

2016 Reunion Report

The Third reunion of the 1/83rd Artillery was held in Herndon, VA at the Westin Washington Dulles Airport Hotel, from October 13th thru 17th. The attendees included sixty Veterans of the 1/83rd, three Australians (2 from the 131 DLB, and 1 from the 106 Field Battery) plus 48 family members and friends. The attendees represented 31 States plus Australia.

For a list of the all the attendees, see the 83rd website at...

<http://www.1stbn83rdartylvietnam.com/Reunions/Reunions.htm>

The Reunion agenda was:

Date	Start Time	End Time	Description
Pre-Reunion			
Thursday 10/13/16	5:00 p.m.	11:45 p.m.	Hospitality Suite
	5:00 p.m.	7:00 p.m.	Reunion Registration
	5:00 p.m.	7:00 p.m.	Room Raffle Tickets sold
Reunion			
Friday 10/14/16	9:00 a.m.	11:45 p.m.	Hospitality Suite
	1:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.	Reunion Registration
	1:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.	Room Raffle Tickets sold
	7:00 p.m.	9:00 p.m.	PX Open
	7:00 p.m.	10:00 p.m.	Meet and Greet (with snacks) - Open to all Room Raffle Drawing at 9:00 p.m.
Reunion			
Saturday 10/15/16	9:00 a.m.	11:45 p.m.	Hospitality Suite
	8:30 a.m.		Meet Buses for Washington DC Tour. Buses leave promptly at 9:00 a.m. and return at approximately 5:00 p.m.
	Evening		On Your Own
Reunion			
Sunday 10/16/16	9:00 a.m.	3:00 p.m.	Hospitality Suite
	9:00 a.m.	5:30 p.m.	Free Time
	12:30 p.m.	2:30 p.m.	PX Open
	10:00 a.m.	11:00 a.m.	Group Discussion - Moderated by Howard Sanger
	10:00 a.m.	2:00 p.m.	Woman Only Meeting - Hosted by Sue Marchal
	5:30 p.m.	10:00 p.m.	Cocktails (Cash Bar)
	6:00 p.m.	10:00 p.m.	Dinner and Group Pictures
Post-Reunion			
Monday 10/17/16	7:30 a.m.		Meet Bus for Optional Gettysburg Tour. Bus leaves promptly at 8:00 a.m. and returns at approximately 9:00 p.m.

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The agenda was very informal, most of the time was for the Veterans to break into groups to discuss topics of interest and reconnect after many years.

On Thursday guests started arriving. Although nothing formal was planned for Thursday, the Hospitality Room was available to all. Registration and the distribution of welcome information packets were available on Thursday and Friday. Friday evening was the Meet and Greet reception. Beverages and lite refreshments were available. The evening was relaxing with good conversation and companionship and gave everyone their first chance to get acquainted or in some cases re-acquainted.

We conducted two fund raising activities which were very successful. We had a raffle to chance off two hotel rooms for the 3 nights of the Reunion and two single nights for the Reunion and a PX which was open throughout the Reunion.

Saturday was an all day bus trip into Washington DC. We did a driving tour of the major sites and we visited Arlington National Cemetery to see the Changing of the Guard, a very inspiring ceremony.

The real highlight of the day was when we visited the Vietnam Memorial Wall where we made a wreath presentation in honor of the fallen men from the 1/83rd. We processed down to the apex of The Wall led by Roger Koopman and Frank Sloan, who presented the wreath, which was followed by a moving invocation given by Frank Roettinger.

On Sunday morning, Sue Marchal hosted a womens meeting which covered several subjects including PTSD and VA Benefits. Sue is a retired VA nurse and she kindly offered to host this meeting which was a big success.

Also on Sunday morning, Howard Sanger conducted an informal session where the guys shared some their experiences and observations upon arriving in Vietnam.

Sunday evening started with cocktails and the Pledge of Allegiance. Tables were set for 10 people and the conversations were lively with many stories, big and small, being told. We had many good laughs. Pictures were taken and have been added to the website.

The “*Missing Man Table & Honors Ceremony*” was conducted to honor and remember those of the 1/83rd who never made it home from Vietnam. We read the names of those men. The ceremony also was to remember those of our Battalion who have passed away since Vietnam.

Our guest speaker was LTG (Ret.) Roger Schultz, President of the Army Historical Foundation, the fund raising arm of the planned National Museum of the Army to be built at Ft. Belvoir, VA. General Schultz was called to active duty as a member of the Iowa National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 133rd Infantry. After training at Fort Carson, Colorado, he served in Vietnam with 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment in 1969, first as a rifle platoon leader, and later as a scout platoon leader.

Lt. Schultz received the Silver Star for heroism in combat, as well as the Combat Infantryman Badge, Purple Heart (two awards), Vietnam Service Medal (with 3 Bronze Stars), Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross (with Gold and Silver Star), Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross (with Palm Unit Citation), and Republic of Vietnam Civil Actions Unit Citation.

General Schultz’s remarks included his respect for us as fellow Vietnam Veterans along with a brief description of the National Museum of the Army. At the end of his remarks each member of the 1/83d, along with our

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Australian guests, received a pin for Vietnam Veterans commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War. His remarks were appreciated and enjoyed by all.

The Reunion officially came to close after the Banquet and photos on Sunday evening and many attendees were heading home on Monday.

A special thank you goes to Johnnie Pearson who took many photos throughout the Reunion. This is 2 Reunions where Johnnie has graciously done this. His photos can be found on the website at...

<http://www.1stbn83rdartyvietnam.com/Reunions/Reunions.htm>

A post-Reunion day trip to Gettysburg was on Monday and was planned and organized by Mike Reetz. We had 53 attend and it was a very interesting day capped by a visit to the gravesite of MSG. Clarence Everett, the first member of the 1/83rd to lose his life in Vietnam in December 1966. Dinner ended our day at the Dobbins House in Gettysburg.

I announced at this Reunion that I would no longer plan and organize future 1/83rd Reunions. Mike Reetz has announced that he is willing to take on this role for our next Reunion, time and location to be determined.

I hope after reading this you will seriously consider attending our next reunion. It was a worthwhile and rewarding experience

Thank you.
Bill Taggart
1/83rd
1966-1967