



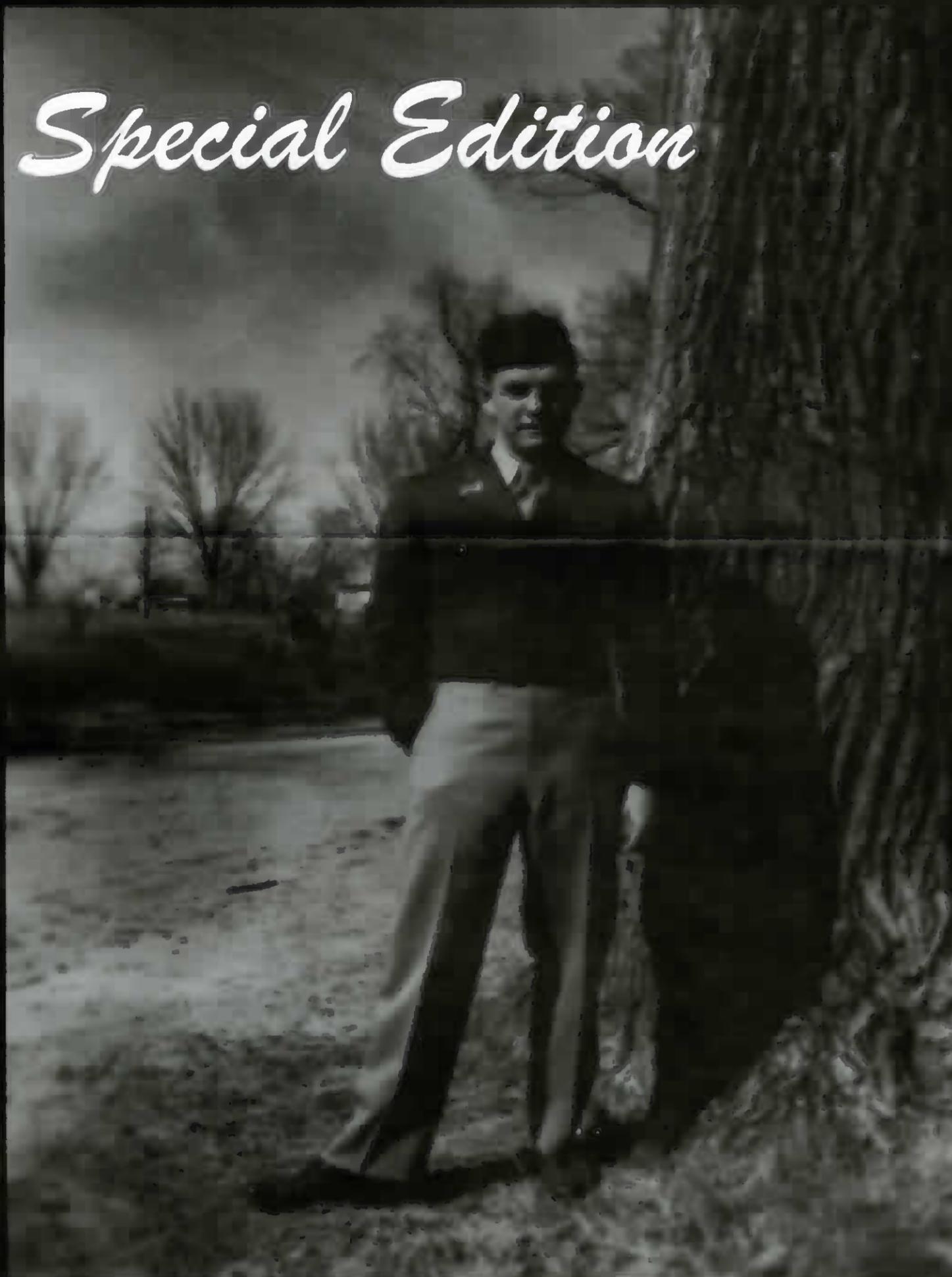
Louisiana Guardian

Volume 11

Published in the interest of the Louisiana National Guard

4th Quarter 1997

Special Edition



—2nd Lt. Ansel M. Stroud, Jr. - 1946

*The Louisiana National Guard says goodbye
to a great visionary as a new era dawns.*

Looking Ahead...

Brig. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau

Brig. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, a native of Vidrine, La., began his military career in June 1969. He enlisted in the Louisiana Army National Guard as a private and was trained as an infantryman at Fort Polk, Louisiana.

He attended Louisiana State Officer Candidate School and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in 1971. He has served in many positions including platoon leader, company commander, battalion S-4, battalion S-3, battalion executive officer and battalion commander.

During Operation Desert Storm, Landreneau served on active duty in Southwest Asia as commander of the 527th Engineer Battalion, leading the breach into Iraq at the start of the ground war.

He later served as commander of the 225th Engineer Group from January 1992 until he assumed command of the 256th Infantry Brigade (Mech.) headquartered in Lafayette, La. in August 1995. For his service during Operation Desert Storm, Landreneau was awarded the Bronze Star.

In addition to his duties as commanding general of the 256th Infantry Brigade (Mech.), he also served as the special assistant to the adjutant general.



In his civilian life, Landreneau recently retired as the Assistant State Conservationist for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Re-

sources Conservation Service.

His appointment as Louisiana's new adjutant general becomes effective Nov. 9.

Editorial:

Stroud retirement sparks change

By Maria L. LoVasco
State PAO

"To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." And with this verse from the Book of Ecclesiastes, Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud, Jr. broke the news to the gathered officers and NCOs that he felt it was time for him to go.

This issue is dedicated to Maj. Gen. Stroud and his 53 years of military service. His presence at the helm of the Louisiana National Guard was one thing many of us felt was a constant in a sea of change. Others retired, others moved on, but Maj. Gen. Stroud would always be around, or so we thought.

As we tried to comprehend the incredible change that his leaving would initiate, other changes began to take place. Brig. Gen. Arthur Abercrombie, the Assistant Adjutant General of the Army retired. Col. (Ret.) William Croft, Director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness in Baton Rouge also announced his departure.

The 225th Engineer group changed commanders saying goodbye to Col. Allen Bozeman and welcome aboard to Lt. Col. John Basilica. The 256th Infantry Brigade staged a spectacular change of command with Col. Richard W. Averitt returning to the fold as Brig. Gen. Landreneau moves up to fill some very big shoes.

We've lost some units - the Headquarters of the 204th Area Support Group, the 39th Military Police Company, and the 159th MASH.

These units have proud lineages whose flags are now cased and whose history lives on in the memories of its former members. We saw the birth of a new unit - the 1084th Transportation Company (Petroleum) made up of former Military Policemen who will now serve from behind the wheel of a truck.

And numerous battalions have received new commanders in the last few months - the 1st Battalion, 156th Armor; the 1088th Engineer Battalion, and the 159th Fighter Wing.

As we speak, a few dozen members of the 812th Air Ambulance Company are serving in Georgia in support of Operation Joint Guard - certainly a change from where they thought they'd be this fall.

Change is the only constant in the universe, and as we embark on a new era in the Louisiana National Guard we will bring with us the vision and ideals initiated by a great leader nearly two decades ago.

No one begrudges Maj. Gen. Stroud and his wife, Jane this time they desire to have together. He has served longer than most of us have been alive. But we will miss him. And his absence will be felt - for some of us in large sorrowful degrees - and for some of us as a lingering feeling that something valuable has been lost.

But Maj. Gen. Stroud will never truly be lost to us. He will live on in all of us with whom he served and whom he influenced. He will serve on in Brig. Gen. Bennett Landreneau as he leads us into the 21st Century.

LOUISIANA GUARDSMAN NEWSPAPER

The Adjutant General
La. Army and Air Guard
Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud, Jr.

Chief of Staff (Army)
Col. William R. Hilborn

Deputy Commander (Air)
Col. Harry Troclair

Public Affairs Officer
Maj. Maria LoVasco

Public Affairs NCO
Master Sgt. John Sullivan

This newspaper is an authorized publication for members of the Louisiana Army and Air National Guard. Contents of the Louisiana Guardsman are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or the Louisiana National Guard.

Original articles pertaining to Louisiana National Guard units or individuals that would be of interest to the Guard community may be submitted to Louisiana National Guard, Public Affairs Office, Jackson Barracks, New Orleans, LA 70146-0330.

1st Det., 102nd Public Affairs Detachment

Commander
Capt. Patrick Simon
First Sergeant
Sgt. 1st Class Paul J. Sylvest
Community Relations
2nd Lt. Jason Lott

Newspaper Staff
Editor
Staff Sgt. Kristine Bacharach
Photojournalists
Sgt. Karen E. Leger
Spec. Rochelle C. Touchard

Broadcast Journalists
1st Lt. Glen Tortorich
Sgt. Darin Mann
Spec. Robert Whitaker

Chief of Staff
Hotline
1-800-233-6796

State Family
Assistance
Office
1-800-541-5860

Looking Back...

Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud, Jr.

To recall my 53 1/2 years of military service would become a long article - of times long past and of people who, like me, were doing either what they wanted to do, or what was required of them. So, if I may, let me share a little of my life with you, all of which reflects on what I am today, and what the Guard is and has been for me.

