589TH ENGINEER BN ASSOCIATION
VIETNAM

MOUNTAIN MOVER NEWSLETTER

VOLUME NO. 2 **EDITION NO. 1**

Greetings Mountain Movers! The newsletter is a little late because of cataract surgery at the VA, which turned a two day event into a 6 week event because of complications during surgery. This issue we are featuring some informational sketches of some of our members. We are always looking for interesting stories about our 589th members, so if you have some please send them to my email: fletchersapp1011@hotmail.com.

2011 REUNION—BRANSON, MISSOURI

Hey country and western music fans the 2011 reunion will be held at the Stone Castle Hotel and Conference center in Branson. Branson, whom many call the "New Nashville", features some of the best live entertainment in America. The delicious cuisine features a vast array of country cooking with ribs, steaks and fish. Along with the live entertainment, Branson features one of the best arts and crafts theme parks in America—Silver Dollar City. Don't miss this opportunity to get together with your buddies in this one of a kind resort area. We owe a vote of thanks to our reunion planners. For questions, either go to the reunion page at the Association website—www.589thengrbn.com, or call Perry Blanchfield at 770-366-4411 or Randy Joyner at 407-808-2981. After such a great reunion in 2010, we are all looking forward to the 2011 reunion.

Thanks to our Association officers, we came again to Ft Leonard Wood for our second reunion. We came from farms and fields, cities, towns, suburbs and urban centers from across America much as we did 40 odd years ago when our country called us to war. We had a great time visiting our old friends, our comrades, our band of brothers, breaking bread and looking at pictures when we were soldiers.

MINI REUNION HELD IN ALEXANDRIA, VA.

Mountain Mover News received the following communiqué from some of our fine officers many of us remember from Ft Hood to Vietnam. Lawrence D. Doff, with some additions by Ed Marshall, wrote:

"Hello Perry,

Ed Marcy (Battalion S-3; Don Hazen (Battalion Assistant S-3) Dave Harbach (Commander, Co D then Assistant S-3) Ed Marshall (Commander, Co A, then Battalion S-4) and myself (Battalion S-1, then Commander of HHC and then of Co d) got together last night (Dec 2) at Don Hazen's home in Alexandria, VA.

We were among the group of officers that fell upon the 589th Engineer Battalion at Ft Hood, Texas in July, 1966, LTC Snoke and I arriving from Paris, Francis. LTC Alan Grum, who took command of the 589th six months after the 589th arrived in

Vietnam had a pressing engagement and could not make it, although Ed Marshall and Don Hazen visited with him briefly on Dec 1st at Ft Myer, VA. Myron Snoke retired a Colonel from a District Engineer command. Al Grum retired a BG, from the faculty at West Point.

Dave, Ed Marshall and I each served a total of 22 months with the 589th, both at Fort Hood and in Vietnam, July 1966 through April 1968.

It was the first time in 40 years that we had met.

After a couple of hours at Hazen's house, we went out to dinner with the ladies and talked and talked and talked some more.

Our principal topic of conversation was our magical and mystical assignments with the 589 Engineer Battalion and how our positive experiences with this phenomenal collection of men, under the fantastic leadership of Myron D. Snoke, was never duplicated in any other assignment we received throughout our subsequent Army careers.

In mid 1967, Ed Marcy left the 589th, and went on as a Task Force S-3 near Vietnam's western border and then to staff engineer assignments including the Pentagon. He retired a LTC. Don Hazen also left the 589th in mid '67 to command a combat engineer company near Dak To, then went on to an illustrious career with both battalion command and District command assignments; her retired a Colonel. Dave Harbach went back to the Armor branch and returned to Vietnam a year later as an advisor. As a Colonel, he ended his career commanding Fort McNair. Ed Marshall, returned to Vietnam in 1971-72 as an operations staff officer at MACV HQS. Ed split the remainder of his career in Engineer Combat Developments and Facilities Engineer assignments, retiring a Colonel as the Director of Engineering at Walter Reed Army Hospital. I went back to Vietnam with the 19th Engineer Battalion (Combat) and ended up a LTC in the Pentagon, first as an Assistant in Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird's office, then in Army DCSPOPS and finally in the Secretary of the Army's office.

