

THE

RED DIAMOND

The official publication of The Society of the Fifth Division, United States Army.

Volume MMXXI ED. 3

August 2021

Annual Dues: \$15

100th Anniversary 2021 Reunion



Providence, RI.

101 Years OLD

“WE WILL”

Deadline for submission of articles for the next Edition: August 15, 2021

2020-2021 Society of the Fifth Division Officers – Roster

Objectives of the Society

A. To perpetuate and memorialize the valiant acts and patriotic deeds of the Fifth Division; to electrify and unify that invisible current of fellowship, friendship and comradeship molded in the throes of war and the exigencies of a peacetime service, and promote the interests and welfare of its members.

B. To publish and preserve the history of the accomplishments of the Fifth Division and the Society, in war and peace, and set forth the gallant and heroic deeds of its members.

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A Message From the President's Wife, Pat, and From our President Louis Pepi

Dear member of the Society of the 5th Division and family,

Pat and I would like to welcome you to the 100th Reunion of the Society of the 5th Division, U S Army. We hope you will enjoy your stay at The Crowne Plaza Airport Hotel in Warwick / Providence, Rhode Island. Welcome to New England.

New England in the fall offers many wonderful sights and sounds. You will be arriving at just the perfect time for "Leaf Peeping" and other Fall endeavors. From the Rhode Island and Cape Cod beaches and seashore, north to the City of Boston and its waterfront, and then to the Rocky shores of Maine; there are sites to see. Then heading west into interior Maine, there is the great North Woods, then further west, there is the Green and White mountains of Vermont and New Hampshire. I hope you make additional time to take in the scenic sights of New England.

Meanwhile, back at the Crowne Plaza hotel, the hotel offers free transportation to the town of Warwick, Rhode Island where there are many fine restaurants and shopping places in the village. There is also bus service to Foxwoods Casino daily if that is your pleasure.

I would encourage you to wear your name tags at all times at the reunion. This helps us learn names and also identifies us as members of the Society of the Fifth Division since there may also be another military reunion in the hotel. Be sure to visit our Quartermaster to buy your 5th Division gear. Check out and bid on our silent auction items which have been donated to support our society. The auction will be held on Saturday night, but items will be on display all day. A big thanks to all who have donated items for the auction.

Reunions are a time to renew old acquaintances and make new ones but they also serve to meet the requirements of our Constitution and bylaws. This reunion will be a special one since we have not met in two years due to the present health situation in the country and it is our 100th reunion. The Society is the oldest continuously running veteran's group in the country.

I would also encourage you to attend a service on Sunday at 9:00 a.m. where chaplain Ron Van Beek will conduct a non-denominational worship service. At 10:00 p.m. there will be a memorial service to honor and remember our members who have passed away during the last year. The general membership meeting for election of officers will be held on Sunday afternoon at 1:00PM. Please make your plans to attend these services and meetings.

I think the society of the 5th Division is a very unique society. Membership is limited to a group of men who may have volunteered or may have been drafted to serve our country, but now we are all volunteers. The Society requires many people to fill all the positions of the executive board, the advisory committee, the representatives at large and other committees as needed. Also, many members and spouses volunteer to help make our reunions memorable events. I want to thank each and every one of you for your support and for giving your time and money to make our society and reunions great and please—continue to volunteer.

Be sure to greet first time members and have a wonderful time at our 100th reunion and enjoy the Providence Rhode Island and greater New England area.

Lou & Pat Pepi



A Message From 1st Vice President Gary Haverman

A Message from the 1st Vice President, Gary Haverman

Hello again to my wonderful and beautiful readers of the Red Diamond. I hope this message finds all of you in good health and enjoying life to the fullest.

Here in Iowa, we are experiencing a much dryer and warmer summer than usual. It all started in June when temperatures reached into the mid to high 90's. It was also the same time that I gave up a week to work at American Legion Hawkeye Boys State and that is my Segway to the topic of this Red Diamond message.

I realized many of us are members of the American Legion but may not be aware of all the programs that it offers our youth. American Legion Boys State was founded in 1935 to counter the Fascist inspired Young Pioneer Camps, where boys of high school age were taught that democracy had outworn its usefulness and should be replaced by a new form of government namely Fascism.

The Boys State program got its start by two educators who were both members of the American Legion of Illinois. It was their desire to start a counter movement within the ranks of American youth that would develop a better understanding of our system of government and to instill in our youth a desire to preserve it.

The first Boys State was conducted at the Illinois State Fairgrounds, Springfield, Illinois in June 1935. Now many years later the program is still providing that opportunity for young men to learn by doing and through this time, there have been well over one million young men that have experienced American Legion Boys State. In today's world our way of life is still in danger of other forms of government alien to our democratic ideals and by apathy among our own citizens. The American Legion continues to sponsor and to conduct Boys State in the belief that young citizens who are familiar with the operation of our system of government will be better prepared to uphold its ideals and maintain it for future generations.

Hawkeye Boys State got its start in 1938 and is the only Boys State that is held on a military installation, Camp Dodge near Johnston, Iowa. It is unique in that we use the National Guard's barracks as cities where the boys elect their mayors and councilmen. There are four cities that makeup a county with supervisors elected. Some of the guys will run for a state position such as a senator or state representative and of course governor. By the end of the third day everyone should have a job. I should also mention that the two parties that the boys use are the Federalist and the Nationalist.

Each night we have a general session where they have a chance to listen to a motivational speaker. Some boys will go to law school and others to state patrol. Each afternoon, there is athletics which include softball, volleyball, football, frisbee, etc. The week goes very fast and is very rewarding.

My duties at Boys State include a scholarship committee where we choose two boys to attend Boys Nation held in Washington D.C. in July, work with the Color Guard, inspections and on several occasions, I have been asked to speak to one or more cities about my experiences in Vietnam.

I was so very proud that my three sons were selected to attend Boys State, but so very saddened when my middle son, Andy died the day before he was to come home, from a drowning accident at the pool that was part of Camp Dodge. So, for the past 25 years a part of my heart has remained at Camp Dodge and Boys State. I plan to return every year if God wills. A scholarship is given away each year bearing his name.

My wife Jeanne and I are very much looking forward to meeting and greeting you all at our up coming 100th reunion. I'm sure President Lou and First Lady Pat have planned an unforgettable time for us all. It has been two years since San Diego, and I can't wait to reunite with my Red Devil family. If you have not made plans to join us at the 100th reunion of the Society of the Fifth Division in Providence, RI., I want to encourage you to make those plans now because you will be so missed and miss out on so much at this memorable reunion. For those of you who are joining us, we will see you soon sending wishes to you all for safe travels. May God bless you and bless our upcoming reunion.

Below is a picture of our 2021, Hawkeye State Boys Color Guard whom I really enjoyed working with.

A Message and Prayer from our Chaplain Ron Van Beek



A Message from our 2nd Vice President Hal Roller

To all my Friends,

Why do we Honor Memorial Day?

Throughout our Military History we have honored our Fallen; this has been reinforced since WWI up to the present day. It is in our Military Core Values to leave no Fallen behind. All efforts are made no matter how long the time frame it takes to bring our Fallen back to the USA, or to a Foreign Country International Cemetery. To this day, we are still trying to retrieve our Missing in Action and we will continue to do so until all have been accounted. Our Military Soldiers understand at times they will go in Harm's Way. Knowing America will do what ever it takes to assure, if they become one of the Fallen, they will have a proper Burial no matter the circumstances; it's the least we can do for them and their families.

For me, this is a Holy Day. It is also an emotional day for me due to my own experiences in Retrieving, Handling, Processing, Transporting, Notifying Family, and the Burial for our Fallen. It is also a fulfilling day too, knowing Graves Registration/Mortuary Affairs from the point of the Beginning and Ending are always with our Fallen; they are never left alone and we are with them on their Final Journey with Dignity, Reverence, Respect.

I made an Pledge in 1970 at the Quang Tri Graves Registration Point I would never forget the Fallen sacrifices they made for the United States of America. It has and will always be an Honor for me to have served our Fallen.

I am sending this notice out early and I asking each one of you on Memorial Day to take a few seconds to thank our Fallen and Honor them and their families for their sacrifices.

Jerry/Jerald Collman.

Jerald

Thank you for words so deeply and thoughtfully spoken. You have walked the line of duty making the words even more meaningful. Myself, I have visited many of our beautiful military cemeteries, chest tightening as I gaze across the thousands of white crosses. Perhaps General Patton as quoted says it best "Thank God They Lived".

Rich

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What I have learned from a Vietnam veteran

Veterans Day has come and gone again. This year, one war has me deep in thought: Vietnam. As a teen during that era, I shouted, "Make love not war," until I was hoarse. I was convinced that it was a senseless war. I thought the men (and quite a few women) who went, were ignorant and violence-prone, that the conflict was a waste — of lives, of money, of sensibility. Today, as a sexagenarian, I teach writing at our local senior center. One of my students, I shall call him Mark, but that's not his real name, is a veteran of the Vietnam War.