I was born April 5, 1927, the only son of Grace and Ansel Stroud, and had an older sister, Killie Marie. We lived in Dixie - that's right - Dixie, Louisiana, a small cotton farming community in Caddo Parish, about twelve miles north of Shreveport. Growing up in the depression but living in a rural area, no one seemed to have much in the way of money, but we all had what was needed: food, clothing, medical care, great schools and very active and well-attended churches.

My father owned a general store, which means that he sold just about everything. Additionally, he was a farm equipment dealer for International Harvester Farm Equipment and Trucks, a business that did quite well as mule farming was being replaced with tractors and other equipment. In addition, he had a cotton and cattle farm.

The school and churches were the center of all activities. I attended a school four miles from our home, in Belcher, and traveled on a school bus with my other white friends. Our society was strictly segregated, with local small (grades one through seven) schools for black children. But our separated times ended after school and I played, hunted and camped out with my friends, regardless of color. I believe these relationships and experiences had a major impact on my later life. By the Dixie standards of the 1930-1940s, I would become very liberal on all matters of race.

My dream as a boy was to be a great baseball player, being influenced by the St. Louis Cardinals' games that I heard on the radio. Those were the days of the great "Gas House Gang" which played a fast and rough style of baseball. The Dean brothers, Dizzy and Paul, the Martins, Steve and Pepper and others were an interesting and exciting team. My dad also was a great baseball fan, but supported the hated American League team, the New York Yankees. A highlight of my early years was a trip to the World Series in 1940 when the Cardinals seemed to have won the National League race, only to lose out the last day to Cincinnati. My dad took me to that Series, which the Yankees won 4-0. I did get to see Johnny Vandemeer pitch. He had had two no-hit games earlier that year. I saw lots of Shreveport Sports games (a Texas League team) with my father - a great experience.

I enjoyed my youth, my grandmother telling Civil War stories, my aunt with Bible study, a time of fond memories.

Our school was small but effective.

Our principal always provided the very best for us: strong and rigid discipline, but a good education. As a group, we heard on the radio the great news events and speeches: Hitler, Mussolini, Roosevelt, the Duke of Windsor and other world leaders. At home, we would listen to President Roosevelt deliver his fire-side chats.

At twelve, I joined the Boy Scouts, which I enjoyed very much, remaining a scout until I completed high school. I was a good scout and became an Eagle Scout, my first opportunity to compete against no one, just progress as best I could. It was training that has served me well, and I still remember that the Scout motto and laws, when followed, serves one well.

The great 1941 maneuvers had General Patton bring his 2nd Armored Division through Dixie one Saturday afternoon in an "attack" on Shreveport. The defending Blue Army had an Infantry unit as an outpost and they stayed in one of my father's buildings.

These National Guard soldiers from Illinois were very interesting to talk to, and we became fast friends. They were to be in the army for one year, but ended up in the Pacific early in 1942 and had a long, tough fight. Before returning home in 1943, the American Legion in Shreveport established a program to provide some Jr. ROTC-like training in the rural high schools. Several from Belcher went to a two-week training camp run by the Byrd and Fair Park High Schools ROTC at Centenary College. I was the captain of the Belcher Company. This training, along with Boy Scouts, would give me a big advantage in the next few years.

In 1944, I enlisted in the Army as a part of the Army Specialized Training Program. I had taken a test and qualified for the engineer schooling. I reported

"I found that by hard work and study I could perform most tasks, lead men, and make decisions, and I enjoyed that very special bonding that is found in military units."

Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud, Jr.

to Baylor University in early May, 1944, about a month before my high school graduation. (I hitchhiked back home to receive my diploma - another story in itself). After six months at Baylor, we transferred to Texas A & M, where I remained until February of 1945.

Then my training really started. I was processed through Fort Chaffee, went through basic at Camp Livingston and then to Officer Candidate School in August at Fort Knox, Ky. When the war with Japan ended, we stopped the class for a short time and I did not complete OCS until January, 1946. I remained at Fort Knox for about nine months and



was transferred to the 2nd Infantry Division, Fort Lewis, Wash.

At Fort Knox and Fort Lewis, I served with officers and NCOs who had fought with armored units in Europe. They were my heroes, and I worked hard to become as they were - strong, tough leaders. The troop commander of the 2nd Reconnaissance Troop, a Captain Hardy, was a National Guard Officer from Michigan. He was the first to talk to me about the Guard, and becoming a member.

I was released from active duty in March, 1947 and contacted the Guard. At the time I was 19 years old and could not be commissioned in the Guard, even though I had a commission on active duty, as the minimum age for the Guard was 21. A couple of months later, the regulation was changed and I joined the 199th Infantry Regiment at Fort Humber in Shreveport. Captain Hardy had recommended it, so I thought I would give it a try for a year or so. That was 50 years ago...

My Guard experience gave me an opportunity to be with soldiers and officers who served in World War II. I admired and respected most of them and gained from their experiences.

I found that by hard work and study I could perform most tasks, lead men, and make decisions, and I enjoyed that very special bonding that is found in military units.

I was fortunate to work for outstanding officers such as the late Maj. Gen. George Trousdale of Monroe; he was my great mentor. He was what I think a man, a gentleman, and an officer should be. I have tried to live a life that reflects well on his teaching.

I never thought I'd be a general; I just wanted to be a good company commander. When I was a battalion commander, I was sure that I was at the height of my career. It was at battalion level command that I came in contact with those who made the 4th Battalion, 156th Infantry the best unit that I ever served with. We thought we were good - we worked and trained hard, we

bonded and became a GREAT battalion.

Being a General officer has been a special privilege. It is one that I value and honor. It is one that was made possible by the support, hard work and prayers of many. It is a blessing that I don't understand.... why me? But a great joy and honor for me.

Who made it possible? First, my father and mother, without whose support I would not be what I am today. Barbara and the four boys who supported my Guard activities, even though it took me away and made their lives more difficult. My business associates who had to pick up the slack and the extra work and financial cost for them. And last but not least, the great soldiers of the army who served as instructors and advisors, my fellow unit members and superiors who had faith in me and enough patience to see it through.

And now as I end my career with a great family - Jane, loving wife and my best friend, four sons, Jane's children, our grandchildren, friends and our extended family of those with whom we have worked and served - I know how truly fortunate I am.

To be born in a free country to loving Christian parents, to be a citizen where you can have great freedom to be who and what you can be, is all that one can ask. You gave me a chance. I became a good Adjutant General because you were great soldiers and airmen. You brought great credit to our state by your dedicated service.

I wish Gen. Landreneau well. He is an outstanding officer who will continue to enhance the National Guard with his leadership skills and ability. Do for him what you have done for me.

My association with the guard, my association with you, will always be in my memory. I wish you the very best and God's blessings for you and your families. I hope in your life that you enjoy the same love and happiness that I have found with Jane.

Goodbye.

Looking Back...

Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud, Jr.

To recall my 53 1/2 years of military service would become a long article - of times long past and of people who, like me, were doing either what they wanted to do, or what was required of them. So, if I may, let me share a little of my life with you, all of which reflects on what I am today, and what the Guard is and has been for me.

I was born April 5, 1927, the only son of Grace and Ansel Stroud, and had an older sister, Killie Marie. We lived in Dixie - that's right - Dixie, Louisiana, a small cotton farming community in Caddo Parish, about twelve miles north of Shreveport. Growing up in the depression but living in a rural area, no one seemed to have much in the way of money, but we all had what was needed: food, clothing, medical care, great schools and very active and well-attended churches.

My father owned a general store, which means that he sold just about everything. Additionally, he was a farm equipment dealer for International Harvester Farm Equipment and Trucks, a business that did quite well as mule farming was being replaced with tractors and other equipment. In addition, he had a cotton and cattle farm.

The school and churches were the center of all activities. I attended a school four miles from our home, in Belcher, and traveled on a school bus with my other white friends. Our society was strictly segregated, with local small (grades one through seven) schools for black children. But our separated times ended after school and I played, hunted and camped out with my friends, regardless of color. I believe these relationships and experiences had a major impact on my later life. By the Dixie standards of the 1930-1940s, I would become very liberal on all matters of race.

My dream as a boy was to be a great baseball player, being influenced by the St. Louis Cardinals' games that I heard on the radio. Those were the days of the great "Gas House Gang" which played a fast and rough style of baseball. The Dean brothers, Dizzy and Paul, the Martins, Steve and Pepper and others were an interesting and exciting team. My dad also was a great baseball fan, but supported the hated American League team, the New York Yankees. A highlight of my

early years was a trip to the World Series I in 1940 when the Cardinals seemed to have won the National League race, only to lose out the last day to Cincinnati. My dad took me to that Series, which the Yankees won 4-0. I did get to see Johnny Vandemeer pitch. He had had two no-hit games earlier that year. I saw lots of Shreveport Sports games (a Texas League team) with my father - a great experience.

I enjoyed my youth, my grandmother telling Civil War stories, my aunt with Bible study, a time of fond memories.

Our school was small but effective.

Our principal always provided the very best for us: strong and rigid discipline, but a good education. As a group, we heard on the radio the great news events and speeches: Hitler, Mussolini, Roosevelt, the Duke of Windsor and other world leaders. At home, we would listen to President Roosevelt deliver his fire-side chats.

At twelve, I joined the Boy Scouts, which I enjoyed very much, remaining a scout until I completed high school. I was a good scout and became an Eagle Scout, my first opportunity to compete against no one, just progress as best I could. It was training that has served me well, and I still remember that the Scout motto and laws, when followed, serves one well.

