



Detachment of Texas

Commander's Travel Notes

April 21, 2023

On March 11 of this year, I visited El Paso Post 832 to attend Myra Cooper's, this year's Department President Homecoming. While I was there a familiar face walked in the building. We locked eyes and with a returning smile, this person was surprised that I came from Beaumont to visit. Before I left Beaumont I mentioned to my Post 817 Adjutant Cheryl Williams that I hope to see Past Department Commander James Allen McNair. I also suggested that since he's not traveling as much these days and that he may not come to Beaumont in June to celebrate our 75 years as a chartered post I present to him one of our 75th anniversary commemorative coins. I was very happy and honored to spend some time with him that evening talking about some shared memories and our love for the legion. The last thing he told me before leaving to return home was that he was going to try and make it to Beaumont for the celebration. Nineteen days later I received the dreadful call that Command Sergeant Major and Past Department Commander James Allen McNair had passed.

I knew I had to return for Commander McNair's services to represent the Detachment of Texas and besides it would be a well-attended important event because of his stature. Upon arrival already in town or on their way to El Paso were esteemed members of local Legion Posts, Auxiliaries, and state District Officers and there were the current Department Commander Hince, her husband Past Department Commander, and Current Alt NECMAN John Hince, Past Department Commanders Herb O'Dell, John McKinney, Walter Ivie, Bret Watson, and Past Department and Past

National Commander Paul Dillard, State Adjutant Bill West were all in attendance.

CSM McNair served in the US Army for 30 years, including serving at Fort Bliss, Tx, Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD, Alaska, Europe, and Korea. He received many commendations, medals, and awards, including the Meritorious Service Medal and the Legion of Merit. He retired in 1985 and was recognized on the floor of the United States House Representatives for his distinguished service, saying "His outstanding service to his country will long be remembered by his fellow soldiers and greatly appreciated by his fellow Americans "

Thursday evening was the wake with an outstanding program befitting at State Commander. I was very impressed by their final salute ceremony. Something that I've taken back to my Post to compare with our Final Salute Ceremony. The funeral services the next day at Hope Chapel on the grounds of Fort Bliss heavenly culminating with and led by Past Department Commander and Alternate NECMAN Hince a presentation of arms to Past Department Commander McNair as he went from the Chapel doors to the awaiting funeral hearse to be driven to Fort Bliss National Cemetery Internment pergola. Taps a bugle call sounded by a lone soldier maybe 100 yards away in the middle of unidentified veterans' grave makers during this patriotic memorial ceremony. I left El Paso knowing that I was there for every minute of McNair's farewell and represented the Detachment of Texas well.

Let me give a big thanks to Department President Myra Cooper for providing a car and driver for my use while in El Paso. Whether it was to go to all the services, go to a restaurant, go to the Post or take me to the airport. Outstanding hospitality.

Constantly trying to make us better,

Clifton Guillory

Commander, Detachment of Texas

