

DIABLO



The Link for All Veterans, Active Duty, Spouses, Family and Friends of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment Association — August 2017

2017 REUNION

October 20, 2017 marks the 75th anniversary of the the activation of the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment. Join us to celebrate this legendary regiment in Fayetteville, NC October 18 -22, 2017. Below is a tentative schedule of events:

Wed, Oct 18: -Registration Day

- Arrival of Reunion Attendees
- Hospitality Room will be open

Thu, Oct 19: -Welcoming Breakfast to include briefings of events taking place over the next three days.

- 10:00 AM – Board vans for Airborne and Special Operations Museum tour.
- 11:45 AM – 12:30 PM – Lunch downtown
- 12:30 PM – Board vans for trip to the General Lee Museum, Dunn, NC.
- 4:30 PM – Depart for the Ramada Plaza

Fri, Oct 20: -8:30 AM – Board vans for Fort Bragg activities with one or both 508 PIR BNs to include lunch with active Duty paratroopers at 1st BN Dining Facility, and visit to modern barracks.

- 2:30 PM – Board vans for visit to 8 nd Airborne Museum
- 4:30 PM – Depart Fort Bragg for the Ramada Plaza.

Sat, Oct 21: -10:00 AM – BOD Meeting

- Board vans for:
 - Fayetteville area Transportation Museum's Depot and
 - Local History Museum and,
 - Veterans Park
- 11:30 AM – Lunch Downtown
- 3:00 PM – Board Vans for Ramada Plaza
- 3:30 PM – General Membership meeting to include the election of new Officers.
- 7:00 PM - Banquet

It is our most ardent hope that all generations of the 508 th Parachute Infantry will be represented at this special 75th Anniversary Reunion. Any group requiring a table for displaying items, please contact Reunion Chairman, Lou Gutierrez, at lgutierrez@nc.rr.com or 910-423-5056.

We will also be publishing a special 75 th Anniversary Program. A form for purchasing memorials and ads is enclosed with this newsletter along with the reunion registration form. ➔

1 FURY HONES IT'S SKILLS IN REAL WORLD TRAINING

With the start of the New Year 1Fury began preparations to assume the Army's Global Response Battalion from March 15^h through June 15th 2017. As the GRB 1, 1-508 PIR remained on a two-hour recall for a no-notice deployment anywhere in the world.

In January, February, and the beginning of March, we completed a deployment readiness exercise that took the entire battalion through a 96-hour sequence that began with a middle of the night notification and ended four days later after the battalion loaded all of our equipment onto pallets, loaded vehicles onto aircraft and issued each individual paratrooper their combat load of ammo and had them rig their rucks in preparation for a jump into enemy territory.

Following this exercise, 1Fury executed platoon live fires on Fort Bragg. Every platoon certified during both day and night conditions to demonstrate our lethality and preparedness to jump, fight, and win tonight. Upon return from these live fire exercises we were inspected by the division staff to ensure all of our Paratroopers and equipment met the requirements for the nation's Global Response Battalion.

While on GRB 1, division once again tested our readiness and lethality with an entire battalion no-notice recall in the middle of the night. And once again, 1Fury answered the call. As the Commanding General and Command Sergeant Major of the Division watched, our Paratroopers excelled at marksmanship, physical fitness, and medical treatment skills. Our equipment and personal administrative requirements highlighted our readiness and lethality during the most comprehensive emergency deployment exercises conducted by the 82nd Airborne Division.

After proving our readiness and individual skills, 1-508 PIR deployed to OP13 on Fort Bragg for a Company Combined Arms Maneuver Live Fire. Each rifle company was task organized with a Delta platoon of gun trucks, supported by engineers, and the artillery battery attached to our battalion for deployment operations. Under both day and night conditions and in the pouring rain and Carolina humidity, C Co earned the title of most lethal company in 3rd Brigade Combat Team.

Additionally, 1-508 said farewell to two company commanders and welcomed their highly motivated replacements. In April, CPT Tyner Elgin moved from C Co to HHC BDE as CPT James Simpson took over Charlie. In June, CPT Paul Kearney relinquished command to CPT Jon Brege as he prepares to take over HHT in 3rd BCT's CAV Squadron. We are grateful for Paul and Tyner's service and the testament of their success with 1Fury is their selection to command second companies in our brigade. We welcome CPTs Brege and Simpson and wish them and their families great success as part of the 1-508 PIR family.

From 16 June through the 4th of July holiday 1Fury is taking some well-deserved block leave as we get set for brigade level exercises in July and then outload and deployment to the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, LA in August and September.

ALL THE WAY! FURY FROM THE SKY! ➔

By MAJ Adam Scher, 1-508 PIR Executive Officer

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2 FURY REPORT

Throughout the month of March, Task Force 2Fury continued to provide essential support to the Iraqi Army who made great strides in the West Mosul clearance operation. LTC Browning and the Battalion staff were instrumental, working day in and day out alongside their partners in the Coalition's effort to defeat ISIS.

At the end of February, the West Mosul clearance operation was in its initial stages and TF 2Fury was charged with advising and assisting a new unit – the 9th Iraqi Army Division. Throughout the month of March, TF2 Fury met with their Iraqi counterparts on a daily basis to build trust and become integrated into the Iraqi planning cycle for the operation.

Daily meetings with the Iraqis involved traveling throughout the area of operations to conduct battlefield circulation and visiting the different brigade headquarters elements in our partner's division. This allowed LTC Browning, several members of the staff, and security elements to understand the operational environment surrounding West Mosul. CPT Omar Cavalier and CPT Mark Zwirgzdas (White Falcons) each advised a different brigade within the Iraqi Division and, at various times, pushed forward to live and work alongside their counterparts at the forward Brigade headquarters' locations.

Due to the dynamic nature of our partnered forces mission, the entire team supporting the western Mosul advise and assist team established numerous temporary advisor locations until the Task Force ultimately established its final Tactical Assembly Area (TAA) location. The first several weeks of March were spent building up the TAA, expanding force protection requirements, and improving the Paratroopers' standard of living. This included everything from gravel emplacement, reducing some of the muddy conditions produced during the rainy season, to establishing shower trailers, a fully functional gym, and finally establishing a laundry and dining facility that supported the entire camp.

Every day 2FURY continued to improve the living conditions around the camp eventually installing WiFi access for all Soldiers to access during their down time in between missions. The TAA became the central hub to support all Soldiers day to day needs, while providing a secure location to focus on the advisor mission with our Iraqi counterparts. In addition to the Battalion TAA, a forward patrol base co-located with one of the Iraqi Brigade Headquarters was established. Conditions for the Soldiers operating from this location were a bit more austere, however all troopers maintained a regular rotation back to the Battalion TAA to execute refit operations for mail, laundry, showers and general down time as the permitted by the mission.

