

VIETNAM Revisited

Last Updated Friday, 06 August 2010

VIETNAM Revisited 2010

Scroll to the bottom page for link to cool 2010 YouTube videos.

The Pennsylvania Military Museum's combat bivouac, "VIETNAM Revisited," is one of the best public educational living history events in Central Pennsylvania. It features real weapons (no air soft toy guns), real equipment and real soldiers made up of prior service veterans of the army, navy, Marines and active duty National Guardsmen.

1st Cavalry living historians: Front row L to R – John Wagner, Jr., John Wagner, Sr., Alan Beckwith. Standing L to R – Dave Ayers, Doug Swope, Chris Gray, Tom Gray, Pete Michel, Bruce Michel.

Photo credit: Joe Horvath

This was our fourth year for the interpretation of Vietnam and the weather fully cooperated by giving us very hot and humid conditions on Saturday 24JUL and rainy skies which cleared to hot and humid on Sunday 25JUL.

Museum educator Joe Horvath, portraying an infantry major, takes a smoke break during the oppressive heat and humidity on Saturday. Photo Credit: Aaron J. Heiner, Reuters News Service

As in years past, visitors were greeted by the In-Processing sign at the entrance to the trail network. Several interpretive displays were manned and the public was encouraged to go "on patrol" with a squad through the dense underbrush .

Vietnam vets are requested to sign the board with their name, rank, unit and dates of time in-country. On the reverse side of the board is a map of the country where vets are asked to mark the location of their time in-country. Photo Credit: William Cawthern

PFC Chris Gray mans the info table. Photo Credit: William Cawthern

A 2010 "patrol" is led down the trail toward Pebble Beach. The "beach" is a tree covered area of the creek used as a swimming hole. We had designated it as a rallying point for the patrols. It was a good site to suspect an ambush. Photo Credit: William Cawthern

Centre Daily Times staff photographer Michelle Bixby documents the use of a field stove to heat C-rations.

Photo Credit: William Cawthern

HM2 Doc Ayers on TAD to the army talks about field medicine. Photo Credit; William Cawthern

Living History events are a great way to see museum exhibits come alive. Reuters News Service photographer Aaron Heiner gets some pointers on the M38A1 Jeep from John Wagner, Jr. Photo Credit William Cawthern

Conducting a public demonstration of a tactical battle reenactment is quite easy for 18th and 19th century reenactors. The Napoleonic tactics used during the Revolutionary and Civil Wars were designed for an audience sitting beside the battlefield. Tactics changed as the weapons improved and by the mid 1960's American soldiers found themselves in an environment much different than anything they ever faced. The question faced by living historians and professional institutions: How to respectfully interpret modern combat for a public audience in a safe manner without seeming fake or far fetched? Just as the Vietnam War was a remote and isolating experience, so to is the public demonstration of combat. Visitors experience the patrol action by listening to the radio communication traffic between the squad leader and firebase as well as see and hear the firefight in the distance through the dense forest underbrush.

PFC Chris Gray, SPC Pete Michel and PFC Doug Swope prepare to move out on patrol.

Photo Credit William Cawthern

Ambush demonstrations were conducted twice each day - 1300 and 1500. Time and space were condensed so that all action taking place is within 200 meters of the base camp audience and is concluded in 15 minutes.

Radioman Chris Gray provides covering fire and SGT Tom Gray calls in a SITREP at the Saturday tactical.

Photo Credit: Aaron J. Heiner, Reuters News Service.

PFC Alan Beckwith and PFC Chris Gray in an "Ambush Left" situation. Photo Credit: Aaron J. Heiner, Reuters News Service

Doc Ayers bandages SPC Pete Michel while SGT John Wagner looks on.

Photo Credit: Aaron J. Heiner, Reuters News Service

SGT John Wagner escorts the Viet Cong prisoner to the base camp. Photo Credit: Aaron J. Heiner, Reuters News Service

Please visit the YouTube links below for a video of the ambush demonstrations on Sunday and special kudos to those

intrepid visitors who braved the rain for the 1300 event. This video is for you!

Visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jleXBZrzT8Y> for the 2010 patrol in the rain

Visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7XTp5YC9QkY> for the 2010 patrol in the sun

For an AP video report on the 2009 event see: [AP Video Report](#)

Interested in participating? Visit <http://www.garyowens.webs.com/> for additional info on reenacting.