

# **NATIONAL DUSTERS, QUADS & SEARCHLIGHTS ASSOCIATION, Inc.**

## **NEWSLETTER # 1 – JANUARY 2024**

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### **President's Message – David McCray**



Greetings Everyone!

I will make this a short message since Joe has a lot to put in the newsletter. Our reunion will be in Washington DC, November 7-11, 2024. Joe and Bruce have details in the newsletter but this shift away from the hot summer months will be welcome. The decision to offer NDQSA lifetime membership has been a success, and we now have 29 members for life. The Hawaii trip was a success and fun for all. Joe has a picture of the group for the newsletter.

The board of directors has approved, and I secured, an attorney to set up a Trust for the perpetual care of our Fort Sill Memorial and other NDQSA heritage assets under the stewardship of the Air Defense Artillery Association. We will control the Trust until we dissolve and then the ADAA will take over as Trustee. Our treasurer can now start accepting donations for the Trust. Our hope is to eventually fund the trust with \$50,000 through membership donations and other fund raising.

The brick project near the Fort Sill ADA Learning Center is back on track and they will be installed in March, weather permitting. Jackie Carver has graciously agreed to supervise the project since the ADAA has not been able to secure a contractor. Many of you may know Jackie was a General Contractor for a large southwester construction company. Some of the work he did was install suites in the Auburn University Stadium.

I really want to encourage you to take a look at the new NDQSA.COM website. The Committee has done a fantastic job with more to come. Your board of directors continue to work and plan for our membership and legacy. I am proud to say thank you to them for all they have accomplished in the last couple of years. Until next time, I wish all of you good health and spirits. I hope everyone had a great Christmas and New Year holiday!

God Bless You All,  
Dave

### **NEW NDQSA WEBSITE**

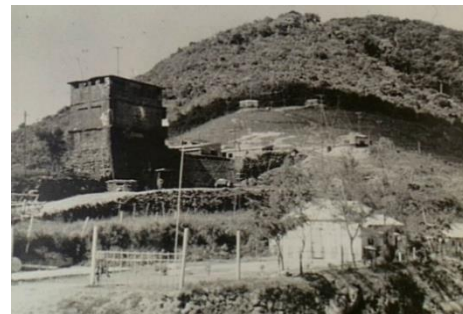
Our website committee consists of Bob Cuce, Bob Lauver, Allan Penwell, Rick Liebendorfer, and Richard Burmood. Their dedication to getting our website revised, updated, and modernized has produced a fantastic new site. This website is dedicated to the men who served with Dusters, Quad 50s, Searchlights, Vulcans, and HAWKS in Vietnam. It is managed by the National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights Association, Inc. which endeavors to share their stories and provide meaningful venues for bonding together in honor of our shared service. Please check out our new website: [WWW.NDQSA.com](http://WWW.NDQSA.com)

**Together Then – Together Again.**

# Living on the Hai Van Mountain Pass 1970-1971

By Bill Baker

This is a compilation of different events that occurred during my Duster days with “B” Battery 1st/44<sup>th</sup> on Hai Van Pass Viet Nam. The Hai Van Pass is the highest mountain pass between Da Nang and Hue City. Hai Van consisted of a village and road stop base camp at the top of the pass. It was an ancient base – Main bunker, was not used to my knowledge in my time, but it was interesting – built by the French during their time. Hai Van combat base was comprised of about 20 RVN Marine’s; a few Army Radio relay station soldiers and our two Dusters, which were rotated in and out of that base. Things were changing quickly as “B” Battery Dusters moved out of our Dong Ha home into the 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine base at Da Nang (China Beach). They placed two Dusters on top of Hai Van, one called “Tin Rabbit” and one called “Puzzle People.”



We had to drive up the very steep road from Da Nang to the top of Hai Van Pass where our new Duster position was located. We had a new driver who was leery of turning up into this very narrow road to lead to our new gun position. So, with a not so smart order I said I’ll drive our Duster up the road. The arrival and travel time was very slow and uneventful other than it was a tight squeeze. Our very small hilltop position had a great view of both sides of the road and down valley. That time of year was monsoon in the making – the village at the top of the hill was tiny, but had a great “Black Market” where you could buy almost anything, if you know what I mean? We lived in hooch’s made of sandbags and PSP metal roofs. The gun emplacements had ammo bunkers next to each gun.

**Monsoon, Typhoon** – passed directly over our position – the eye being a very eerie place to me, from 135 or so mile an hour winds, dark and dark, then some sun, then dead calm, very humid! Then back to the 135 mile an hour winds with rain that was blowing sideways.

**Point of Great Entertainment** – during the storm that night we were on guard duty and crews fired flares into the wind of the storm at about parallel to the top of the mountain – whooosshhh! Then shoot a popup. The parachute of the flare got caught in 135 miles an hour wind and went flying only a few feet over the tops of our head. The crews would scream, Let’s do it again.” So went the night. Pretty fun!

Other entertainment was “Shorty” our medic had with him an astrological telescope. We would take turns looking at the moon and other planets. It was so dark at night you could see millions of stars and constant shooting stars.

