

# Comrades-in-arms mark hard-fought battles

By MARY P. FELTER  
Community News Editor

Two comrades in battle will stand shoulder-to-shoulder today at Arlington National Cemetery. One is a retired Army lieutenant general, the other a former South Vietnamese army lieutenant general.

In 1968, John "Jack" H. Cushman and Ngo Quang Truong were commanding officers near Hue during the Tet offensive.

"We fought hard. It was like going uphill. It was a vicious enemy," said Lt. Gen. Cushman, who headed the 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.

The American brigade had barely stepped off the military transports before it was engaged in battle with the North Vietnamese.

After those difficult victories and others in 1968, Lt. Gen. Ngo recommended that President Nguyen Van Thien award the Cross of Gallantry with Palm to the 2nd Brigade. Presentation ceremonies were held in Vietnam in 1969.

This morning at Arlington the inscription from the former Vietnamese government will be unveiled on the 101st Airborne monument. Officers and color guards from division headquarters at Fort Campbell, Ky., will attend the ceremony.

Lt. Gen. Cushman and his wife Nancy, both Army "brats," have settled in Annapolis for the sailing after a career that took him to the Philippines, Japan, Germany, Vietnam and Korea.

He retired in 1978 and does "some writing" for the Naval Institute, he said.

He was in Japan shortly after the atomic bomb was dropped and then worked on the Manhattan Project in New Mexico after World War II. He witnessed atomic bomb explosions in 1948.

"We should never want to see one used in a war, especially against civilians," he said.

He was among the first U.S. military advisers sent to Vietnam, serving in the Delta. In the late 1960s he commanded Fort Devins outside Boston. The fort was ringed by colleges with plenty of campus dissent. Some of his seven children were of college age, so dinner table discussions about Vietnam were heated.

He also served as a military assistant to Cyrus Vance, secretary of the Department of the Army, and was commander of Korean-American forces, responsible for the western half of the demilitarized zone and the defense of Seoul.

Among his duty stations was the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., where he served on the faculty and later was commandant of the school.

It was there that the couple sponsored Lt. Gen. Ngo and his family after South Vietnam collapsed.

Through friends and other connections, they found him on a ship off the Vietnamese coast. His wife and older

son made it to Fort Chaffee, Ark., while their daughters fled with a State Department employee to Seattle. The youngest child, who spoke no English, was at Camp Pendleton, Calif., for several weeks before his identity was established.

The refugees are now American citizens and live in Springfield, Va. Lt. Gen. Ngo is retired from the Association of American Railroads. The couple visit each other frequently.

"Gen. (Creighton) Abrams said of him that he was capable of commanding an American division," Lt. Gen. Cushman said.

Besides celebrating the recognition for his old command and seeing old friends, Lt. Gen. Cushman also is getting ready to attend D-Day anniversary activities in Europe.

On June 6, 1944, he was graduating from the Military Academy at West Point. A classmate was John S.D. Eisenhower, son of Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, supreme commander of the Allied expeditionary forces.

Last week Lt. Gen. Cushman attended his 50th class reunion. This week he'll tour English villages and airfields where the 101st boarded aircraft for the historic assault on France.

"I obviously didn't participate, but I'm deeply fond of the division. I just want to be there," he said.

One other place he would like to visit is Vietnam.

"My son John, who's a reporter, and I want to go back there. It's a beautiful country."



By George N. Lundskow — The Capital

Retired Army Lt. Gen. John H. Cushman, former commander of the 2nd Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, poses with some memorabilia from his years in the service.