As you can tell from the enclosed photo" (not available for newsletter) "we are not young studs any longer, at least in body. However, everyone was sharp in mind with clear recollections and little embellishment.

We are still engaged in active pursuits,. We all travel extensively, are involved in sports or volunteer activities and are leading happy and fulfilling lives.

We are unanimous in praising, in retrospect (as we also did at the time) the magnificent group of men who were assigned to the battalion. The Warrant Officers and NCOs of the 589th were among the finest any of us ever encountered before or after. Organizing the unit and equipping the unit and training the unit and preparing for deployment were somewhat mechanical tasks. Our success came from the way we worked as a team and supported each other. We were on a 22 month high.

But there was also a phenomenal intangible that Colonel Snoke provided. A spirit that pervaded the battalion. An excitement of the mission. A sense of teamwork. I have marveled over the years at how this magic worked and I tried, in every job since then and in my own businesses after retirement, to apply it.

The same spirit is apparent in the 589th Engineer Battalion Association. There is an excitement which pervades the Association and its web-site, not too different from the excitement which existed in the 589th at Fort Hood and in Vietnam."

Mountain Mover News wishes to thank these fine officers for their words and deeds they accomplished in their leadership of our 589th in our Vietnam adventure. Certainly we share their feelings of mutual respect and admiration.

FORMER 589TH COMMANDER DONALD RAMSAY SPENT LONG CAREER WITH CORPS OF ENGINEERS

Donald Ramsay, who commanded the 589th Engineers from June 1969 to May 1970, enlisted in the CE in July 1946. He was born and grew up in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He was commissioned a 2d LT. CE in June 1947 and was assigned to Japan at Misawa AFB.

He attended West Point and graduated in June 1953. and was commissioned in CE again and assigned to Korea in 1953. He was the CO of an Engineer Co (32nd Engr Gp) and later Combat Engr Co (24th Div) in 1953-54. He was assigned to the Kansas City Engr District at Fort Riley KS and New England flood rehab work in 1955-56.

He attended a Nuclear Engineering course at AFIT in 1956-1958 MSNE, after which he taught Nuclear Reactor Theory to ANPPOC at Fort Belvoir, VA. He was an advisor to the Imperial Iranian Army Engr School in Tehran, Iran from 1961-62. After attending the Command and General Staff College, he then taught Nuclear Physics at West Point. In 1966-68 he was the S3 for the 44th Engr Group at Korat, Thailand.

After a tour with Pentagon Force Development in 1968-69, he came to Vietnam to command the 589th from June of 1969-May 1970. After he left Vietnam he went to the Engineer School as Head of Construction Engineering Div. 1970-71. He then attended the Army War College 1971-72. He subsequently went back to the Pentagon as Chief Manpower Programs Div. ODSCPER 1972-74 (ended the draft and out of Vietnam), From 1974-1996 he was with the rail transit industry-the Washington Metro, NYCTA and St Louis Metrolink system, and worked on many other studies and proposals. He is now retired and many of us enjoyed chatting with him when he joined us at our 2nd reunion in Waynesville.

9/11 INSPIRES 589TH FORMER COMMANDER ALLEN F. GRUM TO RETURN TO ARMY THINGS

Like many of us, the attack on 9/11/2001 brought out strong feelings of patriotism. Allen F. Grum, Brigadier General (Retired), who took over command of the 589th 6 months after we arrived in Vietnam, joined the Army Research Laboratory at Adelphi, Maryland as a civilian researcher. Initially he was the Associate Director for Strategic Initiatives and subsequently, the Associate Director for Science and Technology. He left the Army Research Lab in 2005 and has continued to work as a consultant for the organization to the present.

General Grum was born in Washington D.C. October 6, 1931 as the son of Allen F. Grum and Nathalie Cate Grum. His father was an army officer who was forced to retire from the Ordinance Corp because of a physical disability.

