

Legion Family,

It is my sad duty to report that Marty Frank passed away in the early hours today, 3 Apr 08 at the VA hospital. Marty was a 30+ year member of the Legion and a POW from July 12, 1967 to March 5th, 1973.....a total of 2,063 days. The clothes and other items he had with him when he was released as a POW are hanging in a display case in our Post's hall.

Marty had a book dedicated to him: "**The 101st Pennsylvania in the Civil War: Its Capture and POW Experience**" by Harold B. Birch, Published 2007. Birch was Marty's commander for only a couple of weeks before Marty's capture.

Here is the dedication:

DEDICATION

Because this book deals in particular with the experiences of Union soldiers who became prisoners of war during the Civil War, this book is dedicated to the seven enlisted men from the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Division, who, just weeks before I assumed command in July 1967, were captured by the North Vietnamese Army in the Ia Drang Valley in South Vietnam. They spent over five years as prisoners of war (POWs)—first in Cambodia and then, after walking north on the “Ho Chi Minh trail”, in the Hanoi area of North Vietnam. Of those captured, James F. Scheile and James L. Van Bendegam died of their wounds and of maltreatment. **Martin S. Frank**, Nathan B. Henry, Cordine McMurray, Stanley A. Newell, and Richard A. Perricone survived their imprisonment. For years their families assumed them to be dead. Years later, I learned that Stanley Newell, captured as an 18 or 19-year-old, had stayed in the army after he was freed and retired as a Military Police lieutenant colonel. Cordine McMurray, a platoon sergeant when captured, also remained in the army and retired as a sergeant major. Sadly, the stories of these POWs are largely untold, their sacrifices unappreciated.

The below article was taken from this link: <http://www.pownetwork.org/bios/f/f033.htm>

FRANK, MARTIN STANLEY
RIP 04/03/2008
Name: Martin Stanley Frank

Rank/Branch: E5/US Army
Unit: Company B, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division
Date of Birth:
Home City of Record:
Date of Loss: 12 Jul 1967
Country of Loss: South Vietnam
Loss Coordinates: 134026N 1073809E (YA850131)
Status (in 1973): Released POW
Category:
Aircraft/Vehicle/Ground: Ground

Source: Compiled from one or more of the following: raw data from U.S. Government agency sources, correspondence with POW/MIA families, published sources, interviews. Updated by the P.O.W. NETWORK.

Other Personnel In Incident: Nathan B. Henry; Cordine McMurray; Stanley A. Newell; Richard R. Perricone (all released); James F. Schiele; James L. Van Bendegom (both missing). Held with men from at least two other incidents including: Incident on 18 May 1967: Joe L. DeLong (missing); Incident on 17 Feb 1967: David W. Sooter (released).

REMARKS: 730305 RELSD BY PRG

SYNOPSIS: In the spring of 1973, 591 American Prisoners of War were released from prisons and camps in Vietnam. Among them were six of a group of nine U.S. Army 4th Infantry Division personnel captured in and near Pleiku Province, South Vietnam during the year of 1967 whose lives had been intertwined for the past six years. All had belonged to that part of the "Ivy Division" which was assigned to Task Force Oregon conducting border operations called Operation Sam Houston (1 Jan - 5 Apr 67) and Operation Francis Marion (5 Apr - 12 Oct 67).

On February 17, 1967, W1 David W. Sooter was the only man captured from a OH23 helicopter downed at the southeastern edge of Kontum Province near the edge of Pleiku Province, and near the Cambodian border.

PFC Joe Lynn DeLong was the machine gunner for his company, on a company-sized patrol in Rotanakiri Province, Cambodia on May 18, 1967. (Note: most records list this loss as in South Vietnam, and coordinates place it in the Ia Drang Valley, Pleiku Province, South Vietnam near the border of Cambodia, but U.S. Army casualty reports state that the loss was in Kotanakiri Province, Cambodia.) While on patrol, his unit was hit by a Viet Cong force of unknown size and cut off from the rest of the company. DeLong's platoon formed a defensive perimeter and attempted to hold their position. Later that day, at about 1830 hours, DeLong's platoon position was overrun. The next morning, another unit reached his position, and was able to account for all platoon members except for DeLong. It was later learned that DeLong had been captured.

