



1/92

Field Artillery

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NEWSLETTER

SPRING-SUMMER

2016



US Artillery Hits ISIS

In late March, the Department of Defense revealed the existence of a secret firebase in northern Iraq that was conducting fire missions against ISIS. Its existence is reminiscent of the type of operations we carried out in Vietnam. A company of Marines along with four M777A2, 155mm towed howitzers, were airlifted by CH-47 helicopters to a remote location to support Iraqi forces. This is a first for coalition forces.

The Marine Corps has been experimenting with how to best form their deployable units in order to make them lighter, faster, and more lethal. They are exploring a major change to their artillery doctrine. It calls for an artillery platoon to be in direct support of a Marine company. “The idea of deploying a gun platoon in support of smaller infantry elements is new territory for us,” said a spokesman for the 10th Marine Regiment. This new tactic is now in action at FB Bell, the name given to the once secret location. An admiral at JCS said, “The artillery mission is to provide fires and support of Iraqi forces, just like we do with airplanes, just its surface-to-surface fires versus air-to-surface...”

In the 1/92, it was normal to have our batteries split in support of maneuvering units. The tactics used in the Central Highlands, some fifty years ago, are being re-learned in the war on terrorism.



M114 Modernization

While the US chose to replace the M114 after the Vietnam War, a number of less affluent nations opted to modernize them. Some of these are still in use today.

Countries like Norway, Pakistan, South Korea, Israel and Iraq developed new barrels with minor changes to the carriage. Manufacturers like RDM Technology, Soltam LTD, and Hyundai Group developed modification kits for the M114 that made the upgrades cost effective while increasing range and reducing weight. Here are a few examples:

M114/39 (Norway)

KH179 (South Korea)

HM41 (Iran)



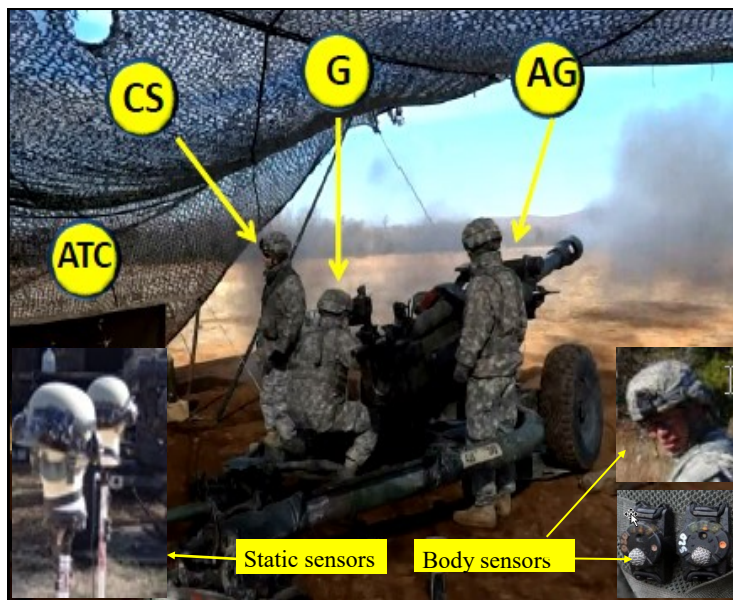
Update: BOP Effects on Artillery Crews

Field testing with the M119, 105mm howitzer, to measure blast overpressure (BOP) effects on artillery crews is finished. However, the results have not been extrapolated to heavier artillery. Dr. Gary Kamimori, research physiologist, explained that further testing needs to be done at Ft. Sill with the M777/M109. "I would expect that the current 155 may have greater effects than the 105 but a lot of that comes down to physics and design. As you well know, the old 155 had a lot of blow off which was definitely exacerbated by the protective ramparts, etc. but design changes (muzzle brakes, etc.) have had a significant effect on over pressure..." is the reply he gave to a question about the way the howitzers were used in the 1/92.

