



River Currents

A PUBLICATION OF
THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION

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From the Galley

2013 Reunion: Aug. 28 - Sept. 1

Room rates are \$79 per night. These rates are good 3 days prior to the reunion and 3 days following the reunion. You can start making reservations now at 1-800-228-92909 or with the in-house reservation department (1-317-352-1231, ext. 1114). The cut-off date for making reservations is July 28, 2013. When making the reservation through the reservation department, all you have to do is mention that you are with the Mobile Riverine Force Association. The reservations page is online with our "Group Code" at <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/inddt?groupCode=rivri&app=resvlink&fromDate=8/27/13&toDate=9/2/13>.

You can find a registration form and flight form and more pictures of the hotel on our web site and in this *River Currents*. We may have a few changes on the transportation schedules; we will keep you updated in the *River Currents* and our web site (www.mrfa.org) prior to the reunion. Looking forward to seeing everyone in Indy. We have a good one plan... Dance Friday evening, Speakers, and Memorial Service Saturday morning, lunch buffet Saturday afternoon. **Albert**

Note of interest: If you have any problems registering at the hotel, please contact Frank Jones. Frank prefers e-mail (frank@raffertylighting.com). You can leave a message at his home (314-822-1230). Frank will

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MRFA Gathers at Lincoln Memorial

Veterans Day in Washington, DC

The gathering of the Mobile Riverine Force - 9th Infantry Division Veterans had a good turn out to honor our Fallen Brothers in DC this week. We had about 65 Veterans, family members, and friends participate in our wreath laying ceremony on Veterans Day. Harry Hahn, Doug Smith, Paul Keener, and Doc Pries made some comments and Chuck Elder, Dwight Strickland, and Doug Smith said prayers as wreaths were placed.

Bob "Doc" Pries, B Co. 2nd/47th Infantry 9th Infantry Division

Gathering of the Troops in San Diego a Huge Success

Thanks to all who helped make the Gathering of the Troops in San Diego such a huge success. Many of the membership and Board Members worked together as one to make this happen—Mike and Connie Harris, Georgie and Charlie Ardinger, Don Blankenship, Ron and Judy Wallace, Mable and Frank Springer, Bill Brennan, Harry Hahn, Robert and Betty Schrader, Bill Sinclair, Rodney and Sue Walker, Bob and Esther Lightwine, John and Sandy Weiss, Doug and Sherrie Carrington, and Ana Riddle.

Note: Mary Raybell and Sgt Okey Toothman USA (Ret.) 3/47th won the 50/25/25 raffle.

I have received numerous e-mails on the Gathering. I will share a few with you. First it has been 10 years since we were last in San Diego, and the Association didn't know what to expect cost wise or attendance wise. It was like flying by the seat of your pants. But over the years, we have been very fortunate to have great Board

Members and a great membership of volunteers. The volunteers always make life much easier at the reunions for the Officers and Board Members. I want to take this time to thank each and every one of you who helped make the Gathering one that won't be forgotten any time soon. Some say it was their first one, but it won't be their last one. So I would like to give a big Bravo Zulu not only to the Officers and Board Members but to all whom attended. Thanks for the support given, it's greatly appreciated. **Albert!!! Hope to see you all in Indy 2013.**

Speech for Laying of Wreath, Sept. 5, 2012

**by Colonel Laddie Cox
U.S. Army (Ret.) CMDR S-4
B Co 4th/47th (06/67-04/68)**

Good Morning ... We are gathered here at the CC8-18 Vietnam War Memorial at the Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, California, to honor and remember



**Col Laddie Cox U.S. Army (Ret.)
B Co 4th/47th 9th Inf Div**

the 2,604 of our fellow soldiers who gave, all those years ago during the Vietnam War, to us and to their nation everything they possibly could—their current and future lives. They paid the ultimate price doing their duty to protect us and to uphold their honor and the best principles of our society during a war and at a time when many of their fellow citizens did not understand nor appreciate their courage and sacrifice. They are exemplified in the extreme by

men such as Medal of Honor recipient PFC James W. Fous, who on 14 May 1968 saved three of his fellow soldiers by giving up his own life by smothering an enemy grenade, and by many others.

We honor and remember them for doing their duty in the far off places of Vietnam, such as the Rung Sat Special Zone, and the Plain of Reeds, and Long An, Co Gong, Dinh Tuong, Kien Hoa, Vinh Long, and Phong Dinh provinces of the Mekong Delta, as well as the base camps, cities and towns, such as Bear Cat, Dong Tam, Rach Kien, Can Tho, My Tho, and Chi Lay.

We honor and remember them for their perseverance and fidelity in doing their duty during thousands of engagements and hundreds of heavy battles such as Ap Bac and those during Tet of 1968. We honor and remember them for doing their duty while enduring closely sprung ambushes and snipers, incoming mortar and

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REMEMBERING The Crossroads

In Their Own Words



Greg Hill
M-91-3 (10/67-11/68)

When I think of The Crossroads, I think of two specific times. We always called it Christmas Crossroads because that is where we spent Christmas 1967. I remember there was a so called cease fire going on at the time so there was not a lot of activity. They did fly a special dinner out to the boats which was a nice change to settling for boned turkey ((better than the ham and lima beans or as some called them ham and mf's). I wrote a poem on Christmas Eve, based on The Night Before Christmas, but during subsequent months lost what I had written and could not remember enough to redo it. It started: 'Twas the night before Christmas and the Delta was calm, no B-40 rockets, nor the smell of napalm.

The main date I will always remember at The Crossroads was April 4, 1968. That was when we lost Douglas Morton from my boat (M-91-3) and Samuel Chavous and John Woodard from M-92-2. The date is always burned deep because that was also the date Dr. Martin Luther King was taken from us. I won't go into the details of what and who lead to the death of Doug Morton, because I have learned not to harbor ill will towards anyone. There were circumstances that we had no control over ourselves. I would like to share some remembrances of Doug Morton though.

He was a hippy, more or less. He was one of the few sailors I ever met who was drafted. Normally, people who were drafted ended up in the Army or Marines. I cannot say that Doug was a true pacifist, but I do know he was not in favor of the war, but accepted his responsibilities as a member of the crew.

Doug was very talented. He used to sit and play his guitar while smoking some non-standard cigarettes. His music did give us a peaceful feeling or at least it did to me. He was quite an artist too. He had added some of his artwork to our boat, primarily on the 40-mm turret where he served as our loader. I often wonder if one painting was a bit of a premonition. He had painted the grim reaper on one door. Shortly after his death, we painted over it. Doug was a kind and gentle soul and I am glad he was part of my life, even if only for a short while.

I do remember one other incident at The Crossroads, one of the first times I saw one of the Zippo boats in action. They were spraying flames deep into the jungle and someone came on the radio hollering Charlie was in there. Of course we assumed they meant the VC, but they meant Charlie Co from one of the 9th Infantry battalions.

Greg M. Hill RM3 M-91-3 (10/67-11/68)

Oh yes, I remember The Crossroads quite well. During the second half of my tour, the MRF (at least the 3rd/60th) operated mostly in Kien Hoa Province and points farther south. I recall one operation in particular, because it was an odd one. Below is a map detail of The Crossroads (north, of course, is at the top, My Tho to the north-northwest on the northern side of the Big Blue—Song My Tho)

Normally, on the boats, we'd come south from the Song My Tho and turn southeast on the Song Ba Lal (one of the several "Ambush Alleys"). More often than not, we WOULD get ambushed (that famous photo of the Alpha boat run bow-aground on the north side of the Song Ba Lal could have been taken by me; I was directly opposite the event but was too occupied on the radio figuring out whether we were going to try to run the ambush or turn into it to take any pictures). Note of interest: The photos were taken by PHC Dan Dodd MRF photographer.