One day a Korean DC-3 twin engine airplane from Korea to Da Nang crashed on the other side of the valley. It landed in the treetops of the jungle. The aircraft was suspended hanging in the trees. The passengers and crew climbed down – scared they’d be killed by ARVN or NVA.

**Gooks on the plane – Fire Mission** – “Shorty” our Duster crew member daily monitored the plane crash site with his telescope. One day he started yelling “Oh man- Oh man” there are enemy troops climbing up into the plane. They were going to let us shoot at the plane!!! Hell yeah!

I’m not a trained Duster Crew member, my MOS being O5C Radio-Radio Teletype and only had a quick training on a Duster and just a little shooting, they didn’t need an RTO guy, so they sent me to “B” Battery, and I asked to go onto the tracks. I was on the Duster called Tin Rabbit in a day or two at FSB Barbara. Got to fire some there – that was my OJT. Five days later the gunner goes home and I’m the new “Gunner.”

**Yes.... we were going to fire on that Korean airplane, and I was the gunner.** It was the largest, longest fire mission of my entire year. Each track fired about 1000 rounds. A guy we called “Slim” was the gunner on other Duster called “Puzzle People.” I say it was my round, he says it was his... hit the plane at the point where the wing joins the fuselage of the plane, there must have been some fuel left, the wing came off, the plane started sliding down the mountain from the trees. With that many rounds fired – good thing it wasn’t flying! What was learned later was the NVA was scrapping the plane – taking fuel and parts – they found they had a complete

hospital buried in the side of the mountain – surgical suites – hospital rooms – crew quarters so it was quite a developed base in the side of the mountain.

Not too many weeks after that – there was a sizeable ambush of a convoy on the north side of the mountain. Our guns had a good view of the road, and the convoy was a long distance away. We started firing over the trucks and crews being ambushed. Quite a mission – Thank God no errors on our part – pretty good fire as I remember it – no friendly fire hits of our guys – I'll bet it scared the piss out of them as our 40mm rounds flew overheads and hitting the hill and trees behind them.

Then there was the incident of coming back from DaNang base whatever reason we went... I was in the passenger seat, we had a radio crew guy from the mountain relay station in the back, the truck had a canvas topper on it, **it was our ¾ ton truck.** We got about ½ way up the final trail up from the QL-1 to the mountain gun position FSB at top – the truck shuddered – lost power – the driver lost control as the truck started to go backwards – I yelled to the guy in back to JUMP! OUT! Which he did, as did the driver after losing control – the truck was going over the massive drop, passenger side tail end first. I pushed my door open and got tangled in the wire – the wire entangled the door – it pulled me from the truck – so as I bailed out rolling head over heel – I landed on my feet for one second and pushed myself with a jump like push getting out of the way of the truck that was behind me rolling. It passed behind me as I was rolling down the side of the hill in elephant grass. There was concertina wire – grass – and “very steep terrain.” When I got myself stopped – I yelled “The guy from the back made it out.” The pegs of the truck tarp had slipped just past his head as it rolled over him, the truck on top of him for a brief second in its rolling down the side of the mountain. It punched a hole in his ear lobe but did not cut it off. That close to very bad or dead. No other injury from this incident. We climbed back up to the road – to find signs in the wire – we were in a mine field of years gone by. The grass being tall probably stopped one from exploding. We got to the top. The truck had continued rolling down the mountain side, two levels of the switch back road that was the top of the mountain road. No one was injured as this truck came flying down the mountain. They figured the clutch had exploded with loss of power – it was a very steep road. Our guardian angels on overtime.

**Surfing near the river where the bridge crossed on the south side of the pass.** So, there was a couple of times I'd ask my sergeant for time off – yep – time off the mountain – I'd put on my war gear – grenades – bandolier of M-16 Clips - a band of 40mm HE rounds for me blooper M79 gun I carried strapped on my shoulder – flak jacket – helmet; I'm ready for road travel. Getting a ride on the QL-1 was not a problem, always someone going one direction or the other. Dressed for ambush participation a good idea. I would go south to the point where the bridge crossed the river at the bottom of the pass. I would ask to get off them. Then I'd walk east to the coast, there was a small beach, they said there was a leper colony that some Germans ran, I never saw it, just rumor I suppose. My walks were uneventful, a guy in a round basket boat fishing with a throw net – looking at me – what's my intent – am I crazy? What are you doing, no words exchanged – just a smile and a wave - So arriving at the beach – there was a small break in the ocean. I'd take off my gear, my clothes and go in the ocean for a swim, some body surfing. One of the things I liked to do. After some time enjoying the surf – I'd gear up again – walk back to the QL-1 and hitch back up to the top, get off the truck and walk the trail up to the base... end of a good day.



**The Chicken** – One day I decided enough of these “C-Rats.” I'm going to go find some real food. I again got my gear and headed down the mountain – I'd see the ARVN carrying chickens – I decided to get one and take it back to the base... I forget my gun sergeant's name – an older Black guy – appeared too old to be in country maybe his last tour of a career. So, I showed up ‘Sergeant’ I have a chicken – let's eat it! So, I don't know much about a lot of things such as chickens – I'd brought back a ‘rooster.’ I'm sure the Vietnamese that sold it to me may still be laughing at the stupid American buying their old rooster. Desperation I suppose. I don't remember what happen to my chicken... the Sergeant had a good laugh and smile – dumb ass – I don't however remember what the fate of that chicken was – I don't remember cooking it or eating it or seeing it running around – so ‘poof’ I don't know.



