

## SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION



Fall 2013 Newsletter

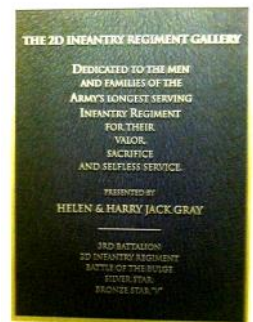
### WJ MULLEN, BG USA, RETIRED

HONORARY COLONEL, SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT

When you visit the National Infantry Museum at Fort Benning, Georgia – and, I hope that you do – you will be impressed with the interpretation of the Infantry's historic purpose to close with the enemy using the "Last 100 Yards" as the theme. Close combat is portrayed in historic fights selected from the Revolution, Civil War, World War I, World War II, Korea, Viet Nam, and Iraq. Overlooking this prominent display is "The Second Infantry Regiment Gallery," the central part of the Museum's Mezzanine.

This memorialization of our Regiment was made possible by a donation from Harry Jack Gray, who was awarded the Silver Star while serving as the 3d Battalion's FO in WWII. The Gallery is "Dedicated to the men and families of the Army's longest serving infantry regiment for their valor, sacrifice, and selfless service." This is a wonderful and enduring tribute to Ramrodders - past, present, and future. It is appropriate that our families' sacrifices and selfless service are included in the dedication.

Exhibits in the Museum's galleries provide information and displays of US and enemy uniforms and equipment to portray the Infantry experience during the many conflicts our Nation has fought. The path through Vietnamese jungle and the UH-1B hovering overhead evoked memories of my war. The exhibits from past wars and those of the current decade demonstrate that no matter how much the change in equipment and technology, the role of the Infantry and Infantry combat remain constant.



In the Spring a three-quarters scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, known to most of us as "The Wall," will be in place. Excavation and landscaping are underway for a permanent site for the eight feet high and 240 feet long "Dignity Memorial Viet Nam Wall." It is one of several replicas of the "Wall" and has toured the country for almost two decades.

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Our thoughts and prayers remain with the Soldiers of 2 – 2 INF. Their area of operations is in Zabul Province where they are part of Regional Command South. The Battalion's principal base is FOB Apache. As you know, 2-2 INF works principally with the Afghan National Army. The Ramrods' performance of their mission is in the best traditions of our Regiment.

LTC Lopez informed me in a message on 7 Oct 2013 that, "Our Soldiers are doing great. We just finished a six day mission with the Afghan Army. We were fighting the entire time, and came back without a scratch. God is good."

The Army is implementing the largest reduction of combat forces in two decades. Part of that process will result in the current chapter of Ramrod history coming to its end and another to begin. Department of the Army has announced that the 2 – 2 INF will be inactivated at Fort Knox. Current information indicates that the Battalion will be reflagged at Fort Polk, LA, as part of the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. The Army's longest serving infantry regiment will continue its proud service to our Nation.

Future 2d Infantry Regiment reunions (those held in conjunction with the Society of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division annual reunions, as well as, Pigeon Forge) will be enhanced when we will be joined by veterans of the Regiment's most recent battles and campaigns. Interaction between those of us who fought in Viet Nam with those of us who fought in Afghanistan and Iraq will help us all better understand our own experiences and better appreciate the role of the Infantry and the character of Infantrymen. *NOLI ME TANGERE!*

## BOB "FO" DOUGLASS

PRESIDENT, SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

My Fellow Ramrods and Associates:

First of all I would like to wish everyone a very safe and happy Veterans Day!

It is with a very sad heart that I tell those of you who do not already know, we have lost one of our greatest Ramrods this past September, Gary Tucker went to the regiment in the sky.



Gary was a great leader, a great warrior and a great friend.

He served as the leader of Recon, also as Bandit 3-6 in 68-69, and he also served as our Association President for four years.



We will miss him at the Reunions especially his dry humor and great war stories. During his tour of duty with 2-2 he was awarded the DSC, 3 Silver Stars, 4 Bronze Stars, 5 Army Commendations and 4 Purple Hearts. He was the

officer that did the write up of the actions on the 24 May 1969 for James Bondsteel's CMH. After all, he should have because he started the fight when he knew of a shortcut. I know that I will miss him very much myself. Gary will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery on 22 January 2014 at 13:00.

For those interested, the Battalion Commander LTC Eric Lopez has a facebook page that he keeps everyone informed about the troops. It is **Ramrod Six** <https://www.facebook.com/ramrod.six> and has also

published 4 newsletters entitled "Ramrod Rush" which can be found on the 2nd Infantry Regiment's website, <http://www.secinfreg.org/>

Good news is that I have kept in touch with three of our Battalion Commanders that led 1-2 and 2-2 down range the last three times. LTC Dan Hurlbut 2-2, LTC Steven Miska 1-2 and LTC Alan Streeter 2-2. I proudly would like to announce that all three of them have been promoted to Full Bird Col. Also CSM Walter Tagalicud who was the CSM for 2-2 on their last tour down Range will be taking over the 3rd Brigade of the 101st as the Brigade CSM.

