



# NATIONAL DUSTERS, QUADS & SEARCHLIGHTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER # 2 – JUNE/JULY 2018

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**2019 NDQSA 37<sup>th</sup>  
ANNUAL REUNION  
MOBILE, ALABAMA  
Dates: T.B.D.**

## NEW MEMBERS/CONTACTS

[Bill Thomashefsky](#), A-5/2, '66-67, FL  
Darnail King, 5/2 '68-69 OH  
Mel Neagle, H-29 '68 AZ  
Eric Drinkhouse, I-29 '67-68 FL

If the name is blue and underlined, you can click on it and send a message to the new member. Maybe he knows someone you served with? Send him an email!!

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## PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Dear Brothers and Sisters



I feel honored to be your new President and as I said in Gettysburg, I will do the best job I can. We have a strong board and executive officers to support me and I look forward to the two years ahead.

Robert "Bob" Cuce  
President NDQSA

## FEATURED STORIES:

### Gettysburg Recap Election Results

## MEMBERS THAT HAVE PASSED

Lynn Burgess, G-65. '70-71 15Mar18, OK  
Don Dragosh, D-71 Mar14, KS  
Montgomery Speir, H-4/60, '70-71, 25Apr18 NC  
Larry Reberry, B-5/2 '68-70, 19May18, MO  
Fred Feldman, D-1/44 G29, '68-69 9Jan18, SC  
Michael Erhard, G-29, '67-68, 16May18, KY  
George Bloomer, E-41, '71-72, 8Apr17, VA  
Mike Jordan, A-4/60, '69-70, 8May17, NM

They will be missed and we give honor to their service, their lives and their families.

There is more information and links to obituaries on my Facebook page: [Dqs historian](#)

## STILL LOOKING FOR BUDDIES?

Many of the new contacts this newsletter were located with the help of long time member [Bill Sturgeon](#). He has generously offered to help to try and locate buddies that you served with. But you have to have something to go by. I gave him some names and information from some orders I had and he was able to give me some numbers to call.



He had done professional searches as part of his career and has access to online resources unavailable to the Historian. He can be reached at (858) 663-4199 (cell/text) Please provide your full contact info and as much of the info you have of the person you are looking for: Name; Hometown; Nickname and birth date or at least how old you think he is.

Thanks Bill, I hope we locate a bunch of guys.

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## DO YOU HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS?

Two pieces of contact information that frequently change are cell phone numbers and email addresses. Typically there are about a half dozen emails sent out each year to every member with a valid (current) email address on record with the Historian. **If you (or a spouse) have an email address and you have not received any emails from me, dqshistorian@cox.net, it is time for you to**

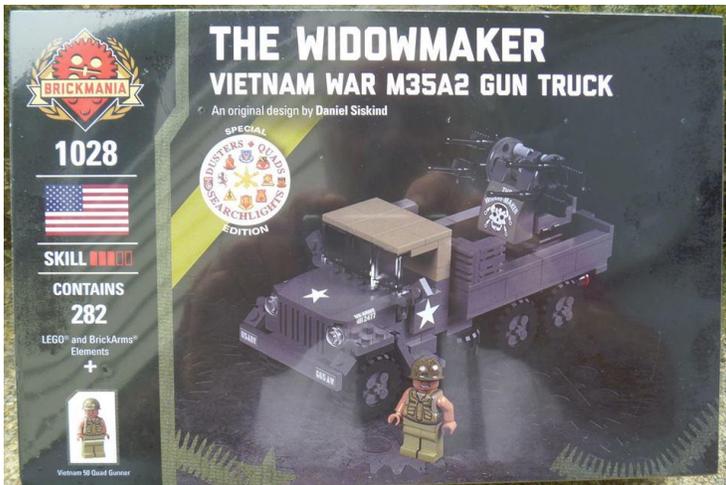
record your email address with him. Simply [click here](#) and identify yourself clearly (full name). You might as well confirm your telephone numbers in the same email. When an email is sent to a bad email address, the Historian tries to contact the member by phone to determine their status. This is a time consuming effort, but it does give him a chance to talk to members.

**\*\* BOARD MEMBERS WANTED \*\***

It is time for some new blood. Next Year we will be voting on the six boardmember positions that comprise the 11-man executive board that manages this association. Nominations are open (and you can nominate yourself) for one of these two-year positions. If you are interested in joining the management team and bringing your skills to the group, contact Paul Kopsick via phone or email to record your nomination. If you expressed interest at the reunion, please make your nomination formal at this time.

**BRICKMANIA NEWS**

**David Siskind**, the owner of Brickmania and a good friend to NDQSA and committed to making a special issue M55 Quad .50 Gun Truck Lego kit for NDQSA members. It was a redesign of their 2012 kit of the M35A2 truck and M55 gun mount that had a very limited run of 50 kits. David has gotten much better over the years so this update is incredible. It will include a set of decals for the gun shield and 'bat-wings' with the artwork for "The Widow Maker" a common theme among all the four Quad 50 batteries.



