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**A Military Life (Col. Johnnie P. Byrd Collection)
Donation No. 2015-8**

Title: A Military Life (Col. Johnnie P. Byrd Collection)
Accession Number: MSS. 710
Creator: Johnnie P. Byrd
Extent: 9 cubic feet
Inclusive Dates: 1916-2013
Abstract: This collection ranges from 1916-2013 and covers nine cubic feet. It consists of scrapbooks, correspondence, photographs, certificates, insignia, patches, medals, awards, books, film reels, DVDs, uniforms, and an ammunition shell. The collection contains six standard cubic foot boxes, two costume textile boxes, and one small oversize box.

Provenance: Donated by Johnnie P. Byrd
Processed by: Lydia Nunes, May 2015

Preferred Citation: A Military Life (Col. Johnnie P. Byrd Collection), Special Collections Department, Mississippi State University Libraries.

Access: Open to all researchers.
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Language: English

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Col. Johnnie Paul Byrd was born on June 8, 1939, and grew up in the town of Laurel, Mississippi. He graduated from George S. Gardiner High School in 1957, and began his college career at Mississippi State University. While at the university, he was involved in several honor societies, including Omicron Delta Kappa, Phi Eta Sigma, and Delta Pi Delta. Byrd received the honor of Who's Who in American Colleges and Universities and was president of the School of Forestry. He also lettered four years and competed nationally on the University Small Bore Rifle Team.

Byrd's military service began with the 101st Airborne Division in Fort Campbell, Kentucky from 1961-1964, where he served as an Artillery Forward Observer, Artillery Battery Executive Officer, and Artillery Battery Commander.

He then served in the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Sukiran, Okinawa (Japan) from 1964-1965 as an Artillery Battalion Fire Direction Officer. He traveled with the 173rd Airborne Brigade to the Republic of Vietnam from 1965-1966 and was an Artillery Battalion Fire Direction Officer, as well as Assistant Brigade C-3 Operations Officer.

Once back in the United States, Byrd became the Assistant Professor of Military Sciences at McNeese State University in Lake Charles, Louisiana from 1967 until 1969.

In 1970, he returned to Vietnam for one year serving as Military Assistance Command, Tactical Air Support Element, and Direct Air Support Operations Officer.

Byrd then moved to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, from 1973-1976 to serve as Automatic Data Processing Staff Officer and Tactical Fire Direction System. Beginning in 1976, he relocated to Brussels, Belgium, to serve as the personal advisor to the System Manager of the NATO Headquarters Internal Command and Control System.

Byrd then joined the 2nd Battalion, 20th Field Artillery in Wiesbaden, Germany from 1977-1979, where he was the battalion commander. He returned to Fort Belvoir, Virginia, from 1981-1984 to serve at the U.S. Army Computer Systems Command.

Byrd's final military service was at the U.S. Army Military Personnel Center in Alexandria, Virginia, where he was director and Automatic Data Processing Operations Directorate from 1984-1986. Colonel Byrd retired soon after in 1986.

During his military service, Byrd went to many military schools and received a variety of awards and distinctions. He attended the 101st Airborne Division Parachutist School, the 101st Airborne Division Air Transportability School, the 101st Airborne Division Jumpmaster School,

the Artillery Officers Basic Course, the Field Artillery Officers Advance Course, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the National War College. In addition to attending several military schools, Byrd was awarded many honorable distinctions, including the Legion of Merit, Air Medal, Joint Services Commendation Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Meritorious Unit Citation, and Senior Parachutist Badge.

SCOPE AND CONTENT

This collection covers nine cubic feet and ranges from 1916-2013 with the bulk the material dating from 1957-1986. It consists of scrapbooks, correspondence, photographs, certificates, insignia, patches, medals, awards, books, film reels, DVDs, uniforms, and an ammunition shell. The collection contains six standard cubic foot boxes, two costume textile boxes, and one small oversize box.

Inventory

Box 1

FF 1—Army Pamphlets (1962-1982)

FF 2—Army Sewing Kit (1965)

FF 3—Certificates and Medal Citations (1961-1986)

FF 4—Correspondence and Christmas Cards (1965-1970)

FF 5—Correspondence from Byrd to Wife (August 1963-April 1966)

FF 6—Correspondence from Carolyn Byrd to Family (1965)

FF 7—Correspondence, Invitations, and Misc. Documents (1976-1979)

FF 8—Documents and Photographs (Fort Campbell and Okinawa, 1961-1965) Pt. 1

FF 9—Documents and Photographs (Fort Campbell and Okinawa, 1961-1965) Pt. 2

FF 10—Honors Day Programs (1967-1969)

