

Boot to Boot

COMPANY D
1ST BATTALION
12TH 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 7 ISSUE 4

OCTOBER 2022

Leaving Las Vegas

Delta Brothers Look Back on Six Reunions

Over the decades since 1972, one by one, a few at a time, D Company Vietnam veterans had attended Division and Regimental reunions hoping to celebrate friendships forged in foxholes. Along the way, old soldiers found each other and small groups occasionally got together, Fred MacLennan with “his boys,” and others.

In 2011, Bob March launched a website for D Company at <http://www.cattrack6india.com/>

A meeting at the 1st Cavalry Division’s 2012 Reunion in Portland, Oregon, and again later that year at the 12th Regiment Reunion in Branson, Missouri, followed. Chuck Rose became the first President of a Delta Veterans Association. A decision was taken

to expand the organization and the focus of the web site to include all Delta veterans who served in Vietnam.

The next task was to locate as many brothers as possible and bring them together. Teams traveled to the National Archives in Maryland multiple times to identify more than 1,400 brothers who served with Delta in Vietnam. Chuck Rose organized the first Delta reunion in San Antonio, Texas in 2015.

Since 2016 Fred MacLennan has led an effort to locate our veterans, finding nearly 800 of the 1400 (alive and deceased), giving us “active” roster of nearly 350.

Our second reunion was in Tucson, Arizona in 2017, followed just a year later by a return to San Antonio (with A Company) when the 12th Regiment reneged on a commitment to move from Branson. Trying to get on a schedule coordinated with the

1st Cavalry Division, we were at Fort Benning, Georgia in 2019. Plans to “piggy-back” the Division in 2020 were ruined by a COVID cancellation, but we rebounded in 21-22 with back-to-back events in Las Vegas.

Beginning with our first stand-alone Delta reunion, we’ve developed our own way of doing things, military traditions that make our banquet special events. Those are described on page 4.

We take a photographic look back at 11 years (2012-2022) of reunions beginning on page 5.

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June 13-17, 2023
1st Cavalry Division
75th Reunion
Louisville, Kentucky
Tell Your Delta Company
Brothers to meet you there



Crowne Plaza Airport Expo Center



830 Phillips Lane

Louisville, KY 40209

Included: Parking, Airport Shuttle, On-site & nearby Restaurants, 588 Rooms, near Churchill Downs. Room block rate, \$124 + tax.

Book: (502) 367-2251 reference code SAL or <https://book.passkey.com/e/49951844>

THIS IS DELTA'S 2023 REUNION

INFORMATION AT <https://1cda.org/annual-reunion/>

MAJOR EVENTS

Wednesday, 14 June

Check into hotel and register. Reunion Room, Souvenir Shop, Bus to Downtown (all are every day)

Thursday, 15 June

Legacy Breakfast, Ladies Tea on the riverboat *Belle of Louisville*, President's Reception at Churchill Downs with night racing.

Friday, 16 June

Purple Hear Breakfast, Unit Luncheons, Reception and Reunion Banquet

Saturday, 17 June

Group Breakfast, Memorial Service, Check out of Hotel & Depart.

OTHER ACCOMMODATION OPTIONS

Spring Hill Suites Louisville Airport (502) 361-9009

Tru by Hilton Louisville Airport (502) 792-8800

Hampton Inn Louisville Airport (502) 366-8100

Howard Johnson by Windham Louisville Airport (502) 363-9952

Courtyard by Marriott Louisville Airport (502) 368-5678

Derby Park Campgrounds & RV Parking (502) 636-3532

1ST CAVALRY DIVISION REUNION REGISTRATION FORM ATTACHED



***First Commander's
Corner***

It is Our fondest hope and prayer that this latest Delta quarterly 2022 newsletter finds you and yours in good health and enjoying the many joys and blessings

of this wonderful journey of life we are all on! We are pleased to report that Delta’s Reunion at South Point Resort and Casino, 3–6 October, was another huge success, thanks to ALL the volunteers who worked throughout the year to bring us our best reunion yet. For those of you unable to join us, know that you were very much missed.

With pipes accompanying the retiring of the colors in Las Vegas still echoing the strains of Garry Owen, our Secretary, Fred MacLennan, is already leading the charge, researching venues for our 2024 reunion, tentatively set for July in Washington, D. C.

