

LZ X-RAY:



The only reporter in Vietnam awarded a Bronze Star with V Device by the U.S. Army, Joe Galloway was the 'Ernie Pyle of Vietnam.'

AS TOLD BY
JOSEPH L. GALLOWAY

Top: Armed with a Swedish K submachine gun and a Nikon camera, Joe Galloway could, in his words, "shoot you with either!" (courtesy of Joe Galloway). Right: Galloway snapped this photo of wounded being evacuated from LZ X-ray during the Battle of the Ia Drang (Joe Galloway).

Report Under



ter Fire

JOSEPH L. GALLOWAY LANDED IN VIETNAM IN March 1965, two weeks after the U.S. Marines had arrived at Da Nang. Little did he realize then which way that war would go and where it would take him. Lieutenant General Harold G. Moore, who was a lieutenant colonel when they first met in the Ia Drang Valley in 1965, once said of Joe Galloway, "He has the sharpest pencil in Vietnam!"—a reference to the M-16 slung over his shoulder.

Galloway eventually became the Ernie Pyle of the Vietnam War. Respected by the leaders for his honest and candid reporting and befriended by the troops, he traveled all over Vietnam. Some of the friends he made there, among the 7th Cavalry and other regiments, he would later meet in another war, another time and in a very different set of circumstances. Going on to cover conflicts and near misses in India, Pakistan and elsewhere, Galloway had a front-row seat with Maj. Gen. Barry McCaffrey and the 24th Infantry Division during Operation Desert Storm. Joe's last major deployment was in Haiti with an Army Reserve Special Forces A-team from Alabama.

The success of the book *We Were Soldiers Once...and Young*, which Galloway co-authored with Hal Moore, and the recently released movie version titled *We Were Soldiers* has made Galloway a much-sought-after speaker. *Vietnam Magazine* staff member Lance Jones was recently privileged to interview him in Falls Church, Va.

VIETNAM: How did you get your start?

GALLOWAY: I was working in Topeka, Kan., in 1963. I had been reading the dispatches of Neil Sheehan and David Halberstam from Vietnam. I felt that there was going to be war there and it would become an American war, my generation's war, and I wanted to cover it. I began a letter-writing campaign to my bosses in New York—one a week, four a month and so on. It was like a military battle. I just had to get to Vietnam.... Shortly after the 1964 elections, I was home on vacation visiting my parents in Refugio, Texas. I got a call from my boss, Jack Fallon, in Dallas. He asked me if I owned a trench coat [and] said if I didn't I should purchase one, because effective immediately I was being transferred to UPI Asia headquarters in Tokyo, Japan. Do not pass go! Do not collect \$200!

VN: When did you get to Vietnam?

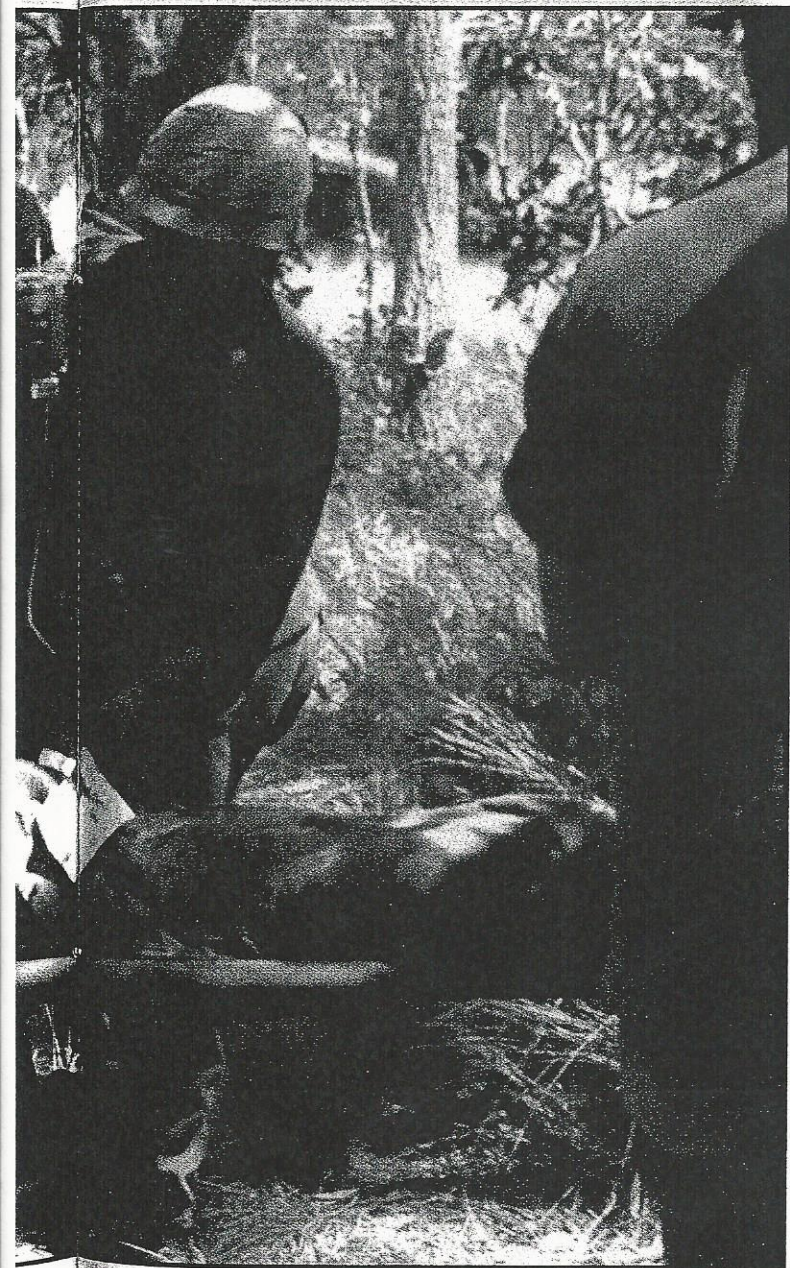
GALLOWAY: On March 8, 1965, the Marines landed at Red Beach, Da Nang. Two weeks later, I was told to get ready. I was UPI's reinforcements. The last thing I did was buy a camera.

