



RIPCORDER REPORT

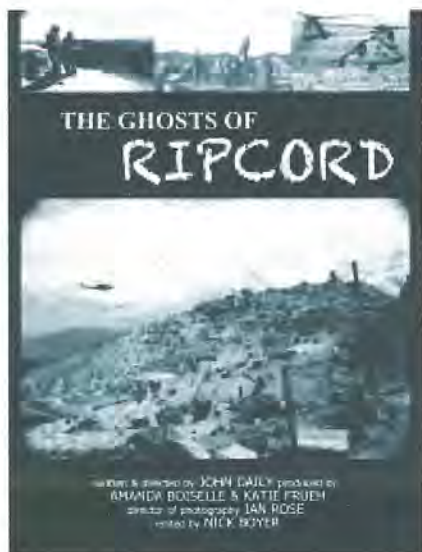


For Friends and Survivors of the battle of Fire Support Base Ripcord
Republic of Vietnam 12 March - 23 July, 1970

Number 93

Spring 2013

The Ghosts of Ripcord Documentary



"The Ghosts of Ripcord" documentary is nearing completion and will be premiering April 6th, 2013 at the National Constitution Center in historic Philadelphia, PA. If you're interested in attending the event with the producers and director of the film please contact Frank Marshall to inquire about ticket availability. There is limited seating and tickets are selling out fast. We hope to see you there, and thank you for your support through the making of this incredible film.

More information will be sent out by e-mail, postal mail and on our website. Make your plans now and reserve a seat for the premier. Only 145 seats are available and we only have a few left.

Contact Frank Marshall with any questions at frank@ripcordassociation.com

For a list of those attending, go to our website updates page. So far 38 Ripcord Veterans will be there.

Check out Ghosts of Ripcord facebook page
<http://www.facebook.com/#!/firebasefilm>

Ripcord on Facebook

by Anthony Chritchlow



Our Face book page keeps growing.

First I just want to say. It is my honor to maintain the Face book page for the association. I'm pleased to say our page membership continues to grow. We are up to 320 now. I expect this number to be higher by the time the news letter is published. I would expect once the documentary shows on TV we will also get a big increase. Are you getting excited about the Premier? Sadly I cannot make it. I encourage everyone to try to get there. I understand that everyone who donated to the documentary well be getting a copy after the Premier.

If any of you have pictures of ripcord or the area around it please put them on the face book page. Please keep your comments on face book to what happened at and around ripcord and your time in Vietnam. I really hate to be a Meany and delete comments on other subjects. I will do so if needed.

I know Frank is always looking for your Biographies. Sit down, write one up and send it to Frank. There are only 26 Biographies on the association web page. Come on we can do better.

If you can't make it to the documentary premier come to the annual reunion. I will be at the reunion in 3 years. See all of you then.

Visit the
Ripcord Association Facebook page at:

[http://www.facebook.com/groups/
ripcordassociation/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/ripcordassociation/)

FROM THE EDITOR

I would like to thank all members of the Ripcord Association for all their support in making our Ripcord Association a very unique and great Veterans organization. Please continue to send me incoming mail, photos, and comments. They are greatly appreciated by everyone.



You can always contact me with any questions. My address is below or my e-mail: frank@ripcordassociation.com

Membership

Anyone can join our Ripcord Association for free. If you are a Ripcord veteran, or an Associate member. Go to our website and update your membership to change your e-mail, postal address, etc. so that we can continue to update you.

E-mail address

I need your e-mail address. If you are not receiving updates and information about the Ripcord Association via e-mail, you may be missing out on a lot of news. Please go to our website and update your information.

Contact me at mail@ripcordassociation.com or at my address below.

Frank Marshall
5 Taconia Ct
Mt Laurel, NJ 08054

The Battle of Ripcord Movie

We have no updates or information about this project by Dark Ronin Films since Oct 2012. The Ripcord Association will not support this project if Dark Ronin films does not give us any information or updates on their plans to proceed. There have been some complaints to us that the product sales of movie items by Dark Ronin films were never fulfilled but it seems this situation has been resolved and the money refunded.

The Ripcord Association does not endorse or support any solicitation for funds or donations for this movie.

Donations, the life blood of our Association

The following have given donations to the Ripcord Association since the last newsletter. These donations help keep the website and newsletters published to keep all our Ripcord members up to date.