In any case, on this operation, we were not ambushed and Echo Co (3rd/60th) inserted unopposed on the north side of the Song Ba Lal some 10 klicks into the southeast and began a sweep back toward The Crossroads north of the Song Ba Lal. As I recall, we met no resistance and spent a long day slogging through the mud and single canopy jungle. A pair of Loaches was our point (first time I'd seen that), buzzing the jungle tree lines and drowned paddies about 200 m ahead of our lead element (me with the battalion radio and the HQ Group, including the CO). Echo Co's CO, Captain Murphy, led from the front when he could get away with it; his RTOs, me included, had all come up from the RECON Platoon—a tradition in Echo Co back in the day before Echo became Delta—had all walked point and were as much assaulters as phone talkers, all of us with many months in the field. As 1600 hours approached, we began to contemplate an NDP (Night Defensive Position). I radioed the TOC (Tactical Operations Center) and asked for guidance. The Battalion Commander, at that point Colonel Marine I believe or it could have been Colonel Peterson, came up on the horn, asked for my Six, and told Capt Murphy he was thinking of clean sheets (my squawk box was on so I could monitor what was said on my radio). I recall bristling because we Ems and NCOs weren't issued sheets; however,

I was also cheered: the MRB was Heaven compared to a wet night in the field, even if my rack was in the port head of the LST just forward of the Mess Deck, and Navy chow, the one enduring pleasant memory of my war was Navy chow.

The usual banter ensued regarding how the Company was to be extracted (air or water-mobile—the way we'd come in). This is where my memory becomes a bit fuzzy. My recollection is that air was the preferred choice, although we were in an area where only five slicks at a time could safely perform an extraction. Our destination is clear in my mind though: the large east-west paddy/LZ on the west side of the canal running from the Song My Tho all the way to Ben Tre, right at The Crossroads. There was an indigenous hamlet that hugged the west bank of that canal and beyond it to the west, the huge paddy. For some reason (and here it becomes bizarre), the CO, or the Battalion Commander, wanted someone to go on ahead to reconnoiter the LZ (not secure it, because it was assumed to be secure) and provide a

body to orientate [sic] the incoming lifts. A volunteer was required. At that point in my tour, I was the Senior RTO and also bereft of fear (my fear of being killed or wounded had been replaced by something far more insidious: the terror of screwing up and causing someone else to be killed or maimed). I

volunteered. My motivation was not heroic; I figured a ride in a chopper would be a lot more pleasant than slogging in the mud for another hour or two. I should also add that at that point in my tour I had adopted what we called the *Give a Shit Attitude*, which meant quite the opposite: I didn't really give a shit what happened to me. It was a form of defense against the cruel hand of Fate and quite effective (up to a point).

A single slick arrived, flared, blowing muddy water everywhere, and I boarded, me, my radio (now on the Company push), and my CAR-15 (plus ammo, etc.) and away we went. Ten minutes later I was deposited on The Crossroads LZ. It was only then that I realized that I was utterly alone, save for some Vietnamese farmers doing something with rice chaff, and the hamlet strung along the north-south canal, which was about 300 m to my east). There was a slight rise in the dry paddy 50 m to my south, and I made for that. high ground, you know. I tried my radio, nothing. Uh-oh. I'd



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learned through bitter experience that the radio was the most effective weapon we had. No radio. No Sea Wolves. No radio. No F-4 Phantoms. No radio. No arty. No radio. No nothing. It was a very ugly feeling. In the middle of a barren field. Alone among Vietnamese. No coms. No backup of any kind.

Perhaps, I'd misdialed the Company frequency. As I contemplated switching back to the battalion push all hell broke loose. From the direction of "Ambush Alley" came a spontaneous and sustained eruption of heavy weapons fire. Had to be the Navy running an ambush on their way back to The Crossroads. However; the tactical situation on the Song Ba La was the least of my concerns. Large caliber rounds were flying everywhere. I tossed away my steel pot (a useless and awkward piece of required equipment that the Special Forces and SEALs had proved long before only offered protection from shrapnel splatter—and who gave a shit about a little shrapnel?), came to my knees, and waved the rice thrashes to my position (there was a slight depression at the crown of the knoll where I'd set up my solitary CP). Soon I was joined by about 20 or so Vietnamese. A woman in a conical straw hat lay down beside me, shaking like a leaf. Hell, I was shaking like a leaf. Had they forgotten that I was there, probably. The thought was not comforting but strangely typical. I wasn't expendable; I was simple forgotten. Being expendable carried with it a certain macho glory; being forgotten was being irrelevant. I felt sorry for myself and a little bit angry.

While it seemed like forever, the naval gunfire probably lasted a minute or two. Then all was quiet. The Vietnamese who had taken shelter in my "CP" went back to thrashing rice chaff. All returned to normal. Soon, the first of the Navy flotilla emerged from "Ambush Alley" and began to nose against the bank along which the hamlet clung. As I approached (steel pot lost), I observed my Company exiting the Tangos (as I recall).

[Here, I hope that someone else with a better memory than mine can recall if Echo Co did, in fact, finally airlift into the LZ or came out with the Navy; I do know that we either overnighted at The Crossroads and returned to the MRB the next day by boat or that we re-embarked the same afternoon and returned that evening.]

I have often wondered if I should have been recommended for a medal for my actions on that afternoon at The Crossroads. However, the citation would have been ludicrous:

Sergeant Goins volunteered for a stupid and unnecessary solitary insertion by air into an unsecured but potential safe Landing Zone in order to provide a guidon for an incoming airlift. Although he lost all communication with his parent unit, he heroically led Vietnam civilians to safety when the area came under intense crossfire from an intense firefight involving the Navy and enemy ambushers on the Song Ba Lal. In the highest tradition of the United States Army, Sergeant Goins demonstrated his undying GIVE A SHIT ATTITUDE...

So there it is. One of many memories I have of The Crossroads. There were the ambushes, the Australian mercenary I met one night in the

swamps of Xóm Kién Vang (we spent a night discussing philosophy and the meaning of life), the terror of beaching in the heart of an ambush and fighting our way through, and other equally prosaic war stories. But being alone for the better part of 3 hours at The Crossroads is the high/low light of my memories.

Timothy S. Goins Sgt E Co 3rd/60 (1968-69)

Albert, Yes, I remember The Crossroads very vividly. I was a crew member on A-92-4 on 04/04/68. We arrived at The Crossroads from anchorage at Dong Tam. We were in the lead on the port bank and A-92-1 was on the starboard. We were both dragging our mine gear. We turned right at The Crossroads. The rest is MRFA history.

Thomas J. Etheridge A-92-4 (02/68-02/69)

When our class arrived in-country in May '68, we were assigned to Div 112. As we relieved the boat crew of ASPB 112-6, the boat captain said, "Sign here. Everything onboard and oh, by the way you have an Op tonight in Ben Tre and The Crossroads. Good luck and welcome to Vietnam." It just so happened that my last Op was in Ben Tre near the Brick Factory. Numerous firefights and even my second wound was received there. Take care.

Joseph Mattie

M-112-2 and A-112-6 (05/68-05/69)

I Remember my Third Firefight

History says over 800 men died there on their very first day in Vietnam, over 1,000 died on their last day of Tour. My stepbrother had died during Tet 1968, so I had no illusions as to how dangerous Nam was. I arrived in Nam on April 13, 1969, with \$13 in my pocket. Was assigned to the Mobile Riverine Force and stationed on the USS Benewah. Placed in 1st Squad, 1st Platoon, Co D, 47th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division. During my short time in-country, I was in a few skirmishes and 3 firefights. The third was a real killer. Tangos had dropped us off and we had captured a bunker complex on the 28th. On April

