

RIPCORD REPORT

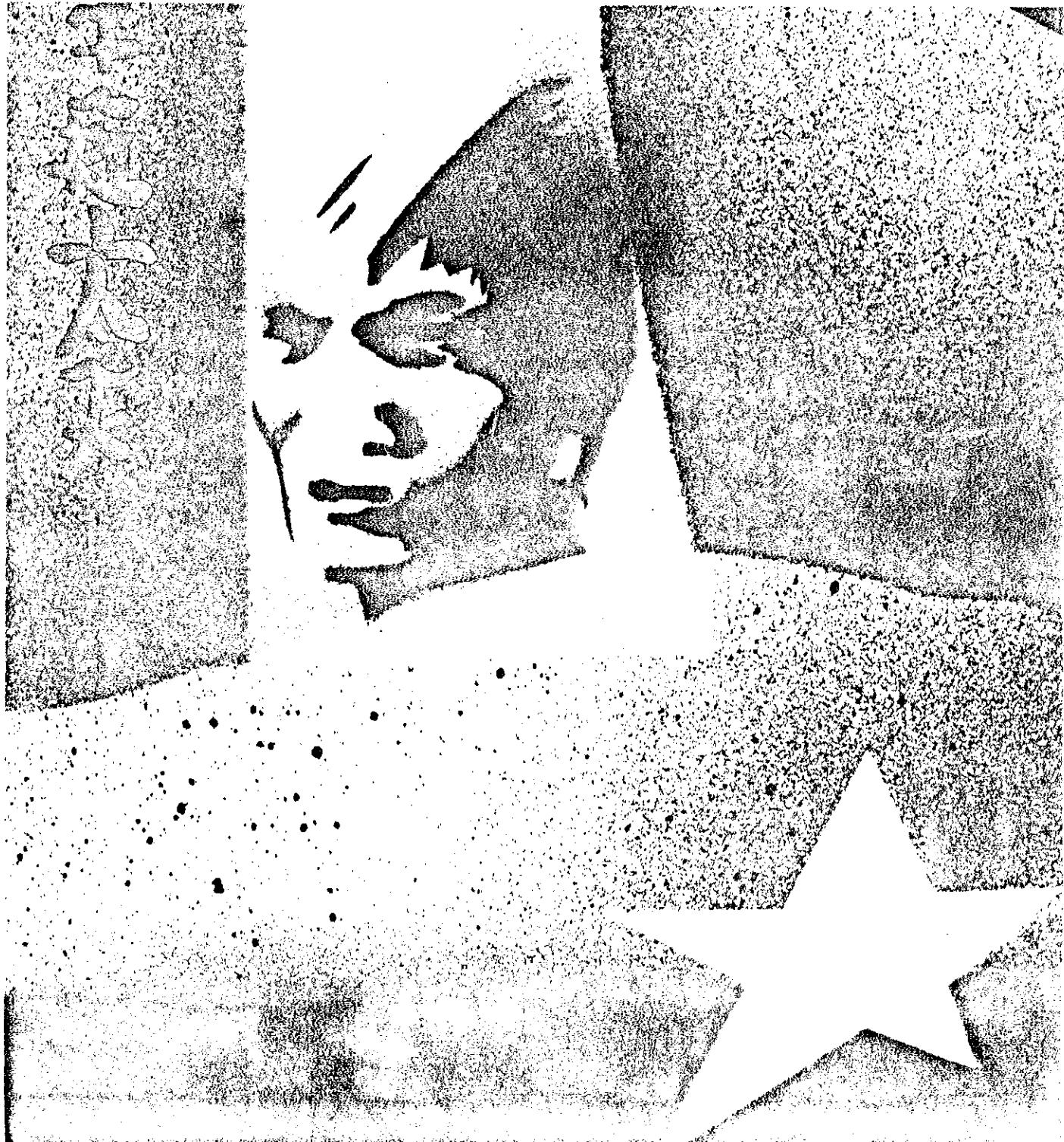
For Friends and Survivors of FSB RIPCORD, RVN

A Newsletter

No. 29, April 1991

Cover: Infantry Magazine

May - June 1969



RIPCORD REPORT: FOR FRIENDS AND SURVIVORS

The Battle for Fire Support Base Ripcord extended from 12 March to 23 July 1970. During the peak of the battle, from 1 to 23 July, there were 61 KIA, 345 WIA and one MIA. It was the most costly action by US Forces during 1970. It was the last major battle of the Vietnam War that was fought by purely American units.

At the center of this cauldron of fire were soldiers of the 2-506th Infantry Battalion, and Bravo Battery, 2-319th Artillery Battalion, 101st Airborne Division. There were others: Infantrymen from sister battalions (2-501 and 1-506); Artillerymen on neighboring fire bases; men who flew F4 Phantoms and Forward Air Controllers in observation aircraft; Army Aviators in gunships and utility helicopters; men who pushed supplies forward; men who kept vigil by radios; men and women who staffed the hospitals; and others, who provided support in a thousand different ways.

The men at Ripcord fought aggressively, and well. Their courage was beyond measure. Their steadfast loyalty to a nation divided by the war remains unquestioned. And, their sacrifice has gone largely unnoticed.

Today, we're looking for these people, these brave souls who fought the Battle of Ripcord; who survived; who are friends and relatives of those who fell there; or who simply have a keen interest in knowing more about what it was like to have been a soldier in the most bitterly divisive war our country has had in this century.

Membership in the Ripcord Association and subscription to the "Ripcord Report" is free. Anyone may join who was involved at the Battle of Ripcord, who knows someone who was there, or who simply has a genuine interest to know more about our part in the Vietnam War. The "Ripcord Report" is a living history of the Battle of Ripcord, and to a lesser extent, the Vietnam War. Its intentions are to share information, clarify events, offer occasional opinion, and promote better understanding among the membership. The association leadership does not mean to offend, or cause renewed suffering due to the content of the report. Many of the members have benefited from the report, hopefully, many more will in the months and years ahead.

The "Ripcord Report" and the Ripcord Association were founded by Chip Collins (B & RCN, 2-506, 70-71) in 1984. From an initial membership of four, the association has grown to over 200 members. Any advertising accepted will be published free of charge. The newsletter makes no guarantees regarding acceptance or publication of an item. Material will be returned if so requested (please include return postage). All photographs submitted will be returned free of charge, unless the individual providing them states otherwise.

Send requests for membership/subscription, articles, submissions, new members, and donations to: Chuck Hawkins, Editor, Ripcord Report.

BASIC LOAD

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Incoming

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CONTACTS/NEW FACES

Steve Morgan

J. Sneaky White

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Veteran's Album

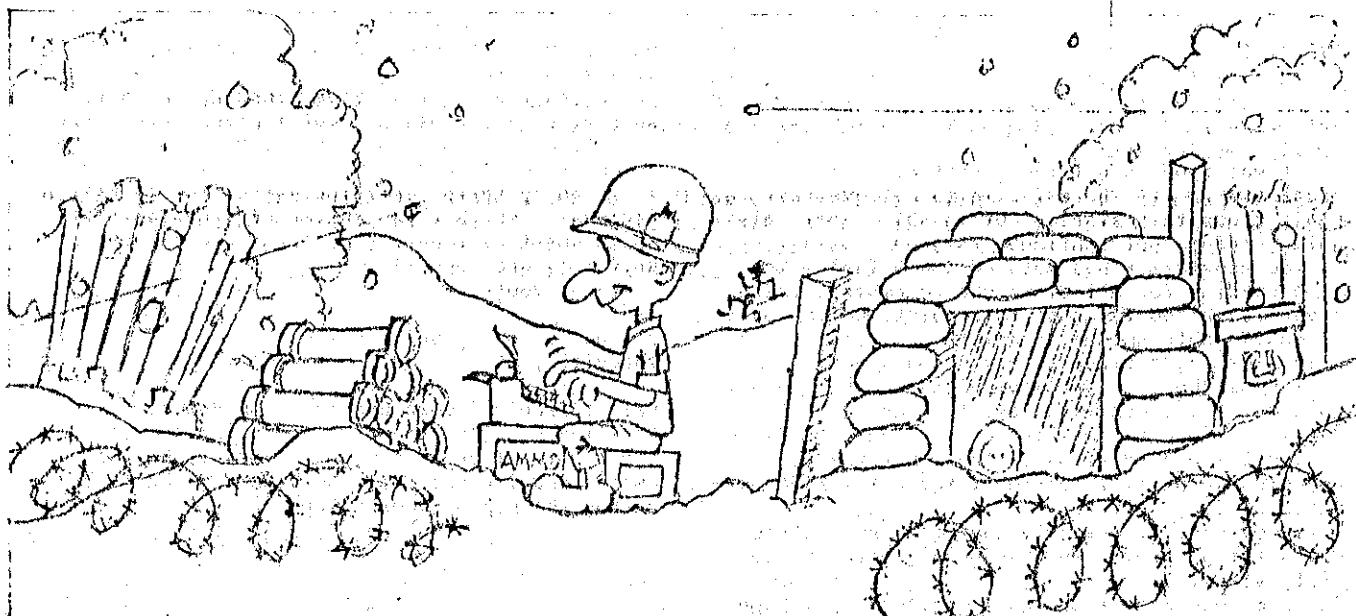
(HHB/2-319th Arty, 70-71)

(C/4-77th ARA, 69-71)

(A/2-501, 68-69)

FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS FROM: BEN HARRISON, J. SNEAKY WHITE, STEVE MORGAN, & RICK BLYTHE

COVER: By Bryant for Infantry magazine, May-June 1969. "I remember the days of peace...." Captured NVA Lieutenant describes his life in North Vietnam, NVA training procedures and combat operations frequently employed in South Vietnam. The first of a series for the "Ripcord Report."



