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Korean War Project Newsletter – Dec 25, 2007 Volume 10 - 6

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1. Editorial
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Hal and I wish a 'Seasons Greetings' to each of our readers. We especially want to extend that message to all of our servicemen and women who are on duty around the world.

A tradition for our Holiday / Christmas newsletter has been to feature a wonderful story written by Dave Hughes of Colorado Springs.

Dave was a 1<sup>st</sup> Lt with K Co of the 7<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division during the first year of the war. He retired from the US Army as a Colonel. He taught at the US Military Academy. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for action during the attack on Hill 347 in October 1951.

Holiday Extra: for this edition, several postcards or menus will be found on our online web version of this newsletter.

Web Version:

[www.koreanwar.org/html/newsletter\\_december\\_25\\_2007.html](http://www.koreanwar.org/html/newsletter_december_25_2007.html)

Hal will be giving you an "up-to-the-minute" progress report for accomplishments on projects featured in earlier 2007 news. That report will be out on New Year's Eve.

As part of our ongoing work, we have finally been able to get photographs of our Killed and Missing online. Over 3900 photographs are now displayed within the KIA/MIA data section of the site. Hal is soliciting new input for this section.

The New Year's Edition will feature Navy, Air Force and USMC items, so consider sending us items for publication.

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2. KWP Project – Maps, Charts, Casualties, Guestbook
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Hal has taken most of the past 5 months to perform a line by line research of the casualties. This includes corrections of spellings of both names and hometowns. Where we only have county both of us would like your input on actual hometown, if at all possible.

Our Guestbook/Looking For area needs some housekeeping by those who have posted. We will be sending out an email with a form inserted to allow an automatic update of our data files.

All the information is for the use of the Korean War Project and users, only.

Link: [www.koreanwar.org/html/korean\\_war\\_databases.html](http://www.koreanwar.org/html/korean_war_databases.html)

Link: [www.koreanwar.org/html/looking\\_for.html](http://www.koreanwar.org/html/looking_for.html)

Link: [www.koreanwar.org/html/comm2.cfm?com\\_url=2004\\_view\\_guest\\_book\\_5](http://www.koreanwar.org/html/comm2.cfm?com_url=2004_view_guest_book_5)

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3. Bookstore

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=====a.=====

One Came Home, A true story about twin brothers who are called to serve their country together in the Korean War

By Vincent A. Krepps

This is a real work of love by an old friend. Vince really captures his emotions in detailing the events of both twins from home to Korea and the tragic loss of Richard.

We follow the Krepps from the Naktong River to hospital in Japan and to Korea again. Kunu-ri was the place the 82<sup>nd</sup> AAA AW Bn took heavy losses, once again. This is where Richard was captured.

For the next 50 years Vince diligently sought word of his brother. The search led to his heavy involvement to spur the US Department of Defense to seek agreements with the DPRK, allowing teams to search within North Korea and China.

The book gives us insight into the painful process and the results of this very personal inquiry.

Published by: Heritage Special Edition, American Literary Press

ISBN 1-56167-998-7, Hardcover

Price: \$26.95 US

Order (410) 882-7700 or (800) 873-2003

I also have many books (One Came Home) to sell. I anyone wants one autographed special I will do that. My costs will be \$25

including postage. Send Check or money order to:

Vincent A. Krepps  
24 Goucher Woods Ct.  
Towson, MD 21286  
Email: [vak1950@starpower.net](mailto:vak1950@starpower.net)

=====b.=====

Wall of Fire, A diary of the Third Korean Winter Campaign

by Dudley J. Hughes

We found this gem at our local bookstore. This is must reading for anyone interested in the use of artillery and especially the use of indirect fire by Quad-Fifty Machine Guns.

Another story of twins and the incredible amount of work to leverage the Quad-Fifty's while under fire. The 45<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was holding ground around Heartbreak Ridge and over to the Punchbowl.

The Hughes boys were assigned to the 145<sup>th</sup> Field Artillery.