Mark is penning his memoirs, and I have the honor of guiding him. His stories are brutal. As a gunner on a helicopter, he did not have far to go to see the horror. And now I see the thatched huts, the barefoot woman and children, the heat rising to blur all sight. I see fear. Mark must have been frightened, but he hasn't spoken about that, at least not yet. The Vietnamese civilians were obviously terrified that their lives would soon end. Mark talks of the intense heat. He told me of an all-pervading stench that is everywhere — the sewage, the rats eating the fallen, the urine and the poverty. I often excuse myself from our sessions together and quietly cry into a bathroom tissue.

Wasn't this war a grotesque conflict that made household words of "Charlie" and "grunt," "latrine" and "medic?" I am

ashamed. I marched and picketed and sang: "What are we fightin' for? Don't ask me, I don't give a damn. Next stop is Vietnam." Truly, I was clueless. I went along with my peers. I was cool, I was groovy.

Mark told me that once home, he moved into a house in a family neighborhood. "I didn't tell anyone I was a vet. It would have been like saying, 'Hi, I'm Mark. I'm a psychopath and I live where children play.'" Mark hurts. He was never told, "Thank you for your service," like our current soldiers are. He hurts because he is isolated in that horror, in that stench. How dare I ever again criticize those U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine veterans who went through Hades? I can't say they went through "hell and back," because for far too many, there was no back.

Veterans Day was a day off from work for me. Thanks to Mark, it no longer is so simple. "What are we fightin' for?" Those men (and many women) fought as Americans who were told they were "needed." Mark, will you ever rest without images causing you the worst kind of pain? Mark, will you accept my apology for being hateful and outspoken?

God speed. Thank you for your service.

Kathleen Gemmell, Baltimore



From the Editor of the
Red Diamond
David Kocan

Cancer

What a scary ugly word, no other word that comes from your doctor, will take your breathe away. By the time you read this I will be out of my treatment and on to recovery. My prognosis from the beginning was good. It all started with chocking on solid food, then a lump started to grow on the side of my throat. To the VA in Baltimore I went, after x-rays, CT scans, PET scans and finally a biopsy, they confirmed the worse, cancer on the base of my tongue. Diagnosis, 35 radiation treatments and 3 chemo treatments. I have a new and a special respect for those who have had cancer. Cancer is like being wounded, only those who have been through it can relate. My support team is the best, 1st God my faith that the Lord is always there, my family, all of them from my wife to my grandchildren. My brothers who text me constantly with encouragement and text me Good night. I had a great team of doctors and nurses, they gave me the best care and treated me with the utmost respect, I can not praise them enough. My life has changed, I look at my time here can be cut short, but i will never give up

See you. all in September

Some WWII Memories of Lt. Ercey Carver
7th Engineer Combat Battalion (Approx. 600 men)
5th Infantry Division (The Red Diamond)
3rd Army (Gen. George Patton)

4 Oct. '42

Inducted into U.S. Army at Ft. Hayes, Columbus, Ohio.

Interesting antidote: A day after induction and with minimum of instructions I was walking along the sidewalk near the post and approaching two officers. I passed right between them and gave them the salute with both hands at the same time. Didn't want either one to be offended by using one hand! Needless to say, then stopped me and corrected me!

6 Oct. '42

Started to travel by train from Ft. Hayes west. Nobody knew where we were headed. At a stop much later, we yelled at some one on the station platform and he said we were in Rolla, Missouri near Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri

8 Oct. '42

At Ft Leonard Wood, Missouri I began combat engineer training (3 months). Combat engineers in the army learn how to build roads, blow up roads, build bridges, blow up bridges, lay mines, pick up mines, dig fox holes, carry troops across water in boats, etc. and are armed with weapons to fight with infantry troops when necessary. While at Ft. Leonard Wood I was accepted by the army to attend Officer Candidate School at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia after three months basic engineer training followed by two extra weeks training acting as an officer in handling "misfits" in a temporary "company of engineers" (This was a test to see if we "had it" to go on to officer training school!)

28 Apr. '43

After some of the most intense ninety days of engineer and infantry training, where at every minute of the day we were subjected to all kinds of harassment by drill instructors trying to make us "fail" at whatever we were doing, I graduated from Ft. Belvoir as a "90 day wonder", 2nd Lt. in the Corps of Engineers! Mom and Dad came to my graduation.

1 May '43

After a short "stop over" in Chillicothe, Ohio I reported to Camp Carson (now Ft. Carson) near Colorado Springs to Company A, 49th Engineer Combat Bn. Spent that summer field training troops in that area and we also spent a couple of months in east Texas and Louisiana on maneuvers – just more combat engineer training.

Oct. '43

Transferred to Camp Shenango, Pennsylvania across the border near Youngstown, Ohio. Spent some time in organizing a temporary unit of troops in preparation for overseas movement.

1 Nov. '43

Boarded the original English "Queen Elizabeth" luxury ship in New York harbor with the temporary organized troops. They happened to be a four-hundred-man unit of medical troops. It was a seven-day crossing of the Atlantic Ocean to Glasgow, Scotland.

8 Nov. '43

Landed in Scotland. Boarded a train and headed south to a troop replacement depot where the troops and officers would eventually receive permanent assignments to various units in England and Northern Ireland. When I boarded the train in Glasgow, American Red Cross ladies came down the aisle passing out packages of cigarettes. I glanced at my pack and noticed stamped on the top of the pack, "Courtesy of Chamber of Commerce, Chillicothe, Ohio." What a coincident! This was about a twelve-hour ride.

9 Nov.'43

Stayed at the replacement depot which was near to Birmingham, England for about three days, and was finally assigned to the 7th Engineer Combat Battalion of the 5th Infantry Division in Northern Ireland.

17 Nov. '43 (on or about)

From Liverpool, England travelled by ship across the Irish Sea to Belfast, Northern Ireland. Transported by truck south to the small village of Dundrum which is about 35 miles from Belfast and also on the sea coast. I was assigned to Company "A" whose commander was Capt. Charles Marks (now living in Ft. Wayne, Indiana). He assigned me as 3rd Platoon Commander which had about 50 men equipped with 3 squad GMC trucks, one platoon GMC truck, and a jeep for the platoon commander. We spent 6 ½ to 7 months in advance engineer training – day and night.

20 May '44

I was sent to England for a two-week Baily bridge school – learning how to put heavy metal bridges across small rivers and ravines. This heavy bridge when put across wide rivers could be built using floating pontoons and piers from one section to the next.

7 Jun '44

On our last day of bridge school, we noticed many air-craft flying overhead toward France and of course we speculated the anticipated "invasion" was on. Sure enough, at the end of the day back in our quarters the radio was "shouting" that the invasion of Normandy was on!

8 Jun. '44

Returned by air to Northern Ireland where I noted all of our combat units were already engaged in "water proofing" vehicles – getting them ready for possibly driving through water onto the French beaches in Normandy.

14 Jun. '44 (on or about)

Our engineer unit began landing on Utah Beach (Normandy). It was almost a week after the initial invasion landing on the beach, so there was no direct firing at us by the Germans – they had been pushed inland a few miles. There were occasional German long-range artillery shells coming in on us but not too accurate. Nothing like the shelling our troops endured during the landing the week before. For a couple of weeks, we stayed in the area (3 or 4 miles from the beach) laying mines, picking up mines, digging foxholes for the infantry, and occasionally firing at the Germans in support of our infantry in the hedge-row land of Normandy.

Jul. '44 (early)

We began to intensify our engagement with the Germans and slow but sure they started retreating eastward through France toward their Homeland. My platoon of engineers was a part of a Task Force of infantry, artillery, and tanks pushing the Germans eastward. Occasionally, they would "dig in" and fight, but we would root them out and they continued to retreat. The Army Air Corps gave us excellent support with "close in" strafing and bombing of the Germans we were chasing. All this time my engineers were doing the tasks they had been trained to do.

1. Helping the infantry dig fox-holes when necessary.
 2. Making roads where sometimes there were no roads.
 3. Blowing up roads with TNT and dynamite when necessary.
 4. Building trestles or bridges where needed.
 5. Blowing up bridges sometimes to the Germans counter-attacking from time-to-time.
 6. Laying mines when necessary to prevent German vehicles easy maneuvering.
 7. Picking up mine both ours and the Germans when it became necessary.
 8. From time-to-time we actually had to fire at the Germans right along with our infantry soldiers.
- There were other Task Forces like ours steadily pushing the Germans eastward through France.

Sept. '44 (Labor Day)

Being part of General Patton's 3rd Army, we had pushed the Germans so rapidly eastward through France that rations, water, gasoline, and maintenance parts for vehicles could not keep up with the troops and their vehicles. So for a few days we were stopped to let "things" catch up with us. We later were to learn the German troops had stopped running and began infiltrating back into the fortification areas which existed between France and Germany.

12 Sept. '44 (on or about)

We renewed our offensive eastward, but against heavy German resistance again. They had really come back and "dug in" during the few days we had waited for our supplies to catch up. After a few weeks of heavy fighting, we began to move more rapidly again. A little later our units had begun house-to-house fighting in Saarbrücken, Germany (near the French border) when we were suddenly ordered to pull out, go northward overnight and we became the southern part of what was to be called the Battle of the Bulge. The German army had attacked in Belgium and our unit was to prevent the Germans from breaking southward out of the "Bulge".

