLIE FRANK
 GREENE, KENNETH LAWRENCE
 GREENE, LAWRENCE DOUGLASS
 GREENE, LLOYD ROLLAND
 GREENE, LLOYD VINCENT
 GREENWALD, DENNIS
 GREENWOOD, FRANCIS DAVID
 GREVILLE, LEONARD GEORGE
 GRIFFIN, SAMMIE
 GRIFFIS, MICHAEL DANIEL
 GRISMER, EDGAR JOSEPH
 GRISETTE, PRELOW
 GROOMS, RICHARD JAMES
 GRUBB, STEVE FREEMAN
 GRUEZKE, JAMES A
 GUERIN, ROBERT LOUIS
 GUERRERO, JOSE F JR
 GUERRERO, WILEY
 GUILLORY, JAMES CLIFTON
 GUILMET, DANIEL J
 GULLEY, RONALD WALTER
 GUNN, GEORGE BRUCE
 GUNTHER, JOHN JACOB
 GUTIERREZ, ALBERT R JR
 GUTRICK, DONALD MAURICE
 GUYER, ALBERT MARSHALL
 HACEK, JAMES DAVID
 HACKWORTH, DWIGHT LEE
 HAGER, ROBERT LEE JR
 HAGERTY, WILLIAM THOMAS
 HAGOOD, JOHN ROBERT
 HAGUE, GERALD CHARLES
 HAINES, ADHERE NE LOUIS
 @ HALL, BLAKE W
 HALL, BRUCE
 HALL, CLARENCE
 HALL, DONALD DALE
 HALL, GARY DODDS
 HAMBLIN, RONALD B
 HAMBY, JACKIE DWAYNE
 HAMILTON, EDWARD
 HAMILTON, JOSEPH THOMAS
 HAMILTON, PAUL GEORGE JR
 HAMILTON, VIRGIL VERN
 HAMM, DONALD CURTIS
 HANEY, THOMAS WILLIAM
 HANIOTES, STEVEN MICHAEL
 HANNIGAN, JOHN EDWARD III
 HANNON, RICHARD LAMAR
 HARBISON, SHERRON EVERETT
 HARDEN, ROBERT WESLEY JR
 HARDIMAN, LA FRANCIS
 HARDING, DAVID LEE
 HARDY, ABRAHAM LINCOLN
 HARDY, PHILLIP DEAN
 HARING, KARL RICHARD
 HARLAND, WAYNE LYNN
 HARPER, HAROLD OWEN
 HARPER, MARVIN
 HARPER, RICHARD EARL
 HARRINGTON, CLIFTON WILLIAM
 HARRIS, NATHANIEL
 HARRISON, JIMMIE RAY
 HARRISON, JOHNNY
 HART, ERNEST DWIGHT JR
 * HART, JOHN D
 HART, RANDOLPH GUY JR
 HARTMAN, JOHN WILLIAM
 HASKETT, EDWARD O DAY
 HASTINGS, BOBBY GENE
 HATCHETT, KYLE HENRY
 HAVEL, RICHARD THOMAS
 HAWTHORNE, WILLIAM ALLEN
 HAYES, BOBBY LEE
 HAYES, HAROLD UTAH
 HAYES, JOSEPH D
 HAYES, THOMAS
 HEAGGANS, THURSTON CONRAD
 HEATH, RUSSELL M
 * HEBERT, JUSTIN
 HEEREN, DARREL WAYNE
 HEGLER, MOSE JR
 HELLER, DAVID JUNIOR
 HEMMITT, TERRY EUGENE
 HENDERSON, GREG NEAL
 HENDERSON, JAMES D
 HENNEGHAN, ROBERT LEE
 HENNING, ARTHUR ROBERT
 HENSLEY, MARK ALAN
 HERING, MARK RICHARD
 HERLIHY, JOHN HENRY JR
 HERNANDEZ, RUDOLPH VILLALPANE
 @ HERNANDEZ, EMMANUEL
 HERNANDEZ-RODRIGUEZ, RUBENEDID
 HERRERA, FRANK G
 HERRON, ROCKWELL SELDEN
 HERST, WILLIAM DONALD JR
 HERVAS, AARON KAMALA
 HESS, ZAN
 HESTER, ELVESTER JR
 HESTER, VANESTER LAMAR
 HIBBLER, RICHARD WAYNE
 HICKS, FRANK EDWARD
 HICKS, RANDOLPH TRUMAN
 HIDO, RICHARD LEE
 HILDERBRANT, PHILLIP JAY
 HILL, ALVIN GENE
 HILL, GERALD WILLIAM
 HILL, LARRY EDWIN
 HILL, LEROY
 HILL, MAURICE RICHARD
 HILLMAN, RONALD ARWED
 HILTERBRAN, DANNY LEE
 HIMES, JACK LANDEN
 HIMMELREICH, HARRY EDWARD
 @ HINES, DEREK S
 HINKLE, WILLIAM CECIL
 HINTON, DENNIS EDWARD
 HIPPI, JOSEPH EARNEST
 HOLCOMB, DOYLE
 HOLCOMB, REBEL LEE
 HOLEMAN, RONALD STEVEN
 HOLLAND, CHARLES JAMES
 HOLLAND, DOUGLAS C
 HOLLAND, RUSSELL JAMES
 HOLLIMAN, TED DELANE JR

HOLMAN, SAMUEL L
HOLMES, THOMAS EUGENE
HOLTHOFF, WILLIAM HENRY
HONEYCUTT, DONALD EUGENE
HOOD, RICHARD E JR
HOOKS, DAYTON JOSEPH
HOOPER, VINS RONALD
HOPKINS, JAMES HARRISON
HOSKINS, DANNY
HOSKINS, ROBERT LEE JR
HOWARD, DAVID LAFATE
HOWARD, LAWRENCE PAIGE JR
HOWIE, NORMAN PERRY JR
HU, PATRICK HOP SUNG
HUDDLESTON, THOMAS PATE
HUDNALL, WILLIAM LEON
HUDSON, RAYMOND HOYT
HUDSON, THOMAS HAROLD
HUFFMAN, DAVID KEITH
HUGGINS, FRAZIER DANIEL
HUGHES, DENNIS FOX
HUGHES, FURMAN DAVID
HUGHES, JERRY NELSON
HUGHES, JESSE RAY JR
HUGHLETT, JOHN ALBERT
HULSLANDER, ROSS THOMAS
HUMPHREY, HARVEY EDWARD
HUMPHREY, VICTOR JAMES
HUMPHRIES, WAYNE WARREN
HUNT, JOSEPH FRANCIS
HUSTEAD, TERENCE MICHAEL
HYETT, KENNETH MONROE
@ HYLAND, JOSHUA M
IANDOLI, DONALD
IMPELITHERE, ALAN JOHN
INSLEE, RAYMOND STEPHEN
INSULIN, OTTO
* IVORY, CRAIG
JACKSON, BEN JR
JACKSON, EDWARD
JACKSON, EDWARD JR
JACKSON, GERALD ARTHUR
JACKSON, JAMES CLEVELAND
JACKSON, ROBERT EUGENE
JACOBSON, KENNETH JAMES
JAMES, JOHN HENRY JR
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JARVIS, WILLIAM THOMAS
JASSO, JOHN
JATICH, GARY LEE
JAWOROWICZ, LAWRENCE FRANK
JENKINS, BARNETTE GARTRELL
JENKINS, JAMES EARL
JEWETT, STEPHEN DYER
JIM, MARTIN JR
JINDRICH, STEVEN FREDERICK
JOHNSON, ALLEN ISAAC
JOHNSON, DAVID ARTHUR
JOHNSON, DAVID E
JOHNSON, DAVID HAROLD
JOHNSON, DAVID JOSEPH
JOHNSON, FRED ARTHUR
JOHNSON, HARRY J
JOHNSON, HENRY L
JOHNSON, JAMES
JOHNSON, JAMES ALLEN
JOHNSON, JAMES JR
JOHNSON, JIMMY LEROY JR
JOHNSON, MCARTHUR
JOHNSTON, RICHARD BRUCE
JOHNSTON, RICHARD J
JOLE, RICHARD WADE
JONES, BENNIE FRANK