Published by: Hellgate Press

ISBN 1-55571-637-7, Hardcover  
[www.hellgatepress.com](http://www.hellgatepress.com)

PO Box 3727  
Central Point OR 97502  
PH: 800 795-5049

=====c.=====

Mid-Century Warrior: A Soldier's Journey to Korea

By Warren Gardner MacDonald USA (Ret.)

Tanks! This succinct book covers Warren's induction, basic training in Armored Command and all the way to Korea and ultimately to his posting to the Tank Company, 32<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Regiment 7<sup>th</sup> ID under X Corps, late October, 1951.

From battle to hospital and back to the US, Warren takes us on a journey which details life in a tank unit.

Published by Lulu Press

ISBN 1-4116-7894-X, Paperback

3131 RDU Center, Ste 235  
Morrisville, NC 27560

=====d.=====

Sunchon Tunnel Massacre Survivors

By Pat McGrath Avery and Joyce Faulkner

Our friend, Ed Slater, and other POW survivors of one of the most sordid episodes of the war, finally have a voice.

This war was fought ferociously and this book brings that horrible fact home to the reader. The book features personal interviews which are compelling.

Endorsements come from Phil Chinnery, Shorty "Tiger" Estabrook, Dave Grossman, Samuel Clark, and W.H. McDonald, among others.

Published by Red Engine Press

ISBN 978-0-9800064-0-7 Hardcover - \$26.95

ISBN 978-0-9785158-1-2 Softcover - \$17.98

18942 State Hwy 13, Ste F 107  
Branson, MO 65737  
PH: 417-230-5555

or Amazon.com

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4. Shanks Booties

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Dave Hughes  
[dave@oldcolo.com](mailto:dave@oldcolo.com)

Shanks Bootees

It was during the dark days of the December retreat when I first saw them. They were hanging from the cold muzzle of an old, battered, Springfield rifle - a pair of tiny blue baby bootees. Their pale silk ribbons ended in a neat bow behind the front sight, and each little boot hung down separately, one slightly above the other, swinging silently in the wind. They reminded me of tiny bells, and even though one had a smudge of dirt on its soft surface, and part of the ribbon that touched the barrel had lost color from scorching heat, they seemed to me to be the freshest, cleanest objects in all of drab Korea.

At first the bootees had fixed my attention, but after the surprise of seeing these symbols of home in such an incongruous place had worn off, I let my eyes drift, unobserved, to their owner.

He was a lieutenant, young, I could see, and tired; not so much from the exertion of the trudging march, but with the wear of long days and nights in combat. He was talking to men from his platoon, all of them together watching the core of a little blaze in their center, and I could tell that he was answering some of their

disturbing questions about the war. There was a tone of hopelessness in the men's voices, but the lieutenant sounded cheerful; there was a glint in his eye, and a squint that melted into an easy smile when he spoke.

As my companions moved on, I glanced back briefly to the blue bootees still fresh, still swinging. Often in the next few weeks I saw the lieutenant and his bootees while we moved southward before the Chinese armies. Around the ever-present warming fires I heard the simple story of the officer and his boots.

The lieutenant was named Shank, and he, twenty-two years old, led a rifle platoon. He had come over from Okinawa while the Army was clamped in the vise of the Pusan perimeter, short on manpower. Shank had his baptism of fire on the hills outside Taegu. His youth and fire helped keep his decimated platoon intact, while the North Koreans frantically tried to crack the American lines. Then came the breakthrough, and Shank's company, rode on the record-breaking tank and truck dash northward. He picked up the Springfield rifle then, and kept it because of its renowned accuracy and apparent immunity to the cold weather. A violent day south of Pyongyang won Shank a Silver Star for gallantry, as he led his flesh-and-blood infantrymen against T-34 tanks and destroyed three of them. The Chinese intervention and beginning of the American retreat brought him up to where I met him, south of Kunari.

The bootees? That was simple. He was an expectant father, and the little boots sent by his young wife in the States reflected his whole optimistic attitude while the battle was the darkest. I also learned that when the baby came it would be announced by a new piece of ribbon on the boots - blue for a boy, pink for a girl.