He went to high school in San Antonio, Texas and entered the US Military Academy at West Point with the class of 1953. He graduated eighth in a class of 512 and selected the Corps of Engineers as his basic branch. His engineering career included troop assignments in Korea, France, Germany and Viet Nam, where he commanded our 589th during the Tet Offensive and Counter Tet campaign.

General Grum who holds a Ph.D. in Engineering Economic Systems from Stanford University, was an instructor and assistant professor of Civil Engineering at the Military Academy in the 60's, and then returned to West Point as the Associate Professor of Engineering Management. He was named Professor and Head of the Department of Engineering in 1980, the position he held when he retired from the Army on January 1, 1987. His contributions to the scientific and technical education of the Army were substantial as almost 13,000 cadets (30% of the graduates at that time) graduated from West Point during his tenure. In addition, he was a leader in the initial accreditation of the Civil Engineering Mechanical Engineering, and Engineering Management programs at the Military Academy. During his Army career he graduated from the Basic and Advanced Courses at the Engineer School, the Command and General Staff College, and the Army War College.

General Grum is married to Jane Patterson of Aiken, S.C. They have five grown children. One son fought in the first Gulf War. They have twin daughters, one, an Army LTC doctor, was deployed to Iraq, and her sister, an Army MAJ veterinarian, fought in the first Gulf War.

General Grum had a distinguished Army career whose military decorations included the Distinguished Service Medal, two awards of the Legion of Merit, two awards of the Meritorious Service Medal, two awards of the Bronze Star (one with "V" device), and the Commendation Medal. The faculty and students of the School of Engineering chose him as the outstanding teacher for the 1996-97 Academic Year. Mercer University named him as a Professor Emeritus in 2006. He is also one of two researchers recognized as an Honorary Fellow at the Army Research Center. Certainly his brothers at arms at the 589th hold him in high regard.

SPECIALIST AL CARLISLE SURVIVES AMBUSH

Al Carlisle, whose book "I Am Not Ashamed" chronicles his year as a photographer in Vietnam, used his training and skills to survive an ambush on November 26th, 1968. It happened on QL 1, south of Phan Rang. He was riding with Specialist James Darwin Delano (Tim) and 1st Lieutenant Ronald J. Moe, Commander of B Company, while they were inspecting some bridges on QL1. Tim and Lieutenant Moe were killed in the ambush. Here is the story in Al Carlisle's words.

"I just spent a glorious week in Hawaii with my wife," Tim said. "She came all the way from Hindsdale, New Hampshire to meet me there. Man, it was great," Tim's voice is excited as he recalls his R&R.

We reach the first bridge. I find a position where I can get the whole bridge in one shot. Then we measure it-Lt. Moe writing down the figures as we give them. This routine continues throughout the morning.

The Noon sun is hot and blistering. Tim takes off his flak jacket and shirt, leaving his T-shirt. I get tired of wearing the flak jacket and take it off too. We reach a straight section of road. In the distance we can see the ocean breaking on the rocky shore. Off to the left is a small fishing village. A small boat eases its way out to the ocean. It's tranquil and picturesque scene. On our right is a large mountain with thick, tall brush at its base. Lt. Moe looks over his shoulder and says,"We better keep our eyes open, this is known V.C. territory." "KNOWN V.C. TERRITORY. Then what are we doing out here by ourselves?" I think to myself. We continue down the road to where it makes a sharp turn to the right. We follow it around to a clearing, when Lt. Moe says we can stop here for lunch, then we'll head back to Phan Rang.

We break out the boxes of C-rations and begin to eat. Tim remarks, "Here we sit in Vietnam eating C-rations and in a few days our families will be sitting down to a nice turkey dinner with all the trimmings.´ Thanksgiving---I hadn't thought about it. Holidays come and go over here without fanfare or notice, but my mind conjures up visions of home with friends and families gathering together to break bread in love and harmony. We finish our meager meal and get ready to head back. "Hey, Tim. You want me to drive back?" I ask. "Nah, driving relaxes me." Tim said."