29, we swept through the tangled vegetation of what had been, 20 years before, a French rubber plantation. I had been moved up from rifleman to grenadier, carrying the M-79 grenade launcher. I was behind the point man as we crossed a small clearing. A command detonated mine exploded wounding the point man, me, and the squad leader. I was the only one conscious. I was in shock but my training took over. The blast had broken both of my legs, my left arm, and some ribs on my left side. I yelled for the machine gunner to provide covering fire so the wounded could be pulled back, but I was in a cross fire. An NVA officer standing in a ditch was shooting a captured M-79 at me from my right and a light machine gun in the brush was spraying me from my left. A bullet hit me in my left side of my face in front of my ear. It exited the right side of my jaw, breaking my jaw and facial bones. My carotid artery was completely severed. (I later spit out half of a 45-caliber slug at the 24th Evac. Hospital.) I was then hit by exploding grenades from the enemy's M-79, knocking me out. While unconscious, I was hit by at least 8 rounds from an AK-47. (The doctors left 3 in me.) I had a "Life after Death Experience" seeing Heaven's Gate that so awed me; it took 5 months before I talked about it. I revived to watch the Medic giving me a trac in my throat. Next to me were two bodies wrapped like me in ponchos, Pvt. Wallace Mosley and Pvt. James Cleary. The Medic told the Captain he had thought I was dead because I had no heartbeat, no respiration, no bleeding from my more than 40 wounds, and my eyes were fixed. I was soon dusted off under enemy fire with the door gunner blazing back. I spent 13 months in various hospitals, including a month in Vietnam and 3 months in Camp Zama, Japan. My "home coming parade" consisted of a group of "Peaceniks" who threw firecrackers under our military ambulances in California. I finally walked again after 12 months. I retired 100% disabled. My wife of only 4 months, Barb,

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Greetings Albert,

Ahhhh yes, the infamous Crossroads! I was with A Co 3rd/60th from Oct 68 to Sept 69, and we went through The Crossroads several times. One time in particular does stand out as we were ambushed along there and of course all the boats were opening up with everything they had and we (Infantry passengers) were doing our part from the well deck with the Navy's mounted 0.30 cal's and our own weapons. I was shooting someone's M-79 as fast as I could and went through all the ammo he had and then used my own M-60 until that ammo was gone. All the time being smart enough not to expose my head too much by looking over the side to aim! When

I did chance a peak, I was amazed by what the Zippos had done; it looked to me as if the entire world was on fire. I'll never forget that sight; movie special effects couldn't have done any better job! Everything was ablaze and the stream of fire was just going back and forth delivering hell and damnation! I don't remember details as to casualties but I think we got through it pretty much clean, at least that time. I know nobody on my Tango was hurt. After we got back to the Benewah, I remember it took several days to "come down" from that emotional high with your brain running at warp speed for so long.

Darrell Plough A Co 3rd/60th (1968-69)



Darrell Plough A Co 3rd/60th (1968-69)



Darrell Plough Today



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rocket fire, incoming small arms and automatic weapons and RPG fire, and the ever present mines and booby traps. We honor and remember them for doing their duty even while experiencing the pain and horror of witnessing the wounding and mutilation and death of their brothers-in-arms before their own occurred.

We honor and remember them for carrying the fight to a sometimes elusive but always skillful and tenacious enemy, such as the 261st, 263rd VC Battalions, and the 303rd, 306th, 309th, 514th, and 516th Main Force Battalions.

We honor and remember them for doing their duty while experiencing the frustration of trying to sort friend from enemy and enemy from non-combatant civilians. And for doing all of these things amid the heat and low water of the "dry" season; the never ending mud, wetness, high water, and the leeches and mosquitoes of the monsoon season, often while walking on split, swollen, and infected feet. We honor and remember them for doing their duty during countless amphibious and airmobile assaults, jitterbugs and checked barges....patrols, night ambushes and raids, reconnaissance-in-force, cordon and search, cordon and destroy, and search and clear operations, fire missions, air strikes, and Med-Caps as well as all of the necessary signal, supply and maintenance, and medical logistical missions.

I know that many of us would not have had the past 46 years or so of life without their specific sacrifices and that we have remembered them and prayed for them, each in our own way, for these many years.

Even though we may often fall short, one of the important ways we can continue to honor our fallen brothers is to continue to strive daily to live our own lives with principle, honor, integrity,

and industry. Another way is to support, in every way possible, the comparatively small percentage of our young men and women, and their families, who are carrying the heavy burden of our current wars. Further, let us each, as best that we can, continue to work toward keeping our nation strong, free, and the champion of justice, freedom, and peace. God bless our fallen brothers, the "Old Reliables" of the 9th Infantry Division of the U.S. Army, and the United States of America.

Col Cox presented the flag and certificate to Manuel Galvez in honor of his brother Joe Angel Galvez KIA 09/18/68 in Kien Hoa Province while serving with B Co 4th/47th 9th Inf Div. The presentation was made at the Vietnam Veterans Unit Memorial at Coronado, California.

Don, My thanks to you, Albert Moore, Michael Harris, Charlie and Georgie Arding, and all the others for the honor and opportunity to participate in acknowledging our fallen brothers-in-arms and, as importantly, to each of you for all of your hard work over the years in making the Mobile Riverine Force Association a viable and well-functioning organization.

**Col Laddie Cox U.S. Army (Ret.)
B Co 4th/47th 9th Inf Div**



Col. Cox and Manuel Galvez

Dearest Al and the MRFA

I would like to say thank you to everyone for this past weekend in San Diego at the "Gathering of the Troops!" Personally, I had such a great time, although I hid out in my bunker many times and could/should have been involved more

with everyone. This is a personal problem of mine, but everyone went overboard to make me feel welcome and warm. Al, I am truly sorry that I didn't get to shake your hand or give you a big hug, I so wanted to do this little thing!!

By looking at us all, many will be making that last trip to that big ocean in the sky before we meet again; time takes its toll. Although,

everyone I spoke to say the same thing, we were all 18-19 years old, at least in our minds, it is so sad that the body gives up. We all have been blessed, those who returned after spending our time in Hell, that whatever we got back in the world was just a bonus to our life.

Congratulations to all those Board Members and friends who worked so hard. Those who blessed us with such a great time, thanks, even if I didn't win any prizes, ha ha!

Thanks Brothers and Sisters.

**Dean "Fritz" Turner
USS Brule AKL-28 (10/66-10/68)**

Albert,
Esther and I had a great time at the San Diego Gathering of the Troops. San Diego is still a beautiful city. It is always good to meet again with my Mobile Riverine comrades and miss the ones who are no longer with us like Rich Corrick who served in my Division. There were many guys who were in attendance for the first time and it is good to see them again and welcome them home. The laying of the wreath at the Vietnam Memorial on Coronado Island was a wonderful tribute for those who gave their all for our freedom. It was nice to see the renovation of the boats that are on display for others to see and understand what the Brown Water Navy was all about. Wish the public could see the display as well. We look forward to



**Dean "Fritz"
Turner**

next year in Indianapolis and hope many more "first-time" brothers will be able to come as well.

**In Brotherhood,
Bob and Esther Lightwine
Tango Boat 112-11 (02/67-02/68)**

Dear Charlie/Georgie,

I wanted to say thank you for all the things you two do for the Mobile Riverine Force Association. Thank you for implementing such an enjoyable and nice reunion in San Diego. Marsha and I enjoyed ourselves very much.

I reunited with one of my brothers from the First Platoon, Alpha Co 4/47 Inf. 9th Inf Div for the first time since 1968. I also reunited with another Infantry Vet from the 3rd/60th Inf. 9th Inf Div that I returned to Vietnam with in March of 1999.

Last but most important, thank you very much for presenting a flag to Manuel and Martha Galvez. It is so special to see Manuel's eyes light up with pride and emotion regarding his brother Joe Angel Galvez. Joe was a very special warrior for the Mobile Riverine Force. He saved many lives in B Co 4/47 Inf. while firing his M-60 machine gun. Joe was in Vietnam for approximately 4 months and was decorated six times (1 Silver Star, 2 Bronze Stars, and 3 Purple Hearts). He also made the ultimate sacrifice and was KIA 09/18/68. Since the San Diego reunion, Manuel Galvez has heard from two Bravo Co Vets that have spoken highly of Joe. Thank you guys so much, I know the Galvez family (15 children) will be greatly honored to know of Joe's service to his country. Vets helping vets. Sincerely,

**Tom Sanborn
thomassanborn@comcast.net**

I attended my first reunion since being a member of the MRFA from 1998. I found out that I was truly missing out on something special. My wife and I had such a great time meeting all my brothers from the 9th and the Navy units that served

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My Army Career: 11 Months + 21 Days

by John W. Weiss
C Co. 2nd/60th Inf (11/68-02/69)

As some of you know, I spent eleven months and twenty one days in the Army. I spent eight weeks at Fort Dix and nine more at Ft Polk. Two weeks home and off to Vietnam. Having spent so little time in the Army, I never learned all the acronyms and military jargon. With only three and half months in-country, I never knew where we were going or what we did.