Paul Kopsick ordered 30 of the kits out of a run of 100. Our kits have the NDQSA logo on the box and reads "Special Edition". This is David's way of honoring the men that served on these units in Vietnam. He was able to complete their production run in time for the Gettysburg reunion. I worked with them on the design of the model and what the gunner would look like. I also provided extensive historical content for the enclosed manual. The sticker sheet allows for you to outfit other soldiers and had artwork for five different quads. The truck is very sturdy and the quad is streamlined in detail to allow for the scale of working with Lego bricks. All and all it is a remarkable kit. [See this video.](#) ←

Pre-order sales were also taken and fulfilled. If you feel you pre-ordered a kit and did not hear from me, please contact Paul ASAP. I have a very few of these kits still available. They are \$140.

I also still have a few of the Xenon Searchlight Jeep kits available for \$120 each. Proceeds go to our Searchlight Jeep restoration project funds.

I still have a very few kits of the limited edition NDQSA M42A1 duster. I will make them available on a first come basis for \$200. Contact Paul if you want one. (202) 262-9560 or [dqshistorian@cox.net](mailto:dqshistorian@cox.net) ASAP

**M42A1 DUSTER**  
TWIN 40MM SELF-PROPELLED ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN  
An original design by Daniel Siskind



Contains 577 LEGO®, Brickmania, and BrickArms® Elements plus printed building instructions



Proudly made in the U.S.A  
For ages 14+

**QUALITY GUARANTEE**  
If upon opening this sealed package you should find any parts broken, missing, or defective, please contact us for prompt customer service.  
Brickmania LLC, PO Box 18051, Minneapolis, MN 55416,  
USA TEL: (612) 837-418-3937  
Outside the USA: +1(612) 837-418-3937

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**CHOKING HAZARD!**  
Contains small parts.  
Not intended for children under 4.

**And the Laserjet goes...**  
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# 2018 GETTYSBURG REUNION RECAP

NATIONAL DUSTERS, QUADS AND SEARCHLIGHTS ASSOCIATION



36th Annual Reunion - June 5 thru June 10, 2018 - Gettysburg, PA - Operation Gettysburg

This year, we (the board) were not sure that we were even going to be able to arrange for a hotel in Gettysburg. This was where the members voted that they wanted to go to, so Bruce Geiger and Bob Lauver (each recovering from assorted health situations) did it again! We are very grateful to them for all their hard work and negotiation skills.



Gettysburg and the Wyndham hotel worked out just fine. The weather for most of the field trips was excellent and the abundant regional rains did not bother us at all. There was a very good turnout this year (125 members) and there were at least 10 families that had to cancel at the last minute for mostly health related issues.



The hospitality room was filled every evening, however

the room closing time gets earlier and earlier each year. Paul Kopsick, the historian, brought enough displays and archives to fill the room as usual, and the donations for the fundraising auctions kept encroaching on his displays each night until they outnumbered his display tables.

The unselfish generosity of the bidders made this one of the fund raising auctions of recent years. We will need those funds to balance the budget for the reunion and for the anticipated expenses of replacing the base of the eagle statue at Ft. Sill which developed a crack on one corner. See article in this newsletter for details.

There is a lot of history in the region, largely from the Civil War but also for the 1950's at the Eisenhower farm and homestead. There was a trip up to Carlisle PA, to visit the Army Heritage & Education Center (Army War College).



We had our annual memorial service there to honor and remember all the ADA men that died in Vietnam as well as those association members that had passed since the last reunion.





That evening we had the grandest “President’s Reception” ever, with a free sit down dinner and an evening of fun and music with the acclaimed [Fabulous Hubcaps!](#) a DC band that brought back all that great music from the ‘50’s 60’s ‘70’s etc. What a show! The dance floor was all ‘elbows and asses’.



The conga line snaked its way through the tables and those with limited mobility did their best to swing and sway to the rhythms. The band was particularly respectful to performing in front of so many Vietnam Veterans and their families. And, yes, they did play “We got to get out of this place” (in their second set). And as the last tunes echoed through the halls, the Washington Capitals won their first Stanley Cup! C-A-P-S CAPS, CAPS, CAPS! (Sorry I had to put that in).



The next morning the buses returned and the group was off for the tours of the Gettysburg Battlefields. Earlier in the week, the group was enthralled to get a technical account of the military tactics and technology of that era by Vincent Tedesco III, son of Col. Vinny Tedesco of the group. His discussion of the battle of Gettysburg made the tour of the fields and interpretation center all the more insightful.