Then I forgot about him as we prepared to defend Seoul from above the frozen Han River. We were hit hard by the Chinese. They streamed down from the hills and charged the barbed wire. They charged again and again, piling up before our smoking guns. The days were but frantic preparation for the nights. Companies dwindled, and my platoon was halved as cold, sickness, and the enemy took their toll. I neared the end of my mental reserves. Names of casualties were rumored, and I heard Shank's among them. I wondered where Shank's bootees were now.

Then the endless night of the retreat from Seoul came. When we got the word my few men were too dulled to show any emotion at the announcement. Most were too miserable to want to retreat again for twenty-five miles, Chinese or no. But we did, and the temperature dropped to 30 degrees below zero as our silent column stumbled along the hard ground. It was the most depressing night I had ever endured - pushed by the uncompromising cold, the pursuing enemy and the chaotic memory of the bloody nights before. I, as a leader, was close to that mental chasm. Only the numbness prevented thinking myself into mute depression

We plodded across the cracking ice of the Han River at four-thirty in the morning, and marched on south at an ever-slowng pace. Finally the last five mile stretch was ahead. We rested briefly, and as the men dropped to the roadside they fell asleep immediately. I wondered if I could get them going again. Worse yet, I didn't think I could go myself so tired, numb, and raw was my body.

Then in the black despair of uselessness in a second-page war I looked up as a passing figure brushed against my inert shoe pacs.

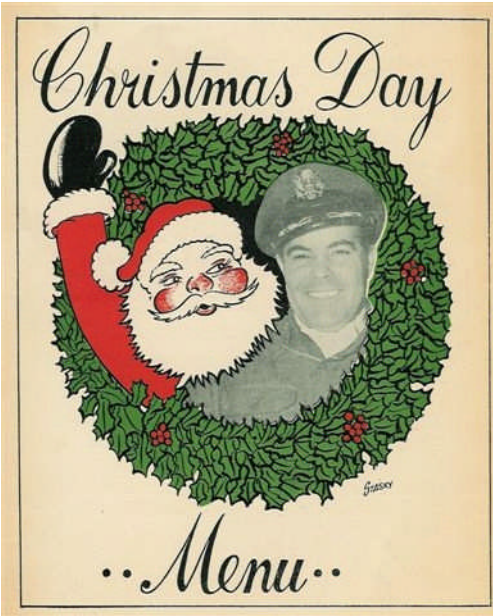
There walked young Lieutenant Shank up the Korean road, whistling softly, while every waking eye followed him to see the muzzle of his battered Springfield rifle. Swinging gaily in the first rays of the morning sun were Shank's bootees, and fluttering below them was the brightest, bluest, piece of ribbon I have ever seen.

Lt David Hughes  
Seoul, Korea, Dec 1950  
7th Cav Inf Rgt 1 Cav Div  
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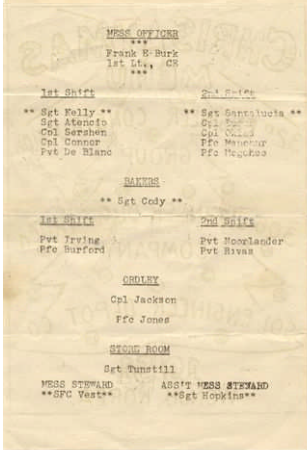
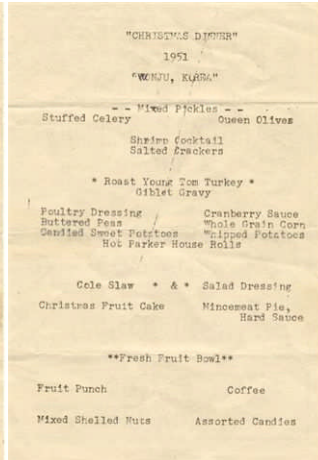
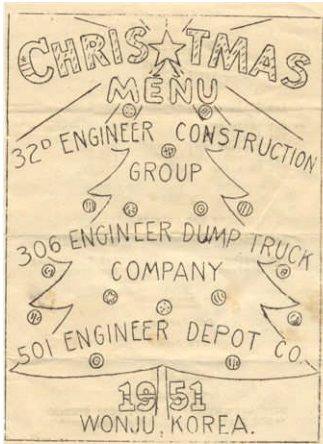
5. Christmas Cards - Menus

