

*The First
Screaming*

A HISTORICAL REVIEW OF
THE 1ST BRIGADE (Separate) 101st AIRBORNE DIVISION
in Viet Nam from July 1965 through January 1968



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*Eagles
in Viet Nam*

1st Brigade (Separate) Viet Nam



101st Airborne Division

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The ALWAYS FIRST Brigade



CHOW IN THE FIELD

This magazine is produced by and for veterans of the ALWAYS FIRST BRIGADE who served in the brigade from July 1965 through April 1968. The publication will chronicle the military history and accomplishments of veterans who served, as well as units that were assigned, attached or supported the brigade. The editor solicits material about the brigade for use in the magazine and for future publication in a book that will contain a comprehensive history of the brigade.

Another goal of the editor is to lead an initiative to place a monument, to honor members of the brigade, at the Wings of LIBERTY Military Museum at Fort Campbell, Kentucky (the museum will be located on the Tennessee side of Fort Campbell).

12th BIENNIAL REUNION OMAHA, NEBRASKA OCTOBER 6-9, 2010



Terry R. Zahn,
SPT BN HQ Elt 7/65-5/66

This announcement is for planning purposes. The reunion will be hosted by Terry R. Zahn, SPT BN HQ Eltinge 7/65-5/66. Terry is the President of the Midwest Chapter of the 101st Airborne Division Association and serves on the Association Board of Governors.

The reunion hotel is the HOLIDAY INN CENTRAL OMAHA CONVENTION CENTER. Information relative to reunion

registration, hotel reservations and schedule will be published as soon as the information is available.

The STATIC LINE AWARDS FESTIVAL, in Atlanta was a real success. Harvey Appleman was honored as the First Brigade (S) Man of the Year as you can see in the photo above. Harvey has been a constant supporter of the brigade. He has served as Reunion Chairman for the Clarksville reunion. He serves as the Honorary Command Sergeant Major of the 502nd Infantry Regiment and has been an outstanding representative of the brigade at many of the annual WEEK OF THE EAGLES celebrations at Fort Campbell.

I am encouraged by the number of First Brigade (S) veterans who have stepped up, recently, to write some in-depth personal accounts of Brigade actions in Viet Nam. I invite you to expand on any story you see in the center section reproductions of THE SCREAMING EAGLE and



(L to R) MAJ(R) Ivan Worrell, INFO OFF 5/66-5/67, Editor and Publisher of THE FIRST SCREAMING EAGLES IN VIET NAM, poses with the First Brigade (Separate) Man of the Year CSM(R) Harvey P. Appleman, 2/327 HQ 2/67-3/68.

DIPLOMAT AND WARRIOR newspapers or to add your experience to any story published in the magazine.

C Company 1/327th will have an annual reunion at COBRA LAKE at about the same time that this magazine goes in the mail. I plan to attend and give you a report of the COLD STEEL COBRA gathering in the October magazine.



Following is a list of those who are in **The First SCREAMING EAGLES in Viet Nam** database and are mentioned in **The Screaming Eagle**, published November 22, 1967 and reproduced in the center fold of this magazine.

Medevac Pilot Saves 16 Wounded, page 1,
written by William P. Singley, BDE HQ PIO 67
Mentioned; CPT(R) Thomas J. Courtney, 2/502 B&E 67-68

Champ Alerts Twice, page 1,
James F. Moore, 42nd Scout Dog 7/67-7/68
Norman E. Fretwell, 2/327 A 5/67-5/68

Urging Bond Sales, page 2
LTG(R) William S. Carpenter, 2/502 C 66-67

Squad Defoliates 'Moving' Jungle, page 2
Michael Norris, 1/327 ABU 6/67-8/69

Troops Dig Out 3 NVA, page 3
Ted S. Orvold, 2/502 B 67 - ?
Thomas F. McCarthy, 2/502 B 6/67-1/68

Medic Disregards Enemy Fire, page 4
James L. Russell, 1/327 C 67-68
Glen F. Borg, 1/327 C 67-68
Thomas Kinane, 1/327 C 4/67-12/68
Royce Keahey, 1/327 C 67-68
Raymond L. Land, 1/327 C 1/67-2/68
Richard K. Owens, 1/327 C 67-68



Screaming Eagles

BRIEFING PACKET



1st Brigade

101ST Airborne Division

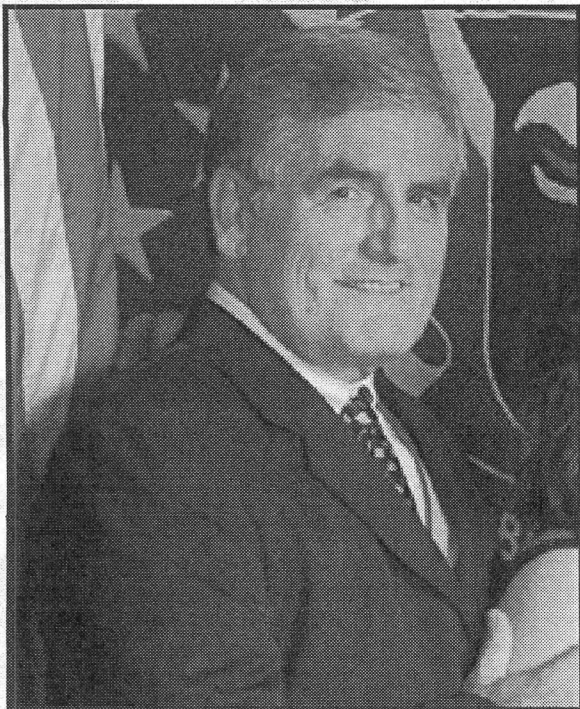
VIETNAM

FORWARD

This In-Country Briefing Booklet has been prepared by the Information Office, 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division to assist commanders in the presentation of their orientation to replacement personnel. Under normal circumstances this briefing will be accomplished by the Brigade Replacement Detachment; however, commanders down to company level must be prepared to brief their own replacements should the need arise.

Headquarters, 1st Brigade
101st Airborne Division
1 February 67

IVAN G. WORRELL
Major, Infantry
Information Officer



*Dean J. Beaupre,
2/502 A 1/67-1/68*

This 21 page First Brigade (S) Screaming Eagle Briefing Packet was given to me at the Hampton reunion by Dean J. Beaupre, 2/502 A 1/67-1/68. The seven pages in this issue will be followed by seven pages in the October 09 and the January 2010 magazines.

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SECTION I
WHY YOU ARE HERE

1. Why you are here:

- a. To support the free Vietnamese in their fight against communist domination.
- b. To preserve freedom and insure that the Vietnamese people may develop according to their own desires without outside interference and without serving the policies of any other nation.
- c. To frustrate communist designs to forcefully extend their sphere of influence in Southeast Asia.

2. What we expect of you:

- a. Long, fruitful hours while on duty with maximum alertness and security.
- b. Active and ambitious support of the U.S. mission in Viet Nam, i.e. to support and assist the Vietnamese people in their fight against the Viet Cong.
- c. Use "off-duty" time constructively and conduct yourselves in an exemplary manner.
- d. Be ALERT at all times:
 - (1) Take care of your buddies.
 - (2) Take care of your equipment.

3. Benefits of serving in Viet Nam:

- a. Working with and under the best leadership the U.S. Army has ever put into the field.
- b. Satisfaction of doing something important for your country.
- c. Excellent promotion opportunity for qualified enlisted personnel.
- d. Recognition (awards and decorations).

4. Conclusion:

- a. Our presence here is vital and essential.
- b. Every task must be done well and completely, regardless of the

magnitude involved.

c. Develop a positive attitude from the beginning. You'll be happier, safer, and will accomplish more in the final analysis.

SECTION II HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

1. Viet Nam

Between 1946 and 1954 the French and the Vietnamese Communists (Viet Minh) warred for the control of French Indo-China. In 1950 an agreement was made between the governments of the U.S., France, Laos, Cambodia, and Viet Nam to provide military assistance to Indo-China. The military agreement was named the Mutual Defense Assistance Program. The U.S.'s part became known as MAAG (Military Assistance Advisory Group).

The heavy losses of the French at Dien Bien Phu foreshadowed the eventual defeat and downfall of French control over Indo-China. Fearing that all the countries of Indo-China would come under Communist domination a conference was convened at Geneva in 1954. Participating in the conference were representatives from the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, Communist China, Laos, Cambodia, South Viet Nam, and the Communist Viet Minh regime. The U.S. sent a delegation, not to participate, but to show concern for the future of Southeast Asia. The U.S. did draft a separate declaration, however, stating that we would support the Geneva agreements as if we had signed them.

The agreements ended French rule in Indo-China bringing the war to a close. Under the Armistice agreement, Viet Nam was to be temporarily divided at the 17th parallel into, roughly, two equal halves. Viet Nam-wide elections were to be held at a suitable time; however, Ho Chi Minh, the Viet Minh leader, refused to take part in any elections he could not control, so the agreed elections never materialized. Instead, the division of Viet Nam became more permanent until the border was accepted as a political barrier. Since July 1954, the land south of the parallel has been known as the Republic of Viet Nam and the land north of the parallel as the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam (North Viet Nam).

In the autumn of 1954 the Republic of Viet Nam requested the United States to provide assistance in building the country as a free land in peace. The request was honored, and during the next five years the young republic showed remarkable progress. A few of the more outstanding results were:

- (1) 140,000 peasants received tracts of land.
- (2) Production of rice and rubber rose above pre-war level.

(3) School enrollments tripled, accompanied by a similar rise in the number of teachers.

(4) 3,000 medical-aid stations and maternity clinics were established.

(5) A national institution of administration was established to train Vietnamese citizens for public service careers.

(6) Several manufacturing plants were constructed to provide a basis for economic growth.

During this five year program, North Viet Nam could not approach the progressive movement of South Viet Nam and saw itself fall further behind the South. These vast improvements in the political and economic health of the Republic of Viet Nam were just the opposite of the Communist theory that the new and free republic would soon collapse. When South Viet Nam failed to conform to the collapse theory, and in fact showed every indication of becoming strong, the Communists initiated the basic insurgency principle of terrorism through sabotage and assassination. During the period 1960-1961 the Communist guerrillas assassinated 3,000 and kidnapped over 2,500 South Vietnamese village chiefs, school teachers, public health workers, and others who were contributing to the health, welfare and safety of South Viet Nam.

2. Unable to halt this inhuman campaign of terror with its own resources, the South Vietnamese government turned to the United States for military assistance. Their urgent request was honored by a steady increase in the number of U. S. personnel who were sent to act as advisors for Vietnamese military units. This marked the beginning of MACV as we know it today. The number of U. S. military personnel in Viet Nam has increased steadily until now, when complete U. S. military units have been deployed throughout the country.

MACV's mission is advisory responsibility and operational control of all Free World Forces in Viet Nam, including Army, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Marines.

3. As U. S. military and economic assistance increased in the Republic of Viet Nam, a need arose for a strong support unit. In December, 1961 three Battalions of support troops arrived to support MACV. This marked the beginning of the U. S. Army, Viet Nam (USARV), which remains under the operational control of MACV.

4. Consistent with the arrival of U. S. combat units, a Corps type headquarters was established in Nha Trang, RVN, and was designated Task Force Alfa. This headquarters has subsequently been designated I Field Force, Viet Nam and functions as a tactical headquarters with operational control of allied units in the Vietnamese II Corps Tactical Zone.

SECTION III
COUNTRY CHARACTERISTICS

Country Familiarization

1. VIET NAM: The country is shaped something like the state of California, forming the East coast of the Indo-China peninsula. Its location in relationship to the United States and New York is one-half way around the world or approximately 10,000 miles.

a. It's bounded on the north by China, the east by the South China Sea, the south by the Gulf of Siam and on the west by Laos and Cambodia.

b. North Viet Nam is characterized by cooler climates and relatively rugged terrain.

c. Central Viet Nam is characterized by dense jungles and rugged mountains.

d. South Viet Nam (Delta Region) is characterized by extensive series of rice paddy and marsh land. This area is generally considered to be south of Saigon.

e. The border of Viet Nam (North and South) consists of 250 miles of Laotian Border; 650 miles of Cambodian Border, and 1,500 miles of sea coast.

2. South Viet Nam (Republic of Viet Nam): The Republic of Viet Nam extends from the 17th parallel in the north to the Cau Mau peninsula bounded by the Gulf of Siam on the south. The principle terrain features may be considered to be the Delta, Coastal lowlands and central highlands.

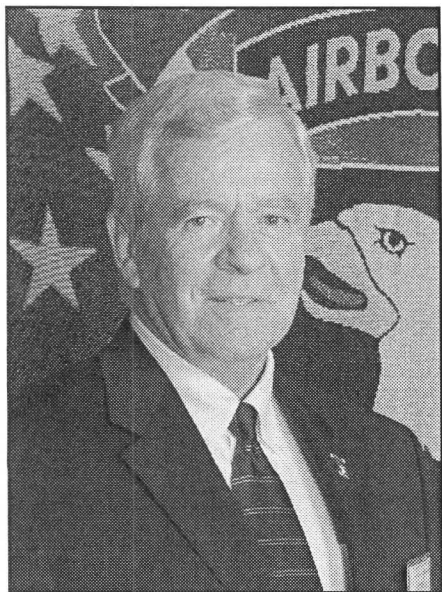
a. The Delta: This region is characterized by an intricate network of canals and waterways with vast stretches of rice paddies. It's largely very flat and wet. This region may further be classified as extremely fertile with the capability of growing an extensive variety of crops; rice is the principle crop here coining the phrase that Viet Nam is the "Breadbasket of Asia".

b. Coastal Lowlands: This area is generally considered to run the general trace of the Vietnamese coastline bordered by the South China Sea. It's generally fertile with a number of rivers, streams and small harbors which support a limited fishing trade. The economy of this region remains, however, essentially agrarian.

c. Central Highlands: This area extends from the coastal plains west towards Cambodia and north towards North Viet Nam with elevations reaching 10,000 feet. The area is further characterized by a thick jungle cover and is somewhat cooler than the southern areas of Viet Nam.

d. The monsoon season differs with each of the three major areas of

The Battle of the Que Son Valley 8 October 1967 – Continued



COL(R) Herbert D. Williams III
(2/327 A&B 7/67-6/68)

By COL (Retired) Herb Williams, formerly a Platoon Leader in A/2/327, 1st Bde (Separate), 101st Abn Div

Articles in the April 2009 issue of *The First Screaming Eagles in Viet Nam* took me back to 8 October 1967. In particular, the article on Pages 10-15 by COL (Retired) John P. Lawton, entitled "The Battle of the Que Son Valley – 8 October 1967," was interesting and informative because,

at the time, I was a 1st Lieutenant assigned as the 4th Platoon



Leader in A/2/327 under then CPT Lawton's command. After reading his account, I reviewed the combat notebook and annotated map I used at that time and still retain.



A/2/327th Officers ready for action in September 1967. L to R – 1LT Dave Williamson, 1st Platoon Leader; 1LT Herb Williams, 4th Platoon Leader; 1LT Al Jonsen, XO; 1LT David G. Dunkenberger, 2nd Platoon Leader; and 1LT Norm Fretwell, 3rd Platoon Leader

To add my perspective to what happened that day, however, I need to relate the combat actions in which A/2/327 was



My annotated map of the combat area near Hiep Duc, Vietnam (Map Sheet 6640 III)

involved between 29 September and 8 October 1967.