STAFF JOURNAL: LZ OAKTON

The goofy-looking guy in the cartoon above is supposed to be me when I was the Adjutant for the 2-506th, the last three months of my tour (Dec. '70 - Feb. '71). The battalion artist (extra duty for one of our short-timers) made the drawing twenty years ago. Welcome to the "Ripcord Report."

I can't tell you how relieved I am (we all are) at the favorable outcome to Operation Desert Storm. I had the privilege to meet, and shake hands with, one of the recently returned troopers, a young Marine sergeant. We were both at a local barbershop in Fairfax, Virginia for haircuts. (Yeah, I still get mine cut the old-fashioned way.) Some of the sergeant's remarks were interesting.

He'd been in the fighting along the coast, heading north toward Kuwait City. He complained about the coalition Arab forces (Saudis and Kuwaitis, I gathered): " Didn't seem very eager to advance, until we had taken the city." I asked him about the French (Foreign Legion) forces. His response: "They're good. They live for combat. They like it. They're a bit crazy." He also had high praise for the British Marines whom he had met. When asked about his current plans, he replied: "My wife's having a baby, that's why I got to come home early. Then, I'll buy a car, and go where they

send me."

His haircut finished (what we called white sidewalls, he calls wash'n'wear), he offered to pay. "No," the barber said, "the haircut's on me. Welcome home."

Each of us can take justifiable pride in the performance of the members of our armed forces in Operation Desert Storm. Our soldiers, airmen and women, sailors, and marines did what they were called on to do, and did it well, just as we did a generation ago -- take pride in that as well.

I hope you don't mind the different format for the newsletter. With fewer pages and smaller type it's easier to get out more frequently. The occasional long delays between publication haven't helped build either circulation or membership.

I've talked with and/or heard from a number of members of the Ripcord Association recently -- Bon Harrison (3d Bde. CO, 70-71), Art Witnik (A/2-506, 69-70), Ray "Blackie" Blackman (D/2-501, 69-70), John "Custer" Mihalko (RCN/2-506, 70-71), John Palm (father of Terry Palm, D/2-501, KIA in July 1970 on Hill 805), Gary Deses (HHC/2-506, 70-71), Al Werth, Chris Lee, Bill "Doc" Payne, Rick Blythe (HHC/2-506), Bob Seitz (RCN/2-506, 70-72), and others. Apparently "Ripcord Report" No. 28 was well received. Thanks for your continued support.

Speaking of support, the newsletter will always look forward to receiving any information, stories, poems, book-reviews, pictures, old or new articles, and other bits and pieces of Ripcord history and recollections. The newsletter will also publish other items of interest to Vietnam Veterans as appropriate. Any photographs you submit will be returned, though this can take some time. Of course, not everything that is submitted can be published; that's a judgment call that I have to make.

The financial condition of the Ripcord Association is sound, thanks to the generous contributions of many of our members. We have several hundred dollars in our account, more than enough to cover costs for the next six months.

We do need to find more members for the association. Right now there are 201 Ripcord veterans and friends who receive the newsletter, yet there were as many as 4,000 soldiers who were involved in the Ripcord A0 in some way in 1970. Where are these guys? Let's make an effort to find more Ripcord veterans. If you have any questions, or ideas for the newsletter, let me know. If you have any complaints, the Chaplin's number is... (old joke). Anyway, "Currahee," and keep the cards and letters coming. Enjoy. Chuck Hawkins, LZ Oakton.

INCOMING

Dear Chuck,

It was good to get the latest copy of the newsletter. It's hard for me to believe that the small group that started out in '84 is not only going strong, but continues to grow.

The newsletter has matured and I feel makes fine reading for all of us who remember. There have been 28 editions at this point, which total a considerable amount of written history of our brief but major piece of a very long war.

I hope the guys are saying that history and in some quiet but positive way, letting their families know its importance. I hadn't realized what all those editions of the newsletter amounted to until I looked at the box I keep them in on day.

In my case, I not only have the newsletters but a lot of items I picked up as editor in our early years.

As my daughter is an aspiring author, I hope the material will eventually be of interest to her. If not to her, possibly another family member. It speaks eloquently to a very special time and place among extraordinary people.

As I write this, I think what a turnaround the War in the Gulf is compared to ours. I'm glad this generation's battles remain short (hopefully), relatively uncomplicated ones. The reunions with towns and families are terrific but sadly make us realize how different ours was and could not have had such an end. I hated to see John Mihalko and family move out west, although I'm sure it was a good move for them. I'll miss that short jaunt up the East Coast for a mini-reunion. Perhaps we can get something together before long.

Hang in there. Keep up the good work.

Chip Collins
Marion, VA

Dear John,

Enclosed is a small donation for your group. I would like to be added to the mailing list of the "Ripcord Report." A little about myself....

During late '69 thru early '71, I was a cobra pilot for the Griffins -- C Btry, 4/77th ARA, out of Camp Evans. During late June or early July '70 (I think), we were called out during the seige at Ripcord. I -- and several other Griffins -- flew ARA support over the firebase. I do remember one evening in fog, flying gun runs (and rocket runs) through the fog at the glow from the fire at the ammo dump on Ripcord, or, maybe it was 105 ammo blowing up.

Though I usually tried to fly CCN missions, I was interested in Ripcord. I had been at Khe Sanh during the siege in early '68. So I knew what it felt like to be in a tough situation. If the one thing I have learned from war, and especially my tours in Vietnam, is that the comaradire of those that have been in situations such as Ripcord/Khe Sanh is higher than others. The acts of bravery -- which at the time go unnoticed, or because everyone is doing their best to stay alive -- are forgotten as the passage of time continues. Though these seem small, we, the veterans of such actions truly

understand, and more important, cherish, the men we served with.

Though I only flew above Ripcord, and only in support of the '06th, I feel I might have helped -- helped a group of men who were enduring the toughest challenge of their young lives. And if I -- and my fellow Griffins, were able to kill a few NVA -- so that you and members of the '06th could survive, then I (and I am sure other Griffins) are happy!!

Thank you!!!

J. Sneaky White, Griffin 92G
Vacaville, CA

PS: I received your address from "Sweet Griffin" -- Rick Freeman, truly the finest cobra pilot I've ever known. Like I, he was amazed and impressed in the valor of the '06th during the Ripcord Operation.

Chuck,

I thought you might be interested in this Veterans Day speech, "I am the United States of America," poems, and this letter from Mary Graves of Maryland.

Gary Jesters
Manchester, MD

Gary, I would like to thank you for your letter. Thanks very much. I may not be able to get it all in this issue, but it will be useful for future ones.

Chuck Hawkins, Editor

Dear Vietnam Veteran,

I would like to say a very heartfelt "thank you" to all the veterans of the Vietnam War. My heart is very happy at how much love and support is being shown to the troops of Desert Storm. However, my heart is also breaking at the thought of how our troops were treated during and after the Vietnam War. I personally saw the disdain and contempt shown to these very brave guys who were fighting a war that very few wanted. I am so angry and disgusted at the thought of how so-called Americans spit on them and even beat them up if given a chance, and then, of course, there was also the complete indifference.

I was 19 years old in 1972, and was dating a Marine who just returned from Vietnam. His name is Ricky Raymond. I haven't seen him in years and I do not know where he is. He was a highly-decorated Marine who led dogs through the jungle to find the Viet Cong. I was very proud of him, but I don't think I ever told him. I would like to tell him now, and other guys like him that I knew then: guys like Jimmy Bailes and Pat Cunningham, Jr., and all Vietnam veterans who served so bravely. I wish I could go back and show them the love, support, and understanding that they so very much deserved. And, of course, there were the ones who didn't come back, like the only brother of my dear friend, Jim Chase, who was killed in Vietnam. How terrible to fight such a nasty and unpopular war.

war, and then come home to fight another one in your own country. I hope that they can forgive me and other people like me who were too indifferent to care. I may not have been the one doing the spitting or not speaking to them, but I turned the other way when I saw it happening.