VN: So you weren't a photojournalist initially?

GALLOWAY: No! I could make \$10 for every photo used by the wire service. A bad day would see me making \$100 just from my pictures. You see, my salary was only \$135 a week.

VN: What did you do when you got to Vietnam?

GALLOWAY: I arrived in Vietnam aboard an Air France flight. As quickly as possible, I passed through immigration, got my suitcase and left for the bureau at No. 19 Ngo Duc Khe, just off Tu Do Street, in the heart of Saigon. My quarters were located over the



bureau. As soon as I could obtain my South Vietnamese and American press ID cards, I headed for the U.S. Marines in Da Nang. The next morning, I took an Air Force [Fairchild] C-123 transport plane from Tan Son Nhut Air Base.... We got to Da Nang about six hours later. Once there, I was grabbed by Henri Huet of UPI. He said that there was a major battle going on in Quang Ngai. We climbed on a [Lockheed] C-130 and flew up there. Once there, we boarded a Marine [Sikorsky] CH-34 helicopter. The crew said that we were going out to recover the bodies of two American advisers who were killed in the fighting while with their South Vietnamese unit. When we got there, dead bodies were all over the place. We went from hole to hole until we found them, then we and the two crewmen from the chopper...carried them slowly back to the helicopter. I had hurried to get to Vietnam because I [thought] since the Marines had landed, the war would be swiftly won. On the flight back to Quang Ngai City, I realized that we would be in this war for a while.

VN: What did you do with the Marines when you finally linked up with them?

GALLOWAY: I followed them everywhere. I covered every Marine operation in I Corps, including a combat amphibious assault landing on the Batangan Peninsula to clear the way for the establishment of a Marine air base at Chu Lai.... I had been back in Saigon for a brief visit in August 1965 and was back on the C-123 bound for Da Nang. We landed at Pleiku, and as I looked out over the lowered ramp, I saw South Vietnamese soldiers flinging dead bodies off a helicopter.... I jumped off the airplane with my pack and camera bag.

VN: What had happened?

GALLOWAY: A South Vietnamese airborne unit had been ambushed. Another South Vietnamese airborne column was marching from Duc Co to Pleiku. I met troopers from the American 101st Airborne Division who were to link up with the South Vietnamese force. When they [did,] I took a few pictures of the tiny Vietnamese soldiers who were being led by a huge American major. I walked over and introduced myself. His name was Norman Schwarzkopf.... there were rumors of a new, experimental U.S. Army division coming to the Central Highlands in a few days. I headed on back to Da Nang and the Marines.

VN: When did you link up with the Army?

