

# 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 1 ISSUE 2

OCTOBER 2016

## #1's Corner



In this second edition of the Delta Company newsletter there's both good news and great things on the horizon.

The 12th Cavalry Regiment's reunion in September was again a great experience. There

was a new-this-year wives' day of pampering.

Former Delta Commander John Gergulis gave a moving banquet speech, recounting the contributions of Delta Company from its 1/187th Abn Inf. roots through the inception of Delta Company 1/12th Cavalry Abn., to its service in Vietnam. He spoke to the legacy of the early veterans of the unit.

The Regiment voted to return to Branson for its 2017 reunion. San Antonio will host in 2018, our own Chuck Rose taking the lead.

Our website continues to grow with #2 Bob March gathering stories and pictures of Delta Company. Thanks Bob for your great work!

Delta Co. Researchers located documents at the National Archives, identifying over 300 new Delta Company veterans and adding to our history.

I had a busy fall with the *Interdenominational Ministers Conference of Harrisburg and Vicinity*, of which I am Chair of the *Veteran's Committee*,

launching *LZ Resurrection*, a service of Moral and Spiritual Healing for veterans and their families. The October 1 event, the first time the Faith Community welcomed veterans to a service to acknowledge the invisible wounds of war was held in Harrisburg, PA at *Bethany African Methodist Episcopal Church*. We got great feedback, so plan to conduct it annually and in other locations. Colonel John & Babes Gergulis were in attendance as was Jay Snyder, C-1-12 Platoon Leader 65-66, a State Senator and Congressional Representative.

The 2017 Delta Reunion will be held in Tucson, Arizona, October 3-6. I expect to see you all there having a great time. Thanks #3 Tom Kjos and Frank Crary for putting this together. Special thanks also to Chuck Rose for his assistance.

Charles Tapp, Delta 1966, who passed away in 2014 is honored in Fiddlers Green. His daughter, Brooke, will attend our Tucson Reunion. Happy Veterans Day and Thanksgiving!

*"Boot to Boot"*

Dwight D Edwards  
President, AKA #1

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## 2017 Delta Company Reunion in Tucson

Don't plan anything else for October 3-6, 2017, because the brothers with whom you served in Vietnam expect to see you at the Desert Diamond Resort in Tucson, Arizona. This will be our second-ever reunion, following the very special time we had in San Antonio in 2015, the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Delta landing at Quin Nhon. 2017 will mark the passing of 50 years for those who served in 1967.



Desert Diamond ([ddcaz.com/tucson/hotel](http://ddcaz.com/tucson/hotel)) provides shuttle service for arriving and departing guests. The nearby Tucson International Airport hosts 6 airlines flying non-stop from 19 cities and over 100 arriving flights daily. Mission View RV Park ([www.missionviewrv.com](http://www.missionviewrv.com)) is near the Desert Diamond Resort. Given the seasonal nature - spaces

are limited - make RV park reservations right away. But let us know when you do.

We will have an extended-hours Reunion Room in which to meet and reminisce with old friends not seen in many years. The hotel has committed to locating our rooms together in the same tower with our Reunion Room. Yes, we're already laying in a supply of our now-traditional *Fireball*.



It's first-come, first-served for the best room locations. There are a limited number of handicap rooms and rooms with a balcony (of interest to our smokers), so make your reservations for those needs as soon as they "open" in January.

Planning is not yet complete, but a Memorial Service, Delta business meeting, and our banquet are certainly on the schedule. Other possible events include a Tuesday Welcome Dinner at Tucson's AmVets club, a visit to the *Pima Air and Space Museum* ([www.pimaair.org](http://www.pimaair.org)) and an excursion for the ladies to the quaint shops, galleries and eateries of the historic Tubac Artist's Community.

We had 50 Delta veterans in San Antonio, and believe—with your help—we can double that number in Tucson. (See Archives article on page 4.) We really want to see you - each of you - in Tucson.

