



SACEI
www.sacei07.org

**A COUNTRY
STAYS ALIVE
WHEN ITS
CULTURE IS
ALIVE.**

**HOPE NEVER DIES
IN THE
INDOMITABLE VI-
ETNAMESE MIND.**

- **SACEI Newsletter up-
dates you on the latest
news about Vietnam-
ese-America.**
- **It serves as a link be-
tween SACEI mem-
bers and those who are
interested in the Viet-
namese or Vietnam-
ese-American culture.**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Soldiers Without a Country: We're Finally Honoring South Vietnamese Who Fought With Us	1
Rear Admiral (lower half) Huan Tu Nguyen	2
Vietnam Magazine Vol II, No 1: Revisionist vs Orthodox?	4

SAIGON ARTS, CULTURE & EDUCATION INSTITUTE



To Research, Document & Promote Vietnamese-American Culture

NEWSLETTER # 132

OCTOBER 2019



Soldiers Without a Country: We're Finally Honoring South Vietnamese Who Fought With Us

Jim Webb

USA TODAY Opinion Fri, Sep 13 11:05 PM EDT

How do we as a society remember our dead, including those who lost their lives alongside us in [our nation's wars](#)? William Gladstone, a British prime minister during the 19th century, offered a timeless formula: "Show me the manner in which a nation or community cares for its dead, and I will measure with mathematical exactness the tender sympathies of its people, their respect for the law of the land and their loyalty to high ideals."

On Friday, a U.S. Air Force aircraft will carry the commingled remains of 81 airborne soldiers of the former South Vietnamese Army from Hawaii, where they have been stored in a military facility for more than 33 years, to California. On Oct. 26, there will be a full military ceremony honoring their service in Westminster, often known as Little Saigon, where tens of thousands of Vietnamese Americans now live.

This will be a unique occurrence because their names might never be known and because they were soldiers of an allied army. Following the ceremony, these forgotten soldiers will be laid to rest under a commemorative marker in the largest Vietnamese-American cemetery in our country.

This final resting place will mark a complicated, 54-year journey that began on a long-forgotten battlefield during a vicious war that tore apart our country and resulted in the deaths of 58,000 Americans and millions of Vietnamese.

'Men Without a Country'

In late 1965 an American C-123 was shot down, killing all four American crew members and 81 South Vietnamese Airborne soldiers.



The crash site was located in a contested area and was not visited until 1974. Bone fragments and some personal paraphernalia were gathered, but all of the recovered remains were commingled and could fit into one large casket. The remains were shipped to Bangkok. The American crew members were later identified through DNA testing and were given a proper interment. But there was no flight manifest for the South Vietnamese soldiers. In 1986, their remains were sent to the U.S. mili-

tary's POW/MIA lab in Hawaii, which is responsible for identifying those lost or missing from our nation's wars.

And there the remains of the South Vietnamese soldiers have been sitting for the past 33 years. Because there was no flight manifest for such a combat mission, we will probably never know the names of those who were lost. They are identified only as members of an elite airborne battalion of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam.

The Hanoi government twice declined to accept them for a proper burial in Vietnam. And because these were not American citizens or soldiers, there was no clear way for them to be buried and properly honored in the United States. They are unknown soldiers, and have indeed become "Men Without a Country," after having given their lives on behalf of a country

Continue on next page

Disclaimer: The listing in this newsletter of a book title or a film does not mean endorsement or approval by SACEI.

Soldiers Without a Country...

that no longer exists.

Laying to rest the 81 in Freedom Park

I learned about this situation two years ago. For me, Gladstone's timeless message was a guidepost. If we are who we say we are as a nation and as a people, we should care not only for our own dead but also for those who served alongside us under great peril. These lost soldiers deserved to be remembered with honor and dignity.

After many months of intricate negotiations on both the diplomatic and legal front, this is now going to happen. On Oct. 26, after the memorial service in Westminster's Freedom Park, the soldiers will be interred near a memorial that remembers the courage and contributions of the hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese refugees who took to the sea during perilous times, risking everything to come to our country.

The ceremony will do far more than merely remembering the sacrifices and the five decades odyssey of those young soldiers who so long ago lost their lives for the ideals of democracy on behalf of a country that no longer exists. It will also serve as a reminder of the hundreds of thousands of other soldiers who lost their lives and the thousands of others whose remains might never be found.

The sad but epic journey of these lost soldiers from the battlefields of Vietnam to the largest Vietnamese-American cemetery in our country will provide closure for many others who paid their own price and made their way to America. It will allow our nation to remember and appreciate the contributions of the 2 million Americans of Vietnamese descent who have helped make us a stronger and more vibrant society.

And it will help us to remember who we are as Americans, and who we should always aspire to be: a people who treasure human life, and who will never forget those who stood beside us during extraordinarily difficult times.



A U.S. Air Force flight carrying the remains of the 81 South Vietnamese soldiers arrives in Southern California on Sept. 13, 2019. They were escorted by retired Col. Gene (Gino) Castagnetti, right, former director of the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, to a mortuary in Westminster, California.