The great 1941 maneuvers had General Patton bring his 2nd Armored Division through Dixie one Saturday afternoon in an "attack" on Shreveport. The defending Blue Army had an Infantry unit as an outpost and they stayed in one of my father's buildings.

These National Guard soldiers from Illinois were very interesting to talk to, and we became fast friends. They were to be in the army for one year, but ended up in the Pacific early in 1942 and had a long, tough fight. Before returning home in 1943, the American Legion in Shreveport established a program to provide some Jr. ROTC-like training in the rural high schools. Several from Belcher went to a two-week training camp run by the Byrd and Fair Park High Schools ROTC at Centenary College. I was the captain of the Belcher Company. This training, along with Boy Scouts, would give me a big advantage in the next few years.

In 1944, I enlisted in the Army as a part of the Army Specialized Training Program. I had taken a test and qualified for the engineer schooling. I reported

"I found that by hard work and study I could perform most tasks, lead men, and make decisions, and I enjoyed that very special bonding that is found in military units."

Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud, Jr.

to Baylor University in early May, 1944, about a month before my high school graduation. (I hitchhiked back home to receive my diploma - another story in itself). After six months at Baylor, we transferred to Texas A & M, where I remained until February of 1945.

Then my training really started. I was processed through Fort Chaffee, went through basic at Camp Livingston and then to Officer Candidate School in August at Fort Knox, Ky. When the war with Japan ended, we stopped the class for a short time and I did not complete OCS until January, 1946. I remained at Fort Knox for about nine months and



was transferred to the 2nd Infantry Division, Fort Lewis, Wash.

At Fort Knox and Fort Lewis, I served with officers and NCOs who had fought with armored units in Europe. They were my heroes, and I worked hard to become as they were - strong, tough leaders. The troop commander of the 2nd Reconnaissance Troop, a Captain Hardy, was a National Guard Officer from Michigan. He was the first to talk to me about the Guard, and becoming a member.

I was released from active duty in March, 1947 and contacted the Guard. At the time I was 19 years old and could not be commissioned in the Guard, even though I had a commission on active duty, as the minimum age for the Guard was 21. A couple of months later, the regulation was changed and I joined the 199th Infantry Regiment at Fort Humber in Shreveport. Captain Hardy had recommended it, so I thought I would give it a try for a year or so. That was 50 years ago...

My Guard experience gave me an opportunity to be with soldiers and officers who served in World War II. I admired and respected most of them and gained from their experiences.

I found that by hard work and study I could perform most tasks, lead men, and make decisions, and I enjoyed that very special bonding that is found in military units.

I was fortunate to work for outstanding officers such as the late Maj. Gen. George Trousdale of Monroe; he was my great mentor. He was what I think a man, a gentleman, and an officer should be. I have tried to live a life that reflects well on his teaching.

I never thought I'd be a general; I just wanted to be a good company commander. When I was a battalion commander, I was sure that I was at the height of my career. It was at battalion level command that I came in contact with those who made the 4th Battalion, 156th Infantry the best unit that I ever served with. We thought we were good - we worked and trained hard, we

bonded and became a GREAT battalion.

Being a General officer has been a special privilege. It is one that I value and honor. It is one that was made possible by the support, hard work and prayers of many. It is a blessing that I don't understand..... why me? But a great joy and honor for me.

Who made it possible? First, my father and mother, without whose support I would not be what I am today. Barbara and the four boys who supported my Guard activities, even though it took me away and made their lives more difficult. My business associates who had to pick up the slack and the extra work and financial cost for them. And last but not least, the great soldiers of the army who served as instructors and advisors, my fellow unit members and superiors who had faith in me and enough patience to see it through.

And now as I end my career with a great family - Jane, loving wife and my best friend, four sons, Jane's children, our grandchildren, friends and our extended family of those with whom we have worked and served - I know how truly fortunate I am.

To be born in a free country to loving Christian parents, to be a citizen where you can have great freedom - to be who and what you can be, is all that one can ask. You gave me a chance. I became a good Adjutant General because you were great soldiers and airmen. You brought great credit to our state by your dedicated service.

I wish Gen. Landreneau well. He is an outstanding officer who will continue to enhance the National Guard with his leadership skills and ability. Do for him what you have done for me.

My association with the guard, my association with you, will always be in my memory. I wish you the very best and God's blessings for you and your families. I hope in your life that you enjoy the same love and happiness that I have found with Jane.

Goodbye.

Stick shakes for 159th FW

Veillon takes controls...

By Suzanne Chailot
159th FW PA

After 23 years of service in the Air National Guard and Air Force, Col. James E. Green is "shaking the stick" for another fighter pilot to assume control.

"Shaking the stick," is a term used by fighter pilots during flight. The command pilot, who cannot see his co-pilot sitting directly behind him, shakes the jet control stick until he feels his co-pilot regain control of the stick. His co-pilot in this case is Lt. Col. Brod Veillon who assumed control of the 159th Fighter Wing during a change of command ceremony in October at the Joint Reserve Training Base in New Orleans.

"I have big shoes to fill and a tough act to follow," Veillon said during his acceptance speech referring to Green's command and leadership.

Veillon joined the Louisiana ANG in 1992 as commander of the

122nd Air Control Party after a distinguished active duty Air Force career with assignments in Spangdahlem, Germany, Homestead AFB Fla., Luke AFB Ariz., and Kunsan AB Korea. Veillon is a command pilot with more than 2700 fighter hours in the F-4, F-16 and F-15 aircraft. Most recently, Veillon was the Vice-Commander of the 159th FW.

During the ceremony, held in the renovated 159th FW hangar, he purposely singled out every group and flight under his new command and commented they were models of excellence for the rest of the nation. "We are a world class organization and the future is bright for the 159th Fighter Wing," Veillon said. "It is my privilege to be your commander."

Veillon is the son of Joseph Brodney and Winnifred Veillon of Ville Platte. He is a graduate of the University of Southwestern Louisiana in Lafayette. He is married to the former Angie LaFleur of Vidrine and



Lt. Col. Brod Veillon

they have two children Zachary, 6, and Katherine, 2. The Veillons currently live at Jackson Barracks in New Orleans.

The outgoing commander, Col. Green joined the Louisiana National Guard in August 1995. Under his leadership and direction, the 159th FW achieved overall excellent ratings during the 1995 Operational Readiness Inspection and the 1997 Quality Air Force Assessment. He was directly responsible for the establishment of the Chiefs Council, Super Drill, Wellness Seminar, a mentoring program for junior offic-

ers and the Bayou Militia Press publication.

In his own words, he thanked the 159th for taking him along with them. "Together we slayed many dragons, the ORI dragon, the QAFA dragon, the HSI dragon, the Stand Eval. dragon, but perhaps the toughest dragon was the reputation dragon," Green said. "We restored our pride, adopted a new name and are conducting ourselves as professionals. We are well on our way to becoming models of excellence. Thank you for your support."

According to Green, he will miss the people of the 159th FW and is proud to have served as their commander. "I won't miss the jets, I won't miss the buildings, I will miss the smiling faces of the people who make up the 159th FW."

Green, along with his wife Annie, their two children, Molly, 5, and Sam, 2, will be returning to Minnesota. There, he will resume his career as a pilot with Northwest Airlines.

Curtis takes 1088th Engineer reins

By Bernard Chailot
256th Infantry Brigade PAO

In a stirring ritual steeped in military history, Lt. Col. John Douglas passed the colors of the 1088th Engineer Battalion to Maj. Glenn H. Curtis in a September ceremony held in Plaquemine, La.

Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud, Jr., state adjutant general, told assembled soldiers and guests the battalion was both losing and gaining an outstanding leader. "It is with mixed feelings that we gather here today," Stroud said. "Not many leaders get the opportunity to organize and command a battalion, and no one's done it any better than Col. Douglas."

Stroud said being a combat engineer "is a tough business. Maj. Curtis comes from a long line of distinguished military men, and we are confident in his ability to lead this battalion."

Douglas thanked the officers and men of the battalion on behalf of himself and his wife, Cheryl. "I haven't done anything here by myself," he said. "You soldiers have earned the awards and brought this battalion to its current level of combat

readiness. I salute you."

Curtis also touted the importance of teamwork. "Many people in my career have helped prepare me for this position," he said. "One of them is my wife Jill who knows as well as anyone the sacrifices of being married to a soldier. She's always stood by me."

Curtis enlisted in the Guard as a private in 1982 and accepted his officer's commission in 1984.

He has served as a platoon leader, company com-

mander, battalion operations officer and most recently as the 1088th Executive Officer. In civilian life, Curtis is vice-president of International Manufacturers' Representatives in Baton Rouge.

Douglas has served in the Guard since 1969. He took the reins of the 1088th when the battalion was organized in October 1993. Battalion companies are located in Plaquemine, Opelousas, New Roads, Donaldsonville and Napoleonville.

Douglas formerly served as a civil engineer, construction engineer, battalion operations officer and group executive officer. He now moves on to become executive officer of the 61st Troop Command in New Orleans.

"Many people in my career have helped prepare me for this position. One of them is my wife Jill who knows as well as anyone the sacrifices of being married to a soldier. She's always stood by me."

Maj. Glenn H. Curtis

1st Bn, 156th Armor changes command

By Maria L. LoVasco
State PAO

The 1st Battalion, 156th Armor, Louisiana Army National Guard, conducted a change of com-

mand ceremony on October 4th. The ceremony took place at the Armory in Shreveport. Lt. Col. Kenneth W. Valentine, the outgoing commander, passed the unit guidon to Lt. Col. Ronnie D. Johnson.

