



River Currents



A PUBLICATION OF
THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION

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FALL 2008

From the Galley

ALBERT MOORE, MRFA PRESIDENT

MRFA 9th Infantry Division Reunion in Indianapolis September 2-6, 2009

The hotel will again make the shuttle service available for anyone who wants to go to downtown Indianapolis and visit some of the local sites. Times vary on when the shuttle leaves and returns to the hotel so you may want to check with the main desk for their schedule. Schedules will also be posted in the main lobby.

Registration will be set up outside the main hospitality room "Hall of Champions" beginning at 9:30 a.m. on September 3.

Products sales will begin at 9:30 a.m. on September 3 in the Hall of Champions.

Hospitality Room Hall of Champions will be open at 7:00 a.m. daily. Closing time varies. Beverages and snacks will be available in the Hall of Champions.

Speakers will be Friday evening following the Pig Out. Speakers will be posted in a later issue of the *River Currents*.

Memorial services will be held Saturday morning.

The Delta to DMZ dance will be held Saturday evening playing your favorites of the 60s and 70s. More detailed reunion information will be in upcoming issues of *River Currents*.

The dates are September 2 to checkout on Sunday, September 6. Cost per room per night is \$79. You can start making your reservations on September 1, 2008. To make reservations, call 317-248-2481 and be sure to mention you are making reservations under the Mobile Riverine Force Association and give the dates you plan on staying; you are not required to stay all three nights. If you live in the area and just want to drop in, you are more than welcome. For more information, feel free to contact Reunion Coordinator Michelle Jackson at 317-381-6130 or e-mail mx-

jackson@adamsmark.com; or contact Cynthia Busboom 317-381-6160 or e-mail cbusboom@adamsmark.com.

For individual hospitality rooms, please contact Michelle Jackson. The cost for individual hospitality rooms are \$125 per day.

The speedway and downtown bring all the excitement of the city right to your doorstep. Here you will find the warmth and charm of

the grand hotels combined with the comfort and efficiency of the most modern accommodations. The staff will provide unrivaled service and attention to detail, taking care of all your needs. Experience Indianapolis' finest hotel and have a truly remarkable stay!

Located just one half mile from the Indianapolis International Airport and only 8 minutes to downtown, the Convention Center, RCA Dome, and Circle Centre Mall. Easy access to interstate highways makes the Adam's Mark a convenient destination from any part of the city, state, or country. Contact them at: 2544 Executive Drive, Indianapolis, Indiana 46241, 317-248-2481. They provide free shuttle to and from Indianapolis International Airport, accessed by courtesy phones located in the baggage claim areas.

Indianapolis transportation and convenient Indianapolis hotel transportation services are available. Complimentary 24-hour shuttle service is available for the Indianapolis Airport.

Guest amenities include free parking, outdoor pool, health club, gift shop, same day dry cleaning and laundry, express checkout, safe deposit and security storage, shoe shine, room service, and wireless high-speed Internet in lobby area. The 407 deluxe guest rooms and

CHECK OUT OUR NEW T-SHIRTS! SEE PAGE 8.

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Veterans Day 2008, Bloomington, MN

The MRFA and 9th Infantry Division will hold its Vets Day Gathering at the Ramada Inn Airport and Thunderbird Convention Center, 2201 East 78th Street, Bloomington, MN 55425. Conveniently located just off I-494 at the 24th Avenue exit. The Ramada

is on the opposite side of the Mall of America. Check-in time is 3:00 p.m. Friday, Novem-

ber 7 and check-out is Sunday, November 9. Room rates are \$89 (plus tax) per night. For reservations, call 1-952-854-3411 or 1-800-272-6232 and be sure to mention the MRFA and 9th Infantry Division. Reservations must be made before the cutoff date of October 17, 2008, so make your reservations soon. A hospitality room will be available on November 7 and 8. The Memorial Service will be held Saturday, November 8 at 1 p.m.

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Veterans Day 2008, Washington, DC

The MRFA and 9th Infantry Division will be placing wreaths at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC, on Veterans Day, Tuesday, November 11, 2008. We will be gathering at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial at 8:30 a.m. and proceed to the Wall at 9:00 a.m.

