

October 2015

Fifteenth Infantry Regiment
"The Old China Hands"



The DRAGON

www.15thinfantry.org

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Fellow Old China Hands,

The Army announced this summer the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team at Fort Benning will inactivate by April 2016 under Army strength reductions brought on by continued fiscal constraints. All units of the Brigade Combat Team are due to inactivate by 15 December 2015, except for 1-15 IN, which is to reorganize to an Infantry Battalion Task Force with 3 line companies, a weapons company, an artillery battery, and a headquarters company. LTC Tanner and his chain of command is working diligently to reorganize the battalion and to move to another part of Fort Benning as the garrison is planning on mothballing Kelly Hill to save money. The battalion is also absorbing new personnel from the 3rd HBCT units inactivating and bringing new company commanders on board – a very full plate indeed. He has assured me the China Room is a top priority. It has already been inventoried and is being packed for the pending move.

As you can read in LTC Minami's update, 3-15 IN had a successful training rotation to the Joint Readiness Training Center. Congratulations - this remains one of the Army's toughest tests for units! Once again we have Can Do soldiers deployed overseas, as 3-15 IN soldiers are now serving at Camp Lemonier, Djibouti, Africa and having the opportunity to train with French soldiers.

Old China Hands, our Association needs your help! We are withering away due to apathy and lack of engagement by the vast majority of our membership. We have significant openings in our officer and staff positions. We have been advertising the Dragon editor's position for almost a year, knowing that Ed Holt was giving up the position. With no replacement, I have had to prepare this edition of the Dragon with the assistance of our database administrator, Tom Heitzer. This is an unsatisfactory arrangement. No one has stepped up to replace Mike Friend as membership chairman. No one has stepped up to be our Constitution and By Laws Chairman. No one has stepped up to be our Public Relations Chairman. And we are recruiting very few new members.

This situation is untenable and reflects poorly on our Regiment's proud tradition of Can Do. As our Army continues to downsize and experience tremendous turbulence our Association needs to help the Army and our battalions in the maintenance of our proud traditions and heritage. Your leadership cannot run this Association alone and you should not expect us to. So look inside yourselves, recommit to making our Association effective and vibrant, and help us fill these critical positions. CAN DO! Tim

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<p>Public Relations Chairman Vacant Contact the President for info</p>	<p>Constitution and By-Laws Chairman Vacant Contact the President for info</p>	

Taps



Joseph L. Golden Irmo, SC 1LT, F CO, 2 BN, KW, Feb 1953-Oct 1953 DOD 3/13/2015 Reported by his wife, Jeanette	R. B. Sanford-LM Pearland, TX SFC, Tank CO, REGT, KW, Sept 1951-July 1952 DOD 6/23/2015 Reported by Scott Sanford to Rich Heller
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New Members	
Michael A. Burgess-RM Fort Benning, GA CPL, D CO, 1 BN, RF, December 2013-	Dustin D. Dobbins-RM Dixon, MO CPT, B CO, 1 BN, OIF Sept 2011-Sept 2013
John G. McGinn-RM Manassas, VA 2LT, B & C CO, 1BN, CW, June 1991-July1994	Bunyan D Broadwater-LM Chesapeake, VA CPT, C CO, 1 BN, CW July 1990-October 1991

Annual Regular & Associate Membership Dues

Annual membership dues for 2016 are now due. Check your mailing label. If you have 2015 expiration date to the right of your name your dues need to be paid for 2016. Send your check or money order to Bart Viruso at 116 Harriet Road, North Babylon, NY 11703 or go online to www.15thinfantry.org and select "Click Here to Pay Dues" button. If your membership fee is not paid by 12/31/2014 then the January 2015 DRAGON will be your last issue received and you will be dropped from the membership rolls.

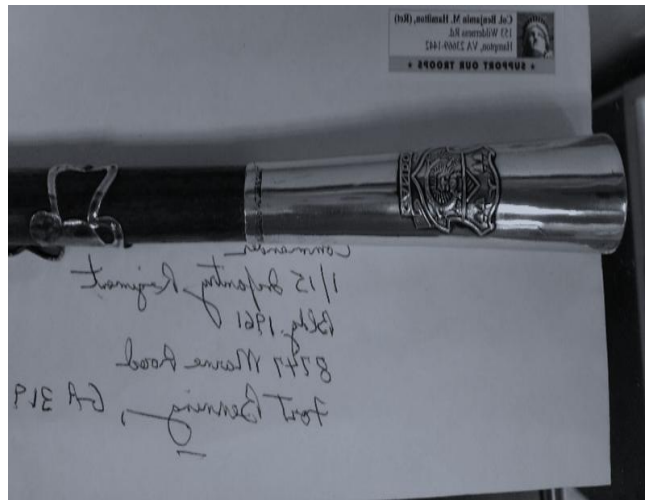
Regular Annual & Associate Membership dues are \$10.00 (Current Active Duty is \$5.00).

