



Seventh United States Cavalry Association

2012 Issue 2

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"Troopers of the 7th Cavalry "

"GarryOwen"

As 2011 is now firmly in our rear view mirror and Valentines Day has passed. As usual, I slept through the festivities of watching the ball drop in Times Square. I find that as I get older that particular event doesn't mean as much as it once did. The New Year arrives whether I watch the ball drop or not.

I finished reading another book on Custer titled The Last Stand and I was quite impressed by the depth of the research that the author - Nathaniel Phillbrick has done. The bibliography alone contained several hundred references and the notes to each chapter were filled with other interesting tidbits. The maps were exceptional as well. For those who have visited those hallowed grounds, this book gives additional insight and helps to fill in some of the blanks. If you're into that battle, this book would be a welcome addition to your library. I spent several hours watching a "Twilight Zone" marathon on New Years Day and interestingly there was an episode titled, The 7th is Made up of Phantoms.

A Montana National Guard Troop was performing maneuvers around the Little Bighorn and somehow a Stuart Recon Vehicle dismounted crew got involved in the battle. They of course were killed and strangely, as only Rod Sterling could, those 3 names appeared on the Monument to the fallen. The next episode involved a B-25 called King 9 which had crash landed after suffering battle damage. My father flew B-25's so I thought that was intriguing as well. I wonder if that episode was developed as a result of the B-24 Liberator "Lady Be Good" found in the Libyan Desert some 18 years after she went down after missing her checkpoint at Benghazi in 1943.

Two more books well worth the read: GEN (Ret) Hugh Shelton's memoir Without Hesitation speaks to his career up to and including his Chairmanship of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The background and interactions between the military and the civilian leadership are fascinating. He referenced another book called Dereliction Of Duty by H.R. McMaster which details the undercurrents of the early years of the Vietnam War. McMaster pulls no punches in how the LBJ White House was run and the

seemingly inability of the JCS to deal with McNamara. Bob Arbatetti tells us that the documentary called The Fog of War speaks to several issues as well, including the Cuban Missile Crisis. I have that DVD in my library but as yet haven't broken the seal.

PFC Melbourne "Leroy" Rogers, 7th U.S. Cavalry-Japan/Korea/Japan 8 October '51 till 4 March '53 sends us the following: 22 Dec. '51: Having said before I don't remember anything from the time I left my last, cold, wet, stinking, rat infested, bunker, having been relieved by the 3rd Infantry, until we were on a ship sailing in the Yellow Sea around the southern tip of the little peninsula, called South Korea, until we got to the Sea of Japan. From there we landed at the harbor of Muroran, Japan. I remember disembarking and getting on a truck, probably a six by and heading for Camp Crawford not many miles from Sapporo, Japan. I remember the first sight of Camp Crawford, with brick barracks as plain as yesterday! I don't remember the last bath I had or if we took showers in any kind of order but I do know we were all eager to get clean once more! Bunk beds, clean sheets and wool blankets were a luxury. I had a lower bunk probably would have fallen off the top.

Christmas Eve night I was scheduled for one-hour guard duty - for security reasons I was told. Anyhow the snow was falling in huge Hokkaido size flakes. The base loud speakers were playing familiar Christmas carols, so it was a short hour, even in the cold. When my time was up and I was properly relieved on guard, I went straight to the base chapel, where a Japanese choir was singing Christmas carols-one stanza in English and then in Japanese. I thought this was really neat. I have also said many times that 1952 was one of the most carefree years of my life-once I got out of George Company, a rifle company, and transferred to Service Company in mid March, 1952, where I spent the last year behind a type writer. Sure we had to get up early and do PT {physical training} and run 3 miles every Friday but knowing I had another year to serve before ETS even being married I was never home sick till I started home from Pusan. Japan in January, 1953 via Sasebo.

None of us guys will ever know why we left Hokkaido, Japan on December 12 and went to Pusan. All I remember there was goofing off and walking one-hour guard duty at night. Let me digress here: I was at my post and the moon was full. When I saw this 2LT approaching me, I never challenged him! When he asked my name and why I didn't challenge him, he asked if I wanted to leave Korea alive! I told him I had already left the front lines once and could see his gold bar 20 paces! I never saluted him and wonder to this day why he didn't court martial me. As you by now noticed, I do ramble a lot and the 80-year-old mind is not the same but it sure makes me enjoy the warmth of the home we built in 1966, when our two sons were only 2 years old and the baby 4 months. Dug footing March 1 and moved in on April 28! We sold our other house under a GI loan and had to give possession, so the builders got the job done. We hope all of you have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, healthy New Year. Thanks Leroy for a glimpse back 60 years.

