

LRRP RANGER ASSOCIATION



SUA SPONTE

The Quarterly Newsletter of the E-51st and G-75th LRRP Ranger Association, Summer Issue 1998

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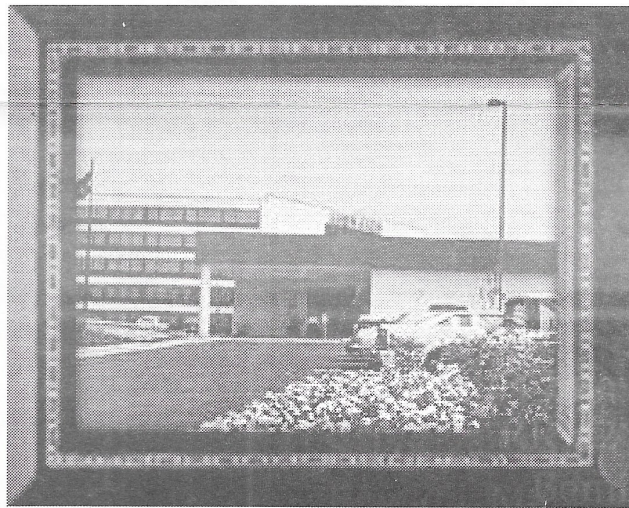
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1998 Georgia Reunion

by Newsletter Staff



This is the Sheraton Airport Inn, site of the 1998 Reunion, Columbus, Ga.

Southern hospitality is always a trademark of the South and when our ninth-annual reunion takes place in Columbus, Georgia, this is bound to be no exception. This year, the men of Company E 51st and G 75th are happy to celebrate the Ranger Memorial at Fort Benning with the 75th Regiment Association acting as hosts. Included is a tribute to our fallen Brothers in a special sunrise service (see schedule on page 10) thanks to the efforts of Steve Crabtree and associates who have sold all the bricks! Also, the annual business meeting (see page 9) should set the stage for the survival or demise of our association, et. al.

Sua Sponte

**COMPANY G (RANGER)
75th INFANTRY ASSOCIATION**
2005 ROBIN ST
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President
To be announced
Vice-President
Ralph 'Otter' Tildon
Secretary
Jerry Schuster
Treasurer
Frank Svensson
Board of Directors
Al Stewart, Chairman
"Doc" Bronson
Jim 'Winston' Connolly
Danny 'Bean' Jacks
Steve "Tower" Johnson
Dave "Chief" Moncada
Jerry Schuster
Historian
John 'Gunner' Starnes
Corp. Counsel
Tom 'Dolly' Robison

Sua Sponte is the official newsletter published quarterly by the Company G (RANGER) 75th Infantry Association.

Change of Address: Sua Sponte does not maintain the mailing list. All addresses are maintained by the Treasurer. Receivers of Sua Sponte are encouraged to keep the Association informed of any address changes.

Membership Information: All former members of E/51 and G/75 are eligible to receive Sua Sponte. Membership applications can be obtained by contacting the Association at any of the addresses or phone numbers listed above.

Newsletter Submittals: Article, photos, announcements, etc. are always welcomed. Sua Sponte reserves the right to accept and edit all materials as necessary. All submitted photos will be returned if requested. Authorship and photo credits will be provided. Submittal of written articles may be hand written, typed or on computer disk. We can translate most files. Macintosh is preferred.

Deadlines: Sua Sponte is published quarterly in March, June, September and December. Absolute deadlines for submitting material for the newsletter is the first of each month identified above. Time sensitive material will take precedence. Send material to the Sua Sponte address in Bemidji, Mn.

Benning Reunion 1998 Registration Form

Mail to:

75th Ranger Regiment Assn. Reunion
C/O C. Larry Rhodes
8688 Ruffian Lane
Newburgh, IN 47630

E 51st- G 75th Name _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Number of people in your party for the Banquet: _____

SHIRT SIZE: (Sorry, no children's small sizes)

Check size and give number required @ one for each registered

Adult: MEDIUM _____ LARGE _____ XL _____ XXL _____

Adult registration fee includes shirt, banquet meal, hospitality room, and other associated reunion costs. Banquet meal will be a combo chicken/beef plate.