From Hai Van we moved back to Da Nang – the Tin rabbit needed lots of work we were parked awhile as we changed the engine pack, etc. I wasn't fond of the rear – I asked to go back out and they sent me to Hill 52 Que Son Valley a Marine base with two dusters... The rear in Da Nang – a drug haven – crazy – I just felt more at ease out on a base out someplace. My home in the states was a tough place, lots of drugs as well – I didn't come 10000 miles for more of the same – the Sergeant asked me why I wanted to go back out – that's what I told him – I was on a neat loch helicopter in a day, riding right front seat – tree top level skirting the river. The base Hill 52 was home of B-Co.1<sup>st</sup> Marine recon – an interesting location to spend some time.... Another story.



During the 'American War', the Hai Van Pass was known as the “Street Without Joy.” Back then, the pass connected the two war-scarred cities of Hue and Danang, 66 miles via the dangerous and hotly contested NVA Highway 1. The road was so steep in areas the Dusters could only do 5mph and going **down the steep grades the Drivers hoped the breaks would hold.**

## **The “New” Hai Van Pass Tunnel**

Any ADA crew that ever traveled over the Hai Van Pass connecting Hue City to DaNang Remembers that long winding road up and down and finally over the top with that fantastic scenic view. Hai Van Tunnels in central Vietnam connects Thua Thien-Hue Province with central hub Da Nang. The tunnels of 6.2 kilometers (3.85 miles) are the longest road tunnel in Southeast Asia and help reduce traffic pressure.



## **Future Trust for Perpetual Care of our Memorial and Heritage**

**We continue to work on preserving our heritage.**

Keeping our membership updated about the future of our NDQSA Memorial and heritage preservation at Fort Sill, OK is critical. In the future we will be setting up a trust fund to preserve these items and maintain them long after we are gone. To meet legal requirements the trust fund must be set up in Oklahoma and must be a perpetual care type trust. Sadly, we will not last forever, but we all want our legacy to be preserved. Once the trust fund is set up, we will advise our members where and how they can make personal contributions to help ensure our legacy is preserved.

## TAPS

### MEMBERS WHO HAVE PASSED

Name	Unit	Yrs	Date	Loc
Randy Sebert	5/2-H	67-68	28-Dec-2021	IN
Bernard Baskerville	D-71 Quads	67-68	17-Oct-2022	NC
<a href="https://www.buiesfuneralhome.com/obituary/Bernard-Baskerville">https://www.buiesfuneralhome.com/obituary/Bernard-Baskerville</a>				
Robert Rich Jr	G-65 Quads	1971	3-Aug-2016	WI
Ronald Cook	G-29 SLT	68-70	29-Oct-2021	NC
Donald Bartheidel	5/2-D	69-70	13-Apr-2019	MN
Bruce Kloehn	D-71 Quads	69-70	1-Apr-2017	WI
Edward Jamieson	6/56-D Hawk	67-68	4-Apr-2017	MI
Roger Gamblin	E-41 Quads	71-72	unk-date	ME
Alan Srp	5/2-C	67-68	29-Apr-2023	MN
Eric Drinkhouse	I-29 SLT	67-69	8-Jun-2023	FL
<a href="https://www.glickfamilyfuneralhome.com/obituary/Eric-Drinkhouse">https://www.glickfamilyfuneralhome.com/obituary/Eric-Drinkhouse</a>				
Harry Townsend	B-29 SLT	66-69	28-Apr-2020	DE
<a href="https://www.capegazette.com/article/harry-e-townsend-jr-proud-veteran/201512">https://www.capegazette.com/article/harry-e-townsend-jr-proud-veteran/201512</a>				
James Gandy	1/44-C	70-71	2-Oct-2023	CA
Earl Todd	G-65 Quads	70-71	11-Nov-2023	NC
Reagh Neily Jr.	1/44-C	66-67	5 Dec 2023	FL



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

## NDQSA Product Sales

Members interested in purchasing shirts, hats, coins, mugs, etc. can buy them directly from the AIR DEFENSE ARTILLERY ASSOCIATION (ADAA) STORE. Here is the link to their online "Webstore" where you can find two pages of NDQSA specific products and much more. Some quantities and sizes may be limited in the inventory.

<https://www.firsttofire.net/products>

Make sure to take advantage of your ADAA lifetime membership discount. They have a roster and can look up your name. They are good people and want to help. Please contact the ADAA gift shop directly rather than NDQSA.

Telephone: 580-919-2340 or 580-919-2174.

Email: [sales@firsttofire.net](mailto:sales@firsttofire.net).

