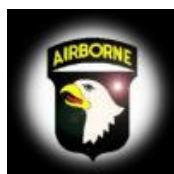




2nd BCT, 101st ABN DIV (AASLT)
“STRIKE HISTORY”
23 February – 01 March 2014



- 23 February 1968 1-502 IN BN search and destroy operations continued with security QL #1. Scattered light contact made with 2 WIA by BBT.
- 23 February 1968 **Operation TACOMA/HOUSTON:** At 1530, A/2-502 Vic AT910914 engaged 2 VC on trial, results: VC fled north, 1 US WHA.
- 24 February 1968 1-502 IN Battalion search and destroy operations continued with security of QL #1. Scattered light contact made with 1 WIA by BBT.
- 24 - 28 February 1971 **Operation Jefferson Glen:** A/2-502 IN combat assaulted into the new Area of Operations. As Bravo Company was preparing to combat assault, the Battalion Commander was notified to cancel the existing operation and prepare to move to Quang Tri Province to come under the operational control of the Third Brigade. The mission was to support Lam Son 719. Alpha Company was brought back to FB Birmingham and with much haste; preparations were made to move north. Coordination at all levels had to be effected and preparations immediately made to move the battalion north. With thorough planning and massive effort, all obstacles were overcome, and on the morning of the 25th, STRIKE Force, relocated to CP at Mai Loc and moved and moved the companies into the AO ten miles to the southwest of Quang Tri.
- At Mai Loc the remaining days of February were spent “digging in” and fortifying the compounds. Troops shelters were built, mess buildings and latrines were erected, and a command post for the bunker line was established. A comprehensive logistic system was set up using three widely separated resupply points. Thus, continuous comfort service support was provided for all field elements throughout the vast area of operations.
- February 28th, ended Operation JEFFERSON GLEN for the STRIKE Force troopers as the last week of February ushered in Operation LAM SON 719.
- 24 – 25 February 1971 1st Battalion, 501st Infantry was air lifted to Dong Ha Combat Base and received a warning order to move on 25 February to A-1, B-1, and A-2. The move was completed and operations were resumed in that area. During the reporting period a light mortar platoon was organized in Bravo and Charlie Companies. These elements consisted of one 81mm mortar tube and fifteen to twenty men. The platoon remained in the Co’s area of operation and conducted daily patrols. Its purpose was to provide the Company Commander with fire support under his direct control.
- 24 February 1991 The 502nd crosses into Iraq to begin the ground phase of Operation DESERT STORM. The regiment and the 101st would go as far north as the Euphrates River during the campaign. The following day Strike Brigade participates in the largest helicopter air assault in military history to establish FOB Cobra. After 100 hours, the ground phase of Operation DESERT STORM is over.



24 February 2008

OPN Dili – 1/B/2-502 IN and 3/B/2-502 IN with the IA conduct OPN Dili, a cache sweep that nets 4 caches consisting of over 800 lbs. of HME, 11 RPGs, various mortar rounds, and a significant amount of AT-Mines. A large amount of Counterfeit ID-making materials are found in a marketplace known to be used as an AQI safe haven. The operation significantly disrupts AQI's supply of IED munitions in the area.



25 February 1968

1-502 IN Battalion provided security of QL #1 and bridge (460400) in preparation for 26 February operations.

25 February 1968

Operation TACOMA/HOUSTON: At 0840, B/2-502 vic. AT912944 found 5 claymore type mines all destroyed in place.

25 February 1969

C and D Co. of 2/502 combat assaulted into LZ Red. In four contacts, 3/187 killed two enemy and captured two weapons southwest of FB Brick. The 2nd Brigade initiated a combined cordon southeast of Sandy, with elements of 1/501, 1/502, C/2/34 Armor, ARVN troops, RFs, PFs and National Police. Elsewhere, B/2-501 engaged three NVA, killing one and capturing two AK-47s, one carbine, and 60mm mortar tube and 10 mortar rounds. (Rendezvous With Destiny (Spring 1969); Screaming Eagle Vietnam Diary)

25 February 1991

In the late summer of 1990, the "STRIKE" Brigade moved to Saudi Arabia as part of Operation Desert Shield to deter a possible Iraqi invasion. On February 25, 1991 the "STRIKE" Brigade participated in the largest helicopter air assault in military history to establish FOB Cobra.

During Operation Desert Storm, the 2nd Brigade and 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) cut the enemies lines of communications, struck deep into his country, threatened a lethal strike against his capital and shut off his escape. The Brigade redeployed to Fort Campbell in March of 1991.

26 February 1968

1-502 IN Battalion cleared and secured assigned section of QL #1 and conducted combat assaults with 3 companies. During the period, light combat was experienced and Alfa NDP was probed by sappers. Results: 7 NVA KIA (BC) and 2 WIA, 2 KIA.

26 February 1968

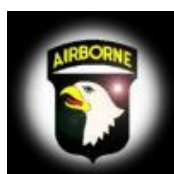
Operation TACOMA/HOUSTON: At 1205, C/2-502 detonated a trip wired grenade at coordinate AT904953 with a result of 3 US WHA. At 1630, Recondo elements vic. AT929904 found one fresh grave, exhumed results 1 VC KIA.

26 February 1969

B/1-502 captured two tons of paddy rice in the combined cordon near Sandy. (Rendezvous With Destiny (Summer 1969); Screaming Eagle Vietnam Diary)

26 February –
April 1971

Operation LAM SON 719: During the next six week the STRIKE Force Battalion conducted operations against enemy forces in Quang Tri Province. On 26 February 1971 the STRIKE Force Battalion combat assaulted into AO Green, located east of the city of Quang Tri. Initially, the Battalion conducted reconnaissance in force (RIF) operations



over the entire area of operations. These RIF operations were used to provide an assessment of the area and gain intelligence. There is no doubt that the combined operations of the 2d Battalion, 502d Infantry and RF/PF forces of Quang Tri Province, coupled with aggressive artillery fire planning, pushed the enemy south across the Quang Tri River.

While Bravo and Charlie Companies were conducting aggressive reconnaissance in the jungle canopy, the Reconnaissance Platoon located elements of an NVA Rocket Artillery Battalion in the Quang Tri Rocket Belt. Bravo Company was immediately lifted into the Rocket Belt and established Ruby II as an outpost while Charlie Company worked along the Quang Tri River in small reconnaissance boats. Additional intelligence indicated a need for additional forces. Therefore, the STRIKE Force was deployed into the Rocket Belt. "As a result of the Rocket Belt operations, no major enemy attack ever developed against Quang Tri City, during Operations Lam Son 719" (Quote: MG Tarpley, CG, 101st Abn Div, 13 April 1971.)

In the meantime, the Artillery "Tiger Plan" caused a member of the local sapper force company to Chieu Hoi. Information from the Chieu Hoi revealed that the Headquarters of an enemy sapper unit was located between the Quang Tri River and the Da Krong River. Their mission was to provide intelligence on U.S./ARVN units that could be utilized by their special combat elements. The battalion jumped on this lead and got an extension of the already large AO and kicked off Operation Bald Eagle. (The STRIKE Force Battalion's AO now covered 605 square miles.)

