

The Bridge

Alan Ramias

BIOGRAPHY



ALAN RAMIAS

Alan Ramias began writing stories as a child and never stopped. After graduating from Merrill High School in Wisconsin in 1965—just as the Vietnam War was escalating—he served as an Army reporter and editor, documenting life on the ground in the Mekong Delta and other regions. When he returned home, he earned degrees in English, Philosophy, and an MBA, launching a corporate career that blended communication, learning, and performance strategy.

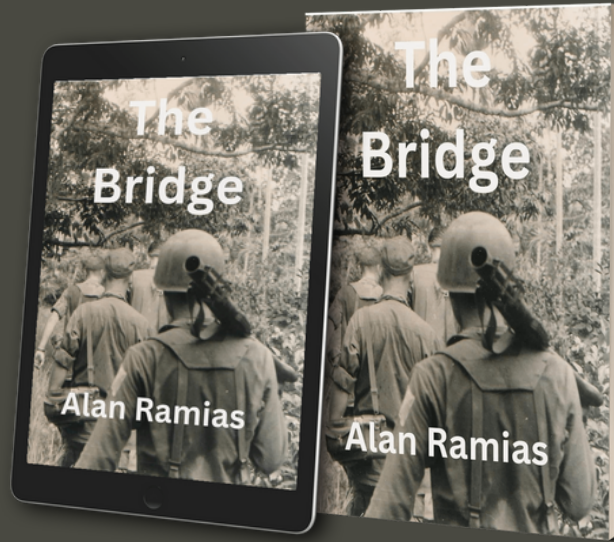
At Motorola, Alan helped found Motorola University and played a key role in early process improvement projects that laid the groundwork for Six Sigma. He later became a partner at the Rummler-Brache Group, leading global consulting engagements for major companies like Shell, 3M, and HP, and mentoring teams across Asia, Europe, and the Americas. As a partner at The Performance Design Lab, he co-authored two foundational books on organizational performance with his mentor, Geary Rummler.

Now turning his attention back to storytelling, Alan draws on decades of personal and professional insight to craft fiction that explores the complexities of memory, war, and human motivation.



Alan Ramias - Army Photographer

ABOUT THE BOOK



THE BRIDGE

A War That Won't Let Go. A Memory That Can't Be Buried. A Story That Refuses to Fade.

The Bridge is not your typical Vietnam War novel. Alan Ramias weaves together fiction, raw memory, poetic fragments, and documentary realism to deliver an unvarnished account of what it meant to serve, survive, and remember.

Moving between gritty squad banter, haunting lyricism, and the quiet desperation of men unprepared for the long shadows of war, this is a novel unafraid to dig beneath the skin.

Through the eyes of Brannick, Hanson, Mills, Sergeant Creek, Lieutenant Chester, and a cast of characters as scarred as the landscape, Ramias drops us into the humid confusion of Vietnam's Mekong Delta.

It's a world where bravado is a mask, every day is borrowed, and the line between heroism and survival blurs.

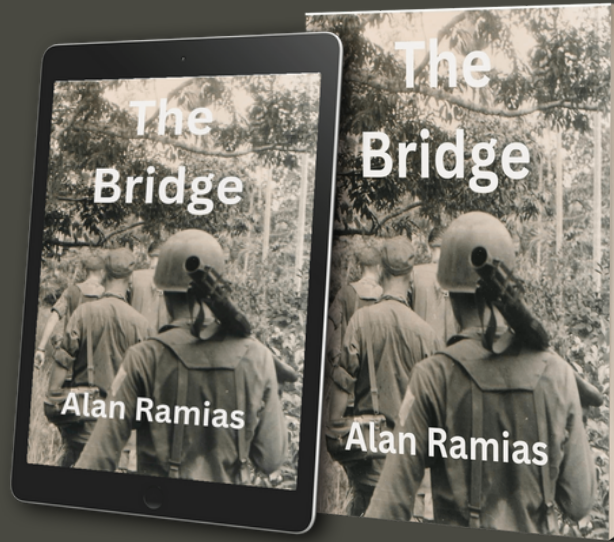
TARGET AUDIENCE

For readers of Tim O'Brien's *The Things They Carried*, Karl Marlantes' *Matterhorn*, and anyone searching for a Vietnam novel that doesn't flinch, *The Bridge* is an unforgettable testament to memory, survival, and the bridges—real and imagined—that we build just to get through.

SIMILAR TITLES

- *If I Die in a Combat Zone* by Tim O'Brien
- *A Rumor of War* by Philip Caputo
- *Better Times than These* by Winston Groom
- *The Sympathizer* by Viet Thanh Nguyen
- *Home from the War* by Robert Lifeton
- *A Bright Shining Lie* by Neil Sheehan

KEY FACTS



BOOK BLURB

The Bridge isn't just about the jungle, the firefights, or the numbing routine.

It's about the aftermath. The memories boxed up and shoved aside, the medals handed off to children, the men who return home but never really come back. It's about the war's residue: the guilt, the atonement, the broken friendships, and the desperate need to tell the truth—even when no one wants to listen.