After finding the MRFA on AOL, I joined in 1994 and attended my first reunion in 1996. Listening to all of you talking made my head swim. What are these people talking about? What is DEROS? PDQ I understood, but the rest, made no sense. In talking to some of you, I learned where we went on patrol. Camp Bear Cat now made sense. I remember the in-country training and the first night ambush. Can't wear mosquito repellent, Uncle Chuck will smell it and know our

position. So we swatted the mosquitos and cursed under our breath.

A little side trip on how I came into possession of all the letters I mailed to my mother. In 1995 she was diagnosed with lung cancer and had her left lung removed. The doctor said all is well. Nine months later the cancer is back. My brother and I hopped a plane to Phoenix for one last visit. My mother was adamant about what was to happen to her estate. While there, she came out of her bedroom with a shoe box. What's that, I ask? All the letters I sent her from the day I was drafted. I would like to share with all of you, the excerpts of these letters.

4 Nov 1968 My first week in-country. Spent it having in-country training. The weather is hot.

5 Nov 1968 At Camp Bear Cat. Attended classes for security and censors. We went out on a night ambush and got bit by mosquitos.

6 Nov 1968 I will leave for my regular Company. Ordered some

supplies from home, knife, oil stone and tools (3rd Plt C Co 2nd/60th Inf 9th Division).

9 Nov 1968 The weather is hot. Lots of mosquitos. Thursday we went out in choppers and set up an ambush on the dikes. In the afternoon, we went swimming in bomb craters. Ordered fizzies and suntan lotion from home.

10 Nov 1968 The weather is hot. The rest of the squad went out on an ambush. I got to watch a boxing match.

15 Nov 1968 The weather is about the same. I had bunker duty. We went out last night and walked in waist deep mud.

18 Nov 1968 The weather is hot during the day, cool at night. Half of the Company went out in the morning and shot eight VC. The rest of us went out at night to join up. One VC opened up on the whole Company. One guy got a scratch on his shoulder.

20 Nov 1968 The weather is hot

during the day, cool at night. We spent the last couple of days in the field with not too much time off.

21 Nov 1968 The weather is about the same. Bitched about the mail service. I had to carry an air mattress to the field. The first time out, it got two holes in it. They gave me two patches to fix it. I met a fellow from Clearfield, PA. We talked about hunting. Half the Company went out in the AM. The rest were to meet up in the PM. Everybody came in and got two days off. (This was our one week of Riverine duty.)

24 Nov 1968 There is a typhoon in Da Nang. We just got back from a three-day bushmaster. We humped a 50-caliber machine gun and 1,000 rounds. We went out on the tracks. We stole some sampans and took the gun across the river. The motor burned up in the sampan. We found a guy without ID. He spit on the radio and got ruffed up. Set up for the night and watched the river for

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in the Delta. My special thanks go out to all of our members and wives who worked so hard to make the San Diego reunion such an enjoyable event. What a great organization with great people. We are looking forward to Indy next year. Thanks again for everything!
Doug and Shirley Lindsey
YRBM-17 (1967-68)

This was our first event that we have participated in with the MRFA. Since Sheri and I are "locals," we offered to do whatever errands were needed. I found my true niche in life by being the "Donut Dude," getting up at zero dark thirty heading off to a local Mom & Pop donut shop that we personally haunt on a regular basis. On the first day I ordered 6 dozen to go. The owners asked what the event was so I told them. They gave me 7 dozen for the price of 6. The next day they gave me 8 dozen for the price of 6. You see, they were from Cambodia. They wanted to thank us for what we did. I heard that everyone loved the donuts.

I truly believe that a good time was had by all who attended this year's "Gathering of the Troops" in San Diego. Although muggy (for San Diego standards), the weather was near perfect. Sheri and I met many wonderful people, too many to name. But, as you all probably already know, Charlie and Georgie Ardinger are great! I doubt that Georgie ever sat down. We also met Steve and Karen Ryan from Colorado. Wonderful, wonderful people. Start planning for Indy now. It's going to be a hoot.
Doug and Sheri Carrington USS St Francis River LSMR-525 (Oct 67-Nov 69)

It's been over 2.5 years since Alan Hardtarfer left this life but seeing some of the same men who served in the Mobile Riverine Force with him, some at the same time, brought Alan back to life for a short time. Since I didn't keep up his membership in the MRFA after he died, I didn't know about the Gathering until our Best Man, Capt Peter Bernier, contacted me to tell me that he and his wife, Anita, were going to be in town from Virginia to attend. I was thrilled to see them and also very excited to be able to mingle with the other 'River Rats' at the hotel over the weekend, spending the entire day, Saturday, with the group.

Esther Lightwine and some of the other spouses who hadn't gone to the USS Midway tour were at the registration desk and were so very welcoming and understanding when I broke into tears while talking about my 'Sweetie.' That sounds trite when you know that these men and women have seen and experienced so much more pain and sadness but my emotions have always been close to the surface.

I enjoyed chewing the fat and meeting people that offered to help me track down more information on Alan's time in the MRF. Cdr C. Al Bell turned me onto an author that wrote a novel about a ship in the Tonkin Gulf during 1969. It

turns out that Mr. Deuterman was assigned to the same ship at about the same time that my

husband, Alan, was there. I'm trying to contact Mr. Deuterman now and I know from my interest in genealogy that you never know where or when the next lead is coming from. Wish me luck! Bravo-Zulu to all the Officers and members of the MRFA!!

Georgie and Charlie I want to thank you for your gracious inclusion of me into the group. You made me feel very welcome and whatever information comes of it will be an added benefit. I had a great time this weekend and will treasure the time you all spent with me.

Thank you, Janet Cooper

I had a great time at my first reunion with everyone. Wish I could have been there Saturday after the Memorial visit, but had a mandatory wedding to attend. Also I enjoyed talking with you. Thanks for the pictures.

Thomas Matyn USS Sphinx
ARL-24 (03/69-03/70)

I want to thank our guest speakers at the memorial ceremony. Both Colonel Laddie Cox and Captain Pete Bernier had great words of sincerity in honor of our troops and crew mates who paid the ultimate price and who we will always remember. Thanks so much for helping make the memorial visit a special occasion for us all.

Don Blankenship Board Member MRFA

Hello Gary Chapman (USS Colleton), I want to take a moment to personally Thank You for your graciousness towards the MRFA and its members by allowing us the free tour of the USS Midway! Please do give our thanks to all of the Docents who donated the free tickets and time!

Warmest regards,
Mike Harris T-152-1 (07/68-07/69)



Shirley and Doug Lindsey



*Anita - Capt Pete Bernier
Janet Cooper*



Thomas Matyn



Ron Albee in Vietnam



Ron Albee today

Are you talking about the two canals or rivers that everyone called The Crossroads? It was a pretty bad area...

Hi Albert,

My lasting memory of The Crossroads isn't a good one--April 16, 1969! From what I remember, Charlie Co. 4/47th was in the area of The Crossroads. I think we were on our third night out in the jungle and word was passed down that we had to meet the tango boat by a certain time or we would be staying out another night. The CO told the point man to find a trail leading to The Crossroads. We tried not to walk trails or rice paddy dikes for fear of booby traps. The Company was on a trail headed towards The Crossroads, and we took a short break. I was walking rear security with my M-60 machine gun. Another soldier by the name of Fredrick Stanley Shavel from Richmond Hills, New York—we all called him "CHEVY"—and I sat down on a bunker that was along the side of the trail. After a short break, the Company moved out. Chevy said to me that he would walk rear security. We both stood up and after taking a step past him, an enemy sniper shot Chevy and killed him instantly. Another soldier by the last name of Rodriguez from New York City pulled Chevy into a canal, but he was already dead by this time.