*"Memories are always special... Sometimes we laugh when remembering the days we cried, and we cry when remembering the days that we laughed."*  
- Anonymous -

## Other Cavalry Reunions, Past and Future

Many of you attended the 11th Annual 12th Cavalry Regiment Association Reunion last month at the Welk Resort in Branson, Missouri. As always, it was an excellent event. Look for the Regiment's newsletter for information on the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual, again in September in Branson.

Earlier in the summer the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Association had its reunion in Las Vegas. Again, many of you were among the 700+ 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry veterans who attended. The Cav's reunion in 2017 will be with the active division at Ft. Hood, Texas. Expect details in the November-December issue of the *Saber*.

## Operation Pegasus, April 1968

### Relief of the 26<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment at Khe Sanh Combat Base

An image of Delta's 3<sup>rd</sup> platoon sorting through weapons found in an NVA supply depot near Khe Sanh in April 1968 has lately been seen on the web (it's also on Delta's web site). At the National Archives we learned the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 12<sup>th</sup> Daily Journals for that period are missing, but the Division's survived, and from 167 pages covering OPERATION PEGASUS, we can outline Delta's activity.

PEGASUS jumped off at 0700 on 1 April 1968, when two Marine Battalions attacked west along Highway 9 toward KHE SANH COMBAT BASE, defended by the 26<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment. After the morning weather cleared enough for air operations, the Cav's 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade air assaulted, taking control of LZ's commanding the high ground along the highway.

Over the next few days, the Marines fought their way westward against light opposition while engineer units restored the highway behind them. The Cav's 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigade attacked west and south from LZ's MIKE and CATES, bracketing Route 9. On 3 April, one day ahead of schedule, 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry air assaulted into the battle, establishing LZ's TOM, THOR and WHARTON even further toward KSCB.

The 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, of which we were a part, did not enter the battle until 5 April; before that Delta was working to the west of Quang Tri. On 2 April at 0632, 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon's 1<sup>st</sup> squad received small arms fire while returning from an overnight ambush. A few minutes later (0707), a returning squad on the far side of the perimeter tripped a booby trap; 2 were medevac'd. Later that morning Delta found two dead enemy soldiers, and a TOKAREV 7.62 mm pistol. Early that afternoon Delta air assaulted into a "green" LZ at YD279492 and soon found a cache of rice, 2 rifles, TNT, and ammunition. There's no mention of the company—or of the 1/12<sup>th</sup>—over the next two days; we assume the battalion was being extracted to LZ SHARON in preparation for joining PEGASUS. SHARON took 25 rounds of 82mm mortar fire the night of the 4<sup>th</sup>, likely interrupting Delta's short rest.

The morning of 5 April, 1/8<sup>th</sup>, which would lead the two-battalion air assault into LZ SNAPPER (the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade's Commander was Donald "Snapper" Rattan) was lifted to the staging area at LZ STUD (Ca Lu). Except for a side trip by Delta's 3<sup>rd</sup> Platoon, which was inserted at noon at YD209408 to secure a ¼ ton trailer "dropped from an aircraft," 1/12<sup>th</sup> followed. 1/8<sup>th</sup> lifted out of STUD at 1300 on the first combat assault into the mountains between Khe Sanh and the Laotian border to establish SNAPPER at XD841345. Fifty minutes later, the first elements of 1/12<sup>th</sup> were also in the air on the way to a "green" LZ. Barely an hour and half later, two infantry battalions, two artillery batteries, two Quad 50's, a searchlight, and a bulldozer were on the ground. Thirty-four more sorties were flown by 12 CH47 CHINOOKS before dark.

