

RIPCORD REPORT

A NEWSLETTER

No. 1 JULY 1985

For Friends and Survivors of FSB RIPCORD, RVN

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(The Search for Chickenman 34)

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Editor: Chip Collins

Co-Editor: "Blackie" Blackman

Financial Contributors:

Oct-Feb

Harry Crawford Jr.

Ken Hamilton

Steve Wallace

Contributions To :

Ripcord Association

c/o John Mihalko

10 Legion Pl.

Whippany, N.J.

07081



Sit/Rep

This newsletter should have been in your mailbox no later than March. For the many old-timers among you as well as the several new ones, who have been sent a Packet of initial information and since been in the dark an apology and explanation is in order.

The amateurish quality of early newsletters twice saw the Association attempt to establish a relationship with a Publisher that would see a newsletter with the quality that our history with its retrospectives and Photos was deserving of.

Twice, we have been forced to re-evaluate whether or not the difficulties involved to have quality were worth losing Association momentum and a month to month ability to keep you updated on news.

As we waited on this Particular issue, I heard from many of you who made it clear that it was not how the newsletter looked, but what it had in it and how often it arrived that was important to you.

As a result, we have decided it's time we moved on. Shortly after this newsletter gets to you, I'll be working on the next one which should arrive no later than early July. Simply Put, it's time we caught up on news of the Past few months and well Past time that we begin Planning the 2nd R1Pcord Reunion we referred to in the last issue.

By not continuing with a Publisher, we will need in the near future to address the need for a copier. At Present we have some feelers out about how we might achieve that. But in the future we may need to call on you for help. If any of you are aware of any corporate or government resources that could assist us Please let us know. You may be aware of a resource for a grant that we might apply for. Our feeling is that there is a source out there somewhere if we can identify who, what, and how.

Ray "Blackie" Blackman in the meantime has located a source who has agreed to help us get out our next couple of issues. Also Blackie will serve as co-editor in doing so. Much thanks to Blackie and friend!

Finally, I need to note that the Association is now some 125 strong, around double what it was back in October and the reunion. You old-timers will know we've rarely harped, or had to, about money, but as we meet the challenges of the next few months we're going to need your help. I'm sure that as you have in the Past, we can depend on you.

Chip Collins
May 28, 1987

CONTACTS

- James Seery (C/HHC 2/506) [REDACTED]
- Mike Miller (C 1/506) [REDACTED] Phone conversation with Mike reveals he is closely involved with Vietnam Veterans of Illinois and works as a bank guard.
- Alphonso "Jr." Jones (173rd. Hbn. Bde.) [REDACTED] 63120
- Paul "Dutchman" Van Schaik (C 2/327) [REDACTED]
- Anthony "Wolf" Pawlik (C 2/327) [REDACTED] "Wolf" and his unit worked much of the area and firebases around Ripcord.
- Harry Crawford Jr. (D/E RECON 2/501) [REDACTED] IL 60516
- Robert "Doc" Ferguson (HHC/E RECON 2/506) [REDACTED] OH 45601
- Martin "Doc" Glennon (A 2/506) [REDACTED] Martin only recently learned of the Hssoc. He has written a brief book about Ripcord and has collaborated with an author on a story about his experiences near the base.
- James Kilgore (E 2/506) [REDACTED]
- Buster Harrison (A 2/506) [REDACTED]
- Donald Dawkins (A 2/506) [REDACTED]
- Lloyd Harrington (A 2/506) [REDACTED]
- Clifton Franks (A 2/506) [REDACTED]
- Rick Isom (A 2/506) [REDACTED]
- Jody Smith (A 2/506) [REDACTED]
- Stephen Wallace (B 2/506) [REDACTED] 29709. Steve was Platoon leader for Bravo's infamous Third Herd shortly before and through all of Ripcord. Known as Lt. Whisper he was very "strack" and taught us most of the skills we would need to survive.