Saturday morning was the annual business meeting and it was attended by nearly 100 members. The main focus of the meeting was the announcing of the results of the 2018 ballot for executive officers. The ballots were tabulated and verified and the new (and returning) officers are:

- President: Robert “Bob” Cuce, E-41<sup>st</sup> 1971**
- Vice President: Paul Kopsick, B-4/60<sup>th</sup> 1971**
- 2d Vice President: Dave McCray, D-4/60 / E-41<sup>st</sup> 1971**
- Secretary: Garry Severin, 5/2d 1967**
- Treasurer: Allan Penwell, 5/2d 1968**
- Past President: John Huelsenbeck, C-1/44<sup>th</sup> 1968**

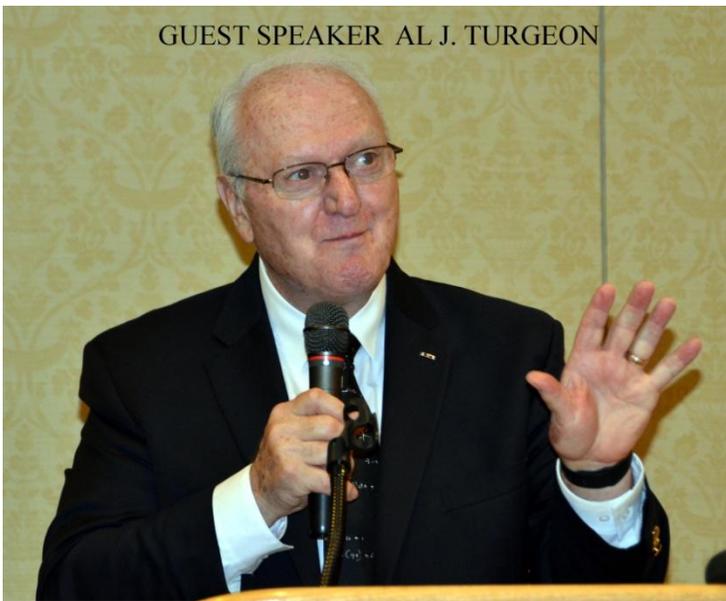


The other major point was the selection of location for the 2019 reunion. The board had offered several

locations for consideration in the southeast. After discussion and a show of hands, [Mobile, Alabama](#) (barring any hurricanes) was selected. Mobile holds many great venues to explore and would be a fitting counterpart (historically speaking) to go from Gettysburg in the “north” to Mobile in the “south.”



The ladies had their own social during the men’s business meeting. The ladies have been and continue to be a vital part of the association through their continued support to NDQSA, their men and their families.



The meetings were followed by the annual banquet with a spirited guest speaker (Dr. Al Turgeon) who presented a historical perspective on the history of the Vietnam War.

Afterwards were the presentations of various awards: Saint Barbara, Molly Pitcher and the Four Chaplains.



Jenifer Hitt receives the Molly Pitcher award.



Four Chaplain’s Legion of Honor & Humanitarian awardees.



Four Chaplain’s LOH / Humanitarian Awardees



represented by several family members including his son David Clark and Ms. Jenifer Hitt.



President John Huelsenbeck (2014-2018), and Sally, were further honored for their primary roles in the formation of and sustaining of our association over these past 38 years. Many members of his family were in attendance so the group could thank them for sharing their parents with us these many years.



The day ended with our fun filled fund-raising auctions. Again this year, past president Paul Hansen handled the microphone with such skill and verbal acuity that many were gleeful participants and did not mind shelling over the few dollars still left hiding in their wallets.



This year's President's Award was presented to Luke Clark (H-4/60 '71) for his many years of service to NDQSA, especially as the guiding hand for the development and installation of the ADA Memorial (Project Eagle) at Ft. Sill, OK. He was unable to attend this year as his wife Lynette is battling cancer. He was



It was one of our best auctions even which was a fitting end to one of our best reunions. Sunday morning Larry LaPrairie gave the attendees a warm and spiritual sendoff for the travel home. Hope to see you in Mobile!

D-  
/ /18 # \$  
Q- S- E- P

Mailing Label ->

Cut out and tape  
to envelope

**NDQSA**  
**PO Box 890130**  
**Oklahoma City, OK 73189**

**2018 MEMBERSHIP INVOICE / ROSTER UPDATE / PRODUCT ORDER FORM**

(Tear off this page and mail it in with your up to date contact information and unit history)  
This version supersedes any previous forms as certain options are not available.

**Roster Contact Information (Please Print)**

Are you a new or existing NDQSA contact?

(New) (Existing) circle one

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: ( ) -

Cell Phone: ( ) -

**Service Information (Vietnam) (fill out even if on file)**

Dates of 1<sup>st</sup> tour (m/yr): \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Addtn'l tour (m/yr): \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Primary MOS: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Battery/Unit: \_\_\_\_\_

Attached To: \_\_\_\_\_

Names of bases:

Names/hometowns of buddies you knew:

Rank (highest grade while in Vietnam)

Grade: Officer: \_\_\_\_\_ NCO: \_\_\_\_\_ EM: \_\_\_\_\_

Valor Awards

PH ( ) DSC ( ) SS ( ) BS/V ( ) ACM/V ( )

If you want to get the newsletter only by email and forego  
the paper mailed copy, please check this box. ( ) ←

