



Seventh United States Cavalry Association

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PRESIDENT VICE PRESIDENT SECRETARY/TREASURER
Phill Zook **Robert J. Anderson**

"Troopers of the 7th Cavalry "

"GarryOwen"

Today is April 30th and 39 years ago the ground war in Vietnam came to an inglorious end when the NVA drove their tanks onto the grounds of the Presidential Palace. For many of us who fought in what the Vietnamese refer to as The American War, it is a somber day of reflection of what might have been and what should have been. Peace with honor, a finely tuned phrase coined by the Nixon Administration wasn't to be. The politicians got us into this shooting war and decided years later that it was time to get out leaving our ally to fend for herself. What a horrific waste of the youth on both sides of the conflict, taking an estimated million or more lives and leaving an untold number wondering still - why? Our generation, many now in the twilight of our years, sometimes look back with a fondness for the friendships that we formed, as well as melancholy when anniversary dates like today roll around. Our fathers, many of whom fought in the European and Pacific campaigns, look back as well on campaigns like Antipolo and the freeing of the civilians at the University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines. Warriors like William A. Richardson, our President Emeritus, and Bob Andersen, a rifleman in B 1-7, and the late Norm Osterby, also a B 1-7 trooper who wrote this column for a dozen years, horse cavalymen the three of them. Then my good friend Sherm VanDyke, who served in Baker Company 1-7 during the harsh conditions of the Korean War. Then came OIF and OEF and terrible fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan dealing not only with the conditions but with the insidious and barbaric IED's. These gallant soldiers will someday perhaps also wonder what these issues were really fought over. No matter the conflict, our Garryowen men and women have stood tall in honorable and proud service.

This will be the last report before the Chicago reunion, and the Association HQ has been working tirelessly to ensure that we have a good time. If you haven't yet made your reservation you need to do that today. Discussions are already underway for a trip to Las Vegas in 2016, and next year we will be back at Fort Hood, our Texas home.

I just recently finished another book called Restoring Valor written by Doug and Pam Sterner. It is a smaller version, if you will, along the lines of B.G. Burkett's Stolen Valor and goes into some of the background of how the original Stolen Valor Act and Stolen Valor Act (version 2) came into being. As I have found out, and this book also points out, the Army and Division Commands do a lousy job of archiving the records of our soldiers. Many 7th Cavalry soldiers have little or no record of their service due to multiple moves, homes burning, and divorces, etc. This is very frustrating when a veteran decides to join an organization that requires some verifiable proof. Our Association has had several instances of people saying that they were something that they weren't. An NBC special report a number of years ago was based largely upon information supplied by a figment of one person's fertile imagination, and another was discovered when he died and a contingent of First Team Command folks showed up at his funeral.

Over the last 10 plus years, the late Jim Brigham and I have been collecting orders of 7th Cavalry Troopers. My duties as your Secretary/Treasurer put me in an ideal position to receive these documents when a new trooper applied for membership, and Jim started even prior to his involvement with our association. After Jim passed, his good friend Bud Alley, who was a roommate of Jim's on the boat going to Vietnam in late summer of 1965, was given boxes of memorabilia from the family. Part of this collection were lists of names that Jim had been collecting over the years as well as other 7th Cavalry Association items, as Jim also served as our quartermaster. Bud has since forwarded this collection to me and I am in the process of cataloging and generating a database that will contain every 7th Cavalry veteran by name, rank, and unit backed up by official documents. I am making an educated guess that well over 12,000 troopers served in the three units of the 7th Cavalry (1-7; 2-7 and 5-7) just in Vietnam. Why do this, especially now you might ask? Primarily to ensure that a record is made is the first answer. Perhaps the most important reason is to have a repository of records to help other veterans who have lost their documents to have at least one item that shows they were there. So what can you do to help? Dust off that old box of records and send me copies of General, Letter, Special, and Unit Orders. CIB, Air Medal, Combat Medic Badge, Promotion, Company Rosters, Bronze Star, Army Commendation, and DEROS. Most of these have multiple names and in some cases multiple units. Artillery guys can send orders attaching them to specific companies or battalions. Morning reports are another useful tool, but by the time you get copies from NPRC they are illegible and almost useless. I can tell you from personal experience in helping troopers with claims, and not just 7th Cav guys, how frustrated they are when they can't provide the documents that the Government should have for whatever reason. So there you have it will you help? Tom McClelland, who served as a Staff Sergeant with C 2-7 starting in 1965, just yesterday sent in three sets of orders that added 71 names to this project. GarryOwen! Marion Siara ('70-'71) and Ron "Shortround" Migut ('66-'67) have the most comprehensive and accurate database of C 1-7 troopers from Vietnam that I'm aware of. In working with the Company Rosters some times the reare notations that soldiers were wounded, medevaced, or killed in action. The 1 Oct 69 Roster of D 2-7 shows that three warriors paid the supreme sacrifice: Nathaniel Bush; Roberto Gonzalez-Sanchez, and Edison Hull. All three were assigned to the 3rd platoon and I pay respect to their memory and the gallant warriors of that Garryowen Company who fought on that day so long ago. As long as one of us lives, their memory and their sacrifice will not be forgotten.

Bud Alley is also working on a project to gather photos for all of the Volunteers (nickname for the State of Tennessee) who were killed in Vietnam. A similar project is being conducted by the VVF to go into their new Education Center to be built across the street from The Wall in DC . If you have any photos of Tennessee warriors or any warrior that served you might want to contact either Bud or the VVMF. My term as your Secretary/Treasurer expires in Chicago and we are looking for someone to step up to take over part of those duties. At our Saturday luncheon and business meeting plans are underway to split the duties and make two positions, Secretary and Treasurer. If the membership approves this change I will then place my name for consideration as your Treasurer, a position that I have held since 2000.

