

# Boot to Boot

COMPANY D  
1<sup>ST</sup> BATTALION  
12<sup>TH</sup> CAVALRY

VIETNAM, 1965-1972



FOR HE TODAY THAT SHEDS HIS BLOOD WITH ME SHALL BE MY BROTHER FROM THIS DAY TO THE ENDING OF THE WORLD

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 4

OCTOBER 2017

## 2018 Delta Reunion

San Antonio, Texas

September 6-9

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el Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel  
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## #1's Corner



We have just returned from Tucson from our second Delta Company

reunion.

It was great fun seeing Company members from all the years of its existence during the Sixties and early Seventies.

We have a proud heritage that dates back to the formation of the Company in 1963 as Delta 1/187 Abn Inf that Col. John Gergulis speaks so well of. We all belong to the lineage and are proud of it.

We shared a lot of laughter about all those crazy situations that we got into. We shed some tears for those that are in Fiddlers Green. We broke bread together at our banquet and had an excellent speaker.

We were surprised by a wedding proposal by Frank Crary and the

proposed presentation of the Distinguished Service Cross to him as well.

We had that Delta Devilish drink Fireball that was tried by all at least once.

We had an election that brought us a new number 2 & 3 Tom Kjos and Fred MacLennan. We also selected representatives from our respective groups: Jerry Fell (65-66), Ron Redalen (67-68) and Fred Bell (69-72).

John Gergulis remains as our fearless Col. and Luther Nixon our Honorary Command Sergeant Major.

Next year we're off to San Antonio and where to next is not yet on the books. Big thanks to Tom Kjos for his leadership for the past reunion and his crew Frank Crary and Chuck Rose.

God Bless and pray for Peter Vander Ven as he grieves the loss of his wife Annette.

*"Boot to Boot"*

Dwight D Edwards  
President, AKA #1

## Delta Company Website Update

Greetings Delta Brothers. Recent important changes to the web site include:

- The website photo index used to be straight down the intro page. Now there is a new and separate Photo Index Page which is accessed on the intro page. This change was done because of the new additions of photos which made the finding of particular photo pages increasingly awkward.
- Available photos from the Tucson reunion have been added. Thanks to all who sent them.
- Added a button to show the planned return to Vietnam trip schedule. (Found on Intro Page).
- Continued the on-going updates to the Roster for all periods.
- Be on the look out for some new pages from Mark Vinglish, Ronald Morgan, Jammie Swidecki, and Lonnie Anderson. These photo pages will be on the web site this month.
- Added a picture of Larry Cheney, which Larry gave me at the reunion, to Franklin Smith's photo page. Also changed the music on that page to *Flowers on the Wall* which Larry Cheney was famous for singing at humorous moments in Vietnam.
- Added a link to Jonathan Wild's *Keep Old Glory Flying* next to his photo on Gary DeRigne's photo page.

It was wonderful to see all the Delta Troopers at the reunion in Tucson. Its a real honor to spend time with such an honored group of combat veterans.

*Bob March*

WHAT WE DO IN LIFE ECHOES IN ETERNITY

### **A Message From Delta Secretary Fred Mac Lennan**

It is my pleasure to serve you as the Secretary of the Delta 1/12 Association. So, for the next year I will be taking notes of our Board Meetings and informing you of any changes or ideas that have been discussed in those meetings thru this newsletter. That, gentlemen, is the easy part.

My main objective moving forward is to locate as many Delta veterans as possible. To date we have amassed 1355 names of men that served with Delta between 1965 and 1972. We have accounted for 446 veterans (alive or deceased). The 909 men not yet found need to be looked for; we need your help.

I truly believe that there are no exceptions to this statement *“We are not getting any younger, our memory is not as good as it used to be and our overall health is not better than it was 40 years ago.”* The time to find these guys is now.

Review the roster from your era, pick out a few names of guys whom you served with, that have not been found and look for them. Speak with anyone who attended our reunion in Tucson. I would be surprised if anyone says it was not a great experience, and a good turnout of nearly 70 Delta Veterans. Yet I am sure most would agree it would have been even better with more of our guys. We only achieve that by finding these remaining men.