Oct., Nov., Dec. '44

Our unit contained the Germans on the south side of the Bulge until the weather started clearing later in December. The city of Bastogne had been surrounded by the Germans with many American troops there. General Patton ordered a Task Force be organized and an effort be made to break the siege of Bastogne. My engineer platoon along with the infantry and tanks broke through the Germans surrounding the city and relieved the American 101st Airborne Division. Never saw such a bunch of happy soldiers!

We then started again pushing the Germans eastward back into Germany. The engineers were very busy in helping American troops across several rivers and the German troops were really running.

20 Mar. '45

On this date our engineers stood on the west bank of the Rhine River. All German troops who had not been captured as prisoners had retreated to the east bank and continued moving eastward. As I stood there with the engineer battalion commander, he was telling me what we needed to do as a defense against the enemy for the next day or two. Up drove a couple of jeeps and "lo and behold" General Patton stepped toward us! We saluted him and I stepped aside as he and my commander began talking. I overheard Patton tell my commander we were "doing a great job" and he turned to me and shook hands. My commander told him of his plans to set up defenses in the area. Patton said words to this effect, "Colonel, the best defense is a good offense, so I want you to get all the boats and floating bridge equipment available up here as fast as you can. We will get all the men and equipment across this river as fast as we can tonight and have a floating bridge across the river by tomorrow afternoon to get our heavy guns and equipment across." My job with a driver and jeep the rest of the day and night was going back to the rear areas and leading convoys of boats and floating bridge equipment on trailers to the assembly area at the river in the village of Oppenheim, Germany.

21 Mar. '45

On one of my many trips back to the rear area in pitch black darkness, I heard and, as it got nearer, could see this huge hulk of a machine on this narrow dirt road. I pulled over, stopped and a voice yelled, "Where is the Rhine?" I yelled back, "Who are you?" He replied, "We're U.S. Navy with a big landing craft on a trailer." I yelled, "Whoopee!" Told him to follow the little dirt road. How he ever got that rig down that winding road at the river bank in the dark, I'll never know! That big landing craft got a lot of troops and equipment across the river that night and later in the morning. The floating bridge was completed by mid-afternoon by our 7th Engineer Combat Battalion and the 3rd Army began crossing. I estimated it was about ¼ mile long in spanning the river at the village of Oppenheim.

23 Mar. '45

We entered Frankfurt which was pretty well "bombed out." The German troops were already gone, but the civilians were already out "cleaning up" the streets and sidewalks- industrious people!

Mar. '45, Apr. '45 (continued)

As we chased the German troops further eastward, the Russian troops were chasing other German troops westward – both toward Berlin. In April and early May the enemy troops began surrendering in huge numbers. Example: At one resting point I went into a nearby woods to "go"! As I finished, I heard some voices coming toward me. I hid momentarily and then saw some Germans wandering through the forest. They had already gotten rid of their weapons. I hailed them. Up went their hands and I directed them back to our rest area where we held them until some of our troops came by headed back to the rear area. There were 35 men in that group of prisoners. We learned later that large masses of Germans were "giving up."

6 May '45

(V-E Day)

By this date my unit was again part of an infantry Task Force in Czechoslovakia heading north not far from the town of Pilsen. We got word of the German surrender at Rheims, France. Patton troops were ordered back to the German/Czech border. Our immediate task was to keep refugees from crossing the Czech border into Germany. They were running from the Russian forces who were coming into Czechoslovakia to occupy it.

7-8 May '45

Here it was! The end of the war and we had no "booze" to help celebrate! It was decided that I, my driver, and a jeep would go into nearby Czechoslovakia and find an operating brewery. Before we found the beer, I noted some U.S military vehicles of the 4th Armored Division. I knew Joe Hurst, a friend from my hometown of Chillicothe, was in the Medical unit of the 4th. Finally found him and we had our picture taken together. Later that day I found a Czech brewery operating, bought two barrels of beer and headed back to our battalion headquarters in Germany. The two heavy kegs of beer in the jeep made it look like the front wheels were almost off the road and rear end of the jeep was dragging! To say the least our battalion headquarters welcomed us back with the beer!

May '45

(About Middle)

Our engineer unit was eventually sent to a small village south of Munich, Germany where we temporarily set up "occupation" duties for about a month.

Jun. '45

(Later Part)

The 5th Division began preparing to return to the U.S. My unit convoyed to a staging area in France – our place was called "Camp Lucky Strike." Eventually from there I led an American convoy westward through France to the port of LeHarve where we boarded a transport headed to New York. The French had done very little cleaning up!

4 July '45

Spent 4th of July aboard ship! Arrived in New York a few days later. Our ship was greeted in New York harbor with all the fanfare – whistles and horns blaring with hoses of water flying through the air! Quite a welcome!

15 Jul '45 - 15 Aug '45

Arrived home on Pine Street in Chillicothe on 30-day leave. Opened up a bottle of champagne I had sent home from France and that mom and dad has saved in the "ice box". As I recall, I think mom even had a sip of it! One day I was playing golf at the country club and while walking down number 8 fairway, I hear from a nearby backyard radio about the bombing of Hiroshima, Japan! Speculation arose about ending the war with Japan! A few days later, of course, it became a reality!

We had previously been assigned to Camp Campbell, Kentucky after the 30-day leave to begin advanced training to eventually participate in the invasion of Japan. Upon reporting to Camp Campbell our unit began to disband. I was released officially on 14 October 1945. I enrolled at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, 4 January 1946, into the School of Engineering. I wanted to learn what an "engineer" does after being and "engineer" in the U. S Army during World War II! Whew!

-End of Story-



“Frequently, the Vietcong or North Vietnamese would be attacking an outpost and I would explain that, and we would have ground-air support, particularly at night where we’d go in there with these gun ships, and I would give briefings on all of that,” Filer told The Huffington Post. “Some of the time, there would be unidentified craft over the DMZ.”

Filer described a typical report that he’d receive and which he included in his briefings to Brown: “You’d have an aircraft flying along, doing around 500 knots and a UFO comes alongside and does some barrel rolls around the aircraft and then flies off at three times the speed of one of the fastest jets we have in the Air Force. So, obviously, it has a technology far in advance of anything we have.

“I would be told this unofficially. People tell you a lot of things that they don’t put in writing or sign their name to. There was always this part of UFOs that, if you got too interested, it could mess up your career. And this is true today even with commercial pilots. I’ve also heard from people serving in Afghanistan saying they’ve seen UFOs, and the Iranian news carries UFO reports pretty regularly.”

During a 1973 press conference, five years after the patrol boat UFO encounters, Brown — as USAF chief of staff — was asked about the Air Force’s position on UFOs:

I don’t know whether this story has ever been told or not. They weren’t called UFOs. They were called enemy helicopters. And they were only seen at night and they were only seen in certain places. They were seen up around the DMZ in the early summer of ‘68. And this resulted in quite a little battle. And in the course of this, an Australian destroyer took a hit and we never found any enemy, we only found ourselves when this had all been sorted out. And this caused some shooting there, and there was no enemy at all involved, but we always reacted.

Always after dark, the same thing happened up at Pleiku at the Highlands in ‘69.

To check out this article: <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/ufos-during-wartime>

A taste of New England



ANNUAL ALPHA COMPANY COOK OUT

When: Thursday 09 Sep. 2021

**Where: 25 Larnis Rd. *Arrive at 730pm*
Framingham Ma. 01701**

MENU

***Cape Cod Lobster Rolls
New England Clam Chowder
Fenway Sausage
Boston Cream Pie***

**To have an accurate head count we ask you to send
your RSVP to John Ginty; johng466@hotmail.com**

**Questions? Contact Bruce Walmsley at
617 953-8367**

On 06/15/2021 10:59 AM Jerald Collman <jcollman@verizon.net> wrote:

Hi All,

Glad to see others trying to help another Infantry Brother.

Bob, I will contact the National Archives that handles the Casualty arena pertaining to After Action Reports and Daily Logs pertaining to June 1 1970 (also May 26) from HHC 1st Bde 5th Inf Div, Co C 75th Spt Bn, & 5th Spt Bn, DaNang Mortuary May 26-June 3rd 1970, as to the Security Platoon. I will try calling them again hoping that they are now fully operational now. I am still going to go to Washington DC before/after I attend the 5th Division Reunion in September; following up, as I suspect this might take more than one trip, when I attend the Graves Registration Reunion in early October in Pennsylvania; following up, if necessary, when I attend the Tampa Bay Buccaneers & The Washington Football Team game. Please be patient because this data gathering is important to proceed forward if we discover there is a 4th KIA. Bob, if you are available anytime before the above, I can fly up to DC and we can walk this thru together at the National Archives Section which isn't the one downtown DC?