GALLOWAY: The 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) arrived in An Khe in early September. I shifted from Da Nang to An Khe

in late September. The Cav had 435 shiny new helicopters in their inventory. It was great! These guys rode to war. The Marines walked. They walked so much that I wore out two pair of combat boots during the short time I was with them.... In mid-October the Special Forces camp at Plei Me came under siege. I headed that way in a hurry. By the time I got to the area, the airspace over the camp had been shut down. Nothing could fly in or out of the camp—no supplies, no food, no replacements, nothing. The North Vietnamese Army had encircled the camp with... Regulars and had ringed the camp with Chinese-made 12.7mm anti-aircraft machine guns. Up to this point, they had shot down two Air Force fighter-bombers and one Army Huey helicopter.

VN: How did you get into Plei Me?

GALLOWAY: I had missed the last helicopter that was allowed into Plei Me and

was mad as hell.... A friend of mine, Captain Ray Burns of Ganado, Texas, came up to me. He was, like most of the pilots in the 119th, a graduate of Texas A&M University—an Aggie! Ray was wondering why I was so mad. I told him that I needed to get into the camp at Plei Me and couldn't get a ride.... He grinned and said he would really like to see the place himself and that if I wanted a ride he would take me.... It didn't bother him that the airspace was closed. Ray landed the Huey as quickly as possible to avoid the machine guns. I jumped out just as the men flung some wounded aboard.

VN: What happened after you arrived?

GALLOWAY: A sergeant ran up and said, "I don't know who you are, sir, but first, take off that f—ing beret and secondly, Major [Charles] Beckwith wants to see you right now!" I asked which one he was. "He's that



Profiles of leadership in combat. Above: The command post of the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry (1-7), at LZ X-ray with Lt. Col. Harold Moore (left) and Sgt. Maj. Basil L. Plumley. Right: Major Charles Beckwith during the siege of Plei Me Special Forces camp.



PHOTOS: JOE GALLOWAY

Beckwith said, 'I need reinforcements...ammunition...food... medevac helicopters....And what has the goddamned Army in its wisdom sent me? A reporter! A f—ing reporter!'

big guy over there jumping up and down on his hat," the sergeant replied....As I approached, [the major] hit me with a barrage of questions. "Who the hell are you?" I told him I was a reporter. He then said, "I need everything in the whole goddamned world. I need reinforcements. I need ammunition. I need food. I need medevac helicopters. I would love a bottle of Jim Beam whiskey and some cigars. And what has the goddamned Army in its wisdom sent me? A reporter! A f—ing reporter! Well, son, I got news for you. I don't have a vacancy for a reporter, but I do have a vacancy for a good corner machine-gunner—and you are it!"

VN: What did you say to that?

GALLOWAY: I simply replied, "Yes, sir!" After a brief class on how to operate the weapon, I lived with that machine gun in that corner of the trench for the next two or three days and nights. A South Vietnamese

armored column finally arrived to lift the siege. The North Vietnamese had fled or melted back into the jungle, and it was quiet for the first time in a week. Early in the morning, the sky filled with U.S. Army helicopters. A battalion of the 1st Cavalry Division [the "Air Cav"] arrived to sweep the hills around Plei Me. I went to Major Beckwith to say goodbye. He told me that I had "done good" as a machine-gunner, and he thanked me for the help. Then he said, "You have no weapon." I said that...I was still, technically speaking, a noncombatant. He had a sergeant bring an M-16 rifle and a sackful of loaded magazines. Beckwith said: "Ain't no such thing in these mountains, boy. Take the rifle." I took it, slung it over my back, and marched out to hook up with the Air Cav....I kept that rifle with me until I came back to the States.

VN: So that line about needing a rifle came

from Beckwith, not from Sgt. Maj. Plumley, as in the movie [*We Were Soldiers*]?

GALLOWAY: Yes, Hollywood never did let anything get in the way of a good line.

VN: Is that when your association with the Cav began?

GALLOWAY: Yes. I began to go out with the 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, when they arrived in November to patrol around Plei Me. I went out with the 1st Battalion, 7th Cavalry, on a MEDCAP [Medical Civilian Aid Patrol]. We were in Montagnard territory. They were some of the most honorable people in the entire country....To show you how long it had been since these people had seen a white man, we marched into this village to conduct the MEDCAP. A village elder rushed into his hut and emerged in short order buttoning up a tattered old French army tunic and carrying a French flag.



JOE GALLOWAY

A critical aerial resupply drop lands at the Plei Me Special Forces camp. Galloway was ordered by Major Beckwith to man a .30-caliber machine gun after he managed to get into the camp.

VN: What was it like working with Colonel Moore's battalion?