Please feel free to call me any time to discuss ways to search for missing comrades. My phone number is 347-853-1281. I look forward to speaking with you.

*Fred Mac Lennan*

## Two Streams, a Small Unit Action April 7, 1966

*Bob March*

This story really began about a week before on March 31 when Delta Company air assaulted into LZ Eagle to relieve A company and the 1/9th who had been engaged all night with over 1000 NVA. LZ Eagle was less than a klick from the Cambodian border. When Delta arrived in the morning there was a downed Chinook and two burned Hueys along with 197 NVA bodies. This was the first real contact of Operation Lincoln, which had commenced March 25th, 1966. Operation Lincoln was intended to stunt the build up in the Ia Drang/Chu Pong area after the Pleiku Campaign in November, 1965. The 32nd, 33rd, and 66th NVA regiments were still active in the area and building strength.

Upon arrival at LZ Eagle, Recon platoon was ordered to locate the remaining NVA. Recon spent the next week patrolling night and day and into Cambodia. (This period is the subject of another story.)

On the evening of April 6th the Recon platoon arrived at LZ Hawk, three clicks east of the Cambodian border and at the base of the Chu Pong Massive, where the 1/12th Battalion CP, as well as the rest of Delta and part of Alpha Company were located. Recon platoon spent the night in relative comfort for the first time in over a week, feeling fortunate not to be on some night patrol or ambush.

The next morning, April 7th, a squad of the Delta Weapons Platoon (AT Platoon) was on a Recon clearing patrol about a klick south of the perimeter when they encountered a few NVA. There was an exchange of gunfire and one member of the Weapons Platoon was wounded (believed to be SP4 Carl Berg).

The Battalion S-3 then ordered the Delta Recon Platoon to patrol south and find the NVA. LT Carpenter, the platoon leader, decided to take two of the three squads of the Recon platoon. Included in the patrol was SGT Lute's squad and SSG Rubio's along with the company medic, SP4 Jerome Baylor, the FO, SGT Larry Cheney, and the two Platoon RTO's (PFC Bob March and PFC John Rockwell). The platoon was very much under strength due to hospitalization, so the total on the patrol was around 20.

Recon headed south from LZ Hawk. They passed a hut in a field and decided to ignore it. After about three clicks they intersected a dry stream bed and followed it south west. They then found freshly dug spider holes, which had been poorly camouflaged.

Approaching a thick grove of brush and trees that lined that part of the stream bed, LT Carpenter made a critical decision. He directed SSG Rubio's squad to cross the dried stream bed and move along the south side, parallel to SGT Lute's squad on the north. SGT Lute's squad and the Command group watched SSG Rubio's squad cross the stream bed and move out. Then the rest of Recon followed the stream bed towards the brush and trees.

As they approached the brush, suddenly what appeared to be a bush got up and ran right in front of the point man, across the line of march. If the point man had acted fast he could have tripped the VC. Why the VC, who was probably a guide for the NVA, just didn't shoot is anyone's guess. PFC March aimed and was squeezing the trigger on his rifle as LT Carpenter ran right in front of him towards the VC. (March came within a millisecond of shooting the platoon leader as he let off the trigger.) LT Carpenter ran over to the VC, who had crouched behind an ant hill, and decapitated him by emptying a magazine into his head. He then yelled: "He's mine!" It was at this point that all hell broke loose.

(Continued on page 9)

## Tucson Delta Reunion October 2017

Delta's second-ever reunion was held at the *Desert Diamond Resort Hotel* in Tucson, Arizona, October 3-6, 2017.

Most arrived on Tuesday, in time to catch our busses for the *Welcome Dinner* at AmVets Post 770, where we were treated to spaghetti and karaoke featuring the vocal stylings of Delta veterans LTC (ret) Chuck Rose, MOH recipient John Baca and others. Delta's Hospitality Suite on the top floor of our hotel wing was open before – and after – the welcome event.

