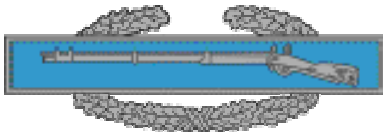


ON THE RIGHT TRACK

1st Battalion 50th Infantry Association



September, 2009



Cover Page

Surviving Son

Jim Tilley, III

There was a day in my life that I can point to and say that day is what put me on the path to the 1/50th 2009 reunion. Of course the events of that day and the repercussions for the world as we know it vastly overshadowed anything that happened to me. But it was the start. That day was September 11, 2001. I remember spending that day and the days afterward seeing and reading the outpouring of sorrow from people all around the world. I remember seeing a picture of small children in Moscow laying flowers at the gate of our Embassy. This struck me in particular because of my time in the Army which occurred at the height of the cold war. It opened the flood gates of a depression that I had been suppressing for years. I was diagnosed with clinical depression put on medication and sought counseling. I'll skip all the various details as they aren't really important to the story.

During my counseling I was asked why I never spent any time trying to find out about my dad. At the time I didn't think much about it. I had grown up with the idea that my dad was a hero. My grandparents had laminated a newspaper article that said he was killed by a sniper in a cave. All of his medals were hung on the wall along side a painting of him. Every Sunday after church grandma and I would go to the cemetery. No one ever really talked about him though other than to say he was a war hero.

Life of course happened and I got busy with other things. A few years later after lots of consideration and even more procrastination I decided to go looking. I procrastinated because I thought it would be a ton of work to find out from the Army who was there at the same time. The only indication I had of a unit was from his old OG green jacket from Ft Hood with the 2nd A.D. patch on the sleeve. I couldn't find out anything about them being in Vietnam so I decided in July of 2004 to write the record center in St. Louis. A few weeks later I received a response explaining to me that he was in the 1/50th. So I started Googling and one of the first sites I found was the association web site. It was intimidating to see the forums and the e-mail addresses available for so little work. I mean how do you cold contact someone asking them about your namesake that they might have known 36 years ago? Will they not remember him? Will I bring up a bad memory or dredge up things they didn't want to deal with anymore? I expected to wait weeks to hear from anyone and not learn anything. Of course it was a matter of days and I had a flood of e-mails with details and information I hadn't even thought of asking about yet. It was stunning and a bit overwhelming.

I was invited to both the 2005 and 2007 reunions. But again of course life happened and something always interfered. I wanted to go to meet the guys I had talked to via e-mail and yet I didn't want to go. I'm not what you would call a social butterfly. So it was intimidating to plan on meeting with guys who were there with him. I couldn't get anyone to come with me who would understand what it's like. So I kept saying I can't right now I'll go to the next one. But then one day, after reading about the health problems a couple guys were having, it occurred to me that this isn't an opportunity that I will always have. I was wasting the time I had to learn about my dad and what it was really like to be there. To see and hear from the people who were there about the terrible things that happened. So I determined that no matter what I could not miss the 2009 reunion. As luck would have it I almost didn't make it. A couple days before I didn't know how I was going to get there but at the last minute I caught a break. I ended up at a nearby hotel and managed to get a comparable rate to the association rate. I'm still amazed that my car made the 1600 mile round trip without a single issue. I drove down Monday and arrived at my hotel about 7:30. I drove over to Shoney's to get some dinner. On the way back to my hotel I was going to stop at the hotel and see if anything for the reunion was in place. But instead I drove by and didn't stop. I really didn't know what to expect. It was the same excuses that I had for not showing up to the other reunions. So I went back to my hotel and went to bed. Of course in retrospect I wish I wouldn't have done that. But we all know hindsight is 20/20. I really enjoyed the various events that were scheduled. But the best time I had was sitting around talking to everyone or just listening to the stories. Just being a fly on the wall while everyone talked about their experience was amazing to me. To watch guys who hadn't talked in years or even ever met sit down and know and understand exactly what it was like to deal with the consequences was really cool.

I didn't learn a lot about what my dad was like. But I learned so much more. To me it was always a distant place with the glossed over and spun view of the movie industry. The reunion brought the picture into clear focus. I learned what it was like from all perspectives, the officers, the NCO's and the enlisted men. Of course it's not the same as being there but my respect has grown immensely for all of you for surviving not only the war but the aftermath.

