Chapter 18, The Larry Pierce Chapter of the 173rd Airborne Brigade Association hosted an outstanding 2017 Brigade Association Reunion in Oklahoma City, OK, May 17 – May 21. Over 600 Sky Soldiers and guests and at least 13 Chapter 1 members attended.

I am happy to report that there were over 100 Global War on Terrorism Sky Soldiers there. These young Sky Soldiers are a credit to our nation for continuing the tradition and spirit of the Airborne. They are the future of our Association.

Jack Kranchick and I arrived on May 16th so we could observe and help set up the registration and vendor areas. This experience will be invaluable to our Chapter in planning and executing the 2018 173rd Airborne Brigade Association Reunion, in Alexandria, VA.

We appreciated Chapter 18’s staff for allowing us to participate in their operations meetings. We gained valuable insights for our reunion from them.

Among highlights of the Oklahoma City Reunion were trips to Fort Sill, the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum, the 45th Infantry Division Museum, and the well-attended Ladies Luncheon.

I attended the Board of Directors (BOD) Meeting. The General Membership Meeting was conducted on Saturday morning, May 20. It was announced that Terry Aubrey the serving Associate.
Message from the Chapter President

This past quarter, the Chapter has actively fulfilled our vow to remember our fallen Sky Soldiers and to support Sky Soldiers and U.S. Veterans. Our activities included:

- A Gathering of The Herd in Falls Church, VA on 11 March.
- The 2018 173rd Airborne Brigade Association Reunion Committee meetings on 25 March, 29 April, and 27 May.
- Donation of $500 to the U.S. Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) Foundation on 4 April.
- Donation of $500 to the Fisher House at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC) Bethesda on 25 April.
- The Reading of the Names of Vietnam-Era Sky Soldier KIAs (1965-1966) and all Global War on Terrorism, at the Airborne Brigade Marker, Arlington National Cemetery, on 6 May.
- Chapter members attended the 2017 173rd Airborne Brigade Association Reunion, in Oklahoma City, OK, 17-21 May.

I appreciate the support of Chapter members, family members, and guest who supported the above events.

Upcoming Events:

- Our Chapter is the Host Chapter for the 2018 173rd Airborne Brigade Reunion.
- There will be a Gathering of Herd in Williamsburg, VA, 15 July. Please join us. (See information in this issue).
- Our annual Chapter BBQ will again be at my house, 12 August. – See information in this issue. A flyer will be sent out. Save the date and please attend.

To date, we have 79 active Chapter members, who have paid the annual fee. If you did not receive the 2017 Chapter Fee letter please contact me. Your support is vital us.

Airborne All The Way,

Joe

Chapter Donation to Fisher House

It’s been some time since wounded Sky Soldiers have been hospitalized at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center (WRNMMC). This respite has allowed the Chapter to reorient its charitable giving to Association-affiliated scholarships and The Fisher House Foundation, at WRNMMC, in Bethesda, MD.

So it was on April 4, 2017, when a contingent of seven Sky Soldiers met with Ms. Jessica Reddish, an assistant to the Bethesda Fisher House Manager. This was the third time Chapter Members have visited and donated money to this worthy charity.

Ms. Reddish took the Band of Brothers through the facility while she explained how the Fisher Houses came to be and what services it provides. The Fisher House program was established by Zachary Fisher and his wife Elizabeth. The Fisher Houses provide residence for military and veteran family members while the Service Member/Veteran is being treated.

There are 71 Fisher Houses located on 24 military installations and 29 Veteran Affairs medical centers. To date, the program has offered more than six million days of lodging to more than 305,000 service families.

Everyone was impressed with the quality the facility and dedication of the staff to serving the families of those being treated at WRNMMC.

After the tour, Mack Brooks, Garrett Clemons, Bill Connolly, Joe Flesch, Henry Persons, and Jim Yarrison watched as Ed Anthony presented Ms. Reddish with the Chapter’s $500.00 donation. Ms. Reddish accepted the Chapter’s gift and the Sky Soldiers left knowing that they have met their obligation to serve. We look forward to the next opportunity to support the Fisher House Foundation.

L. to R.: Garrett Clemons, Jim Yarrison, Ms. Reddish, Joe Flesch, Ed Anthony, Henry Persons, Bill Connolly, and Mack Brooks (not pictured)
The Hospitality Room and the Vendors Area were well-attended each day. There were opportunities for specific unit events, in the evening of May 18 & 19.

The Association Banquet was held on May 20th. COL William L. Ostlund gave an outstanding speech. On Sunday, May 21, the Association Chaplin conducted a solemn Memorial Service to departed Sky Soldiers. Following the memorial service, the attendees departed to their homes.

Our Chapter intends to continue the tradition of hosting an outstanding 2018 Sky Soldier Reunion. As our Reunion planning progresses, I intend to ask more of our members to step forward to make our Reunion the best Reunion ever.

Joe Flesch,
President Chapter 1
(Sigholtz Capital Chapter)
Gathering of the Herd: Saint Patrick’s Day

Some would say it was a wee bit brisk, but never you mind the weather. March 11 t’was a bonnie day indeed, as the band of brothers and their spouses gathered to celebrate Saint Patrick’s Day. Celebrating the patron saint of Ireland’s day has been a long-standing tradition in the Chapter and appropriately this Gathering of the Herd was celebrated at Ireland’s Four Provinces Restaurant in Falls Church, VA. Our gathering included Ed & Connie Anthony, Mack Brooks, Garrett & Susan Clemons, Chuck Evans, Joe & Jeane Flesch, Roy Gilmore, Harvey Jester, Henry & Brenda Persons, Alan Phillips, Trudy Surut and Jim Yarrison.

