

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

1ST BATTALION, 50TH INFANTRY ASSOCIATION

EDITOR LORENE BURCH



AUGUST, 2021

FROM THE TC HATCH

By Jim Seagers

Hello, friends,

We had such a good time at the Reunion; and it appears all of you who came did, too! LTC Daubert and his cadre, Mike McCardell, Jay Copley, John Topper, Chris Lewis, and Gary Quint had everything planned so nicely that every event went very smoothly. Thanks to all of you!

Thank you once again for the honor of serving as your president. I really enjoy representing you as often as I can at Ft. Benning and with the general public, especially with veterans in other units. Take care and have a wonderful summer.

“Play the Game”

Jimmy Segars

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THE LADIES CORNER

By Loretta Segars

Thank you to everyone in our association and the 1/50th Infantry Battalion for the honor of the U. S. Army’s Public Service Award. When I get well, I hope to get back to serving our association more. All of you took such good care of me during the recent Reunion. Also, thank you for the presents you gave me, too. You are all so thoughtful! Jimmy and I had a great time! I have two more chemo treatments. Then I should get some feedback on how effective the treatments have been. Thank you for your prayers and concern.

Sincerely,

Loretta Segars



CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

By Toby Jordan



Hope you are enjoying the summer. For those who missed the reunion, if you haven't heard, it was a very good time for those who were able to make it.

My prayers for those who are dealing with sickness, one dear friend that comes to mind is Russ Roth we miss you buddy.

A big congratulations to Mick Hawkins being inducted into Saint Maurice it was well deserved along with Russ.

I don't know how many more reunions we will have, so my prayers will be for our health that we can continue to enjoy maybe making new acquaintances of old friends. If you have any prayer request email me or call. My email address is: lawrencejordan30@yahoo.com, Phone no. 573-379-0875

God Bless each and every one.
Toby.

EDITOR'S NOTES:

Greeting all:

I wish I could attach a slide show of all the pictures I took. Some of them weren't great, but the memories attached to them are unforgettable.



I Am not sure if this reunion was different because of us all being distanced for so long, or if it was that we are become more like a family. As I look back I enjoyed rekindling some of my old friendships and making so many new ones.

We had such a warm greeting by LTC Justin Daubert, as he made it more enjoyable with his quirky sense of humor. You all would have enjoyed listening to him.

It was an unexpected honor to receive the Shield of Sparta. Thank you so much, I have to confess, if it weren't for Roger's help I am not sure it would always get out on time. He helps me with the mailings, by helping to fold, addressing and putting stamps on them. So am sharing it with him. It truly means a lot.

Eternally grateful for the honor of being your editor:

Lorene Burch

REUNION MEMORIAL ACTIVITIES

Gone but not forgotten

50th Infantry Veterans we have recently learned have passed away:

George Borges, died August 7, 2020
Marvin Brophy, died July 27, 2020
Robert L. Carney, died Oct 15, 2019
Lawrence Manuel Clouse, died May 13, 2019
Jimmy Wayne Copeland, died November 17, 2018
William F. DeSimone, died May 21, 2021
Louis Frisbie, died June 6, 2021
Robert Gold, died February 3, 2020
Thomas W. Herren, Bn XO, died August 12, 2017
Joe Kwak. C Co. died December 2, 2020
Michael Henry McFarland, died June 8, 2019

Brian F. McShane, Died May 20, 2011
Everett Daniel "Dan" Odom, Jr., died June 9, 2018
John Parkinson, died April 26, 2020
Warren Franklin Rockey, Died January 16, 2015
Vinny Russo, Died Nov 21, 2019
Leo F. Ryan, died April 21, 2014
Gerald (Jerry) Seliski, died October 9, 2019
John Earl Smerdon, died July 7, 2019
Joe Torres, Jr., died February 8, 2021
John R. Voakes, Jr, died December 26, 2017
Gary Wolff, died March 6, 2021

Memorial Wreath Laying Ceremony -June 24, 2021
Speech given in part by John Topper

As we honor and pay tribute to those we left behind in Vietnam, their monumental sacrifice is difficult for us to imagine. My thoughts always go back to Tom Pipkin... the first man killed from our battalion. He was 20 years old with a wife who was expecting their first child. A child he would never know. It's difficult to imagine the many years of anguish and heartbreak that began with his death. A young girl widowed and robbed of her future with the man she loved An unborn child who will never know the love of the man who fathered her. That's heartbreak that can't be made to go away.