If you want to switch back from email to paper mail, please  
check this box. ( ) ←

**DUES - DONATIONS – PRODUCT ORDERS**

Make check/MO payable to NDQSA

**Shipping is included in the price of all items.**

Dues: circle payment(s) for (2018) (2019) (2020) (2021)

**DUES ARE \$25 PER YEAR** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Donations: Quad 50 restoration \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Searchlight restoration \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Searchlight Print (\$60 min) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Operation Eagle Repair** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Product: NDQSA Emb. Patch \_\_\_\_ @ \$5 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NDQSA Logo Decal \_\_\_\_ @ \$5 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Bumper Sticker \_\_\_\_ @ \$10 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Circle (Duster)(Quad)(SLT)(HAWK)(Vulcan)

Challenge Coin: \_\_\_\_ coin @ \$12 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Lucite Challenge Coin: \_\_\_\_ @ \$25 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NDQSA Pin Set: \_\_\_\_ sets @ \$8 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

.50-cal bottle opener \_\_\_\_ @ \$14 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NEW NDQSA HAT \_\_\_\_ @ \$15 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NDQSA T-shirt (black)(grey)

Size: \_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_ @ \$15 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NDQSA Polo Shirt (black)(tan)

Size: \_\_\_\_ # \_\_\_\_ @ \$30 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

(regular) (tall)

No more jackets being produced

TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If paying dues presents a hardship for you but you still  
want to be an Active Member, check this box [ ]. ←

Some members have made donations to assist you.

# NDQSA PRODUCT ITEMS 2018



Logo Patch \$5



Logo Decal \$5



NDQSA Challenge Coin \$12 @  
NDQSA Pin Set \$8 @



Lucite Coin \$25 50-cal bottle opener \$14



NDQSA Cap \$15 Made in the USA



## New Products Size Chart Subject to stock on hand

Give 1st & 2nd choice on color

**T-shirt:** Medium  
Black Large  
Gray XL  
\$15 XXL (Tall)  
XXXL (Tall)  
XXXXL

**Mens Polo:** Small  
Black Medium  
Tan Large  
\$30 XL  
XXL (Tall)  
XXXL (Tall)  
XXXXL  
XL Tall  
XXL Tall



**Searchlight 50 Print (\$60 min)**

Quad .50 print Sold Out



Contact Paul Kopsick if you want one of the Brickmania



**NDQSA BUMPER STICKERS**  
Duster- Quad-50-SLT-HAWK-Vulcan  
\$10 each

Lego Searchlights Kits \$120  
Lego M42A1 Dusters \$200  
Lego M35A2 Quad50 \$140  
Very limited # of kits left

# I DIDN'T KNOW THAT!

One of the most important aspects of the ADA weapon systems deployed in Vietnam was their VERSATILITY.

The M42A1 Duster's mobility and firepower was creatively adapted to be used on the road, at firebases, on landing craft and even on a pontoon barge (the HMS Buttercup).

The M55 Quad-50's was similarly adapted from the initial deployment of M35A2 'Deuce-n-a-halves' to the M54 5-ton as the 'prime mover'. But they could also be deployed to remote locations as a ground mount and were sometimes adapted to other transports like the M113 APC (the ill-fated 'Leprechaun'), the M548 ammo carrier (the 'Swamp Fox'), and on floating barges.

The 23" Xenon searchlight was no different. While initially deployed on M151 jeeps, it could be adapted to use in stationary positions like perimeter guard towers, on riverine vessels and we even know of one attached to the gun shield on a Duster, although I cannot imagine it withstanding the rigors of the twin bofors for very long. Still, it exists in photos.

I am always looking for good quality and composition photos when I archive guy's albums. I love to see images of artwork on various dusters, quads and SLTs. I also like to have photos of guy's faces with their names identified. Some albums are better than others. Some are just fragments of photo albums because some photos were lost, stolen or destroyed (sometimes even confiscated). I have seen many, many 'scenery' photos of Vietnam in these albums. Even my albums are like that. Water buffalos, rice paddies and little kids comprise the bulk of a lot of albums. However, every once in a while I see a photo and I say..."I didn't know that!"

Thanks to John(ny) R. "Jack" Cihak (Las Vegas, NV) of B-1/44<sup>th</sup> 1971 (and 5/42<sup>th</sup> Service Bn 1972) we have the following very interesting photo.



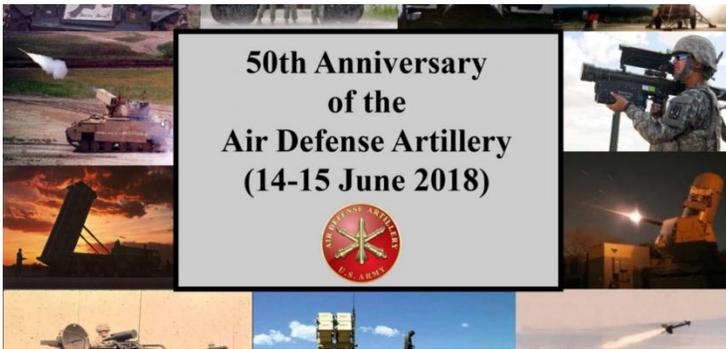
It is of SP4 Robert Lloyd (San Jose CA) of some ADA unit standing in front of an APC. On the side of the APC is the logo of G-65<sup>th</sup> ADA Quads. That by itself is interesting because I also did not know that any of the quad-50 batteries had any APCs assigned to them.