Alpha and Delta companies were inserted into AO Bald Eagle. Alpha Company's first two aircraft into the LZ received fire but the fire was quickly suppressed by the escort gunships. On the third day of the operation, Delta Company initiated contact with an NVA unit. Alpha Company was brought up to block the enemy's withdrawal and reinforce the action, while artillery, ARA, and flame were poured into the contact point. Again, the next day Delta Company engaged the enemy in a bunker complex. After close in fighting with LAW's and hand grenades, one NVA Soldier surrendered. Meanwhile, Alpha Company discovered valuable documents in another area of the enemy base camp. The POW and captured documents provided extensive intelligence on the enemy unit, its AO, strength, weakness, and propaganda mission. (The NVA POW had been in South Vietnam on 17 days.) Based on the POW's information an extensive artillery fire plan was initiated against the confirmed targets. Following three days of artillery fire a combined US/ARVN reconnaissance intelligence raid was launched to wrap up the operation.

During the last week of March the battalion learned through reliable intelligence sources, that an NVA unit was moving into Cam Lo District. Again, STRIKE Force extended the AO and conducted another combined US/ARVN operation north and west of Cam Lo. Charlie Company assaulted and swept east while two RF companies came under intense B-40 rocket and automatic small arms fire. As Charlie Company accelerated their movement to the contact point, artillery, ARA, and air strikes using napalm were directed on the enemy. Charlie Company got into the action and routed the enemy using small unit fire and maneuver. (One NVA was carrying a letter which was post marked in Vinh Linh, four days before the day he was killed. Vinh Linh is 35 miles, as a crow flies, across the DMZ in North Vietnam.) Information from a POW captured by Charlie Company caused the battalion to stay overnight in the area and pursue the operation further. The next day Charlie Company located the NVA Regiment's base of operations which included heavily fortified bunkers, watch towers, weapons, and ammunition and supply caches. This operation proved to be of immediate importance to the Cam Lo District forces.

During early April the Battalion received indications of an enemy build up and extensive movement in the area north and east of Firebase Ann. In reaction to this; Alpha Company, three reconnaissance teams, and a sniper team were inserted into the area. The workings of these units provided much intelligence on the enemy movements in the area.



After a reconnaissance team had made contact and developed the situation it was learned that one of the enemy KIA was a company commander of an enemy operating in Trieu Phong District, Quang Tri Province. Many documents were gathered and reported. Notification was made to the Quang Tri Province Advisers and the results of this intelligence had far reaching effects on the VC/NVA units in the area.

It must be recognized that the ARVN bore the heavy fighting across the border in Laos. Certainly, the hard battles of the ARVN Rangers, the ARVN Airborne Division, and the 1st ARVN Division supported by air from the 101st Airborne Division, contributed in a major way to the success of Lam Son 719. Lam Son has added to their confidence and experience and materially aided Vietnamization.

Nevertheless, it was STRIKE Force Soldiers who accomplished the 2-502 IN mission. Valuable intelligence could not have been gathered without the detailed, patient and careful scouring of the jungle by the Infantrymen of the 2-502 IN.

Lam Son 719 rapidly drew to an end in early April as Mai Loc was used as a redeployment point. Thousands of pieces of equipment and men were moved into the area as operations in the west were closed out. The BN CO became the Regional Commander and had the awesome task of tactically situating and protecting all these men and material. The airstrip at Mai Loc obtained the appearance of a major supply depot, for at times there were a hundred of more aircraft of all types in the area.

However, to insure noteworthy completion of our part of Lam Son 719, RCN Team 2 detonated two claymore mines when they detected movement outside their perimeter. This command detonated ambush netted 3 NVA KIA, 1 AK-47, 1- 9mm parabellum pistol, numerous documents, and a couple of days at Eagle Beach for Team 2. A Company not to be outclassed, discovered a cache site on April 7th, that contained 30 individual weapons, (SKS, Mausers, and rifles) and 4 crew served weapons (BAR's).

The following day the battalion started its move back to Camp Eagle for stand down. On April 9th the entire battalion was relocated at Camp Eagle for a nine day refresher stand-down. Stand-down time proved to be great booster of morale for the "men in the bush". The battalion had gone 100 days without a stand-down and the relaxation was sorely needed as well as much deserved.

Emphasis in training was put on tactics and skills that would be used in the upcoming operation. High speed extraction techniques, field SOP, Medevac, Comsec, employment of ARA, Arty, and Air Strikes, and safety classes were presented to the men in the battalion. Still there was time allotted for athletics, Commanders time, administrative time, and general free time. Entertainment was readily available as movies were shown every night and some of Vietnam's best floor shows were presented to the battalion.

During the stand-down the battalion was honored by a visit from the Division Commander, Major General Tarpley. At a ceremony on the STRIKE Force Parade Grounds, the 2d BN, 502d IN, "STRIKE FORCE", received the Presidential Unit Citation for actions in an operation during August 1970 in the vicinity of "Comeback Ridge" and FB Barnett.

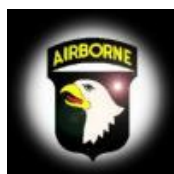
On April 17 the Battalion returned to the field. This time the TOC located at FB Jack. Most of the remaining time in April was spent getting ready for Operation Lam Son 720, and the returned into the "Big Valley". (2d Battalion, 502d Infantry; Unit History, Approved by LTC John C. Snodgrass, IN, Commanding)

27 February 1968

1-502 IN Battalion continued search and destroy operations southeast of Quang Tri and cleared and secured QL #1. Two combat assaults resulted in heavy contact by Bravo and light contact by Charlie. Results: Friendly 12 WIA; 2 NVA KIA (BC)