We have been informed that when the 3rd Brigade returns from Afghanistan they will be casing their colors and disbanded but 2-2 will not, they will be reassigned to the 3rd Brigade, 10th Mountain which is at Fort Polk, Louisiana, so the 2nd Infantry will live on.

Presently I am in the Philippines and will return to the USA on the 7th of November. And usually I can keep up with everything that is going on with troops. But on the 11th of October I experienced my first typhoon. It came thru the city that I am staying in and destroyed almost all of the power lines and 50 per cent of the trees. We are being told that we may have power again by the middle of November so it has been a real problem for any type of Internet connections.

I am sometimes able to reach the outside world thru my fiancé's cell phone but that is only thru face book and that is a far reach also.

So until we meet again, keep your head down and your powder dry.

## Congratulations!

We wish to congratulate the following winners at this years First Infantry Division Reunion:

- ◆ 1st Prize—\$2,500. Rudy Blaizé
- ◆ Basket Ramona Tamés
- ◆ Room Upgrade to Suite James & Janet Hunter



## COMMANDER'S COLUMN

BY LTC ERIC LOPEZ—RAMROD 6

REPRINTED FROM "THE RAMROD RUSH", ISSUE 4—NOVEMBER 2013

**O**n the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month the guns fell silent throughout Europe. Since the solemn day of the 3rd of August 1914, much of the world was engaged in a four year war. The era of brutal combat was the largest, most violent conflict in human history at that time. War raged on three continents and Soldiers from 42 nations fought by land, sea and for the first time in the air. The improved weaponry unleashed casualties on a previously unthinkable scale; 9 million combatants died. Soldiers from Japan fought in trench lines in France, American Doughboys found them-selves defending the port of Archangel in Russia above the Arctic Circle, Soldiers from the Ottoman Empire found themselves fighting against Australians from the far side of the world in Gallipoli and again in the Holy Land. The war marked the introduction of the machinegun which provided the same amount of fire power as a company of soldiers armed with bolt-action rifles. The Howitzer artillery increased indirect firing capabilities because of its high angles and targeted enemy soldiers previously out of reach. The war also marked the first employment of aircraft as weapons and tanks made their debut in battle. The conflict formally ended in November 1918. The carnage and atrocities of war, the sights and sounds, the explosions and devastation fell silent on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918.

Since 1919, November 11th has been a day of solemn observance for those who survived and their descendants; in Britain it is marked as Remembrance Day, in France it is known as Armistice Day and in the United States it is Veteran's Day. The day commemorates the sacrifices, courage, and patriotism of those willing to serve on behalf of a just cause despite personal hardship. The famed World War I and World War II veteran General George Patton commented, "Wars are fought with weapons, but they are won by men."

The men, referenced by General Patton, represent the strength of our nation and the birth of our national pride. Veterans' Day commemorates the horrors of war endured by heroes who are permanently fixtures in stories of gallantry and extraordinary courage. The patriotism embodied by the he-roes of yesteryear created a small fraternity of men and women who considered their own safety and comfort less important than the ideals and principles of the U.S. Constitution. The fraternity continues to grow as veterans from today's conflicts in Afghanistan demonstrate the character and bravery that helped defeat the darkness of tyranny and once again allow the light of freedom to emerge. America is fortunate to have a corps of men and women ready and willing to answer "yes" when the nation calls. The Americans willing to serve in the military are fortunate to have a corps of patriots who humbly offer their support regardless of the political climate or personal sacrifice.

This Veterans' Day I offer to my fellow veterans a piece of advice. Thank America for supporting the military. Thank America for their thoughts and prayers. Thank America for enjoying the benefits of our way of life. I also encourage Americans to remember why we celebrate Veterans' Day. Instead of treating the day like any other day, pause a moment and embrace the past, present, and future of the U.S. The lives that were lost, the periods of separation that were endured, and the experiences of war that were born, should humbly remind us why Arlington National Cemetery, the final resting place for those who once wore a military uniform, is America's most hallowed ground. America is great because of those willing to fight and die for others. America's military is great because of the proud patriots who readily offer support regardless of the situation or environment. As President Kennedy said "A Nation reveals itself not only 9.5



# 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION EXECUTIVE BOARD

BY JIM LESLIE, EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER, FIRST INFANTRY DIVISION  
VICE PRESIDENT, SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

This was the 95th annual reunion in Jacksonville, Florida with the division board meeting on August 2, 2013, for the first and only board meeting for 2013. It was my honor to represent the president and members of the 2nd Infantry Regiment.

The board meeting lasted for about an hour and a half covering reading minutes from last year's meeting (2012), financial statement from January 2013 to June 2013, executive director's report, first division foundation report, active division report, report from Cantigny, and lastly, division memorial (D.C.) report.

I can report to you that in all areas the division is doing outstanding with assets over \$1,800,000.00 with a strong future for growth and financial success. The division is working on ways to bring active duty and retired soldiers into the division society to perpetuate its longevity. Our division memorial fund is looking to all regiments for financial support in the renovation of our beloved first division war memorial in Washington D.C..

