



River Currents



A PUBLICATION OF
THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 19, NUMBER 3
FALL 2010

Veterans Day 2010

The MRFA and 9th Infantry Division will be placing wreaths at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC on Veterans Day, Thursday, November 11, 2010. We will be gathering at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial at 8:30 a.m. on the 11th and proceed to The Wall at 9:00 a.m.

Note of Interest Brothers

The Wall brings on many sorrows but most of all it should and must bring on remembrance. It took me over 40 years before I could go down there and actually touch the names of my fallen comrades. I told them in a solemn prayer that they will not be forgotten. I am sorry to say that most people in this country take their freedom for granted. I only wish that they could have seen what we have and the price for their freedom.

Take care Brothers

Jerry Lariviere D Co. 3rd/60th MRF

We have blocked 80 rooms at the Hilton Garden Inn Arlington/Courthouse Plaza in Arlington, Virginia, for November 8-12. Room rates are \$119 (plus tax) per night. For reservations, call 703-528-4444 and refer to our group reservation code "MRF." Reservations may also be made online at www.arlingtoncourthouse.gardeninn.com. Be sure to enter the online reservation code "MRF" in the booking box labeled Group/Convention code. Reservations under these group codes must be made before the cut-

We will also have a ceremony at the U.S. Navy Memorial from 3 to 4 p.m. honoring the MRF and 9th Infantry Division complete with speakers. We will also place a wreath at the Lone Sailor Statue in honor of all our fallen Navy and Army Brothers, Veterans of the MRF and 9th Infantry Division.

A first for the U.S. Navy Memorial is that they have granted approval for us to do the Missing Man Table Ceremony same as we do at our reunions. We will furnish our own speakers, Chaplain, Bugler, and wreath layers. If you have never been to one of our ceremonies at the U.S. Navy Memorial, it is something you do not want to miss. The U.S. Navy Memorial is located at 7th Street between Pennsylvania Avenue and Indiana Avenue in Washington, DC (701 Pennsylvania Ave, NW).

Check out the full list of speakers for the ceremonies on page 2.

off date of October 29, 2010, so make your reservations soon. The Hilton Garden Inn Arlington/Courthouse Plaza is located at 1333 North Courthouse Road, Arlington, VA.

Come join us as we honor our fallen Brothers on Veterans Day 2010. We look forward to seeing you in DC.

For more information, contact Board Member Bob (Doc) Pries at 5832 NW Windy Pines Lane, Port Saint Lucie, FL 34986-4637, (513) 659-4974, priesrl@att.net.

From the Galley

Folks, these are just a few of the things you may want to see and visit while in DC for our Veterans Day z laying and the Navy Memorial ceremony. Looking forward to seeing all of you for this special day.

Albert



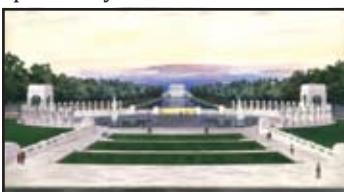
Vietnam Soldiers Statue



Vietnam Women's Statue



Navy Memorial



World War II Memorial



Korean War Memorial



Vietnam Veterans Memorial

A Note from MRFA Secretary Andy Brigante

This is my first update to you, the members, as the MRFA Secretary. As you all know, we have always tried to keep the cost of our reunions down and as low as possible. We still have the lowest reunion cost of any Association that I know of, but unfortunately due to the economy, the cost of doing the reunions has gone up as well. We used to be able to depend on donations at the reunion to help defray some of the cost, but the last couple of reunions the donations have gone down to a tinkle. We depend on donations to help pay for the barbecue, snacks, and beverages in the hospitality room and other expenses. With the current economy, that luxury has ceased. At the board meeting it was decided that in order to continue giving you the type of reunions you're used to, the registration will be increased from \$35 to \$50 per member (to include one guest) with \$25 per additional person or family member. That's only a \$15 increase which is still low compared to the majority of associations. There will be a \$75 registration fee charged for members who do not preregister.

We have changed the events schedule to include golf on Friday morning, and the dance later Friday evening. There will be no casino trip, as last year's trip went over like a Chinese fire drill.

We will have speakers on Saturday morning followed by memorial services starting at 10 a.m. (ceremonies and presentations will be completed by noon). The reason for these changes are because some have stated that by Saturday evening they're just too tired for a dance and would rather relax and be with their fellow members on the last night. Some of these changes we did not want to make, but unfortunately like most groups we have to stay afloat and on an even keel. We hope you the members will understand and we can still count on your continuing support of the association. Thanks to everyone. Army & Navy rocks!

Andy Brigante, C Co 2nd/39th (1967)
529 Coleman Dr. W, Winter Haven, FL 33884
863-324-7440, domsmema@hotmail.com

40% OFF HATS & TEES OCT. 1 - DEC. 20
(See pg. 10)

Veteran's Day Speakers

Master of Ceremonies: Master Chief Chet Stanley (Master Diver), U.S. Navy (Ret.), CCB-111-1

Memorial Speakers: Chaplain Col. Jim Johnson, U.S. Army (Ret.) 3rd/60th, 9th Infantry

Captain Mike Connolly, U.S. Navy (Ret.), Commander River Assault Division 132 and Commander River Assault Squadron 13

Brigadier General Douglas Smith, U.S. Army (Ret.), Cdr 2nd/47th (Mech) Infantry, Vietnam

RADM William Carlson U.S. Navy (Ret.), CO USS White River LSMR-536 (1965-1968), Vietnam.

Served briefly as CO then XO USS Goldsborough (DDG 20), conducting shore bombardment ops in South Vietnam and strike operations in North Vietnam (1971-72).

LTG Patrick Hughes, U.S. Army (Ret.), Infantry Plt. Ldr, Company D, 4th/39th Inf, 9th Infantry, Fire Support Base "Danger." Gen Hughes also served as a Provincial Phoenix Program Advisor and S-2 Advisor in Advisory Team 49, MACV-CORDS, Long Khanh Province.

Missing Man Table Ceremony: David Schoenian C Co 4th/47th 9th Infantry

Wreath Laying at the Lone Sailor Statue

Singing Amazing Grace: LtJg Michael Hahn USS Benewah APB-35 Vietnam

Playing of Taps: Sgt Robert Nichols B Co 3rd/60 9th Infantry

What To Do If...

I would like to start with an update for you all. In the Spring column, I stressed the importance of submitting claims if you suffer from Ischemic heart disease (including artery disease), Parkinson's disease, or B cell leukemia (such as hairy cell leukemia), all newly recognized diseases associated with Agent Orange.

Although these conditions have been approved, the funding has yet to be allocated. However, it is still important to submit your claim as soon as possible because when the money is finally allocated it will be retroactive to WHEN YOU FILED.

In past columns, I've talked about ways to prepare for the passing of a loved one, and how to obtain those benefits to which you are entitled when that inevitable passing happens. But after talking with some folks who have gone through that process and are now passed the initial grieving process, a few other things have come to mind. This is not only for widows, but for the most part, applies to widowers as well.

It is likely that you are finding yourself alone for the first time in many, many years. And in addition to missing your loved one, you are at a loss for who you are (as a solo, not a team), and what to do now that you have no one to do it with. It is important at this point that you attend to your mental well being in addition to your physical and financial matters. Memories are a wonderful way to stay connected to your loved one, but life continues to move forward and so must you.

It is best to stay active and connected. If you have friends and family, call on them often, stay in touch. But also, make new friends through organizations of common interests (there are many groups in most areas of the country), Senior Centers, volunteer work, a part-time job (unless you already have a full-time job), etc. Sit down and think about your interests or perhaps things you've always wanted to do and for some

reason haven't, and if you can figure a way, do them. It's easy to say, "I just can't," but a lot more fun to figure a way to complete those things on your own 'Bucket List.' There are many organizations that plan trips and will find you a roommate so that you can avoid the 'single-traveler' penalty. Some trips can be taken at a reasonable cost if that is your interest.

If learning new things is important to you, most towns have some sort of Adult Educational Programs that are usually quite reasonably priced. Ask yourself, "What have I always wanted to learn" and see if there are courses available. Very often, local Community and State Colleges will offer Veterans or their spouses, courses at reduced rates and in some states for free, or they may do the same for Senior Citizens, if you fit into that category. Another avenue for widows of some disabled veterans is through the DVA's Survivor and Dependant Educational Assistance Program. This is good if you are seeking a degree or certificate program (and no, we are never too old to do this). This program can be worth up to \$49,000 in education. If you want to see if you qualify, VA Form 22-5490 should be filled out and sent to the VA.

If you've always dreamed of writing a book or articles for other publications, what better time to try than right now. What have you got to lose? Even if you don't want to publish a book or article, now may be a good time to write down thoughts to pass on to your family, or just to get things out of your head and onto paper, or take a creative writing course to get you started.

Join a gym. There are many inexpensive options these days, and exercise is not only good for your health, but also good for your mind.

Losing a loved one is probably the most difficult time in any person's life. But, there are many things you can do to move forward and perhaps even come to the realization that life alone is much better than you had ever imagined.

Paula Wright, thewrightthing@verizon.net

Navy Man Goes Into the Field With the 9th Infantry

Over the years I have heard a few Navy members state they had went out on patrols with the Army units of the MRF. I knew of only one incident where it actually happened, but it was an authorized trip into the field and my friend Richard Scott off the USS Benewah was busted from E-5 to E-4 for doing so. I recently received the below from Captain Stephen Dexter U.S. Navy (Ret.) who actually went into the field. It was authorized and he has sent pictures to prove it. Article below.

Captain Stephen Dexter
Supply Officer U.S. Navy (Ret.)



