



## **Miramar National Cemetery Support Foundation**

### **Bob Baker Korean War Veteran Founder, Bob Baker Auto Group Biography**

Bob Baker is a Korean War veteran of the Battle of Outpost Harry, and a successful businessman who is known in San Diego as a generous benefactor of causes that help the homeless, that support veterans, and that benefit the community in many ways.

His most recent effort is to provide major funding for a Miramar National Cemetery Support Foundation project to construct a Veterans Tribute Tower & Carillon at Miramar National Cemetery. The Tribute Tower will be dedicated on Veterans Day, 11 November 2016.

Baker grew up in Los Angeles during the difficult Depression years. His parents divorced when he was 10, and he lived in a succession of foster homes and boarding houses. For a time, he lived on the streets.

After high school in 1950, Baker joined the U.S. Army Paratrooper, Pathfinder with the 188th Regiment, 11th Airborne Division. It was his desire to join the Regimental Combat Team in 1953. However, when he got to Japan and was assigned duties, there were no vacancies. Baker and his four close friends (who also were denied) volunteered to go to Korea.

He was transferred to the 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division. He eventually reached the front lines in February 1953, where he made 27 night patrols, and earned two Bronze Star Medals. Baker described his Korean War experience in his 2005 autobiography, *Against All Odds: The Robert H. Baker Story*.

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## **PG. 2, Bob Baker Biography**

Baker wrote, "I was always one of the first to volunteer for these night actions and quickly got myself the reputation as a man who loved combat so much he was never willing to miss an opportunity to smear on the blackface and go out into the night for whatever adventure awaited."

That adventure came during the Battle for Outpost Harry, 10 to 18 June, 1953. The outpost was a strategic position on a tiny hilltop on the direct route to the South Korean capital of Seoul some 60 miles south.

The Chinese Army repeatedly staged mass attacks on the position, and lobbed more than 88,000 rounds of artillery on the defending U.S. and Greek troops fighting under the United Nations banner. The embattled troops were told to "hold at all costs."

In the early evening hours of 12 June, Baker volunteered, along with a buddy, to go on a suicide mission even though they were told they wouldn't come back. The Chinese attacked the third day of the battle. Because they attacked two hours earlier than expected, Baker had to retreat through the minefields, leading two squads safely back to the main bunker at Outpost Harry.

The 5th Regimental Combat Team ran into hand-to-hand fighting with the Chinese, calling artillery "fire on target" on their own position when the Chinese reached the Team's trenches. He was on the front lines until a truce was declared in July 1953.

UN troops suffered approximately 700 casualties. Baker estimates the Chinese counted 10,000 dead, wounded or missing in the battles of June 1953.

Baker's Army service ended in December 1953. He was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with V device, among others, for his actions in combat.

Home from the Army, he began a career as a car salesman. Over the years, he rose to manager, then dealership owner, then owner of a group of automobile dealerships in Indiana and California.

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### **PG. 3, Bob Baker Biography**

Baker credits his deep faith, his Army service, and his entrepreneurial drive with his success. Throughout his life, he has shared that success, his time, and his resources with others less fortunate.

He also has maintained an intense interest in Army history, especially the Korean War and the legend of Outpost Harry. Over the years, he has worked to preserve the memory of his fellow Korean War veterans, and veterans of all services.

Examples of his efforts include key financial support for construction of The National Museum of the United States Army at Fort Belvoir, Va., just south of Washington, D.C., and the Veterans Tribute Tower & Carillon at Miramar National Cemetery.

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