

"When the law was passed there were two areas that raised questions for me," Webb explained. "One was the presumption of exposure for anyone who had been in Vietnam; 2.7 million people had an automatic presumption of exposure. And then the notion that the VA administrator, now the secretary of veterans' affairs, has discretion based on scientific evidence to decide a service-connection" to various illnesses. "It's very broad."

Webb amended HR 4899 so claims can't be paid on the three newly-named Agent Orange illnesses until 60 days after a final rule is published.

"This is an area where we have a responsibility to pump for more [information] to tell us specifically how they made the connection. The only appropriate way to do that is say, 'Let's fence the money for 60 days and get some clarification here.'"

Webb said he was unaware on finding the \$13.4 billion in the bill that Shinseki had asked Sen. Daniel Akaka (D-Hawaii), chairman of the VA committee, not to hold a hearing on this issue. Akaka had scheduled one for April, then rescheduled for early May when VA declined to send witnesses.

One theme he ran on in 2006, Webb said, was restoring a proper balance of power between the legislative and executive branches. Too much authority had been conceded to, or usurped by, recent administrations.

Webb said he even fired off a letter to President Obama last December challenging a claim he made as he prepared for a summit on climate change that he would return from Copenhagen with a binding agreement.

"I just felt compelled to say, 'You do not have the constitutional authority to bind the United States to an international agreement. The Congress does'." Webb said.

Shinseki's decision on Agent Orange strikes Webb as more proof too much power has been conceded to the executive branch.

It was the Carter administration, he said, that adopted a presumption "that everyone who was in Vietnam was exposed" to Agent Orange. At the time, he said, the decision wasn't "onerous" on VA budgets because the department only had linked Agent Orange to some rare illnesses.

More recently, VA has found links to ailments generally associated with aging, committing VA to pay billions in additional compensation. Webb felt the scientific evidence linking Type II diabetes to Agent Orange in 2001 was soft. He is reluctant to say the same about the

three illnesses Shinseki has endorsed until he hears his testimony.

But Webb does intend to question the science behind presuming everyone who served in Vietnam was exposed to defoliants. He knows his own Marine Company was, he said, as were many other units who were engaged in combat in the countryside or handled Agent Orange directly.

"On any given day in Vietnam they say about 10 percent of the people were actually out in direct combat. Percentages are actually higher than that because of rotations...But the majority of the people weren't in combat" where defoliants were used. "That's just the reality of it."

The issue was handled with more precision, he suggested, in the late 1970s when Webb served as legal counsel on the House VA committee.



"The discussions were you could develop a chronological map overlay of where defoliants had been used, and then develop a nexus in someone's service record on whether they had been in those areas. From that you could say whether these conditions would be presumptively acquired. Back then it was very small in numbers."

(continued....)



~ THE DOGS OF WAR ~
The 39th Scout Dog Platoon

"Everyone up here wants to help veterans -- no one more than I do. But a lot of people have asked about this. They want to make sure we're really (a) following the law and (b) taking care of people who are service connected. I don't want to be the one person out here doing this. I know Chairman Akaka has joined me in his concerns. The main thing is let's have Secretary Shinseki come forward and explain the causality."

In our interview, Webb said VA wouldn't publish a final regulation until after the Sept. 23 hearing. It was later learned the hearing might fall within the 60-day period, an indication VA officials plan to publish a final rule before the hearing. That would narrow Webb's window to try to block compensation payments if he and colleagues decide such action is justified.

To comment, e-mail milupdate@aol.com, write to Military Update, P.O. Box 231111, Centreville, VA, 20120-1111 or visit: www.militaryupdate.com



Pete Peters with his Scout Dog, 1966, Vietnam.

From the beaches of Vung Tau, to the jungles of the Iron Triangle, through the rubber plantations surrounding Da Lat and Tay Ninh, sweeping the Ia Drang Valley west of Pleiku, then north, taking the NVA held mountains above Dak To, protecting the highly vital highway 19 corridor, and finally, securing the An Lao valley & the Bon Song coastal plains. For five years the Scout Teams of the 39th always were out in front.

"We're moving out! Dogman, take the point!"



Visit the web site:

members.tripod.com/39th_scout_dogs/



~ The 4th of July ~

Independence Day, commonly known as July 4th or the Fourth of July, commemorates the Continental Congress' adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776. The document, primarily written by Thomas Jefferson, served as a formal announcement that the 13 American colonies were no longer part of the British Empire and would henceforth be free and independent states. Regarded as the birthday of the United States of America, the day is typically celebrated with parades, fireworks, ceremonies, barbecues and family gatherings.