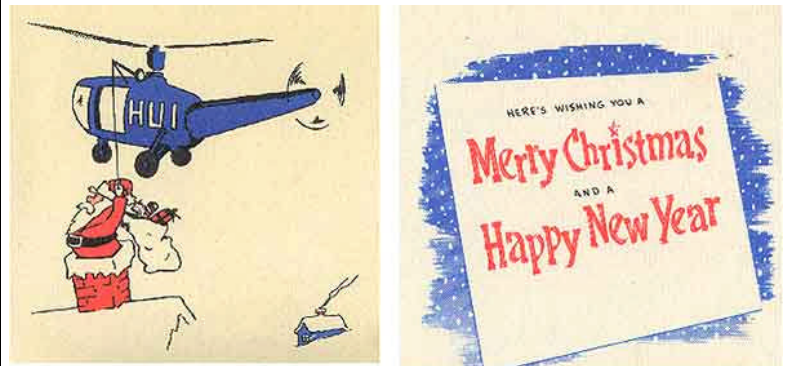
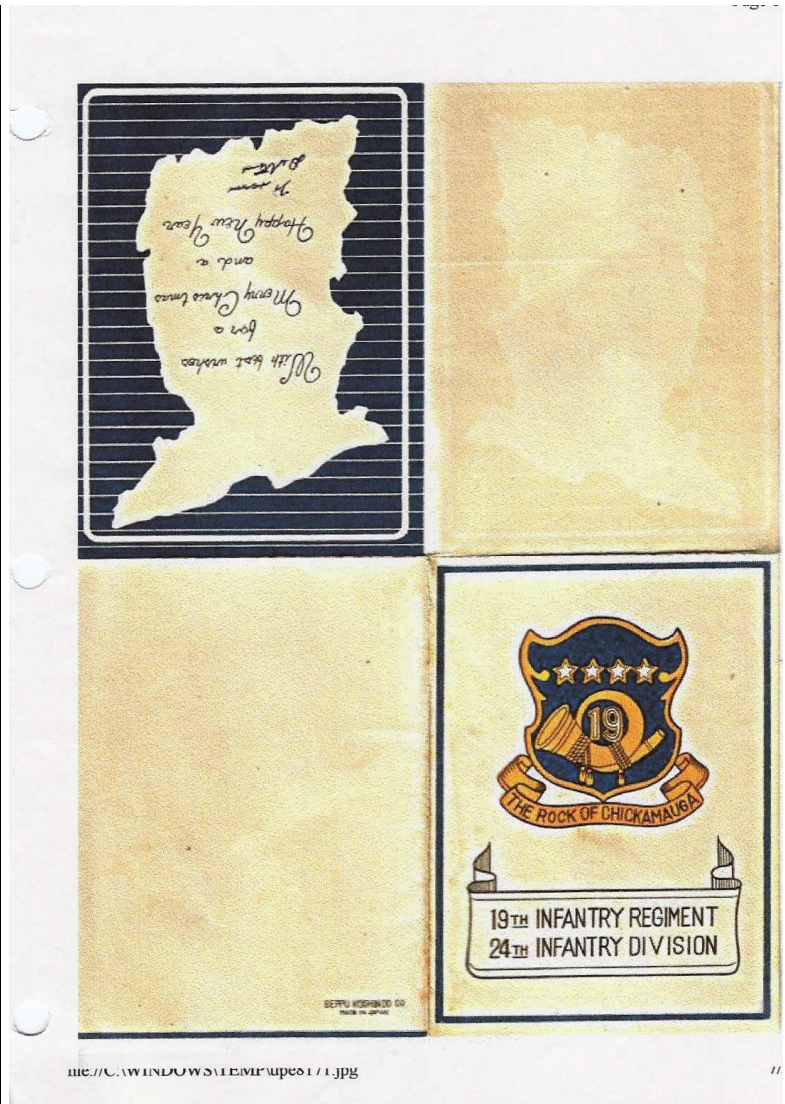
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See the online version of the newsletter for these wonderful graphics.