We follow the road around the sharp turn, and head down the long straightaway. An F-100 thunders past us, flying lower than I had ever seen one. We watch it disappear into the distance. My mind is back home watching friends and loved ones arrive for the feast. Lt. Moe and Tim must be doing the same, since we are all silent to our dreams.

Suddenly a loud crack explodes, shattering the silence. It was as if someone had lit a firecracker next to my ear. Everything goes into slow motion. The front of the jeep leaps and explodes into flame. Lt. Moe just leans to the right and falls out, almost gracefully. Tim's head jerks back, his hands covering his bloody face. "Oh God!" he screams, then slumps forward. Blood seems to be everywhere. I feel myself moving in slow motion, head over heels, as the jeep comes to a stop in a ditch. Laying on the ground, my first thought is that we must have hit a land mine. Trying to clear my thoughts, I reach up for Tim and my weapon, which is in the back seat. My hand is forced back by the heavy flames that engulf the front of the jeep. "Tim's dead", I know. I laid there next to the jeep; dry grass beginning to burn from the dripping gasoline. I am gripped in fear as I hear voices, Vietnamese voices. Then the report of an automatic weapon, then more Vietnamese chatter. The must have finished off Lt. Moe and I fear I'm next.

IN an instant I make the decision to crawl into the bush, and make a run for it. I crawl a few feet down the ditch, then turn to see a man clad in khaki shorts and black shirt with a bush hat on his head. He turns and sees me too. I watch, unable to move, as he raises his AK-47 and points it towards me. I hear it fire, and wait for the rounds to hit. "This is it, Carlisle, you're a dead man," I think. I turn and run into the thick brush, my legs unable to respond to my mind's commands fast enough. I still hear the firing at me. "God, please…make it fast and painless, I feel myself saying. My mind sees my Mother without her son, and Pat, dear Pat…"I love you."

I run up the side of the mountain a few hundred feet. From there I can see the jeep, black, ominous smoke rises from it. Also, I can see clearly down the road, and the fishing village in front of me. I figure the village to be about a quarter of a mile or so across the road. I can't see any of the VC; I know there were at least two or three of them. I begin to see how badly I've been hurt. Tearing open my shirt, I am relieved to see no holes, thank God. I then begin to look down the front for any signs of blood, though I feel no pain. Then at my right knee, I spot a small hole in my pants. From the knee down, it is soaked with blood and water from the ditch. My heart begins to pound so I tear open the pant leg. My knee exposed, I finally feel pain, wrenching pain. The hole in my knee is about the size of a dime, clean and neat, pulsing blood with each heart beat. "Gotta make a tourniquet," I think, removing my belt, and fastening it around my leg just above the knee. It stops bleeding, but the throbbing is incessant. Surveying the situation, my options are limited. I can't stay here waiting for help to arrive from Phan Rang. It will be hours before we are missed. I decide to go to the fishing village. Maybe there are R.F.'s (Regional Forces) there, but I won't take any chances by just walking into the village.

I ease my way down the mountain to the side of the road. From the side of a bush, I look up and down the road. Convinced no one is around, I dart across the road and hide in the thick brush. My knee hurts like hell from the run, and I rest for a few moments. Then I move slowly favoring my right leg. Remembering what I had been told in a survival course about staying off of trails, I walk parallel to a main trail. Long, sharp thorns tear at the flesh on my hands and face. My mouth feels dry, like a wad of cotton had soaked every ounce of moisture from it.

About halfway to the small bay that separates me from the village, I come to a rocky outcrop. Carefully I climb to the top to get a better view of the village. A wooden pier juts out into the bay from the dock. A man and a boy stand next to the rail fishing. There is little movement in the village; I decide to make my presence known from the sandy beach on my side of the bay.

