



WAR HERO

LT. COLONEL JAMES D. BENSON

Brigade Executive Officer, 1969

WW II & KOREAN WAR

Enlistment: 14 of November 1939.

Brigadier General James D. Benson served with the 40th Infantry Division, 323rd Military Police Escort Guard Company, and went to the Southwest Pacific with the 353rd Engineer Regiment as an enlisted man during World War II.

He received his commission through Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Ga., in June 1945, four years after his call to active duty.

After the war, BG Benson rejoined the **40th Infantry Division** and was soon in command of the Medium Tank Company of the **160th Infantry Regiment**. Called to active duty again with the division for duty in Korea, he served as the Executive Officer of Company E, 160th Infantry, Company Commander of Company H, 160th Infantry, and as Operations Officer in the 40th Division's Provost Marshall's Office.

(<https://www.goldennarrowresearch.com/research-a-korean-war-veteran/#korean-war-request>, http://www.koreanwar-educator.org/topics/branch_accounts/army/p_40th_division.htm)

KOREAN WAR EFFORT

[<https://www.militarymuseum.org/40Korea.html>]

Early in **October 1952**, the Communist Chinese and North Koreans launched a series of major operations northwest of Cheorwon, with smaller attacks along the entire front, to push Americans off key-terrain. Their efforts failed, but the sixty-days was a period of heavy fighting. On 22 October 1952, the 40th Infantry Division was assigned to the X Corps, and moved back into the front lines completing relief of the 25th Infantry Division in the Corps' "Center" (Paem-Ihyon-Ni) Sector. The Division defended from Heartbreak

Ridge to the Punch Bowl. Trying to exploit the relief, at midnight the Communists' bugles signaled attack along the Division's front that lasted every night from 22-25 October. Then again, on 3-4 November, they launched another offensive along the entire front. This time its main effort was focused at Heartbreak Ridge (Hill 851) to the adjacent Mundung-ni Valley, on the Division's "Left" Sector in the 160th Infantry Regiment's area. The Division held fast and repelled the foe time-and-again. The Communists' operations then reduced into smaller units attacking outposts and key-bunkers along the front.

[<http://www.militarymuseum.org/40thIDKorea.html>]

January 1952 - The 40th Infantry Division began the three-echelon movement to Korea on 7 January, as scheduled and by 11 January, the 1st echelon landed at Inchon. The **160th Infantry Regiment** departed immediately for the 24th Division's sector and completed the relief of the 19th Infantry Regiment on 19 January. By 28 January, 40th Infantry Division, assumed sector responsibility for the Kumsong-Chwarae-ri sector on the central front.

February 1952 - The Division maintained its positions along the stable IX US Corps sector during the month.

March 1952 - The Division continued to maintain its positions along the Kumsong-Chwarae-ri sector of the central front until 30 March. The Division continued the program of patrolling to maintain contact while inflicting maximum casualties and denying the enemy the opportunity of permanently entrenching himself south of Phase Line Bill, a line parallel to and 1000-3000 yards in front of the Main Line of Resistance (MLR). Organic tanks were used effectively in both day and night operations, conducting direct fire missions against enemy positions.

During the period **21-30 March 1952**, the Division was relieved by elements of the Republic of Korea (ROK) Capitol and 6th ROK Infantry Divisions. Sector responsibility was assumed by the ROK forces on 30 March. The Division immediately began a

movement to the 2nd ROK Infantry Division sector to effect the relief of that unit. The **160th Infantry Regiment** completed the relief of the 32nd ROK Infantry Regiment and the 223rd Infantry Regiment completed the relief of the 31st ROK Infantry Regiment as the period ended.

On **1 April 1952** the Division completed the relief of the 2nd ROK Infantry Division and assumed control of the Kumhwa-Kumsong. The Division was deployed with the 223rd Infantry Regiment on the left, 160th Infantry Regiment on the right and the 224th Infantry Regiment and 140th Tank Battalion in Division reserve. Division Artillery was in support.