In March the 2FURY team received multiple visits from various distinguished guests. This included the Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) Commander, Lieutenant General Townsend, and his Command Sergeant Major (CSM), CSM Jones; the Combined Joint Forces Land Component Commander for Operation Inherent Resolve in Iraq (CJFLCC-OIR), Major General Martin; and the Deputy Commanding General- Erbil, Brigadier General Richardson. During these visits, the TF 2Fury staff provided leaders updates on operations and intelligence from the tactical level perspective, as well as an opportunity to recognize members of the TF 2Fury Task Force for their hard work.

TF 2Fury also hosted a National Geographic film crew compiling footage for a documentary showcasing how the U.S. is combating extremism around the world. National Geographic is traveling to several military theaters, meeting with commanders at all echelons to produce the multi-series documentary. The team spent several days at both the forward patrol base and the Battalion TAA. Be sure to look for 2FURY Paratroopers when the series airs in early 2018 – “Chain of Command”.

Outside of the new TAA, TF 2Fury continued to maintain a presence at TAA Filfayl, with CPT Jon Austin, Delta Company Commander, overseeing a critical base expansion plan. Paratroopers at Filfayl conduct regular patrols in the surrounding area to build partnership with the local military and pass along training techniques and advice. They continue to sharpen their war-fighting skills, regularly executing weapons training and ranges with partnered forces on several occasions. Of note, our very own 2Fury Paratrooper at Filfayl, SPC Devin West (Juliet Company), was named the Brigade’s Falcon of the Month (March 2017) for his selfless service to the Falcon Brigade in support of Operation Inherent Resolve.

As the fourth month of the deployment came to a close in April, Task Force 2FURY was operating at an incredible capacity where once new and unfamiliar tasks became commonplace and fluid. They developed a strong and trusting relationship with their Iraqi Army counterparts, and became comfortable with the landscape where they lived. Despite this normal life, the month of April brought many changes to TF 2FURY. The team executed multiple promotions, with Troopers assuming new jobs, and the establishment of two new Company out stations. Given all these changes, TF 2FURY never faltered giving support to their Iraqi partners, a testament of their dedication to the mission.

May 2017 marked the half way point of the deployment and the 2FURY machine continued to run on all cylinders. TF 2FURY was steadfast in all of their tasks during May, continuing to advise and support the Iraqi Army and continuing to logistically sustain themselves across many locations. TF 2FURY was the main effort for a significant portion of the fight during the month of May as the Iraqi Army began a new offensive into West Mosul. There were many long days and nights for the staff and advise and assist teams, but it was all for a good cause as the Iraqi Army was successful and are almost finished with liberating the rest of Mosul from ISIS control.

TEAM GATOR and TEAM COLDSTEEL began operating in their new patrol bases for the in May and maximized their collocation with their Iraqi partners. Both of the advise and assist commanders were overly successful in supporting their Iraqi counterparts with the usage of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and through operational advice. This was directly displayed in the overwhelming success of the 9th Iraqi Armored Division in moving through Western Mosul– they cleared a challenging part of the city in less than two weeks’ time. This feat was a huge morale boost to the Iraqi Army as had been fighting in Mosul since October 2016. ISIS in Mosul was the last significant stronghold, and the IA was instrumental in removing their presence and control.

TF 2FURY swelled its ranks in May, bringing a few Paratroopers of every company in the battalion forward, as well as now incorporating Soldiers from every single battalion in 2BCT into TF 2FURY at the TAA. TF 2FURY has become a large task force and its capability is a testament to the vigilance of the organization. In addition to this, MAJ Kerkick departed from TF 2FURY, with his role being filled by CPT Jon Austin as the forward Battalion Operations Officer, and CPT Omar Cavalier as the forward Battalion Executive Officer. The change in leadership has given many junior non-commissioned officers and junior officers the opportunity to step up and continue the mission with vigor.

A common phrase of this battalion is “once 2FURY; always 2FURY”. A Soldier who is a member of TF 2FURY for any period of time at any time will always be considered a part of the battalion and taken care of by the rest. In May two Soldiers who were formerly Brutal Nation but then transferred to Charlie Troop, 1-73rd Cavalry Squadron, chose to have their former platoon leader from their time in 2FURY swear them in during their re-enlistment. It speaks volumes of the unit that 2FURY has created when Soldiers make a choice to come back for such a momentous occasion in their career. While these Soldiers are no longer physically assigned to 2FURY, the Army has retained two outstanding Soldiers and they will always be a part of the 2FURY family.

An important piece to being on a deployment is to stay connected to calendar events. It helps to pass the time looking milestone to milestone. May is an important month where we were able to celebrate three occasions: Cinco de Mayo, Mother’s Day, and Memorial Day. TF 2FURY celebrated Cinco de Mayo with decorations and guacamole courtesy of SSG James Stineman. SSG Stineman kept both as a surprise until the day and the Paratroopers were overjoyed to see the dining facility decorated and with authentic cuisine to boot. Several members of the leadership put out regular reminders of the approaching Mother’s Day, giving sons and daughters time to write a note or make a phone call to their mothers for all they have done. On Mother’s Day, the

dining facility prepared a special Mother's Day meal of chicken cordonbleu! For Memorial Day, Sergeant Major Hunt ran another PT event for the whole TAA. The workout was "Murph" to honor those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice. This workout consists of 1-milerun, 100 pull-ups, 200 push-ups, 300 air squats, and 1-mile run to end it off, all wearing body armor at 15-20 pounds extra!

In June, a group of late deployers joined our ranks. All Paratroopers that came forward are crucial entities to the ongoing advise and assist operations, increasing our capability across the area of responsibility. We also had the privilege of incorporating the Paratroopers from Turkey back into our ranks. They successfully completed their mission and were able to fall back under the TF 2FURY umbrella. TEAM GATOR and TEAM CHARLIE, our two company level advise and assist teams, have once again moved locations but this time they combined their efforts and occupied patrol bases with in the same vicinity. There was a moment in time at the beginning of June where the Company Teams were pushed to the limits, re-establishing themselves in various locations in the heat. Soldiers of the multiple teams and the battalion has embraced the frequent moves and thrived in the scramble to help the 9th Iraqi Armor Division accomplish their mission in Downtown Mosul.

Six months are now in the books and every Paratrooper in TF2 FURY can see the light at the end of the tunnel. While we are officially in the down ward slope of the deployment, TF 2FURY has kept their heads in the game and provided the same level of support, if not more, to our Iraqi partners on a daily basis. With summer officially beginning, its presence can be felt as the temperature rises. TF2 FURY has acclimatized to the conditions, but it definitely brings a new found appreciation for this region of the world. The difference between the humid coastal summers of Fort Bragg versus the arid desert climate of the Fertile Crescent could not be clearer. It is hard to not think about the armies in previous centuries that moved across these lands and attempted to conquer vast swaths while experiencing the thick heat and damage of the sun and wind. Over two thousand years ago, Alexander the Great waged war in what is now East Mosul in the pivotal Battle of Gaugamela. TF 2FURY is now making history by serving in such an ancient part of the world. †

ATW

By 1LT Matthew B. Green, 2-508 PIR



2-508th in Mosul –Many thanks to Sgt. Justin Smith for identifying these soldiers as 2-508.