Photo courtesy of Richard Leonhardt.

Because of the economy and cost of everything going up more than we expected, the MRFA Board of Directors voted to increase the membership dues. This is something we did not plan on doing but postage and the cost of products and newsletters has risen. So as of January 1, 2011, dues will be \$20 for 1 year and \$50 for 3 years. We are sorry but this is something that needed to be done. The increase will help the association keep up with the inflation and the economy that keeps the association going.

Thanks for your support

Charlie Ardinger, Membership Chairman and Treasurer

We have women in the military, but they don't put us in the front lines. They don't know if we can fight, if we can kill. I think we can. All the general has to do is walk over to the women and say, "You see the enemy over there? They say you look fat in those uniforms."

- Elaine Boosler

PLEASE NOTE: YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE is printed on your issue of *River Currents* just above your name and address.

I have a small "cover story" to tell. APL-30 went to work for the Navy's Task Force 117, as a hotel for boat crews and Army infantry soldiers of the 9th Infantry Division (Riverine Infantry) of the Mobile Riverine Force. APL 30 arrived from overhaul and modification work in Yokosuka and Guam to Cat Lo some time in September 1968 and a month later was towed to the MRB (then off Dong Tam). After a few weeks as the temporary flagship for CTG 117.2 (Capt Now), we became the flagship for Cdr RAS 9, RAD 92, a handful of UDTs, and two rifle companies from the 3/60th Inf. Routine and boredom quickly settled in. I, as supply officer and RPS custodian in APL 30, got quickly bored and soon found myself asking the Army if it would mind if I came along to the field if they thought they were going to have an easy day there. While the commanding officer of C Co did not exactly invite me to come along, he did say he did not object. I was assigned to the second platoon should an opportunity come up. With a few not noticeable differences, I looked no different from the other soldiers in the platoon.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

Navy Man in the Field

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2



Lt Stephen Dexter in the field.

A few days later--early November--we went into the field courtesy of one of the RADs. At daylight we were put ashore and started what appeared to me to be a broad sweep of the land in search of--well, in search of whatever. Within an hour the 1st Platoon was engaged in a minor firefight. The sounds of small arms fire to this Navy puke was, however, quite electrifying. The 2nd Platoon's life was quiet and routine. Around 1100, I was walking with the point man of the platoon--his name was Bodine--when he and I encountered a couple of VC about 20 yards in front of us. They fired first, we fired second--or at least Bodine did. The first reaction from 1st Lt Frank was, "Where is Dexter and is he ok?" Bodine and I dropped back toward the platoon and Lt Frank called in some artillery support. First came the marking round which, quite to our surprise landed amid the platoon, not where the VC had been. At that point, Lt Frank called off the artillery support and we decided there was no enemy to engage anyway.

As Bodine and I shared our lunch of C-rats, I took off my helmet and put on the Marine fatigue hat I'd been issued at Coronado. Bodine was startled. "That's a Navy hat. What the heck are you doing with a Navy hat?" he said. I pointed to the "U.S. Navy" embroidered on my shirt and told him that I was in the Navy. He then shook his head and wondered what the heck someone in the Navy who did not have to be out there was doing out there.

Resulting From the Incident

1. CTF 117 got wind of the event and put out a message reminding us all that rubber necking was not authorized.

2. LTC Marine, the commanding officer of 3/60th INF, commented that the Navy must be really bored.

3. I became something of a small town "hero" (nutcase) to the Army embarked in APL 30.

4. We probably provided far better support to the Army, but we still washed them down when they came back from the field.

5. When the CAR was authorized in 1969, I put in for it and was awarded same. The HAT made all the difference.

Note: Albert if the article is of use to you, you have my permission to use it. I do think, however, that it may cause some controversy regarding that impulsive LtJg and the foolish "leadership" above him. Lt Frank's reaction exemplified exactly why I should not have been there. The platoon leader felt he needed to be more concerned about his "Navy baggage" than the operational safety and mission of his platoon.

When I left APL-30, C and D Companies of the 3/60th Inf gave me a plaque, with a CIB attached thereto, and a citation for my combat service and goodwill. I later learned that they had put me in for the CIB but some sharp admin



Lt Dexter with Marine style cap.



C Co 3rd/60th heading back to the MRB.



3rd/60th soldiers awaiting pick-up.

type picked up on the LtJg in the rank column and questioned the appropriateness of the award. He did the right thing and struck my name from the list.

Pictures courtesy of Stephen Dexter
sdexnorva@cox.net.

Lt Dennis Frank.



Last Ride for Monitor-6

Dave McCann RM-3, riverboy1970@gmail.com

A boat class buddy of mine just sent me this rare picture of Monitor-6 and most of the crew celebrating our last river transit on our way to Dong Tam to turn over our boats in November of 1970. The previous day our little group consisting of Tangos 49, 50, M-6 (brought up the rear), and several other Tango boats all left Phouc Xuyen on the "Grand Canal." It was the last duty station for our little group of former MRF boats that had been "chopped" for duty on night ambush on the canal. After coming out of the canal, we proceeded down the Song Van Co Tay to the support base at Ben Luc, where we tied up for the night before proceeding the following day out into the wide, safer feeling of the Mekong River and onto Dong Tam.



Last river transit of the Monitor-6

For some of the crew, they would be leaving the country and the service after their tour and turning over our boats in River Squadron 15. For others it was just our next step in our in-country experiences as we were split up and were given new duties on and off the rivers to complete our tour.

The picture of the STAB boats and Monitor-6 was taken in Dong Tam in early September or late August before our final transit to Phouc Xuyen where we supported these boats and others with our indirect fire support on night ambush positions. Monitor-6 received a new starboard engine and a new 105-mm barrel in Dong Tam during refitting, August 1970.



Monitor-6 and STAB Boats in Dong Tam, 1970.

The picture below looks like we were taking on fuel. That is Gunners mate John Watson sitting there taking it all in while some crew member is bent over looking at the C-ration for something to eat.



Monitor-6 alongside the base at Phouc Xuyen

Pictures were taken by Tango 49 crew member Jim Albrecht.

Directions:

Cook beef with onions until beef loses its pink color, stirring to break apart. Drain or skim off excess fat.

Sprinkle flour over beef; continue cooking until flour is absorbed.

Add tomatoes, mace or nutmeg, salt and pepper. Stir to mix well. Simmer 10 to 15 minutes. Internal temperature must reach 155 F. or higher for 15 seconds. Hold for service at 140 F. or higher.

Minced beef may be served over toast, biscuits, rice or pasta.

A Recipe to Remember

Though this recipe may have had a few changes over the years, most cooks haven't changed it.

MINCED BEEF (Yield 10 portions)

Ingredients:

- 2 Lbs - Beef, Ground, Bulk, Raw, 90% Lean
- 3 1/3 ozs (9 1/2 TB) - Onions, Fresh, Chopped
- 3/4 cup - Flour, Wheat, General Purpose
- 2 lbs (3 1/2 cups) - Tomatoes, Canned, Crushed, including liquid
- 1/2 tsp - Mace, Ground (or Nutmeg)
- 1/2 tsp - SALT
- Dash - Pepper, Black, Ground

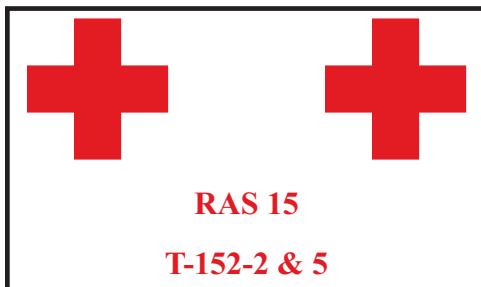
100th Helicopter Landing

T-152-2 and T-152-5



Boat Captain T-5, Pilot, Pilot, David Davey Boat Captain T-2.

It seems like the 100th Landing took place in early June of 1969. Please help me if you know the correct date. Tangos 2 and 5 had been "Aid Boats" since around September of 1968, so between the two of them they landed approximate average of (12) helicopters per month. When one subtracts the "stand-down" times, then this total could escalate quickly during operations in enemy-infested territory. Tango 2 was the initial Aid Boat, so she landed the bulk of the helos.



The Inscription on the Cake

The Red Crosses on each side of the inscription denote that these were used as Medical Aid Boats. They seemed to do everything. The critically wounded would receive additional first aid as they were brought in from the jungles. A U.S. Navy medical corpsman and/or a Vietnamese Army or Marine doctor would travel along on operations in order to dispense their professional abilities. As the Medivac helicopters saved many from death in Vietnam, so did these medical aid boats. The crew of each boat played key roles in helping save lives and limbs throughout the year. It may have come by holding an IV bag or supplying the proper dressings for the wounds. Hundreds of U.S. Navy, U.S. Army, Vietnamese Army, Vietnamese Marines, and civilians are thankful today for the efforts of those brave men who often put their lives in danger trying to save others.

Amidst all of these serious life and death matters, we always seemed to find some kind of humor to get us through the hard times. I'd like to share a personal story regarding the 100th Landing. Uh...or was it the 101st Landing? I'll let you be the judge. First, here's a recent quote from Bill Janes who piloted Hueys for the U.S. Army 191st Assault Helicopter Company:

"What did you guys call them boats that had the elevated helipad installed on 'em? We called them 'Hell to land on' because we figured that

somebody had gone out and measured the skids on a Huey, and gave us six inches on each side. It took both pilots, the crew chief, and the door gunner burning up the intercom to get us down on one of 'em without falling in the water."

Those mini-flight decks must have looked like postage stamps to the pilots from any elevation above 100'. My guess is that they were 17' wide by 22' long. Does anybody have the actual dimensions? If so, then please pass them along so that I can stand corrected.