In the meantime, in 2023 Delta will “piggy-back” the 1st Cavalry Division Association’s 75th Annual Reunion in Louisville, Kentucky, 13–17 June 2023. I hope to see you in Louisville!

But 2023 will mark yet another milestone for some of our Delta Bothers, yours truly included. In 1963 D Company, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 187th Infantry, 11th Air Assault Division (Test) was activated at the old Harmony Church bivouac area. That unit was later reflagged as Delta 1st Battalion (Airborne), 12th Cavalry before its deployment to Vietnam in September 1965. Those sixty years have flashed by, and just a few of us who served in the 187th Infantry at Fort Benning survive today. I am working on a special celebration of that sixtieth anniversary for the veterans who were there in 1963-1965. Look for details in our January 2023 Newsletter.

I know I am joined by all of Our Delta Brothers in wishing each of you and yours a very Healthy and Happy Thanksgiving.

May CHRISTmas 2022 bring to each of you, HOPE, PEACE and JOY, this holiday season and in the year to come. have brought a bit of sunshine to a Brother!

THE GREATEST CASUALTY IS BEING FORGOTTEN ©
Wounded Warrior Project

Blessings & Boot to Boot

Johnny Sergulis

FIDDLER’S GREEN

Sadly, we report three more who have joined our brothers in
That shady meadow green, the eternal resting place known as Fiddler's Green.

JOHN BROWN

ROGER HUDSON

KIRK KNIGHT

OUR REUNION BANQUET TRADITIONS

MILITARY BANQUETS Delta's Reunion Banquets follow traditions established over centuries of celebratory military feasts. The Roman Legions regaled, and the Vikings feasted, to celebrate battles and honor heroes. As a formal institution, "dining in" began in English monasteries and universities in the 1500's, and during the eighteenth century formal Regimental Dinners became a tradition in the British Army. American units held Mess Nights in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The tradition waned after the Civil War, but revived in World War II.

THE OPENING - "KEEP OLD GLORY FLYING" In 1969 Jonathan Wild joined Delta Company in Vietnam, where his guitar was near at hand when his machine gun didn't have to be. After Vietnam, he settled in Lompoc, California, raised a family, and performed on stages throughout California, never forgetting the men with whom he served.

Cancer took Jonathan Wild in May of 2011. We first played Jon's "Keep Old Glory Flying," at our Tucson Reunion in 2017. Jonathan Wild has been with us at every Reunion since.

POSTING THE COLORS - "GARRYOWEN" The command "Post the Colors" wakes the strains of "Garryowen," as a piper leads in the color guard carrying the National Colors, those of the 1st Cavalry Division, and Delta Company's Guidon with the 24 Campaign and Award Streamers earned in the Vietnam War. An Irish drinking song, Garryowen already had a long military history—it was the song of the 88th Regiment of Foot in the Peninsula War, 1811—before it was brought to the 7th Cavalry in 1867 by officers with ties to the Fifth Royal Irish Lancers. The Regimental Band played it as Lt. Col. George Armstrong Custer's 7th Cavalry left the Powder River and rode into history at the Little Big Horn.

THE FALLEN AND MISSING SOLDIER TABLE Set at every formal American Military Banquet, the table is covered with a white tablecloth. On it is a Single Red Rose, Red Ribbon, Slice of Lemon a Pinch of Salt, and a Candle. The Glass is Inverted. The Chair is Empty. During the banquet, the meaning of the table and each item on it will be explained.

HISTORY VIDEO - Beginning with the 2018 San Antonio Reunion, webmaster Bob March has produced a video telling some part of our Vietnam story to be shown at our Banquet. The tradition continued in Las Vegas this year with a unique set of videos, titled "*The Old Soldier*," part of our "*Bob Hope Show*" presentation. After our event a more complete version can be found at <http://www.cattrack6india.com/photoindex.html>

THE TOASTS - From whimsical (and sometimes profane...but not here) to serious and formal, toasts have been an honored custom of military banquets as long as they have been held.