MEMORIAL STONE DEDICATION

On 24 MAY 17, 1-508 PIR conducted a memorial stone dedication, honoring those 1 FURY Paratroopers that died while serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. To honor these Paratroopers, their names were engraved in memorial stones donated to the Battalion from the 508th Association. These stones are now positioned in front of the Battalion Headquarters building. Paratroopers past and present as well as our Gold Star family members were present for the unveiling. Champlain Stamps gave the invocation and LTC McChrystal presided over the ceremony. Honoring those Paratroopers and their families during All American week allows us to remember their legacy, the sacrifices they made for this great nation, and keep their families close to the 508th family.

Airborne!

By MAJ Adam Scher, 1-508 PIR Executive Officer

Donna and I drove up Tuesday after work. Wednesday morning we met with Chris in the Hotel restaurant around 8:30 AM and soon after left following Rock and Lou to First Battalion Headquarters for the ceremony. When we arrived, there was already a pretty big crowd gathering on a very humid, gray, dreary day. The Battalion had a couple of canopies with chairs set up and a parachute covering the already placed memorial stones. Most of the chairs were for Gold star families, I believe we had ten Gold Star Families in attendance and several chairs with Mine, Chris, Donna, Rock and Lou's names. One of the first people I met was Don Jakeway, H Company WWII. I have a copy of his book *Paratroopers Do or Die* in my bathroom but I have never had the pleasure of meeting him. The ceremony was pretty short and somewhat surreal for me. The look on these families faces. You could see the hurt and pain but you could also see the pride. It seemed that everyone was very moved by the memorial stones and they gathered around to run their fingers across the names on the stones and pose for pictures by their Heroes memorial. This really touched me. I was in a fog the rest of the day and in fact the following weekend. It really hit close to home as these parents were around my age and their heroes were the ages of my children. I cannot imagine the pain of their loss, although it was evident in many of their faces. I was told by more than one family member that the Battalion had become their family. It was very nice to see how there was a couple of active duty soldiers with each family. I assume they were friends or somehow associated with each fallen Hero because of the way they interacted with the family members. Following the ceremony we drove to the Brigade Headquarters for The Gold star Family luncheon. Donna was thrilled to see her old friend Barbara Gavin Fauntleroy and was even more surprised when she approached her and she looked up and said "well hello Donna Palmer, it is so nice to see you again". The first time Donna met her was at a reunion in Columbus Georgia soon after Donna read her book *The General and His Daughter*. They became fast friends. She was at the luncheon to support the 505RCT, her father's first regimental command position. We had a very nice lunch with great pasta, salad and brownies. The Brigade commander gave a nice speech about how important it is to honor the fallen heroes and included a paragraph from a letter where General Gavin is telling his community that he did not want them to honor him by naming a road after him and how it felt it was much more appropriate to name it after one of their fallen Heroes. The Brigade and Battalion Chaplins said a few words. It was a very nice day. Attached are a few pictures from the event. I am proud that we were able to attend and represent our Association. ➔



Troy Palmer

EVERY SOLDIER HAS A STORY

And we want yours!! Do you have a story to tell of your service in the 508th? Combat or otherwise? If so, please send it to the Diablo editor at Editor@508PIR.org. Our goal is to one day have a story or article from each generation of 508th paratroopers in every issue of the Diablo newsletter. ➔

CONDOLENCES

McClure, Martha

Hello Ellen,

I wanted to let you know that my mom, Martha McClure, passed away June 14, 2017 – Flag Day. She had endured the debilitating effects of the stroke she had for 14 months and then peacefully and without pain went home to be with the Lord. We will miss her greatly, but we know she is rejoicing in heaven with Dad, and not confined to her body that did not work anymore. She had always been so active and loved going places. We had a wonderful celebration service of her life here in Florida and we will take her to Big Lake, TX, to be buried beside her husband, Billy. We will have a private graveside service there on August 5. She was an inspiration to us all for her unconditional love and kindness to everyone she knew, especially all of us, her large adoring family. I knew you would want to know. You have always been so sweet to Mom and me. I hope to come to the reunion in October. ➔

Sincerely,

Pat Laakso

4471 Bowstring Ct.

Titusville, FL 32796-1016

1/508th DOMINICAN REPUBLIC - 1965

Operation Power Pack

The following article is excerpted and summarized from *Power Pack: Dominican Republic 1965-1966*, Copyright 1965 82nd Airborne Division Association, published by Messenger Printing Company-Portsmouth, Virginia. Photos courtesy of 82nd Airborne Division War Memorial Museum at Fort Bragg, NC.

1st Battalion 508th flew from Pope AFB to San Isidro Airfield in Santo Domingo and at 1:30 AM on 30 April became the first U.S. Army combat unit to set foot on the Dominican Republic and the first unit of the 82nd Airborne Division to enter combat since May 1945.

The Battalion's first objective was to seize and secure the eastern end of the Duarte Bridge, check the bridge for demolitions, and clear the Villa Duarte section just south of the eastern end of the bridge. A task force composed of 1st Battalion and cavalry and engineer attachments struck out on a dual-axis at 7 AM, securing the eastern end of the bridge without incident. B Company and the Reconnaissance Platoon moved to secure the area north of the bridge on the east bank. C Company and the attached cavalry element moved south against sniper and automatic weapons fire to secure the Villa Duarte area just south of the bridge. At 10:30 AM, A Company also proceeded south to clear the La Francia area and affect a link-up with Dominican forces located there.

By mid-afternoon that first day, the Battalion had orders to secure the Villa Duarte area, both ends of the Duarte Bridge, the city's electric plant, and to establish a foothold around the western end of the bridge. C Company took the bridge under heavy enemy fire, thus becoming the first American unit to cross the bridge into the city of Santo Domingo. B Company and attached C Company-505th PIR followed behind C Company and fought on its right and left flanks, respectively, to secure a foothold on the western edge of the bridge. A Company, being the Battalion reserve, and the cavalry element, secured the Duarte Bridge and the Villa Duarte area. By 6 PM, all assigned areas were secured and the Battalion received only occasional harassing fire throughout the night.

At 9 AM on 01 May, the order came to organize a task force to move across the city and link up with Marine elements there. The Battalion reconnaissance platoon and the 1st platoon from C Company were organized into the link-up task force. Within minutes, the task force neutralized the first heavily armed enemy position where it suffered one KIA, the first man killed in combat in the 82nd Airborne Division since World War II. Despite sniper and automatic weapons fire received throughout the route, the task force was able to link up with the Marines at 1:15 PM on 01 May.