4



- 27 February 1968 **Operation TACOMA/HOUSTON:** At 1240H, C/2-502 reported friendly convoy had a truck hit a pressure mine, results: 2 US WHA, 1 2 ½ ton truck damaged.
- 28 February 1968 1-502 IN moved to FSB Nora, 14 km northwest of Hue. The Battalion began operations in new AO and Charlie occupied positions for preparation for LZ Sally.
- 28 February 1969 The month drew to a close with an important day in the 101st Airborne history: Operations Nevada Eagle terminated at midnight. (See "288 Days of Nevada Eagle," P. 2.) On the last day of Nevada Eagle, four enemy were killed and one crew served weapon was captured. 2/502 and 3/187 continued to probe deeper into enemy base areas. In rocket belt RIF operations, D/1-502 captured a complete 60mm mortar. (Rendezvous With Destiny (Spring 1969); Screaming Eagle Vietnam Diary)
- 28 February 1970 Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 502d Infantry, 1st Platoon departed FB Normandy for an in-country 3 day R&R at Eagle Beach which was actually only a day and a half due to a call to return to FB Normandy for a combat assault and stand by as ready reserved/rapid reaction force.
- 29 February 1968 1-502 IN Battalion began search and destroy operations in new AO. Alfa and Delta moved northwest from An Lo Bridge. Alfa taken under fire by estimated company of NVA, Alfa pulled back and called for and received air strikes, artillery and gunships. Results: 5 NVA KIA (BC)
- 29 February 1968 **Operation TACOMA/HOUSTON:** B/2-502 was removed from AO to rear base for refitting. They were reinserted by road on 011420H Mar. to continue mission of Search and Destroy in assigned AO.
- March – April 1969 **A Shau Valley:** During this period, five Battalions of the 101st Airborne Division including A Company and the rest of 2/501st, air assaulted into the A Shau Valley. Combat assaults and fast moving reconnaissance in force quickly determined the NVA were avoiding contact and moving its main forces back across the border. The operation yielded many large caches, one that included 14 trucks, 600 brand new SKS rifles, ChiCom radios and field telephones.
- March 1968 2-501st Battalion operations were characterized by aggressive daylight patrols and sweeps and numerous night ambushes in the area of the West of Hue. Although numerous booby traps were encountered initially, and enemy body counts of fourteen were not uncommon for the night ambushes, enemy contact decreased as the month passed. The enemy was successfully repelled from the villages adjacent to Hue and forced out into the densely vegetated foothills.
- 01 March 1968 1-502nd Battalion began operations in Quang Tri district from FSB Nora, An Lo Bridge and continued construction of FSB Sally. Alfa moved to Ap Lai Xa (YD 638310) where they had made heavy contact on 29 Feb 1968. They found no enemy but villagers stated that there had been approx. 200 NVA/VC in the village and that they had been up most of the night dragging off their dead. Delta made light contact in vic. YD 642298 and Battalion CO's C&C ship used to kill 16 NVA. Results: 16 NVA KIA (BC) by Strike's C&C. (1-502 Unit Annual Historical Supplements)



01 March –
26 March 1968

U.S. intelligence reports warned in early 1969 that North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops were busy stockpiling weapons and ammunition in key areas of South Vietnam's Northern provinces. The NVA viewed one such area, the A Shau Valley, as a relatively safe haven from which they could launch an attack on Hue, some 26 miles to the northeast. The 28-mile-long A Shau Valley, located in rugged country in southwestern Thua Thien province along the Laotian border, branched off from the Ho Chi Minh Trail and provided a natural thoroughfare toward Hue and Da Nang. The A Shau ran south down the Laotian and Cambodian border areas to some 37 miles from Saigon.

As of March 1969, it was apparent to U.S. commanders that NVA troops were on the move into the area. Maj. Gen. Raymond Davis, then-commander of the 3rd Marine Division, said the Communists had hacked a road to within 17 miles of Hue. Davis said the road, if extended another four miles, would have allowed the NVA to bring their 122mm guns within range of the former imperial capital.

The goal for U.S. forces, therefore, was clear: prevent the NVA from using the valley as a staging area for an attack on Hue and the coastal provinces, as the Communists had done the previous year during the Tet Offensive.

On March 1, 1969 the 101st Airborne Division's 1st Bn., 502nd Infantry launched the first of three operations (Massachusetts Strikes; Apache Snow and Montgomery Rendezvous) designed to drive out or destroy NVA forces in the valley. Working from the southern end, the unit's A, B, and C companies moved north.

On March 12, C Company assaulted an area near Fire Support Base (FSB) Veghel, a U.S. position in the central valley that had been abandoned the previous year, to establish a landing zone for the battalion.

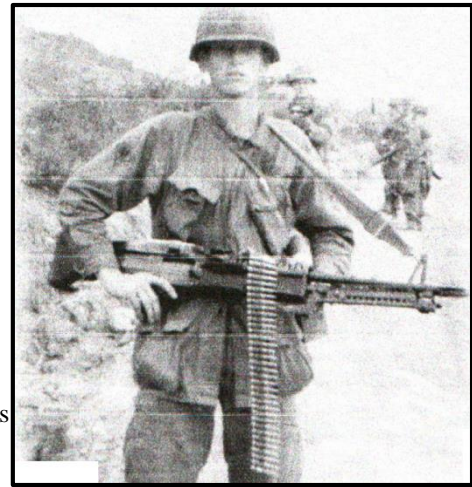
Awaiting the troopers was the 816th NVA Battalion. Fighting from about 4:30 p.m. through the night, C Company soldiers secured the base, losing 2 KIA while killing 12 NVA. The rest of the NVA troops tied some four miles southwest to the 2,640-ft. Dong A Tay Mountain, described as a "round, squat hill with a large razorback ridge flowing out of it to the north."

Initially, U.S. commanders thought the enemy force guarding the area around FSB Veghel was only squad-sized, and after it was cleared thought it might be a company. But soldiers in the field knew differently.

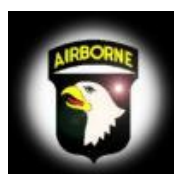
"The first couple of nights near Dong A Tay, we could hear the ticking of generators in the background of our radio communications," said 1st Lt. John Eastham, commander of 2nd Plt. B Co. We knew then we had something big."

The Noise Was Ungodly'

On the morning of March 19th, American commanders called in Air Force fire-power to blast NVA troops out of their labyrinth of bunkers on Dons A Tay. 1st Lt. Ed Donaldson, who commanded 2nd Plt, A Co., recalls an Air Force jet dropping a 10,000-pound "daisy cutter" bomb (used to clear landing zones) on the hilltop. Immediately thereafter, 2nd and 3rd Platoons led the attack.



Above: Dave Nesbitt, holding an M-60 machine gun, pauses while on patrol on Jan. 1, 1969, the day before his 21st birthday. Nesbitt was later wounded at Dong A Tay on March 20.



"We were running into delaying contacts as we moved toward the hill," "Every so often we would get contact from two or three NVA. But we kept getting pressured by division to get to the top, so we didn't chase them."

Lt. John Sorge, who commanded 3rd Platoon, recalled that his unit suffered the first casualties. "My platoon sergeant Sandy Muhlengraft was the first one wounded and my RTO (radio telephone operator) Lawrence Olive was the first KIA," Sorge said.



Above: RTO Lawrence Olive and LT John Sorge. Olive became the 1st KIA at Dong A Tay.

Donaldson says his platoon saw "bunkers everywhere" as they moved forward. Upon reaching the top of Dong A Tay, "we noticed commo wire and there were clothes and other debris up in the trees," that he surmised was caused by the huge daisy cutter explosion. "Just then a couple of NVA went running down a ridge, and my guys, who were real aggressive, went after them," Donaldson said. "I yelled at them to return but it was too late."

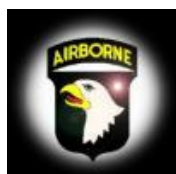
An NVA ambush lay in wait. "The whole jungle erupted," he recalled. "We got pinned down on a little saddle on a very narrow ridge." Donaldson called in artillery fire, estimating that 1,700 rounds—some landing only 25 yards from 2nd Platoon's position—blasted the hilltop for the next three hours.