The fifteen Sky Soldiers and kin sat amongst the pictures of heroes from the Emerald Isle, Irish tartan patterns, Irish sport team memorabilia, and other artifacts associated with Hibernia. One could be excused if one thought, for the moment, he had been transported to that magical isle. One could even hear a bit of the bogue from a nearby table.

It was the top of the morning and many ordered breakfast. Some of the more adventurous boldly selected from the lunch menu. Some even ordered Irish stout to quench the thirst and recognize the occasion. Ere long, the ordering was done, the grace was said, the Pledge of Allegiance made, and the blend of Chapter meeting and the socializing began.

The Chapter President updated the group on the 2017 and 2018 Reunions. He encouraged Members to volunteer to help and some did so. He listed several upcoming Chapter activities and encouraged participation. In short order, Chapter business was set aside for casual conversation. All too soon, the meal was over and all but the camaraderie remained. As we left the Four Irish Provinces, I dare say some of the Irish stayed with us. I could have sworn that I saw many a Sky Soldier leaving with a jig in his step and a lilt in his voice.

Ireland’s Four Provinces Falls Church, VA

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**Chapter 1 Financial Report**

**As of 31 May 2017**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Balance as of 27 February 2017</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Receipts (Dues, fees, and donations)</td>
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<td>Brigade Dues (1) @ $24.00</td>
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<td>Staples (March &amp; Annual Meeting Packets (25)</td>
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<td>Brigade Annual Fees (1)</td>
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It was unseasonably cool, windy, and yes, rainy, for late April, but the Chapter had approved donating $500.00 to Army Heritage and Education Center (AHEC) Foundation and the ten-man Chapter contingent was there to honor that commitment.

Chapter participants included Mack Brooks, Joe Flesch, Roy Gilmore, Jack Kranchick, John Kingeter, Henry & Brenda Persons, Bob Read, and Terry & Patrice Walsh.

April 25, 2017, was not the first time the Chapter had donated to AHEC. On September 14, 2015, the Chapter approved donating one of two signed Iwo Jima Monument lithographs and $550.00 to the AHEC Foundation.

Believe it or not, there is 173d Airborne Brigade history that connects it to the Marine Corps. The 4th Battalion, 503rd Infantry, 173d Airborne Brigade Separate, was attached to the Marine Corps 3rd Division and conducted joint operations with them in Da Nang, South Vietnam, in late 1966. The 4th Battalion, 503rd received the Presidential Citation (Navy) for excellent service during the attachment.

The lithograph was signed by Felix de Weldon, the designer and sculptor of the Iwo Jima monument. The Chapter’s donated copy of the Iwo Jima lithograph still hangs at AHEC.

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The Heritage Trail is USAHEC’s outdoor museum. It covers about one mile of replicated structures and artifacts from nearly every era of Army history, including fourteen full scale exhibits from the French and Indian War to the War on Terrorism. It was a memorable experience for all.
As we get ready for the 2018 Reunion, our web site will be a repository the meetings and documents the 2018 Reunion Committee generates, including Meeting Minutes, project plans, and other key items.

I’ve just uploaded a copy of the briefing our Chapter President gave to the Brigade Association Leadership on our plans and strategy for the Reunion.

We also plan to capitalizing on information available on the Brigade web site, so you will have a local source of information.

As the Web Master, I’m always looking for ways to make the site more useful to members and the general public.

When asked about our Chapter, one of the things I give them is the web address and tell them to go to http://173dairbornechapter1.org

I’ve gotten lots of positive feedback, especially from folks wanting to browse back issues of “The Herd Word.”

You can always contact me at cajungene@gmail.com with ideas or suggestions on how to make the site better.

Gene Cartier
50th Anniversary: Back to Dak To

Gene Cartier and B Company 1/503 have organized a back to RVN tour to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Dak To. Highlights of the tour include visits to Vung Tau, Saigon, Dak To (Hills 823 & 875), and LZ English.

**Monday 13 Nov**
Drive thru An Khe to Qui Nhon. Overnight Avani Resort and Spa, Qui Nhon.

**Tuesday 14 Nov**
Drive to An Khe. Visit local area, then drive back to Quy Nhon. Overnight Avani Resort and Spa, Qui Nhon

**Wednesday 15 Nov**
Visit Cham Towers en route to Tuy Hoa. Overnight Avani Resort and Spa, Qui Nhon

**Thursday, 16 Nov**
Drive to Bong Son, then Hoi An. Stop en route to hamlet, specializing in making tapioca powder and rice papers. Arrive Quang Ngai; brief visit to My Lai. Then onto Chu Lai airport and the Americal Division base. Overnight Lantana Hoian Boutique Hotel.

**Friday 17 Nov**
Visit Da Nang and fly to Saigon. Farewell Dinner Saigon. Overnight Rex Hotel, Saigon

**Saturday 18 Nov**
Check out of the hotel, transfer to airport, by way of Mall for souvenir shopping. Fly back to San Francisco

Tour cost is $3960 per person, including R/T air, all transportation, most meals and lodging, and most in-country costs.

Adult children and spouses are welcome. Hotel accommodations are upscale.

Gene is going with his daughter, a retired 82d Airborne First Sergeant.

To find out more e-mail Gene cajungene@gmail.com or contact Valor Tours at valortours@yahoo.com or at 800-842-4504.

Gene considers this trip to be a way to share his experiences with his daughter to honor the Sky Soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice. It is also a way to see how Vietnam has changed since we were there.
YOU VOLUNTEERED ONCE

VOLUNTEER AGAIN!

HELP THE CHAPTER HOST A SUCCESSFUL 2018 REUNION
CONTACT JOE FLESCH
SIGHOLTZ.CAPITAL.CHAPTER@GMAIL.COM