

Why they call em "Brother"



6-31st May 2007 ~ Battalion Newsletter

Our member list continues to grow... it seems every time I think we have identified all who served, another set of orders or awards appears and we add a few more names to the list. In the January newsletter I told you we had identified 3,039 men and located 1,135 men. Our latest numbers are:

Company	Total	Deceased	KIA	Located	No Contact	Searching
Alpha	536	52	23	235	5	220
Bravo	588	54	23	185	2	324
Charlie	603	53	38	241	5	266
Delta	697	71	45	391	17	173
Echo	246	17	12	107	3	107
HHC	442	56	9	100		278
Unknown	15	1		2		12
Ft Lewis	29	1		3		25
Battalion	3156	305	150	1264	32	1405

Thank you to all the men who responded to our mailings, I hope that I managed to get back in touch with all of you and if per chance I missed you, please accept my apologies. Since our September search campaign we've confirmed the location of over 270 men.

Sadly the numbers of our brothers that have since passed on continues to grow. We have added 35 names to our Memorial pages since our last newsletter. Please take a moment to remember the brothers that have passed on: Alpha – Clarence Gilstad 2005, Gary Massie 12/2000, Jan Moyer 10/1983 Bravo – Lance Bergstresser 04/2005, Randy Burleson 06/1999, Kenneth Davis 2005, Duane Okland 02/2007 Charlie - Thomas King 05/1995, Clyde McNeely 12/2006, Richard Riffley 1994, Jess Wheeler 04/2005 Delta – Ralph Bolander 12/1998, Michael Brown 1993, Peter Bustos 12/1993, Glen Cater 08/2004, Mike Crandall 10/2005, Ronnie Jones 02/2006, Michael Kaylor 10/2006, Samuel McCrae 02/2004, John Mercer 12/1978, Harrison Montgomery 03/1993, Arthur Murr 09/1998, Charles Peterson 07/1976, Charles Richards 02/2005, Otha Robertson, Todd Severson 11/2005 HHC – David Hazels 2002, Jimmie Jones 02/1992, Johnnie B Lambert 09/2004, David Livsey 02/1990, Joseph Schmalhorst 07/1992, Johnnie Thomas 12/2006, Arnold Thompson, Charles Williams 07/2000, Michael Winchombe 11/1980, and Donald Langston 04/1996.

We are in the process of creating the presentation for the reunion memorial service for all the brothers of the 6-31st that have passed on. Thank you to all who have assisted in providing photographs for the memorial. There are still 298 out of the 454 names that we do not have photographs of. If you can please visit the website and review the list of names we are in search of photos for and if you can provide a photo email or send it to us. We will return all original photographs to you. This process has enabled us to add many photographs to our KIA and Memory pages on the website. If you are interested in adding any comments to those pages, just send them in and we'll get them posted for you.

Special thanks to the brothers who continue to support our endeavors and have contributed to the Search fund, Memorial fund and/or Newsletter fund. It is because of your contributions that this is all possible.

** Jimmy Apel, Alpha
** Bill McMullen, Charlie
Fred Sanchez, Delta

Floyd Bennett, Alpha
** Dale Mills, Charlie
Mike Strand, Charlie

Paul Konya, Delta
Joe Rauscher, Charlie
Steve Williams, Bravo

The Switchback Grill – Howard Talton, HHC and Walt Paugels proprietors
The 31st Infantry Regiment Association

A very special thank you to Jack Considine, Membership Chair for the 31st Infantry Regiment Association. Jack had received a large donation of postage stamps for the 31st a few years back that he wasn't using, and he offered them to us, to aide in our search efforts. We used the stamps to mail 612 letters to those in a searching status that we could validate mailing addresses for. Of that mailing we received 70 confirmations thus far that we have located another 6-31st brother.

He's done it again, Dan Ezso, that is... yet another new and improved version of the DVD entitled The Journey to Vietnam with the 6-31st. With each new Echo company contact made, Dan adds photos and memories to what was already an outstanding creation. Although primarily Echo Company photographs, it truly is the story of the 'Fort Lewis originals'. We've added the DVD to the website – the DVD is an hour long and requires high speed access to view.

Once we figured out "how" to add the video to the website, the wheels of creation started and Chuck McCammon converted Del Bumann's 2006 Run For The Wall, and Dean Hess' Huey-091 experiences to video format. The video format gives one a different perspective then just thumbing through the photo galleries. However, for those that cannot view the videos, the photos remain in the galleries. Run For The Wall, 2007 is scheduled for May 12th – 27th. We know Del is gearing up to participate again this year. Watch for the Run in your area and if you have the opportunity get out there to support them, you might just see a 6-31st brother in amongst the riders.