Bill Williams
Jeff Winters
Dave Bridges
Wilburn Wall
Bruce Whipple
Tim Joliet
Leigh Freeman
Lee Tremblay
Tom McGuire

Checks payable to "Ripcord Association".

Mail to:

Lee Widjeskog,
493 Stillman Ave.
Bridgeton, NJ 08302

Opinions expressed in submitted material are not necessarily those of the editorial staff. We reserve the right to reject any material deemed to be inappropriate. We also reserve the right to edit all submissions, but we will make every effort to maintain the writer's concept and meaning. Please be brief and concise.

RIPCORD REPORT

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

Ripcord Report

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www.ripcordassociation.com

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JERSEY RAMBLING

by Lee Widjeskog

A/2-506



Well, January 2013 is upon us and the only cold weather of the year has descended upon the East Coast. Some of you may have noted that On December 22, 2012 you awoke to find the world as it was when you went to bed. The Mayan calendar had not predicted the end of the world as some suggested, but simply went into another long count which will end on 13 October 4772. Then, if anyone is watching, the calendar will move to the next level for another 2000+ years. Predictions about the end of the world seem to appear at irregular intervals. They are based not on facts, but on beliefs and different interpretations of facts and writings. All I can suggest is that if you live your life well; when your end comes it will not bother you.

Things are moving along on many fronts with the Ripcord Association. With guys like Frank Marshall, Fred Gilbert and Fred Spaulding around, things do not stay quiet for long. Over the past year we had a movie about Ripcord rise in anticipation and then fall down as the details failed to solidify, a well-deserved Distinguished Service Cross was presented to Lt. Col. Spaulding for his actions around Ripcord and Temple University (with encouragement from Frank) has produced a 90 minute documentary about our battle. Some of these things will filter into the back ground over time, some may reappear and others may fully dissolve from our immediate conscience. Whatever the case, it has all become part of the history of the Ripcord Association.

As this issue tells you, we are heading to Myrtle Beach for our next two reunions. It should be a fun time for all that attend. The weather in October is usually in the 80's, kids are in school, tourist numbers are down and the water is still quite warm. The beach is right in front of the hotel and all you have to do is walk out the door. It was great the last time and should be just as good this time around.

The next ten years will undoubtedly see a lot of changes in our reunions. We will be missing people due to health and even death. It is not unusual; it is simply the way of life. With that said, I encourage all members who have been putting off coming to the reunions due to work, family, money, shyness or just the feeling you might not belong to suck it up and make

attendance a priority in your life. You'll be surprised at how many friends you have at the event. Do it now before we lose you or we lose some of your best 'Nam buddies. None of us are getting younger and as much as we might wish it, we will not live forever! Come to Myrtle Beach!!!

Ripcord Association Membership

New Members

Last Name	First Name	Unit
Shepardson	Howard	A/1-327th
Larson	Leonard	A/2-320
Kohr	Kristen	Associate Member
DeWulf	Evan	Associate Member
Schwartz	James	Associate Member
Hermann	Bob	Associate Member
Johnson	Karen	Associate Member
Howe	David	Associate Member
Bushue	Robert	B/2-501 mortars
Spych, Jr	Bill	C/2-506 1966
Shaughnessy	Don	D/1-506
Virgilio	Ronald	D/2-506
Peacock	Tom	D/2-506, A/2-501
Hall	Paul	D2/501
Ross III	Carter	unit not listed

We have:

- 824 members in our Ripcord Association.
- 615 are Ripcord Veterans
- 209 are Associate Members
- 270 receive newsletter via Postal Mail
- 554 receive the newsletter via e-mail
- 15 are new members
- 297 Facebook "Ripcord Association Group"

When was the last time you updated your Membership If you have moved, changed your e-mail address, etc, please go to our website Membership Page and fill out the membership Form

INCOMING MAIL

Dear Frank,

I am David L. Campbell and was quite surprised and delighted to receive the Winter edition of Ripcord Report. I am not sure how you obtained my name but I am glad you did. I never knew the Association ever existed. While I rarely talk about 22 July 1970 it is forever branded in my mind. I was the Eagle Dustoff Medic on Lt. Schwartz's bird on that fateful day, being shot down after picking a load of wounded. If it was not for Lt. Rosen and his Eagle Dustoff crew (especially Eagle Dustoff medic Brent Law) I dare say I would be writing this E-mail.