Here's the things some may not know about. Brigade HHC and its Attachments was huge! It was larger than the 75th Spt BN and many of Attachments were from Combat Branches. This is what I tried to explain many years ago to the Historian to explore this area to understand the full operation of the Brigade. Remember we were a "Separate Brigade" by November 1969 which elevated the Brigade to have G1-G5 Staff and a Brigadier General plus other sources. These Attachments had some seasoned Combat Branch soldiers.

The Security Platoon was used more than just being a part of securing the outside boundaries of QTCB. They were involved in various operations within Quang Tri Province; even supporting other smaller operations that didn't require the 1/11th or 1/61, as they were already mechanized. The Sec Plt came under the Command of Brigade HHC and the Company Commander was Capt Gordon Bacon (a 2nd tour Infantry Officer with much previous combat experience). Capt Bacon reported directly to the General and to the Deputy Commanding Officer. So I think one might figure out the Security Platoon Missions became more than just being called Security Platoon. Many times they were operating alone and most times no other forces to help.

Bob or Malcom as an example wouldn't know much of this at the squad level; and many times even at the Plt Sgt & LT level. They would just go do it.

Fill free to put this in the Newsletter if this helps to find Security Platoon soldiers who were there on June 1 1970 or anyone who knew something about whether there was 4 or 3 KIA's excluding what we know from the recorded information on the Wall or the Official KIA List as we are way past all that information.

Jerry

A CONTROVERSIAL QUESTION

A SERIES EXAMINING CONTENTIOUS ISSUES OF THE VIETNAM WAR BY ERIK VILLARD

DID THE UNITED STATES LOSE THE VIETNAM WAR?

There are several ways to answer this question, depending on how one interprets the terms “lose” and “war.” All of the arguments have merit, and readers may choose which one seems most persuasive to them.

The conventional view remains that the United States lost the Vietnam War because our opponent, North Vietnam, conquered the side we backed, South Vietnam, which surrendered in April 1975. Although the North Vietnamese and Viet Cong sustained enormous casualties—upward of a million killed by wounds, disease and malnutrition—the communists eventually prevailed.

Others argue the United States did not lose the war because all U.S. combat forces had departed South Vietnam by the beginning of 1973, more than two years before the final North Vietnamese victory. In this view, the war was a political failure—the United States had failed to keep South Vietnam independent and noncommunist—but it had not been a defeat for the U.S. military itself.

A third argument holds that the United States was never defeated in Vietnam because it was never our war to win or to lose. American forces were deployed to South Vietnam to help that nation defend its territorial and political integrity—not to conquer North Vietnam. Despite the massive commitment of American forces and resources, the Vietnam War was a civil war between North and South, communist and noncommunist, in

which Vietnamese on both sides did the most fighting and dying. The United States attempted to swing the balance in favor of the South but was never in a position to decide the ultimate fate of Vietnam, according to this reasoning.

Others contend that the United States could have achieved a traditional military victory if the troops had not been forced to fight “with one hand tied behind their backs” due to Washington’s fears that stronger measures would have provoked a direct conflict with China and the Soviet Union, our enemy’s two principal patrons. They argue that it would be misleading to say that the United States lost a war it was never truly committed to winning.

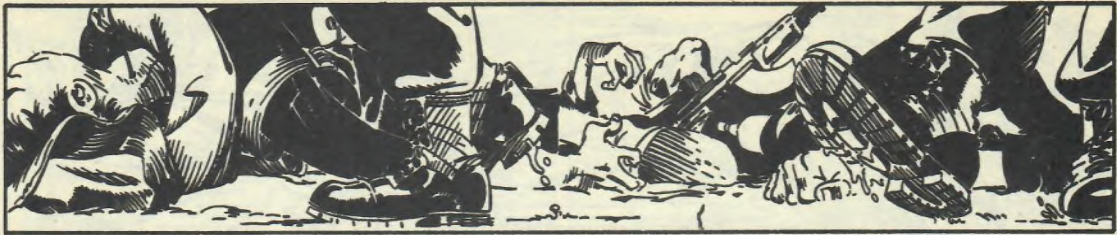
Lastly, one could argue the United States did not lose the Vietnam War because the only “war” that really threatened the country then was the Cold War. The Vietnam War was a battle within the larger Cold War, along with the Korean War, confrontations in Berlin, the Cuban Missile Crisis and other clashes between the U.S. and its main communist rivals, the Soviet Union and China. According to that perspective, the United States fought a bloody but ultimately inconclusive war in Southeast Asia before prevailing with the 1991 collapse of the Soviet Union.

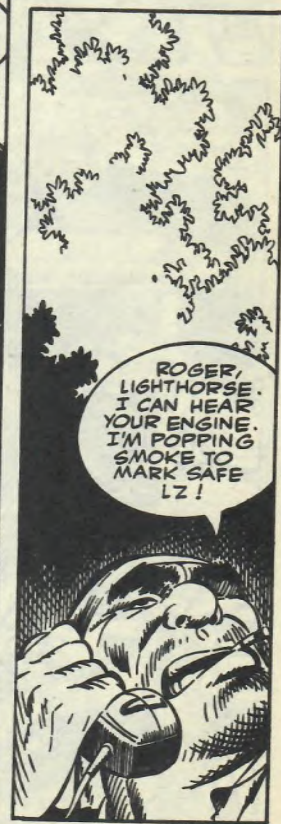
Dr. Erik Villard is a Vietnam War specialist at the U.S. Army Center of Military History at Fort McNair in Washington D.C.

BETTMANN/GETTY IMAGES

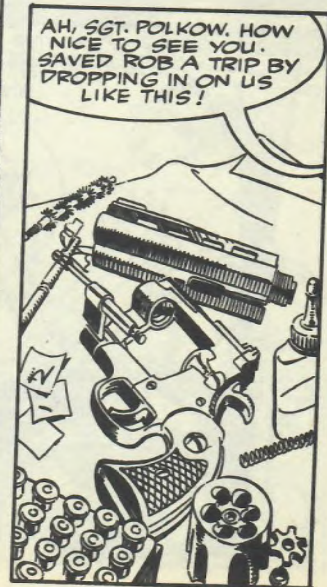
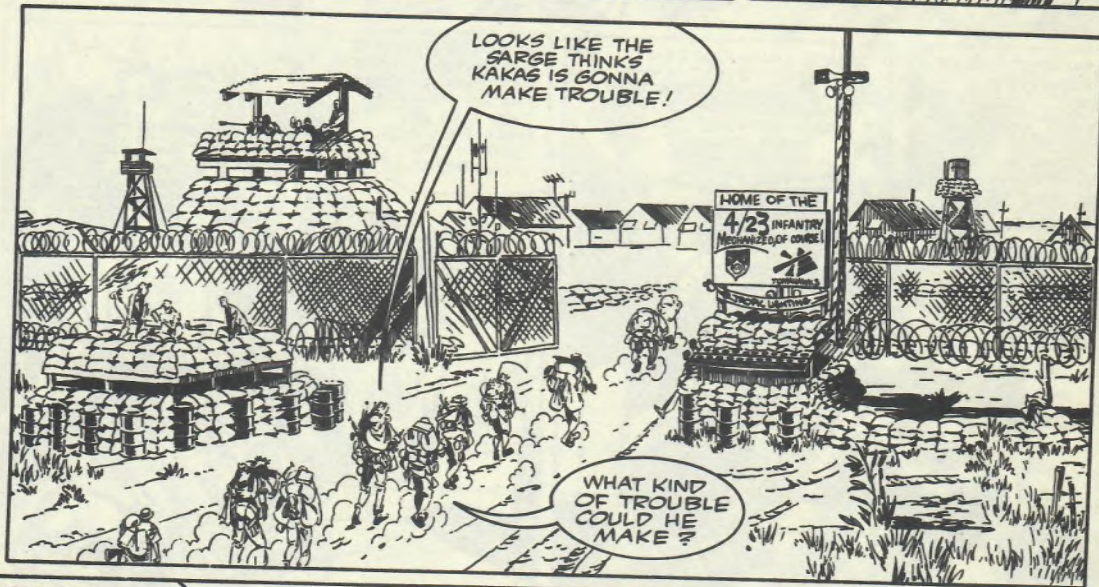


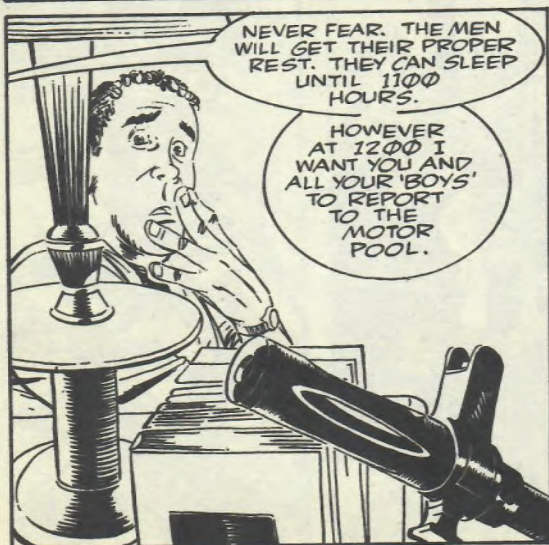
South Vietnamese trying to escape Saigon on April 29, 1975, board an Air America helicopter on the roof of an apartment building that housed U.S. government officials, including CIA officers. The next day, North Vietnamese tanks rolled into Saigon and the American-backed government surrendered.