One of the major problems the society is having is finding hotel convention sites for upcoming conventions. It's becoming hard to find hotels which will accommodate over 650 members and still keep the room cost in line. As most of us know, we have had problems with the C.P.'s. We want to set up our own C.P.'s to keep our costs reasonable. Most large hotels will not allow us to furnish our own liquor and are citing a legal issue. It looks like in the future this may come to an end as well as getting \$275 rooms for \$90 to \$125. You would think a large group like us would be welcomed in most large cities, but that is not the case. All in all, times are changing and we need to have and support our division convention as well as Pigeon Forge.

Mostly what takes place at the board meeting can be heard on Saturday after the memorial service at the general membership meeting. Most people attend the memorial service but miss this meeting and miss out on a lot of great society information. I would encourage anyone to attend this meeting. I serve you so please email me with any questions.

Your Brother in War and Peace,  
Jim Leslie [gripfast@ameritech.net](mailto:gripfast@ameritech.net)



## FINANCE REPORT

BY DOUG TABB, TREASURER, SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Association members dues contributions during the period increased slightly as the board offered active duty soldiers a discounted dues structure. **Active duty Second Infantry members will be able to join the association annually for \$5.00 and Lifetime for \$25.00.** Remember the current annual dues for non-active veterans remain the same at \$10.00 for annual membership and \$100.00 for Lifetime membership. Hopefully, the discounted dues for active duty members will encourage the younger soldiers to join our organization in the future without any financial burden on family expenses. Thanks again to all who have given so generously for the support of activities throughout the year and please do encourage your veteran buddies to join.

## SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION FINANCE REPORT OCTOBER, 2013

Balance	4/30/2013	\$ 10,808.90
Members Contributions	(Dues & Donations)	\$550.00
Expenses For Period	(04/30/2013 thru 10/30/2013)	( 75.00)
<b>Bank Balance</b>	<b>10/30/2013</b>	<b>\$ 11,283.90</b>
	Wounded Warrior Fund	\$ 2,696.00
	Second Infantry Fund	\$ 8,587.90



## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

BY RICH MALING, CHAPLAIN, SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

It was December 1968. The 21 year old soldier had been in Vietnam for a month. Like every other GI that Christmas, he longed for being home with his family. He envisioned the cold, the snow, and above all, Mom cooking Christmas dinner with the love she had always shown to her family. Oh, how he wished he was anywhere else, but especially home.

Already, the stink of Vietnam was seared into his memory. Yet, little did this young soldier realize the hell that laid before him; he was lucky to this point where little action had taken place in his mechanized infantry unit. That was to change.

As he sat in the back of his armored personnel carrier, he opened a letter from home. A joy it was, a note from his Mom and a prayer:

### *"A Mother's Prayer"*

*God, Father of Freedom, look after that boy of mine wherever he may be. Walk in upon him. Talk with him during the silent watches of the night, and spur him to bravery whenever called upon to face the cruel foe. Transfer my prayer to his heart, that he may know the lingering love I have bequeathed to him as an everlasting gift.*

*Keep my boy contented and inspired by the never-dying faith in his mother's God. He is my gift to freedom. May that freedom forever remain untarnished, God. Through the lonely and confusing of training and combat, and throughout all the long days of a hopeful victory, keep his spirit high and his purpose unwavering. Make him proud to all with whom he comes in contact and make his influence a noonday light wherever his duty takes him. Satisfy the hunger of his soul with the knowledge of this daily prayer of mine.*

*To my country, and to the world's freedom, O Heavenly Father, have I bequeathed this boy of mine. He is my choicest treasure. Take care of him, God. Keep him in health and sustain him under every circumstance. Warm him anew under his shelter and under the stars. Touch him with my smile of cheer and comfort and full confidence in his every brave pursuit.*

*Silent and alone, I pray, God, but I am only one of millions of mothers, whose prayers stream day and night to you. This is our Gethsemane. Lead us victoriously through it, God. And lead that boy of mine through it. Fail him not... And may he not fail You, his country, nor his mother. Thank You, God.*

*Love, Mom*

I was that young, lonely soldier those four plus decades ago. I found this prayer (author unknown to me) profound... As my Mom did. Those tender-hearted words swept over me that eve. In the days ahead, Mom's prayer stayed with me. Through the many fights that lay ahead, I remained a believer that her daily prayers went with me. I survived the hell of combat. I did my absolute best to see that my soldiers survived too: Some, too many, did not. They are remembered by this humbled old soldier now. There were the physically wounded too, and all were mentally scared. Guilt has abounded, but dulled with time, yet never forgotten. God knows why. I one day look forward to seeing my Brothers in that promised Place called Heaven.

So with another Veterans' Day celebration, let us celebrate our Brothers-In-Arms and their families wherever they may be.