In the October 2007 issue of **The First Screaming Eagles in Viet Nam**, I noticed an article with a related picture of three destroyed helicopters on Page 25. After reading the article, I told my wife I was aboard the helicopter on the far left in the photo when it took the hits that caused it to crash-land as it hovered to deliver me and part of my platoon in a combat assault on the afternoon of 29 September 1967. Our company had been given the mission of securing the area around the two other helicopters that had crash-landed there earlier. One of them was the Command and Control (C&C) helicopter for the 1st Brigade Deputy Commander, COL John W. "Rip" Collins, and the other was the C&C helicopter for the 2/327th Battalion Commander, LTC Robert G. "Greyhound" Yerks. Both of the C&C helicopters had been hit while unsuccessfully attempting to medevac a Platoon Leader from C/2/327 who had been wounded that morning in a fire-fight that was still going on near the base of Hill 118 (Grid Coordinates AT921259) where the helicopters crash-landed. Carl E. Midkiff, who listed that he was assigned to the HHC Air Section from 12/1966 to 12/1967, wrote that he was the aircraft commander of COL Collins' helicopter, "Rip's Mule," that day, and it was the second helicopter shot down on the hilltop. Mr. Midkiff described the situation and said, "A couple of hundred yards from the LZ the place lit up like the 4th of July. Extremely heavy automatic weapons fire." Later in the article, Mr. Midkiff said, "The crew-chief counted more than 40 holes in our huey." He further noted, "Our huey continued to take hits the whole time we were on the ground." An excerpt he

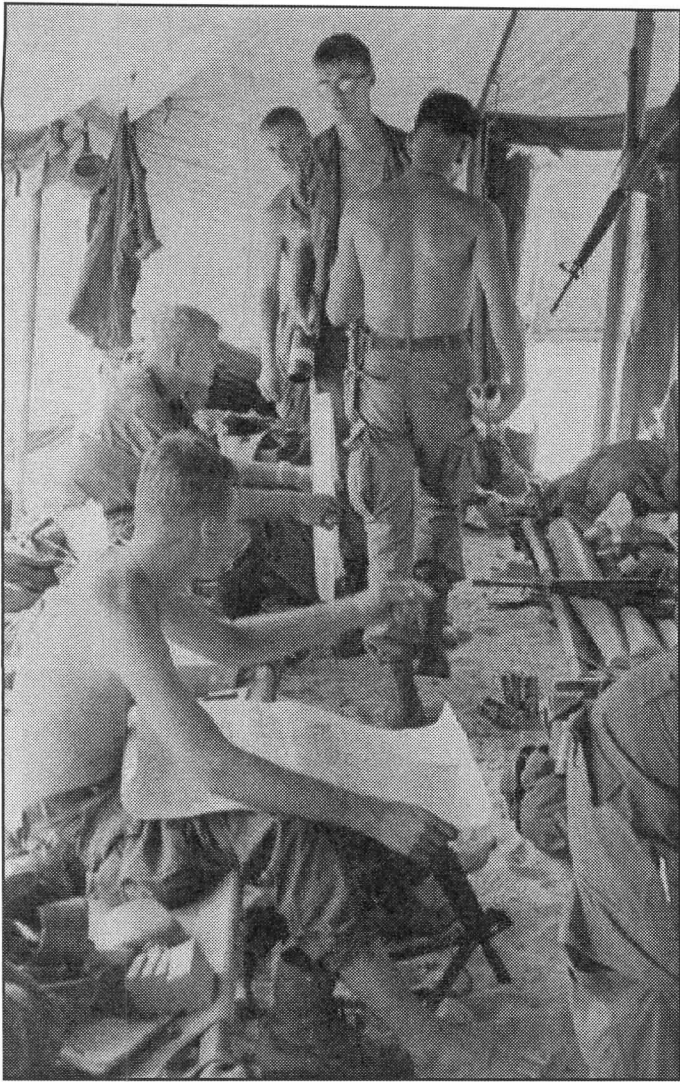
provided from the helicopter history of Southern I Corps stated, "29 Sep, the 14th CAB was called upon to provide gunship close air support, reaction force lift ships, and flareships to units of the 101st Abn Div who were engaged in heavy fighting. In final tabulation for the day, the battalion had 22 aircraft hit, three UH1-D's and one UH-1B destroyed; eight pilots wounded (and) one crew chief KIA. This was the worst day ever suffered by the battalion." 1

My combat notebook entries and map annotations indicate A/2/327 had received a three-day resupply of combat essentials that morning and was located on the south side of the Song Thu Bon river at Grid Coordinates AT873220 about 6 kilometers southwest of Hill 118. The notes indicate C/2/327 was in heavy contact, and we were initially sent in to secure helicopters that had been shot down. Four men were wounded in the first lift, and I had just jumped off the chopper I rode in on the second lift when it took a hit in the transmission. No one was hurt, but the transmission missed hitting me and my Radio-Telephone Operator (RTO) by about 10 feet when it came out after the helicopter crash-landed. Another helicopter appeared to get hit on the last lift and seemed to almost crash but managed to get away. Although we didn't know it at the time, an NCO from the 3rd Platoon had been hit in the head and killed by the rotor blade of that helicopter as it lurched to escape the enemy fire.

Late in the afternoon of 29 September, we left Hill 118 and moved northwest to relieve units of C/2/327 that were pinned down by heavy fire. My platoon led the way down the hill in



Some of the men assigned to the A/2/327th 4th Platoon at the temporary Chu Lai base camp before the Que Son Valley combat operation in September 1967. PFC John W. McMaster, the soldier wearing sunglasses in the center of the back row, was an attached Medic and was KIA on 8 October 1967. PFC Earl Erwin Jr., the soldier kneeling with a towel around his shoulders on the left end of the front row was KIA on 29 February 1968 during the Tet Offensive. SGT Dale Burkman, the soldier wearing glasses and no hat or shirt on the left end of the back row, narrowly escaped serious injury when an enemy bullet hit his helmet on 3 October 1967.



Getting ready for action in the temporary base camp at Chu Lai in September 1967. 1LT Dave Williamson, 1st Platoon Leader, is the officer in the foreground with the map. 1LT Al Jonsen, Company XO, is seated on the cot to his left. 1LT Bob Fergusson, Artillery FO, who DOW on 8 November 1967, is the tall officer wearing glasses in the top center of the photo; and SFC Gordon Mauldin, 1st Platoon Sergeant, is looking around his right shoulder. The soldier walking away with his back to the camera is SSG Rodriguez, a 1st Platoon Squad Leader. 4

the dark and assaulted with other platoons of the company across an open rice paddy to get to the hill where most of the fire was coming from. Four men from the 1st and 2nd Platoons were wounded during the assault. After linking up with the 2/327th Hawk Platoon, we located the 4th Platoon of C/2/327 that had been pinned down during the day by enemy fire. They had several men KIA and WIA. I learned that their Platoon Leader, who had died as a result of his wound that day, was 1LT Clyde Vernon Moore, a friend and a good man whom I had known since we met while we were in OCS in the same battalion at Fort Benning, GA before we were commissioned as Infantry 2nd Lieutenants in the summer of 1966.

After the dead and wounded paratroopers were evacuated, we learned we had a man missing from A/2/327. A pilot from one of the helicopters that had delivered us to the top of Hill 118

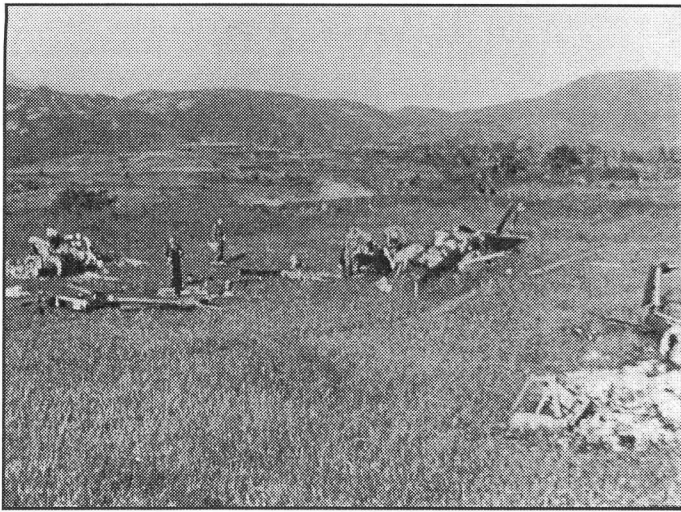
earlier had reported he thought a man from our company had been hit by a rotor blade from his helicopter as it was taking off after receiving enemy fire. My platoon led the way back up Hill 118 to search for our missing man, and I recall that "Puff the Magic Dragon," a C-130 gunship, provided flares for illumination and periodically let loose a stream of fire from its Gatling gun at targets on the ground. It was an awesome sight, and the sound that Gatling gun made was like a giant ripping a sheet of steel apart. I would not have wanted to be on the receiving end!

When we got back up to the top of Hill 118 before daylight, we lined up shoulder-width apart and searched until we located our missing KIA about 0530 hours, 30 September 1967. He was SGT Willie Farmer Jr., a paratrooper respected by all who served with him in A/2/327. After we found and evacuated his body, we set up a company perimeter around the hilltop for resupply of combat essentials. The NVA hit us with mortars about four times in the afternoon. My notes indicate we had five wounded and one killed in the attacks but none from my platoon. We moved off of Hill 118 in the late afternoon and set up a company perimeter on a small hill to the southwest near the village of Hiep Duc.

For the next several days, we had some type of enemy contact almost daily; and it was obvious we had stirred up a real hornet's nest in a large and very dangerous unit. On 2 October 1967, SFC Gordon Mauldin, Acting Platoon Leader of the 1st Platoon, was shot and seriously wounded; and a 1st Platoon RTO, PFC Alan E. Williams, was shot and killed. SFC Mauldin had been my Platoon Sergeant when I was the 1st Platoon Leader during July-August 1967 before I was wounded in a mortar attack on 16 August 1967 and spent a couple of weeks in hospitals getting my left hand and thumb repaired. 2 When I returned to duty on 30 August 1967,



Back in action. L to R – 1LT Herb Williams and SFC Nichie Alonzo check enemy equipment found on 28 October 1967 after a combat action in support of B/2/327 on 27 October 1967.



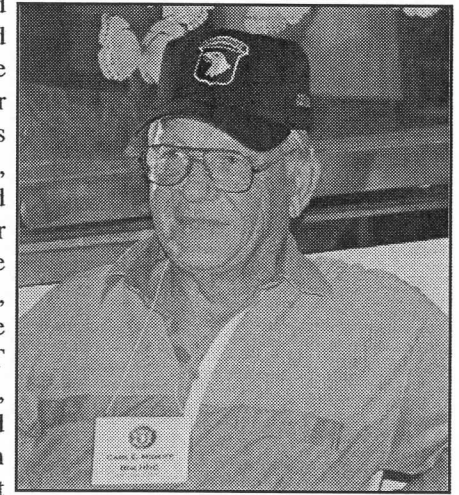
The three helicopters crash site "Million Dollar Hill" sent by Carl E. Midkiff (HHC AIR SECT 12/66-12/67).

command of A/2/327 had been changed from CPT Pete Pepper to then CPT John Lawton, who had previously been the 2/327th S-2. CPT Lawton told me he was reassigning me as the 4th Platoon Leader and that he had already reassigned the former 4th Platoon Leader, 1LT Dave Williamson, as the 1st Platoon Leader. I was not happy about the change because I knew and trusted the men in 1st Platoon and felt we had worked well together; but I kept my disappointment to myself and assumed my new duty assignment. Within a short time, I developed the same feelings of trust and confidence in the men of the 4th Platoon and they never disappointed me.

We had another enemy contact on 3 October 1967 that resulted in SP4 Wallace W. Hopkins Jr. being shot and KIA and SSG Fred C. Nunez, my 2nd Squad Leader, being wounded by enemy mortar shrapnel and dying as a result of his wounds before a medevac helicopter could come in to pick him up. My notebook entry for the day said the weather that morning was a forecast for the action later – it was rainy, cloudy, windy, cold, and miserable! A/1/327 was in heavy contact east of us, and we went to help them out by setting up a blocking position on the north and south sides of a road that ran roughly southwest to northeast across the map grid square located at Grid Coordinates AT930250. Once we had the blocking position set up facing east, CPT Lawton decided to take his Command Post (CP) group out front with a squad from another platoon to contact A/1/327. Considering the circumstances, I don't know why he made that dangerous decision; but they had only gone about 300 meters when they encountered an enemy unit and got pinned down by heavy fire. During the firefight, SP4 Hopkins was hit in the chest and died. He had been my Platoon RTO before being chosen to be one of the CO's RTOs.

When my platoon moved up on line along the north side of the road to help the CP group, I almost got hit by automatic weapon fire as I was crossing an open area. We continued to move forward past the CP group and started receiving heavy fire from the front. I held my platoon and the 1st Platoon up behind a rice paddy dike and started to maneuver my 2nd Squad down to the left to try to outflank the enemy who were shooting at us. Just as the first two men got to the edge of a

lower rice paddy, a mortar round hit and wounded them. SSG Nunez and two more men moved down to help them, and another mortar round hit that wounded SSG Nunez. The Scout Dog Handler who was with us went to help them, and he was wounded by another mortar round. Sometime during that contact, one of the men in the 2nd Squad, SGT Dale Burkman, narrowly escaped serious injury from an enemy bullet that hit his helmet and ricocheted inside it.



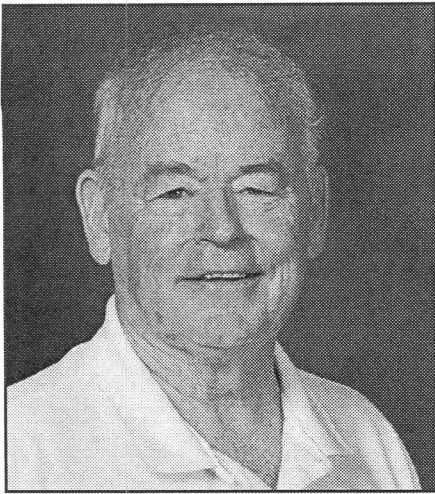
Carl E. Midkiff (HHC AIR SECT 12/66-12/67)

To add insult to injury, so to speak, we almost became victims of a "friendly fire" incident. Late in the day, a helicopter came over flying low to deliver an emergency ammunition resupply to A/1/327 which was still located east of us. When the enemy started shooting at the helicopter, one of its door gunners stitched a burst of machine gun bullets along the opposite side of the paddy dike we were lying behind for cover. It was a close call!

We had to wait until it was almost dark to get our wounded out by firing artillery smoke rounds on our left flank to obscure the enemy's vision and crawling in to get them. Just after we got the first two men out, an enemy soldier threw two hand grenades and wounded one of the medics who was helping with the rescue. I carried one man out and then pulled SSG Nunez up the paddy dike and fired my CAR-15 on automatic to provide cover while CPT Lawton and someone else dragged him to safety. By the time we got everyone out and moved back to a company perimeter, it was after dark and we were experiencing typhoon-rain and high winds. The weather was too severe for medevac helicopters to fly, and SSG Nunez died during the night before a medevac helicopter arrived the following morning. Although I had several men wounded in combat, he was the only man in my platoon who died as a result of hostile action during my six months of duty as an Infantry Platoon Leader. SSG Nunez was a very good soldier and was missed and mourned by all of us!

That night, I had carried SP4 Hopkins' body part of the way back to the perimeter; and the strong smell of death had gotten into my jungle fatigue jacket so much that I could not stand to wear it, so I threw the jacket away. My recently assigned Platoon Sergeant, SFC Nichie Alonzo, had also carried SP4 Hopkins' body part of the way back and had the same reaction to the death smell in his jacket that I did. We both just wore our jungle sweaters for a couple of days until we were able to get replacement jackets on a resupply.

On the morning of 4 October 1967, we linked up with A/1/327.



COL (R) John P. Lawton
(2/327 A 67-68)

Their unit had suffered 2 KIAs and 4 WIAs from their enemy contacts the previous day and had killed 14 of the enemy and captured a bunch of weapons. After they were extracted by helicopter, A/2/327 went back to the area where we had the enemy contact the day before and recovered all of the weapons of our wounded and also

recovered the Scout Dog there whose handler had been wounded. We resupplied with ammunition and set up another blocking position at the base of Hill 118.

We had more enemy contact on 5 October 1967 that resulted in a couple of men from 3rd Platoon being slightly wounded by mortar shrapnel. Their squad had gotten fired at, and they had dropped their rucksacks. CPT Lawton sent my platoon to help them recover their equipment. Almost as soon as we arrived at the spot where they had left their rucksacks, 60mm mortar rounds started falling. It seemed clear to me that the enemy was observing us even though we could not see them. After the 3rd Platoon men were wounded, I remember that SFC Alonzo, who had a lot of previous combat experience and an instinct for sensing danger, looked over at a dark woodline on the other side of a rice paddy from us and said, "Lieutenant, I don't know what they've got over there, but we need to get out of here right now!" I respected his judgment and had the same ominous feeling, so I began to "verbally encourage" the 3rd Platoon men to get their stuff together faster so we could get the hell away from there! As we moved out, the enemy was still dropping mortar rounds in the area.

Things seemed to quiet down during the day on 6 October 1967, but my platoon almost got hit by friendly artillery fire that night while we were set up in a night ambush position beside a trail near the place where we had gotten mortared the day before. The "friendly fire" incident occurred while another 2/327th unit was adjusting its night defensive fire artillery concentrations. When the artillery fire adjustment was going to continue after my platoon was almost hit by a White Phosphorus (WP) round and despite my heated radio protest, CPT Lawton allowed us to return to the company perimeter; and the other unit kept on shooting.