FF 11—Loose Materials from Scrapbook

FF 12—Military Photographs (McNeese State University, 1978)

FF 13—Miscellaneous Military Certificates and Photographs

FF 14—Miscellaneous Personal and Military Documents (Pt. 1)

FF 15—Miscellaneous Personal and Military Documents (Pt. 2)

FF 16—Newsletters (Battalion and Brigade Wives, 1977-1979)

FF 17—Photographs and Clippings (Mississippi State University, 1957-1961)

FF 18—Photographs (McNeese State University, 1967-1969)

FF 19—Port of Lake Charles Magazines (July 1968)

FF 20—Rank Insignia (Epaulets)

FF 21—Scrapbook Contents (LP Collection and Photographs) 1961-1963

FF 22—173rd Airborne Brigade Scrapbook Contents (Pt. 1)

FF 23—173rd Airborne Brigade Scrapbook Contents (Pt. 2)

FF 24—173rd Airborne Brigade Scrapbook Contents (Pt. 3)

FF 25—Speeches

Item 25—173rd Airborne Brigade Scrapbook Cover

Item 26—Photo Album Scrapbook

Item 27—CD and DVD containing digital images

Box 2

Item Number	Item Title/Description	Item Date
1	Convention card, orders, rules, etc.	n.d.
2	Subdued patches and insignia	n.d.
3	U.S. Army shoulder patches	n.d.
4	2 nd Lieutenant artillery shoulder straps	n.d.
5	Miniature medals	n.d.
6	Miscellaneous shoulder patches	n.d.
7	Field artillery scarf	n.d.
8	Rank insignia (Pt. 1)	n.d.
9	Rank insignia (Pt. 2)	n.d.
10	Unit crests	n.d.
11	Name plates	n.d.
12	Calling cards and name tag	n.d.
13	Senior jump wings (parachute)	n.d.
14	Buttons for army greens and dress blues	n.d.
15	Three dog tags	1961-1971
16	P-38 can opener	n.d.
17	173 rd Airborne Brigade insignia	n.d.
18	Marksmanship Badge (expert) and U.S. brass insignia	n.d.
19	National Defense Service Medal	n.d.

20	Vietnam Service Medal	n.d.
21	Vietnam Campaign Medal	1960
22	Vietnam Staff Service Medal	n.d.
23	Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Palm	n.d.
24	173 rd Airborne Brigade (Okinawa and Vietnam)	1964-1966
25	A/321 st Field Artillery 101 st unit crest	1961-1962
26	3/319 Field Artillery Battalion unit crest	1964-1966
27	Field Artillery Battalion unit crests	1962-1979
28	Legion of Merit (U.S. Army Military Personnel Center)	1986
29	Bronze Star Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster (Vietnam)	1966, 1971
30	Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters	1976 (Ft. Belvoir, VA), 1979 (Weisbaden, Germany), 1985 (Alexandria, VA)
31	Air Medal (Bien Hoa, RVN)	1966
32	Joint Service Commendation Medal (7 th Air Force Operations, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam)	1971
33	Army Commendation Medal with "V" and two Oak Leaf Clusters	1966 (Bien Hoa, RVN), 1963 (2 nd Battalion 320 th Field Artillery), 1965 (3 rd Battalion 319 th Field Artillery)
34	Trophy (173 rd Airborne Brigade - SEP)	1964-1966
35	Citation (Legion of Merit)	1986
36	Plaque (ADP Operations Division)	1984-1986

Box 3

Item Number	Item Title/Description	Item Date
37	Book - <u>The Brass Ring</u>	1971
38	Book - <u>The Armed Forces Officer</u>	1950
39	Book - <u>Building Bridges and Roads in the</u>	2010