God Bless all,  
Rich Maling

"A-26/B-6"  
'Nam 68-69  
Abn/Rangers Lead the Way

2 Samuel 23:2-4



*"The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me,  
And His word was on my tongue.*

*The God of Israel said,  
The Rock of Israel spoke to me:  
'He who rules over men must be just,  
Ruling in the fear of God.*

*And he shall be like the light of the  
morning when the sun rises,  
A morning without clouds,  
Like the tender grass springing out of  
the earth,  
By clear shining after rain.'*



## A SOLDIER'S LETTER HOME

BY JIM LESLIE

Dear Civilians, Friends, and Draft Dodgers,

In the very near future the undersigned will once more be in your midst, dehydrated and demoralized, to take his place once again as a human being with the well-known forms of freedom and justice for all; engaged in life, liberty and the somewhat delayed pursuit of happiness. In making your joyous preparations to welcome him back to organized society, you must take certain steps to make allowance for the crude environment which has been his miserable lot for the past twelve months. In other words, he might be a little Asiatic from Vietnamesitis and Overseasitis and should be handled with care. Do not be alarmed if he is infected with all forms of rare tropical diseases. A little time in "The land of the Big PX" will cure this malady.

Therefore, show no alarm if he insists on carrying a weapon to the dinner table, looks around for his steal pot when offered a chair, or wakes you up in the middle of the night for guard duty. Keep cool when he pours gravy on his desert for dinner or mixes peaches with his Seagrams VO and insists on fingers and hands instead of silverware, and prefers C-rations and dust to steak. Take it with a smile when he insists on digging up the garden to fill sandbags for the bunker he is building. Be tolerant when he takes his blanket and sheet of the bed and puts them on the floor to sleep on. When in his daily conversation he utters such things as "Xin Loi" and "Choi oi," just be patient. He will learn to speak his own language again sooner than you think. Do not let it shake you up if when on the phone he says "Roger out" for good bye, or simply shouts "Working!" Leave calmly and quickly if by some chance he says "Didi" with an irritated look on his face, because it means no less than "Get the \_\_\_\_\_ out of here."

It is suggested that remarks not be made about the neatness of the uniforms of the Marines, Navy or Air Force, but have a word of praise for his Class A's. Never ask him why the Jones boy held a higher rank than he did. And above all, never mention the term "extend." If you are out to one of your favorite night clubs and after a few hours of drinking he suddenly calls the waitress "Number One Girl" or uses his hat as an ashtray, he is still rational. He will probably keep listening for "Homeward Bound" or "We gotta Get Outta This Place" to sound over Radio Lai Khe. If he does, comfort him, for he is still only reminiscing. Be especially watchful when he is in the presence of women, especially beautiful women. His intentions will be strictly sincere, but dishonorable. Above all keep in mind that beneath that tanned and rugged exterior there beats a heart of gold (the only thing of value he has left). Treat him with kindness and tolerance, an occasional fifth of good liquor and a copy of the latest Playboy, and you will be able to rehabilitate that which once was (and now is a hollow shell of) the happy-go-lucky guy you once knew and loved.

Last, but not least, send no more mail to the APO, fill the icebox with beer, get the civvies out of the moth balls, fill the car with gas, get the women and children off the streets, because:

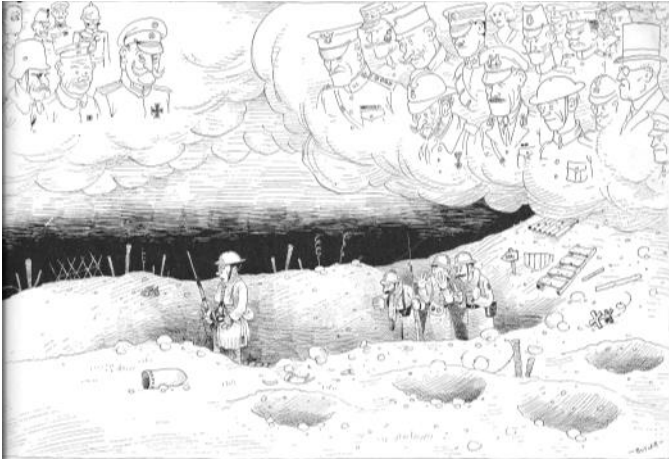
THE KID IS COMING HOME!!!!

