

Timothy Lee Tweedell

nickname 'Red' or Tim with friends

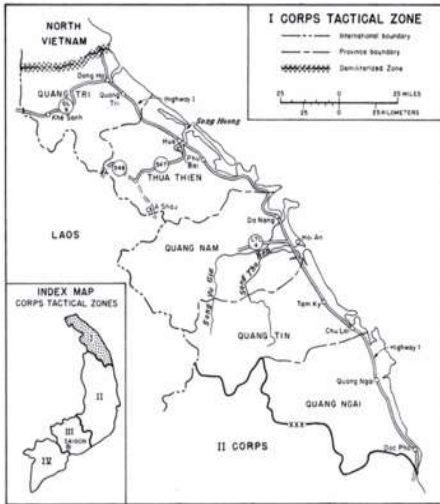
G-Battery, 65th Artillery Quad 50 caliber (MG) 1970-71



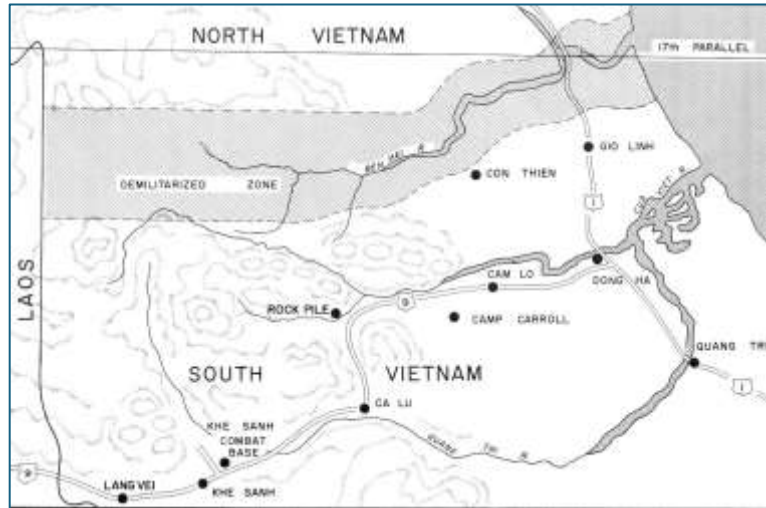
The National Dusters, Quads & Searchlights Association (NDQSA) was very important to Tim Tweedell after he learned about it. He was a regular blogger on the old website and found it therapeutic to chat with others about shared experiences. Tim was also a part of the Noncommissioned Officer Candidate School program and the NDQSA reunions provided an opportunity to meet again with these old friends and talk about the carefree days at Fort Bliss and their wartime experiences. Vietnam was not kind to Tim. It left him with PTSD emotional scars and hidden Agent Orange time bombs that would continue to explode, robbing him of his gentleness, his health, his mobility, and eventually even his sense of reality.

This scrapbook does not benefit from Tim's thoughts because he passed away on May 24, 2024, so it is put together by his friend; Richard Burmood. That friendship started at Fort Bliss in 1970. His wife Terri, my wife Susan, and Steve Belt's wife all had new babies, struggled in El Paso with small apartments, tiny paychecks, and husbands who were never home. Naturally, because only a few of the men were married, these shared

experiences by young families depending on each other resulted in lifetimes of friendship.

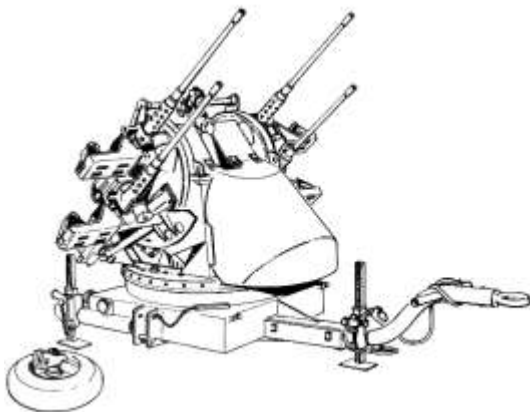


I CTZ map



Camp Carroll location

Tim withdrew from the NCOCS program early so arrived in theater in 1970. He was assigned to G-Battery, 65th Artillery which was attached to 1st Battalion, 44th Artillery (AW)(SP) in the I Corps Tactical Zone (ICTZ) of the First Field Force Vietnam (IFFV) near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) separating North and South Vietnam. Most of Tim's time was spent at Camp J.J. Carroll which was critical to the security of South Vietnam from the North Vietnamese Regular Army.



