



# THE 13TH (C) ENGINEER

**"IN OMNIA PARATUS"**

**NEWSLETTER OF THE 13<sup>TH</sup> ENGINEER (C) BN. ASSN.**

## **PRESIDENTS CORNER – GENE REED**



**AUGUST 2025**

**Dear Members,**

As your president, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the loss of our fellow member and Quartermaster, Tom Cotton. Tom served this association faithfully and brought not only dedication but also a lot of heart and humor to everything he did. He was a friend to many of us, and his passing is a reminder of how much we mean to one another in this brotherhood.

We all know our membership is getting older. That's not something to shy away from—it's part of the journey we share. But it does call on each of us to think about the future of the 13th Combat Engineer Association and how we can keep its spirit alive for the years ahead.

In the coming weeks, we will begin the process of naming a new Quartermaster. If you feel called to serve, or if you know someone who would be a good fit, please reach out. This role is vital to keeping our operations running and continuing the work Tom cared so much about.

Most of all, I encourage each of you to stay connected. Check in on one another. Share your stories. Attend when you can. This association exists because of the bonds we formed during our service, and those bonds are as strong as we choose to make them.

Thank you for your continued support and for honoring Tom's memory by carrying on the mission we all share.

**Gene Reed President  
IN OMNIA PARATUS (In All Things Prepared)  
13th Engineer (C) Battalion Association**

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Avon, Indiana 46123



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**2026 (Dues Expire)**



## Kids Say the Darndest Things

A new teacher was trying to apply her psychology courses. She started her class by saying. "Everyone who thinks you're stupid, stand up!" After a few seconds, Little Johnny stood up. The teacher said, "Do you think you're stupid, Little Johnny?" "No, Ma'am, but I hate to see you standing there all by yourself!"

## POW/MIA DAY

The third Friday in September is recognized as POW/MIA Day, a time to remember the sacrifices of prisoners of war (POW) and servicemembers who are missing in action (MIA). Until 1979, there was no formal recognition day set aside for these important men and women in uniform.

## GOVERNING BOARD ELECTED OFFICERS

<b>PRESIDENT</b> Harry (Gene) Reed "E" Company 1970 8833 Prairie Trail Avon, IN 46123 317-268-6455 genereed@genereedins.com	<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b> Laurens (Buddy) Beckwith "D" Co. 64-65 SGM (Ret) 317 Pine Lake Drive Harvest AL 35749 256-724-0378 Beckwithlaurens@gmail.com	<b>IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT</b> Arlie E. Ellis "B" Company 65-66 825 Rose Street Crowley, TX, 76036 469-554-1324 essec5793@gmail.com
<b>TREASURER</b> Harry (Gene) Reed "E" Company 1970 8833 Prairie Trail Avon, IN 46123 317-268-6455 genereed@genereedins.com		<b>SECRETARY</b> Earl C. Shatzer "HQ" Company 67-68 1962 Tanglewood Ln. Vacaville, CA 95687 707-689-0874 shatzer@pacbell.net

## ADVISORY COUNCIL

<b>ADVISOR</b> Levi O. Haire – (Rabbit) "H&S" Company 49-51 358 Wingate Road Ellijay, GA 30540 706-635-2528 rabbit713e@ellijay.com	<b>CHAPLAIN</b> vacant	<b>QUARTER MASTER</b> Temporarily filled by Gene Reed
<b>NEWSLETTER EDITOR</b> Earl Shatzer "HQ" Company 67-68 1962 Tanglewood Ln. Vacaville, CA 95687 707-689-0874 shatzer@pacbell.net	<b>CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE</b> <a href="https://13thengineerbn.com/">https://13thengineerbn.com/</a>	<b>WEBMASTER</b> Earl Shatzer "HQ" Company 67-68 1962 Tanglewood Ln. Vacaville, CA 95687 707-689-0874 shatzer@pacbell.net

**Will Rodgers Speaks**

I doubt if there is a thing in the world as wrong and unreliable as History. History ain't what it is, it's what some writer wanted it to be, and I just happened to think I bet ours is as crooked as the rest. I bet we have started just as much devilment as was ever started against us – maybe more.

Will Rogers March 1932

### Border incidents involving North and South Korea since the Korean Armistice Agreement of July 27, 1953.

February 16, 1958: North Korean agents hijacked a Korean Air Lines flight Changlang en route from Busan to Seoul and landed it in Pyongyang; one American pilot, one American passenger, two West German passengers, and 24 other passengers were released in early March, but eight other passengers remained in North Korea.

**VICE PRESIDENT CORNER LAURENS (BUDDY) BECKWITH**

Sadly, today we have lost another member of the association. Our Quartermaster, Tom Cotton, passed earlier this month. He had undergone surgery and was in rehab in Kansas. According to the Doctors, while his rehab was progressing slowly, he was making progress. I know we all have his wife, Caroline, and the family in our thoughts and prayers. I have lost my phone and text friend. Really going to miss those afternoon chats.

Regarding our current business, in the last newsletter, we asked for suggestions on where we might go this September for our annual 13th get-together. At this point, the officers haven't come up with any concrete plans for a location or for them. Last September we had three members at Ft Leonard Wood. I assume if we do anything this year, the response will be about the same. If anyone would like to suggest a location or any interests that might be considered, please let us know.

