

NATIONAL DUSTERS, QUADS & SEARCHLIGHTS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER # 2 – AUGUST 2021

38th Annual Reunion “Operation Hampton Roads” Norfolk, VA Nov 9-14, 2021

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE



To all my NDQSA Brothers and Sisters:

I hope this message finds you and your families in good health and spirits. We are closing in on final plans for the 2021 reunion while the country is still in flux with respect to the pandemic. With a number of states lifting restrictions as of this writing, I would caution you all too still be on

your guard and use caution when out in public. You all share our desire to get together in Norfolk. We hope all of you have been fully vaccinated and are encouraging others to do the same.

The 2021 NDQSA election poses an opportunity for new blood to join the leadership team as there are a number of open positions. The election committee has developed a slate of nominees and the ballot will be distributed with the 2021 rosters to all ACTIVE status members of NDQSA. We are sorry for the delays in newsletters, the roster and membership cards, but uncertainties with our election, the plans for the reunion and concern about the pandemic prevented the normal flow of these items as they are interdependent on each other.

I can also report that we have developed a permanent option for the product sales portion of our association. With the help of Vinny Tedesco and a nice donation from NDQSA, our product sales will now be coordinated out of the Air Defense Artillery Association at Ft. Sill. We have moved our entire product holdings from the Gettler household, including the trailer used to transport and store our items, to Ft. Sill through the generosity of NDQSA treasurer Allan Penwell who picked up the trailer and drove it to Oklahoma. We will continue with product sales as soon as a few logistics are ironed out. Thank you all for your continued support and patience during this transition year.

Be well and be safe. [Bob Cuce](#) President NDQSA

FEATURED STORIES:

4/60th Reactivation 1971-2021

Ft. Sill Honeymoon

E Pluribus Unum – Out of Many one
Letters Home from the field 1967 Pt.1

NEW MEMBERS/CONTACTS

Isom Taylor B-1/44 '67-68

Willie McDonnell B-5/2 '67-68

[Victor Rocheleaux B-5/2 '69-70](#)

[Wilfred Spencer B-5/2 '69-70](#)

[Stewart McGregor, B-5/2 '69-70](#)

[Alan Bazzini, A-1/44 '66-67](#)

[Kenneth Sorensen, B-6/56 '65-66](#)

[Ron Foster, G-55, '69-70](#)

[Chuck Veltri, B-5/2 '70-71](#)

Send an email to welcome them!

MEMBERS THAT HAVE PASSED

Klain Garriga, A-1/44 '68 1Jun20, MS

Harold Manns, H-29 '67-68 1/17/12, FL

Olie Steigberg, G-29 '66-67 2/21/20, IL

Keith Kidwell, D-71 '71, 30Dec20, FL

Riley McVeay, B-29 '66-67 25Jan20, MS

Ross Roe, C-5/2 '66-67 4Oct19, TX

Orval Mammenga, 5/2 '66-67 26Oct20, AZ

William Farnum, A-4/60 '70-71 8Jan21, TX

George Lewis, C-1/44 '68-69 3Jun14, CA

Patrick Burke, C-1/44 6Aug15, WI

Dan Naill, A-5/2 '70-71, 16Oct20, IL

Joseph Devereaux, G-29 '67-68, 31Jan17, MD

John Thornton, H-5/2 '69-70 8Sep14, MD

David Gibson, H-4/60 30Oct17, SC

Leo Walton, 4/60 '68-69 26Sep16, CA

Orrien Gresemer, G-29 '67-68 2002, PA

William Thomashefsky, A-5/2 '66-67 30Oct20, FL

Leslie Custer, A-1/44 '66-67 4Aug21, TX

Joseph Galloway (Ia Drang-65) 19Aug21, NC

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

= = = = = = = =

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 the dqshistorian@cox.net, it is time for you to record your email address with him. Simply [click here](#) and identify yourself clearly (full name). Please 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.

+ + + + + + + +

REMEMBER

NDQSA is an IRS 501(c) (19) non-profit veterans organization so if you are of means and in a giving state of mind, know that you can put NDQSA in your estate plans for when you leave this “mortal plane.” Also, NDQSA has several vehicle restoration projects we are still trying to complete: the Widow Maker gun-truck still needs to pay off the loan of the Quad 50 gun mount (20K), and we are still looking for an appropriate Mutt M151 jeep (10K) for the Xenon SLT we have at the Tank Farm. We continue to accept donations for the maintenance of the ADA Memorial at Ft. Sill (Project Eagle) and general “Good Works” projects.

+ + + + + + + +

FIND & PHONE A FRIEND!

If you remember the name and home town of a buddy, there is now a real web site that will let you search for him with a good chance of locating him if he is still alive. Go to truepeoplesearch.com and type in the full name and his home town. Look for guys that are 70 years old and see if there are any hits. If you have an old address look down the relevent info that pops up, and it might be there confirming that you located him. Try the phone numbers listed and see if you found him.

If not, no harm done. If yes...well you got a lot to talk about. Be sure to let me know how it turns out.

+ + + + + + + +

LOST BUDDY FOUND!

To prove that this can work I will share the story of Isom Taylor of 1/44th. I was contcted on his behalf by his insurance agent who was trying to help him locate his buddy from AIT. Making a long story short, after I interviewed Isom I came away with a few pieces of information on his friend. His name was Willie McDonald; he lived in East St. Louis, IL. He was about 72-73 years old and was born in June. Isom had been looking for him for years, travelling from Texas to St.Louis many times over the years. While Isom was with 1/44th I assumed Willie was also in 1/44th during '67-68. I searched all my holdings for 1/44th documents from that time period but could not find any mention of either of them. Remembering that there was an infusion of personnel between 1/44th and the other newly arriving Duster battalions, I looked for Willie in my database of names from the 5/2d. Incredibly I found the name Willie E. McDonnell serving with 5/2d during 1968. With a middle initial and an alternate spelling of the last name, I went to the search site and looked for a Willie E McDonnell in East St. Louis. Low and behold there were a few in the greater St. Louis area. When I narrowed my search for someone in their early 70's, there was only one...and he was born in June!