Editors Note: *This was written by Jim Tilley, III our latest Life Member. Jim's dad is one of the honored KIA of our battalion. All who met and spent time with Jim at last months reunion were quite impressed with this young man.*

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Billie McGregor, Editorial Assistant

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My First Reunion

By Jerry L. Cooper

When I left Vietnam all I wanted to do was put it all behind me. I didn't want to keep in touch with anyone or anything that might remind me. I can see now that it might have been one of the biggest mistakes I ever made. Approximately two and a half years ago I stumbled on to the 1st & 50th web site and it couldn't have happened at a better time for me. I was once again suffering from severe depression and after reading several of the post I realized it was time to get help. It was also just before the 2007 reunion. Part of me wanted to go and part of me was afraid to go because I was afraid of dredging up old memories that I just did not want to deal with. I didn't go which was another major mistake.

Since then I have made progress but when confronted with going to the reunion this year I was once again getting cold feet. Even though my wife, daughter and doctor were insisting that I go, I was just too nervous about bringing up old heartaches. I also did not recognize any of the names on the pre-registered list and was certain I would not know anyone there. I am very antisocial and rarely start a conversation with anyone I don't know well. My son finally convinced me that I could leave at anytime I became uncomfortable so I decided to give it a try. This was one of the best decisions I ever made.

Upon arriving and checking in at the motel I was greeted by a couple of members and in a short time I was feeling a lot less apprehensive. I was never allowed to stand off and not join in. Everyone treated me as if I was their long lost brother. I may not have known anyone there but I felt as if I had served with each and every one of them. For the first time in years I felt as if someone really understood. To those who feel the association and/or the reunion is only for the "Boat People" I can only say that in my experience this could not have been farther from the truth. Whether you came into country with the battalion or you came home with it, everyone was treated the same. Unless you asked or you knew the individual, it was impossible to know when they were in country.

Even though I really enjoyed the museum, the BBQ, the banquet and all the other activities I must say that the wreath laying ceremony was the most emotional for me. I was finally able to cry for my fallen brothers and I think to a lesser extent for myself. I especially enjoyed the evenings, after the day's activities were completed, just sitting around the "CP" trading stories. I feel that this is really where I got to know people. Although the stories were different they were all the same about young men in a bad situation just trying to survive and watch over their brothers. I want to thank everyone for treating me as if I were an old friend. I won't mention any names for fear of leaving someone out and I don't want to hurt anyone's feelings. I also want to thank everyone responsible for making the association and the reunion such a great success. You have all done a magnificent job.

In closing I want say to everyone that did not attend, you were missed. There may have been many reasons you could not come, but please, please don't let apprehension be the reason for not attending the next reunion. Almost everyone I talked with was nervous about their first reunion but none of them regretted it. I truly believe this reunion was the best therapy I could have received. I hope to see you all at the next one.

By Dave Knechtel - Bravo Co., 1st Platoon, Nov. 1967 – Nov. 1968

Now that the reunion is over and I am getting back to my normal routine I continue to think back to my first reunion a couple of weeks ago. My first thoughts are why did I wait so long? Work always seemed to tie up my schedule for attending previous reunions and I am very glad I did not let my work schedule get in the way this time.

I flew into Atlanta from Pittsburgh with my wife Kathy and we drove down to Phoenix City. As we drove my mind was racing in circles. Would I recognize anyone? How will they react to me? Would they recognize me? I actually was very nervous when we arrived. We checked in and I unloaded the luggage and told Kathy I have to go out and see who is here. I just had to get this over with. The suspense was getting to me!

Well, I walked towards a crowd of people under a gazebo behind the pool and my eyes were checking out every face to see who I would remember and if anyone would ever recognize me. Just then my old friend and squad leader when I arrived at the 1/50th., Walter "Butch" Billups walks up and give me a big hug and hand shake! Well, Just then all the apprehension and fear left me instantly. And sitting next to Butch was my other old buddy from the 1st Platoon Bob Schaller. Bob was also a squad leader in the 1st Platoon and we went out on a couple of interesting ambushes and patrols together. Later on we ran into a few more guys from the 1st Platoon, Jimmy Copeland and Jon Thelen. It was really great just sitting around looking at old pictures, telling stories and also meeting guys from other companies and platoons. My wife Kathy also enjoyed the stories, pictures and meeting some new friends.

