ADDENDUM ONE:

NEW for 2025!

**RETIRED MAJOR GENERAL ANDREW H. ANDERSON’S**

**ABBREVIATED BIOGRAPHY**

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this Addendum One to “The Retired Major General Andrew H. Anderson 5th Infantry Regiment Association Memorial Scholarship” is to give applicants to this Scholarship Program a brief history of his life and times to better understand and know the man it has been named in honor of, Andrew H. Anderson.

**Overview:**

Major General (Retired) Andrew H. Anderson was not born a General and he certainly never expected to attain the rank of a General Officer in the United States Army.

Full Name: Andrew Herbert “Andy” Anderson

Born: September 8, 1928

Place: Brooklyn, New York

Died: April 19, 2023

Age: 94 Years, 7 Months and 22 Days

Place: Autumn Lake Healthcare; Cambridge, Maryland

Family: Son, Soldier, Husband (Ellen Lee), Father (James, Glenn and Steven), Grandfather (Casey)

Career: Union steel door frame fabricator, Soldier, an Officer and a Gentleman

Retired: May 31, 1986

Military Awards: Distinguished Service Medal, Silver Star, Legion Of Merit with 2d Oak Leaf Cluster (OLC), Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal with “V” (for Valor) Device and 2d OLC, Purple Heart, Air Medal with “V” Device and Numeral 7, Army Commendation Medal with “V” Device and 2d OLC, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with 4 Battle Stars, Permanent Army Presidential Unit Citation, Combat Infantryman Badge, Expert Infantryman Badge and U. S. Army and German Parachutist Badges. Various other foreign awards and decorations.

**Biography:**

**Youth:** Growing up in Brooklyn, NY in the aftermath of “The Great Depression” was not easy. His parents had immigrated from Scandinavia; they were hard workers and determined to become U. S. citizens, prosper, rear a family and live the idyllic life in the “land of the free, home of the brave.” “Andy” as he preferred to be addressed when young, attended Public School. At age 16, while attending high school at the Manhattan High School of Aviation Trades, he enlisted in the New York State Guard, a semi-quasi precursor to being a member of the New York National Guard. The NY Guard filled in whenever the formal NY National Guard was mobilized. He excelled in the discipline of a regimented organization and rose rapidly in rank, even if that rank was in name only. As soon as he was of eligible age, he enlisted in the official New York National Guard, where, again, he rose swiftly through the ranks because of his dedication**,** attitude and unending thirst for ***education*** and knowledge.

**Young Adult:** His father wanted him to follow in his footsteps as a steel door frame fabricator and, just importantly, obtain his “Union Card” which was worth its weight in gold in a rapidly growing New York City (NYC). If you had the much coveted “Union Card,” you worked; and if you didn’t, you didn’t. Period. For several years he worked as a fabricator and, in fact, earned very good money but it just didn’t sit well with him. He was still active in the NY National Guard, drilling one weekend a month and attending “Summer Camp” two weeks a year. He decided to enlist in the Army despite the fact that his Father disapproved.

**Young Soldier:** After coming up through the ranks a second time, because of leaving the New York Guard and then basically starting all over again in the NY Army National Guard, young Andy saw that ***education*** - from training classes that taught tank maintenance to advanced math classes to determine distance to target - was the key to moving up in rank in the Army; whether curriculum based or the always helpful and beneficial “hip pocket” based training to standard of being given more responsibility and of becoming a LEADER! *Andrew H. Anderson was not born a General and he certainly never expected to become a General but he was destined to be a General because of his belief in* ***education****.* Over time, his ongoing ***education*** granted him the key that would let him unlock and open any door. After attending a 3-month active-duty course that would qualify him as a Tank Commander, Andy discovered he could apply for a direct commission as a Second Lieutenant in the NY Army National Guard. Based on his ***education*** “portfolio” if you will, he was commissioned! His continuing goal of attending the University of Maryland at every available opportunity and snapping up every training course he could get, showed the Selection Board that he merited a Direct Commission. However, that decision now resulted in him having to start all over again for a third time at the bottom of the rank ladder.