Quad 50 art



Quad 50 truck mounted from training manual

Golf Battery was a Quad .50 caliber MG unit, so its main weapons system was a quadruple electric driven gun mount with four .50 cal machine guns mounted in the bed of a 2 ½ ton or 5 ton cargo truck. It was a World War II era weapon designed for air defense but was being very successfully employed in a ground support role for fire support base and convoy security in Vietnam because of its high rate of fire.

We have a few pictures taken by Tim and others that help tell the story of what life was like for him at Camp J.J. Carroll in 1971. By the time Tim got there, the 3rd Marine



High terrain that overlooks Camp Carroll

Division was relying on mobile positions instead of fixed strong points for their artillery and Camp Carroll had become an Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) fire support base for their artillery. For Tim and other Americans stationed with ARVNs, this meant less support and often a sense of isolation and imminent danger. They trusted the men they served with, but could you trust the ARVNs at your back? The next year on 30 March 1972 the ARVN commander surrendered Carroll to the North Vietnamese People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN) at the opening phase of their Easter Offensive.

The Quads were always located along the perimeter wire, usually at the point of highest risk from direct attack. Would American rescue come if you needed it? His Battery Headquarters was far away and had little responsibility beyond logistics and personnel support. There were still 1/44th Dusters on Carroll but they were also sited independently as perimeter strong points. Squads lived and fought alone.



Exposed Quad on perimeter security



Duster on Camp Carroll

Like many men who come home from war, where they saw and did things that affected them deeply, Tim did not talk much about the fighting and killing. His pictures tell the story of a routine daily life. Almost a surreal counter point to the millions of .50 cal rounds fired by Quads protecting those depending upon them and the almost daily artillery, rockets, and mortars that were trying to kill them.

The only way to protect yourself against incoming fire was to have good solid bunkers and hope you never received a direct hit. For a Quad crew it was a dance. Avoid the worst by hunkering down in a bunker but run to the guns when it slacked to provide counter battery fire or break up a ground attack.



Improving bunker at entrance gate



Sleeping conditions inside bunkers



Steel chain-link fencing protect against RPGs



Sandbag wall provides extra protection

Tim's squad was responsible for security of one of Camp Carroll's entrance gates. From his pictures it looks like they were working to improve their position with good solid bunkers and steel chain-link fencing. A rocket propelled grenade (RPG) would be stopped

by the fence and even if it detonated, the blast would not penetrate its target. Sandbag walls provide some protection along walkways and added security for the bunkers from shrapnel and explosions inside the base perimeter. The height of these walls was always enough to protect the crew when sleeping, but not so high as to limit visibility. Before you laugh at the crewman sunbathing on top of their sleeping bunker, remember that they always had to have someone watching for threats, and if they somewhere found a folding chair and appropriated it for a better use from some REMF (rear echelon mother@#\$%&!), well so much the better. Note the small tower constructed behind him to get more elevation as protection against enemy movement in defilade (protection or shielding from ground observation.)



The Quad off its truck and placed on an elevated platform

Evidently someone decided to turn it into a fixed site for the quad by improving the structure, lifting the mount off its truck, and emplacing (putting) it on top of an elevated structure. They have used 55-gallon barrels as a base with 40mm ammo cans above, and probably some pierced (or perforated) steel planking (PSP) to provide a floor for the Quad. The barrels and cans would have been filled with sand for stability and blast protection. This higher elevation gives them better coverage over some of the dead

zones down range (Folds or depressions in the ground preventing a target from being engaged from a fixed position.) The disadvantage of Quad ground mount employment is that they can't displace (move) when the base is under attack and they can't keep the enemy guessing by having alternate sites. (Note: Published Vietnam Lessons Learned recommend keeping the Quad mounted on its vehicle so that it can rapidly displace when under attack, move to a threatened perimeter sector that needs more firepower, and even shift to an alternate fighting position after dark to confuse the enemy.) The enemy knows right where they are going to be all the time. In fact, I am sure the NVA had their position zeroed-in with exact measurements from infiltrators walking off the distance of everything on their base to include right up to their front door. Because Camp JJ Carroll was an ARVN base, the American's did not have freedom of movement. They would have been in direct support of the ARVNs but not under their command and control. It made sense to make their position as strong and self-reliant as possible.