I have lived with the moment for the last 43 years. I don't know if the sniper was going to shoot me because of the machine gun I was carrying or because Chevy was wearing a jungle shirt that had Sgt. stripes on it, even though he was a Spc 4. Remember that the Navy did the laundry for us. So we just grabbed something that would fit us and off we went.

I guess I'll never know. I actually talked to his sister a few years ago and also his girlfriend about the same time. Just recently, I was contacted by a boyhood friend of Chevy's. I keep meaning to call him, but I don't have the words to tell him about his friend. He told me that there was a group that has hung out together since high school and out of the 10 men sent to Vietnam, Chevy was the only one that didn't make it back alive.

I found out that Chevy's girlfriend's father worked at the airport and just happen to be one of the men that unloaded the planes and helped unload Chevy's casket. It was a very sad day. For them that he didn't make it home and on 16 April 1969 in the area of The Crossroads the sniper choose to take Chevy's life instead of mine. I'll never forget.

Ron Albee Charlie Co 4th/47th 9th Inf Div (1969)

CROSSROADS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

stood with me through it all and we celebrate our 44th wedding anniversary on Dec 2012. We have 6 kids and 10 grandkids. I have never had a flashback and the only bad dream I had lasted about 10 seconds, it was a night firefight, but I never was in a night firefight. My life motto since 1969 has been to live life so as not to be disgraceful to God or those men who are on The Wall in DC and to enjoy life, to live it for those who didn't make it back on the "Freedom Bird." If anyone remembers who the Medic was in Co D, 1st Platoon, let me know, I wish to thank him and say, "I lived!"

Spec 4 Clayton Peterson, U.S. Army (Ret.)

Clayton Peterson
Camp Zama, JapanClayton Peterson
today

The Crossroads, April 4, 1968

This is my story of my most memorable trip through The Crossroads. Although we were through there many times, this is one trip I will never forget [although my memory may be a bit foggy after 44 years]. I was the port 0.50-cal. gunner on T-111-3. We had the Army's medical crew onboard since we were the Aid boat on operations.

We were underway from the Mobil Riverine Base on the Song My Tho. This was the first operation we went on since we had our mast welded so we could fly three flags at one time. Naturally, the Ensign was center and high. Since our boat captain, BM3 Underwood was a rebel [and I don't hold that against him], we had to fly the Rebel flag to port side. Since we were the medical aid boat, we somehow came up with a Red Cross flag that we flew on the right side for the first [and may I say only time]. Little did we know at the time, the Red Cross flag made us Charlie's number one target.

Anyhow, we were making our way south off the My Tho River when we came to The Crossroads, and turned right heading west. We didn't get too far when the lead boats came upon an obstruction in the river that was impassable. As we were turning around, Charlie opened up on us. We had almost completed our 180 when I saw the rocket coming straight for us. From my perspective, it was coming right into my gun mount. All that came to my mind was "Oh shit, this is it." Then at the last second, the rocket dove down and hit us about the water line.

Underwood called down to the well deck for a damage report. Hogan, our engineer, called back, "The rocket came through the middle locker and exploded. The lockers on either side held our booze and not a bottle was broken."

In my year on T-111-3 that was the only time we flew the Red Cross flag, and the only time

we were hit with a rocket. We had many other times we received small arms fire, but that's for another story. I figure I'd better start typing them before my memory goes totally.

From the shaky memory of Bruce A. Jensen, GMG2 T-111-3 (1967-68)

Bruce Jensen T-111-3
(1967-68)Bruce Jensen
today

I remember Thanksgiving Day in 1967. RivDiv 91 was on an operation with the 9th Inf elements. I was the radioman on A-91-5 when we received a call to report to The Crossroads. What a pleasant surprise when we arrived, and the Army had set up a serving line with a HOT Thanksgiving meal with turkey and dressing and all the trimmings. I think that was my favorite good memory in the time I was there and one of my ALL-time favorite Thanksgiving memories.

Greg Brenner A-91-5 (03/67-02/68)

Greg Brenner A-91-5
(03/67-02/68)Greg Brenner
today

The Crossroads, Ben Tre, and that island across from My Tho were three places that we hated to operate in; lots of hiding places and booby traps. The terrain was so thick around The Crossroads and especially around Ben Tre you could walk right up to a bunker and never see it.

Robert "Bob" Hoelle 4th/47th (1968-69)

Robert "Bob" Hoelle
4th/47th (1968-69)
(photo taken
somewhere in Kien
Hoa province circa
Sep '68)

Robert Hoelle today

WEISS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

sampans. Saw nothing. We rode tracks back to base camp.

28 Nov 1968 We came back from a three-day bushmaster. We were supposed to check for weapons and an ammo plant.

29 Nov 1968 We went out on Eagle flights. We went across the river and found a lot of bunkers. We blew all of them up.

30 Nov 1968 The weather is cloudy and cool. Thanksgiving it rained all day.

3 Dec 1968 The weather is hot, with no breeze. On Sunday we left for a three-day bushmaster. One group set up by the river and I got to sleep in a pig pen. We did a Cordon and Search with an ARVN Company the next day. We had 150 VC trapped, but our orders got changed and we went back in.

8 Dec 1968 The weather is hot. On Wednesday we went out on Eagle flights. Walked the paddies for nine hours. Delta Co spotted 5 VC, so we went to help them. We were supposed to have Thursday off, but we went out at 0600 for Eagle flights. We set up along the river and went out on an LP for the night. Had a Major drag us out to the wood line. The next day we went out on a 48-hour bushmaster. We discovered a VC area with numerous bunkers. We called in a Demo team to blow the bunkers. We found numerous trails; tracker team called but couldn't find anything. Found an old lady with a store and we cleaned her out. New Tiger Scout in Company. We found a bunch of papers, but the Tiger Scouts say they are just doctor's receipts.

11 Dec 1968 The weather has been the same, with nice breezes. We went out on Eagle flights for the day. We had two landings. One was in an area we were just in. The second was in a wood line near the base camp. We did not see anything. CBS-TV was in the air taking pictures. Tomorrow they are to be on the ground with us.

18 Dec 1968 We went to an old ARVN base camp (Thu Thua) that was overrun in April. We were fixing it up and repairing the berm. We went out on an Eagle flight and it got turned into an overnigher. Nobody took anything along to be out overnight. Went to the Plain of Reeds.

21 Dec 1968 We went out on a 48-hour bushmaster, but came back after one day. We set up in the bend of the river. At night the Navy got ambushed by VC and we were in the middle. It wasn't much fun

being shot at by the Navy. (By all accounts this happened at either Snoopy's Nose or the Nutz.)



John Weiss

23 Dec 1968

We went out on an Eagle flight. First the Air Force bombed the place, then the Artillery shelled it. We went in and out and found one POW. Nothing but mud and water.

We had to wait an hour and half for the choppers. We didn't return to the camp until 2000.

25 Dec 1968 Christmas. The weather is overcast and humid. Eight Donut Dollies came into camp and sang songs. The platoon leaders handed out packages from the Red Cross. Word is some people will get to see Bob Hope.

27 Dec 1968 The weather is cloudy, lightning, and looks like rain. Yesterday, we went out on a Medcap with Doc Naeglin. Joined up with the rest of the Company and did a Cordon and Search with the ARVNs. On the way back in we got ambushed by the VC. We lost two Tiger Scouts and a Sergeant. More were wounded. Called in gunships to help out. ARVNs searched the village and found five dead and one POW. They got credit because they were hit earlier. I went to see Bob Hope in Dong Tam.

29 Dec 1968 The weather is cloudy with lots of humidity. We lost the CO on Dec. 28. Went out on Medcap with Doc. He treated two old ladies. Tomorrow we go back to Tan Tru.

2 Jan 1969 The weather is terrible, cloudy and rain. New Year's Eve day we were out on Eagle flights and a 48-hour bushmaster. The first night we had two VC come at us and in the firefight. We lost a man, had one wounded, and got a VC. We moved back and got mortared. Another firefight and they shot up a bunch of equipment. The next night we set up and didn't see anything until 0500. They turned out to be an ARVN ambush of 30 men.