**Young Officer:** 2LT… 1LT… CPT\*… Three progressive ranks encompassing every Army Basic Armor Officer’s position or assignment; sometimes more than once. He started taking the equivalent of what today is known as correspondence courses because he had already seen the proverbial light at the end of the tunnel of the importance of ***education***. That light was always more ***education*** and not a train blocking his path! With 20 tank company commanders in the division, 1LT Anderson was the only one holding the rank of Lieutenant!

\*Second Lieutenant (O-1)… First Lieutenant (O-2)… Captain (O-3)

In early 1956 during his first of four tours in Germany, he met his future wife at the Officer’s Club. Ellen Lee Miller. After a brief courtship, they were married later that same year. An Army officer is not a successful Army officer without a competent, attention-to-detail oriented Executive Officer or “XO” and his XO was his wife. They were a cohesive team from day one. His XO served alongside him until December 2, 2016 when she departed this earth to prepare the area for his final assignment.

**Field Grade Officer:** MAJ… LTC… COL\*\*… Three more progressive ranks with the various corresponding military ***education*** benchmarks to meet, or having been met, along with his degree from the University of Maryland then allowed him to apply for a Regular Army Commission. Pursuing his college degree early on in his career absolutely convinced him that it was the catalyst that influenced the selection board to recommend him for a Regular Army Commission. Andy was now well on his way to being a career Army Officer! He was a Platoon Leader, a Company Commander as both 1LT and CPT, a Battalion Commander, a Brigade Commander, an Assistant Division Commander and a Post Commander (Aberdeen Proving Ground; Aberdeen, Maryland) and every conceivable Additional Duty position imaginable in between.

\*\*Major (O-4)… Lieutenant Colonel (O-5)… Colonel (O-6)

Army officers, like enlisted Soldiers, are trained in or for specific jobs; branch specific for officers and occupational specific for the enlisted. When the individuals attain the highest ranks, that trained background is sometimes no longer relevant but the ***education*** was always taken into consideration! General Anderson was NEVER Infantry Branched! From day one, he was trained as an Armor officer. Undoubtedly his Armor background was a blessing in disguise for his next assignment.

**“Baptism Under Fire”:** In 1968, then LTC Anderson volunteered for Vietnam. It was to be his first combat command and his Branch Officer at the Pentagon in Washington, D. C., where he had just completed a three-year assignment, suggested a Staff or Operations position until he was acclimated. Not acclimated to the weather mind you, although that was probably the “official” reason given, but, no, acclimated until he received his “baptism under fire.”He was assigned as the Assistant G-3 Operations Officer for the 25th Infantry Division from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. That division had deployed to Vietnam in December 1965 and would remain through mid-1972 - over six straight years. Unheard of at that time and unheard of to this day! When he landed in Vietnam and reported in, the Commanding General of the 25th ID told him he didn’t need an Assistant G-3; he needed combatant commanders! On the ground!! NOW!!! His “baptism under fire” would be in real time.

An applicant for a General Anderson Scholarship has an opportunity to receive 5 Bonus Points to be added to their Scholarship Application Packet Score if they include a personal story or recollection between themself and the Veteran who qualifies them to apply for a scholarship; whether now, in the present or having occurred sometime in the past regardless if the Qualifying Veteran is alive or not. *Congratulations, you found the “Easter Egg!”* The only rule is the story must be true and must be attested to as being true, known to be true or known to have occurred by the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the Applicant. This personal story or recollection will be reprinted in the same edition of our Bobcat Bulletin that announces your scholarship award if you become a General Anderson Scholarship Awardee. *The story or recollection can be a funny missive, a serious recounting of a certain event or anything in between. Something that you will remember for the rest of your life. It does not have to be Army related but that is highly encouraged.*