JONES, DOUGLAS LEE
JONES, ERVIN
JONES, JOHN HENRY
JONES, LARRY WILLIAM
JONES, LAWRENCE EDWARD
JONES, MARYUS NAPOLEON
JONES, MILFORD
JONES, PAUL
JONES, RAY MORGAN KEITH
JONES, RONALD RUSSELL
JONES, SHERMAN LAWRENCE
JONES, THEODORE R JR
JONES, THOMAS HOWARD
JONES, TOMMY ROY
JONES, WILLIE DONALD
JORDAN, DANIEL WALTER
JORDAN, LARRY LEON
JORDAN, PAUL ROBERT
JORDAN, WILLIAM E III
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JORGENSEN, EMORY LEE
JUDD, DONALD R
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KAPELUCK, JOHN MICHAEL
KARR, DAVID RAY
KASAI, THOMAS TARO
KAUFMAN, HAROLD JAMES
KAVICH, ROBERT DALE
KAWAMURA, TERRY TERUO
KAZMIERCZAK, ROBERT JOSEPH
KEEL, DAVID LATTIMORE
KEENEY, JOSEPH FRANK
KEGLEY, JOE DAVID
KEIL, DUANE RICHARD
KEITH, JAMES KELLY III
KELLEY, JERRY CONRAD
KELLEY, LARRY MILTON
KELLY, JAMES MICHAEL
KELLY, JOHN WILLIAM SIDNEY
KELLY, LARRY LEE
KELLY, STEPHEN ALLEN
KENNEDY, CHARLES F
KENNEDY, MICHAEL JOSEPH
KENNEDY, RAYMOND O
KERN, DOUGLAS DUANE
KERNAN, MICHAEL ROBERT
KERNS, GLENN DIRK
KEY, ANDERSON HAROLD
KEYS, MICHAEL HENRY
KIDD, DONNY RAMON
KIEHL, MICHAEL RAYMOND
KIER, CHARLES RICHARD
KILEY, MICHAEL JAMES
KIMBALL, RICHARD NELSON JR
KIMBLE, EDDIE CLAUDE
KIMBROUGH, GOLSBY JR
KING, HAROLD B
KING, JACK LLOYD
KIPP, RAYMOND SIDNEY
KIRCHNER, GARY ALLEN
KISCADEN, MICHAEL EDWARD
KISER, ROBERT JESSE
KLANIECKI, EDWARD MATTHEW
KLEIN, SZOLTON SIGMOND
KLINDT, DAN THOMAS
KLOSSEK, GERALD
KNAUS, JOHN RICHARD
KNOX, IRVILLE J
KNUDSON, KENNETH MAX
KOCK, EUGENE JOHN GEORGE
KOEFOOD, RODGER MAGNUS
KOFLE, SIEGFRIED

KOHLER, LUDWIG PETER
KOIVUPALO, ROBERT W JR
KOONCE, JEFFREY WAYNE
KOPKE, ROGER JOSEPH
KOWALESKI, GREGORY STANLEY
KRANSHAN, TIMOTHY MICHAEL
KROS, ROGER ALLEN
KRUEGER, GREGORY KEITH
KRYSKE, LEO NEAL
KUBELUS, ANTHONY GEORGE JR
KULIK, CASIMIR
KULIKOWSKI, EDWARD JOSEPH
KUPKOWSKI, JOHN WALTER
LA ROUCHE, JAMES MICHAEL
LA VALLEE, ROBERT C JR
LABRECQUE, ROBERT WILLIAM
LAIRD, RICHARD FRANCIS
LAKE, LARRY VERNON
LAMB, EDWARD ALAN
LAMB, HOWARD SIDNEY
LANCTOT, RICHARD LOUIS
LANGHAM, HOLLAND IRWIN
LANGLER, STEPHEN DOUGLAS
LANGLEY, WESTON JOSEPH
LANTZ, PETER J
LANZARIN, LEONARD ALLAN
LARACUENTE, ERNESTO LUIS
LARSEN, MICHAEL CONRAD
LARSON, DAVID WAYNE
LARSON, RANDOLPH LOUIS
LASKIN, FRANK HOWARD
LATTMAN, DONALD WAYNE
LAU, JOEL THOMAS
LAUREANO-LOPEZ, ISMAEL
LAVELLE, JOHN JOSEPH
LAWRENCE, BILLY EVERETT
LAWRENCE, TORY DRAKE
LAWTON, EDWARD LESTER
LAYPORTE, OSCAR ROBERT
LE LEAUX, MICHAEL JAMES
LEAKE, JOHNNY H
LEATHERS, CLIFFORD W JR
LEE, JAMES HOWARD
LEE, ROY RONALD
LEFFLER, RUSSELL ALAN
@ LEHMILLER, MICHAEL R
LEIGH, NEWELL FERRELL JR
LESANDO, NICHOLAS PETER JR
LESKA, ROBERT JOHN
LESTER, GRADY RUDOLPH JR
LESTER, JAMES ROBERT
LESZCZYNSKI, WITOLD JOHN
LEVINGS, JAMES M
LEVY, GERALD
LEWIS, CHARLIE GRAY
LEWIS, ELTON
LEWIS, GARY FRANKLIN
LEWIS, GARY LEE
LEWIS, JERRY D
LEWIS, MICHAEL
LEWIS, TEDD MCCLUNE
LEYVA-PARRA-FRIAS, FELIX F F
LIMA, KENNETH KAWIKA
LIMINGA, FREDERICK HUGO
LINDGREN, ROBERT WILLIAM
LINDLEY, BOBBY PAT
LINDSEY, DENNIS PAUL
LISBON, JOHNNY
LITWIN, ROBERT RICHARD
LLOYD, MARTIN ROGER
LOCHRIDGE, ROBERT ERIC
LOCKE, JACK ELSWORTH
LOCKETT, CLEO