THE REUNION PROGRAM - D Company's programs have been diverse and distinguished:
2015 - Former Commander, US Army South, Major General (Ret) Alfred Valenzuela
2017 - D Company (Vietnam) Recipient of the Medal of Honor, Allen Lynch
2018 - Commander of 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, at Fort Hood, Lieutenant Colonel Ryan Long
2019 - Distinguished Lawyer, Former Columbus Mayor, Colonel (Ret) Bob Poydasheff
2021 - Author, philanthropist, Former D Company (Vietnam) Platoon Sergeant, Gary DeRigne
2022 - Bill Johnson & Amber Averill star in "*A Bob Hope Christmas Encore*," with Gary DeRigne



A.J. & Lizzy Rancatore



Chuck Rose & Dwight Evans



**Piping in the Colors to
“Garryowen” is a tradition
at Delta’s Reunions**



2015 - San Antonio, 1967-68



Ray Ferber, Ron Redalen, James Neeley



2015 - San Antonio, Recon 1965-66



Todd Ruedisili, Gary Downs, Wally Speed



2019 - National Infantry Museum



2012 - Delta at the 12th Cavalry Reunion, Branson



Carl Wolfe, Fred Bell, Lonnie (Doc) Alexander, Doug Kulman, Paul Perreira, Fred Lange, Arthur Colbert, Fred MacLennan, Dave Hendrickson



m, Columbus & Fort Benning



Reuben Campos-Rodriguez



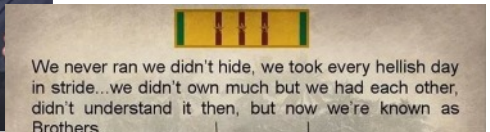
Sandra & James Neeley



Tom Kjos & Fred Mac Lennan



Fort Benning, 2019 – Walt Wilczak, Luther Nixon, Dwight Edwards, Ed Waltz, Rob Ruiz



We never ran we didn't hide, we took every hellish day in stride.. we didn't own much but we had each other, didn't understand it then, but now we're known as Brothers...



1965 - 1966

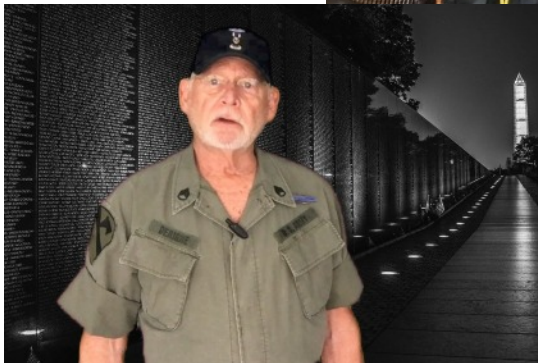
Below: Bill Johnson & Amber Averill
Duet *Thanks for the Memories*
Bob Hope Show, A Reprise for Delta



1967 - 1968



1969 - 1972



Left: Gary DeRigne as *The Old Soldier*



Poolside at South Point



Fearless Fly and Doc Alexander



Delta Check-in at South Point



**Lounging
in the D
Company
Hospitality
Suite**



Andy Rios, Ramon Ramoz, Steve Kuckelman, Stacy Swinney, Ray Ferber in Delta's Hospitality Suite



Salute!

WEBSITE UPDATE

BOB MARCH

Hello Brother Troopers,

As always, around Reunion time there is an increase of views of the Delta 1/12th Company website. This year is no exception, with about 5,000 website visits per month (about 68,000 “hits”).

The Delta Company videos continue to rack up about 4,000 views per day. The total now is 1.9 Million views. On November 11th, Veteran's Day, there were 11,000 views.

The major addition to the website is the 2022 Las Vegas Reunion photo page. Check it out by going to the Reunion Index on the website front page (See “Photos Reunion” down the left side of <http://www.cattrack6india.com/>). It's not too late to send in photos for that page. *And it's never too late to send in photos of your Vietnam experience!* Please consider that.

Unfortunately, there are several roster status updates reflecting that our brothers have passed. (See Fiddler's Greene)

Two more videos have been added to the Video page on the website. One is an extended version (call it a “Director’s Cut”) of the “Old Soldier” video that was shown at the Las Vegas Reunion. That video has received 100% “Likes” from the more than 1000 viewers to date. Check it out.