INCOMING

10/26/86

Sorry this letter is so late. Since I moved in early summer a lot of my mail has been misplaced. The Government strikes again! Feeling our squad was a very big part of RiPcord, I found your newsletter both excellent and depressing. H 2/500 re-opened RiPcord after a long stand down. Then we pulled security while the Place was rebuilt. Then we were sent back to the bush around RiPcord.

On the last few days of RiPcord we were set up just from the base on a small knoll. We could see just about everything that was happening but were powerless to help based on our own circumstances. We were hit with mortars and overrun.

RiPcord was hot when we first landed and it was damned hot when we left! Enough said of that damned Place.

I believe the RiPcord Report is a very good cause. I'm behind you a 101%.

Keep up the good work!
Joe Evans
Washington, PH

10/26/86

Just saw your notice in the "VETERAN". I was wounded while on RiPcord. After I was flown to Phu Bai, they sent me home. I never returned. My memories of RiPcord, Granite, and the guys I met there are fuzzy.

As you can see, I am still fighting a war, only now it's with myself. I suffer from PTSD, and have lost two wives and four kids. Since I was discharged in '71, I have spent most of my time in and out of Prisons and jails. I am to get out again by 12/15/86.

Everyone in Nam and here calls me "Catfish". I was in the 101st attached to 2/319 HKLY. I would like very much to receive the RiPcord Report.

Sincerely,
Jim "Catfish" Branner #143683
(address now Gen. Del., New Market, VA 22844)

11/11/86

In the very near future the undersigned will once more be in your midst, de-hydrated and demoralized, to take his Place again as a human being with the well known forms of freedom and justice for all; engage in life and liberty and the somewhat delayed Pursuit of happiness.

No, I'm not back in Nam, in country, but I'm incarcerated at Collins Correctional Facility. Presently, I'm a member of the Vietnam War Self-Help Collective and RAP Group. It was at one of our meetings that I saw a notice on the Hssoc.

Well this is "Green Grass" of the 155th Assault Helicopter Co., 10th Cbt. Hsilt Bn., 1st. Avn. Bde. acknowledging your call.

I'll be looking for you to add me to your newsletter mailing list.

Your friend,
Michael Pendergrass #84-H-0614

INCOMING

12/11/86

I was the RECON Platoon RTD for 2/501 during Ripcord and was in the initial assault on the hill next to Ripcord. If memory serves me correctly it was B Co. that was right behind us going down the back side of the valley. Our Lt. was Vic Arndt at the time. I was with him when he was hit by shrapnel.

Prior to Ripcord, Recon operated in the area for about a month. Before I went to Recon, I was RTD for third Platoon of D 2/501. Am a member of Delta Raiders of Vietnam Assoc.

The years have faded a lot of the memories, but I know if I saw some maps of the area and heard some names again, the memories would come flooding back. Hope to hear from you soon.

Cordially,
Harry C. Crawford Jr.
Downers Grove, IL

1/87

My name is Tony Pawlik. I was assigned to C 2/327 (Camp Eagle) in Feb., 1970. My company was working as flank security in the Firebase O'Keilly area. We bore some of the battle but not the siege of Ripcord. I never thought about it until I saw the article in the "VETERAN". We later worked the Firebase Jerome area. By May, 1970 we were in the Firebase Gladiator area to cover the flank security of Ripcord. I was once on Ripcord but was not there during the main battle. The 2/327 was all over the valley looking for the NVH. I never knew anyone would recall that part of history. Send me more information. I now belong to Chapter 32 Queens Vietnam Veterans of America.

Thanks,
Skyhawks
Anthony Pawlik



SPECIAL FEATURE

To the Guys of Ripcord. I thought I would send you two Poems that I wrote, and a Poem that a friend of mine wrote.

The three Poems were read at a Vietnam Seminar given at Bradley University.
-Mike Miller (C 1/586)

Under the scorching sun of Vietnam, a boy becomes a man. A dustoff carries him from the valley where this story all began.

He was my right arm, my buddy, my brother, my friend. I feel a wetness on my cheek, and wonder if it will end.