"They laid down a wall of steel," he said, "We would've been in a lot worse shape if not for the artillerymen." Freddy Baker, a rifleman with A Company who was awaiting a helicopter for a planned R&R leave, says he was ordered back to his platoon when the shooting started. "The noise was ungodly," Baker said. "Arty, machine guns, rifle fire. RPGs, as well as gunships and jets. I remember the F-4 Phantoms releasing their ordnance and you could see it tumbling right toward you."

Dave Nesbitt was a 21-year-old specialist 4 serving with A Company's 1st Platoon. He says he and another soldier were digging foxholes when they heard small-arms fire erupt down the ridge from them. "He jumped up, grabbed his M-16 with only one magazine and ran down toward the firing," Nesbitt, a VFW member of Post 3034 in Sumter, S.C., said. "It was a very bad mistake. I helped retrieve his body the next day."

Nesbitt was wounded the following day, March 20, when "a big ball of fire from a mortar or command-detonated artillery round" exploded as he manned an M-60 machine gun behind a tree. He remembers a couple of his fellow troopers pulling him up the hill and out of firing range where A Company's 1st Platoon medic, James "Doc" Feliciano, could apply first aid.

"I had a hole in my knee big enough to put in a grapefruit," said Nesbitt, who later had his knee fused together instead of amputating his leg. Feliciano recalls Nesbitt as the last casualty he treated that day. "Wally Morrow gave me cover fire as I worked on Dave," said Feliciano, a VFW life member from New York. "Besides an ambush in Tam Ky in July 1969, this operation was the worst for me. We were making contact daily and it was pretty hectic."



'The Best Thing I Ever Did in My Life'

The next two days, March 21-22 were particularly bad for B Company when it lost seven KIAs. On March 21, 1st Lt. William Dent, who commanded 3rd Platoon, was wounded in an ambush and later died. "I put him on a chopper alive," said B Company 1st Sgt. Royce Burkett, a life member of VFW Post 6018 in Fayetteville, N.C. "He had three bullet holes in him. I guess he must have lost too much blood. I remember him asking me to secure his Ranger knife."

Burkett, also a Korean War vet, was wounded March 22 when fragments from an RPG hit him in the head, leg and arm. "It knocked me back into a bomb crater," he said. "I had blood sloshing around in my boots, but I didn't think my condition was had enough to be evacuated then. I spent that night on the hill and was medevac'd out the next day. I spent 45 days in the hospital with an infection."



Above: LT John Eastern and Radio Operator SPC Dean Smith

Casualties were taking such a heavy toll on B Company platoons that Spec. 4 Dean Smith, an RTO with 1st Platoon, remembers a fellow RTO, Spec. 4 Robert E. McAferty, walking point for a squad because all other point men had been wounded.

"He walked past me and down a trail," said Smith, a former five-time commander of VFW Post 2494 in Irving, Texas. "All of a sudden I heard him screaming, 'they're all around us, and then hell broke loose. It sounded horrible?'"

Smith says his unit later found McAferty's lifeless body tied to a tree. Donaldson says A Company secured the hilltop on March 24. He was then ordered to take command of Recon Platoon. "It was the most intense time of my year in Vietnam," said Donaldson, who became a lawyer and judge as a civilian. "It also was the best thing I ever did in my life."

The next day, B Company would make the final push to move the NVA off Dons A Tay,

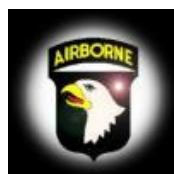
'Jane Fonda Stuff Found in Bunker'

Around 10:35 a.m. on March 25, 2nd Platoon discovered a deserted NVA hospital bunker complex that Eastham said contained Communist propaganda leaflets depicting U.S. POWs and "Jane Fonda stuff," like blankets and towels sent by sympathetic Americans.

According to the book *Hamburger Hill* by Samuel Zaffiri, soldiers found a list "of medicines that had been shipped to the hospital, followed by the words: 'Donated by your friends at the University of California at Berkeley: '"

At 11 a.m., 1st Platoon soldiers discovered a small bunker complex, and three were killed "instantly" upon entering it. It is unclear how they died, but 1st Sgt. Burkett believes the bunker was booby-trapped. The other four soldiers who died that day—from both 1st and 2nd Platoons—were killed by sniper fire.

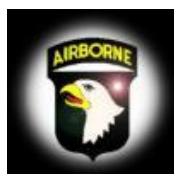
Firefights continued throughout the afternoon as 2nd Platoon moved to reinforce 1st Platoon. By 6:30 p.m., the enemy had broken contact with B Company. All seven Americans killed March 25 were from B Company's 1st and 2nd Platoons. Overall, from March 19-25, 1st Battalion's official death toll shows 20 U.S. KIA. According to daily after-action reports, 1st Battalion members had 39 WIA while killing 56 NVA troops.



"It was most certainly the worst day of my Vietnam tour," said Eastham, a member of VFW Post 201 in Waterbury, Conn. "I think about It every day."

B Company was airlifted off Dong A Tay on March 26. But more bloody battles awaited U.S. troops in the A Shau Valley, 1st Battalion had merely fulfilled the first objective in a campaign that would last throughout the summer of 1969. (Dong A Tay: A Costly Victory in the A Shau Valley; By Tim Dyhouse)

- 01 March 1969 The first day of March was also a red-letter day for the 101st as the Division-wide Operation Kentucky Jumper started. D/2-501 conducted a combat assault south of FB Tennessee to construct FB Whip. A/1-327 accounted for the first enemy killed during operation Kentucky Jumper when the paratroopers engaged two VC, killing one and taking his weapon. Elements of the 1st and 3rd Brigades began assuming new positions in expanded AOs in preparation for a combined forces thrust by the 2nd Brigade and ARVN troops deep into the A Shau Valley – Operation Massachusetts Striker. The 101st Airborne was going back into the valley, hopefully to strike a fatal blow to the enemy.
- 01 March 1969 Operation Kentucky Jumper, succeeding Nevada Eagle, begins. A 2nd Brigade thrust into the A Shau Valley, Massachusetts Striker, also begins, but is hindered by bad weather. (Rendezvous With Destiny (Summer 1969); Screaming Eagle Vietnam Diary)
- 01 March 1969 The 2d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division begins Operation MASSACHUSETTS STRIKER in the southern A Shau and Rao Nai Valleys on Thua Thien Province, vicinity of Route 548.
- 01 March 1969 The -502nd Battalion launched the first of three operations (Massachusetts Striker, Apache Snow and Montgomery Rendezvous) designed to drive out or destroy the NVA forces in the valley. Working from the southern end, the unit's A, B, and C Companies moved north.
- 02 March 1968 2nd Brigade closes its CP at LZ Jane and moves to LZ Sally, eight miles north of Hue.
- 02 March 1968 1-502nd Battalion continued search and destroy operations and made light contact throughout the day. Booby-Traps caused 3 WIA. (1-502 Unit Annual Historical Supplement)
- 03 March 1968 Battalion continued search and destroy operations from An LO Bridge to (YD 671311) Ap Duc Trong. Bravo and Charlie made heavy contact from village and called for all available fire support and pulled back. After heavy contact for 4 hours, B&C were withdrawn by air. During extraction battalion commanders C&C received heavy fire wounding battalion CO, his RTO, battalion S-2, and command pilot. Battalion S-2 DOA at Evans. (HQ/1-502 Annual Historical Supplement)
- March -May 2006 Operation Glory Light. Disrupt AIF and deny them access from Fallujah to Shakaria Triangle, through the use of Sadr Yusufiyah. 2-502 IN led the assault into Sadr Yusufiyah. 1-502 IN prevented the AIF from fleeing to the South from Sadr Yusufiyah. 1-320 FAR fielded MiTT teams, assisting ISF in search efforts and combat operations across the area of operations. At the end of the mission, Strike BCT found 28 IEDs and 20 caches were seized. The BCT established Patrol Base Warrior as a base of continuous operations in the Sadr Yusufiyah area.
- March 1982 XVII Airborne Corps designated the 1st Battalion 502nd Infantry Regiment as the replacement unit to be sent to the Sinai Peninsula in Egypt for a six-month tour of duty with Multinational Force and Observers (MFO). Supporting the American commitment to the peacekeeping force established under the terms of the 1979 Egypt-Israeli peace treaty, the Screaming Eagles and the 82nd Airborne Division from Ft. Bragg alternated six month tours of duty.