"9 days today"  
 keep a light in the window (HA HA)  
 Jim Sharp



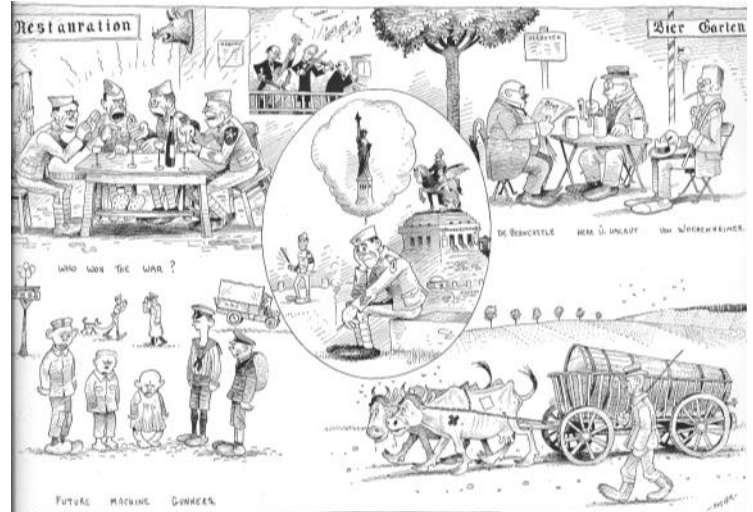
SUBMITTED BY JIM LESLIE

## MEMBERS PAGES



GRAVE RESPONSIBILITIES

THE time had now come for the Americans to take their place in the battle lines. On the night of October 21st, 1917, units of the First Division occupied the front line trenches ten kilometers northeast of Nancy, and Battery C of the Sixth Field Artillery fired the first American shot on October 23rd, while, on October 27th, the first German prisoner was captured. The Germans, learning of the presence of American troops, broke the quiet of the sector with a raid. A sergeant and ten men were taken prisoners, and the first Americans were killed in action: Gresham, Enright and Hay. *October 1917.*



THE ARMY OF OCCUPATION

THE Armistice did not bring an end to military duties. The long, hard march up to the Rhine was led by the oldest and most experienced divisions. The First Division had the honor of being the first to cross, and took its place on the thirty-mile bridgehead beyond Coblenz. Here it remained until August and was the last of the fighting divisions to return home. *1918-1919.*

## SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT TRIVIA

BY LARRY GRZYWINSKI, HISTORIAN, SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION

Beginning in January 1837 until the end of May 1842 companies and then the entire regiment campaigned in Florida during the second Seminole War. Companies F and K were the first to entire Florida. They arrived on 31 January 1837 and remained until 23 February 1837 when they returned to Georgia. The two companies move between Georgia and Florida several times until October 1837 when they were joined by Headquarters and four more companies at Fort Brooke which was located in present day Tampa.

Over time the balance of the regiment arrived in Florida with Headquarters returning to Michigan for a time. The regiment campaigned throughout Florida, fighting skirmishes at Fort Miami and Etonia Scrub in February 1839. Micanopy in May 1840 and Cow Creek Hammock in July 1840.

During 1841 companies fought skirmishes at Orange Creek Bridge and Ocklawaha River in March. In January 1842 Companies B, K and a detachment from Company G were engaged at Haw Creek and 3 companies were engaged at Big Hammock of Pilaklikaha on April 1842.

With the war winding down the regiment is ordered to return to its posts on the Great Lakes and between 25 and 27 May they depart from Pilatka, Florida, by transport, traveling up the Saint John River passing through Jacksonville. From April 1840, in the absence of Col Hugh Brady, LTC Bennett Riley was in command of the regiment. The regiment suffered 12 killed and 12 wounded during its 4 ½ years campaigning in Florida.



Fort Brooke, Tampa, Fla.


 SAVE THE DATE

## SOAPBOX

BY JIM LESLIE, VP SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION



An old tradition in England is standing on a soapbox in Hyde Park, London saying whatever you think.

Here are my thoughts as I can see changes coming. We all see it at our local VFW and American Legion Posts. I can also see it at the division convention and at the Pigeon Forge reunion.

We need to support two of our best legacies, both of them having their pluses and minuses, but without them where would we find the camaraderie of our brotherhood? How would we cope with the past and look forward to our new brothers in the future? We certainly have our individual memories, but why not bring our family into the fold so they can understand us in what we have been through. What better way to accomplish this than with our reunions.

With that said, we are all one ... 2nd Infantry Regiment. Do not stray, but join together so we can perpetuate two great reunions. God bless you all!

**2ND INFANTRY BATTALION  
2ND INFANTRY REGIMENT BALL  
15 March 2014**



A Battalion Ball is currently being planned at Fort Knox to commemorate the successes of the Ramrods' deployment and honor the Regiment's lineage.

The Battalion is in the initial stages of developing the concept, but if you know of anyone from the 2nd Infantry Regiment who might want to attend or if any members might be interested in donating to the event or purchasing tickets for a Soldier please watch the message board for further details.



**Ramrods Reunion  
15 - 18 May 2014**

The reunion is open to all who are currently serving or had served in the Battalions of the 2nd Infantry Regiment, their families and guests.

Please see the website in the near future for information and to download the registration forms:

<http://www.secinfreg.org/events/events.htm>

## OFFICERS OF THE FIRST DIVISION DINNER

BY THOMAS A. REHM AND WALT MOELLER

The 95th Annual 1st Division Combat Officers Dinner is scheduled for **26th of April, 2014** in Northern Virginia.

If you have not received an invitation letter, please contact T A Rehm and he will see that you get on the list.

[tar221130@gmail.com](mailto:tar221130@gmail.com)

It's not too early to mark your calendar.