As I listen to the rotor blades fade into the cloudless sky I look down at my worn fatigues...wondering why.

Why you my friend, what will your last thoughts be, I know their coming soon.

Will they be of loved ones, home, and comfort, or the Pain of your terrible wound?

I have been told the war is over, and to forget the mistakes you say we made. What about our missing in action, and Prisoners of War still in Vietnam today? Do you think their war is over, and their memories fade?

It's so hard to explain to those that can't understand, what it's like to see a friend die in a distant land. Or feel the sweat, fear and anger, that turns a boy into a man.

Forget you say....there are thousands of names engraved...upon a marble monument made of black.

For each name, there is a memory from one of us, of those who didn't make it back.

Forget! You tell us, that's easy for you to say. It wasn't you that was with them on their final day.

Forget you say! Forget the Pain and death, we'll forget, Oh yes we'll forget!.....When we take our final breath.

M. Miller

STILL

Searching, Quietly Searching, - Finally Rest!
The Darkness Is Falling, We Have To Be Our Best.
We Sit For Hours Without A Sound,
Not Even Feeling, Nerves Tightly Wound.

We Blow The Ambush! Bodies Fall,
Claymores Explode, Tracers Fill The Sky.
We Pray To God That None Of Us Will Die,

All Is Quiet At Last; It Seems Like
Hours But Only Minutes Have Passed.
The Smell Of Cordite Has Drifted Away Once More.
Nothing Unusual, Just The Nightly Ritual Of War.

As The Dawn Creeps Around My
Shoulders, Another Night Passes....,
I Feel Years Older.

There Are Feelings And Memories
In My Mind, Feelings Some Will Never
Experience, And Others Will Never See.
Like The Nights Of The Ashau Valley,
Firebase Ripcord, Or An N.D.P.!

We Went When Our Country Beckoned,
 "Many Lived" Many Were Destined For The
 Wall.....In The Flash Of A Second!

These Feelings We Share, And You'll Never
 Understand.
 These Are Our Memories Of That Faraway Land.

It Hurts To Contain All These Feelings
 Inside, And To Feel You Know The Ones That
 Lived, And The Hurt Of Those That Died.

The Fear Of Awakening In The Night,
 Full Of Pain And Full Of Fright,
 Sweating, Remembering The War,
 Vietnam Dozing From Every Pore.

We Are Older In Years, And Our Hair
 Has Grayed, Physically We Are Home, But
 Our Youth And Minds Have Stayed
 It's Been 16 Years, But Yesterday
 It Seems. God! Why Can't I Stop
 These Terrible Dreams?

November 6, The Day I Returned. Full
 Of Guilt, Bitterness, And The Things
 I Had Learned.
 So For All Of Us Who Mentally Made
 It Home, I've Tried To Express Our
 Feelings Through This Poem.

I Know The Dreams Will Stop, And The
 Memories Will End. And I'll Forget The
 Things We've Seen.
 When Finally The Mournful Sounds Of
 Taps Blow For Me----Across A
 Beautiful Field Of Green.

M. Miller
 November 86

TARNISHED HONOR

Although we walk among you now
 We've never found our Place
 We live in fear
 And with nightmares
 It's said we've been disgraced.

We heard your call and fought that war
 Without respect or Pride
 In fear and Pain
 We fought in vain
 And still fight on inside.

Some try to find their Peace of mind
 With alcohol or drugs
 Others relieve their hells from Prison cells
 Or a life without their minds

But when we tried to show our Pride
 You slapped us in our face
 But we love you still America!

Your Conscience
 and Disgrace

REUNION

The event in October fresh on our minds, this might be a good time to relate the story of my first reunion. It was a small one, but it was made special by two friends. One from Vietnam Past and one who had been around since I was sixteen and said enough is enough and left home.

Al Kiddle and I had first gotten together as the two machine gunners of B 2/506's Third Herd. Initially sharing gunner technical expertise the bond became stronger as we recognized ourselves as the NVH targets we were and began naturally covering each other during various unit actions.