At the request and urging of a very close family friend (Chuck Cooper) I was the guest speaker 3 months ago at my home town Kawanis Club. Chuck wanted me to talk about what Dustoff was like in Vietnam. I choose to speak about 22 July 1970...FSB Ripcord. I started off with a bit of historical background of Dustoff and then I just faded away into the haunting recesses of my mind. When I finished I looked out into the audience and saw faces of disbelief that such a thing was a real life event let alone that this small rural Florida town "boy" participated in it.

I feel we combat medics have a lot to say along with the soldiers we strived to keep from perishing. My life along with all the other participants lives, was forever forged into a different being as a result of the tragedy of FSB Ripcord. For me it's the most profounding impact and life altering experience I have ever encountered in my life so far.

I know there has to be something good to come out of so much mayhem and carnage that represents that day in July 1970. I have not discovered it yet but I am thankful the Ripcord Association is here for me to be a part of.

Thanks,

David Campbell

d.l.camp.75@gmail.com

Lee,

You may or may not remember me, but we spoke at the November 2011 reunion at Fort Campbell at the Holiday Inn. I asked if you knew my Fort Ord buddy Willie who was in Alpha, and you said that he was a

member of your platoon who walked point for a very brief time. I want to thank you for providing the details about his time with you. It meant a lot to me because the last time I saw him was just after a night of guard duty at Evans' Orange Sector. Willie had crawled under a truck parked there to nap until our ride to battalion arrived. After he assured me that the shaded red dirt was comfy, I napped there, too. Later that day, he joined Alpha in the field, and I joined Charlie at Ripcord.

The Veterans Administration has just upwardly adjusted my PTSD rating, resulting in a financial gain I'd like to share with the association.

Please accept my check in memory of Willie and of everyone else who gave everything around Ripcord.

Leigh Freeman

Charlie 2-506

Dear Frank,

I am writing you from information given me from Mike Womack. I am trying to locate any members from A Co 2/506 Inf. that were in that unit in Aug - Sept. 1971 that could remember Sp.4 Alan Hinzpeter (nick name "Pete" or "Hinz"). He was KIA Sept 6th, 1971 on Firebase Helen while serving in A Co, 2/506 Inf, 101 Abn. I have details involving the incident and have no interest pursuing the matter.

"Pete" & I grew up, went to school together, & were very close friends in Minot N.D. We were in Vietnam during the same time frame. Initially, Pete was assigned with the 5th Mech near Quan Tri, I with the Americal near DaNang. When the 5th stood down, we were able to spend a couple days together at Camp Adner & Faulkner near HoiAn. He was reassigned to 2/506 & the rest is history.

If any of your members may have remembered him, please give them my email address, I just would appreciate their thoughts regarding Pete as an individual because of how close we were.

Tom Link

link@westriv.com

Please continue to send your letters and comments to: mail@ripcordassociation.com

Everyone would love to hear from you.

INCOMING MAIL

2LT William Penn Wall III

I need some help. I am working on all Ripcord Fallen profiles on "Together We Served" website. On the Virtual Wall it has him listed as : B BTRY, 2ND BN, 319TH ARTILLERY, 3RD BDE, 101ST ABN DIV, USARV. On your website it has him listed as B/2/506. Can you or any members help me get his data correct.

Mikel W. Dawson
beslagsmed@hotmail.com

*(Editor's note: Please let me know also as I can correct it on our Memorial list. Thank you
frank@ripcordassociation.com)*

Frank

Although I was not on Ripcord, two of my friends from A/501st Signal were KIA there. I supported Evans and several other firebases and as a Screaming Eagle, feel connected to all my brothers. I met you at the Ripcord Movie event. I write a blog for phillyburbs.com and I was wondering if you think any one would want to tell their story. It doesn't have to be all Ripcord. I want to get some info out there about the FB site and the upcoming documentary. Take a look at my stories and let me know what you think.

http://www.phillyburbs.com/blogs/veteran_voices/

Bob
bobstar101@gmail.com

Hello there,

My name is Joshua Hossack. I am part of a team of people from around the world who share an interest in the Vietnam war, and are currently developing a Vietnam war add-on for the military simulator Arma 2. I became quite interested in the story of Firebase Ripcord when I picked up Keith Nolan's book about it. Since then I have been looking for more information about both Firebase Ripcord and the A Shau valley, however my searches have still yet to turn up maps of the AO or a layout of the firebase itself. I was wondering if perhaps there were any scans of maps that might have been used

or maybe a base layout map that you could send to me? Those maps would allow us to create an in-game terrain based on the Ripcord AO.