I have another Korea-related interest. I served with Co D at Camp Casey in 1964-65. I've heard that in the late 1950s, one of our companies had a small compound located north of Camp Casey, across from the airfield and the MSR, but outside Casey's main perimeter. I've searched through many old photos of the area but haven't been able to locate this compound. If you have any information or pictures of it, I would be very grateful if you could share them.

Buddy Beckwith, Vice President

**Border incidents involving North and South Korea**

In the upcoming newsletters, I'll be sharing individual incidents along with specific details.

Most of these incidents took place near either the Korean Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) or the Northern Limit Line (NLL). This list includes engagements on land, air, and sea, but does not include alleged incursions and terrorist incidents that occurred away from the border. A total of 3,693 armed North Korean agents have infiltrated into South Korea between 1954 and 1992, with 20% of these occurring between 1967 and 1968.

Many of the incidents occurring at sea are due to border disputes. In 1977, North Korea claimed an Exclusive Economic Zone over a large area south of the disputed western maritime border, the Northern Limit Line in the Yellow Sea. This is a prime fishing area, particularly for crabs, and clashes commonly occur, which have been dubbed the "Crab Wars". As of January 2011, North Korea had violated the armistice 221 times, including 26 military attacks.

## Treasurer's Corner - Gene Reed



As your Treasurer, I want to extend a warm greeting to all our members. It's an honor to serve our association in this capacity, and I'm committed to ensuring the financial health and transparency of our organization.

Our association thrives on the dedication and participation of its members, and your contributions, both in spirit and financially.

I encourage you to reach out if you have any questions regarding our financial standing or any other matter related to the association's treasury. Your input is always valued, and I believe that open communication is key to our collective success.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the 13th Engineer Association.

As of **July 23, 2025**, our current account balance stands at **\$10,668.69**. This balance reflects the continued support and dedication of our members.

We understand that keeping track of dues can sometimes be tricky. If you're ever unsure about your current payment status, please don't hesitate to contact Earl Shatzer or me directly. We're here to help!

I want to extend a sincere and heartfelt thank you to all the members who have already paid their dues, and especially to those who have made additional donations. Your generosity is truly vital to the continued strength and activities of the 13th Combat Engineer Association.

Please note that all donations to the association are tax-deductible, providing an excellent way to support our mission while receiving a tax benefit.

If your membership fees are outstanding, please note that our secretary has already sent a reminder via letter or email.

Engineers Clear the Way  
Gene Reed- Treasure  
317-268-6455  
genereed@genereedins.com

**Korean War Facts**  
**There were 131 Medals of Honor awarded during the Korean War**



**Secretary Corner – Earl Shatzer**

707-689-0874 [shatzer@pacbell.net](mailto:shatzer@pacbell.net) or [eshatzer@13thengineerbn.com](mailto:eshatzer@13thengineerbn.com)



I want to talk about my friend and fellow member of the 13th Combat Engineer Association, Tom Cotton. He was truly one of a kind, known for his quick wit and colorful remarks. Beneath that lively personality was a kind and generous heart, always ready to show compassion when it mattered most. Tom was also incredibly determined. One of his goals on his bucket list was to skydive, and he achieved it at the remarkable age of 80.

I first met Tom at the 2018 Branson reunion. Our connection deepened at the Huntsville reunion, where we shared memorable conversations, often listening to his engaging stories from his time in Korea. Tom had a remarkable personality. From Huntsville onward, we had many phone calls where I would remotely assist him with computer tasks. He was always incredibly gracious and thankful for the help. I'm genuinely going to miss him, our calls, and our collaborative online sessions.

Joining the Association in January 2013, Tom dedicated himself to the role of Quartermaster starting in December 2016. Despite initially considering retirement in April 2018, he remained committed to the position. During the 2018 Branson reunion, as I was elected Webmaster, Tom confirmed his intention to continue serving as Quartermaster, a role he held until his passing this July.

With respect and appreciation,  
Earl Shatzer, Secretary, 13th Combat Engineer Association



*"Me future is seated, Willie. I'm gonna be a peressor on types of European soil"*

## North Korea Facts

After severe flooding in 1995, North Korea suffered a major famine, in which the U.S. estimates that between 275,000 and two million people died. More than 13 million people, including 60% of children in North Korea, still suffer from malnutrition.

**Geoje-do POW CAMP (continued from Page 07 April 2025 newsletter)**

In early May, after a tour of inspection, Col. Robert T. Chaplin, Provost Marshal of the Far East Command, reported that Communist prisoners refused even to bring in their own food and supplies. The possibility of new incidents that might embarrass the UN Command, especially at Panmunjom, led Ridgway to remind Van Fleet that proper control had to be maintained regardless of whether screening was conducted or not. As it happened, Van Fleet was more concerned over the fact that Colonel Chaplin had not informed Eighth Army of his impressions first than he was over the prisoner-camp situation. There was no cause for "undue anxiety" about Geoje, he told Ridgway on 5 May. Actually, Eighth Army officers admitted freely that UN authorities could not enter the compounds, inspect sanitation, supervise medical support, or work the Communist prisoners as they desired. They exercised external control only, in that UN security forces prevented the prisoners from escaping. Thus, on 7 May, the Communist prisoners and the UN appeared to have reached a stalemate. The former had interior control but could not get out without violence, and the latter had exterior control but could not get in without violence. With the cancellation of forced screening, the UN Command indicated that it was willing to accept the status quo rather than initiate another wave of bloodshed in the camps. The next move was up to the Communists.