Multiple year payments are welcomed. Life membership rates are: To age 60--\$150; age 61 to 69-- \$120; age 70 to79-- \$100; age 80 and above-- \$50. If you are on active duty and deployed at this time contact us. We will extend your membership until you return, but you need to let us know of your deployment status. E-mail Tom Heitzer at theitzer001@charter.net to let him know of your deployment and we will extend your membership.

China Room receives new item from Old China Hand

The China Room received a new addition this summer when COL Benjamin M. Hamilton, US Army, retired donated his father's (then CPT R.G. Hamilton) swagger stick from the period of his service as Company Commander, I Company in 1932-1934. It is a truly beautiful example of the swagger sticks carried by personnel of our Regiment in China. Colonel Hamilton was a young boy in China when his father was stationed there. R.G. Hamilton later rose to the rank of Colonel and worked for Army Ground Forces Command under LTG Leslie J. McNair. As an independent observer sent to battlefields in Europe and he found the Army's anti-tank weapons inadequate. His recommendations led to the development and fielding of the bazooka and the 75mm recoilless rifle. COL Hamilton's proudest achievement however was his design of, in cooperation with the Institute of Heraldry, the Combat Infantryman's Badge – the Army's most prestigious badge! It is amazing what Can Do men have done in the history of our Army.

Unfortunately, COL Ben Hamilton passed away in August shortly after his generous donation. Monika, her Mom, and I were fortunate to meet COL Hamilton and his wonderful wife, Dibba, in their home in Hampton, Virginia in July.



Lft. Colonel Ben Hamilton, Dibba Hamilton, Tim Stoy, and Mrs. Haesook Choi and rt. COL Hamilton's swagger stick.

Active Battalion Updates

3rd Battalion – from LTC Minami: The China Battalion has continued to set the standard in the 3rd Infantry Division in conducting tough realistic training. Soldiers within 3-15 Infantry have maintained the “Can Do” attitude and have upheld the tradition of the 15th Infantry Regiment. As the fiscal year comes to a close, the China Battalion is postured for success in whatever field of battle they may find themselves.

In August, Soldiers from Companies A and D, and elements from Headquarters and Headquarters Company assumed its East Africa Response Force Mission. Located at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, the response force will fall under the Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, which helps to protect U.S. interests through military engagement and by providing military support to East African partner nations. The element at Camp Lemonnier have prepared for months for this deployment with training facilitated by other Companies within 3-15 Infantry. The participating Soldiers conducted a validation exercise which tested the Company's ability to perform specific missions such as embassy defense, target discrimination, and personnel extraction. While the Company at Camp Lemonnier maintains its combat preparedness, they will

have the opportunity to conduct joint training exercises with French Soldiers. The experience afforded to these CAN DO Soldiers is invaluable.

The entire Battalion executed training at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana from mid-August to mid-September. 3-15 Infantry conducted months of training to prepare for this culminating event that tested the systems and combat readiness of the Battalion. First, the Battalion conducted railway operations, container load out, and sensitive item inventories to ensure the equipment and supplies that enabled success would be readily available. The China Battalion conducted an air assault joint force entry, several days of counterinsurgency operations, a battalion defense and a battalion attack. Company C also participated in a Company Live Fire Exercise in conjunction with this training event. The JRTC rotation was a success, the Battalion performed admirably and excelled amongst its sister Battalions within 21BCT. The defensive positions that 3-15 Infantry constructed were regarded as the "best in the history of JRTC." This training event has prepared the Battalion for future combat or training deployments in the future.