A Delta veterans few arrived early to take in local sites like the *Mission San Xavier del Bac*, or like Fred Lange and Dave Hendrickson, decided to relive the days of Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday, and the Old West in *Tombstone, Arizona*.

On Wednesday, some rested from their travel, others tried their luck at the casino. Nearly everyone spent time in Delta's Hospitality Suite. Many took our bus to the *Pima Air & Space Museum*, a huge and impressive display of warbirds and commercial aircraft. Where else are there two B-52's, a Huey and a Cobra, an SR-71 and a Boeing 787 Dreamliner, along with hundreds of other aircraft from the earliest days of aviation to the most recent? Wednesday was also a big day in the Hospitality Suite.

Thursday was a big day...in every way. At 0900 was our traditional *Memorial Service* with the reading of the *Roll of Honor* of those who died in Vietnam, our own Reverend Dwight Edwards officiating.

After we saw the ladies off for a *Tubac Gallery & Shopping Adventure*, Delta's *Business Meeting* elected leadership for the next two years (**Delta Company Contacts and Addresses**, page 12), considered reunion possibilities, received an outline of our efforts to find Delta veterans, and got a description of the April 2018 Return to

Vietnam with *Vietnam Battlefield Tours* (page 10). We decided to gather in San Antonio, Texas next September for another Delta reunion (page 11). All of 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry is welcome. After disposing of our business, we again relaxed and shared memories in the Hospitality Suite.

During the *Reception*, a mounted cavalry patrol delivered our flags, then the mournful bagpipe strains of *Garry Owen* accompanied the posting of the colors. Delta's own Jonathan Wild's award-winning video *Keep Old Glory Flying* was introduced by 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon Sergeant Gary Derigne, Delta '69 (page 11). After *The Fallen Comrade Table*, Delta recognized Frank Crary, for a finally pending and long overdue *Distinguished Service Cross* for actions in 1966 having now passed both Houses of Congress. Frank surprised most of us by proposing to girlfriend Sandy Trebbe. Then after the *Traditional Toasts* dinner was served.

Following dinner, speaker *Allen Lynch*, awarded the *Medal of Honor* for his actions in Delta at the Battle of Tam Quan in 1967, reminded us that though we gave much a half-century ago we still can do so in important ways, as Allen has through his *Medal of Honor Veterans Foundation*. (<http://www.ajlynchfoundation.org/>).

The Hospitality Room re-opened immediately after the banquet, allowing renewal of acquaintances and sharing of memories well into the wee hours of Saturday morning. I mentioned Delta's hospitality suite, didn't I?

Delta was privileged to welcome John Baca and Allen Lynch, its two living recipients of the *Medal of Honor* and *Distinguished Service Cross* recipient Roger Hattersley, Delta's one living veteran of three recipients.

Sadly, tragedy struck one of our own Saturday evening when a auto accident took the life of Annette, wife of Pete Vander Ven Delta '69-'70. Our condolences to Pete and the Vander Ven family.



*Welcome Dinner* Katherine March & Alex Barber



*Welcome Dinner* Babes Gergulis, John Gergulis, Pete La Count



*Welcome Dinner* Karaoke with Chuck Rose. Dwight Edwards, foreground (Right)

*Welcome Dinner* Fred Mac Lennan, Tom Kjos, Lafe Smith (Left)



John Baca (Left)  
*Medal of Honor 1970*

Allen Lynch (Below)  
*Medal of Honor 1967*  
our Banquet Speaker



*Welcome Dinner*  
(Left) Chuck & Linda Doole



*The Proposal* Sandra Trebbe & Frank Cray



*1969-1970* Left to Right: LT Lafe Smith, Fred Bell, Fred Lange, Deryl Houser, Lonnie Alexander, Doug Kuhlman, Larry Toczek, Dave Guenther, Dale Deforge, Dave Hendrickson, Arthur Colbert, Larry Tax, Mike McKinney, CO