Valentine had commanded the unit since August 1995. He is a native of Mansfield, La. and a graduate of Louisiana Tech University in Ruston, La. He and his family reside in Pineville, La. where he is employed by Central Louisiana Electrical Company (CLECO) as Supervisor of Training and Safety for the Power Generation Division.

He moves on as the training officer of Detachment 1, Headquarters State Area Command at Camp Beauregard in Pineville.

The incoming commander, Lt. Col. Ronnie Johnson, first joined the U.S. Army in 1982. During his five years of service, Johnson served as an infantry company commander in the 1st Armor Division in Germany and then as a staff officer at the infantry school at Fort Benning, Ga. He joined the Louisiana Army National Guard in 1987 and has served in various positions in the 256th Infantry Brigade, among them, company commander, S-3 and Executive Officer of the 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry. For the past year he has served

as the Brigade Executive Officer.

He is a graduate of Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge and works full-time as a supervisor with the U.S. Marshal Office in Baton Rouge.

The 1st Battalion, 156th Armor has five companies located in Shreveport, Vivian and Coushatta. It was first organized in 1861 as part of the 2nd and 3rd Louisiana Volunteer Infantry Regiments and was mustered into confederate service in New Orleans.

It was most recently federalized in 1990 for Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. The armor battalion is equipped with the M1A1 Main Battle Tank.



Stroud Snapshots...

Baby Ansel with pet and sister Killie Marie, 1927



"Maj. Gen. Stroud has always had the ability to make things happen in the Louisiana Army National Guard. He has set an excellent example for all to follow. His retirement will leave a void, but his mission and agenda will be passed on. It has been a privilege for Company C, 528th Engineer Battalion to have Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud as its Adjutant General.

Submitted by SSgt. 1st Class Donal Robinson
RNCO, Co. C, 528th Engr Bn

"For many years Maj. Gen. Stroud has been the State Adjutant General. Like the Rock of Gibraltar, he has stood as the pinnacle of the Louisiana Army National Guard, committing his life to the interests of the citizen soldiers. He has been in office through the careers of many men, providing his leadership, guidance and setting forth the goals that have made this state stand above all others. He will be sadly missed."

Submitted by Staff Sgt. Aaron Coleman, Co. B, 528th Engr Bn

With President Ronald Reagan



"One of the most touching insights into the impact this man has made on soldiers came this year in the back of a transport plane returning from Belize. It was late, dark and the drone of the huge engines kept me from hearing all of the details. I just know that two young soldiers were talking and one apparently felt slighted that some superior person had not noticed or spoken to him. I have no idea whether he was referring to an NCO or an officer. After the slighted soldier finished his account he said to his companion, 'Now General Stroud will speak to you. I was in the drill hall one day and he walked right up to me and started talking to me.' The soldier seemed genuinely affected by the brief encounter with the General. It was obvious this was a special moment for him and he wanted to relate it to the other soldier. I could sense such affection and appreciation for his commander in this young man's voice.

The telling of the encounter also made an impression on me."

Submitted by Chaplain Jim Comer, HQ STARC

"Early in 1995, I and Warrant Officer Glen Lala in DIM had worked for over a month on little else but the special multi-media presentation for the on-site ACOE visit by the judges from Washington D.C. Neither of us were full-time Visual Information Specialists, but, as there was no one doing that job at the time, we got tasked with the presentation because he had the technical knowledge and I traditionally worked on the much simpler command briefing. Human and technical error beset us, and on the big day the presentation was doomed from the start. A dozen smaller errors throughout the half-hour long presentation were overshadowed at the end by the Mother-of-all-mistakes. During the last few minutes of the presentation the screen went to black and the audience sat in a darkened theater while only my tape-recorded voice droned on in the darkness. During those awful minutes, when I knew there was no way to recover, I hid in the control booth in the back and lost my composure. The weeks of long hours, little sleep and feeling overwhelmed got the best of me. I locked the door and broke down, knowing that I had just embarrassed Gen. Stroud and the Louisiana National Guard in front of the judges. As the crowd filed out, I just prayed no one would need to enter the control booth to use the phone. I heard a knock on the door and tried to wipe my eyes while I answered it. It was the man himself, my boss Gen. Stroud. When he saw my face and heard me say, 'I'm so sorry. We worked so hard,' he just held my hand silently for a while and then quietly said, 'I thought you did a good job.'"

Submitted by Maj. Maria L. LoVasco, Public Affairs Officer, HQ STARC

With Pope John Paul II



"I think he supported the Air National Guard by letting the commanders do their job."

Submitted by Capt. Chris Walker, Maintenance Squadron

"It took Moses 40 years to lead the Israelites to the Promised Land. It took Gen. Stroud 17 years to lead the Louisiana National Guard to theirs. You know, I think they were both about the same age when they retired."

Submitted by Lt. Col. Glenn Huth, 159th FW Logistics Commander

Greeting a returning Persian Gulf soldier





With wife, Jane

*"It is with many thanks to Gen. Stroud for the "Stroud Study" which began the AGR program. All soldiers hired under this program should remember his efforts in this venue. Additionally, Maj. Gen. Stroud has established a high standard of integrity, honesty and competence for all soldiers in the Louisiana Army National Guard."
Submitted by Staff Sgt. Rickey Perry
Det. 1, Co. B, 528th Engr. Bn.*



"In July 1987, my mother passed away while I was on a Leaders Recon at the NTC at Fort Irwin, California. My father was having a difficult time contacting me. Through a series of events, Gen. Stroud ended up personally contacting my father. Once this occurred, in a short time I was informed and travel was arranged to return me to Louisiana. In my father's words, 'I had a problem and he took care of it.' My father was very grateful for Gen. Stroud's personal action to return me to my family.

My memory of Gen. Stroud will always be touched by this event."

*Submitted by Warrent Officer Mark D. Ayres
1/141st Field Artillery*

"He is the most compassionate person I've ever known. When he gave you a mission, he also gave you the authority commensurate with the mission. His vision for the future was unbelievable. He could not only see the next hill, but he could see over it and around the next curve. Working with him on a daily basis for 14 years was the most rewarding and memorable time of my 41-plus year career. Being number two in anything was never really of interest to him and he always believed common sense would get you through most situations. He has a remarkable memory. He's a great soldier, gentleman and friend. He had to be good or we would not have made him an honorary E-10 like we did a few years ago at the Enlisted Association. He loves soldiers and tolerated officers."

Submitted by former State Command Sgt. Maj. Harold B. Cook



With former State Command Sgt. Maj. Harold B. Cook

"During my military career, Gen. Stroud has provided the best training possible for the soldiers. Gen. Stroud is going to be sorely missed."

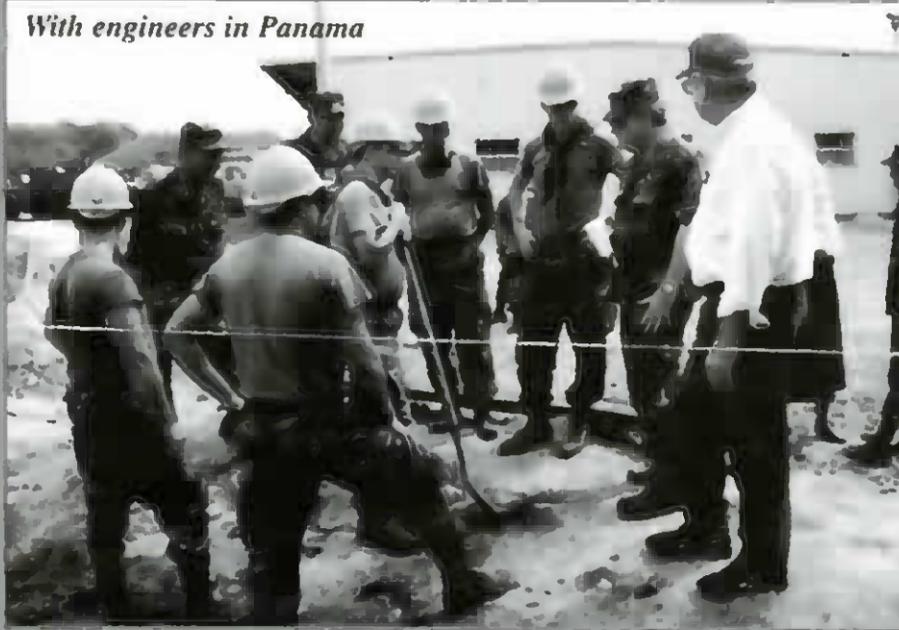
*Submitted by Staff Sgt. Deborah Washington
RNCO, Det. 1, Co. C, 528th Engr. Bn.*

"The crowning act in Gen. Stroud's career is the day he married Ms. Jane"

Submitted by Lt. Col. Robert Vaughn, 159th Fighter Wing

"When a soldier makes an Interstate Transfer into the Louisiana Army National Guard, they have to hope for the best within their new organization. Maj. Gen. Stroud has made the Louisiana Army National Guard just that... The Best! I came to Louisiana as a fully qualified second lieutenant armor officer from Washington State when I transferred to Company D, 205th Engineer Bn a few days prior to AT 87. I met and provided a project briefing to the Adjutant General when he visited my AT work site at Camp Beauregard. I was impressed that the Adjutant General took the time to observe the process and progress of our concrete pour mission. I have been privileged to command four engineer units since 1987. Maj. Gen. Stroud's attention to mission detail and care for soldiers has proven to me that I made the right interstate transfer decision."