Operation Desert Shield is bringing up a lot of guilt and pain for me regarding this very important issue. I wonder if there are other people who feel the same way. But more importantly, I worry that the Vietnam veterans who are seeing all the love and support for our troops now, may be feeling the hurt and rejection all over again. So, I want to make it very clear to them that I, for one, have not forgotten them. I know time is supposed to heal all wounds, but I don't think in the case of Vietnam that it truly has. In my opinion, there is still much more to be said.

I do not like to "point fingers," but I would also like to say that Jane Fonda committed, in my opinion, the unpardonable sin of treason when she went to North Vietnam. I would like to ask why she has never had to pay for it. The POWs certainly paid for it! Why was she allowed to get away with it, and why was she allowed to return to this country?

I would also like to mention that there are WWII veterans, such as my stepfather, William "Sully" Sullivan, as well as Korean War veterans, such as my uncle, Louis J. Landwehr, still alive in this country today. "Sully," as he is known in our hometown of Laurel, Maryland, landed on the beaches of Normandy on D-Day, 1944. I would like to say "thank you" to them also and let them know that they are not forgotten. And, I would like to mention my father, Tommie Graves, who was a highly decorated Marine who fought so bravely in both WWII and Korea. He died a long time ago, but I will never forget him. I wish I had thanked him when he was living; I wish I had understood.

I hope you will print my letter. I would like to tell all the Vietnam veterans that I love them and am very proud of what they did to serve this country, and I, for one, ask their forgiveness and hope that many more Americans will do the same.

Mary E. Graves
Laurel, MD

Dear Ripcord Association:

I served in the United States Army during 1968-1969 as a Squad Leader in Company A, 2d Battalion, 501st Infantry, 101st Airborne Division. I was wounded in combat in Vietnam in early May 1969, and lost contact with my unit thereafter.

I believe that Frank A. Pena was a member of my squad. I am interested in his whereabouts so that I may try to contact him. I would appreciate any information that you could provide to help me locate Frank Pena, or any information you have about any inquiries about his unit.

Thank you for your assistance and cooperation in this matter.

John E. Lambert

Dear Ripcord Report:

My unit from Vietnam is holding its first ever reunion in the near future. In order to locate some of the personnel who served with me, I need to advertise in order to reach them, so I came to your organization to please publicize the reunion. I'm hoping that maybe some of my brothers are readers of your organization's newsletter and will answer the request.

Information on the reunion: Co. F (LRP), 51st Inf. (Abn.) will hold a reunion in June

Thank you for your help in this endeavor.
Keep America strong, support her veterans!

T. Gonzales
Austin, TX

Dear John,

That's a common way that some letters going to Vietnam started, anyway, my name is Steven Morgan. I served in Vietnam from January 1970 'till January 1971 with Headquarters Battery, 2d Battalion, 319th Artillery (101st Airborne Division). My field time was on FSB Barbara, O'Reilly, Ripcord, and Rakasan. I also adjusted artillery fire around Ripcord from the air. Just for informations' sake, the CO of our battery on Ripcord was CPT Rich (Very gung ho).

There was somuch going on that summer, that it's hard to put it all together in your mind. The "Ripcord Report" helps. However, I do remember the days leading up to, and final day of, Ripcord as a FSB. That summer and the summer of 1969 were both costly for the 3d Brigade.

By the way, I learned of your newsletter from Bill Payne in California. He runs a company called Proud Productions. He makes Vietnam "T" shirts of the highest quality. His phone number is 714/599-1970. Bill has sent me a copy of the "Ripcord Report" No. 26, June 1990. I am now on your mailing list, and if I can help you or any other veteran my address is (see new

I am originally from southern Illinois. I am proud to have served in Vietnam, and extremely proud to have served in the 101st Airborne Division. I hope my donation will help your report reach other veterans. Say a prayer for the young Eagles in the Middle East. Airborne always.

Steve Morgan
Baton Rouge, LA

Dear Chuck,

After speaking with you and Col. Bob Seitz last week, it was a nice feeling to know that career officers like yourselves are so willing to speak with Vietnam veterans that you have never met. I guess it's because anyone who served in a place like Vietnam shares a common bond that makes it easy to open up to each other.

To anyone else out there, the reason for my

To anyone else out there, the reason for my calls was to try and locate a 2d Lt. by the name of Kelly who served with A/2-506 from October 1969 through April or May 1970. If anyone remembers him, or at least his first name, please drop me a line. 2d Lt. Kelly was originally from Miami, Florida.

One other thing, Chuck. Concerning your "Pass in Review" of Summons of the Trumpet (Feb. '91 issue), you mentioned that there were only two professional athletes who served in Vietnam. Actually, there are two more. Ed Figueroa, an American League pitcher who won 20 games in 1979 for the Yankees, served with the Marines. Also, Garry Maddox, an outfielder for the Philadelphia Phillies and San Francisco Giants, served in the Army and later went on to be honored in 1977 by No Greater Love Committee as one of four Vietnam veterans who have distinguished themselves in public life.

Art Witnik
Higganum, CT

Dear Chuck,

Received my latest copy of "Ripcord," and as always looked forward to receipt.

My main reason for writing is, I just came across some photos I acquired years ago and wanted to share them. If you can use them in some way, that would be great.

Also, want to make a donation to help and keep this newsletter "in the air." Later, if possible, I'd like to buy ad space for a few of my shirts (sending you sample of quality) I think our airborne brothers may be interested in.

Nice talkin' with you -- fraternally,

Bill "Doc" Payne -- "Above the Rest!"
San Dimas, CA

Editor's Note: Bill did send me an absolutely splendid Screaming Eagles "T" shirt with the 101st patch front and back along with the names of all the major battles the division saw in Vietnam -- including Ripcord. See his ad in this report. Bill also sent some excellent photos of FSB Ripcord, Vehgely, and the rest of the AO. Thanks, Bill, and good talkin' to you, too. However, the "Ripcord Report" doesn't accept paid advertising, just items of interest to its readership.

Dear Chuck,

This is the article I spoke to you about. The photos will follow. Please make sure I get my next issue of "Ripcord Report." Thank you.

Chris Lee
Chillicothe, OH

Pictured at right, NCO candidates getting up the tough way -- via cargo net. Infantry, 1969,



EDITOR'S HISTORY CORNER

Dept. of the Army
HQ, 2d BN (Ambl) 506th INF
APO San Francisco 96383
Unit History, March 1971

Introduction

Who can say at what distant point in the gulf of time will the tribes of man lay down their arms and join hands in peace? That the time will not come easily or soon, this we know. The tyrant chieftans will continue their ravages, sinning against the earth as they do against each other, and each new generation will be required to bear brave men to check that tyranny. Yet, when the last tyrant falls into his mouldy grave, a warrior from the Cherokee nation will step forth from the resting place of his ancestors, and will stand alone on a mountain somewhere in northern Georgia. His cry will ring clear and true, and the chambers of our souls will echo: "CURRAHEE."

Preface

The year, 1970, was not a good year for the "Best of the Currahees." Any soldier will tell you that a year of war is never good. But it was a proud year. You could see it in the faces of the officers and enlisted men -- pride -- pride in themselves, pride in each other, pride in their unit. 1970 was a year when the Currahees of the 2d Battalion (Airmobile) 506th Infantry stood alone as never before. It was the year of the Battle of Fire Base Ripcord.

If ever in the Vietnam War there was a forward edge of the battle area, Fire Base Ripcord in the year 1970 was that forward edge. Situated deep in the jungled mountains twenty miles northwest of the imperial city of Hue, Fire Base Ripcord practically overlooked the frightening A Shau Valley. For the better part of the year, the 2d Battalion (Airmobile) 506th Infantry operated on, and in the vicinity of, Ripcord. It was here that we met our enemy, the NVA. And here also was where we experienced most of our heartaches and frustrations, our successes and comradship. True, there were other places and actions. We began the year at

Fire Base Jack, and during the year we knew others: Shepard; Davis; Granite; Gladiator; O'Reilly; Katheryn; Rakkesan; and Maureen. New places and old, we came to know them all, but Ripcord we knew best. It seems only fitting then, that the thrust of this history be dedicated to the men of the 2d Battalion (Airmobile) 506th Infantry who fought and died by Ripcord and throughout the year of 1970.