Thanks

Joshua Hossack
wingmate12@gmail.com

New Member

I found you by typing in fb ripcord association and there you were. Like I said I realized I might be the only one who saw it all from a higher vantage point and want to tell someone. All the aerial pictures of Ripcord were taken from aircraft but I was there 24/7 looking down from FB O'Reilly. I could only see from one side but saw all aircraft landings and all the air strikes and I could see Ripcords 105's firing away day and night. I could see very clearly the ammo dump from where I was and the crippled Chinook back down into it and crash. Will try to write something in time for the NL.

Bill Aeschliman
chairplace@verizon.net

(Editor's note: Bill's story will be on our website soon. I am still working on the website redesign. Thank you.)

"Reunion Get together" 2/501& Charlie Company all band of brothers

at 4 kegs 276 N. Jones Blvd Las Vegas, NV, 3-15-16-17-2013, contact RC Bob Henningsen email Henningsenkrc@aol.com

The dates for a "get together" here in Las Vegas, Nevada, are set for evenings of Fri.-Sat.-Sun. the 15, 16, 17 of Mar., 2013, at the Four Kegs. WE could maybe have a Sunday brunch someplace...I'll keep you informed. "On line", there are always good deals for flights to Vegas some times for lodging and eating included. Any and all are sure welcome.

Visit the Ripcord Association website
at:
www.ripcordassociation.com

Firestore Ripcord Association October 9 – 13, 2013

Hotel Reservation form for
Sands Ocean Club Resort
9550 Shore Drive
Myrtle Beach, SC 29572
Phone: (888) 265-8846
Group code: **RIPCORDER ASSOCIATION**

Group Room Rate: Sunday thru Sunday \$75 per day + \$2.14 access charge per day + tax.
(Breakfast included)

A deposit for the first night's room and tax or a Credit Card Number is required to
guarantee this reservation.*

Room rate is available three days before and after the group-blocked dates.

Tell them you are with the RIPCORDER ASSOCIATION when you register.

Your Name: _____ Telephone # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____ No. of Rooms _____

Roommate Name(s): _____

Room needs: _____

- Although we cannot guarantee special requests, every effort will be made to meet your request.

Deposit Enclosed: _____ Credit Card Number: _____ Exp: _____

Cardholder Signature Authorizing Hotel's Use of Credit Card: _____

*PLEASE NOTE: Those guests sending a cash deposit should be aware that a credit card imprint and valid, state-issued ID will be necessary upon check in. Should you wish to pay for your stay with cash, a credit card imprint and valid ID will still be required upon arrival to secure your accommodations.

All cash payments are accepted upon departure.

Check-in time: 3:00 PM

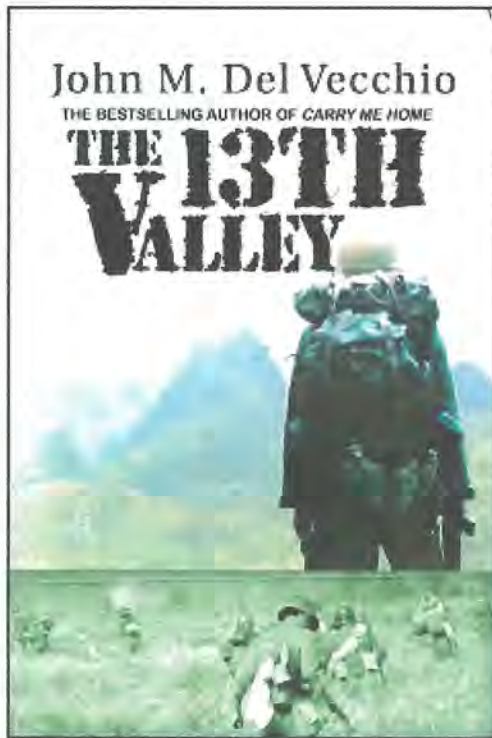
Check-out Time: 11:00 AM

To confirm reservations, return form to the hotel or call by September 9, 2013.

We look forward to seeing you in October!

The 13th Valley by John M. Del Vecchio

'The 13th Valley': An epic war story with an explosive punch Warriors Publishing Group re-releases Del Vecchio's celebrated novel. The Vietnamese name on the map doesn't matter to the soldiers of the 101st Airborne Division who will have to descend into the enemy-infested valley near the Laotian border in the summer of 1970. To them that dark, ominous chunk of jungle-covered low ground is the valley of the shadow of death. New to Vietnam is Cherry, who learns the hard way what war is all about in the 13th Valley. Warriors Publishing Group is proud to re-release the book that chronicles it all.