1971_Tim_Tweedell_JJ Carroll_Chinook lifting mount off truck

This picture is interesting. It shows the Chinook coming in to lift the Quad off its truck to put into the new elevated position. Tim is the furthest right soldier standing on the truck waiting to make the sling load hook up. Directly behind the windsock pole is their new bunker and the platform where the Quad will be placed. To the right of the bunker you can see their mounted fighting position with the Quad on its truck backed into sandbag revetments (barricade of sandbags set up to provide protection from blast) they had been using. To the right of that is their older, partially disassembled, bunker where that tower had been. In front of it is a hand painted sign of the G/65 Quad shoulder patch. These patches were locally fabricated so it is nice seeing it here in Tim's picture. To the right of that is probably their ammo storage bunker with what looks like a red warning sign. In the foreground across the entrance road is a raised walkway. It looks like it leads to a shower point because of the potable water tank in the right corner of the picture. The mostly obscured sign says, "Chào" and "Tạm biệt" which both mean good-by in Vietnamese.



G/65 Quad shoulder patch



Tim's deuce and a half " Gladiator 43"



My favorite of Tim's Vietnam pictures

With the Quad removed from the deuce and a half (2 ½ ton truck), Tim got new duties as its primary driver making supply runs which relieved G/65 headquarters from this responsibility. I like this picture of the deuce's cab because it makes me smile seeing that can of coke which was a constant companion of Tim.



Local market outside the gates of JJ Carroll



Vietnamese women carrying animal feed

Typical of any GI who escaped the confines of his base and was not engaged in combat operations, Tim's camera recorded the uniqueness of Vietnam.



SSG James Boddie at Camp JJ Carroll



Jame E. Boddie – The Wall of Faces photo

One of the emotional burdens carried by Tim was the loss of his section leader and friend, Staff Sergeant (SSG) James Boddie. In May 1971 Tim was allowed to take an R&R (rest and recuperation) leave and go back home to see his wife Terri and his young son, Timothy Jr. One of Tim's routine resupply runs was to the nearby American Fire Support Base Charlie Two (FSB C-2) primarily for rations from their mess hall. With Tim back in

the United States, SSG Boddie made that trip on May 21, 1971. At 1735 hours, FSB C-2 started to receive 122mm rockets. At 102 pounds and 6 1/2 feet long, the projectiles had a range of over 6 miles and were equipped with time-delayed fuses. A total of 11 rockets landed within the perimeter in the middle of evening chow. Evening bombardment had become routine on FSB C-2, so the men left the mess hall to take cover in the fortified Enlisted Men's Club bunker. Those GIs not familiar with the drill were hustled to the club bunker by a First Sergeant. The seventh rocket launched against the base hit at 1744 hours. It directly struck the club bunker, which at the time was occupied by an estimated 65-70 personnel. Even though the bunker was covered by four layers of sandbags and three feet of dirt, the rocket penetrated its protective barrier and exploded inside, causing it to collapse on those sheltered below. The losses were devastating with 30 killed and 33 wounded. SSG James Boddie was among those killed. Tim never fully recovered from this combination of "the luck of fate" and "survivor's guilt." Returning to Vietnam was very difficult for him and Jim Boddie's death haunted him forever.



Tim would go on to spend many years as both a contracted and independent long haul truck driver. Crisscrossing America with the goods that drive our economy, he would be joined by Terri for several of those years. Their adventures could fill a book, or at least a Rand McNally Road Atlas.

We started this scrapbook talking about how important NDQSA and the reunions were to Tim. It was the wives who pushed these men into going to their first reunion, believing that it might help them with their Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) by being with men who had shared their experiences. As usual, the wives were right.

NDQSA Reunion 2000 Washington, DC

Wheelchair: Joe Parrish

Bottom Row (L to R): Tom Mahoney, Richard Burmood, Steve Belt, Tim Tweedell, Pete Breckenridge, Gerald Chapman.