*Submitted by Capt. Steven A. Buck,
1088th Engr Bn*



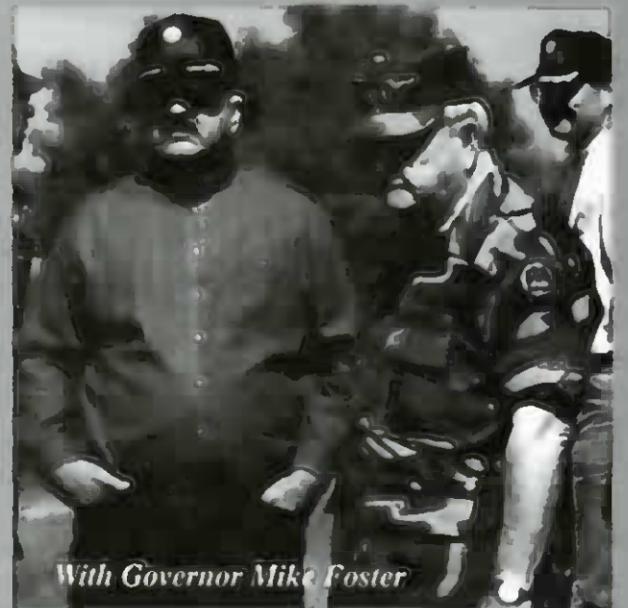
With engineers in Panama

"The Louisiana National Guard is the best in the United States because of Gen. Stroud's leadership. He is a leader among leaders. Even though I have worked with him for only a short period of time, I've found him to be one of the most honorable and professional individuals I have ever worked with."

Submitted by Gov. Mike Foster

"It was a warm day in the fall of 1988, and HHC, 527th Engr Bn was having a Class A inspection by Maj. Gen. Stroud at the Bossier City armory. I was in formation next to my squad leader, Staff Sgt. John Briery, Sr., and Maj. Gen. Stroud was inspecting the squad in front of us. Just as Gen. Stroud was heading our way, a flock of birds flew overhead and one just happened to have to go, and when it did, it landed right on Staff Sgt. Briery's uniform and shoes. Barely able to contain our laughter, Gen. Stroud stopped in front of Staff Sgt. Briery and asked if this change to the uniform was covered in AR 670-1. Needless to say we all had a good laugh!"

Submitted by Staff Sgt. Charles Upchurch, 2225th Engr Co (Panel Bridge)



With Governor Mike Foster

"During a recent "Memorialization Ceremony" for the Breaux Bridge Readiness Training Center, Company A, 2/156th Inf. was privileged to have Maj. Gen. Stroud as its guest speaker, for which we were very grateful. After the official ceremony, Gen. Stroud took time out of his very busy schedule to tour the center and meet with many of my soldiers and their families. My soldiers are still bragging of how they were able to comfortably socialize with Gen. Stroud. His actions impacted tremendously on the "Esprit de Corps" of Alpha Rock soldiers. Once again, Gen. Stroud, thank you for caring and enjoy your richly deserved retirement."

Submitted by 1st Sgt. Chris Guilbeaux, Co A, 2/156th Infantry Battalion

With President Bush, 1992



"Stroud really backed the Enlisted Association. I think he was the one who originally organized and promoted it. He has attended every state conference I can remember and a few national conventions. Now that's a TAG."

Submitted by Chief Master Sgt. Bobby Fisher, 159th AGS Supervisor

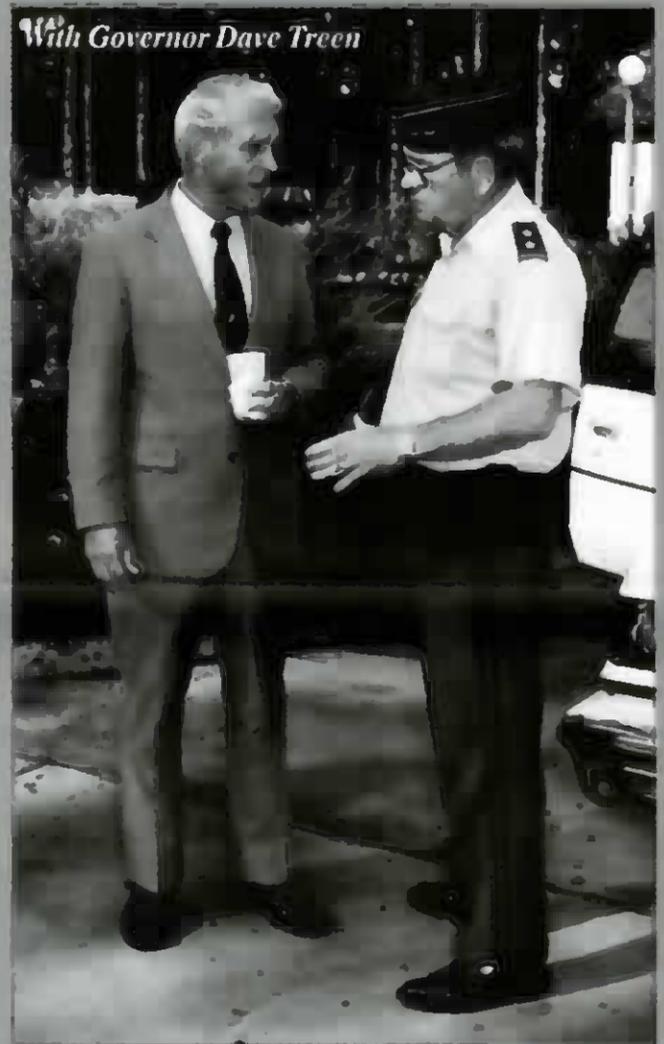
"Union, justice, confidence is our state's motto. General, you are that motto."

Submitted by Col. Hunt Downer, Staff Judge Advocates Office, HQ STARC



"Maj. Gen. Stroud set the standard for leadership - his ability to formulate a vision, communicate that vision, and then motivate others towards its successful attainment is what leadership is all about. He has done that and more; he took care of soldiers; he took care of the Guard."

Submitted by Maj. Jadwin V. Mayeaux, Jr., Commander, 2nd Bn., 156th Inf.



With Governor Dave Treen

"Since my enlistment over 17 years ago, I've seen many changes that have affected the National Guard, respectfully the Louisiana National Guard. The one constant was always "the TAG". We the members of the Louisiana Guard, I think, will truly miss his firm commitment to the Louisiana Army National Guard and to this country. As a soldier, I can remember every time I had a chance to see Maj. Gen. Stroud. He always took time for his troops. It may not seem like much, but to a soldier in the field it is important to know your general has time for his troops."

Sgt. 1st Class Calvin R. Sistrunk, Unit Readiness NCO, HHC, 528th Engr Bn



"Maj. Gen. Stroud has been a staunch supporter of Louisiana's Youth Challenge Program from its inception to the present time. He has actively participated in activities and programs here and lets the staff and students know that he cares deeply about the success of our students, not only while they are in residence, but also after they return to their home communities. Because of his belief in our youth and his commitment to them, he has volunteered to be a mentor for a Youth Challenge student. What an inspiration this should be to adults across the state to know that Maj. Gen. Stroud desires to continue to share his time and energies in this capacity."

Submitted by Rebecca Anthony, Post-Residential Coordinator Youth Challenge Program

"Through the many changes that have transpired in the last 10 to 15 years, Maj. Gen. Stroud has truly been a cornerstone to the Louisiana Army National Guard. I believe that his leadership helped to offer a tremendous amount of stability to an ever-changing Army."

He will be missed"

Capt. Andrew R. Magee, S-1, HQ, 528th Engr Bn

"During the aftermath of Hurricane Andrew we were driving through a town that had received quite a lot of wind and rain damage. As we passed a prominent graveyard, Gen. Stroud noticed that only half had been cleared of fallen limbs and debris. He questioned why only half of the cemetery was cleared and the other half wasn't. Someone replied, 'Why, that's the black side, sir.' With that knowledge he instantly gave the order to clear the neglected side of the cemetery. That's the kind of man he was and still is. There is no color or gender barrier with Gen. Stroud."

