

## Memories

By Bruce A. Masters

This really should not be about Bruce A. Masters or any individual but rather about soldiers doing what they had to do, about all Infantryman, either Paratroopers, Marines, straight or mechanized infantry or for that matter any similar combat arms soldiers / GRUNTS ALL, and their loved ones. It happens to be about us, 2nd Bn. the 327 Regiment of the 101st Airborne Div.

Countless others, for Example:

Lt. Walter Eddy, my Plt. Ldr. Shot-up pretty bad in the village had 2 tours in Vietnam, Med-evaced twice. He went in for corrective surgery in a VA hospital in the early 90's. They severed several nerves in his neck, was wheelchair bound with all the other problems that go along with it. Died late fall, 2002, complications from this surgery.

The Moms & Dads like those of Patrick Mooney, 1st KIA in the village, died in Lt. Eddy's arms. When I finally met them in June of 99 they told me of the hate mail they had received after the notification of their sons' death was made public. The letters stated that they were "happy to hear that their son got what he deserved" and I will ALWAYS carry this with me. I had heard of this happening but thought it was an "urban legend" phenomenon. It is real.

The Bob Westover's of Michigan, shot in the village, 6/20/66, "patched-up" & eventually sent back to the states only to lose a leg to a land mine later that year.

McCorkle, wounded in the village, "patched up" & returned to duty only to end up on a KIA list later that summer as many others did. Numerous others that were KIA on subsequent, mandatory, tours.

Countless others that served / bled & died. Many with no one to witness their sacrifice & deaths except for their friends and / or the enemy.

Most were simply youngsters, 18 - 22 years old. Many of the older, more experienced soldiers also paid the price. A lot of us younger guys owe our lives to our friends and immediate leaders. I was, and to this day, still proud of serving with the guys that I fought beside, bled with and damn near died with on MANY occasions. I was just 6/18 - 21/ 66. Had 3 rounds off of my steel pot, two in March, one about 5 minutes prior to getting hit while returning fire with my machine gun. My thoughts are with them daily. Thank you guys!

BAM, out.