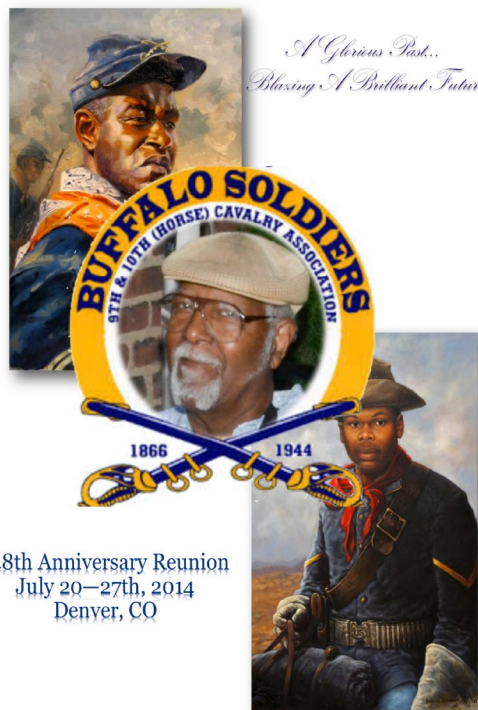


*A Glorious Past...
Blessing A Brilliant Future*



148th Anniversary Reunion
July 20–27th, 2014
Denver, CO

Trooper Robert Bruton

24th Infantry Regimental Combat Team

I was born in Perry Florida in January 1931. The country was in the Great Depression. We were a poor family, but I didn't know it until I became an adult and realized what I didn't have as a child. When there is love in the home, nothing else matters.

My segregated school house was destroyed by fire when I was in the sixth grade. I like to say it was not rebuilt until I would have been in the 18th grade. After my school was destroyed, I attended classes in churches, private homes, Knights of Pythias Halls, and even under trees.

In May 1947, I graduated from high school and my graduation class consisted of eleven students. Thirty-nine of my former classmates dropped out of school for various reasons. In September 1947, I began my college education at Florida A&M College in Tallahassee, Florida. A year and a half later, I became a college dropout because I couldn't afford the monthly tuition fee of \$56.00.

In February 1949, I enlisted in the US Army as an eighteen year old college dropout and began basic training in Fort Dix, New Jersey. My outfit was the 365th Infantry Regiment. The regiment was garrisoned on Range Road, a segregated housing and training area for colored troops. Coming from Florida, basic training during the month of February in New Jersey was very comfortable. It was the first time I had ever seen snow on the ground, but I completed basic training. After eight weeks of basic training, I was transferred to the 173rd Army Band at Fort Dix. My government issued music instrument was the clarinet. The Bandmaster was CWO Harry H. Hollowell. About the time of the pending dedication of the Buffalo Soldier Monument at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, I met Hollowell for the first time since I played for him at Fort Dix in 1949. It was at the ceremony that I became aware of the 9th and 10th (Horse) Cavalry Association. I telephoned Trooper Henderson to get information concerning the pending dedication activities. That week, after attending the 24th Infantry Regimental reunion in South Carolina, I motored to Kansas, for the dedication and have been a member ever since.

I became the Assistant Treasurer when Trooper Clifford Russell was Treasurer and was elected Assistant Treasurer when Trooper Albert Curley was elected. A need for our Executive Board Meeting to be videotaped became a reality. I was given the Job which included taping the general membership meetings and other reunion activities, for twenty (20) years. The tape was to aid Troopers Nadine Robinson and Leanna Rogers to compile the minutes of the meetings as secretaries respectfully. A special thanks to Troopers Harold Cole, Franklin Henderson, and the late Robert Powell.

In January 1950, I was transferred to the 291st Army Band at Camp Gifu, Japan. When Communist-ruled North Korea invaded South Korea on June 25, 1950, half of the members of the band, including myself, were assigned to rifle companies on the 24th Infantry Regimental Combat Team (RCT), 24th Infantry Division. I was sent to Company A of the RCT. I had to re-learn how to clean and breakdown a rifle again. The worst part about the move, I had on the job training for combat, in combat. I was a nineteen year old, scared soldier. How did I survive Korea? Grandma prayed for me and for my safe return home. I did get banged up though. Frost bitten feet. Purple Heart combat infantry badge and citations were given to the unit.

On June 25, 1952, I was honorably discharged from the army. Instead of going back to college, I went to a trade school. Soon after graduation, I opened my own television repair business. I also worked ten years for Bendix Aviation, and was later hired by the New York Telephone Company, where I retired after 29 years of service in December 1992.

In September 1954, I got married and began to start a family. I had in mind that I wanted to travel after retiring, so I did. I have travelled to twelve countries in Africa, gone on many cruises: at least six Caribbean, one Mediterranean, as well as one to Hawaii. I have driven coast to coast many times. I joined the 24th Infantry Association, when it was first organized, as well as the 9th and 10th (Horse) Cavalry Association. I have not missed a reunion since joining. I currently serve as a Trustee at Union Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church, Newark, NJ.

My wife, Betty, and I celebrate 60 years of marriage this year and have eight, no nine children, twelve grandchildren, and seven great grandchildren.