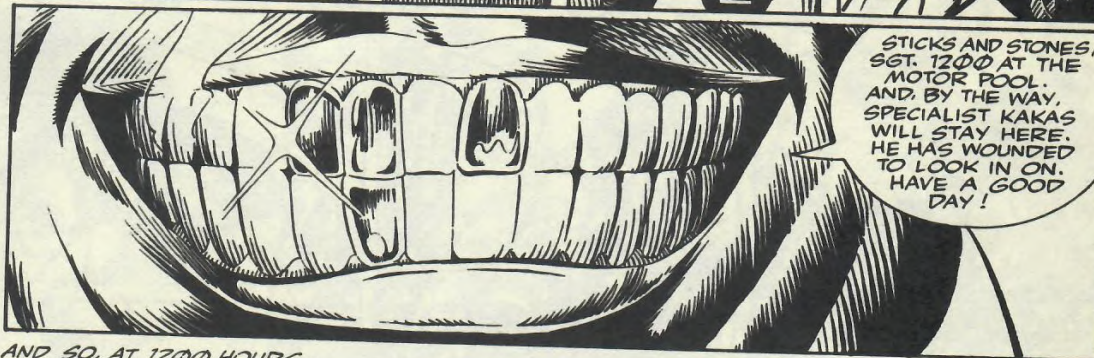






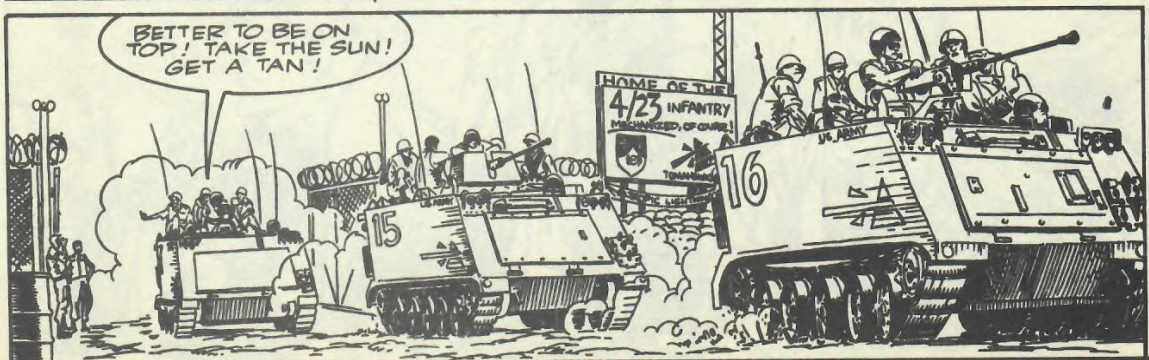
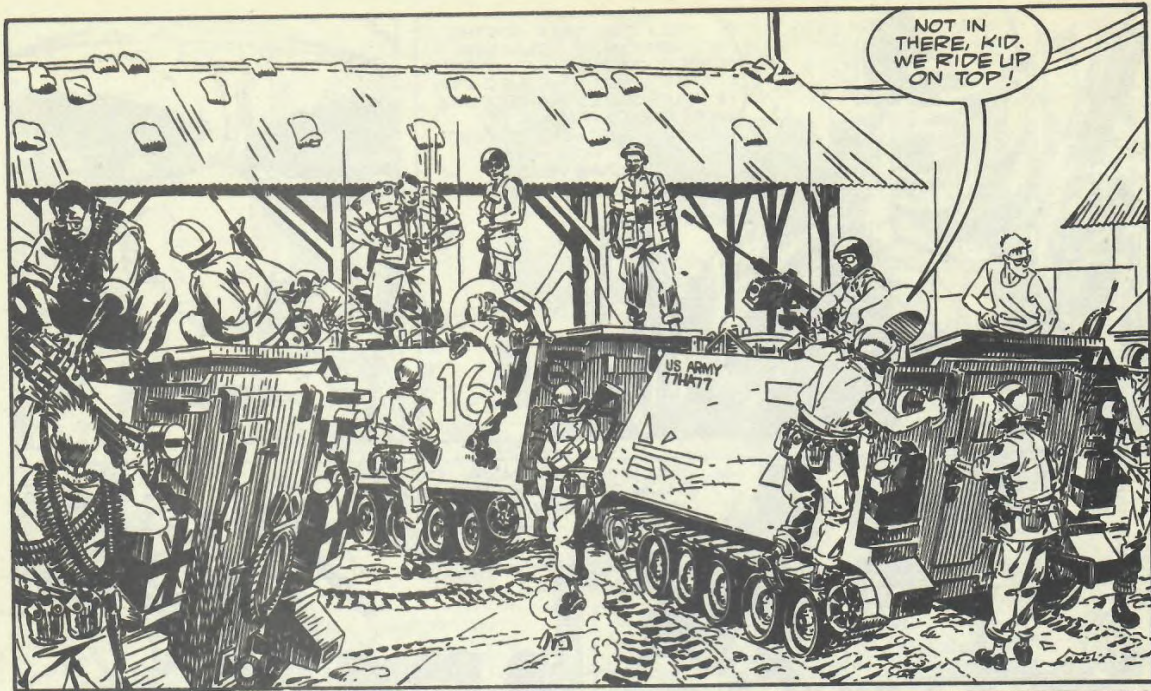


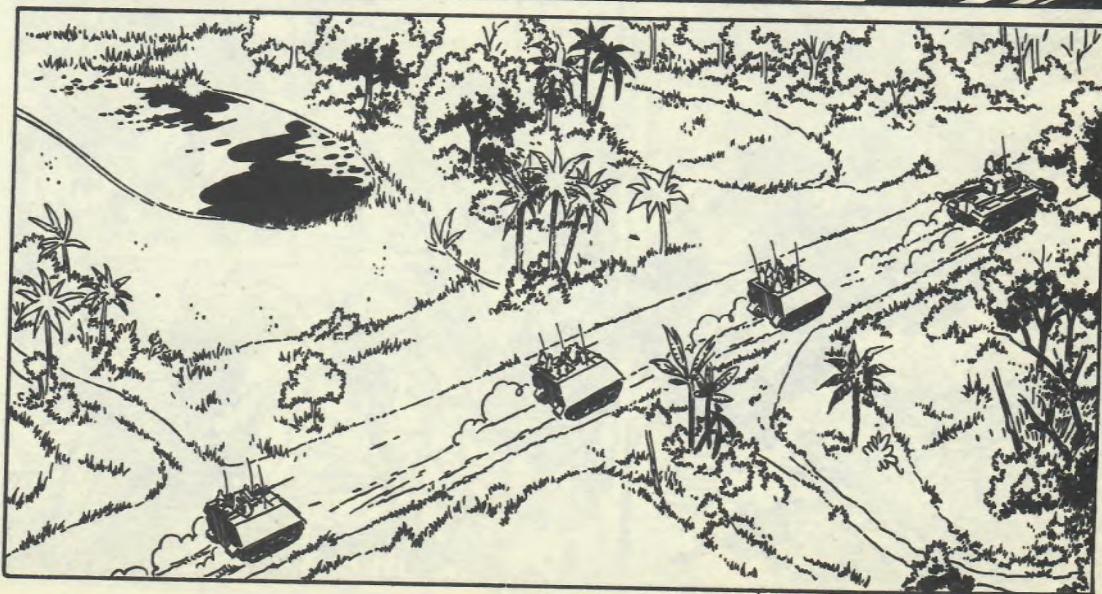
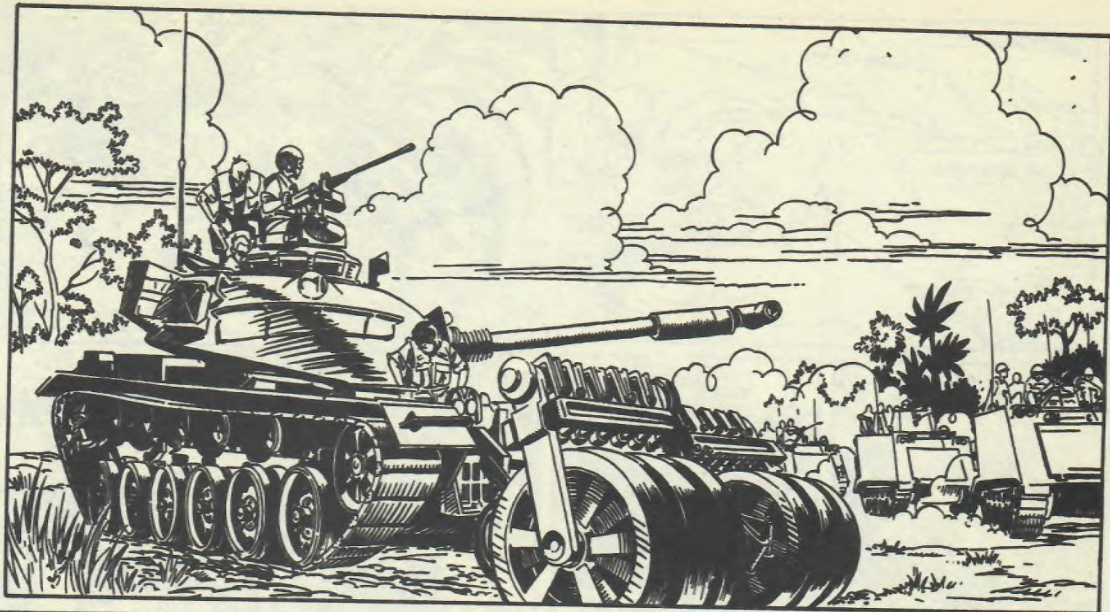