While others dug into the slopes of SNAPPER, B & D 1/12<sup>th</sup>, moved west into the AO, where B received SA and mortar fire at 0500 the next morning. Two were wounded, but not medevac'd. At 0945 Delta found 4 NVA bodies with weapons and equipment 800 meters WSW of SNAPPER. Documents confirmed this was the AO of the 24<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 304<sup>th</sup> Division, Peoples Army of Vietnam (PAVN, or NVA). At 1915 Delta, at XD833373, having moved 3,000 meters north since 0945, discovered a 37mm anti-aircraft gun with 200 rounds of 37mm ammunition and 5,000 rounds of 12.7mm (.51 cal.).

On the morning of the 7<sup>th</sup>, 300 meters further north, Delta found B40 rockets and 82mm mortar rounds; a few minutes later, an NVA body "w/steel pot and SKS." Ten minutes later there's another cache, with ammunition and "400 new shovels." (Continued on Page 7)

## Delta Company Website Update

There are always new things being posted on the website at <http://www.cattrack6india.com>, so check it often.

PROJECTS Information was gathered at the National Archives to support the FIREFIGHTS pages on the website. The quest for new material had some successes. Many of the Battalion Daily logs for the period of 65/66/67 and 69 were available. But for some critical periods, notably all of records for 1/12<sup>th</sup> in I Corps in 68, and all of 70 and 72 were missing. (One wonders why.) However, other sources of information can be used, especially interviews with those who were there. Also, Intelligence summaries and Division level info is available at the Archives. Each log recorded the coordinates of Delta Company as it was reported during the day. An interesting patrol map could be constructed from that data. Another trip to the archives is in the offing. If you are considering going to the Archives, do it. It's a great experience.

WEB SITE ADDITIONS Photos by Charles Tapp (1966). Scroll down the left side of the intro page of the Delta site and click on TAPP PHOTOS. With images of Delta's company area at An Khe and along Highway 19, there are photos of SP4 Tapp with the 82nd Airborne in the Dominican Republic.

July 5th - LT Samuel J. Watson added to the Roster. He was part of the Delta Company advanced party and then was sent to the 101st. Posted our first newsletter. Subsequent newsletters will also be posted on the intro page of the website.

July 11th - Posted You Tube video documenting "secret codes" on DD 214's being used in hiring decisions (and by the VA in eligibility determinations) without the knowledge of veterans. A list of the codes is also posted.

July 27th - Posted more photos from Tom Kjos, mostly taken on LZ Sharon in Quang Tri.

August 20th - Updated Mid Period roster with names provided by Tom Kjos from General Orders obtained in 2012 and 2013 visits to the National Archives.

October 2nd - Updated Roster to include Charles Williamson, who contacted me after coming across the Delta Company web site. He has knowledge of many other Delta Company members and has promised to send information that will help us track down more members of Delta. There are Delta veterans who have maintained contact over the years but are unaware of the larger Delta Company group and our reunions.

October 7 - Added 115 names to the Mid Period roster from the National Archives. The Mid Period roster now totals 372. Fred MacLennan's efforts at the Archives yielded 205 new names, bringing the Late Period roster to 293 names. The Early Period roster contains 253 names, so we have identified 918 veterans of Delta Company in Vietnam.

GROWING PAINS Our web site has grown to over 70 pages. Some are having some trouble navigating the site, in particular not seeing links to following pages. Many of the photo pages, for example Frank Cary's and Ken Goff's, are on multiple pages. Take your time and poke around.

*Bob March*

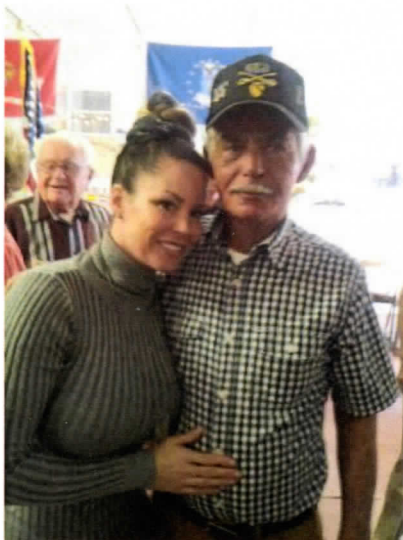
## Fiddler's Green Charles Tapp

On May 2nd, 2014 a great Delta Brother passed away. Charles Michael Tapp was born in Bellefontaine, Ohio on July 5th, 1945 to Lewis Vincent Tapp and Maribell Louise Tapp (Kirk). His family traveled throughout his childhood, but always returned home to the Tapp family farm in Logan County, Ohio. Family and friends attest to his passion, his loyalty and his never-give-up attitude. Farm life shaped Chuck's character and personality, leading him into military service.