The Declaration of Independence announced the

American colonies' independence from Britain. American Revolution

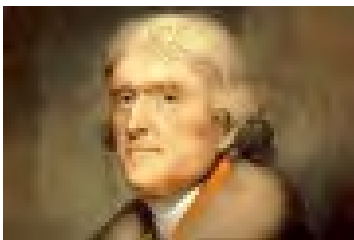


In the second half of the 18th century, the American colonies rejected the British monarchy and won their independence.



The Continental Congress

From 1774 to 1789, the Continental Congress served as the government of the 13 American colonies and later the United States.



Thomas Jefferson

The third U.S. president and a renowned political philosopher, Thomas Jefferson played a significant role in drafting the Declaration of Independence.

Independence Day

Independence Day, commonly known as the Fourth of July, is the annual celebration of nationhood. It commemorates the passage of the Declaration of Independence by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776.

The Congress had voted in favor of independence from Great Britain on July 2 but did not actually complete the process of revising the Declaration of Independence, originally drafted by Thomas Jefferson in consultation with fellow committee members John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman and William Livingston, until two days later. The celebration was initially modeled on that of the king's birthday, which had been marked annually by bell ringing, bonfires, solemn processions and oratory. Such festivals had long played a significant role in the Anglo-American political tradition. Especially in the 17th and 18th centuries, when dynastic and religious controversies racked the British Empire (and much of the rest of Europe), the choice of which anniversaries of historic events were celebrated and which were lamented had clear political meanings. The ritual of toasting the king and other patriot-heroes—or of criticizing them—became an informal kind of political speech, further formalized in mid-18th century when the toasts given at taverns and banquets began to be reprinted in newspapers.

Early Years

In the early stages of the revolutionary movement in the colonies during the 1760s and early 1770s, patriots used such celebrations to proclaim their resistance to Parliament's legislation while lauding the king as the real defender of English liberties. However, the marking of the first days of independence during the summer of 1776 actually took the form in many towns of a mock funeral for the king, whose "death" symbolized the end of monarchy and tyranny and the rebirth of liberty.

During the early years of the republic, Independence Day was commemorated with parades, oratory and toasting, in ceremonies that celebrated the existence of the new nation. These rites played an equally important role in the evolving federal political system. With the rise of informal political parties, they provided venues for leaders and constituents to tie local and national contests to independence and the issues facing the national polity.

(continued....)

