

- Kenneth Darrell Jones, SP 4, U.S. Army, Operation Whitecoat (CD-22) 1954-56
Q-fever Project
(Revised August 23, 2008)

- I was born October 30, 1933, Hill Top, Kentucky (McCreary County). I responded to the draft August 24, 1954, in Louisville, Kentucky, and was processed at Fort Knox as a **1-A-O**. The next leg of this unknown journey was by train to Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas, where I immediately jumped into the first eight weeks of Medical Aid training. I then had an opportunity to have a brief respite back in Kentucky before completing the eight remaining weeks. I was anxious for my next assignment.
- During the second week of November 1954, Colonel William Tigertt, commanding officer from the Medical Unit of **WRAMC** (now called **USAMRIID**) and Elder George W. Chambers, Director of War Service Commission, General Conference Headquarters of Seventh-day Adventist, Washington, D.C., briefed my platoon on a critical, new Army and National initiative that we could be an integral part of. I, and eleven of my fellow soldiers from this meeting, became the first twelve volunteers to qualify as the initial participants in this new program.
- It was an energized group of twelve young men who left San Antonio December 30, 1954, at approximately 10:30 p.m. We were excited as we arrived at the Washington International Airport (now Reagan Intl. Airport). It was early a.m. on December 31st. Captain Richard Klitch, our Company Commander, met our group. We were transported to Walter Reed Army Medical Center. After check-in and breakfast we were transferred to the Forest Glen annex of Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Silver Spring, Maryland arriving before noon.
- After another check-in, assignment of rooms and bedding issue, we settled in on the second floor in the wing that has since then been destroyed by fire. We waited the tomorrow with many different visions of what our next months would be like.
- The next day, January 1, 1955 we were at a new day, a new year, a new place, and a new phase of our lives. We entered two weeks of endless tests and processing. 1st Sgt. Ryan and Capt. Klitch finally called me, Leonard Barnard, of Ballentine, Montana, and Kenneth Healy of Buffalo, New York to their office. We had been chosen as the first three volunteers to continue the heart of the program process at Camp Detrick (now Fort Detrick).
- COL. Tigertt transported our group of three and Elder George G. Chambers to Camp Detrick (now Fort Detrick) in his personal car. I remember arriving at the gate at Camp Detrick (now Fort Detrick). The guard motioned us to go on through without a moment of hesitation. It gave us a feeling of importance and pride. We made our way to the three wings behind the base hospital. A long corridor connected the wings. The first two wings were wood structure and rather non-descript. The third wing; however, was a brick/block type structure that was adjacent to the fence behind which was the “hot area”. We entered that wing through the back doors. Here we met our own assigned personal doctors with whom we would become very familiar in the ensuing days. Maj. William Matouseck was my doctor. The other men had Capt. George McCormick and Capt. George DeMuth. We also had our own team of nurses; Maj. Alice B. Clark, charge nurse, and her associates, Maj. Marjorie Barker and Capt. Kathleen Daniel, along with two corpsman; M/Sgt. Jack

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Teaney and SFC George Sweeney. It got even better - we had our own cook - Sotero (Terry) Abibea. Mr. Abibea was retired from the Navy and during his lustrous career had served as special chef for President Roosevelt and Vice President Truman at the Yalta Conference. He brought magazines to show us pictures of this event. He was an excellent cook and adapted so readily to our dietary needs. We were fed very well!

- SFC Frank Nash and his wife Doris, civil service employee, were in charge of the laboratory that was responsible for drawing all blood from volunteers. They became our special friends during our many hours of visiting their facilities.
- LT. COL. Gochenour was the veterinarian in charge of the animal laboratory and was Assisted by SFC. Victor Lopez. Donald Johnson and Ervin Epping, were two volunteers that worked in this laboratory after their six/eight weeks of quarantine
- In the following days we had numerous blood test and physical exams. However, the reality of our assignment set in when we were given the special mouthpiece and shown how to use it in breathing when the time came for us to be taken to the 'hot area' for exposure. When that day arrived, COL. Tigertt again transported us to the building in the 'hot area' that housed the infamous "**Eight Ball**". COL. Tigertt was our inspiration and always made sure we were treated special. We appreciated his personal attention so much. Once in the building we were taken to a special room where we exchanged our clothes for scrubs. We exited by an elevator that lifted us to the 'cat walk', which was a walkway surrounding the **Eight Ball**. Booths along the catwalk, similar to telephone booths, hid the portals that opened into the virus-laden atmosphere of the **Eight Ball**. We would soon be breathing these concoctions, an invisible bug that we didn't understand and had no idea of the effect it would have on our bodies. A technician joined us in our individual booths and reviewed our instructions of how to breathe with the mouthpiece. Our mouthpieces were attached to the **Eight Ball** tubing and our mouths. Our heads were securely strapped so that we could not move during the exposure that would deliver the Q-fever virus to us. It was all over after a short span of breaths. The **Eight Ball** had delivered its menace. This occurred on January 25, 1955. I was 21 years old. This date has been confirmed by LT COL Philip Pittman by personal correspondence.
- I have been asked what was going through my mind while in the **Eight Ball** portal. To this day, I cannot clearly recall my specific thoughts. I was young and eager to serve my country. This was my way of doing so and I was only focused on the project. I did not hesitate about the unknown or any potential danger and I was not afraid. I had confidence in the leadership of the program, and especially in the leadership of COL. Tigertt.
- Following the Q-Fever exposure, we returned to the change room where we walked through ultra violet lighting, removed our scrubs, took showers, dressed, and were transported back to the hospital ward.
- Daily observations began with: doctor exams, TPR's three times a day, X-Ray's, EKG's, blood work, and recording of intake & output. This continued for the next six-eight weeks. During this time we were confined to the hospital ward. We observed others arriving to go through the same process.
- I suffered no significant reactions to my exposure during the observation period, nor did the other two volunteers. However, Leonard Barnard asked to be exposed a second time,

