

## VIDEO DEBUT

Modern technology plays a major, and sometimes unexpected, role in the life of today's soldier... and its product is not always military.

One such example was the arrangement of live video conferences between Sinai-based Second Battalion Wolfhounds and their spouses.

Each married soldier was given several opportunities to talk with his spouse back at Schofield Barracks. The chats were carefully timed, with participants on both sides each given his/her exact time schedules.

When it was Corporal Larry Uhl's turn one morning, Mrs. Uhl couldn't be found... shopping, visiting a friend, no one knew. Then Uhl himself suggested they try Tripler Hospital. His wife was pregnant, but this was a bit early.

You guessed it... she was in the labor room; and with her a friend, who had promised to capture the birth on camcorder.

To make a long story short, Uhl got to see the film of his child's birth within four hours of the actual event.

The happy parents had met originally in Panama when the corporal was stationed there. Mrs. Uhl, then a citizen of Columbia, was attending school in the Canal Zone area.

The star of the show had been named Kathreen. Her "sponsors" for her TV debut were Lt. Col. Gregory Lynch, Second Battalion Commander, and Cpt. James Merlo, Rear Detachment Commander.

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## GO, WOLFHOUSES

Kokumbuna was a major objective during the WWII battle for Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands. Several Divisions were involved on the American side, and the Wolfhounds, along with the rest of the 25<sup>th</sup> Division were in the thick of the fight.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Division Commanding General, "Lightning Joe" Collins ordered the Wolfhounds to push as far as fast as possible.

The 27<sup>th</sup> took him at his word! They outran the communications wire and thus the artillery support, with signalmen frantically laying new wire and the artillery scrambling to displace batteries forward. Through muddy, obstacle ridden jungle, the `Hounds roared onto the beach immediately east of Kokumbuna, trapping an enemy pocket.

Anxious to destroy the remaining Japanese before they could prepare more defensive positions, General Collins next ordered the Wolfhounds to continue the drive.

Despite the problems caused by their smashing offensive, Colonel McCullouch's Wolfhounds kept unit discipline and cohesiveness at a high level and contributed greatly to halting the enemy push.

The importance of Gaudalcanal may be judged by the fact that the Solomons were the last barrier in Japan's drive to seize Australia. Had we lost there, the pages of history may well have had a tragic tale to tell.

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The imagination and creativity of Wolfhound operations personnel may be assessed by a review of some of the nicknames they bestowed on the sites of battles they fought in the Philippines in WWII. They include Galloping Horse, Myoko Ridge, the Scar, the Pimple, the Wart, Woody Hill and others.

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## GUAMANIAN GUERRILLA

The island of Guam was one of the first pieces of American soil to fall to Japanese invaders. Future Wolfhound Francisco Mesa, a native of the island, lost his entire family there.

Miraculously, he himself recovered from severe bayonet wounds and fought against the Japanese as a guerrilla in the days and months that followed.

Enlisting later in the Army, Mesa was a sniper in the second platoon of A Company. According to retired Wolfhound George Langdale, Mesa's short-fused and unorthodox guerrilla tactics, instincts and experience were invaluable to the men of A Company.

Langdale also remembers that after the company lost all its officers (KIA/MIA) and FO at Sandbag Castle in Korea, a Captain Hinman brought up one platoon of his L Company to stabilize the position and retake Listening Post Agnes.

He feels that these bits of information, "... are important because they're not found in libraries."

We agree--- too bad more people don't know and appreciate the men who stand between light and darkness for America.

## TWO KNEES

In a summary of action by the First Battalion on Guadalcanal, dated 4 February 1943, there was a list of enemy material seized. Among the items were "2 knee mortars."

This type of mortar was given that name because it had a curved base plate designed to fit on the trunk of a felled palm tree. We trust that the mistake made by people in other units which resulted in smashed knees was never made by the Wolfhounds!

Among the many other interesting articles to be found in the Regimental Room is the diary of a young Japanese infantry officer picked up on Guadalcanal.

Apparently many more men in his unit died from diseases than from bullets. There also seemed to be plenty of whiskey but very little food. Stop into the Room to read the full story--- and to see and hear about the life and times of the Wolfhounds who went before you.