By late morning on the following day, the entire Battalion task force, minus A Company that was providing close-in security for the Duarte Bridge, had been relieved in place and moved to San Isidro Airfield to provide security for the surrounding area. A Company rejoined the Battalion as the reserve company on 04 May. Between 02-09 May, the Battalion conducted several foot and motorized patrols, including coordinating with the Dominican Armed Forces located at the International Airport 25 km east of Santo Domingo. Heliborne operations were conducted by the 3rd platoon of B Company on 08 May and the 3rd platoon of C Company on 09 May but no enemy contact was made. On 09 May, the Battalion reconnaissance platoon escorted 120 Americans from the Ambassador Hotel to San Isidro Airfield for evacuation from the Dominican Republic.

Starting on 09 May, the Battalion was relieved of the airfield security mission and became the Division Ready Force. On the morning of 11 May, the Battalion was ordered back to the east side of the Ozama River where until 21 May, the Battalion received enemy fire on the average of about twenty times a day. On 14 May, B Company lifted a 106 mm RR by helicopter onto the roof of the nine-story flour mill. Heavy fire was received by the flour mill from an old fort located across the Ozama River, but return fire from the gun on the roof wreaked such havoc in killing enemy soldiers and destroying weapons and warehouses that for the remainder of the Battalion's stay on the east bank, no significant fire was again received. The Battalion also participated in civil affairs during this period, handing out foodstuffs and treating 250-500 civilians daily in the Battalion medical aid stations.

After again moving to the west side of the Ozama River to take up positions the Battalion had first cleared on 01 May, from 21 May to 03 June, Battalion personnel improved their positions under sporadic enemy fire. On 04 June, the Battalion was given the additional mission of guarding the city power plant and guarding the Duarte Bridge. Civic action activities during this period consisted of food distribution, medical treatment of approximately 450 civilians daily, and so ambitious a clean-up campaign on the part of A Company that the civilians presented a letter to General York thanking him for the wonderful work his men had done.

Food distribution and administrative inspections were suspended when the Battalion was ordered to attack south at 10:30 AM on 15 June. A and C Companies led the attack at 11:00 AM and, similar to 30 April, C Company again bore the brunt of the attack. Both companies hit stronger enemy resistance than previously encountered, but returned fire with confidence and courage such that within ninety minutes, the Battalion front had advanced from two blocks south of the Corridor to ten blocks south. B Company had also attacked west securing two more blocks on the Battalion's right flank under heavy enemy sniper and automatic weapons fire. By 12:30 PM on 15 June, the entire Battalion area was secure.

The following day, fire erupted again but was quickly put down. The Battalion was not without its losses for the battle as C Company had three men wounded on 15 June who later died of their wounds. Twenty-seven men were also wounded in action during those two days. The Battalion casualties were far less than the rebels, who suffered 67 KIA and 59 WIA. After dealing with harassing fire for a couple days, the Battalion was relieved in place and sent west of Santo Domingo to an area near the town of Jaina on 19 June.

1st Battalion 508th suffered five KIAs and 48 WIAs. The Battalion was credited with 97 enemy KIAs, 76 WIAs, 181 POWs, 284 detainees, capturing 51 rifles, 12 pistols, 15 knives, 14 vehicles, 10 grenades, 2 caliber 50 MGs, 3 shotguns, 5 gas guns, 1 rocket launcher, 1 20mm gun and an unknown amount of ammunition. The Battalion destroyed 3 caliber 50 MGs, 2 ARs, 8 rifles, 1 cal. 30 MG and 4 warehouses, and 2000 civilians were evacuated through the lines.

Note: 2nd Battalion 508th service during *Operation Power Pack* in the Dominican Republic will be the subject of a future *DIABLO* article. †



THANK YOU

Many thanks to Marilyn Biagiani for her very kind and generous donation in memory of her husband, William Biagiani, who served in Hq. Co. 2nd Bn. during WWII

Thanks, also, to Bob Spears, who served in Hq. Co. 2nd Bn during WWII, for his very kind and generous donation in memory of his daughter, Alana Swafford, who passed away suddenly in 2015. Alana was loved by all who knew her and will be forever in our hearts. †

WHO ARE THESE GUYS?

This is a photo 1-508 soldiers in Vincenza, Italy. Can anyone identify them and know what year the photo was taken?



1-508 th in Vincenza, Italy

ARMY OFFICERS FOLLOW IN THEIR FATHERS' JUMP BOOTS

June 17, 2017 Article Reprinted from the Fayetteville Observer.

"Six minutes!"

William Grimes would shout the command from the front door of his home in Clarksville, Tennessee. And, soon enough, his two grandchildren would be standing in front of him, eagerly awaiting what would come next.

"Get ready!" Grimes would shout, continuing his modified jumpmaster commands as his two would-be paratroopers got ready for elementary school.

"Stand up!" their grandfather commanded. "Check static lines!"

With that, a young Stoney Grimes and his little sister would run their hands along an invisible parachute.

Years later, now Capt. Stoney Grimes essentially hears the same commands while serving with the 82nd Airborne Division. The inside of planes echo with the familiarity of his childhood home. For Grimes, being a paratrooper is, in essence, a family business. His grandfather spent 25 years in the Army, including several in the 82nd. His father, also named Stoney Grimes, served with the All Americans for five years.

The Grimes family is not unusual. A study released several years ago by the Pentagon showed that 80 percent of troops came from a family where at least one parent, grandparent, aunt or uncle, sibling or cousin also had worn their nation's uniform. More than a quarter had a parent who served. On and around Fort Bragg, especially, young men and women feel the pull to follow in the footsteps of their fathers or mothers.

First Lt. Cody Brown grew up hearing his father's war stories. Clinton Brown, who retired as a master sergeant in 2007, would bring his son to his Special Forces team room, where the boy would run around in a uniform and "work Army" between tales.

Brown and Grimes said their parents played key roles in setting them up for their careers. Neither ever felt pushed to the Army. Instead, they said, their families instilled values that made them want to serve their country. The young Army officers are among 2,100 paratroopers with the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division deployed to Iraq, where they are training, advising and assisting their Iraqi counterparts in the fight against the Islamic State.

Grimes is a fire direction officer for 2nd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment. Brown is a platoon leader with the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

And back home, their father figures couldn't be prouder.

William Grimes was long out of uniform by the time his grandson and granddaughter – ages 8 and 4 – came to live with him at his home near Fort Campbell, Kentucky. But the familiar routines of 25 years of Army service still shaped how he raised the children following the death of their father. A Vietnam veteran, who retired as a sergeant first class, he would walk the kids through jumpmaster commands. It was a game they would play. "They had fun doing it with me," the elder Grimes said from his home in Tennessee. "They liked doing it."