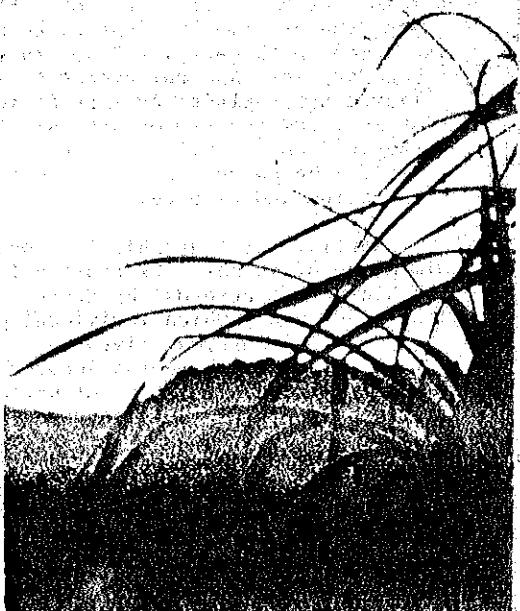
First Part of the Year

The dank chill of the northeast monsoon brought a feeling of excitement to LTC Howard G. Crowell, Jr. as he watched the last lift of slicks drop his men on Currabee Pad at Camp Evans. This would be an ambitious month, an ambitious year. He quickly went over in his mind the operations that were planned for the near future. Yes. They were going to be aggressive operations and his Currahees would be taxed heavily. The present stand-down would be a good time to review techniques of operation and go over details with his company commanders.

As Operation Jefferson Glen carried over into the new year, and rest and stand-down drew to an end, the excitement mounted. Delta Company under CPT Dwight Walhood would go far and wide searching for the enemy. Two artillery raids were planned for January, and Delta Company would make aggressive thrusts to Fire Base Shepard and Fire Base Davis. The remainder of the battalion would operate in the coastal plains region near Fire Base Jack. CPT Vincent Felletter, soon to turn Alpha Company over to CPT Albert Burkhardt, would be responsible for the security of Fire Base Jack. Bravo Company and Charlie Company were given search and clear missions that would take them to the threshold of NVA territory in the mountains south of Camp Evans. CPT Glynn Hale had turned his command of Charlie Company over to CPT Isabellino Vasquez-Rodrigues, a hardened campaigner who would undertake some of the most successful operations of the year. CPT Carmelito Arkangel, Jr., commanding Bravo Company, would lead his Currahees through difficult times as the battalion drove into enemy territory.

The stage was set, the players cast, and the machinery of war awoke, ready to strike. And strike the 2/506th did. The raid to Fire Base Shepard yielded little in the way of action, but the raid to Fire Base Davis was a different story. Delta Company located and destroyed enemy caches, booby traps, and mine fields. As the 3d Platoon hovered into FB Davis to join the remainder of Delta Company, enemy small arms fire met the aircraft. Intense suppressive fire quickly discouraged the enemy, and he fled the area. Delta Company had found the enemy; they would all live to find him again. Bravo Company, in the meantime, was having a more difficult time. The VC and NVA seemed to avoid contact, and instead employed booby traps to harass and cause casualties to the men of Bravo. But CPT Arkangel's men were not to be denied their success. They had found the enemy, they would kill him if they could. On 4 February, the 1st Platoon lay in wait along a freshly used enemy trail. If the monsoon rains had dulled the senses of the VC, it had done just the opposite to the Currahees laying in ambush. They were fully alert as two VC crept silently along the trail. When the last crack of the rifles echoed, two VC lay dead in the kill zone.

.... to be continued.



PASS IN REVIEW

The Thousand Mile War:
World War II in Alaska and the Aleutians
by: Brian Garfield
Doubleday & Company, Inc., New York, 1969

Occasionally, a book is read that is so good it has to be set aside from time to time to let its impact sink in. The Thousand Mile War is such a book. It will be read the first time and not be put down. It will later be read again more slowly, being set aside in order to savor each chapter.

Even though the book has nothing to do with Vietnam, or the 101st Airborne Division, it deserves the attention of the Ripcord Association membership. Combat in the Aleutian Islands during World War II bears striking similarities and stark contrasts to the fighting experienced by Ripcord veterans.

The Aleutian Campaign was fought under harsh, subarctic conditions, compared to the harsh tropical conditions where the 101st fought the Battle of Ripcord. Both involved rugged mountains and a determined enemy. In each, effective air support was critical to the success of ground combat. Relatively few people in the United States were aware of the combat actions in the Aleutians, or at Ripcord. Allied success in the North Pacific heralded the future successes of the island hopping campaign in the Pacific Theater during World War II. Whatever success that attended the Ripcord fighting, however, signaled the sad end of a quite different chapter in American history.

Brian Garfield has written an enjoyable, accurate, and detailed account of America's first victory in the Pacific Theater in World War II. It is filled with anecdotes, personal stories, and vivid remembrances of the veterans who fought there.

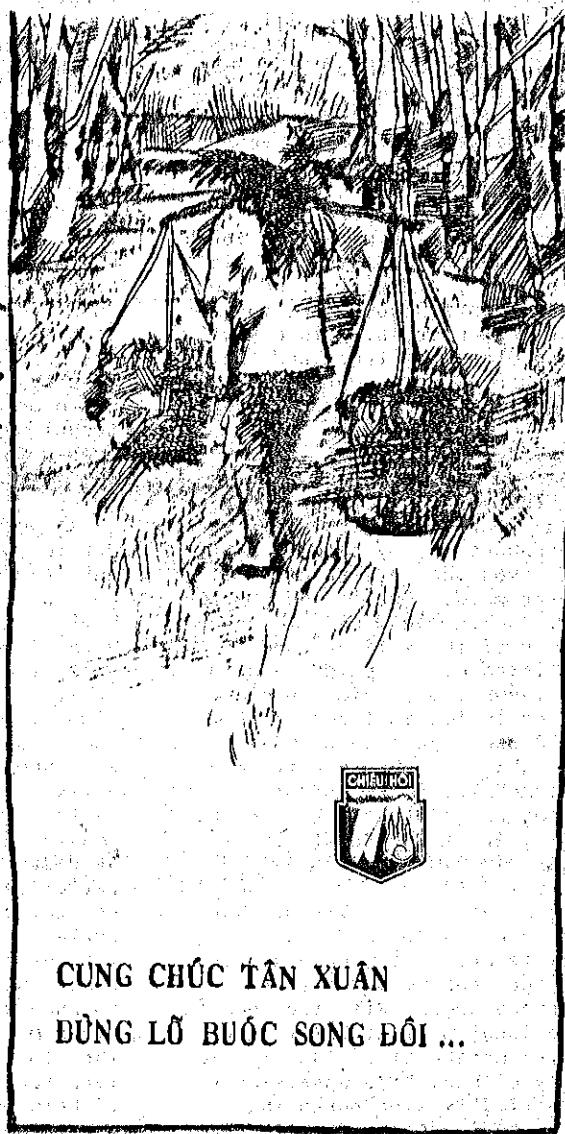
Garfield pulls no punches in describing the command relationship between the Army, Navy, and Army Air Force. From the senior Army commander, Major General Simon Bolivar Buckner (later killed in action on Okinawa in 1945), to the senior Navy commander, Rear Admiral Robert A. Theobald (later relieved and replaced by Rear Admiral Thomas C. Kinkaid), and the senior Army Air Force commander, Brigadier General William O. Butler, the author tells of the successes and failures of interservice cooperation and rivalry.

Garfield also graphically portrays the human dimension of combat. Excerpting from war diaries and historical records, he describes the exacting conditions under which individual pilots, sailors, and combat infantrymen lived, and fought and died. It is chilling to read the account of Major William H. Willoughby's Alaskan Scout Battalion as they battle over frozen, ice encrusted mountains in the Battle of Attu. The tales of bombers taking off and landing in zero-visibility fog, whipped by 50 mile per hour cross winds are gripping. There is a story on nearly every page, and they are woven together clearly and understandably.

Garfield also provides excellent map references as well as numerous photographs depicting the conditions of combat and the men who fought. His end notes are detailed, and nearly as interesting to read as the book itself.

For the World War II history buff, this book will complement a personal library. For the veteran of combat at Ripcord, it provides a welcome glimpse at another forgotten campaign, in another place, and time.

Chuck Hawkins



CUNG CHỨC TÂN XUÂN
DÙNG LỞ BUỐC SONG ĐÔI...