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## GUADALCANAL'S GALLOPING HORSE

On January 10<sup>th</sup>, 1943, the Wolfhounds under Colonel Wm. A. McCullough led the assault on Galloping Horse, their first WWII engagement. On an island only 90 miles long and an average of 25 miles wide, Galloping Horse received its nickname due to its appearance from the air.

Forbidding terrain of mountains and dormant volcanoes up to 8,000 feet, steep ravines and deep streams mark the island itself. Add to this a hot, humid climate supporting malarial and dengue fever-carrying mosquitoes.

The First and Third Battalions led the attack, which was preceded by a time-on-target artillery barrage, designed to frustrate enemy efforts to seek and destroy the four artillery units. ("Time on Target" is a ploy requiring weapons of varying size and range to fire in such manner as to result in all shells arriving on target at the same time.)

Violent and intense struggles between fire teams and individuals occurred, and the advance soon stalled. That's when Wolfhound Captain Charles Davis took over. Taking four men and all the grenades they could carry they crawled stealthily toward the enemy position until they were spotted by the Japanese, who tossed grenades that failed to explode.

Roaring their defiance and the Wolfhound battle cry, Davis and the four men from E Company roared into the enemy position, wiping out its defenders. E Company followed to take the ridge.

Davis was awarded the Medal of Honor.

It is noteworthy that the major unit whose advance was stalled were the Marines. They recommended Davis for the medal.

## NOW YOU SEE 'EM

An example of the wily tactics employed by LTC "Mike" Michaelis in the Korean War was a slaughter of North Korean troops at Hawanggan engineered by the Wolfhounds.

Arranging with the 8<sup>th</sup> Artillery (Bark of the Wolfhounds) under LTC Terry, Michaelis pulled the Wolfhounds to the rear after dark about 800 yards. The following morning, the North Koreans poured into the vacated area.

Terry's "Bark of the Wolfhounds" opened up on the completely fooled Reds, destroying two battalions.

During operations around Hawanggan the Regiment inflicted over 3,000 casualties. This was the first action in which a US unit had skillfully fought the NKA to a standstill and still remained combat ready.

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## WE ONLY WON FIVE?

Wolfhound Second Battalion soldiers, when they left the Sinai in January 1997, left behind an indelible impression as lightfighters. When not actually engaged in peacekeeping duties, they were constantly honing their martial skills.

The results must be the cause of deep respect and admiration on the part of troops from the many nations who make up the peacekeeping force.

In a competition between troops of these countries, competitions involving skills in such things as marksmanship, physical fitness and individual expertness in a wide variety of soldierly functions. **THE WOLFHOUSES CAPTURED FIVE OF THE SIX TITLES AT STAKE!**

They also participated in joint operations between ground troops, the Italian Navy and a U.S. Aviation Platoon. According to Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Lynch, these accomplishments had a direct impact on relationships between the U.S., Egypt and Israel.

It is interesting to reflect upon how many operations in which the Wolfhounds have participated have provided beneficial nudges to the course of history... and may even have had some effect on the avoidance of massive conflicts.

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## THE LIFE AND TIMES OF KOLCHAK I

Ever wonder where we got Kolchak, our first mascot? The story is an interesting bit of Wolfhound history, and bears repeating.

On the Regiment's Organization Day, May 2, 1929, a Mrs. Gay of Honolulu brought a Borzoi, or Russian Wolfhound to the celebration because she knew that the 27<sup>th</sup> had been in Siberia. Her dog incidentally was named "Volchok."

The officers and men of the Wolfhounds were fascinated by the dog and it wasn't long before the idea began to spread that the 27<sup>th</sup> had to have its very own mascot.

The Wolfhounds had been thinking of purchasing a dog, so they contacted Mrs. Gay. Volchok had just sired a litter and the deal was made.

The first mascot joined the regiment and was named "Kolchak" in honor of Admiral Kolchak, leader of the White Russians at the end of WWI. He was placed in the charge of Sgt. J. Martin. The mascot and Mrs. Martin became inseparable friends. Sergeant Martin made it a threesome, but this mutual affection caused a real problem some years later.

After 30 years, Martin was ready for retirement. He had spent 27 years in the Wolfhounds and 3 years in other units. When he and Mrs. Martin left, their departure wasn't any big thing to Kolchak until he began to realize that they weren't coming back.

He ate barely enough to survive, and every night his mournful wails could be heard for long distances. The Wolfhounds gave in... the mascot was shipped to San Diego, where he rejoined his family... the Martins.