All in all it was a wonderful experience! The camaraderie was still there, visiting Fort Benning, the museum, the lunches, the BBQ, the wreath laying ceremony, the dinner and especially the recognition the Association received everywhere we went would send a chill up and down my spine. I remembered getting off the bus at the Battalion Headquarters for the wreath laying ceremony and a Platoon was marching by calling cadence. I felt like jumping into the formation and marching along with them.

After returning home and telling our family about the trip and looking at the pictures, my daughter Lisa and her son Tanner can't wait to attend the next reunion with us. All I can say at this point is "God willing" you will see me and Kathy and maybe a couple extras at the next reunion in 2011. God Bless us all and our Country!

FROM THE TC HATCH

Jimmy Segars, President

Awesome! That's the word to describe the August Reunion held at Ft. Benning this year. This year was especially memorable because we not only had the pleasure of being with those of you who come to every reunion but also many new faces were there along with some that we had not seen for a while. Altogether, we made a pretty good bunch I would say. And having our families there certainly added to the occasion.

Once again John Topper and all the cadre at Ft. Benning were outstanding in their welcome and organizational skills. Every detail was thought of right down to the privilege of firing a 50-caliber machine gun for the first time since our Vietnam days. Those simulated targets were quite realistic. And some of us even seemed to appreciate the "size of the turkeys" on one field of targets.

We especially want to thank the families of those whose names appear on our monument for making the effort to come be a part of our association. The families' presence meant a great deal to all of us as well as to them. We want to thank Jim Sheppard and Barbara Anne for all their hard work in researching the whereabouts of these families. We expect to have even more at the next reunion.

To Lt. Col. Anthony Benitez and his staff, we extend our heartfelt thanks for all he did to make our visit a great pleasure. We wish him and all the men in the 1/50th serving at Ft. Benning God's blessings and protection as they so ably serve our country.

Touring the museum was a nice addition to our reunion. As you know, anyone can visit it at any time. So I encourage you to invite others to take advantage of this great opportunity to let the general public know more about the infantry so they can more readily appreciate the great gift of service that all in the military give to us each and every day. Our country owes a great debt of gratitude to serviceman and servicewoman.

The sacred soil spread by Jay Copley at the memorial service held a great deal of meaning. For those of you who did not get to attend, we would like for you to know that there is now at the memorial site at the 1/50th Headquarters soil from where we fought in Vietnam. A marker will be placed at the site as a permanent reminder that those serving now are also a part of those who served before. Thank you Ft. Benning personnel for allowing us this honor and to those who made this possible. It is a great tribute in the long line of which we are privileged to be a part.

Thank all of you who attended. I look forward to seeing you again at the next reunion if not before. Thank you again for the privilege of serving as your president. Please feel free to contact me anytime if you need anything. I can be reached at segars-jim-lor@charter.net. Play the Game! HOOAH!

P.S. I am allowing my wife to make just one more reminder about the cookbook. The specifications are as follows:

1. A recipe of something done while "cooking in the field." (She already has the C4 recipe.)
2. If no such recipe is available, a family favorite recipe will be great, too. You may submit as many recipes as you wish, but at least one please.
3. Submit a story of one of your experiences while in the military, preferably one that is humorous. (Remember that family members will read this.)
4. Submit a short biography about you, including names and information about your family.
5. Submit two photos related to your time in service, preferably of your time in Vietnam.
6. The deadline given at the reunion has passed, but the latest DEADLINE is October 1. Diana Clark has agreed to put this cookbook together. Proceeds from its sale will go to the Association.
7. Submit these to segars-jim-lor@charter.net or mail them to Jimmy Segars, 2323 Half-Sectionline Road, Albertville, Alabama 35950.

This cookbook is to represent the "lighter" side of our time in service. We will all get to know each other better through humor and family ties as well as our time in service



Association President Jimmy Segars and Bob Gold
@ Reunion 2009.



Association President Jimmy Segars and LTC Anthony
Benitez @ Reunion 2009.