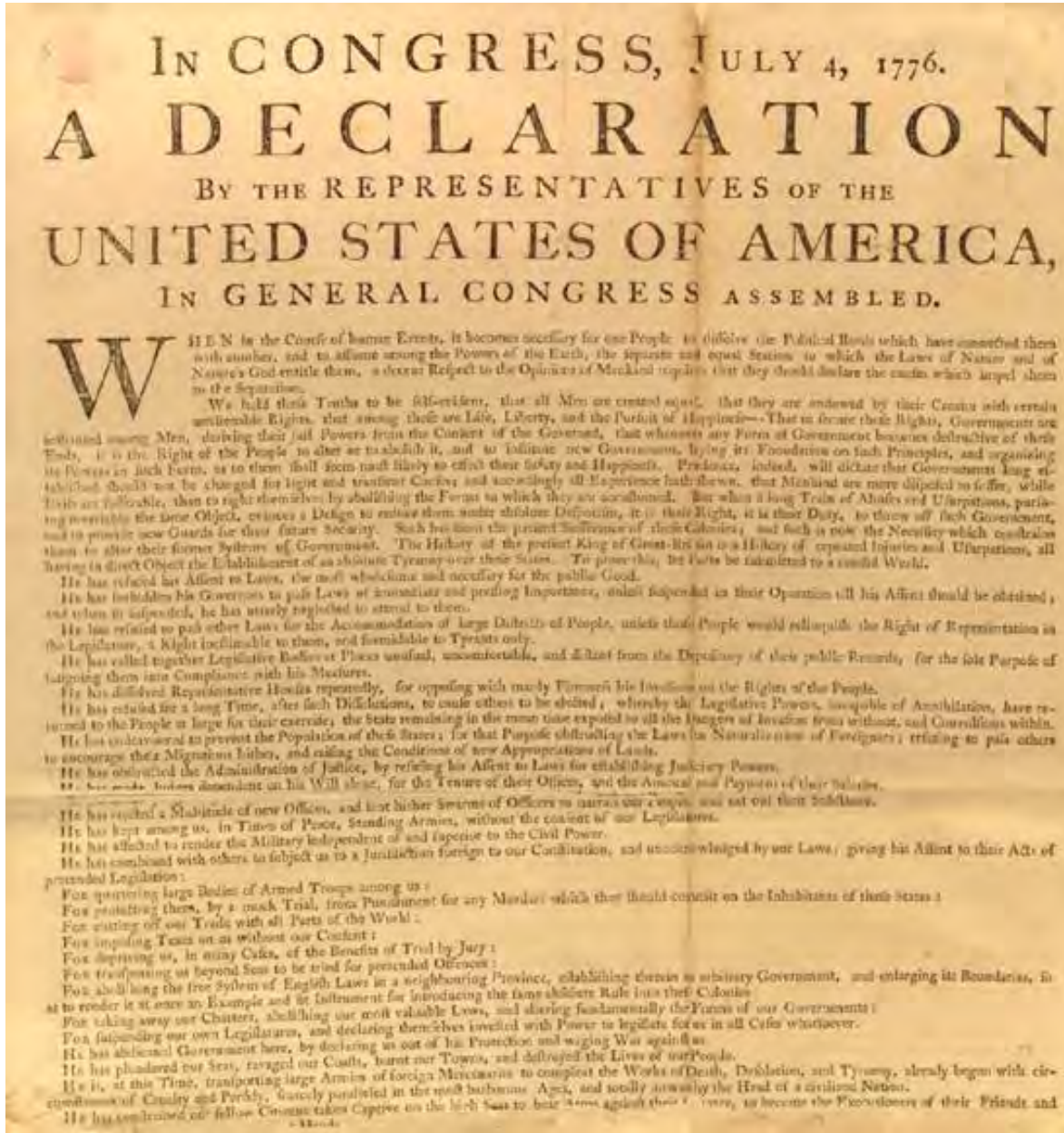


By the mid-1790s, the two nascent political parties held separate, partisan Independence Day festivals in most larger towns. Perhaps for this reason, Independence Day became the model for a series of (often short-lived) celebrations that sometimes contained more explicit political resonance, such as Washington's birthday and the anniversary of Jefferson's Inauguration while he served as president (1801-09).

claim. Abolitionists, women's rights advocates, the temperance movement, and opponents of immigration (nativists) all seized the day and its observance, in the process often declaring that they could not celebrate with the entire community while an un-American perversion of their rights prevailed.

A Modern History

With the rise of leisure, the Fourth also emerged as a major midsummer holiday. The prevalence of heavy drinking and the many injuries caused by setting off fireworks prompted reformers of the late 19th and the early 20th century to mount a Safe and Sane Fourth of July movement. During the later 20th century, although it remained a national holiday marked by parades, concerts of patriotic music and fireworks displays, Independence Day declined in importance as a venue for politics. It remains a potent symbol of national power and of specifically American qualities even the freedom to stay at home and barbecue.



19th Century Celebrations

The bombastic torrent of words that characterized Independence Day during the 19th century made it both a serious occasion and one sometimes open to ridicule—like the increasingly popular and democratic political process itself in that period. With the growth and diversification of American society, the Fourth of July commemoration became a patriotic tradition which many groups—not just political parties—sought to

Source: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.
For informatino visit Britannica.com

(continued...)



~ THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE ~

IN CONGRESS, July 4, 1776.

The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,

When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.--That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.--Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harrass our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our

constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us: For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States: For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world: For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent: For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury: For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:

For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:

For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our Brittish brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.





2010 503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team Reunion ~ September 22nd - September 26th ~



~ Tentative Agenda ~

Wyndham DFW Airport North, Irving Texas

Wednesday, September 22nd

Registration (room 704):.....12:00a.m. - 5:00p.m.
Hospitality Room (room 704):..... 2:00p.m. - 10:00p.m.

Thursday, September 23rd

*Breakfast..... 6:00a.m. - 11:00a.m.
Registration (room 704):.....10:00a.m. - 4:00p.m.

Friday, September 24th

* Breakfast.....6:00a.m. - 11:00a.m.
Board of Director's Meeting,
(Hospitality room 704):.....10:00a.m.
Registration (room 704):.....12:00a.m. - 5:00p.m.
Hospitality Room (room 704/804):.....12:00a.m. - 5:00p.m.

Hospitality room sponsored by:

FORD ALBRITTON

ALL TROOPERS please come and lift a drink!!!!

Hospitality Room (room 704):..... 2:00p.m. - 5:00p.m.
Dinner (banquet room BOND):..... 6:00p.m.
Hospitality Room: (room 704 & 804),
After dinner:..... 10:00p.m.