We have blocked 40 rooms at the Hilton Garden Inn Arlington/Courthouse Plaza at 1333 North Courthouse Road in Arlington,

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suites feature large work desk, Herman Miller Ergonomic Desk Chair, complimentary high-speed Internet access, speed dial phone with message alert and modem access, remote control color TV, in-room movies, iron/ironing board, hair dryer, wake up and turn-down service. Non-smoking and handicapped accessible rooms available. Featuring award-winning cuisine and a full-service lounge.

Adam's Mark Dining

The Premier Indianapolis Dining Headquarters. Be sure you wear your name tag when dining in the Restaurant and you will receive a 10% discount on your meals. Guests of the Adam's Mark enjoy a variety of Indianapolis dining pleasures that are served with a high level of service for every appetite and occasion. The finest chefs, maitre'ds and servers are dedicated to providing the most satisfying and rich dining experience.

The Marker Restaurant—Features award-winning American cuisine in an intimate atmosphere. The Marker Restaurant is an ideal setting for business lunches and dinners. Monday-Saturday, 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. and Sundays 6:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Marker Lounge--Great for business or pleasure, enjoy your favorite refreshments and catch the news or your favorite sporting event on one of the seven TVs including a big screen TV. Monday-Saturday 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 a.m. and Sunday 11:00 a.m.-midnight.

A Sea Story about Chief Gunners Mate Richard Scott

Liberty I—Manila, November 1974
By Captain Jim Giblin U.S. Navy Ret.

There are, I believe, one or two sea stories that capture the essence of a side of "Scotty" that perhaps most people, including a fair number his shipmates, never knew. Both reflect the fact that he was; have to do with his never-ending quest for liberty.

A bit of background for those not familiar with this subject. In the United States Navy, liberty, or the authorized absence of an individual from his or her place of duty for a period of normally not more than 48 hours, has been and continues to be one of the things most valued by sailors of our Navy and, for that matter, any other navy.

"Scotty" was no different in this regard with one, very significant exception. He had a unique, almost uncanny, sense of how to find, for lack of a better word, opportunities to take advantage of this age-old seafaring practice and, when he could, extend those treasured few hours of liberty to a full 50 to 100% more time by seeking out opportunities for special liberty--the authorized absence of an individual from his or her place of duty for a period of normally not more than 72-96 hours under "special circumstances."

The number of “special circumstances” that “Scotty” mustered up in his pursuit of liberty and/or special liberty while serving in GURKE were, to say the least, impressive. Quite frankly, we could probably make a movie about them if anyone had taken the time to record all of them for posterity! But perhaps more remarkable was his ability to do so just about everywhere in the western Pacific. And, to his credit as a professional, he exercised what he considered to be his God-given right to create these opportunities around that part of the Pacific without using the tactics and the tone of a sea lawyer or someone among the crew of a ship who is prone to being argumentative or who too frequently questions orders or regulations in pursuit of his or her own self interest.

Liberty is by custom, tradition, and U.S. Navy Regulations not a right. Instead, it is a privilege that must be earned. In my view, the person best able to determine if an individual has earned that privilege is the officer or chief petty officer who is in charge of that particular person. Because of this, I left the granting of liberty to the leadership of each individual division in the department. In Scotty's case, this was an Ensign/Lieutenant Junior Grade for most of Scotty's time on GURKE.

But, as Senior Watch Officer responsible for the organization, integrity and effectiveness of GURKE's watch organization in port and at sea, I added one additional requirement governing the approval of liberty for sailors assigned to a section in port. I insisted that a sailor from a duty section seeking to go on liberty to have a qualified relief, also known in the vernacular as a "standby, and that the Command Duty Officer for the day approve

that “standby” and the request for liberty. It was this requirement and how “Scotty” met it that created the circumstances of this sea story that demonstrates his unique ability to extend those treasured few hours of liberty.

In November of 1975, GURKE sailed up Manila Bay in the Philippines for a port visit to the storied city of Manila. For a variety of reasons, the ship had not been in Manila for several years and, knowing something about the “pecking order” of bringing U.S. Navy ships on berth in that city, I was stunned by the fact that someone in a position of authority had assigned GURKE to a choice berth on the waterfront in South Harbor in downtown Manila with easy access to Rizal Park, Makati, and the old Army–Navy Club. I knew this was a choice berth based on my previous visits to Manila and was suitably impressed that the Philippine Presidential Yacht was moored about 300 yards in front of us.