5 Jan 1969 We went out on Eagle flights and made three landings. We did not find anything, but several bunkers. Lots of mud and water. Got to pull road guard duty for one week.

6 Jan 1969 Rainy weather, today nice.

8 Jan 1969 The past two nights the VC attacked the base camp. I walked the road with nothing exciting happening.

9 Jan 1969 The weather is nice

and sunny. On the road with two others and an ARVN.

11 Jan 1969 A VC was setting up a booby trap on the road and blew himself up. He was a tax collector and had not collected any taxes since October 1967. Artillery was shooting leaflets to the villages.

12 Jan 1969 It rained today.

18 Jan 1969 The weather is nice and windy. We were not supposed to go out yesterday. The rest of the Company went out and they couldn't find chopper time to bring them in. But they found time to take us out. We had to walk back in the next day.

21 Jan 1969 Weather is the same. Spent the day cleaning weapons in the supply room.

31 Jan 1969 Weather is cloudy. We went out on Eagle flights. We found two ammo caches. At the first one, we found numerous full magazines for an AK-47. We also found clothes and a rifle. At the second we found six full cans of AK ammo, two cans of machine gun ammo and other junk. Had a steak and beer party the night before.

1 Feb 1969 Weather is nice. Reminds you of an autumn day at home.

5 Feb 1969 The weather is about the same. Sunday we went out on an ambush with the CO. We spotted eight VC, but did not get any kills. We had to walk back on Monday. Yesterday we went out on Eagle flights. We made two landings, but did not find anything. Then last night we went out on an ambush.

6 Feb 1969 The weather is cool. On detail this morning and got the night off. Rumors of the 9th going home in July.

7 Feb 1969 The weather is hot during the day, cool at night. Last night we went out on a last minute ambush. We did not go too far. The base camp got hit with 36 mortar rounds. Most hit outside the wire. We got a new generator.

9 Feb 1969 The weather is about the same. Last night we were on ready reaction. We all went to the flick and got drunk. We can't sleep in the hootches anymore. We have to sleep in bunkers or on the berm. Started carrying the radio. There are only 15 left who are able to go to the field.

10 Feb 1969 Yesterday went out with only 10 people. We spotted four NVA who crossed a creek. The choppers picked us up and took us to the other side. The guy in front of me set off a booby trap. Got hit in the arm (twice), a nail in my left leg and in the right eye. Got dusted off to the Third Field Hospital.



Another Carbon Cemetery Journey

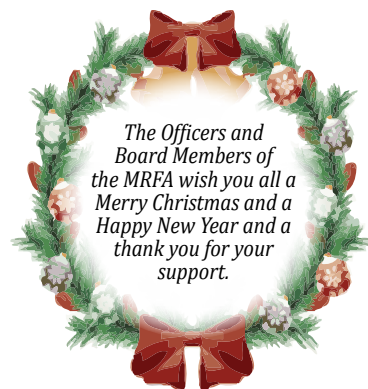
Albert,

I read Stephen's article in the current issue of "River Currents" and I knew I had to find PFC Theodore Hubbard Jr.'s grave and pay my respects. I went to Carbon Cemetery today. The Carbon Cemetery is definitely not on the map so it did take a little time to find it. Finding PFC Hubbard's grave was also not an easy task. I followed the clues you left in the article and I eventually found his grave marker. I cleaned the area as best as I

could but I promise I will return with some tools and cleaning gear and do a better job. He will not be forgotten. **GPS coordinates of Hubbard's grave** ten. I will try to keep the grave site maintained as long as my health permits.

Lester Eldredge EMCM (Ret) USS Washtenaw County LST-1166 (01/65-07/68)

Lester thank you so very very much for taking on the care of PFC Hubbard's grave site. It's greatly appreciated. I'm sure all who read this will be appreciative as well. It never surprises me what one Vietnam Veteran no matter what branch of service will do for a brother Vietnam Veteran. This goes beyond the call of duty... Albert



The Officers and Board Members of the MRFA wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and a thank you for your support.

UP001 MRF Mekong Delta
(white anchor)

UP002 MRFA Vietnam

UP003 MRF Mekong Delta
(yellow anchor)UP004 9th Inf Div
(no words)

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UP005 9th Inf Div
VietnamUP006 9th Inf Div
Vietnam Veteran

UP007 RAF TF 117



UP008 RAF One



UP009 VCCC (blue)



UP010 VCCC (brown)



UP011 VCCC (silver)



UP012 Combat Boat Captain



UP013 Combat Boat Crewman



UP014 RivRon 9



UP015 RAD 91



UP016 RAD 92



UP017 RAD 111



UP018 RAD 112



UP019 River Squadron 13



UP020 RAD 131



UP021 RAD 132



UP022 RivRon XV



UP023 RAD 152



UP024 Riv Div 153



UP025 MRF 3/47



UP026 3rd/60th Inf



UP027 39th Inf



UP028 47th Inf



UP029 USS Benewah APB-35



UP030 USS Colleton APB-36



UP031 USS Mercer APB-39



UP032 USS Nueces APB-40



UP033 USS Benewah Logo



UP034 USS Mercer Logo



UP035 River Raiders



UP036 River Rat



UP037 Army River Rat



UP038 Navy River Rat



UP039 Brown Water Navy



UP040 NIOTC



UP041 MRF Vietnam Veteran



UP042 RAS 13

Check out the web site too! Visit www.mrfa.org

Name _____
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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 amounts for grand total to enclose.
2. Make your check or money order payable to the MRFA. The MRFA does not take credit cards.
3. Mail Gear Order Form and check to Products Chairman, Chet Stanley Jr., 205 Carolina Ave., Easley, SC 29640-1409; 864-306-8400; gunnerstan@aol.com.

Visit www.mrfa.org to download our gear locker catalog!

Item No./Description	Size	Qty.	Amount
			\$
NOTES:			
Total items ordered _____			
Grand Total			\$



ABOVE: A view of the Indianapolis Marriott East. RIGHT: Lisa Howe Director of Sales and Stephanie Linton Sales Manager



2013 REUNION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

return calls or e-mails as soon as possible. Frank works a full-time job, so bear with him on answers.

Discount: The hotel will be giving us a 10% discount for all food and beverages purchased in the hotel restaurant. You have to wear your name badge when asking for this discount.

Castleton Square Mall: The hotel will provide complimentary transportation to and from Castleton Square Mall at a prearranged time with departure from the hotel in the morning and departure from Castleton Square Mall in the afternoon. Service will be offered on a first come, first serve basis.

Flight Information Form: If you are flying and have friends flying, try and work your air travel around each other. The Indianapolis Marriott East has never offered shuttle service to and from the airport before and it will all be a work in progress. The airport is about 16 miles from the hotel and the cost per taxi runs around \$45 or \$50. To provide the complimentary transportation on a prearranged scheduled basis, fill out the below form.

Hotel Features: Indianapolis Marriott East's restaurant serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner. A bar/lounge is open for drinks. Room service is available during limited hours. The hotel serves buffet breakfasts (surcharges apply). Recreational amenities include an indoor pool, a spa tub, and a fitness facility. This 3.5-star property has a business center and offers small meeting rooms, audio-visual equipment, and business services. Wireless and wired high-speed Internet access is available in public areas (surcharges apply). This Indianapolis property has 75,000 square feet of event space consisting of banquet facilities, conference/meeting rooms, a ballroom, and exhibit space. Wedding services, concierge services, and tour assistance are available. Guest parking is complimentary. Additional property amenities include gift shops/newsstands and laundry facilities. This is a smoke-free property.