Reunion 2007 is promising to be the 'biggest' event ever. To date, 216 of the 6-31st have stated that they plan to be there in San Antonio, August 23-26th. Chaplain Bill Burns and his lovely wife Florence have gone above and beyond to make this a time to remember. The reunion will be held at the Holiday Inn El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel and Conference Ctr. Details of the reunion, tour information, and registration forms can be found on the website. A reminder if you have special needs, please get in touch with Bill or Florence and they will assist you if they can in ensuring those needs are met.

The latest update from Chaplain Burns is that there are 88 rooms reserved for the reunion with a total occupancy of 157 people. The banquet menu has been finalized; the choices will be for Beef-London Broil, Chicken-Chicken Marsala with Mushrooms and a wine sauce, and for Vegetarian fare Eggplant Parmesan over a bed of Noodles with grilled vegetables.

For those without internet access, contact me and I will get a reunion information packet mailed out to you. For the most part, we believe we have already sent the reunion information to all located men of the 6-31st via the last newsletter or as additional mailings. If you did not receive the information, let us know.



Delta Co (Jerry White) had challenged all that once again Delta would rule the reunion attendance... the latest numbers appear that Jerry has succeeded in ensuring that Delta Co will take home the high attendance trophy... the numbers planning to attend by company: Alpha 28 – Bravo 16 – Charlie 34 – Delta 100 – Echo 24 – HHC 13

Of course Jerry has worked non-stop night and day in his reunion coordination effort. Great job once again Jerry and Delta Co... but it isn't over yet! Charlie Co headed by Dale Mills and Echo Co headed by Dan Ezso and Art Decker are still working. The important thing to remember here as we've seen in the past, it really doesn't matter which line company you were assigned to, once you get to the reunion... you will be amongst your brothers. If you haven't yet let us know that you plan to attend, please drop us a note and we'll add your name to the list... quite often just knowing that 'you' will be there, will entice a few more of the brothers to attend.

A few notes about the reunion – Alpha Company will have their "official" group company dinner on Thursday evening; CPT Ron Corson is busy working with his San Antonio contacts to find the venue for the dinner.

Don Varenhorst (Echo Company) is attempting to coordinate golf outings during the reunion. If you are interested in a golf match while in San Antonio, please get in touch with us and we will pass the information along to Don.

A note to Charlie Co from Deacon Mills: The 31st infantry reunion is fast approaching and August will be here soon. Mary Doyon "volunteered" me to contact all the Charlie Co. guys to encourage everyone to come to the reunion. I, in turn solicited some "volunteers" and we went to work contacting everyone that we could find a good address, e-mail address or telephone number for. At the reunion last year in Syracuse, NY, there were about 10 or 12 guys there from Charlie Co. So far, there are about 35 guys who have indicated they plan to be at this year's reunion. I like to believe the triple in numbers is the result of the efforts of our "volunteers" who contacted the Charlie guys. The "volunteers" are Joe Deangelis, George Mauldin, Bill McMullen, Al Olson, Bill Owen, Mike Strand, Lyle Taresh, Gwyn Wathen, and David Wilson. I would like to publicly thank them for their all their help. I have found out over the years that good volunteers can't be beat for getting a superior job done in a hurry.

Several of the guys have expressed a desire to have a Charlie Co. get-to-gether of some kind. A meal function and social time is one suggestion. I know Alpha Co. has a dinner planned and a goodbye breakfast on Sunday morning. I believe that last year, Delta Co. had a dinner and social time on Thursday or Friday night. Let me know if you are interested in something like this and I'll try to find some (volunteer) help with organizing and planning. I would like to hear your suggestions. If you are familiar with San Antonio and know of a place we could get together, I would love to hear from you: Dale Mills, 201 Plantation Dr. Macon, GA 31210 (478) 477-7636 or email sdalem@bellsouth.net

Friday afternoon at 4:30, we plan to hold the 6-31st Memorial Service. The time was selected as the tours will have returned to the hotel by 4 pm and the evening dinner tour isn't scheduled to gather until 6:45. The memorial presentation is a little longer than a half hour in duration. Reunion attendees, please make every effort to be there and join us in honoring the memory of the brothers of the 6-31st. More details will be provided at a later time.