02 March 1942

The 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment (PIR) was activated at Fort Benning, Georgia from the 502nd Parachute Infantry Battalion. MAJ Howell was promoted to Colonel but left the same month to command the parachute school at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; he passed the regiment's command to COL George Van Horn Moseley Jr. who came from a long line of West Point Graduates. Like the other airborne regimental commanders of his day, COL Moseley made enormous demands on his troops as well as himself.

During this week, in the span of 72 years since the 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment originated in July 1941 as the 502nd Parachute Battalion, an experimental unit formed to test the doctrine and tactics of parachute assault, the following awards were awarded to members of 2BCT and the 502nd IN Regiment.

9 x Silver Star Medal (2 x Posthumously)
5 x Bronze Star Medal with Valor
2 x Army Commendation Medal with Valor
1 x Bronze Star Medal (1 x Posthumously)
27 x Purple Heart (18 x Posthumously)
1 x Non-Hostile Injury or Illness

23 February 1968



PVT David R. Lehr (D/1-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gun fire wounds in the Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam.

24 February 1968



CPL Alfred S. Najar Jr. (C/1-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from artillery, rocket, or mortar wounds in the Quang Nam Province, South Vietnam.

24 February 2008

1LT Eric Giannaris (2/B/1-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart for military merit and for wounds received when 2/B/1-502 IN was escorting an engineer convoy to JSS Hurriya. 1LT Giannaris' vehicle was struck by a two array explosively formed projectile, roughly 5 meters away from the vehicle. He was diagnosed with a head concussion, perforated ear drum, and smoke inhalation.

24 February 2008

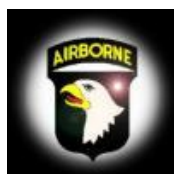
2LT John D. Waltrin (B/1-502 IN) for his heroic actions during combat operations he receives the Army Commendation with Valor.

24 February 2008

SPC Joseph C. Strong (HHC/1-502 IN) SPC "Doc" Strong performed medical aid and shielded a casualty without regard for his own safety. For his heroic actions during combat operations he received the Army Commendation with Valor.

24 February 2011

PFC Rigoberto Soto (C/1-75 CAV) earned the Purple Heart for military merit and for wounds received when insurgents attacked his dismounted patrol with small arms fire.



- 25 February 1967 PFC William J. Franks (B/2-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gun fire wounds in the Lam Dong Province, South Vietnam.
- 25 February 1969 The following Soldiers: 1LT Phil D. Johnson and SP4 Truman J. Walsh (C/1-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in their deaths from other explosive device wounds in the Thua Thien Province, South Vietnam.
- 26 February 1968 PFC Dennis J. Kromrey (A/1-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from other explosive device wounds in the Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam.
- 26 February 1970 SGT David S. Reid (B/2-501 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in their deaths from other explosive device wounds in the Thua Thien Province, South Vietnam.
- 26 February 2011 SGT Daniel Bartlett (D/1-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart for military merit and for wounds received when insurgents attacked his mounted patrol with grenades.
- 27 February 1968 PFC Jimmy M. Trollinger (A/1-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gun fire wounds in the Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam.
- 27 February 1970 PFC Freddie C. Defoor (C/1-501 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in their deaths from multiple fragmentation wounds in the Thua Thien Province, South Vietnam.
- 27 February 1970 The following Soldiers: MAJ Wood R. De Levil (1-OLC) (HHC/1-502 IN); CPT Alvin Hennigan and PFC William G. Cox (B/1-502 IN) earned the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for heroism in connection with military operations against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam.
- 28 February 1970 SP4 Larry E. Dailey (C/1-501 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in their deaths from other explosive device wounds in the Thua Thien Province, South Vietnam.
- 28 February 1978 SP4 Earl E. McCarty (B/1-501 IN) died while on a military mission when an artillery round fired by a friendly force impacted the area, in the Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam.



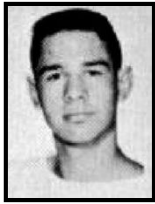
29 February 1968



SGT Gerald Cervantes (D/1-501 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in their deaths from small arms gun fire wounds while on a combat operation in support of USMC retaking Hue City, in the Thua Thien Province, South Vietnam.



01 March 1966



SP4 Bruce L. Marosites (HHC/2-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from small arms gun fire wounds in the Province not reported, South Vietnam.

01 March –
31 July 1969

The following Soldiers: PFC William R. Ingle, PFC Joseph E. Lehmer, PFC James A. Sgroi (C/1-501 IN); 1SG Paul C. Purcell, SFC Juan Jose, PFC Charles C. Sergeant (D/1-501 IN); PFC Calvin W. Bailey, PFC Jerome F. Favours, PFC Paul Hernandez, SP4 Phillip E. King, SP4 Thomas M. Ray, PFC Leslie Skelly, PFC Wilbur Steward, SGT Norman M. Takeoka, PFC Lionel S. Tatsutani, PFC Clifton J. D. Walker (E/1-501 IN); SSG Alfred F. Bustin, SP4 Ronald A. Feiertag, SP6 Wallac Nakandakari, PFC Robert Ramirez, SP4 Ernest L. Taintor (HHC/1-501 IN); SP4 Victor G. Brothers, PFC Gregory H. Bucknor, PFC Steven L. Tropf, PFC Thomas J. Wells, PFC Larry C. Williams (D/2-501 IN) earned the Army Commendation Medal for meritorious achievement. (HQ 101st ABN DIV (AM), General Order Number 10612; 16 August 1969)

March 1944

PFC Baxter M. Teal (502d PIR) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received in action resulting in his death during WWII in Belgium, Germany.