I had the duty as Command Duty Officer the first day in-port. "Scotty" was in my duty section and, accordingly, had the duty with me that day. We came alongside nicely about 0830 and announced "Liberty Call" around 1030 or 1100. Knowing of his family's history in the Philippines in general and Manila in particular, not to mention his never ending quest for liberty, I was amazed that he had not approached me with a request to approve a "standby" so that he could go on liberty! Not so fast--I should have known better!

About 1530 that afternoon, guess who shows up at my stateroom door—and the first two guesses don't count. You got it—then-Gunners Mate First Class Scott. In his usual manner that always started off with that short, somewhat muffled, subtle laugh that only he could do followed by the words "Mr. "G," you're not going to believe this but...", he announced that "I've got a standby who is qualified and I'd like to go on liberty." When I asked him why he hadn't submitted his request earlier, I was amazed, though I shouldn't have been, when he told me that "I had to wait to see if the Presidential Yacht was in port."

OK—I just couldn't let this one go and decided to take the bait. I asked him just what he meant. Again, in his usual manner of understating things, he replied "Well, errrrhhh-hhhhh, I have a standing invitation from the President to visit the yacht when it's in port Manila and I've been invited to a party on the yacht tonight." I had no comeback to that one, didn't bother to try to come up with one, and promptly approved the request chit!

That said I had to see for myself how "Scotty" was going to leave the ship and where he'd go, so I instructed the Quarterdeck Watch to let me know when he departed GURKE.



2009 MRFA 9th INFANTRY DIVISION
REUNION REGISTRATION FORM
Indianapolis, Indiana - September 2-6, 2009

Name: _____

Unit: _____ Dates in Unit (s): _____

Name(s) wife & family/guest(s)

Street Address:

City: State: Zip:

Phone:()

E-Mail:

Be sure to enclose your check or money order with this form. Send to address below.

Registration Fee: (Member only, cost includes spouse or girlfriend) x \$35 = \$

Additional Family Members, Children, Friends
Total x \$10 each = \$

Registration Fee (Non Members)*
Total x \$50 each = \$

Grand Total Enclosed = \$

*Non member is defined as a person who is eligible to be a member of the MRFA by having served in the MRF TF117 or TFs115 or 116, the 9th Infantry Division or any Army/Navy supporting unit who has not joined the MRFA. The registration fee covers the member and/or guest, girlfriend, etc.; all other fees apply to friends and/or children. Please send your check or money order (payable to MRFA) with this form before August 22, 2009, to MRFA Reunion, 106 Belleview Dr. NE, Conover, NC 28613. There will be a \$25 charge for all returned checks. Cancellations prior to the reunion will be charged a \$10 processing fee.

About 1830 that evening as the sun was setting over Manila Bay, the Quarterdeck Watch informed me that "GMG1 Scott was leaving the ship." On hearing that and not wanting to appear as if I was "tracking" him, I proceeded to the signal bridge. I could not believe what I saw!

There was "Scotty" dressed to the nines in a pair of nicely pressed trousers and a very formal traditional Philippine barong tagalog heading for Rizal Park. OK—I was suitably impressed given the fact that this is a man who has been known to wear trousers made from an old Navy bedspread and shirts that would be banned in the old Pearl City Tavern on Oahu on liberty! But I still wanted to see where he would go.

I lost him for a minute or two when he exited the pier area into Rizal Park. When he emerged from the tree line in the park, he was walking down the broad sidewalk on the bayside of Roxas Boulevard heading straight for the Presidential Yacht. To my amazement, there was indeed a small party in progress on the Yacht. As he approached the security team on the pier, he took something out of his pocket and handed it to the lead officer of the security detail. A moment or two passed as this officer communicated with someone presumably on the yacht. Some 30 or 45 seconds later, "Scotty" was walking up the brow of that yacht towards a man who was standing at the head of that brow waiting to greet him. That man was the President of the Republic of the Philippines!