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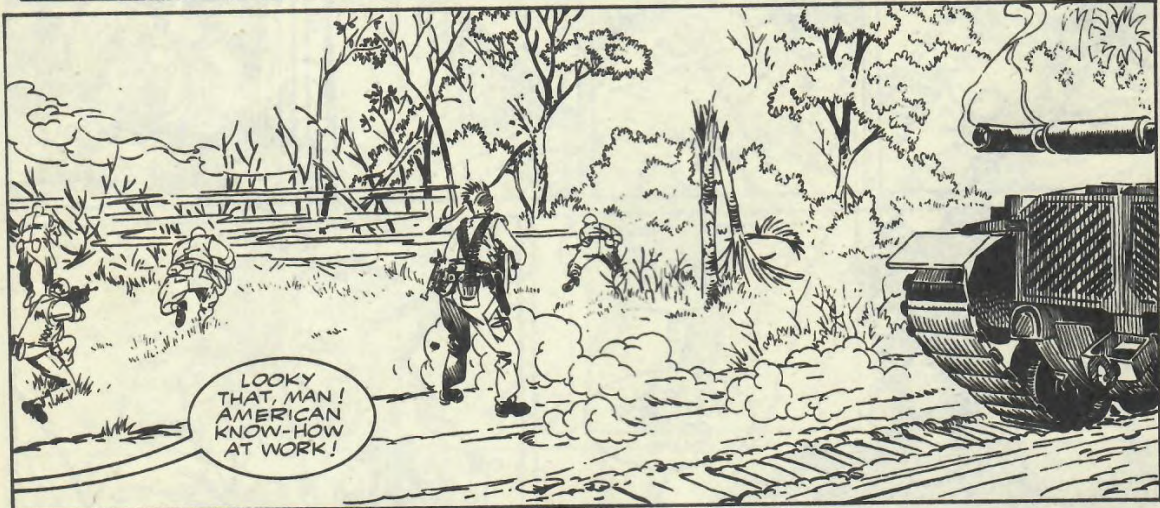
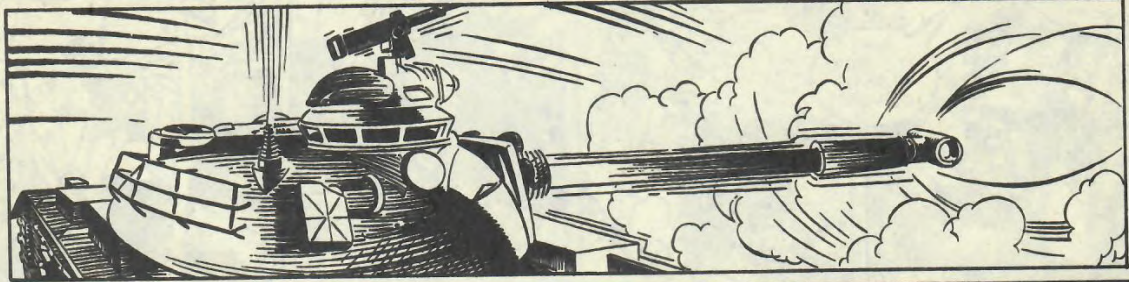


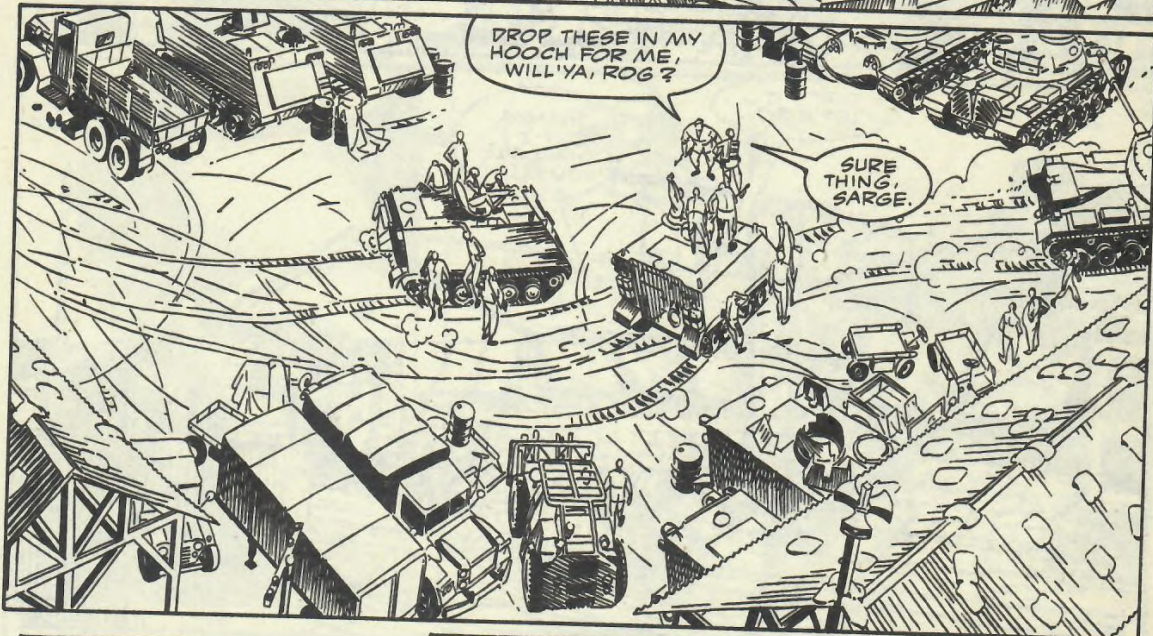


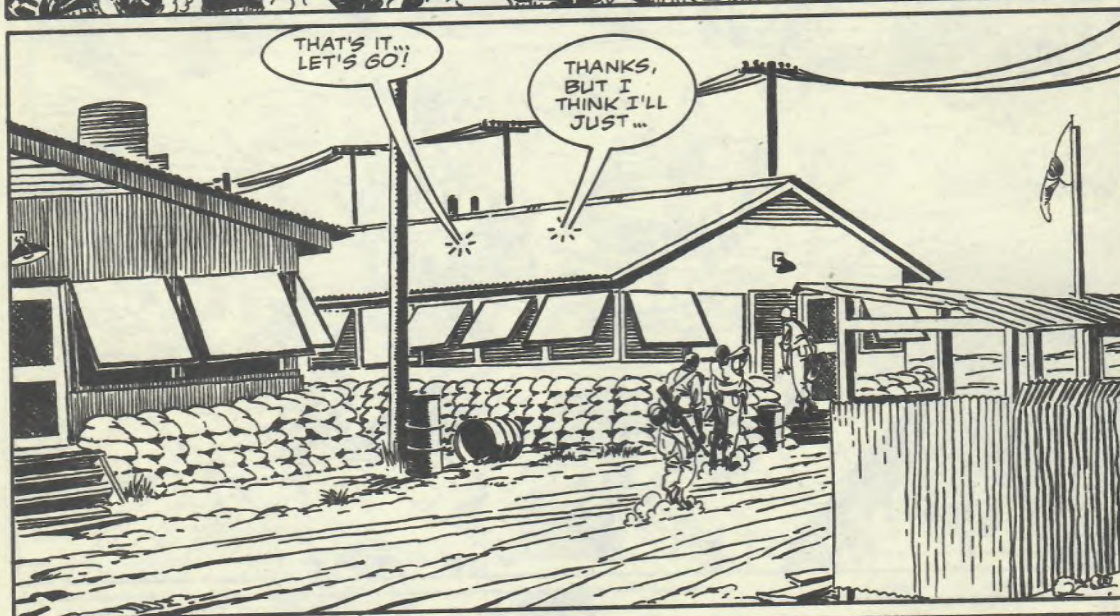












This is the new and final updated form please check it out, thank you.