Top row (L to R): Robert Dembinski, Mike Dunkerly, John Mowatt, Dave McCray



NCOCS class 2-70 at the November 2000 DQS reunion

The first reunion a large group of the NCOCS guys attended was the year 2000 Veterans Day Dusters, Quads, and Searchlights reunion in Washington DC. Dave McCray had always been the force of nature pulling the class of 2-70 together. He spent many hours calling each of us, laughing and cajoling until eleven of us made the trip. For many it changed our lives, and we were part of something special. Tim came to that reunion with his son Shawn Tweedell, who was an active-duty Marine Sergeant at the time. Shawn wrote about this experience in Tim Tweedell's obituary.

Private Timothy Lee Tweedell Sr. served 13 months in the Republic of Vietnam with G 65th Artillery Battery as a Quad 50 gunner. He left a child and came back a man that had seen things that he could not unsee. It took decades for him to find peace. Sincere thanks go to the members of the National Dusters, Quads, and Searchlights Association (NDQSA). Tim attended his first reunion with the NDQSA on Veteran's Day 2000 in Washington, DC. Finally, being back with people that spoke the same language and saw the same things brought an immediate peace. The wounds began to heal. Thank you NDQSA!



Tim and Terri Tweedell at the 2014 reunion in Washington D.C.



That infamous gang of AIT and NCOCS friends at the 2014 reunion in Washington DC. L-R: Dave McCray, Richard Burmood, Tim Tweedell, Steve Belt, and Tom Mahoney. This was the reunion when Dave explained why Tim was eligible for VA benefits and what he should do to get help.



The 2017 reunion in Albuquerque. L-R: Dave McCray, Tim Tweedell, Ethan Parrish, and Richard Burmood. Ethan's dad (Joe Parrish) passed away in January 2017. Ethan and Connie (his mom) came to the reunion as part of his healing to be with the men who loved his dad like a brother.



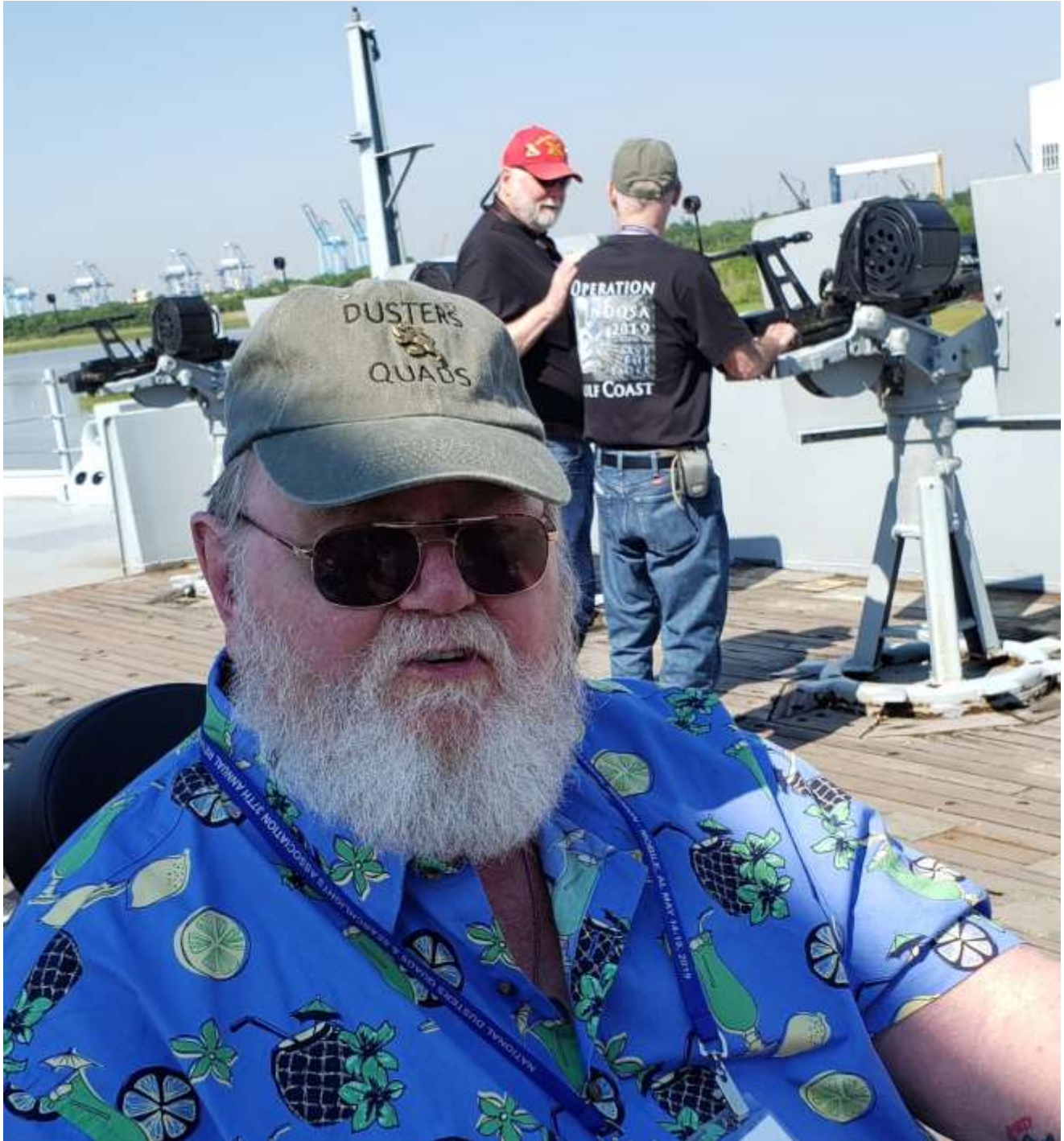
Another shot of the 2017 reunion in Albuquerque, New Mexico during the banquet. L-R: Terri Tweedell, Tim Tweedell, Ethan Parrish, and Richard Burmood. This was a difficult trip for Tim. Terri had to drive all the way from Washington state and back. Tim's Parkinson's Disease had gotten bad enough that he fell during a rest break and really tore up his arm. Didn't seem to damage his practical joker bone and cutting humor though.