On **3 April**, a change in boundary between the Division and the 2nd Infantry Division necessitated the deployment of the 224th Infantry Regiment on-line to the left of the 223rd Infantry Regiment. This move was completed on 6 April and the Division was now deployed west to east with the 224th Infantry Regiment, 223rd Infantry Regiment and the 160th Infantry Regiment on-line. The 140th Tank Battalion remained in division reserve.

May 1952 - The Division remained deployed as previously reported and battle lines remained unchanged during the month.

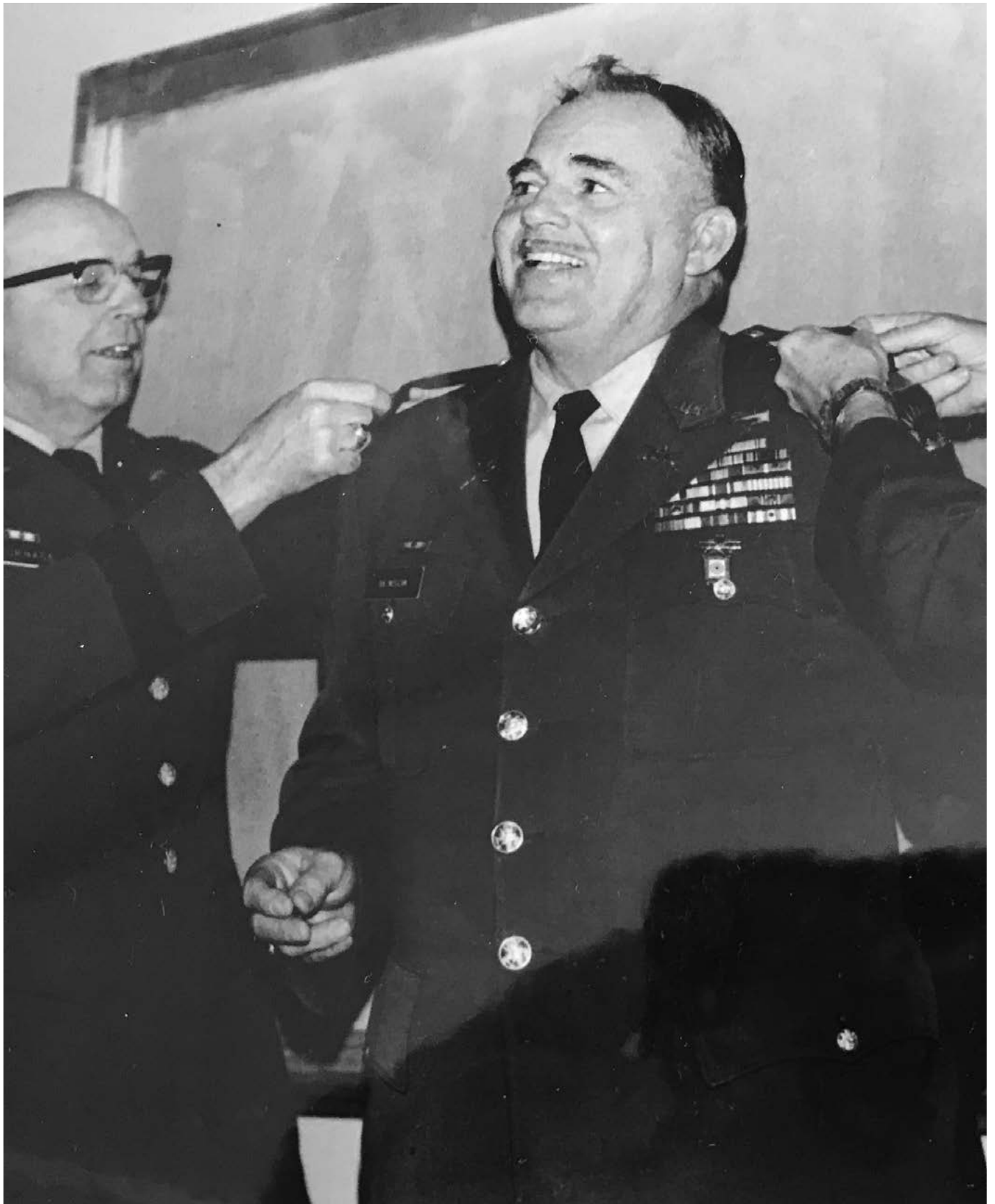
June 1952 - The improvement and strengthening of defensive positions and the maintenance of enemy contact through patrol activity continued to receive primary consideration by the Division.

