

6Q – WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? WHY? AND HOW?

THE 82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION

BY
ROXANA
TOFAN



HAVE YOU EVER WITNESSED the powerful display of camaraderie and connection among veterans or individuals with a shared military background? Have you ever been at a sporting event or some other place where all the sudden you hear someone say ‘Airborne’ and someone else reply “Airborne-All The Way”? It didn’t seem like they knew each other but all the sudden they are starting a conversation like they were lifelong friends. Whether it was the hat or the T-shirt that identified the 82nd Airborne sign... they recognize it with excitement and pride.

WHAT

The 82nd Airborne Division is like a giant can of “whoop-ass” that America has placed on her shelf, just-in-case the President of the United States is forced to take or respond with military action anywhere in the world. **22,000 Army soldiers on standby for America’s 911 call is “What” this military unit represents to the world.** The 82nd is specialized and trained for rapid deployment via parachute and air assault operations. It is one of the most highly trained and rapidly deployable divisions in the U.S. military, wheels-up for airborne delivery within 18-hours of any contingency. The division is composed of several brigade combat teams, including infantry, artillery, engineer, and support units. Each brigade combat team has between 3,000 and 5,000 men and women assigned. These highly trained soldiers are equipped and ready to operate independently or as part of a larger force.



Review of the 328th Infantry Regiment at Camp Gordon, Atlanta, GA, February 1, 1918.

WHO

The 82nd Airborne Division earned the nickname “All-American” because it was composed of soldiers from all 48 states during the unit’s first activation in 1917 for World War I. Currently assigned soldiers (and Veterans) from across America are “Who” represent this elite Army unit. The 82nd Airborne Division was first activated in 1917 during World War I as the 82nd Division. It saw action in both World Wars I and II. Since then, the 82nd has been deployed to numerous conflicts and operations, including the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, Afghanistan, Iraq, and various peacekeeping missions around the world.

HOW

Jumping out of a perfectly good airplane? Yes, that is “How” the soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division conduct a wide range of missions, including airborne assault, airfield seizure, and direct-action military operations. Soldiers in the 82nd Airborne Division undergo rigorous training in airborne operations, which includes parachute jumps, air assault techniques, and combat training. They also receive specialized training in areas such as marksmanship, tactics, and leadership to prepare them for the demands of airborne and air assault missions. Dangerous and deadly stuff!



WHERE

The division’s headquarters is located at Fort Liberty (formerly Fort Bragg), North Carolina. This is in Fayetteville, North Carolina which is also known as the “Home of the Airborne.” Fort Liberty serves as the main training and operational base for the 82nd Airborne Division, providing the infrastructure and resources necessary for their missions. Many active-duty and retired military personnel refer to North Carolina as the “Center-of-the-Universe.” In addition to the 82nd Airborne Division, many other specialized units call Fort Liberty “home”, including the Army’s 18th Airborne Corps, 3rd Special Forces Group (Airborne), and the Delta Force.

WHY

“Why” does America keep the 82nd Airborne Division in a constant state of readiness and ready to deploy anywhere in the world within 18 hours? Perhaps because it is such a useful and deadly resource for America’s national security leaders. It is also a very strong strategic deterrent for potential enemies looking to conduct military operations. Let’s face it, today’s international security environment is extremely volatile and unpredictable. We already see Russia’s military offensive operations in Ukraine, increasing conflicts in the Middle East to include a more militarily aggressive Iran, North Korea’s ballistic missile provocations, and of course China’s on-going incursions and growing military presence in the Indo-Pacific region. These are all good reasons “Why” we love and keep the 82nd Airborne Division. It plays a crucial role in the U.S. military’s ability to project power rapidly and decisively in response to emerging threats or conflicts. A versatile and highly mobile force that can be deployed quickly to various regions of the world to conduct missions ranging from combat operations to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. The 82nd Airborne Division is one of the most iconic and highly respected fighting units in the free world.

It’s easy to understand why the bond formed through shared experiences, like serving in the 82nd Airborne Division, can be incredibly strong and can create an instant sense of kinship among those who have served. It’s moments when those Soldiers recognize each other that highlight the unique and profound connections that military service can foster, even among strangers. ■

Roxana Tofan is a commercial real estate and business broker and the founder and owner of Clear Integrity Group in San Antonio. She is also a Contributing Editor of **thenetwork** roxana@clearintegritygroup.com

If a woman says to a man, ‘Do what you want...’, the man would be unwise to follow her advice.