Finding Aid for the Don Zuber, Jr. Vietnam War correspondence collection 2016.183.w.r

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Center for American War Letters Archives
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Leatherby Libraries
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URL: http://www1.chapman.edu/library/archives/
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: Center for American War Letters Archives
Title: Don Zuber, Jr. Vietnam War Correspondence
creator: Zuber, Don
Identifier/Call Number: 2016.183.w.r
Physical Description: 1 Linear feet
Date (bulk): 1968-1970
Leatherby Libraries, Special Collections, CAWL
Abstract: This collection contains letters and photographs from Sgt. Don Zuber, Jr., U.S. Army, during the Vietnam War. It also includes four letters from U.S. Army SP5 Jon M. Young.
Storage Unit: Zuber 1
Storage Unit: 1-22
Content Description
This collection contains the correspondence of Sgt. Don Zuber, Jr. throughout his training and time served during the Vietnam War. Sgt. Zuber, U.S. Army, 11th Armored Calvary Regiment, served as a radio teletype operator. Most of the collection is correspondence from Zuber to his parents, Don Sr. and Laura Zuber in San Pedro, CA. The collection includes letters from Zuber to his aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. Guido Tognazzini in Santa Maria, CA. The collection also includes some photographs, newspaper articles and a Vietnam Conflict Map. Early correspondence, August 1968 - March 1969 relates daily life and training at Fort Ord, CA and Fort Gordon, Georgia. Correspondence from April 1969 to March 1970 describes his job, life in camp headquarters and local scenery in Vietnam, principally in Bien Hoa and Quan Loi. In a document accompanying the collection entitled "My Letters Home" Zuber explains that his letters are mostly positive, writing that although "I was always around conflict and death and earned the Purple Heart for wounds sustained in a rocket attack. I kept this negativity from my parents and shared only my positive experiences with them in letters written home. I decided to write them every day and give them assurance of my safety." -- The collection also includes correspondence from Jon M. Young to his uncle Guido Tognazzini.
Arrangement
This collection is arranged by material type, author, and date. Arrangement principally follows the author's original arrangement as listed in the document prepared by him entitled "My Letters Home." Series list: Series 1: Correspondence from Don Zuber, Jr. to Don, Sr. and Laura Zuber. -- Series 2: Correspondence from Don Zuber, Jr. to Mr. and Mrs. Guido Tognazzini -- Series 3: Correspondence from Jon M. Young to Guido Tognazzini. -- Series 4: Photographs -- Series 5: The Blackhorse newspapers -- Series 6: Vietnam Conflict Map. -- Series 7: Document - My Letters Home
Conditions Governing Access
This collection is open for research.
Conditions Governing Use
There are no restrictions on the use of this material except where previously copyrighted material is concerned. It is the responsibility of the researcher to obtain all permissions. For further copyright information, please contact the archivist.
Biographical / Historical
Don Zuber, Jr. was born November 20, 1945. He served in the U.S. Army from August 14, 1968 to March 31, 1970 with the 11th Armored Calvary Regiment. Following training at Fort Ord, CA and Fort Gordon, GA he served in Vietnam. His parents were Don Zuber, Sr. and Laura Aholin Zuber of San Pedro California. After the war he married Diana Jo Ductor. He has two sons, Jeremy Alexander Zuber and Joseph Adam Zuber and a grandson Benjamin Edmund Zuber. In correspondence with Andrew Carroll, Zuber writes of living in Sacramento and Martinez, CA.
Preferred Citation
Don Zuber, Jr. Vietnam War correspondence (2016.183.w.r), Center for American War Letters Archives, Chapman University, CA
Immediate Source of Acquisition
Gift of Don Zuber, Jr. Legacy collection from Andrew Carroll.
Subjects and Indexing Terms
Correspondence -- Vietnam War -- 1961-1975
Vietnam War, 1961-1975 -- Personal narratives, American
United States -- Race Relations

Series 1. Correspondence from Don Zuber, Jr. to Don, Sr. and Laura Zuber
1968-08-18-1970-03-22

Physical Description: .7 Linear Feet(15 folders)
Scope and Contents
This series contains 334 letters written by Don Zuber, Jr. to his parents Don, Sr. and Laura Zuber beginning August 18, 1968 and ending March 22, 1970. They begin while he was in basic training at Fort Ord, CA, continue through communications specialist training at Fort Gordon, GA and then the majority of his service as a radio operator at various posts in Vietnam. In training he describes daily routine, aptitude tests, inspections and detailed combat and physical training. -- He describes his fellow soldiers as "all really good guys... It seems as though all prejudice between the races is nonexistence (sic). It is amazing because we are entirely equal here together. No one has any more than the other guy. We have about 5 colored guys here with us and everyone enjoys talking with everyone." He writes about applying for Officer Candidate School and Military Occupational Specialty training and his good fortune of being selected for radio operator's school. -- In Vietnam, principally at Bien Hoa and Quan Loi, he writes of daily life, food, books he is reading, current movies, specifics of his job, traveling by plane, helicopter and truck to other bases to change radio frequencies and codes, fellow soldiers, local Vietnamese people (see esp. letter of 6/27/69), commanding officers, and the rain, mud, heat and insects. In his autobiographical description of the collection, "My Letters Home" (see Series 7, Folder 22) Zuber says he deliberately chose not to write his parents of the negative and dangerous aspects of the war and his service. In his letter of 08/23/69 he writes his opinion of why the U.S. must be in Vietnam, about the Vietnamese people and his change in attitude toward them. Although while in specialist training Zuber expressed his hope of being stationed in Germany, in early 1969 he shares the news he is being sent to Vietnam. He writes he has "a strong faith in God and I'm sure that he will protect me. I guess he is sending me to Viet Nam to save someone's life. I am sad but I will keep my head high and do my very best.... I must admit I am a little scared about it all but too - I'm sure it will broaden my outlook on life. It will help me grow up a bit more." He writes of his excitement about flying over the Pacific Ocean and of the advantage of an early out of the Army for having served 12 months overseas. -- The last folder in this series (Folder 15) contains four undated letters. Most describe photos, but includes one thank-you letter to Don, Sr. and Laura Zuber from SP/4 Tony C. (Speedy) Gonzales.