*Recon Platoon 1965-66*  
 Sitting L-R : CO John Gergulis, Alex Barber, Bob Ruiz, Franklin Smith, Walter Wilczak  
 Standing L-R: XO Sam Watson, Dwight Edwards, Bob March, Larry Cheney, Don Trotter, Chuck Doole, Jerry Fell, Mike Van Kirk, Chuck Rose, Frank Crary

*October's Quote*  
 (For Delta Recon 65-66)  
 "Just drive down that road until you get blown up" - General George Patton, to a Recon Platoon



Fred Mac Lennan,  
 Jon Dodson

*Bonus Quote* "A Medal just proves that were you smart enough to think of a plan, stupid enough to try it, and lucky enough to survive."  
 -Unknown-



*Hospitality Suite - Late Night* Facing from Left: John Kirby, Ray Ferber, Gary Downs, Tom Kjos, Sandra Neeley; Back to camera, from right: James Neeley, Ken Goff, Ron Redalen



*1968 Delta CP* (Above)  
L-R John Kirby, Ken Goff,  
Ron Redalen, Doug Christ



*Reception* L-R Bob March, Jill Hattersley,  
Tom Kjos, Roger Hattersley (*DSC 1966*,  
seated), Frank Crary (*DSC 1966* pending),  
Ray Ferber



*Map Recon* (Left) L-R  
Dave Hendrickson, Fred  
Lange, Jon Dodson



*The Presentation*  
Chuck Rose, Frank Crary,  
Alex Barber (Right)



**Two Streams (continued from page 3)** The NVA (estimated to be 100 strong) had observed Recon's approach and opened up furiously. Everyone in Recon took off and ran toward the shooting at high speed, like they were trained to do. SGT Lute lead the way and was out in front, being a fast runner. PFC March was about 20 feet to his right, also in front. All the troopers moved towards the enemy, laying down a base of automatic fire. SGT Lute's squad spread out more or less on line. Suddenly SGT Lute went down into the prone position with his rifle outstretched in front of him, as if to fire. PFC March, who had been an RTO about 3 hours, had to run back 25 yards to LT Carpenter.

Immediately, SGT Cheney contacted the Delta Mortar platoon and began a fire mission. But realizing that SGT Lute was not moving, LT Carpenter had to determine if SGT Lute was dead before dropping mortars near him. He asked for volunteers to brave the intense fire and run forward and check on SGT Lute. PFC March and PFC Charlie Miller both volunteered and Charlie Miller was picked to run forward. (Carpenter told March: "No, you're my RTO.") As Charlie ran forward, the remaining members of Recon fired heavily to reduce the risk to him. He ran forward quickly and checked SGT Lute, who had been shot in the head. As he ran back his eyes were as large as saucers and he yelled: "He's dead." Charlie had been shot through the helmet right in the forehead area, with a big hole blown out the back. It would have killed him, but the bullet was miraculously diverted around his head between the helmet liner and the steel pot, leaving only a bad welt. Lucky Charlie.

Meanwhile, on the south side of the stream bed SGT Rubio's squad was also heavily engaged. PFC Robert Ruiz was one of the lead troopers and was less than 20 feet from the NVA positions. He was behind a small tree for cover, but the NVA were hammering at him with heavy fire. He decided to run for a nearby ant hill and was hit badly in the arm, knocking him down. The Medic, SP4 Jerome Baylor, ran over to check on Robert. Then an NVA threw a grenade at them and SP4 Baylor placed himself between the grenade and Robert, taking the full force of the blast, killing himself and falling over dead on top of Robert.

SP4 David Bailey was moving along the north side of the stream bed shooting it out with NVA positioned in Spider holes. Many of them were running back to their central position where a second stream bed met the first. As SP4 Bailey was shooting at one NVA, another NVA shot SP4 Bailey in the stomach, knocking him down. He was in terrible pain calling for the Medic. Two troopers ran over, picked him up and carried him to the rear through a hail of bullets. As they carried him away he was angry and yelled, "Kill the Mother F...ers!" SP4 David Bailey died of his wounds the next day.