Once again, "Scotty" triumphs!

Richard Hawkins Scott

The Very Early Years Interesting Years of Scotty

Dick's "Scotty's" folks, Isabel and Churchill Scott, lived in the Philippine Islands. His Dad was a mining engineer and his Mom was a school teacher. In December 1941 the Japanese invaded the island where they lived, and the entire family was captured (his Mom, Dad, two sisters, and his Dad's mom).

Originally, they were interred in Camp John Hay, Baguio, Mountain Province. At the time, his mom was 8 months pregnant. In January 1942 she gave birth, with the help of a military nurse, to Dick. It's hard to believe but he only weighed about 5+ pounds. His family remained in that camp until they were transferred to Camp Holmes, Trinidad, Philippines, and then to Camp Bilabid in Manila where they were liberated in February 1945.

In 1946 his family moved to Bishop, California, to a mining camp. In 1947, a dam broke and they narrowly escaped with their lives, losing everything, again.

In 1953 he appeared on Ralph Edwards, *This is Your Life*, with the nurse who helped his mom give birth to him.

From Bishop, they moved to Pamona, California; then to Houston, Texas; to Belle Fourche, South Dakota; to Bagio, Brazil (where Dick attended several years of high school), and then back to California where he graduated and joined the Navy in 1960.

Veteran's Day, Bloomington MN

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The honor guard will be provided by member Mike Clark of the VVA Anoka, Minnesota, Chapter. Wreaths will be placed at both the MRFA and 9th memorials at Fort Snelling. If you live in the area and just want to drop in, you are more than welcome.

This is not to take away from our Veterans Day gathering in Washington, DC. This is to give those who live a distance from Washington, DC, a chance to gather with their fellow Army and Navy members and their guests. We use to do this every year but recently it was changed to every other year.

The Army and Navy memorials at Fort Snelling are impressive, if you have never visited Fort Snelling National Cemetery this may be a good time. Mike Clark served with A Co 4th/39th Inf (1966-1967). Mike and the VVA Chapter do an excellent job with our memorial services. If you would like more info on Fort Snelling, please contact Mike at 763-323-1336, or email mike40777@yahoo.com. He'll be more than happy to assist you.

Hotel features: Free airport shuttle, full service restaurant, the Boulevard Café, Lounge, the Boulevard Pub, business center, free high speed internet, gym/fitness center, meeting/banquet facilities, pets allowed, and pool.

For more information, contact Charlie Ardingner at 1857 County Road A14, Decorah, Iowa 54101, 563-735-5924 or e-mail mrfamembership@mabeltel.coop. Please send us an e-mail if you plan on attending the reunion so we can provide you with name tags.

A Story of Interest, from Albert Moore

You may not recognize my name, (*Oh But I Do* article). I have been a member of the MRFA for several years having served on the Delta from '69 to '70 with TF116 and other boat operations. Recently, in May 2008 my wife and I had the opportunity to visit Newport Naval Base, Newport, Rhode Island. I was stationed there after Vietnam and ultimately discharged from that base; all those many years ago. We have fond and loving memories from this area so it is always nice to go back and reminisce. However, while there we had a chance encounter with a Sailor that I found both interesting and heart wrenching.....I think you may enjoy it.

When driving through the base late Saturday afternoon on our way back to our RV site, I caught a glimpse of a Sailor along the side of the road with the hood up on his old and very beat up car. In dress whites, he was attempting to replace his car battery. Knowing personally just how hard it is to keep whites clean, I told my wife that we were turning around to assist the lad. As I parked behind him, I saw that he was a young OCS Sailor of Asian descent who was obviously given a 24-hour liberty pass. As I approached him, I said "Stand fast Sailor, and let the old man help you." His response was to immediately snap to attention, and say

"Aye, Sir!" I got my tools out from the truck and after installing the battery, I found that his post terminal clamp needed to be replaced. I told him to hop in my truck and I would take him to a local auto parts store to secure the needed terminal clamp and get him on his well-deserved liberty.

