

Y2K 'bug' found in bunker at FSB Ripcord

Just for fun, suppose this was true.

MACV HQ, SAIGON (July 15, 1970)—In the midst of heavy fighting on Fire Support Base Ripcord, grunts of the 101st Airborne Division (Almóbile) found something to laugh about this week.

Enemy mortars and rockets have been pounding the remote base in western Thua Thien province for over two weeks. "Things have been pretty tight," admitted 3rd Brigade vector control officer Maj. Oral Flapp, "but morale is good and the men are punching back hard at the enemy."

Maj. Flapp should know. He choppered out to Ripcord earlier in the week on a staff visit to inspect bunker facilities.

His chopper landed in the midst of a mortar barrage and he quickly sought cover in a nearby bunker. "The place was a real rat hole," Flapp recalls, "but with all the [crap] going on outside, it seemed like the beach at Vung Tau at that moment."

Flapp dusted himself off and looked around. He had company. Two pairs of GI eyeballs stared at the major; one belonged to a specialist in the fighting position of the bunker, the other to a private seated inside cleaning his M-16.

"Close call, major?" the trooper cleaning his rifle asked. Without waiting for a reply the soldier continued. "To [expletive] [expletive] much [expletive] [expletive] [expletive], going down here, and that's a [expletive] [expletive] [expletive] fact, sir."

"Well, now that that's settled," Flapp said, "let me ask you men some questions."

"Sure," said the private. "Go ahead," said the specialist.

"What I want to know," Flapp inclined his head, "is how you will deal with the enemy when his assault brings him really close in?"

"Well, we got our rifles," the private said, "and we got our grenades and claymores." "And our bayonets," the specialist added.

"And if those things fail," the specialist continued, "we got old Sgt. Rock here."

"Who is Sgt. Rock?" Flapp asked.

"Not a who, major," the specialist replied, "Sgt. Rock is an it. Show 'em Slick," the specialist said to the private.

The private got up off the marmite can he had been sitting on, fiddled with the latches and raised the lid an inch. "You awake, Sgt. Rock?" he said quietly.

There was a scuffling sound from inside the marmite can.

"Yeah, he's awake. Lemme get his leash," the private said.

Maj. Flapp looked quizzical and began to say something, but then Sgt. Rock was out of the can and on the lead and raised up on his hind legs—at least 1,000 of them. He stared directly at the major's pistol belt.

Flapp's eyes went wide, his face blanched, "That's the biggest [expletive] centipede I've ever seen," he cried.

"Yeah, major, Sgt. Rock is a bug—a big [expletive] [expletive] bug."

"Well, technically a centipede is a member of the class Chilopoda, more like a worm than a bug," Flapp explained.

"We just call him a bug, major," the specialist said flatly, "a Y2K bug. Show the major what Sgt. Rock can do Slick."

The private put Sgt. Rock through his paces. The giant centipede knew the bunker inside out, knew the fighting position cold—the location of the claymore switches, where the primary direction of fire markers were, everything.

"Ya ought'a see him pitch grenades, major," the private said. "He can pull pins and toss a dozen or so at once, fire the M-16 at the same time, and have legs left over to scratch his butt."

"Dang," exclaimed Flapp, scratching his head, "that's impressive. But you called him a Y2K bug, why is that?"

"Well, major, Rock here has these two poison front legs," the private answered. "He stung one of the Kit Carson scouts once who got too nosy, and the guy let out a yell that could be heard on Hill 805."

"That's right, major," the specialist added, "had a patrol over there at the time. They heard it plain as day."

"So we figured," the private finished, "that if Sgt. Rock can make a man yell two kilometers that we'd call him our Y2K bug."

(GROAN ... remember, you read it here first. Have a great New Year—Chuck Hawkins, editor)

Getting ready for Ripcord Reunion 2000

SHREVEPORT—Plans are in progress for a great 30-year reunion next year in Shreveport, LA.