Unfortunately none of the listed phone numbers were still in use, but at least I had a possible address for a likely candidate. I then contacted Bill Sturgeon for help with finding current contact info on this specific person. Bill got back to me with two more phone numbers. The first one did not answer, but the second one did. I asked if he was Willie McDonnell and did he serve with the Dusters in Vietnam in 1968? He said yes. I asked if he remembered an Isom Taylor, and he said yes and that he was also looking for him.

There is much more to this story as they did reconnect and plan to visit with each other, but I need to keep this short. So welcome Isom Taylor and Willie McDonnell to NDQSA. Brothers then...Brothers Reunited!

Synopsis of relevant minutes of NDQSA Board of Directors and Executive Officers Meeting July 16, 2021

The NDQSA Board of Directors and Executive Officers met in a 90 minute conference call on July 16, 2021. The main items of business were : (1) The 2021 reunion and banquet/party; (2) The 2022 reunion; (3) Formation of a new committee; (4) Update on the trailer, NDQSA product and the ADA Association.

1. The reunion committee reported that preparations for the 2021 reunion are on schedule. As a thank you to members and to serve as an encouragement to come back into the fold after COVID, registration for the reunion is reduced to \$20 for both family and single members. As a health safety reminder to all attendees:

In order to maintain a safe reunion for everybody, we are requesting that people who have not been vaccinated please do so. While a personal freedom and therefore left to the discretion of individuals, if not fully vaccinated please be prepared to wear a mask for protection of yourself and others.

2. The board continues to work on next year’s Fort Sill reunion anticipated for early July 2022.

3. The board established a Steering and Heritage Committee. Its roles and functions will be to set standards, identify capabilities, and establish limits on how the National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights Association will keep its history intact and present our heritage to other organizations. The five (5) member committee will initially consist of Al Hansen, Allan Penwell, Paul Kopsick, Paul Hanson and Bob Cuce. Al Hansen will head up the committee.

4. NDQSA product will be available through the Fort Sill ADA Association web site as soon as it gets priced and loaded. An effort will be made to have a small selection of items available at the Norfolk reunion. Allan Penwell’s trip report and coordination with Fort Sill will be published separately in the newsletter.

+ + + + + + + +



The 4/60th ADA is being reactivated after 50-year hiatus!

Our contact, Alex Corby, reports, the current plan is for reactivation ceremonies to be on either on 15

September or 15 October as the activation date. It will depend on the flag officer decisions.



We would like to announce our unit naming convention and share some of the symbolism and imagery that the unit will use moving forward. In each of the following images are details on how it ties to members of The Fighting Aces from the fields of Europe in WWI, the “Rock” of Corregidor in WWII, and the Central Highlands of Vietnam.

Throughout history The Fighting Aces have answered the call in what history would identify as some of the toughest conditions and greatest challenges earning 9 unit citations to include 4 Presidential Unit Citations along the way. Be proud of your heritage and carry it forward as we add the next chapter to this great unit’s history. “We Rule The Heavens!”

Look forward to getting as many 4/60th vets out to the activation ceremony at Ft. Sill. We want the young troopers to know where they came from. We would like to have you all there when we give them their unit insignias (having y’all be the ones to give it to them). – Alex Corby

+ + + + +



This should be the new motto of the new ADAR units which deploy with the M-SHORAD.

"E PLURIBUS UNUM" or "Out of many...ONE!"

It has the body and protection of a Duster; the road wheels of a Gun-Truck; Quad 70mm Stinger missiles (ala the HAWK); Twin 177mm Hellfire missiles; a mini-Duster 30mm (not 40mm) automatic cannon; mobile Radar like the HAWK...AND... Two (count'em), two headlights like a Searchlight jeep (LOL). But I hear they are also working on a laser too. That would be real cool. Motto would look good on a challenge coin or t-shirt.



NDQSA PRODUCT SALES TRANSFERRED TO FT. SILL



Picking up the trailer from Mary Gettler

Peg and I are back from our four-day venture of picking up the trailer in Iowa and dropping it off at Fort Sill. It was a fun trip with only one mishap. The radiator cap on the farm truck was loose, and we lost most of the water in the radiator. Two hours, a nice state trooper, and a good mechanic solved the problem, and we were on our way.

The trip gave me a good insight into the workings of the Air Defense Artillery Association, and let me share it with you.

We were greeted at the Fort Sill gate by Mike Simley, Dave Christensen, and Jenilee Sanford who are with the Association. I had met Dave before at the Knoxville reunion and corresponded with him when I was working on my memoirs a few years ago. Dave is a PhD type who is the ADA Historian. He teaches at the ADA school and is involved in all things ADA. Mike Simley is a retired ADA officer who is the Deputy Commandant of the Air Defense Artillery School. He is immersed in strategic planning for ADA as well as ADA instruction at the school. Jenilee has been employed by the ADA Association since 2015 and is the only employee. I think all of this is described correctly, but maybe I have missed a thing or two.

After getting checked through the gate, we went to the new offices of the Association at 747 Geronimo Road at Fort Sill. The small building was built to house the horse cavalry back in the 1800's. Slowly the offices are getting in shape, and the \$5,000 we (NDQSA) approved for the new floor should help. Our NDQSA products will be sold on the Association website as well as on display in the office.

Incidentally, the existing website is pretty basic, but Jenilee is in the process of upgrading it. The Association is self-supporting and has a board of ADA officers and enlisted along with Vinnie Tedesco.



I learned a lot in talking with Mike and Dave, especially about the evolution of the ADA which no longer is the kid sister of the field artillery. Remember how our Vietnam units were all attached to different divisions and battalions? That has always been the case with ADA, at least since I was a junior officer being trained to go on a Hercules missile site to shoot down Russian bombers. It is different now as ADA units are becoming organic to field battalions. The ADA school at Fort Sill is in new buildings, and ADA weapons are displayed around the fort. The new ADA museum is prominent and will be great to see at our reunion next year. I am told it is first class. Unfortunately, it was closed so we could not go through it.