For those of you that will not be able to join us in San Antonio in August, Louis Dominguez (Charlie Co) is already very busy in the early planning stages for Reunion 2008 to be held in San Pedro, California. Louis tells me he has 300 rooms blocked at a \$109/night rate which is a very good price for harbor view hotels. Tentatively, there is a cruise of the Port of Los Angeles and Long Beach harbor which is the third largest in the world, tours of Fort MacArthur Military Museum with lunch on Victory Lane and a fully restored and operation Victory Ship that served in WWII, Korea and Vietnam. Louis is also trying to arrange an optional 4 day cruise to Mexico leaving Monday and returning Friday for those that want to extend their vacation time. Anyone living in the Los Angeles – Long Beach area that would be willing to assist Louis in the reunion effort for 2008 would be appreciated, let us know and we'll pass your contact information along to Louis.



We had a rather interesting story unfold that I thought I would share with you. A few years back, Donut Dollie Emily Strange was contacted by a guy that had recently purchased some Zippo lighters from an auction. In particular one lighter, was of interest and the gentleman was looking to see if Emily could help solve the mystery of the Zippo.

Emily created a page on her website and contacted Frank Gubla (9th ID Delta Dawgs) to see if he could lend any assistance. Frank contacted Robert Stewart to see if he could lend any assistance.... It was obvious that it belonged to a member of the 6-31st 9th ID. And many of the guys remembered LT Clayton Hall, but there was question as to if he was the same man as the DongTam inscription didn't go with the memories of LT Hall. And the mysterious linked SS didn't make sense. After much searching, we finally found LT Hall, seems his name was Claytor not Clayton as remembered, and he confirmed for us that the lighter was in fact his... one of many he lost along his way. The linked SS he thought might have been Sea Serpents. We are in contact with Emily now to see if we can put Clay and the guy that bought the lighter in touch.

If you ever wonder about contacting your brothers or family members of our deceased I thought I would share with you a recent happening... David Magaha, Bravo Company felt it was very important that we find a photograph of Clarence Joseph Novak KIA 04/1970. David was with Clarence when he died. David contacted the Nebraska American Legion asking for their assistance in locating a photograph. After a few emails and conversations, David had the opportunity to speak with Clarence's brother. Here is an excerpt of what David relayed to me:

"I called Jerry and spoke to him about a photograph. I learned a great deal about what information is provided to the families of those who are killed in the line of duty. The

circumstances surrounding their loved ones sacrifice appears to never be communicated. Jerry has promised to send me a photograph. I guess I am somewhat surprised to find out the families are not given the specifics of the incident involving their loved one.”

The contact you make can be the most important thing to your brother or his family members... and as we are discovering, the amount of time that has passed is irrelevant to the value of the communication. So pick up that phone or write that email or letter... you and your brother will be glad that you did.

The member list is still missing a lot of detail, if you have internet access to view the list and can provide any additional information it would be appreciated. Jerry White has Delta Co pretty well covered but he is asking for your assistance in putting a platoon with the following names. If you remember which platoon any of these men served in, please get in touch with Jerry.