Ok, here we go. I was determined to see Australia while I was overseas. Soon after arriving in-country I found out that the waiting period for R&R to Sydney was approximately 10 months. I wasn't daunted. My name went on the list and I began my wait. There were many times that I thought about changing my destination, but I continued to wait month after month. My unit had been in-country for about 9 months when I finally hopped onto that plane for Sydney. Now that's a story in itself that I may post here later.

I found out upon arrival back to the Mobile Riverine Base (MRB) from Sydney that my boat was out on a combat mission. The powers that be told me that I would have to go "TDY" (temporary duty) on another boat until T-152-1 returned to the MRB. I quickly chose T-152-2 because several of my buddies were aboard her. That was ok with the staff since she had just lost a crewman. My heart sunk. Later I found out that Bob Buchanan's mother had passed away and he had traveled stateside on emergency leave. I was relieved to hear that there were no casualties, but I also felt bad about Bob's situation as his father had died several years previous.

I took over Bob's "rack" (canvas stretched over a pipe frame that served as a bed) and settled in. While talking to the crew, I learned that the 100th Landing was to take place the next day. The River Assault Flotilla staff had decided to make a big deal out of it by preparing a cake. These situations sounded awful strange in a war zone, but the thought of cake sounded ok when lined up next to C-rations.

There were two "ladders" (steps to civilians) that led up to the flight deck from either side of the boat. I positioned myself on the starboard (right) ladder at deck level as the 100th bird descended towards the boat. I forgot whether someone was hand signaling the pilot in or not. Usual protocol was to have a guy down on one knee on the flight deck guiding the pilot in.

As the Huey eased closer to the deck, I noticed that the pilot seemed to be a bit short. I was right. By the time he reached the boat, he had the nose high and his tail was pointing down towards the murky brown water. When the metal skids hit the 90-degree edge of the steel flight deck, the chopper had enough momentum that the nose literally skidded quickly upwards. Guess what happened to the tail? It dropped just as fast towards the water. I would guess that the chopper was at about a 45-degree angle to the deck at that point. I'm told that if the tail rotor would have become submerged in the water then the entire ship would have gone out of control. The rotor narrowly missed being dunked by inches. I'm sure that my hair would have stood on end even if there was no backwash from the main rotor.

The event was all taking place right in front of me at a very rapid pace. I remember looking

right into the eyes of the pilot as he rode the ship like a rodeo bull. I could also see the eyes of the copilot. All four eyes were as wide as 50 cent pieces.

The pilot gunned the engine in order to lower the nose. I'm sure that a big percentage of what was on his mind at that moment was that tail rotor. While frozen to the ladder like petrified wood, I watched as the pilot over compensated when attempting to level the ship out. The bird shook with the increased RPMs. Now her nose was pointing downward and her tail was at the top end of the 45-degree angle.

The only direction the ship could go was down. I'm sure that the main rotor was very close to the boat's superstructure at that point. We would always take down the main mast and tie the radio antennae down before we landed a chopper. The rear gun turret still stood about 4 feet higher than the flight deck.

As the ship's nose dropped the few feet, I remember thinking about how "short" I was in-country. Still frozen in place, I watched as the front tips of the skids banged on the steel deck. They did, however, prevent the nose from making contact. The pilot gunned the engine to top speed. This caused the skids to drag across the entire width of the flight deck. The bird was shaking as she dropped off the port side of the deck and down towards the water. I held on as the rotor wash pushed me backwards. Guys had been blown off decks by the artificial wind before. The pilot barely pulled the chopper out of her downward motion just before she hit the water.

Everything became still as the pilot took the bird around for a second try. I decided that I would watch from the fantail on his next attempt. I bet that he was literally shaking in his boots as he descended upon the boat once again. This time he made a perfect landing much to everyone's relief.

Ok, you be the judge. Would the 2nd attempt be the 101st Landing? At any rate, it was nice to be there for that moment in history, even though it could have turned out catastrophic.



T-152-5 Crew Members David Willenberg, Larry Smith, "Red," John McCurdy, Barry Duschanek, and Alex Lincoln.

I've enclosed a \$100 check. You can decide what to do with it, the organization, a vet, or a vet's family. Wherever you think it does the most good. I love the Organization Al and the others have developed.

*Peace and Love
Edward Whitmarsh*

Water Mine Warfare in South Vietnam

By Edward J. Marolda

The Vietnamese Communists employed thousands of mines against U.S. and allied naval forces throughout the conflict in Vietnam, much as they had against the French during the First Indochina War. Between 1959 and 1964, Viet Cong mines, often homemade devices, took an increasing toll of naval vessels and civilian craft on the many rivers and canals of South Vietnam. This threat ended commercial traffic on some of the country's primary waterways.

As U.S. naval forces deployed to South Vietnam in the mid-1960s, moving into the watery environment of the Mekong Delta west and south of Saigon, they took steps to counter the enemy's mine threat. The danger was especially acute on the waterways near Saigon, South Vietnam's most important port. Viet Cong closure of the Long Tau River, which followed a meandering, forty-five-mile course through the Rung Sat swamp on its way to the capital, would have put an enormous strain on allied logistic resources in the southern regions of South Vietnam.

As a result, on 20 May 1966, the Navy established Mine Squadron 11, Detachment Alpha (Mine Division 112 after May 1968) at Nha Be. The minesweeping detachment operated 12

or 13 57-foot, fiberglass-hulled minesweeping boats (MSB). The MSBs fought with machine guns and grenade launchers and carried surface radars and minesweeping gear for clearing explosives from the rivers. The Navy also set up three-boat sections at Danang and Cam Ranh Bay. Detachment Alpha's strength increased in July 1967 when the first of six mechanized landing craft, minesweeping (LCM(M)) reached Nha Be.

Despite the presence on the Long Tau of Mine Squadron 11 and other river warfare forces, in the second half of 1966 and early 1967 the Communists mounted a serious effort to interdict the waterway. The Viet Cong employed mines, 122-millimeter rockets, rocket-propelled grenades, recoilless rifles, machine guns, and small arms against American and Vietnamese naval forces and merchantmen. In August 1966, Viet Cong mines severely damaged SS Baton Rouge Victory, a Vietnamese Navy vessel, and MSB 54. Then that November, the enemy sank MSB 54. In February 1967, Communist direct-fire weapons and mines destroyed



MSB 49 and heavily damaged MSB 49.

By the spring of 1967, however, the tide began to turn. Allied naval units moved in force into the Rung Sat area, refined their mine countermeasures tactics, and brought better weapons and equipment into play against the enemy sappers. Vietnamese Regional Force, U.S. Army 9th Division troops, and Navy SEAL commandoes, working with helicopter, river patrol boat, MSB, and LCM(M) units, scoured the shorelines. During the next year, Communist guerrillas periodically ambushed ships on the Long Tau, but the fast and devastating reaction by allied forces kept casualties and damage to vessels relatively light. Often, the minesweeping force swept up mines before they could do damage or river patrol boat and SEAL patrols disrupted enemy attack plans. The upshot was that the Viet Cong were unable to cut or even seriously slow logistic traffic on the Long Tau, even when their comrades were fighting for their lives in Saigon during the Tet Offensive of early 1968.

During 1968 and 1969, the Navy also deployed strong mine countermeasures forces to the Cua Viet River, just south of the Demilitarized Zone, and defeated the North Vietnamese Army's attempt to cut the vital waterway.

Sources

Marolda, Edward J. By Sea, Air, and Land: An Illustrated History of the U.S. Navy and the War in Southeast Asia. Washington: Naval Historical Center, 1994.

Schreadley, Richard L. From the Rivers to the Sea: The U.S. Navy in Vietnam. Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 1992.

<http://www.history.navy.mil/wars/vietnam/mine-southviet.htm>

Why I am Planning On Attending the 2011 Reunion

By Tom Kirby, LTJG (former) Weapons Officer, U.S. Benewah - 1970

For almost 35 years after I got back, I tried my utmost to shut the events of 1970 out of my mind. For the most part, I was successful. There were the occasional flash backs of long buried memories that would awake me from a past that I was most thankful to forget. I was part of the final crew of the Benewah, and was there at the ship's decommissioning in Subic Bay.

I'm sure most of you are not aware of her final mission in Vietnam. When I arrived, the majority of the U.S. Navy, and the Army's entire 9th ID had departed. Our mission under Nixon's "Vietnamization" program was to support the South Vietnam Navy in its river patrol interdiction operations using the PBR's turned over to them by the departing U.S. Navy. I can tell you that this was problematic. I witnessed the ARVN Navy waste our time and energy by refusing to engage in firefights, permitting Viet Cong patrols to pass without action. It was a very frustrating time, and it seemed most of their time was spent sleeping. This continuing strife between our crew and the ARVN Navy living on the ammo barges lead to an incident where the ARVN Navy (armed with an M-16) and a member of our crew (armed with a .50-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Dear Sir:

I am the widow of ship serviceman 3rd class (I think on rank) Mark Duane Kandle birth date (2/9/49). He died suddenly in my arms in June of 1989 of a heart condition that had no name. We had an autopsy done because he was only 40 years old and appeared to be healthy. As of March 25 of this year it now has a name and is on the Agent Orange list. He served in the Navy from 12/67 to 3/71 first on the USS Princeton and then on the USS Hunterdon County (LST 838). I went last week and checked with a VA advocate for our area. He said I have a pretty strong case but if I could come up with pictures of the USS Hunterdon County up the rivers of Nam or Cambodia or both or a letter of documentation it could just make it stronger. We were high school sweethearts since I was 14 years old and were married while he was in the service. We were married 20 years when he died. He didn't get to enjoy the pride of seeing his daughter become a senior paramedic nor his son graduate with honors. His son then went on to become an electrician. He has six grandkids. He has one who is studying to be a doctor. He has also missed out on his first great grandchild, a boy. Mark has missed so much of his life. Would you please help me with any information you can give me. Thank You and God bless you for your help.