Thanks to the efforts of Jim Savage, our website manager, and with input from Karl Haartz, the Vice-President of the 5-7 Association, our association is in process of ordering an official 7th Cavalry Standard (flag if you will). This will be an excellent addition to our meeting room and will conform to the standards of the Institute of Heraldry. At some point in the future we will need to discuss a way to obtain all of the Campaign Streamers that our proud unit has earned since its formation in 1866. Karl told me that the 5-7 held fundraisers with some troopers even buying individual streamers. LTC Jeffrey Gottlieb who commands the 4-7 in Korea is providing the logistical support for this project.

MG Ierardi, who commanded the 1-7 way back in the 90's, has been reassigned to III Corps until further assignment; most likely as a Lieutenant General. Seems to me like many 7th Cavalry Commanders rise to become General Officers! From Rick Carr, who was a Sergeant in A 1-7 in '70 and '71, comes this tip. If your spouse is covered by CHAMP VA Health Insurance please check out a new VA Dental Insurance Program. Delta Dental is offering insurance for \$26.45 per month (for the comprehensive coverage) for your spouse only. He had been paying \$111.92 month for the same comprehensive coverage for his wife which is a savings of \$85.47 per month. Rick attended NCO School at Fort Benning and instead of calling himself a 'Shake and Bake,' refers to himself as a "Whip and Chill," because he was there in the winter.

A group from Charlie 1-7 in Cambodia will again meet for a mini reunion in Maggie Valley, North Carolina in September, organized by Marion Siara. Twenty- five folks have already made their reservations. Marion and his wife Connie sometimes host this gathering in Pentwater, Michigan. Ron also sent us this link to some images that were run in the Denver Post four years ago. Some images you might not want grandchildren to see, but the photos are well framed. If you weren't there, it might help to explain and understand the long-term effects on the psyche of the Vietnam era veterans.

I received a call about the story that was run on John Fitzgibbons several months ago. The story indicated that LT Fitzgibbons was in Bravo Company when he was killed but the caller - Jim Berney - who was there indicated that they were in Delta Company.

Jim Savage also reports the following: The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has advised computer users to consider using alternatives to Microsoft Corporation's Internet Explorer browser until the company fixes a security flaw that hackers have used to launch attacks. The bug is the first high-profile security flaw to emerge since Microsoft stopped providing security updates for Windows XP earlier this month. That means PCs running the 13-year old operating system could remain unprotected against hackers seeking to exploit the newly uncovered flaw, even after Microsoft figures out how to defend against it. The United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team, a part of Homeland Security known as US-CERT, said in an advisory released on Monday morning that the vulnerability is in versions 6 to 11 of Internet Explorer. Until my computer crashed last November I was running Windows XP and have been using Firefox since my new system was installed. Update from Bob Kon B 1-7 in '69 to '70. Microsoft has just released a patch for this threat to include Windows XP.

I received this piece from both Shortroud and Garland Schnack on a Mysterious Vietnam War Memorial located well off any foot trail near the Continental Divide in Colorado. The video (less than six minutes) was taken by a young woman dirt bike rider who stumbled upon a Vietnam memorial in the high country. Whoever did it invested a lot of time and money as it appears to be made of polished granite. In a circle about 75 feet out from the monument itself are 10 or more polished smaller stones. Words are in English, Vietnamese and Chinese. Some are poems while others refer to the war in the mid 50's. Evidently hunters and possibly some vets must be aware of it as there are numerous 7.62 x 51 and 30.06 rounds on one of the ledges between the stones, as well as coins left behind, similar to what folks leave on cemetery headstones.

Two more warriors have joined the Long Line awaiting us in Fiddler's Green. Leslie Lowell (Lowlie) Anderson, Company G, 7th Cavalry Regiment, and the 1st Cavalry Division passed away on March 13, 2014. Received word from as passed on by Dennis Webster that Bill Mercer died on March 2nd. I only knew him for 15 minutes. He was a Sergeant in Alpha 1-7, from 1967 to 1968. During Tet 1968, Alpha and Delta were involved in a minor firefight across a river near LZ Evans. A Lieutenant was wounded while trying to cross the river and needed to be retrieved from the water. As Senior Medic for Delta this was my job. Once reaching the wounded man, I found the water and mud to be deeper than I thought, making quick movement impossible. I was struggling to move the wounded man to safety with rounds hitting around us. It was a lifetime of nightmares. Suddenly a hand reached out and grabbed the wounded man's load bearing gear. Between the two of us we were able to drag him back to safety. Bill Mercer was a good friend even though I only knew him for 15 minutes. Quite a tribute!

The 5th Battalion of our 7th Cavalry is holding their 12th biannual reunion starting 14 July 2014 at the University Plaza Hotel in Springfield, Missouri. They do a splendid job of promoting the camaraderie between the old Troopers and the new breed of warrior and I'm proud to know several of them.

GEN Eric Shinseki is rolling hot on the Phoenix VA Hospital after a report says they were keeping a 'secret list' to make their metrics look better. Several veterans passed away while waiting for care at this facility. The VA sadly in some areas looks more to how they (administration) are viewed rather than discharging their responsibilities to us. The Detroit VA last year was caught shredding documents for the same reason.