We often volunteered for Rifs or ambushes in an excuse to work together. No matter what we did we seemed charmed with luck. By the time Bravo Co. ended up on the Pyrotechnic nightmare that was R1Pcord we needed all the luck we could muster.

Al had a good natured disposition and the lean and rugged good looks of Dietrich on "Rat Patrol". On July 1, I gave up my gun to H.G., Pete Collins only to be walking Point up Hill 805 an hour later. The move up the hill had been hampered then by dense undergrowth. Al had laid down a base of fire that prevented any real resistance. We moved up the hill with probably more ease than was seen by any unit during the Period.

A short time later on R1Pcord, our nerves taut with the tension brought on by mortar after mortar raining on the firebase, we ate meals punctuated by grim, near hysterical, gallows humor.

Close calls were common. Direct hits on positions occurred frequently. Your ears rang awhile and you went on with what you were doing.

One day we ventured outside the wire to blow away a huge tree blocking our fields of fire. A sniper had plagued that part of the base. He shot at us every morning as we got out of our foxholes, but he was a notoriously poor shot. Until he shot down the Chinook on July 18.

On the day of our demo Rif we thoughtlessly went out with only a few rounds apiece. With surprising accuracy the sniper pinned us down until our Platoon could come out to rescue us. This all within yards of the Perimeter wire.

Our first charge on the tree had seen it supported by only a splinter, and a fierce wind blowing in all directions but not knocking it down. We had a scene straight from a Three Stooges skit deciding who would run up to place the last charge.

It was only a few mornings later that I dug thru bodies around a .50 cal. machine gun to extricate one at the bottom. White-faced I discovered it was Al and we dug, scooted, and half-carried him to the TUC pad to a Medivac. That was the last I saw of him until the Spring of '77.

The first time I saw Dickie Shupe, he was just another Punk on a bike. After leaving home, I had ended up in Southwest Virginia, where I was born and most of my father's family lived. To finish high school I was rooming in a flop-house with college and vo-tech kids and working on an NYC Program.

Dick's Personality can grate on you. Over the years being his friend has at times been damn near next to impossible. His name sounds like something you say when you hit your thumb with a hammer. Or when the condom vendor runs out with your quarter and you've got the local Hids express in the back seat ready to go.

But the guy had his Good Points. Whenever he was there was always a Party and women and if that was already in Progress there would soon be more booze for the Party and more women.

He has a certain Presence that almost always gets an immediate reaction good or bad in people. He picked me up one day at my Grandmother's who had never met him. A spry and acid old gal of 84 she gaped as Dick roared up the drive in his maroon rag-top Corvette looking like a stoned-to-death Jesus Christ. She bent down, turned around and looked at me and said, "So that's what a Dickie Shupe is!"

Just after Vietnam, Dickie and I would pile people in his '65 Comet and race over narrow, crooked, Southwest VA roads just to see how long it took them to pee their pants. Needless to say we made lots of friends and there was almost always a six-pack or a fifth left in the car from these episodes. Guys just gave up drinking and discovered the Lord after an hour or two with us.

We have all had our individual ways of dealing with Nam after we came back. Still it's not surprising when what we do seems similar. My way for a long time was staying in a whiskey haze which probably accounted for a good deal of my more irreverent behavior with Dickie.

It wasn't hard at all after a time to develop an outlaw mentality. Riding thru Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee during weekends with the Eagles playing "Desperado" in the background puts you in a good mood for mischief and your mind off Vietnam.

One weekend we found ourselves in Bristol, Tennessee. Swilling beer at a nightclub Dickie allowed as having been without a woman for some few hours he was desperately in need.

He then picked up a mama who belonged to the local motorcycle gangs dope-dealer. Folks, when the dope-dealer of a motorcycle gang is upset the whole gang is. They wanted to know real bad where my friend was. After a little coercion I allowed as to how they might find him driving a '54 Studebaker taking his little prize to the local ice-cream Parlor.