Sincerely,
Mark's widow, Linda

This is my e-mail: Nannysnest20@q.com and my mailing address: Linda Kandle, 1749 SW 15th St., Redmond, OR 97756.

MRFA	
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION	
Charlie Ardinger	
1857 County Rd. A-14 • Decorah, IA 52101	
<input type="checkbox"/> New Member <input type="checkbox"/> Renewal <input type="checkbox"/> Donation <input type="checkbox"/> Sponsor <input type="checkbox"/> CHANGE OF ADDRESS - Note Below!	
NEWSLETTER DELIVERY	
<input type="checkbox"/> Postal Delivery <input type="checkbox"/> GO GREEN with Email Delivery!	
NAME: _____	
STREET: _____	
CITY: _____	
STATE: _____ ZIP: _____	
PHONE: () _____	
E-MAIL: _____	
Dates Served in Unit (mm/yr - mm/yr): _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> WWII <input type="checkbox"/> Korea <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnam <input type="checkbox"/> Army Member: Unit (Division, Brigade, Battalion, Company, Platoon): _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Navy Member: Ship, Boat Hull Nos. or NavDet: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Associate Member	
Membership Rates:	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Year \$15.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 Years \$40.00 <input type="checkbox"/> Donation: \$ _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> To become a member, mail your check or money order (payable to MRFA) to: Charlie Ardinger • MRFA Membership Chairman 1857 County Rd. A14, Decorah, IA 52101-7448	
<i>Please Note: This form may be used for New Memberships, Renewals and Changes of Address. Be sure to check the appropriate box.</i>	

GEAR LOCKER SALE!

Save 40% on Hats and T's
Oct. 1 through Dec. 20

USS Westchester
City LST-1167
VIETNAM

H1 - Westchester

USS Mark AKL-12
VIETNAM

H6 - Mark

USS Krishna ARL-38
VIETNAM

H10 - Krishna

USS BRULE
AKL 28
VIETNAM

H18 - Brule

U.S. NAVY CORPSMAN
VIETNAM

H25 - Navy Corpsman

We've got a great selection
of both Navy and 9th Infantry hats!

All are made of quality 100% cotton with pewter
finish clasp. Each has gold and/or silver
embroidery on a black base.

COMBAT MEDIC
VIETNAM

H30 - Combat Medic

9th/Medical Bn
Dong Tan
VIETNAM

H33 - 9th Med. Bn.

9th MP CO.
9th Inf Div VIETNAM.
Dong Tam

H31 - 9th MP Company

2nd (Mech) 47th INFANTRY
2nd INFANTRY DIV. - VIETNAM

H32 - 2nd/47th Mech.



H50 - Purple Heart

Enjoy our new MRFA cap that is a six panel, full back (not mesh) and fully adjustable embroidered with FULL COLOR LOGO AND RIBBONS!

NEW!

H35 - Old Reliabes

H37 - RAF - TF 117

H36 - RAF -
Army/Navy**Ship Hats too!**

H51 - Benewah

H52 - Nueces

H53 - Colleton

H54 - Mercer

Save 40%

OCT. 1 - DEC. 20

ONLY
\$12.90
Reg. \$21.50

Embroidered Hats

Perfect for any occasion. We have many ships hats.

All are dark navy blue with pewter finish clasp
with high-quality gold embroidery text and
are made of comfortable, long wearing
cotton. We have the hard to find items
the other guys don't!

H43 - CIB White



H48 - Silver Star



H49 - Bronze Star



H26 - Benewah Patch



H27 - IUWG-1 Patch

H44 - CIB Olive Drab

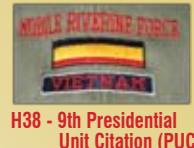


Combat Infantry Badge hats are available
in white with a dark blue bill and
olive drab green. Made of high
quality woven cotton with fully
adjustable pewter clasp.

H56 - TF116

H57 - 60th

Regiment Hats

H38 - 9th Presidential
Unit Citation (PUC)

H39 - MRF Svc. Ribbon



H40 - 9th Svc. Ribbon

H41 - MRF Presidential
Unit Citation (PUC)

H55 - 47th



H58 - White River



H59 - 39th



H46 - MRF Tango



H47 - MRF ASPB Alpha

Riverine Infantry hats
are tan base with rope braid trim on the brim.

ONLY
\$13.50
S-XL
Reg. \$22.50
XXL-XXXL \$14.10
Reg. \$23.50

T5 - TANGO
HELO

T6 - CCB



T7 - TANGO

T8 - VCCC
VIETNAM COMBATANT - CRAFT CREWMAN

T1 - APC



T2 - LCPL



T3 - ASPB



T4 - MONITOR



T7 - TANGO



T8 - VCCC



T-Shirts

Heavy duty, long wearing T-shirts. Featuring full-color logos and high quality image detailing! Perfect for parties, especially with us!

Available in sizes from Small to XXXL.

THE SHIRTS SHOWN BELOW (T-9 THROUGH-20) HAVE FULL COLOR EMBROIDERED LOGO IMAGES.

ONLY
\$13.50
S-XL
Reg. \$22.50
XXL-XXXL **\$14.10**
Reg. \$23.50



GEAR LOCKER CLEARANCE

These are the last of their kind, get them before they're gone!

USS Washoe City LST 1165
VIETNAM

H2 - Washoe

USS Holmes City LST 1165
VIETNAM

H5 - Holmes

USS Krishna ARL-38
VIETNAM

H10 - Krishna

USS Askari ARL-30
VIETNAM

H11 - Askari

USS Hickman
City LST-825
VIETNAM

H14 - Hickman

USS Clarion River LSMR-405
VIETNAM

H15 - Clarion River

TASK FORCE 116
PBR's
"VIETNAM"

H19 - TF 116

TASK FORCE 117
MRF
"VIETNAM"

H20 - TF 117

SHORE PATROL

H23 - Shore Patrol

MILITARY POLICE

H34 - Military Police

\$5.00

WHILE
SUPPLIES
LAST



USS Tom Green City LST 1165
VIETNAM

H3 - Tom Green

USS Hampshire City LST-103
VIETNAM

H4 - Hampshire

USS Carronade
IFS-1
VIETNAM

H8 - Carronade

USS Sphinx
ARL-24
VIETNAM

H9 - Sphinx

USS Mercer APB-39
VIETNAM

H12 - Mercer

USS Satyr ARL-24
VIETNAM

H13 - Satyr

USS Nueces
APB-40
VIETNAM

H17 - Nueces

USS Indra ARL-31
VIETNAM

H21 - Indra

USS Colleton APB-36
VIETNAM

H22 - Colleton

USS Whitfield City
LST-T169
VIETNAM

H24 - Whitfield



SS1 - MRFA



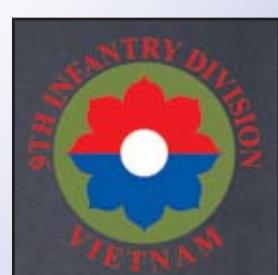
SS2 - TF 117

Sweatshirts

Now Only
\$12.90

FREE SHIPPING

Sweatshirt designs featured fully embroidered logos. Soft, durable 50% cotton / 50% polyester blend makes for a long lasting easy care product. Available in sizes from Large through XXXL (please specify on order form).



SS3 - 9TH INF

T-Shirts

T-shirt designs feature digitally printed, full-color logos. Soft, durable 50% cotton / 50% polyester blend makes for a long lasting easy care product. Available in sizes from Med. through XXXL (please specify on order form).



CT1 - NAVY



CT2 - ARMY

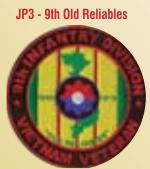


CT3 - VN SVC RIBBON

Now Only
\$12.90

FREE SHIPPING

Jumbo Patches



Enormous 9" diameter patches,
a must have for your favorite
jacket or shirt!

**SALE!
\$12.50**
FREE SHIPPING

Full color
embroidery is
bright and brilliant.
Free shipping
included.

NEED MORE GEAR?

Thanks to our webmaster Mike Harris,
you can download the complete line of
MRFA products online at [www.mrfa.org!](http://www.mrfa.org/)
We've got pins, coins, patches, DVDs and
much more!

GEAR ORDER FORM

This form should be used for all product orders
except banners (see banner order form below)

ITEM NO. / DESCRIPTION	SIZE	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
			\$ _____
			\$ _____
			\$ _____

FOR MUG ORDERS

NAME _____

RANK (MAX. 4 CHARACTERS) _____

UNIT _____

ITEM NO. / DESCRIPTION	SIZE	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
			\$ _____
			\$ _____
			\$ _____
			\$ _____
			\$ _____

Have a larger order? Just list it on a separate sheet and list grand totals below!

GRAND TOTAL OF ALL ITEMS ORDERED # _____ \$ _____

Great Gear and FREE Shipping Too!

Just tell us where to send your gear.

Ordering is as easy as 1-2-3.