GALLOWAY: The jungle was so thick there, at times we could only move 100 yards per hour. Later in the day, we moved into easier terrain. However, we had to cross a stream that was neck deep. Once across, we established a perimeter for the night—no fires, no cigarettes. I shivered all night in my wet clothes. It was one of the longest nights of my life! When morning broke, I tore off a chunk of C-4 for a fire and began boiling water for some coffee. About that time, two men walked up. They were Lt. Col. Hal Moore and Sgt. Maj. Basil L. Plumley—the battalion commander and his sergeant major! The colonel looked me over and then said: "In my battalion, everyone shaves in the morning. You, too." He was staring at my fresh, hot canteen cup full of boiling water. The sergeant major was grinning broadly. I groaned and dug out my razor and bar of soap. The coffee would have to wait. Once

we figured there wasn't going to be any action, I caught a chopper back to Pleiku. However, that chance meeting would pay dividends just a few days later when the 1-7 went into LZ X-ray.

VN: Tell us about LZ X-ray.

GALLOWAY: On November 14, I was at brigade headquarters when the word passed that B Company was going to move out. Later, the whole battalion would be lifted into the operation to the west of Plei Me camp. I asked the brigade commander, Colonel Tim Brown, if I could fly in with the 1st Battalion. He said that all the lift assets were full and that it would likely be another long, hot walk in the sun. He did tell me that...if something were to happen, I could fly out in his command helicopter with him. I didn't have a good feeling about this operation...and felt like I needed to get in there with the troops. By that time, B Company was loading up. I found one helicopter that had room on it and hopped in...but, right before take off, I was bumped for a

medic. No complaints on that.... However, it looked like I wouldn't make it into X-ray.

VN: How did you get to X-ray?

GALLOWAY: Not long after that, Colonel Brown came rushing out of his tent and motioned me to come along. We climbed into his command bird and headed for the Ia Drang Valley. He told me that Colonel Moore was in the middle of a hell of a fight. An Air Force [Douglas] A-1E Skyraider passed below our chopper. There must have been a 100-yard sheet of smoke and flame streaming from it. The pilot, Captain Paul McClellan, Jr., flew the burning aircraft about a half-mile beyond the LZ and crashed into the jungle. Captain McClellan...is still carried as missing in action. He left a wife and five children. Recently, Joint Task Force-Full Accounting offered to go in and recover [his remains]. However, his wife, in a very insightful gesture, refused, stating that he had died doing what he loved to do and [she] thought it best not to disturb him.



...he added that that reporter Galloway wanted a ride [into LZ X-ray]. Moore responded, 'If he is crazy enough to want to come in here...bring him along.'

VN: What happened next in the battle?

GALLOWAY: Colonel Brown wanted to land at LZ X-ray. However, Moore successfully talked him out of that, saying... his ship would be a magnet for all the North Vietnamese bullets. He landed instead at LZ Falcon, about five miles from X-ray. The artillery had been flown in to Falcon. It consisted of one battery of six 105mm howitzers. Later, a second battery was flown in for a total of 12 tubes. Disappointed, that is where I got off the chopper.

VN: How well did the artillery perform in direct support of the operation?

GALLOWAY: The artillery was awesome and critical to the survival of Colonel Moore's battalion. They just didn't stop. [Boeing-Vertol] CH-47 Chinooks would fly in, slow to a hover and lift the nose of the helicopter. At that point the crew would lower the tailgate, and out would roll the ammunition for the 105s—and then they left, having never landed. It was very quick. They fired more than 18,000 rounds during those three days in support of us. It was no accident that the first place Colonel Moore landed after the battle was Falcon. He assembled the artillerymen and thanked them for saving our lives. As time passed that day, more and more reporters were getting into Falcon. Like me, they couldn't get a ride into X-ray. However, I ran into Colonel Moore's S-3, Captain Gregg "Matt" Dillon. I asked him how I could get into X-ray.... I stuck with him until he called Colonel Moore. When he told Moore of his plans to get the resupply into the LZ, he added that that reporter Galloway wanted a ride. Moore responded, "If he is crazy enough to want to come in here, and you have the room, bring him along." Now I had my ride. I just had to keep the other reporters away. I hid behind a tent until they all went back to Pleiku. After they left, the two choppers roared in. I got on and was on my way to the biggest battle of the war—and an exclusive report, I might add.

VN: How did Colonel Moore feel about having a reporter hanging around his unit?