Crouching in the bush, I strain my eyes one more time for signs of the enemy. It looks peaceful enough. Standing up, I hobble onto the sand and begin to wave my arms and yell at the man on the dock. "Hey," I'm over here!" I yell. The village comes alive. The man runs down the dock pointing his arm towards me as he yells. Then gunshots ring out from the village. The sand at my feet kicks up as the rounds bury themselves. "Shit! The whole village is full of VC." I cry to myself. Men and boys begin to run across the foot bridge to my side of the bay. I turn and run back into the brush, taking a different route back to the road. Hobbling in the brush, I find myself repeating the 23rd Psalm. "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want." Not being a zealous Christian in practice, I still know my fate is out of my hands; I pray for God's help.

Back at the roadside, I lay flat in the brush. A motorcycle rushes by, its rider anxious to be gone from the area. Fear is written on his face. I look up and down the road. No movement, only the black smoke from the jeep marks the spot where my journey began. The spot is nearly the exact point where two hours before, Lt. Moe had warned us of being in enemy held territory.

The coast clear, I limped rapidly across the road and back to the side of the mountain. Looking towards the village, I'm relieved to see no one had followed me,

at least I don't see anyone. For the first time, I relax and begin to reappraise the situation. One thing for sure, if I stay on this mountain till morning, I'll probably bleed to death. Calmly I wait, resisting the temptation to light a cigarette, not wanting to give my position away. I feel a sense of pride as I recall how coolly I had handled each situation. I didn't freeze or panic, but maintained a cool head. Shame overtakes my pride when I think, "Here you are patting yourself on the back and two men are dead."

In the distance I hear the strain of a truck engine. I look to see a truck lumbering down the road. As it approaches, I see that it is a 2 ½ ton, white GMC civilian truck. It's going towards Phan Rang, but it's a chance to get off this mountain. I head down towards the road. When it is fifty or so feet away, I jump out and begin to wave my arms. The truck slows as it gets near me. The two men and one woman are startled by sudden appearance. The younger man jumps out and helps me to the back of the truck. It has a metal covering over the back, and without the truck stopping he opens the tailgate and helps me in. He motions for me to cover up with the straw mats on the floor, then closes the gate. I can hear them chattering in the cab. "God, I hope they're friendly," runs through my mind. I feel around me to see what they are carrying. If I find weapons, my next port of duty will be the Hanoi Hilton. Only farming tools; I sigh in relief, then close my eyes and black out.

Suddenly aware of the truck stopping, I raise up on my elbow. Outside I hear Vietnamese chattering and then automatic weapons firing. "Christ! They've killed the Vietnamese in the cab." I wait for the tailgate to open and the fire from a VC's weapon to kill me. I am surprised and relieved as the truck begins to move slowly, building up speed as he changes gears. I black out again.

I awaken again to the sounds of Vietnamese talking and shouting outside. Raising myself up, I find a small sliding door about 10" wide next to the cab. I open it and peer out into the dimly lit evening. A smile inches its way across my face. I joyously think to myself, "ARVN's we must be at an ARVN camp.

I'm helped out of the truck and laid on a stretcher. "Nook—nook!" (water, water) I proclaim to the ARVN's carrying me. One of these hands me his canteen and I begin to guzzle the warm tea. He gently pulls it from my lips and signals for me to drink slowly. The driver stands next to me as they lay me on the ground. "Thank you!" I cry to him, grasping his hand. He looks down at me and smiles a broad, toothy grin.

"I'm Captain Mitchell, Advisor to this ARVN unit," proclaims the MACV Advisor who kneels beside me. "We've got a dust-off coming for you; should be here shortly," he continues. He then removes a large bandage from his aid kit and wraps it around my knee. The ARVN's have built a raging bonfire to fix our location for the "MEDEVAC" chopper. I reach in my shirt pocket for my cigarettes, but they are all soiled from the water in the ditch. Captain Mitchell pulls a pack from his pocket and hands me one of his. He lights it for me then asks what happened. I relate the afternoon's events to him. He just sits there and shakes his head….

L to R: Johnson, Al Carlisle, and Fletcher Sapp