Submitted by Staff Sgt. Suzanne Chaillot, 159th FW Public Affairs



As an armor officer (center)



With Governor Edwin Edwards

*"Words are inadequate to express my admiration for him or to describe my feelings about him. He was always there when the state and I needed him. He is a top soldier, a gentleman and a good friend."
Submitted by former Governor Edwin W. Edwards*

*"Over my 23-year career, I have worked with a lot of commanders who would hinder progress. As 159th Wing commander, Gen. Stroud was the kind of TAG who would accelerate it."
Submitted by Col. (Ret.) James E. Green, former commander, 159th Fighter Wing*



*"After completing a rotation at the NTC in Fort Irwin I had the occasion to meet Maj. Gen. Stroud for the first time, as he was present at the Moisant Airport to greet the 141st Field Artillery returning from California. He has always been present at the Enlisted Association Conventions that I have gone to, and he certainly was effective when he spoke at these conventions (not to mention the "fun" night prior to the convention.) Gen. Stroud also visited the 141st during Operation Desert Shield Storm at Ford Hood, Texas (another hellhole), and I met with him personally and was very inspired after speaking with him."
Submitted by Sgt. 1st Class Patrick H. Roche, 141st Field Artillery*

*"I was to catch a flight from New Orleans to Washington, D.C. to attend my husband's graduation from the U.S. Army Engineer School at Fort Belvoir, Va. Flying was a new experience for me, and I was really uneasy about getting on the right plane at the right time. The plane I was to catch was delayed by an hour due to fog in Chicago, its origin. As I was pacing around wondering if I was going to get to Ohio in time, I spotted Gen. Stroud waiting for the same flight. I had never met him before, but had seen him many times on television and at military events. I took the opportunity to introduce myself and told him Sgt. 1st Class Elmer Hathaway was my husband. We spent the next hour talking about the course Elmer had just completed and how proud I was of him. We were in separate sections on the plane during the flight so I didn't get a chance to speak to him again. During the flight we were informed that we would not make our connecting flight into D.C., and to report to the counter staffed by personnel wearing red jackets. Panic started to set in, and I was a basket-case even before the plane landed. I managed to find the counter with the red jackets; however, the run-around then began. I was sent to another location in the airport, which turned out to be the wrong place. If ever there was a time that a lady in distress needed a "knight in shining armor" it was now. At this point I bumped into Gen. Stroud again and explained my troubles to him. He took me by the arm and escorted me to the right counter, which by the way was the same counter I had been at originally. Within minutes he had me booked on the same flight with him. Now as luck would have it, we had to wait two hours for this special flight to D.C. By this time my nerves were shot and I was starving. Gen. Stroud treated me to dinner and took care of me until our flight arrived in Washington, where he turned me over to my grateful husband. The now Sgt. Maj. Hathaway and I will never forget his kindness. He is a commander who truly understands the meaning of taking care of soldiers when he took time to care about a soldier's wife in trouble.
We consider him a special friend.*

Submitted by Mrs. Joan P. Hathaway, wife of Sgt. Maj. Elmer Hathaway



With sons, Allyn, William, Daniel, Martin

*"The members of the Inspector General's Office would like to thank you for your support and for giving us the opportunity to serve."
Submitted by Col. Henry G. Holcomb, Maj. Timothy J. Scott, Master Sgt. Shelby J. Thomas and Sgt. Tracy L. Guidry, IG Office*

*"When I hear the name Gen. Stroud, the first thing I think of is unprecedented integrity. Someone who always puts service above self. We need more Gen. Strouds in the National Guard."
Submitted by Master Sgt. Mike Gaines, First Sergeant, 159th FW and Maintenance Squadron*

*"On December 5, 1993, a dedication of the Clarks Armory was conducted. There was only one hitch to the occasion. The local water plant supervisor cornered Maj. Gen. Stroud concerning what he considered a safety hazard on the property donated to the National Guard. Despite all of the dignitaries waiting, this gentleman led Maj. Gen. Stroud into the woods on the property to inspect a hole in the ground. Maj. Gen. Stroud was in his Class B uniform and returned with mud on his shoes to participate in the ceremony."
Ronald G. Evans, Det. 1, Co. A, 528th Engr. Bn.*



With Governor Buddy Roemer



With Mom, Grace, dad Ansel, Sr., and sister Killie Marie

Louisiana Brigade changes hands

Photo and story
by John A. Sullivan
State PA NCO

Cajun Field took on the appearance of a military camp on October 19. There were hundreds of soldiers standing at attention, flags with battle streamers whipping in the breeze, tanks on display and hundreds of guests.

The occasion: the change of command ceremony for the 256th Infantry Brigade, the Louisiana National Guard's largest unit with a strength of more than 5,000 men and women. Col. Richard W. Averitt of Lecompte, La., took command of the unit from Brig. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, a native of Central Louisiana who now lives in New Orleans.

Landreneau has recently been named as the replacement for Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud, Jr., state adjutant general, who will retire on November 8. He originally took command of the brigade in 1995.

The Louisiana Brigade has units in 34 communities across the state, with the majority of them in the Acadiana area. These soldiers rep-

resent 10 units ranging in size from detachments to battalions.

Among the guests watching the change of command was Gen. William Crouch, the Vice Chief of Staff for the Army. Crouch was the general that planned the initial use of U.S. Forces in Bosnia. "This is a great day to be a member of the National Guard and a great day to be a member of the United States Army of which we are a part of," Stroud said. He congratulated the 256th as being the only Enhanced Brigade to meet and exceed the requirements set forth by the National Guard Bureau.

The 256th is one of 15 National Guard brigades across the country to be classified as Enhanced Brigades. As a high priority combat unit the Louisiana Brigade receives better training and new equipment to prepare itself for a fast response. The adjutant general also spoke of the time when he commanded the Louisiana Brigade back in the 70's.

"It was good then and it is even better now and that speaks of the commitment of the soldiers, NCOs (ser-

geants) and officers of the brigade," he said. "I want to thank all of you for the commitment you have made to your communities, your state and your nation." "It is a great honor to be here with you for this ceremony. It is a great honor to be a member of the

greatest institution in America and the world - the institution of the U.S. Army of which the National Guard is a part."

Landreneau received an award from the Lafayette City-Parish government and several military honors, said. "I want to thank God for being able to lead the Louisiana Brigade. I know you will keep the warrior spirit. God Bless the brigade."

Landreneau's awards include the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, and the Army Commendation Medal and the Kuwait Liberation Medal. The incoming commander, Richard Averitt, served as the deputy commander of the brigade from 1992-1996. He said taking over the brigade was "like coming home. It is a great honor to be able to come to the 256th, a unit which has a long list of accomplishments."

Before taking command of the brigade, Averitt, who is a Vietnam veteran, commanded the 204th Area Support Group in New Orleans. He took over that command in 1996. Among his awards are the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal



Col. Richard Averitt

with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Army Commendation Medal, and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

The Louisiana Brigade's history dates back to 1769 when it was formed as the Regiment of City Militia by Gen. Don Alejandro O'Reilly, Governor of the Spanish Province of Louisiana.

Members of what would eventually be known as the Louisiana Brigade, took part in the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Battle of New Orleans, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II and most recently in Desert Shield and Desert Storm.



The 1st Bn, 141st Field Artillery fires a salute to the outgoing commander Brig. Gen. Bennett Landreneau during the 256th Infantry Brigade change of command ceremony held in October at Cajun Field in Lafayette, La.

Two centuries later Brigade colors fly high

By John A. Sullivan
State PA NCO

Col. Richard W. Averitt's taking command of the Louisiana National Guard's 256th Brigade is another note in a history that dates back to 1769.

In 1769 the 156th Infantry (Mechanized) was organized in New Orleans as The Regiment of City Militia under Gen. Don Alejandro O'Reilly, Governor of the Spanish Province of Louisiana.

Throughout its history, soldiers of the Louisiana Brigade have taken part in nine wars, and served under four national flags as well as the state of Louisiana.

The flags it has flown under are Spain, France, the United States and the Confederate States of America. The stream of the Regiment's continuity flowed steadily without interruption for 223 years.

Some key dates:

*1769-1803 (Spanish) Regiment of City Militia

*1803 (for 30 days) Regiment of City Militia (and Corps of American Volunteers)

*1803-1821 Regiment of City Militia (and Battalion of Orleans Volunteers)

*1821-1878 Infantry Regiment of the Louisiana Legion

*1878-1898 First Brigade (Infantry Elements)

*1898-1913 Second Louisiana Infantry

*1913-1917 First Louisiana Infantry

*Since 1917 156th Infantry

The 156th Infantry Regiment has fought in many wars including: the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Battle of New Orleans, the Mexican War, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II and Operation Desert Storm.

It was during the Civil War that

the unit gained many of its battle streamers.

During the Civil War, the 2nd Louisiana Regiment fought with Gen. Robert E. Lee during the Seven Day Battle near Richmond, Va. in 1862.

In the bloody fighting that marked the Battle of Gettysburg, the 2nd Louisiana Regiment fought to within 100 yards of Union positions on top of Cemetery Ridge.

After the Battle of Luka in 1862, Gen. Price said of the Louisiana soldiers, "No men fought more bravely or victoriously than they."

Before disbanding with the Army of northern Virginia following the defeat of the Confederate armies, the 2nd Regiment had fought in the campaigns of the Second Manassas, Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Gettysburg and Appomattox. The unit suffered heavy casualties in all of these engagements.

Soldiers of the regiment would go to war again in WWI when the

unit, designated as the 1st Infantry Regiment, became part of the 39th Infantry Division and went to France. Many of the unit's members would be sent as replacements for other units in Europe.

Some other highlights in the history of the 256th:

In 1976 the unit was selected as a Roundout Brigade with the 5th Infantry Division. In 1987, the 256th went to the National Training Center and became the first National Guard brigade to attend and successfully complete a training rotation at the center located at Fort Irwin, Calif.

In November 1990, the 256th was mobilized for Operation Desert Storm. The unit was training for deployment to the Persian Gulf Theater when the ground war, known as Desert Storm, broke out. The 256th was demobilized in May 1991.

In 1995, the Louisiana Brigade was selected as one of the 15 Enhanced Readiness Brigades in the U.S. Army.

Basilica accepts 225th command challenge

Photo and story
by John A. Sullivan
State PA NCO

Under a clear blue sky on a fall afternoon, the 225th Engineer Group at Camp Beauregard got a new commander - one who hails from Connecticut. Lt. Col. John P. Basilica Jr. took command of the unit from Col. Allen R. Bozeman.