GALLOWAY: Colonel Moore had one of the healthiest...outlooks on the press: The mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers of these soldiers had a right to know what they were doing. He had two rules for reporters. The first was to stay out of the way. The other was not to reveal information that could compromise his operations. The colonel also had two rules for his soldiers when dealing with the press. He told them that there will be reporters here from time

to time who may ask you questions. First, answer them truthfully. Second, don't answer questions above your pay grade. If you are a squad leader, answer things that pertain to your squad.

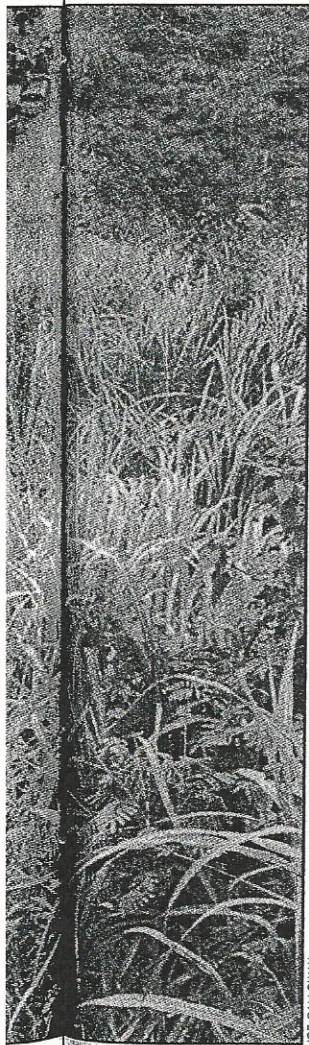
VN: What happened in X-ray?

GALLOWAY: I flew in a Huey helicopter piloted by Major Bruce "Old Snakeshit" Crandall. It was the last flight for him after a day where he already had one helicopter shot full of holes. We had crates of ammo and grenades and 5-gallon clear plastic bladders of water...and I sat on a crate of grenades. We roared in and landed in the tall elephant grass. We jumped off, turned and began throwing ammo boxes, grenade crates and water bladders....One of the first things I heard when I arrived—it was dark—was a voice [saying] "Follow me and I'll take you to the command post... and watch where you step! There are bodies all over the place and they are all ours." After [a] quick briefing from the colonel that explained we were surrounded, I moved off underneath a tree. I plopped down...with my M-16 across my lap, feeling good and wondering what I had gotten myself into.

VN: And what had you gotten into?

GALLOWAY: I found out the next morning. All hell broke loose. I quickly discovered what the term "the beaten zone" meant. I lay there on my belly wondering what I was going to do next. Suddenly, I felt something hit me in the ribs. When I looked up, I found that it was Sgt. Maj. Plumley's size 12 combat boot. The sergeant major bent at the waist and shouted over the incredible din of battle, "You can't take no pictures laying down there on the ground, Sonny." I realized he was right.... Chances were we were all going to die right here. I could either die laying flat on my belly or die standing up with a guy like the sergeant major. So I got up. We were sorely understrength, what with malaria and then [President Lyndon B.] Johnson sending us over understrength. That morn-

Galloway covered nearly all aspects of the Vietnam War. Aboard an ARVN M-24 Chaffee tank, he took this photo of an ARVN unit moving out of Duc Co supported by armor on August 17, 1965.



JOE GALLOWAY

ing, the enemy nearly overran our position. They in fact overran two of Charlie Company's platoons. If they hadn't stopped to shoot our wounded and loot our dead, they would have broken through and there would have been hell to pay.

VN: What are some things that stand out in your mind?

GALLOWAY: During the battle, I spied a tall, lanky GI jump out of one of the mortar pits about 30 yards away. He ran over to where I was and shouted, "Joe! Joe

Helicopter support was key to the survival of the 1-7 at LZ X-ray. Here Bell UH-1D Hueys bring reinforcements into "the beaten zone."



NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Galloway! Don't you know me, man? It's Vince Cantu from Refugio!" In the middle of the worst day of the worst battle of the Vietnam War, a guy who graduated with me from Refugio High School, class of '59 with 55 people in it, was grabbing and hugging me. He advised, "You got to get down, Joe. There are guys dying all around us. This is dangerous shit!" His cousin, from a town nearby...later marched in with the relief column. There were probably 20 guys from south Texas [who] lived within 100 miles of my hometown who were in that valley and in that battle. They are the best friends of my life. [Vince] told me he would be going home in two weeks—if he survived this. "I'll be home in Refugio for

Christmas," he said. I asked him [to] say hello to my family.