SOCIETY OF THE 5TH DIVISION ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC. in the form of check or money order. Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. Returned checks will be charged a \$35 fee. You may also register online and pay by credit card at www.afr-reg.com/society2021 (3.5% will be added to total). All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before August 6, 2021. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing. Please do not staple or tape your payment to this form.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
322 Madison Mews
Norfolk, VA 23510
ATTN: SOCIETY OF THE 5TH

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Check # _____	Date Received _____
Inputted _____	Nametag Completed _____

	Price Per	# of People	Total
CUT-OFF DATE IS 8/6/21			
<u>TOURS</u>			
FRIDAY 9/10: Battleship Cove	\$ 70	#	\$
SATURDAY 9/11: Newport Tour	\$ 67	#	\$
<u>MEAL OPTIONS (Please select your entrée)</u>			
SATURDAY 9/11:			
Grilled New York Sirloin Steak	\$ 45	#	\$
Sauteed Chicken Breast Saltimbocca	\$ 45	#	\$
Baked New England Scrod	\$ 45	#	\$
Pasta Primavera	\$ 45	#	\$
SUNDAY 9/12:			
Grilled New York Sirloin Steak	\$ 45	#	\$
Boneless Breast of Chicken	\$ 45	#	\$
Baked New England Scrod	\$ 45	#	\$
Pasta Primavera	\$ 45	#	\$
<u>PER PERSON REGISTRATION FEE</u>			
Covers various reunion expenses.	\$20	#	\$
DONATION FOR HOSPITALITY ROOM EXPENSES	\$		\$
Total Amount Payable to Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.			\$

PLEASE PRINT NAME AS YOU WANT YOUR NAMETAG TO READ

FIRST _____ LAST _____

SPOUSE NAME (IF ATTENDING) OR GUEST NAMES _____

UNIT INFORMATION (ex. D CO/1st BN/11th Infantry): _____

YEARS SERVED W/ 5ID(ex. 1965-66): _____

WHERE (CIRCLE ONE): WWII FT CARSON VIETNAM FT POLK OTHER: _____

CURRENT & PAST SOCIETY OFFICE HELD (ex. NATIONAL FIRST VICE PRESIDENT, PAST PRESIDENT, ETC.): _____

STREET ADDRESS OF MAIN ATTENDEE _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PH. NUMBER (_____) _____ - _____ EMAIL _____ @ _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

(Sleeping room requirements must be conveyed by attendee directly with hotel)

MUST YOU BE LIFTED HYDRAULICALLY ONTO THE BUS WHILE SEATED IN YOUR WHEELCHAIR IN ORDER TO PARTICIPATE IN BUS TRIPS? (PLEASE NOTE THAT WE CANNOT GUARANTEE AVAILABILITY). YES NO

For refunds and cancellations please refer to our policies outlined at the bottom of the reunion program. **CANCELLATIONS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9:00am-4:00pm EASTERN TIME (excluding holidays).** Call (757) 625-6401 to cancel reunion activities and obtain a cancellation code. Refunds processed 4-6 weeks after reunion.

On August 8, 1971 the United States Army 5th Infantry Division left Quang Tri, Vietnam for the United States of America. For all that served during this time may we stand and remember all. God Bless our families that supported us, God Bless the 5th Division and God Bless the United States of America.

See you at the reunion.

NOTABLE DEATHS ELSEWHERE

Col. Dave Severance, 102

Commander at Iwo Jima

Col. Dave Severance, the commander of the Marine company that raised a huge American flag over the Japanese island of Iwo Jima in World War II, inspiring the photograph that thrilled the American home front and became an enduring image of men at war, died Monday at his home in the La Jolla section of San Diego. He was 102.

His family announced his death Wednesday.

The flag-raising atop Mount Suribachi on Feb. 23, 1945, captured by an Associated Press photographer, Joe Rosenthal, was taken when the battle for Iwo Jima was far from over. In the days that followed, Severance earned the Silver Star, the Marines' third-highest decoration for valor after the Medal of Honor and the Navy Cross. The citation stated that in a firefight for a heavily defended ridge, he "skillfully directed the assault on this strong enemy position despite stubborn resistance."

Severance, a captain at the time, commanded Easy Company of the 28th Marine Regiment, 5th Marine Division — part of the 70,000-man Marine force that sought to seize Iwo Jima, 75 square miles of black volcanic sand about 660 miles south of Tokyo. The island, defended by 21,000 Japanese troops, held airstrips that were needed as bases for U.S. fighter planes and as havens for crippled bombers returning to the Mariana Islands from missions over Japan.

Amid heavy casualties, the Marines by the fifth day of combat on Iwo Jima had silenced most opposition from Japanese soldiers dug into caves on Mount Suribachi, an extinct volcano 546 feet high at Iwo Jima's southern tip.

In midmorning, a group of Marines from Easy Company raised a flag at the summit, a ceremony photographed by Sgt. Louis Lowery of the Marine magazine *Leatherneck*. When James Forrestal, the secretary of the Navy, who was on the beach below, saw the flag, he requested that it be kept as a memento. After it was returned to the beach, Severance sent another group of his Marines to bring a larger flag to the moun-

taintop.

It was the raising of the second flag that was portrayed in Rosenthal's dramatic photograph.

Both flags are now at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, Virginia. Frayed by strong winds, the second flag flew above Mount Suribachi for the remainder of the Iwo Jima campaign. The Joe Rosenthal photograph is in the National Archives. And the scene he photographed was replicated on a monumental scale as the U.S. Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Virginia, across the Potomac from the National Mall in Washington. The statue is dedicated to "the Marine dead of all wars and their comrades of other services who fell fighting beside them."

Dave Elliott Severance was born Feb. 4, 1919, in Milwaukee to Dave and Belle Severance. His family moved to Greeley, Colorado, when he was a child. He attended the University of Washington for a year, then joined the Marines in 1938.

He was commissioned as a lieutenant and first saw combat as a platoon commander in the 1943 battle for the Pacific island of Bougainville. His platoon was ambushed and cut off by Japanese troops about a mile behind enemy lines, but fought its way out of an encirclement and wiped out the enemy with the loss of only one Marine, according to the National WWII Museum in New Orleans.

Early in 1944, he was promoted to captain. He had six officers and 240 enlisted men under his command when the Marines landed on Iwo Jima on Feb. 19, 1945.

After World War II, Severance completed flight training and flew fighter aircraft during the Korean War. He completed 69 missions and earned the Distinguished Flying Cross. He was promoted to colonel in 1962. At his retirement, in May 1968, he was assistant director of personnel at Marine headquarters.

His survivors include two daughters, Nina Cohen and Lynn Severance; two sons, Dave Jr. and Mike; and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. His marriage to his first wife, Margaret, ended in divorce. His second wife, Barbara, died in 2017.

— *The New York Times*

COMMENTARY

Coming Home: 50 Years Past

By Gary L. Noller

Approximately nine million Americans served in the military during the ten years of the Vietnam War era. This included all three of my mother's sons.

I did not want to go into the Army, go to Vietnam, be an infantryman, and fight in a war. I did want to come home. I got what I wanted.

On April 30, 1971, I left Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam. A day later I separated from the Army at Ft. Lewis, Washington.

My plane landed at Wichita, Kansas about noon on Saturday, May 2. As I exited the plane the flight attendant noted my Army uniform, tanned skin, and sun-bleached hair. She asked, "Are you home now?" I replied, "Yes." That was my 'Welcome Home'. And that was enough.

In September 1969 I wanted to begin a masters degree program in computer science at Kansas State University. I received substantial financial assistance from the university and I was excited to get in on the ground floor of a fast advancing technology. Conscription into the Army changed those plans forever.

My ten months, three weeks, in two days and Vietnam were extremely difficult. Nothing in my upbringing or military training fully prepared me for what I would experience during my tour. Not all days were bad days. But many were. A few were worse.

There are times when I ask myself if it really did happen. Perhaps it did not. It may be that I just read all this in a book and that book is what is in my memory. But it really did happen.

I really did go three weeks in the same clothes and without a shower. I really did have to make three days food last for ten days. I really did have to go two days without sleep. I really did have to sleep on the smelly jungle ground for weeks at a time.

My buddies and I sometimes talked about what could happen to us. I always thought I would be a casualty but I did not think I would be killed. But I was never wounded by the enemy.

At six feet, two inches tall I was a hard target to miss. I carried the radio for the company commander which made me stand out even more. Some of my buddies constantly scoured the ground for a booby trap trip wire. Others kept their focus at eye level in case of a face-to-face encounter with an enemy soldier. I, on the other hand, kept close watch overhead for a sniper waiting in the trees.

Coming home was not the joy that I thought I would be. The plane going to Vietnam was packed full. But the plane coming home had empty seats. I could not miss the

fact that those empty seats were not filled because their occupants were casualties. The attendant came by and said, "We have some extra meals. Do you want another one?" "No, thank you," I answered.

After a short stop to refuel the airplane in Japan, I arrived back in the World at Ft. Lewis, Washington. It was about 3:00 PM and we had our promised steak dinner. It was cooked about 10:00 AM. We did some paperwork processing and then headed to the supply room to get our sheets and blankets for the night.

A very telling incident occurred as our group of about a dozen Vietnam returnees arrived at the supply room.

We found the door locked so we politely knocked to gain entrance. The door was opened by a largely overweight staff sergeant who had a scowl on his face. It was nearing 5:00 PM and he was ready to go home. Our arrival proved to be a pain in the ass for him.