_____ ADULT REGISTRATIONS @ \$65 FOR EACH: \$ _____

_____ CHILDREN'S REGISTRATIONS @ \$25 FOR EACH: \$ _____

EXTRA DONATION TO HELP BRING SOME YOUNG RANGERS OR GUYS WHO CAN NOT AFFORD IT: \$ _____

ADD \$10 PER PERSON FOR REGISTRATIONS RECEIVED AFTER JULY 15

TOTAL AMOUNT OF CHECK OR CARD PAYMENT: \$ _____

Please make checks payable to:

75th RANGER REGIMENT ASSOCIATION INC.

VISA/MASTER CARD NUMBER: _____ EXPIRATION: _____

/

_____ If you will not have transportation or access to someone who does, please indicate here so we have some idea of number of busses needed.

Please be sure to register with the hotel early. Also, to get the best room block prices, be sure to mention that you are with the 75th Ranger Regiment Association so that you are covered under our room block contract.

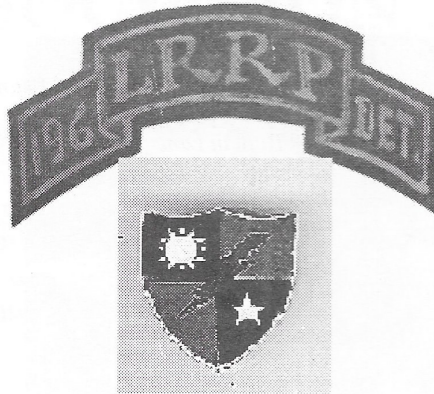
Primary Hotel: Sheraton Airport Hotel in Columbus GA, phone 706-327-6868

or 800-325-3535.

Backup Hotel: Holiday Inn North at 2800 Manchester Expressway, not too far from the Sheraton. Their phone number is 706-324-0231 or 800-605-8266.

Gunner's Corner

By John Gunner Starnes



The LRRPs and Rangers of the Vietnam War evolved due to performance as well as needs of the maneuver commanders in the theater of operations and would directly/indirectly support national strategic requirements. When LRRPs were activated in 1954, it was in Germany. LRRPs was the answer to disbanded Ranger units.

LRRPs are to give a Corp or Army level commander eyes and ears past the operating area of a traditional reconnaissance platoon.

Question: So why change it to Ranger? And why the 75th Infantry? Answer: The Merrill's Marauders Association wanted to be activated for two reasons: The first to be dubbed Ranger officially. They were never known as Ranger officially until 1969. The award of the Ranger tab to the men of the unit in 1950's was political. Powerful lobbying from the Marauders Association got them the tab. The second reason was the 75th Infantry Regiment were all legs. So how does a non-airborne unit become Airborne? Go to jump school or take in airborne units and request the parent unit be made Airborne officially, pretty slick huh? The Ranger Department did not want LRRPs at the beginning, however, that would change through heavy influence from the Marauder Association. Rational, the word Recon instead of Ranger was used to identify LRRP units.

WANTED: A FEW GOOD MEN

by Sua Sponte Staff

There are presently two board positions, possibly three, that will be up for re-election at the annual board meeting in Benning. Also, there is an opening for the President of the Association. Should you like to be considered for any of these positions, please let it known! Send your name to:

Jerry Schuster: 2005 Robin St, Altus, OK 73521
e-mail: schuster@intellisys.net
phone : 1-(405) 482-6180

ASSOCIATION NEWS

That Sucking Sound You Hear is the Vacuum from Above

by Frank Svensson



I was just thumbing through my copy of "New Webster's Dictionary" trying to figure out how to write this article. You see, we have some problems that really need to be dealt with. And the only way that they can be dealt with is for someone to take some action.