BOOK INFO

Title

The Bridge

Author

Alan Ramias

Genre

Historical Fiction/War fiction

Publication Date

August 20, 2024

Formats Available

Hardcover, Paperback, Kindle

Dimensions & Page Count

6 x 0.37 x 9 inches & 120 pages

ISBN (Paperback) & ASIN

979-8329831030 & B0DDTZZX8X

Distributor

Contact Author

“

A powerfully written book about what it took to survive in hell. It is a must read if you want to somehow understand why these men came back broken. Thank you Mr. Ramias

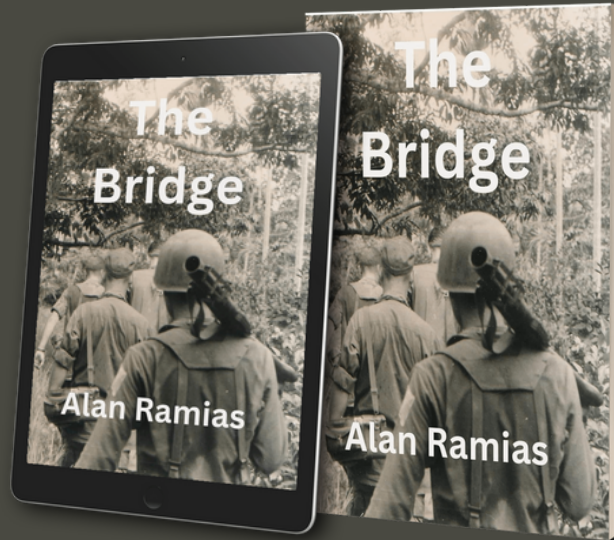
— Amazon 5-Star Review

”



“Unexpected and Compassionate”

CONVERSATION STARTERS



BOOK Q&A

How did you arrive at the title?

The story evolved over 40 years, and the title came only toward the end. I first wrote short stories and poems about my war experiences after leaving the Army and going to college. Decades later, I decided to collect those pieces into a manuscript but then realized I could turn them into a novel if I could find a structure that would arrange all of the pieces into a coherent whole. The incident at the bridge was at first just one piece, but when I realized I could make it the central story and symbol, I had my title and my structure.

Is there a particular character that you feel a strong connection to?

Hanson is the hero of the story, a very flawed hero because of his drug use, but beyond brave. He is based on a real person who won a Silver Star for saving two soldiers after a devastating bombing, but the way he did it was not just courageous but poetic, epic, and utterly humane. I always wanted to write about him; I felt honored to have even known him.

EXCERPT

“Some of his men out there were dead. Chester knew by the strange positions in which they lay—arms flopped over their backs, faces jutting skyward at freakish angles, some curled and clutching their bellies. Every now and then Hanson would come by, lean over one of the still shapes, and with infinite tenderness twist it into some more reasonable position. Then he would be gone again, splashing in another direction. Chester figured out he would soon be back again to plop another one down and straighten him out. There were so many.”

DISCUSSION PROMPTS

- What were your initial impressions of the book? Did they change as you continued reading?
- Which character did you find most compelling, and why?
- Were there any specific scenes or moments that stood out to you? What made them memorable?
- Did the book raise any questions or provoke any thoughts that you're still pondering?
- Would you recommend this book to others? Why or why not?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

AUTHOR BACKGROUND

When did you first realize you wanted to be a writer, and what initially sparked that desire?

I was about 8 years old when I started writing stories about things that fascinated me at the time. I wrote with a pencil and wrote so much that for years I had a giant callus on the side of my left index finger from holding it so much. I remember I loved cowboys, and all the westerns on television were my original inspiration, I think.

Are there any authors or books that have had a significant influence on your writing style or career?

In my teens, the first book I remember having a profound influence on me was *Raintree County* by Ross Lockridge Jr. The county was a symbol for the entire country, and it was the first time I encountered such a wonderful use of symbolism and metaphor.

The second book that wowed me was *A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens. His creation of memorable characters stayed with me, and it also taught me a lot about plotting, where certain events happened early in the book and then resurfaced amazingly at the end.

Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* also had a big influence on me. The circular structure was fascinating, and the great satirical characters, themes, and events made me want to write like him.

What's the most valuable piece of advice you've ever received, and how has it impacted your work?

Everyone has heard the cliché "Write what you know." For the longest time, I tried to do that, and it often entrapped me in the facts, resulting in writing that was flat, dull, and obvious. But I had a writing teacher once who said, I think actually sarcastically, "Write until you know," and I think that is actually very wise. I often don't know where I'm going or what I'm trying to accomplish until I write it, rewrite it, and then finally I know.

WRITING PROCESS

Could you describe your writing space? What elements are essential for you to be productive?

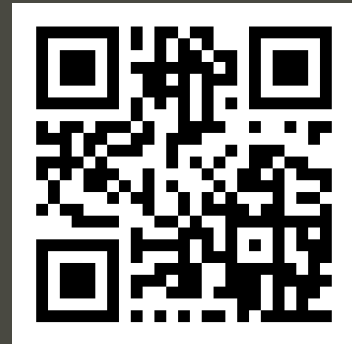
A desk, a heap of books, a place to put papers, and other stuff I might need. The place varies. I have a room at home where I write, and we have a cabin in New Mexico also set aside for writing and other creative pursuits.

CONTACT INFO



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