LOCKRIDGE, JAMES T
LOFTON, RAYFON
LOGAN, GORDON WESLEY JR
LOISEL, JAMES LEE
LONG, JOE
LONGORIA, JOE GILBERT
LOPEZ, RENE CERDA
LOPEZ-GARCIA, GEOVEL
LORENZ, TERRY WAYNE
LOUVRING, CARL FREDRICK
LOVE, JOHN ARTHUR
LOWE, DONALD EVERETT
LOWE, WALTER BEDFORD JR
LOWRY, JIMMY CLINT
LOZADA, CARLOS JAMES
LUCERO, PATRICK ARNOLD
LUIS, GEORGE GREGORIO
LUKES, THOMAS BURTON
LUNA, ROBERT
LUNSFORD, JAMES WILLIAM JR
LUTTRELL, GARY ALLEN
LYERLY, RONALD WAYNE
MABE, ROGER DALE
MABE, TOMMY DARRELL
MAC NAUGHT, ROBERT WILLIAM
MADRID, ERNEST
MAGEE, MITCHELL JR
MAGRUDER, DOUGLAS GRAHAM
MALONE, HERBERT LEE
Malone, JIMMY EUGENE
MANEY, RALPH WARREN
MANGUM, SAM HENRY
MANN, CHARLES CLIFTON JR
MANSFIELD, PATRICK LEROY
MANUEL, ROLAND WILL
MAPLES, FRANCIS LEROY
MARASON, JOHN EDGAR
MARCHESI, JIMMY EUGENE
MARQUEZ, GERALDO
MARQUEZ, PAUL JOSEPH
MARQUEZ, VALENTINE
MARROQUIN, TOMAS JR
MARSH, HAROLD CLIFTON
MARSHALL, DENNIS CRAIG
MARTIN, LARRY
MARTIN, RALPH
MARTIN, STEVEN LARRY
MARTIN, TERRY LEE
MARTINEZ, ENRIQUE
MARTINEZ-MERCADO, EDWIN J
MARTINOVSKY, MILOSLAV JOSE
MARTINSON, DARRELL WAYNE
MASON, CHARLES JOSEPH L
MASON, RICHARD FLOYD
MASON, WILLIAM PAUL
MATHEWS, CHARLES DONALD
MATHISON, MICHAEL K
MATLOCK, WILLIAM TRAVIS
MATTHEWS, ROBERT L
MATTINGLY, GEORGE MICHAEL
MAY 35186, ROY EDWARD
MAYER, WALTER CHRISTIAN
MAYS, THOMAS CURTIS
MC ALLISTER, CAMERON TRENT
MC BRIDE, ELLIS A JR
MC BROOM, WILLIAM STANLEY
MC CORD, MICHAEL RAYE
MC COY, ELEC
MC CRAY, FRANK JR
MC CRAY, PLEASANT JR
MC CRYSTAL **, JAMES LARRY
MC DAID, JOHN MURL
MC DERMOTT, TERRENCE M

MC DOWELL, MELVIN WARREN
MC EACHIN, JOHN JR
MC GEHEE, NOBLE DOUGLAS
MC GHEE, RICHARD DALE
MC GINN, JOHN ARTHUR
MC GINTY, LAWRENCE MICHAEL
MC INTIRE, WALTER EDWIN JR
MC KEE, JACK ROGER
MC KOY, WILLIAM OTHELLO
MC MAHAN, DANEIL
MC MAHAN, DANIEL JACKSON
MC MAHAN, JOHN EDWARD
MC MILLEN, RONALD DEAN
MC NEIL, WILLIE DAVIS
MC NULTY, CHARLES RICHARD
MC QUINN, BYRON DEAN
MCCANN, FRANCIS JOSEPH JR
MCDONALD, MARTIN TERRANCE
MCLVAIN, EDWARD M III
MCLHERN, MICHAEL SHEA
MEADE, DAVID ERNEST
MEADOR, DANIEL R
MEADOWS, JOHN WILLIAM
MEADOWS, MILLARD FRANKLIN
MEANS, VERNON
MEARS, CHARLES ROBERT
MEARS, PETER JOSEPH JR
MEDLEY, MICHAEL MILTON
MEEHAN, RAYMOND PATRICK
MEISBURGER, JOSEPH STEVEN
MENDALL, CARLTON JOSEPH
MENDEZ, THEODORE SR
MERCHANT, CARL LEE
MERKLE, ELLIOTT LYNN
MERRILL, WELDON BERNARD
METZLER, PERRY
MEZA, JESUS JAMES
MICHAEL, DON LESLIE
MICHAEL, JAMES ALBERT
MICHALOPOULOS, RAYMOND WIL
MICKNA, JOHN RONALD
MIDDLETON, STEVEN ALFRED
MIKA, STEPHEN ADAM
MIKE, STEVEN
MIKULA, EMERY GEORGE
MILLER, CLARENCE ALVIE JR
MILLER, IVAN DEAN JR
MILLER, JERRY ROBERT
MILLER, JOSEPH LLOYD
MILLER, LARRY LEE
MILLER, LOUIS CHARLES
MILLER, RALPH PETERSON III
MILLINGER, GLEN ALLAN
MILLNER, CARLTON BRANDARD
MILLS, WARD WARREN JR
MINCKS, JIMMIE LEE
MINICK, STEPHEN MICHAEL
MINNIX, LEROY FRANKLIN
MINO, ROBERT E
MINOR, MICHAEL JAMES
* MINUCCI, JOSEPH II
MITCHELL, CHARLES LEROY JR
MITCHELL, CLARENCE
MITCHELL, LARRY GENE
MITCHELL, LARRY LEON
MITCHELL, MICHAEL SIDNEY
MITCHELL, ROBERT STEVENS
MITCHELL, THOMAS VICTOR
MOBLEY, SUTTON JR
MOHR, RICHARD ALLEN
MOLTON, KENNETH WAYNE
MONDRAGON, BENJAMIN ALLEN
MOODY, FRANCIS

MOORE, CARLOS DAVID
MOORE, DENNIS WESLEY
MOORE, DOUGLAS EUGENE
MOORE, GILLIAM
MOORE, JIMMY RAY
MOORE, MICHAEL KEITH
MORAN, JOHN WILLIAM
MORAN, LONZO JOSEPH JR
MORENO, JESUS JR
MORGAN, GEORGE ROBERT
MORRIS, CHARLES H JR
MORRIS, ROBERT L
MORRIS, THOMAS W
MORRISSEY, JAMES JOSEPH
MORTON, JERRY WAYNE
@ MORTON, JOHN D
MOSER, HARRY JULIUS IV
MOSES, ABELL
MOULTON, LESTER NEAL
MULKEY, HERBERT EUGENE JR
MULLENS, ROBERT JOSEPH JR
MULLER, HAROLD BRADLEY
MULVEY, FRANCIS TRAINOR
MUNDEN, DONALD MARTIN
MUNDY, ROBERT HAL
MUNN, WILLIAM ARTHUR
MURPHY, TIMOTHY JOHN
MURPHY, WILLIAM JOSEPH
MURRAY, DARNELL PATRICK
MURRAY, LARRY
MURRAY, MARVIN WINSTON
MURRAY, THOMAS J
MURRAY, WAYNE PAUL
MURREY, TRACY HENRY
MYERS, DONALD WAYNE
MYERS, R C
MYERS, RICHARD VAUGHN
MYERS, TONY HOWARD
NADEAU, LARRY JOSEPH
NAHODIL, DONALD A JR
NANCE, SHIRL BRAD
NASTOR, TONY VALDEZ
NATHAN, JOHN ARTHUR
NAVARRETE, JOB JR
NEAL, WILBERT HOYT JR
NEGRO, DANIEL LEE
NELSON, DUANE MICHAEL
NELSON, EARL
NELSON, RUSSEL COURTNEY
NERVEZA, DELMORE BYRON
NEWSOME, JOHNNY
NICHOLS, PHILIP LARRY
NOAH, JOSH CAIN
NOE, JERRY LYNN
NOSS, JAMES THEODORE
NOTHERN, JAMES WILLIAM JR
NULL, RICKY LEE
O BOYLE, TERRENCE PATRICK
O CONNELL, ROBERT GENE
O CONNOR, FREDERICK J JR
O CONNOR, MICHAEL DONALD
O NEAL, JERRY LEE
O NEAL, TONY LEE
OGEA, WALLACE LEE
OGLE, DAVID ROBERT
OLIPHANT, JOSEPH B JR
OLIVE, MILTON LEE III
OLIVO, RAFAEL
OLLILA, DONALD WARREN
OLSZEWSKI, JOHN MICHAEL
OROSZ, ANDREW JOHN
ORRIS, STEVE III
ORTEGA, ANIBAL JR