However, on the top of the same APC there is a Xenon SLT, presumably of G-29<sup>th</sup> SLT. Now Jack was with B-1/44<sup>th</sup> from March thru November 1971. When the unit deactivated in late 1971, Jack still had several months of his tour to serve and was reassigned to the Service Battery of the 5/42<sup>d</sup> Arty much further south. There he served (along with several of his duster/quad buddies) until he DEROSed in March 1972. He kept a scrap book made from a bound Army record book and in it he recorded the names and addresses of many of the men in 5/42<sup>d</sup> Arty along with pictures of many of them. Great idea Jack! I wish I thought of that.

So, my questions are: What does anyone know about this specific SLT-APC configuration between G-29<sup>th</sup>, G-65<sup>th</sup> and 1/44<sup>th</sup> in late 1971? How was it powered? How and where was it utilized? Are there any more photos out there of this or similar modifications of any of the Vietnam era ADA weapon systems?

Inquiring minds want to know!

# 50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADA BRANCH



refreshments and loud celebration. And in "Brilliant" artillery fashion nobody even thought about where the missile would fly off to, much less impact at. I was told that it landed off post in somebody's car port. No info on injuries. FUBAR!

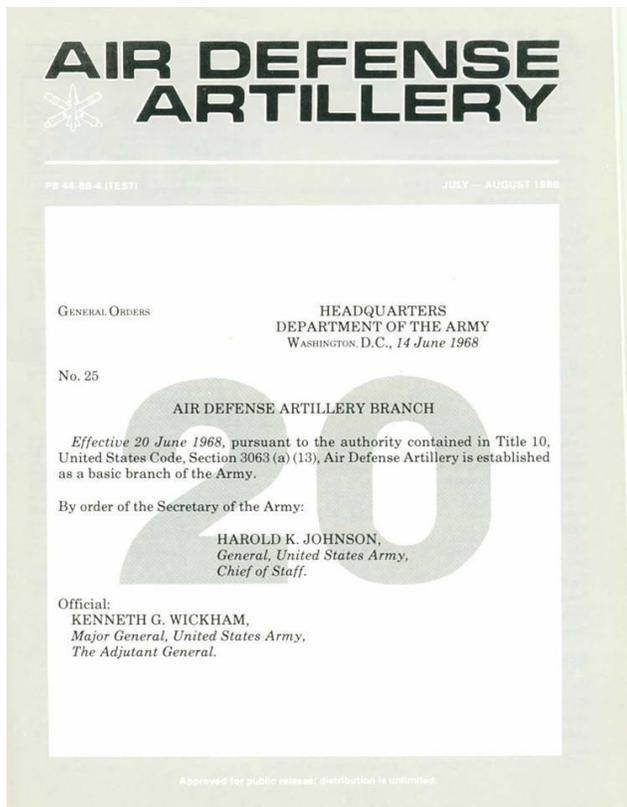
So, 50 years later there was an even larger celebration but not at Ft Bliss where the ADA was long established at, but back at Ft Sill where the ADA Branch has been relocated to.

A special challenge coin was struck to commemorate the event, here are images.

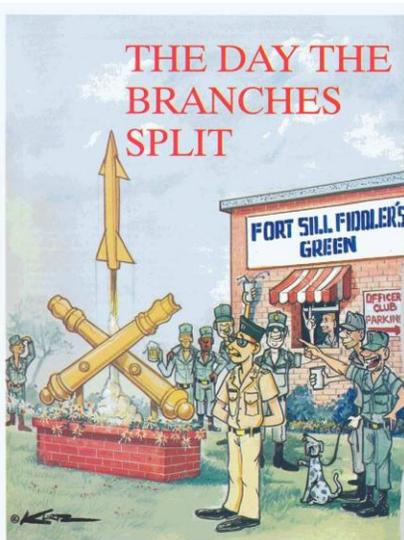


Dusters, Quads, Vulcans and HAWKs are on the coin!

NDQSA was represented by John Huelsenbeck, Earl Holt, James Smith, Vinny Tedesco, Bob Lauver, and Doug Hemphill. ADA Historian, Dave Christensen is in the upper left.



Artist rendering of the historic event at FT Sill. 14Jun68



A large replica of the Artillery insignia had been erected near the Officer's Club. After the officers had gathered around, the missile was launched from the insignia and went rocketing away. The Field Artillery officers then took off their insignia, replaced them with those without missiles and retired to the Fiddler's Green for



John reports that it was an excellent ceremony and the NDQSA Vets were greeted warmly with much respect. The food was much better than he remembered when he went thru AIT. Thanks to Sue Lauver for the photo.