So as we honor Tom and the other 238 names on these monuments, let's Remember him because he is all of them—and he is one of us. He, and those with whom we fought, taught us to endure hardship, to show courage, to place our trust in each other. They taught us about Brotherhood.

On 19 April 1775 Captain John Parker standing on Lexington Green instructed his men, "Do not fire unless fired upon. But, if they mean to have a war let it begin here." The Revolutionary War began that day, and American men and women have been answering the nation's call to duty ever since. You answered that call. You understand the Brotherhood and can be proud of your service. So today, rather than morn the loss of these men, let's celebrate that such men existed... and we were privileged to know them.



REUNION 2021 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING - 23 JUNE 2021

Minutes by Association Secretary Gary Quint

The meeting was called to order by President Jim Segars

Invocation was given by Chaplain Toby Jordan

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag was led by Vice President Roberto Melendez

The minutes of the 2019 meeting were presented by Secretary Gary Quint. Bill Mims made a motion to accept the minutes as published in the Association News Letter. The motion was seconded and approved by a voice vote of the membership. Gary also recognized all of the Medics in our group, for their support during our tours.

President Segars recognized the two representatives of Artillery, Keith Rennerfeldt and Bill Hunter. Due to the fact that Treasurer Chuck Mc Aleer was unable to attend, the Treasurer's report was presented by John Topper. Jim Segars made a motion to accept the Treasurers report as given. The motion was seconded and approved by voice vote of the membership.

Jim Segars then introduced Battalion Commander LTC Justin Daubert who welcomed us to Fort Benning. Jim Segars announced that General Donahoe would be a guest speaker at the Banquet. General Donahoe and Command Sergeant Major Derrick Garner form the Command Team at Fort Benning. Jim announced that Command Sergeant Major Derrick Garner will speak at the Battalion Bar-B-Que.

We will have lunch in the Mess Hall with the Trainees, on Wednesday and dinner at Uchee Creek that evening with the 1/50th Training Cadre and their families. Everyone is encouraged to mingle with the Trainees as well as the Cadre families.

He also discussed the shirts and caps which are ordinarily ordered 6-8 weeks in advance making it somewhat difficult to coordinate sizes. Great effort is made so that everyone has a shirt and cap for the Turning Blue Ceremony as well as the Memorial Service.

President Segars also announced that Rob Choppa, President of National Infantry Association, will speak at the Memorial Service.

OLD BUSINESS

John Topper informed those in attendance that the 1/50th logo will be among those displayed at the new Army Museum at Fort Belvoir Virginia. He also briefed the membership on the current status of the Valorous Unit Citation which has been in limbo since 1968.

Jim Sheppard gave the Historian's Report and offered a variety of items for sale, the proceeds of which would go to the Association.

NEW BUSINESS

Jim Segars discussed the schedule for the week and emphasized that we share conversation with the Trainees and Cadre families when meeting with them.

President Segars also discussed the Museum and a new display created by CSM Chris Lewis (Ret) and the viewing of a documentary based on Lorretta Segars book "Sand in Tuscany".

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(Minutes continued from page 4)

NEXT REUNION

Jim Segars asked if anyone objected to our next reunion being held at Fort Benning. There were no objections from the floor and Jim made a motion to keep our reunion at Fort Benning. It was seconded by John Topper and accepted by the floor.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

John Topper discussed the current roster of officers and no changes were offered by the floor. John made a motion to retain the current officers and this motion was seconded and accepted by the members.

Benediction was offered by Chaplain Toby Jordan.

The meeting was adjourned.

REUNION 2021

From Reunion Chairperson John Topper



In many ways this was the best reunion we've had since beginning our biannual sojourn to Ft Benning in 2003. The numbers weren't as high as some years, but that gave us more time to spend with each other. The logistics created by the pandemic – including the post being shut down and not opening until just prior to our arrival were challenging. The inability of the Club to cook for us until just a few days before the scheduled banquet was a great concern. The last minute surprise of not having shirts and caps as promised was a real challenge as well. We managed to overcome all those issues and each event went as planned, and without a hiccup.

It did, however, cost us more than usual, about \$3300 over our budget. Most of that was caused by the Association having to pay for shirts – heretofore they were picked up by the Battalion. Same was true for the BBQ and rental of the event center at Uchee Creek. The battalion commander purchased the beer for the BBQ out of his pocket – thank you Justin Daubert! Another major expense was the increase in cost for our banquet on Thursday evening – about \$1000 more than the last reunion. It also didn't help that we squashed the 50/50 at the banquet. My fault on that one.