And so, the morning "jumps" became a family tradition. "Check equipment!" William Grimes would shout, as the two children grew more excited. "Stand by!" At the order of "Go!" the two children would race past their grandfather out into the world. "We would jump off into the yard," Stoney Grimes said. By the time the school bus arrived, William Grimes said, the children were often practicing parachute landing falls nearby. The bus driver would slow to a stop, he said, look out at the children and laugh. "We did it like they were little paratroopers," Stoney Grimes said. "It was a fun little ritual we had."

At the time, Williams Grimes didn't think his grandson would follow the "family" business. "When he was little, he wanted to be a weatherman," William Grimes said. It wasn't until high school, when Stoney Grimes became involved with the Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, that he turned his attention to a future Army career. "He took to that like a fish to water," William Grimes said.

Speaking from Iraq, Grimes said he never felt pressured to put on a uniform. "He never once pushed me or encouraged me to join the military until he saw I had an interest in it," he said. "His focus was only on making me happy." But there's no doubt the elder Grimes played a big role in the younger man's career choice. "He's my hero," Stoney Grimes said. "I look up to him... I credit his counsel and his advice and how he raised me for what I am and who I am today."

Grimes was commissioned as an Army officer seven years ago out of Austin Peay State University, a college near his home in Clarksville. From the start, Grimes knew he wanted to wear the "AA" of the 82nd Airborne. "It's been sort of a family thing for

us,” he said of his father’s and grandfather’s service in the division. “My grandfather was a jumpmaster with 200-plus jumps... It’s extremely important for me. It’s a point of pride.”

Grimes got his wish after attending the captain’s career course. He’s spent the last two-and-a-half years in the 2nd Brigade Combat Team. In his current role, he controls American howitzer crews in Iraq supporting the anti-ISIS fight. “The mission keeps us busy, 24 hours a day,” he said. “It’s extremely rewarding,” Grimes added. “Paratroopers here love doing their jobs. And they love getting after it.”

In another part of Iraq, 1st Lt. Cody Brown also is following in his father’s footsteps. A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, Brown hoped to earn a coveted position within the 82nd Airborne. He was ecstatic to learn that not only would he wear the maroon beret, but his first assignment would come in the same battalion where his father first served as an enlisted soldier. Brown joined the 2nd Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment in May of 2016. Like his father before him, he soon found himself preparing to deploy. “I guess it was fate,” Brown said.



As a young soldier, Clinton Brown had hardly broken-in his boots by the time he deployed to Grenada in 1983. “It was scary,” the elder Brown recalled. “But I was also excited. I was psyched up.”

Whereas the elder Brown was sent to Grenada on a short-notice mission, his son had more time to prepare. Cody Brown said he knew before joining the brigade that it would likely deploy. “I had heard it through the rumor mill,” he said. “I absolutely wanted it to happen. I was pretty excited to help out.” Now he’s heading up a platoon providing security at an outpost in Iraq. “We’re not the actual ones fighting here,” he said of the mission to help Iraqi forces defeat ISIS. “But it’s pretty important... it’s pretty rewarding being part of the larger picture.” Brown said he and his soldiers take pride in knowing that Iraqi forces are pushing ISIS out of Mosul and out of the country. “I believe we’re doing a good job,” he said.

Before he deployed, the younger Brown leaned heavily on the experiences of his father. “He’s been deployed countless times,” he said. “His biggest advice for me was to make sure I continued to train my soldiers so nobody gets complacent.”

Clinton Brown spent nearly two decades of his 25-year career at Fort Bragg, although he was often serving in other parts of the world. After serving in the 82nd Airborne Division, the elder Brown said he spent time with the 3rd and 7th Special Forces Groups, with the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, with U.S. Army Special Operations Command and Special Forces Command. At each stop, the younger Brown was constantly by his father’s side, listening to his father’s friends and teammates share their war stories and chiming in with questions of his own. “He just listened to whatever we would talk about,” Clinton Brown said. “He just latched onto that stuff. He was just born to be in the Army, I guess.”

But Clinton Brown wasn’t initially sold on his son following into the “family business.” He knew that Army life would keep him away from his family. He knew that if his son put on the uniform, his future would be filled with missed holidays, milestones and time apart. “I thought I had done enough for him,” Clinton Brown said of his own service. “I didn’t want him to come in the Army.” But the younger Brown was stubborn. His father taught him to be a leader and to never take the easy way out.

To Cody Brown, the path to the Army was clear and obvious. “Being surrounded by the military culture... it really kind of shaped what I wanted to do with my future,” he said. But Brown’s father did win in one regard. He convinced his son not to enlist directly after high school. Instead, he pushed him to go to college. That college turned out to be West Point. And Clinton Brown couldn’t have been happier. “It made me really proud,” he said. “He definitely urged me in that direction,” Cody Brown said of his father’s wish that he become an officer.

The older Brown taught his son to always trust the experience and expertise of noncommissioned officers. But he told him those NCOs also need strong leaders. “He said they deserve a good leader and he thought I could be that leader one day,” Brown said. “I always preached in his head ‘Respect NCOs and listen to them,’” Clinton Brown said. “Try to do the right thing, always.”

Cody Brown wasn’t alone in receiving valuable advice. William Grimes told his grandson that he could do whatever he wanted in the Army. But, he said, to be an officer, he must want that added responsibility that comes with commanding soldiers. “It’s not for everyone,” the elder Grimes said. “You have to be dedicated. Sometimes you can’t think about yourself... They have a tough job.”

Stoney Grimes was up to the challenge. And now, he’s doing the most rewarding work of his career. “We’re out here doing an important job in a historic time,” he said. “It’s a life experience that I’ll never forget.”

FINAL JUMPS

Kindly submit information of final jumps to Editor@508PIR.org. Please include: name, company, years served in the 508th if available, and address where to send condolences if available.

Canard, Curtis

Dear Diablo Editor,

I am writing to let you know that Curtis passed away 12-09-2016. He had just turned 94 when he fell in the nursing home after only being there six weeks and hit his head. He had a brain hemorrhage and only lasted two days after the fall. They told us he was not a candidate for surgery. He loved going to the reunions and seeing all his buddies. He served in E Co.

Sincerely,

Betty Jo Canard (Wife)

1239 Ocean Shore Blvd. #7F6
Ormand Beach, FL 32176-3676

DeRuntz, Gene

Gene DeRuntz served in F Co. during WWII. He passed away 03/19/2017. Condolences may be sent to his family at: 4609 Maryville Rd.; Granite City, IL 62040-2514

Detroit, William J.

