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Contact:

Maj. Craig Heathscott

Public Affairs Officer

39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (deployed) Arkansas Army National Guard

craig.heathscott@us.army.mil

Memory of White County Soldier honored in Iraq with building dedication ~ Sgt. John Ray Massey remembered for service with Searcy, Ozark Guard units

by Sgt. Rick Fahr

1st Squadron, 151st Cavalry Regiment, 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS BASE ADDER, TALLIL, Iraq - Sgt. John Ray Massey died nearly a year ago, but as with each of those we have lost in Iraq, his memory lives on with the Family and friends left behind at home in the United States. John Massey, in fact, is one of many whose memory lives on here in the Middle East.

His name appears on a memorial wall on this post in southern Iraq, and earlier this week, troops dedicated a new facility, the John R. Massey Building, which will house a number of operations.

Massey, who was serving with the Ozark based Battery C, 2nd Battalion, 142nd Fires Brigade, died July 15 of wounds sustained in Baghdad the previous day when his vehicle was struck by an improvised explosive device.

Massey, who was from Higginson, was serving on a voluntary second tour to Iraq after having already served with the 39th Brigade Combat Team during its first tour. During that deployment, Massey served with the Searcy based Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 2nd Battalion, 153rd Infantry Regiment.

Those who served with Massey recalled him as a dedicated Soldier and good friend.

Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Parks of 1st Squadron, 151st Cavalry Squadron, who worked with Massey during the 39th's first deployment, described the Soldier as a selfless person who often took extra work shifts to give others time off.

"That's just the kind of individual John was," he said.

Parks said Massey enjoyed the "simple things in life."

"He liked to hunt and fish and ride four-wheelers. He liked the down-to-earth stuff," he added.

Staff Sgt. Mark Kellogg, who also served with Massey, laughed when recalling his friend.

"He was just an outstanding guy. He worked. He just worked," Kellogg said. "He was one of the best. He took care of what troops he had and tried to take care of the troops he didn't have. He was an all-around good guy."

Building Dedication. Sgt. LaRon Harris (left) and Cpl. Derrion Amos, both of 1st Squadron, 151st Cavalry Regiment, of the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, walk through the newly christened John R. Massey Building at COB Adder, Tallil, Iraq. Officials dedicated the building to honor Massey, who died last summer while providing convoy security. (Photo by Sgt. Rick Fahr, 1st Squadron, 151st Cavalry Regiment)

Memorial Wall. First Sgt. James Glenn of 600th Quartermaster Co. unveils the name of John R. Massey on the COB Adder Memorial Wall during a recent ceremony. Massey was one of five honored Troops who died while serving at the post. (Photo by Sgt. Rick Fahr, 1st Squadron, 151 Cavalry Regiment Public Affairs)

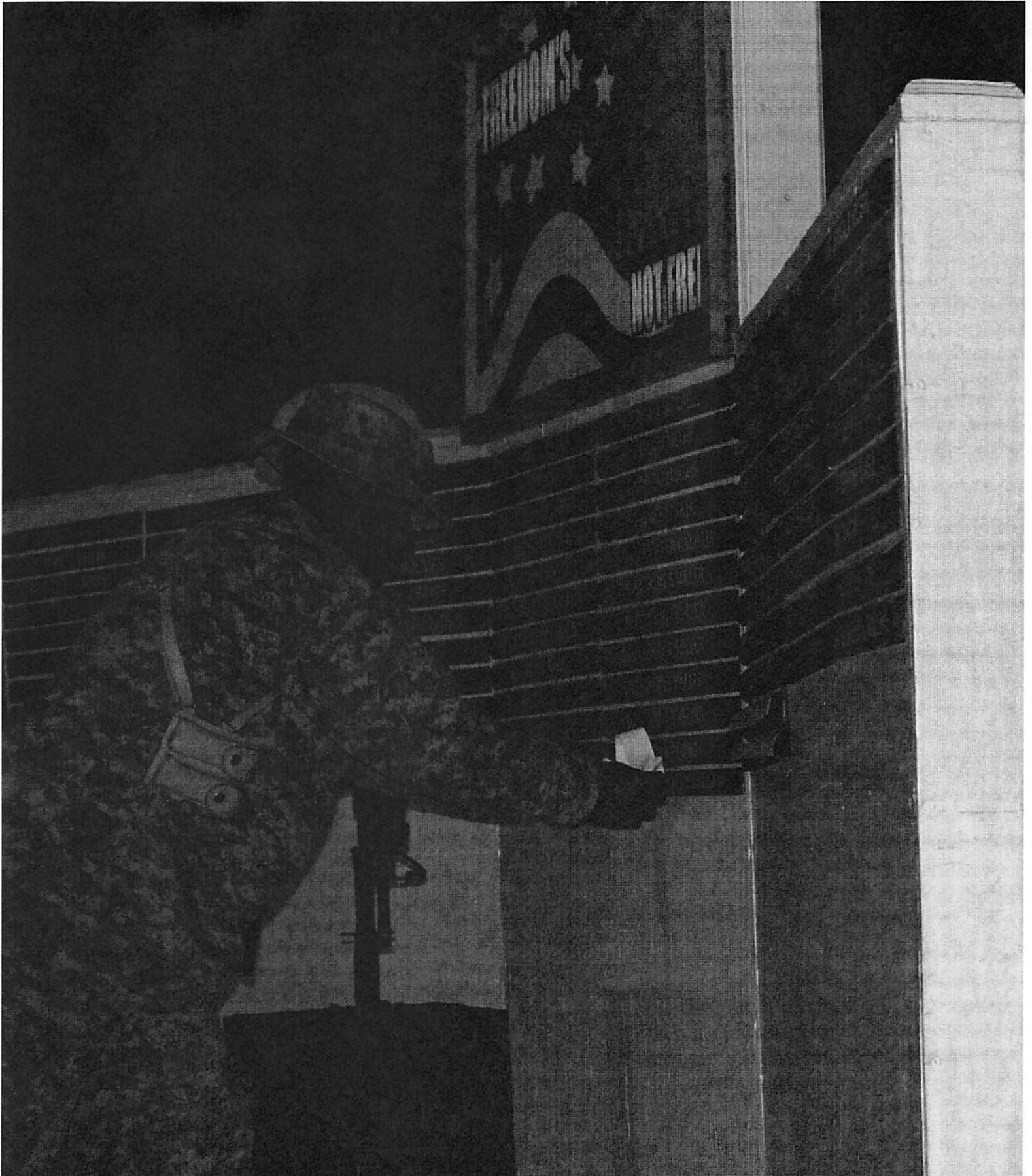
Capt. Chris Heathscott
State Public Affairs Officer
Arkansas National Guard
Bldg. 5301, Camp Joseph T. Robinson
North Little Rock, AR 72199-9600