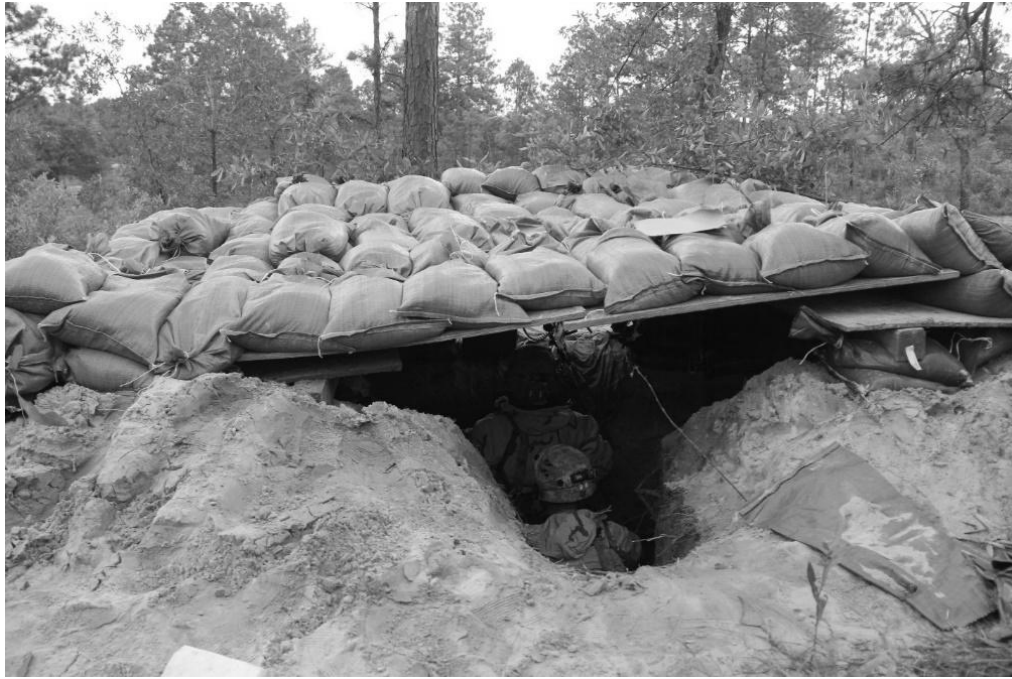
A critical aspect of developing a productive and thriving Battalion is enhancing the Family Readiness Group. In concurrence with the Battalion's training at JRTC and its mission in East Africa, the Battalion FRG conducted three events in August and September to build the unit and family morale. The Battalion FRG planned a family day at a recreation center where families were able to utilize bounce houses, laser tag, and roller skating. The FRG also planned a Walk or Run-a-Thon fundraiser to raise money for future Battalion FRG events. Finally, over 50 family members participated in the FRG Bowling night at Marne Lanes. All of the events were successful and saw many families build bonds and relationships with fellow CAN DO families.

It is an exciting time to be a CAN DO Soldier, we are postured for success in any mission we are called to do. The remainder of the year will be filled with multiple Change of Commands, specialized individual and collective training, and opportunities for growth in advising and assisting partner nations throughout the world.

CAN DO!

LTC Nathan Minami & CSM Shawn Carns

October 2015



Soldiers from Company B in their prepared fighting position during the Battalion Defense at JRTC on 2 September 2015.



Soldiers from Companies A, D, and elements from Headquarters and Headquarters Company prior to their deployment to Camp Lemonnier Djibouti in support of the East Africa Response Force Mission.

October 2015

3-15 IN to rename Company Operations Facility in honor of CSM Robert Gallagher

3-15 IN will rename its Company Operations Facility at 504 Rally Point Road, Bldg 8422, Fort Stewart, GA in honor of Command Sergeant Major Robert Gallagher on Monday, 16 November 2015 at 1300. CSM Gallagher received the Silver Star for his actions on OJB Curley on 7 April 2003. Point of contact for the ceremony is 1LT Darren Johnson, tel. 912 435 7944, email darren.l.johnson51.mil@mail.mil

Silver Star Citation for CSM Robert Gallagher

On the morning of 7 April, 2003 Task Force 3-15 was tasked to seize three key intersections leading into the heart of Baghdad, Iraq known as objectives MOE, LARRY and CURLEY. They were crucial to resupply pipeline to the two armored task forces from 2 BCT, 3 ID which had seized terrain inside Baghdad. Initial intelligence assessments of OBJ Curley indicated there would be little, to no resistance in the area. As such, LTC Stephen Twitty, TF 3-15 Commander, created Team *Zan* to seize and defend OBJ Curley under the command of CPT Harry "Zan" Hornbuckle.

Team *Zan* was a pick-up team of roughly 50 Soldiers consisting of a single Mechanized Infantry platoon, an Engineer squad, the Mortar platoon, a Scout section, and the TF Command Sergeant Major Robert Gallagher with a M88 and a HMMWV. Upon arrival at OBJ Curley, initial resistance was limited. However, as the day drew on, enemy presence and the rate of fire increased exponentially. Despite intelligence assessments on the objective, Curley was heavily defended by a large number of Syrian Jihadists who violently attacked the defensive position for 10 hours using small arms, suicide bombers, recoilless rifles and RPGs from buildings, trenches, bunkers, and rubble along-side the cloverleaf intersection.

During the firefight, CSM Gallagher was wounded when RPG shrapnel struck his left leg. Despite his limited mobility, CSM Gallagher continued to fight off the enemy, firing his M4 from behind the cover of his M88 recovery vehicle, even as he was receiving medical treatment. At the height of the battle, an estimated 200 Iraqi Republican Guard Soldiers and Syrian Fighters surrounded TM *Zan*.

In the evening of 7 April, as reinforcements from the Battalion Reserve arrived, TM *Zan* was nearly black on ammunition and fuel. As the smoke cleared, two US Soldiers had given their lives in the defensive effort and roughly a dozen were otherwise wounded. However, countless Iraqi and Syrian militants lay dead in the streets.

Over the course of the fight, CSM Gallagher showed extreme resolve in the defense of his assigned position. Despite his wounds, he continued to lead his out-numbered unit from the front and organize the defenses against a determined and well organized enemy never giving up key terrain crucial to the success of the battle.

October 2015

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