Bill Detroit served in F Co. during WWII and passed away 09/22/2015. Condolences may be sent to his family at: 313 Country Club Rd.; Achofield, WI 54476-1216

Ellsworth, Scott Edward

Scott served in E Co. during WWII. He passed away 03/15/17. Condolences may be sent to his daughter, Barbara Ellsworth Forbes at: 100 S. Lincoln Ave.; Eagle Grove, IA 50533-2026

Crain, Clemon C.

Dear Ellen (Family and Friends of the 508th PIR),

I am writing to let you know of the passing of my sweet, wonderful dad, SSGT Clem C. Crain, D-Co., 3rd Platoon. I am also sending a copy of what Dad wrote several years ago, at my request. I thought you might be interested in the writing. Dad passed away on Sept. 21, 2016 with my mom following on Feb 15, 2017 (my birthday). They would have been married 73 years on Nov. 9, 2016. Thank you for all you do! I look so forward to the emails and the Diablo publications. I am forever grateful!

Sincerely,

Carolyn F. Crain

S/SGT. Clemon C. Crain 508th Parachute Inf. Regt., D-Co., 3rd Plt. 82nd Airborne Div.

Born August 5, 1923 on a farm near Oak Ridge, Missouri located in Cape Girardeau County in the state of Missouri. The son of Ellis O. and Irene (Hopkins) Crain.

Drafted into military service January 11, 1943 at Jefferson Barracks, Missouri near St. Louis, Missouri on the Mississippi River. I went to Camp Roberts, California for 13 weeks of Basic Infantry Training. Upon completion of Basic Infantry Training, I was shipped out to Fort Benning, Georgia for Jump School and then on to demolition school for three weeks. After that I was sent to Camp McCall, North Carolina and was assigned to the 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, D-Company, 3rd Platoon, 1st Squad. Camp McCall was a new camp at the time and consisted of the walls being tar paper covered and each company had one shower room and it was a little crowded at times.

The last week of May, the 101st Airborne Division was to engage in an airborne maneuver in the vicinity of Cheraw, South Carolina and the 508th was chosen to operate as ground troops against it. It rained almost constantly for seven days and seven nights. I got my first furlough to go home for 15 days. At that time, I had to travel by a very slow coal burning train which seemed to take forever to get to Cape Girardeau, Missouri. It sure was nice to see all of my family and my sweetheart, Naomi Hahs, which I later changed to Naomi Crain.

At the first of September, we were alerted to move out to Lebanon, Tennessee to engage in the Second Army maneuvers. For the next month we operated as ground infantry and again it seemed to rain most of the time. By the first of October we moved out to Tullahoma, Tennessee to prepare for a regimental jump, which was a night jump near Gallatin, Tennessee and then we were sent back to Camp McCall, North Carolina.

The first on November, I got another furlough to go home and "Wow" what happened? Naomi Hahs got her name changed to Naomi Crain. On the 20th of December, we went from Camp McCall to Camp Shanks, New York. "Boy" was it ever cold.

We made the march to the Weehawken Ferry on December 27 and our next stop was Staten Island where we loaded on to the U. S. A. T. James Parker. About 14 days later, we landed in Belfast, Northern Ireland and then forwarded on to the resort town of Port Stewart in Northern Ireland. We left Ireland on the first of March and went to Nottingham, England where our base camp was located. This is where we began to train and get ready for the Invasion of France and made more night jumps. Then with all our equipment loaded and ready to go, we went to "Saltby Air Base" to wait for the D-Day operation which came on June 6. We had 18 troopers per plane and I was number 13. The tail number on the C-47 I jumped from was #43-15623. We were in Normandy for 38 days and the statistics were:

Killed in Action - 336
Wounded - 660
Missing in Action - 165
Total - 1161

The Normandy Operation Code name was "OVERLORD". After being relieved in Normandy we went back to our base camp in Nottingham, England to get replacements and prepare for our next airborne mission which was the Invasion of Holland.

On September 17th, we were airborne heading for Holland, Code Operation name was "MARKET GARDEN". We landed in and around the "NIJMEGEN" region. The 508th were the first troops to be in combat with the enemy on German ground. We were in the Holland Operation for a total of 56 days and the statistics were:

Killed in Action - 146
Wounded - 469
Missing in Action - 66
Total - 681

After being relieved in Holland, we went back to an old French Camp in Sissonne, France, a former artillery post in the Reims area. We thought that the war was about over for us, but on December 16th that all changed with the mass breakthrough of the German Army in the "ARDENNES".

We were in this operation for 50 days and then we went back to Sissonne, France, but this time we went to the Old Tents.

Killed in Action - 136
Wounded - 671
Missing in Action - 23
Total - 830

Finally on May 7, 1945, the news broke prematurely that the war in Europe was over and at that time we were in Chartres, France, which is Southwest of Paris. We were prepared to jump on 48 hours notice on Prisoner of War Camps (P.O.W's) to liberate prisoners of allied forces.

On the last of May, we moved back to Sissone, France to await assignment. On June 8, movement was initiated to Frankfurt am Main, Germany for occupation duties.

The 508th was chosen to guard General Dwight D. Eisenhower's supreme headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force. We wore white parachute scarves, white gloves and white boot laces at all ceremonies and guard duties and we looked sharp!!

We were all ready to go home. Then a point system was announced. Being one of the older troopers of the 508th, I could go home. I shipped out to Berlin, Germany to the 82nd Headquarters to get with a group to ship out for the states. But, as always, that was a slow move and I thought that I was never going to get out of there! I finally caught a ship, the SEA-SCAMP, back to the United States and then back to Jefferson Barracks to be discharged on December 28, 1945 with the rank of Staff Sergeant (S/SGT).

AWARDS

Bronze Star Medal
Purple Heart Medal
Good Conduct Medal
Presidential Unit Emblem

E. T. O.

European Campaign Medal with 4 bronze stars
Normandy, Central Europe, Ardennes & Rhineland
Two Invasion arrow heads
Normandy & Holland
World War II Victory Medal
Army of Occupation Medal with German Clasp
Combat Infantryman Badge (C.I.B.)

French Fourragere
 Belgian Fourragere
 Netherlands Orange Lanyard
 Honorable Service Lapel Button WWII
 Parachute Wings with Two Combat Jump Stars in Wings

"Memorable Experience"

The first airplane that I ever rode in, I jumped out of!!!!!!!!!!!!!! (I didn't think that the pilot could land it.) On my second jump, we made a crash landing (right engine went out).

The C-47 plane in the Special Forces and Airborne Museum at Fayetteville, NC has the tail numbers of the plane that I jumped out of in the Normandy Invasion #43-15623.

I got married on November 9, 1943 to Naomi Hahs and we had two children, our son, Vaughn S. Crain and our daughter, Carolyn Y. Crain.