John also reports that the new ADA "Education Center" is well under construction. If they get it completed in time, NDQSA will likely hold the 2020 reunion in the Oklahoma area.

## OPERATION EAGLE REVISITED

The board has been holding off mentioning this until we had some idea of what we are up against. Actually we still do not fully understand what our options are at this time but we can now report on the problem. Basically, the main pedestal of the ADA Memorial at Ft. Sill, our “Project Eagle” has developed a crack in one corner. Efforts to locate a new stone to replace the existing flawed monolith have not proven successful. The previous contractor has not been forthcoming or available for counsel. The main advocate of the memorial, Luke Clark, has had to step away from the project due to health issues.

It is unclear where we (NDQSA) go from here. Technically, the Memorial is not NDQSA property. It was gifted to the US Army, they maintain it as best they can. Still, NDQSA feels a great allegiance to the memorial and equally responsible in insuring its preservation for future generations.

At this time we (the board) do not know what to do to resolve the issue. Even if we can find a suitable replacement pedestal (which we have not been able to do as yet), there are no assurances that it will not happen again. It gets real hot in Oklahoma in the summer and pretty cold in the winter. Even the most pure and massive granite will experience thermal expanding and contracting forces that could result in a failure or crack. We certainly did not expect to have such a problem so soon after installation.

What the board has decided is twofold, 1) we must locate other persons with both knowledge and experience in designing and maintaining monuments. The Army certainly has such individuals and we must seek them out. Our military liaison, Vinny Tedesco, has

been tasked with determining what if any resources exist within the branch with regard to memorials. The hope is that they will be able to better advise the relevant parties on what steps should be taken to resolve, repair or replace the eagle’s pedestal. At that point we (NDQSA) would look to provide whatever support might be necessary to insure the legacy of the monument as it was intended.



To that goal we come to point 2) we are reopening our multipurpose form to again accept donations, this time for the Project Eagle restoration. Basically because, whatever the determination, it is going to require money to complete the task. Maybe a lot of money?

As we did in the past with the Gold Star Mothers Program and the original Project Eagle Program, emphasis in future NDQSA fundraising will be given to raising funds so when the time comes we will be in a position to assist in the restoration.

It is beyond the skill set of the current board members to direct any technical actions on this issue. We hope that when the right parties inspect and ascertain the current status of the pedestal they will have a clear prognosis of what next steps need to be taken.

The rest of the memorial is fine. The Army (we are told) does clean the stone surfaces when needed and maintains the grounds neatly (it is the Army). NDQSA does continue to sponsor a wreath each Veteran’s Day (or is it Memorial Day, I forget).

Either way NDQSA will continue to present a presence at the Memorial on a regular schedule.

All NDQSA members are invited to stop by the memorial if their travels bring them into the area



♪ “Who are you...who, who!  
Combat Scene Invigation  
1971-2018

Here is another interesting “Cold Case” that started and ended relatively quickly with some interesting results.

Gerard ‘Jerry’ Ioannilli (E-41th ’71) of “Easy Rider” talked with me during the Gettysburg reunion with a question about a guy that died on his gun-truck in 1971. I asked him to send me an email with what he knew.

*Greetings Paul*

*At the reunion I mentioned a searchlight crewmember getting killed while sitting on the back of our quad.*

*The story is: One night in mid to late 1971, while we were on guard duty, on the perimeter at Tuy Hoa airfield, two guys in a searchlight jeep stopped by to see our truck. They had seen us earlier in the day and had noticed the Easy Rider logo with the stars and stripes.*



*They thought it was cool and asked if they could climb up into the bed with us to take a look and ended up hanging out for a bit.*

*About 15 minutes later we heard a whoosh & a crash, one of our crew felt something hot scrape his leg then the searchlight guy fell over. We thought we were getting incoming, and had received a defective enemy mortar (since there was no explosion).*

*Everyone dove off the truck & took cover with our weapons out & our heads down.*

*Within a few minutes our radio up on the truck was squawking with the hourly commo check.*

*No one made a move to answer it because we still weren't sure of what had just happened.*

*Getting no response from us, the radio operator then contacted the watch tower 150 yard to our right to ask if they could see what was going on at our spot. Apparently they said they heard yelling from our location, and the radio started calling us again. Being that I was the section leader, I climbed up on the truck. When I turned on my flash light to locate the radio hand set, I was shocked to see this kid with the side of his head torn open with blood and brain matter all over the radio and deck. I started retching at that sight, finally I was able to get the radio mike and respond to TOC. I said we had a situation here and without thinking clearly I said we needed a medic. They wanted to know why and I just said we are not sure what just happened and we need help real soon. Shortly an ambulance, two jeeps from TOC and the MP's arrived.*