I know it's unlikely for me to drive a pick-up truck, but here is the video to prove it. Peg and I have not been on our honeymoon yet, hence the title. Control + Click on the link to take you to the website.

<https://animoto.com/play/RTRS78sLOiwCfNBiNkzRTg>

Music is courtesy of The Eagles. Enjoy.

Allan Penwell
NDQSA Treasurer
C: 217.493.5697
E: a.penwell@comcast.net

Reunion Activities & Norfolk Area Attractions

Norfolk Waterfront



Hampton Roads Naval Museum



Battleship USS Wisconsin



MacArthur Memorial & Museum



Botanical Gardens



Naval Base Tours



Mermaid Winery



Nauticus Maritime Museum



Waterside Pavilion & Restaurants



Chrysler Museum



Seafood Restaurants



Spirit of Norfolk Cruise



Norfolk Harborfest



Chrysler Museum Glass Studio



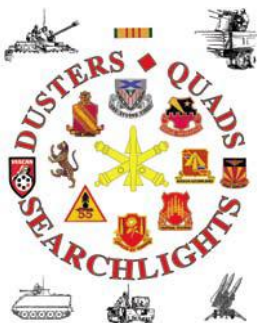
Virginia Zoo



Plan to arrive early or stay after the reunion to take advantage of the wonderful sights, sounds and history that is Norfolk

Harborfest Concert



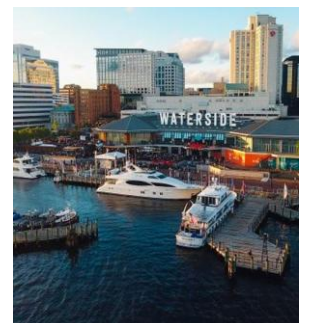


38th Annual NDQSA Reunion

"Operation Hampton Roads"

Norfolk, VA

Rescheduled: Nov 9th – 14th, 2021



38th Annual Reunion will be in Norfolk, VA

Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel

777 Waterside Drive

Norfolk, VA 23510

1(757)622-6664

<https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/orfsi-sheraton-norfolk-waterside-hotel/>



Room Rate: \$114 + tax King or 2 Queens

Discounted Buffet Breakfast \$16pp All Inclusive

Discounted hotel self-parking voucher: \$10/day

NDQSA Group Rate 2 days pre/3 days post above dates (11/07/21– 11/17/21 Based on hotel room availability!)

Reservation Cutoff Date: Oct 22nd, 2021

Phone & Online Reservations Must Mention:

NDQSA or National Dusters, Quads & Searchlight Association Reunion

Sheraton Central Reservations: 1(800)325-3535

Problems Call Hotel Direct: 1(757)622-6664

(Office hours only: Monday-Friday 9am–5pm Eastern)

Ask for: Group Sales/Christine or Erica

Online Reservation Link:

<https://www.marriott.com/events/start.mi?id=1622749474156&key=GRP>

Book Your Hotel Reservations ASAP!

Reunion Events & Registration Form to follow!

Norfolk Regional Airport (8 miles) has Taxi & Uber



Dues: _____ Product: _____
 / /21 Ck# Total \$
 Donations: Q- S- E- GW-

Mailing Label ->
 Cut out and tape
 to envelope

NDQSA
PO BOX 596
Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706

NDQSA- 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 (Viet Nam) (fill out even if on file)

Dates of 1st 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 Viet Nam)
 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 (2021) (2022) (2023) (2024)
DUES ARE \$25 PER YEAR \$ _____
 Donations: Quad 50 restoration \$ _____
 Searchlight restoration \$ _____
 Searchlight Print (\$60 min) \$ _____
Operation Eagle Repair \$ _____
 Good Works \$ _____
 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.

2021 NDQSA REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

PLEASE READ EVERYTHING CAREFULLY AND MAIL THIS FORM TO THE TREASURER – SEE ADDRESS LABEL BELOW

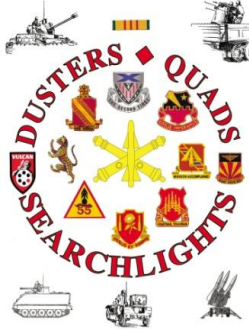
38th ANNUAL NDQSA REUNION, NORFOLK, VA

Nov 9th – Nov 14th 2021

Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel

**777 Waterside Drive
Norfolk, VA 23510
1(757)622-6664
Central Reservations 1(800)325-3535
Please ONLY use this Online Link
>>> [NDQSA 2021 Reunion Link](#) <<<**

Room Rate: \$114 + tax King or 2 Queens, Free Internet
Discounted All Inclusive Buffet Breakfast \$16pp
Discounted Self Parking Voucher: \$10/Day (Identify NDQSA at check in!)
Discount 15% at Waterside Seafood Café (food & non alcoholic beverages only)
NDQSA Grp Rate 2 days pre/3 days post above dates (based on hotel availability)
Phone & Online Reservations Must Mention: NDQSA Reunion
Reservation Problems: Call Hotel Direct (Weekdays Only 9am-5pm EST)
1 (757) 622-6664 Ask for Group Sales/Christine or Erica



Name(print): _____

Spouse/other attendees: _____

Cell Phone Number: _____

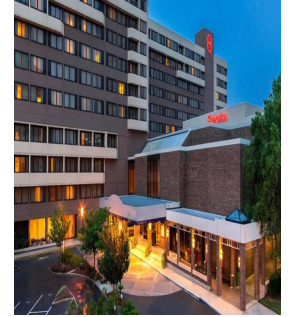
Which days are you planning to attend the reunion? (circle)

Nov 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17
Su M Tu W Th F S Su M Tu W

Remember to make your hotel reservations ASAP to insure room availability.

If you have already made your reservations, check this box [].

If you are local or not staying at the reunion hotel, check this box [].



To help planning reunion activities for buses & meals, please pre-register now and send fees for the following activities.

As always, should unforeseen circumstances occur and you are unable to attend the reunion, you will receive a full refund.

Activity times are tentative and subject to change as plans are finalized.