The good news, of course, was that for the first time ever, the Post CG spoke to us at the banquet. MG Pat Donahoe did a fantastic job in his research of our history. At the BBQ we were addressed by the Post Command Sergeant Major, Derrick Garner. CSM Garner is an alumni of 1/50 OSUT training in 1996. The featured speaker at our Memorial Service was the 198th Infantry Brigade Commander, Colonel Ryan Wylie. All speakers were well prepared and sincere in their efforts to make us feel welcome – they contributed to an awesome reunion!

But the real value in making it worth all the effort, in my opinion, was the opportunity to see the magnificent faces of those in attendance. Albeit some were more magnificent than others. It may have escaped your notice, but some of us are getting older! I particularly enjoyed the Tuesday Open Mic and listening to what everyone had to say. Especially interesting was our Facetime conversation with Russ Roth.

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Congratulations to our newest members of the Order of Saint Maurice, Don Hoag and Mick Hawkins – and Russ Roth from afar. We also recognized the value of the behind-the-scenes workers and supporters: Kay Quint, Brenda Jordan, Melanie Hoag, and our intrepid Newsletter Editor, Lorene Burch and, Cynthia Guthrie from afar.

We missed all those who were unable to make it for various reasons. We also missed and gave a loving tribute to those who were taken from us since the last reunion.

God bless you all – hope to see you at our next reunion. Play up, play up and Play the Game!

FROM THE BATTALION COMMANDING OFFICER

On behalf of the Cadre of the Battalion I would like to thank the Association for the amazing work in the planning and execution of the recent association week. This is the first time that the entire team has been together since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The larger 1-50IN family took the opportunity to meet, connect and build on established relationships. It was the first time in three years we had the **past**—our Vietnam Veterans, the **present**—the current 1-50IN cadre, and the **future**—our Trainees in the same place. It was AWESOME! The bonds that were forged and the relationships that were nurtured, will last for years to come.



A personal highlight for me was watching and listening to the engagements of our Veterans and Trainees at the two lunch events. Watching the past and present 1-50IN teammates exchanging phone numbers and email addresses before departing ways, was an indicator that we got things right this year.

We were fortunate to have three distinguished visitors speak at our events. First was CSM Derrick Garner, the Fort Benning Command Sergeant Major who came through Alpha Company, 1-50IN in basic training. CSM Garner shared some words from his heart at the BBQ and we took that opportunity to recognize him as an Honorary Member of the 50th Infantry Regiment that night. He was blown away when the team presented him a set of BN colors as a gift. COL Ryan Wylie, the current 198th BDE, Brigade Commander, spent the morning with the team at the memorial rededication. COL Wylie is a huge supporter of the organization and one of the behind the scenes leaders whose efforts made the week a reality. Finally, MG Patrick Donahoe, the Fort Benning Commanding General, spent the evening with the team at the Association Banquet. A student of military history, MG Donahoe did his homework when preparing his comments. He connected with the lineage of the 50th Infantry Regiment and the members in attendance. He told afterwards how much he enjoyed spending the evening with the entire team.

The final event for this amazing week was the 1-50IN BN ball, where COL (R) John Topper was the guest speaker. COL (R) Topper spent time with the cadre by sharing past stories of the 1-50IN team. Through his words he connected the audience to the inspirational leaders he referenced. His expert story telling filled the room with laughter and many joyful tears.

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The Army is a people business and the association week was a perfect example of bringing the past, present and future members of 1-50IN together. I was honored to take part in this amazing week and am honored to be the commander of 1-50IN. We look forward to the next time that we can get the complete 1-50IN family together again.

LTC Justin E. Daubert - "Play Up, Play Up, Play the Game"

ST. MAURICE AWARDS

Given the St. Maurice award were Don Hoag and Harley (Mick) Hawkins. Russ Roth was also given this award but was unable to attend due to health issues.



SHIELD OF SPARTA

Receiving the Shield of Sparta for their work within the association, were Kay Quint, Brenda Jordan, Melanie Hoag and Lorene Burch...Also Cynthia Guthrie who was unable to attend due to a prior family commitment.



Congratulation to each of you!

HISTORIAN REPORT

It was great seeing those who attended our recent reunion at Fort Benning! Although the crowd was somewhat smaller than in reunions past, it was particularly enjoyable to see so many good friends for hugs and handshakes. Given the physical separations necessitated by the year and a half of pandemic protocols, it was doubly enjoyable to be with any group...in what was, for me (and most of us), the first time at such a mass gathering since March of 2019!

