**Some OCS Reunion Thoughts**

*(…keep it light and keep it moving…make it light-hearted and welcoming for all!!)*

Hi - I’m ????? and I was in the 1st platoon of 22-Hotel…and I’m ?????, I was in the 2nd platoon.

We would like to welcome you...and recall with you some of our more memorable experiences when we were in 22 Hotel,, stationed here - at Fort Belvoir, VA. It was just about (45) years ago this week that we graduated from The United States Army Engineer Officer Candidate Regiment of the U S Army Engineer School and were commissioned as officers in the United States Army.

**Belvoir Days**

* We were members of the two platoons of 22 Hotel
* We came to 22 Hotel from many places…
* furthest from the north was David Jones, from Alaska
* furthest west was...
* furthest east was…
* and furthest from the south was…
* We learned skills that were very important then, but not so important now…
* Polishing brass, Shining boots, Making West Point shirt tucks, Eating square meals
* We learned a new vocabulary
* Bean, Drop, Break Starch, Give me Ten, the Green Chair, Strack
* We learned how to introduce ourselves to our superiors
* We learned proper dining etiquette
* We learned many important lessons about life…
* We learned that we could function on little sleep…with a little “magic”
* …if we worked together, we could accomplish what we had to
* Sometimes we weren’t quite as impressive as we thought we were
* (The Hogate’s Restaurant story) – On one of our first evening passes to Washington, some of us went to Hogate’s, a well known seafood restaurant, for a nice meal. Of course, we were in uniform. A distinguished looking gentleman was having dinner with a lady at a nearby table. Somehow a conversation started and he asked who we were. We responded that we were officer candidates in the army. He then asked, in a serious tone,…”which army?? - theirs or ours!!”
* And then…we had “special friends”
* the Pogey Bait wives
* …and then there was…Maj. Quantoc (Escape and Evasion at Camp A. P. Hill)

**There were Songs that were special to us…**

* (favorites of the1st platoon were…)
* …
* …
* …
* …
* (2nd platoon specialties included…)
* “Whiskey in the Jar
* The Sailor Song…”What do you do with a drunken sailor”…or, as we knew it,…”What do you do with the colonel’s daughter”
* “California Dreamin’”
* “My Girl”
* (And yes…)
* Many of us did go to “Far away places with strange sounding names”
* …and now our song seems to be becoming…”Ah Yes, I remember it well” (from the musical “Gigi”)

**There were Special Times**

* There was the “Turning White” Dance

The OCS progression was thru three phases, Green, followed by White, followed by Red. Some of our fellow candidates were married, and to mark our important passage from Green to White, their wives planned and hosted a dance.

Many of us had no contacts in the Washington area, but that did not stop them. On 3” x 5” cards they took down a myriad of information about each one of us, and then they went out on a mission of their own…finding dates for us.

We never knew how they did it. But as I recall, each young lady was witty, charming and a beauty. We were not too bad, either. (I think we may have been in our “dress blues”.)

It was a memorable evening, a great success. It was a special time for us.

* There was the day of the 2nd platoon’s “Inspection” by Lt. Ware’s new girlfriend

We were marching back from a field exercise... it had been raining…it was muddy…we had our rifles…we were dirty and tired. Lt. Ware let it be known that about (30) after we got back there would be a special inspection. It would not be to usual military standards – it would be conducted by his new girlfriend!! AND WE WOULD BE STRACK!! We would be wearing our shined Helmet Liners, our OCS Scarves, our Polished Boots. We and our Rifles would be clean and sharp! That was a direct order. How could we be prepared?? How was this possible??

Our OCIC, our Officer Candidate In Charge, was up to the challenge. We would do exactly as we had been ordered, to the letter. Our rifles were a disaster, anyway…they would have to be disassembled, cleaned and polished…so why not?? We stripped off our filthy uniforms, put on our helmet liners, our scarves and our polished boots, took up our rifles and went marching through the shower, round and round, singing appropriate songs.

When Lt. Ware and his girlfriend arrived, we were just about to start marching out of our barracks and into the company area for the inspection. Suddenly, Lt. Ware realized the significance of what was about to happen. We were prepared to be inspected, but was Lt. Ware prepared to let the inspection happen?? Other than what we had been ordered to wear, we wore nothing else. (And some of us might even have “saluted” his attractive girlfriend in a rather personal manner.)

I wouldn’t say that he backed down…but he did reconsider…and he and his lady friend quickly drove off for some other adventure…but it was probably not as interesting as an inspection of 22-Hotel-2 would have been.

It was one of the few times that we got the better of Lt. Ware!!

**Our TAC Officers were always there to lend a “Helping Hand”**

* There were
* (1st platoon) - Lt. Dawason, Lt. Heien, Lt.\_Bundy + Lt. ???
* (2nd platoon) - LT, Ware …what about Lt. Eisenardt and Lt. Harry
* (one story about each TAC)
* …
* …
* …

**We tried to kept track of Time and Place and the World**

* We had our OCICR (our Officer Candidate in charge of Rumors – our presenter and interpreter of gossip and speculation)
* Messages had a Date-Time Group
* In Vietnam, it was newspapers from home... that were usually 14-17 days old when they arrived

**Ours was a “Time and Place” world**

* We went in various directions when we left OCS, based upon…
* the needs and wants of the service
* our interests and desires
* Information In our personnel files,
* We went in various directions when we returned
* Many of us were “citizen soldiers”, and we returned to our homes
* Some of extended our time in the army
* Many of us discovered new career directions
* Some of us made the army or government work a career

**The World has changed**

* It is certainly a different place than it was in 1968-69
* Communications is no longer by wire-connected phones…but by cellphones
* Records are no longer kept on paper…but on computer media
* Many of us are no longer slim and trim as the candidates we once were!!!... some of us are at the stage where the one thing that is shrinking is our hairlines… and some things that is growing are our waists and prostrates
* Our memories may not be as sharp as they once were, but to compensate for this, our stories do seem to be getting better as they age
* Flashes (in the night) are now things that our wives may experience, not us.

**Awards -** (One award for each person…presented in a “light-hearted” manner)

(…for bring us together this weekend and for this 22 Hotel Reunion..)

* …for organizing this event
* …for tracking down those with whom contact was lost
* …Class Historian (informal secretary/scribe/record keeper)

(…for the 1st platoon…)

* for …
* for…

(…for the 2nd platoon…)

* ...for.…
* …for…

(…and, of course, for our TAC’s…)

* …for
* …for…

**We recall those who we could not reach, or who were unable to be with us tonight**

*(…or may not be cited)*

* 1st platoon
* 2nd platoon

**And we Remember those of 22 Hotel who *are no longer with us***

*(...with a personal comment about each, as he is named…)*

* 1st platoon
* ???
* 2nd platoon
* David Heffner
* Bill Morris
* Dale Wardlaw

**Thanks for being with us and for helping to make this weekend a success!!**

**And thanks for being an important part of our lives during a memorable time!!**