WORD FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Ron Leraas, Vice-President

Another biennial reunion is completed. Congratulations and a big "thank you" to John Topper for his hard work and demonstrated organizational skills that were largely responsible for pulling this one off extremely smoothly. It was an honor to get re-acquainted with those of you I had met the last time (four years ago, for me) and to get to meet additional members – I was excited to see an increase in attendance from those of the Class of 1970, and especially to get re-acquainted with JR Dacus, who joined me in a life-defining moment on 2 November 1970.

I hope that those of you who attended were able to share some moments with our guests -- the families of our fallen. JR Dacus and I were honored to meet and spend some time with the father and sisters of John Moody, a Charlie Company KIA from July 1970. They were happy to meet and talk to some people who had served with John, and were appreciative of hearing what we could provide about the circumstances surrounding the action and his death. It is a key goal of the Association that the inclusion of family members will be continued – and broader in scope – in subsequent reunions.

Normally, during the latter part of July and the beginning of August, I am on the southern shores of Lake Erie participating in the National High Power Rifle Matches at Camp Perry, Ohio. Due to the reunion postponement, I went to Columbus, GA, while the rest of the Texas team went to the Nationals without me and won the Soldier Of Marathon Trophy, which is awarded to the highest-scoring six-man civilian team. So, now I have to listen to trash talk reminding me that they are a much better team without me.

In my column in the September 2008 newsletter, I talked about the M1s For Vets program, which is intended to give injured Iraq / Afghan vets an opportunity to participate in rifle competitions. This program is getting stronger and is making an impact, as indicated by the following excerpt from an entry in Texas team member Robert Langham's blog:

"At the end of the awards they brought out the M1s-for-Vets group. This group tries to match donated M1 Garands with disabled vets. About 12 of them came and shot this year at the matches. They got up front, two in wheelchairs, a couple with canes, one guy missing a hand. Young men in their 20s. They introduced them and the crowd stood up whooping and hollering and clapping and WOULDN'T sit down or stop. It rolled on and on and on. Nearly everyone had tears rolling down their cheeks, both the young men and the crowd.

These young men belong to the American gun culture. Think about Henry Gates and Officer Crowley. You think Gates, the highly paid Harvard professor KNOWS a soldier, or anyone with a soldier in the family? I doubt it. Officer Crowley on the other hand probably doesn't know anyone who wasn't a soldier, has a kid in the Marines or Army.

I'll go a little farther: Gates knows victims. And he knows the rest of us are racists. These young men who have all suffered as only soldiers suffer and lost things important to any human, THEY aren't victims. Or racists, I would bet.

These young men got it yesterday. Some of them looked embarrassed or confused, many were having trouble controlling their faces as the crowd poured out their love for them cheering and clapping. On and on and on. I think they got it.

There's a Camp Perry moment for you."

MINI-REUNION ON THE HORIZON

Ken Riley

Welcome home, and for those who attended the previous reunion, it was a real pleasure to meet you all; and although I did not get the chance to talk with some of you as long as I had hoped, it was an honor to have met you personally. As I stated at the reunion banquet, I will be holding a "mini-reunion" around the third weekend of September 2010. Location is still to be decided and that I let up to those of you who wish to attend this reunion.

Currently I have three locations picked: Gettysburg PA ; San Antonio TX ; and a three day cruise to the Bahamas .

What I need all of you who may be interested in attending this "mini-reunion" to do is to send me a note, e-mail, or call me with your choice. I will keep these locations open until the end of October, at which time I will select a location based on the votes I receive from you folks. I will then begin making arrangements and let everyone know in the December newsletter where we will hold it, what the room rates are, and other pertinent information, such as dates, length of reunion, and so forth.

Please respond to one of the methods of communications below with your choice prior to October 31, 2009. Voting closes midnight that date, so if you would rather go to one of the three choices listed above, make your selection by then.