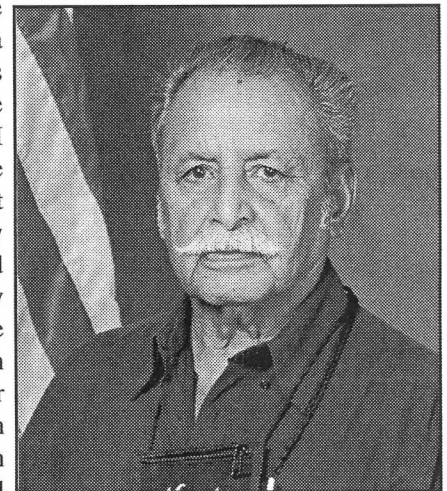
My notebook tells me 7 October 1967 was a quiet day and that A/2/327 got a five-day resupply of combat essentials.

And that brings me to 8 October 1967, one of several "Alive Days" I remember and celebrate from my year in Vietnam with the 1st Brigade (Separate), 101st Airborne Division. 3 I stated earlier that I found CPT Lawton's article interesting and

informative, and here's why:

First, it was news to me that a decision had been made "late on the evening of 7 October ... that weather permitting, A Co would be extracted on 8 October." I was never informed of the decision but understand it, because the combat strength of A/2/327 had dwindled as a result of everything that had happened since 12 September 1967 when the operation started. I believe I only had 12 men and myself fit for duty in the 4th Platoon by then and remember wondering why we were still getting platoon-size missions when all I had to accomplish them with was a reinforced Rifle Squad. News that we were to be extracted would have been welcomed and a cause for celebration in my platoon because all of us would have been very happy to learn we were being pulled out of that "hell hole" of a valley!

Second, it was news to me that CPT Lawton did not recall where my platoon was on 8 October 1967. For the record, we were where he told us to be and doing what he told us to do! Before he left that morning with his CP group and the 2nd Platoon (Reinforced) to contact and resupply C/2/327, he gave me a search and destroy mission to perform while they were gone which took me and my platoon on a route 180 degrees opposite from the direction he went. I knew what they were going to do, but not exactly where they were going to go, and did not know how long it would take them or my platoon to accomplish our missions. It was an unusual situation because I don't recall any other time during my combat tour when we ever had to deliver



Nichie G. Alonzo
(2/327 A 11/67-12/68)

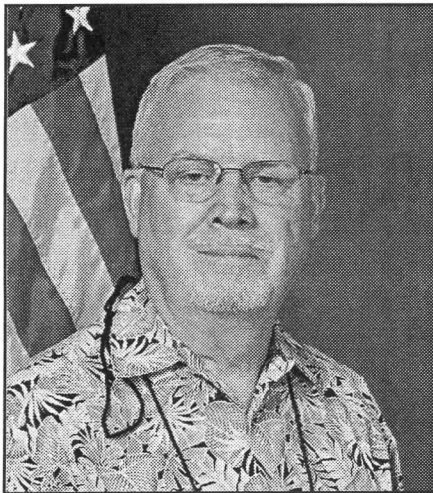
anything to another company after a resupply day. My recollection is that my platoon left our rucksacks in the company perimeter secured by 1LT Norm Fretwell, the 3rd Platoon Leader, and other A/2/327 men who had been left behind. We just took our LBE and weapons, because we expected to return there that afternoon after we checked out the area CPT Lawton had assigned. Then, the situation suddenly got deadly serious!

We had patrolled out almost to the farthest point from the company perimeter on the route CPT Lawton had designated when we heard the sound of a fire beginning in the far distance north of us in the afternoon. My RTO told me the 2nd Platoon was in contact. As the sound of the volume of fire in the distance continued to build, I took the radio handset in time to hear 1LT Dave Dunkenberger, the 2nd Platoon Leader, say "They've got something big and they're coming after us!" I immediately headed my platoon back toward the company



perimeter on the double since it was between us and the sound of the firing. A few minutes later, I took the radio handset from my RTO again and heard a voice transmitting in Vietnamese. At that moment, I knew something very bad had happened and we were going to have to try to help!

My memory is that we stopped briefly at the company perimeter to grab more ammunition from the rucksacks we had left there. I believe a very few men from the 2nd Platoon (Reinforced) and the CP group, who had been involved in the firefight, were trickling in after escaping injury and evading capture and finding their way back to the company perimeter. No one knew exactly what had happened except that it was a dangerous mess, so I started my platoon off in the general direction of the last firing we had heard to see what we could do to help. We had gone 5 or 6 hundred meters when we encountered a B/2/327 platoon in a small perimeter, and we



1st SGT(R) Gordon Mauldin
(2/327 A 7/67-10/67)

almost fired on each other because they weren't expecting us and because we didn't know they were there. We got their company radio frequency and kept going but had no idea at that point exactly where we were going because we could no longer hear any weapons firing to guide us. While we were moving, I had my RTO contact the CO of B/2/327 and told him we had lost

contact with my CO on our company frequency and asked him to obtain instructions for me from the 2/327th S-3. A few minutes later, he contacted me by radio and informed me that C/2/327 was moving to help our 2nd Platoon (Reinforced) and the A/2/327 CP group. He relayed instructions from the 2/327th S-3 that I was to return to the area where we had encountered his B/2/327 4th Platoon and wait there. As I understood it, the reasons for the order were that C/2/327 was closer to the area where the battle had occurred than we were; and also, it would avoid my platoon and C/2/327 firing into each other if we both found the place at the same time. To this day, I still do not know the exact location of the battle. I put a circle on my annotated map, but it was only a guess; and I have never seen or read anything that gave me the Grid Coordinates.

About half an hour after we got back to the B/2/327 4th Platoon location, we started learning some details and also got some action when several NVA walked past the perimeter. The B/2/327 men killed two of them. I was told we had been placed under the operational control of B/2/327 and that A/2/327 had lost 17 killed and 4 wounded. The dead included 1LT David G. Dunkenberger, an OCS classmate of mine, who had been assigned to A/2/327 while I was in the hospital in August 1967. I was also told that CPT Lawton and the

Artillery Forward Observer, 1LT Bob Fergusson, had been seriously wounded and medevaced. We spent the night manning part of the B Company perimeter, and my combat notebook indicates "It rained like never before all night!"

On 9 October 1967, the survivors of A/2/327 were extracted by helicopter to the 2/327th Tactical Operation Center (TOC) and then to the Tien Phuoc airstrip. We arrived back at Chu Lai in the late afternoon and met our new CO, CPT Lyndol L. Cook. Over the next few days, we resupplied, received replacements and participated in a Memorial Service for our dead buddies.

On 14 October 1967, the newly rebuilt A/2/327 made an Air Mobile Assault near Tam Ky, Vietnam and provided security for the 2/327th TOC for several days as our reintroduction to combat operations. On 6 November 1967, we were sent back into the Que Son Valley (which the troops called "Slaughter Valley" because of what had happened there on 8 October 1967) and continued to conduct combat operations there until we were extracted and moved to Phan Rang on 24 November 1967 for a slightly delayed Thanksgiving Day celebration.

END NOTES

1 The participating aviation units nicknamed Hill 118 "Million Dollar Hill" because of the downed helicopters. The nickname stuck because I recently saw the same hill labeled as "Million Dollar Hill" in a diagram accompanying a description of more intense combat that occurred in the same area in August 1969.

2 I lost track of SFC Mauldin after he was medevaced and didn't see him again until the Biennial Reunion of the 1st Brigade (Separate), 101st Airborne Division, held in Phoenix, AZ in Fall, 2004. At that time, I was happy to learn he had recovered from his combat wounds and had been able to complete his military career and retire as a First Sergeant E-8. He became Minister of a church in Clearwater, FL after his military retirement; and we have continued our friendship and contact each other often. We still address each other in our e-mails using our old A/2/327 radio call signs - he's still "Black Hawk" to me and I'm still "Flash Gordon" to him. Some things just don't change!

3 I define an "Alive Day" as any day during a combat tour when something happens that makes you aware you just had a "close encounter of the worst kind," i.e. with Death, and you are lucky to still be alive. 8 October 1967 was such a day for me because CPT Lawton could have said that morning, "Lieutenant Williams, have the 4th Platoon saddle up. We're gonna take this stuff over to C Company." On that day, my platoon was extremely lucky and as I've often said, I'd rather be lucky than smart any day! Every day of life since then has been a gift that I hope we have earned and deserve. The "why" of it remains an unfathomable mystery.

4 Around 1990, I was looking through photos I took in Viet Nam and realized this may have been the last one taken of 1LT Robert (Bob) Fergusson, Artillery FO, before he was seriously wounded on 8 October 1967 and later died as a result of his wounds on 8 November 1967. I knew by then that 1LT Norm Fretwell had become the aide to 1LT Fergusson's father, MG Robert G. Fergusson, Commander of U.S. Forces in Berlin, after completing his combat tour in Viet Nam; so I contacted Norm at his law office in Kansas City, MO and asked him to inquire about the matter since I did not want to inconsiderately open old wounds or cause further pain to Bob's family. When Norm told me a copy of the photo would be welcomed, I had an enlarged copy made and forwarded it to MG (Retired) Fergusson at his home in CA. Sometime later, I received a phone call from him thanking me for the photo of his son.

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22 May 2009

Hawk Plt. 2/327 Que Son Valley Battle Sep 29, 1967 thru Oct 9 1967

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In the April 2009 edition a lot was said about the battle which 2/327 was engaged in between Sep 29 to Oct 9, 1967 in the Que Son Valley near Chu Lai. However, nothing was ever mentioned about the Hawk Recon Platoon's contribution to that operation. I know, because I was there too. On Sep 29, the Hawks were at the BN TOC as a react force for some of the line companies that were working in the valley. In the early evening heavy fire could be heard from down in the valley. The sounds of a heated fire fight escalated, but most of the firing we heard was coming from AK 47s and RPD machine guns. Lt. McKnight, the Hawk platoon leader was called to the TOC CP for an emergency briefing. Five minutes later he was running back to our position ordering us to saddle up for an eagle flight out to help a platoon from Charlie Company that was in serious trouble. We were told to take only ammo and water. No rucks or sleeping gear. Four birds touched-down at the TOC and took us out one bird at time. We had about 20 guys in the platoon at the time. Our LZ was hot, resulting in one of the guys on one bird (RTO) getting hit in his femoral artery. By the time we assembled in the treeline, we moved in the dark to reach the beleaguered platoon. Upon reaching the platoon, the NVA di di maued (moved out quickly) from the area. We were told to set up positions for the night, so we used the fighting holes previously occupied by the Dinks. We had no rucks or survival gear to use. Medevacs got the seriously wounded guys from Charlie Company out of the area. The next morning we hooked up with Charlie Company. Nine men were killed in the platoon, including the platoon leader. For the next nine days the Hawks ran point for the battalion, walking down the valley in front of a line company. We were in contact with the enemy on a daily basis, resulting in several wounded and one, maybe two killed. I never heard what happened to the guy who was hit in the femoral artery. Keep in mind, we numbered about 20 guys. Our battalion was in contact with the 2nd NVA Division Rifle Company OP's and platoons were getting hit and/or overrun nightly, while we were sending out six-man ambush teams in the night. That presented a pucker factor in itself.

Unlike the Tiger Force or Recondos, the Hawks stayed true to the six-man recon team concept longer than anyone else. But during daytime in this operation, we worked as a kind of battalion point platoon, assaulting treelines and fixed enemy positions. I recall one day during heavy rain, we were observing NVA troops move about a bunch of hooches in a treeline about 50 meters from our location. We saw bunkers and spider holes throughout the area. At one point we saw a young woman naked from the waist down, exit a hooch and wash her ozone. She returned to the hooch and was promptly followed by yet another NVA soldier, who remained in there about 5 minutes. Needless to say what was going on over there. The lieutenant said we had to assault that position. Now with less than 20 men, we were concerned. Because of the



Robert O. Martin, 2/327 HHC Recon 1/67-11/67, sent this photo taken at the base camp near Chu Lai about a month before the Que Son Valley Battle.

rain, we had no air support, but we got on line and attacked the area with artillery support. Considering where we were, it could have turned out bloody. Fortunately that day the gods of war were kind. The dinks took off when we attacked. About two days before A Company was hit, we were ambushed on the main trail that led through the valley. One man was killed, Fred Hoffman, who was walking point, and I was slack man. On October 8, we, along with Charlie Company were ordered to move to where A Company was in trouble. At one point we set up ambushes near a burned-out hamlet where A & C Companies would later bring their dead and wounded. Some of the NVA that had hit A Company ran into our kill zones, and we gave them a warm Hawk welcome. That night A & C Companies and the Hawks formed a night defensive perimeter in the aforementioned hamlet. It was anticipated that we would be hit by a large enemy force in the night or early morning hours. As the rain never stopped, and there was no air cover, the odds were high that we'd be hit hard. I still recall the early dawn the next day. The clouds parted and the sun was shining. It was the first clear day in nine days of nonstop rain. The jets were soon soaring over, hitting targets all around our position. The pilots reporting seeing large numbers of NVA rapidly move away from our location. By October 9, I was already several days over due to start clearing to DEROS. I was taken out on the first resupply bird back to Chu Lai, back to Phan Rhang, and finally back home.

Before coming to the Hawks, I served in an airborne infantry line company in the 1st Air Cav. After the Hawks I served in a rifle company in the 173rd Airborne. But I learned the best tactics for Vietnam-style combat, along with map reading skills, in the Hawks. The Hawks were expert in reconnaissance techniques and small unit raids and ambushes. They rarely made mistakes in the field, because with only six (6) men, mistakes could be very costly. When we began working as a 20-man platoon, that's when we started taking casualties. As General George S. Patton once said "I don't want you to die for your country. Let the other poor, dumb, son of a bitch die for his country." And the Hawks ended up dishing out a lot more death and destruction to the enemy than they ever received.

R.O. Martin



Editor's Note: See page 17 "Medevac Pilot Saves 16 Wounded" story

CPT(R) Thomas J. Courtney, 2/502 B&E 67-68, 335 Cedar Lane, Fayetteville, GA 30214-4729, work (404) 669-6069, home (770) 487-1333 sent the following:

The events of the day and night in question are a bit hazy to me but what Gen., then Major, Brady did that night are perfectly clear in my memory.

We, B Co 2/502 started out that day in a movement to contact. My Platoon, 3rd, was on point. While crossing a series of dried up rice paddies, our company command group was fired up wounding our F.O., Lt. Don Nimitz, seriously. Dust off was called but had trouble getting in because of NVA ground fire. Eventually two gunships escorted the dust off in and a "running" pickup was made.

We continued on and made contact with dug in NVA in bunkers. I made the decision to make a penetration and clear the bunkers laterally.

While moving toward the bunkers, we were taken under fire by RPGs from our left flank. Several of my men were wounded including myself. I remember looking to my left and seeing an RPG round that looked like a big football coming towards me. The next thing I recall is flying through the air.

We withdrew back into a tree line and were securing and treating our wounded and calling for fire support from Charlie Battery 2/320 Artillery (I loved those guys). I was briefing my squad leaders about what the plan of action was to be after the artillery was lifted when what I think was another RPG round exploded in front of me. I came to lying on top of my RTO,



SPC 4 Snyder, who was screaming that his eyes were gone. One of my squad leaders SGT Ben Williams, had taken the brunt of the explosion and was seriously wounded. I had no sense of balance as my eardrums and equilibrium sacs had been ruptured and my chest felt like I had been hit by a truck. Later I found a hunk of shrapnel imbedded in an M16 magazine, which was in a bandoleer slung across my chest. I still have that magazine to remind me that "it don't mean nothing," one of our favorite sayings when things got bad.

From this point on things get hazy. I remember that the storm hit us as dust off was called for and I thought that there is no way they can get in through this storm but they did, not once but at least once more. I do recall that Maj Brady was guiding in on flares dropped by the flare ship and that the NVA were firing 12.7s at him. LT Ted Orvold, second platoon leader, was on the radio talking Maj Brady in. I refused medevac that night but did go out, the next day.

While recuperating in the rear, I wrote Maj Brady up for the Distinguished Service Cross and submitted it through channels. The 1st BDE Aviation officer came down to see me to try to get me to change my recommendation from a DSC to a Distinguished Flying Cross. I absolutely refused to change it. What he, Brady, did was the bravest thing I have ever seen in my four combat tours dating back to Korea. There were a lot of heroes that night. When I met Maj Brady and thanked him I was amazed that he didn't walk straddle legged.

P.S. While I was riding with Gen Mat as "Warrior of the Week," we were at the evac hospital when they brought John Lawton in. The priest was trying to give him last rights and I remember John Lawton telling him to "get the hell away from me, I ain't dying."



Flares, Fog & Faith

The true story of how a "dustoff" pilot earned the Medal of Honor.

BY MAJ. GEN. PATRICK BRADY, U.S. ARMY (RET.)