ORTIZ, DOMINGO
ORTIZ, JOHN MANUEL
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OSIER, ROBERT DALE JR
OVERBECK, PHILIP MOREY
OVERWEG, ROGER DALE
OVIEDO, HIGINIO OVALLE
OWEN, STEVEN CRAIG
OWENS, BEN
OWENS, CHARLES EDWARD
OWENS, KENNETH GRANT
OWENS, ROBERT LEE
OWENS, WILBERT
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PACK, ROBERT VAN
PADILLA, EDDIE JACK
PAGE, THELBERT G
PALENSKE, WILLIAM ALLEN
PALM, JOSH JR
@ PALMER, CHRISTOPHER L
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PANGELINAN, GREGORIO L
PANNELL, JOSEPH
PAPPAS, ELEFTHERIOS PANTEL
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PARKER, HERMAN JR
PARKER, JAMES ALLEN
PARKER, LARRY
PARKER, MICHAEL
PARKER, ROBERT KENNETH
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PARMERTER, MICHAEL JAMES
PARNELL, BILLY RAY
PARR, KEITH MASON
PARRISH, ROGER ALAN
PARSONS, RONALD ALLEN
PARTEE, WARDLOW WESLEY
PASCAL, IVAN KIMOKEO
PATINO, ROBERTO LERMA
PATRICK, RICHARD MICHAEL
PATTERSON, JAMES ROBERT
PATTERSON, RICHARD STUART
PATTERSON, THOMAS
PATTERSON, TIMOTHY
PATTON, GEORGE
PATTON, JOHN PERRY
PAULICH, PATRICK JAMES
PAULK, ELIAS JOHNSON
PAYNE, ROY CHARLES JR
PEACE, CHARLES LAMONT
PEARSALL, RICHARD MARK
PEEL, LAWRENCE RAY
PEGGS, ALBERT LEE
PELLETIER, RICHARD WILLIAM
PENDERGIST, RONALD LYNN
PEREZ, JOSE MANUEL
PERRY, RANDALL LAWRENCE
PERSON, DAVID EUGENE
PETERS, DANIEL ALLEN
PETERS, ROBERT CHARLES
PETERSON, RICHARD W
PETRECHKO, EDMUND A JR
PETTIS, LORENZO RICHARD
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PHILLIPS, THOMAS FRANK
PHILLIPS, WILLIAM LEROY
PHILYAW, LAWRENCE EDWARD
PICKETT, MALCOLM JEROME
PIERCE, JOSEPH HOWARD JR
PIERCE, LARRY STANLEY
PIERSON, DENNIS LEROY
PILLOW, RONALD EDWARD

PINHEIRO, JEFFREY ANTONE
PINN, ARNOLD
PLAMBECK, PAUL WANDLING JR
PLUMB, CHARLES DONALD JR
POE, JESSIE GERALD
POFF, ELBERT DARRELL
PONTING, JOHN L
POOLE, ORIS LAMAR
POOR, GEORGE ALBERT JR
POORE, LEONARD BURTON
POPE, THOMAS ROBERT
PORT, GARY CRAIG
PORTER, TIMOTHY MICHAEL
PORTIS, ANTHONY JEROME
POTTER, ALBERT RAYMOND
POTTER, JERRY LEE
POWELL, RICHARD EDWIN
POWELL, STEVEN REED
POWERS, JOHN ROGER
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PYPNIOWSKI, LARRY
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QUICK, GEORGE DEWEY JR
QUINN, STEPHEN WAYNE
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RABIDEAU, JOHN J
RAFFENSPERGER, JAMES E JR
RAIFORD, CHARLES LEROY JR
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RAMIREZ, MARIO
RAMM, FERENC JOHN
RAMON, DENNIS MICHAEL
RAMOS, STEPHEN KEALOHA
RANDALL, LOUIS R
RANKIN, EDWARD GARRY
RATLIFE, BILLY HARRISON
RAY, CHARLES
RAY, DURWARD FRANK
RAY, MICHAEL WAYNE
RAY, WALTER DONALD
REBITS, JOHN RAYMOND
REDMOND, CARTER
REED, PAUL EDWARD
REEDER, PHILIP DALLAM
REEVES, MICHAEL DAVIS
REEVES, RAYMOND STANLEY JR
REICHERT, JOSEPH R
REIGLE, AARON HENRY
REILLY, JAMES JOSEPH JR
REILLY, JOSEPH JOHN
REINBOTT, HAROLD W.
RENDON, JOSEPH
RENFRO, NORMAN A
RESPRESS, THOMAS
RETZLAFF, ARTHUR CLIFTON
REYES, EDWARD THOMAS
REYES, HENRY R
REYNOLDS, DAVID RICHARD
REYNOLDS, HARVEY CLAUDE
* REYNOLDS, SEAN C
RIBITSCH, ERIC
RICE, JOHNNIE EDWARD JR
RICHARDS, LEONARD JEFFREY
RICHARDSON, JIMMIE JENKINS
RICK, EUGENE MERLYN
RIGBY, OLIS RAY
RIGGINS, BILLY G

RILEY, CHARLES FRANKLIN
RILEY, THOMAS JAY
RINEHART, JOSEPH LESTER
RIOS, ROBERTO PENA
RISTINEN, ARMAND ERVIN
RIVERA-GARCIA, WILLIAM
RIZOR, DAVID LEE
RIZZI, RALPH JOSEPH
ROBERTS, CLAUDE
ROBERTS, PAUL MICHAEL
ROBERTS, WALTER JAMES
ROBILLARD, WILFRED ROLAND
ROBINSON, CHARLES HARVEY
ROBINSON, CLINTON CURTIS
ROBINSON, FRANCIS JOSEPH
ROBINSON, JOHN
ROBINSON, WILLIE JAMES
ROBSON, TIMOTHY FRANCIS
ROCHA, JOSE MARIE
ROCK, GERALD FRANCIS
RODARTE, ALEXANDER D
RODRIGUES, RICHARD
RODRIGUEZ, ENCARNACION
RODRIGUEZ, ROBERT
RODRIGUEZ, ROMIRO C
ROERINK, GARY DOYLE
ROEST, DOUGLAS RAY
ROG, EDWARD JOSEPH JR
ROGAN, JAMES PAUL
ROGERS, JERRY EUGENE
ROMAN, JEREMIAS
ROMERO, TRINE JR
ROOD, CRAIG ALLEN
ROSE, LAWRENCE OLIVER
ROSS, CHARLES GREGORY
ROSS, GENE AUTRY
ROSS, JAMES ARTHUR
ROSS, ROBERT LEE
ROSS, WILLIAM ALLEN
ROST, LEROY ALPHUS
ROUNDTREE, WILLIE JUNIUS
ROUNTREE, GLEN EVERETT
ROWLAND, GEORGE CLAYTON JR
RUIS, DEWEY DOLEN JR
RUSH, JOSEPH BRADLEY
RUSHLOW, RICHARD LEONARD
RUSSELL, PETER LOWELL
RUSSELL, RONNIE LEN
RUSSO, MICHAEL PHILLIP
RUTOWSKI, DENNIS DAVID
RUTTIMANN, ALLAN
RUYBAL, DANNY GILBERT
RYAN, JERRY VAN
RYLEE, JAMES SIDNEY
SABEL, JOEL MICHAEL
SACK, GERALD DUANE
SAENZ, HECTOR MARIO
SAEZ-RAMIREZ, ANGEL PERFIR
SALDANA, RICHARD DAVID
SALZMAN, LAVERN LEO
SAMANS, WALTER A JR
SAMPSON, JOSEPH C JR
SANCHEZ, JESSE
SANDERS, DONALD RAY
SANDERS, DONALD ROBERT JR
SANDERS, FRANCIS EUGENE
SANDERS, ROBERT JAMES
SANFORD, JAMES WALTER
SANTIAGO, TIMOTEO MUNOZ JR
SANTOS, RAFAEL SALAS
SAWYER, JAMES EVERETT JR
SCARBOROUGH, ELMER WAYNE
SCHADDELEE, WILLIAM D