1. Indicate your choice of item number (be sure to include color and size if applicable), with quantity and total amount. Add total amounts for Grand Total to enclose.
2. Make your check or money order payable to the MRFA.
3. Mail both to Products Chairman, Bob VanDuff, 2906 SE Starlite Dr., Topeka, KS 66605
phone: 785-267-1526 bvdmrfa@cox.net

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE, ZIP _____

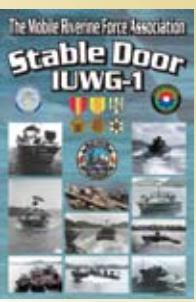
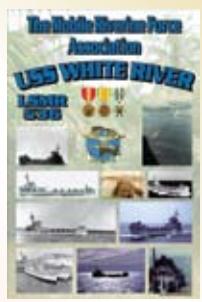
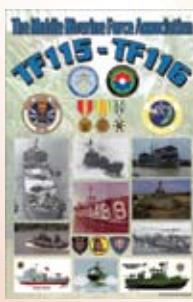
PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

TOTAL ITEMS ORDERED _____ GRAND TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

BANNER ORDER FORM

FREE SHIPPING ON ALL ORDERS!



A - TF115-TF116

B - WHITE RIVER

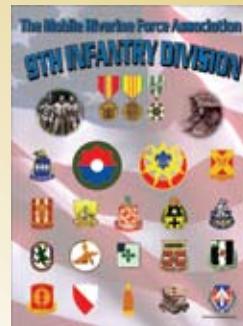
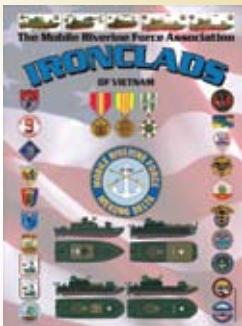
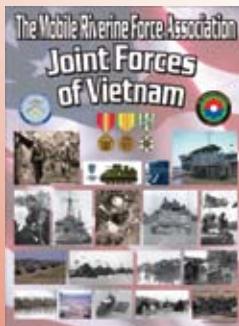
C - STABLE DOOR

\$80

THESE FULL COLOR VINYL BANNERS ARE 24"W X 36"H
WITH HIGH QUALITY DIGITALLY PRINTED IMAGES AND
COME COMPLETE WITH BRASS GROMMETS FOR
HANGING.

AVAILABLE IN 3 STYLES, PLEASE SPECIFY ON ORDER
FORM BELOW.

MAKES A PERFECT ADDITION TO YOUR EVENT OR
COLLECTION.



D - JOINT FORCES

E - BROWN WATER NAVY

F - IRONCLADS

G - 9TH INFANTRY

THESE FULL COLOR VINYL BANNERS ARE 36"W X 48"H
WITH HIGH QUALITY DIGITALLY PRINTED IMAGES
AND COME COMPLETE WITH BRASS
GROMMETS FOR HANGING.

\$90

AVAILABLE IN 4 STYLES, PLEASE SPECIFY
ON ORDER FORM.

(INDICATE QUANTITY IN SPACE PROVIDED)

24"W X 36"H (\$80.00) 36"W X 48"H (\$90.00)

_____ A - TF115-TF116 _____ D - JOINT FORCES

_____ B - WHITE RIVER _____ E - BROWN WATER

_____ C - STABLE DOOR _____ F - IRONCLADS

_____ G - 9TH INFANTRY _____ G - 9TH INFANTRY

SMALL BANNERS X \$80.00 EA. = \$ _____

LARGE BANNERS X \$90.00 EA. = \$ _____

GRAND TOTAL ENCLOSED = \$ _____

Please use this special order form for banners only.

A Helicopter War

By SP4 Richard P. Smith

Few in number, and seemingly frail and underpowered, the early helicopters generally were looked upon as freaks. The pilots called "rotorheads" by their fixed wing contemporaries were likewise regarded as an odd lot of zealots, somehow not quite socially acceptable.

With the outbreak of war in Vietnam, an irony took place; a comeuppance started to brew. The helicopter and rotorhead began receiving worldwide attention--and acclaim.

Door gunner scans jungle, sights for enemy.



True, they were short-range machines, but they were invaluable in close quarter rescue and troop landings in inaccessible wooded and jungle areas. The helicopter quickly demonstrated its almost incredible versatility in combat.

In the Mekong Delta, "home" of the 9th Infantry Division, the helicopter rose to its pinnacle. The helicopter, being able to land in rice paddies, airlift troops to anywhere on the terrain, and even to land on tree-tops, soon secured its rightful place alongside the Flying Fortress of World War II and the biplane of World War I.



Vietnam had become a helicopter war.

Colorful tracers spin home.

Night Combat Mission

Helicopters used by the 9th Division are divided into two broad categories—combat and non-combat. Flying combat missions at night, the "Stingrays," a gunship company of the 9th Aviation Battalion, are considered the most potent of the Division's flying arsenal. Each of the UH-1C Stingrays carries two rocket pods containing 14 rockets and 6,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition for its two mini-guru.

In the early days of the war when the gunships made a strike, the Viet Cong believed



they were being attacked by some type of fire-breathing, smoke-snorting ancestral dragon.

Stingray gunships circle the Division AO. A 9th Division soldier need only call once.

Their fears were not unfounded, though. On a single pass, a gunship can devastate an area the size of a football field. Two months ago, the gunships, with tactical air help from the Air Force, sank 93 sampans of an enemy convoy near the Plain of Reeds in less than 90 minutes.

The ships usually fly in eagle flights while on a mission. An eagle flight consists of five heli-



Incredible Versatility

copters flying in close formation. Counter-mortar-teams of two gunships each are on duty in every sector of the Delta ready to counter over any position within the Division in less than 10 minutes.

In the early days of the Tet aggression, Stingray averaged five missions a day. Long hours of maintenance by gunship crews were performed on a round-the-clock basis.

Chopper maintenance, an endless task.



Walls of Fire

Besides strictly combat missions, helicopters resupply the infantryman with food, water, ammunition, medical supplies, and all-important mail--sometimes flying through walls of fire to deliver. When he is wounded, the infantryman can expect to be in the hands of a skilled surgeon within 10 minutes.

The men who fly the Division birds all are volunteers and most are first-term enlistees. The pilots receive nine months of training and crew members receive four. Each pilot is an expert at flying both the bubble-topped OH-23 and the regular UH-1 series helicopter. They learn instrument flying, emergency procedures and aerial gunnery as well as routine flying. Crew members become expert mechanics, able to detect any trouble by its sound.

Auto-rotation

All helicopters are equipped with clutches that can be disengaged, throwing the rotors into a free wheeling "auto-rotation." If the helicopter is traveling forward fast enough, the rotors will continue to whirl, keeping the craft aloft enough to make a glide landing. Forward speed is essential to this maneuver, and if a helicopter is not flying fast enough, the pilot must "dive" the chopper to pick up speed. At best, it is a hairy operation.

Crewman loads 14 rockets onto gunship. Devastating fire for communist positions.



Vietnam, like all wars in America's history, has produced military jargon. A helicopter is called a "chopper" because of the chopping effect of its rotor blades. The wind turbulence caused by the rotation of the blades is called the "wash."

Pinpoint fire

A servo-motor connects the pilot's sights

with the gunship's weaponry allowing the pilot to spray an area of fire on one point.

"The mini-guns and rockets are area weapons whereas the door gunners with their M-60 machine guns are for pinpoint fire," said Warrant Officer David Dennis, Levittown, NY, a fire team leader for the Stingrays. The mini-guns fire at a rate of 4,000 rounds per minute for each gunship.

The travelers of the Division are the Jayhawks. The Jayhawks primarily fly by day while the Stingrays remain night raiders.

Every day, 16 of Company A's Jayhawks take off for every corner of the Division. Their primary mission is general support. Seven Jayhawks per day are used as command and control ships by the Division, Artillery and brigade commanders.



Racing toward Jayhawk slicks, a welcome sight after combat.

The rest become utility, mail delivery and courier aircraft. A command helicopter also is supplied to the Royal Thai Queen's Cobra Volunteer Regiment.

On Sundays, Jayhawks provide transportation for chaplains and on paydays they ferry pay officers to the field. With all of their other commitments, the Jayhawks must be ready to send up ten combat aircraft at any time in tactical emergency situations.

A little known unit in the battalion is the Pathfinder platoon. They have the responsibility of clearing and securing landing zones in remote areas. Each pilot is a qualified parachutist. Pathfinders stationed with the Queen's Cobras as resupply liaison also have had to become English teachers since the Thais speak very little English.

During its first year of operations, the battalion logged 128,474 sorties. The Jayhawks carried 4,509 tons of cargo and 167,786 passengers. The Stingrays accounted for 218 enemy dead and destroyed over 286 enemy buildings and 224 sampans.

The men of the battalion have further distinguished themselves with 42 Distinguished Flying Crosses, four Silver Stars, and 63 Bronze Stars.

Young Aviators

Unlike previous wars where older men in higher ranks were accorded the hero worship, the aviators of Vietnam are young. Most range between the ages of 18 and 25.

Within a few years, the pilots and craft will be regimented and standardized. Until then, however, you can fly high or low, slow or fast, until all is known about helicopters in combat. The "by-the-seat-of-your-pants" flying typical of Eddie Rickenbacker has hardly been consigned to history--not as long as there are rotorheads, anyway.

A Heartfelt Thanks

The following letter and attached photos were sent to us from Earl Mounce after the dedication of the memorial for the three men lost in Vietnam. They were all from the same high school. Thanks much Earl for sending us these great photos!

Albert

On behalf of the family of Sgt. Gerold L. Mounce, let me extend to you and the MRFA our appreciation for the wreath provided in honor of Gerold at the Fallen Eagles Memorial Dedication.



Wreath from Mobile Riverine Force Association & 9th Infantry Division.

The Memorial is in remembrance and to honor the three Surry Central High School graduates who gave their lives for our Country. They are Army Sgt. Gerold L. Mounce, Vietnam; Marine Cpl. Dale Gunnell, Vietnam; and Army Pfc. Adam Marion, Iraq.