Saturday, September 25th

*Breakfast: 6:00a.m. - 11:00a.m.
SW Chapter Meeting:
(hospitality room 804):.....9:30a.m.
Annual Membership Meeting:
(hospitality room 704):11:00a.m.
Hospitality Room (Open after annual meeting): 5:00p.m.
Open after banquet:.....10:00p.m.
Banquet: (banquet room LINDBERGH 1):.....6:00p.m.

Sunday, September 26th

*Breakfast:.....6:00a.m. - 11:00a.m.
Check Out: anytime up to 12:00a.m.

*Breakfast Buffet is for registered hotel guests only.
ALL others must order and pay individually.

***No food or beverage may be taken out of the
Hospitality suites, per hotel request.***

~ Hotel Information ~

Wyndham DFW Airport North
4441 West John Carpenter Freeway (HWY 114)
Irving, Texas 75063

Hotel Reservations: (972)-929-8181
for special requests.

Toll free Reservations: (877)-999-3223
specify hotel name.

Be sure to request the 503rd PRCT room block
when making your reservations.

Dates: Wednesday, Sept 22nd - Sunday, Sept 26th
(stay longer if you wish!)

- **Room Rate** is \$79.00 plus tax for up to 2 people (king or 2 full beds), which includes full breakfast buffet (including omelets and the like!), and free shuttle service to and from DFW Airport and local restaurants.

Hotel Reservation deadline is September 1, 2010, after which room rate cannot be guaranteed.

503rd Reunion Registration Fee

\$90.00 per person, please make check payable and mail to:

Marvin Edwards or;
SW 503rd PRCT

1655 VZCR 2313, Canton, Texas 75103

Phone number for any questions—(903)-848-7023

Fee includes: Catered Dinner on Friday and Saturday, Banquet Room both nights for Dinner, Hospitality Room for entire reunion with snacks and drinks.
Name Tags.
Free Parking at hotel.
And other items.

Hospitality Room on Friday is sponsored by **FORD ALBRITTON!!!** All troopers please come and share drinks and conversation from 2:00-5:00 p.m.. Ford was attached to Headquarters and flew many support missions for you and would like to talk with all of his old friends.



Attention all Sky Soldiers! The 503rd PRCT Association is inviting all members of the 173d Airborne Brigade Association to join their fellow 503rd paratroopers at our reunion in Dallas, TX this September. We hope to see you here!!!



AIRBORNE.....ALL THE WAY!

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503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team 2010

~ Reunion Registration Form ~



Wednesday, September 22nd-Sunday, September 26th

Wyndham DFW Airport North, Irving Texas

*****PLEASE PRINT and RETURN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WITH PAYMENT*****

_____ How many will be registered to attend reunion and banquet at \$90.00 per person?

Please print names

Unit

1. _____

2. _____ spouse

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

For information or questions, please call:

(903)-848-7023

_____ How many other guests will attend **ONLY** the catered meals with you at a cost of \$32.50 per person per meal? Please indicate meal: _____ Friday _____ Saturday

Date you plan to check in: _____

Date you plan to check out: _____

_____ We will **NOT** be able to attend the reunion or banquet(s) this year.

(Please print)

(Name): _____

(Phone Number): _____

(Email): _____



Wyndham DFW Airport North, Irving Texas

Enclosed is my check in the amount of: \$ _____ payable to:

503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team

Please mail completed form with check to:

Marvin Edwards

1655 VZCR 2313, Canton, TX 75103

Registration deadline is Sunday, August 15, 2010.
Registration refunds will be given until September 10, 2010.



A FINE SOLDIER

By Bob Carmichael, LTC (Ret)

At Camp Zinn my sleeping quarters were on the main street. One day, about dusk, I noticed a platoon of men going up the street toward the wire, going out on security guard was my guess. They were also, I noted, "C" Company troops. The next evening, once again, I observed the same platoon of men heading out.



Bob Carmichael 2/66

Now, Sgt. (Hammer) Jackson was the 1st Sgt. of "C" Company, and an awesome soldier. A few days later I received a call from Maj. Roosevelt Wilson who was the Brigade LG. He was a friend of mine, and he said, "Bob, I need to come down and have a visit with Sgt. Jackson."

Shortly thereafter, he came down to Camp Zinn and went out to see Sgt. Jackson. Upon his return, he said, "Everything is o.k.," and no problems.

Several days earlier we were on a road clearing operation with a light tank section of the 1st Inf. Div. We had traveled up the road to a junction overlooking the area ahead. The tank parked and, as we often did, the battalion command group and the company command group met at the tank.