A memorial ceremony will be held at the Caddo-Bossier Parish War Memorial. A granite block with the appropriate inscription will be laid at the memorial honoring all of those men who fought and died in the Ripcord battle.

The ceremony will be quite impressive and efforts are currently being made to see if a pass in review of some sort honoring the members of the Ripcord Association will occur at the ceremony. Details of the ceremony and the upcoming reunion will be forthcoming in the next newsletter.

Any donations to help defray the costs of the granite block will be most appreciated. Mail all checks to Fred Spaulding at: 7702 White Dove Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46256-1750. Thanks.

Once I am more concrete about what I can arrange, I will furnish you the complete arrangements so that future newsletters can reflect what is ultimately planned.

Currahee—James H. Campbell

Mark your calendars now.

Reunion '00 will be in Shreveport, Louisiana in October.

We're not sure of the dates yet. It will either be over the Columbus Day weekend (Oct. 5-9), or the following week (Oct. 12-16). Stay tuned.

Hotel and travel information will be in forthcoming issues of the newsletter.

You can stare Death in the face as often as you want. But when he opens his eyes, watch out.

Egos begin wars. Ids end them.

In this special Issue of *Ripcord Report*

On the following pages you will find a listing of names and addresses of the Battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord Association, also known as the FSB Ripcord Association, doing business as the FSB Ripcord Survivors Association, and otherwise known as the plain old Ripcord Association. But, hey, what's in a name?

Let the editor know

Puleeze ... if your name or address is incorrect, let the editor know. Many of the names don't have a unit listed. If you want your unit listed, let the editor know. If you no longer want to be on the mailing list, let the editor know. If you don't want your name and address given out in the future, let the editor know. If you don't see someone on the list who you're looking for, let the editor know and the name you're searching for will be listed in future newsletters. If you have a change of address, let the editor know.

In short, if it has to do with the newsletter or the membership roster, let the editor know.

Chuck Hawkins
Editor, *Ripcord Report*

If it has to do with contributions, money, finances and things like that, let Fred Spaulding know.

Recent donations

Karin J. Loke (Don Workman's sister, D/1-506)
Phil Kallas (A/1-501)
Mike Renner (A/2-11 Arty)

Many thanks for your support.

Progress on "the book"

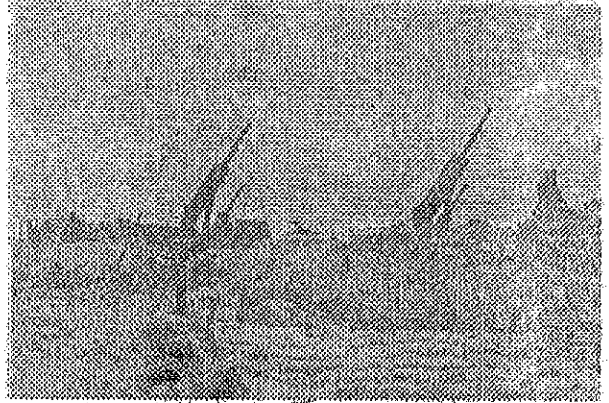
Keith William Nolan has sent his Battle of Ripcord manuscript at Presidio Press and is rounding up photographs to send to Presidio. No word yet on a publication date, but expect another six months before Presidio gets it to market.

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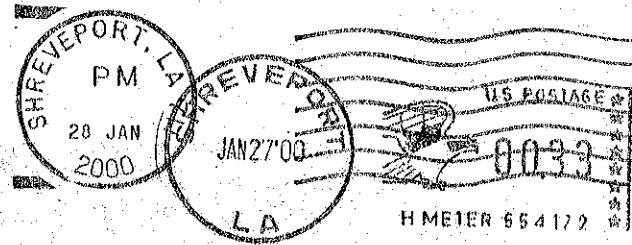
HAPPY Y2K

Ripcord Report is a publication of the Battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord Association, and is the authoritative voice of history of the battle.



Courtesy Anthony Critchlow, HHC, 2/506

Ripcord Report



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