WARRIORS PUBLISHING GROUP (WPG) – Forty-two years ago, award-winning author John M. Del Vecchio was a soldier in the famed 101st Airborne Division sent into an enemy stronghold in northern South Vietnam. His experiences fighting a brutal battle against a determined enemy in a jungle-covered valley near the Laotian border eventually became the celebrated war novel titled *The 13th Valley*, and won him worldwide acclaim as a writer in the mold of Norman Mailer and other literary veterans who have chronicled their wartime experiences. When *The 13th Valley* was originally published in 1982, it hit readers with all the impact of an incoming mortar round. The book was widely touted as one of the best war stories ever written. “Del Vecchio has constructed a classic war novel,” said the Chicago Sun-Times, “a complex and frightening book that gets it right from accurate dialogue to brilliant description to warm and human characterization.” Del Vecchio’s book enjoys a place of honor on thousands of bookshelves, and veterans have passed dog-eared, underlined copies around among themselves for years. “This important and impactful book has been out of print for too long,” said Julia Dye, the senior editor and publisher at Warriors Publishing Group (WPG), “and we’re very excited about getting it back into circulation so that a new generation of veterans and other readers can

enjoy what John has written.”

Warriors Publishing acquired the rights to *The 13th Valley* and is releasing the book in August in both hard copy and digital formats. The 13th Valley is available through Amazon and <http://www.warriorspublishing.com>.

For more information or to schedule an interview with John M. Del Vecchio, contact Julia Dye, Warriors Publishing Group at 818/349-6640 or info@warriorspublishing.com

“The first Viet Nam combat novel to demand—and deserve—comparison with Norman Mailer’s *The Naked and the Dead*.” —Philadelphia Inquirer

Future Ripcord Reunions

2013 Ripcord Reunion
Myrtle Beach, SC
Oct 9 - 12, 2013

2014 Ripcord Reunion
Myrtle Beach, SC
Oct 8 - 11, 2014

2015 Ripcord Reunion
Springfield, MO
Oct 7 - 10, 2015

RIPCORDEREUNION 2013
MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA

☐ Yes, I'll be there!

☐ I have not attended a Reunion since 1997 and have not received a Ripcord Coin.

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ UNIT IN 'NAM _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Will a family member(s) or guest be sharing your accommodations ☐ yes ☐ no? How many including you? ☐. If yes what are their names? (For name tag purposes only).

Arrival Date _____ Departure Date _____

TRANSPORTATION FROM THE AIRPORT IS PROVIDED BY COMPLEMENTARY AIRPORT SHUTTLE. MAKE RESERVATIONS FOR PICK UP AT LEAST 48 HOURS BEFORE ARRIVAL! (1-888-265-8864)

Registration fee of \$ _____ is enclosed for # _____ Adults and # _____ children under 18.
\$40 for children under 18. For adults see discounts below !

DISCOUNTS FOR EARLY REGISTRATION:

Before June 30, 2013, \$75 per adult
July 1 through 31, 2013 \$80 per adult,
August 1 through 31, 2013 \$85 per adult.
After September 1, 2013 \$90 per adult.

Your registration fee covers the cost of the hospitality room, snacks and beverages, and dinner on Saturday.

Registration fee due no later than October 4, 2013.

Make your check payable to "RIPCORDEREUNION ASSOCIATION"

Mail your check with this form to:

Lee Widjeskog, 493 Stillman Ave., Bridgeton, NJ 08302.

If you have questions call Lee at 856-451-1108 before 5 October 2013

AGENDA

Wednesday, October 9: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Self guided tours and shopping)
Thursday, October 10: Hospitality suite opens at 1200 hours. (Golf in the AM) (Self guided tours)
Friday, October 11: Hospitality 1200 Hours. Ladies raffle 1900 hours (7PM)
Saturday, October 12: Business meeting for association business in Hospitality room.
Dinner with cash bar starting at 1730 hours done by 2200 hours.
Sunday, October 13: Homeward bound
Thursday golf outing (not included in the registration fee). Check here if you will play ☐.

**HOTEL RESERVATIONS MUST BE MADE SEPERATELY AND
BY September 9, 2013**

CALL 1-888-265-8846

**ASK FOR HOTEL RESERVATIONS AND REFER TO THE GROUP
CODE: RIPCORDEREUNION**