



**173RD
AIRBORNE
BRIGADE**



**1ST BATTALION
50TH INFANTRY**



"A" COMPANY



**SPECIALIST
4TH CLASS**



INFANTRY

DONALD RAY STEPHENSON

"A" Company, 1st Battalion (Mechanized), 50th Infantry
Specialist 4th Class, E4, US53908479, MOS 11B2P

Home of Record: Shelbyville, TN

Date of Birth: November 11, 1947, Age at time of loss: 20, Single

173rd Airborne Brigade (Separate), Binh Dinh Province, Republic of Vietnam

Start of Tour: December 9, 1967, Date of Casualty: May 5, 1968, Days in Country: 148

Casualty Type A1, Burns, Panel 55E – Row 032

At noon, on May 5, 1968, near the villages of An Bao in Binh Dinh Province, "A" Company forces were attacked and outnumbered 10 to 1 by a Regiment of the North Vietnamese Army. "A" Company forces were overrun and took heavy casualties when Charlie Company was called in to reinforce the besieged Alpha Company. Upon arrival, the enemy, who had fallen silent to allow the "C" Company troops to enter the ambush zone, opened fire with an intense and sustained barrage of small arms, automatic weapons and B40 Rocket fire from three sides.

Donald Stephenson was the RTO for "A" Company's 1st Sergeant Malcolm Dulac that day, both were among the men killed in the fierce fighting.

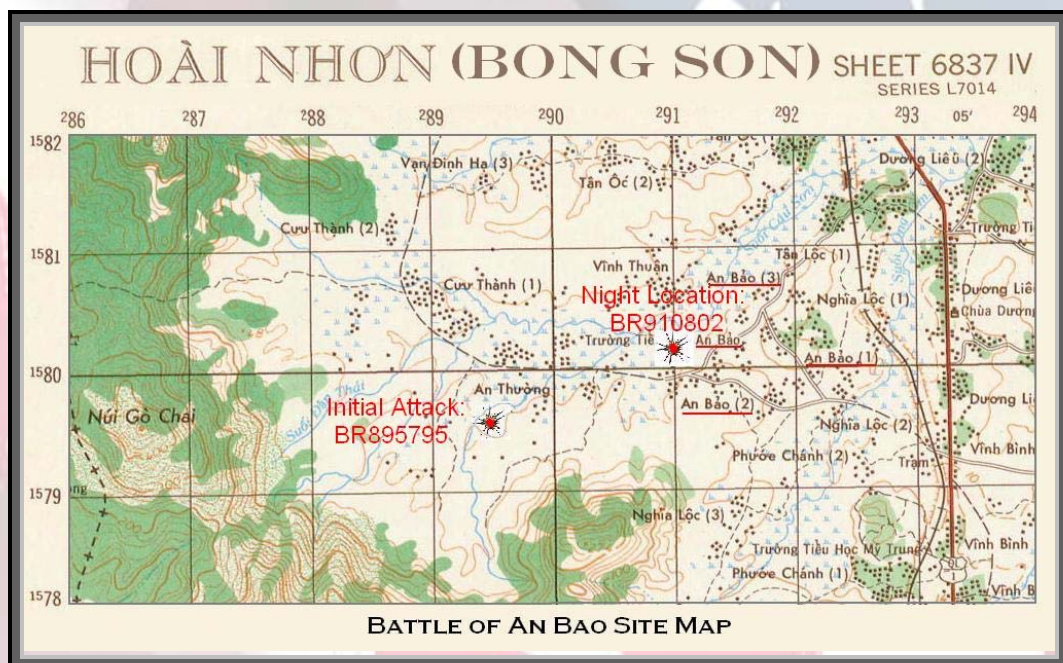
Fierce fighting ensued on both 1/50th Companies as additional reinforcements from "B" Company, 1/50th Infantry and "B" Company, 1/69th Armor were called in to battle the huge enemy force.

Read about the Battle of An Bao:

<http://www.ichiban1.org/pdf/Memorial/AnBaoCondensed.pdf>

<http://www.ichiban1.org/pdf/Memorial/AnBaoExpanded.pdf>

A map of the location of the Battle of An Bao in Binh Dinh Province is shown below:



Continued...

Don's childhood friend, Paul Cross, wrote a compelling story about Donny Stephenson's return home and burial. The story can be found on our "War Stories" pages: <http://ichiban1.org/pdf/StephensonHomecoming-1968.pdf>

A bridge on State Highway 64 (Lewisburg Highway) just west of Shelbyville was named in honor of Donald Ray Stephenson (Photo below).

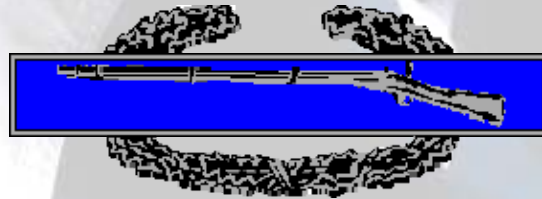


Donald Stephenson is buried at Wheel Community Cemetery, Shelbyville Highway, Lewisburg, Bedford County, TN (Photos Below).



Continued...

DONALD STEPHENSON'S AWARDS AND DECORATIONS:



Combat Infantry Badge



Airborne Qualified



HQ 173RD AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)

GENERAL ORDERS NUMBER 1461

26 MAY 1968

FOR DISTINGUISHING HIMSELF BY OUTSTANDING MERITORIOUS SERVICE IN CONNECTION WITH GROUND OPERATIONS AGAINST A HOSTILE FORCE IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM DURING THE PERIOD FROM JANUARY 1968 TO MAY 1969. THROUGH HIS UNTIRING EFFORTS AND PROFESSIONAL ABILITY, HE CONSISTENTLY OBTAINED OUTSTANDING RESULTS. HE WAS QUICK TO GRASP THE IMPLICATIONS OF NEW PROBLEMS WITH WHICH HE WAS FACED AS A RESULT OF THE EVER-CHANGING SITUATIONS INHERENT IN THE COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATION AND TO FIND WAYS AND MEANS TO SOLVE THOSE PROBLEMS. THE ENERGETIC APPLICATION OF THIS EXTENSIVE KNOWLEDGE HAS MATERIALLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE EFFORTS OF THE UNITED STATES MISSION TO THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM TO ASSIST THAT COUNTRY IN RIDDING ITSELF OF THE COMMUNIST THREAT TO ITS FREEDOM. HIS INITIATIVE, ZEAL, SOUND JUDGMENT AND DEVOTION TO DUTY HAVE BEEN IN THE HIGHEST TRADITION OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY AND REFLECT GREAT CREDIT ON HIM AND ON THE MILITARY SERVICE.



Bronze Star



Purple Heart



National Defense



Vietnam Service



Vietnam Campaign