@ SCHAFFER, MICHAEL W
SCHAP, FRANK JOSEPH
SCHEIBER, RICHARD ALAN
SCHEMEL, JERRY L
SCHINDLER, THOMAS JAMES
SCHMIDT, RICHARD CARL
SCHMIDT, STEVEN WARREN
SCHOENBERG, RICHARD C
SCHOOLER, STEVEN THOMAS
SCHOUWBURG, GERRIT JOHN
SCHROBILGEN, WARREN H JR
SCHUH, DAVID MICHAEL
SCHUKAR, RONALD KEITH
SCHULTZ, JAMES CHESTER
SCHUTZ, PETER JOHN
SCHWELLENBACH, GARY RALPH
SCIBELLI, THOMAS ANTHONY
SCOTT, WILLIAM ALEXANDER
SCULLY, EDWARD ANTHONY
SECOR, WILLIAM DALE
SEDA, PABLO ISREAL
SEEKFORF, DANIEL LEONARD
SEGAR, CALVIN RUSSELL
SEMPSPROT, BRUCE GORDON
SERNA, ERNEST
SERREM, MARK MAC DONALD
SERVANTEZ, JOSEPH ANTHONY
SEXTON, HUGH AMES JR
SEXTON, JEFFREY ROSS
SEXTON, WESLEY ROBERT
SHAFER, JAMES DUDLEY
SHAMBLIN, THEODORE
SHARBER, JOHN JR
SHARP, VALDEZ
SHAW, GARY FRANCIS
SHAW, JOHN DILLINGER
SHEPHERD, FRANKLIN STEVE
SHERMAN, JOHN CALVIN
SHERMAN, REX MARCEL
SHERMAN, VICTOR P JR
SHIPE, THOMAS ALLEBACH
SHIPLEY, THOMAS FREDERICK
SHIPMAN, ROBERT DUANE
SHIRMANG, RICHARD
SHOMAKER, JEROME CHARLES
SHOOP, JACK HENRY JR
SHORES, MALTON GENE
SHOVER, BRUCE CHARLES
SHROBA, THOMAS MICHAEL
SIGHOLTZ, ROBERT H JR
SILBAS, ROSENDO FLORES
SIMMONS, WILLIE JAMES
SIMON, RALPH
SIMPSON, CHESTER PAUL
SIMS, HENRY JAMES
SISLER, WILLIAM DOUGLAS
SKILES, JAMES ARTHUR
SLACK, CHARLES LEROY JR
SLADE, BILLY RAY
SLAUGHTER, KENNETH WESLEY
SMITH, CURTIS
SMITH, DAVID HUGH
SMITH, DAVID II
SMITH, DONALD EUGENE
SMITH, FRANK LEE
SMITH, GARY KENNETH
SMITH, GARY WAYNE
SMITH, HAROLD MCRAE
SMITH, HOWARD BRUCE
SMITH, JAMES ROBERT
SMITH, JESSE E
SMITH, JOHN WILLIAM
SMITH, LARRY DEAN

SMITH, LARRY HAYS
SMITH, LESLIE R
SMITH, LEWIS BENJAMIN
SMITH, LLOYD EDGAR
SMITH, MARVIN BONNEY JR
SMITH, RICHARD FLOYD
SMITH, ROBERT GEORGE
SMITH, ROBERT SR
SMITH, THOMAS LEROY
SMITH, WILLIAM
SNELL, RALEIGH JOHN JR
SNOW, CHARLES HARRY
SNYDER, RODGER CLAYBORN
SOBOTA, DANIEL JAMES
SOKOLOWSKI, FRANK MICHAEL
SOLANO, PORFIRIO SAM
SOLIS, FELIX
SORRELLS, BOBBY HORACE
SOUSA, LAURENCE NELSON
SOWER, DONALD MICHAEL
SOWERS, RANDAL GENE
SPAIN, ERVIN
SPEARS, JERRY WAYNE
SPEIGHT, FRANKLIN ELLIOTT
SPELLER, JAMES RONALD
SPENCER, CORDELL
SPENCER, HARRY HERBERT
SPIER, HARRY DIWAIN
SPITTLER, IRA JAMES III
SPRINKLE, VERNON PATRICK
SPOULE, WILLIAM C JR
SQUIER, WILLIAM RUSSELL JR
STACEY, RALPH MCGUIN JR
STALTER, JOHN RAYMOND
STANLEY, DENNIS RALPH
STANLEY, JAMES MITCHELL
STARKES, JOHN MILTON JR
STATON, ROBERT MILTON JR
STEELE, PATRICK MATTHEW
STEFFE, MICHAEL WILLIAM
STEFKO, WILLIAM CHARLES
STEGALL, ALLAN JR
STEIDLER, JOHNSON AUGUSTUS
STELL, JAMES ARTHUR
STEMBRIDGE, WAYLAND DAN
STEPHENS, DAVID ALLEN
STEPHENS, HARRY EDWARD
STEPHENSON, DAVID RICHARD
STEPHENSON, DONALD RAY
STEVENS, EDRICK KENNETH
STEVENS, FRANCIS GEORGE
STEVENS, ROBERT LOUIS JR
STEWART, DAVID WAYNE
STEWART, EDWARD LARRY
STEWART, GREGORY WILLIAM
STEWART, LONNY LAWRENCE
STEWART, SAMUEL KAY
@ STEYART, MATTHEW P
STOCKETT, RICHARD LEE
STOKES, FRANK EDWARD
STOLTZ, STEVEN RAY
STONE, GREGORY MARTIN
STONE, RICHARD ARLAN
STOVES, MERRITT III
STRACK, LAWRENCE
STRAZZANTI, ALAN PETER
STRICKLIN, THOMAS GRADY
STROHM, TIMOTHY LAWRENCE
STROUD, ALLEN SHEFFIELD
STROUSE, GARY LEE
STUBBE, WILLIAM LEROY
@ STUBLE, SASCHA
SUEDMYER, LARRY DEAN III