Rear Admiral (lower half) Huan Tu Nguyen

Came to America in 1975 as an orphan at the age of 14, Huan Tu Nguyen, determined to make the best of his life and followed his dad's military career. And soon, barring any unexpected circumstances, he will become the first Vietnamese-American to be a rear admiral. He will join 3 other Vietnamese-Americans to hold the general rank in the US armed forces.

Nguyen's family was captured at their home in the early morning of the Tet Offensive in 1968. The VC targeted his family because his dad, Lt. Colonel Tuan Nguyen was the head of an armored division protecting the city. His parents along with his 6 siblings and his 80 year-old grandma were executed. He was the only one in his family who survived the brutality.

A few days later, the communist rebel leader responsible for the killings, Lem Nguyen, was captured. Hearing the cowardly and heartless massacre committed by Lem Nguyen, then Brigadier General Loan Nguyen, pulled out his revolver and summarily executed Lem Nguyen point blank.

<http://littlesaigoninside.blogspot.com/2019/06/the-circle-life-of-navy-captain-huan.html>



Continue on next page

John McCain, War Hero, Senator...

The Vietnam War produced many tragedies, brought down administrations and a country, destroyed lives while created refugees and endless misery. Yet, in the circle of life, the triumph of the human spirits, of good over evil, of hope over despair, is indomitable.

Huan Tu Nguyen's nomination to Rear Admiral has been confirmed by the Senate by Voice Vote on 6/27/2019
<https://www.congress.gov/nomination/116th-congress/841>



Captain Huan T. Nguyen

Director, NAVSEA Reserve Programs Community Manager

CAPT Nguyen current assignment is XO NAVSEA Enlisted and Director, Reserve Program for Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA). He oversees the administrative and operational support of more than 2,000 officers and enlisted NAVSEA reserve personnel. He is also the Community Manager for Reserve ED responsible for the recruiting, training, career development and officer assignment of the US Navy Reserve Engineering Duty Officer. CAPT Nguyen received his commission into the Engineering Duty Officer program in 1993. He graduated from Oklahoma State in 1981 with a BS in Electrical Engineering. He also received an MS in Electrical Engineering from Southern

Methodist, MS in Engineering (Manufacturing) from Purdue University and MS in Information Technology and Software Engineering (Highest Distinction) from Carnegie Mellon University in 2008. He completed Executive Leadership training at Cornell University in 2011.

He has served multiple XO and CO tours with various reserve units at NAVSEA, PACFLT, ONR. His assignments included SUPSHIP Jacksonville, SPAWAR, Ship Repair Facility Yokosuka, Office of Naval Research and Naval Sea Systems Command. His active duty assignments include Department Head at SRF Yokosuka, XO at the Joint CREW Field Office in Baghdad supporting Task Force Troy/18th Airborne Corps and Vth Corps, Chief Engineer for Task Force Paladin & Combined Explosive/Exploitation Cell (CEXC) in Afghanistan, OPNAV N6 and currently at NAVSEA since 2013.

Prior to his recall to active duty, CAPT Nguyen was the Senior Technical Advisor/Director of Business Development on CREW systems at ITT/Exelis. Before that, he was a Senior Vice President for Bank of America, responsible for Information technology and cybersecurity for Global Trading Infrastructure.

CAPT Nguyen's awards include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (2), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (2), Joint Meritorious Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal and National Defense Service Medal.

Vietnam Magazine Vol II, No 1: Revisionist vs Orthodox?

Please go to <https://www.vvfhmag.org/> to download your copy of the magazine.

CONTENTS

Introduction
 Second Indochina War: A Theater of the Cold War
 Vietnam: Colonial Encounter, 1850-1945
 U.S. Policy 1945-1961
 First Indochina War 1945-1954
 Two Vietnams from 1954 to 1960
 Viet Nam 1960-1964 (Ho Chi Minh-Ngo Dinh Diem)
 Viet Nam 1964-1968 American Conduct of the War Phase 1
 Propaganda, Protestors, and Public Opinion
 Viet Nam 1969-1972 Conduct of the War
 Concluding the War 1973-1975
 After the War-1975
 The Vietnam War in Popular Culture
 Reflections and Lessons Learned
 Why Orthodox Academic Histories of the Vietnam War
 Are Irrelevant, Mistaken, and Downright Dangerous
 Was the War Won in 1972? A Crucial Question

 Peace? Defeat? What Did the Vietnam War Protesters Want?
 Opinion: Sometimes the Herd is Wrong
 SLANGUAGE

James D. Mc Leroy
 Michael G. Kort
 Keith Weller Taylor
 Michael G. Kort
 Martin Windrow
 Vu Quy Ky
 Frank Scotton
 James D. McLeroy
 Roger Canfield
 Col. Andrew Finlayson, USMC (Ret)
 Stephen B. Young
 Nghia M. Vo
 Michael Lee Lanning
 Mark Moyer

 Stephen Sherman
 Henry Rothmann and
 C Dale Walton
 James Webb
 Terry Garlock
 Gordon Rottman