Having bought some time I headed out with companion to avert my friend's sure death. Sure enough Dickie had went to the first motel and parked directly in front of his room. Not very survival minded of him to say the least.

By now motorcycle exhausts were like bees up and down the street. We rushed in to let Dick know what was coming down. As he was obviously sated I assumed he'd head out. Not my friend. He then strolled his luscious beauty back to the bathroom for his version of one for the road.

Everybody now happy we charged out to the car as motorcycles began buzzing the motel. Dick Passes out at the wheel. I sling his body to one side and drive like Hell out of Bristol, waking him up for every shift into third gear which I couldn't seem to negotiate. Like I said he could be a difficult friend.

Crazy times like those aside I did work up enough energy to return to school. Still needing the haze I found I could do most work before I left campus. The nights were mine and my escapades with Dick the Daring continued. It did get bad enough that by my senior year I could sense when Dick was on campus looking for me and I could then make an effort to avoid whatever Party it was he had in mind for us.

By graduation I had wanted to see Al as well as others for some time. In the meantime Dick's one Painful disappointment in life was that we had not raised hell in Vietnam together. Never mind that we had been hellions before and ever since. That wasn't the same. He wanted to meet Al as bad as I wanted to see him again.

With minimum discussion we took off one day bringing along a friend named Larry. What was surprising about not having seen Al before was that it was only a five hour drive from my home in VA, to his in Summersville, W.VA.

I had known we would have fairly decent roads until well into West VA, so volunteered for the first shift of driving. By the time Dick realized that the twisting, turning road he was on would last for hours he was furious. This was before the days of an improved Rt. 19 and the breathtaking New River Gorge Bridge.

Taking his frustration out on us he began throwing the van into curves daring us to ask to take the wheel. We stuck by our guns. NonPlussed, he started picking up hitchhikers and venting his frustration on them. Usually a hundred yards down the road was all they would last. Then white-knuckled and wet-crotched they departed the van.

We eventually arrived in Summersville. We hadn't thought about calling anyone and no one answered the phone. Getting on the U.S. we found Al had lots of friends. One of them, Tim and his girlfriend Rita turned up and took us to a local dive called the Pioneer Grill, where Al was rumored to stop on the way home. The Place had class. All it needed was a dirt floor.

In the meantime Dickie began a weekend long lust after Rita who was an immediate hit with all of us. Al sauntered in later and after warm hellos we headed elsewhere to talk.

Tim, Rita, Larry, and Dickie start Playing Pool with a rough looking crew in the Pioneer. We arrive back later to find Dick and Larry ready to climb the walls from the Good old boys who had conned them into a "friendly" game. Thus they were rescued.

The next day we ended up at a Place Al liked called the Real McCoy Supper Club. Life memberships were a dollar. They served a drink called Swamp Water in a Mason Jar. Sometime during the night we made several more friends who looked similar to the drug heavies we see on Miami Vice. Al was certainly respectful but Dick wasn't. He alienated several that evening and waved a Pistol to punctuate his arguments.

We finally headed home in our usual haze that evening all of us beat from daylight to midnight drinking. Dick's van swerved into Al's driveway and nobody had any energy to go in. Al said he was fine where he was until Dickie allowed how it wasn't fair for Al's wife, Liz to sleep alone. Van doors went off like shotguns as the crew headed into the house.

Al's family during the weekend treated us great. His wife Liz shook her head at beer tops sounding off at daylight but we were a harmless crew. What she did find hard was our eating the wild ramps that were in season and us with an odor that made the Wild Bunch smell like choirboys.

At one Point during the weekend Dick showed Al his expertise with his handgun. Steering with one hand and Pointing the Pistol out the window with the other he shot at imaginary good guys. The Pistol went click.. click.. bang! Al was aghast. "You Pulled that Piece of shit on those guys in the Real McCoy"!

By Sunday we had settled a bit. We were touring Summersville. At one Point we stopped at a roadside fruit stand to buy Peaches. Later we found that though they looked great on one side they were rotten on the other. We stayed hungry and eventually drove into a drive-in Greasy Spoon.