Cheu Hoi leaflet
Courtesy of Art Witnik

PURPLE HEART AWARDED
TWENTY YEARS LATE
Frewsburg, NY

The press was represented by an older, retired gentleman; a "stringer" or part-time reporter for one of the county's local newspapers. The reporters from the larger area papers were busy elsewhere. The local TV station sent an unkempt cameraman who arrived late and left early. As usual, the news media gave scant attention to a positive event related to Vietnam Veterans.

But if the media were otherwise occupied, the family, friends, and neighbors of Dick Cable (Recon, 2-506, 1970) were not. Though no one took a headcount, there was standing room only at the Darby American Legion Post 553 at 1 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 20th 1991.

Even the AFC championship game between the Bills and the Raiders didn't keep folks away (though the Legion did ensure the game was tuned in on the television in the downstairs lounge).

Dick Cable, then PFC, was wounded in action near Ripcord on 3 Nov. '70, more than three months after the evacuation of the fire base. Dick (a long-standing member of the Ripcord Association) and members of Recon Team E, led by SSG Lenny "Ranger" Long had been inserted by helicopter on a small, mountainous LZ near the old Ripcord AO. Their mission: deal with some NVA snipers that a line company was having trouble with. The insertion was cleverly disguised by the actual extraction of the rifle company. Recon Team E, sure they had not been

detected, moved several hundred meters to an NDP.

Things changed before nightfall, however, and the team was ordered back to the LZ to receive two more soldiers who were to emplace electronic sensors. This foolish order compromised the mission, and the members of Team E knew it. The LZ now became their NDP.

The next morning, the team moved out again. But "Ranger" Long, knowing the folly of retracing a path in enemy jungle, took a slightly different route. As a result, the team avoided the kill zone of an NVA ambush that had been set for them. They were spotted, however, and engaged by the NVA as they passed behind the position hidden by thick jungle on the ridge-line.

In the sharp firefight that ensued, Dick and three other members of

the team were wounded. Disregarding his own wounds from RPG fragments, he continued firing on enemy positions until the NVA fled.

Why did the award come 20 years late? No one knows for sure, but a copy of the original orders for Dick's Purple Heart dated 1 Dec. '70 show his unit to be the 2-502, not the 2-506. A typo? Clerical error? It's not clear.

What is clear, is that Dick's platoon leader, then 1LT Robert Seitz, discovered the unintentional error at a recent mini-reunion. After chasing down the award orders through the Army's award reclamation process, Seitz, now a colonel and also a Ripcord Assn. member, arranged for the award ceremony in Dick's hometown of Frewsburg, NY.

Unfortunately, Operation Desert Storm kept Colonel Seitz from attending, and Chuck Hawkins (Maj. USAR) represented the Dept. of the US Army in Seitz's place.

Congratulations, Dick, on the belated honor. It is richly deserved.

If you, or someone you know, has not received a decoration or an award which was submitted, write to: LTC Terry Adkins, Chief, Military Awards Branch, US Army Personnel Command, 200 Stovall Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22331. If you have a copy of the orders, it's a big help. If not, you'll need to provide more details.

Colonel Adkins was an Army aviator in Vietnam, and he understands how things were, and are. -- Editor



From left: Dick and Debbie Cable, sons Daniel and Trevor, and Chuck Hawkins.

FSB Ripcord, sometime after 18 July 1970
when the ammo dump exploded.
Photo by: Bill "Doc" Payne



Long-delayed honor comes to veteran

Will will receive Army medal for combat assaults

By Zack Van Eyck
Daily Staff Reporter

Like many veterans who served their country in Vietnam, Ronald M. Will Jr. of Quicksburg isn't sure his fellow citizens, especially those of younger generations, have a clear understanding of what the experience was all about.

Later this month, the memories he brought back from that conflict will resurface again and, Will hopes, a greater understanding of his year as a medic in the jungles of South Vietnam will also emerge when the Army presents him with a long-overdue medal for his participation in more than 25 combat assaults.

Will was supposed to receive the award shortly after his tour of duty ended in September 1971, but he never got it.

Robert M. Seitz, his lieutenant in the 101st Airborne Division,

"I don't think young people today understand the Vietnam conflict. I don't think there are enough veterans telling their kids what it was all about."

Ron Will Jr.

learned about the mixup at a platoon reunion this summer and, after three months of cutting through military red tape, located the missing honor.

Seitz, accompanied by several other members of the platoon, will present the medal to Will on Dec. 16 in a 1 p.m. ceremony at the Veterans of Foreign Wars Hall in Edinburg.

"I've got mixed feelings about the whole thing. It's a good thing,

but it brings back a lot of stuff," said the 40-year-old Will, who works as a machinist with Kennametal Inc. in New Market. "I'm glad it's being done now to shed some light on how the Vietnam vets have been treated."

Will's entire family is expected to be there, including his wife, two brothers, two sisters and his 94-year-old grandmother, Beatrice Will. But the two people Will thinks might benefit most from the special day are his daughters, 14-year-old Jennifer and 10-year-old Amy.

"I don't think young people today understand the Vietnam conflict. I don't think there are enough veterans telling their kids what it was all about," he said.

Will has a lot to tell.

Although a medic, he was fully armed as a part of a six-man team within the 25-member platoon. His unit was transported by helicopter to various locations in northern South Vietnam, where it would engage in ground reconnaissance missions, often encountering enemy fire.

"There were a few situations where things didn't go as planned



R.W. WILL JR.

and people would get hurt," he said. "Whether you was getting shot at or not, if there was a man on the ground, you had to help him."

Will was awarded, and received, both a Purple Heart and a

Bronze Star Medal for valor.

Seitz said Will's courage and skills as a combat medic clearly saved the lives of several men, and others were greatly assisted by his efforts.

"He genuinely cared for all of us and he made our health and welfare his top priority, whether it was treating gunshot wounds or reminding us to take our malaria pills," he said. "I can tell you he has our total respect and admiration."

Seitz also remembers the stories Will told about the Civil War, his home in the Shenandoah Valley and his girlfriend, Blenda Sites. Miss Sites became Mrs. Will in January 1972, less than four months after Will's return home, and Seitz will be meeting her and seeing the valley he heard about for the first time on Dec. 18.

"It's a highlight of the Christmas season and it's a highlight of a life to be with people you have such close ties to and shared a very hard experience with," said Seitz, who now serves on the joint staff at the Pentagon.

"Ron is a patriot who was always committed to his fellow soldiers and it's just very nice to see history reach out and say, 'Thank you, Mr. Will, for what you did for your nation.'"

Northern Virginia Daily

Saturday
December 1, 1990

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

MASSANUTTEN POST NO. 2447
EDINBURG, VIRGINIA 22824



THE 101 BALLAD

Courtesy of Gary Jester

War is full of blood and tears and many good men must die
Men who fight to keep their freedom and protect our way of life
Sledding through the lines of the enemy, taking them one by one
It's the brave young Screaming Eagles of the 101.

Loneliness is a well known feeling in the middle of the cold dark night
Imagine hearing an awful sound, it's the sound of a painful cry
Then you feel the deep burning pain, and see the flash from the enemy's gun
That's the life of the Screaming Eagles of the 101.

Then you say a little prayer and hope that it reaches some one
Not knowing if you'll live to see the rise of the morning sun
Then you pull yourself together, cause you know that you must drive on
That's the life of the Screaming Eagles of the 101.

Fighting every night and day to keep America free
Cause they know it's the only way and all the world must see
Even though the going's rough, they don't quit 'till the fighting's done
It's the brave young Screaming Eagles of the 101.

Through years and years of war the American soldier is still standing
Still fighting for freedom
This isn't a survival for us but it's an endurance we owe for a free way of life
We want that freedom, we must fight for it.
Drive On, Screaming Eagles, Drive On.

THE ENEMY

Major Malcom A. Danner
Major Billy J. Biberstein

Editor's Note: This article is from the May-June 1969 issue of Infantry, "...the professional magazine for infantrymen," and will be reprinted in the "Ripcord Report" as a series of articles over the next several issues.

"The North Vietnamese don't like it under the yoke of the Communist party ... American Infantry Units are weak, their fire power is poor and their equipment is poor ... We know we cannot defeat the Americans, as it is almost impossible to defeat you ... We will win the war politically, not militarily...."

These are some of the random thoughts and views of a young lieutenant in the North Vietnamese Army who was wounded in action and subsequently captured by an American unit in South Vietnam in 1968.

The information, views and opinions in this article are those of the NVA lieutenant and do not reflect the official position of any Department of Defense agency.

This is his story....

My parents were farmers and owned 50 hectares of rice fields in North Vietnam, but when I was born, my father was dead and my mother was renting most of the land to neighbors. When I was six to 10 years old I had to move from Nam Ha to Ngol Coa village in Hoa Lu District of Ninh Binh Provence because of the fighting between the French and the Viet Minh.