The Garryowen Pipes and Drums held their first reunion in Orlando, Florida on Veterans Day. This small group of men have one thing in common, in that they were former members of the "Garryowen Pipes & Drums" with the 3rd Reconnaissance Squadron of the 7th United States Cavalry and served in Schweinfurt Germany. We all arrived from various parts of America, just as we had so many years ago. From California, to New York, from Utah to Texas and Florida, they all answered the Reunion call.

These were the same men who years ago acted as Goodwill Ambassadors for America, the 7th Cavalry and the 3rd Squadron. They represented their country at everything from the Cub Scout Parades at Post Housing to the Berlin Volks-fest, where they performed before over 500,000 people. On November 12th at 5pm we assembled as "Garryowen" was playing in the background by Piper Jeff Evans. We all stood as the Colors were presented and recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Next the group honored those who had passed. Special note was made of our fallen Comrade, SGT Terrance Allen,

KIA May 6, 1968 in Thua Thein South Vietnam and the Pipers played. Then special recognition for other members who served in Vietnam, like William J Guffey and Gerald Scmaltz, all were given a much belated, "Welcome Home Men and Thank You."

After dinner James Savage addressed the men. Jim is the web master of the US 7th Cavalry Association web site. Then the organizers of the reunion raffled off three original works of art donated by professional artist "Gerald LaPole". Jerry was also one of the first members of the 1963 Band when it was formed in Schweinfurt. His contribution and that of James Savage and the organizers of the reunion are immeasurable.

Organizers of the reunion were Jeff Evans, Thomas Hoppough and Curtis Silverest. Without their efforts and that of all former members, the reunion wouldn't have happened. Then it was scrapbook and memory time as the men looked at pictures from the past and recalled how life was as a member of the "Garryowen Pipes & Drums". If you just listened and looked around the room, you could tell by the smiles and the laughter that the years were melting away. It was a great night, at the right time of life for these men who served their country in a unique way. Old friends reunited and new friends were made. Because of the years and age, they do not know if they will ever see each other again, as it is with any unit. The bond lasts forever as long as one person remembers. They were young once again, if only for a few hours. "Garryowen" my friends, it was an honor to serve with you and an honor to be with you again. This report was sent by Curtis R Silverest via Jim Savage.

Gordon Severson, L 3-7 with service in Korea reports that he was elected President at their reunion in Gatlinburg, Tennessee September 6-10, 2011. "An- other great reunion is now history. It was wonderful seeing so many of you in Gatlinburg at Reunion 2011. I hope those who didn't make it will try for next year in Reno, Nevada. We voted to hold the 2012 reunion in Reno which won out over Billings, Montana. It was also voted that the 2013 reunion will be in the central part of the U.S. with the specific location to be decided at Reunion 2012.

"We received a warm welcome from Gatlinburg Mayor Mike Werner and news coverage by the local Mountain Press and Knoxville News Sentinel. Thanks to local trooper Leroy Rogers (G Co) for TV and press coverage arrangements. "I welcome our other new officers elected in Gatlinburg; Vice President Gene Gray (G Co), Tipton, Iowa and Board members, Ray DiCaprio (A Co), Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Rudy Lommerse (HM-B Co), LaSalle, Michigan. Other officers were carried over. Thanks go to Past President Erwin Williams (K Co) for a job well done as Nominating Chairman. I especially want to thank Richard Mitchell (C Co), our Secretary and Newsletter Editor, for his outstanding and ongoing work in making the annual reunion arrangements along with Treasurer Jack Cauley (K Co). I would also like to recognize troopers Jack and Richard with accolades for their continuing service as key officers. I arrived in Korea and turned 21 the first week of March, 1951. I was assigned to L Co, 7th Cav on the front line near Seoul, starting as an ammo bearer and radio operator, then Squad Leader and 3rd Platoon Sgt; from Pvt to SFC. I left for Japan with the 7th Cav in December when we were relieved by the 45th Infantry Division. I retired as a Captain in March, 1990 with 26 years active and reserve service. My wife, Aud and I went on a 50th Anniversary Revisit Korea tour in October 2001. I am still working part-time as a bailiff with the Alaska Court System in the Anchorage Courthouse." Space constraints limited quite a bit of Gordon's military experience including his enlistment at age 15. Gordon also wrote that a group of Cav Troopers are working to get an Association Chapter started in Alaska. Garryowen, Gordon for this report.