He volunteered for Jump School, joined the 82nd Airborne Division, then went with them to the Dominican Republic, where he was awarded his first Purple Heart after a serious wound (above).



After recovery, he was assigned to Delta Company in Vietnam, as one of the early replacements in January 1966. He was with the Delta Weapons Platoon and completed many combat assaults and patrols. On April 2, 1966 he was again severely wounded near LZ Eagle, a very nasty place on the Cambodian border. He was medevac'd back to the States for recovery. Charles was always proud to have served his country honorably and with great distinction.



After his military career Chuck spent his life in the building trades. From pole barns to houses, shopping centers to home projects, his career spanned decades of changing the shape of the horizon. He loved his family, had six children, thirteen grand children and one great grandchild. During his later years he confirmed through DNA testing that he was a descendant of the Wicocomico; a proud Indian tribe, which was around the Potomac River when the earliest settlers came to the New World in the 1600's.

While his passing puts his body to rest, his airborne spirit and knowledge carries forward for generations to come. Always he will be remembered and always he will be loved by his family and those who served with him in combat.

His faithful daughter Brooke (left, with Charles) has provided many of his pictures for display on the Delta web site. She has stood by her father and helped him through a difficult time with the VA before his death. She will be attending the 2017 Delta Company Reunion in Tucson.

*Bob March*

## We Have 918 Delta Names National Archives Report

Bob March, Tom Kjos, and Fred MacLennan visited the National Archives in College Park, Maryland, September 26-30, 2016.

Military unit operational records are at *Archives II Textual Reference Branch* in College Park, Maryland, for all units that served in Vietnam. Texas Tech University in Lubbock, Texas, also has an extensive archive of privately collected documents. The Archives at College Park possess a nearly-complete set of 1st Cavalry Division General Orders, After Action Reports for major operations and battles, and *Daily Staff Journal[s]* kept by Division, Brigade and Battalion Operations (G3/S3) Sections, the *Daily Intelligence Summary* prepared by the Division G2, and some *Daily Journals* of Brigade and Battalion S2 Sections. None of these records are entirely complete, but often if one is missing, another set will provide some information.

We had two objectives for this trip: (1) Identify as many brothers who served with Delta in Vietnam as possible, and (2) Obtain documents that tell Delta's Vietnam story.

Bob March took responsibility for researching Delta's history, a result of his project to document each of Delta's firefights on our website at ([www.cattrack6india.com](http://www.cattrack6india.com)). He "pulled" 1/12th Daily Journals from "Cavalry Unit Records, MACV Support Command, Record Group 472" (note that these records do not exist under "1st Cavalry Division"). The Journals are complete from 1965 through 1967, 1968 is missing except for December, and 1969 is complete, but 1970-1972 were not preserved. With most of 1968 missing, we were able to obtain copies of the 1st Cavalry Division G3 Daily Journals and many of the Division's G2 Daily Intelligence Summaries for January through April. These fill in some of the missing information about Delta when we were involved in significant contacts or operations for which there are no battalion journals. It appears that these documents are nearly complete and more can be obtained in future research visits. We now have over 4,000 pages of documents collected during Archive visits in 2012, 2013 and this year.