USPS Mail: PO Box 33727, Fort Sill, OK 73503

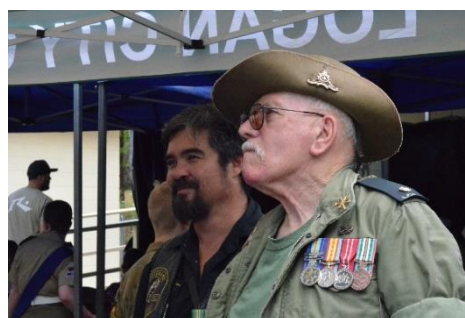


# The Story from “Down Under”

By Keith Hume

I received my notice to do National Service whilst living in Sydney, Australia, in 1968, at 19 years of age. I had my license to drive, and I was working for a General Motors subsidiary selling Holden branded cars, parts, and accessories. I thought to myself at the time that a change wouldn't hurt for two years, and instead of playing soldiers as a kid, I might enjoy it.

Didn't even think about the war in Asia. Wasn't a part of my life, but basic training changed all that. I liked big things, like trucks and big guns, although knowing what I do now, I could have made a wiser choice than the Royal Australian Artillery. I did not realize that eventually all those things that go bang or boom have an after effect. At the time, the Artillery still had the old 25 pounders from WW2 but were changing over to M2A2 105's from the USA. Big surprise when I was posted to 103 Medium Regiment, as they had really “BIG Guns”!



Keith Hume – Present Day



The British 5.5-inch field gun was a monster at approximately 6.5 tons and fired a bomb that weighed 90 lbs. Heavy and not suited to use in South Vietnam but got us all very fit. Looked like I had missed the war, as I only had another seven or so months to serve. Yeah/Nah!

Went in to pick up my truck one morning in the desert, near the rocket testing range at Woomera. My sergeant told me to go find Gunner Kyle, and when we came back to the office he said, "go get your gear together, it's off to Vietnam for you two". Well, that can't be right I remember saying, "I've only got six months to serve!". His comeback was fairly cruel but true. "Then keep your bloody head down mate!"

Got to SVN for four months as a reinforcement, attached to an artillery unit, 101 Field battery, First Field Regiment RAA at Nui Dat, north-east of Saigon.

After the first night with the Foxtrot team, I was wondering who the noisy bastards were about 100mtrs to our south? Happened to be a battery of 155mm M109's from 2nd Artillery, US Army. Every time they fired a mission the sheet on my bed floated like a ghost for a second or two, before falling back on my head, such was the shock wave. We lost beer glasses, shaving mirrors, and numerous items of value.

Eventually the Dusters arrived in February to our amusement, as we had never seen the M42 before now in our TAOR. The unit was C231 and C232 of 5AW22FFV.

The 8th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment was conducting Operation Hammersley at the time, with elements of 1st Field Regt. Engineers, in the Long Hai mountains, south of Dat Do. I was assigned to the Dusters as an ammo truck driver for a few weeks, and we would move to where we were needed at short notice, moving between Nui Dat, Dat Do, FSB Horseshoe, and down to the beach at Phuoc Hai.

This is where I gained the skill of finding all sorts of good stuff, including money for the rest of my life, as my eyes were quick to pick up anything that could be an AP mine!





It was a scary time, but the American soldiers were "Mates," so we all looked after each other. That's what "Mates" do. Duster Mates PFC Jennings and PFC Robertson were both on the Duster called "Have Guns Will Travel and are only two names I can still remember. I included their Duster photos - So "G' Day"!

Regards to you all,

Gunner Keith Hulme  
101 Field Battery, 1st Field Regiment  
Royal Australian Artillery, 1st Task Force SVN 1970

## **Dusters in Vietnam**

**By Daniel M. Gutierrez, Major, USA (Ret.)**

The fog of time continues to obscure, erode and censure the events of the Vietnam War. But for those of us who were there, the war remains crystalized in time and ever present in our minds. Many features and particulars of the conflict are already long forgotten only to be briefly resurrected by occasional gatherings of guys like me.

One example of this is the story of the three "Duster" Battalions which served in "the Nam" between 1966 and 1971. I would venture to say that many veterans of the war have no memory of the Dusters or what they were. It is rare indeed, to find a Vietnam vet who served in one of these three battalions. I was one so I decided to shed a little light into the fog of time.

The M42 Duster was a Korean War era weapon system which had become obsolete by the time of Vietnam. It became an Air Defense Artillery weapon system designed to shoot down propeller driven aircraft. The jet aircraft rendered it inadequate. By the time of Vietnam War, the only Duster units were in the National Guard of various states. However, as the war intensified and U.S. involvement broadened it became clear the conflict would be one of helicopter lifted airmobile units operating out of base camps, fire bases and landing zones. These fire bases and landing zones (LZ's) required security and protection, and someone thought of the Dusters. Consequently, three battalions were formed from NG units and married up with hastily trained Air Defense Artillery personnel (I received one day of familiarity training).

The M42 (and later the M42A1) featured a pair of 40mm Automatic Bofors (Swedish make of WW II Navy fame) cannons mounted on refurbished Walker Bulldog M41 medium tank chassis with an open turret. It was soon realized that although its air defense role was past, the Dusters could be employed with great effect as a ground support weapon. Firing 240 high explosive rounds per minute with great accuracy made the Dusters lethal weapons against enemy infantry formations and ideal for perimeter defense of fire bases and LZ's. The Dusters were also useful for convoy protection and guarding bridges and crossroads.