It is thought that the cumulative effect of low level BOP such as that encountered by artillery crews may lead to mild traumatic brain injury over time. Unfortunately, there is scant medical data on human beings to support it. Clinical trials are underway by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke in collaboration with Walter Reed Army Institute of Research to collect this type of data from active and veteran populations. For additional information, check these sources:

https://blastinjuryresearch.amedd.army.mil/docs/sos/2015_11/day1/DaSilva_LT_Uade.pdf
<https://clinicaltrials.gov/et2/show/NCT01524822>

M119 layout during testing at Ft. Sill



Below is the data collected on artillery crews for the M119 using Charge 4, normal angle and the DOD injury thresholds:

Crew Position	Max Peak Overpressure (psi)
Ammo	1.89
AG	1.70
G	1.89
L	1.34
RTO	1.70
CS	2.03

psi	Effect on Humans (1ms Pulse Duration)
0.3	Unprotected hearing threshold
5	Eardrums rupture threshold
15	50% chance of eardrum rupture
30	Lung injury threshold
100	Slight chance of death (pulmonary)
150	50% chance of death (pulmonary)
200	100% chance of death (pulmonary)

Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (mTBI)

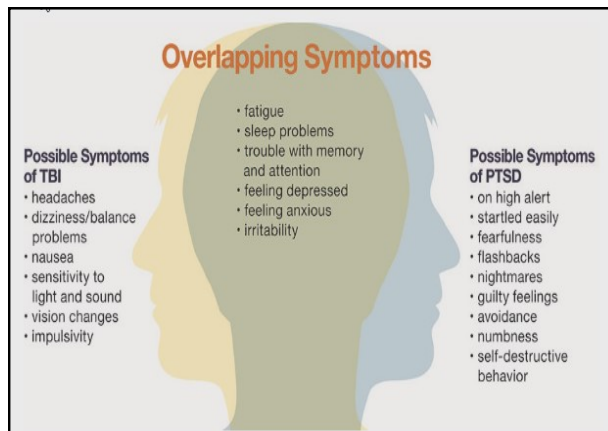
There is concern that repeated exposure to BOP may have cumulative effects as seen in high school football and professional football players. These are more commonly known as concussions which is mTBI according to Dr. Scott Livingston, Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center. According to Dr. Livingston, the Defense Department has documented evidence that when service members sustain concussions, they are at increased risk for subsequent injuries.



There are three mTBI symptom categories:

- PHYSICAL symptoms which include headaches and sleep problems.
- COGNITIVE symptoms which include headaches, memory problems, slow thinking, and decreased reaction time.
- BEHAVIORAL symptoms such as increased anxiety, irritability, or bouts of depression and anger.

It is important to note that individuals experiencing mTBI might experience significantly different symptoms. A lot of overlap exists between mild, moderate, and severe TBI and PTSD which can cause blast injuries to be misdiagnosed.



SOURCE: <http://taskandpurpose.com/author/jamesclark> 2/2/2016
<http://dvvic.dcoe.mil>

Blast Overpressure Research

The DOD established the Blast Injury Research Program Coordinating Office in 2006 to oversee efforts by all three armed services to better understand brain injuries. Last year it hosted a review to determine if repeated blast-related trauma can contribute to Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE). There is still uncertainty if concussions lead to CTE which tends to show up later in life.

The US Center of Disease Control has published the following concerning concussion complications:

"Concussion may cause a wide range of short- or long-term complications, affecting thinking, sensation, language or emotions. These changes may lead to problems with memory, communication, personality changes, as well as depression and the early onset of dementia. "

SOURCE: http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/clinicians/resource_center/complications_of_concussion.html

Update: Retroactive Award of the CAB

Congress directed the Department of Defense in December 2015 to review extending the retroactive award of the Combat Action Badge to December 7, 1941. The results of this review were released earlier this year. They stated in part, "While considered, this review did not recommend changing existing eligibility criteria for the Army Combat Action Badge."



Representative Richard Nugent, Florida, has twice proposed legislations to extend eligibility back to WW II. Nugent is not seeking reelection but said he would still push the issue before leaving office this November. The thinking is that the Army's decision is based on two things—too hard to do and too costly.

Others disagree with this view. Their position is that the burden of proof should be with the individual and that all cost associated with the award be borne by the applicant. Other military awards have been made retroactive to WW II. Why not the CAB?

Update: VA Veteran Choice Program

New eligibility criteria has been announced by the VA after receiving a backlash from veteran groups and Congress. The 40-mile distance standard from a VA medical facility now includes, "at least 40 miles of driving to a VA facility with a full time primary-care doctor." Call 866-606-8198 if you want to determine if you qualify under the expanded guidelines.

