

Letter to the 1/50<sup>th</sup> Association.



I was astonished when I found this site. Thank you so much.

I served with the Scouts with great pride the entire time I was there. [ 7/69 – 7/70 ] We knew what we were doing and did it well.

I see a lot of mention on this site about one 'Sgt Charles (Stormy) Connell'. He taught me how to stay alive. He and I were close as well as one 'Sgt Sid (Cotton) ?'. I also have read Stormy's story here and want to reflect a little on that day. On March 20<sup>th</sup> Charlie Co. called on the Scouts for support. (This next part is tough to write). I wasn't feeling well and the medic checked my temp. It was 104 and we later found out that it was malaria. I was to take my squad that day to Charlie Co's aid to sweep the site. Because of my high fever, Stormy volunteered to take my squad on the mission while I stayed behind and waited for the dust off to the rear. (He took point as I would have. To many new guys.) When I got the word that he was hit by a sniper (or walked into them) and killed I was devastated. That was suppose to be me out there that day. I lived with that all my life. The many nights of crying and nightmares. I cannot watch or talk about Viet Nam without thinking about Stormy and falling apart. To top things off, I was dusted out along with his body. I was given his helmet and later I received the clothes he was wearing. Stormy had a 'target' drawn on his helmet and the bullet hole was just outside the target. He received the silver star for his heroics that day.

Now a little about 'Stormy'. (to the best of my recollection) Stormy had issues. I recall him telling me he did not get along with his family and that his 2 sisters hated him. Hence, the target on the helmet. He really didn't want to go home. He had 3 weeks left of his 2<sup>nd</sup> tour. I know he would have signed up again. He talked of dying in Nam.

Anyway – due to my malaria, I was not to return to the field and was airlifted to Japan & the 249<sup>th</sup> Gen Hosp. I had a rare type of malaria. It almost killed me. I had a 30% chance of making it. Because of this, I never received the contents of my foot locker that was stored in the rear. That foot locker contained everything that meant anything to me. I lost my cameras and the many pictures of the guys with how to contact them later, and our 'triumphs'. The biggest loss was Stormy's helmet and fatigues. I don't think there was anyone closer to Stormy than myself and 'Cotton'.

I need help in contacting some of my men. Norm Raty – Ed Swope. Both served with me on my track along with Ken Thomas who died when the gooks overran Betty. Sid (Cotton). I cannot remember last name. (maybe Sherwood) – I want to find you man. There was a cherry from Janesville, MN that took a round through the thigh and his Sgt got hit on one of his fingers I believe. I cannot remember any of the names. I ran up and got between the two of them and laid down fire and threw a grenade into the bunker they walked up on. As I only lived 30 minutes from Janesville, I really want to find this guy.

Thanks for the time and listening.

(Sgt) Pat 'Willie' Willson