**DANGER FORWARD** 

No Mission To Difficult — No Sacrifice To Great — Duty First



## SOCIETY OF THE FIRST INFANTRY DIVISION

<http://www.1stid.org/reunion.php>

### 2014 Reunion

Hyatt Regency  
Orange County, Calif.  
June 25-29



### 2015 Reunion

Westin Lombard  
Lombard, Ill.  
June 15-21



# Society of the First Infantry Division 2013 Reunion Jacksonville, Florida



Pictures courtesy of JIM LESLIE AND LARRY GRZYWINSKI



## A VETERANS JOURNEY BACK TO VIETNAM PART 1

BY TOM COPELAND, HHC, 2/2, LAI KHE, VIETNAM 67-68

LIFETIME MEMBER, SECOND INFANTRY REGIMENT ASSOCIATION



**From February 3, 1967 to January 30, 1968  
and served with HHC 2/2 in Vietnam.  
Our base camp was located in Lai Khe.**

In September, 2013, I returned to Vietnam. Although this is something I had wanted to do for the past several years, it did cause me to have some anxiety and a few second thoughts in the weeks leading up to the trip. While in Vietnam I kept a daily journal and took almost 1300 pictures to document the trip. I have been asked to share some of my experiences with the members of the 2nd Infantry Regiment Association.

Many of the notations which follow are my thoughts as I wrote them during the tour. Others have been edited in the interest of taking up less room in the newsletter. There were 16 Americans on this tour, including John Adams who served with 1/2 in 67-68.

On Sunday, September 8th we flew from Los Angeles to Saigon. Since we crossed the international dateline we lost a day during our flight. We arrived in Saigon around noon on Tuesday, September 10th and started our tour. Our first stop was the War Remnants Museum. Outside the building were many pieces of American equipment that were left behind during the American pull out. Inside the museum there are three floors dedicated to the "American War". Much of it is in my opinion propaganda, but then again the people who build the museums get to tell the story the way they want to. From there we went to the Presidential Palace, which was left exactly the way it was when the North Vietnamese tanks crashed through the gates in April, 1975 and ended the war. The tour of the Palace was very interesting, especially since everything inside the Palace, and the President's offices were exactly as they were found by the communists in 1975. From the Palace it was on to Notre Dame Cathedral and Saigon's main Post Office. The Post Office is one of the oldest standing buildings in Saigon. After taking lots of pictures and buying a few souvenirs we went to the hotel to get checked in and freshen up for dinner.

### A LITTLE ABOUT SAIGON

10,000,000 people live in Saigon and another 3,000,000 people come into Saigon every day to work. On any given day there are 9,000,000 motor scooters on the streets of Saigon. We witnessed one accident during our 2 week stay. Our bus backed into a parked motor scooter, neither the bike nor the driver was hurt but it required a payoff to the owner of the bike.

The motor scooters are the major mode of transportation in Vietnam. The law allows two riders per scooter unless they are family, it is not unusual to see a family of four on one scooter. I tried to get photos of that but it was hard to do from the bus. Helmets are required for all passengers on a scooter with the exception of infants.

The motor scooters are also used to haul all sorts of things, even baskets of

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[HTTP://WWW.VIETNAMBATTLEFIELDTOURS.COM/](http://WWW.VIETNAMBATTLEFIELDTOURS.COM/)



Presidential Palace



Notre Dame Cathedral



Motor scooters in traffic



Boat ride through the canals in the  
Mekong Delta

pigs going to market. I saw two riders on one scooter carrying a ten foot ladder. The balance and maneuvering of the scooters is something to see.



US Army base in Phu Loi 1967

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2013**

Today we traveled to My Tho on the Northern edge of the Mekong Delta. We took a water taxi to Coconut Island and toured a honey factory and a coconut candy factory. We rode horse carts on back streets and then small boats through very narrow canals. I envisioned this was how the VC moved men and equipment during the war. We visited the former site of the 9th Infantry Division Headquarters which has been replaced by a very large soccer stadium.



Base in Phu Loi 2013

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2013**

Today has been one hell of a day for me. We left the hotel in Saigon and headed North, going through Phu Loi. I spent some time operating out of the Phu Loi base camp. It was a great place to go because it was an aviation base and they had lots of food and drink that we never had at Lai Khe. I managed to snap a few pictures of the old Phu Loi base, which is now a Vietnamese Army base. We couldn't stop and take pictures but the bus would slow to a crawl and the guide, Mr. Phi, would say, "Get ready to take your pictures. Take now. Take now."



US Army buildings in Phu Loi

We left Phu Loi and headed for Highway 13, Thunder Road, to Lai Khe. We drove through Lai Khe stopping outside the building that served as the 3rd Brigade Headquarters, and the house once used by the Division Commanding General. We then went in search of the old airfield. While driving down the Highway 13 I spotted what looked like pavement off to the East side of the road. As we were backing up I saw a woman in a shop pointing in the direction of the airfield. She knew what this group of Americans was looking for. The whole group got off the bus and walked over to what is left of the runway.