The ongoing controversy over VA's handling of the Choice Program has resulted in Senator John McCain introducing legislation that would allow all veterans to seek care outside the VA and to have it paid for by VA insurance. A proposal circulated by the Commission on Care formed by Congress to study how the VA will provide healthcare in the future recommends an end to all new construction, closing veteran hospitals and clinics, and turning over veteran health-care to the private sector over the next 20 years. This proposal is being criticized by many veteran groups who think that the VA healthcare system can be fixed and improved rather than being eliminated.

Update: Veteran Identification Card

The VA has informed Congress that it will not be able to issue veteran identification cards this year. They estimate that it will take at least another year to implement.

Legislation authorizing veteran identification cards was passed by Congress July, 2016. Officials at the VA have begun drafting regulations. However, they point out that the new procedures need to have public comment as well as approval from the Office of Management and Budget. These will take additional time to obtain.

The intent of the law is to give veterans easy proof of their military service. It is envisioned that a small fee will be charged for the identification card to cover the costs of design and production.

Fallen Brother: Clarence "Buddy" Downard



Clarence passed away March 31, 2016 at the age of 71. He was a member of Service Battery who drove a 5-Ton delivering ammo to the firing batteries throughout the Central Highlands. Bud, as his friends called him, suffered from pancreatic cancer and had a 100% PTSD disability rating according to his life-long wartime buddy John Maguire.

He was an avid classic car enthusiast who liked to restore old cars like the Model T designs. As a member of the Southern Knights of Central Kentucky Car Club, he enjoyed displaying his restorations. He took advantage of his driving experience in the Army and turned it into a career as a long and short haul trucker. He belonged to the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Local Union 89.



Fallen Brother: Joseph R. Miklos



Joseph died October 25, 2015 at the young age of 65. He was a member of the aviation section supporting the 1/92 who was a regular attendee at many of our reunion gatherings.

After leaving the Army, he worked as a steelworker for 17 years and then was employed as a letter carrier for the US Postal Service for 11 years in the Youngstown, Ohio area.

During his off time he devoted many volunteer hours in the Hubbard Fire Department as a firefighter and paramedic. Fishing was one of his favorite pastimes as was operating a ham radio. Joseph loved spending time with grandchildren and other youth in his community. One mourner wrote, "He was a dad figure to many of us. We will miss him."

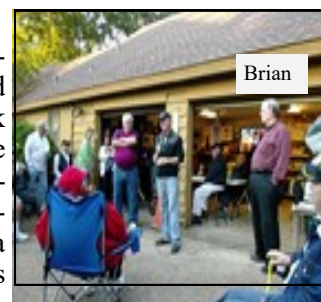


Book Review:

The Creation of the Vietnam Memorial, is the inside story of how the most popular visited icon in Washington, DC was built. It is written by Robert W. Doubek, a lawyer and executive director for the project throughout the years it took to plan, finance, and see the construction to its completion. It's a riveting account that some of us were exposed to at the Memphis reunion in 2013.



Doug Turner, our reunion host, invited Brian Carter, site manager and engineer for Binswanger Glass to talk to us about how the names on the wall were inscribed. Brian's company was awarded the contract to stencil the names on the wall using a unique process that was the first of its

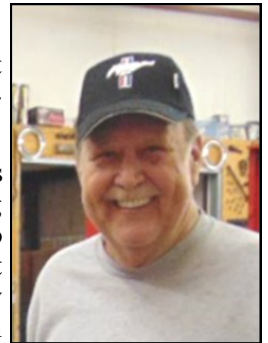


GIL GOLTS 1967-1968



Gill arrived in country March 11, 1967 and after a few months found himself at Dak To with Bravo Battery preparing to be airlifted to LZ Hambone. What followed is the Battle of Dak To involving the 4th ID, 173rd ABN, and the 5th SFG.