*G.Ioannilli (E-41 1971) damage to side of Quad-50 gun-truck Easy Rider*

*They saw what we saw and started with the questions. After an hour or so of questions and discussion and seeing the hole in the side of our truck bed, someone located some type of metal canister buried in the sand below where the hole in the side of the truck bed was.*

*They determined an illumination round had malfunctioned and came down like an artillery shell. I was later told they pulled that particular lot of illumination rounds away from the firing unit to be destroyed.*

*We never knew this kid's name but he said he was from California. He was killed by friendly fire! Who was he?*

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I thought it would be easy to identify the individual since we knew (or thought we knew) all the NDQSA casualties, down to their specific units, like B-29<sup>th</sup> SLTs. A problem developed when I could not find an actual 'candidate' casualty from B-29<sup>th</sup> in all of 1971. Could this be an unrecorded searchlight casualty that we were not tracking and whose name is not on our memorial at Ft. Sill? It could happen!

My task was to try and find a name on "The Wall" based on very limited information: he was in the Army; he was riding in a searchlight jeep; he was from California and the incident happened in mid- to late-1971. It happened near Tuy Hoa airfield (in Phu Yen province) and was an accidental death caused by a faulty illumination round.

The searchlight battery that covered Tuy Hoa was Bravo Battery 29<sup>th</sup> Artillery. So the casualty should be listed as B-29. There could be some confusion as to unit because in mid-1971, B-29<sup>th</sup> had been released from the operational control of 4/60<sup>th</sup> ADA (Dusters) to a broader command so they could keep operating the big searchlights at major bases in IICORP (the Central Highlands). Still he should be identified as B-29<sup>th</sup>.

There are several inline resources to search for the history of Vietnam fatalities: the main one is the [Coffelt Database](#); another is the [Vietnam Veterans Memorial](#) website; and Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund page "[The Wall of Faces](#)". Each resource has its own data components and specific searching parameters. Each presumes you know who you are looking for. I did not know who I was looking for, but I had a few data points to work with.

I first had to search for B-29<sup>th</sup> fatalities for 1971. The Coffelt database was the only one that lets you search by unit (under Ground Forces). Unfortunately I could only search a time period of +/- 10 days. After tedious

searching I did not find a candidate fatality from B-29<sup>th</sup> in 1971, so he was not listed as B-29<sup>th</sup>.

♪"Who are you...who, who! ♪

Now I have to look for him with my remaining information: Army, Tuy Hoa, California, mid- to late-1971. Fortunately the search parameters from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial web site does allow one to search for these very factors, without having the name.

I searched using these parameters and set a broad starting and ending date (July thru October) and it returned 31 names. Going down through the list alphabetically I come across the name, Randall Bruce Bernard. He was married, 22 years old and was killed on 21Sep71 in Phu Yen Province by a non-hostile accident. Now I can go to Coffelt and see what it says.

Eureka! The Coffelt search reveals that [Randall Bernard](#) was "struck by mortar illumination shell" and that he was an infantryman with E Co, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn 22<sup>nd</sup> Infantry. So even though he arrived in a B-29<sup>th</sup> searchlight jeep, he was NOT a B-29<sup>th</sup> searchlight crewman. Jerry Ioannilli later reported that he found a notation in his photo album showing "1/22" the unit Randall was actually from.

Now I can go to "The Wall of Faces" site and see any pictures of him and read comments submitted about him.



Now we know who you were.  
RIP SP4 Randall B. Bernard  
'Brothers then...Brothers Forever'

## “I don’t like crowds!”

There are probably a lot of Vietnam vets that feel that way or know a vet that is reluctant to reach out and even meet with other Vietnam vets. Some may look back to their time in service and for one reason or another feel that it is something they are not proud of or feel it cannot be discussed in public. Whatever the reason(s) we still reach out to every Vietnam Vet, whether NDQSA or not, and welcome them home.

I was working on my various displays in the empty hospitality room at Gettysburg one morning when this rather ‘biker’ looking dude walk in. I walk over and introduce myself and he says he is Bill Thomashefsky and he was with A-5/2d in 1967-68.

But the first thing he told me was “**I don’t like crowds**, and if I came here and saw a lot of people, I would have turned right around and left and you would never have known I existed.” This was remarkable considering he drove his camper all the way up from Dayton Beach FL based only on a reunion notice he saw in a magazine.

It turns out; he went over on the boat and was around several tragic events during his tour. What he told me later on, literally curled my blood.

He had been fighting the VA for years and accumulated some documents with the help of his case worker. He had photos and other documents that he basically gave me because he said none of his kids care anything about them or his time in service. This included a few early ORLLs (Quarterly Reports) from the 5/2d that I never had found access to.

He told me about several incidents where several 5/2d men were killed in tragic accidents. Before this, they were just names on our casualty list. Now I have some of the back story on the events and it brought home these events in a new light.