**Capture of General Dodd (7–10 May 1952)**

It did not take long for the Communist prisoners to act. As investigation later revealed, they had become familiar with the habits of General [Francis Dodd](#), the camp commandant, during the spring and by the beginning of May they had readied a plan. Well aware that Dodd was anxious to lessen the tension in the camp, they also knew that he often went unarmed to the sally ports of the compounds and talked to the leaders. This system of personal contact kept Dodd in close touch with camp problems, but it exposed him to an element of risk. Only the guards carried weapons on Geoje, and there were no locks on the compounds' gates, since work details were constantly passing in and out. Security personnel were not authorized to shoot, save in case of a grave emergency or self-defense, and were not permitted to keep a round in the chamber of their guns. In the past, the Communists had successfully kidnapped several UN soldiers, and although they had later released them unharmed after Communist complaints had been heard, the practice was neither new nor unknown. Since the technique had proved profitable in previous instances, the prisoners decided to capture the camp commandant. Taking advantage of his willingness to come to them, they made careful plans.

On the evening of 6 May, members of a Communist work detail from Compound 76 refused to enter the enclosure until they had spoken to Lt. Col. Wilbur R. Raven, commanding officer of the 94th Military Police Battalion and the compound. The prisoners told Raven that guards had beaten members of the compound and searched them for contraband. When he promised to investigate the charges, they seemed satisfied, but asked to see General Dodd on the next day to discuss matters of importance. Raven was noncommittal since he did not wish the prisoners to imagine that they could summon the commandant at will, but he promised to pass the message on to the general. The prisoners indicated that they would be willing to let themselves be listed and fingerprinted if Dodd would come and talk to them. Dodd had just been instructed to complete an accurate roster and identification of all the remaining prisoners of war on Geoje and hoped for the chance to win a bloodless victory. Colonel Raven finished his discussions with the leaders of Compound 76 shortly after 14:00 on 7 May and Dodd drove up a few minutes later. As usual they talked with the unlocked gate of the sally port between them and the Communists gave a series of questions concerning items of food and clothing they required. Then, branching into politics, they inquired about the truce negotiations. First, they attempted to invite Dodd and Raven to come inside and sit down so that they could carry on the discussion in a more comfortable atmosphere. Raven turned down these suggestions bluntly since he himself had previously been seized and held. More prisoners had meanwhile gathered in the sally port and Dodd permitted them to approach and listen to the conversation. In the midst of the talk, a work detail turning in tents for salvage came through the sally port, and the outer door was opened to let them pass out. It remained ajar and the prisoners drew closer to Dodd and Raven as if to finish their discussion. Suddenly, they leapt forward and began to drag the two officers into the compound. Raven grabbed hold of a post until the guards rushed up and used their bayonets to force the prisoners back, but Dodd was successfully hauled inside the compound, whisked behind a row of blankets draped along the inner barbed wire fence, and hurried to a tent that was prepared for him. The prisoners told him that the kidnapping had been planned and that the other compounds would have made an attempt to seize him if the opportunity had arisen.

**Geoje-do POW CAMP (continued from Page 07)**

The Communists treated Dodd well. The prisoners did all they could to provide him with small comforts and permitted medicine for his ulcers to be brought in. They applied no physical pressure whatsoever, yet they left no doubt that Dodd would be the first casualty and that they would resist violently any attempt to rescue him by force. Under the circumstances, they hoped for Dodd to co-operate and help them reach a bloodless settlement, and Dodd complied. He agreed to act as go-between for the prisoners and relayed their demands to the outside. A telephone was installed, and upon Dodd's recommendation, representatives from all of the other compounds were brought to Compound 76 for a meeting to work out the demands that would be submitted to the UN Command. Colonel Craig attempted to use one of the senior KPA officers, Colonel Lee Hak Koo, to persuade inmates of Compound 76 to release Dodd, but Lee remained and became the prisoners' representative as soon as he had entered the compound.

With the successful completion of the first step, the Communists began carrying out the second phase. Within a few minutes of Dodd's capture, they hoisted a large sign announcing: "We captured Dodd. As long as our demand is met, his safety is secured. If a brutal act such as shooting happens, his life is in danger." The threat was soon followed by the first note from Dodd that he was all right and asking that no troops be sent in to release him until after 17:00. Apparently, General Dodd felt that he could persuade the prisoners to let him go by that time. In the meantime, word had passed swiftly back to General Yount and through him to Van Fleet of the capture of Dodd. Van Fleet immediately instructed Yount not to use force to effect Dodd's release unless Eighth Army approved such action. Yount, in turn, sent his chief of staff, Col. William H. Craig, by air to Geoje to assume command. Repeating Van Fleet's injunction not to use force, Yount told Craig: "We are to talk them out. Obviously, if somebody makes a mass break, we most certainly will resist... But unless they attempt such a thing, under no circumstances use fire to get them out. Wait them out. One thing above all is to approach it calmly. If we get them excited, only God knows what will happen." The fear of a concerted attempt to break out of the compounds and the resultant casualties that both the UN and prisoners would probably suffer dominated this conversation and mirrored the first reaction of Dodd's superiors to the potential explosiveness of the situation. A major uprising would mean violence and unfavorable publicity that would be useful to China and North Korea. Dodd's actions in Compound 76 complemented this desire to localize the incident.