I retired from Shell Oil Company with 30 years plus on May 1, 1983. †

LEST WE FORGET

July 4 Facebook posting by Tom Colones

On this July 4th holiday I want to pause and remember the life of Pvt Paul Owens from Woodruff, South Carolina! He lost his life seventy-three years ago today fighting on Hill 95 in Normandy back on July 4th 1944! He was a member of the 82nd Airborne Division & 508th PIR! I visit his grave every time I am in Normandy and took some soil from the very street in Woodruff (W. Georgia St.) where he grew up and put it on his grave. Have not been able to locate any living relatives, but in my own way I just wanted him to know he has not been forgotten! Lest We Forget! †



Tom Colones placing hometown soil on the grave of Paul E. Owens

NEW FAMILY & FRIENDS LIFETIME MEMBERS

Sustaining Members:

Aristeo Blanco – 508th RCT 1951 – Transferred from 508th Airborne Chapter

Clifton Hodge – Hq. Division Artillery – 1955-1956 – Transferred from 508th Airborne Chapter

Patrons:

Carl Porter of Service Co. upgraded to Patron level.

Supporters:

Paul Ott – 320th Field Artillery Bn – 1953 to 1955 – Transferred from 508th Airborne Chapter

Anthony "Tony" Peralta – 1st Bn Co. D – 508th RCT 1952-1955 – Transferred from 508th Airborne Chapter

508th MIA LAID TO REST AFTER 73 YEARS

Following up our April 2017 *DIABLO* story, Private Eugene J. “Gene” Appleby, 508th PIR Company A, was duly honored with funeral services and burial with full military honors at South Lawn Cemetery on June 22nd in Coshocton, OH.

His remains were found in September 2011 on the Groenendaal Farm along Wylterbaan Road in Groesbeek, Netherlands. PVT Appleby parachuted onto Drop Zone T in Operation Market Garden on September 17, 1944, but was killed later that afternoon by enemy fire. Dutch and American experts collaborated during an extensive investigation period. Ultimately, DNA analysis and circumstantial evidence were used to identify the remains as those of PVT Appleby.



PVT Appleby’s remains arrived at John Glenn International Airport in Columbus, OH, on June 20th where family members, veterans and local press witnessed an Honor Guard ceremony surrounding transfer of the casket from an American Airlines jetliner to a hearse. Family members



included Gene Simonds, nephew of PVT Appleby, and his wife, Janis, and Denise Arnold, niece of PVT Appleby, and her husband, Nate—all from Panama City, FL. Gene, born in 1947, was named after his uncle, and spoke of PVT Appleby to the press, saying, “He’s always kind of been like a hero in my life. I remember pictures of him in his Civil Air Patrol uniform standing next to the wing of his airplane.”

Columbus police, local police and the local Patriot Guard led a multi-car procession from the airport to the small city of Coshocton some 70 miles away. In an impressive display of patriotism and gratitude, people of all ages lined the procession route and overpasses waving American flags, saluting or placing hand over heart. Fire and other emergency equipment parked along the route and on overpasses in an incredible show of solidarity. One highlight was two large fire trucks on an overpass with their ladders raised and crossed displaying a large American flag. The procession was met by hundreds of Coshocton residents waving flags all along Main Street—a rather incredible scene stretching a half-mile through downtown.

The June 22nd ceremonies were equally impressive and emotional. Pastor Mark Granger officiated at the funeral service. A large number of local veterans attended and organized a touching procession and salute by PVT Appleby’s flag-draped casket. The Army presented the family with PVT Appleby’s medals, including the Purple Heart, the Bronze Star and the Combat Infantry Badge. The local chapter of Blue Star Mothers presented the family with a memorial banner. Chris Harris, Vice President of the *Family and Friends of the 508th PIR Association*, spoke. Five 508th veterans—Don Jakeway from WWII H Company, Larry Weaver and Chris Kreuser from the Panama/Operation Just Cause era, and Delbert Grush and Eric Sowers from the Operation Enduring Freedom deployment in Afghanistan during 2007-2008—presented a memorial wreath. Don Jakeway then talked about the battlefield situation that fateful September 17th in 1944 and eloquently expressed his feelings surrounding a fallen comrade being honored and receiving such a proper homecoming. Pastor Mark gave a stirring sermon, saying, “PVT Appleby sacrificed his future so that so many others could have a future.”



Residents of Coshocton, again waving flags, saluting or putting hand to heart, lined the procession route from the funeral home to the cemetery. The entire route was lined with American flags staked every 10 feet. The committal ceremonies were equally moving with a 21-gun salute, the playing of Taps, the folding/presenting of the Flag, and Pastor Mark’s uplifting words surrounding the promises of everlasting life.

Below, we reproduce Chris Harris’ concluding remarks when he spoke at the funeral home. His fitting words capture our Association’s mission to honor, preserve and communicate the history of all generations of our courageous 508th Paratroopers:

“To the entire family of PVT Appleby, just as the Dutch people never forget, we will never forget. And to Private Gene J. Appleby:

- After all these years, welcome home, and may you finally be at rest beside your mother, Elizabeth, and your sister, Louise.
- May you also know the everlasting admiration and camaraderie of all your 508th PIR brothers and sisters.
- And in honor of you and all our fallen soldiers, may all of us never forget the inscription etched into a monument at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, honoring 508th Paratroopers lost in the Dominican Republic that reads, ‘*Let their sacrifices for the cause of freedom be an inspiration to us all.*’ →



CONGRATULATIONS

In April, 1-508 PIR had 3 Paratroopers graduated PRC on 12 APR: SPC Mastantuono (A Co), PFC Leischner (A Co), and PV2 Westfall (HHC). Furthermore, SPC Aldeano graduated from Ranger School as part of Class 4-17. SGT Bell (HHC) and CPL Hupf (HHC) both graduated from IMLC. SGT Bell made the commandant's list and CPL Hupf scored a 94% grade point average as the only E4 in the class. 2LT Inman (HHC) graduated from Ranger School as part of Class 05-17 on 28 APR.

During the All-American Week competitions 1-508 PIR won the LGOP competition, took 2nd place in combat fitness and shooting, and had champions in their weight class for both boxing and combatives. Overall, 1-508 PIR took the bronze medal in this year's All-American Week competition.

In May, SFC Race (A Co), SGT Mertzig (B Co), and SGT Novy (HHC) successfully passed JMPI. In June, SFC Race (A Co), SGT Mertzig (B Co), and SGT Novy (HHC) successfully passed PWAC and are now brand new Jumpmasters!

Congratulations to C Co. 1-508 PIR – winner of the 3rd Qtr Gavin Cup. The Gavin Cup is awarded to the company, troop, or battery within the 82 nd Airborne Division that is most ready to "Fight Tonight".