Thanks

Kenneth G. Riley
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717-451-5522 cell
Kenr17331@yahoo.com

COMMENTARY: SHED NO TEARS FOR ROBERT MCNAMARA

By Joseph L. Galloway

McClatchy Newspapers



In the wake of the death of one of the main architects of the Vietnam War, former Defense Secretary Robert Strange McNamara - old, gray, frail and full of his 93 years of living - many have rushed to examine and weigh his life and times. The more charitable, politicians for the most part, have declared that at least McNamara, three decades after his war and Jack Kennedy's war and Lyndon B. Johnson's war ended so badly, had confessed to errors and apologized in his 1995 book IN RETROSPECT. His acknowledgement that he'd known what the U.S. government was doing in Vietnam was wrong but for 30 years couldn't bring himself to publicly admit that truth, could hardly comfort the parents, children, widows, siblings and friends of the 58,249 young American men and eight young American women who were killed in his war. Nor were they much comfort to the huge number of Vietnamese -some say two million, others three million - who were killed in the war an unbelieving McNamara still prosecuted vigorously and defended strongly. He was a charter member of what LBJ derisively called the "You Harvards," and David Halberstam profiled in The Best and The Brightest - the bright young wizards JFK brought to Washington to help us stand astride the world. But the ink was barely dry on the pages of those McNamara memoirs before a New York Times editorial writer, on April 12, 1995, dismissed McNamara's apologies and confessions as entirely irrelevant: "His regret cannot be huge enough to balance the books for our dead soldiers. The ghosts of those un-lived lives circle close around Mr. McNamara. Surely he must in every quiet and prosperous moment hear the ceaseless whispers of those poor boys in the

Infantry, dying in the tall grass, platoon by platoon, for no purpose. What he took from them cannot be repaid by prime-time apology and stale tears, three decades late." Amen, brother.

While McNamara was confessing and apologizing he conveniently left out a detail, a damning little detail. They say the Devil is in the details, and he certainly lives in this one. Who out there remembers Mr. McNamara's - he was the ultimate bean counter who knew the cost of everything but the worth of nothing - Project 100,000? If nothing else, Project 100,000 surely guarantees that Judgment Day and eternity will not be very comfortable for Mr. McNamara, now arriving on Track 12. Beginning in 1965 and for nearly three years McNamara each year drafted into the military 100,000 young boys whose scores in the mental qualification and aptitude tests were in the lowest quarter - so-called Category IV's. Men with IQ's of 65 or even lower. They were, to put it bluntly, mentally deficient. Illiterate. Mostly black and redneck whites, hailing from the mean big city ghettos and the remote Appalachian valleys. By drafting them the Pentagon would not have to draft an equal number of middle class and elite college boys whose mothers could and would raise Hell with their representatives in Washington. The young men of Project 100,000 couldn't read, so training manual comic books were created for them. They had to be taught to tie their boots. They often failed in boot camp, and were recycled over and over until they finally reached some low standard and were declared trained and ready.

They could not be taught any more demanding job than trigger pulling and, so, all of them were shipped to Vietnam and most went straight into combat where the learning curve is steep and deadly. The cold, hard statistics say that these almost helpless young men died in action in the jungles at a rate three times higher than the average draftee. McNamara's military even assigned the Project 100,000 men special serial numbers so that anyone could identify them and deal with them accordingly.

The Good Book says we must forgive those who trespass against us - but what about those who trespass against the most helpless among us; those willing to conscript the mentally handicapped, the most innocent, and turn them into cannon fodder? I can only hope that the last voices Robert S. McNamara heard before he was gathered into the darkness at long last were those of the poor boys in the Infantry, the poor boys of Project 100,000, the poor victims of Agent Orange, the poor Vietnamese farm families whose lives and the very land itself were torn apart by millions of tons of bombs rained on them by the best and the brightest. Save your tears for them. Bob McNamara certainly doesn't deserve them.

CHAPLAIN'S**Parker Pierce****O
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How is everybody in the 1/50th family? I pray that each of you and your family members are doing well. WOW - what a reunion we experienced in August at Ft. Benning, Georgia! It has to be considered to be the best one we have ever had, and there are reasons why this is true. These would include the motels we stayed in, the food served, the activities we experienced, the times of fellowship with each other and the troops, and the times of late night reminiscing with old buddies and new ones, and most definitely the heart wrenching memorial service, but most importantly just being with all of you and your special family members! Having first timers at our reunion, and the very special people that came to honor their loved ones killed in Vietnam while serving with the 1/50th was a very special blessing to me and I know to each of you. Also, going to the new infantry museum was a special event. The ones who put that facility together did a fantastic job. Months before we ever got to go to the museum I had mentioned it to several people that it had been built. One lady I had met within the last year told me today that she, her husband and several family members visited the museum within the past two weeks. She said that all of them were totally pleased with their visit, as I know we were, and more significant she is a U.S. Army veteran and served in Iraq! In closing my cousin that I mentioned in a couple of the newsletters passed away on June 12. He went on home to be with the Lord! I pray God's blessings for each of you, and I cherish the times we get together every couple of years. Please let me know of any prayer requests, and I know we will be praying for each other, our Nation, our President, and our troops and their families. In Him, Parker