The main drawback of the Dusters was that it could not fire with any degree of effectiveness while on the move. This drawback did not deter infantry and armor units from using the Dusters in offensive operations such as "Search and Destroy" missions. Its firepower and mobility were too much of a temptation for maneuver commanders to ignore. If the Dusters were available, maneuver commanders would use them. At times unit commanders forgot the main drawback of the Duster - it could not shoot with any accuracy while on the move and had to either go down to a slow crawl or completely stopped. When stopped and still shooting the drivers had to keep the engine running, place the Duster in park and open the large front door to be able to remove the 116-pound cans of 40mm ammo stored in the hull of the Duster. The driver would crawl in and out of the Duster dragging the heavy ammo cans. Once outside he would spin the twist locks off the cans and run around the Duster throwing the clips of ammo up to the loaders called Cannoneers. All this was being done as the enemy was shooting at them.

At one time, my section was attached to a mechanized infantry battalion involved in sweeping an area and engaging enemy units. The battalion commander informed me that I would be deployed online with four tanks

and assorted APCs in the advance. I reminded the CO that my Dusters could not open fire while on the move effectively. Nonetheless, off we went and as we deployed online, all units were ordered to advance and open fire on the wooded line ahead. I radioed the commander that my Dusters could not fire “on the move.” He insisted and what resulted was my Dusters shooting up, down and all around chaotically. I can report that my section accounted for the death of one water buffalo (collateral damage) and the decapitation of several coconut trees.

The first unit of Dusters deployed to Vietnam was the 1st Battalion, 44th Air Defense Artillery (Automatic Weapons – Self Propelled). This outfit arrived in Vietnam in 1966 and was assigned to 1st (“Eye”) Corps and attached to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Marines. The 5th Battalion, 2nd ADA (AW -SP) came next assigned in the south as part of III Corps closely followed by the 4th Battalion, 60th ADA (AW - SP) assigned to II Corps in the Central Highlands. All Duster battalions were augmented by truck mounted Quad 50 Machine Guns and Jeep Mounted Searchlights that were of particular use in perimeter defense. All Duster 40-millimeter rounds and armor piercing rounds were excess Navy ammo, and all were tracer rounds. At night, when fired on fully automatic with both cannons firing, the visual result was a long streak of fire. The Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army dubbed them “Fire Dragons.”

The Dusters played an important part in Vietnam. When the “Tet” Offensive began, Dusters and Quads from Dong Ha went to support the Hue City battle, at the Marine Corps request. The company advanced into a withering cascade of fire as it reached Hue City. The Dusters helped salvage it and played a major role in the savage street fighting that followed. *On February 6, 1968, famous Marine Walter Kaczmarek from Hotel Company - 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division along with his team of Frank Thomas, Bryan Shepard, Alan McDonald, a New Marine - PFC Hawk, and Lt. Leo, took down the enemy NVA Flag that was flying over the Hue City and raised the American Flag tells a story when they first saw a Duster. Walter: We are all pinned down behind a building and cannot advance forward. We see this tank-like weapon coming down the street towards us and at first think it's an NVA tank. Then we see the American Star on the front plate and knew it was one of ours, but what is it? This tank stops right in front of us and this soldier up in the open turret asks how they can help. My Lt. asked him if he's the Lt. in charge and with a quick response he yelled “Sorry Sir” we have no Lieutenant and I'm this Dusters Squad Leader and I'm in charge. My Lt. asked what is it and can it do? He replied, “My Dusters 40mm rounds can destroy anything you want in minutes, give me a target.” We had never seen or heard of a Duster and when it started shooting, we all dove for cover. In less than a minute the building we had been trying to take to take for hours was gone. We all looked at each other in amazement and wondered why we didn't have dozens of these Dusters.*

Duster units attached to the 1st Cavalry Division participated in Operations Greeley and Pershing in 1967, and in the defense and relief of Khe Sanh in 1968. In the Mekong Delta, the M42's of the 5th of the 2nd (“Nickel – Deuce”) were sometimes placed on landing craft to assist in river crossing operations.

In Vietnam, the “Dusters” and Quads were there, to stand up and be counted.

**Brothers, I am so sorry. All my photos and Vietnam treasures were with an uncle and aunt on a dairy farm in upstate New York. When they died, all that stuff was lost.**

## **Membership Dues**

It's that time of year to pay your membership dues. Our NDQSA bylaws state that dues should be hopefully paid at the beginning of the year and run from January 1st to December 31st. Yearly dues have remained at \$25 even though the cost of mailing newsletters and other membership benefits have continued to climb. The payment of your yearly dues or our new “**Lifetime Membership Dues**” is greatly appreciated. Please fill out the Dues and Roster Update form at the end of this newsletter.



