



Mobile Riverine Force Association Memorial/Museum is to honor all those who suffered the unthinkable horrors of war and sacrificed much on the altar of freedom



Praise is hardly enough

History

Historically, this was the first time the Army and Navy worked together since the Civil War.

Background

In the early part of 1992, Albert Moore, a former cook on the USS Benewah, and Charlie Ardinger, a Boat Captain out of RivRon 15, had an idea to get some old shipmates together for a reunion. They combined forces and the reunion was held at the Days Inn in Hickory, NC, April 2-5, 1992. About 200 former Navy and 9th Infantry Army guys and guests showed up. A meeting was held April 4, 1992, and a vote was taken to establish the new Mobile Riverine Force. So the Second Mobile Riverine Force was formed as an Army and Navy Association (Mobile Riverine Force Association [MRFA] a non-profit association with the state of North Carolina).

The MRFA had been searching for a suitable location for a Mini-Museum for several years. The Association was unable to find a location that would be acceptable and convenient for our members.

After much thought, the Officers and Board Members approved the purchase of a 48' Fifth Wheel Avenger Trailer equipped with interior lighting, generator, rear entrance ramp, side exit door, and non-skid rubber flooring to be used as our Mobile MRFA Memorial/Museum

and for much needed storage between reunions.

Before the names were added to the trailer, Dave Argabright and a few other members of the 2nd/60th and Ralph Fries of the MRFA spent about 2 years exhaustively researching Government databases to ensure a high degree of accuracy. However, there are some errors in the Government data and on the Mobile MRFA Memorial/Museum.

Member Richard Corrick agreed to haul the trailer to all MRFA reunions for the cost of fuel only. The Officers and Board Members felt that this was the perfect answer for our Mobile MRFA Memorial/Museum and would also solve our much needed storage problem. Richard Corrick made the first Mobile MRFA Memorial/Museum available for viewing at the 2003 MRFA Reunion in Fort Mitchell, KY, August 27-31, 2003.

Update

At the 2007 reunion, a number of our members commented that they believe there were errors in the KIAs listed on the MRFA Memorial/Museum Trailer (i.e., missing names, wrong unit, etc.). Once a list was developed, Bob Pries and others researched the names to verify accuracy and made modifications where appropriate. Before the 2009 reunion, some name and date KIA corrections were made and more in-country units were added.

Represents

The Mobile MRFA Memorial/Museum is in honor of all and represents all of the U.S. Army's 9th Infantry Division (Old Reliables) KIAs and all the Navy units of the Brown Water Navy included Task Forces 117 (Mobile Riverine Force), 116 (Gamewardens), and 115 (Market Time); Navy Seals KIAs; as well as all other in-country Navy Units and Coast Guard KIAs in the Mekong Delta and other areas of Vietnam from 1965 to 1975.

The Riverine Infantry of the 9th Infantry Division included 3rd/47th, 4th/47th, 3rd/60th, 3rd/34th Arty, 1097th (MD) Boat Company and supporting units (15th Combat Engineer; 1st/11th, 1st/16th, 1/84th, 3rd/11th Artillery; 2nd/39th, 2nd/47th 2nd/60th, 3rd/39th, 4th/39th, 5th/60th, and 6th/31st, Mech Infantry; 335th Radio Research; 709th Maintenance; and 9th Aviation, Medical, Military Police, and Signal).

Stationed ships of the MRF TF-117 included USS Askari (ARL-30); USS Benewah (APB-35); USS Colleton (APB-36); USS Krishna (ARL-38); USS Mercer (APB-39); USS Nueces (APB-40); USS White River (LSMR-536); YFR-889; YTBs Winnemucca (YTB-785) and Kalispell (YTB 784); APLs: 21, 26, 30, and 55; YRBMs: 16, 17, 18, 20, and 21; USS Brule (AKL-28); and USS Mark (AKL-12).

And lest we forget all the supporting fleet LSTs that were stationed ships on a rotating basis

and those who supplied the force over night or those who just unloaded the supplies and went back down the river. Each and all did their job and it was always nice to see the LSTs running the Brown Waters of the Delta. The LSTs all were a very large part of the Brown Water Navy and played a large role during the Vietnam War as did all the above listed Army and Navy units. They all did their jobs to the upmost of their ability and did it all with honor and dignity. The Boys of Vietnam will never be forgotten.

Remembrance

There are 2,983 of our casualties listed under their respective units on the sides of the Mobile MRFA

Memorial/Museum. Because of the number of KIAs that the Navy (2,558) and Army (2,624) sustained in the Mekong Delta, there was not enough space on the sides of the trailer for all of them. We apologize we were unable to post all of our KIAs.

All the Army and Navy KIAs on the Mobile MRFA Memorial/Museum are listed by last name and by state in a book with the trailer and is available for your convenience.

Our brothers in the Mobile Riverine Force and 9th Infantry will be remembered by family, friends, and each of us in the Mobile Riverine Force. Their sacrifice for their country and for the people of the Republic of South Vietnam will never be forgotten.

Contact

If anyone would like the Mobile MRFA Memorial/Museum brought to their area, contact Bruce Graff USS Passumpsic AO-107 (07/65-10/68). He is the contact and driver for the Mobile MRFA Memorial/Museum. His e-mail is pinecrek@mabeltel.coop.

The cost is \$1.00 per mile round trip plus \$50.00 a day for the driver. We will need two motel rooms down, back, and while there as another couple comes along to assist. We keep the trailer open roughly from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. It's nice to have electricity available to use the lights in the trailer. We need roughly 70 feet to park it on grass so we can set up our tent.