The College Park archives also hold the *General Orders* of the 1st Cavalry Division, a total of 105 boxes, 46 linear feet, 71,862 orders, including awards of Silver Stars, Bronze Stars, Air Medals, Army Commendation Medals and some Purple Hearts (the latter were also issued by medical units, so there are many for which there is no Division-issued General Order). On this and previous archive visits we have reviewed 57 boxes containing 41,867 orders - approximately 2,000 of which Delta now has copies. From these orders we have 918 names on our *Delta Vietnam Roster*. We are aware of 117 who were KIA in Vietnam or have died since, and have located 137 living brothers. That leaves 664 veterans for whom we have a name, a likely State (from a Social Security Number or Service Number), and an approximate age. Using on-line search tools we can find addresses and telephone numbers.

This is where we need your help! We need to call those numbers to find our brothers; if we get enough volunteers, each of us will only have to make a few calls. Please, to help find veterans of 1965-66, contact Bob March (360-779-3149, [recondelta@embarqmail.com](mailto:recondelta@embarqmail.com)); for veterans of 1967-1969, contact Tom Kjos (480-352-2583, [tomwkjos03@gmail.com](mailto:tomwkjos03@gmail.com)); and for 1970-1972, contact Fred MacLennan, (410-648-5188, [fredmacl66@outlook.com](mailto:fredmacl66@outlook.com)).

*Tom Kjos*

(Continued from Page 3) It's a giant scavenger hunt. It was also a strange, eerie place. 1/12<sup>th</sup>'s B Company reported a "dead dog in bunker." The next day, "B 1-12 reports the dead dog has moved to a new location."

The morning of the 8<sup>th</sup> Delta was "moving in the N (North) portion of AO across RED BALL [Route 9] coordinated w/little people [ARVN Abn Task Force] who are to the W." Only 400 meters WNW from our overnight position we walked into our first, and only, firefight in OPERATION PEGASUS. The Division's Journal: "D 1-12 XD829379 0941H made contact w/en sqd. Contact broke at 1030H 5 US WIA medevac completed at 1029H. Delta engaged by AW & SW fire from 4 to 5 positions when moving west two platoons on line. The terrain was forest, relatively open at the ground. In the area were many bunkers, most of them storage for ammunition and other equipment. The enemy fled as we advanced, excepting one wounded NVA soldier who remained, but soon died. A search of the contact area confirmed 3 more NVA KIA.



Delta joined Alpha and Bravo in a night defensive position on high ground 800 meters south of its contact. The following morning, the 9<sup>th</sup>, we again crossed Route 9, and 400 meters further north found the cache pictured here. Included were 5 mortars, 6 machine guns, 1 recoilless rifle, 54 rifles, 2 pistols, medical supplies and ammunition. Nearby was a "large grave w/50 bodies dumped in a pile."

The 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry began withdrawing from PEGASUS on the 9<sup>th</sup>, with 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade HQ, 1/8<sup>th</sup>, and A Battery 1/19<sup>th</sup> Artillery off SNAPPER to SHARON at Quang Tri on the 11<sup>th</sup>. Delta was OPCON to 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade on the 10<sup>th</sup>, and returned to LZ SNAPPER on the 11<sup>th</sup>. The 1/12<sup>th</sup>'s other companies continued the attack west along ROUTE 9 to the Lang Vei Special Forces Camp, overrun by the NVA 24<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 304 Division and the 198<sup>th</sup> Tank Battalion (PAVN) in February. The camp was in the hands of 1/12<sup>th</sup> troopers on 12 April. The 1/12<sup>th</sup> returned to the Quang Tri AO early on 15 April, arriving just as OPERATION PEGASUS officially ended at 0800.

*Tom Kjos*

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

Detail and registration material for our October 3-6<sup>th</sup> Reunion in Tucson, AZ. Excerpts from Colonel John Gergulis' (former Delta Commander) speech to the 12<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Reunion in Branson in September. A Fiddler's Green, Web Site Update, and more, introduced by President, Dwight Edwards in his #1's Corner. Plus another story of Delta in Vietnam. And your submissions are very much wanted.

# *Boot to Boot*

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