

Steel Tigers 1/77th ARMOR ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Volume 4

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Standing Firm Then

Standing Firm Now

Words from our President...Jerry Brown:

Mounted Warriors of the 77th Armor Regiment Assemble in Colorado Springs

July 24-27, 2003...Jerry Brown

2003 is finally here and this is the year for our next 1/77th Armor Reunion. The first two reunions were great events that were completely organized and run by Patricia Johnson and Tom Rosser. Patricia and Tom are the founders of the Steel Tigers, 1/77th Armor Association and they will always have a special place in our hearts and we intend to honor them both at the Reunion Banquet.

The 1/77th Armor Reunion Committee, Bruce Goldsmith, Leonard Renoux, and Pat Sullivan, have put together an outstanding lineup of events. The Reunion will be held in Colorado Springs, CO, near Fort Carson. Colorado Springs is a great place to take a break because it is such a beautiful area and has loads of things to do and see.

To those who have not attended a 1/77 Armor reunion, I highly recommend it. In my experience, the last two Reunions have been more like family reunions than a gathering of old warriors. Since I had never attended a veteran's type reunion before the Reunion at Ft. Knox in 2000, I did not know what to expect. I had nothing in my data files to download and 31 years had passed since I had last seen or talked to these men.

Back in April 2000, when Patricia first contacted me, I was highly suspicious. What I came to realize is that she really did care about us old Vietnam Vets and she was a woman of action. In just a few months, with the help of Tom Rosser, they did the impossible; they organized a Reunion and over 100 veterans and their family members showed up. Men brought their wives, children, and grandchildren.

It is difficult to explain what draws old warriors to such activities. It is not an ego trip that gives one a free ride to brag, but instead every man I talked to considered themselves humbled by their wartime experience. There was much laughter, hugs, and some tears. Those bonds that were forged so many years ago by the fire of combat were still very strong. Mostly men reminisced about the good times and special friendships developed during the hardships of war.

There was enough time to talk and socialize on a personal basis and there were other special activities planned because after awhile our jaw muscles needed a rest. The wives and other family members appreciated a break also.

One of the most memorable experiences was the dedication of the 1/77th Armor Memorial at Ft. Knox. Patricia had much difficulty in coordinating Post support for our service, but like a bulldog, she would not let go until the Army provided the support. As at previous Reunions, we will remember those 1/77th Armor men who died in the service of their country.

All in all, Kathie and I had a super time. I had an opportunity to talk to men who I respect and admire, and with men who shared a living space smaller than a "Volkswagen Bug" for several months. I had an opportunity to make new friends and to catch up on the lives of old friends.

This year, at the business meeting, there is some important business that will need to be conducted such as ratification of the Association Constitution and elections of new officers. We will need good men to lead the Association over the next two years, so please consider volunteering for President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Membership Chairman, Chaplain, and Judge Advocate.

I hope you will consider coming this year. If you are coming, register early. See you at the Reunion. We are going to have a great time...God Bless America and the American Soldier.

Jerry A. Brown...President

A Word from our Founder...Tom Rosser

Well, everyone it's getting closer to July 24th, the start of the 1/77th Armor reunion in Colorado Springs, Co. When I started looking for my tank crew I never dreamed it would turn into what it has. God Bless you Patricia Johnson. This will be our 3rd reunion and hopefully the biggest and best. For you tankers that have never been to Colo. Springs or Ft. Carson, it's a beautiful city with a lot to do and see. As you all know Ft. Carson is where the 5th shipped out from in July of '68. A lot of us are excited about seeing the city and base again. I hope all of you that have never been there are looking forward to going also. After all, the 1/77th Armor reunions are for all of you no matter where you shipped out from.

For you first timers that are coming and those that are undecided, I can truly say that you won't be disappointed. Some of you might have fears about old memories rising. Judging from the first two reunions and watching old buddies reunite for the first time; the memories will be good ones. It's hard to describe the feelings we all have when seeing our buddies for the first time in 30 odd years. For me it was an experience I will never forget and I hope you will feel the same way. So, if you're having any thoughts about not attending please put them aside. I know you'll have a great time.

I hope everyone is looking for your buddies that haven't been found yet to get the word out about the reunion. Let's make this the biggest reunion yet. I'm looking forward to seeing a lot of new faces in July.

Thanks...Tom Rosser, C Co. 3rd Platoon 68/69

Reunion Update

Plans for our 2003 reunion are coming together nicely and hopefully will make for a great time. The reunion is set for July 24-27, 2003 in Colorado Springs, Colorado...previous home of the 1/77th Armor and the 5th Infantry Division. Plans call for arrival on Thursday afternoon, with hotel check-in around 4:00PM. Reunion registration and our hospitality room will be located just off the main lobby.

Our reunion will be held at the beautiful Radisson Inn Colorado Springs North, located near the Air Force Academy, at Academy Blvd. and I-25. The address is 8110 North Academy Blvd., Colorado Springs, CO 80920. For toll free reservations, call 1-800-333-3333. Their website is: www.radisson.com/coloradospringsco_north. Please contact them for you reservations as soon as possible. We only committed for 70 rooms, so first come first serve! Be sure to mention that you're with the Steel Tiger 1/77th Armor Assn to get the special rate. Reservations made after June 24, 2003 will not get the lower rate.

The price for the hotel is \$89/room. The price includes free use of the swimming pool, Bally's Fitness Center and Goldy's Gym. The price also includes a free breakfast buffet each day from 6:30-9:00 AM. The hotel is located

near a major shopping mall, which has many dining establishments to suit all prices and tastes. The hotel also has a very nice restaurant that has good food at moderate prices. The lower rates are good from July 21st through July 29th, for any of you who might like to have a longer stay.