SUGGS, JOHN FENTON JR
SULLIVAN, JOHN JOSEPH
SUMTER, FORREST DARRYL
SUNIGA, JOHN ANTHONY JR
SURETTE, PAUL JOSEPH
SUTHERLAND, BOBBY COLLINS
SVEEN, BRENT WILLIAM
SWANSTROM, DOUGLAS GAYLORD
SWEENEY, JOSEPH EDWARD
SWINNEA, THOMAS HENRY
SZUTZ, BRAD JOHN
SZYMANSKI, ROBERT
TABB, PHIL
TABOR, BRUCE WAYNE
TABOR, RICHARD EUGENE
TAFEO, FA'ASAVILIGA V
TAFOYA, VICTOR ARNALDO
TARBELL, WILLIAM M
TARKINGTON, CURTIS RAY
TATE, SCIP
TAYLOR, CLARENCE
TAYLOR, DONNIE CARL
TAYLOR, ERNEST RAY JR
TAYLOR, JOHN HENRY
TAYLOR, PAUL CLIVE O
TAYLOR, RICHARD BERRY
TAYLOR, WENDELL
THOMAS, ALLEN WALKER
THOMAS, CHARLES
THOMAS, CHARLES F IV
THOMAS, DAVID EUGENE
THOMAS, JAMES RONALD
THOMAS, JOHN WILLIAM
* THOMAS, KYLE G
THOMAS, LEONARD ALAN
THOMAS, MICHAEL OLIVER
THOMPSON, NATHANIEL
THOMPSON, RICHARD W
THOMPSON, ROBERT JR
THOMPSON, WILLIAM NATHANIEL
THOMSON, STUART HAROLD
THURSTON, CLAIR HALL JR
TIGHE, JOHN ROY
TIGNER, JOHN HENRY
TILLOTSON, ROBERT VIRTUS
TILLOU, JOHN FREDERICK JR
TOBEY, MICHAEL JAMES
TOKARSKI, STANLEY RICHARD
TOLLIVER, SAMUEL STANLEY
TOMPKINS, JAMES ERVIN
TOMSIC, MICHAEL PATRICK
TORRES, IGNACIO JR
TORRES, JESUS M
TORRES-ACEVEDO, JUVENCIO
TOWNSEND, ROOSEVELT
TRACY, JOHN WAYNE
TRAXLER, TOMMY JR
TREMBLAY, ALAIN JOSEPH
TREMBLAY, PATRICK JOSEPH
TRESTER, DAVID ALEXANDER
TREVARTON, LARRY GEORGE
TRUJILLO, FRANCISCO M
TUCKER, GREGORY CHARLES
@ TUCKER, STEVEN C.
TUCKER, WILLIE JAMES
TURNAGE, THOMAS ALFRED
TURNER, ARTHUR JR
TURNER, LARRY BURNS
TURNER, WILLIAM COY
TUTTLE, KENNETH ALLEN
TYLER, LARRY JEROME
TYLER, LESTER
UGLAND, DAVID LEONARD

ULIBARRI, EDWARD ANTHONY
 ULMAN, EDWARD DELBERT
 UNDERWOOD, HARRY WILLIAM
 UPRIGHT, BRIAN DALE
 UPTAIN, DAVIS
 URQUHART, THOMAS
 VALDEZ, DANIEL VIRAMONTES
 VALENCIA, AMADO ACOSTA
 VAN CAMPEN, THOMAS CHARLES
 VANDERHOFF, GEORGE A JR
 VANDEVENDER, JOSEPH TOMMY
 VASQUES, SELVESTER JOE
 VENABLE, ELTON RAY
 VENCEL, ALBERT ALLEN
 VIGO-NEGRIN, LUIS
 VILLARREAL, ERNESTO
 VINCENT, GEORGE
 VOGEL, GARRITY
 VOJIR, JAMES PAUL
 WADDLE, SAMMIE WAYNE
 WADE, THOMAS JOE
 WAGNER, RICHARD EDWARD
 WAIDE, DONALD GILES
 WALDRON, GEORGE ALLEN
 WALDRON, JAMES TAYLOR
 WALKER, CHARLIE C
 WALKER, CHARLIE LEWIS
 WALKER, MICHAEL EARL
 WALKER, RICHARD JR
 WALKER, ROBERT HARVEY
 WALKER, THOMAS JAMES
 WALKER, WILLIE C
 WALL, JIMMIE PAUL
 WALLACE, EUGENE KENNETH
 WALTERS, JOHN EDMOND
 WALTERS, WILLIAM E
 WALTHERS, FRANK DANIEL
 WANAMAKER, JOHNNY WAYNE
 WARBINGTON, HOWARD OTTO
 WARD, DANNY RUSSELL
 WARD, RUDOLPH NATHINAL
 WARNER, GARY ALLEN
 WARREN, WILLIE CRAIG
 WASHINGTON, ALBERT B JR
 WASHINGTON, LAWRENCE O
 WASHINGTON, LEONARD B JR
 WASILOW, JOHN STEPHEN
 WATERMAN, MICHAEL J
 WATKINS, FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT
 WATKINS, MICHAEL
 WATKINS, THOMAS EDWARD

WATSON, TYRONE CALVIN
 WATSON, WILMER
 WATTERS, CHARLES JOSEPH
 WEBB, EARL KENNON
 WEBB, FRANK WRIGHT
 WEBB, TERRY EMERSON
 WEBB, VIRGIL JUNIOR
 WEBER, JOHN KNUTE
 WEDGEWORTH, WILLIAM THOMAS
 WELCH, DAVID
 WELCH, NORMAN GENE
 WELCH, RICHARD WILLIAM
 WELLS, RICHARD FOY
 WELLS, ROBERT OLIVER
 WELLS, ROGER ORRIE
 WELSH, DANIEL
 WELSH, RUTHERFORD J
 WENRICK, PHILIP BRUCE
 WESOLOWSKI, ALVIN JOHN JR
 WESTPOINT, THOMAS LEE
 WHEELER, JAMES CHRISTOPHER
 WHEELER, MICHEL T
 WHEELHOUSE, CLIFTON P JR
 WHITAKER, KELLY EUGENE
 WHITBECK, ROBERT EARL
 WHITE, ARNOLD SYLVANUS
 WHITE, JAMES LEE
 WHITE, LEONARD RAY
 WHITE, MICHAEL ALAN
 WHITE, STEPHEN O MEARA
 WHITLATCH, WILLIAM CARL JR
 WHITLEY, FREDDIE LEE
 WHITTINGTON, MERREL P
 WIEST, JOHN ROBIN
 WILCOX, CHARLES THOMAS
 WILKIE, ARTHUR WAYNE
 WILKINS, TERRY KENNETH
 WILLBANKS, CHARLES EDWARDS
 WILLIAMS, BILLY
 WILLIAMS, EDWIN JEROME
 WILLIAMS, FRANK NORMAN
 WILLIAMS, HAROLD DAVID
 WILLIAMS, HARRIS LEE
 WILLIAMS, JIMMY LAVERNE
 WILLIAMS, LARRY KEITH
 WILLIAMS, LEMUEL TAYLOR
 WILLIAMS, REMER
 WILLIAMS, THEODORE JR
 WILLIAMS, TROY BYRON
 WILLIAMS, WALTER DOUGLAS
 WILLIAMSON, WILLIAM CURTIS