According to Webster's a vacuum is defined as "a space devoid of molecules and atoms....." At this point in time, we have no association president, technically no chairman of the board of directors, no one (at least to my knowledge) has expressed a desire to run for the two open board seats and we're back to having 2 guys running the whole show. I have to add that Al Stewart resigned from his position as board chairman for good reasons and has asked that he again be considered for that position. But overall, if we were back in Vietnam, someone would get relieved. Unfortunately, if you relieve either of the two guys doing most of the work, things would go from bad to worst. This isn't a hard thing to figure out. We sorely lack people that are willing to step forward and assume some

responsibility. Don't misunderstand this message. I am not condemning those who are unwilling or unable to volunteer their time and efforts. I'm merely stating the facts as they exist. We are in a lot of trouble from a leadership perspective.

My obvious objective with this is to both let you all know that I see a problem and to hopefully move some of you off top-dead-center and into action. Taking on a office or a board seat with the association **DOES NOT** entail a whole lot of time and almost no money. Ask any of the active board members how much they've spent on association activities out of their own pockets over the last year and it would surprise me if any of them said much more than \$20. There are exceptions: I suspect that Al Stewart spent more than that in phone calls trying to keep the board members in the loop on decisions this past year. I know that myself and Steve Johnson has. There's no doubt in my mind who spends the most out of pocket to keep us happy and going. That

would be Rick (Jammin' Jarhead) Collier. But other than that, I hold to my \$20 estimate. Then ask them how much time they've put into the association. My guess would be less than an hour. One hour of their time. That's not a condemnation/ that's all that was required of them. One hour of time and going to the board meeting at the annual reunion if they attend. Let's see, on hour of time and \$20. Is that so much of a commitment that no one will step forward and assume this awesome responsibility?

We've lost some valuable members and leader over the years. I'm not going to beat that dead horse any more. Some left for good reasons, some for bad, and some we worked to death and others just disappeared. There has been an active effort to try and include everybody in the association, its activities, and most importantly, it's decision making process. Even these efforts have not been enough for some. I would say this to all that read this article. If we continue on the present course, we stand a good chance of losing a good thing: The association **WILL NOT SURVIVE** without active, dues paying members and leaders. It's just that simple.

If this alarms you, good! If you are a current member who never goes beyond attending reunions, a past member who is disgruntled, a current member who is pissed but doesn't want to do anything but complain, a past leader who is burned out or someone who has never paid dues but still enjoys *Sua Sponte*, then you need to think about where we as an association are going. Either people step forward and assume these positions of responsibility, or we die on the vine. I just see it that way.

AN ASSOCIATION ADRIIFT

by David "Chief" Moncada

It is a known truth, reinforced by fact, that all men in G Company (Ranger) 75th Infantry Company either went to the US Army Ranger School or through the South Vietnam Recondo School (Nha Trang or Chu Lai). All who graduated from these grueling training schools demonstrated determination, courage, emotional and physical stamina, and a will to survive in combat against tremendous odds. Exceptional skills? YES...Exceptional men? Absolutely!! That these points are factual and truthful are well beyond argument - RIGHT?