## Annual Veterans Day Observance at the Wall 2023



*Photo: L-R Barry Willever, Richard Burmood, Ray Villanueva, Bruce Geiger, Rick Liebendorfer together at the Wall after the wreath laying ceremony with the NDQSA wreath.*

Members of NDQSA attended the Annual Veterans Day Observance at the Wall, Washington D.C., November 11, 2023, and participated in the wreath laying ceremony. This year's theme was the Thirtieth Anniversary Commemoration of the Vietnam Women's Memorial. Diane Carlson Evans, Founder & President Emeritus of the Vietnam Women's Memorial Foundation was the keynote speaker. Diane was a former Captain in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps who served in Vietnam in 1968 and

1969. Working in surgical and burn units gave her firsthand knowledge of the casualties of the war and the sacrifices of the women who volunteered to support their fighting brothers in the combat zone. It took her 10 years of struggle to convince the government, the press, and the public that a memorial was a necessary part of healing for female war veterans.

*Photo: Diane Carlson Evans welcoming all the Vietnam Veterans home during her Vietnam Woman's Memorial tribute speech.*



Diane said in her tribute that, "While many people assume the statue depicts nurses, it's a memorial to honor all women who served." The memorial was dedicated in 1993 and portrays three women caring for a fallen soldier. "There is no rank on the figures. There is no insignia identifying any of them," Evans said. An estimated 10,000 women served in Vietnam and the names of eight women (all nurses) who died there are included in the list of over 58,000 names on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. While most of the women who risked their lives to serve their country in Vietnam were nurses, many were also Red Cross volunteers, air traffic controllers, communication specialists, and intelligence officers.

## Candidates Running for NDQSA Officers

The following members in good standing have submitted their names for NDQSA Officer Elections to be finalized at our Washington, DC 2024 Reunion. Those elected are for a two-year term 2024 – 2026.

A separate election ballot will be mailed to all active dues paying members of NDQSA in good standing. The ballots will also allow for write-in votes of any qualified member to be elected to an office. Last minute nominations may also be made during the annual membership business meeting at the 2024 NDQSA reunion in Washington, DC. Votes will be tallied at the meeting and winners will be announced.

### Candidate for President

Joseph Belardo C/1/44 1967-68



Currently I am serving as your 1st Vice-President and serve on the publications and heritage committees. Have been a dedicated board member for 40 years and feel that I am an extremely proactive person when it comes to the betterment, wellbeing and good of NDQSA. I have strived for years to make NDQSA the nation's number one veteran's organization. I am the 2018 recipient of the National Jefferson Award, one of America's most prestigious awards for Lifetime Volunteer Service. I served in C/1/44 -1967-68. Over the years I have helped process many VA veteran claims for our members. I have devoted my life to helping veterans and their families. I am the NJ State Commander of the Purple Hearts, member of the VFW, VVA, American Legion, and DAV. I was the original member and cofounder of the Agent Orange Commission. I have conducted 256 oral PowerPoint photo presentations about the Vietnam War to high schools, colleges, universities, civic and military organizations. I am married to Nancy Painton Belardo and have three children, four grandchildren and just celebrated our 55th wedding anniversary on December 7, 2023. I enjoy

retirement, working with veterans, locally and nationally. I also enjoy family, grandchildren, fishing, and bird watching. In 2024 I will be seeking your vote for president. Hopefully, I will get your vote and continue serving NDQSA.

### Candidate for 1st Vice-President

Rick Liebendorfer C/1/44 1969-1970

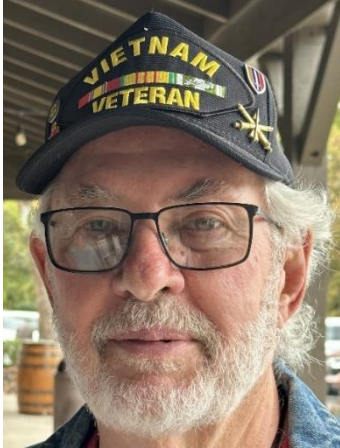


Currently I am serving as your 2nd Vice-President and serve on the Website, Steering and Heritage Committees. I joined C 1/44 in July 1969 after 16F AIT at Ft. Bliss. Spent 12 months along Hwy 9, then extended 6 months and went with the Battery when we were pulled down to Chu Lai to support Americal Div. Left December 30, 1970. The battery was based at Vinh Dai (Seabee rock crusher site off Route 9 on the DMZ). We operated at all the outposts along Rt.9 doing the normal Duster stuff. Went with Charlie Battery to Chu Lai fall of 1970. Squad leader on C221 until it was destroyed in October, killing SSGT Upshaw, the last Comanche KIA. After leaving Vietnam, the Army sent me to Germany. I got out a week before Christmas 1971. Married my best friend 6 months later. She still puts up with me today as of now. After a career in the ceramic tile industry in Colorado, did another stint as a corrections officer with the State of Missouri, Retiring 2018. Linda and I live in rural northern Missouri. Looking forward to my continued service to NDQSA.