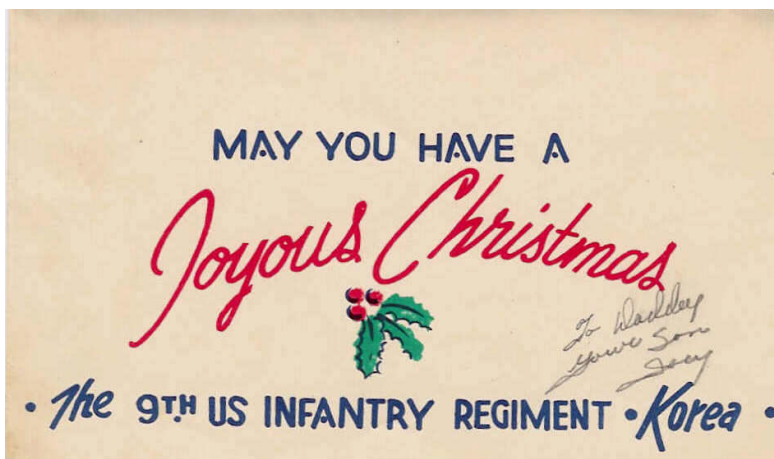






HELICOPTER SQUADRON ONE 1951





## 6. Christmas Poems

### A Korean Christmas Carol

Forwarded by Kathleen Hatch and others:

T'was the night before Christmas and all through the tent,  
Was the smell of fuel oil, the stove pipe was bent.  
Their shoe pacs were hung by the stove with care,  
In the hopes that they'd issue each guy a new pair.  
The weary GI's were sacked out in their beds  
As visions of sugar babies danced in their heads.  
When up on the ridge line there rose such a clatter,  
A Chinese machine gun had started to chatter.  
I rushed for my rifle and thru back the bolt,  
The rest of my tent mates awoke with a jolt.  
Outside we could hear our platoon Sgt. Kelly,  
A hard little man with a little fat belly.  
"Come Yancy, come Clancey, come Conners and Dodson,  
Up Shiller, up Miller, up Burgess and Watson.  
Get up on that hill top and silence that Red,  
And don't you come back until you are sure he is dead."  
We tumbled outside in a swirl of confusion;  
So cold the guys could have used a transfusion.  
So putting his thumbs up beside of his nose,  
Sgt. Kelly took leave of us shivering Joes.  
But we all heard him say in a voice soft and light,  
"Merry Christmas to all, may you live through the night."

### A Different Christmas Poem

The embers glowed softly, and in their dim light,  
I gazed round the room and I cherished the sight.  
My wife was asleep, her head on my chest,  
My daughter beside me, angelic in rest.

Outside the snow fell, a blanket of white,  
Transforming the yard to a winter delight.

The sparkling lights in the tree I believe,  
Completed the magic that was Christmas Eve.

My eyelids were heavy, my breathing was deep,  
Secure and surrounded by love I would sleep.  
In perfect contentment, or so it would seem,  
So I slumbered, perhaps I started to dream.

The sound wasn't loud, and it wasn't too near,  
But I opened my eyes when it tickled my ear.  
Perhaps just a cough, I didn't quite know,

Then the sure sound of footsteps outside in the snow.

My soul gave a tremble, I struggled to hear,  
And I crept to the door just to see who was near.  
Standing out in the cold and the dark of the night,  
A lone figure stood, his face weary and tight.

A soldier, I puzzled, some twenty years old,  
Perhaps a Marine, huddled here in the cold.  
Alone in the dark, he looked up and smiled,  
Standing watch over me, and my wife and my child.

"What are you doing?" I asked without fear,  
"Come in this moment, it's freezing out here!  
Put down your pack, brush the snow from your sleeve,  
You should be at home on a cold Christmas Eve!"