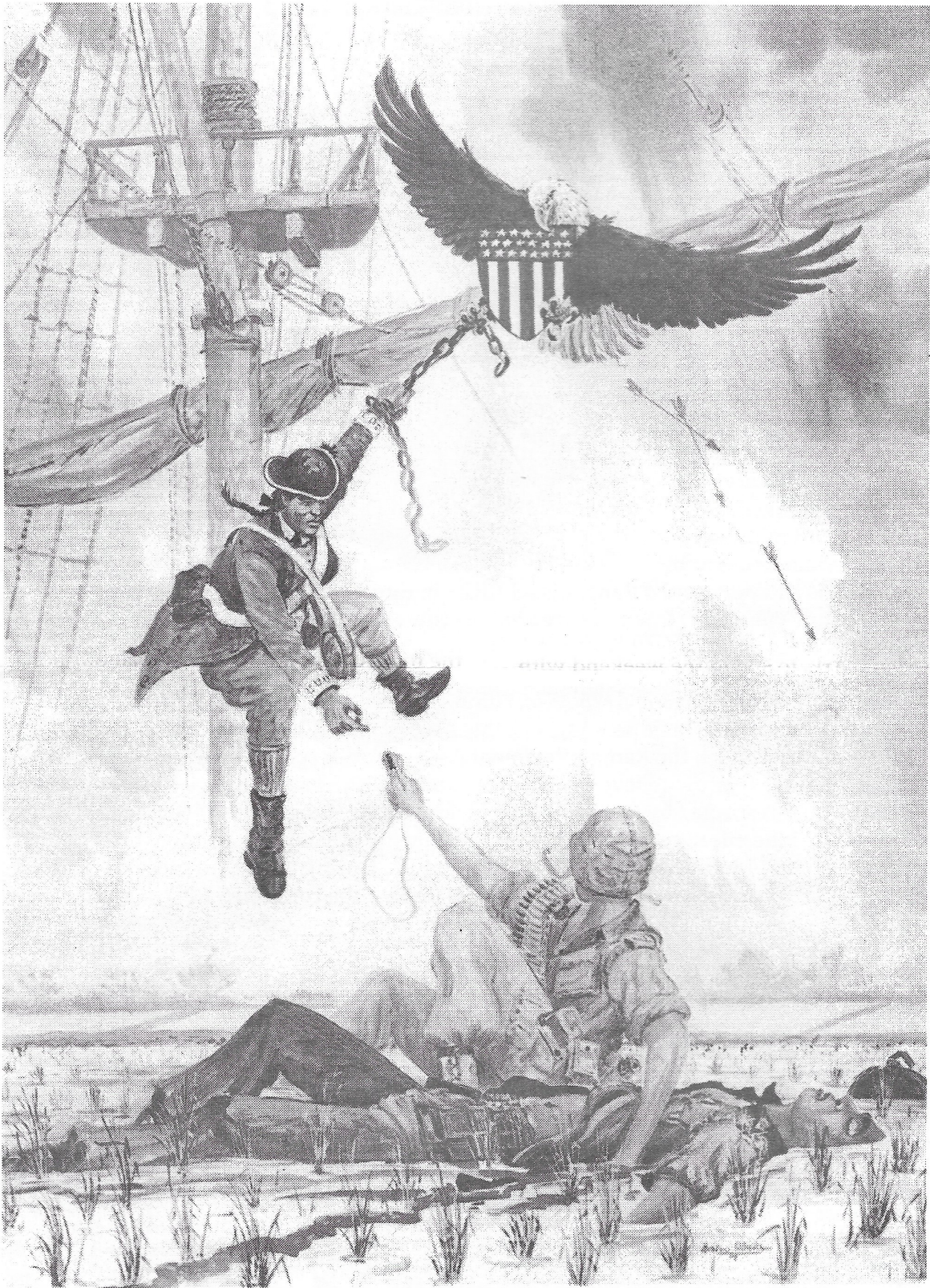
So where is our "Point Man" now? Who is leading this Patrol of Continuation? Are we to accept the possibility that G/75th Ranger Association will be but a memory? A few of us stepped forward during the early years to form the nucleus of leadership, that which gave us impetus and viability, and I'd like to think that this was "a good thing." It served then and continues to serve a worthwhile mission. Yes, our Recondo School Patches and Ranger Tabs may no longer shine with luster and brilliance of years past, but they should remain in our hearts and minds as those things which very few men can attain. Why then, have we allowed certain issues to divide us? Perhaps it's nothing more than human nature. After all, a LRRP is a Ranger, and a Ranger is a LRRP - in direct context to our collective experiences in South Vietnam. How have we allowed this and other issues to divide us these past years?

As a current boardmember of G/75 Association, I will be attending our board meeting (if there is going to be one) in Ft Benning, GA this August. I will be there to help celebrate the Ranger Memorial which the Ranger Regiment Association is sponsoring with the Ranger Training Brigade. Our own Steve Crabtree has accomplished something which should be admired and respected by any past, current, and future Rangers (this include LRRPs as well), as he led the effort to collect funds and administer obtaining individual bricks for all KIAs in Vietnam - I would not miss this for the world. During our board meeting, I intend to bring to the table some very hard questions regarding the continued existence of our association, such as, what are we to do; why are we doing ____; if we aren't, what are we to do with our assets, etc., etc?

WHERE IS OUR POINT MAN, OUR COMPASSMAN, OUR NEW CORE OF LEADERS WHO WILL LEAD US TO OUR NEXT OBJECTIVE?