Hwy 13 from Center of Ben Cat looking North 1967

While we were there an older man came over on a motor bike and started talking to Mr. Phi. He had worked with the Americans during the war doing odd jobs. He was later drafted into the ARVN Army and lost his leg in 74 to machine gun fire. He said he would help us locate the sights of the HHC Company Area and the 18th Surgical Hospital location where Al Garcia was stationed for a while. Our tour guide, Dave Macedonia had a different idea of how to locate the areas by going to the local market and finding some old beetle nut chewing women to talk with. While driving to the market place I spotted what I thought was close to the possible sight of the Company Area. We stopped the bus and Mr. Phi, Dave Macedonia, Al Garcia, David Madrid, and I took a long walk to look for the sights. As soon as I turned the corner I knew where I was and walked straight to the old Company Area and the site of my old barracks. Al and David went down a different road looking for the 18th Surgical Hospital site. Although no buildings exist in those areas we both knew we had found what we were looking for. Another win for the day!



Looking north on Highway 13 towards Lai Khe 2013



Ben Cat City Center looking south 1967

We left Lai Khe and drove South to Ben Cat so I could take a few pictures of the streets and shops I had photographed in 1967. Although the buildings had been improved greatly, the area still looked the same. I took my pictures and we all went to a local cafe to eat the sack lunches we had bought on the way out of Saigon. After lunch we headed up Hwy 240 to locate FSB Lorraine II where SP4 Harry Carl Sarsfield, C-2/2 was killed on Oct 17, 1967. With the help of Dave's GPS and some map coordinates I had researched, we found the sight. Although several farms have



Ben Cat City Center looking south 2013



been built in the area, once I saw the area I knew we were there. We all got off the bus and I passed out flowers. I told the story of the day Carl was killed and we had a moment of silence followed by a prayer provided by one of the Vets on the tour. While we were doing the service we were joined by two Vietnamese farmers from nearby.

We left there and drove to Tay Ninh City where we spent the night. This was a fantastic day! I will say that I felt some highs and lows today but mostly highs with a 46 year old weight lifted off my shoulders. I expect more of the same over the next two days as we visit the sight of my first major battle in Vietnam, and the sight where Joe Lupo was killed. More flowers will be laid and more prayers will be said.

### FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2013

Another home run this morning!

We left Tay Ninh City and drove north past Nui Ba Dinh and on up to the site of the Prek Klok II battle on March 10, 1967. There have been tremendous changes in the area and a town has sprung up on the site of our former NDP. We stopped the bus and studied the maps, GPS, and iPad info, and decided we were very close to the site of the runway. We got out of the bus and walked a few blocks and found a very straight dirt road that Dave and I thought was the runway. A man came along on a motor bike and told us we were standing on the runway. We could also tell by the soil that this was the runway. The US always used laterite as a base for roads and runways then laid PSP (Perforated Steel Planking) over it to make the final landing surface. The PSP was missing but the laterite was still there and looked out of place when compared to the soil around it.

I told Mr. Phi that there was a mass grave to the southwest of the airfield. He asked the locals and found a man that knew where the sight was. He took us there and told us it had been excavated several years ago and the 197 bodies were removed and sent to another location for proper burial. I chose that site for a memorial service for the 3 Americans and 197 Vietnamese who lost their lives in that battle. Again we had a very nice ceremony and laid some flowers. Yet another weight has been lifted off my shoulders!!!

We went back to Tay Ninh City to visit the Cao Dai Temple to observe the noon worship service and to have lunch at a restaurant owned by a former Viet Cong soldier. Mrs. Ngoc Tuyet is a celebrated Viet Cong soldier in Vietnam, and a very gracious hostess. We had the best meal of any so far in Vietnam. After we ate, Mrs. Tuyet changed into her uniform and had her photo made with several of us.

After lunch we visited the Coa Dai Temple and watched the noon worship service. The Coa Dai Religion is founded on the belief, values, and structures of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism, all living and worshiping in peace and harmony. Priests from the three groups wear different color robes during the worship services which take place every six hours and last for about 30 minutes.

We then drove to the Cu Chi tunnels and watched a government propaganda film made in 1967. The film was boring, it was hotter than hell, there was no breeze, so I napped off and on like several others in the group. We then toured the tunnels, but I did not go in any of them, mostly because of my aching knees and partly



3rd Brigade Headquarters 1967



3rd Brigade Headquarters 2013



Air field in Lai Khe 1967



Tom and a former ARVN soldier standing on the last section of the Lai Khe runway



HHC Company Area 1967



HHC Company Area 2013



Lai Khe Village 1967



Lai Khe Village 2013

Memorial service for SP4 Harry Sarsfield,  
KIA

Black Virgin Mountain 1967



Black Virgin Mountain 2013

Joe Lupo was KIA in this  
area

because I just didn't feel a need to see it.

### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2013

Another great day!

We left Saigon and headed Northeast to Di An, site of the 1st Infantry headquarters, and later the rear detachment. Like several other former Army and Air Force bases we have visited, the Vietnamese Government has built an Army post on that location. We couldn't stop for pictures so we just slowed down so that anyone wanting to take pictures could do so without getting off the bus.

Then it was on to Tan Uyen and the Ong Dong Jungle to look for the general area where Joe Lupo was killed on August 26, 1967. Since I couldn't find accurate map coordinates for the location where Lupo was killed, we located a good spot to lay the flowers and had a short memorial service for Joe. On our way back to the bus we were approached by two ladies who were talking to me in Vietnamese. Mr. Phi had gone ahead of us and I had no idea what the women were saying. I finally figured out that they wanted to have their picture made with the Americans. As has been the case in all the places we have been, the people are very friendly and were all smiles and trying their best to communicate with us.