After Korea, he returned to National Guard status, and after another term as Commanding Officer of the Medium Tank Company, 160th Infantry, he became a full-time technician with the National Guard.

His assignments include Assistant S3 of the 981st Field Artillery Battalion; S3 of the 140th Tank Battalion and Combat Squad C; S3 with the 3rd Brigade, 40th Armored Division; Battalion Commander of the 6th Battalion, 185th Armor and 111th Reconnaissance Squadron; and as Executive Officer of the 3rd Brigade, 40th Armored Division. He was then named Executive Officer of the 40th Armored Division.

He graduated from the Command and General Staff College in December 1963.

He later served in various capacities in the California National Guard – Training officer for the California Military Academy, National Guard Headquarters, in Sacramento, California.



PROMOTED TO COLONEL IN APRIL 1973.

He was promoted to Brigadier General and on 23 August 1977, and became commander of the Los Alamitos Army Airfield in Los Alamitos, California under the California Army National Guard. In July 2000, Los Alamitos Armed Force Reserve Center was renamed Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Center.

General Benson passed away June 28, 2003 and was survived by his wife, Marjory, their two sons James Donald Benson II, Juel Bradford Benson, Gail Frances Stone and Cassandra Jo Peat.

<https://remembrance.togetherweserved.com/sign-up.jsp?v2>

40th Armd Bde (Sep), AFT, Ft Irwin, 1969.pdf

[http://mail.militarymuseum.org/40th%20Armd%20Bde%20\(Sep\)%2C%20AFT%2C%20Ft%20Irwin%2C%201969.pdf](http://mail.militarymuseum.org/40th%20Armd%20Bde%20(Sep)%2C%20AFT%2C%20Ft%20Irwin%2C%201969.pdf)

MOS Lookup: <https://www.mrfa.org/us-army/us-army-mos-listings-vietnam-era/>

IRTC – Infantry Replacement Training Center - Possibly Camp Roberts: Sept 1945

<http://www.militarymuseum.org/campbob.html>

<https://www.history.army.mil/>

- END OF Biographical Sketch -

LOS ALAMITOS ARMY AIRFIELD

On 23 August 1977, ownership of the base was transferred from the U.S. Navy to the U.S. Army and renamed Los Alamitos Army Airfield. During the time Los Alamitos was under Navy ownership, it had IATA/ICAO codes of KNTB/NTB. The U.S. Army then licensed the operation of the base to the California Army National Guard. The base was commanded by BG James Benson while Los Alamitos AAF was commanded by LTC James C. Ghormley, III.

In July 2000, Los Alamitos Armed Force Reserve Center was renamed Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Center.

The base served as the starting line for the 14th season of the hit CBS Reality TV Show *The Amazing Race*.^[3] The base's status as an alternate landing area for Air Force One was mentioned in a *West Wing* episode.

The base hosts the annual Southland Credit Union Los Alamitos "Race on the Base," a charity event including a 5K Run, 5K Walk, 10K Run, 10K Skate/Handcycle / Wheelchair, Mission: 1K Kids Run, Jr. Reverse Triathlon and Reverse Triathlon. The next race is February 27, 2016.^[4] The Southland Credit Union Los Alamitos "Race on the Base" is the largest reverse triathlon event in the country.^[5]

On the south edge of runway 22L is the Navy Golf Course, where Tiger Woods honed his game as a youth.^{[6][7][8]} The 18-hole Destroyer Course opened in 1966 and an executive nine holes was later added. The former military-only facility opened for public play in 2004.

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