For those of you who will be arriving by air, the hotel provides free shuttle to and from the airport. Because of airport security, you will need to call the hotel and request transportation prior to picking up your luggage. This allows the hotel time to send the shuttle and meet you in a reasonable time...30-45 minutes from time of call.

There are many places of interest to see in the area, including Pike's Peak, Royal Gorge, The Air Force Academy, and Cripple Creek. You might want to give the Convention and Visitor's Bureau a call for more information. There toll free number is 877-745-3773 or you can visit them on the web at: www.coloradosprings-travel.com.

Included in this newsletter is a listing of our planned activities. You will notice that you have the opportunity to pick which of them you want to participate in. We hope that you can participate in all of them! The only required payment is the registration fee. That fee includes administrative costs for putting on the reunion, a sit-down dinner at our banquet, afternoon hors d'oeuvres, and a commemorative gift for each veteran. Please fill out the registration form and return it to our treasurer, whose address is noted on the form. We would appreciate having your registration forms in by Feb 15, 2003, which will help in planning...reservations and transportation for the various activities. If for some reason you need to cancel prior to the event, your money will certainly be refunded. If we have fewer than 20 people signed up for any activity, it will be cancelled and money refunded. For both the NORAD and Ft. Carson activities you will need to have a picture ID of some sort...military ID, drivers license or passport. When registering for the NORAD event, please include your full legal name on the form; they will be conducting a security check!

Sunday's activity will include a special non-denominational worship and remembrance service followed by our business meeting. Please allow time to attend both of these important events.

For more Steel Tiger information, please check our new website, located at: www.steeltigers.org, where you will find copies of both newsletters, a guest book, links to other related sites, and a photo gallery to which you might want to contribute.

[Download the 2003 Reunion Registration Form Here](#)

2003 Reunion
Description of Activities/Items

[Download the 2003 Reunion Registration Form Here](#)

Friday 7/25/03, 1300-1530

NORAD Tour (Optional)

This is a tour of the North America Air Defense facility located in Cheyenne Mt. It includes bus transportation both ways. This is a walking tour and is not wheelchair accessible. Picture ID required.

Friday 7/25/03, 1730-2200

"Flying W" Ranch (Optional)

This activity includes bus transportation both ways and is wheelchair accessible. The evening includes a western bar-b-que dinner, country/western entertainment and music.

Saturday 7/26/03, 0900-1300

Tour Ft. Carson (Optional)

This is a tour of Ft. Carson, including a static display of the 3rd ACR equipment and a visit to their museum. Lunch will be available in their dining facility but is not included in the price.

Bus transportation is again provided and the activity is wheelchair accessible... Picture ID required

Saturday 7/26/03, 1830-2330

Banquet (Required for each person)

This includes a sit down dinner which includes coffee, tea and dessert. A cash bar is also available. Group pictures will be taken at this event.

Shirts (Optional)

The shirts are a "Polo" style shirt, with a collar. A small Steel Tiger Assn emblem will be on the left chest area. Colors available are white and black. Sizes from S to XXXL.

Note: Dress for all functions is casual except for the banquet where Sunday dress may be considered.

2002 Historians Report

To the members of the 77th Armor Association:

The following is a report on the progress made serving you, the membership. Compiling general information for use in a detailed oral history has been slow. Two and a half years ago I had chosen to focus on the 1st Battalion's actions during the second half of 1968. The material received so far has been interesting, especially the individual accounts and memories. This includes one who served in Japan/Korea, of course the bulk of the membership, the group that served in Vietnam and one on active duty in Bosnia. Your contributions are what will make this oral history come alive.

The following is my present plan. Enough material has been compiled on the life and times during mid September 1968, so I have been able to start a rough draft. My plan is to continue with the 1st Battalion's early months in Vietnam with chapters covering the arrival on the Beach, the move in-land, the first clashes with the enemy and the first large operations of 1968. If you have any thoughts on these matters please contact me. If there is any interest in compiling this unit's history from WWII to present, contact me so we don't duplicate our research efforts.

I want to thank those of you who have taken the time to contribute written or oral material enabling us to start compiling the unit history. I understand it is difficult to bring up some memories, let alone understand what and why this all occurred. In this person eyes, this has been one of our Nation's most recent tragedies.

Other items being worked on are as follows: One member could not recall the names of his crew after a certain date. We have requested a roster to help him recall. We have not been able to contact him to inform him that we now have this roster. Another member is in the process of getting verification about a wound received. We have requested a group of morning reports in hopes his treatment was documented. There are cases where members are looking for other individuals. We request rosters for the purpose of assisting the Membership Chairman in finding these individuals. The response time from the Records Center has been slow this year.

Storage of the association documents: A fire/smoke/water safe document box has not been purchased yet for the Association Archives. I have a pile of folders full of documents. I have the go-ahead from the Association's Board to price these boxes. To be honest, I have not started the research. A member who is an expert in record preservation and storage will be guiding me in this area. I have covered all costs generated so far.

This closes the 2002 Historian's Report. Thank you for giving me this space in the newsletter, enabling me to communicate to the membership. If you have any requests, concerns, or questions, please contact me by phone. My home number is (845) 255-0815 after 6pm EST for you west coasters. Your call is important; so please leave me a message with your name and phone number and I will return your call.

Be safe, stay well and keep in touch. Thank you and best regards,

Robert Rushforth, Association Historian.