For barely a moment I saw his eyes shift,  
Away from the cold and the snow blown in drifts..  
To the window that danced with a warm fire's light  
Then he sighed and he said "Its really all right,

"I'm out here by choice. I'm here every night."  
"It's my duty to stand at the front of the line,  
That separates you from the darkest of times.  
No one had to ask or beg or implore me,

I'm proud to stand here like my father's before me.  
My Gramps died at ' Pearl on a day in December,"  
Then he sighed, "That's a Christmas 'Gram always remembers.

My dad stood his watch in the jungles of ' Nam ',  
And now it is my turn and so, here I am.  
I've not seen my own son in more than a while,  
But my wife sends me pictures, he's sure got her smile.

Then he bent and he carefully pulled from his bag,  
The red, white, and blue... an American flag.  
I can live through the cold and the being alone,  
Away from my family, my house and my home.

I can stand at my post through the rain and the sleet,  
I can sleep in a foxhole with little to eat.  
I can carry the weight of killing another,

Or lay down my life with my sister and brother.

Who stand at the front against any and all,  
To ensure for all time that this flag will not fall."  
"So go back inside," he said, "harbor no fright,  
Your family is waiting and I'll be all right.

"But isn't there something I can do, at the least,  
"Give you money," I asked, "or prepare you a feast?  
It seems all too little for all that you've done,  
For being away from your wife and your son.

Then his eye welled a tear that held no regret,  
"Just tell us you love us, and never forget.  
To fight for our rights back at home while we're gone,  
To stand your own watch, no matter how long.

For when we come home, either standing or dead,  
To know you remember we fought and we bled.  
Is payment enough, and with that we will trust,  
That we mattered to you as you mattered to us."

LCDR Jeff Giles, SC, USN  
30t h Naval Construction Regiment  
OIC, Logistics Cell One  
Al Taqqadum, Iraq

#### 7. Membership, Bumper Stickers

Consider supporting the mission of the Korean War Project by donations in the form of Membership/Sponsorship and our "I Remember Korea" Bumper Sticker campaign.

Membership: [www.koreanwar.org/html/membership.html](http://www.koreanwar.org/html/membership.html)

Bumper Sticker: [www.koreanwar.org/html/bumper\\_sticker.html](http://www.koreanwar.org/html/bumper_sticker.html)

Our Pledge Drive is an ongoing process. Many of our previous donors no longer can assist. We are recruiting from those who have not participated, so if you can, jump on in, it will be appreciated.

The site is free for all to use and those who participate help to ensure that we remain online whether the donation is \$1.00 or more!

For those persons or groups who cannot participate, we certainly understand.

Donations/Memberships are tax deductible, if you use long form IRS reports. Our EIN: 75-2695041 501(c) (3)

Postal Address  
Korean War Project

PO Box 180190  
Dallas, TX 75218

#### 8. This Mailing List (going to 40,000 + persons)

We began this newsletter mailing in December of 1998. The first issue went to just over 2000 persons.

This list is a private list for our visitors and members. A person may join or leave the list at will. It is compiled from our Guest Book and comprises public service messages of general interest to veterans and families.

To join or leave the list: email to: Ted Barker [tbarker@kwp.org](mailto:tbarker@kwp.org)  
Place: Subscribe or Unsubscribe in the subject line.

Consider forwarding the Newsletter to your friends by email or print. Word of mouth is how we grow.

Thanks for being part of the Korean War Project family!

#### 9. 2nd Infantry (Indianhead) Division Association

The 2nd Infantry (Indianhead) Division Association is looking a new secretary treasurer, preferably from the Korean DMZ war era of the late 1960's.

If you are a member of the association and are interested in the job (or know of someone who might be), let me know or contact the association president, Jack Woodall, at: [warriorvet@verizon.net](mailto:warriorvet@verizon.net)

The association is also looking for a new webmaster.

Thanks,

Mike Davino  
Life Member  
2nd Infantry (Indianhead) Division Association  
[MDavino@yahoo.com](mailto:MDavino@yahoo.com)

Thanks to all who have made this newsletter and the website possible!

Donors: [www.koreanwar.org/html/membership.html](http://www.koreanwar.org/html/membership.html)

[Hal and Ted Barker](#)