MRFA Wreath & Memorial

The Memorial was paid for through donations, and all labor was provided by the students and faculty of Surry Central High School.

The Dedication was held on Friday, May 28th at Surry Central High School in Dobson, NC. Attending the dedication were family members, friends, veterans, classmates, local officials, students, and teachers. With the Colors being presented by the High School Jr. ROTC, and taps played at the end of the service by the school band.

Gerold entered the Army through the Selective Service in May 1966 when the 9th

Inf was activated at Ft. Riley Kansas. He was assigned to Co. C 2nd/39th Inf. 9th Inf. Div. The division shipped out to Vietnam in December 1966 and was assigned to Bear Cat.

Gerald Mounce

Gerold was killed in action August 22, 1967, and is buried at our home church cemetery, Pleasant View Baptist Church, 199 Mining Sch. Rd., State Road, NC 28676.

Thanks again

Earl Mounce, Brother of Gerold Mounce

Seeking

From: Steve Williams

Sent: Tuesday, June 01, 2010 10:01 p.m.

2LT David G. Williams

I just discovered your web site. I appreciate your tribute to the members of the 4/47th. My younger brother, 2LT David George Williams, was KIA while serving as a platoon leader with Co A, 4/47th. His date of death was September 21, 1967. All that I know is that he was wounded in combat and medivac'd to a hospital where he succumbed from his wounds. I have never heard from anyone in the 4/47th who knew him. Is there a way to post a message asking if anyone remembers him and the circumstances of his death?

Albert I appreciate your broadcast e-mail message to the 4/47th. I've attached a photo of my brother, 2LT Dave Williams. He was initially assigned to the 4/47th in March 1967. He was wounded twice in combat--with the last injury requiring treatment at a hospital in Japan. Immediately prior to being again assigned as a platoon leader with Alpha Company, he was serving as either the Battalion Motor Officer or the Battalion Transportation Officer. His last letter home said that only 6 of his original 36 platoon members were still in the unit. I appreciate your efforts to see if anyone remembers him.

Steve

Update:

Thanks, Al, for your broadcast e-mail message. This afternoon I was contacted by Howard Johnson, who was the 4/47th Bn Motor Sergeant when my brother was the Bn Motor Officer. He said he remembered my brother very well and said he was highly respected by everyone. I am still trying to contact my brother's company commander, Bob Bischoff. Bob wrote an article in the 2009 Fall issue of River Currents, but the e-mail address listed as his contact is no longer active. He is also listed as a Sponsor for River Currents. I will be contacting Charlie Ardinger to see if he has a current e-mail address for Bob. Thanks, again, for your help. By the way, even though I appreciate being made an honorary member of the MFRA, I will be sending in the full dues in memory of my brother, 2LT David G. Williams.



Steve Williams, Former Captain, US Army Special Forces, 2223 Bearden Street, Davis, CA 95618; stevewms@sbcglobal.net

Why I Plan on Attending

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Cal) came head-to-head and required someone to intervene. Unfortunately, I was the one there at that moment.

I could not escape the memory of the 10 year old Vietnamese boy whose brain matter was scattered on the bottom of his father's sampan by a 7.62mm round from an M-1 fired from our aft mount while they were attempting to pick up garbage being dumped. I especially can't forget the father thanking us profusely for the 400 piastres we gave him for the son's life as his sampan went back to collect more garbage. I particularly hated the fact that drug use was rampant on board, and having to participate in a drug search and NJP that resulted in a number of young crewmen having their careers destroyed.

Nor could I ignore my memories about the loss of Seaman John Hollis, only weeks before the ship was to depart Vietnam. He and I had spent many a mid-watch on the bridge talking about home and what it would be like to get back to the "world." He never made it. While I had many fond memories of the crew and the ship, there were many others that I tried to suppress.

In all the intervening years, I never had contact with anyone who could share a memory about 1970. It wasn't until 2003 that I met a former "Swift" sailor who was also there in 1970. He and I had been to many of the same places, and had many common experiences. I started to come out of my shell. He and I became good friends, and when I diagnosed with prostate cancer, it was he that encouraged me to go to the VA. He died a year later from AO

relate cancer at age 59, and I was left without anyone that I could talk to about 1970.

Then Albert Moore shamed me into going to the 2009 MRFA Reunion. I was very reluctant to go, but I was very glad that I did. It was truly an eye-opener. The MRFA consists of many Navy and Army units that were in Delta. There are so many displays and exhibits it was amazing. I was shocked that so many other sailors had similar experiences and all had photo albums that were exactly like mine. I got to meet Tom Kelly, the MRFA Medal of Honor recipient. The memorial service brought tears to my eyes. I was extremely disappointed, however, to learn that the Benewah was the least represented unit there (Albert started the whole thing as a Benewah reunion). I meet only three crew members. Coincidentally, two of them, RCM Jeff Hanks, and BMC Bill Fullerton, were there

in 1970. I even met a member of the commissioning crew. I truly appreciated my limited time with them. I needed someone to talk to.

In all the intervening years, I never had contact with anyone who could share a memory about 1970.

You must already know how incredibly small the number of people that shared the experience, good or bad, of being onboard that ship at that time. I don't care when you were there, if you served on the Benewah, I look forward to meeting you and spending some time with you. I would like to see my old shipmates in particular, as I am sure you would too. Don't just try to make to the 2011 reunion, make a commitment to make it. Every year you procrastinate, the fewer there the number of remaining crew. We're not getting any younger! I am truly looking forward to sharing a bit of the past with you. That's why I'm planning on going to the 2011 reunion.



TAPS Tribute to a Fallen One

Cdr. Robert B. Bartlett, U.S. Navy (Ret.) passed away January 24, 2008. LT Bartlett was ComRivDiv 152 and also Task Force Element 194.7.4.2 (1969-1970). You may contact Edith Bartlett c/o 3204 Batter Sea Ln., Alexandria, VA 22309.

Tim Doty of West Virginia, passed away Friday, Aug. 27, 2010. Tim served in CO/A, 3/60th, 67-68.

Member Carroll Emery PNCM (Ret.) passed away July 5, 2010. Carroll served on the USS Benewah (O1/54-12/54). You may contact his wife Janice at 1028 E. Ruth Ave., Phoenix AZ 85020-3248; 602-943-7802.

RivRon-15 Staff, **Carl E. Glenn, PN3** (67-70) passed away on 6/9/1997. Contact the family at 1585 3rd St., Delta, CO 81416.

Captain Thomas W. Glickman (USN Ret.), 81, passed away on Aug. 3, 2010. Tom enlisted in the Navy in 1947 at age 17 and served his country for more than 40 years. In 1957 he attended Officer Candidate School and received his commission. He served 24 assignments throughout his career including staff, Commander River Patrol Force in Vietnam and Commanding Officer of the USS Rigel AF- 58 and USS Kilauea AE-26. You can contact the family C/O: Patricia O. Glickman, 5253 Pleasant Hall Ct, Virginia Beach, VA 23464, (757) 497-9571.



Fred L. Kalles, BM1 (61-84), T-152-12, passed on 5/21/04. You may contact the family c/o 545 Canterbury Ln., Moses Lake, WA 98837; (509) 765-5646.

Duane Kandle passed away June 27, 1989, from agent orange. Duane served on the USS Hunterdon County (LST- 838) 1970-1971 as a Ship's Serviceman (Laundry). You may contact the family c/o Linda Kandle, 1749 SW 15th St, Redmond, OR 97756; Nannysnest20@q.com.

Vivian Jean Hall Lopez, wife of Admiral T. Joseph Lopez, USN (Ret.) and mother of Commander Thomas J. Lopez, II, and Mrs. Dominique Lopez-Lepse, died on February 5, 2010, after a long illness. She was born in Montgomery, WV, on April 8, 1942. She married Admiral Lopez, who at the time was a young Navy enlisted man, at the age of 17 on February 27, 1960. Growing in experience and stature along side her husband during his 39 years of service to our nation, she became the "First Lady" of the U.S. Navy in Europe from 1996 through 1998 during her husband's last tours as the Commander in Chief of the U.S. Navy in Europe and the Commander in Chief of Allied Forces Southern Europe for NATO. The intervening years from her marriage until

Admiral Lopez's retirement were spent raising and educating her son and daughter, attending college, and supporting and assisting others, particularly those in Navy organizations. Admiral Lopez served in Vietnam as a LT. and was ComRivDiv-153 (1969-1970). You may contact the Family C/O Thomas J. Lopez 4304 S Valiant Ct. Annandale, VA. 22033. May she rest in peace and may God comfort the Admiral during his time of loss.

Note From Admiral Lopez

Vivian was a very special person who always pushed me to the front and worked on her own causes without fanfare; but my success in any large measure was because I had her at my side. It was a privilege to be known as her husband.

The members of the Mobile Riverine Force Association send deepest sympathies and extend our condolences to the family.

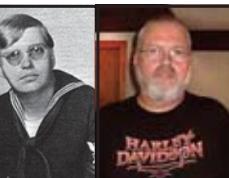
Michael Nehring Tango-151-8 RivRon-15 Passed away 11/29/2008.

Sgt James A. (Jim) Pelfrey passed away due to complications from chemo on July 17, 2010. Jim was the 1st platoon Sgt in C 3/47 in 1966/67. His wife Beverly may be contacted at 1424 Cypress Ct., Junction City, KS 66441; 785-817-3949; or email bevpelfrey@yahoo.com.