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Thirty year old Millett was no newcomer to infantry fighting. During the African Campaign of World War II, Millett, then a sergeant, was nominated for the Medal of Honor for gallantry in action. However, he was listed as AWOL from the Canadian Army from which he had enlisted before Pearl Harbor. When America joined the war, he had ignored the red tape and joined his countrymen without formal separation from the Canadian Service.

Millett has evolved his own techniques for meeting the Chinese enemy in Korea - fighting fire with fire and battling terror with terror.

His favorite prop is an old fashioned fire siren he carries at night when his men attack. As the Americans charge, the captain sets his siren wailing. "just to give the so and so's something to worry about."

Wednesday, however, he said, his men were so fired up for their bayonet charge and made so much noise as they swept up on the terrified Chinese that the siren was not needed.

Millett is an infantryman by his own choice. Assigned to an artillery unit when the Korean campaign began, he took up his matter of a transfer with an infantry battalion commander, Lt. Col. Gordon Murch of St. Louis, MO.

The colonel took one look at Millett's WWII record in the African and Italian Campaigns which also includes a Bronze Star for valor, and promised him a company command immediately.

He proved Wednesday, said one divisional officer, that the cold steel of the bayonet can win a battle when armor plated tanks with 75mm guns are helpless and unable to move.

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## FRANK CONNIFF ON THE SUWON FRONT

The following was taken from an actual news article ran by the International New Service:

Captain Lewis L. Millett Wednesday collected \$314.00 from the GI's in E Company as a contribution to a Japanese orphanage in Osaka.

Then the blond mustached captain from South Dartmouth, Mass., led his men in a bayonet charge on a hill south of Seoul that killed just three less than 150 Chinese soldiers.

One headquarters officer described the assault as "one of the most spectacular of the war."

The infantry company was called up to remove a threat of tanks to "Task Force Bartlett," which had come under heavy fire and was stalled four miles south of the Han River.

But minutes later, the enemy force was scattered by the bayonet-wielding GI's. The Reds who escaped abandoned large numbers of anti-tank guns, burp guns, and rifles in their attempt to get away from the cold steel of the ripping bayonets.

Millett's explanation after the fight was simple. He said, "They kept throwing grenades at me and I got browned off."

The captain was told the correspondent had been informed his company killed 47 Chinese with bayonets and then picked off 50 more Reds fleeing down the reverse slope of the hill.

He retorted:

"Hell, that's not all. Afterwards, we ran down the hill into the village and killed 50 more."

"Me-I shot two and bayoneted three."

(continued)

## MASAN

Sometime in the mid-50's, Hollywood produced a movie starring Robert Mitchum called "One Minute to Zero."

Although the Wolfhounds were not mentioned by name, the film re-enacted enough incidents from the history of the 27<sup>th</sup> to leave no doubt.

One highlight was an order by Lt. Col. Michaelis, the Regimental Commander, to fire upon a column of Korean refugees coming down from the North.

In every conflict between Western nations and countries controlled by dictatorships, it is a common sight to see natives "voting with their feet". So it was not unusual to see long columns of refugees moving toward our positions.

That morning at Masan, the Wolfhounds had their backs to the sea. Hundreds of white-robed Koreans were seen trudging toward 27<sup>th</sup> positions, and most men of the 27<sup>th</sup> eyed them casually, then turned their eyes and thought to other things.

It was quite a shock then, when orders came down from the Regimental Commander to open fire on the "refugees". Without hesitation the Wolfhounds did so... and the "refugees" swiftly pulled weapons from under their robes and returned fire. They were soon wiped out; and, what could have been a disaster became another Wolfhound triumph.

## HELP FROM THE HOMEFRONT

Although it was restored at a later date, the beer ration (two cans a day while the Wolfhounds were in reserve) was a highly prized bonus during the Korean War. Men who didn't drink could command all sorts of payment... sometimes cash, other times performance of onerous duties... in exchange for their share.

Somehow, knowledge of the practice came to the attention of militant ladies of a well known national women's organization back in the States. Outraged, they immediately launched a campaign to save "our boys" from the harrowing danger represented by exposing them to the insidious mental and physical perils of Demon Rum and its offspring.