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and as a result of that exposure he became exceptionally ill. Many of the volunteers exposed thereafter became ill.

- George Wendell Parrish was among the next three volunteers to be exposed and the first one to get sick. He became very sick with a high fever. When you watch the **History channel video**, or other documentary films, you will see CAPT. Daniel standing by his bedside reading his temperature.
- William Patrick, President of *The Bio-Threat Assessment* has confirmed that Barnard, Healy and I were the first three military personnel to volunteer for human exposure to Q-fever at the **Eight Ball**.
- After my quarantine, I moved on from the testing phase and was the first corpsman to be asked to stay on at Camp Detrick (now Fort Detrick) as a part of staff support to project CD-22. During this time I had the pleasure to be associated with other dedicated individuals connected with CD-22. Among these were: Maj. Robert Barnes, LT. COL. Abram Benenson, Dr. Ernest Beutler, LT. COL. William Gochenour, Dr. Robert Hodges, Capt. Dorothy Trogdon and several of my enlisted compatriots. I consider this to have been a very rewarding duty. I was given training to perform X-Ray's and, EKG's and numerous other procedures for the volunteers.
- On July 5, 1955 a group of volunteer soldiers flew to the Dugway Proving Grounds in Utah. At this site, thirty young men and an array of animals were exposed to Q-fever in an open-air environment. This group returned to Camp Detrick (now Fort Detrick) to be quarantined. This was the first of this type of exposure and to my knowledge was the last.
- In early 1956, I was part of a group that participated in the "Sleep Deprivation Project" at Forest Glen. After this project, in late February or early March, we returned to Camp Detrick (now Fort Detrick) to continue project CD-22.
- The name Project Whitecoat (Q-fever group) was not applied until later years. Early on, it was named project Camp Detrick-22 (CD-22). Officials initially considered the Whitecoat name to be too common as a reference to such a complex project. Today we proudly refer to its proper name "**Project Operation Whitecoat.**" (Capt. (Dr.) George DeMuth related this information to me.)
- I was discharged from the Army in August 23, 1956 and returned to my home state. During the next few months, communications with COL. Tigertt, Capt. Klitch and Maj. Clark resulted in an offer to me to return to Fort Detrick to work with them as a Civil Service employee. I returned in March of 1957 and for the next eighteen months I worked in the same capacity with different projects with a new group of volunteers and new staff members.
- There are many ways to show patriotism. Joining the Army and volunteering for the Whitecoat Project was my way of serving my God and my country. I consider it a privilege and an honor to have been one of the first to participate in this historical research program. I always felt it was an honor to have been part of this Project. However, only in recent years have I realized that I contributed to something that not only benefited our military, but also our nation. If I could qualify in a program today and was asked to participate, I would do it again!

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- My work with the project motivated me to initiate a professional career in health care. In September of 1958 I entered a course of study in Radiological Technology at Akron City Hospital (a teaching hospital of 600 beds) in Ohio. I graduated in September 1960. While in Akron, I met my future wife Carolyn Sue.
- I moved to California in 1960. Sue and I were married in National City, California on March 12, 1961. I worked in Radiology in California until 1969 when we moved to North Carolina. I joined Fletcher Hospital as their Chief X-Ray Technologist until 1971. At this time I decided to follow other deep-seated interests that matched my abilities and left the medical profession in pursuit of the building industry as a General Contractor. I am licensed in North and South Carolina as well as California.
- I retired as Director of the Building Department of the **Southeastern California Conference Headquarters of Seventh-day Adventist** in Riverside, California. On April 1, 2007 after twenty-seven years of service.
- Sue and I are parents of three adult professional children, Kenna, R.N., Janie HR and Keith, Porsche Technician.
- I was the co-founder and first President of **The Whitecoat Foundation**.
- From the Coal Mines of Kentucky, through the Laboratories of Fort Detrick, to our individual diverse careers, our lives have been shaped by and certainly changed by our decision to accept the responsibilities of being a “Whitecoat”. We believe we have made a difference for all Americans. I am proud to have had the honor to have served.

Respectfully submitted,
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