SGT Cheney started bringing in Delta mortars on the NVA positions. It was "danger close" to the Recon troopers who were elated to see the mortars so on target. Mortars immediately suppressed incoming fire from the NVA, which allowed the wounded to be transported to a medevac area. Delta fired mortars at a high rate until they ran out of both HE and Willie Peter rounds. The Delta mortar platoon was firing so furiously that they actually had to urinate on the mortar tubes to cool them. Delta mortars were effective, likely preventing the much larger NVA unit from over-running Recon.

LT Carpenter radio'd back to SGT Webb's squad and told them to come and help as fast as they could. They double timed for the entire three clicks, heading towards the sound of hell unleashed without hesitation. He also told SSG Rubio to get the remainder of his squad back across to the north side of the stream bed and join the survivors. This was easier said than done, as the NVA had different ideas. (To be continued in the next issue of *Bunt-to-Bunt*)

Other companies of the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry will be welcome in San Antonio.

## *Fiddler's Green*

We have memorialized by a *Reading of the Roll of Honor* Delta Brothers lost in Vietnam at each reunion. We will again next year in San Antonio, and at every reunion after, as long as we are standing. It's also important to remember those who have passed away since. As of the July issue of *Bunt-to-Bunt* we had identified 89 brothers gone from among us. We unfortunately now add these twenty-seven.

THOMAS E BRADFORD  
ROBERT L. CATHER  
JOHN ORVILLE COX  
BERT H DELAHOUSAYE  
WILLIAM C DITTMAN  
CHARLES J FAW  
CARROL T GLASCOE  
RAYMOND DUBLIN  
CECIL L GREEN

ROBERT HAWKINSON  
ROBERT E HEMMESCH  
ARTHUR V JAMES  
DONALD JOLLY  
DALE LAMBORN  
HOWARD L LICKTEIG  
PATRICK J LIPSKY  
RICHARD A LUNDEIN  
DENNIS O'CLAIR

STEVEN F ROUSE  
RONALD M SHULER  
EDGAR E SOSBE  
KENNETH A SPENCER  
WESLEY SPILLMAN  
JERRY S TROMBLEY  
DENNIS K VAN ORDER  
DAVID C. WILLIAMS  
ARTO F WILLIS

*Unfortunately, this is a list that grows ever longer. It is possible that we have listed someone in error. If you see your name here, please contact Delta's webmaster at [recondelta@embarqmail.com](mailto:recondelta@embarqmail.com) Do the same if you know of a Delta Veteran who has gone on to Fiddler's Green.*

*Bob March, Fred Mac Lennan & Tom Kjos*

### VIETNAM RETURN UPDATE

The itinerary on *Vietnam Battlefield Tours* has been updated. Updates from the previously posted itinerary include an evening flight to Pleiku that saves us an otherwise lost day in Saigon, and not only gets us additional time in the Central Highlands and coastal Binh Dinh, but adequate "down-time" in Hoi An and Hue later. Field visits include FSB's like Pace, Snapper, and English; battle sites like Hoa Hoi, and Tam Quan, campaign terrain like Dak To and A Chau. We submitted coordinates for these sites for early approval, and included those in the Reunion packet and in emails. Our itinerary is also available on Delta's website at <http://www.cattrack6india.com/>

More than a dozen Delta veterans have expressed interest, and it's important now to get your deposit and paperwork in to *Vietnam Battlefield Tours*, since as soon as the itinerary was published on VBT's site, the trip is open to all. Some spaces have already been taken.