Series 2. Correspondence from Don Zuber, Jr. to Mr. and Mrs. Guido Tognazzini
1968-09-19-1969-02

Physical Description: .1 Linear feet(2 folders)
Scope and Contents
This series contains contains 21 letters from Don Zuber, Jr. to his uncle and aunt in Santa Maria, CA. A letter of 08/05/1969 includes a small photograph cut from a snapshot of a woman wearing a turquoise coat and a corsage. Zuber writes first of his basic training at Fort Ord, CA, his assignment as a radio operator, trips to San Francisco and Monterey on leave. He writes of further radio communications training at Fort Gordon, GA, family news, art and art lessons, hopes of assignment to Germany. From Vietnam he describes the weather - rain, mud, heat and of changing base locations in Quan Loi, Bien Hoa, Xuan Loc. Zuber's last letters include general descriptions of his plans for his life when he returns home - earning money, going to college, travel.
Series 3. Correspondence from Jon M. Young to Guido Tognazzini 1965-1968

Physical Description: .025 Linear feet(1 folder)

Scope and Contents
This series includes three letters and a postcard from U.S. Army Pfc. Jon M. Young to his uncle Guido Tognazzini. On a postcard from Fort Polk, Louisiana, Nov. 1965, Young writes of learning compass navigation and field communications, viewing weapons demonstrations and anticipating rifle training. A letter from Germany in March 1966 asks his uncle's advice about the kinds of guns he should buy there and ship home. He writes he "like(s) the Army a little bit but there is a certain lack of freedom and a lot of little things that are inconvenient and irritating." In the last letter Young wishes his uncle fast recovery from illness and hospitalization, then writes of night guard duty and wildlife in the German forest. In the document Don Zuber, Jr. wrote describing the collection ("My Letters Home", Folder 22) Zuber says "Jon was a casualty very soon after arriving in Viet Nam." It is not clear from this mention whether Jon M. Young was killed or injured. However, vvmf.org/WallofFaces lists U.S. Army SPF5 Jon Michael Young of San Luis Obispo, CA as a casualty with date of death 4/4/68 in Kien Hoa, Vietnam. Since Guido Tognazzini is referenced as "Uncle" by both Jon M. Young and Don Zuber, Jr. it is possible they were cousins.


Physical Description: .025 Linear feet(1 folder)

Scope and Contents
This series contains two photographs of Don Zuber, Jr., described in correspondence. One is a formal portrait head and shoulders shot taken in 1968 after Zuber's basic training. Another photo is an informal snapshot of Zuber sitting in his quarters in Vietnam, captioned "3 weeks to go!!!"


Physical Description: .05 Linear feet(1 folder)

Scope and Contents
This series contains three original issues of Blackhorse newspapers from June, July and November 1969. The Blackhorse is a monthly publication of 11th Armored Calvary Regiment. The newspapers contain articles and photographs about the activities of the 11th Armored Calvary Regiment in Vietnam.

Series 6. Vietnam Conflict Map

Physical Description: .05 Linear feet(1 folder)

Scope and Contents
This series includes one map titled Vietnam Conflict Map Including Continent and Special Maps and Indexes and Chronology of Events since World War II. The map is undated. Published by Hammond Inc., Copyright C.S. Hammond and Co., Maplewood, NJ. It includes an "Economic Map of SouthEast Asia" that identifies agricultural, mineral and industrial products from various regions. A political map of "Vietnam and Neighboring Countries" identifies capitals, international boundaries, canals, rivers, railroads, major roads, major airbases and U.S. Marine and Army landings in 1965. The map also includes "Events Leading to the Crisis -- A Chronology of the Vietnam Conflict Since 1945."
This series includes a five-page document titled "My Letters Home" written by Don Zuber, Jr. dated May 19, 2014. It is bound in a paper folder with a clear plastic cover and consists of a title page and dedication, an autobiographical description and history of the collection and a list of materials in the collection. The autobiographical section tells of his induction to the Army, training, and service in Vietnam. It includes his perspective on his life, the war, and his desire to protect his parents from worry. Zuber writes of his decision to donate his letters to the war letters project and his contact with Andrew Carroll. He dedicated the collection to his parents Don Zuber, Sr. and Laura Aholin Zuber, his wife Diana Jo Ductor Zuber, his sons Jeremy Alexander Zuber and Joseph Adam Zuber and his grandson Benjamin Edmund Zuber.