Decorated Veteran Receives "Veteran of the Month" Award and Recognition

The below was submitted by Family and Friends member, Fred Hoek, of the Netherlands

(Carson City, NV) – The Nevada Department of Veterans Services and Governor Brian Sandoval are pleased to announce highly decorated U.S. Army veteran William (Bill) Knapp received the "Veteran of the Month" award and recognition on Thursday, April 20, 2017 inside the Grant Sawyer Building in Las Vegas, NV.

The special ceremony for the 94-year-old WWII veteran recognizes Knapp's continuing contributions to fellow veterans and community. Governor Brian Sandoval said, "Bill Knapp's commitment to serve is demonstrated in his both his time in the military and his life as a civilian." The Governor added, "Even at the young age of 94, Bill still continues serve his community and others."

Knapp is a member of the Southern Nevada Patriot Guard Riders whose members ensure a veteran who has passed away, will never have to take that "final walk" alone. They are present during "Ceremonies for the Unaccompanied," at the Southern Nevada State Veterans Cemetery in Boulder City, NV. At the age of 94, Knapp accepts the American Flag on behalf of WWII veterans during those Thursday ceremonies. Knapp also remembers his fellow WWII veteran friends who have passed away by placing a flag every week on their graves.

In 2015, Knapp was awarded the French Legion of Honor. He served in WWII in the 82nd Airborne Division, 508th Parachute Infantry Reg. from 1942-1946. For his service he received several other honors including; the Purple Heart, Bronze Star Medal, and a Battlefield Commission.

Knapp is also a member of the American Legion and is a current member of Post 76. He attends church every Sunday and remains committed to helping others. In his younger years, Knapp was a very active member of the Shriners International "precision motorcycle club." He retired his bike at the age of 74. †



Fred Hoek and Bill Knapp at LaFiere, June 5, 2016

A LABOUR OF LOVE

Replica Cushman Build

In August 2016, one man and his shed embarked on a journey that would result in a tear jerking memorial to Pvt John Daum, a member of the 508 PIR who lost his life in Normandy - June 1944 just days after he was dropped in by parachute. This man is Glyn Shipstone of Nottingham, an avid re-enactor and history buff of the 508 PIR during Normandy. Glyn has built up a fantastic reputation for his re-enactment group JUMP 44 LHG, who now have many ties with veterans and families in America. One Friendship Glyn has come to establish over the years is with Thomas Stumpner of Wisconsin, USA. Thomas is the nephew of Pvt John Daum who served with the 508PIR during Normandy and as Thomas's mother (John's Sister) used to say, John would be the bud that would never blossom. Thomas has come to realise the impact John's story has had on many people and thinks this incredible tribute tells a different story.

So where did it all start?

On 6th August 2016 Glyn embarked on a mission to replicate an Airborne Cushman 53, an extremely rare item to find as an original and with no plans available apart from the overall dimensions of the bike, Glyn's first task was to make up his own plans using a scaling technique from original photographs for each and every part of the scooter. After he had drawn up the plans and found all of the correct dimensions to make the Cushman to the same specifications as an original, Glyn set out to gather the materials needed to make the frame for his Cushman 53. The First Problem that arose was shaping the steel into the correct shapes for the frame which gives the Cushman its Basic structure to house all of the other components. After some head scratching, a home-made forge was built using very basic forging techniques and his wife's hairdryer to keep the air flowing through the forge to keep it hot enough to bend the steel bars. Needless to say Glyn ended up buying a new hairdryer. Now the steel bars are bent they needed to be welded together to make the basic frame structure for the Cushman whilst giving enough strength to hold the whole bike together and support the weight of its rider.

There is more than just a frame to a Cushman 53, and these other parts would prove to be the most difficult to find and build. First of all Glyn needed an engine for his Cushman and with original engines only found in the U.S. with prices way out of Glyn's budget, he had to source a modern bike engine that would fit the Cushman frame and give the same speed as an original. After extensive searching an engine was found and that's where the fun began. To make the modern engine look and sound the same as an original Glyn had to manufacture his own exhaust system, air intake and throttle lever system that would link to the pedals on the Cushman. To do this Glyn called in the help of his best friend and fellow re-enactor Graham Lawson also from Nottingham. With Graham's help, Glyn managed to get around these problems and the Cushman was slowly beginning to come together but there was still three vital parts that were needed to complete the Cushman, these were the wheels, the seat, and the petrol tank.

After hours and hours of searching the web and scrounging around classic vehicle dealers, Glyn was able to source some original tires, an original petrol tank and a leather seat imported from the U.S. Whilst waiting a long time to finally get hold of these items the next step was to manufacture the handle bars and steering column to the front wheel. Again, the home-made forge was fired up and the metal was bent and cut into the precise angle to give the Cushman that authentic feel just like an original. With Glyn working most days of the week and some weekends he had very little time to get this done and had to make use of the precious daylight hours to get the main parts of the bike built. Once the front forks and handle bars were attached to the main frame Glyn set out to cut and weld the front panels to give the Cushman its iconic look. Whilst waiting for the original tires, some mock up tires were purchased so the Cushman could be wheeled around easier and the other components could be built such as the braking system to the rear tire and the engine could be positioned correctly so the chain would be the right length to fit onto the crank of the original tire.

Now all the main components of the bike had been built and the remaining parts were on the way Glyn could focus on the more detailed parts such as building the seat bracket and springs ready for the leather seat to be fixed on. Some more problems arose when the engine was tested and the exhaust system did not sound right so that also had to be adjusted. With Glyn's hope to get the bike built by April 2017 ready for what would have been John Daum's birthday drawing in, there was worry that this build would not have been finished in time. But in the months building up the parts did finally begin to arrive and the Cushman could finally all be assembled to see if all the hard work had paid off. There were a few minor tweaks that needed to be sorted but other than that the Cushman was ready to be stripped down and painted. After the olive drab coat had been painted on the Cushman Glyn could now set out to stencil the bike up with John Daum's enlistment number found on his dog tags, his birthday engraved onto the data plate and his regiment also stenciled to the rest of the bike. The Final Touch to the bike was to put John's nickname 'Bud' given to him by his father onto the petrol tank. Thomas had grown up to be told about his 'Uncle Bud' and that is what Glyn chose to name the bike overall.

On 2nd April 2017 Glyn and some other members of JUMP 44 LHG put together a memorial reveal video for Thomas Stumpner which can be found at www.jump44lhg.co.uk or find us on Facebook under the same name. Thomas was

overwhelmed by the dedication and respect Glyn and the group had for his uncle and only wishes to someday see the bike for himself. Overall Glyn has put everything he has into making this bike and hopes that the group will have fun using it, but at the same time teach the story behind this incredible Tribute, and let John Daum live on in the hearts of many more people to come. →

Article written by Vaughan Barnett



Glyn Shipstone astride the "Uncle Bud"



The "Uncle Bud"



The Diablo

3630 Townsend Dr.
Dallas, TX 75229-3805