Nearly two months later, on July 12, 1967, SP4 Martin S. Frank, PFC Nathan B. Henry, Sgt. Cordine McMurray, PFC Stanley A. Newell, PFC Richard R. Perricone, SP4 James F. Schiele and PFC James L. Van Bendegom, all members of Company B, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division, were conducting a search and destroy mission along the Cambodian border when their position was overrun by the Viet Cong. With the exception of Schiele, all the men were captured. The U.S. Army notes that Schiele and Van Bendegom were

captured by the North Vietnamese, while the others, apparently, were captured by Viet Cong.

PFC Schiele was seen by his platoon leader as his unit was forced to withdraw, leaving him behind. He had been hit a number of times by automatic weapons fire in the legs and chest and was thought to be dead. PFC Perricone stated in his debrief upon return to the U.S. that the enemy camp commander of Camp 102 told him that SP4 Schiele had died of wounds received in the fire fight. However, since there was no positive proof of death, the U.S. government placed Schiele in a Missing in Action category. Classified information given to the Vietnamese by Gen. John Vessey in 1987, however, states that both Schiele and Van Bendegom were captured by the North Vietnamese.

PFC Vanbendegom was also wounded in the engagement, and was seen alive by other Americans captured in the same battle about one week after his capture at a communist field hospital in Cambodia, not far from his capture location. One of the released Americans was later told by the commanding North Vietnamese officer at his prison camp in Cambodia that SP4 Vanbendegom had died of his wounds. Vanbendegom was categorized as a Prisoner of War.

The other seven Americans were held in prison camps on the Vietnam/Cambodia border for several months. According to the debriefs of releasees Sooter and Perricone, they and DeLong had attempted to escape from a border camp in Cambodia on November 6, 1967, but were recaptured the same day. Two days later, Sooter and Perricone were shown DeLong's bullet-ridden and blood-soaked trousers and were told that DeLong had been killed resisting recapture. The Vietnamese included DeLong's name on a list of prisoners who had died in captivity (saying he died in November 1967), did not return his remains, and did not offer any explanation.

Sooter, Frank, Henry, Perricone, McMurray and Newell were all released by the PRG in 1973. Frank was never known to be a prisoner by the U.S. Henry was injured, and maintains a permanent disability today. The U.S. is certain the Vietnamese also know the fates of DeLong, Schiele and Vanbendegom, but the Vietnamese continue to remain silent.

Since the end of the war, only a few score of the many remains the Vietnamese could provide have been returned to U.S. control. Each return of remains signals some political move by the Vietnamese. Strong moves towards normalization of relations began in the mid-80's, which most Americans would not oppose. As evidence mounts that hundreds of Americans are still held captive by these same governments the U.S. is rushing to befriend, many concerned Americans believe that in our rush to leave Indochina, we abandoned our best men. And that in our rush to return, we will sign their death warrants.

SOURCE: WE CAME HOME copyright 1977

Captain and Mrs. Frederic A Wyatt (USNR Ret), Barbara Powers Wyatt, Editor P.O.W. Publications, 10250 Moorpark St., Toluca Lake, CA 91602

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MARTIN S. FRANK
Staff Sergeant- United States Army
Captured: July 12, 1967
Released: March 5, 1973

I was born in Montclair, New Jersey and was raised in Belleville, New Jersey. I entered the Army in April of 1966 shortly after a separation from my wife. I attended Basic Training at Ft. Dix, New Jersey and at Ft. Polk, Louisiana. In September of 1966 I left for Vietnam and was assigned to Company B, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, 4th Division. My station camp, Camp Eneri, Pleiku, RSVN.

I was captured at Pleiku Province July 12, 1967. My first two and a half years were spent in the jungle prison camp in South Vietnam. We walked to North Vietnam. At one time I was down to 95 pounds and at the time of my release I was back up to 130 pounds.

After returning to US control 5 March 1973, I had a preliminary examination at Clark Air Force Base, Philippines and then was sent to Ft. Monmouth, New Jersey for further examination. I am presently assigned to Ft. Monmouth as a career counselor. I just re-enlisted for four more years as I intend to make a career of the service. I was divorced 12 October 1973 and as of yet have no future marital plans.

Dennis
Dennis Ducharme
Post 593 Chaplain & Webmaster
<http://www.Post593.org>