Check your passport's expiration; you need extra photos. Inoculations need to be up-to-date. Everything you need to know is at <http://www.vietnambattlefieldtours.com/>

### OTHER 2018 CAVALRY REUNIONS

1st Cavalry Division Association, Charleston, WV, June 20-25. <https://www.1cda.org/annual-reunion.html>  
12th Cavalry Regiment Association, Branson, MO, September 13-17. <http://www.12thcav.us/>

## Delta's 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Reunion San Antonio, Texas, 6-9 September 2018

**HOTEL** – *El Tropicano Riverwalk Hotel* (<http://www.eltropicanohotel.com/>) Rooms will cost \$127.00 per night including all taxes and fees, with 2 free breakfast buffets. There will be no resort fee and WiFi is free. Rooms are available at this rate for three days before and after the reunion. Make your reservations at the toll free number 877-736-4311. Tell the operator you are attending the *1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry Reunion*. Or make your reservation on line by copy-paste-click of:  
<https://reservations.travelclick.com/75553?groupID=1747584&hotelID=75553#/guestsandrooms>

**TRANSPORTATION** – A trolley runs every 15-20 minutes from a stop just a block away from the hotel, making all of downtown is easily accessible. A Double Decker Bus stops in front of the hotel every 20 minutes for a “Hop-on, Hop-off” tour of San Antonio. (We are looking into the possibility of having a Van Shuttle to and from the airport on Thursday and Sunday.)

**REGISTRATION FEE** – To be determined.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE** – *Final Schedule* and *Registration Form* in the January Newsletter.

Thursday, 6 September – Check into hotel and register. Welcome Dinner at *VFW Post 76*. Our *Hospitality Suite* in the *Trinidad Room* will be open from Thursday afternoon through Saturday night.

Friday, 7 September – In the morning attend *Lackland Air Force Base Airman Graduation Parade* then visit *Fort San Houston Quadrangle*, *FSH Museum* and tour the Post. Lunch at *Mi Tierra Restaurant* in the *Mercado* (Mexican market), then take a *River Boat Tour* of the Downtown Area.

Saturday, 8 September – *Memorial Service* and Company *General Membership Meetings* in the morning, with a tour of the *Alamo* in the Afternoon, and our *Banquet* in the evening.

Saturday, 9 September – Departure day.

This will be another great event. Delta’s success at finding its Brothers-in-Arms has made its reunions bigger and better every time, and San Antonio will not be an exception. It’s where you’re most likely to see that friend of a half-century ago. Other companies of the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry are welcome!



Delta Veteran Jonathan Wild was lost to cancer linked to Agent Orange in 2011. His award-winning video *Keep Old Glory Flying*, introduced by Jonathan’s 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon Sergeant Gary DeRigne, was a highlight of our reunion banquet.

**In the Next Issue of *Boot-to-Boot***

Everything you need to know about our 2018 San Antonio reunion. Fiddler’s Green, Web Site Update, President’s message and other news. Part 2 of Two Streams. Your submissions are wanted.

# *Boot to Boot*

Association of Delta Company  
1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry  
9817 W Mockingbird Dr  
Sun City, AZ 85373

Mailing Permit  
or  
Postage

## Delta Company Contacts and Addresses

### President

Dwight Edwards (717) 657-3269 dedwa28@verizon.net

### Vice President/ Newsletter Editor

Tom Kjos (480) 352-2583 tomwkjos03@gmail.com

### Secretary/Outreach

Fred Mac Lennan (347) 853-1281 fredmacl66@gmail.com

### Webmaster/Historian

Bob March (360) 779-3149 recondelta@embarqmail.com

### 2018 Reunion

Chuck Rose (210) 854-4131 chuckrose@gvtc.com

### 65-66 Era Representative

Jerry Fell (512) 923-4232 hometoo@sbcglobal.net

### 67-68 Era Representative

Ron Redalen (651) 274-9052 rrrredalen@hotmail.com

### 69-72 Era Representative

Fred Bell (305) 369-3247 fred\_ester@msn.com

### Mail for the Website

Bob March  
1509 Sawdust Hill Road NE  
Paulsbo, WA 98370-9127

### Mail for the Newsletter

Tom Kjos  
9817 W Mockingbird Dr  
Sun City, AZ 85373-2136