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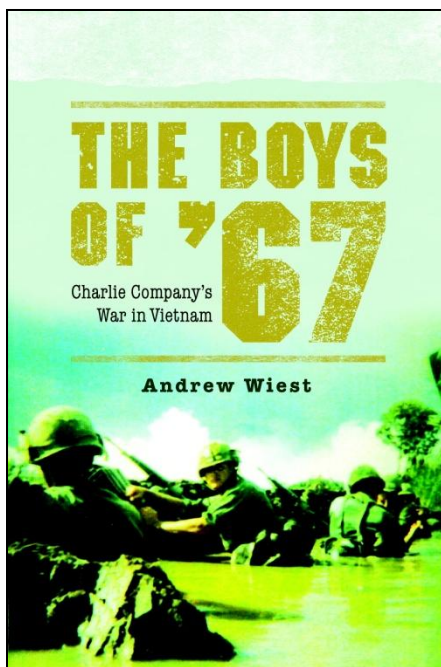
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New Book Explores the Vietnam War Experiences of a “Band of Brothers”

The Boys of '67: Charlie Company's War in Vietnam

By Andrew Wiest



Praise for *The Boys of '67*:

“Andrew Wiest sheds light and understanding on the human and psychological dimension of war and the aftermath of war. It is a story of courage, comradeship, tribulation, suffering, and perseverance.”

—Brigadier General H. R. McMaster, author of *Dereliction of Duty: Lyndon Johnson, Robert McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam*

“This is a story of men at war in the tradition of *A Band of Brothers*. It is a remarkable book written by a master storyteller and meticulous historian.”

—James H. Willbanks, PhD, is a Vietnam veteran and author of *Abandoning Vietnam* and *The Battle of An Loc*

“*The Boys of '67* follows a single infantry company in a single year of the Vietnam War. It is a story of men who routinely put their lives into each others' hands. It is a story

of fear and heroism; of waste, confusion, boredom--and their impact on those who return home. Wiest's empathy and perception make the book as emotionally compelling as it is intellectually penetrating, impossible to read with a detached mind or dry eyes.”

—Dennis Showalter, author of *Hitler's Panzers*

When the 160 men of Charlie Company (4th Battalion/47th Infantry/9th ID) were drafted by the US Army in May 1966, they were part of the wave of conscriptions that would swell the American military to 80,000 combat troops in theater by the height of the war in 1968. In the spring of 1966, the war was still popular and the draftees of Charlie Company saw their service as a rite of passage. But by December 1967, when the company rotated home, only 30 men were not casualties—and they were among the first vets of the war to be spit on and harassed by war protestors as they arrived back the U.S.

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In his new book, *The Boys of '67*, Andy Wiest, the award-winning author of *Vietnam's Forgotten Army* and *The Vietnam War 1956-1975*, examines the experiences of a company from the only division in the Vietnam era to train and deploy together in similar fashion to WWII's famous 101st Airborne Division.

Wiest interviewed more than 50 officers and enlisted men who served with Charlie Company, including the surviving platoon leaders and both of the company's commanders. (One of the platoon leaders, Lt Jack Benedick, lost both of his legs, but went on to become a champion skier.) In addition, he interviewed 15 family members of Charlie Company veterans, including wives, children, parents, and siblings. Wiest also had access to personal papers, collections of letters, a diary, an abundance of newspaper clippings, training notebooks, field manuals, condolence letters, and photographs from before, during, and after the conflict.

As Wiest shows, the fighting that Charlie Company saw in 1967 was nearly as bloody as many of the better publicized battles, including the infamous 'Ia Drang' and 'Hamburger Hill.' As a result, many of the surviving members of Charlie Company came home with what the military now recognizes as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder—a diagnosis that was not recognized until the late 1970s and was not widely treated until the 1980s. Only recently, after more than 40 years, have many members of Charlie Company achieved any real and sustained relief from their suffering.

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Andrew Wiest, Ph.D. is Professor of History at the University of Southern Mississippi. He is the author of 14 books including *Vietnam's Forgotten Army: Heroism and Betrayal in the ARVN*, which won the Society for Military History's Distinguished Book Award. Wiest has appeared in and consulted on several historical documentaries for the History Channel, PBS, the BBC, and for Lucasfilm. Since 1997, Wiest has travelled to Vietnam several times in the company of Vietnam veterans and students taking his semester-long course on the war. The trips have been under the supervision of the Gulfport/Biloxi Veterans Administration, which has supported Wiest's efforts to integrate veterans who suffer from PTSD into the college classroom. Wiest lives in Hattiesburg with his wife Jill and their three children. For more information, visit www.theboysof67.com.

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