VN: What else do you remember most?
GALLOWAY: After I had moved back to the command post, Lieutenant Charlie Hastings, who had been doing a wonderful job at keeping the NVA off our backs, called in a napalm strike of two [North American] F-100 Super Sabers. Colonel Moore was yelling to call them off, and Charlie was screaming into his radio for them to pull up as well. One, the second of

the two, did pull up. However, the first had already released his canisters. They...impacted 20 yards from my position. Several of our own men were killed or horribly burned. Colonel Moore talked to a visibly shaken Lieutenant Hastings and said: "Forget those two, Charlie, you're doing a great job keeping us alive! Keep 'em coming!" Years later, [when I gave] a speech at the Naval Academy, an older guy came up and...said that he was a former Marine air liaison guy up on the Rock Pile and that he had a similar experience. His commander did not tell him words like those, and he had borne a burden of guilt for years. He saw what a real leader did in those circumstances and felt that some of that burden had been lifted.

VN: What do you think Colonel Moore did right at LZ X-ray?

GALLOWAY: As far as I'm concerned, he did everything right, [although] not all of it happened that day. He trained his men to be able to fight after sustaining casualties. While at Fort Benning, he insisted that his men learn the jobs of those above them

in their chain of command. He trained them to be able to function without leaders.... That ability saved countless lives. Another thing that Colonel Moore did was to be able to detach himself mentally from a situation and ask himself: What am I doing that I shouldn't be doing? What am I not doing that I should be doing to shape this battle in our favor? Colonel Moore also...was able to understand critical objectives of the terrain and where the enemy would try to go...[and] to get inside the head of the enemy commander.

VN: What do you think he did wrong?

GALLOWAY: If he did anything wrong, we wouldn't have made it! Now, he would tell you that he should have used the [Bell] OH-13s of the 9th Cav early in the morning of the second day to recon the flanks and up that mountain. That might have allowed them to have a greater warning of the impending attack and they could have used the artillery and air support to stop them sooner.... He also wished that he had trained his soldiers that when a comrade was shot, you first shoot the mother f—er who shot him or you'll be shot, too,

when you run to get him. *Then* you go get the wounded man to safety. The Vietnamese did that very well. They didn't get their wounded or dead until after the battle.

VN: There are those who say that Colonel Moore did not use the intelligence assets to their fullest, and that today's military would not make that same mistake. Could you compare his actions with that of the recent Operation Anaconda in Afghanistan, where American and coalition forces came across an enemy force far greater than expected?

GALLOWAY: They are amazingly similar, aren't they? Maybe even worse. I hope those who would make those judgments are up to their ass in it in Afghanistan now. Those who make that type of proclamation usually are doing so from the safety of a classroom or other noncombat situation. We have a lot of technological equipment to gather intelligence now. However, unless you have someone on the ground looking at the situation, it doesn't do all that much good. As with LZ X-ray, when the soldiers hit the ground in Anaconda, they had to adjust to a situation that was somewhat dif-

Have you read the book?

We Were Soldiers Once...and Young, by Harold G. Moore and Joseph Galloway, is available now from www.thehistorynetshop.com. Part of the **About** network

...the enemy nearly overran our position....If they hadn't stopped to shoot our wounded and loot our dead, they would have broken through and there would have been hell to pay.

ferent than what the intelligence people had led them to believe.

VN: How do you feel about the way Vietnam veterans were treated upon their return?

GALLOWAY: Shamefully!... This country can never do enough to apologize or make it up to them. For most of those guys there is a justifiable bitterness and anger there. [As someone said,] "They may not have been the greatest generation—but they are the greatest of their generation!"

VN: Did you meet with the veterans of the Ia Drang?

GALLOWAY: We started getting together once a year in 1987. A small group, five or six, got together around a table at Fort Hood, Texas. Last year, we had 530 at dinner. For us, it is an annual fix that we have to have. It's unfortunate to have to go through a war to obtain that kind of friendship; but the hottest fire makes the strongest steel. They are such good guys, good men.

VN: When did you and General Moore decide to write the book?

GALLOWAY: I think we knew from the last day on X-ray that we were going to write it one day. We stayed in touch....In 1976 we shook hands and said that when he was done with the Army and I was done wandering around the world, we would do the book. I came back to L.A. as the UPI bureau chief in 1980, and he retired in 1977 and started a ski resort for Bo Callaway in Colorado. When we were both ready, we got together. We knew where about 15 of the guys were, and we had to find a couple or 300. We prepared a questionnaire for those first men and a cover letter that stated if we made a profit on the book, part of that would go to start a scholarship fund for the children of the Ia Drang veterans. The research took 10 years.