ACTIVITIES

<p>Tuesday Nov 9th Setup/Registration 11:00 AM in Hospitality Room</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Open Day Sightseeing On Your Own</p> <p>Evening Activities Hospitality Room closes at ~12 midnight</p>	<p>Wednesday Nov 10th Registration 9:00 AM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11:30am</p> <p>‘Spirit of Norfolk’ Luncheon Cruise & Greater Norfolk Tour \$ 50 pp (11:30-3:30pm) Note: Port is less than one block from hotel</p> <p>Evening Activities Hospitality Room closes at ~12 midnight</p>	<p>Thursday Nov 11th Morning on Your Own</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4:30 PM NDQSA Memorial Hotel Ballroom</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5:00 PM-10:30 PM Annual NDQSA Dinner Banquet Awards & Presentations followed by President’s Party Featuring The Fabulous Hubcaps</p> <p>Cash Bar (Complimentary Beer, Wine & Soft Drinks)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">\$50 pp</p>	<p>Friday Nov 12th</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11:00 AM (Board Buses to dock 10:30 AM)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Nauticus ‘Victory Rover’ Naval Base Tour Air Craft Carriers & Nuclear Subs \$ 50 pp (11:00 AM-3:00 PM)</p> <p>Evening Activities Hospitality Room closes at ~12 midnight</p>	<p>Saturday Nov 13th 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM Annual Membership Business Mtg. *Members required to attend</p> <p>9:00 AM to 11:00 AM Ladies Continental Breakfast in Hospitality Room</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Afternoon On Your Own</p> <p>7pm Evening Activities, Auctions & Raffles Hospitality Room closes at ~11:00 PM</p>
<p>Sunday Nov 14th 9:00AM Chaplain’s Farewell Svc.</p>				

Select & Pay for Activities

	<u>No.of Persons</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Wed, Nov10 th 11:30am-3:30pm ‘Spirit of Norfolk’ Luncheon Cruise & Tour of Greater Norfolk	(\$50) x _____ = \$ _____	
Thurs, Nov11 th 5:00pm-10:30pm NDQSA Dinner Banquet & President’s Party with Band	(\$50) x _____ = \$ _____	
Friday, Nov12 th 11am-3pm Nauticus ‘Victory Rover’ Naval Base Boat Tour	(\$50) x _____ = \$ _____	
Voluntary donation to 2021 NDQSA Good Works Project: Norfolk Fisher House (any amount welcome)		\$ _____
Reunion Registration Fee: <u>Make sure you add it into your total.</u>	(\$20 individual or family)	\$ _____ 20 _____
Total >>>>>>		\$ _____

**Allan Penwell
1613 Congressional Way
Champaign, IL. 61822**

Make your pre-registration check payable to NDQSA
and mail to NDQSA Treasurer:
← **Cut out this address label and tape it to your envelope.**

**Tear off this
page, fill it
out and mail**

LETTERS HOME FROM THE MOTOR POOL 1967-68

SP4 Phillip McGuire, D-4/60 '67-68



As the Historian and newsletter editor I continue to ask everyone I communicate with to share a story with me. Most requests are unanswered because most guys feel they have nothing to say or have something they do not want to share. I understand that and I am so glad that at least one guy had the idea to share some of the letters that he wrote home with us. I was ecstatic to read his first letter and asked

him to transcribe more. Over the past few months he has been transcribing them and emailing them to me. Over the next few newsletters you will read a wonderful diary of the guys that keeps our Dusters on the road. Remember if they didn't work, the rest of us could not do their jobs.

To put this into historical context, these are early tour letters from the start of the 4/60th original deployment to Vietnam. The 4/60th Duster Battalion arrived in early 1967 and set up near Phu Cat Airbase in the Central Highlands. Phillip was part of the "advance team" and flew over early in 1967 to set some logistics up. The 4/60th were going to be providing support for the largest (by square miles) area of any of the three battalions. And many elements of 4/60th, E-41st Quads and B-29th SLT would eventually deploy as far north as the DMZ (ICTZ) and south as Saigon (III & IVCTZ). It would be a lot of road travelling. In general, A-Battery worked along the coast, B- & D-Batteries were sent west to the Pleiku area of operations and C-Battery was in the southern part of the IICTZ (combat tactical zone).

Curious sidebar, the 4/60th was not the first Duster unit to deploy to Pleiku and IICTZ or IICORP. While archiving photos from members of the 1/44th I recognized the topography in several photos as being in the Pleiku area. In my conversations with this guy from the 1/44th, he told me that when they first arrived in-country they were part of a convoy up QL14 through the treacherous highland passes up to Pleiku to set up a base camp. He told me they were not even given ammo for their personal weapons, and the Dusters were not yet off the transport ship. A few days after getting to Pleiku (at what would become Artillery Hill) the 1/44th was reassigned to the north (ICTZ ICORP) to support the 3d Marine Division.

These letters are from Phillip McGuire who was a track mechanic with D-Battery which would later setup camp at Camp Enari near Dragon Mountain south of Pleiku. They were responsible for the region south and west of Pleiku. B-Battery was responsible for the area north and east of Pleiku.

Plei Me, LZ Oasis, Cateaka Tea Plantation, Jackson Hole, Duc Co were all firebases west of Pleiku to the border with Cambodia along QL19. The infamous Ia Drang valley is just to the south of this area. What struck me is how informative Phillip was in his letters, describing in detail and with names, what his daily duties were and how important it was to keep all the trucks, track and weapons in operational order. Especially early on before logistical supply lines were established.

So, here we go. Even more incredible, I had already archived Phil's impressive photographs several years ago so I have actual photos of many of the events he describes. Many of the letters will read as kind of choppy sentences. I did make some edits here and there, but left a lot of syntax issues so you can get a feel for his communication style.

Prelude: Why I was chosen for the advance party I don't know. I am grateful to who ever made that decision. I did not want to go over on a ship. We left El Paso on a C-130. I remember stepping out of the terminal building seeing that big green airplane. I noticed at the top of the tail was my brother's name MAC. I thought now how weird is that? Found out later it stood for Military Air Command.