## Candidate for 2nd Vice-President

Barry Willever G-Battery-65th Artillery 1968-69



I'm running for 2nd Vice President and have been an active member of NDQSA for many years. I was drafted in 1968 and went to Ft. Dix and Ft. Bliss. November of 68 I went to Vietnam and was assigned to G-Btry. 65th Arty, 1st 44 Arty. I served all over the DMZ and other I Corps areas. I was the gunner and squad leader on the famous Quad called "The Widow Maker." I'm a Life Member of Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 415 in PA and served as President for 20 years. I also served as 2nd VP on the VVA, PA State Council. I am also on the United Fellowship Lutheran Church Council. I've been a member of the American Legion for 31 years. My wife Judy and I have been married for 50 years and have one daughter and three grandsons. The oldest is going for his Eagle Scout Award. I have dedicated my life to helping all veterans and will be a positive addition to our association's Board of Directors. Thank you for your votes.

## Candidate for Secretary

Richard Burmood C/1/44 1970 SGT 16F40



Currently serving as your Secretary, I would appreciate your vote so that I can continue serving you and NDQSA in that capacity. After Vietnam I returned to Fort Bliss and found that the Army suited me and my family. Eventually I graduated from OCS and served for over 29 years, retiring as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1999. Many of the tasks ahead for NDQSA involve preserving our heritage and honoring the men who served in the ADA units in Vietnam. Since my last election I have taken on more board responsibility. I now maintain the membership roster and am involved in building our new NDQSA.COM website. The heritage pages about Sergeant Mitchell W. Stout are a result of my hours of research, preparing archive documents, and displaying the records on the website. I also directly support the election committee by preparing and mailing the ballot packets and assisting the publications committee in producing our newsletters. Thank you for your vote.

## Candidate for Treasurer

Allan Penwell C/5/2 1967-68, 1LT



I have been treasurer of NDQSA since 2009 and provide professional accounting and financial guidance to the board. My weekly duties include picking up our mail, making accounting and bank entries, and communicating with other board officers as needed. In addition, I have helped to edit our newsletters as well as being involved in other projects. My brief Army career included an ROTC commission, two years of active duty, and four years in the reserves. I was a platoon leader and XO with C/5/2 in 1967-68 in the Mekong Delta. Following active duty, I completed an MBA and was a commercial banker for 43 years. My corporate background provides a positive perspective to the board. I am deeply committed to our organization and feel personal responsibility in making it special for our members and heritage. I want to continue serving NDQSA for another term.



## Some Memories from the Hawaii Trip September 2023



Major General Brian Gibson and the 94th Army Air and Missile Defense Command, Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam Hawaii hosted visiting members of NDQSA on 20 September 2023. It was an opportunity for veterans and young Air Defenders to develop leaders, share experiences, and foster camaraderie within the Air Defense Artillery community. Jackie Carver, Luke Clark and David McCray present the General with the new 4<sup>th</sup>/60<sup>th</sup> painting “Fire Dragons of Route 19”



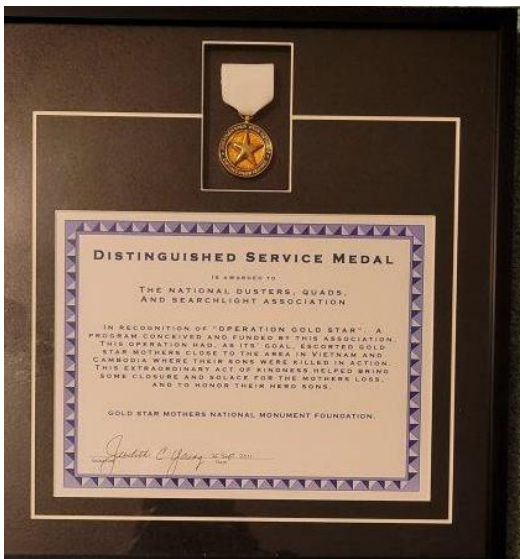


## Certificate of Appreciation from 94<sup>th</sup> Air Defense and Missile Defense Command September 20, 2023

NDQSA was honored with a Certificate of Appreciation for preserving history and fostering camaraderie within the ADA community. The certificate is now part of our memorabilia and will ultimately be transferred to the ADAA at Fort Sill for archival preservation. Presented by Major General Brian W. Wilson, CG 94<sup>th</sup> AAMDC, 20 Sept. 2023 to NDQSA BOD member Luke Clark. The 94<sup>th</sup> AAMDC hosted the Dusters, Quads and Searchlights Veterans group at Joint Base Pearl Harbor Hickman, Hawaii on Sept. 20, 2023. It was an opportunity for veterans and young Air Defenders to develop leaders, share experiences, and foster camaraderie within the Air Defense Artillery Community.



## Distinguished Service Medal from Gold Star Mothers September 25, 2011

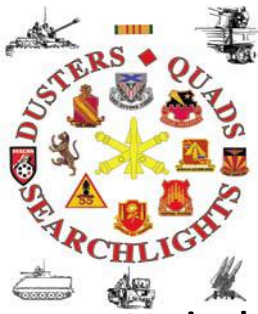


Presented by the Gold Star Mothers National Monument Association to Luke Clark on September 25, 2011.