As the Communist representatives met on the night of 7 May, Dodd urged that no troops be employed to get him since he did not think he would be harmed. Dodd's plea coincided with the wishes of Yount and Van Fleet at this point. Colonel Craig agreed to remain passive. On the next day, the prisoners presented Dodd with a list of their demands. The chief preoccupation of the prisoners during this early phase concerned the formation and recognition by the UN of a prisoner organization with telephone facilities between the compounds and two vehicles for intra-compound travel. Despite not having the command authority to make any agreements, Dodd falsely promised to deliver most of the items of equipment that the prisoners asked for. After the meeting concluded, the representatives wanted to return to their compounds and report to the rest of the prisoners; thus, another delay ensued. General Yount refused to allow them to leave until Van Fleet overruled him late in the afternoon. By the time the representatives discussed events with their compound mates and returned to Compound 76, evening had begun. While the prisoners were carrying on their conversations, Colonel Craig sent for trained machine gun crews, grenades, and gas masks. The 3rd Battalion, 9th Infantry Regiment boarded LST at Busan and set out for Geoje. Republic of Korea Navy picket boats ringed the island in case of a major escape attempt, and Navy, Marine, and Air Force planes remained on alert. Company B of the 64th Medium Tank Battalion was detached from the US 3rd Infantry Division and started to move toward Busan.

(to be continued)

Note: more articles about the Geoje-do POW camp will be continued in the upcoming newsletters.



## **NEWSLETTER EDITOR CORNER – EARL SHATZER**

Newsletter Editor Email: [shatzer@pacbell.net](mailto:shatzer@pacbell.net) (707) 689-0874



Greetings, fellow 13th Engineers!

As your newsletter editor, I'm constantly reminded of the incredible bond we share and the rich history of our battalion. My goal with each issue is to bring our community closer, keep you informed, and most importantly, help us all reminisce about the experiences that shaped us.

This month, we're sharing "a touching tribute to our fallen comrade, Tom Cotton," But what truly makes this newsletter special are your stories and memories. I encourage each of you to reach out, whether it's a photo from your service, a funny anecdote, or an update on what you're doing now. This is *our* newsletter, and your contributions are what truly bring it to life.

Thank you for being a part of this enduring legacy.  
Sincerely,

Simply email your suggestions to **shatzer@pacbell.net**, and we'll do our best to include them in upcoming issues. You can also write or call me using the information listed below.

Earl Shatzer, Newsletter Editor  
1962 Tanglewood Ln, Vacaville, CA 95687  
Reach out directly at **707-689-0874**.

### **Sign Up for Our Electronic Newsletter**

**Email Me:** Send a message to [shatzer@pacbell.net](mailto:shatzer@pacbell.net) and I will add you to our mailing list.

### **Interesting North Korea Facts**

- North Korea officially worships Kim Jong-Il, the de facto leader of North Korea (the official leader is still his father, Kim Il-sung, who died in 1994). North Koreans are told he was born on Mount Paektu, like a mythical God. Russian records, however, show that he was actually born in Siberia.
- Kim Jong-Il is only 5' 2" tall. He wears four-inch lifts in his shoes to compensate for his short stature.



### KOREAN VIGNETTES A FACE OF WAR

<b>Thomas</b>	<b>A.</b>	<b>Batts</b>	<b>RA14313749</b>
First Name	MI	Last Name	Serial No
"Tom"	745	5 April '30	Cpl
"Nickname"	MOS	Birthday	Grade/Rank
B1/31/7	18 Sep '50-7 Dec '50		Sharpesburg, NC
Unit(s)	Duty Tour(s) in Korea		Home
Purple Heart, 4OLC	Combat Infantry Badge	NDSM	UNSM OM-J
Medals & Awards			
Korean Campaign Service Medal, 2 stars		PUC, OLC	ROK PUC

### SURRENDER ? NEVER!

I enlisted in the Army in 1948, and trained as a mountain and ski trooper in C Company, 14th RCT at Camp Carson, CO. I volunteered for Korea 26 Jun 1950. I was placed on O/S orders next day. In Japan I was assigned to B Company 31st Infantry and made the Inchon landing. We saw some action at Suwon and Osan. We were then ordered to Pusan where we loaded aboard the Private Patrick(CMH), landing at Iwon on 4 Nov. We patrolled a big hunk of northeast Korea until Thanksgiving. On Nov 28 we left Hungnam for Koto-ri. We were supposed to join Col McLean's Task Force on 29 Nov. To our surprise, we were suddenly made a part of Task Force Drysdale. We left Koto about 0800, 29 Nov.

We fought Chinese all morning and kept the road open. About 1500 hours, trucks from X Corps came to pick us up. We went up the road a mile or so and ran into a Chinese ambush. Later I learned that we were in Hellfire Valley. Ordered off the trucks, we ran to the riverbed, 50 or 60 yards away. The truck driver began firing his .50 caliber MG. In just a few minutes the MG was turned on us by the Chinese. Lt George Snipin, platoon leader of the 3d platoon said, "Batts, kill that son-of-a-bitch." I squeezed off a round from my BAR. The ChiCom fell to the ground. I stayed there 15 or 20 minutes. There were 3 trucks out in front that had .50 caliber MGs. As fast as the Chinese manned the guns, I picked them off, I don't know how many, I didn't count, but there were 20 or 30, maybe more. It seemed like a lot at the time. After every burst, I would move a few feet. After a time, the Chinese quit trying to use those guns.