I am not pleased to be under the communist regime or yoke. Before it was established, my mother was able to sell our farm products to the people but after they came, she had to sell her products to the cooperative. She also must buy all her supplies from the cooperative. There is very little profit now.

The North Vietnamese people don't like it under the communist party but they dare not express their feeling for fear of punishment. If they speak out against the government they are immediately arrested and sent to a reform center for one to four months. If it is a more serious offense they are sent to prison for six months or more. I don't believe anyone is executed unless they commit a serious crime such as murder.

The people of North Vietnam do not like to see their men drafted into the NVA but the government says they must go. This makes the government unpopular and the people do not like the communist party. The families of the drafted youth do not like to see their sons infiltrated into South Vietnam, but this is an order from the party which must be executed. As very few men ever return to North Vietnam, the people know there is little hope of one's return. They believe the soldiers are a sacrifice and will die. The only soldiers that get back to North Vietnam other than the wounded, are the cadre of infiltration units that bring the replacements

down. They return to train more soldiers, then bring them down.

I know I'm sick and tired of the army, being in it for the duration; however, there are very few men who reject the military draft. I don't know the punishment for those who do, but you never see them again. The time of departure from North Vietnam to South Vietnam is the most critical time. There are a lot of volunteers in the NVA but they are the hot-bloods. The age group is from 16 to 21 years old. These are the young and hot-blooded elements and they want to fight. They haven't seen the brutality of the war.

There are very few of the age group 17 to 35 years old left in the hamlets and villages in North Vietnam. In the hamlet, where I was living when drafted, there were 120 families and a total population of 4,000 to 5,000 people. There were only three or four men of the 17 to 35 age group left and they were not in good health. They were either sick, deformed or paralyzed. There will always be a constant supply of manpower for the army, however. It will be furnished by the school children as they grow up. The problem is that the youths will lack combat experience and all our experienced soldiers are getting killed.

I was drafted in early 1965 and was assigned to a reconnaissance unit from the start. I initially took a few tests but most of the tests were given later and were on Recon subjects such as map reading. The drafted personnel go into different branches depending on their civilian trade and schooling. After a period of basic training the cadre normally selects personnel for certain branches. The basic training varies from a minimum of one month, for an infantryman before he goes to the battlefield, to a minimum of one and one-half years for a recon man. Our reconnaissance units are considered to be the elite organizations. In order to become a member of one, a soldier must be selected and trained specifically for reconnaissance. Our higher headquarters normally furnishes the replacements we need and we will not accept soldiers from subordinate elements as replacements. One and one-half years is the minimum training period for a recon soldier and the maximum is for four years.

The recon soldier is treated best and has good quarters and food, but the training is very difficult and the hours are long and tiring. The recon units are issued and carry two sets of fatigues plus two sets of camouflaged fatigues. Our uniforms are manufactured in North Vietnam. We also get the new type AK weapon manufactured in 1957. We were issued steel helmets in North Vietnam and wore them initially in South Vietnam but after several incidents in which Local and Main Force VC units shot and killed our soldiers, the regimental CO ordered us to discard the helmets. We then went bare-headed.

The sappers are the second most elite units. They are selected by the cadre and are not volunteers. They have a required six months minimum training period and a maximum of one and one-half years. They train on the use of

demolitions only and many get killed because they lack training in tactics.

We had many weapons in the army while in North Vietnam; more weapons than personnel. I personally like my K54 pistol the best (ChiCom automatic) and I also like the AK-47, which is better than the M16. Although I never fired the M16, the AK-47 is more practical as it is smaller, easier to handle and clean and the round does more damage.¹

There are Russian advisors with all our army units such as the artillery, infantry and armor, but I do not know about the Air Force.² We have many tanks in North Vietnam, a whole army corps of tanks, but I have never seen them in South Vietnam. During my movement through North Vietnam to the south I saw a regimental size force of Chinese soldiers in Thai Nguyen Provence.³ This was a mountainous forest area.

We left North Vietnam in February 1968 and went into Laos. We were on a military road through forests and jungles. I do not know much about Laos as we never really met the people. I don't really know whose side Laos is on.

I didn't get to know the Cambodian people either. In theory and practice, Cambodia is neutral. I don't know why we get to use it; I expect it's like a chess game. The NVA made the right move and uses Cambodia and I suppose the South Vietnamese could also use it if they knew how to.

In South Vietnam I never passed through villages or hamlets and only talked with South Vietnamese laborers controlled by the NVA. They were sociable.

During the day when I am not on an operation my life with the NVA is very easy. I wake up at 0600 hours daily, brush my teeth and bathe. I eat breakfast with my fellow officers at 0700 hours. The enlisted soldiers eat together in another area. After breakfast I join the men of my company and talk to them until about 1100 hours. We talk about personal matters like families, home and of course sex. At 1100 hours I eat lunch and take a siesta until 1400 hours. Our food is usually rice and canned meat. The food is from China and is prepared for us by the two cooks of my company. As Executive Officer of the Company I am responsible for the preparation of the food. The canned meat is usually pork and we get tired of eating it so often. Sometimes the Vietnamese people provide us food. In Darlac, Kontum and Pleiku, the people were sympathetic to us and gave us rice.

In the afternoon I go fishing with one or two members of my company. We do not go more than two kilometers from our base camp. We are very careful with members of our unit who appear to be worried or if their morale is low. We watch them closely and accompany them continuously. There is nothing to do during the day except go fishing.

At 1800 I eat supper and then at 1900 the entire company assembles for a meeting at which the political officer is in charge. At this daily meeting the political officer praises the

NVA heroes and slanders the South Vietnamese government. He also talks about the great victories we are achieving against the ARVN and US units. I do not think the political officer is effective; the soldiers do not listen attentively and become bored very quickly with his speech. One reason he is ineffective is because he never accompanies us on our combat operations and he never sees us take casualties. The soldiers know this and do not believe his stories. Sometimes I get together with my men after the political meeting and we sing and tell jokes to try and cheer each other up. At 2100 we go to bed. If we are located away from the enemy we sleep in hammocks; if we are close to the enemy we sleep in trenches and foxholes.

TO BE CONTINUED....

1. The lieutenant is entitled to believe his own propaganda. The M16, however, was (and is) far superior to the AK-47 in almost all respects, especially in terms of accuracy, range, and destructive power of the round.

2. This is not surprising. There were several reports of sighting a tall, white-skinned soldier working with NVA forces around Ripcord. One such report was made by CPT Rembert G. Rollison, commander of D/2-506. Whether the individual was Russian could not be confirmed.

3. Also not surprising. On 19 July 1970, about two kilometers southeast of Ripcord, A/2-506 CO, CPT Chuck Hawkins, killed to men in NVA uniform, each carrying folding stock AK-50 rifles. The smaller man was readily identified as an NVA recon sergeant, the other man had not a shred of identification, and was about six feet tall. Was he Chinese? Hawkins thinks so.

RIPCORD TRIVIA: General Sidney B. Berry, Lt. Gen., USA, Ret. and member of the Ripcord Association, was Brigadier General Berry and Assistant Commandant of the US Army Infantry School at the time this article was originally published in May-June 1969.



POETRY

Vietnam, 1959-1975

When all the battles are over,
and the war is finally done,
count me only as a soldier
who never left his gun.
For the right to serve my country
is the only prize I've won.

Unsigned

Courtesy of Gary Jesters.
Printed in The Maryland Vietnam Veteran.

Assault

Violence moving up a hill...
Short dashes across light-years
Of jungle.
Bits of angry split the air,
And kill,
Leaving lonely.