Over the years I have read various accounts of the rescue missions for which I became one of two soldiers in Vietnam to receive both the Distinguished Service Cross and the Medal of Honor. None are completely accurate, including the official Medal of Honor citation. At the time, some criticized my flying on these missions as irresponsible; it was outside the regulations but necessary and in no way reckless. What follows is what actually happened on those missions and how I discovered the techniques that made them possible.

The changes between my 1964 tour in Vietnam as a helicopter ambulance, or "dustoff," pilot and my second tour - from 1967 to 1968 - were monumental and frightening. "Dustoff" had gone from 16,000 troops supported to some 500,000, and from



4,000 patients carried per year to more than 7,000 per month. Helicopters and crew losses were alarming. And Mother Nature was killing more than Charlie. Three of our pilots from the 54th Helicopter Ambulance Detachment, which I brought to Chu Lai in August 1967, preceded us to Vietnam. All three were killed at night, two hitting mountains during bad weather. Chu Lai was full of mountains, and the weather was brutal.

I was scared to death. Charlie worked the graveyard shift and used the terrain and weather very well. There were casualties day and night in weather. We had to fly in those conditions or troops would die. But how? Our pilots were inexperienced - 10 of 12 were two months out of flight school - but eager. They would push themselves for a wounded soldier, increasing the risks, almost certainties, of death or accident.

Editor's Note: General Brady wrote: "Ivan, the action was not on Thanksgiving it was 2-3 October, and it was a unit from the 1st Brigade, the only 101st unit with the Americal at the time. The story errs in stating that we did not get all the patients, we did. I have attached an article I wrote for THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE which for the first time describes what really happened. You should mention to your readers that I have a book coming out this summer called DEAD MEN FLYING, from MerriamPress@comcast.net which goes into more detail on Dustoff and the 101st."

I am a person who wears my faith on my sleeve. Since my youth I have been in the habit of talking to God - often casually and not always in a prayerful way, but intensely, during stressful and dangerous situations. I had a serious dialogue with Him as I matched our experience with the mountains and weather at Chu Lai. Many of the troop locations were on mountaintops often enveloped by clouds or in valleys covered with a dense, solid fog resembling a 500-foot snow bank. These were zero-zero conditions, and there were no let-down facilities in these mountains. To make matters worse, we were to go operational during the monsoon season. OK, Lord, how do we do it?

However, weather was not our initial problem; that was Charlie. Our first operational day we had one ship shot up, on the fourth day two more, and on the fifth day, all six ships were shot up and three crewmen seriously wounded. My first tour was semi-war; this was war. But as bad as the first week was - and despite the fact that it was monsoon season - no one was killed, and we did not have to face the dreaded night weather pick-up. Then came the second week.

Night Vision. The call came late at night on Oct. 2, in the middle of a monsoon. Several units of the 101st Division had suffered numerous casualties and were surrounded deep in the mountains to our west. All Army aircraft had been grounded. I knew the wounded must have been extremely serious or they would not have called us in such conditions. As we headed into the blizzard, I employed a method I used during my first tour in the mountainless delta: low and slow, from light to light. We ran out of lights, and our searchlight was useless in the blinding rain. OK, Lord, what now? Why are you doing this to me? Then I had a vision, an epiphany really. Thank you, Lord.

On an earlier routine night mission into the valley, as dark figures darted back and forth loading the patients, I sat there absentmindedly enjoying the bizarre beauty of night on the battlefield. The flares drifted lazily down through the mountains, illuminating the charming landscape in multiple shades of green pierced with deadly but strangely beautiful emerald and golden streaks of tracer fire. In my reverie I noticed that one of the mountains, covered with clouds, was perfectly silhouetted by the flares - a stunning sight. That vision came back to me, and I knew how to get those soldiers out.

My plan was to fly instruments (IFR) to the pick-up site (PZ) and let down using flares. My hope was that the flares would silhouette the mountains, or at least enough area around my bird to keep me clear of them. There was an Air Force flare ship at 9,000 feet over the fight. I explained to him what I

See article on page 17 - *Medevac Pilot Saves 16 Wounded (The Screaming Eagle, November 22, 1967.)*



wanted to do, and he agreed to help. I started down circling under the flares, working to position them outside my window. I forgot to tell the Air Force to keep a flare lighted at all times. I discovered this omission at 1,500 feet in 3,000-foot mountains when the lights went out. There was nothing to do but come to a hover, which wasn't difficult in the H model, and do a steep instrument takeoff (ITO), clear the mountains and start over. Eventually we got it right and I descended to the side of a mountain, where we made our first of several pickups. Once loaded, I did a steep ITO clear of the mountains and flew on instruments to a hospital. There were more wounded, and we went back.

This trip, we were able to get down more easily but could not locate the wounded. They were fearful that the enemy would see their signal and tried to guide us in by sound. The enemy also could hear us, but as we flew blacked out they could not see us and were firing wildly all over the sky. That turned out to be a good thing. It was from the location and fire of enemy quad .51-caliber guns that we were able to orient ourselves and find the friendly patients. But we didn't get them all.

On the third trip, we got caught in a thunder cloud - perhaps the most terrifying experience I ever had in a helicopter - but we managed to get all the patients, despite the bird needing to



MAJ. GEN. PATRICK BRADY, MOH

Continued on page 21

Medevac Pilot Saves 16 Wounded

By SP5 William P. Singley
CHU LAI — Thanksgiving holds a special meaning for 16 Screaming Eagles who are alive today because an Army aviator challenged defying odds with skill and courage — and won. The official record says Maj. Patrick H. Brady, Marinette, Wis., is the executive officer of the 54th Med. Det. (Helicopter Ambulance) and pilot. Paratroopers of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf. say he is the bravest man they have known. During one of the worst monsoon storms of the season, B Co. had made contact with an NVA force of unknown size. An

enemy rocket launcher hammered away at the American position. Five men lay wounded seriously. Combat medics taxed their skill and knowledge to keep them alive. They needed a "Dust-Off" — immediate helicopter evacuation. As the message crackled through the storm to the 54th, Lt. Tom Courtney, Knoxville, Tenn., a B Co. platoon leader thought: "No one can make it. Not in this storm. The weather is too bad." Courtney breathed a silent prayer for his wounded men. They waited.

Twenty-five miles to the east, on the coast of the South China Sea, the "Dust-Off" horn blared into the rain-soaked night. No one had to leave the comfort of the pilot's shack. All aircraft had been grounded. But Brady and WO Gregory P. Schwartz, Lena, Ill., dashed out into the rain toward their Red Cross marked chopper. Spec. 4 Glen B. Peck, crew chief from Fremont, Calif., and medic Spec. 5 Jimmy L. Johnson, Houston, followed. It was nearly 8 p.m. when Brady lifted their helicopter off the Chu Lai pad and headed

west toward the mountains and jungle. Flying by instruments, the "Dust-Off" reached the valley where the wounded lay. Low clouds shrouded the mountain peaks. Rain hammered at the helicopter. Enemy machine gunners ripped the night with tracers arcing toward the mercy flight. Spirits Lifted The men of B Co. could hear the helicopter above the storm. Their spirits lifted. Brady, Schwartz, Peck and Johnson strained their eyes to see through the downpour. Somewhere down there were

men who needed them. The pilot radioed a message to the men on the ground: "I can't find you right now, but I'll be back." Courtney found it difficult to believe the pilot's promise. "I couldn't blame him if he didn't come back. The storm was terrible." Brady, a Medevac pilot since 1963 and now serving his second tour in Vietnam, had an idea: "High above this valley is a C-47 gunship on station," he thought. "If we had flares we could find our way in to the wounded men." The "Dust-Off" returned for fuel. Lt. Jerome B. Foust, Columbus, Ga., climbed into the cockpit and Brady took off again. Climbing high into the storm, Brady returned to the area where B Co. waited. Still orbiting above the valley was an Air Force C-47 — 'Spooky'. Flares Light Way Brady coordinated with 'Spooky', explained he wanted flares to light his way into the paratrooper position and prepared to make his descent. Slowly, in wide circles, the helicopter descended. Each crew member searched the darkness for a sign that would indicate their location. "When a flare went out, it was like walking into a darkened room," said Foust. Brady turned his radio to Courtney's frequency and called. "I couldn't believe it," Courtney said. "He had come back!" As the chopper continued to feel its way down through the clouds, Foust asked Brady if he was sure of what he was doing. Brady nodded, his eyes racing back and forth from the glowing instrument panel to the darkness outside. All of a sudden, the "Dust-Off" broke through the last layer of clouds. Brady flashed his landing lights to help the paratroopers locate his helicopter. A flashlight blinked an answer from the ground. "When I saw that flashlight, it was the happiest day of my life," said Brady. Wounded on Board In less than five minutes the chopper was filled with wounded. Brady revved the engine and shouted to Courtney above the noise: "I'll be back." The storm worsened as the helicopter climbed high in the pitch-black sky. Instruments and Brady's skill guided the flight to the landing pad at 2nd Surgical Hospital. Brady refueled and Maj. Robert D. McWilliams, Woodland, Calif., commanding officer of the 54th replaced Foust as the co-pilot. "Foust had been flying all day," McWilliams said. "He needed rest." Above the valley, 'Spooky' waited for the chopper. Once (Continued on Back Page)

The
Screaming

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Eagle

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1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division

November 22, 1967

'Champ' Alerts Twice

CHU LAI — On two consecutive days a 70-pound, grey German Shepherd scout dog saved a platoon of 101st Airborne paratroopers by alerting to enemy ambushes.

Champ, new to the 42nd Scout Dog Platoon, and his handler, Pfc. James F. Moore, Hollis, N.H., were on point with the 3rd Platoon of A Co., 2nd Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf. during Operation Benton.

Suddenly he alerted. "It was a strong reaction," said Moore. "He cocked his head and sniffed the air."

The men moved off the trail except for two paratroopers who crawled forward to investigate. Around a bend in the path, seven NVA soldiers were eating.

The two paratroopers crawled back to set an ambush and await the enemy.

As darkness fell, the NVA descended. The enemy point man spotted one of the paratroopers and signaled his comrades. He was killed by paratrooper fire, but the other NVA escaped. One weapon was captured.

The next morning, Champ led a patrol near the company command post.

"We were 50 meters out of the perimeter when he alerted," said Moore. Lt. Norman A. Fretwell, Joplin, Mo., signaled his men to move on line and sweep forward. Another platoon was called in to cover the left flank.

"We moved into an NVA ambush from behind," said Fretwell. "They were watching the trail and we were on them before they could run."

Fire broke out when an NVA turned and spotted the paratroopers. He rose and fired a burst, but was cut down? Five more NVA were killed, a machine gun and five AK-47's captured in the 45-minute encounter. The NVA on the other side of the trail abandoned their mission and fled. Two paratroopers were wounded.



Smiles on a Slide

Youngsters of Phan Rang have playground facilities to enjoy, thanks to support battalion paratroopers of the 101st Airborne. The Screaming Eagles designed and built a merry-go-round, Jungle Jim climbing bars, teeter-totter, sliding board and swings for the playground adjacent to the Phan Rang Recreation Center. Scores of Vietnamese children were present for the first day "try-out" of the American contribution to fun and enjoyment. It continues to be a principal attraction for Vietnamese youngsters who are developing a close identity with the Americans stationed at Phan Rang. (Photo by Capt. Wes Groesbeck)

Christmas Cards

PHAN RANG — Distinctive Christmas cards for Screaming Eagles of the 101st Airborne may be purchased from the NCO Club here, officials announced.

The Christmas cards were designed by a former Screaming Eagle and were purchased for brigade personnel by the NCO club. Purchase price of the cards is minimal, envelopes included.

Individuals desiring to purchase cards may do so through their battalion sergeants major or from the NCO club.

Christmas cards should be mailed by Dec. 13.

Evaluate All Information

Intelligence Detachment Tips Troops to Enemy Strengths

CHU LAI—A cache of enemy weapons is found. An enemy battalion is located. A Hoi Chanh tells of weakening enemy morale.

These intelligence reports are typical of the kind of information the 181st Military Intelligence Detachment produces for the Screaming Eagles.

The detachment, commanded by Capt. Charles Stokes, Buffalo, W.Va., has four sections, each working independently, yet at the same time combining all known data to give the brigade commander an accurate picture of what the enemy is doing.

One section keeps informed on enemy movements, designations and activities. Another evaluates documents, pictures and reports. A third section is concerned with security and the fourth acts as the source of information for the other three. That is the detainee interrogation unit.

"Questioning of detainees starts in the field," explains Lt. Timothy F. Healy, Manhattan, N.Y. "A Vietnamese interpreter begins developing information which will be of immediate value to the unit which secured the subject."

Once the subject has been questioned at the unit level, he is flown to the brigade headquarters for further, more detailed interrogation.

"Each headquarters supports the other," Healy adds. "The continuing, detailed interrogation permits all elements to evaluate the information and fit it into meaningful material."

Once in a while, the detachment gets a hard-core Viet Cong or NVA who refuses to talk. In this case, the subject's rights are protected.

Most of the detainees questioned by the 181st intelligence team are simply tired of fighting and want to quit. Some have been engaged in combat or terrorist activities since 1954. A 38-year-old former Viet Cong once told his questioners: "I'm

just tired of it all."

"Sometimes a former enemy will rally to our side because morale in his unit is low or because he isn't treated properly," Healy added. "One recent dejected NVA soldier led paratroopers to a cache of 10 weapons including a machine gun."

"The personality of the individual we question — his clothing, health, morale, weapon, knowledge of the area — all of these factors contribute toward putting our continuing puzzle together," said Healy. "When the pieces fit, we save lives, money and shorten the war."



Urging Bond Sales

"Savings Bonds are better than ever," says Capt. Bill Carpenter, West Point's famed "Lonesome End" and much decorated former Screaming Eagle. Carpenter formerly served as a company commander with the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf., aide-de-camp to Gen. William C. Westmoreland and as assistant brigade S-3.

(USA Photo)

Army Chopper Rescues 2 Wounded Troopers

PHAN RANG (10th Avn Bn-IO)—An Army helicopter rescued two paratroopers of the 101st Airborne Division after their three-quarter-ton truck was attacked by VC near here recently.

Returning from a routine mission, "Beachbum" helicopter of the 10th Combat Aviation Battalion's 117th Assault Helicopter Company received a rescue call.

An Army "Birdog" pilot of the 183rd Reconnaissance Airplane Company observed the apparently deserted American vehicle as he was making an afternoon flight.

Capt. Britt Knox, Nashville, Tenn., helicopter commander, flew quickly to the location. Within minutes he made radio contact with the Birdog pilot who marked the area for him.

The pilot of the helicopter, WO James Bell, Montgomery, Ala., described the area as "a salt flat with the truck lying close to a lot of brush. There didn't appear to be any sign of life."

As the helicopter made a low observation pass over the area, Spec. 4 Allen Bennett, St. Louis, the crew chief, said he saw someone.

Knox quickly checked with the crew chief and determined Bennett had seen a G.I. on the ground.

The helicopter pilots took their Huey in for another close look, and this time door gunner Spec. 4 Harry Cawley, Hillerton, Pa., reported seeing somebody else.

Two wounded paratroopers, who had been hiding in the brush to avoid enemy contact, were located by the crew.

As Knox landed to recover the troopers, several shots were fired from the enemy location near the vehicle. Cawley placed suppressive fire on the enemy as Bennett jumped from the helicopter to help the two wounded Americans aboard the aircraft.

Knox related later that "seeing that 'Screaming Eagle' patch of the 101st brought back many fond memories."

"Our battalion provided 17 months of support to the 101st Airborne Brigade, flying all over the II Corps area."

After a safe recovery, the two paratroopers were evacuated to the 101st medical aid station here and later to the 8th Field Army Hospital in Nha Trang.

Squad Defoliates 'Moving' Jungle

CHU LAI—A squad of 101st Airborne paratroopers defoliated some moving jungle with their M-16's northwest of here recently and harvested a crop of dead NVA.

An enemy platoon had been observed moving across a series of rice paddies. They subsequently moved into a treeline as the 4th Plat. of A Co., 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf., led by Lt. Michael A. Norris, Oceanside, Calif., maneuvered to engage them.

"We moved into the treeline and met intense automatic weapons fire," said Norris. "I withdrew my platoon and placed squads at each end of the treeline to flank them."

Norris moved again toward the treeline. "We were crawling on hands and knees," said Norris. "The enemy was in spiderholes and I didn't want to risk getting any of my men shot in the back. We had crawled only a few feet when we heard firing on our left flank."

The squad Norris had placed on the left flank had killed five NVA trying to escape across a rice paddy.

"The bushes were moving," said Norris. "It gave away the positions of several enemy."

"We were crawling around from hole to hole and they caught on," Norris stated. "They began to support one another."

Cpl. John C. Shepard, Dedeville, Ala., had placed his squad on line along the left flank of the platoon.