FROM THE EDITOR**John Topper**

The 2009 reunion has ended and by all accounts to which I have been privy, it was enjoyed by all who attended. The efforts of the folks at Fort Benning, as usual, were stellar and without exception, each contributed to its success. Jimmie and Loretta Segars did a masterful job in managing the events; Tom and Diane Clark contributed so much to the memorial service with their inspired idea of presenting a carnation to each family member of our KIAs who were in attendance. Typical of the Clark's, they followed up their idea with the purchase of the flowers. Tony Benitez presented an inspired and heartfelt speech at the service; the laying of the wreath was solemn and made even more meaningful with the addition of the sacred soil from the Battle of An Bao. Everything was executed to perfection.

The annual BBQ at Uchee Creek was enhanced by the promotion ceremony of one of the Drill Sergeants. Nice touch by the battalion command group. Having some of the family members of our KIAs in attendance made it even more special.

Elsewhere in this newsletter, an article by Ken Riley announces a "mini-reunion" that will be held in the fall of 2010 at a location to be determined by those who are interested in attending. Please let Ken know if you are interested and vote on one of the sites he has offered.

On a new subject, this newsletter is the single most costly undertaking of our Association. It costs about \$2000 annually to publish. Our dues structure is such that they alone are not sufficient to cover the cost. The Board of Directors, at its meeting last month, kicked around some ideas on how to reduce costs. One of the ideas, since we post the newsletter on our website, is to give members the choice of "opting out" of receiving a hard copy and simply view it online. Costs for stamps exceed \$350/annually and will almost certainly continue to increase. So, if you are okay with viewing the newsletter online, email me at jt1@psci.net.

The newsletter contains too much material from me – I would rather have personal stories from some of you to fill the space. This is your newsletter and it should have your stories, both from memories of Vietnam and what is going on in your life today. Something as easy as what you have done since leaving Vietnam – marriage, children, job, hobbies and the like would be interesting to others. It would also mean that I don't have to dig for "filler stuff".

Best to you all and Play the Game!



The Infantry Museum Fort Benning

The Family First Program – as reported in the Austin American-Statesman Contributed by Robert Melendez

The Family First Program is aimed at reducing stress on soldiers and families and to reduce fatalities from vehicle accidents. It has been instituted at Fort Hood by III Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Rick Lynch. It includes:

- More time for family life; shorter work hours to guarantee soldiers are home by 6:00 PM, except on Thursdays when they leave work at 3:00 PM. No weekend work unless approved by the commanding general.
- New Resiliency Campus the size of a city block and includes a Spiritual Fitness Center for meditation, classes on ethics and suicide prevention and youth and family activities; counseling center; fitness center for yoga, massage, tai chi and other programs. A Wellness Center for tobacco-cessation, nutrition classes and stress management.
- Mandatory visits by officers to barracks and off-post homes of soldiers on a regular basis to check welfare and get to know soldiers' families.
- Suicide prevention task force.
- Monthly televised town hall meetings hosted by Fort Hood commanders.
- New Officer's Club and club for non-commissioned officers.
- Mandatory helmets and reflective vests for soldiers on motorcycles, even off post. Mandatory safety course for motorcyclists. Twice-yearly motorcycle rally through Central Texas led by Fort Hood commanders.

The first of its kind in the Army, the Resiliency Campus provides counselors, financial advisers, substance abuse classes and nutrition experts. The Army has emphasized physical fitness for many years, at Fort Hood they are focusing on all the other aspects of a soldier's life.

M-1/M-2 Carbine Rifle



The M1 Garand was the weapon of choice for infantry. The M1 Carbine, half the weight and with a less powerful cartridge, was the weapon of choice for support troops, and others not primarily involved in infantry combat. It was designed to meet combat needs less demanding than the M1 Rifle, but more than can be met by the M1911A1 pistol. It was more convenient to use than the M1, and less intrusive to their other duties, while still much more effective than hand guns.