There was a large, bushy growth near the tank and, unknown to us, under it there were three VC...and out they popped! Fortunately, they got in only a few shots before Sgt. Jackson shot two with his weapon, which jammed; he then reached over, grabbed a bystander's weapon and killed the third one, who

would have most likely killed me. However, Sgt. Jackson, unfortunately, was wounded in the lower thigh.

As we were preparing to have him dusted off for treatment, he was heard to say, quietly but emphatically, "When the 1st Sergeant gets wounded, somebody is not doing their job....these men need more training."

Upon our return to base camp, the 1st Sgt. set about fulfilling his promise by designating some of the troops who were prone to creating disturbances for extra training on guard duty. Additionally, to be certain they stayed awake in case of surprise attack, he took some of their rifles away from them...thereby initiating Maj. Wilson's visit to our camp. Sgt. Jackson agreed that, in the future all soldiers would have weapons while on guard duty.



Hammer Jackson....A Fine Soldier

(continued...)





The Charlie Company perimeter at Camp Zinn

This story is in no way meant to be critical of 1st Sgt. Jackson; the men in "C" Company and our entire battalion were fortunate to have him. Hammer Jackson saved my life that day, and I have never forgotten it. I'd bet that today those guard duty "trainees," who are now granddads, laugh about the story as they did at our 2/503d reunion in Florida a few years back.



L-R: 2/503rd HHC RTO's Lew Smith & Wayne Hoitt with their old boss, Bob Carmichael. Cocoa Beach, FL 2006

At the 2/503d reunion in Cocoa Beach I had the opportunity to shake Hammer's hand, thank him for saving my life, and, thoroughly enjoyed a good visit with him and other soldiers from our battalion.

My thanks and my salute to 1st Sgt. Hammer Jackson, a fine soldier. We were all privileged to have served with him. I look forward to seeing and visiting with him again, and all our Sky Soldiers at our next battalion reunion.

LTC Robert B. Carmichael (Bob) served as Battalion Executive Officer of the 2/503d in 1965/66, until February 1966, when he took over as Battalion Commander when (then) LTC George

Dexter, Col. (Ret), was severely wounded. During his second tour in Vietnam, LTC Carmichael served as a Battalion Commander with the 25th Infantry Division during Operation Crook. Bob is retired in Austin, TX with his lovely bride Exie, and spends his time gardening, following Texas sports, fishing and giving his old 2/503rd RTO's a hard time at every chance.



"Enough with the salutes, RTO. Where's the beer?"

Another 2/503rd Reunion in Florida???

Since we held the two 2/503rd reunions in Cocoa Beach, Florida some years ago, a number of our guys keep asking Don "Rocky" Rockholt (A/2/503d) and me when do we plan to have another one? And, sometimes, while sitting together at the VFW here over too many drinks, the two of us discuss the possibility -- in fact, the more we drink the more interesting the idea becomes.

Invariably, I'll suggest the 50th anniversary of when the 173d went to Vietnam....that's the point at which we both begin laughing.

So boys, what do you think? Should the 2/503rd muster one more time in Florida sometime soon? Drop us a note and let us know if this sounds interesting to you -- you ain't gettin' no younger. rto173d@cfl.rr.com Ed





82nd Airborne Division

A Salute to our Fellow Paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division

The 82nd Airborne Division has had its share of famous soldiers from Sergeant Alvin C. York to General James M. Gavin. But that's not what the 82nd is really about. The real story of the 82nd is the thousands of unnamed paratroopers in jump boots, baggy pants and maroon berets, who have always been ready and willing to jump into danger and then drive on until the mission was accomplished.

The 82nd has become so well known for its airborne accomplishments, that its proud World War I heritage is almost forgotten.

The 82nd Infantry Division was formed August 25, 1917, at Camp Gordon, Georgia. Since members of the Division came from all 48 states, the unit was given the nickname "All-Americans," hence its famed "AA" shoulder patch.

In the spring of 1918, the Division deployed to France. In nearly five months of combat the 82nd fought in three major campaigns and helped to break the fighting spirit of the German Imperial Army.

The 82nd was demobilized after World War I. For more than 20 years the "All-American Division" would live only in the memories of men who served in its ranks during the Great War.



All American Jump
redesignated the 82nd Airborne Division.

With the outbreak of World War II, the 82nd was reactivated on March 25, 1942 at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana under the command of Major General Omar N. Bradley.

On August 15, 1942, the 82nd Infantry Division became the first airborne division in the U.S. Army. On that date, the All-American Division was

In April 1943, paratroopers of the 82nd Airborne Division set sail for North Africa under the command of Major General Matthew B. Ridgway to participate in the campaign to puncture the soft underbelly of the Third Reich.