Member **Ralph Franklin "Frank" Pinegar III**

61, of Indianapolis, died Monday, May 24, 2010, at St. Vincent Hospice in Indianapolis. While in Vietnam, he served with Naval Support Activity, Saigon, Detachment Binh Thuy, from March 1969 to March 1970. Ralph was proud of serving his country during the Vietnam War. Contact his brother Jeff Pinegar c/o 349 W. Wesley St., Wheaton, IL 60187-5027; Jeffrey.Pinegar@VerizonWireless.com.



DT-1 Donald Shaffer passed away September 7, 1973, due to complications from Agent Orange. Donald served on the USS Benewah (APB-35) as the ship's Dental Tech. Donald served onboard March 1968 to March 1969. You may contact Patricia Shaffer-Wagner c/o 2403 Stratford Avenue, Coraopolis, PA 15108-2223; tweed8@comcast.net. May our brother rest in peace.



Member Edward E. Teletzke passed away July 22, 2010, from agent orange related cancer. Ed had fought a valiant fight against his cancer for 10 years. Ed was a fine person and a great shipmate to all who knew him. He will be missed by all he served with in Vietnam and those of the membership he met afterwards. Ed served on CCB-91-1 T-91-4 (10/68-11/69). You may contact Sue Phaklides c/o 129 Alvina St., Green Bay, WI 54303; 920-494-7077.

The MRFA Board of Directors sends sympathies to all the families of the fallen.



Get Well Wishes

Member **Craig Bronish** is in the VA Hospital in Lyons, NJ with severe dementia and Parkinsons. I am not sure if any of this was caused by exposure to Agent Orange or not. Craig served on the USS Benewah APB-35 as a 2nd class MR (1967-68). You may contact the family c/o Phyllis Bronish, 314 Dutch Neck Rd., East Windsor, NJ 08520-1302; or phone 609-731-7280; pbbronish@gmail.com.

In Memory Of

This section is for members who wish to sponsor the MRFA by placing a notice in memory of one of their fallen comrades. In some cases, the name of the sponsor will precede the name of the person who was KIA, or has passed on since Vietnam. It's \$25 for four issues.

MajGeneral Lucien Bolduc, Jr. USA (Ret) for Guy Tutwiler
Bill Brennan for Tom Swanick GMG3 USS White River LSMR-536

Brothers of the 2nd/47th Inf for all Army and Navy KIAs
Michael Connolly for LTG James Francis Rost, Jr., RivDiv 132, KIA November 1969

Gene Cooper for Steve Brichford FT2 1968/69 and Jerry Roleofs 1967-68 USS White River LSMR-536

Col Monte G. Euler for Cecil R. Hobbs, Jr. A Co 4th/47th Inf KIA 4/4/68

Nan Fulton for LtGen Bill Fulton Cdr 2nd Bde Asst Div Cdr 9th Inf Div (1966-68)

Ray Funderburk for LTC John B. Tower CO 2nd/47th Inf
Regina Gooden for Sgt Lloyd Earl Valentine B Co 3rd/47th KIA September 5, 1968

Joe Hilliard for Joe Benack from Florida and Donald Hartzell from Pennsylvania

Bob Houle CS2 for Larry Hunter CS3 USS White River LSMR-536

John and Barbara Iannucci for Mitchell Perdue B Co. 3rd/60th (01/68-09/68)

David Lynn for Howard Burns (QM2), Robert Bouchet (SM2), and Herman Miller (GM3) IUWG 1-3 Qui Nhon KIA 8/11/68

Men of C Co 4th/47th 1967 for our Brothers KIA 03/19/67 Benito Alaniz; MIA 04/09/67 Ronald P. Schworer; KIA 04/13/67 Charles "Duffy" Black; KIA 05/15/67 Donald M. Peterson; KIA 06/19/67 Robert J. Cara, Robert J. Jindra, Timothy A. Johnson,

Forrest L. Ramos, Cameron A. Rice, David A. Robin, Sheldon B. Schulman, Hubert J. Fink, Kenneth D. Frakes, William M. Geier, John L. Winters; KIA 07/11/67 Marion "Butch" Eakins, Elmer F. Kenney, Harold W. King, Philip A. Ferro, George E. Smith; KIA 07/29/67 Cecil B. Bridges; KIA 09/29/67 James M. Sunday;

KIA 10/06/67 Gale A. Alldridge, Danny D. Burkhead, Charles W. Davis; KIA 11/10/67 Charles W. Grizzle; and KIA 05/06/68 John T. Hoskins

Adam Metts for Donald L. Bruckart T-111-2 KIA 03/31/69

A R "Monti" Montillo for William "Bulldog" McLaughlin B Co 3rd/60th KIA 10/03/68 and Barry "Butch" Copp B Co 3rd/60th KIA 10/28/68

VP Roy Moseman for Oscar Santiago C-2 4th/47th (10/67-10/68)

Jasper Northcutt for SSGT Henry T. Aragon B-2 2nd/47th KIA 08/23/67, SGT James E. Boorman B-2 2nd/47th KIA 08/27/67, SP4 James D. Bronakoski B-2 2nd/47th KIA 04/27/67, SP4 Michael G. Hartnett B-2 2nd/47th KIA 04/27/67, SGT William D. Mize B-2 2nd/47th 5th/60th KIA 10/28/67, CPL Harold K. Southwick B-2 2nd/47th Inf KIA 03/02/67 (first KIA in B Co. 2nd/47th in Vietnam), and PFC Robert C. Voltz B-1 2nd/47th Inf (Mech) KIA 3/11/67 (first KIA 1st Platoon B Co. 2nd/47th in Vietnam)

Dave Remore for Paco 3rd/60th Inf KIA 05/02/67 and Bandido Charlie 5th/60th Inf KIA 07/30/67

Chet "Gunner" Stanley for all the USN and USA KIAs of the MRFA (1967-70)

Ken Sundberg for Michael David Sheahan 5th/60th KIA 02/25/68, Robert L. Conley 5th/60th KIA 02/01/68, and Glenn Dean Taylor 5th/60th KIA 02/01/68

Robert Sutton for LT James Frost Vin Te Canal Chau Duc KIA 11/69

Robert Thacker for SFC Earl T. Pelhan Jr. KIA 15th Combat Eng.

Steven Totcoff for my brother CPL Dennis S. Totcoff B Co 3rd/47th KIA 5/2/68

USS Guide MSO-447 for Shipmate and Brother Harold Foster Tom White for my brother Mackroy White T-151-4 and A-152-4 (04/68-01/70)

Gary Williams for Dale Winkel C Co. 3rd/60th 9th Inf (1/68-1/69)

CPT Steve Williams in memory of 2LT David George Williams Co A 4th/47th KIA 09/21/67

Frank Buck for son Frank H. Buck ENFM USN T-92-10 KIA 12/28/67

SPONSORS

Dallas Abbott A Co. 3rd/60th Inf (6/67-6/68)
Anthony Aiken Point Caution WPB-82301 (4/68-5/69)
LT H. M. "Mruk" Alexander ComRivDiv 132 (6/68 6/69)
Charlie and Georgina Ardinger T-151-11
John Armstrong HHC 3rd/47th Inf (4/66-1/68)
Charles Aubert USS Harnett Cty. LST-821 (4/67-7/68)
Carl Ayres A-91-6 (2/68-2/69)
Christian Bachofer ComRivDiv 92 (7/68-6/69)
Robert T. Bak Z-132-2 (4/69-4/70)
Col Paul Barnes HHC & B Co. 3/39th Inf (12/66-11/67)
William Befort B Co. 1st Plt 4th/47th (2/66-9/67)
Jack Benedick C Co. 4th/47th Inf
Robert Bischoff CDR A Co 4th/47th Inf (7/67-7/68)
Richard Bittle USS Nueces (6/68-4/69)
Tom Bitky IJWG-1-Vung Tau/Ha Tein (5/69-5/70)
Capt Peveril Blundell USN (Ret.) ComRivRon 13 (68-69)
Thomas Bogner A and C Cos. 2nd/39th Inf (2/68-1/69)
MajGen Blackie Bolduc USA (Ret.) Cdr 3rd/47th Inf
Tom Brady B Co 3rd/47th (11/67-1/69)
Brothers of the 2nd/47th (Mech) Inf
Capt Kenneth Brown A Co. 3rd/60th Inf
MGen Walter Bryde, Jr. HQ 3rd/34th Artillery (7/68-8/69)
Ralph Burnette A Co. 4th/47th (6/67-5/68)
John and Pamela Carlin in honor of Erol Tuzcu
RADM William Carlson CO USS White River LSMR-530
(10/65-3/68)
Craig "Doc" Champion E and D Cos. 3rd/47th Inf (3/68-
11/68)
Gary Chapman USS Colleton APB-36 (8/68-8/69)
John and Doris Chrzanowski A 4/47 and B 6/31 (3/69-
3/70)
Pasquale "Chick" Cicarelli YRB-16 (9/67-9/68)
Jack Collier C Co. 47th Inf/Reg WWII (1944)
Michael Connolly RivRon 13 River Assault Div 13:
(4/69-6/70)
Randall Cook USS Monmouth County (1970)
Patricia Cooney A Co. 3rd/60th Inf (2/68-2/69)
LTC Richard Crotty HHC 3rd Bde, 9th Inf (7/67-7/68)
William Currier HSB 3rd/34th Arty (11/68-8/69)
CSM Troy Davis USA Ret. Hq 2nd Bde 9th Sig (11/66-
12/68)
Frank De La Oliva Harbor Clearance Unit One (9/68-6/71)
Ralph Dean USS Nueces APB-40 (1968-69)
Buddy Deuell, III T-132-2 (5/68-5/69)
Dan Dodd PHC (Ret) ComFlotPlot-One