Originally, the M1 was to be capable of selective fire control, but this was dropped. Because a demand arose for an automatic capability, the M2 was developed, with a selective-fire switch added to the left side of the receiver, operating on the sear mechanism.

The US Carbine, Caliber .30in, M3, or T3, was simply an M2 with suitable mountings prepared on the receiver to take various models of infra-red night-sighting devices. No open or conventional sights were provided, and the IR carbine mounted an M3 flash hider, a simpler design than that for the M1C Garand. The M3 carbine, (its development title was T3), was produced in limited numbers as a semi-prototype. Only about 2100 were manufactured compared to 5,510,000 M1 carbines, 150,000 M1A1 carbines and 570,000 M2 carbines.

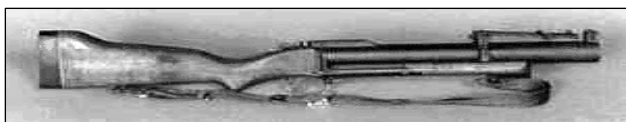
The M1 and M2 Carbines were also much more powerful than the Russian type burp guns used by the North Koreans and, later, the Chinese, having more than twice their muzzle energy.

In the infantry, the M2 Carbine was carried by Staff NCOs and officers. With its 30 round magazine, rapid fire and greater stopping power, it was an effective counter to the various submachine guns used by the Communists in the Korean War.

In intense cold, however, such as the Chosin battle, light weapons such as the carbine and air-cooled .30 calibre light machine guns malfunctioned much more often than the M1 and the water-cooled heavies, with anti-freeze in their jackets. The Marines used alcohol based hair tonic as anti-freeze lubricants for all light weapons, with good success, but the carbine components were small and fragile, and repeatedly malfunctioned.

The Carbine continued to be used in Viet Nam, until replaced by the M16.

M-79 Grenade Launcher



Commonly known as the 'Thumper' or 'Blooper', this weapon first appeared during the Vietnam war and closely resembled a large bore, single barrel, sawed-off shotgun. The first M79 Grenade launchers were delivered to the US Army in 1961.

The M79 was designed as a close support weapon for the infantry, with two weapons being issued to each rifle squad. The tactical use of the weapon required the gunner (grenadier) to be dedicated to the weapon and only carried a pistol as a side arm. The M79 was intended to bridge the gap between the maximum throwing distance of a hand grenade, and the lowest range of supporting mortar fire - between 50 and 300 meters - and thus gave the squad an integral indirect fire weapon. With a length of 737mm (barrel = 355mm) and a loaded weight of 3kg, (6 and a half pounds) the M79 was an ideal weapon in the close terrain of Vietnam.

The M79 was a single shot, shoulder fired, break-barrel weapon which fired a spherical 40mm diameter grenade loaded directly into the breech. It had a rubber pad fitted to the shoulder stock to absorb some of the shock. The M-406 40mm HE grenades fired from the M79 traveled at a muzzle velocity of 75 meters per second, and contained enough explosive within a steel casing that upon impact with the target would produce over 300 fragments at 1,524 meters per second within a lethal radius of up to 5 meters. Stabilized in flight by the spin imparted on it by the rifled barrel the grenade rotated at 3,700rpm, this in turn, after approximately 15 meters of flight, armed the grenade.

For close range fighting the Army came up with two types of M79 rounds. The first was a flechette round (or Bee Hives round) which housed approx 45 small darts in a plastic casing, these rounds were issued on an experimental basis. Later this round was replaced by the M-576 buckshot round. This round contained twenty-seven 00 buckshot which on firing was carried down the barrel in a 40mm plastic sabot which slowed down in flight so that the pellets could travel in their forward direction un-aided. The M79 could also fire smoke grenades (both standard and parachute), CS gas, and flares.

The M79 had a large flip up sight situated half way down the barrel, with a basic leaf foresight fixed at the end of the barrel. The rear sight was calibrated up to 375 meters (410 yds) in 25 meter (27.3 yds) intervals. In the hands of a good experienced Grenadier the M79 was highly accurate up to 200 meters. Later in the war the M79 was superseded by the M203.