"We were forward security for the platoon," he said. "When the rest of the platoon made contact, we swung around on the flank and spotted 12 NVA. They were trying to surround us and cut us off from the rest of the platoon and company," said Shepard.

As Shepard's squad advanced on the enemy one of the paratroopers spotted an NVA and fired.

Shepard lost sight of the man and began yelling for him.

"I called for him so loudly that Runsvold heard me over the shooting," Shepard recalled.

Cautiously, Sgt. Albert H. Runsvold, Clearfield, Utah, crawled into the brush and searched for the missing paratrooper.

"I knew someone was out there," said Runsvold. "I heard movement."

An NVA, who had been hiding in the foliage, jumped out at Runsvold, fired from less than three feet and missed.

"I fell away from his and squeezed off a burst from my M-16," said Runsvold.

The paratrooper took an RPD and eight Chinese-Communist grenades from the dead NVA.



Instant Repair Work

A paratrooper of the 801st Maintenance puts the final touch to repairs of a 105mm howitzer during a recent operation. The men of the 801st perform instant repair, quickly returning equipment to the unit. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Mike Mangiameli)



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Sniper Changes Rifles

CHU LAI — A sniper in the 101st Airborne who used three rifles to kill eight Viet Cong during Operation Benton and Wheeler, has added four to his score with a machine gun.

Spec. 4 Richard V. Vaughan, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., a sniper with the Hawks, a reconnaissance element of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf., is an expert shot with the M-14, M-16 and .30-06 rifles.

"When the Hawks got sniper scopes I asked for one. Since then I've only missed twice."

Vaughan and Pfc. Paul Robinson, Balboa, Canal Zone, were directed to set up an observation post on a hill.

"They gave me a machine gun instead of my rifle," said Vaughan. "At first I was mad, but I started thinking of the range of the gun and decided I'd try sniping with it."

That afternoon Vaughan and Robinson set up their position. Robinson searched the valley with binoculars.

"There's one over by that far tree line," Robinson pointed. Vaughan trained the barrel of the gun on the treeline and spotted a black pajama-clad figure walking near a rice dike. He fired a two round burst.

"You got him!" yelled Robinson. "His weapon fell in the water."

As the afternoon wore on Vaughan added three more confirmed kills.

No Lecture Necessary

CHU LAI — Six paratroopers in the 101st Airborne vowed they would never again complain about digging foxholes after they survived an NVA night attack during Operation Wheeler west of here.

A Co. of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf., had dug in for the night. Half of the men were asleep.

Suddenly, enemy machine gun fire ripped the stillness.

"Hit the hole!" yelled Pfc. Martin W. Williams, Flagstaff, Ariz., grabbing his steel helmet.

Leaping into the foxhole with Williams were Spec. 4 Ira F. McNutt, Robertsville, Ohio, and Pfc. Edwin Lopez, Jamacia, N.Y.

"At first I thought it was just another mortar attack," said Williams. "Then I realized we were being probed."

Pfc. Samuel J. Baker, Virginia Beach, Va., John F. Burke, Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and James J. Meyers, New Roads, La., piled into the foxhole near their tent.

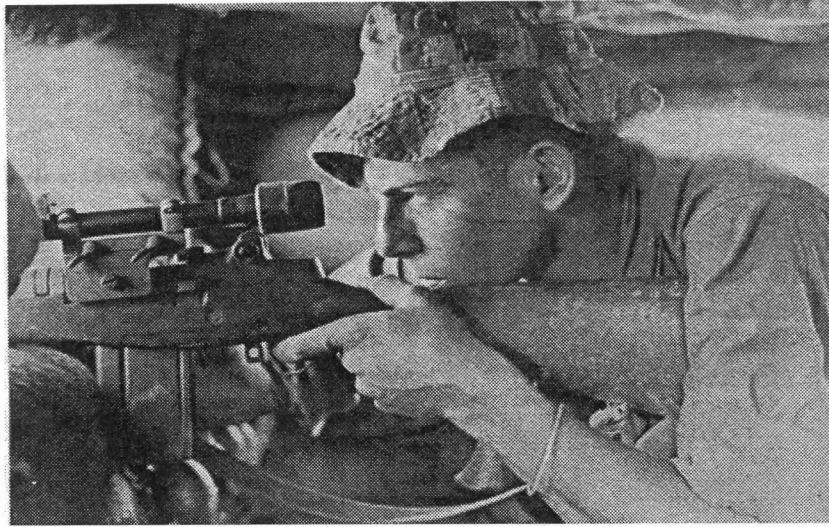
"We all dived for the hole with the crack of the first round," said Baker.

The enemy weapons zeroed in on Baker's tent.

"They kept firing at the tent," said Baker. "We threw grenades at the enemy running towards us."

The enemy broke contact just before dawn. As light came, the men of A Co. discovered 18 enemy dead. Three NVA were sprawled near Williams' foxhole. Six bodies were in front of the foxhole occupied by Baker, Burke and Meyers.

"No one will ever have to tell us to dig in again," said Williams.



Expert Concentration

Spec. 4 Richard C. Vaughan, Fort Lauderdale, Fla., a member of the Hawk reconnaissance platoon of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf., is one of the best snipers in the brigade. Vaughan has used a variety of rifles, but prefers the M-14 (above) best. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Mike Mangiameli)

Military Police Perform Multitude Of Tasks Supporting Paratroopers

CHU LAI — A solitary figure stands a lonely vigil at the entrance to the brigade. He is always there, braving the weather and fighting the boredom of his thankless job. He is a Screaming Eagle Military Policeman.

Long hours and a multitude of duties are routine for the 101st MP. Unlike stateside duties of patrolling streets of towns near military installations, the combat MP's primary responsibility is providing security against the threat of an enemy attack or terrorism.

"The MP's support the brigade in combat operations through a multitude of missions involving security," explains the brigade provost marshal, Maj. Carl J. Allen, San Antonio. "Often we are providing security and escorts for convoys, guarding detainees and securing roads and villages for mine-sweeps or civic action operations."

Moving through villages in

machine gun mounted jeeps, motorized patrols are responsible for insuring there are no enemy to present danger to an approaching convoy. MP's are a constant target for snipers and often run the risk of hitting a mine or road booby traps.

During many combat operations, while the battalions are involved in search and destroy missions, the MP's maintain security and check-points around hamlets to discourage Viet Cong tax collectors from intimidating the people.

Working hand in hand with other brigade elements, the Screaming Eagle MP's protected 101st convoys in Vietnam. Notably, they safeguarded Highway 1 when elements trucked from Kontum to Phan Rang, Phan Thiet to Song Mao and back to Phan Rang, and Phan Rang to Khanh Duong. More recently they escorted vehicles during the move from Khanh Duong to Nha Trang and various moves in the I Corps area.

Twenty MP's are assigned to the Phan Rang base camp, augmenting the mixed armed services police forces and working with local Vietnamese officials.

"Our rear element," says Staff Sgt. Miles Pierce, Red Bay, Ala., "doesn't get involved in the tactical aspect of MP work quite as much as those forward, but the preventive efforts and long hours are the same."

Platoon leader, Lt. James F. Anderson Jr., Greenville, N.C., commends his troopers on their devotion to duty and maintenance of high standards in spite of long hours of duty.

"It seems our men never get any free time. They are either going on duty, coming off, or preparing to go. We constantly receive missions requiring the use of our gun jeeps and often have to use men who would otherwise have been off duty. Being an MP is a full time job."



Traffic Control

A paratrooper of the 101st Airborne's Military Police Plat. directs traffic near Brigade Headquarters. (Photo by Spec. 3 William P. Singley)

Troops Dig Out 3 NVA

By SP4 Dan Stroebel
CHU LAI — A squad of paratroopers in the 101st Airborne had to literally root out three NVA from bunkers dug into the side of a trench during an Operation Wheeler action near here.

Early in the day, two platoons from B Co. of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf., had crossed a series of rice paddies without contact. Late in the afternoon, Lt. Ted S. Orvold, Atlanta, began moving his platoon across the open area when enemy sniper fire sent his paratroopers diving for the ground.

The platoon laid down a base of fire as the officer crawled to the edge of the paddy and threw grenades into the first enemy position. He then led a squad across the paddy to a trench adjacent to scattered trees bordering the rice paddy.

"I was certain NVA were in the trench somewhere," said Orvold. "The question was — where?"

Orvold Scores

Sgt. Thomas F. McCarthy, Boston, moved cautiously into the trench. A lone enemy soldier leaped out from a bunker and aimed at the paratrooper's back. Orvold dropped the enemy with a quick burst from 10-feet.

"Thank God the lieutenant reacted when he did," said McCarthy.

Orvold, now convinced the enemy was hiding in the trench, decided to root out the stubborn insurgents.

Pfc. James R. Hartness, Derby, Kan., led the way as the squad entered the trench. Hartness moved slowly along the trench wall.

Suddenly the muzzle of an AK-47 was shoved out of a hole and fired a burst not six inches from Hartness' face.

"I thought I was hit and fell back," Hartness recalled. "It was a natural reaction to jerk away. It saved my life."

A wall of dirt extended above the ground level, parallel to the trench. Hartness volunteered to crawl along the top of the wall and throw a grenade into the bunker. Orvold decided against the suggestion because Hartness would be exposed to possible fire. Instead, he asked Hartness to crawl behind the wall, concealing himself from fire and holding his hand up above the top of the wall so Orvold would know the paratrooper's location.

On Target

"There!" the platoon leader yelled. "It's the bunker right below you."

"I threw in two grenades and I could still hear movement," Hartness recalled. "I added a third for good measure."

The enemy crawled out — and died.

While the paratroopers examined the body of the dead NVA and searched the bunker, firing broke out across the rice paddy.

McCarthy and a small security force sighted an enemy soldier running toward the trench and opened fire, killing him. However, other enemy hidden in bunkers to McCarthy's front began firing on the security force.

"We knew where the positions were," said McCarthy. "We couldn't move toward them because of an open rice paddy between us."

The paratroopers called in artillery and gunships as darkness fell.

Trooper Tosses 'Strike'

CHU LAI — A "strike" thrown by a 101st Airborne paratrooper struck-out an attacking NVA soldier near here when a "ball" could have cost the American his life.

Five men from C Co. of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf. were manning an observation post. Spec. 4 Frank Jennings, Pittsburgh, was scanning the area with a night device.

"It was pretty dark and I had to stand up in order to see," said Jennings. "I saw movement and it turned out to be four figures coming toward us."

Pfc. Ronald Hancock, Bell Gardens, Calif., grabbed the handset of his radio to report the sighting back to the company.

"The radio was dead," said Hancock. "Even the familiar rushing sound was gone."

Their only means of communication eliminated, the five paratroopers decided to engage the enemy.

Jennings instructed each man to ready a grenade and wait for his command.

As the enemy approached their position, five grenades sailed through the air.

"They fell short and the enemy dived for cover," said Hancock. Jennings leaped to his feet and saw an enemy soldier 15 yards away.

"Unfortunately, he saw me at the same time," Jennings said. "I knew my exploding grenade wouldn't get him before he fired, so I threw it at him like a baseball."

The enemy was raising his RPD machine gun to fire when Jennings' grenade struck the gunner in the chest. Momentarily startled, the enemy watched the grenade fall to the ground and explode.

"The blast killed him and wounded another," said Jennings. "The other two ran down the hill."



Three Men From Colorado

Three paratroopers from Colorado who met en route to Vietnam have been assigned to C Co. of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf. (Left to right): Spec. 4 Allen Shoultz, Denver, and Pfc. Dave Diaz, Brighton, and Thomas R. Harms, Greeley. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Mike Manglamell)

Treats Three Wounded

Medic Disregards Enemy Fire

CHU LAI — If ever a book is written about combat medics in Vietnam, the author would benefit from learning about Spec. 5 Aaron D. McDaniel, Newark, N.J., a paratrooper medic in the 101st Airborne.

"He's the best I've seen out there," said Pfc. James L. Russell, Rockford, Mich., a machine gunner in C Co. of the 1st Bn. (Abn), 327th Inf.

Plat. Sgt. Glen F. Borg, Fayetteville, N.C., recalled an action during Operation Wheeler to support Russell's statement.

"The 4th Plat. had gone to a nearby stream to fill canteens," said Borg. "The area was generally safe but as the first man bent down to fill his canteen,

'Charlie' opened fire. Everybody scattered for cover but there were punji stakes everywhere, even in the stream."

Borg assembled the platoon and moved by fire and maneuver across the stream into the terraced hedgerows and rice paddies ahead, hoping to eliminate the enemy before dark. McDaniel was with the sergeant.

Ahead, NVA regulars in spider holes and bunkers opened fire on the left flank of the advancing platoon. The platoon leader, Lt. Thomas Kinane, Brooklyn, yelled for a medic. Pfc. Royce Keahey, Rome, Ga., had been wounded.

Runs Through Fire
McDaniel ran through a hail

of enemy fire into the rice paddy. He knelt beside a man who was bandaging himself. "I'm O.K.," he shouted. "Check the others."

McDaniel scooted along a paddy dike to Keahey.

"Russell was really giving it to them with his machine gun," said McDaniel. "He was mad because a bullet had shot a hole straight through his helmet."

Quickly McDaniel bandaged Keahey, assured him he was all right and looked around for other wounded.

Spec. 4 Raymond L. Land, Tucson, Ariz., saw McDaniel rise to move.

"Stay back!" Land yelled above the firing.

McDaniel was on his feet and running toward a fallen trooper. Bullets cut the air around him as he reached the wounded man.

Aiming at Bottle

"Every time I tried to raise a bottle of plasma, it seemed the enemy was aiming at the bottle," McDaniel recalled.

Land shook his head in disbelief as McDaniel cared for the badly-wounded paratrooper. Then he saw Pfc. Richard K. Owens, Roseboro, N.C., running toward McDaniel.

"Owens! Get down," Land shouted, watching the bullets kicking up dirt around McDaniel.

Owens held the bottle of plasma while McDaniel applied first aid.

Other platoons of C Co. now joined the battle, flanking the enemy with grenades and machine gun fire. The enemy fled into the dusk, leaving rucksacks and ammunition behind.

Spec. 4 Lonnie Lane, Murfreesboro, Tenn., another medic, joined McDaniel in caring for the wounded.

One American was near death. McDaniel and Lane gave him mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and heart massage to keep him alive. As they placed him aboard the "Dust-Off," the wounded trooper held on to a spark of life.

Somewhere in the darkness of the Vietnam night, as the chopper flew toward the hospital, the spark went out. McDaniel had given his best.

Buddies Serving 2/502

CHU LAI—Paratrooper wings brought three Colorado neighbors together in the United States and contributed to their assignment to the same 101st Airborne company here.

Spec. 4 Allen Shoultz, Denver, and Pfc. Dave Diaz, Brighton, and Thomas R. Harms, Greeley, are members of C Co., 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf.

"We saw each other at the Stapleton International Airport in Denver," said Harms. "All of us were going military standby to Ft. Lewis, Wash."

"There were several soldiers waiting," said Shoultz. "Just we three were airborne. The others were 'legs'."

"Dave and I got acquainted on the plane to the Coast," Harms said. "Shoultz teamed up with us at the baggage counter in Seattle."

The three paratroopers shared a cab from the airport and talked about their Vietnam assignments.

During two days of processing at Ft. Lewis, Shoultz and Harms spent a day on KP. "That was a day we'd like to forget," laughed Shoultz. "You never saw so many pots and pans."

A day later, the Colorado trio relaxed as a Northwest Orient jet carried them to Vietnam.

More processing at Cam Ranh and the three were en route to the Screaming Eagle base camp at Phan Rang.

"Proficiency school was really good," Shoultz said. "The instruction was top-notch and it really improved our confidence."

The Colorado trio wondered how much longer they would remain together. Luck had been with them so far.

"We were happy when we got our orders assigning us to Charlie company of the 'O-Deuce,'" they said. "We heard good things about C Co. in Phan Rang. It's considered one of the best."

Each agreed that when they had volunteered to go airborne, they felt certain they would come to Vietnam. All were in the 82nd Airborne Div. when their overseas orders came.

"Back there, I felt like I should be in Vietnam," said Diaz.

Shoultz and Harms agreed. "You know you're coming here sooner or later," said Shoultz. "It's good to be here and get it over with."

Dud Makes Poor Seat

CHU LAI — The adage — look before you sit — was a pointed lesson for a 101st Airborne paratrooper recently when he sat down on an enemy mine.

Pfc. Carroll Ellis Jr., Windham, Vt., radio-telephone operator (RTO) with the Recondos of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf., was heating a canteen cup of water when he plopped down to rest. His backside made contact with the three-pronged triggering device.

"It felt like three hot knives," said Ellis.