The 2017 reunion in Albuquerque. L-R: Dave McCray, Tim Tweedell, Ethan Parrish, and Richard Burmood. Ethan's dad (Joe Parrish) passed away in January 2017. Ethan and Connie (his mom) came to the reunion as part of his healing to be with the men who loved his dad like a brother.



This picture is from the 2019 reunion in Mobile, Alabama. L-R: Jack Chiak, Richard Burmood and Tim Tweedell. By this time both Jack and Tim needed mobility devices to get around. Tim is sporting another bandage. Tim and I are paired up in sporty olive drab Duster Quad caps. Tim introduced me to Jack. Turned out they knew each other from attending other reunions. Truly a Band of Brothers.



This is absolutely my favorite picture of Tim. He is sitting on the deck of the USS Alabama Battleship that we toured during the 2019 reunion in Mobile, Alabama. Even after Parkinson took away his freedom, his practical joker wit remained. His scooter did not have enough power to make it up the ramp, so I pushed him. It was difficult but we were making progress. Halfway up, I was really struggling then suddenly... Thanks, Tim for taking the brake off. Going down it was a race because he was cranking

the throttle. Not sure how he made it around the curve and got safely down, but he left me in the dust. Terri would never have forgiven me if he had crashed.



Tim was proud of who he served with in Vietnam and wore a 65th Air Defense Artillery Ocelot tattoo for all to see.

Timothy Lee Tweedell Sr's passed away on May 24, 2024 after an ugly battle with Parkinson's Disease. He hated Parkinson's and Parkinson's hated him too. One could assume this was the hardest fight of his life unless they knew that he gallantly served in Vietnam but brought the war home with him. He never knew the peace he had earned until near the end. If NDQSA helped, then we wish that for all our brothers.

"Together Then - Together Again.

I hope you would have approved of this scrapbook. I offer it as a tribute from me to you as a lasting thank you for your friendship. v.r. Richard Burmood



Tim Tweedell Military Funeral 4 June 2024

Willamette National Cemetery Portland Oregon

Honor Guard presents the burial flag to Tim's oldest grandson Timothy L. Tweedell III. "On behalf of the President of the United States, the United States Army and a grateful nation, please accept this flag as a symbol of our appreciation for your loved one's honorable and faithful service."