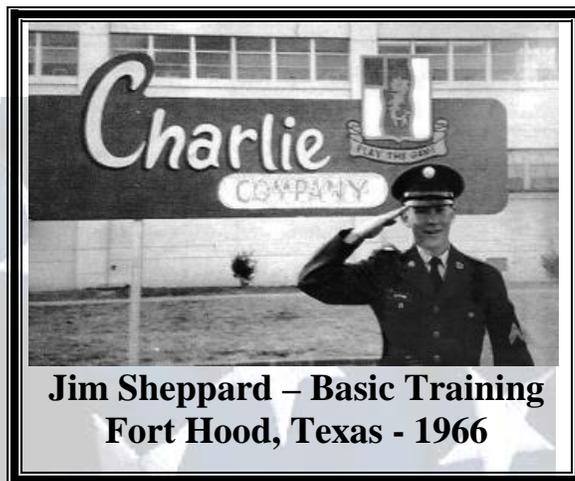
Also memorable for me was getting to know the current Battalion Commander, LTC Justin Daubert. Once again, we are impressed by another great leader at the helm of our beloved 50th Infantry! Also of note were the obvious and much needed renovations at our host hotel! That Venue has proven to be just about perfect for our reunion needs...so it is reassuring to know that relationship can continue and we don't have to be concerned with moving to another property.

As for my Historian duties, the remodeled Board Room where I house our Archives worked out very well. Sales of various items totaled \$305.00...which should meet whatever historian expenses I incur during the next two years! Thank you! I have some ideas for improving the offering I have for sale at these reunions...since previous sales show which items remain as favorites and which are not in demand.

For the next few months, I plan to work on the Memorial pages for the 32 men we listed on our original memorial who turned out to not be from the 50th Infantry. Some of you know the story...but I feel that many do not...so I will explain here in some detail.

Early in this decade when former C and D Company Commander Ray Sarlin picked up the work of our original website designer...my former squad leader Norm Poage...Ray took it upon himself to attempt to gather a list of men from the 1/50 killed in the Vietnam War as part of the Memorial being planned for presentation to the Battalion in 2003. At that time, there was no list of casualties that showed unit assignments at the Battalion and Company level. All KIAs had only been identified by the major command (Brigade or Division) to which they belonged. Although the "Internet" was a marvelous tool in helping so many efforts...not the least of which was Ray's quest, there was only one database website that listed the men killed in action by multiple categories...such as MOS, Province where KIA and other basic information. Information on Battalion level assignments was still unknown for most...and not included. That website database was called "No Quarter" and has since been replaced by the now extremely accurate "Coffelt Database" which does include assignments...in many cases down to platoon level.

To get back to formulating our memorial list of names, Ray used the documentation I had been gathering during my years since 1999 when installed as Historian to find mention of casualties. Official documentation such as After Action Reports and Daily Staff Journals do NOT list names...but do give numbers. So, for example, we knew "X" amount of men died on a given date...but not what the names were. Ray would assemble a list of names for a given KIA event...first based on those we knew and could report to Ray had died in that event. When there turned out to be a man or more we could still not identify, Ray would go to the "No Quarter" database and do a search by Date, Province and MOS (Usually 11B...although that turned out to be flawed...since some KIAs were not Infantry MOS). Finally he would pull from those searches the men with the major command to which we were attached...and fill the voids with "guessed" names.



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While not all of the names were “guesses” and an unknown number were actually accurate...the final list turned out to contain a very high percentage of the actual men KIA with the 1/50...however, as mentioned, 32 proved to not be men from the 1/50.

I had not yet begun my efforts at memorial website pages for each man killed in action...but as those efforts moved full steam ahead during the late Randy Smith’s tenure as Association President, I began to discover the discrepancies. Adding to the difficulty in understanding the source of information that placed many of these names on our KIA list was the fact that Ray Sarlin gave up his webmaster duties late in 2005 and a rift between Ray and myself precluding conversations about individual names and how specifically they came to be known as 50th Infantry KIAs. (I am very happy to report that Ray and I have since reconciled)

Some had been mentioned by members of our association who remembered their deaths. Some were reported as dying...but the man in question had been transferred to another unit...however most in that category have been substantiated. In the end, we had the aforementioned 32 names engraved on our memorial who were not assigned to the 50th Infantry upon their deaths in Vietnam. This fact was brought to the attention of the association at a subsequent reunion...and the membership voted to leave those names on the memorial.