A Lt, a Sgt and a Cpl were manning a hill furrow that ran down to the river. The Lt said he wanted to speak to me. He asked me my platoon. I told him "Third." He said, "The bald eagle has surrendered," meaning Capt Charles Peckham. I said I knew. About that time a mortar shell hit in the hill furrow and blew me 10 or 20 feet in the air. I remember flying through the air, but don't remember hitting the ground. When I came to, my BAR was across my lap. I crawled back to the hill furrow. I could not recognize anything that was a even part of a man. I went back up the river to where Lt (Alfred J.) Anderson, 1st platoon leader, had set up his CP. There were other men there who were fighting off the Chinese. I asked if anyone had a grenade. Somebody handed me one. I pulled the pin and threw it at some Chinese who were closing in. A Chinese soldier no more than 5 feet away stood up and put three rounds from a burp gun through my right hand. Lt Snipin cut him down with his carbine. I couldn't handle my BAR with one hand. I gave it to Popolo and told him to go to the hill furrow, kill any thing that moved, and not let any Chinese cross that hill furrow. I never saw Popolo again. I moved up river a bit and crawled into a blown out spot. I took out my Colt .45 and was able to kill every Chinese that came by my hole. Several fell on me when I shot them. I piled the dead bodies up on the rocks, and to my right and left in front of me. I was wounded three more times that night. At first light somebody came by and said that Lt Anderson wanted everybody ready because we're going to get out of here. I looked across the river. I saw the river iced over, rocks sticking out of the ice, hills on the other side and some trees.

We were a sorry looking bunch, but we got across the river and back to Koto-ri without loss of any more men. I was taken to the aid station, where there were wounded men from B/31, Royal Marines, and G/3/1 being treated. I was air evacd to Hagaru Marine Hospital, then to Hungnam and on a C-54 to Osaka Army Hospital on 7 December. I was hospitalized through March '51 and discharged May '52.

Lts Anderson and Snipin were superior officers. Had Lt Anderson been our CO, the outcome may well have been different in that ambush. He was a leader. He also had sand in his craw, as did Lt Snipin.

## **The Battle of Bayonet Hill: Lewis Millett and the ‘Wolfhounds’ at War in Korea**

The last major bayonet charge in American military history took place in Korea on February 7, 1951. The charge was carried out by the men of Easy Company, 27th Infantry “Wolfhounds,” during the Battle of Bayonet Hill. The soldiers were led by Cpt. Lewis Millett, who had been awarded the Silver Star during World War II. Millett’s actions in Korea would lead to an even higher award.

### **Charge!**

In early February 1951, Millett led Company E through a rice paddy into an attack against Chinese and Korean forces, around Hill 180 near Soam-Ni, Korea.

After two days of battle, Millett and his men were pushed back to the base of the hill and again were facing heavy enemy fire. He knew he needed to get his men to higher ground.

On February 7, one of the company’s platoons got pinned down by heavy fire. Millett had read a translated enemy report that claimed U.S. troops weren’t willing to engage in close combat, and that was something he wanted to prove wrong.

Millett turned to his men.

“We’re going up the hill,” he yelled. “Fix bayonets. Charge! Everyone goes with me!”

Millett ordered the other two platoons forward and, putting himself at the head of the charge, fixed his bayonet onto his rifle. He then ordered everyone to do the same and follow him up the hill in a close-combat assault that became the last major American bayonet charge in military history.

During the fierce fight, Millett stabbed two enemy soldiers with his bayonet, threw a bunch of grenades, then clubbed and bayoneted his way through more enemy fighters as he urged his men forward.

On the way up the hill, Millett ran ahead of his soldiers, having to dodge both enemy and friendly grenades. He was able to dodge eight of them, but the ninth left shrapnel in his legs and back. Millett continued to the top and signaled to his men that the hill was theirs. Nine soldiers and approximately 100 enemy soldiers were killed during the battle.

Millett refused to be evacuated for his wounds until the hill was firmly secured.

For his bravery and leadership, Millett received the Medal of Honor on July 5, 1951, from President Harry S. Truman during a ceremony in the White House Rose Garden. Three other soldiers, Col. Raymond Harvey, Master Sgt. Stanley Adams and Sgt. Einar Ingman also received the high honor that day.

Millett continued with his military career. He attended Ranger School and later led a 101st Airborne Division school for reconnaissance training. He served in several special operations advisory roles during the Vietnam War and helped found the Royal Thai Army Ranger School.

Always Honorable

Millett retired from the Army in 1973. He went on to serve for more than 15 years as the honorary colonel of the 27th Infantry Regiment Association. He died Nov. 14, 2009.