82nd Airborne, WWII

The Division's first two combat operations were parachute and glider assaults into Sicily and Salerno, Italy on July 9 and September 13, 1943.

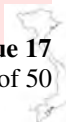
In January 1944, the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, which was temporarily detached from the Division to fight at Anzio, earned the nickname "Devils in Baggy Pants." The nickname was taken from an entry made in a German officer's diary.

While the 504th was detached, the remainder of the 82nd was pulled out of Italy in November 1943 and moved to the United Kingdom to prepare for the liberation of Europe.

With two combat jumps under its belt, the 82nd Airborne Division was now ready for the most ambitious airborne operation of the war, Operation NEPTUNE-the airborne invasion of Normandy. The operation was part of Operation OVERLORD, the amphibious assault on the northern coast of Nazi-occupied France.

In preparation for the operation, the division was reorganized. Two new parachute infantry regiments, the 507th and the 508th, joined the division. Due to its depleted state following the fighting in Italy, the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment did not take part in the invasion.

(continued...)



On June 5-6, 1944, the paratroopers of the 82nd's three parachute infantry regiments and reinforced glider infantry regiment boarded hundreds of transport planes and gliders and, began the largest airborne assault in history. They were among the first soldiers to fight in Normandy, France.

By the time the All-American Division was pulled back to England, it had seen 33 days of bloody combat and suffered 5,245 paratroopers killed, wounded or missing. The Division's post battle report read, "...33 days of action without relief, without replacements. Every mission accomplished. No ground gained was ever relinquished."

Following the Normandy invasion, the 82nd became part of the newly organized XVIII Airborne Corps, which consisted of the U.S. 17th, 82nd, and 101st Airborne Divisions.

In September, the 82nd began planning for Operation MARKET-GARDEN in Holland. The operation called for three-plus airborne divisions to seize and hold key bridges and roads deep behind German lines. The 504th now back at full strength rejoined the 82nd, while the 507th went to the 17th Airborne Division.

On September 17, the 82nd Airborne Division conducted its fourth combat jump of World War II into Holland. Fighting off ferocious German counterattacks, the 82nd captured its objectives between Grave and Nijmegen. Its success, however, was short-lived because of the defeat of other Allied units at Arnhem.

The gateway to Germany would not open in September 1944, and the 82nd was ordered back to France.

Suddenly, on December 16, 1944, the Germans launched a surprise offensive through the Ardennes Forest which caught the Allies completely by surprise. Two days later the 82nd joined the fighting and blunted General Von Rundstedt's northern penetration in the American lines.

Following the surrender of Germany, the 82nd was ordered to Berlin for occupation duty. In Berlin General George Patton was so impressed with the 82nd's honor guard he said, "In all my years in the Army and all the honor guards I have ever seen, the 82nd's honor guard is undoubtedly the best." Hence the "All-Americans" became known as "America's Guard of Honor."

The 82nd returned to the United States January 3, 1946. Instead of being demobilized, the 82nd made its permanent home at Fort Bragg, North Carolina and was designated a regular Army division on November 15, 1948.

Life in the 82nd during the 1950s and 1960s consisted of intensive training exercises in all environments and locations to include Alaska, Panama, the Far East and the continental United States.

In April 1965, the "All-Americans" were alerted for action in response to the civil war raging in the Dominican Republic. Spearheaded by the 3rd Brigade, the 82nd deployed to the Caribbean in Operation POWER PACK. Peace and stability was restored by June 17, when the rebel guns were silenced.

But three years later, the 82nd Airborne Division was again called to action. During the Tet Offensive, which swept across the Republic of Vietnam in January 1968, the 3rd Brigade was alerted and within 24 hours, the brigade was enroute to Chu Lai. The 3rd Brigade performed combat duties in the Hue-Phu Bai area of the

I Corps sector. Later the brigade was moved south to Saigon, and fought battles in the Mekong Delta, the Iron Triangle and along the Cambodian border. After serving nearly 22 months in Vietnam, the 3rd Brigade troopers returned to Fort Bragg on December 12, 1969.

During the 1970s, Division units deployed to the Republic of Korea, Turkey and Greece for exercises in potential future battlegrounds.

The Division was also alerted three times. War in the Middle East in the fall of 1973 brought the 82nd to full alert. Then in May 1978, the Division was alerted for a possible drop into Zaire, and again in November 1979, the Division was alerted for a possible operation to rescue the American hostages in Iran.