"Today is a great day to be an American and to be here with you," said Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud, Jr., adjutant general of the Louisiana National Guard. "Today is an important day because it marks the changing of command of a great unit. Changing of commands are not only symbolic, but also very emotional. We see changes as career's progress. We see changes as achievements are recognized. We see changes as soldiers accept new challenges."

Stroud said that Bozeman's "name isn't on my Rolodex; I knew it by heart. And many times we would have conversations at 2 a.m. or 4 a.m. about important events coming up. He was always there, and the 225th was always there."

"Change is a must," said Bozeman to the members of the engineer group. "Today marks a day of change for myself and the 225th." Bozeman said he had three things on his side during his tenure as commander of the 225th Engineer Group.

"The first is God. He was always by my side. It's like that poem about footprints in the sand. He was carrying me. I want to thank my wife for always being there to support me. And I want to thank you the soldiers of the 225th Group. I want to thank you all from the bottom of my heart. God Bless all of you."

Among Bozeman's awards are the Meritorious Service Medal and the Army Commendation medal. He has been in the service for 26 years.

Basilica, the incoming commander, was born in New London, Conn. on Feb. 4, 1956. He was commissioned a second lieutenant in 1978 after graduating from West Point. Before taking over command of the 225th, he was battalion commander of the 3rd Battalion, 156th Infantry in Lake Charles.

"It is a distinct honor and a personal privilege to become commander of the 225th Group," said Basilica. "On behalf of the Group, I want to say thanks to Col. Bozeman for a job well done. The 225th Group is the best engineer unit in the U.S. Army."

Among Basilica's awards are the Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Clusters and the Army Commendation Medal. He serves as the full-time Chief of Staff for the Department of Transportation and Development in Baton Rouge.



The 225th Engineer Group colors waved under a bright sky during the passing of the guidon at the change of command ceremony. Inset: Incoming commander, Lt. Col. John P. Basilica (left). Outgoing commander, Col. Allen R. Bozeman.

Lineage of 225th

By John A. Sullivan
State PA NCO

On July 20 of the year 1954, the Louisiana National Guard's 225th Engineer Group was federally recognized as an aviation battalion.

After being reorganized and re-designated in 1957 and 1963, the 225th Engineer Group of today was headquartered at Camp Beauregard in Pineville.

The Group is currently made up of three combat heavy engineer battalions; one combat corps wheeled engineer battalion, and one panel bridge company. These units are located in Ruston, Monroe, Baton Rouge and Bogalusa.

The motto of the 256th Group is "CONFECTIO", which is Latin for "To Build."

The units and their commanders and first sergeants are: HHC, 225th Eng. Group, 1st Lt. Rodney D. Cain and 1st Sgt. Joseph Cole in Pineville; 205th Engineer Bn., Lt. Col. Joe L. Price and Command Sgt. Maj. Roggie Boone in Bogalusa; 527th Eng. Bn., Lt. Col. Terry G. Hammett and Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Billberry in Ruston; 528th Eng. Bn., Lt. Col. Robert D. Hudnall and Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Whitehead in Monroe; 769th Eng. Bn., Lt. Col. Perry J. Smith and Command Sgt. Maj. James Serio in Baton Rouge.

Croft steps down as OEP assistant director

By Maria L. LoVasco
State PAO

Col. (Ret.) William J. Croft announced in September his decision to step down as Assistant Director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness, in Baton Rouge.

He was appointed to this position in 1991 when the office of Emergency Preparedness was first aligned under the State Military Department.

Croft handled the day to day functions of assisting the parishes and other state agencies in preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation programs related to emergencies and disasters.

Croft assumed a position with an international banking company whose U.S. headquarters are in Baton Rouge.

He was succeeded on Nov. 1st

by Lt. Col. (Ret.) Mike Brown, former Chief of Operations and Communications for the OEP. Brown, retired from the Army National Guard, has held various positions with the National Guard Bureau to include Chief, Mobilization Branch.

The assistant director works for the state adjutant general who serves as the director of the Office of Emergency Preparedness.

204th ASG, 61st Troop Command merge

By Maria L. LoVasco
State PAO

Units of the 204th Area Support Group and the 61st Troop Command have merged to form the singular 61st Troop Command.

This move was necessitated by the upcoming dissolution of the 204th ASG headquarters unit effective March 1, 1998.

The Troop Command is commanded by Col. Thomas J. Kirkpatrick. The full-time Administrative Officer is Col. John Douglas. The headquarters is in New Orleans.

The new combined Major Command (MACOM) will be made up of the following battalions and units:

61st Troop Command

1084th Transportation Co.

3673rd Maintenance Co.

Det. 1, 3673rd Maint. Co.

1060th Surgical Detachment

Det. 5, HQ State Area Command

HQ, 773d Maint. Bn.

HQ Detachment, 773d Maint. Bn.

3671st Maint. Co.

1083rd Transportation Co.

Detachment 1, 1083rd Trans. Co.

1086th Transportation Co.

Det. 1, 1086th Transportation Co.

1087th Transportation Co.

Det. 1, 1087th Trans. Co.

156th Army Band

HQ, 415th MI Bn.

HQ Co., 415th MI Bn.

Co. A, 415th MI Bn.

Co. B, 415th MI Bn.

Co. C, 415th MI Bn.

239th Military Police Co.

Det. 1, 239th Military Police Co.

Co. A, 111th ASM Bn.

HQ, 244th Aviation Bn.

HQ Company, 244th Aviation Bn.

Det. 1, HHC, 244th Aviation Bn.

Co. A, 244th Aviation Bn.

Co. B, 244th Aviation Bn.

Co. C, 244th Aviation Bn.

Co. D, 244th Aviation Bn.

Det. 1, Co. D, 244th Aviation Bn.

812th Medical Co.

159th Mash deactivates

Photo and story
by John A. Sullivan
State PA NCO

After 46 years of continuous service, the colors of the Louisiana National Guard's 159th MASH have been cased for the last time. Under a blistering September sun at the Jackson Barracks parade field, the unit was officially deactivated.

"I have participated in a number of duties in my life, but none of them have been more saddening than the deactivation of the 159th MASH," said Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud Jr., adjutant general of the Louisiana National Guard.

Stroud said the men and women of the unit "should be proud" of the 159th's accomplishments. "You have always been there when called upon to help."

He pointed out that the 159th had personnel mobilized and on the scene of the Oakdale prison disturbance "within 24 hours of being called upon to support the Federal Bureau of Prisons."

A prisoner riot at the site in 1987 required federal and state officials to seal the prison off and then retake it. The situation ended without the large number of casualties federal officials had predicted. "You were there and you responded," Stroud said.

Stroud said he remembered in December 1990 going to visit the com-

mander, Lt. Col. Michael Jennings. Jennings, the general said, "was my personal physician and after giving me a lecture about taking care of myself I looked at him and told him that the MASH was being mobilized."

The 159th was ordered into active service on Dec. 8, 1990 in support of Operation Desert Shield and later took part in the ground offensive against Iraqi forces as part of Operation Desert Storm.

"You went and did a magnificent job," Stroud said. "The 159th was placed in an area where if the ground war had met the opposition it was expected to meet, it would have dealt with a large number of casualties."

The MASH advanced deep into Iraqi territory and was the only U.S. medical unit to become operational in Iraq during Desert Storm. The unit treated and evacuated more than 300 U.S. and allied soldiers from the war zone.

"As the unit was advancing into enemy territory, it achieved the distinction of becoming the only MASH unit to take enemy prisoners," said Maj. Randal L. Gaines, the 159th's executive officer.

For its part in the Gulf War, the 159th was awarded the following campaign ribbons: Operation Desert Shield, Operation Desert Storm, Liberation of Kuwait and Operation Desert Saber. The unit was released from active duty on May 10, 1991 and returned to the rolls of the Louisiana National Guard. Since

then it has taken part in a number of projects including providing medical support for operational military units, as well as, health screenings and services to civilians in Paraguay and Belize.

"You can be proud of your service," Stroud said.

The last commander of the 159th, Col. Dennis A. LaRavia, was presented the Meritorious Service Medal by Stroud for his work as commander from Dec. 15, 1994 until present.

"For everything there is a season and a time," LaRavia told the unit and a small crowd of friends and relatives who came to see the deactivation ceremony. He added that "it has been an honor to serve as commander of this unit."

Some members of the 159th will continue service as Det. 5, 61st Troop Command. LaRavia said others will retire while others will find spots in other units. "Thank you for your work and God bless all of you," LaRavia said.

The 159th was born on Dec. 1, 1951 as the Louisiana National Guard's 105th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital. It



The 159th MASH colors are cased during the inactivation ceremony held at Jackson Barracks in September.

was redesignated the 105th Surgical Hospital on April 1, 1953 and reorganized and redesignated the 159th Evacuation Hospital on March 15, 1955.

The unit was ordered into active duty on Oct. 1, 1961 in New Orleans and returned to state control on Aug. 6, 1962. On Sept. 1, 1974 it was reorganized and redesignated the 159th Combat Support Hospital. In September 1984 it was redesignated the 159th MASH and it entered into federal service in December 1990 to take part in the Gulf War

One LANG unit inactivated, another comes aboard

Photo and story
by Karen E. Leger
Det. 1, 102nd PAD

Out with the old. In with the new. Such was the case with the ceremony that took place in front of the Louisiana Army National Guard's 204th Area Support Group armory at Jackson Barracks.