**WEBMASTER CORNER – EARL SHATZER**

"Ever wonder what goes into keeping our 13th Engineer Association website running smoothly? As your webmaster, it's a bit like being a digital quartermaster! I manage the 'supply lines' of information, ensuring our news, photos, and historical records are always accessible to you. From wrestling with broken links to optimizing for various devices, it's a constant effort to ensure our online presence is welcoming and functional. My goal is to make it as easy as possible for you to connect with each other and our shared history."

Being your webmaster isn't just about technical upkeep; it's about being a digital historian for the 13th Engineer Association. Every article, every photo, every 'Taps' notice we post helps to build a lasting archive of our shared experiences and the incredible service of our members. It's a privilege to ensure that the stories of the 13th, from the front lines to our reunions, are preserved for future generations and remain accessible to all of you, no matter where you are."

**A Call to Action/Engagement:**

"While I handle the 'nuts and bolts' of the website, its true value comes from you, our members. I'm always looking for new content – photos from past reunions, stories from your time in the 13th, or even ideas for new sections. Think of me as your digital editor, ready to help you share your memories and insights with the rest of the association. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have something you'd like to contribute or any suggestions for improving our site."

**Earl Shatzer Webmaster 707-689-0874 or [shatzer@pacbell.net](mailto:shatzer@pacbell.net)**

**Guestbook Entry**

THOMAS A. SCOTT 04/13/2025

I served in the 13th Engineer Battalion at Fort Ord, California, from 1985 to 1988, in B Company, 2nd Platoon, 2nd Squadron. It was an honor to be the 1st and only light fighter course. The men I served with will always be my sapper brothers for life. God speed and God bless America us. Thank you, SP/4 Tom A. Scott, US Army (retired).

**Border incidents involving North and South Korea**

- March 6, 1958: An American F-86 Sabre is shot down near the DMZ. The pilot (Leon Pfeiffer) was captured and released after 11 days.
- May 17, 1963: An American OH-23 helicopter was shot down near the DMZ. The crew (US Army Captains Ben W. Stutts and Carleton W. Voltz) were captured. They were released a year later on May 16, 1964.



## **BLOODY BATTLES OF THE KOREAN WAR**

### **Heartbreak Ridge**

Heartbreak Ridge was the site of one of the Korean War's bloodiest battles. Ben Loudermilk wrote in [worldatlas.com](http://worldatlas.com): The Battle of Heartbreak Ridge was a month-long campaign in the Korean War, lasting from the 13th of September until the 15th of October 1951. The site of the battle was a seven-mile-long (11-kilometer) stretch of land over three sharp peaks, separated by steep valleys. The area is slightly north of today's Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) at the 38th Parallel that separates the two countries on the Korean Peninsula. United Nations (UN) troops had driven back the North Koreans and Chinese from Bloody Ridge a mile to the south, and the Communists had entrenched themselves at Heartbreak Ridge to slow their advance. The United Nations had initiated the entire offensive in the area in an effort to disenfranchise the Communists of this important staging area for their attacks on South Korea. [Source: Ben Loudermilk, [worldatlas.com](http://worldatlas.com), April 25, 2017]

"Communist North Korea had Chinese support on the ground for its attack on South Korea. To repel the attack, the United Nations had sent a force consisting chiefly of American and French troops, supported by nearby South Korean, Dutch, and Filipino forces. Major General Clovis Byers, commander of the United States X Corps, and the 2nd Infantry Division commander, Brigadier General Thomas Shazo, led the U.S. forces. M4 Shermans from the 72nd Tank Battalion were called into play as well to bolster the infantry's efforts. On the Communist side, the North Korean 6th, 12th, and 13th Divisions, and the Chinese CCF 204th Division led by Wenfang Luo, were under the ultimate command of Wen Niansheng of the Chinese 68th Army.

"After two weeks of stalemate, the Americans determined that a lasting victory lay in destroying the resupply depots in the Mundung-ni Valley just west of Heartbreak Ridge. Anticipating this, the Chinese sent reinforcements to that very location. On the 11th of October, 30 M4 Shermans of the 72nd Tank Battalion, under the cover of air support and artillery barrages, raced across the valley. By coincidence, the Chinese 610th Regiment of the 204th Division was caught in the open, and was decimated. The following day, a larger armored force continued the relentless attack. Over the next two weeks, the Shermans overran all the supply depots, cutting off the Communist troops on Heartbreak Ridge. American and French forces finally eliminated all resistance in the hills through direct troop assaults by 13 October. Although the Americans and French suffered heavy casualties totaling over 3,700 men, the North Korean and Chinese forces lost an even more astronomical number of soldiers, in excess of 25,000.

"Heartbreak Ridge was never again lost to enemy action after this decisive battle. Subsequent Communist assaults were bloody but unsuccessful and, although the United Nations' forces lost tens of thousands of troops, they did so without relinquishing the high ground. That the U.N. was willing to endure such terrible casualties for this objective demonstrated to the Communists that they would not win the war through brute force or intimidation. Furthermore, deprived of prime territory needed for their assaults on South Korea, the Communists realized that their dreams of unifying Korea under Communism was likely to become a lost cause. This convinced both sides to return to the armistice table.

## Exchange of prisoners of war during the Korean War in 1953

Little Switch and Big Switch were the code names for the large exchange of prisoners of war during the Korean War in 1953. It was preceded by Operation Little Switch, which involved the exchange of sick and wounded prisoners.