VN: How were you and Hal Moore able to research the North Vietnamese side of it?

GALLOWAY: In 1990, we returned to Vietnam for *U.S. News and World Report* to do an article. We hoped to go to the valley and talk to the commanders. That didn't happen. They did give us General Nguyen Vo Giap and the historian of the People's Army, Maj. Gen. Hoang Phuong, who had been present on the battlefield. He had been sent down the Ho Chi Minh Trail; he walked down. It took him two and a half months. He arrived just in time to write the after-action report....He had the authority from Hanoi to interview all of the commanders. Later, Phuong wrote a pamphlet, "How to Fight the Americans." It was circulated to everyone in the [North] Vietnamese Army and to the Viet Cong as well. After talking to these guys, I did a cover story on the 25th anniversary of the battle, October 29, 1990—a battle no one remembered in a war no one liked. Timing is everything.

Continued on page 64



A wounded air cavalryman is loaded onto a Huey for evacuation. As Galloway paraphrased, "They may not have been the greatest generation—but they are the greatest of their generation."

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Interview

FROM PAGE 25

It was on the eve of another war, and we hadn't figured out...what we thought of the last one. We were deluged with mail. The article won the National Magazine Award. VN: Did you get to talk with the NVA veterans of the battle?

GALLOWAY: After returning from the Gulf War, I took a six-month leave to write the book. We were just starting to write it when we got a telegram from the Vietnamese. They said that if we were to return, they would give us the people we didn't get before.... We went back and they delivered. We interviewed General Chu Huy Man, one of five senior generals they ever had. He was the equivalent rank of Giap and became the commissar of the People's Army of Vietnam. Later, he became a Central Committee member.... He was the division commander in the Ia Drang Valley. His subordinate, Hal Moore's counterpart, was General Nguyen Huu An, who is depicted in the movie. We had six to seven hours with each of these guys. They brought their journals and maps, as did we. It was a great time. After finishing those interviews, we hot-footed it home and wrote the book. We worked on the manuscript right up to the very last minute. We turned it in right before Christmas. It was released on Veterans Day of 1992.

VN: What about the movie rights?

GALLOWAY: We had a lot of calls from Hollywood. Most of them were from scumbags. Some were people who had ideas and no money. The others had money and no ideas. They waste huge chunks of your time.... So, we fired our agent and took it off the market. We were prepared to wait until hell freezes over or the right guy comes along. A year or so later [we] were at VMI giving a talk, and we were in our quarters about to have a drink. The phone rang. The guy said: "Sir, you don't know me, but my name is Randall Wallace. I'm a screen writer. I love your book and want to make it into a movie." I said, "Mr. Wallace, you're going to have to answer a question or this conversation is going nowhere fast!" He said, "What's your question?" "Do you believe in heroes?" He answered: "Yes sir, I do! I just finished making a movie called *Braveheart*, and it will be out next year. You see that movie and you'll know that I do. Better yet, I'm sending you the screenplay right now." That was the beginning, and we worked with him for eight years on the project.

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COUPON EXPIRES 12/31/02

OCTOBER '02



Events

REUNIONS

October 10-12: Veterans who served aboard USS *Davidson* (DE/FF1045) will reunite in Branson, Mo. For information contact Robert Schippers via e-mail at colking@pcpartner.net, or via postal mail at 1519 1st St. North, Newton, Iowa 50208.

October 10-13: Veterans who served aboard USS *Saratoga* (CV3 CVA/CV60) will hold their 51st reunion in Branson, Mo. Contact John D. Brandman at (877) 360-7272 or via e-mail at cva360@aol.com, or visit www.uss-saratoga.com.

October 10-13: MCB 74 Seabees, Vietnam Era, will hold Reunion Nine in Biloxi/Gulfport, Miss. For information contact Bill Christiansen at (920) 856-6842 or via e-mail at pinhole@doorpi.net.

October 10-13: The Air Commando Association annual reunion will be held in Fort Walton Beach, Fla. For information contact Eugene D. Rossel at (850) 581-0099 or at aircommando1@earthlink.net.

October 11-13: The Vietnam Dog Handler Association's biannual reunion will be held in St. Louis, Mo. For information contact James Stewart at (810) 639-5755 or check the Web site at www.vdhaonline.org or by e-mail at jstewart@centurytel.net.