He ordered us off the loading dock and told us to form a proper military formation in the parking lot. He spent the next ten minutes telling us that no one cared who were we, where we had been, and what we had done. As if this in not enough he went on to tell us that the public hated veterans and we had better get used to shabby treatment.

One of the guys in the group called out to him, "Just give us some sheets and blankets and we will get out of your hair." The supply sergeant responded with a scowl and hollered back, "You will get your sheets and blankets when it damn well pleases me to let you have them."

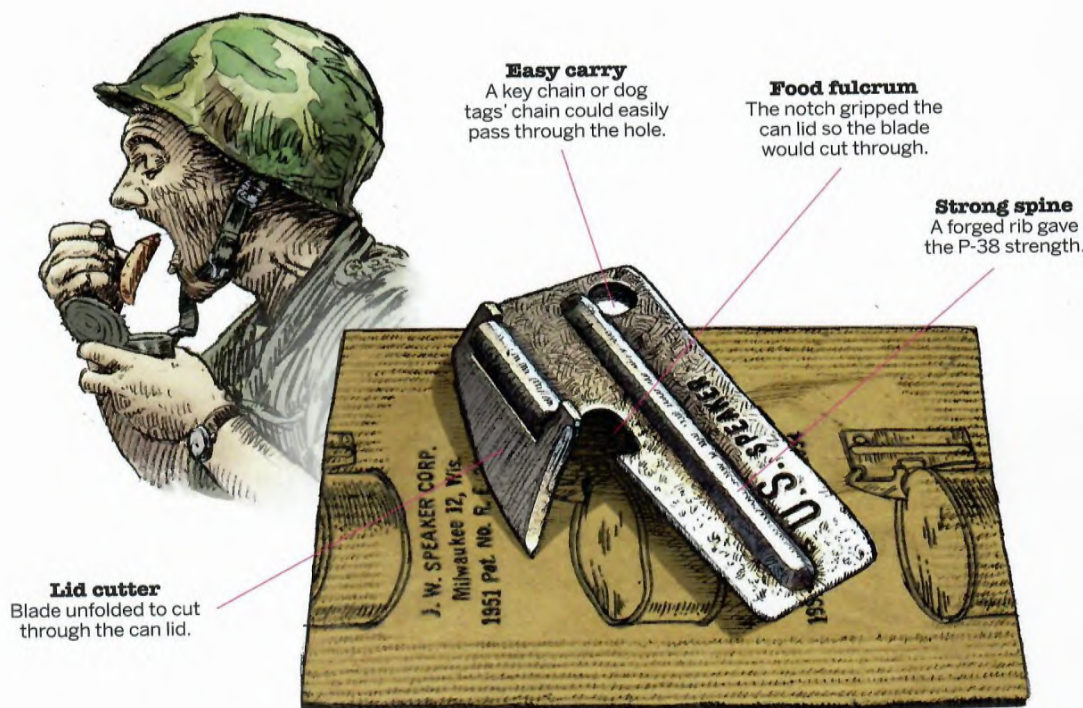
At that point our tempers began to rise. Another veteran shouted back, "If you would have treated us like this just a few days ago we would have shot you." Then, as a group, we all turned and quietly walked back to our barracks. I do not think we would have really shot the guy- or perhaps, if we did, just in the foot.

That night I opened up my duffel bag and pulled out my Army issue G. I. over coat. I climbed up on the bare mattress of a top bunk in our World War II era barracks, covered up with the coat, and went to sleep. Sheets? Blankets? I don't need your stinking sheets and blankets.

I left Vietnam but many of my close buddies remained. We were very close and we took care of each other. Would they be okay? Would I be okay. It is fortunate that the ones I left behind all made it home and all continue to be okay.

I have always thought that Vietnam was either the hardest thing I would ever do or it was good preparation for the hardest thing I would ever do. Over the past 50 years it has remained the hardest thing I have ever done. I hope it always is.

To all who served, "Welcome Home." I am glad you made it.



THE P-38 'JOHN WAYNE' CAN OPENER

By Carl O. Schuster

On Jan. 21, 1968, the Marines of Echo Company, 2nd Battalion, 26th Marine Regiment, successfully defended Hill 861 protecting Khe Sanh against an assault by two battalions of the North Vietnamese Army. As the shock of combat wore off, some Marines used their "John Wayne" can openers on C-ration cans to grab a quick meal. The P-38 can opener was one of the troops' most important pieces of field gear in Vietnam. The can opener was included with every case of C rations.

The P-38, first used on a large scale with the widespread distribution of C-ration cans during World War II, consisted of a short, notched sheet-metal handle with a small hinged blade that rotated to pierce the can lid. The C ration's World War II colleague, the K ration, used a "key" opener. Simple and easy to use, the P-38 had a handle that was designed with a hole in it so the device could be lowered into boiling water for cleaning. However, most of the troops used the hole to hang the can opener from their dog tags or key chains.

To open a can, one unfolded the P-38 blade, hooked the notch on the can lid and "walked" the opener around until the lid could be lifted or removed. The handle can also serve as an ad hoc flat-head screwdriver. Other uses for the P-38 included cleaning mud and debris from boots, sharpening pencils, trimming threads from uniforms and stripping wires.

The origins of the P-38 designation are unclear. There are three plausible theories: The P-38 is about 38 mm long; it could open a can faster than the P-38 fighter can fly; or 38 "punctures" were needed to open a C-ration can with it. Navy and Marine Corps personnel dubbed it the "John Wayne" in the belief that the actor did a training film to demonstrate its use, but the film has yet to surface.

More than 12 million were produced by 1970. Variations have been adopted by several nations, and the trusty P-38 remains in production worldwide today. ▼

Designation: Opener, Can, Hand, Folding Type I
Length: 1½ in.
Weight: Under 2 oz.
Material: Aluminum sheet metal
Distribution: In every case of C rations

ARSENAL

FEEDBACK



During anti-war protests at Kent State University on May 4, 1970, a student hurls a tear gas canister back at Ohio National Guardsmen, who fired into the crowd.

Simply put, they panicked. They had no reason to be issued live ammo. In October '67 I was one of the MPs who guarded the Pentagon for that demonstration. We stood there with empty rifles while the demonstration took place. It seems the regular army was a lot brighter than the draft evaders who made up the majority of the Ohio National Guard.

David Don, served with 527th Military Police Company in Vietnam via Facebook

Kent State Debate

I don't think the author (Mindy Farmer, "May 4, 1970," June 2020) really emphasizes the absolute hate by the leftist, anti-military protesters. The rocks and brickbats being thrown were not inconsequential. They were very dangerous and extremely provoking. I don't think the troops should have shot the idiots who were protesting as they also got a good kid who happened to be at the wrong place at the wrong time. The thugs throwing rocks were not exercising constitutional guarantees as they were not peaceful. They should have been punished, but the school administrators didn't have spines, and they got away with unlawful, disruptive and anti American conduct which has set the new "standard" since.

*Edwin L. Kennedy Jr.
New Market, Alabama*

I read with great distraction the May 4, 1970, story. I was wounded, as were my fellow Marines, on May 4, 1970, while proudly serving our country in Vietnam. We didn't need self-serving students to protest on our behalf. The students were more worried about their own butts than they were for those serving. When Nixon ended the draft, guess what? No more protests. People were still fighting and dying in Vietnam when the draft ended, but when students were no longer vulnerable to conscription they didn't "care" anymore.

*William Stilwagen
Onancock, Virginia*

The National Guard was made up of kids who were avoiding the draft. The kids who were murdered by their itchy trigger fingers were UNARMED. The four kids that were killed were not throwing back [tear gas] canisters. They were simply there, and the Guard opened fire without anyone firing at them first.

I served in the Army 1973-75 and attended Kent State 1976-79. The students killed deserve to be remembered, no matter how much I may have disagreed with them. Sadly, many Americans at the time supported shooting the students. Even though I was a hawk, a veteran and in ROTC, I made lifelong friends with many who weren't. In 1977-79, I participated in protests to stop the building of a gym on the hill the GIs fired from. A certain amount of tension, disruption and tumult was unavoidable. Some students deliberately trespassed on the gym site so they would get arrested. (Even a May 4 National Guardsman deliberately trespassed so he would get arrested.) At a protest I missed, tear gas was used. But I never had any fear we would be shot. Christian jocks who wanted a gym and Christians like me who wanted to preserve our history and honor the dead got together to pray for peace (as it turned out, God wanted the gym). I strongly supported Nixon's actions 1969-73 and still do. I would be ashamed of myself and deeply repentant if I had opposed them like the 1970 protesters.

*Raymond P. Opeka,
Grand Rapids, Michigan*

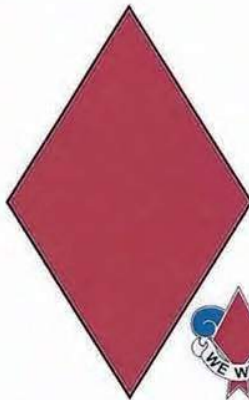
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