Guest Rooms: Indianapolis Marriott East has 315 air-conditioned guest rooms featured with coffee/tea makers and complimentary weekday newspapers. Beds come with premium bedding. Bathrooms

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

2013 Reunion Registration Form

Mobile Riverine Force Association
Indianapolis Marriott East
7202 East 21st Street, Indianapolis, IN
August 28 to September 1, 2013

Name _____

Unit in Vietnam _____ Dates _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ or Cell _____

E-mail _____

Name(s): Spouse/Guest(s) _____ City _____ State _____

☐ No spouse/girlfriend or guests

☐ Send my registration form to me by e-mail

REGISTRATION FEE \$50.00

Cost includes member and spouse/girlfriend
(Does not cover lodging, food, bus trips, or shuttles)

Total number of other guest(s) (____ x \$15 each) _____

Registration fee for Nonmember (\$65) _____

Saturday afternoon buffet (number of people ____ x \$10) _____

Late registration fee (\$65) _____

Grand total enclosed \$ _____

Please send this form with your check or money order
(payable to MRFA or Mobile Riverine Force Association) before August 16,
2013, to MRFA 2013 Reunion, 1857 County Road A14, Decorah, IA 52101.

There will be a \$25 charge for all returned checks.
Cancellations prior to the reunion will be charged a \$10 processing fee.

When filling out the Reunion Registration Form, please be as accurate and clear as possible. Please use **one unit and one date**, even if you have served in more than one unit.

To provide the complimentary transportation to and from the airport on a prearranged scheduled basis, fill out the 2013 MRFA Reunion Flight Information Form and send to Lindsay Smart as indicated on the form.

Note: You will still have to check in at the registration desk to receive your name tag.

If you wait and pay your registration fee at the reunion, the late registration fee will be \$65. Register early and help the MRFA as we use your fees to purchase food, beverages, and other items.

To those few who always try and get by without paying the Registration Fee and want a free ride, this is not honoring your fellow members and their spouses.

If you have any questions, contact Albert at mrfa@bellsouth.net, Charlie Arding at mrfamembership@mabeltel.coop, or Gunner Stanley at gunnerstan@aol.com.

Thanks for your support in our great association. Albert Moore, MRFA President

2013 MRFA Reunion Flight Information Form

(NOTE: Flight info due 2 weeks prior to arrival to get on the hotel shuttle.)



Name(s): _____

Cell Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Date	Airline	Flight Number	Arrival time INTO Indianapolis Airport	Number of People Needing Ride from Indianapolis Airport
Date	Airline	Flight Number	Arrival time DEPARTING Marriott East Hotel	Number of People Needing Ride to Indianapolis Airport

Send this form back to Lindsay Smart by e-mail smartl@indymarriotteast.com; fax to Lindsay Smart at 317-352-9775; or mail to Lindsay Smart, Event Manager, Indianapolis Marriott East, 7202 E 21st St, Indianapolis, IN 46219, ATTN: 2013 MRFA Reunion Flight Info. If you e-mail this form, you will receive a confirmation e-mail back within 3 days of arrival as to what your pick up times will be. If flights are delayed, call 317-352-1231 when you get into Indianapolis airport and they will get you on the next shuttle.

From the Membership

Folks: It is 45 years ago this date July 11, 1967, which M-112-1 went in harm's way in the Mekong Delta. My thoughts today are with my shipmates on that boat and especially the memory of BMC Howard Bannister, our Boat Captain, who was killed, and his family. The memories I have are vivid, and I guess they always will be. God Bless America and all of our military folks, past and present.

D. K. Butler BM2 Coxswain of M-112-1 and plank-owner of RivRon 11



Joe Angel Galvez

Seeking: Anyone who remembers serving with Joe Angel Galvez PFC KIA 09/18/68 while serving with B Co 4th/47th Kien Hoa Province (RVN). Please contact his bother Manuel Galvez, 8099 Shasta Ave., Elk Grove, CA 95758, 916-682-9246, mandmgalvez@frontier.net.

Mobile Riverine Force Association Membership Application Form

- ☐ New Member ☐ Associate Member ☐ Renewal ☐ Sponsor
☐ Donation ☐ CCB-18 ☐ Mobile Museum
☐ Change of address below.

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

- ☐ Postal Delivery ☐ Go Green with Email

Name _____
 Street _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip Code _____
 Phone _____
 Cell _____
 E-mail _____

- ☐ WW-II ☐ Korea ☐ Vietnam

- ☐ Army Member
 Unit (Division, Brigade, Battalion, Company, Platoon, Battery)

- ☐ Navy Member
 Unit (Ship, Boat Hull Numbers, Navy Activity/Detachment, etc.)

Dates Served in Unit (mm/yr - mm/yr) _____ to _____

MEMBERSHIP RATES

- ☐ 1 Year \$20 ☐ 3 Years \$50

DONATION

☐ _____

To become a member, mail your check or money order (payable To MRFA) to Charlie Ardinger, MRFA Membership Chairman, 1857 County Road, A14, Decorah, IA 52101-7448.

2013 REUNION CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

feature shower/tub combinations, complimentary toiletries, and hair dryers. Wired high-speed and wireless Internet access is available for a surcharge (MRFA will be exempted from this surcharge). Guest rooms offer multi-line phones with voice mail. Televisions have premium satellite channels and pay movies. Rooms also include electronic check-out and trouser presses. Guests may request refrigerators and wake-up calls. Housekeeping is available daily. Guest rooms are all non-smoking.

Notifications and Fees: The following fees and deposits are charged by the property at time of service, check-in, or check-out: (1) Pet fee, \$75.00 per pet; (2) Pet deposit, \$75.00 per stay; and (3) Buffet breakfast fee, \$15.95 per person (approximately). The above list may not be comprehensive. Fees and deposits may not include tax and are subject to change.

The MRFA guests are exempt for the fee for in-room high-speed Internet (wired and wireless).

Handicap Home Health Depot Scooters: To rent a handicap scooter, contact Kathy or Paula at Home Health Depot (317-347-6400). The requirement is a \$400 deposit and the scooter will be delivered to the hotel. If there are no damages to the scooter, the rate upon return will be \$150 for rental, delivery, and pick-up for the dates of August 28-September 1, 2013. The MRFA is not responsible for the delivery of the scooter or the payment.

Individual Hospitality Rooms: If a group would like a Hospitality Room, contact Lindsay Smart, Event Manager (317-322-3716 ext. 11164, smart1@indymarriotteast.com). The rate is \$125 per day. Lindsay mentioned to book the hospitality rooms quickly.

Buffet Lunch, Saturday, August 31, 2013, 1300-1430: Marriott Deli \$10.00 per person.

Kokomo Event Nets New Members!



William "Hutch" Hutchinson

Thanks to William "Hutch" and Corine Hutchinson for manning the MRFA booth in Kokomo, Indiana. From that event, we acquired a couple of new members.



Corine Hutchinson

TAPS Tribute to a Fallen One



Saucier

Member **Gerald Saucier** LCDR, USN (Ret), 81, died at his home surrounded by family on Friday, August 17, 2012. He served his country in the U.S. Navy for 21 years, including distinguished service in Vietnam. He was the Captain of the USS Benewah APB-35 (1966-May 1968). CDR Saucier was a great Captain; he molded a young crew into an outstanding crew of Officers and Enlisted alike.

When the Benewah was put in Commission in 1966 at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, the civilians who had worked on her to get her ready did not live up to their part of getting the ship ready for Vietnam. Due to the urgency to get her into the Delta, She was signed for and to Vietnam she went. It took 60 some days to get her there and many days of 16 and 18 hours a day 7 days a week working by the crew to get her ready for her duty of supporting the Navy boat crews, Riverine Infantry of the 9th Infantry Division, and the staff of the MRF. Through it all, Captain Saucier did a great job through trying to please the MRF staff, which was not an easy task.

Somehow the Captain kept his cool under some trying times and conditions and his crew came first. He looked after his crew and was well

respected by the crew as well. It was an honor to have served under his command. He truly was an Officer and a Gentleman. I for one will never forget this kind and gentle man. His kind only comes around every so often. He will be missed by all who knew him and served under him. You may contact the family c/o Margaret Saucier, 4936 Olive Grove Ln, Virginia Beach, VA 23455-5214, 757-499-0138.