17 Feb 67 Left El Paso at 9:30 PM MST. Thursday night, arrived in Norton Field CA at 11:30 PM MST. Hickam Field Hawaii 11:00 AM MST Friday morning. I am fine. (Note we were not scheduled to land at Hickam Field in Hawaii, the plane developed an engine problem and landed there for repairs. We were on the ground for a few hours and we were allowed to walk around for a little while, 2 hours ?)

Friday 18 Feb 67 We left Hawaii at 2:30 PM MST. Right now it is 5:30 MST. We are somewhere between Hawaii and Guam which will be our next stop. We are flying in a C-130, it is a military plane. I am sitting on a bench made out of nylon cloth. With my back propped up against some nylon straps that come down from the top and fastened to the rear of the bench. I have my feet propped up on the boxes we have our supplies in. On my right is a valve that keeps hissing and above my head there is a loose piece of metal that keeps vibrating and making a racket. On top of all this noise is the roar of the engines. It's not too bad once I have got use to it. It like to have drove me nuts from El Paso to Norton Field California. From California to Hawaii I just put my field jacket over my head and went to sleep.

It is 7:15 by the clock on the wall of the mess hall. 11:00 am MST. Now in Okinawa next stop Vietnam. (Note I left my watch on Mountain Standard Time for the flight over.)

Sunday afternoon We arrived in Vietnam about 11:30 Sunday morning. When we crossed the International Date Line we lost Saturday and gained a day. We landed in Qui Nhon. The country here is beautiful. The people and the town's are dirty. When the people here take a notion to answer the call of nature they just drop their pants where they stand. We just got our rifles and 7 magazines of ammo with 19 rounds to the magazine. We brought over 9,500 rounds with us. We had a hot meal when we got here. The weather here is nice. It is fairly cool. There have been about 3 real light sprinkles of rain since we have been here. Everything is nice and green here. In the towns, where there is a lot of traffic, there is a layer of dust on everything. Know what struck me as funny? The pigs, they are sway back or at least look like it. Their belly drags the ground. One of the Lieutenants is missing his ammo magazines. So they are going around and taking the extra magazines away from those that have them.

Tuesday afternoon 22 Feb 67 Today we went out to the area the unit will occupy when it arrives here. The area is made up of clearings with hedge rows as boundaries. What we had to do was cut holes in the hedge rows for the vehicles to get through. We used machetes for this. There is an old temple and a few huts there. We didn't go in them because they might be booby trapped.

We found the entrance to a tunnel the VC used when they occupied the area. We were told to carry our weapons loaded with a round in the chamber and on safe. I think this was to get us use to it instead of there being a chance of an attack from the VC. It's not a bad idea. There is a chance D-Battery will be attached to the Fourth Infantry. They are near the Cambodian border. If we are sent with the Fourth ID we will be in the big middle of this happy horse shit.

The name of the place where we are at now is Phu Cat. It is an Air Force base. Like I said the only battery to stay here will be Headquarters and one of the line batteries. The other line batteries will be sent to support infantry units. You'll all can tell the newspaper I am in Vietnam and that I am in D-Btry of the 4th battalion 60th Artillery. The unit is composed of self propelled twin forty millimeter guns. My job will be 63C20, automatic weapons mechanic. Alston just handed me a book on them so I will close and start reading it.

Thursday 2 March 67 Yesterday we went into Qui Nhon and picked up seven of our vehicles. We left in the afternoon about 12:30 and got back here at 5:45. It is 22 1/2 miles from Phu Cat to Qui Nhon. It took us about 2 hours to drive it. The fastest we ever got was 32 miles an hour. The roads are so bad and crowded to go fast, but we really cut a trail. All of



I will try to describe the plane. If you get lost forget it. The plane is so cluttered up it is pitiful. I am at the front setting on the right side. The seat runs down the side of the wall for about sixteen feet. On the left hand side is another seat the same length. We are setting with our backs to the side of the plane. Above the seats there are four stretchers suspended from the ceiling. Two above my head, two more to my left. The other side is the same way. We have our supplies packed in boxes. These boxes are stacked in between the two seats. Where this seat stops another is in the middle of the floor running to the rear of the plane where our duffle bags are. The men are setting back to back on this seat, there are some more stretchers hanging from the ceiling in front of them. At the top and running the full length of the ceiling is a bunch of wires and pipes. To put it simple this plane was built for service-ability, not looks or comfort. We arrived at Wake Island at 12:00 midnight MST.

the other people here slow down for all of the bumps. We just slowed down for the bad ones. Brown and I were in one of the duce and a halves. We liked to have ran over a pig and almost wiped a cows ass with our trailer. (Brown was driving I was riding shotgun). It was a lot of fun and I enjoyed it.

I had guard last night. I went on at 11:00 got off at 1:00 went back on guard again at 5:00 had fifteen minutes for breakfast and got off guard at 9:00. Then Lt. Bennett had me moving the trucks around in the motor pool. After lunch Brown, Williams and I went to the motor pool and unloaded three of the trucks. Even though there was a fellow with a fork lift there to help us it took all afternoon to unload the three trucks. We couldn't work very hard because it was real hot today. So we worked slowly since we weren't use to the heat. Today was about as hot as the hottest days back home. It was cool compared to what we have ahead of us. I have guard again tonight. I will probably end up pulling two two hour shift's again. I worked in my tee shirt all day and I have a light sunburn. When I get home I am going to be brown and I do mean brown.

Saturday 4 March 67

Today has been a real fun day. I finally got to drive some of the trucks somewhere besides here. This morning eleven of us went to Qui Nhon (on the coast). Each of us driving a 2-1/2 ton truck. Then we drove back to Phu Cat in another 2-1/2 ton. I was pulling a water trailer. Then this afternoon fifteen of us went to Qui Nhon again. I came back in a 2-1/2 to pulling two trailers. The trailers were piggy back. I enjoyed every minute of it. This afternoon I also helped change two flats both on the rear right side of a 2-1/2 ton. I got hung with two guard shifts yesterday. Eleven to one at night then seven in the morning till five thirty in the afternoon. Then I had guard again nine to eleven last night. That covers my activities for the last few days.