Held Back by the Chains of Politics



Picture submitted by "Jarhead" depicting the last chapter of *Even God is Against Us*, by Austin Duell.

Association News

"Jarhead Rolls"

by Rick Collier

Nearly every year, the president of our country makes what is known as "the State of the Union Address". Here, in these next few lines, will be a "state of the people address".

Twenty-five years ago, and more, young men were returning home to face fellow Americans who had chosen to not only misunderstand them, but to abuse and debase them for the job they had done overseas, especially when it was found out what units some of us had served in. Based on experiences from some of my travels in the past few years, I'm happy to report that attitude and feeling no longer prevails.

One of those experiences impacted on me just north of Texarkana while on my way to Mena, Ark. to spend the weekend with the Walker family (don't tell me you've never heard of "Limey" Walker!!). I'd passed a convoy of 18-wheelers and then, what I call a pregnant roller skate, (an Isuzu, or the like), when it speeded up, stayed on my bumper for a minute, passed me with the passenger looking back toward my van. They dropped back alongside and flagged me over. Puzzled, yet curious, I complied.

The two were 19 year-old-students attending a community college in Texarkana and had questions about Vietnam: legitimate questions. I wound up being quite impressed by their already acquired knowledge on the subject. Looking back down the road behind my van, the young lady suddenly said, "Oh, my God!" Glancing back in the same direction, I immediately understood. The entire convoy of trucks had pulled off on the shoulder of the highway behind my van, the drivers climbed out. In single file, each walked up to me, stuck out his hand without any introduction



This is the sculpture now in San Antonio shared by "Jarhead" in the last Sua Sponte issue.

and said simply, "Welcome home," turned around and walked away. I nearly went to the pavement.

Since then, these kinds of experiences have reoccurred more and more. Of course, driving 80,000 miles per year for the past 4 in a van decorated like mine is an open invitation to being saluted at and flagged off the road. Could it possibly be that our non-combative veteran fellow Americans are finally welcoming us home???

When the returning Gulf War vets returned to their home, many Nam vets expressed anger and some outright bitterness. I told each and everyone, "Yes, this is their welcome home." In actuality, it comes from a sense of guilt. The people of this country have finally remembered what they did to you, and they don't know how to make it right.

Yes, the state of the people has come a long way since the late 60's and 70's. Those many years ago, they stripped us of our pride in self and each other, belittled our efforts in that small country so far from home. However, they failed to take into consideration our brotherhood bonded and tempered in the hellfire of war. But after the passage of so many, many years, the collective conscience of America has finally awakened,

Welcome Home, Brothers and Sisters!

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Ron Ridenhour Passes Away

Credits: Bergen Record Corporation and "Inside People".

Sua Sponte has been informed of the passing away of Ron Ridenhour, former member of the E-51st Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol of the Americal Division.

Ron Ridenhour, a soldier turned journalist who exposed the atrocities in the 1968 My Lai massacre and went on to become an award-winning Columnists investigative reporter. Ron Ridenhour died of an apparent heart attack while playing handball, said his friend Mary Howell.

Although Ron Ridenhour spent decades as an investigative reporter after leaving as a LRRP in Vietnam, he was known for his work in exposing events surrounding the My Lai massacre, when an Army company led by Capt. William Calley was involved in war atrocities. "The world would be a better place if there were more people in it like Ron," Howell said.

After returning home, Ron Ridenhour typed up what he had learned in three-page, single-spaced letter and sent off 30 copies to Arizona's congressional delegation and other federal official.

By 1969, an official probe was under way, and war crimes charges were brought against 13 officers and enlisted men. Calley was the only one convicted. He was sentenced to life in prison but was freed after three years.

Ron Ridenhour, at the time of his death, was working on several projects. He was a stringer for People magazine, had been working on a piece for the London Review of Books, co-produced a story on militias for NBC-TV's "Dateline," and had several speaking engagements on the 30th anniversary of My Lai in March, Howell said.

Ron had worked as an investigative reporter in Springfield, Mass., and Phoenix, Ariz., before coming to New Orleans in 1981 to work for an alternative weekly publication.