The other video was made by Mr. Lê Hoàng Linh, Deputy Head of English Division, VTV International, Vietnam Television, who attended our Las Vegas Reunion. It is a short discussion of the efforts at LZ Bird to recover remains from that battle in 1966, and an appeal for those who have any knowledge about enemy burials to contact him (or me). The video also shows some of the veterans from Charlie Company who traveled to Vietnam to assist with the LZ Bird mass grave location. That story is not yet over. Mr. Linh interviewed several Delta Brothers at the reunion, and would have done more had he not contracted covid. He is putting together a documentary film which should be out by April of next year.

There is now an email list set up so you will be notified of significant updates to the website. The sender will appear to as “ebsite Delta 1-12th Cav” If you get an email from me via that address, respond with a reply if you want that to be saved in your address book. It may go into your junk mail otherwise.

Have a great Christmas and Thanksgiving

**REMEMBER: DON'T WALK ON TRAILS AND BRING PLENTY OF AMMO.
CATTRACK6INDIA...OUT**

Bob March

(360) 627-0918

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

REGULAR FEATURES: First Commander’s Column, Web Update, Secretary’s Report, Book Review, Fiddler’s Green

HISTORY FEATURE: June 6, 1968

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Well boys, another Reunion has passed. It was good once again to see and hang out with men that I admire and respect. We may be older and uglier, but we are still on the green side of the grass which is a lot better than the other alternative.

It's always hard to say good by at the end of these affairs, but God willing we will meet again next year at the First Cavalry Reunion in Louisville, Kentucky. Information and registration forms can be downloaded from the First Cavalry Division Association Web Site

Delta Company's next Reunion will be in Washington, DC in 2024. This is still in the early planning stages, so it will be months, likely mid-2023, before details are published on the website and in the newsletter. **GOOD HEALTH**

Fred Mac Kennan

BOOK REVIEW

UP COUNTRY

Nelson DeMille

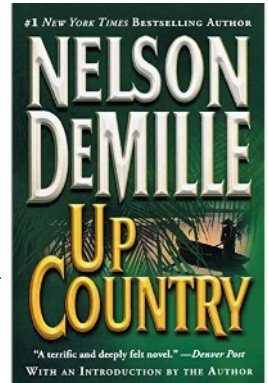
There was a story about novelist and Vietnam veteran Nelson DeMille in a recent issue of American Legion magazine. I was struck by the similarity between his Vietnam tour and mine in the 1st Cavalry Division. And Nelson DeMille seemed familiar, even though I'd not read any of his books.

I flew through his novel, *Up Country* in less than a week. The repartee of the characters was entertaining; the pace of the story was enough to hold my interest. One story? Not really. This novel is at least three things between two covers. It's a murder mystery, though that story is pretty thin. It's a romance, the principal characters engaging in a barbed repartee between shared beds, showers, and (of all things) a Nha Trang, Vietnam nude beach. DeMille writes the comedy of the battle of the sexes with a deft touch, enough to elicit frequent smiles and chuckles.

But it is also a memoir of combat in Vietnam, told as fiction, with some hyperbole, but with the edgy undercurrent of a real soldier's narrative, a soldier returning thirty years on to the killing fields where he lost his youth. That young soldier was Lieutenant DeMille, leading a platoon in D Company, 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry, and that soldier was me, with my own platoon in D Company 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry. Both in the 1st Brigade, both "saw the elephant" in Bong Son, then on to Quang Tri, Khe Sanh, and A Shau. The book's protagonist, Paul Brenner, the investigator from "he General's Daughter" is on the ultimate "old case," a murder in a combat zone. To solve it, Mr. Brenner is back in Vietnam, returning to those fields with Susan Weber, the object both of his affection (eventually), and his suspicion (immediately). She isn't the murderer, of course – that's never in play – but she may not be an ally, either. A literary case of "sleeping with the enemy."

DeMille (through Brenner) takes Susan on a tour "up country," and for a veteran, his word picture of those places at that far away time, and his description of those places as they were in 1997, when he made his own trip back, is more than worth the read.

The author's photograph on the book cover was familiar. I found a program saved for nearly a half century. The front, "Graduation Ceremony, Infantry Officer Candidate Class Number 23-67." On the back, the poem, "I am the Infantry." Inside was my name and there was "Nelson R DeMille." -*TWK*-



Boot to Boot

Veterans of Delta Company
1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry
(Vietnam)
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or
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