



9th Infantry Division



The Old Reliable

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Ceremony at Y Bridge

Awards presented to Saigon heroes

SAIGON – Standing on the ground where one week earlier many had fought and some had died, men of the 9th Division paid homage to the dead and honored the living May 20.

In a muddy pagoda yard only a few hundred feet from the Y-Bridge on Saigon's southern edge, generals of the U.S. Army, Air Force and Vietnamese Army gave tribute to the combat successes of their men.

Major General Julian J. Ewell, 9th Division Commander, praised the Division's 3d Brigade, the artillery units, the cavalry, the assault helicopters and the Air Force. He also said the Vietnamese National Police, ARVN Rangers, Regional and Popular Forces units fought courageously.

General Ewell stated that "with indomitable courage and dogged perseverance, elements of the 2d Battalion, 47th Infantry; 3d Battalion, 39th Infantry; 4th Battalion, 39th Infantry; 5th Battalion, 60th Infantry; and 6th Battalion, 31st Infantry, initially set up an impenetrable defense and then counterattacked, destroying or driving away every enemy unit and soldier. These units killed more than one thousand of the enemy."

Thirty decorations were presented by the Vietnamese government to U.S. soldiers. Included were the Cross of Gallantry with Palm to Brigadier General Morgan G. Roseborough, assistant Division commander; Colonel Josiah A. Wallace, Jr., commander of Division artillery; Colonel George C. Benson, 3d Brigade commander; Lieutenant Colonel Anthony P. DeLuca, 3d/39th commander; and Staff Sergeant Willie Holmes, platoon sergeant of Company A, 5th/60th.

Seventy-four U.S. soldiers received the Silver Star or Bronze Star with "V" device for valor. Three Army and four Air Force men received the Distinguished Flying Cross; two Air Force pilots and an air liaison officer received the Silver Star.

Six symbolic spot awards of the Silver Star were made to men who died during the Saigon fighting.

U.S. awards were presented to the deputy police commissioner of Saigon and the district chief.

The commanding general of III Corps, Lieutenant General Ke Nguyen Khang, presented the decorations for his government.

Lieutenant General Bruce Palmer, Jr., deputy commander of USARV, presented the U.S. Army awards. Major General Robert F. Worley, vice commander of the 7th Air Force, pinned the awards on the Air Force men.

Even as the ceremony took place on the southern edge of the Kinh Doi Canal, which the VC never crossed, armed soldiers were positioned on nearby rooftops and APCs ringed the area.