Twenty-Five Years After and then Some

by Newsletter Staff

Over a three-day period in December of 1994, educators, journalists, poets, doctors, retired military, newsmen, and others of both American and Vietnamese background gathered to participate in a Tulane University conference entitled, "My Lai 25 Years After: Facing the Darkness, Healing the Wound".

According to information received about the conference, the gathering focused on the social, political and historic effects of the My Lai atrocities, and emphasized "healing the wounds" of this dark and tragic episode of the war.

The conference featured special exhibits, numerous speakers, films and slide shows, poetry and fiction reading. Attending and participating in the conference were Ron Ridenhour and John Fritzingler.

What's In A Label

by Frank Svensson

Our new labeling system is finally complete and in use. I've been working with my computer specialist, Alan Inglis, on various changes and improvements to our data base system. Alan and I flew together years ago and he is currently one of my best friends and my family attorney. Among the improvements that we've worked on is a direct link between every individual's membership status and his/her mailing label. The label on your copy of *Sua Sponte* should look something like the following:

I.M. Badd
901-199
100 Main Street
Anytown, USA 11111-0000

The numbers below the individual name are your membership # and the latest year through which dues have been paid. Lifetime members or complimentary mailings are noted as 2050. If there are no numbers following the membership number, you've never paid dues. What's up with that? Please check for a correct match and let me know if there is a problem.

ASSOCIATION NEWS

Meeting Notice

Pursuant to Article 111, Section 1 of the Association Bylaws, the Association announces the 1998 Annual Meeting of the Company Association, E 51st LRRPS- G 75th Rangers, to be held on Saturday, August 22, 1998, Sheraton Airport Inn, Columbus, Georgia, for the purpose of transacting business and other matters brought before the Board of Directors to be held at 1:00 P.M., Eastern Standard Time, in the *Georgia Room*.

Concessions

by Frank Svensson

As some of you are aware, we've experienced some problems with our concessions systems over the past 6 months or so. I'm happy to report to you that we have straightened out our problems. Those of you that have ordered items since December should, by now, have received your packages. If this is not the case, please let me know immediately.

We do our best to make sure that we treat you, our customers, with the respect that you deserve. Part of our responsibility is to make sure that you get your merchandise in a timely fashion.

We failed in that respect for a 6-month period. I take full responsibility for that and promise that I'll do my best to make sure that it doesn't happen again.

There are some new ideas being developed for our supply system. Among these are coffee mugs, sweatshirts and tank-top-t-shirts. We'll keep you posted as we bring these items. See you in D.C. and Benning.

Washington D.C. Gathering

Where: Double Tree Hotel, 1750 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland. 20852

Reservation phone: 1-800-222-tree or 1-301-468-1100.

When: July 3-5, 1998.

Hotel Info: Rates are \$69.00 per night July 3-4 and \$111.00 for Thursday July 2, single or double occupancy. **Cut off date was 5:00 p.m. on June 12, 1998 for these rates which has expired so contact Earl Toomey if you still plan on attending.**

Contact person Earl Toomey at:

Earl Toomey
1320 SE 29th St
Cape Coral Fl, 33904

1-(941) 542-4306



ASSOCIATION NEWS

Schedule of events for 75th Regiment

Courtesy of the 75th Association Web Page

75th Ranger Regiment Assoc. Reunion 1998

Thursday, August 20, 1998

0700: "Sunrise" memorial service to dedicate the additional bricks of over 380 of our KIAs, former brothers and teammates who died fighting for their country in Vietnam, which will have been installed in the walk of the Ranger memorial. In addition, we plan to honor Grenada, 5 Panama, and 6 Somalia Rangers who died in action.

1300: A Distinguished Members of the Regiment program. (Invitation only)

1600: Ranger Hall Of Fame inductions.

1800: 75th Ranger Regiment cookout/banquet at the hangar at Lawson Field.

Friday, August 21, 1998

0900: RTB change of command.

Saturday, August 22, 1998

0900 - 1200: 75th Association Business meeting

1300 - 1500 Company G 75th-E51st Association Business meeting
Association banquet at the "Iron Works" in Columbus. Cocktails begins at 1600 with the Banquet proceedings following around 1700. Guest speaker will be Mark Bowden. Mark is the author of the acclaimed series "Blackhawk Down" which ran in the Philadelphia News in November and December 1997.