On October 25, 1983 elements of the 82nd were called back to the Caribbean to the tiny island of Grenada. The first 82nd unit to deploy in Operation URGENT FURY was a task force of the 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment.

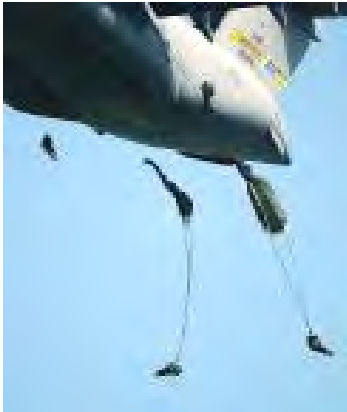
On October 26 and 27, the 1st Battalion, 505th Infantry and the 1st Battalion, 508th Infantry, with support units deployed to Grenada. Military operations in Grenada ended in early November.



82nd Airborne Trooper



Operation URGENT FURY tested the Division's ability to deploy as a rapid deployment force. The first aircraft carrying division troopers touched down at Point Salinas 17 hours after notification.



In March 1988, a brigade task force made up of two battalions from the 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment conducted a parachute insertion and airland operation into Honduras as part of Operation GOLDEN PHEASANT. The deployment was billed a joint training exercise, but the paratroopers were ready to fight. The

82nd Jumps in Korea

deployment of armed and willing paratroopers to the Honduran countryside caused the Sandinistas to withdraw back to Nicaragua. Operation GOLDEN PHEASANT prepared the paratroopers for future combat in the increasingly unstable world.

On December 20, 1989, the "All-Americans," as part of Operation JUST CAUSE, conducted their first combat jump since World War II onto Torrijos International Airport, Panama. The paratroopers' goal was to oust a ruthless dictator and restore the duly-elected government to power in Panama. The 1st Brigade task force made up of the 1st and 2nd Battalions, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, parachuted into combat for the first time since World War II. In Panama, the paratroopers were joined on the ground by 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment which was already in Panama. After the night combat jump and seizure of the airport, the 82nd conducted follow-on combat air assault missions in Panama City and the surrounding areas.



The victorious paratroopers returned to Fort Bragg on January 12, 1990.

But seven months later the paratroopers were again called to war. Six days after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait on August 2, 1990, the 82nd became the vanguard of the largest deployment of American troops since Vietnam.

The first unit to deploy to Saudi Arabia was a task force comprising the Division's 2nd Brigade. Soon after, the rest of the Division followed. There, intensive training began in anticipation of fighting in the desert with the heavily armored Iraqi Army.

The adage or battle cry picked up by the paratroopers was, "The road home...is through Baghdad." About a decade later, that battle cry would become more of a fact than an adage.

On January 16, 1991, Operation DESERT STORM began when an armada of Allied war planes pounded Iraqi targets. The ground war began almost six weeks later. On February 23, the vehicle mounted 82nd Airborne Division paratroopers protected the XVIII Airborne Corps flank as fast-moving armor and mechanized units moved deep inside Iraq. A 2nd Brigade task force was attached to the 6th French Light Armored Division becoming the far left flank of the Corps.

In the short 100-hour ground war, the vehicle mounted 82nd drove deep into Iraq and captured thousands of Iraqi soldiers and tons of equipment, weapons and ammunition.

After the liberation of Kuwait, the 82nd began its redeployment back to Fort Bragg with most of the Division returning by the end of April.

Following the Division's return and subsequent victory parades, the troopers began to re-establish some of the systems that had become dormant during their eight months in the desert. On top of the list was the regaining of individual and unit airborne proficiency and the continuation of tough and realistic training.

In August 1992, the Division was alerted to deploy a task force to the hurricane-ravaged area of South Florida and provide humanitarian assistance following Hurricane Andrew. For more than 30 days, Division troopers provided food, shelter and medical attention to a grateful Florida population, instilling a sense of hope and renewed confidence in the military.

On the 50th anniversary of the Operation MARKET-GARDEN, the 82nd again answered the nation's call and prepared to conduct a parachute assault in the Caribbean nation of Haiti to help restore democracy. With the troopers aboard aircraft heading towards the island, the de facto regime capitulated, and the Division was turned back to Fort Bragg.



(continued...)



82nd Airborne Division paratroopers were among the first ground troops sent into the war-torn Kosovo region of the Balkans in Summer 1999, when the 2nd Battalion, 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment moved in from neighboring Macedonia.

They were followed shortly by the 3d Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, who themselves will be followed by the 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment in January 2001 as part of regular peacekeeping operation rotations.