Thursday 9 March 67 It is raining again here. It started raining late last night. Tuesday some of the guys put up tents. I drove a two and a half ton truck all day. I picked up the tents at a supply point and brought them out here (we are in our new area. The one our unit will occupy) I hauled twenty six hospital tents. When the day was over I was bushed. I helped to load and unload the tents. They weigh about three hundred pounds. We used a fork lift to load them but we had to unload them by hand. When we came

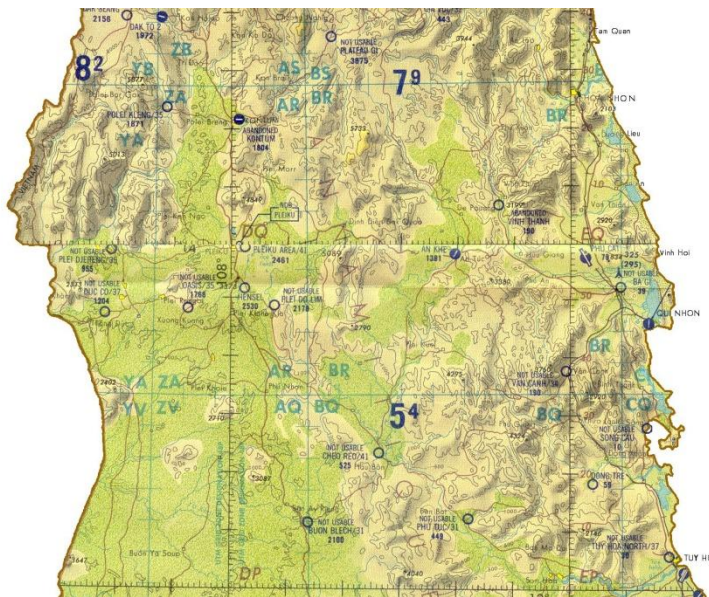
back from chow the Major wanted us to put up one of the tents in the dark. So while he slept we put up another tent. We got it up about 9:30. Then I had to go over to the motor pool for guard duty. I got to bed at 2:00 that night. We got up at 6:30.

Yesterday we had to put up some more tents. The group I worked with got up the six tents we were told to put up. Then we got to shower and shave. Got to go put up some more tents. I just got through putting up five more tents. That makes eleven in two days. We have put up close to fifty nine tents so far. I hope that is all of them. If I have to put up another tent I will throw a rock at the fellow that tells me to put it up. I had to pull two hours of guard last night from 8 to 10 so it wasn't bad. The Sarge came through to wake us up

this morning at 5:30. I was so tired I didn't get up till 7:00. Brown came through and said "McGuire get your lazy ass up." When I got up everybody was outside on police call. They were picking up the boxes the tents had came in. When I got up something bit me on the leg. Guess what? It was a centipede. It didn't make me sick or anything. It just hurt all day. It felt like a wasp sting and lasted all day. When we go to chow we have to go back to the old area. When we came back everybody goes to our motor pool and picks up a vehicle and drives it

back over here. So far I have brought back two duce and a halves with trailers and one quarter ton (jeep) with trailer. I will close up and see if I can't wash my hands and clean up a little. It has been raining and I wore black gloves to work in they got wet and the die has faded out on my hands they are a nice blue black color. How about a care package... put some candy bars, chewing gum and a bottle of vitamin pills in it.

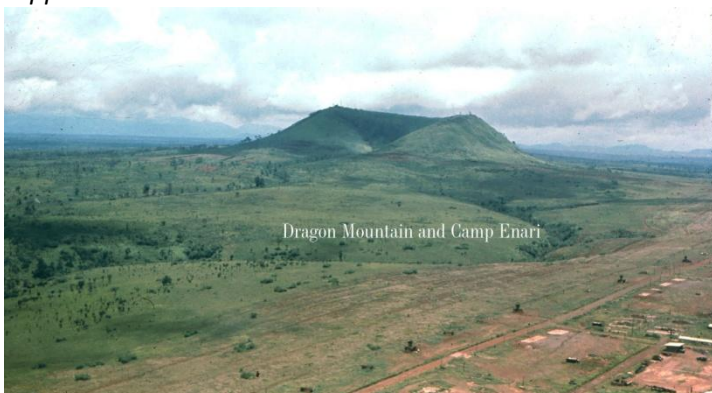
Wednesday 15 Mar? I am writing this letter by lantern. It is kind of hard to see but I figure I had better write while I have a chance. We test fired all of the tracks (guns) today. We had one that failed to extract the rounds. I think I have that one fixed. I was told of two more that would not fire. I will have to check them out. The quad fifty on the hill in front of us just got through firing a few hundred rounds at something. If there is a smear on this letter it is from a bug I smacked. Mother you are talking about snow and here it was up to 99 degrees today. The heat is not bothering me much yet. Pretty soon we will be leaving in convoy to Plei Ku (Play Coo) in about five or six days. That is where the Fourth Infantry is at.



No letter for 19 Mar 67, (My 21st Birthday) but 20 years later I wrote a note to be included with them. I cannot remember what was done during the day more than likely we worked getting ready for the drive (from Phu Cat) to Camp Enari just west of Pleiku. I do remember the night. We had just received our beer rations. Like most boys when they turned twenty one I planned on getting knee walking drunk. After supper I got in line for my beer I found out all we would be allowed to drink was two cans this made me mad. Then I found out I was scheduled to stand guard duty in the motor pool and I wasn't allowed to drink any beer. This really made me talk to myself cussing the Army.

While I was on guard duty about eight o'clock pm Buck Barkley and some of the other men were gathered around a table singing country and western songs. This was one activity that I enjoyed. The fact I was missing it made me madder. Around nine o'clock pm a Viet Cong sniper outside the perimeter started shooting in the direction of Buck and the boys. It was too dark for him to see a distinct target he was shooting at the sound. They immediately quit singing and found a hole to crawl into along with everybody else. I took cover behind a jeep because he then started taking random shots. While setting there it dawned on me everybody was out of sight and no one would be guarding the beer box (A NCO was assigned this job each night). So I bent over and ran and crawled to the beer box reached in grabbed two beers then returned to cover behind the jeep sat down and drank my beers. So thanks to some Viet Cong sniper I did get to drink a beer on my twenty first birthday. He didn't fire much over 10 rounds.

