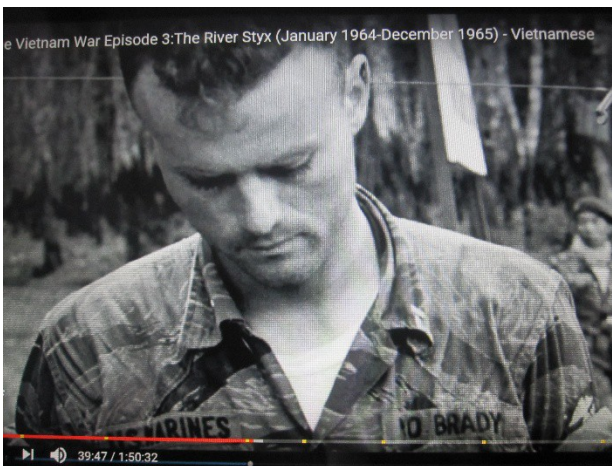


Philip Brady



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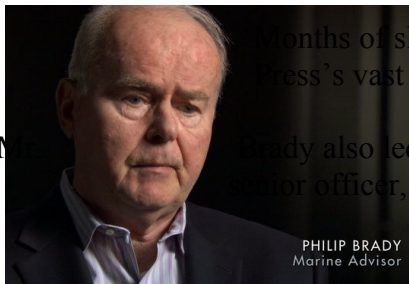


photograph of him from Binh Gia that had appeared in Paris-Match sometime in 1965. (All Mr. Brady's photographs from the war had been lost in a fire.)

Other research exposed the lingering pain Americans caused their South Vietnamese allies. Through the journalist Joseph Galloway, who covered the war for United Press International and co-wrote "[We Were Soldiers Once ... And Young](#)," about the battle of the Ia Drang Valley, Novick met Philip Brady, who had served in the Marines and later worked for Sen. Jim Webb (D-Va.). Brady was a veteran of the battle of Binh Gia, a four-day engagement that demonstrated the military prowess of the Viet Cong. Brady in turn pointed the filmmakers to Tran Ngoc Toan, a lieutenant colonel in South Vietnam's Marine Corps, to whom he was wounded at Binh Gia, and he bitterly recalls that although the Americans took care to evacuate the bodies of four crewmen who died in a helicopter crash, they refused to extend the same consideration to the South Vietnamese dead.



It was Mr. Brady, whom Ms. Novick met early in the research process, who first mentioned Binh Gia. "He told me he had been at this really important battle," she recalled. But he said he would only be interviewed if the filmmakers could find a photograph of him from Binh Gia that had appeared in Paris-Match sometime in 1965. (All Mr. Brady's photographs from the war had been lost in a fire.)



Months of sleuthing eventually turned up the original image, which was in The Associated Press's vast Vietnam archive, in a folder labeled "Advisers."

Mr. Brady also led the film's researchers to home movie footage, taken on a camera owned by his superior officer, Capt. Frank P. Eller. Footage used early in the scene shows American and South Vietnamese soldiers training, sharing meals and relaxing together.



The scene moves from Mr. Brady to Tran Ngoc Toan, a veteran of the South Vietnamese marine unit Mr. Brady was attached to, which was known as the Killer Sharks. He was interviewed at his home in Houston, where a large population of South Vietnamese refugees settled after the fall of Saigon in 1975.

A graduate of the elite military academy at Dalat, Mr. Toan had been fighting the Viet Cong for more than two years. "You are not my adviser," he affectionately recalls telling Mr. Brady. "You are my helper."