March 1945

PFC Vern W. Maughan (502^d PIR) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received in action resulting in his death during WWII in Belgium, Germany.

02 March 1978



SSG Robert L. Platt Jr. (B/2-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) and the Prisoner of War Medal for military merit for action on 10 June 1967 while as a member of a ten-man patrol on a search and destroy mission operating about five miles southwest of the City of Mo Duc in Quang Ngai Province, South Vietnam. During the patrol, the team was ambushed and then PFC Platt was reportedly wounded in the shoulder. When the patrol withdrew under fire, PFC Platt was carried a short distance when the man carrying him was wounded and PFC Platt was again wounded in the back. At this point, PFC Platt was left behind.

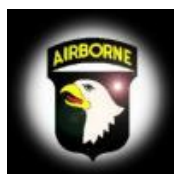
After the patrol regrouped, search operations were begun and continued until 16 June. During the search, items were found that were believed to belong to PFC Platt, but he was not found. A captured enemy document indicated that an individual whose first name was Robert had been captured and died the next day from wounds. This report was not specific enough to classify PFC Platt as a prisoner of war. Subsequently, Vietnam acknowledges that SSG Platt had been captured alive and classified as missing in action and was posthumously promoted to Staff Sergeant. Remains and body has not been recovered.

03 March 1968

The Following Soldiers: CPL Henry Norfleet Jr., CPL James E. Williams, and SP4 Ernest E. Fawks (C/1-502 IN), PFC Richard L. Borgman (B/1-502 IN) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in their deaths from small arms gun fire wounds in AP Duc Trong, 10km NW of Hue in the Thua Thien Province, South Vietnam.

03 March 1968

CPT Frank R. Dimmitt (HHC/1-502 IN) earned the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received which resulted in his death from a gunshot wound received while passenger of helicopter when hit by hostile small arms fire, in AP Duc Trong, 10km NW of Hue, in the Thua Thien Province, South Vietnam.



03 March 1986

SP4 Paul F. Newman Jr. (C/1-501 IN) died from small arms fire wounds received on 06 April 1968.

03 March 1944

PVT Harry S. Scott (502d PIR) earned the Purple Heart (Posthumously) for military merit and for wounds received in action resulting in his death during WWII in England.

STRIKE HISTORY (Citation's and Awards):

23 February 1968

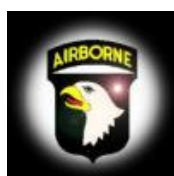


2LT Robert H. Adams JR. (A/2-501 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action in the Republic of Vietnam on 23 February 1968. First Lieutenant Adams distinguished himself while serving as platoon leader with Company A, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry. Company A was providing the rear security for a battalion size assault on a North Vietnamese Regimental base camp north of Hue, Republic of Vietnam. As the battle grew in intensity, the attacking force began receiving heavy rocket propelled grenade and sixty millimeter mortar fire from the right flank. Company A was instructed to move to the area and silence the enemy resistance. As Lieutenant Adams moved his platoon toward a hedgerow, the platoon came under heavy rocket propelled grenade and machine gun fire from the concealed enemy force. Knowing that to delay might be disastrous; he led his platoon in a headlong dash to the hedgerow. Apparently noting the Lieutenant Adams was the rallying force in the unit, the enemy concentrated a furious burst of fire on him, destroying his rifle in his hands. He stopped momentarily, picked up the grenade launcher of a wounded man, and again resumed his assault on the enemy. With his men following him, the enemy positions were overrun and the platoon, more slowly now, pursued the fleeing enemy. After an hour of continuous fighting, Lieutenant Adams had succeeded in reaching his objective and the company began to set up a defensive perimeter. Very soon though, sniper fire began to erupt from within the perimeter and Lieutenant Adams, with several other, attempted to locate the snipers. He soon discovered that there were three North Vietnamese in a small area. Concealing his movement with smoke grenades, Lieutenant Adams crept forward in a low crouch and as the smoke cleared, found himself almost face to face with the surprised enemy. He quickly shot all three of the enemy soldiers and finally was able to declare the area secured. Second Lieutenant Adams' personal bravery and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

23 February 1968



CPT Dennis J. Gillem (C/2-501 IN) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor (2-OLC) for heroism in ground combat against a hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 23 February 1968. Captain Gillem distinguished himself while serving as Company Commander of Company C, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 501st Infantry, on combat operations near the village of Chua Thieu Mu, Republic of Vietnam. The company, led by the third platoon as point element, was engaged in a large sweep designed to drive the insurgents from their fortified positions. As they moved out the third platoon came under intense enemy fire. Captain Gillem immediately moved forward from his rear position to the forward most element of the platoon to assess the situation. After making his assessment, Captain Gillem again moved across the bullet swept fields to the second platoon to personally direct its movements. Despite the heavy fire and with complete disregard for his own welfare, Captain Gillem moved with the forward element of the platoon in order to effectively control the flanking attack on the enemy. Through informants captured during the sweep it was determined that an estimated battalion of North Vietnamese lie in and wait to ambush the company. Because of the overwhelming numerical superiority and the close proximity to the enemy, Captain Gillem chose to withdraw in order to call in effective artillery fire. Captain Gillem personally directed all elements of the company in an orderly withdrawal and in spite of the intense enemy fire, remained in place until his assurance that all elements of his command had withdrawn. Captain Gillem's courageous actions during the engagement, without regard for his own



safety, enabled the company to drive the enemy from the fortified positions. His leadership and personal direction were an inspiration to his men and rallied confidence in their abilities. Captain Gillem's exceptionally gallant actions reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

25 February 1967

1LT David M. Belding (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action against an armed hostile force on 25 February 1967 near Song Mao, Republic of Vietnam. Lieutenant Belding's platoon was air-lifted into an area where a blocking action was to be set up. After landing, the platoon left the landing zone and moved down a jungle trail. Approximately eleven hundred meters away from the landing zone, the point man encountered three hostile soldiers. Both elements began firing at the same time. Lieutenant Belding quickly deployed the platoon and started maneuvering them toward the enemy force when the right flank erupted into a hail of hostile fire. Before he could affect a reorganization of his platoon, to cope with the fire from the right flank, the left flank also came under heavy fire. Receiving fire from three sides, Lieutenant Belding began to move the platoon to the rear so that the men could replenish their ammunition, which was stored back at the landing zone with the rest of the equipment. A small element of insurgents had maneuvered behind them, leaving the friendly platoon completely surrounded and cut off from their source of supply. With total disregard for his own personal safety, Lieutenant Belding rushed through the intensive hail of fire and began directing the fire of his men. After identifying the targets, Lieutenant Belding called in artillery and exposed himself to the hostile fire. After calling in air strikes he moved through the area, under fire, giving aid to the wounded and comforting them as best he could. The air strikes coupled with the renewed efforts of the platoon, resulted in the retreat of the enemy forces. Lieutenant Belding then directed the preparation of a landing zone for the evacuation of the wounded personnel. Lieutenant Belding's heroic actions while engaged in close combat with a numerically superior hostile force were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, Task Force Oregon and the United States Army.