WILLINGHAM, JOHN DAVIS
 WILSON, HARRY CONARD II
 WILSON, HERBERT JR
 WILSON, JONATHAN TRAXLER
 WILSON, RUDOLPH
 WILSON, THOMAS EDWARD
 WILSON, WILLIAM JEFFREY
 WINTERS, STEVEN ANDREW
 WINTERS, WILLIAM JOHN
 WISNIEWSKI, CHARLES J JR
 WISSELL, LAWRENCE JAMES
 WITZEL, ROBERT CHARLES
 WOBLE, JOHN B
 WOLF, JOHN ROBY
 WOLFF, RICHARD GLEN
 WOOD, DARRELL GEORGE JR
 WOOD, DONALD CHARLES
 @ WOODARD, ROMANES L.
 WOODS, WILLIAM STEPHEN
 WOOLEY, HENRY EUGENE
 WOOTEN, JOHN WESLEY
 WORRELL, JAMES R
 WRIGHT, GARY WAYNE
 WRIGHT, SYLVESTER JR
 WRIGHT, VERNON ARTHUR
 WRIGHT, WILLIE ALFRED
 WUSTERBARTH, CLINTON CARL
 YAMASHITA, MELVIN MASAICHI
 * YASHINSKI, MICHAEL E
 YATSKO, JOSEPH PAUL JR
 YAZZIE, DAN
 YOUNG, ERNEST HAROLD III
 YOUNG, JOHN EDWARD
 YOUNG, RONALD WAYNE
 YOUNGERMAN, JOSEPH MICHAEL
 YUGEL, LOUIS ARTHUR
 ZERFASS, JEROME VINCENT
 ZERGGEN, FRANCIS ALBERT
 ZIEBARTH, DENNIS LEROY
 ZIMMERMAN, ROGER
 ZIMMERMAN, TERRY
 ZINN, RONALD LLOYD
 ZIONTS, CHARLES A
 ZOLLER, ERIC WARD
 ZSIGO, ALEXANDER C JR
 ZUKOV, STEPHEN ANDREW

 = DIED IN VIETNAM
 * = DIED IN IRAQ
 @ = DIED IN AFGHANISTAN

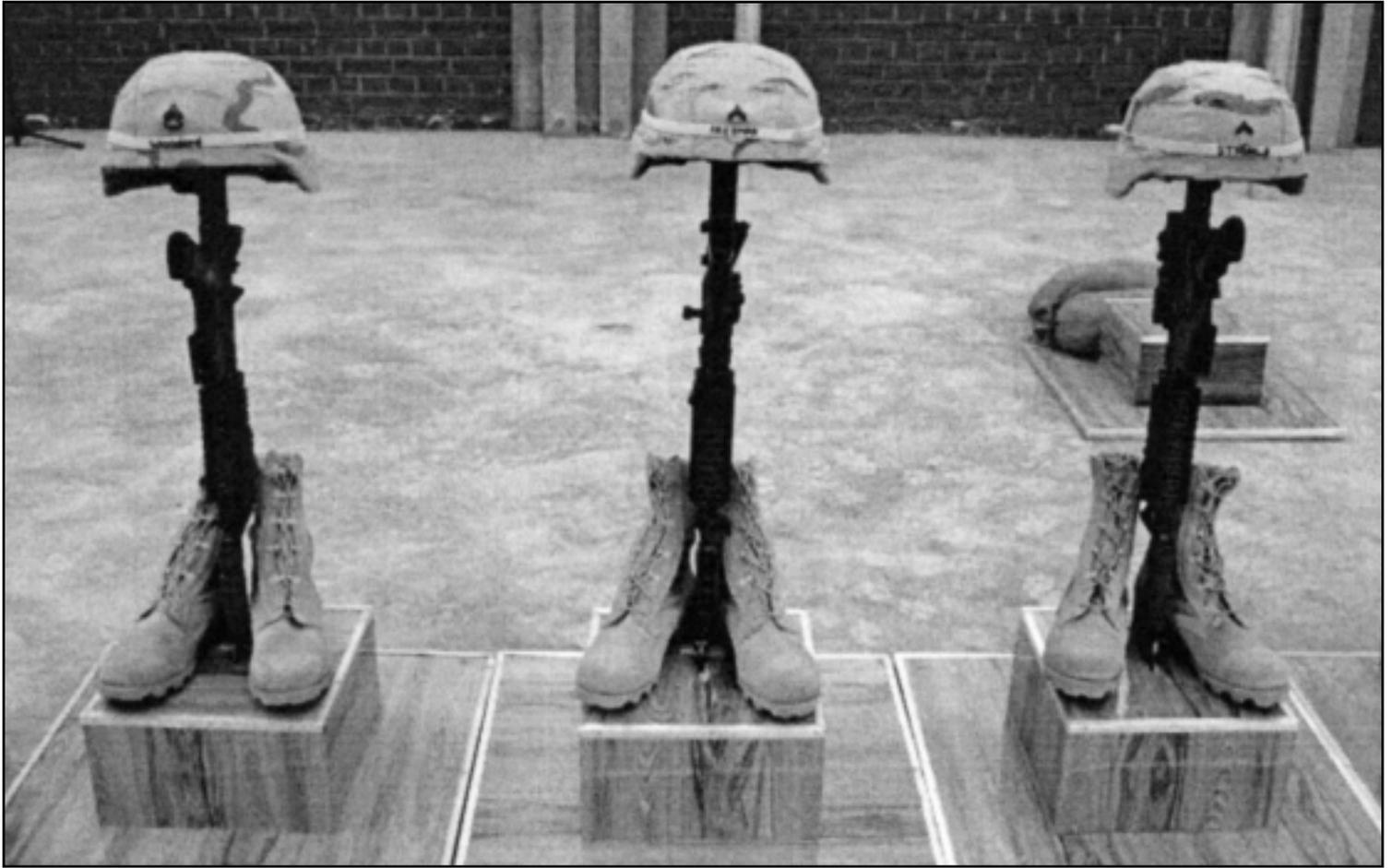
AUSTRALIANS ATTACHED TO THE 173D AIRBORNE BDE

The First and Fifth Battalions, Royal Australian Regiment (Group), 105th Battery, Royal Australian Artillery & 3rd Field Troop, Royal Australian Engineers.

ALISTER, D
 BADE, K W
 BAXTER, L J
 BOWTELL, R W
 BURKE, M A
 CARROLL, W T
 CLARK, C
 COUPE, B F
 COXON, R E
 FARREN, L T
 FIELD, R E

FOSTHERINGHAM, A H T
 GILLSON, P R
 GRILLS, E A
 HANSEN, A R
 HILLIER, R H
 HORNE, N W
 McDONALD, L C
 NALDER, W L
 NOACK, E W
 PARKER, R H J
 PENN, D H

PETERSEN, B O
 ROSS, T
 SEIPEL, R D
 SIMPSON, T
 SMITH, F J
 SUTER, T
 SWEETNAM, J R
 VAN VALEN, A
 WHIET, R
 WILSON, M A F



PARATROOPERS PRAYER

*Kind Heavenly Father, our Great God who invites — “Follow Me,” may we with stalwart hearts declare thee Lord of all. We ask Thy Holy blessing to rest upon all paratroopers who are on the path to secure and sustain peace. May we be ready at all times to boldly stand up for thy truth and ways, and be steadfastly **hooked up** to thy law and gospel. May a primary part of our equipment be a confident faith in thee as we **stand in the door** of all missions in life. May **the canopy** of thy love shield and keep us now and forever. Amen.*



COMMANDERS OF THE 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE



BG ELLIS W. WILLIAMSON	MAR 1963-FEB 1966
BG PAUL F. SMITH	FEB 1966- DEC1966
BG JOHN R. DEAN JR	DEC 1966- SEPT 1967
BG LEO H SCHWEITER	SEPT 1967- MAR 1968
BG RICHARD J ALLEN	MAR 1968- DEC 1968
BG JOHN W. BARNES	DEC 1968- AUG 1969
BG HUBERT S. CUNNINGHAM	AUG 1969- AUG 1970
BG ELMER R. OCHS	AUG 1970- JAN 1971
BG JACK MAC FARLANE	JAN 1971- JAN 1972
BG M COLLIR ROSS	RETIRED COLORS 1972