C. Hawkins, 1972

Heroes

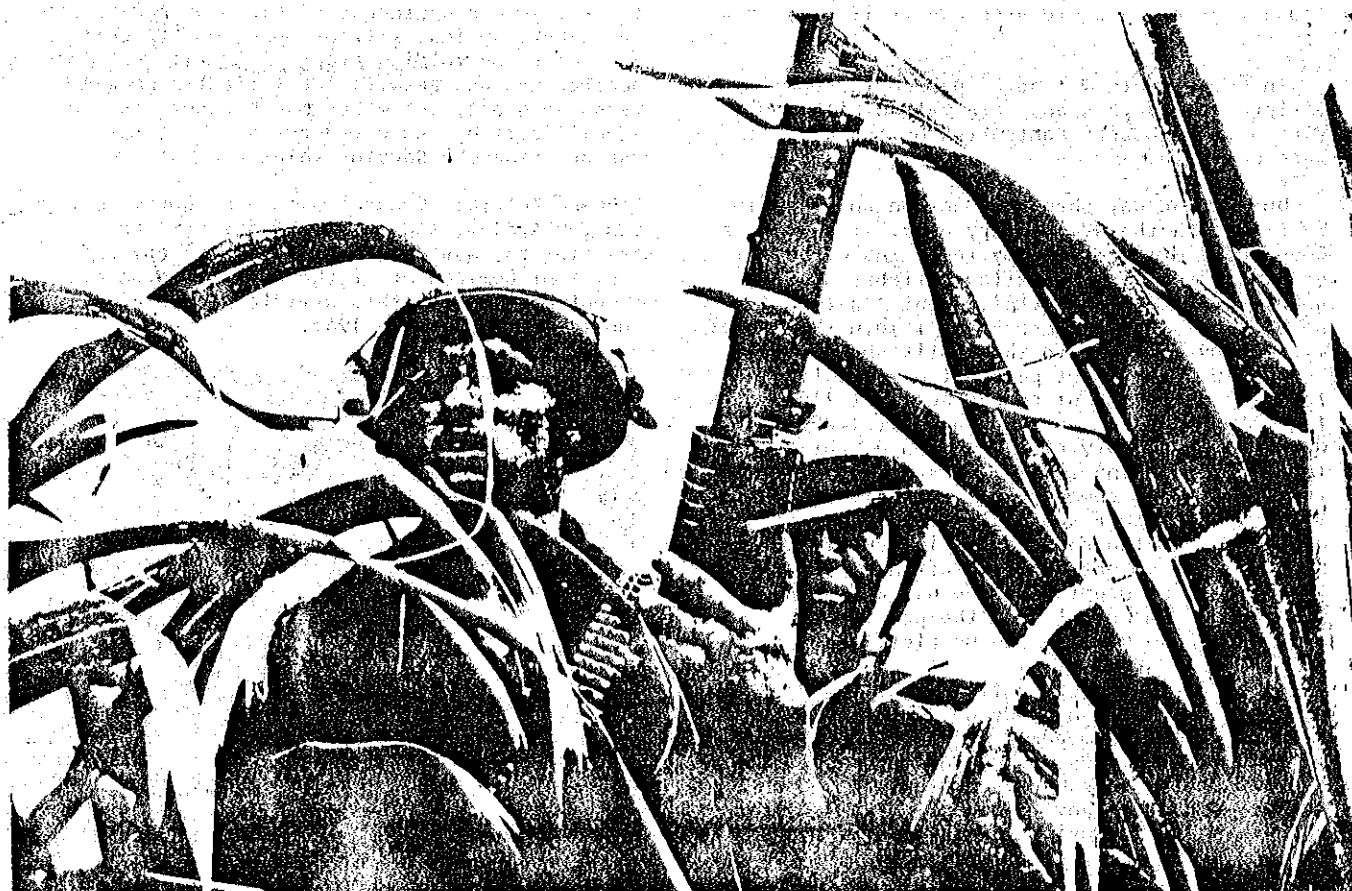
Long ago I used to dream of growing older
And of the many fine things that I'd be and do.

Childhood idols, sainted heroes,
Boldly mounted on their chargers,
Brought from history into life,
Their deeds the passwords of my youth.

Now, yesterday is but a glimmer,
A slowly fading light so pure.
And the pedestals on which my heroes
Sat have all but crumbled out of sight.

Today, my heroes don't ride horses,
But walk, instead, in dust and mud.

C. Hawkins, 1974



RAIDER REUNION

Courtesy of Ray Blackman

On July 13th and 14th over 70 Vets, their families, and some of the Delta KIA family members CA'd into the small town of Carrollton, Kentucky. The occasion was another successful DELTA RAIDERS REUNION.

The Vets and their families started to arrive as early as Thursday morning in anticipation of joining up with one of their buddies that they haven't seen since Vietnam. It was a very emotional event for all who attended.

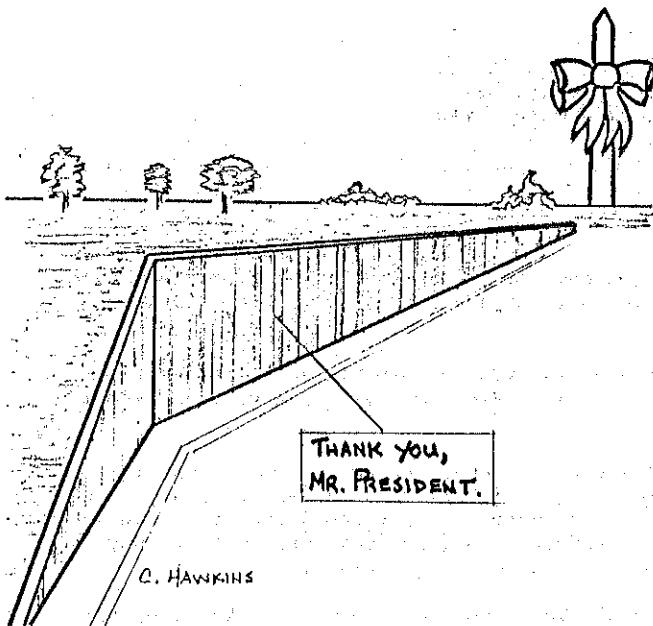
Friday was a get together day where old acquaintances were once again renewed, a lot of photo albums were looked at, and slide shows from both the 1967/68 and 1970/71 time periods were shown. On Saturday the day began with a Memorial Service for the Vets of Delta Company who are no longer with us. The 101st Honor Guard was present to post the colors and excellent speeches were made by Wayne McMenamy, Cleo Hogan, and Chris Straub, all former Company Commanders of D, 2/501.

That evening was a dinner and awards get together for all Vets and family members. Rod Soubers presented John Palm the first Hooper/Simms Award, for his early efforts in locating Delta vets.

Three members of the DROVA Board were honored for their contributions to the success of the DELTA RAIDERS OF VIETNAM ASSOCIATION. Those honored were Rod Soubers, Ray Blackman, and Mike Allen.

Sunday was spent saying good-bye to all new and renewed acquaintances.





Murphy's Law of Combat

By David Evans
Chicago Tribune

1. You are not supermen. Freshly graduated recruits from Marine boot camp and all fighter pilots, especially, take note.
2. Suppressive fires—won't.
3. If it's stupid but works, it isn't stupid.
4. Don't look conspicuous—it draws fire. (For this reason aircraft carriers have been called "bomb magnets".)
5. When in doubt, empty the magazine.
6. Never forget your weapon was made by the lowest bidder.
7. If your attack is going really well, it's an ambush.
8. No plan survives the first contact intact.
9. All five-second grenade fuses will burn down in three seconds.
10. Try to look unimportant, because the bad guys may be low on ammo.
11. If you are forward of your position, the artillery will fall short.
12. The enemy diversion you are ignoring is the main attack.
13. The important things are always simple.
14. The simple things are always hard.
15. The easy way is always minded.
16. If you are short of everything except enemy, you are in combat.
17. When you have secured an area, don't forget to tell the enemy.
18. Incoming fire has the right-
19. No combat-ready unit has ever passed inspection.
20. If the enemy is in range, so are you.
21. Beer math is two beers times 37 men equals 49 cases.
22. Body-count math is three guerrillas plus one probable plus two pigs equals 37 enemy killed in action.
23. Friendly fire—isn't.
24. Things that must be together to work usually can't be shipped together.
25. Radios will fail as soon as you need fire support.
26. Anything you do can get you shot—including doing nothing.
27. Make it too tough for the enemy to get in and you can't get out. (This seems to be the guiding design principle behind the Soviet's BMP and our own Bradley infantry fighting vehicle, both of which nicely package the troops in armored boxes for group destruction.)
28. Tracers work both ways.
29. The only thing more accurate than incoming enemy fire is incoming friendly fire.
30. If you take more than your fair share of objectives, you will have more than your fair share to take.
31. When both sides are convinced they are about to lose, they're both right.
32. Professional soldiers are predictable but the world is full of amateurs.
33. Murphy was a grunt.



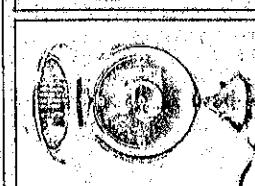
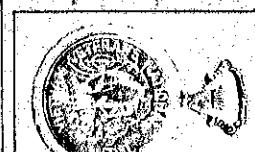
101st troopers on patrol in the vicinity of Mai Loc in 1969.