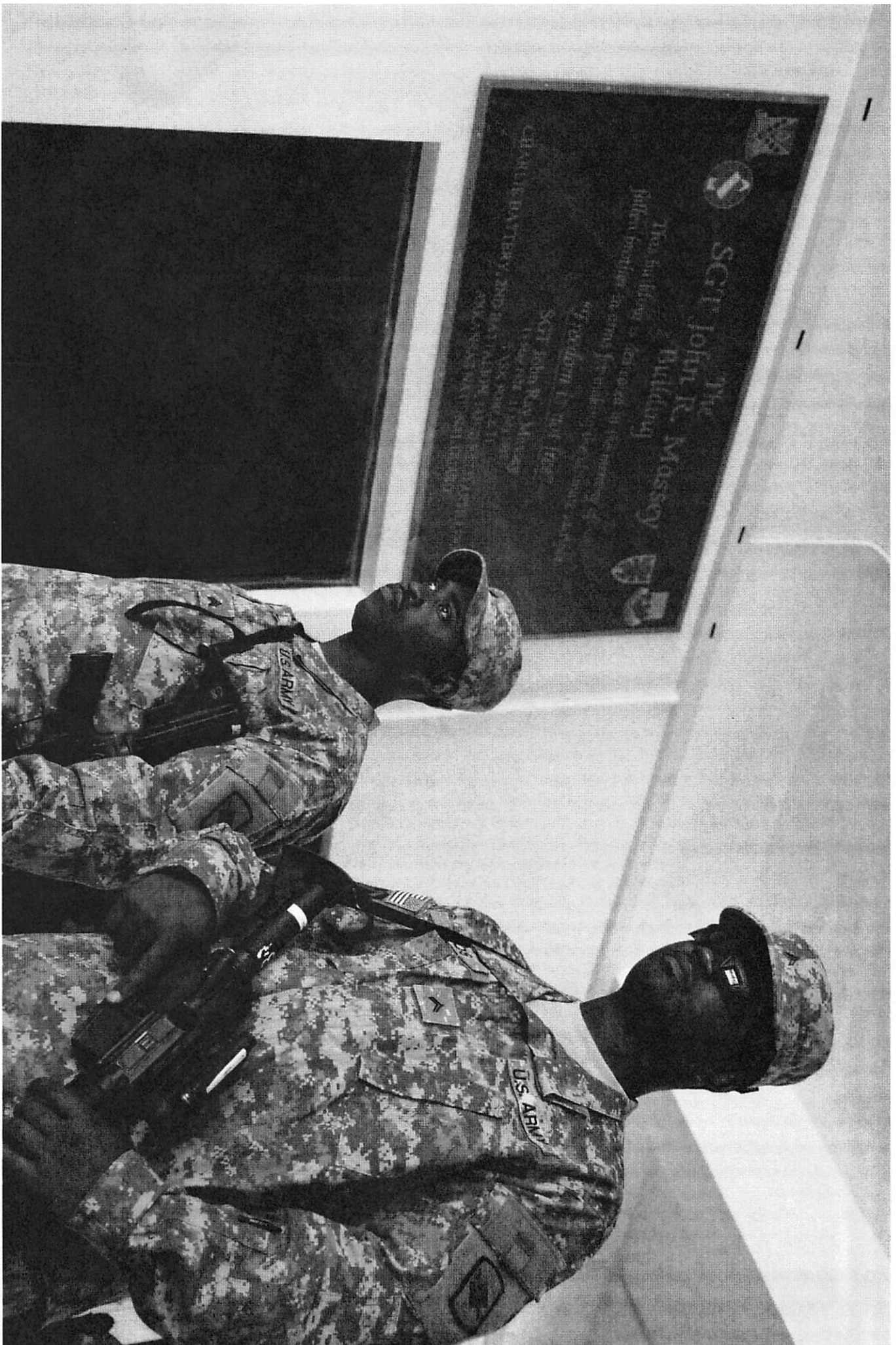
Office: (501) 212-5020
Cell: (501) 590-0318
DSN: 962-5020, FAX: (501) 212-5964
Email: christopher.heathscott@us.army.mil
christopher.heathscott@ar.ngb.army.mil



MASSEY

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SGT JOHN R. MESSY
The Building
John Messy, a sergeant in the
1st Cavalry Division, is a
recipient of the Army
Sergeant's Medal for
his actions in Vietnam.