From Karl Haartz and Charlie Baker: Our annual 5-7 Association dinner in DC was beyond our expectations. One hundred fifty Veterans, wives and relatives gathered in Washington, DC for the annual laying of a wreath at The Wall. This turnout was almost double that of previous years, and

Veterans Day is becoming a significant reunion event for the 5th Battalion, 7th U.S. Cavalry. The Holiday Inn Hotel in Crystal City was the gathering place, and a banquet on the evening prior to Veterans Day kicked off the affair. Karl Haartz, our Vice President, presided in his inimitable fashion. As usual, LTG (Ret) Jim Vaught, accompanied by his wonderful wife, Florence, was the senior man present. It was noteworthy that COL Jody Petery and COL Cliff Wheeler were there, both recent commanders of 5-7 Cavalry in Iraq. Everyone else was a distinguished guest. The evening began with a few words from Karl as our President Gen (Ret) Edmonds was unable to attend as he had a mild stroke a few days prior. He did have surgery but thankfully was only in the hospital 2 days. At last check he was walking 1½ miles a day and recovering quickly. He wanted to attend but the doctors said no flying.

*The high point of this mini-reunion was the premier showing of Norman Lloyd's latest documentary film, *Fallen: But Not Forgotten*. This stirring documentary related the battalion's air-assault through heavy anti-aircraft fire into the infamous A Shau Valley on 19 April 1968, and the subsequent events that led up to the award of the Medal of Honor to Michael Sprayberry for his incredible courage and leadership on the night of 25-26 April. Lloyd's work masterfully captures the aftermath of war, and the impact on families and fellow soldiers who live with the irretrievable loss of sons not recovered. *Fallen: But Not Forgotten* is a fifty minute DVD, and is a must see for veterans of the 1st Cav Division in Vietnam. With a contribution of at least \$10.00 to cover production and shipping costs, a copy, or copies, can be obtained from the Commitment and Sacrifice Foundation at PO Box 6167, Napa Valley, CA 94581. Next we had a Lakota Sioux, "Centering Ceremony," in which all participated. This was done by two Lakota Sioux from the Rosebud Veterans Council, Rosebud, South Dakota. They were Cornell "Jack" Menard (D 1968) and Francis Whitebird, a combat medic in Vietnam. At the end of the ceremony they presented Mike Sprayberry and Bill Litvjak with an Eagle feather with which they can start their own War Bonnet. Everyone met at The Wall on the morning of Veterans Day, starting with photographs, and ending with the ceremonies. Our wreath was carried by Rodney Henning, D Co. 66-67; Greg Holloway, A Co. 68; and William Dieker, HHC 68-69.*

Joe Galloway gave one of the greatest addresses to date, in which he talked about the need for political leaders to know much more about war before they wage it. Joe's speech was the best I have ever heard on Veterans Day and made us forget that the steel chairs were freezing our butts off. Here is the link to his speech and it has been transcribed [www.c-span.org/Events/Vietnam-Veterans-Memorial Ceremony/10737425464](http://www.c-span.org/Events/Vietnam-Veterans-Memorial-Ceremony/10737425464)>.

If you fast forward to minute 23 you can hear Barry McCaffrey's intro of Joe.

We have already signed a contract with the hotel to return in November, 2012, at the same \$99 per night price. Thanks to both Charlie and Karl for this report and I'm glad to hear that the General is recovering nicely. The 5-7 does a magnificent job during Veterans Day festivities at The Wall as well as attending many of the Changes of Command for the active duty squadron. The next reunion of the 5th Battalion, 7th Cavalry Veterans will be in San Antonio, Texas in the third week of July of 2012.

Please make your hotel reservation for Portland, Oregon and send in your registration form to the 1st Cavalry Division Association for the reunion. We want to have a large turnout of 7th Cavalry Troopers at this reunion.

*Garryowen from Michigan.
Bob Anderson
Boots & Saddles Staff Writer
The 7th United States Cavalry Association*