

CAPTAIN PETE

PETER
CLARKE

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The Untold Story and Life of Captain Pete

Introduction

Peter Silverlos Livingston was born before World War II and would be considered a traditionalist in today's jargon. There is an old saying, "You can take the kid out of Brooklyn but you can't take Brooklyn out of the kid". As a young kid growing up in Brooklyn, New York, Peter had the opportunity of being involved in many activities as a young boy. Brooklyn was the most populated of the five boroughs of New York City with over 3 million people of mostly European extraction including many other ethnic races from all over the world during World War II. New York City was and still is the biggest city in the country.

There were more combat troops from Brooklyn than any other area in the country. Over three thousand died in World War II. The average age of those who fought and died in WWII was 26 years old. Believe It or not, the average age of those who fought and died in Vietnam was 19 years old. Also, Marine casualties in Viet Nam totaled over 13 thousand.

The Viet Nam war was one of the longest U.S. conflicts to date totaling ten years from 1965 to 1975, but the U.S. had advisors there for a number of years even before 1965. Over 58,000 U.S. troops died in Viet Nam and some are still Missing In Action (MIA's) like the great Cliff Cushman. He was from the University of Kansas and was a silver medalist in the Olympics. He flew an Air Force jet when he went missing. The Viet Nam Veterans Memorial wall in Washington D.C. is a long black slab marble wall dedicated to all the fallen warriors and those that served and fought in Viet Nam, including those who are still MIA. Each of the soldiers names are inscribed on it in chronological order based on the date they died

and served.

This honor has been bestowed on all these veterans who courageously fought in the Viet Nam war conflict as remembered by the United States which dedicated the building of this wall in their honor. The monument's importance and significance is a symbol for all peoples in the United States and future generations to remember the sacrifice these veterans undertook regarding this conflict.

The Big Battle

All of a sudden Pete noticed a tall man, much taller than the other NVA, starting to come toward him. He looked somewhat different than the other NVA. He wore a helmet and had boots instead of those Ho Chi Min rubber sandals. His jaw was large and protruding and he had high cheek bones, olive skin, and slightly slanted eyes. Pete assumed he must be one of those Chinese or even Russian advisors who were mixed in with the NVA. Pete was out of ammo and had no more clips left for his side arm so he dropped his side arm down behind him next to a big rock at the rally point. Hand to hand combat was going on all around him.

The big man fixed his eyes on Pete and noticed he had no weapon. He continued to run right through the line towards Pete who noticed the big man had nothing else in his hands so he dropped his K-bar behind him next to the big rock while thinking the big man was coming at him to challenge him in a hand to hand fight. Coincidentally the big man knew a Kung Fu martial arts style similar to what Pete had mastered in as they went at each other with hands and feet while using all the moves in their arsenal. As they were fighting Pete thought the big man was using the same Shaolin style of Kung Fu that came from the Shaolin monastery temples as he was trained in from Master Lu.

They both were using the northern Chinese style of Kung Fu which was Changquan and Xingyiquan which involved fast and powerful kicks, high jumps, and smooth and fluid rapid movements.

They were also both using the Southern Chinese style of Kung Fu which was Bak Mei, Wuzuquan, Choy Li Fut, and Wing Chun. This technique used strong arm and hand, and stable immovable stances and fast foot work.

After more than almost ten minutes the big guy somehow got Pete in a choke hold from behind. Just as Pete felt he was about to black out some how he was able to wrap his hands and lock his fingers behind the guy's neck. He then quickly kicked his feet straight up into the air, and using all his leverage swung his feet down while lunging forward as he was able to pull the big guy from behind onto his back in an arched position. And in a continued rapid motion bending forward he instantly swung the big man over his head which took an enormous amount of adrenalin strength.

The big man hit the ground on his back in front of Pete with a hard thud. Pete then stepped back a few feet and stood there for a few seconds while trying to gather himself. This gave him a little needed time since the big man hit the ground real hard on his back and then rose slowly before starting to again come at Pete.

Pete then in a daring move leaped in the air at him and planted both his track shoes one after another in his face. As they both dropped to the ground apparently two of the track spikes caught the big man in both his eyes. As he rose screaming and blinded Pete instantly rose and took two quick shots at him with all his strength.

Pete used his two forefinger knuckles of both his hands, one to the center of the man's stomach below his chest cavity and the other right behind it underhand right up under the man's chin to the middle of his throat. The man started bending forward from the stomach shot and fell backwards from the throat shot. He immediately dropped to the ground making a gurgling sound. Pete noticed that the big man wasn't moving as he stood over him. As they say, it is not the size of the dog, but the fight in the dog.

All of sudden Pete was hit in the chest by riffle fire as he felt a sharp pain like a bayonet thrust coming across and digging into his chest. Blood started to soak his uniform. The bullet did not enter directly into his chest, but across and into his right lung. He was

able to stagger back and lay up against the big rock at the Rally Point.

The Final Goodbye

This time they would all be together and meet in Washington D.C. and spend a week together seeing all the sites and celebrating the Marine Corps birthday on Nov. 10 and Veterans Day on Nov. 11. The last day they planned to visit the Viet Nam Wall where all Pete's Marine comrades who died were honored. Therefore, all Pete's family was able to stay together at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington D.C. for a whole week.

When they arrived at the Wall on their last day together Pete showed them the names of his men as he read each of their names off out loud one at a time. He saw each of their faces in his mind's eye. All his men except the last three who had died sometime after the war were up on the front area of the wall. All those who died during the war were placed in chronological order based on the time of their death as the conflict officially started in 1965 and ended in 1975. Therefore, the names of the men in Pete's company who died in 1965 were inscribed on the front of the wall.

Then they walked much further down on the Wall where Corporal Juan, Pete's communications man and past foreman of his ranch was named. Pete's oldest son who later took over managing Pete's ranch and his family remembered Juan when they visited the ranch. Then they saw First Sergeant Apache Joe's name listed. Pete's two youngest sons remembered the time when they lived on the reservation with him and how they visited him years later before he died. Finally they came to Staff Sergeant James who became a Mercenary fighter or so called "Merc" after the war.

When they ended seeing all Pete's men he said he needed to say goodbye as he was leaving for Lawton, Oklahoma. This is where his wife was buried. He wanted to visit her grave site and see some of her remaining brothers and their family members. Then

as they slowly walked back to the front of the Wall all of Pete's grandchildren came around him and said "Pa" which they all called him, or "Pa Pete" when will we see you again and he said soon I hope. And then they all said we don't want you to live in no nursing home or old people's home. We want you to live with us.

So he said, I guess you will all have to ship me around all the time to stay with ya all (with a little bit of a Texas twang) as they all laughed. He then said I guess that's it as they came to the front of the Wall again. He hugged them all goodbye and with tears in his eyes he turned to the Wall as he saw each of his men's faces and remembered their last words; "Semper FI" Captain Pete "Do or Die" and he said out loud hasta luego (until next time) my brothers; see you again in that better place when we will spend time together in eternity.

He then finally turned again to his family and said I love you all; see you again as soon as I can, and waved goodbye, as he walked away. And so, was the untold story and life of Captain Pete, the kid from Brooklyn, who you could take out of Brooklyn but you could never take Brooklyn out of the kid.