I determined that there were actually 2-3 guys at the reunion that served in his unit at the same time. I told him to return that evening as we were having a party with a band and ‘free’ food. Come and meet the group and see for yourself what NDQSA is. If you still feel anxious or unwelcome, then feel free to leave.



Well he came back with his wife and it was a sea of faces and noise, some 200+ people challenging the food line and milling about. I got them seats near the door just in case they felt uncomfortable and had to leave, however they stayed, and they had a great time.

He told me he never thought there was anything like NDQSA. He got to talk to Larry Thurnherr and others from his unit about their shared experiences. I got to talk to his case worker and I hope she will be as much help to me as I might be to them. In the end, he joined the association and bought a boat load of NDQSA products.

They could not stay for the luncheon on Saturday but if he can drive up to Pennsylvania from Florida, he can surely make it to Mobile Alabama in 2019.

When we had our “Farewell Gathering” on Sunday morning at the end of the reunion, the deacon often asks for people’s feelings about the reunion. I started off the discussion by telling this story to the group. I wanted to point out that you never know what a person’s experiences were...until to talk to them. Appearances can be a conscious barrier to people talking to each other. Bill did not have a NDQSA hat on or had any other token that might show him to be a Vietnam Veteran. Would any of us walk up to him in a crowd?

Well fortunately, he walked up to us, and that took guts! And fortunately we were there to meet him. I continue to tell everyone that NDQSA is a very special group. NDQSA members are special people.

Don’t be afraid to greet a fellow vet when you see one, you never know where it might lead.

# TANK FARM OPEN HOUSE

## SEPTEMBER 22-23, 2018

Our good friends at the Virginia Museum of Military Vehicles and Allan Cors of the Americans in Wartime Museum ([NMAW](#)) have set the dates for the 2018 “Open House” in Nokesville, VA near the Quantico Marine Base.

2018 Open House  
September 22 and 23  
10 a.m. to 4 p.m. both days  
“Tank Farm” in Nokesville, VA

The museum is still in the fund raising stage but the land has been acquired and ground has been broken to prepare the land for building. The Tank Farm has two fully restored M42A1 Dusters in their collection as well as several M55 quad-50 trailer mounts, and a Xenon searchlight. Sorry, no Vulcan or HAWK vehicles.

It is always a great venue to bring the family and you can go [online an register](#) (and donate) for the event.

Family-friendly activities such as vehicles and helicopter displays, living history displays, a scavenger hunt, a veterans round table and much more!



At least one of the Dusters will be running as part of the infield demonstrations. We may be able to get a few of you Duster vets out for a ride during the event for one last trip on a Duster!

I believe our friends from Brickmania will be there but I do not know which display they might bring. There is also the possibility that the online gaming giant “World of Tanks” will be a participant as well. T.B.D.?



National Dusters, Quads &  
Searchlights Association  
PO Box 890130  
Oklahoma City, OK 73189

**Forward Service Requested**



**Dusters, Quads, Searchlights, Vulcans & HAWKS**  
**Air Defense Artillery**  
**“First To Fire...Last To Leave”**

**37<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion**  
**Mobile, Alabama**  
**T.B.D. 2019**

<http://www.ndqsa.com/>

Issue #2 June/July 2018

Face Book : [Dqs historian](#)

Many of you have already paid for multiple years, so look carefully at the mailing label for the year which shows when you are paid up through. (2018 or beyond)

However, if you see the number 0000 or 2017 and below, we have not seen a dues payment from you in a while. If you can't afford the dues, we fully understand so do not worry about it. We only ask that you update your status and verify your contact information, **phone numbers and email address**. Just mail in the info using the multipurpose form or send an email.

2018 Rosters are printed out when your form is submitted and will contain the most up to date information. So please make any updates or changes ASAP!

**If you have changed your phone number or email address recently**, send an email to Paul Kopsick at [dqshistorian@cox.net](mailto:dqshistorian@cox.net) or leave a message on (202) 262-9560.

To be sure you get the newsletter via email, tell your email program to accept emails from [dqshistorian@cox.net](mailto:dqshistorian@cox.net).

## MISSION STATEMENT

The National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights Association™ (NDQSA™) is the original, official representative for ADA Veterans who served in Vietnam. NDQSA is the **only** organization of Vietnam ADA Veterans officially recognized by the Air Defense Artillery Association headquarters in Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. As a tribute to the memory of over 200 ADA Warriors who lost their lives during the war in Vietnam, NDQSA members have funded, constructed and dedicated a magnificent monument in the Memorial Park at Ft. Sill.

NDQSA was founded in 1981 by John Huelsenbeck et al, holds annual reunions and has grown to about 600 active members with a directory of over 2200 ADA Vietnam Veterans and supporters.

NDQSA is an IRS 501(c) (19) non-profit veteran's organization and is incorporated in the State of Indiana.

We welcome and encourage all ADA Veterans who served in Vietnam to join NDQSA and to share the fellowship, mutual support, and continued service to our nation on behalf of all military veterans and active duty personnel.