Found out later that a lot of times the Viet Cong would come through a village in the afternoon give a villager an old rifle a few rounds of ammunition then tell him to fire into a firebase perimeter during the night. When the Viet Cong came back the next morning the villager had better give them back the same amount of fired cartridges. This is probably what happened this time.



Dragon Mountain and Camp Enari

There is a break here in letters. The battalion set up their HQ base at Phu Cat. D-Battery would organize out of Camp Enari alongside a lone hill in the western high plateau called the Central Highlands. A hill is shaped like a curled animal sleeping and was known as "Dragon Mountain" (a high hill

really, not a mountain by any stretch.) The 4th Infantry Division was based there. (This is two years after the 1965 Tet attack on Camp Holloway Airfield in Pleiku which was an early pivot point in American involvement and not too far from LZ X-ray and the Nov'65 Battle of the Ia Drang Valley.)

(D-Battery would support and defend a number of firebases in the Highlands. They would be spread out and needed to be travelled by road. So the proper maintenance of trucks, vehicle and their arms was critical to their mission.)

Thursday 4 May 1967: Firebase Oasis. Nobody up here got any mail today. Spent all day working on the engine we pulled yesterday. We were able to patch up broken fuel injection line. We tried to run engine while it was on the ground outside the track but it would not crank. Hoped a broken fuel line was problem put engine back in track. Had problems putting engine back in. The center motor mount would not lineup so we lifted engine back out and took a hammer to the motor mount. Then the motor went back in.



Then one of the exhaust pipes wanted to give us some trouble... a hammer fixed that too. Engine still did not want to crank after being put back in. The booster was bad. The booster furnishes the initial current to the magnetos for the motor to start. After engine starts the magnetos produce their own current. It took most of afternoon to figure that out. Then we discovered that the magneto cap was burned out and was furnishing a ground for the booster. After replacing the cap the engine fired up. The track will be going out in the morning. So right now the only track dead-lined is the one that hit the mine. When we get parts for it nobody knows. Got to take a shower today. Three days since last shower.

Friday May 5 1967: This morning we had to get ready for a Colonel (Bryant) who was going to come through and look things over. We cleaned up our tent and the supply tent. We were told to clean our rifles. This is the first time we have been given time to clean our rifles. Usually we have to clean them on our own time. Brousseau and I also cleaned up the

back of the maintenance truck and by the time we finished it was dinner time. This afternoon we pulled a distributor out of the jeep and put a new one in. Also cleaned and gapped the plugs, replaced one of them, and timed the engine. Then I went across the road and put a booster in the track that hit the mine. We removed the booster from it yesterday to test out the track we were having trouble starting. It started raining while I was putting the booster in. Then it was time for supper. After chow I had to go out and gas up three tracks.



The roads were pretty muddy and I did a little slipping and sliding. One of the tracks was used to pull a five ton truck out of a ditch. All in all things are muddy here. I have mentioned a mortar attack that was 8 April 67. My first. Later I found a story in Stars and Stripes. "Viet Cong aimed 50 rounds of 82 mm mortar fire at the 2nd Brigade headquarters at the Oasis. All rounds landed outside the perimeter." Inside that bunker I could not tell where they landed. As far as I was concerned they were aimed at me. We had radios in there. One of the observers identified the location of the mortars and requested permission to return fire. Permission was denied, they were in a no fire zone. I concluded two things: 1) The people running this show did not know what they were doing. 2) The people running this show did not care if I made it home or not. Hope this is not too much. Take care.

Thursday 15 June 67. I wasn't able to write last because we were under black out conditions. The 10th Cav got mortared last night. They are down the road about eight miles. I believe they just had three men injured and and one APC blown all to hell. So once again we laid around in the dark with all our field gear on. I took it all off and went to sleep about 9 or 9:30. We all stood around outside watching the fireworks. There were helicopters in the air firing, the Cav unit was firing counter mortar fire and dropping flares everywhere. It was quite a sight. This morning I had to pull another technical on another gun turret. Got it checked out

and squared away by ten thirty. I goofed off rest of the morning. After lunch I helped work on a day room we are putting in the supply tent. This afternoon while I was fueling the tracks I got some pretty good pictures of one of the M60 tanks. It was parked right where I was fueling the tracks. I will be going into Dragon Mountain on the seventeenth and staying a few days.



Friday 16 June 67. I wrote preacher Mac last night. I asked him to thank the ladies of the church for the care package. I haven't received it yet, but I thought I had better write and thank them any way.

Brousseau, Billings, Farron (a new mechanic) and I pulled an ESC (Equipment Serviceability Criteria) on two of the Echo 41st Battery Quad guntrucks. Then we had to pull it on our trucks. I had to work on a turret this afternoon. Just adjust the equilibrators. I also gave my rifle a good cleaning. Then I changed a shock on Robert Brown's (St.L, MO) jeep.



Then I was able to set around a while before chow. After chow I went out and fueled up the tracks. Billings went with me because he will be driving the fuel truck while I am gone.



I will go into Dragon Mountain tomorrow with Sgt Oxendine and Brousseau. Note: Dragon Mountain was renamed Camp Enari.

No date on letter post marked 26 June: Well right now it is 3:45 AM Saturday night. I am at Jackson Hole. Two men have gone in to Dragon Mountain so I am pulling radio watch to take one's place. Woodcock is still here he is pulling watch for the other fellow. We just have to pull one hour and eight minutes. I haven't done much today. I got up at seven thirty. After I had dressed and cleaned up I laid back down and slept till almost twelve o'clock. I like to have not made chow. After chow I helped sand bag in a Jeep. That didn't take to long since they already had forty millimeter ammo cans full of dirt. All we had to do was stack the cans around the Jeep. Then I helped load twenty eight cans of ammo on a two and a half ton and take it around to two track positions. There are at least two or three tracks firing every night up here. They just fire H&I around the perimeter. My turn at radio watch is just about over. Duc Co (I have been spelling it Duco.) got mortared last night and night before. I have found out it is 35 miles west of Pleiku (at the Cambodian border). That should make Jackson Hole (also called Tulsa) about 25 miles west.