From Bruce Craft

I have special rates at the Comfort Inn in Columbus, GA 3 miles from the airport. The rates are \$50.00 per night. The other hotels are \$56 and \$60. They include a FREE breakfast for the Rangers.

The hotel and car bookings are to be done through me. So, please contact me via e-mail, fax, or phone at home. The discounted air fares are done through the main office at work. I have contracted rates with Delta Airlines only. They will give all Rangers their lowest fares plus a BIG discount for even lower rates. This is good only for those flying into Columbus and Atlanta. You must book your flights 60 days or more in advance for the lowest rates and 30 days in advance for lower rates.

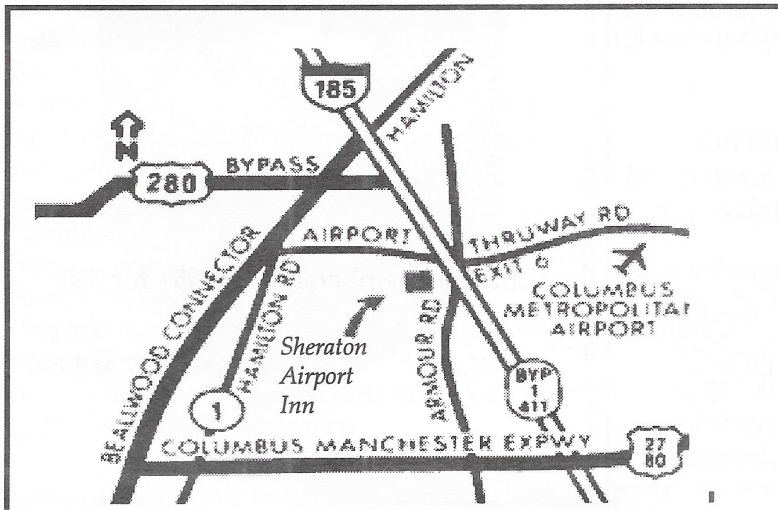
When calling our Toll-free number you must specify "Ranger Reunion" to take advantage of these special rates we have negotiated.

Also, we will have certain rates for all travel plans for the Rangers and their families all year long. When they call for any travel plans just specify for the Rangers and their families.

Here is the info to call free. You must specify Ranger Reunion to get the discount rates for the reunion.

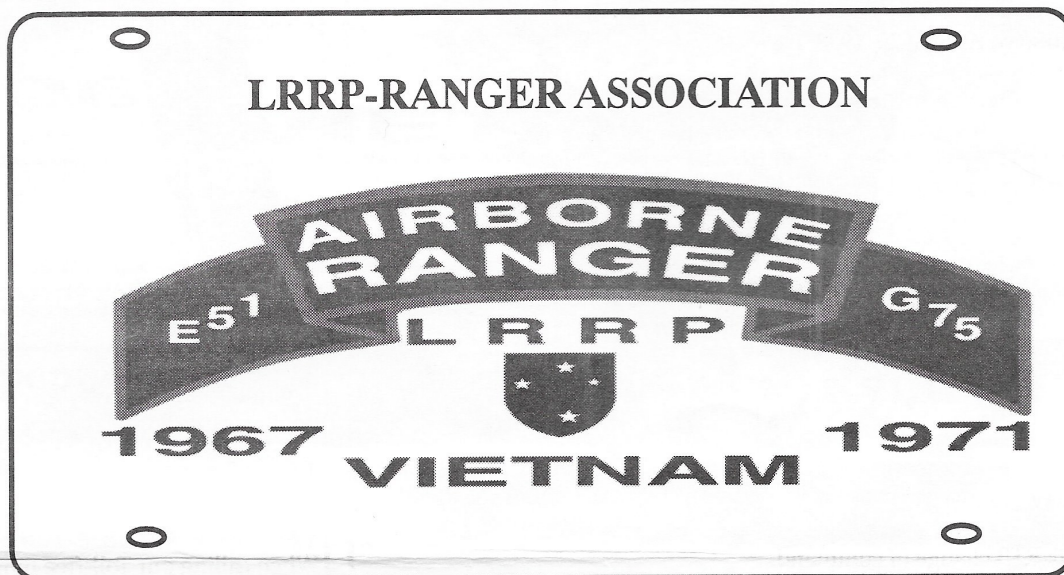
Bruce D. Craft
Martin Travel Services
Fort Lauderdale, Florida & the World
1-800-627-8468
954-779-2615 - Home
954-462-3675 - 24 hr. fax