Last	First		Year	Last	First		Year	Last	First		Year
Abrew	William J.		70	Gill	John R.		69	Nebel Jr.	Regis C.		69
Adamson	Henry C.		69	Gouraiage	Edmond	SSG	68/69	Oder	John B		69
Alonzo	Frank		69	Gregory	James F	PFC	68	Overbeek	Joseph		69
Banks	Henry L.		69	Havlocek	Chris		69	Palmer	Bryan		68/69
Bateman	Thomas H.		69	Herndon	Calvin E.		69	Parr	Richard F.	SGT	69
Beam	Raymond G		69	Huggins	Steven K.		69	Perkins	Michael W.	SGT	69
Bechtol	Donald S	PFC	67	James	George E	SP4	69	Presley Jr	Albert	PFC	68
Bergman	Verlyn K.		68/69	Johnson	Sidney		68/69	Proffit	Charles S.		69
Bierl	Ronald			Johnson	Douglas A.		68/69	Rabago	Otilio		69
Bolander	Ralph		70	Johnson Jr.	George A		69/70	Ratcliff	Jackie Lee		69
Bonds	Gordon L.	SGT	70	Jones	David A.		69	Rees	Richard W	PFC	67
Bowman	Peter	PFC	67	Karl	Robert W.		69	Rider	Larry		68/69
Bradley	Joe	PFC	67	Kelly	Dennis M.		69	Rizzo	Pat		
Briggs	Jimmy D.		69	Kilpatrick	James		68/69	Ruane	Michael F.	PFC	70
Broadnax	Solomon		68/69	Krouse	Gary D.		68/69	Schmidt	Francis G.		68/69
Brummer	Robert G.		69	Kruger	Richard A	PFC	67	Schoenstein	Paul T.		68/69
Bullard	William		70	Lairsey	James R.	SSG	68/69	Scott	George L.		68/69
Chang	Andre P	PFC	67	LaSalle		SGT		Scovil Jr.	Winston	PSG	69
Christie	Donald J	PFC	67	Leigh	Robert H.		69	Smith	Sherman C.		69
Clark	David E.	LT	69/70	Lopez-Rodriguez	Alberto		68/69	Stone	Rodney G.		69
Clayton	Billie	SP4	70	Majurin	Robert J.		69	Thomas	Hilton O		68/69
Corblies	Michael J.		69	Maloney	Terrence M.		68/69	Towns	David		68
Crist	Kenneth W.		68/69	Marsh	Marvin R.		69	Vandergrift	Paul R	PFC	67
Davenport	Dennis			Martin	Charles W.		69	Venegas	Rito (Chief)		70
Davis	Lewis D.		69	Martinez	Madesto G.			Venrame	Roger J.		69
Dooley	Robert D.		68/69	Matthews	Charles O.		70	Wade		1SGT	68
Ellerbe	Harry		69	McCrae	Samuel T	SP4	70	Weiss	Joseph		70
Fennell	Michael	SGT	68	Messer	Ferrell E		69	William	Billy		70
Font	Jose A.		69	Meyers	James R.			William	Terry		70
Ford	Kenneth	PFC	67	Miller	Vernon		70	Winspear	William F	PFC	68
Garizone	Thomas		68	Munoz	George M.		70	Ziegler	Jerry W.	SP4	69
Gill	Don C.		69	Nash	Anthony P		69				

In the mail – we received this email from Jimmy Apel, Alpha Co and thought you might appreciate the humor in preparing for your trip to San Antonio.

How to Survive Driving in San Antonio

1. You must first learn to pronounce the city name. It is: "San Tone". There are other names to learn such as Bexar (Bear) but those will be included in the "advanced" course.
2. The morning rush hour is from 5:00 am to noon. The evening rush hour is from noon to 7:00 pm. Friday's rush hour starts on Thursday morning.
3. The minimum acceptable speed on most freeways is 85 mph. On Loop 1604, your speed is expected to at least match the highway number. Anything less is considered "Wussy".
4. Forget the traffic rules you learned elsewhere. San Antonio has its own version of traffic rules. For example, cars/trucks with the loudest muffler go first at a four-way stop; the trucks with the biggest tires go second. However; SUV-driving, cell phone-talking moms ALWAYS have the right of way.
5. If you actually stop at a yellow light, you will be rear-ended, cussed out, and possibly shot.
6. Never honk at anyone. Ever. Seriously. It's another offense that can get you shot.
7. Road construction is permanent and continuous in San Antonio. Detour barrels are moved around for your entertainment pleasure during the night to make the next day's driving a bit more exciting.
8. Watch carefully for road hazards such as drunks, skunks, dogs, barrels, cones, cows, horses, cats, mattresses, shredded tires, squirrels, rabbits, crows, vultures, javelinas, roadrunners, rattlesnakes, and the coyotes feeding on any of these items. (e.g. watch out for folks who slow down to gawk or decide whether they want to stop and pick it up and take it home!)
9. If someone actually has their turn signal on, wave them to the shoulder immediately to let them know it has been "accidentally activated."
10. If you are in the left lane and only driving 70 in a 55-65 mph zone, you are considered a road hazard and will be "flipped off" accordingly. If you return the flip, you could be shot.
11. For summer driving, it is advisable to wear potholders on your hands due to the fact the steering wheel will be 412 degrees F.
12. True San Antonians ALWAYS seek to park in a shady spot, even before the sun has risen, and no matter how far the parking space is from the office/store/restaurant. This is why you will see cars widely scattered around a parking lot instead of clustered in one place; these people arrived early to park in covered spaces or under trees.
13. If the driver stopped in front of you at a red light suddenly opens his passenger door, it is advisable to quickly avert your eyes before he spits out his chewing tobacco.
14. Last but for sure not least, when you are heading East on I-10 from Boerne you are actually heading (driving) South on an interstate that goes East & West? Go figure...

Until the next time, please take very good care and we look forward to seeing you in San Antonio.

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6-31st Battalion Newsletter – General Comments

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