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OPINION

A "THANK YOU" FROM A VIETNAM VETERAN

by: Charles F. Hawkins

Army beat Navy. Made my year (1990, that is). The 100-year-old football classic now stands knotted up at 42 - 42 & 7. Remember some of the great Army and Navy players of yesteryear? Bellino and Staubach of Navy; Davis, Blanchard, and Carpenter of Army? Remember the 1964 Army-Navy game? It was the game that saw the first use of instant replay on television. And the very first player to be featured by this new technology was ... nope, not Navy's Heisman candidate Roger Staubach (Class of '65). That was the plan. However, technology failed the TV cameras at the critical moment. By the time the problem was fixed, it was Army quarterback Rollie Stichweh (Class of '65) who was featured on "isolate." Incidentally, Army won 11 to 8, and Staubach was held to negative 22 yards on the ground.

Also in 1964, the year I entered West Point, the same year that the Class of '65 became seniors, the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed in the House of Representatives 416-0, and passed in the Senate with only two "nay" votes -- and America focused its attention on the war in Vietnam. I was an infantryman in that war. I led men into battle -- draftees and volunteers. We were where the fighting and dying happened, and it happened a lot. Some of the grisly combat occurred on nameless hills along the A-Shau Valley; other brutal firefights erupted on or near places whose names are known only to those who fought there -- O'Reilly, Gladiator, Rakkasan, Henderson, Granite, Katheryn, Maureen, Ripcord.

I was wounded, and persevered. I knew others who were wounded, far worse than I, who also stood steadfast against our enemy. And mine is not a unique, or even signal, experience, but simply typical of the tens of thousands of men who were caught up in the "maw of the beast" that was infantry combat in Vietnam -- caught up in a war that we were not told, directed, or ordered, and not permitted, to win.

Whatever the reasons for the Vietnam War, and the ideals and morality that attended them, the troops who were sent to do the fighting were not sent to Vietnam to win. They were sent to contain, to interdict, to conduct cross-border incursions, but not to win the war. Troops were sent to make bloody assaults to seize hills that later would be left to the enemy. Troops were sent to make sweeps up valleys to find and destroy enemy supply caches and disrupt enemy maralling areas, only to repeat the same operation the following year. Winning was a neglected concept at the national level.

Not so for the infantry grunt. For all the fighting and dying we saw in Vietnam, the words of one young sergeant put it in perspective for me. Four men were leaving my company -- one of many in the 101st Airborne Division -- with DEROs (date of estimated rotation stateside) orders back home. It was September 1970. We were in the jungled mountains near Firebase Rakkasan in the northern I Corps Zone. The terrible July combat actions around Firebase Ripcord were starting to become a bad dream. The men came to

say goodbye and pay their respects. After a round of handshakes and goodbyes, the sergeant said, "Sir, we ain't gonna' win this sonofabitch. You know it, and we know it." He paused. "If we thought we were gonna' win, we'd stay. If you told us we were gonna' combat assault into Hanoi tomorrow, we'd stay and volunteer for the first lift. But we're not, so we're goin' home."

These words, from a man who had never known defeat in battle, who had given himself wholly to the service of his country, were words spoken by a man who wanted to win, a man who knew how to win. They were also the words of a sour man, a winner-turned-cynic. The message these words conveyed was strong and powerful -- send us to win, or don't send us.

Lieutenant General Sidney B. Berry, USA, Ret., a Korean War veteran and two-tour veteran of Vietnam; Assistant Division Commander of the 101st in 1970-71; and former Superintendent of West Point, restated that message more recently and more eloquently: "It is unworthy of a country to send its soldiers into a war they may not win."

Today, over 26 years after the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, the United States has gone to war again. This time, however, it has been different. This time our men and women in uniform were sent to win. President George Bush promised that a war with Iraq would not be another Vietnam, that every means available would be used to win it. President Bush kept his promise, and the US and Coalition forces measured up to the task, and won.

This is, however, poor solace to those more than 58,000 Vietnam Veterans whose names grace the polished black granite of the Vietnam War Memorial -- The Wall. It is meager comfort to mothers, fathers, wives, sons, daughters, relatives and friends of the Vietnam fallen that they lost loved ones who must now bear silent witness to the quintessential example of how not to fight a war.

But it is a comfort of sorts to those of us who survived Vietnam, who have endured the continuing, varied difficulties and tribulations that war has wrought. It is satisfying to know that our sacrifices have now been rewarded, albeit in a way none of us could have anticipated, nor would have wanted a generation ago.

Soon, all the service academies' graduating Class of '91 -- Cadets of Army, the Midshipmen and women of Navy, and the Cadets of the Air Force Academy -- will be on the same team. They will join the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines in the Persian Gulf and at other military installations around the globe. And they will provide leadership for America's next generation of warriors. For them, the lessons of the past will be positive ones, and will encourage excellence and build further the professional qualities so necessary in the military.

These same lessons that will enable our military to maintain its standards of preparedness are also the ones that will instruct the next generation of national leaders. And for that, we must say: "Thank you, Mr. President."



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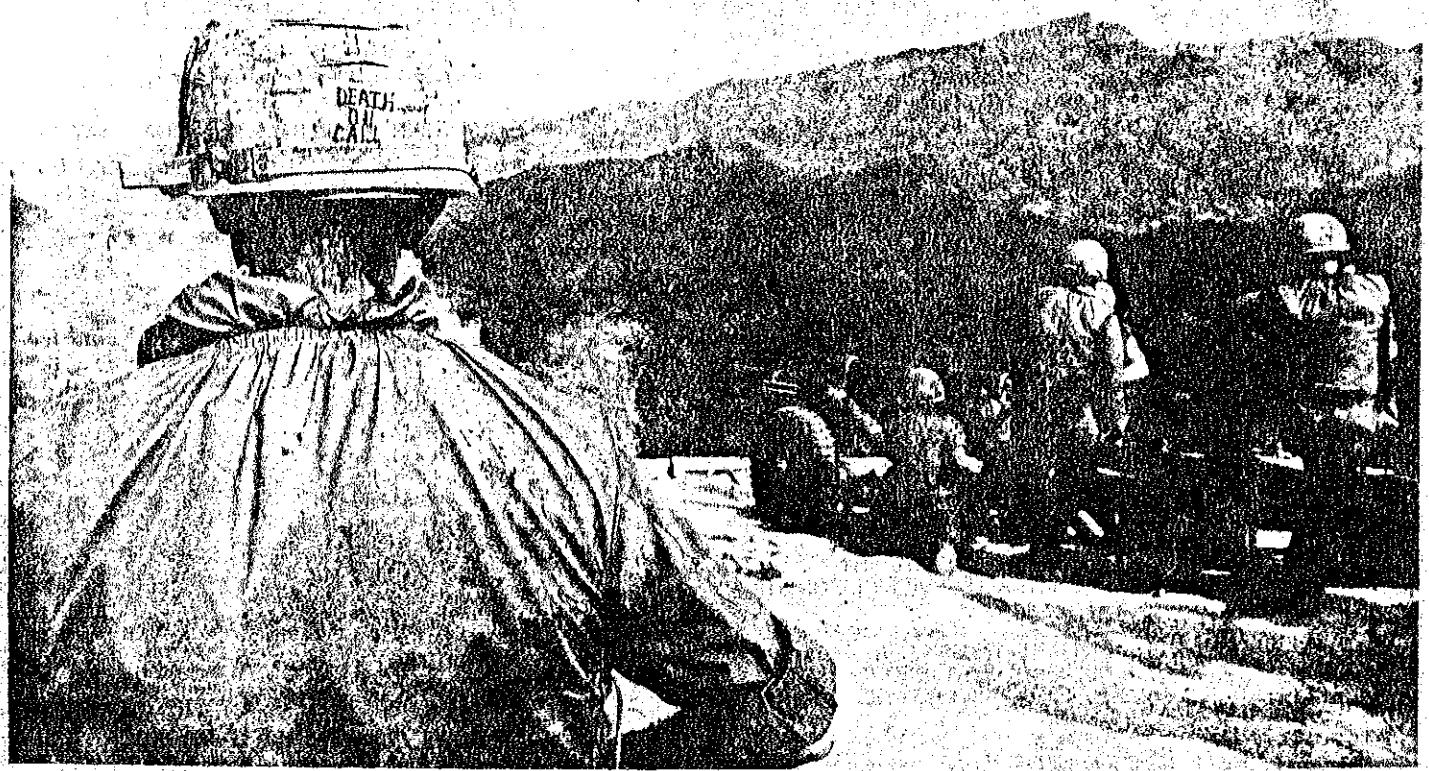


Photo by SP/5 Jensen, SEAPC. SGT Aronson's battery of the 101st Airborne Div. fires anti-mortar fire against a nearby hillside. FSB Ripcord, I Corps. It's "the" thing to do during a mortar attack.



This photo of SSG Art Witnik was taken at Camp Evans in March 1970. The SKS was part of a 67-rifle cache that Art personally discovered in the A Shau Valley in July 1969.