It was here that a real classic took Place. Dickie can actually charm a snake, but Al didn't know that at the time. Right after we pulled in and ordered what had to be the Greasiest burgers in the world, a farmer in an old Ford full of kids and wife came in for what was their Sunday come to town meal.

Dickie yelled at him asking how he was. What follows in my memory are like scenes from an old movie. Farmer comes over and starts talking. Grease is running down Dickie's chin. Dick offers farmer a bite of burger. Farmer takes a bite. Al is rolling around the van beating the sides with laughter. Dickie continues feeding farmer burger. We're all mesmerized as certainly farmer was.

Dick brings up one of the Peaches from the back and shows farmer the good side. Asks him if he would like some dessert. Farmer agrees and Dickie feeds him rotten side. Meal then over, farmer trudges back to Ford and pulls away. Without feeding family.

Shortly after that we're riding down Main St., and Al begins bragging about what a tremendous Grenade arm he had in Vietnam. He spots friends across the street and makes to pepper them with rotten Peaches. Instead faulty Grenade arm splashes rotten Peach all over us and the van. End of fire mission.

We eventually quit eating ramps, harassing locals, and being the general hellions we were. We loaded up and headed home. It had been a hell of a weekend with two of the People I most admired. It felt good. The world was whole again.

C. Collins

BOOK RECON

When I reviewed VIETNAM: THE VALOR AND THE SORROW some months ago you heard me comment then on my bias against historical narratives as reading. I just don't usually find it easy or enjoyable.

Here again, I find myself having been put off by that bias and in doing so having deprived myself of one of the richest histories available to this group.

RENDEZVOUS WITH DESTINY: A HISTORY OF THE 101st AIRBORNE DIVISION, by Leonard Rappert and Arthur Northwood Jr., is a gem of a book. The two authors apparently were responsible for different time periods covered in the book. Also woven in is a good bit of Col. S.L.R. Marshall's excellent history, Bastogne: The First Eight Days.

Early narrative covers some of the history and origins of the 101st. From a reserve unit that just missed WW I to the development of Paratroop forces and the selection of the 101st along with the 82nd to be the first units developed as such, and the deactivations in between give a good feel of early 101st history.

We learn about the eagle or two eagles actually that served as the units early symbols. The first going clear back to the Civil War. Many of the names we commonly heard and used thru our association with the division take on meaning as we learn the history of words like Currahee and Veghel.

Although I was vaguely aware of the use of gliders in WW II, RENDEZVOUS, makes the glider pilots and passengers come to life or as in the case of some go into a dizzying spin of death away from intended landing zones.

Detailed, is the tension and ultimate rivalry between the Paratroops and Glidermen. In the beginning the Para's got the glory and the extra pay. Glidermen on the other hand were ordered into their craft. Eventually, some equality of recognition and pay was attained.

A sidelight of this section on glidermen was the "hit by a freight train" recognition that the use of gliders was nothing more than an early conceptualization of the airmobile concept. As controversial in WW II as going airmobile would be for the division many years later.

A real strength of this tome-sized work is the narrative. The book really takes off with the invasion of mainland Europe. Once there a clear track is kept of most of the units involved. Battalion's are easily kept up with but even companies show up regularly, giving the reader a special identity with the G.I.'s.

Narrative is further strengthened by the pieces written by individuals describing specific actions. As a whole, identification with the units is strong (particularly if it's your old one). By the end of the book you realize their story is our story. No more, no less, and only slightly different than the one we saw as brother infantrymen in Vietnam.

One final footnote on RENDEZVOUS. I read it at my home in December as snow fell fairly heavily for a few days. I shivered as the guys at Bastogne shivered. So if there's still time for you to do that it's a can't miss selection.