On June 26, 1968, then LTC Anderson, assumed command of the 1st Battalion, 5th Infantry (Mechanized) “Bobcats,” one of several Battalions making up the 1st Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division. He had neither the time, nor patience, nor desire to be a “C2” - Command and Control - Battalion Commander directing his Soldiers and his M-113 Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) from the “safety” of a helicopter circling over the battlefield! That leading by example ON the battlefield instead of from OVER the battlefield spoke volumes to his Soldiers! This leadership style was rare in Vietnam because it was not a “safe” leadership style. That also sat well with his Soldiers! This “boots on the ground” style led to the 5th Infantry Battalion receiving the first of three Presidential Unit Citations – the Army’s highest individual unit award! It also very nearly cost him his life when on October 29, 1968 a North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Rocket Propelled Grenade (RPG) struck his APC from one side, traveled through the APC and exploded upon exiting the other side. Then LTC Anderson was severely and critically wounded but alive. He was evacuated to a MASH (Mobile Army Surgical Hospital) in country, stabilized and then moved to a regular military hospital in Japan for initial treatment and further stabilization. After three months, he was airlifted back to the United States where he was sent to the WWII era Valley Forge General Hospital in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. He would spend the next seven months there healing. After nearly a full year of recovery, the Army, in its infinite wisdom, informed him that he was likely going to be Medically Retired. He scoffed… He fought… And then announced at the top of his lungs to the point that the entire hospital heard, “the hell I am” and he proceeded to show, demonstrate and let the top brass know that not only was he fit for duty, but that he was not interested in retirement. Guess who won out?

**General Officer (GO):** Two more ranks; Brigadier General (one star) and Major General (two star), both of which he never would have imagined his ascension to, at any time, throughout his many decades of military service and career as a military officer. Generals are hand-picked for particular assignments. Generals are the ultimate subject matter experts. General Anderson’s forte was Armor and he was always extremely proud that he was one of the most influential and sought after Army Officer’s to lead in the development, production and fielding of the premiere Main Battle Tank (MBT) for the United States Army. To this day, the MBT is still in production and is called the Abrams M-1 MBT! So, ***education*** was right up there in his career since the # 1 guy was none other than General Creighton W. Abrams himself, for whom the MBT is named after. *An interesting side note here, when then COL Anderson was promoted to Brigadier General (BG) he called his wife Lee to tell her that he was going to be a general and her reply was that she already knew that through the “Army Officer’s Wives Network!” It is extremely accurate to this day!* After serving continuously in the NY Guard, the NY Army National Guard and the United States Army for nearly 42 years, Major General Andrew H. Anderson retired on May 31, 1986. For the next 35 years, he stayed busy. He built large museum quality wooden model ships, hand-carved duck decoys and served on many area civic and county boards and participated in local government, as well as a Councilman until his final Permanent Change of Station (PCS) on 19APR23.

**5th Infantry Regiment Association**:

After many years of being a part of the 25th Infantry Division (ID) “Tropic Lightning” Association and known as the 5th Infantry Chapter, General Anderson and a majority of their members, decided to continue their storied history of being a part of the oldest active Infantry Regiment in the United States Army. In July 2008, just a few months past the 200th “Birthday” of the 5th Infantry Regiment, the 5th Infantry Regiment *Association* was Incorporated in Frankfort, Michigan and thus continues on with its 216+ year history (as of 2024) of the regiment. *The Association’s first “Honorary Colonel of the Regiment,” approved by the Department of the Army, The Pentagon; Washington, D. C. was Andrew H. Anderson.* He served in that official capacity just shy of 15 consecutive years until his unexpected passing on April 19, 2023. In February 2023 the newly formed and approved 5th Infantry Regiment Association Scholarship Committee voted to name its newly approved Scholarship Program after him and in May 2023, further amended the name to be “The Retired Major General Andrew H. Anderson 5th Infantry Regiment Association Memorial Scholarship.” In 2024, the 5th Infantry Regiment Association continues to Soldier On!

Today, separate from the Association, the active component of the 5th Infantry Regiment is part of the reactivated 11th Airborne (Arctic) Division at Ft. Wainwright, Alaska after being affiliated with the 25th ID for nearly 60 years. They are known as the “Bobcats” which became their mascot, circa 1953, when the battalion’s pick-up basketball team was nicknamed that for unknown reasons while stationed in Germany.

**In Conclusion:**

This “abbreviated” biography truly only scratches the surface in the storied life and times of one Andrew H. Anderson. To read more, to learn more, including what he did and accomplished after his 40+ years in the Army, simply Google his name. Be prepared however, to learn that if God himself asked “General Andy” to return to Earth to straighten out a FUBAR in the Pentagon, he would look God in the eye and say… I’ll Try Sir\*! Finally, it’s all about ***education***. Period.

\*I’ll Try Sir is the 216+ year old motto of the 5th Infantry Regiment of the United States Army; the “Bobcats!”