Gill writes, "We had our first taste of Agent Orange on Hambone. Three C-130s flew over a few times and sprayed...after about three to four days, everything turned brown...our [fire] missions...lasted for over twenty-four hours...We tried to alternate the crew members...so everyone had a chance to get a few winks. But usually, the gun blast prevented that...during the heavy days of the battle, resupply priority went first to ammo, when the water ran low, no one was allowed to wash



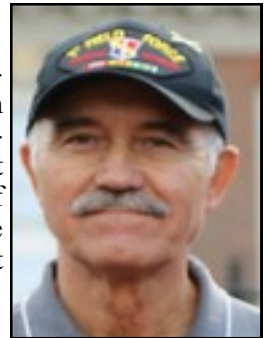
up, priority for the water was one canteen per day and the rest was used for swabbing the gun tubes...once we ran low on c-rations...a pallet of corned beef hash was dropped...we ate it cold, ate it hot, ate in crackers, ate it on bread, and sometimes right out of the can...since then...I have not eaten one bite of it." Bravo battery earned the Presidential Unit Citation for its part in the first Battle of Dak To.

After Dak To, there were more moves and even a return to LZ Hambone. In February 1968, Gil left Vietnam but not the Army. He made it a career retiring in 1983 as a master sergeant. After leaving the Army, he went to work as a JROTC instructor in his home town and spent 28 years teaching there. He has two sons with one living in California and the other in Texas. "I am fully retired and my passion are my vintage mustangs..I belong to a mustang club and I enjoy our car roundups, cruises, and shows."

SAM ARDOLINO 1968-1969



Sam was assigned to HHQ Battery as a surveyor but spent most of his time working in the meteorology section at Dak To. The first half of 1969 saw a lot of action at the forward command post. "While I was there I went through many attacks during that time period and luckily I was never injured," he wrote. Besides being at Dak To and Artillery Hill he was sent to Dak Pek for a month. Dak Pek was one of the most remote and northern Special Forces camps in II Corps located near the Laotian border. "We were mortared there on May 17, 1968, the day before my 21st birthday."



The meteorological section provided weather data to artillery units. "We sent up weather balloons with transmitters that provided barometric density, wind speed, temperature, humidity and the like. This information has to be tabulated and then broadcast over the radio in the form of "MET Messages." Because the weather was so unpredictable, weather balloons were flown several times a day. The atmospheric condition that the MET Messages provided were used by the Fire Direction Centers in each battery to accurately compute firing data to the firing sections.

Sam was born in Italy and came to America in 1951. He became a naturalized citizen at the age of 10. "In my lifetime, I have been to 19 countries...the Vietnam experience made me realize how much I missed my family...there is no country better to live in than the United States of America." After leaving the Army, he went to work in the data processing field eventually becoming a computer programmer. His hometown is Madison, NJ.

GREG TURNER 1970-1971

Vietnamization was in full swing during Greg's tour. He served in three different units because American units were being deactivated and pulled out of Vietnam. The first unit he was assigned to was the 6/14 FA in May 1970. While there, he served as section chief in Charlie Battery on the big 175mm Guns at Firebase Athena in Kontum. The 6/14 FA deactivated in November 1970.

Because he had a lot of time left in country, Greg was reassigned to Alpha Battery, 1/92 FA which had two 155mm howitzers at Plei Mrong. Two significant things occurred while with the 1/92 FA. One, he decided to extend his tour six months and second, he reenlisted for six years. Unfortunately, the unit was deactivated in October 1971 and he was once again reassigned in country. Greg's time at Plei Mrong reminded him of Native Americans. "It was interesting to observe the villagers go about their daily lives. Their lives were very similar to the lives of the American Indians that occupied the wild, wild west.."

The unit Greg was reassigned to next was Charlie Battery, 1/39 FA located at Firebase Carroll near Khe Sanh close to the DMZ. This was a 175mm Gun/8-inch unit. Within six weeks of arrival, the battalion began deactivation. Greg returned to the US in December 1971. Since he had reenlisted, he also had tours at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma and Nuremberg, Germany. He was discharged from the Army in March 1977 and went back to his home town in Canton, Minnesota.

In Canton, he landed a job with Canton State Bank through an on-the-job VA training program. He is still employed at the same bank. Retirement looms on the horizon and he has started a mowing service business to keep himself busy when he leaves banking. He married in 1983, raised a family, and remains an active member of his community through his church, the American Legion, Lions Club, and by supporting the school activities in which his grandchildren participate.