Available from 101st Abn. Div. Assoc., 2677 Willakenzie, Suit 7-B, Eugene, OR 97401 (503) 345-2236 (approx. 14.00)

C. Collins
Feb. 87

SPECIAL NOTE

Laura Palmer is writing a book. A special book. About Poems and letters left to loved ones at the Wall. John Campbell is helping with that effort. An effort that involves locating the authors of the letters, many of whom have not yet been located.

In the meantime a Publishing date approaches. John and I thought you might be able to help on one difficult one as it involves a Currahee, Possibly from D 1/506 in '69.

Printed below is the letter in total. If you might be able to help at all contact John at: [REDACTED] 881-2830. The books name will be SHAKEN IN THE HEART. Both John and Laura will greatly appreciate any help.

To the Sporting Crew,

Well it's been a long time since we talked. I haven't seen you guys for a long, long time - yet it seems to me that we're still together.

There are a lot of things I want to tell you guys - what happened -

After a lot of you bought the farm in summer we continued to work the ridge lines and valleys from the H Shau to the DMZ, then went to the Laotian border.

I got hit couple times on Jan 6 - I was getting so fucking short. I couldn't even hold a long conversation, but shit you know that goes. Those of us were that we there (sic) did a hell of a job keeping my ass alive. I still have both legs and can walk - not real fast - but what the hell. It seems in that valley we hit the 79th and 33rd NVN regiments - No wonder there were so goddamn many books running around.

I went back to Ft. Benning when I got out of the hospitals. I saw Milbury in Japan, he was doing okay - got into some shit for grabbing a Donut Dollie - Then worked at Benning as an instructor.

Many was the time I thought about you guys - it's hard to teach people what it's going to be like to take an infantry unit into combat - I got out in July '73 - No shit you guys would have freaked, the lifer just packed it in and left 1Lt. Infantry Retired.

Most U.S. combat units left Nam in '73. In '74 the books came down the trail like big dogs. The South Vietnamese did okay and re-took most of the country - Then in '75 they came again. Without U.S. support it was all over - NVN still own it.

You guys are on a wall in D.C. it's an okay thing. It seems that somehow you are there. I've seen a couple of the guys since but not many. Griff stayed for a few days last summer. Somehow I think we'd still be close if -

Saw Kim Lee before they shipped us to Japan. She said you guys were Number 1 and she would always remember D /06 - I don't know what happened to her - I guess she'd be about 30 now.

Saw Colonel Greene at Benning about a year later. He said you know - I was in France, Germany, Korea and three trips to the slam (?) and never saw a better outfit than your Foot Cavalry - Sporting Crew.

Was in an airport once couple years ago. This guy staring at me. He says Chickenman - 34 - I said Roger that Brass Balls? Brass Balls was clearly the best fuckin' Medivac Pilot in the world - We drank, talked and at the end we just cut.

Shitheads that were going to school or 4 - Fuckin' F say "Beaucoup" can you imagine that - I never say - beaucoup.

People don't really understand. It's like the bush - when it was over, shit grew back and it was like we were never there, life went on - overall - that was the best thing that could happened. I don't say much, unless I trust them and they're cool. I think you guys would approve.

A Nam Vet is in the tomb of the unknown soldier and the 101st Airborne built a monument paid for by the Alumni Assoc. On it are names like Lam Son 719, Bong AP, Ripcord, Hamburger Hill, A Shau.

No shit the Division ended up leading the league in kills and Wilkie badges - we also took the most KIA, WIA..

They make dumb movies about the war - one guy wrote a book about 13th Valley - Texas Star - he didn't say but think he was 3/506 when they came up. Vets are sorta odd, at first it was like some humbug and never happened now they have Parades and shit - Guess time does that.

Doc - Remember wrapping those bandages around my head that night - I told you my legs - Ha Ha only a few face scars that hair used to cover - which tells you something you're missin' - the aging Process - Thanks Doc - You are the best -

Motown - Still like hockey, think of you when I go - don't skate any more - Win's haven't done shit since then - Next year - Detroit is still there - Not on fire -

Wildman - Never did find your doughnut dollie. Fuck, she probably married some candy assed Air Force Pilot. Bet she misses you!