When America was attacked on Sept. 11, 2001, President George W. Bush called upon the American military to fight global terrorism. 82d soldiers deployed to Afghanistan and the Central Command Area of responsibility to support combat operations. In June 2002 the 82nd Airborne's Task Force Panther, comprised of elements from the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment and other 82nd units, deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Task Force Devil, comprised of the 504th PIR and other 82nd elements, replaced Task Force Panther in January 2003, where they currently maintain the division's mission until further notice.

In February of 2003, the 2nd Brigade Combat Team (BCT), deployed along with the Division Headquarters to Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Division conducted sustained combat operations throughout Iraq and the CENTCOM area of operations. In May 2003 the Division Headquarters returned to Fort Bragg. The 2nd BCT remained in Iraq attached to the 1st Armored Division and continued to conduct combat operations.

The Division Headquarters along with the 3rd BCT and elements of the DIVARTY, DISCOM, Aviation, and separate battalions returned to Iraq in August of 2003 to continue command and control over combat operations in and around Baghdad. In January 2004 the 1st BCT deployed to conduct combat operations in OIF.

The 2nd BCT redeployed to Fort Bragg, North Carolina in February. The Division Headquarters was relieved by the 1st Marine Expeditionary Division in March of 2004 and the remaining 82nd forces in Iraq redeployed to Fort Bragg, NC by the end of April 2004.

For the first time in two years all of the Division's units were returned to home station.

82d Airborne Division units have continued to support the operations in Iraq through 2004 to 2008, with

Battalion and Brigade Combat Team deployments varying in length from four to fifteen months. The Battalion sized deployments have occurred with little notice and for specific missions. The initial deployments were for Iraqi Elections when the Central Command Commander decided he needed more forces to provide security for the election process.

In September of 2004, the 82nd's DRF-1, 1-505 was deployed to support OEF 6 in support of JTF-76 and the Afghanistan elections. The TF redeployed in October 2004.

The 1st Squadron, 17th Cavalry deployed in support of the 2004 Iraqi National elections in northern and central Iraq, they provided combat security and surveillance. Additionally for the 2004 Elections the 2d Battalion, 325th Infantry and 3d Battalion, 504th Infantry both deployed.

These same units were recalled to Iraq to provide a safe and secure environment for the 2005 Iraqi National Referendum and National Parliamentary Elections. The 2d Battalion, 325th Infantry was assigned an area near Tal Afar and facilitated the social, economic and political reconstruction of the region, enabling peaceful and successful elections. Task Force 3d Battalion, 504th Infantry was assigned the same mission in the Anbar Province Region.

Besides supporting elections, Battalions were sent to support full range operations. These include humanitarian assistance, presence patrols, raids, and cordon and search operations.

In October, 2005 the 1st Battalion 504th Infantry deployed to the Kurdish area, northern Iraq. They worked aside a multinational and inter-agency Task Force.

In July 2006 1st Squadron 17th Cavalry was sent into northwest Iraq near Lake Tar and 1st Battalion, 325th Infantry deployed to conduct full range operation in support of a inter-agency Task Force and returned in December 2006.

The 1st Battalion, 82d Aviation deployed to support attack operations with its Apache Helicopters; they were attached to the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade.

(continued....)





The 82d Airborne Division also supported operations in Iraqi with Brigade Combat Team sized deployments. These were the first deployment for these new modular Brigade Combat Teams composed of six battalions.

In August 2006, the 82d Sustainment Brigade deployed to provide logistics support to combat units in Iraq. They provided command and control of logistics and support units from the Army Reserve and National Guard.

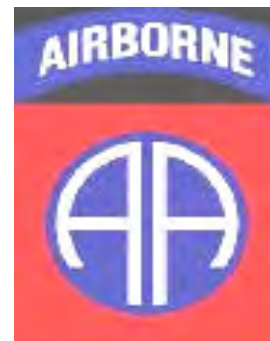
The 3d Brigade Combat Team deployed to Diyala Province where they conduct cordon and search operations to help secure the Iraq - Iran border to prevent the flow of weapons into Iraq.

The 2d Brigade Combat Team was deployed to support the “surge” and was the first US Army Brigade Combat Team deployed to the region; it was deployed to Kuwait and then moved into to Iraqi in January 2007. It supported operations in the Baghdad Region.

In addition the 1st Brigade, 82d Airborne Division deployed in July 2007 to provide theater security force in Iraq they were headquartered in Tallil Iraq.

Many of the Paratroopers and units have returned and are preparing for future deployment as needed.

Background information from:
<http://www.bragg.army.mil/82DV/>



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