From the NDQSA Historian's letter to GSM Assn:

Through the years NDQSA members, their wives and friends, escorted 24 Gold Star Mothers to Vietnam during five separate trips from 2000 thru 2011. This program never had the opportunity to take a Gold Star Mother from their list of more than 200 men that perished from NDQSA units. Honorees included Army, Navy and Marine servicemen. OGS Summer 2002: Valerie May, Theresa O. Davis, Irene Tschan and Mary Wheeler, escorted by Ed and Nina Allen, George Nagelschmidt, Jim Smith, Bruce Geiger and John and Sally Huelsenbeck. OGS Fall 2002: Emogene Cupp, Anne Herd, Florence Johnson, and Georgiana Carter Krell, escorted by Bob and Sue Lauver, Greg Dearborn, and Mike Sweeney. OGS May 2004: Dorothy Oxendine, Shirley Jones, Pauline Yeakley, J. Winona Tucker, Bill and Doris Nuhfer and Barbara

Calfee, escorted by Ed and Tina Allen, Clyde and Janet Larsen, and Dale Peters. OGS Fall 2004: Janice Dahlke, Carol Tabor, Virginia O'Neal, Betty Van Dusen, Betty Pullian and Anna Roble with Bill Griffith, escorted by Bruce Geiger, Jim and Sandy Smith and Sam Hopkins. OGS 2011: Georgia Burkes, Dorothy Shafernocker and Frances Turley, escorted by Bob and Sue Lauver, Luke and Lynette Clark, Rose Arnold, and Jerry Ashley.



# 41<sup>st</sup> Annual NDQSA Reunion

## “Operation Welcome Home”.

### Washington, DC

### November 8<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024



NDQSA is pleased to announce our  
41<sup>st</sup> Annual Reunion at the  
Hilton Arlington National Landing Hotel  
2399 Richmond Highway  
Arlington, VA 22202  
(703)418-6800

<https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/dcanahf-hilton-arlington-national-landing/>



**Room Rates: King Bed \$129 + tax;**

**2 Double Beds \$129 + tax**

**Discounted Self Parking \$15/Day**

**Reagan National Airport Free Shuttle to Hotel**

**(571)380-6299**

**NDQSA Group Rate 2 days pre/2 days post above dates  
(11/06/24 -11/14/24) Based on hotel room availability!!!**

**Reservation Cutoff Date: October 25, 2024**

**Phone & Online Reservations Must Mention:**

**‘National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights**

**Association Reunion’**

**Online NDQSA Reservation Link:**

**<https://book.passkey.com/go/NDQSA2024>**

**Hilton Arlington National Landing Reservations:**

**1-800-HILTONS (445-8667) Group Code: 904**

**Problems (703)418-6800 Ask for Group Sales**

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

**Book Your Hotel Reservations ASAP!**

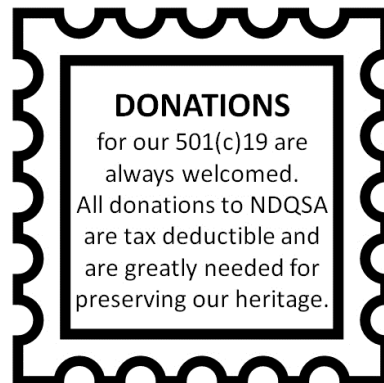
**Submit Registration Form for Reunion Events ASAP!**



**National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights Association, Inc.**

**Dues and Roster Updates**

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Middle Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Spouse or Significant other: \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Vietnam Service Information:  
Dates of 1<sup>st</sup> Tour: (m/yr.): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates of 2<sup>nd</sup> Tour: (m/yr.): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Dates of 3<sup>rd</sup> Tour: (m/yr.): \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_  
Primary MOS: \_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Battery and Unit: \_\_\_\_\_  
Attached to: \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Units if transferred or reassigned: \_\_\_\_\_  
Names of Combat Bases or OP's: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Rank (highest grade while in Vietnam) - Officer: \_\_\_\_\_ NCO: \_\_\_\_\_ EM: \_\_\_\_\_

Valor Awards:  
PH ( ) DSC ( ) SS ( ) BS ( ) BS/V ( ) ACM/V ( ) OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

Dues \$25.00 per Year - Enclosed: 1 Year \_\_\_\_\_ 2 Years \_\_\_\_\_ 3 Years \_\_\_\_\_ 4 Years \_\_\_\_\_ 5 Years \_\_\_\_\_

Lifetime Membership Dues \$250.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Donation to NDQSA: \_\_\_\_\_

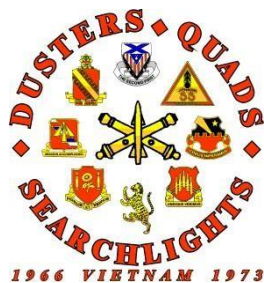
\*\*\*\* Total Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*How would you like to receive your NDQSA Newsletter – Check One: Email \_\_\_\_\_ USPS \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail Check to: NDQSA  
PO Box 149  
Savoy, IL 61874**

NDQSA  
PO Box 149  
Savoy, IL 61874

**Forward Service Requested**



First to Fire...Last to Leave

## January 2024 Newsletter

Executive Directors 2024 Bios  
Reunion Registration  
Member stories

**NDQSA Mission Statement**

The National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights Association™ (NDQSA™) is the original, official representative, and holds the longest, continual and official annual reunion 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 220 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 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 veterans 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.