Freddie - I'd love to have some of your chocolate again - Nothing like it in the world - Wonder what you could have done with Milk! Like to blow a Kool and talk about getting laid, and then sit in the rain in an ambush til it got light enough for more chocolate.

I built the old/new house that was supposed to look old. Did it in a wood, good cover and fields of fire.

Little Pete - Went to Seneca Falls for you - nice town, missed the ladies you said I'd find.

Jimbo - I take at least one hot shower a day - You're right, it's the second best thing. Sometimes I take two or three - try to remember to stay in a few minutes for you per our agreement.

Berries - I don't know - Kids are about the same - They invented a thing called Vietnam Syndrome - So we're a little more careful about letting go the balloon.

Soulman - Temptations are still the best - you could go to school any place now - Fuck, they probably would even let you have a job.

Bill - What in the fuck did you go back up there for? I wish I knew why, Why Goddamn why !!!?

Allie - World was like we thought - ice cream - whisky and shopping malls, nice, clean, soft, getting over.

This wall - I visited it in '83 - it was dark and raining. Sound familiar? Damn, it was hard to walk down there, I was freaking, it's like you're there. Someday I'll go back and we can sit and talk.

I hate the first week in June - late Aug. and December the worst times - remember Oct. the best of times.

The hardest thing is thinking. I remember the good - I remember the bad - sometimes I laugh, sometimes I cry..

The worst thing is I tend to measure people by you guys and that's one fucking hard standard, but fuck them..

When I'm happy I think you share it, and when I'm down I think you guys would be pissed. You know I loved you guys and I miss you terribly - we were tight - I wish it all turned out better - What did Davie say - Nobody lives forever. Can't think of you guys as angels - more like Valhalla, drinking beer, Pissing foam, counting the days til we go home.

Sometimes I sit in the dark and smoke - I see you in the smoke not like ghosts but sitting down-waiting to move out.

Life goes on - mostly good, sometimes bad and there seems to be a hole where my heart used to be (Doc would probably bandage my head). I have trouble liking people and I'm afraid to like them too much.

I'd like to see combat one more time - with you guys - feel the rush and the high..

I feel responsible for each of you - could we, should we have done something different?

I went to this deal with my boss - a guy wrote a book about Bloods - At the end they ask Viet Vets to stand up - I did - I did for all of us - People clapped - what the fuck - I think they meant it - Wish you were there - maybe you were...

I feel better writing this - remember June '67 Why don't you shitheads ever write??

Miss you guys,
Curraheel!

Lt



THE INFORMATION P.X.

The congressionally authorized Vietnam Veterans National Medal is now available. The bronze medal comes in two sizes. The 1 1/2 in. version, No: 685 on the mints Medals List, sells for \$2.25. The 3 in. version, No: 686, sells for \$16.00. To order, send a check or money order to:

U.S. MINT (Medals)
P.O. Box 500
Philadelphia, PA 19105

The Army has a locator service for friends that you suspect might still be in service as well as those that might have retired. To use either of the two services simply do the following:

1. Write your letter, seal it in an envelope, affix stamp.
2. Write your friends full name and last known rank in the center of the envelope and your regular return address in the upper left hand corner.
3. Put the envelope inside a second envelope and include any identifying information you can about the Person you are trying to locate, such as name, rank, social security number, birth date, known duty stations, service record, MOS, units, schools, etc. You might want to include your reason for wanting to contact this Person.
4. Seal and affix Proper Postage to the second envelope.
5. For retired Personnel mail to:

Army: HQDA
Attn: DRCF-ISR
Alexandria, VA 22331-0522

6. For Persons still in service mail to:

Army HQDA-DTAG-PSR
Alexandria, VA 22331

REUNION

A check with Chuck Hawkins found him busy with all kinds of Plans for this years reunion. He is tentatively Planning for this years to take Place in August.

It's time to start Planning and Psyching ourselves up!

More information to follow in the next few newsletters.