October 24-26: The 4-31, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, will hold its reunion in Houston, Texas. For details contact Vance A. van Wieren at (616) 543-3661, or by e-mail at vw196nam@i2k.com.

November 8-10: The B Troop 2-17 Cavalry Association, 101st Airborne Division, will reunite in Washington, D.C., in conjunction with the 30th anniversary of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. Contact Jim Matthews at (412) 466-3557 or by e-mail at jhmatthews1@adelphia.net.

November 10: The 14th Annual "DMZ to Delta" dance, sponsored by Vietnam Veterans of America, Inc., chapter 227,

will be held in Arlington, Va. Contact Len Ignatowski at (703) 255-0353 or by e-mail at ignatows@erols.com.

OTHER EVENTS

October 18: The National Archives in Washington, D.C., hosts authors and historians Lewis "Bob" Sorley and General F.I. Brown, U.S. Army (ret.), who will present and discuss their video documentary, *All it Can Be*. The video program is an account of how the U.S. Army rebuilt itself after Vietnam to become the Army of Desert Storm, and features leaders including Generals Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf as well as five former chiefs of staff. Sorley will also comment on his forthcoming book complementing the documentary. The program will be held at 7 p.m. in Room 105 of the National Archives. For more information contact Sam Anthony at (202) 208-7345 or by e-mail at sam.anthony@nara.gov.

October 22: The New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and Vietnam Era Educational Center, in Holmdel, N.J., presents a full-day interdisciplinary forum, "Since the Fall: The Vietnam War's Legacy from the Vietnamese Perspective." The program will include a keynote address and three panel discussion/workshop sessions: "Vietnam and its People Today," "In the New World: Vietnamese Americans" and "Looking Back, Looking Ahead." Tours of the New Jersey Vietnam Veterans' Memorial and Educational Center will be offered, and professional development credits will be available for New Jersey teachers. For more information call (800) 648-8387 or see the Web site at www.njvvmf.org.

November 11: Veterans Day at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., will be observed with speeches, a color guard and a wreath-laying ceremony. For further information call (202) 619-7222.

Claudia Gary Annis

Readers are welcome to send information about veterans' reunions and educational events. Please note that five to six months' lead time is required to meet our production schedule. Send to: Vietnam, Events editor, 741 Miller Drive S.E., Suite D-2, Leesburg, VA 20175, or by e-mail to Vietnam@thehistorynet.com. Inclusion is subject to space availability, and announcements may be edited.

VN: Did you have much control over it?
GALLOWAY: Every iteration of the screenplay, he would send a copy to me and the old man. We'd pencil it up and send it right back. He didn't take all of our changes. He knows a hell of a lot more about making movies than we do. [But] the movie that he wrote, directed and produced is probably the most accurate account of the Vietnam War ever produced and I think will stand the test for a long time. It is not just a movie about Vietnam. It is a movie about men in battle and, therefore, timeless.

VN: How did Wallace ensure accuracy in portraying combat situations?

GALLOWAY: When [we were] getting ready to film, I got a call from Maj. Gen. John LeMoyne, who was in command at Fort Benning.... Randall Wallace [apparently wanted] to go through Ranger School. I said: "John, you should do this because.... he is the guy who is making the movie out of our book. He wants to be inoculated with the spirit of the Army and I know of no better way than that." John waved him through the gates and handed him over to the tender mercy of the Ranger instructors. He made it through two or three weeks. They damned near killed him. He is 50 years old, for God's sake! [He went through] the Night Infiltration Course, the Ranger Mud Pit, the Darby Queen,... the Swamp Phase, and... the Mountain Phase. After all that, he understood a lot more.... The colonel and I were involved every step of the way. It rings about 85 percent history and 15 percent Hollywood. That is the reverse of normal. Overall, Randall Wallace captured the heart and soul of the story. ☆

Vietnam Magazine would like to thank Joe Galloway for his time as well as for his service to his country. For information about the scholarship fund for the children and grandchildren of Ia Drang Valley veterans, contact the 1st Cavalry Division Association, 302 N. Main St., Copperas Cove, TX 76522. Interviewer Lance Jones is a former Army field artillery officer and the photo and art researcher for Vietnam and World War II magazines. For more information about the book and the movie, visit www.lzxr.com and www.weweresoldiers.com. To see some of Joe Galloway's photographs, visit www.weweresoldiers.net.

t n To read more about the Battle of Ia Drang Valley, go to TheHistoryNet at www.thehistorynet.com and see "Selfless Action in the Ia Drang Valley," by Richard Montpelier, which will appear beginning the week of September 9, 2002.