I made a personal decision to abandon work on memorial pages for those men...since there was too much I did not know about those individual’s deaths. Now that all of our memorial pages are more or less complete, I recently decided to revisit those 32 men’s folders and see what I can bring to their pages in the way of some information as I have done with our 50th Infantry men who made the ultimate sacrifice.

In the end, we Vietnam Veterans are all “brothers”...and it will be my privilege to add these efforts to those already completed. I should have this work done during the coming year. We may even be able to invite some of the relatives and/or friends of these men to a future reunion to see their loved one’s name on our memorial at Fort Benning!

I wish everyone a relaxing and enjoyable summer, and I look forward to seeing you again in 2023!

Association Historian,
Jim Sheppard

GREETINGS TO THE 1/50TH ASSOCIATION FROM THE OCEANIA OMNIMEDIA FILM TEAM!

We want to express our thanks, to all, for the privilege and opportunity we had of sharing our feature film documentary, FINAL WORDS OF WWII, shown on June 23, 2021, at Ft. Benning. Our film, having already won over sixteen International Film Awards, has now been invited to a WORLD PREMIERE at the famous Will Rogers International Film Festival in Claremore, OK, at the famous theater next to the Will Rogers Museum, on Thursday, November 4th, 2021.



This will be the first WORLD PREMIERE granted by the film company, Oceania OmniMedia, led by CEO and President, Jennifer Willingham. Dr. Kevin McAfee, award-winning director and writer, and his filmmaking team (including producer, stars and crew members), will be attending this very special event in the 190-seat restored auditorium for the International Film Festival.

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What an honor this is. If you would like to be a part of this honorary event; and also, our dream as a film team to be able to share this wonderful film on military bases that open their doors to FINAL WORDS OF WWII, this is how you may participate:

Please go to our non-profit WWW.VERITASMISSIONFILMS.COM and go to the “donate” page. You will see the movie poster to FINAL WORDS OF WWII. Click on this and the necessary information regarding “SPECIAL SPONSORSHIPS” and donations for the WORLD PREMIERE, will appear and also where you may financially contribute. Also, please refer to the information given below where you may reach me with any questions.

On behalf of our film team, at Oceania Omni-Media, THANK YOU, in advance, for helping to make our dreams for others a reality.

Best Wishes & God Bless, Stephanie Musser,
Co-Producer of Final Words of WWII,
steph.m@goldenrulehq.com, (405) 760-3723



JOINT CHIEFS - EXECUTIVE PRODUCER CREDIT

\$25,000 Will Rogers Executive Producer Award of Merit

This “Special Producer Credit” will be granted to the producers who come on board promoting the Will Rogers International Film Festival for Oceania Omnimedia. Oceania Omnimedia will be presenting on the night of the premiere, the Will Rogers Award, to this JOINT CHIEFS EP, who will be given in helping promote this film festival in Claremore, Oklahoma.

BENEFITS

- 8 VIP Seats to World Premiere
- Special Photographs With Cast (Segars & Studstill Families)
- Special Photographs With Filmmakers (Producers, Directors, Etc.)
- Movie Poster Credit for Sponsorship
- Special Mentions on All Media Relationship
- Newspaper Coverage on Press Releases
- Special Recognition at the World Premiere
- Presentation of the Will Rogers Award – Oceania Omnimedia

THE GENERALS - CO-PRODUCER CREDIT

\$12,500 Will Rogers Executive Producer Award of Merit

BENEFITS

- 2 VIP Seats to World Premiere
- Special Recognition at the World Premiere
- Presentation of the Will Rogers Award – Oceania Omnimedia
- All monies will be used to coordinate Film Festival marketing materials, engage with the public relations organizations and help promote the Will Rogers International Film Festival.

DECORATED HEROES – MILITARY PATRON CREDIT

- \$2,500 Director’s Award of Merit
- 2 VIP Seats to World Premiere
- Placed in the Promotions for the Will Rogers Premiere

COMMAND TEAM AT OUR 2021 REUNION BANQUET



From Left to right: 1-50 Battalion Commander LTC Justin Daubert, Honorary Sergeant Major of the 50th Infantry Regiment Jay Copley, Honorary Colonel of the 50th Infantry Regiment John Topper, Acting 1-50 Battalion CSM Gonzales, 50th Infantry Association President Jimmy Segars and Maneuver Center of Excellence Commanding General Major General Patrick J. Donahoe.

- Please send in your future articles to Lorene Burch, 821 Meadowbrook Rd., Salina Kansas 67401 or my email address thelmaburch@gmail.com
- Feel free to visit the association web site at: <https://www.ichiban1.org/>