*(Note: 65% of the population in Vietnam is under the age of 30 years and have no recollection of the war.)*

We then traveled back in the direction of Saigon to visit Bien Hoa Airfield and Long Bien, the location of the 90th Replacement Depot. Again, both have been converted into Vietnamese Army bases and taking pictures was very difficult. We had a memorial service for friends of the two guys from Ohio, and for Dave Macedonia's brother-in-law. After the service some of us were taking turns standing on a park bench to get a view of the old American runway. A man came over and was talking with Mr. Phi and when he found who we were and what we were doing he invited us into his home which had a very nice patio overlooking the airfield. We went in and up 4 stories to his roof top patio where we had a beautiful view of the airfield.

### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2013

Today was a free day in Saigon for the group. Most of the group slept in and went to various places around Saigon, but Dave Macedonia, John Adams, Mr. Phi, and I got a private car and driver and took a road trip to several locations that were of interest to John and I. John served with the 1/2 and I served with the 2/2. We were often on joint operations, but in separate locations. We were both on Operation Shenandoah 2 in October 67 when the 2/28 ran into a regiment sized ambush and was decimated. A visit to this site was the last point of importance for me, but on this day John had two other points that he wanted to visit.

First stop was to place a plaque in memory of 3 KIA's from 1/2. LTC Mortimer O' Connor, 1LT Robert Lulla, and SFC Alejandro De Jesus were all KIA there on April 1, 1968.

The next stop was to place a plaque to those 2/28 soldiers killed and missing during the Battle of Ong Thanh on October 17, 1967. On that day my unit was located at FSB Lorraine 2, just South of the 2/28. I have very vivid memories of the calls coming across the radio as the battle started. They were calling for artillery, air strikes, and reinforcements. Later that day is when Carl Sarsfield was KIA just outside our perimeter. When the VC broke contact with the 2/28 they moved south



and passed near our FSB and Sarsfield and his group was just far enough away from our FSB that they made light contact with the leading elements of the fleeing VC.

The next stop was to place a plaque for a group of 6 men from 1/2 who were KIA on October 4, 1967. We finally made our way out of the huge rubber plantation and back onto Thunder Road, Hwy 13, to head South back to Saigon. Along the way we stopped at an open air restaurant for lunch. What luck we had when we randomly picked that place for lunch. It sat right in front of a small lake and there was a fishing contest going on. The banks around the lake were lined with people fishing for catfish. We watched several large catfish being pulled out of the lake and someone would bring them to the judge for check in and take them back to the lake and release them. The food was very good and lunch lasted through a monsoon down pour.

On the way back to Saigon we stopped on the North side of Lai Khe to get photos of the place we used to operate radar from and go swimming. Everything had changed, even the shape of the stream.

*To Be Continued in Spring 2014 Newsletter...*



Dave Macedonia



John Adams, Tom, Dave Macedonia



John Adams



Thunder Road, Coming into Lai Khe from Bau Bang 2013



Ong Dong Jungle also known as the Heart Shaped Woods



Lunch North of Bau Bang



French guard tower north side of Lai Khe 1967



Guard tower would have been behind Tom 2013



Tom with hat 1967



Tom with hat 2013



Monsoon rain while eating lunch



Stream on North side of Lai Khe 1967



Stream on North side of Lai Khe 2013



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**Thank You!**

We wish to thank everyone who submitted articles, poems and pictures to this issue of the newsletter and welcome you to share your stories with us. Please feel free to send your articles and pictures to Bob Douglass, [bdouglass1@peoplepc.com](mailto:bdouglass1@peoplepc.com) or Kathy Grzywinski, [kjgrzywinski@gmail.com](mailto:kjgrzywinski@gmail.com)

*The newsletter is published bi-annually  
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*Article deadlines: Spring 2014 Newsletter-May 15, 2014 and  
 Fall 2014 Newsletter-October 20, 2014.*



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# Second Infantry Regiment Association

## Membership Application and Renewal Form

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General Membership: Annual dues \$ 10.00 Lifetime membership \$ 100.00

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Please Note: It is more economical for the Association to communicate electronically.  
If you don't have email or if you prefer, all correspondence can be mailed to you.

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Dates of service with the regiment: \_\_\_\_\_

(If you know the month and year please enter YRMO IE: August 1968 = 6808)

Area(s) of operation i.e. State Side, Normandy, Rhineland, WWII, Vietnam, Germany, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, etc. \_\_\_\_\_

Battalion \_\_\_\_\_ 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3 \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Company \_\_\_\_\_ A \_\_\_\_\_ B \_\_\_\_\_ C \_\_\_\_\_ D \_\_\_\_\_ HHC

Other unit \_\_\_\_\_

Any information you feel appropriate, such as rank held, medals awarded, or duties performed during service:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please mail your form, along with your check made out to: 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment Association

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