



Sixth Annual Report

173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Foundation, Inc.

31 December 2011

50th Anniversary Celebration and "Reading of the Names"

The 173d Airborne Brigade (SEP) was activated by the Department of the Army on 26 March 1963 on the Island of Okinawa. 26 March 2013 is the 10th Anniversary of the 173d Airborne Brigade's parachute assault into Iraq. It is appropriate to recognize these seminal events that impacted and defined who Sky Soldiers are and what they have accomplished.

Fort Benning is one common thread that unites Airborne soldiers of all generations. The 50th Anniversary celebration, scheduled for 21–24 March, 2013 will be held in the Columbus-Fort Benning area and will include a number of events.

The centerpiece of the four day event will occur on Saturday, 23 March at the 173d Airborne Brigade's Memorial located on the Campus of the National Infantry Museum. The day will begin with The Memorial Cleaning Ceremony, both a symbolic and a practical event. The ceremonial aspects of the cleaning contain elements of reflection, healing, brotherhood and love.

The practical elements of the Memorial Cleaning Ceremony are self-evident. The granite panels periodically require cleaning but only under the supervision of an expert.

The Foundation is pleased to announce that Ms. Lynn Evans of the Columbus Monument Company and a member of the Memorial Foundation Advisory Board will supervise this effort.

The "Reading of the Names" Ceremony is a long-standing military tradition and gives meaning to the words on our Memorial, "The Fallen Will Not Be Forgotten." At approximately 1300 hours on 23 March, at the grandstands next to the 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial, the names of each fallen Sky Soldier from the Vietnam era, and those of our Australian and New Zealand allies, will be read. This segment of the ceremony will be preceded by the presentation of the colors which will be "jumped in" along with the names of our fallen.

At 1900 hours, at the Memorial site, the reading of the names will continue as part of a candlelight service. The names of those warriors who fell in Iraq and Afghanistan will be read. The ceremony will conclude with final honors and taps.

In March 2012, on the Foundation website, information will be provided on how Sky Soldiers, Gold Star family members, and friends of Sky Soldiers can participate in both segments of the "Reading of the Names" ceremony.

While not everyone's desires can be met, the Foundation will strive to accommodate every request. Those selected for reading of the names will be notified by the end of 2012.

Periodically, members of Platoons, Companies and Battalions gather to remember and reflect on the life altering events that defined their service with the 173d Airborne Brigade in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan. The 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Foundation believes this Anniversary Celebration is an excellent venue for these gatherings and urges any group of veterans to take advantage of this opportunity to plan and conduct their own unit "mini-reunions."

Planning for the 50th Anniversary Celebration and the Memorial Cleaning and "Reading of the Names" Ceremonies is still a work in progress. The 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Foundation is working with the Columbus / Fort Benning Chapter to hold a Golf Tournament and to plan and conduct Post tours including a visit to the Airborne School. Specific details will appear on the Memorial Foundation website (www.173dairbornememorial.org) throughout 2012.

The Memorial Foundation's Spartan Club

More than 2,300 years ago, 300 Spartans stood in a rocky mountain pass at Thermopylae and for seven days held off the mighty Persian army, allowing Greek forces to muster and eventually defeat the invaders. 300 warriors preserved the cradle of civilization. Three hundred Spartan Warriors made a difference!

In July of this year, The 173d Airborne Brigade Memorial Foundation put out a call for 300 warriors to help preserve and maintain our Memorial.

Those volunteering to be Spartan Warriors were asked to pledge between \$25 and \$2,000 annually over ten years, to establish an endowment fund of at least \$300,000. This fund will be used for annual maintenance costs, repairs and infrastructure costs for the memorial over the long term, and for adding new information to the 30 granite panels.

We ask each Spartan Club Commander to pledge \$200.00 or more for each of the next ten years. We ask each Spartan Club Centurion to pledge \$173.00 for each of the next ten years. We ask each Spartan Club Lancer to pledge between \$25.00 and \$173.00 for each of the next ten years. (Continued on page 2)

173d Airborne Brigade 50th Anniversary Celebration And "Reading of the Names" Ceremony

Hosted By:
The 173d Airborne Brigade
National Memorial Foundation

Thursday, 21 March – Sunday, 24 March 2013
Fort Benning / Columbus Georgia Area

TENTATIVE PROGRAM

Thursday 21 March
Arrival and Golf Tournament (Tentative)

Friday 22 March
National Infantry Museum Visits
Tours of Fort Benning (including Jump School)
Mini-Reunions conducted by Unit Organizations.

Saturday 23 March
Memorial Cleaning Ceremony
Silver Wings Jump
50th Anniversary - Brigade Activation Commemoration
10th Anniversary - Iraq Parachute Assault Commemoration
Reading of the Names (Vietnam Era)
Candlelight Ceremony with Honors and Reading of the Names (Iraq/Afghanistan)

Sunday 24 March
Prayer Service at Memorial
Departure



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The Memorial Foundation's Spartan Club (from page 1) .

The response to our appeal has been gratifying. To date, 142 Spartans have pledged more than \$250,000, but we are still short of our goal. We need 158 more warriors to help preserve our legacy and maintain our memorial in a condition worthy of the heritage of the 173d Airborne Brigade.

The Memorial Foundation Board of Directors wishes to make clear that pledges do not constitute a legally binding obligation. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, no legal obligation exists and the Foundation will not pursue any collection activity.

Some Spartans have chosen to fulfill their pledge in one or two years. The Foundation welcomes early payments, harboring the hope that interest rates will rebound and that the interest from funds held on deposit will enhance the Endowment Fund.

Spartan Club member will receive periodic communications regarding events held at the Memorial, as well as receiving recognition in our annual programs and reports and on our Website.

As with the Spartans at Thermopylae, the burden of preserving our memorial and heritage is shared equally regardless of position, title and rank. Membership in the Club will be limited to 300 and is open to all Sky Soldiers, their families, commercial sponsors, Association Chapters, and military and patriotic organizations.

Spartan Club application forms are available on the Memorial Foundation Web Site (www.173dairbornememorial.org) or can be obtained by contacting either Floyd Riester at Ries173ABN@aol.com or Ken Smith at kvsmith173@gmail.com. As always, donations to the Memorial Foundation's general fund are welcome.



173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

% COL (R) Kenneth Smith
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Louisburg, NC 27549-7089

INFORMATION AND CONTACT DATA

FOR INFORMATION REGARDING THE MEMORIAL PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT

www.173dairbornememorial.org

OR CONTACT US BY MAIL AT:

**The 173d Airborne Brigade
National Memorial Foundation
1160 Lake Royale • Louisburg, NC 27549**

MEMORIAL FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kenneth V. Smith

J. Robert Wolfgang

Don Dali

Craig Ford

Sharon Goens

Ray Ramirez

Floyd Riester

Karen Riester

James Yarbrough

Make Checks payable to the "173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Foundation" and mail them to the address above. Donations may also be made electronically—please visit our Website for more information.

The 173d Airborne Brigade National Memorial Foundation, Incorporated, is a Georgia Corporation. It has been designated a 501(C)3 entity by the Internal Revenue Service. Donations may be tax deductible. Please consult your accountant.