Negotiations aimed at securing the release of POWs, or at the very least the exchange of sick and wounded, began early in the Korean War but were bogged down over the question of voluntary repatriation, or whether a prisoner had the right to refuse repatriation to his home country.

These talks dragged on until March 1953, when Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai stated on Peking radio that the Communist governments were prepared to discuss an exchange of sick and wounded POWs under the terms of the 1949 Geneva Convention Relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. The agreement was signed on 11 April 1953, with Operation Little Switch beginning on 20 April at Panmunjom.

In total, the operation freed 684 United Nations Command (UNC) prisoners in exchange for 6,670 from the North Korean and Chinese forces.

After Little Switch, UNC negotiators continued to press for the release of the rest of their prisoners, and in June 1953, another agreement was signed that paved the way for Operation Big Switch. This operation, which took place from 5 August to 6 September 1953 in a neutral zone near Panmunjom, involved the exchange of 12,773 prisoners (primarily South Koreans) for 70,183 North Koreans, 5,640 Chinese, 3,597 Americans, and 945 British POWs. In accordance with the ideological nature of the Korean War, the UNC prisoners were received at a compound named Freedom Village.

### Will Rogers on Peace

The greatest contribution to peace in the world would be an international clause. "Any nation can have a nice local revolution any time it sees fit without outside aid or advice from America or England." August 20, 1933

I have a scheme for stopping war. It's this, no nation is allowed to enter a war till they have paid for the last one.  
August 1928



## THE 13TH ENGINEERS IN WORLD WAR II

(continued from April 2025 newsletter page 16)

### Victory# 1

The battle was over, but the Aleutian campaign was not. The units were regrouped and reorganized, new clothing was issued and refitted, and preparations were made for the invasion of the next island, Kiska.

"A" Company of the 13<sup>th</sup> was attached to the 17<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regimental Combat Team (RCT) for the operation. "C" Company, attached to the 53d RCT, came up to the battle area directly from stateside. Headquarters Company and "B" Company remained on Attu, building roads, piers, and more permanent shelters for the incoming garrison forces.

Fortunately, Kiska proved to be a dry run. The Japanese had taken advantage of a break in the weather and the absence of the US Navy blockading ships (which were off refueling and replenishing their ammo). They were safely evacuating their garrison of 5,180 men.

The 13th Engineers, however, made productive use of the landing on Kiska by defusing mines, booby traps, and explosives left by the departed Japanese troops. Again, the lack of good communications and the close coordination required for an operation such as Kiska resulted in unnecessary casualties.

### Friendly Fire!

Troops became confused in the fog and general disorder. Firing started, and casualties resulted from "friendly fire" among the landing forces. Neither of the two companies of the 13<sup>th</sup>, however, suffered any casualties from the defusing operations of the unfortunate melee.

### We depart the area!

On 4 September 1943, the 7<sup>th</sup> Division and the 13<sup>th</sup> Engineers boarded transports and said a "not unhappy" goodbye to the tundra, wind, and cold of treeless Attu and Kiska. We were bound for the tropical island of Hawaii under the command of LTC Harold K. Howell.

## Korean War

Japan ruled over Korea from 1905 until the end of World War II, after which the Soviet Union occupied the northern half of the peninsula, while the United States occupied the southern half. Originally, they intended to keep Korea together as one country. But when the United Nations called for elections in 1947, the Soviet Union refused to comply, instead installing a communist regime led by Kim Il-Sung. In the South, meanwhile, strongman Syngman Rhee became president. Both Kim and Rhee wanted to unify Korea under their rule and initiated border skirmishes that left thousands of dead.

**Temporary Quartermaster – GENE REED**

It is with deep respect and heavy hearts that we remember our friend and fellow member, Tom Cotton. Tom served as Quartermaster for the 13th Combat Engineer Association with unwavering dedication. He kept our operations organized, ensured our members had what they needed, and consistently brought his own unique wit and warmth to the job.

Tom was more than just our Quartermaster. He was a kind soul, a loyal friend, and a living example of the spirit of this association. His colorful humor and his willingness to help anyone who needed it will be missed by all of us.

We are grateful for the years of service Tom gave, and we extend our heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones.

As we move forward, we do so in Tom's memory, honoring his contributions by keeping this association strong and true to the values he embodied.

Rest easy, Tom. Your boots left a mark that won't be forgotten.

Gene Reed, the association's President and Treasurer, is currently serving as the temporary Quartermaster while a permanent successor is identified.

Please also note the updated address for ordering products, listed on our new Quartermaster page (page 17).

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO  
13<sup>TH</sup> ENGR. (C) BN. ASSOCIATION**

**MAIL TO:  
GENE REED  
8833 Prairie Trail  
Avon, IN 46123**

**Tom Cotton "D" Co. 1958 – 1959**

**Tom passed away on July 6, 2025, in Augusta, Kansas. He will be laid to rest in Muskogee, Oklahoma. Funeral arrangements are still pending.**





**These items are in stock and come with free shipping when you order.**



## Product Order Form

You are now able to order products from the website and pay using a credit card via PayPal.