25 February 1967

SP5 Dolfey Jenkins (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action against a hostile force on 25 February 1967 near Song Mao, Republic of Vietnam. As Specialist Five Jenkins' company moved along a jungle trail, they were suddenly engaged by an estimated reinforced enemy platoon. As the battle progressed, elements of the enemy succeeded in maneuvering and encircling the friendly platoon. As the intensity of the enemy fire increased, the majority of the platoon became pinned down and several casualties were sustained. When Specialist Jenkins heard his comrades shouting for a medic, he immediately, and with complete disregard for his own personal safety, charged through the withering enemy fire to the location of a wounded man. On two different occasions Specialist Jenkins braved the intense fire as he crawled approximately twenty meters in front of his perimeter and pulled wounded men to a safe area and gave them medical aid. On the second trip, Specialist Jenkins was forced to drop his medical bag, but immediately upon reaching a covered position, he again returned through the withering fire and retrieved his medical supplies. For more than two hours, Specialist Jenkins moved through the battlefield, treating the wounded and constantly exposing himself to the enemy fire. Specialist Five Jenkins' outstanding display of gallantry in action and his devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

25 February 1967

PFC Donald H. Moon (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for action in combat. Private First Class Moon's platoon was conducting a search and destroy mission when it suddenly became engaged in a fire fight with an estimated platoon-size enemy element. The platoon was receiving a tremendous volume of enemy fire from three sides. When a friendly machine gun position was threatened to be overrun, because an enemy grenade had wounded the gunner and assistant gunner, Private Moon, with complete disregard for his own personal safety, charged across fifty meters of open terrain through the withering enemy fire to the aid of his wounded comrades. As enemy soldiers continued to advance on the friendly machine gun position, Private Moon stood fully exposed to the enemy fire and placed effective fire into the ranks of the enemy while a



medic pulled the two wounded men to a safe area. His actions saved the lives of his two wounded comrades and stopped the enemy element from breaking through the perimeter and undoubtedly prevented a major disaster. Private Moon's outstanding display of gallantry in action and his devotion to duty are within the highest military tradition and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

25 February 1967

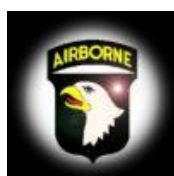
PFC John W. Hudgens (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal (Posthumously) for gallantry in action against an armed hostile enemy on 25 February 1967 near Song Mao, Republic of Vietnam. After landing on a landing zone the third platoon of B Company 502d (Airborne) Infantry had moved approximately eight hundred meters when they became heavily engaged with a numerically superior enemy element estimated to be a reinforced enemy platoon. Private Hudgens exposed himself to the enemy fire in an effort to place more effective fire into the enemy positions. Both the squad leader and the fire team leader being wounded, Private Hudgens began to direct the fire of his fire team. Private Hudgens along with one of his comrades assaulted two enemy positions. When his comrade was seriously wounded, Private Hudgens continued forward with complete disregard for his own personal safety and knocked out both enemy positions, killing two enemy soldiers. Private Hudgens then dragged his wounded comrade through seventy-five meters of bullet swept terrain to a safe area. Private Hudgens again with complete disregard for his own personal safety crawled through fifty meters of vicious enemy fire to direct the fire of a machine gunner by personally pointing out an enemy machinegun position. While returning to his position Private Hudgens was struck in the knee and wounded. Refusing medical aid Private Hudgens crawled to the perimeter where he was wounded again while distributing ammunition to his men. Again with complete disregard for his own personal Private Hudgens refused to be evacuated and crawled to the most forward point of the perimeter where he succeeded in killing another enemy soldier who was attempting to throw a grenade into a friendly position. Private Hudgens' outstanding display of gallantry in action and his devotion to duty are within the highest military tradition and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and United States Army.

25 February 1967

SSG Josiah Blue Jr. (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for gallantry in action against an armed hostile force on 25 February 1967 near Di Linh, Republic of Vietnam. While on a search and destroy mission southwest of Di Linh, the third platoon of Company B, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 502d Infantry came under an unusually heavy volume of hostile fire from an estimated reinforced North Vietnamese weapons platoon. Staff Sergeant Blue quickly tried to lead his squad through the fire in a flanking movement but was halted by the intense fire from an enemy machinegun position. Realizing the situation had become critical, he had his men withdraw and set up a perimeter with the rest of the platoon. While withdrawing, Staff Sergeant Blue, with complete disregard for his own safety, ran back through the increasing enemy fire to retrieve a wounded comrade and carried him back to safety. During the ensuing two hour battle, Staff Sergeant Blue moved from position to position throughout the perimeter pointing out targets, aiding the wounded and shouting words of encouragement. He also manned a machinegun position and killed two hostiles and wounded a third. When another machine gunner took his place, Staff Sergeant Blue exposed himself again to enemy fire and destroyed an enemy machinegun position with a hand grenade which killed both occupants. His courageous acts were instrumental in helping his platoon rally and hold off a numerically superior enemy force for two hours until help arrived. Staff Sergeant Blue's outstanding display of gallantry in action and his devotion to duty against a numerically superior hostile force is in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, Task Force OREGON, and the United States Army.

25 February 1967

PFC William J. Franks (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal (Posthumously) for action in combat. Private First Class Franks' platoon, while on a search and destroy mission near Ban Me Thuot, was suddenly brought under a tremendous volume of enemy fire from an estimated company size element in fortified positions. As the platoon moved forward in the assault, Private Franks observed an enemy machine gun position to his front that was placing murderous fire on an element of his platoon. With complete



disregard for his own personal safety, Private Franks exposed himself to the enemy fire and began firing his weapon into the enemy position. Realizing that his fire was not effective and that he must act quickly, Private Franks jumped up and charged the enemy position, firing as he ran. When Private Franks was approximately twenty meters from the enemy machine gun he was struck by an enemy bullet and knocked to the ground. Getting on his feet Private Franks continued to assault the enemy position until he was struck by another enemy bullet and mortally wounded. As a result of Private Franks' courageous actions the enemy position was destroyed and many lives were saved, Private Franks' outstanding gallantry in action and his avid devotion to duty even at the cost of his life are within the highest military traditions and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

25 February 2006

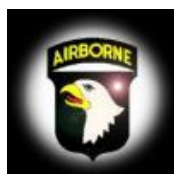
CPT Markello Dotson (HHC/2BCT) actions in combat earned him the Purple Heart. CPT Dotson was conducting daily operations in the 2nd Brigade MiTT TOC when an 82mm mortar round impacted inside the TOC. He received minor shrapnel wounds to the face and neck during the incident. Immediately after the round impacted inside the TOC and through smoke and dust, CPT Dotson began to low crawl toward SSG Yocom-Delgado to get accountability and check for injuries.