Member **Don A. Hughes** passed away from Agent Orange related cancer. Don served with D Co, 15th Engineer Battalion (Combat), 9th Infantry Division (05/67-20/67). You may contact the family c/o his son William "Allen" Hughes, 1200 Goodyear Ave., Gadsden, AL 35903-2102, 256-390-0916, william_14026@msn.com.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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 instances, 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.

Larry (Doc) Austin for Arthur M. Day D Co. 4th/47th KIA 05/08/69

MajGeneral Lucien Bolduc, Jr. USA (Ret) for Guy Tutwiler

Brothers of the 2nd/47th Inf for all Army and Navy KIAs

Lee Connell David Wilson 2nd/60th KIA 08/05/69, Timothy Shelton

4th/39th KIA 06/25/69, Steven Murray 4th/39th KIA 05/26/69, Harvey

Crabtree 2nd/4th Arty KIA 06/19/69, and Dennis Mattox 1st/501st

101st Abn KIA 08/23/69

Lee Daley for Ken Kirkland USS Askari ARL-30 (10/67-01/69)

Nan Fulton for LtGen Bill Fulton Cdr 2nd Bde Asst Div Cdr 9th Inf Div

(1966-68)

John W. Gerbing for Noel T. West A Co. 4th/47th KIA 06/19/67

Regina Gooden for Sgt Lloyd Earl Valentine B Co. 3rd/47th KIA 09/05/68

James Henke, Tony Spradling, Dave Nelson, James Callan, and the Band

of Brothers for Sgt Gerald Thurman and Spec James B. Johnson, and all

our Brothers lost on June 19, 1967, from A Co. 4th/47th 9th in AP BAC.

Joe Hilliard for Joe Benack from Florida and Donald Hartzell from

Pennsylvania

Colleen Huber for Shawn Huber D Co. 3rd/47th Inf (10/68-01/69)

Dave Justin for Tim Doty A Co 3rd/60th

Harry Kawamura for CPL Terry T. Kawamura MOH 173rd Airborne Bde

KIA 03/19/69

John LeBorgne for Luis Mora KIA 02/02/67; Roy Littlehales, Gary Rich-

ards, Robert Vernes, Charles Lewis KIAs 02/16/67; Gerald Novak KIA

03/02/67; James Novotny, Oscar Nicewander, and Dennis Morrell KIAs

03/20/67; all from Co A 3rd/39th 9th Inf Div

OMen 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

Kenneth R. Marple for brother SSGT Reece L. Marple B Co. 3rd/60th KIA

05/11/68

Adam Metts for Donald L. Bruckart T-11-2 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

Albert Moore for Ralph Tresser CS3 USS Benewah APB-35 (1966-67)

Albert Moore for Tom Bityk CS3 IUWG-1 VC-Hill/Ha Tien (1969-70)

Albert and Sarah Moore for Capt Gerald Saucier CO USS Benewah APB-

35 (09/66-02/68)

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

Roy Moseman and Dave Schoenier for Steve Carnine, Earnest Etmann

Jr., Freddie Lewis, Robert McManus, Ron Muehlberg, Ron Panzer, Don

Peterson, Don Pragman, Dennis Price, Larry J. Purcell, Bobby Freeman,

Harry Hass, Stan Holton, Edmond "Red" Tolar, and SSG James Williams

from C Co. 4th/47th KIA August 12-13, 1968.

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 and 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 03/11/67 (first KIA 1st Platoon B Co. 2nd/47th

in Vietnam)

Roy Spivey for my squad leader Charles "Chuck" Cataldo who fought the

good fight in Vietnam, but lost the battle to cancer in November 2010

Chet "Gunner" Stanley for all the USN and USA KIAs of the MRF (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 F. Rost Jr. Vin Te Canal Chau Duc KIA 11/69

USS Guide MSO-447 for Shipmate and Brother Harold Foster

USS Westchester County sailors and soldiers killed and wounded in the

mining on November 1, 1968

Ronald Wallace for all those lost from 3rd/47th Inf

Grant Wieler for LTC Mercer (Monk) Doty, Battalion Commander, 3rd/60th

Inf 1967 and SSG Lowell Holden A Co. 3rd/60th Inf KIA 09/15/67

CPT Steve Williams for 2LT David George Williams Co. A 4th/47th KIA

09/21/67



Carnes

Colleen K. Carnes (Lt Col., USAF, Ret.), 57, passed away November 10, 2011. She is survived by her husband, Member Paul Carnes. While in Vietnam, he served as a Gunners mate onboard the USS Colleton (APB-36) from December 1967 to June 1969. You may contact the family c/o Paul Carnes, 2608 Oaktree Ct, Alamogordo, NM 88310-7736, 505-437-4505, paul.carnes@juno.com.



Sarault

Member **Donald F. Sarault** passed away August 26, 2012. While in Vietnam, Donald served with D Co, 2nd Battalion, 60th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division from January 1968 to February 1969. You may contact the family c/o Doranna Sarault, 301 Polk Ave., Fowler, IN 47944-1465, 765-884-0923, saraultd@att.net.



Currier

BMC Robert Currier USN (Ret.) passed away from Parkinson's disease August

16, 2012. Robert served on the USS Benewah APB-35 (1966-68) on the Deck Force. Robert was a good shipmate; he came aboard as a young SN and developed into a fine young sailor. You may contact the family c/o Noel Denholm, 1806 167th Ave Cir., Omaha, NE 68130. Since Noel is in the process of working with the VA to help Robert's children to receive some kind of compensation, you may contact Noel at the above address.

We have one child that is still a minor (17) and one 20 year old. Since Parkinson's disease is now considered service-related, I am trying to apply for benefits for the children but the VA is leaving it up to me to prove he was in Brown Waters. I have Navy stuff from the '80s and '90s so this has not been easy.

Vincent forwarded your e-mail to me. I have seen your name on a lot of things while doing research on the USS Benewah and the USS Renville (APA-227), but never managed to get a proper e-mail address so I about fell out of my chair when I saw your name on the e-mail.

Vincent has supplied me with the cruise book photo from '66 from the USS Renville of him and also a copy of the re-commissioning crew list from '67 of the Benewah, I found a PDF online of the Benewah Newsletter that mentions him. With your letter, I think that should be enough for them (I hope). His sister swears he was there for the TET offensive which was in '68, I believe.

Thanks for any information you can think of, and if you need more info from me, please e-mail. Thanks you, Noel

Member **Jerry Parmley** passed away October 8, 2012. Jerry served in the PBR River Division 532 (09/66-09/67). You may contact the family c/o Linda Parmley, 50039 230th Ave, Lake Mills, IA 504507420, parmlejl@wectatel.net.

Member **Larry Stalder** passed away September 24, 2012. Larry was on T-112-13 (01/67-05/67). You may contact the family c/o Ann Marie Stalder, 1605 Greenwillow Ln, Red Oak, IA. 51566-1303, annabelle_05_89@hotmail.com.



Sisco

Judy Sisco passed away September 18, 2012. She was the wife of Mark Sisco, C Co 4/47th, 9th Infantry Division. Judy fought a long hard battle with cancer. She always had the best attitude and seemed to never let it get her down. She was always full of life with a big smile on her face. She loved the soldiers and sailors of the MRFA. She will be missed by everyone that she touched in life. You may contact the family c/o Mark Sisco, 3012 W. Towne Village Ct., Antioch, TN 37013, 615-361-0966, jumasis@aol.com. May our Sister Judy rest in peace.

Years of fighting her cancer she never gave up; she was a fighter to the end. Roy Moseman Vice President MRFA C Co 4th/47th

Member **Dan Morgan** passed away August 30, 2012. Dan served at NSA Dong Tam (02/68-03/69). You may contact the family c/o Jayce Morgan, HC 1 Box 1570, Sycamore, MO 65760-9705.

Plankowner member **John R. Zivic** passed away from cancer, November 4, 2012. John served on the USS Vernon County LST-1161 (1967-69). You may contact the family c/o Sandy Zivic, 25 W 80th Pl # 339, Merrillville, IN 46410-5445, 219-789-7508 or his brother Bob Zivic, Bjz@aol.com.



Your membership expiration date is printed on your *River Currents* just above your name and address.

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