	<u>Korean Conflict</u>	
40	Book - <u>A Soldier Reports</u>	1976
41	Book - <u>They Wouldn't Let Us Win</u>	2012
42	Book - <u>Sky Soldiers</u>	n.d.
43	Book - <u>The Army Officer's Manual</u>	1942
44	Book - <u>Provisional Drill and Service Regulations for Field Artillery</u>	1916
45	Book - <u>The Quarterly Journal of Military History</u>	2001
46	Book - <u>Screaming Eagles</u>	1990
47	Book - <u>Here is Your War</u> (hardback)	1943
48	CD (Army photographs)	1957-2013
49	DVD (Mississippi State)	1957-1961
50	DVD (Army main file - photographs)	1957-2013
51	DVD (Updated photo file)	1957-2013
52	DVD (Multiple photo files)	n.d.
53	VHS (Family video)	1965-1972
54	Film Reel (Saigon and Kortenbergh, Belgium)	1971-1977
55	Cassettes and CDs (CDs are condensed material from cassettes; contain family communications while in Germany)	1977-1979
56	8 mm film reel and DVD (DVD is condensed material from film reels; footage of Vietnam, Vietnamese citizens, and air strikes)	1965-1966
57	Book - <u>World War II: A Photographic Record of the War in the Pacific</u>	1965
58	Cassette tapes (encased in air mail containers; contains correspondence audio between Johnnie and Carolyn Byrd)	n.d.
59	8 mm film reels (multiple film reels that contain material from Vietnam)	1970-1971
60	Book- <u>The First Three Years</u>	n.d.
61	Book- <u>Here is Your War</u> (paperback)	1943
62	Book- <u>The Pocket Book of War Humor</u>	1943
63	Counted cross-stitch piece (made by a friend of Carolyn Byrd while stationed at Ft. Belvoir, Virginia)	1975
64	DVDs - condensed material from Item 59; Saigon, Vietnam	1971

Item Number	Item Title/Description	Item Date
65	Major Johnnie Byrd uniform cap	n.d.
66	Jungle scarf (could be American or Viet Cong	n.d.
67	wool gloves)	n.d.
68-69	Two Army laundry bags	n.d.
70	Corcoran paratrooper boots (standard in the army for many years; worn with fatigue work uniform, winter field (wool) uniform, and army dress green uniform in airborne units; always kept spit-shined, even in the field)	n.d.

Box 5

Item Number	Item Title/Description	Item Date
71	Wool field shirt (worn in cold weather with wool pants and wool gloves; sometimes a parka, over-pants, and rubber over-boots were worn)	1977-1979
72	Camouflage fatigue shirt (work uniform worn in Garrison or in the field [woodland pattern]; this one was worn while in Computer Systems Command and Military Personnel Center)	n.d.
73	Camouflage fatigue pants	n.d.

Box 6

FF 1—Howitzer Description

Item Number	Item Title/Description	Item Date
74	105 mm Howitzer ammunition shell	n.d.

SMO Costume/Textile Box 10

Item Number	Item Title/Description	Item Date
75	Army dress blue uniform coat (custom made for Col. Byrd; worn for special formal events with black tie and white shirt)	1961-1962
76	Army dress blue uniform trousers (lighter blue than coat; very much like the old, traditional cavalry uniforms)	1961/1962

SMO Costume/Textile Box 11

Item Number	Item Title/Description	Item Date
77	Army green uniform coat (summer weight) - dress work uniform for entire career; rank was worn on the shoulder epaulets, and ribbons corresponding to medals worn over left pocket; parachute badge over ribbons, while marksmanship and other badges could be worn under the ribbons; unit citation ribbons worn over right pocket with name tag on right pocket flap; U.S. brass and branch insignia worn on collar, with unit on left shoulder; patch on right shoulder was combat patch	n.d.
78	Army green uniform trousers (summer weight)	n.d.
79	Army green uniform trousers (winter weight)	n.d.

SMO Box 63

FF 1—Award (Republic of Vietnam Staff Service Medal, 1971)

FF 2—Certificates, Medals, and Diplomas (1963-1980)

FF 3—Loose Material from Scrapbook

FF 4—Photographs from Scrapbook

FF 5—Photocopies from Scrapbook

Item Number	Item Title/Description	Item Date
80	Poem - "A Very Special Person," to Carolyn Byrd from wives of 2/20 Field Artillery	n.d.
81	Scrapbook (contains newspaper clippings and photographs from Vietnam)	1965-1966
82	Photograph (group photo of BAC 2-64)	n.d.
83	Photograph (group photo of 101 st Airborne Division 320 th Artillery, Ft. Campbell, Kentucky)	1963

SUBJECT HEADINGS

Byrd, Carolyn
Byrd, Johnnie P.

Mississippi State University
National War College (U.S.)
McNeese State University

Airborne troops
Artillery, Field and mountain
Artillery—History
United States—Army—Airborne Division, 101st
Vietnam War, 1961-1975

Brussels (Belgium)
Wiesbaden (Germany)

GENRE

Acetate film
Ammunition components
Audiocassettes
Awards
Black-and-white photographs
Books
CD-Rs
Certificates
Color patches (military patches)
Color photographs
Correspondence
DVDs
Insignias
Medals
Military uniforms
Scrapbooks
Tape reels

ADDED TITLES

The Armed Forces Officer

The Army Officer's Manual

The Brass Ring

Building Bridges and Roads in the Korean Conflict

The First Three Years

Here is Your War

The Pocket Book of War Humor

Provisional Drill and Service Regulations for Field Artillery

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