Friday July 28 67: We got back from Jackson Hole today. Yesterday we didn't get to Jackson Hole until after chow. The cooks fed us anyway. We got three steaks, Kool -Aid and a piece of bread. It was mighty good eating. We worked in a steady down pour of rain while putting a final drive assembly in a track. The drive assembly is 628 pounds of metal. It took a little huffing to get it in. We were slipping and sliding in the mud that didn't help matters much. When we got up this morning it was still raining. We left Jackson Hole about two o'clock. I rode in the back of the truck and I slept all the way back to LZ Oasis. Brousseau and Lanier were in the back with me they were also cutting some Z's.

Saturday July 29 67: Well didn't get any mail today. We went in to Dragon Mountain, Roy Lanier and I took Barkly and Brousseau in. We got there a little before chow. By the time we took a 40mm barrel and final drive off of the trailer it was time for chow. One of the men had a little parrot. We played with it before going to chow.



After lunch we played with the parrot some more. Then I went to the motor pool helped Barkly and Billings fix two flats. Then I went to the orderly room. Captain Yeanny wanted to know if we had some parts for the guns on our truck. We had one of them. Lanier and I went to the motor pool and picked up fifteen gallons of battery acid and four road wheels. We fixed a flat on the maintenance truck. Claypool came in from R&R. He rode back with us. Said he had a real good time.

Saturday 5 Aug 67: We got back from Jackson Hole today. Thursday we TI 'd some more track's and worked on a few. The night before we were playing gin rummy and again the artillery started shooting flares around the perimeter in front of the bunker. The place was really lit up. So we went outside and watched the fireworks. When we got tired of that we went back into the bunker got all our gear handy so we could grab it if we had to and went back to playing rummy.



We got up yesterday morning with the intention of catching the afternoon convoy back to here (Oasis). We stayed at the convoy point from two thirty till five o'clock. We finally got word the convoy couldn't get out because Charlie blew a bridge. As it turned out they didn't blow it up, the bridge just fell in.

When we got back to the C.P. (at Jackson Hole). We got word that one of our tracks here (Oasis) had ran over a mine. So Sgt. Oxendine caught a chopper out of Jackson Hole in to the Oasis. Lanier and I spent last night at Jackson Hole. The track that Claypool drives is the one that hit the mine. We tried to find out if any one was hurt but couldn't.

During the night Sgt. Oxendine called Lanier on the radio and told us to catch the first convoy out today and bring every road wheel, track shoe and road wheel nut we could find and bring back with us. So we got the impression that it had been a big mine. *(Note : Me or someone else probably talked to Sgt. Oxendine while Lanier listened . You put a radio mike in Lanier's hand he would freeze up couldn't talk. A lot of times someone would act as a go between him and whoever he was talking to. Lanier was from Valdosta Georgia found out he passed away a few years back.)*



This morning we loaded everything on the truck. Happeney, a mechanic at Jackson Hole, was going into Dragon Mountain so he came in with us. We couldn't find out if a convoy was leaving this morning or not. So we went to the convoy point just to see. A convoy was forming up so we got in it. We left Jackson Hole at nine thirty. We got a few miles out on the road the convoy came to a stop. The officer in charge had everybody except drivers get out of the vehicles onto the sides of the road and pull security. Our artillery started dropping into the woods off of the road. APC's and M48 Patton tanks were all over the place. Lanier, 'Hap' and I did not know what was going on. We were expecting Charlie to bounce out of the bushes any minute. So once again a round went into chamber and safety off. We were there for a while. Then we moved out again. Everything went OK till we

reached the bridge that fell in. We had to wait again while one truck at a time went across the bridge built to replace it. Once again 'Hap' and I had to get out for security. Finally we got to the Oasis at one thirty. Then we unloaded our rifles. That shit is hard on the nerves.



Since it has rained pretty steady for three days the roads were muddy. We ate C rations for lunch. Then we went to work on the blown track. Claypool skinned his leg when the mine went off. Brooks his squad leader was driving at the time. Claypool was riding on top of the track above where the mine hit. The blast threw him off he hurt his leg when he hit the ground. The medic said he could get a purple heart. He was hurt but he was out working like crazy to get the track fixed. The mine blew eight track sections out bent four road wheels and busted a shock.



Change two more road wheels and get one more piece for the track it will be ready to go again. We worked in a steady down pour of rain most of the time to get it fixed.

This is the end of part #1 of Phil's wonderful diary of his tour of duty as a field mechanic in 1967. I will be putting out another newsletter shortly with the rest of his story. I had to delay this newsletter until the reunion matters were set for Norfolk 2021. The rosters, membership cards and 2021 Election Ballots are also being finalized and will be out ASAP. We hope that by November the reunion can go on as planned. So many people have worked so hard to plan for it and so many families want to attend.

Be safe; get vaccinated if you have not already done so. Celebrating 50 years since the ADA in Vietnam inactivated. Brothers then...brothers forever! E Pluribus Unum.

National Dusters, Quads &
Searchlights Association
PO BOX 596
Hastings on Hudson, NY 10706

<= New Address

Forward Service Requested



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

38th Annual Reunion Rescheduled For Norfolk VA Nov 9-14, 2021

<http://www.ndqsa.com>

Issue 2 August 2021

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. (2021 or beyond)

However, if you see the number 0000 or 2020 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.

Current 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 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.

MISSION STATEMENT

The National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights Association™ (NDQSA™) is the original, official representative for ADA Veterans who served in Viet Nam. NDQSA is the **only** organization of Viet Nam 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 Viet Nam, 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 Viet Nam 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 Viet Nam 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.