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CAP – BLACK NEW STYLE  
QTY \_\_\_\_\_



\$3.00  
ASSOCIATION PATCH  
QTY \_\_\_\_\_



\$5.00  
LAPEL PIN 1"  
QTY \_\_\_\_\_



\$10.00  
13<sup>TH</sup> ENGINEER BATTALION  
UNIT CREST PIN  
1 1/8" H X 1" W  
QTY \_\_\_\_\_



Back \$10.00 Front  
13<sup>th</sup> Engineer Custom Battalion Coin  
1 3/4" Diameter  
QTY \_\_\_\_\_



\$10.00  
13<sup>th</sup> ENGINEER METAL LICENSE  
PLATE 6" X 12"  
QTY \_\_\_\_\_



\$9.00  
7<sup>TH</sup> INFANTRY  
BAYONET PIN  
QTY \_\_\_\_\_



\$9.00  
COMBAT ENGINEER PIN  
LARGE 3" X 1" QTY \_\_\_\_\_  
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Submitted by	
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Address	
City/State/Zip	
Phone #	
Email address	

**For mail-in orders, we currently accept checks.**

**If you prefer to order online through our website, you have the option to use PayPal.**

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO  
13<sup>TH</sup> ENGR. (C) BN. ASSOCIATION**

**MAIL TO:  
GENE REED  
8833 Prairie Trail  
Avon, IN 46123**

**TOTAL AMOUNT OF CHECK \_\_\_\_\_**



## HONORING THOSE WHO HAVE SERVED



All of us in the 13<sup>th</sup> Engineer (C) Battalion Association extend our sincere sympathy to the families and friends of those listed below. May they rest in peace.

It is with a heavy heart that we acknowledge the passing of several cherished members of our association. We've recently learned of these losses, some of which occurred in the last few years and others more recently. Each individual made significant contributions to our community, and their dedication and service will not be forgotten.

<p>Mel L. Watson 7-23-1945 – 2-5-2020 “A” Co. 1963 -1964</p>	<p>David B. Carney 9-30-1931 – 3-30-2022 “A” Co. 1952 – 1954 SGT.</p>	<p>Douglas E. Duden 2-27-1945 – 7-10-2024 HQ &amp; HQ Co. 1965 - 1966</p>
<p>Robert O. Ekdahl 9-12-1939 – 1-11-2024 H&amp;H Co. 1962 – 1963</p>	<p>John P. Kelleher 8-3-1932 – 9-27-2021 H&amp;S Co. 1952 – 1953</p>	<p>Charles C. Lee III 9-17-1943 – 12-1-2023 “A” Co. 1967-1968</p>

### ***The Last Patrol***

***He marched through fields of green, and dust, and strife, A soldier's heart, a soldier's life. Through sunbaked days and starless, chilling nights, He stood his ground, upheld the fading lights.***

***No more the distant bugle's mournful call, No more the weary march, the rise and fall. His rifle stacked, his helmet laid aside, A quiet peace where shadows gently glide.***

***He gave his all, for freedom's sacred name, A flickering candle, burning with bright flame. Now silenced steps upon the earthly sod, His spirit rises, home to meet his God.***

***We'll carry on, remember every deed, The seeds of courage that he helped to feed. For though he's gone, beyond our mortal sight, His memory shines, a guiding, steady light.***

If you are aware of any former 13th Engineer individuals that are not currently part of our organization, please pass this application to them and encourage them to become members of the association.

They can also go to our website <https://13thengineerbn.com> and click on the member application button on the home page to initiate the application process.



DATE \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS/ST. \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

13<sup>TH</sup> ENGINEER COMPANY SERVED WITH \_\_\_\_\_

**DATES SERVED IN 13<sup>TH</sup> ENGINEERS**

**FROM \_\_\_\_\_ TO \_\_\_\_\_**

**SPOUSES NAMES \_\_\_\_\_**

**TELEPHONE NUMBER / INCLUDE AREA CODE (    ) \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_**

**E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_**

**DUES ARE \$5.00 PER YEAR PAYABLE TWO (2) YEARS AT A TIME,  
OR FROM - REUNION TO REUNION**

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO; 13TH ENGR. (C) Bn. ASSOCIATION**

**MAIL CHECKS TO = Gene Reed, Treasurer  
8833 Prairie Trail, Avon, Indiana 46123**

**Or email me at: [genereed@genereedins.com](mailto:genereed@genereedins.com)**

**Website: <https://13thengineerbn.com/>**

13<sup>th</sup> Engineer (C) Bn. Assn.  
Attn: Newsletter Editor  
1962 Tanglewood Ln.  
Vacaville, CA 95687

Return Service Requested

2008 THE CHANGING OF THE GUARD



#### Objectives

To preserve and strengthen the bonds of friendship and camaraderie among members through reunions, meetings, publications, and other social actives, to honor, revere and pay homage to the memory of those gallant comrades who paid the supreme sacrifice while serving in the 13<sup>th</sup> Engineer (C) Bn. To enhance at every opportunity and by example spread those truths contained in the Constitution of the United States, love of country and flag, respect for human rights and due respect for law and order, to strive for the accuracy and correction of any official histories published concerning any campaign in which the battalion participated in, if in the opinion of the association they are in error, to support the activities of the 13<sup>th</sup> Engineer (C) Battalion and to honor the annually selected non-commissioned officer and soldier of the year of the battalion in an appropriate manner.

#### TO ALL WHO SERVED

Those who served before us  
Those who served with us  
Those who served after us  
AND ESPECIALLY  
Those who gave their lives