Ellis yelled "mine" at the top of his voice. Every member of the reconnaissance force hit the ground.

The mine was a dud. A medic gave Ellis a tetanus shot as a preventive measure and sent him back to duty.

Rescues 16 Wounded...

(Continued from Page 1)

again flares groped through the storm to light the path for the "Dust-Off" crew. Brady kept his head out of the window, searching for the beam of Courtney's flashlight.

"I knew they could hear us," Brady said.

Brady and McWilliams found the pin-point of light and again the helicopter touched down. Wounded, grateful men were quickly loaded on board.

"I'll Try!"

Before the chopper lifted out, a radio message from A Co. nearby asked for help. Men had been wounded badly during an enemy mortar attack.

A Co. communications chief, Sgt. Ronald P. Toomey, Piqua, Ohio, waited for Brady's reply.

"I'll try!" answered Brady.

With the last of the wounded from B Co. on board, the helicopter took off into the storm in search of Toomey and A Co.

Circling above the paratrooper company, Brady began his descent. An NVA heavy machine gun opened fire on the helicopter.

"I could hear the gun firing on them," said Courtney. "I prayed for them to make it."

The pilots continued their approach into A Co., dodging enemy fire and fighting the turbu-

lence of the storm. In the maneuvering, they became lost.

"We flew around until the enemy gun began firing on us again," said McWilliams. "From the location of the gun, we reoriented our position and found A Co."

The wounded from B Co. were placed closer together to make room for others. Not all could be taken. Brady and McWilliams

said they would come back.

As the helicopter climbed back into the rain and gale force wind, Johnson, the medic, cared for the wounded. "I tried to keep them conscious," he said. "I didn't want them to think about themselves. I soon found out the guys in the 101st were more concerned about their buddies on the ground. They knew others were wounded and wondered if we would get back to them fast enough."

Fourth Trip

At Chu Lai, the wounded were carried quickly to the waiting doctors and nurses. Dust-Off Flight 2-14 returned to the battlefield. The storm had now reached its full fury. Flares from 'Spooky' were snuffed out in seconds by the wind and rain.

Toomey watched the sky and listened for Brady's return. "He tried and tried for over an hour to get in," said Toomey. "It was impossible."

"The 'Dust-Off' returned to Chu Lai.

Brady looked at his watch. It was 4 a.m.

With dawn the storm abated. Other 54th Med. pilots evacuated the wounded. Lt. Courtney was among them. After he was treated, Courtney went to the 54th to thank Brady.



Maj. Brady

be grounded and checked for structural damage. I used three copilots, flew more than nine hours the night of Oct. 2 and 3, 1967, and landed 12 times, finishing around 4 a.m. I am not sure how many casualties we carried that night, but they were all, as suspected, very serious, and many would have died before morning.

The troops were grateful for our help, and the new technique got a bit of media attention - much of it ill-informed. One book actually recorded that we flew the wounded back low level under the stuff. Others called it the first-ever IFR pickup in the mountains. Still others said it was blind letdown. It was not. I believe that most of the pilots killed at night in weather were killed trying to fly contact without sufficient visibility. Three Dustoff aircraft and 13 crewmen were destroyed in similar conditions later in October. This technique could have saved them. This technique used IFR flight with a VFR (visual, not instrument flight) letdown, not a blind one. Never guessing, I always ensured that I was clear of the terrain, and I never descended one inch blindly.

What I had done was clearly outside the rules, and had I broken the aircraft or hurt someone I would have been in serious trouble. As it turned out, I was put in for an award, initially a Distinguished Flying Cross that was later upgraded to a Distinguished Service Cross when they discovered the mission was a first. More important, we could now save the night-weather patient. Thank you, Lord. But what about zero-zero weather in the daytime on the mountains and in the valleys? Flares don't work in daylight.

I solved that problem on a mission for a snake-bite victim on a 2,400-foot mountaintop. When I saw that the PZ was engulfed with clouds from 1,400 feet up, I had a serious dialogue with God: OK, Lord, now what? Initially I flew straight into the stuff and tried to hover up the mountain. I knew that if I got disoriented I could simply fall off right or left and I would break out in the valley. That happened several times. My crew was tense. Then the ground troops were screaming that the bitten soldier was going into convulsions. I had no idea how we were going to get that kid out. On what I promised my crew would be our last try, I became disoriented.

We were blown sideways, and I was looking out my side window for a place to go in when I discovered that I could see the tip of my rotor blade and the top of the trees under it. That wind was the breath of God. Another epiphany! I now had two reference points and knew I was right side up. I then turned that baby sideways, thanked God and the powerful H model, hovered up the mountain, focused on the blade and the tree tops, right into the PZ. The troops were delighted, and one of them shouted, "God bless you, Double Nickel (my radio call sign)." God certainly had blessed us, although I was a bit upset that He took so long to do it.

Again, what we had done was outside the rules - the R in IFR and VFR is "rules" - but no one challenged us, and we now had a solution for day-weather missions. What I had learned with the snakebite mission was that you can see in zero-zero conditions, not far but far enough. All that is needed is about

20 feet in a Huey, the distance from your window to the tip of the rotor blade. But you had to be able to see to the end of your rotor disc, and you had to have another reference point: a tree, bush or the ground. Nothing must ever come between your eyes and the tip of the rotor blade. And this mission could not be flown nose first; it had to be flown sideways. This was a straight VFR pickup, albeit in IFR conditions. I cautioned our pilots not to push themselves in either night or weather conditions, but to never leave a patient in the field under those conditions and call me if necessary.

Blessed Missions. That is what happened on the day of the Medal-of-Honor missions, my day off. Two Vietnamese soldiers were seriously wounded deep in mountainous terrain at an isolated outpost appropriately called Lonely Boy. The valley was covered with fog about 400 meters deep, and the outpost was under attack. Other helicopters made seven attempts to get in before they called me. I found a mountain clear of the fog, came to a hover at about 2,000 feet and started on my predetermined path down through the fog toward the PZ, which I missed. That may have been a good thing, since the selected PZ was clearly registered by the enemy mortars. I landed in a confined area and loaded the patients.

On the way to the hospital we heard a lot of chatter from LZ West, just to our northwest. It had some 70 casualties. Why aren't they being evacuated, I wondered. Many had been in the mud all night. I was told they could not be evacuated because of the fog and enemy action; others had tried. I was astonished, since fog and enemy fire are almost mutually exclusive. I headed out to LZ West, requesting the radio frequency and location of the casualties. They would not give it to me. I asked to speak with the brigade commander and landed at LZ West. As diplomatically as a major can be with a colonel, I explained that we could get them out and needed to get on with it. In any event, there was no need for them to die without us trying. He said it was impossible; they had tried and turned away. He spoke to some medics, who must have known our capabilities, and then actually asked my copilot if I could make it. My copilot explained that we had just made a pickup in identical weather and had done so before. The colonel warned me that the enemy had 12.7mm anti-aircraft guns, which I had not encountered before, and that they had already shot down two aircraft. He would not lift the artillery and asked me to guide four other choppers in to expedite the evacuation.

I had what we needed. The call sign was "Twister Charlie," and the wounded were near the base of LZ West only minutes away. The four choppers followed me to the base of the fog and turned back. I hovered down the mountain at about 10 feet and stumbled over a uniformed NVA unit, but I was into the fog before they could hit us. We found the patients and loaded up. I don't even remember begging God for help.

We did an ITO straight up through the fog. We heard that the troops on LZ West directly above us broke into cheers when they saw our chopper emerge from the fog. The medical officer saluted as we landed, which was nice since he outranked all of us. We off-loaded our patients for back haul to a hospital and went back. Again the four choppers tried to follow and again



they turned back. In all, we made four trips in and rescued all the wounded - 54 to 60, depending on who counted. The tragedy was that they didn't call us the night before. Thereafter, the Hiep Duc valley became known as Death Valley.

The other two missions for the Medal of Honor action were not unlike many Dustoff pickups. The next area was hot, and we were hit on the way in. The friendlies would not get off the prone, and we could not find the patients. We had to leave and check our bird. They agreed to get up and help, and we went back and got the patients. The controls were damaged and we got another bird for next pickup in a minefield. Everyone had been wounded or killed. A previous Dustoff left the area when a mine exploded, killing two more troops. I hit the spot where he safely landed, and my crew, who were real heroes, literally ran into the minefield and started loading the patients. Things were going well when, unfortunately, they set off a mine. It blew them so high in the air I feared they might hit the rotors. Shrapnel ripped into the side of our bird, and some of our lights turned crimson. Both crew members got up and finished loading. I am not sure why they both weren't killed outright, but I think it was because they were carrying a large soldier on a litter who took most of the blast. I think he was already dead; one of his legs was bent 180 degrees under his body. We headed for the hospital at a low level.

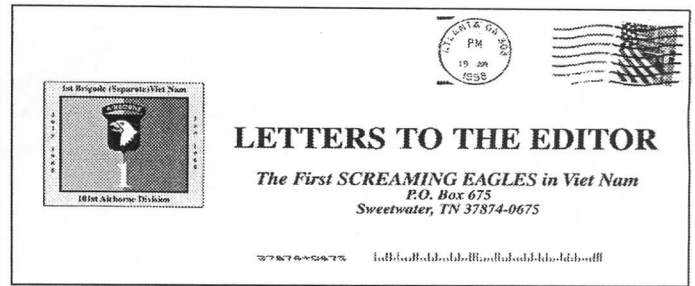
We got another bird and continued the missions on into the night. The Medal of Honor citation credited us with 51 patients; we got at least 64.

The 54th averaged one bird hit every four to five days, and 23 Purple Hearts for the 40 men. There were a lot of days like Jan. 6. I am sure the missions in the fog, the safest of all we flew that day, were the impetus for the Medal of Honor, although the citation, and other accounts, inaccurately describes them. We did not descend "through heavy fog" or turn sideways "to blow away the fog with the back wash" from my rotor blades. How do you blow away fog? Where does it go? You can see in fog or clouds and fly as long as you can see two reference points. Most aviators don't believe contact flight in such conditions is possible, and it is therefore illegal. Many soldiers are alive today because it is possible.

What was truly remarkable was that the original 54th never left a patient in the field, day or night, in any weather - and it carried more than 21,000 patients in nine months, probably more than any like unit ever. No one was killed, and we never lost an aircraft at night or in weather. God surely blessed this remarkable unit; He most certainly showed me the light, despite my doubts in the darkness and in the fog. I may have been a willing instrument, but He is the Author of those two awards that were the result of two epiphanies: one for flares and one for fog. And the day of the Medal of Honor action was Jan. 6, the Feast of the Epiphany.

In addition to the Medal of Honor, Maj. Gen. Brady holds the Distinguished Service Cross, two Distinguished Service Medals, two Bronze Stars and the Purple Heart, among others.

Editor's Note: See Letter to the Editor from Bob Crosby on page 23.



U.S. POSTAL SERVICE

+ JAMES D. AGINS, 326 MED D 7/66-2/67, 33 Sunset Blvd., Hamilton Sq., NJ 08690-3940, (609) 586-3724 wrote: Enclosed find a check for my renewal due in April. Please use the extra for your general expenses whatever you deem necessary.

PLEASE keep up the great work. Looking forward to September in Hampton. If there is anything we/I can do from here please call.

Airborne, Jim

+ LTC(R) JOHN J. DORSEY, 2/327 A 6/66-5/67, 2010A Garry Oaks Ave., Dupont, WA 98327 along with his subscription renewal wrote: Thanks for your great work.

+ CSM(R) HARVEY P. APPLEMAN, 2/327 HQ 2/67-3/68, 39 Abby Lynn Circle Clarksville, TN 37043, (931) 358-2206 sent the following letter with his subscription renewal. Thank you for the great job you are doing keeping the 1st Bde Separate alive. I especially enjoyed the Trung Luong account of the battle by LTC Lou McDonald and Sfc John Burke, Jr. The details were exceptionally outlined by both. I would be remiss if I left out my good friend, soldier and civilian Col. John P. Lawton. John and I served together in the 2nd 327th Inf "No Slack" before he took command of A Company. Keep pushing the "Week of the Eagles." It will be a great event this year. Most of our soldiers of the Screaming Eagle Division have returned and they are great Americans. I welcomed 26 planes - how proud they stood and happy to meet their families. All is well Ivan. My next adventure will be Airborne Awards 1-4 April in Atlanta. Again Ivan keep up the good work. My renewal is enclosed with a little extra.

CSM(R) Harvey Paratrooper Appleman
Honorary Sergeant Major 502nd Inf Reg, 101st Abn Div (Air Assault)

+ CSM(R) ROBERT A. YOUNG, HHC CSM 6/66-6/67, 2 North East Street, Green City, MO 63545-1024, (660) 874-5123 wrote: Just received the April 2009 issue of "The First Screaming Eagles" and notice 4/09 appears. So guess it's time to REUP! Therefore, enclosed is a check to accomplish this requirement. Ivan, was sorry to miss the Brigade Reunion in Hampton, VA due to dental surgery and was sure not in very good shape! Ate lots of oatmeal. HA. Better now, but still not up to 'airborne standards.' In closing, hope this finds you and the family in good health.

Airborne forever,
Bob

P.S. Won't be attending "Static Line" this year. Have talked to Annette Purcell.

+ RON GILLETTE, 2/502 B 1/67-5/67, 537 Andrea Circle, Livermore, CA 94550-7209, (925) 443-4444 sent the following: Thanks for a great job on "The First Screaming Eagles in Viet Nam" magazine. Here's my renewal plus a little extra. Also enclosed my order for 10 challenge coins. Usually I'm able to get them from you at the reunions. But knowing how busy you were putting on the 1st Bde in Hampton, we missed you in Reno and Snowbird. This is without a doubt the best coin to give to other combat veterans.

+ LTC(R) ROBERT (BOB) CROSBY, 2/327 C 3/67-3/68, 6360 Brixton Lane, Indianapolis, IN 46220-4804, work (317) 686-3199 home (317) 251-7152 wrote: I just received the April 2009 version of the First Brigade magazine. As usual, I immediately read it cover to cover.

The articles by John Lawton and Terry Wren were of great interest. I was the executive officer in Charlie Company 2/327 at the time of this battle. Frank McGee's documentary "Same Mud, Same Blood" has some footage at the end which shows Tony Mavroudis (Zorba) and 1st and 2nd platoons of C Company, led by 1LT Unger and PSG Harper respectively, moving up the ridge to relieve A Company. There is also some of the radio traffic in that film clip. Terry Wren, when he was under a great amount of stress and danger, did a masterful job of guiding Zorba up to that battle site.

I walked that area the next day with Zorba and we could see that it was a well planned and executed "L" shaped ambush, with the NVA on the long side of the "L" dug into the reverse side of a wooded paddy dike which was about six (6) feet high on that reserve side. When they executed the ambush, they came out of their holes and had to stand up to fire over the dike. There were probably three (3) machine guns involved in the ambush, and apparently after it was sprung either mortar rounds or rifle grenades were brought in on the troops who were down on the ground. Zorba told me that one of the A Company troops who had broken out of the ambush had run through a mortar position a few hundred yards behind the site.

When Zorba reached the ambush site, the NVA were policing the dead. He told me that due to the late time of the day and the rain, it was initially difficult to determine who was who. Some of the NVA had put on the GI helmets as they tried to escape. But then Zorba realized some of these people had on ponchos, which our troops never wore. So they began to shoot at anyone wearing a poncho. The next day we found GI helmets several hundred yards from the battle site. Apparently, the NVA didn't like the helmets either.

Another hero of that battle was Major Patrick Brady, now Major General (R) and MOH winner, who commanded the med-evac unit at Chu Lai. He flew out in heavy clouds and darkness, while that typhoon was blowing, to pick up John

Lawton and Robert Fergusson. Everything else was grounded. How he got his bird down through the clouds to find that ridge top was a miracle, but without that pick-up John probably would not have survived. I believe Brady received a Distinguish Service Cross for that flight.

Ivan, keep up the great work for our Brigade. You do a terrific job in keeping all of us in contact and telling the story of those 900 days when the best combat unit in Viet Nam was taking care of business.

No Slack, Bob Crosby

+ ROBERT C. HUDSON, 2/327 C&HHC 6/65-7/66, 5221 NW 119th St., Gainesville, FL 32653, work (352) 337-8590 home (352) 332-6373 sent the following note along with his subscription renewal. Ivan, enclosed is a little extra. Thanks for all you do. I enjoy reading the magazine.

JAN CHRISTOFFERSON FERLAND, Family (S. Christofferson KIA 67), 14341 Black Farm Dr., Noblesville, IN 46060 wrote: Thank you so much for sending my sister Carrie a copy of "The Always First Brigade" – the magazine of the "First Screaming Eagles in Viet Nam" which featured YOUR HERO AND MINE, SCOTT and the articles by the soldiers who knew and loved my brother.