David DuHon USS Windham Cty LST-1170 (1968-70)
Robert B. Durrett T-112-7 (1/67-12/67)
Paul Eastham T-132-11 (5/69-7/69)
Virgie Eblen Associate Member
Christopher Emerson CWO USA (Ret) A-112-4 (4/68-4/69)
Edith Etridge Associate Member
Cdr Kirk Ferguson USN (Ret.) ComStabRon-20 (11/69-11/70)
Stephen Ferragamo B Co. 2nd/47th Inf (2/69-3/70)
Terrance Fettert HHC 3rd/47th Inf (4/69-7/69)
Dean Fritz and Carol Campbell
Nan Fulton Associate Member
Gamewardens of Vietnam Mid-Atlantic Chapter
CSM (Ret.), Homer M. Garza 1SG C Btry 3rd/34th Artillery (1/68-1/69)
Regina Gooden Associate Member
James (Jim) Grooms NSA Danang (1966-68)
Larry Gunner Etridge USS Askari ARL-30
Col Monte G. Euler A Co. 4th/47th Inf (01/68-12/68)
Thomas Hagel B Co. 2nd/47th Inf (1/68-2/69)
Pat Haggerty River Div 111 and USS Westchester County (12/66-8/69)
Daniel B. Hall, Jr. Staff ComRivFlot One (12/68-7/69)
Roger Hamilton, Jr. USS Mark AKL-12 (8/68-8/69)
BMCM (Ret) Wayne Happog RivRon 15 T-52
John Harrison C Co. 3rd/47th Inf
Robert Hammond HQ 3rd/34th Artillery (10/68-8/69)
Richard Hause U.S. Army WWII and Korea
Kent Hawley YRBW-20 (10/60-10/70)
Lee Haynes RivDiv 594 PBR-8120 (4/69-2/70)
Jerry Hensley T-92-13 (2/67-11/67)
Joe Hilliard T-48 (9/69-3/70) and T-44 (3/70-7/70)
Roger D. Hite C Co. 3rd/47th Inf (4/67-1/68)
James Hoyer 1097th TC (MB) 8/68-7/69)
MajGen Ira A. Hunt Jr. HHQ 9th Inf Div
Alan G. Hyde 9th Signal (1966-68)
David V. Jarczewski C Co 4th/47th Inf (5/66-5/68)
Ron Jett T-92-8 (1/67-1/68)
Gerald Johnston USS Nye County LST-1067 (1/66-1/67)
David Jones Z-111-7 (10/68-10/69)
Frank B. Jones RivRon 15 T-48
Jerry "Hollywood" Kawecki C Co. 3rd/47th 9th Inf (68)
Eugene Keany 1099th TC (MB) (8/65-7/66)
Dane Keller RivDiv 532 PBR-121 (5/69-5/70)
Tim Kelly C Co. 2nd/47th (Mech) (1968-69)
General William A Knowlton ADC 9th Inf Div (1/68-6/68)
LTC Nicholas M. Laiacona USA (Ret.) C Co. 3rd/60th Inf

(11/68-7/69)
Walter F. Lineberger III XO RivDiv 91 (1968-69)
Tom Lively C Battery 3rd/34th Inf (10/68-9/69)
Ken Locke Sr. USS White River LSMR-536 (6/66-1/68)
Richard Lorman T-152-6 (6/68-6/69)
James and Debby Lowe APL-26 (5/68-5/69)
David Lull B Co. 2nd/47th Inf (3/69-5/70)
Sgt E-5 Ken McLean B Co. 4th/47th Inf 2nd Bde US
Colleton (11/68-1/69)
Thomas L. "Mac" McLemore T-112-7 (12/66-12/67)
Big Jim Meehan UWG-1 Nha Trang
Alan Metzger LCUs NSA Danang
Cdr David Miller USN (Ret.) CO RivDiv 112
(11/67-12/68)
Nicholas P. Miller COS RAS Div 152 (7/68-6/69)
Paul Moody USS Pivot MSO-463 (1966-67)
Albert and Sara Moore USS Benewah APB-35
J. Russell and Alice Moore A-91-5 (11/68-6/69)
Joe Moore, Jr. USS Colleton (11/66-11/67)
Roy and Lynn Moseman 4th/47th Inf
Co Van My TF-115.3.7 Cat Lo
CSM Joseph M. Natividad B Co 3/60 (1967)
CWO James T. Natividad HHC 3/60 (1966-67)
Saul Nava A Co. 4th/47th Inf (9/68-7/69)
MAJ Joe Nichols III CO C Co 3rd/60th Inf (1967)
Jasper Northcutt B Co 2nd/47th Mech Inf (11/66-5/67)
George R. O'Connell USN Terrell Cty LST-1157
Christopher Olsen T-131-8 (5/68-5/69)
Charles Ostrov HHC 2nd/47th Inf (1/68-12/68)
John Oxley E Co. 3rd/47th Inf (1/65-11/67)
Capt Jerry L. Pace USN (Ret.) COMRIVFLOT ONE
(1/68-12/68)
Robert Pawlicki T-111-11 (3/67-12/67)
BMC Dan Peckham USN (Ret.) C-91-1 Coxswain and
A-91-8 Boat Captain (11/67-12/68)
John Perry T-132-11 (6/68-6/69)
Terry Peters USS White River (LSMR-536) (11/67-10/68)
Col Pete Peterson USA (Ret.) Cdr 3rd/60th Inf
(11/68-8/69)
LTC Nathan Plotkin USA (Ret.) HQ 2nd Bde
LCDR Leonard Previto CTF-117 (8/67-8/68)
George Queen USS Benewah (4/67-11/67)
Donald and Marjorie Robbins USS Benewah APB-35
Gerald C. Robinson USS Hampshire County LST-1819
(1/66-9/67)
Joseph K. Rosner RivRon 15 M-6
Bonni Rosner Associate Member
Durwood Rosser M-91-1 (9/67-6/68)

J. Robert Roth USS Benewah (08/68-08/69)
Donald Sack C Co. 3rd/60th Inf (10/67-10/68)
Tom Sanborn A Co 4th/47th Inf (6/68-6/69)
Billie Sanders RivRon 11 RAD 112 T-112-1 & CCB-112-1
(Vietnam 1967)
Norman Saunders B Co 3rd/39th Inf (1/69-8/69)
Harry David Schoenian C Co 4th/47th Inf (7/68-7/69)
Jerry (Doc) Schuebel B Co. 3rd/60th Inf
Col Sam L. Schutte USA (Ret.) B Co 4th/47th Inf (VN)
Mark Seymour YW-118 NSA Danang (01/70-09/70)
Jerry Shearer C Co 3rd/60th Inf (4/67-4/68)
Edward Sicilia 9th MP Co (12/67-12/68)
William Sinclair CDR USS White River (4/65-2/68)
Terry Sloat River Assault Squadron 11 (12/68-4/69)
BrGen Douglas Smith USA Ret. Cdr 2nd/47th (Mech) Inf
Chet "Gunner" Stanley C-111-1 and M-111-3 (66-68)
Norman Stone, Jr. HQ 4th/47th Inf (1/66-8/68)
Art Streeper Boat Captain T-91-2 (1/68-2/69)
Alan Strickland A Co. 2nd/47th (Mech) Inf
John P. Sturgil USS Colleton APB-36
Robert Sutton RivRon 9 M-92-2, Z-92-11, and R-92-1
(11/68-5/69)
John Swart T-132-1 (4/68-4/69)
Wynn Thies C Co. 2nd/39th Inf (9/67-9/68)
Charles Thompson 9th Admin Co (2/66-11/67)
Milton W. Turnage BMCM (Ret.) Boat Captain M-151-1
(7/68-6/69)
LCDR Lewis Turner CO USS Nueces (6/68-6/69)
Wayne Turney USS Guide MSO-447 (4/62-6/66)
William "Doug" Turner USS Asaski ARL-30 (5/67-5/68)
Erol Tuzco A Co. 3rd/60th Inf (1968-69)
USS Terrell Cty LST-1157
Roger C. Valentine CS1 USN Ret. USS Asaski (7/67-5/68)
Bob and Nancy VanDruff T-91-5 and T-92-4
Henry Velez MD B Co. 2nd/39th Inf (7/68-7/69)
GMG1 Ricky Vice T-131-17 (1968/69)
Terry Volz USS Luzerne County LST-902 (03/69-03/70)
Henry Washburn USS Colleton APB-36 (1/67-9/68)
Connie and Jack Watson 3rd/60th 9th Inf (12/68-9/69)
Gary Weisz A-91-4 (10/67-7/68)
Trentwell White USS Whitfield County LST-1169
Edward Whitmarch A Co. 2nd/60th Inf (3/68-3/69)
Stephen G. Wieting USS Benewah APB-35 (11/66-2/68)
Norm Wilkinson B. Co. 4th/47th Inf
William Ziebarth 9th Signal Batt/39th Ant (1966-1967)
Robert Zimmer XU OSSU MERCAP-39 (1968-69)
Admiral Elmo Zumwalt ComNavForV

VISIT WWW.MFA.ORG

MRA Sponsors

Our expressed thanks to those who have become MRA sponsors! It's never too late to get on-board as a sponsor, so we continue to seek and welcome those who wish to sponsor the MRA! Sponsorship in the MRA helps to defray the cost of producing River Currents, which in the past had to be absorbed by the printers. Sponsorships last for a period of one year, with your name and information appearing in four issues. Send your \$25.00 payment to: Charlie Ardinger, 1857 County Rd. A14, Decora IA 52101.



Mobile Riverine Force Association

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Decorah, IA 52101

