



ROLLING THUNDER[®], INC
CHAPTER 2 OF ILLINOIS
P.O. Box 394
Round Lake Beach, Illinois 60073



“MISSION COMPLETE”

Corporal Stanley Paul Arendt

Stanley "Sonny" Arendt, who grew up in the Palatine area, had joined the U.S. Army in 1948 at age 18, spending two years in Japan and re-enlisting to serve with his buddies in the Korean War.



CAPTURE: CPL. Arendt was a member of Company L, 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, which was stationed near Unsan on Nov. 1, 1950, when two Chinese divisions struck. By 0200 hours, the morning of 02 November, the Chinese had blocked the last remaining road for a possible retreat overland. South of Unsan, the 3rd Battalion, commanded by Major Ormond, had dug in just north of the Nammyon River. By dawn, the entire regiment was completely surrounded. The 3rd Battalion was trapped by the Chinese. All day long fighter aircraft and bombers pounded the enemy positions.

Thousands of Chinese had attacked from the north, northwest and west against the 3rd Battalion. The Chinese seemed to come out of nowhere as they swarmed around the flanks and over the defensive positions of the overwhelmed and outnumbered troops.

Pinned down by a barrage of rocket fire and running out of supplies, American Soldiers staged one of the most valiant stands of the Korean War in the Battle of Unsan. Sheer determination and a strong will to survive were about all the members of the U.S. Army's 8th Cavalry Regiment had to get them through a fight marked with impossible odds.

Cpl. Arendt was heavily engaged in the ferocious battle when he and 10 other soldiers were captured by elements of two Chinese Command Divisions. The nine Americans and one South Korean were held in a farmhouse as POWs.

Just after dark, a plane dropped a message to the 3rd Battalion with orders that they were to begin an orderly withdrawal after the 1st Battalion, and 2nd Battalion withdrew. The 3rd Battalion, south of Unsan, was to bring up the regimental rear. By the next morning, the 3rd Battalion was completely isolated by enemy forces, drained of ammunition and engaged in hand-to-hand combat. The men desperately fought off a swarming enemy. Rations were scarce and only provided to the wounded. Ammo was at critical levels -- so low that troops were forced to forage for weapons among the enemy dead.

This event would be the most painful chapter in the proud history of the 1st Cavalry Division. At approximately 1600 hours on the afternoon of 06 November, the action of the 3rd Battalion, 8th Cavalry, as an organized force came to an end. After intense fighting the Battalion was overwhelmed and ceased to exist as a fighting unit. It died gallantly.

Then, on Nov. 16, a North Korean unit came back through the area. They took nine of the American POWs out of the farmhouse, including CPL Arendt, stood them up and shot them. Seven of the bodies, including Arendt, were buried close to where they fell. At first, more than 1,000 men of the 8th Cavalry Regiment were missing in action, but as the days passed, some of them returned to friendly lines along the Ch'ongch'on. Eventually the estimate was revised to a count of more than 600 officers and men lost at Unsan, most of them from the 3rd Battalion. CPL Arendt remained missing for 60 more years.



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RECOVERY: The Arendt family had long since given up ever getting any word of Stanley when in 2004 a farmer found some human bones in a farm field near Unsan.

The Army recovery unit, JPAC, got permission from the North Korean government to check out the report. They found leg bones and about 30 teeth, enough to positively identify Stanley Arendt using Stanley's dental records and DNA from his brother and nephew. It took nearly five years to complete the process - there were no dog tags.

In December, 2009, the Defense Department told Arendt and his sister, Dorothy Stewart, of Sun City, Ariz., it had confirmed the identity of CPL. Stanley Arendt's remains.

INTERMENT: Nearly 60 years after the Chinese overran his division's position in North Korea, the remains of CPL. Stanley "Sonny" Arendt were laid to rest with full military honors the morning of 29 March 2010 at Saint Michael the Archangel Catholic Cemetery in Palatine next to Stan and Frances Arendt, his mother and father.

Nearly 100 people, including friends, family, military veterans and a United States Army Honor Guard gathered in the sunshine for the short prayer service led by Army chaplains 1LT. Cesar Pajarillo and LTC. John Gibbon. That was followed by a gun salute and a bugler playing taps.

Monday's service gave many the opportunity to pay their respects to the fallen soldier whose framed military portrait was displayed on a podium at his parents' graves. Nearby stood a large wreath of entwined red, white and blue flowers topped with a ribbon stamped with the words "Sonny, welcome home."





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After three volleys echoed across the sun-swept graveyard, and the last notes of taps had faded, a soldier presented an American Flag to the brother and sister of CPL. Stanley P. Arendt. His family was also presented with the Purple Heart as well as a medal from the Korean government in honor of Sonny.

"These three volleys represent duty, honor, country," the soldier told Dorothy Stewart, 83, and her brother, Jim Arendt, 64.

Several members of Rolling Thunder Inc. Chapter 2 of Illinois stood as a solemn Honor Guard to pay their respects and present family members with a POW flag, a challenge coin and a memorial battle streamer.

The Flag — The POW/MIA flag was presented as a symbol of our commitment, dedication, and perseverance to ensure our Nation's concern and commitment to resolving, as fully as possible, the fates of Americans still held prisoner, missing and unaccounted for, does not waiver.

The Battle Streamer — The Black Battle Streamer symbolizes a "mission complete". The black streamer with the annotation CPL Stanley Arendt is our way of saying "Welcome Home". A copy of this black battle streamer will fly with our Chapter Honor/Flag Detail and will be a permanent fixture on our Chapter's Army service flag.

The Coin — The coin symbolizes a "test of our metal" in supporting the on-going efforts to ensure the remaining 80,000 plus servicemen, servicewomen, and civilians, unaccounted for, are returned to our Country and to their loved ones. Each member of our Chapter carries a coin as a reminder of our continuing mission.

Despite the chill in the air, the ceremony brought a sense of closure to his family, comfort to his friends, warmth to his fellow Americans, and pride to his Veteran brothers and sisters.

We will "Never Forget" Corporal Stanley Paul Arendt.