SSG Katherine Yocom-Delgado was also wounded in action while on duty as the MiTT TOC NCOIC. She was manning the radios when the 82mm mortar round impacted inside the MiTT TOC within ten meters from her position. The impact from the mortar round threw SSG Yocom-Delgado against a table which she hit her head on then fell to the floor. SSG Yocom-Delgado then got back up, called in the mortar strike to Talon Mike and requested medical support. With a consistently calm composure, she recalled MiTT elements and maintained communications with Talon. When CPT Dotson made it to SSG Yocom-Delgado, she realized he was injured so she began treating his injuries. Through limited visibility she could not find any First Aid dressing, so she ripped her undershirt apart and used it to apply digital pressure to CPT Dotson's injuries. SSG Yocom-Delgado received the Army Commendation award for her actions.

27 February 1968

CPT Paul M. Pritchard (HQ/1-502 IN)) was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor for heroism in ground combat against hostile force in the Republic of Vietnam on 27 February 1968. Captain Pritchard distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous action on 27 February 1968 while serving as a Company Commander during a combat operation in the vicinity of Hue, Republic of Vietnam. Upon receiving word that one of his elements had become pinned down by heavy enemy fire, Captain Pritchard led a squad size force across one hundred and fifty meters of open terrain to try and relieve them. Although he and his men received heavy enemy fire, he managed to give the pinned down element covering fire so they could withdraw. Afterwards Captain Pritchard remained forward to direct artillery fire and Aerial Rocket Artillery on the enemy. Through his courage and outstanding leadership, he contributed immeasurably to the success of the mission. Captain Pritchard's personal bravery and devotion to duty were



in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. (HQ, 101st ABN DIV; General Order Number 3266)

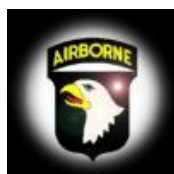
28 February 1966

SFC Lawrence N. Koontz (HHC/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal (1-OLC) for actions in combat. SFC Koontz, Platoon Sergeant of the "Recondo" platoon Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2d Battalion (Airborne), 502d Infantry, was given the mission of securing a landing zone deep in Viet Cong infested jungle prior to a battalion size operation the following day. With a South Vietnamese Army platoon attached to his force late in the afternoon of 28 February 1966, Sergeant Koontz moved toward his objective 8000 meters away. After moving approximately 3000 meters, the two point squads suddenly came under hostile fire. Sergeant Koontz quickly and expertly led two squads from the rear around the embattled front squads in an effort to out-flank the enemy. Shortly after moving toward his new objective, his element came under a murderous hail of enemy fire. With his element and the point squads pinned down by automatic weapon and machine gun fire, Sergeant Koontz organized an assault on the entrenched enemy. When this failed and it became apparent that his whole force was surrounded, Sergeant Koontz grabbed an M60 machine gun and tried to infiltrate the enemy defenses. As he rose and ran for the tree line, he became the target of several enemy automatic weapons. Forced to crawl, Sergeant Koontz continued his daring assault and reached the enemy lines. His ammunition expended, and the enemy regrouping for a charge, Sergeant Koontz then returned to his platoon. He again started out by himself, with a fresh load of ammunition, this time assaulting a weaker portion of the enemy defenses. His men, inspired to great heights by this extraordinary act of gallantry, rushed forward and overran the bewildered Viet Cong. Sergeant Koontz, not satisfied with simply freeing his platoon from enemy fire, pursued the fleeing, disorganized enemy. Still carrying the machine gun, Sergeant Koontz killed three Viet Cong who tried to make a last ditch stand against the inspired, aggressive paratroopers.

After extraction of the wounded, the Recondo platoon then Recondo platoon then reorganized and continued their mission toward the landing zone. Shortly before reaching the main objective, Sergeant Koontz inadvertently stepped on a punji stake. However, he told no one of his injury and refused medical aid. As the Recondo platoon approached the landing zone, it again came under hostile fire from a small group of huts. Sergeant Koontz braved the withering fire to position himself close enough to effectively call artillery fire on the determined enemy. After the artillery was lifted, he again personally led an assault on the Viet Cong. Although limping quite noticeably and obviously in great pain. Sergeant Koontz was able to overrun the enemy and thus secure the landing zone for the forthcoming assault. Through his untiring efforts and conspicuous gallantry, the mission was accomplished, and the battalion was able to land without incident. Sergeant Koontz's avid professionalism and personal intrepidity were unparalleled. His actions are in keeping with the highest standards and traditions of the military service and reflect immeasurable credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

01 March 1966

SP4 Robert E. Bean (B/2-502 IN) was awarded the Silver Star Medal for action in combat. SP4 Bean distinguished himself on 1 March 1966 while serving as point man for a squad size patrol during a search and destroy mission near Tuy Hoa, Republic of Vietnam. While his squad was moving through the dense jungle terrain, the patrol leader stopped his squad to make a map orientation. Since he was the forward security, Specialist Four Bean had already taken cover in the dense foliage. As he lay observing to his front, he spotted fifteen Viet Cong advancing in his direction. Realizing that the Viet Cong would be upon them before he could return to warn his comrades; SP4 Bean, with complete disregard for his safety, single handedly attacked the insurgents. Although he was outnumbered, he caught the Viet Cong by surprise. Charging forward, he killed two and wounded four. After the initial burst of fire, the Viet Cong split into two groups. Later, Specialist Four Bean ran across approximately 100 meters of open terrain and attacked six Viet Cong, killing one and wounding four more. When his squad reached the area, it deployed into an assault line and began delivering suppressive fire onto the insurgent force. Determining that they were outnumbered, the Viet Cong broke contact



and fled. Through his courage and determination, Specialist Four Bean contributed immeasurably to the defeat of the Viet Cong force. His extraordinary heroism in close combat against a hostile force was in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

***STRIKE HISTORY NOTE:**

A major reorganization took place on 3 February 1964, when the 2nd Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division was activated at Fort Campbell, replacing the 1st Airborne Battle Group, 501st Infantry Regiment. The reorganization from the battle groups to brigades and battalions placed two battalions of the 502nd in different brigades of the 101st. The 2nd Battalion was in the 1st Brigade with 1-327th and 2-327th Infantry. Which deployed to Vietnam 1965, in was most notable commanded by LTC Hank "The Gunfighter" Emerson. The new 2nd Brigade's original organic battalions were the 1st and 2d Battalions, 501st Infantry, and the 1st Battalion, 502nd Infantry.

December 1967, 2nd Brigade deployed by C-141 aircraft to the Republic of Vietnam. Over the next five years, soldiers of the "Ready to Go" Brigade participated in twelve campaigns, compiling a distinguished combat record as well as an enviable reputation for success in the rehabilitation of a war-torn nation. The President of Vietnam personally decorated the colors of the Brigade three times, twice with the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, and once with the RVN Civic Action Honor Medal. The Brigade redeployed to Fort Campbell in April, 1972.

In 1984, with the reorganization of the Combat Arms Regimental System, the 2nd Brigade became the parent headquarters for the 1st, 2nd, and 3d Battalions of the 502nd Infantry Regiment. With this reorganization, the Brigade adopted the regimental motto, "Strike."