Please send me a copy when you can.

One of my sons was with the 101st for eight years after he graduated from high school in honor of Scott.

He is with us always and we miss him.

CARRIE HANDY, Family (S. Christofferson KIA 67), 29 Prospect St., St. Albans, VT 05478 wrote: It was truly a thrill to receive the copy of the April 2009 "The Always First Brigade" magazine, featuring so many wonderful articles about my brother, Scott, and the other soldiers who served with him in October 1967. It was a wonderful tribute not only to him but to all who risked their lives in that battle.

Thank you so very much for devoting such a big portion of your magazine to Scott's memoir. It has truly been an honor to be able to get back in touch with so many people who were part of Scott's life, and to have this fine forum for letting others know about the publication of his book (YOUR HERO AND MINE, SCOTT).

I would greatly appreciate an additional three copies of the April 2009 magazine, and am enclosing a check for \$25 to cover the cost.

Again, thank you on behalf of my family for honoring Scott in this memorable way.

Yours Very Truly,
/S/ Carrie Handy
(Scott Christofferson's younger sister)

+ = Current Subscriber

OBITUARIES



**Major General
Richard A. Bresnahan
Colorado Springs, CO**

Major General Richard A. Bresnahan, 84, of Colorado Springs, died peacefully at Pikes Peak Hospice on April 25th, 2009, after a brief battle with liver cancer. A funeral mass and burial with full military honors will take place at Arlington National Cemetery at a date to be announced.

"Dick" was born in Fitchburg, Massachusetts, Nov 14, 1924, the son of James A. and Eva Gagnon Bresnahan. After graduating from Fitchburg High in 1942 he attended Colgate University for one year before entering West Point where he was commissioned a 2nd LT of Infantry in 1946. He married the former Rachel Anna Delisle from Leominster, MA, on 30 Dec 1946, who remained his loving, supportive wife for the next 62 years.

General Bresnahan led units in combat in both Korea and Vietnam. In 1952-1953 he served in three battle campaigns with the 27th Inf Regiment, 25th Inf Division. In 1968 he commanded the 1st Brigade 101st Infantry Division (Airmobile) in Vietnam, leading their actions in five battle campaigns and receiving the Silver Star for gallantry in action. From 1961-65 General Bresnahan held several positions in Germany to include commanding the 1st Battalion 13th Infantry. Key staff assignments included service on the Department of the Army staff and the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Other noteworthy duties included instructor assignments at West Point, The Infantry School at Fort Benning, GA; the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, KS; and the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, PA. As a general officer he served as Chief of Staff, 5th Army at Ft. Sam Houston, TX; Commander, Army Readiness Region 5, Ft. Sheridan, IL; Chief, Joint US Military Aid Group to Greece and Commander of Readiness Region 8, based at Fitzsimons Army Medical Center, Denver.

Editor's Note: This obituary was sent to me by my good friend Eugene W. Standish of Colorado Springs, Colorado.

SGM (R) Joseph A. Garcia
2/17 CAV A Trp 7/65-7/66 & 12/67-11/68
Clarksville, TN

SGM (R) Joseph A. Garcia, 75 died November 29, 2008, at Gateway Medical Center in Clarksville, TN.

He was born Jan 7, 1933, in Karnes City, Texas, son of John R. Garcia and Maria Baldez Aleman.

He retired from the U.S. Army after over 29 years of service. He fought in the Korean War and made two tours of duty to Vietnam during his military career. Afterward, he worked for 10 years as deputy director for the Community Action Agency.

Burial was in the Kentucky Veterans Cemetery – West.

His widow, Kathleen, may be reached at 1380 Dr Meade Lane, Clarksville, TN 37042-4575.

CW3(R) William J. Keller
2/327 HQ (S-4) 6/65-7/66
Tucson, AZ

From: THE SCREAMING EAGLE, Spring 2009 issue

William was born December 21, 1934, raised in Buffalo, NY. A proud soldier of the 101st Airborne Division, he retired in Tucson, AZ. Bill is survived by his wife, Peggy Ann Keller; brother, Edward Keller; children, Angela, William and Michael. Bill's memory will live on with all of us. Memorial Services were held February 21, 2009.

Eric C. Sanders
2/502 HQ 66-67
Brookhaven, MS

From: THE SCREAMING EAGLE, Spring 2009 issue

After graduating from high school Eric enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1965 and was serving his second tour of duty in Vietnam when he was injured October 25, 1967. He later furthered his education by attending Memphis State University in Memphis, TN, and he received his Associate Degree in Architectural Drafting from Co-Lin Junior College in Wesson, MS. Driven by his love for people, Eric coached and sponsored various softball teams. He previously worked for the Sheriff's Department and did numerous acts of volunteer services throughout the community. He loved his church and enjoyed fishing, hunting and conversing with people. He was a member of the 101st Airborne Division Association, VFW Post 4806 and the Elks. Eric also served on the National Advisory Board of the Sergeants Major program until his death.

*There will be a Tiger Force
Reunion 14 - 20 Aug 09 at
Fort Campbell during Week
of the Eagles.*

*Contact: R.A. Hise,
716-353-4501 or
<trouttiger30@aol.com>*



Joseph E. Collins '46

No. 16046 ■ 12 Aug 1924 – 17 Nov 2007 ■ Died in Lewiston, ID
Interred in Normal Hill Cemetery, Lewiston, ID



Joseph Easterbrook Collins, also known as Jerry, was born at West Point, NY, on 12 Aug 1924 to Gladys Easterbrook and Joseph Lawton Collins. He was launched on the life of an Army child and enjoyed every minute of that association until he retired in 1976 as an Infantry colonel. His strong faith was a significant influence on his life, perhaps a heritage from his grandfather, Edmund Easterbrook, Chief of Army Chaplains.

Jerry attended numerous schools while growing up, including Sidwell Friends, Marion Military Institute, and Sullivan's Prep, before entering West Point in 1943. Academics being a challenge to Jerry, he concentrated on his studies, although he enjoyed participating on Company F-2's brigade championship crew his yearling year.

Upon graduation, he received orders to the Infantry School at Ft. Benning, GA, where, in his spare time, he obtained a private pilot's license before being sent to Korea for troop duty in 1947. Returning to the 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, in 1949, he met Caroline Gibson, whose father was post commander at Ft. Benjamin Harrison, IN, and they were married there in October 1950.

Following his tour at Ft. Bragg, Jerry became a company commander and battalion S-3 in the 27th Infantry, 25th Infantry Division, in 1953-54, for which he received the Bronze Star. He then was assigned to Ft. Leavenworth and completed the Command and General Staff College in 1956. Back at Ft. Benning, this time as an instructor, he received orders to attend the British Staff College at Camberley,



Surrey, an hour's drive south of London. This was one of the Collins' most enjoyable tours, with the opportunity for travel and exploration of the United Kingdom. Two years in Germany followed: one with an airborne brigade and the second at Seventh Army Headquarters. He returned to the States to attend the Armed Forces Staff College at Norfolk, then went on to the Pentagon for two years in Forces Development of the Army.

In 1966, he joined the 101st Airborne Division in Viet Nam, serving as a brigade executive officer and battalion commander, for which he was awarded a Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal for Valor, Air Medal for Valor, plus six additional Air Medals. He was a master parachutist. He then worked in the office of the Chief of Joint Chiefs of Staff in Washington, DC. An assignment to the National War College followed, during which Jerry earned a master's of international affairs at George Washington University.

A second tour in Viet Nam in 1969-70 won Jerry a second Silver Star and Legion of Merit, plus thirteen Air Medals as commanding officer of, initially, the 1st Brigade of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, then, the 199th Light Infantry Brigade (Separate). During his two tours in Viet Nam, he was four times awarded the Gallantry Cross by that country.

He returned to the States to spend three years on the Staff and Faculty at the Army War College at Carlisle Barracks, PA. While there, he was awarded another Legion of Merit and earned a master's degree in counseling at Shippensburg State University.

His last tour was spent at Stuttgart, Germany, with the Headquarters, European Command, J-5, Chief of Plans Division. Jerry retired in 1976, and the family made its home at Lewiston, ID. In 1981 he began his second career as a public school teacher after obtaining his teaching certification at Lewis-Clark State College. He taught for seven years at Sacajawea Junior High School, an experience which he described as "really satisfying to work with disadvantaged kids and youths with disabilities." During

that time, the Collins family built a vacation home at Priest Lake in Northern Idaho, where they spent half their time during the following years.

Jerry worked to set up and help with every Red Cross blood drive for a number of years. He served on the boards of Opportunities Unlimited and Meals on Wheels, where he was a regular driver. He was a member of the St. Stanislaus Parish Council and served as a Eucharistic Minister.

His military career was marked by the devotion of the men who served under him. On one Thanksgiving Day in Viet Nam, Jerry flew with his helicopter pilot to personally deliver a hot turkey dinner to all his troops in forward positions in the combat zone. This became a legend in his outfit and remains a tale for telling. He loved his fellow man and was himself loved and respected in return.

Comparison with his famous father, "Lightning Joe" Collins: In an article by A. L. Alford, published 23 Feb 1994 in the *Lewiston Tribune*, Mr. Alford said, "Words that describe his father? He liked music and poetry—sentimental—religious—no profanity, except an occasional damn or hell. He was tough when he needed to be tough." "And Jerry ... like father, like son."

He is survived by his wife Caroline; two sons, Matthew of New York, NY, and Dan and wife Michelle of Deer Park, WA; and son-in-law David Marx of Pleasanton, CA, whose wife and Jerry and Caroline's daughter, Melissa, survived Jerry by only a few months. Also surviving are two grandsons, Levi and Jacob Collins; and two sisters, Gladys Stenger and Nancy Rubino.

His wife Caroline wrote: "At a Collins family reunion in Washington a dozen years ago, those attending were asked what they would like on their tombstones. Jerry wrote:

Joseph E. Collins Soldier—Teacher

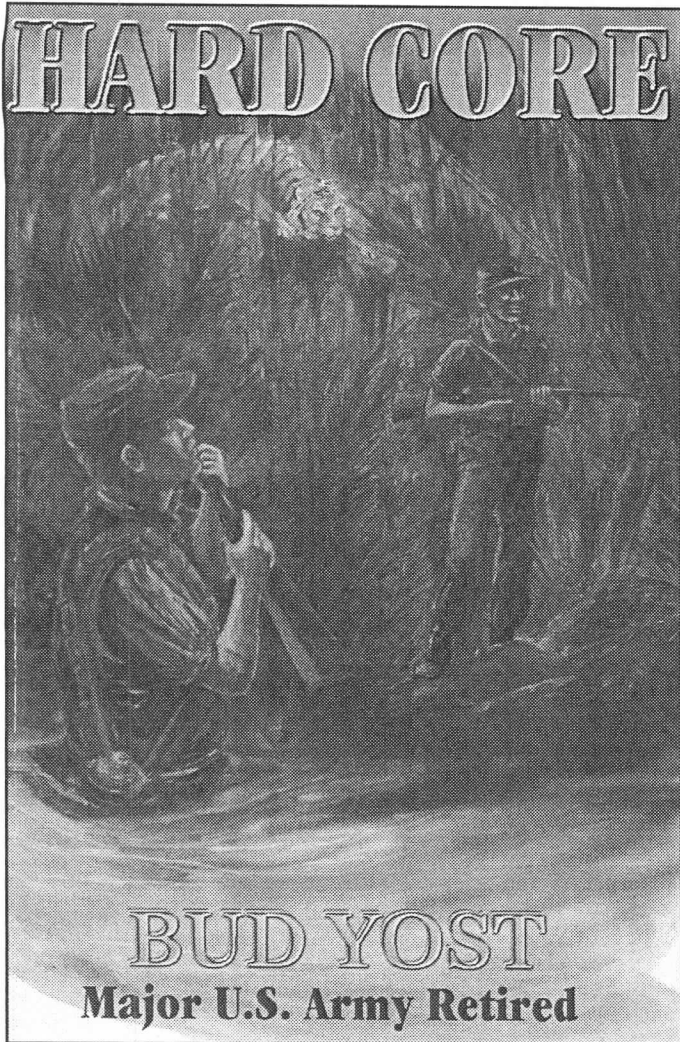
Well done, Jerry. Be thou at peace.

—Written by his family and the Class of '46, Company F-2, Memorial Project



Editor's Note: I remember Colonel Collins, when he was Executive Officer. He was a quiet and gentle man who expected and received results. He informed me of my father's death before I departed on emergency leave for his funeral.





HARD CORE by MAJ(R) Burrwood Yost, 2/502 C LRRP 12/65-7/67

Paperback: 122 pages

Publisher: RoseDog Books; first edition (September 1, 2007)

List Price: \$53.00

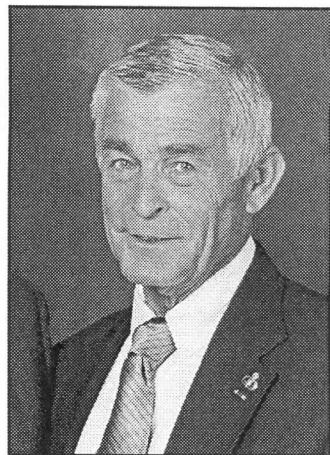
ISBN: 978-0-8059-8710-2

Death always stalked close to the "Hard Core" squad in the jungles of Vietnam, but now they faced another threat. These paratroopers of C Company of the 502nd Airborne Infantry had already endured relentless, fierce close combat with Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese Army, oftentimes facing overwhelming odds. Besides fighting a formidable enemy, they also had to battle the harsh elements of the jungle: excessive heat; insects; snakes and leeches; jungle foliage and thorns ripping into their skin, causing festering infections; jungle rot; constant dysentery; malaria; and other maladies; months of being soaked from monsoon rains and filth and bone-wearying fatigue. On March 5, 1967, near Song Mau, the squad was on a reconnaissance patrol when they encountered a new and unexpected enemy, a large Bengal tiger. The tiger was stalking and about to pounce on the point man, PFC Wendell Rose, when SSG Bud Yost and SP4 Jim Buppert killed it. This encounter was just another saga added to the exploits of the "Hard Core" squad.

From the jump towers at Fort Benning, Georgia, and rigorous



training at stateside Army posts to combat in Vietnam, this is the poignant story of a group of tough, battle-hardened soldiers and their twenty-two-year-old squad leader as told by one who experienced the hardships and witnessed their extraordinary feats of bravery and survival. Unlike so many other chronicles about the early years of the Vietnam conflict, this story contains many little-known facts. Much of the equipment, training, tactics, leadership, and even the rations during the initial years



MAJ(R) Burrwood Yost
2/502 C LRRP 12/65-7/67

of the conflict were from World War II. Living off the land; eating snakes, water buffalo, and captured Vietnamese rice; and remaining in the jungle for months without relief was the norm.

This is must-read book for military history buffs or anyone interested in an authentic account of the travails of paratroopers during the early years of the Vietnam War.

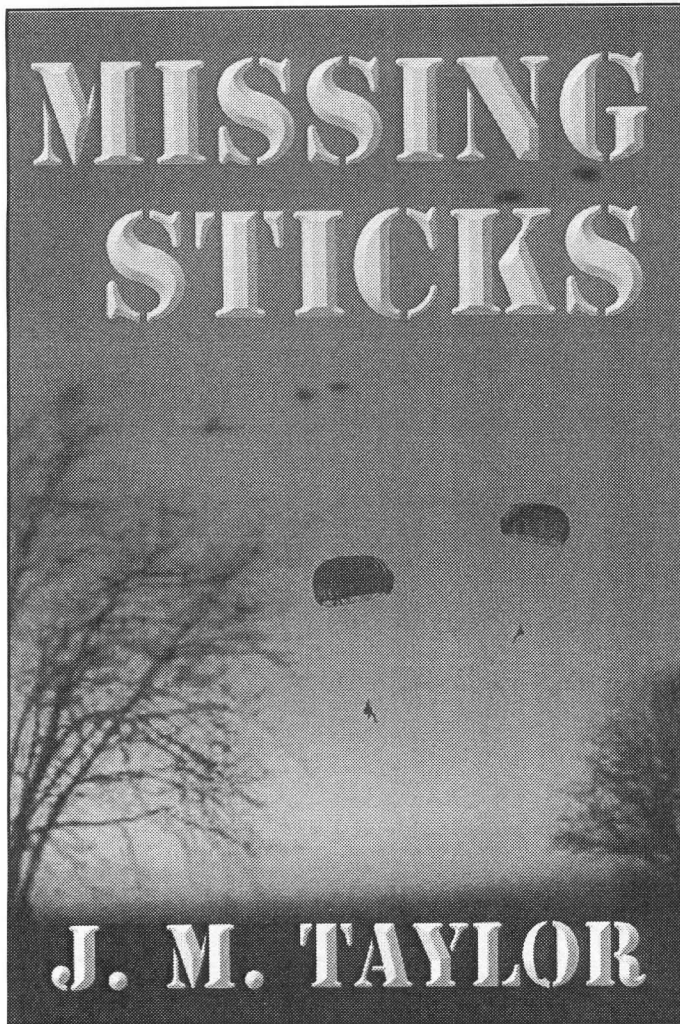
About the Author

Bud Yost resides on Amelia Island, Florida, with his wife, Kay. His military career, which began when he was sixteen years old, spanned two decades. During these twenty years, he served as a paratrooper and ranger, being promoted from Private to Major, and is the recipient of a Battlefield Commission, the Distinguished Service Cross (our nation's second-highest award for valor), among a number of other valorous awards.