COL JAMES C. YARBROUGH	JUNE 2000- JUNE 2002
COL WILLIAM MAYVILLE	JUNE 2002- JUNE 2004
COL KEVIN C. OWENS	JUNE 2004- PRESENT



COMMAND SERGEANT MAJORS OF THE BRIGADE

JUNE 63-APR 64	SGM Mickey Finn	OKINAWA
APR 64-JUNE 64	SGM Vincent D. Roegiers	OKINAWA, VIETNAM
JUNE 64-JUNE 65	SGM A. B. Cannon	VIETNAM
JULY 65-MAY 66	SGM Charles H. Fletcher	VIETNAM
JUNE 66-JAN 67	SGM Robert A. Myrseck	VIETNAM
FEB 67-MAR 67	SGM John Schmittle	VIETNAM
APR 67-AUG 67	SGM Vincent D. Roegiers	VIETNAM
APR 68-MAR 69	SGM John Bittorie	VIETNAM
APR 69-OCT 69	SGM Richard Gilliam	VIETNAM
NOV 69-APR 70	SGM Harmon Hodge	VIETNAM
APR 70-APR 71	CSM John LaVie	VIETNAM
MAY 71-AUG 71	SGM Acy Akridge	VIETNAM, FT. CAMPBELL
AUG 71-JAN 72	SGM Theron Gergen	VIETNAM, FT. CAMPBELL
JUNE 00 -JUNE 02	CSM Lawrence Kilgore	ITALY
JUNE 02-MAY 04	CSM Gunter	ITALY, IRAQ
MAY 04-SEP 04	CSM Earl Rice	ITALY
SEP 04 - Present	CSM Arthur J. McCann III	ITALY, AFGHANISTAN

THE SIGHOLTZ AWARD



The Sigholtz award is named after LT Bobby Sigholtz who was killed in action while serving with the Brigade in Vietnam. A Non-Commissioned Officer, grade E5 or E6 serving with the 173d Airborne Brigade is selected by the Command Sergeant Majors of the Brigade and presented annually.

SIGHOLTZ WINNERS

1990- SGT Frank Adams	2000- SSG Leon Thomas Jr., HHC 2/325 AIR
1992- SGT Jens Randoff	2001- SSG Robert H. Charlisle, HHC 1-507 PIR
1993-SSG Daniel R. Zavodsky 504th PIR	2002- SSG Robert I. Hill, HHC 2-503
1996-SSG Mark Butero HHC 3/319 FA	2003- SSG Brent D. Wipperman, Bco 2-503
1997- SSG Dennis W. Terry	2004- SSG Matthew J. Roberge, HHC 2-503
1999- SSG Kevin R. Zimmerman, HHC 3/325 AIR	2005- SSG Richard Kollar, Co. C, 173d SB (ABN)

SOME THINGS NEVER CHANGE



In spite of all the high tech the Army has become over the years, there are some things that never seem to change. In Vietnam, it was common practice to build wooden "outhouse" latrines, with a 55 Gallon drum under the seat for feces and toilet paper to go into. Once or twice a day, the fecal waste would be disposed of by burning. Someone would get the duty of pulling the 55 Gallon drums out of the outhouse, pouring a couple of gallons of diesel fuel into them, and burning the shit. In a good unit where everyone was performing to the best of their abilities, the shit burning duty was rotated on a random basis. If a trooper had been goofing off, or getting into trouble, a few days of "Crappy" duty would often motivate him to be more of a team player. Now we are in the 21st Century and even though we have GPS, laser sights and the Internet, we still have to burn the crap. This is where the expression, "...I am putting you on a shit detail," comes from. I expect today they probably call it "Sanitation Duty," but no matter how you describe it, it is still Shit Burning. This historical lesson is dedicated to all the Shit Burners, from all the wars, to just let you know ...*some things never change.*



VIETNAM



IRAQ



AFGHANISTAN



173rd AIRBORNE BRIGADE ASSOCIATION



With the reactivation of the 173d Airborne Brigade the purpose of the Association has evolved. The Association has now become a permanent organization that will further develop the common bond that exists between all Sky Soldiers of the 173rd Infantry Brigade, 173d Airborne Brigade (Sep), the 173d Airborne Brigade and the 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team.

The Association currently provides a quarterly national newsletter, a scholarship program and holds an annual reunion for its membership. This allows all Sky Soldier to meet and "Hook Up" with old buddies. The Association has 26 chapters located in various parts of the United States, Italy, New Zealand and Australia. The Association also has a web site located at www.skysoldier.org. Anyone who has served with the 173d Airborne Brigade or who was attached to the 173d Airborne Brigade is invited to join the Society.

President Paul Dinardo, Vice President Frank Mantua, Treasurer Gary Grenade, Membership Jim Bradley

Chapter 1	Washington, DC	Chapter 12	NOT ACTIVE	Chapter 23	Australia NSW
Chapter 2	New York, NY	Chapter 13	Southwest	Chapter 24	Rochester MN
Chapter 3	Ft. Benning, GA	Chapter 14	Southern California	Chapter 25	Phoenix AZ
Chapter 4	Philadelphia	Chapter 15	Minneapolis MN	Chapter 26	NOT ACTIVE
Chapter 5	Ft. Bragg	Chapter 16	Washington State areas	Chapter 27	South Australia
Chapter 6	Illinois	Chapter 17	Mid West (OH)	Chapter 28	San Diego
Chapter 7	Florida	Chapter 18	Oklahoma	Chapter 29	Atlanta
Chapter 8	NOT ACTIVE	Chapter 19	New Zealand	Chapter 30	South Carolina
Chapter 9	New England	Chapter 20	Arizona	Chapter 173	Italy
Chapter 10	WStates (N.Calif)	Chapter 21	NOT ACTIVE		
Chapter 11	Australia	Chapter 22	NOT ACTIVE		

For information about joining the Association contact us at; www.SkySoldier.org

History of the Association / Society / Association



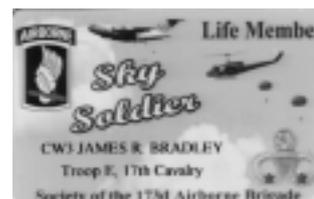
Several years after the 173d Airborne Brigade was established members of the HERD banded together to form the **Sky Soldier Association**. This association was established in 1967 for the express purpose of camaraderie for Sky Soldiers and the building of a memorial to their fallen brothers. The Sky Soldier Association held its first reunion at Fort Benning, Georgia, in 1968.



Old Association Card



Old Life Member Card



Current Life Member Card

The 173d Airborne Brigade was deactivated on 14 January 1972. With the deactivation of the Brigade, the Sky Soldier Association merged its membership into the newly organized **Society of the 173d Airborne Brigade**, which was established 24 March 1973. On 4 October 1973 the official memorial for the 173d Airborne Brigade was dedicated at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. The Society incorporated on 1 July 1983 as the Society of the 173d Airborne Brigade, Inc., as a 501(c) (19) tax exempt corporation.

With the Reactivation of the 173d Airborne Brigade, the society board of directors, voted in January 2006 to re-incorporated as a 501 (c) (10) tax exempt corporation with the 173rd Scholarship fund being a 501(c) (3) tax deductible program within the newly reformed **173rd Airborne Brigade Association**. Memberships in the Society will merge again to membership in the Association.