The 39th Military Police (MP) Company was taken off of the active roles of the Army National Guard and in its place the 1084th Transportation Company was born. According to company commander, Capt. Jeff Volpe, the state is reacting to a military need - that of transporting petroleum.

"Transportation units are the wave of the future for the Louisiana Army National Guard," Volpe said. "If these soldiers display the same enthusiasm, motivation and leadership they showed in the MP corps, they'll have no problem becoming transportation troops." The 39th MP Company is no stranger to change, having its origins in an amalgam of Special Forces units in 1959. In June of that year the 177th, 178th, 181st, 182nd and 184th Special Forces Detachments and the 190th Special Forces Operational Administration Detachment were organized. These units were then consolidated, reorganized and redesignated in January of 1960 as the 177th Special Forces

Operational Detachment.

A year later in May 1961 the company became Headquarters Company, 21st Special Forces Group, 1st Special Forces. It consolidated again in May 1963 with Company A of the



A new unit is added to the Louisiana Army National Guard roster with the unfurling of the 1084th Trans. Co. flag. An inactivation/activation ceremony was held at Jackson Barracks in Sept. for the farewell of the 39th MP Co. and the birth of the 1084th Trans. Co.

21st Special Forces Group to become Company D, 20th Special Forces Group, 1st Special Forces.

In September 1972 the company was converted to the 2224th Engineer Company. It consolidated once more in November 1975 with the 39th military Police Company and became the 239th Military Police Company. Finally in March 1977 the unit was redesignated the 39th Military Police Company which it remained until its deactivation in September of this year. The MP Company has had its share of on-the-job-training during the riots and civil disturbances of the '70s and the Gulf War in 1991.

During Desert Shield/Desert Storm, the 39th MP Company was mobilized and served under the 800th Military Police Brigade from December 6, 1990 through May 8, 1991. They performed three missions during their tour which included guarding the Enemy Prisoner of War camps at King Faud Airport, King Faud Hospital and at the Desert Camp which held over 65,000 Enemy Prisoners of War (EPWs). They also supported EPW transports, both air and ground, and provided law and order in Khabar Towers for the American troops in route to home station.

Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud, state adjutant general of the Louisiana National Guard, commended the troops of the 39th MP Company for

their superb performance during their overseas service. "December 1990 you were called to active duty without any notice and were sent to Southeast Asia to protect enemies of war," he said during the ceremony. "You went without hesitation and performed your duties with the highest professionalism.

"According to Stroud the newly minted 1084th Transportation Company is one of three petroleum transportation units that will be activated before the year 2000. In the year 2000 another military police company will be activated. He assured the soldiers that their MP skills will always be needed again in the future." Until then, the newly reassigned members of the 1084th Transportation Company (Petroleum) will have the primary mission of moving petroleum around on the battlefield.

"This unit has a very proud tradition with a long history of accomplishments," said Col. Richard W. Averitt, 204th Area Support Group commander, higher headquarters of the 1084th. According to Capt. Volpe the soldiers of the 39th MP Company will be retrained in their new duties. "We are lucky to have another unit to convert to," he said. "These soldiers have kept their motivation and their ability and for that we are fortunate."

Abercrombie retires after 30 years



Brig. Gen. Arthur Abercrombie retires after 30 years of military service.

*By Maria L. LoVasco
State PAO*

During the 159th annual Washington Artillery Review, held on October 5th at Jackson Barracks, the Louisiana Army National Guard said good-bye to a long-time supporter and friend, Brig. Gen. Arthur

Abercrombie, assistant adjutant general, Army. Abercrombie retired after 30 years of military service.

He and Maj. Gen. Ansel M. Stroud reviewed the batteries of the 141st Field Artillery from the back of a moving vehicle, as has been the tradition for decades. For both men it would be their last pass and review.

During the retirement ceremony, Stroud spoke. "During his time in the Staff Judge Advocate's Office, General Abercrombie built the finest JAG (Judge Advocate General) section in the Louisiana National Guard.

"He put new life in the state marksmanship program. He led by example, excelling in physical fitness, and he was a great mentor to those who served with him."

Stroud considered his assistant AG to be his alternate conscience. "He was a man you could ask a question, and you better be ready for the answer, because he was going to give you an honest answer."

Stroud described Abercrombie as a fun-loving, hard working person. "His service exemplified what is meant by selfless. His retiring

meant that another officer could stay a little longer. We're going to miss him."

Abercrombie also spoke before the assembled artillerymen and friends. "It's fitting that I go out this way," he said. "I was originally commissioned in 1966 as an artillery officer. And except for a few days in Vietnam, I've never had a bad day in uniform. I've always felt that I got more out of the service, than the service got out of me."

Abercrombie praised his parents for his upbringing, calling his childhood "perfect." He also praised his wife, Becky, on her "military career," citing the numerous weekends when she had to serve as a single parent.

One of his passions, he mentioned, was the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve committee.

"I've been one of the most fortunate soldiers in the world that I've been able to work for a firm that allowed me to be a soldier. Some of my colleagues from Taylor, Porter, Brooks and Phillips are here, and I want to thank them publicly."

Abercrombie works as an attorney in Baton Rouge and often regarded the National Guard as a second full-time job.

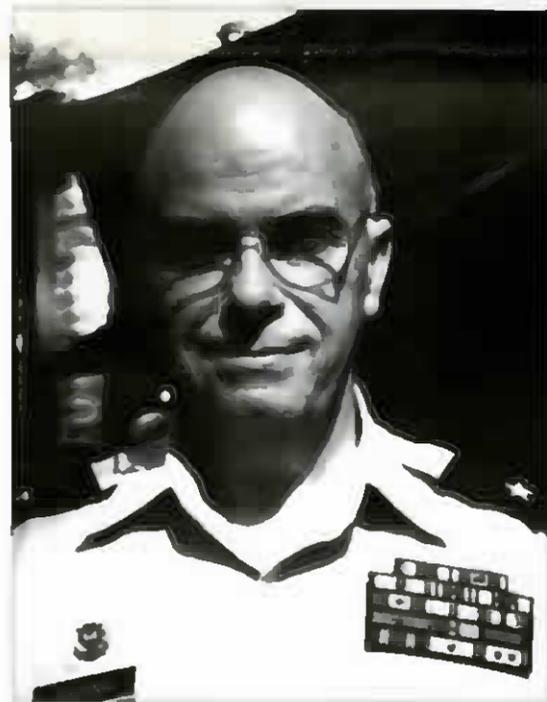
"There's only so long you can juggle two full-time jobs," he said in an interview with the Baton Rouge Advocate newspaper. "The time I did was great, and I was able to do it for a while, but you can't keep up that pace forever."

He looks forward to spending time duck hunting, being with his family and traveling. He has no regrets about leaving. "I leave today with great joy and elation for the organization," he said. "I have great confidence in the team that will continue on the tradition. Brigadier General Landreneau, you and your team will do a great job."

Abercrombie plans to continue his involvement with the National Guard. "Wherever and whenever there is a social function, he said, he'll be there.

"I'll still be around and I'll still be with all of my Guard friends," he said. "I just won't have to get up at six a.m. to do it."

Giering remains in Guard as assistant AG, Army



*By Maria L. LoVasco
State PAO*

Brig. Gen. Edmund J. Giering III, Deputy STARC Commander, originally scheduled to retire in December will remain in the Guard, but in a new capacity, as the Assistant Adjutant General, Army.

A resident of Natchitoches, Giering works as the Assistant State Conservationist for Engineering Services, Natural Resource Conservation Service in Alexandria, an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Giering first joined the

Louisiana Army National Guard in 1976 after having served since 1961 with the Air Force.

Since then he has held numerous positions within the Guard to include battalion commander of the 528th Engineer Battalion and commander of the 225th Engineer Group.

He was the first battalion commander back in 1983 to enter Central America for the first humanitarian engineer National Guard mission in that region.

His affiliation with Central America continues as the Louisiana National Guard's liaison to Belize in the DOD State Partnership Program.

He attended Louisiana Tech University and received his Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineer-

ing in 1961. He also received a Master of Science in Engineering with a double major in Hydraulics and Structures.

Giering's military awards and decorations include: Meritorious Service Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Army Commendation Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Force Commendation Medal, Army Superior Unit Award, Army Achievement Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Army Service Ribbon and Army Reserve Components Overseas Training Ribbon with Numeral 4.

812th Medical soldiers serve in Georgia

*Photo and Story
by Maria L. LoVasco
State PAO*

A group of soldiers from the 812th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) is currently serving in Fort Benning and Fort Stewart, Georgia in support of Operation Joint Guard.

They were mobilized on September 4th and deployed on September 7th to Fort Benning to replace a National Guard unit which had been activated in December 96 to backfill an active duty unit which was deployed to Bosnia.

The 27 men and women of the newly minted Detachment 2, 812th Medical Company are providing Medevac support to the two active duty installations located 200 miles apart.

The detachment, commanded by Maj. Barry Keeling, should be home for Christmas. The 812th had been activated previously for Operation Desert Storm in 1991.



Family members of the 812th Medical Company (AA) assemble for a Family Support Group meeting prior to the departure of the unit. They heard from representatives of the State Family Assistance Office, the Chaplain, the Staff Judge Advocate's Office, TRI-CARE and the Red Cross. Commander Maj. Barry Keeling briefs the families.