Since retiring from the Army in 1981, he has been a merchant mariner. For the past twenty-five years, Bud has traversed the world's oceans on a variety of vessels: oil tankers, container ships, tugs and tows, research ships, and small boats. Additionally he is a past president of the Exxon Seamen's Union and served as a representative for the Sailors' Union of the Pacific. When not at sea aboard ships, both he and Kay enjoy sailing on their forty-one-foot ketch, the *Seafarer*. Bud feels blessed he has lived such an adventuresome life and for his many friends at virtually every point.

Editor's Note: I have read HARD CORE and recommend it to all who wish to stay informed about the actions of the First Brigade (S) 101st Airborne Division in our 26 months as a separate brigade in Viet Nam. Bud Yost told me that he is trying to have the book republished to get the price down to a more reasonable level. I believe it is worth the present price. Bud tells his story in a way that draws you to the scene and almost includes you in the action. I am glad to know the whole, and personal, story of the tiger that was the talk of the brigade for a few weeks.

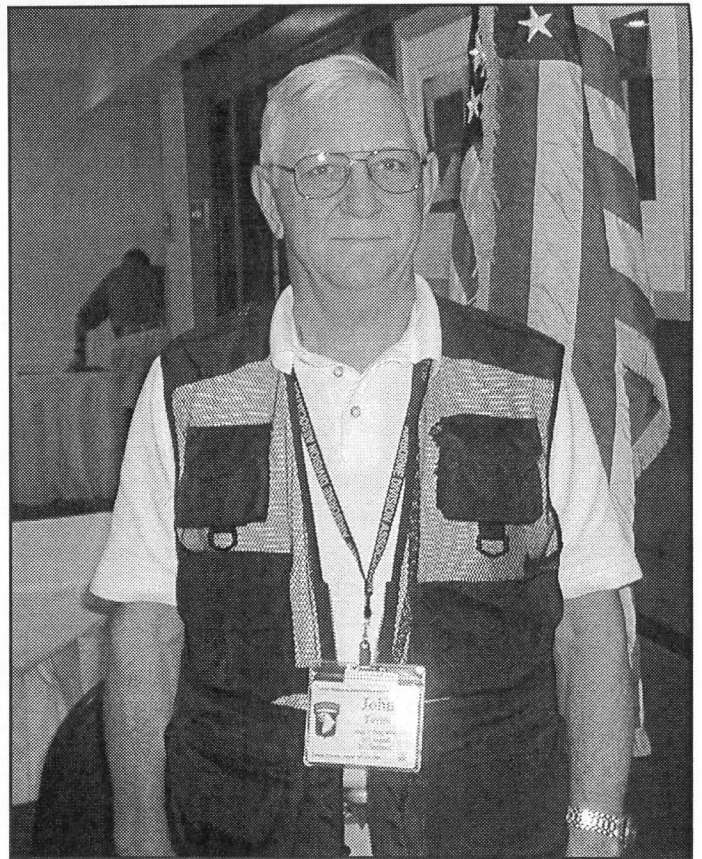




A new novel by John M. Taylor, Jr., 1/501 SIG B 6/65-7/66 featuring the Screaming Eagles of the 101st Airborne Division on D-Day. ISBN: 978-1-879043-00-8 Price \$14.00

D-Day - Normandy - behind Utah Beach. Just after midnight the drop began. Come dawn, 18 C-47s and their paratroopers were missing. What could have the missing troopers accomplished if they had landed safely and engaged the enemy? *MISSING STICKS* tells one story. I have listened to and read accounts written by and about the paratroopers and glidermen, and their aircrews, and wondered who the missing men were. What could, what would the missing men have done if they had made it safely to the ground? This is a novel about those missing men, their buddies and the friends and enemies they met on the ground on June 6th, 1944.

MISSING STICKS is a fictional account of a handful of those missing men, representative of those declared casualties in real life. Each character, every story is a figment of my imagination, but I hope a reflection of the diverse men who flew into the darkness and danger over Normandy that fateful night. I have attempted to make the people and the actions as realistic as possible.



John M. Taylor, Jr.
1/501 SIG B 6/65-7/66

stealing bits and pieces of events and personalities from the accounts of the many who participated, and merged them in my mind.

If you have been around combat you know that not every man is brave. Not every man is a hero. Everyone makes mistakes. However, in the fire of battle, a handful of heroes is forged as bravery overwhelms the fear that naturally keeps us from harm. I hope the Screaming Eagles in this novel are true to the real Screaming Eagles I have known, talked to and read about over the years, with all their faults—and all their bravery.

This novel is the result—a fictional tribute to the Screaming Eagles who disappeared into the darkness. More information at <http://screamingeaglepress.com/> or google Missing Sticks.



12th Biennial Reunion

Omaha, Nebraska

October 6-9, 2010

This announcement is for planning purposes. Details later.
Hosted by Terry R. Zahn, SPT BN HQ E1t 7/65-5/66.
See Inside Front Cover

New Subscribers

March 4, 2009 through
June 1, 2009

Richard Chischilly
1/327 C 67-68 - 1/10
Box 135
Lupton, AZ 86508

Bob Girard
2/502 HHC (Recon) 4/66-4/67 - 1/10
14500 Scripps
Detroit, MI 48215

Archie Hodge, Jr.
1/327 C 5/67-6/68 - 1/10
1769 Cauley Road
Pearson, GA 31642-2365

Maurice Jefferson
326 ENGR A 6/66-4/68 - 1/10
P.O. Box 22320
Baltimore, MD 21203

George M. Mabe
2/17 CAV A 1/66-12/66 - 1/10
4819 Silver Springs Rd.
Pfafftown, NC 27040

William J. Mercier, Jr.
1/327 C 4/67-4/68 - 1/10
900 E. Silverbell Rd.
Lake Orion, MI 48360-2331

Floyd Walksout
1/327 C 66-67 - 1/10
Box 22
Dupree, SD 57623

MAJ(R) Burrwood Yost
2/502 C LRRP 12/65-7/67 - 1/10
1012A Natures Walk Dr.
Fernandina Bch, FL 32034

Renewals

March 4, 2009 through
June 1, 2009

Clinton J. Adkins
2/502 A 6/67-6/68 - 4/10
1241 Four Mile Rd.
Branchland, WV 25506-9634

James D. Agins \$
326 MED D 7/66-2/67 - 4/10
33 Sunset Blvd.
Hamilton Sq., NJ 08690-3940

CSM(R) Harvey P. Appleman \$
2/327 HQ 2/67-3/68 - 4/10
39 Abby Lynn Circle
Clarksville, TN 37043

James B. Auld, Jr.
unit & dates ? - 4/10
28 East Academy Drive
Whippany, NJ 07981

COL(R) George W. Aux, Jr.
2/320 FA HHB,A,B 1/67-8/68 - 4/10
1529 Crenshaw Point
Wake Forest, NC 27587-7378

Jose A. Avelar, Jr.
1/502 A VN 67-68 - 4/10
2314 Doral Ave.
Albert Lea, MN 56007-3323

COL(R) Richard R. Babbitt
2/327 B 7/67-7/68 - 4/10
241 Clinton St., Apt 6
Watertown, NY 13601-3623

COL(R) Seavy A. Bain
2/327 HHC & A 6/67-6/68 - 4/10
3425 Plantation Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28270-0730

Jerry L. Bell
2/327 C 7/65-6/66 - 4/10
370 Moore Road
Savannah, TN 38372-5125

Anthony Bellantoni
2/327 A 1/64-65 - 4/10
47 Prescott Ave.
White Plains, NY 10605-3105

LTG(R) Dennis L. Benchoff
20th Chem Det 9/66-7/67 - 4/10
380 Arbor Road
Lancaster, PA 17601-3204

Robert H. Berry
2/502 HHC&B 1/67-12/67 - 4/10
26743 W. 109th St.
Olathe, KS 66061-7499

CW4(R) George T. Berryhill
2/327 HHC 10/67-10/68 - 4/10
300 Walker Road
Travelers Rest, SC 29690-8836

Joseph D. Blanck
2/502 HHC LRRP 5/66-5/67 - 4/10
72 Ridgewood Ave.
Yonkers, NY 10704-2304

Anthony A. Bliss, Jr.
1/327 A 10/65-10/66 - 4/10
486 Bayville Road
Locust Valley, NY 11560-1209

Griffin R. Bloodhart
1/327 HHC 7/67-7/68 - 4/11
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Albert P. Klerlein, III 1/327 B 12/65-11/66 - 4/10 75 Meadows Rd. Chesapeake City, MD 21915-1700	Donald W. Lilley SPT BN C 4/65-7/66 - 4/10 1506 7th St. East Polson, MT 59860	Joe Mastriani 2/320 FA C 1/65-6/66 - 4/10 56 Smoke Hill Ridge Marshfield, MA 02050-2576	Willie M. Ortiz 2/502 HHC 7/65-5/66 - 1/10 P.O. Box 22074 Tucson, AZ 85734-2074
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March 4, 2009 through
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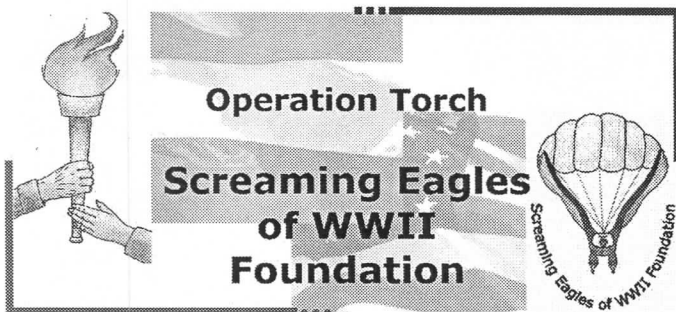
Perry "Woody" Woodruff
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5125 Beta Ave.
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Bruce Gilmore
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Havre De Grace, MD 21708

Richard Russell
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On the 65th anniversary of the liberation of most of Europe the 2009 OPERATION TORCH TOUR will participate in many memorial activities. There is speculation that this will be the last tour that most WWII veterans will be able to participate in. It is a monumental tribute to the men of the 101st Airborne Division that this tour, sponsored by the SCREAMING EAGLES OF WWII FOUNDATION, is led and made up of foundation members who are sons and daughters of those who were liberated.

Program Operation Torch 8 - 22 September 2009

For more information about the tour, the costs and the payment plans contact Joseph M. Bossi CSM (Ret), 2231 Pendleton Drive, Clarksville, TN 37042-5618, Cell: 931-624-8060,



Email: jmbossi@peoplepc.com. For more complete information go to the Operation Torch website at www.screamingeagles.nl. The Netherlands contact is Screaming Eagles of World War II Foundation, Petra Wenstedt-Pulles, Jan van Eyckgracht 197, 5645 TH Eindhoven, The Netherlands.



The two main forces behind the SCREAMING EAGLES OF WWII FOUNDATION, an organization to maintain and promote interest in the 101st Airborne Division's liberation of The Netherlands are (R to L) CSM(R) Joseph M. Bossi, 2/327 HHC 6/66-7/67 (Director of Operations USA) and Petra Wenstedt-Pulles (Chairperson) at the Static Line Airborne Awards Festival.





Issue #1



Issue #2



Issue #3



Issue #4



Issue #5



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Issue #7



Issue #8



Issue #9



Issue #10



Issue #11



Issue #12



Issue #13



Issue #14



Issue #15



Issue #16



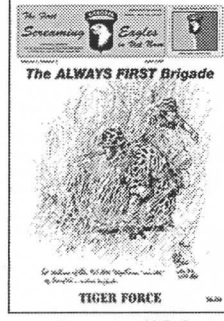
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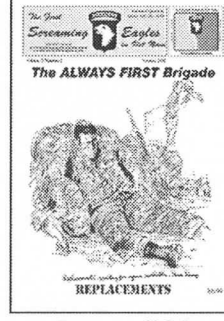
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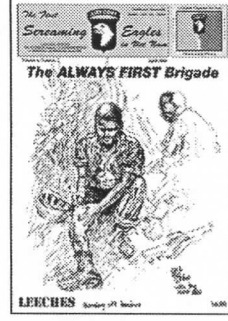
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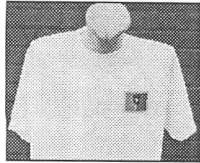


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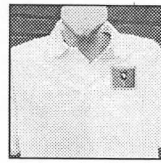


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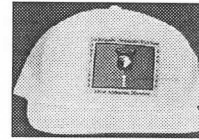
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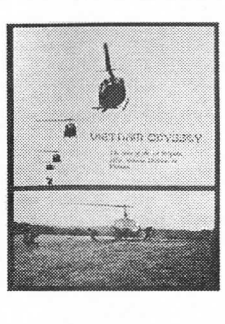


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THE FIRST SCREAMING EAGLES IN VIET NAM

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The editor and publisher reserves the right to edit all submissions for clarity and to meet space constraints. The editor and publisher has the right to refuse any article or advertisement that may, in his opinion, cause embarrassment to any veteran of the 1st Brigade (Separate), 101st Airborne Division. Deadlines for submissions are the first day of March, June, September and December.

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Following is a short description of the contents of this magazine.

BRIEFING PACKETPAGES 1- 7

The first seven pages of the 21 page briefing packet given to each soldier assigned to the First Brigade (S). The additional 14 pages will be printed in the October 2009 and January 2010 magazines.

BATTLE OF QUE SON VALLEYPAGES 8 - 15

COL(R) Herbert D. Williams III, 2/327 A&B 7/67-6/68, Robert O. Martin, 2/327 HHC Recon 1/67-11/67 and CPT(R) Thomas J. Courtney, 2/502 B&E 67-68, add to the story that began in the April issue and was written by COL(R) John P. Lawton, 2/327 A 67-68.

FLARES, FOG & FAITHPAGES 15 - 16 & 21 -22

This story was first published in THE AMERICAN LEGION MAGAZINE. MG(R) Patrick H. Brady, MOH, commanded a Helicopter Ambulance Company that supported the First Brigade (S). He is also the subject of the November 22, 1967, THE SCREAMING EAGLE story "Medevac Pilot Saves 16 Wounded" on page 17 and is prominent in the Battle of Que Son Valley story.

THE SCREAMING EAGLEPAGES 17 - 20

Copy of the First Brigade (S) unit newspaper published November 22, 1967.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORPAGES 22 & 23

U. S. Mail messages sent to the editor by veterans of the First Brigade (S). Use of the guestbook on the web site has been disappointingly sparse.

OBITUARIESPAGES 24 & 25

Some of the obituaries are old because the death of these First Brigade (S) veterans was reported to me late.

HARD COREPAGE 26

Report of a relatively new book by MAJ(R) Burrwood Yost, 2/502 C LRRP 12/65-7/67 who earned the DSC and a direct field commission.

MISSING STICKSPAGE 27

A great book of fiction by John M. Taylor, Jr., 1/501 SIG B 6/65-7/66 that speculates on what those on the aircraft lost before reaching Normandy would have contributed to the 101st Airborne Division mission.

SUBSCRIBERS' LISTPAGES 28 - 32

A list that contains new subscribers, renewing subscribers, address corrections and bad addresses.

OPERATION TORCHPAGE 32

Announcement of the 2009 SCREAMING EAGLES OF WWII FOUNDATION tour to The Netherlands to participate in the liberation ceremonies. CSM(R) Joseph M. Bossi 2/327 HHC 6/66-7/67, is the Foundation's Director of Operations for the USA.



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Sgt. Joseph Craven, Miami, Fla. (left), fires on NVA troops while Spec. 4 Steve Meyers, Baldwin Park, Calif., reloads his M-16 rifle. The two paratroopers of the 2nd Bn. (Abn), 502nd Inf. were patrolling during Operation Benton. (Photo by Spec. 4 James Lohr)

From the scrapbook of COL(R) Gerry Morse, 11327 C.O. 7/67-6/68.

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