The beer ration was promptly halted. A young Wolfhound expressed his thanks by sending the following letter to the women. The missive was reprinted throughout the country by a national news corporation:

Dear ladies,

My buddies and I want you to know how grateful we are for your brave action in stopping distribution of beer to us. When we return from long, long periods of resistance to a vicious enemy who uses every means possible to destroy us, we know how vulnerable we are to the wiles of the devilish brew.

You and the other ladies will be happy to know that we have found a means of replacing the relatively small amount of that awful liquid with a practically endless supply of a concoction derived from the nutritious potato. We will never forget your kindness.

A Wolfhound

## BE ALL YOU CAN BE

It's great to be a Wolfhound... but it does have it's challenges. One is that you're expected to do the job better than anyone else, and another is that envious eyes are always on you.

A case in point was the 1996 assignment of the Second Battalion to the peacekeeping force in the Sinai. Many of the duties imposed upon units and individuals were largely outside their experience and thus a real challenge.

Which brings us to SSG Stewart and the men in his Protocol section. Protocol? It sounded vaguely like an embarrassing personal medical procedure, but he was relieved to find that it meant compliance with the needs and wishes of visitors from many nations. Rather a relief from the vision of probing into more personal matters.

This young non-com and his fellow Wolfhounds had three assignments, each one of which could have commanded the attention of ordinary soldiers. The first was to oversee the preparation of a weekly newspaper for the Wolfhounds and for their dependents back at Schofield Barracks.

The second was the daily operation of the Sinai Inn, a guest house for VIP's and vacationers who numbered more than 1,500 people during their six month tenure.

Third was planning and executing VIP visits to the Second Battalion. Among these visitors were several generals, an internationally known Jazz group (Spyro Gyra), the US ambassador to Egypt, the Hungarian Minister of Defense, Major General John Maher, the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division commander, and many other distinguished people.

According to Stewart, Gen. Maher was the most relaxed and understanding guest. He declined to mention any counterparts.

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## CHRISTMAS '96

Ever think of what happens before Christmas at the North Pole? Santa's helpers have quite a time of it considering things like finances, age, gender, and personal tastes.

Too, factors like sturdiness are important, for the presents must travel thousands of miles. Children relatively close in age will hope for gifts which will be equally appealing as those received by other youngsters of their age. On and on and on...

Consider then the plight of Sergeant First Class Lanni Coots, of HHC, First Battalion. He was handed the assignment of selecting Christmas presents for well over one hundred children at the Holy Family Home, our adopted wards in Osaka.

Fortunately, Coots is imperturbable --- or, in the parlance of today's youth, a cool cat. First, he got a breakdown based on age and gender. We're sure that his final step before embarking on a tour of the toy stores was to prepare for the store owners' ears for the tale of the Wolfhounds and their foster children at the Holy Family Home.

Perhaps there was one more step --- no doubt he asked for (and got) a volume discount.

When the Wolfhound Santa Claus took off for Japan, the gifts were packed and ready to go.

Finally, although the Wolfhounds certainly deserve all the credit in the world for almost fifty years of extending their love to these youngsters, there's an honorary member of the Regiment whom should not be forgotten.

That's Mr. Akio Aoyama, who quietly, without fanfare, provided most of the funds for this annual visit as well as that of the children from the Home to Hawaii.

## NO MORE SECRETS, PLEASE!!

There's still a wealth of material out there... tales of the life of the Wolfhounds in peace and war. The trouble is that some of you who have those memories feel that no one else will enjoy your memories.

And after you and I are gone, those memories are lost in the mists of time.

Here's an example: Did you know that Sills Field, to the right rear of 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division headquarters, is named after Second Lieutenant Gray Sills, a Wolfhound? Yep! But the sad thing is that we can't find anyone who knows why the field was named after him.

We know that there are Wolfhounds who've had experiences that belong in these pages, but they just won't share them with the rest of us. What a loss, especially to the young soldiers who might be inspired by those pages.

Come on gentlemen... tell the rest of us some of those stories you've been telling the family.

Comments and contributions for future Wolfhound Reflections can be sent to:

Commander  
ATTN: S-2 (Regimental Operations)  
1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment  
Schofield Barracks, HI 96857

You can also check out the Wolfhounds on the Web, Thanks to SSG Jim Malachowski for his hard work setting up a 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Homepage on the Internet at:

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/wolfhounds>

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