e-mail: Ranger50@aol.com



ASSOCIATION NEWS

Doc Bronson's Concessions



Licence Plates: \$20

Hats: \$15

Polo shirts: \$26

Belt Buckles: \$10

T-shirts: \$15

Who We Were Video: \$20

Remit to:

Frank Svensson- 6964 Berkshire Avenue-Alto Loma-Ca-91701

Items and size (if applicable) ordered (all items add 10% for shipping and handling).

1998 Membership Dues

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

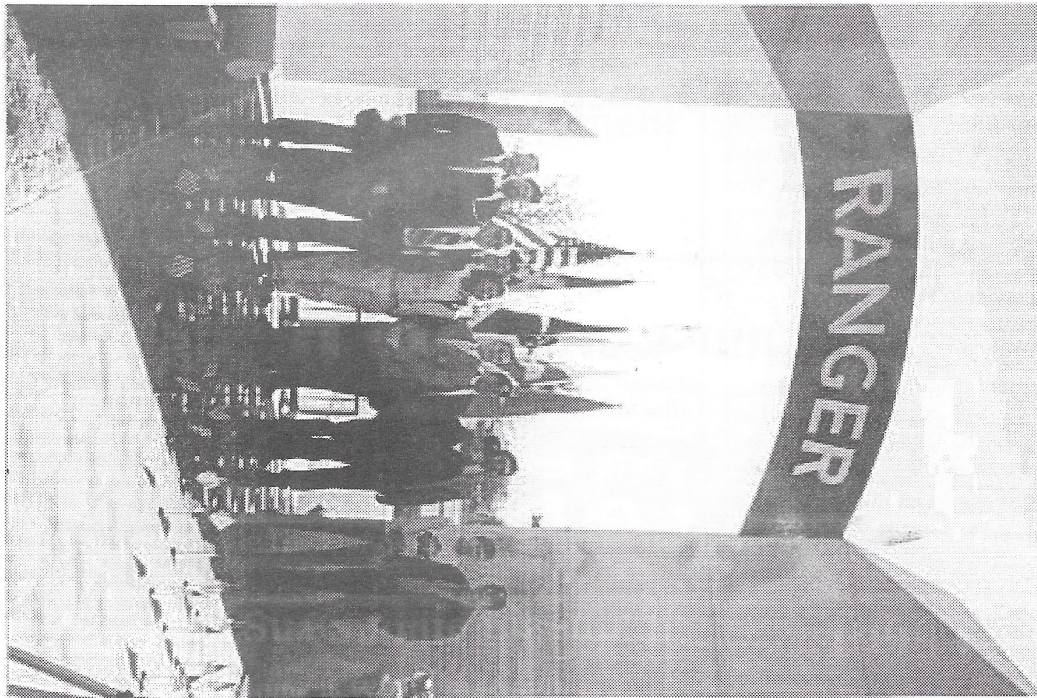
Yearly membership for \$20

Lifetime membership age 65+ for \$50

Lifetime ages 58-65 at \$100

Lifetime membership ages 52-57 at \$200

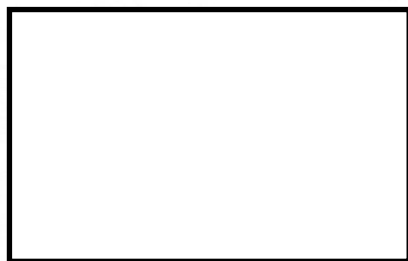
Lifetime membership 51 and less at \$250 Clip and send to Frank Svensson



*LRRP-Ranger Memoria at Benning
See you in Columbus, 98!*

Sua Sponte

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