As we drove, it was obvious he was very grateful that I would take all this trouble to assist him. I assured him that he was not putting me out one iota and I considered it a privilege to assist one of our Warriors. I told him I was a Vietnam veteran and was stationed on the Mekong Delta at various places during my tour of duty. It turns out that he and his parents were from Vietnam. He knew some of the locations on the Delta where I was. Now the most incredible part.....

He said his father was a South Vietnamese Army Officer during the last years of the war having fought with the American Forces for an extended time. He said that when the war ended in 1975 and the Communists took over, his Father was sought out arrested and sent to prison to be "re-nationalized." Being nothing more than a prison camp, the lad went on to tell me how bad it was for his Father. He said his Father was finally released after 6 long years. Subsequently, he found haven under a

US sponsored program with a family in the United States. The Vietnam Government allowed him and his family finally to leave the country and move to Oklahoma where they now reside.

The young OCS Sailor's first name was LOO. He has been in the States for only 11 years now, and after graduating from the University of Oklahoma, joined the US Navy. He told me that he desires to go to Afghanistan or Iraq to help fight, but mostly to help others... as he and his family were helped.

He told me that his Mother has told him that his freedom and ticket to the United States was paid for by the blood of his Father. I was humbled by his statement. After all these years.....it all comes back so quickly and vividly.....yes, freedom paid for by the blood of those others who gave all.

I got the terminal on his car; it started up and we then said goodbye. He went on to wherever to enjoy his few precious hours of liberty. I'm sure I will never see him again but I will never forget him, his dedication, and his story. God Bless America.

Mike Deckman

USS Garrett County LST-786 EN2, '69-'70

e-mail mjdeck@epix.net

I did and do remember Mike. He's been a member for years.... Albert

What To Do If...

There are some things that we would all rather not think about, let alone plan for. Losing a loved one fits into that category. But, if we have the information needed to handle that eventuality when it does happen, we need not waste a lot of time worrying about "What we will do if...?"

I recently lost my wonderful husband to Agent Orange related cancer and spent a lot of time doing research regarding what steps needed to be taken immediately, which benefits I was entitled to, and how to go about getting those benefits.

A friend of my husband, Albert Moore, asked if I would write a column to help other spouses and family members of service members who might have recently, or will in the

future, experience this type of loss, in hopes of making the transition easier for others.

First, let me say: "BE PREPARED!" There are a lot of resources out there that help, but identifying which ones to use immediately after your loss can be a daunting task and one that you may not feel up to. So, let's start with getting ready. There is a great document put out by the Gold Star Wives of America. It is located on the internet at <http://www.goldstarwives.org/PDFs/ShouldKnow.pdf>. It is called, "What My Family Should Know, A Guide for Getting your Affairs in Order." If you don't have a computer, go to the library or have someone print this document for you. If you will sit down with your spouse and fill this document out, you will be way ahead of the game if you lose that spouse. The form goes through all the financial, family, funeral, real estate, insurance, tax, benefits, funeral wishes,

and other information, including where important documents are located, how to get them, and much more that you will need if your loved one passes away. Sometimes it is easier to fill out forms together than to jump into the "What happens if?" conversation. Take the time to fill this out now, you will save yourself untold hours of grief and anguish later. And be sure you both know where the document is stored!

When a spouse does pass away, there are steps that must be taken right away, or it will complicate matters in the future:

1. Get several copies of the death certificate from the office of the town where your spouse died. You will need more than you think; however, they need not all be official, these cost money. Others may be copies of these, but DO get several official certificates. Also, make multiple copies of your spouse's DD214, your wedding license, and any divorce decrees that either of you might have from previous marriages. If you get all these up front, you won't be running around later when you'll need them.

2. If your spouse is collecting Social Security, notify the Social Security Administration right away. They are listed in the phone book. They will tell you what must be done. Social Security will stop immediately for your spouse. But, if you are also collecting or eligible to collect your spouse's benefits, you can choose whichever benefit is greater. The folks at SSA will explain your options to you. Also, once notified and verified, you are entitled to the Social Security death benefit of \$255. As I understand it, that benefit hasn't changed in over 50 years! You can get more information on-line at www.ssa.gov/pgm/receiving.htm.

3. If your spouse is collecting retirement pay from the Military, the VA, or a private employer, they must be notified. In the case of the Military, they will take back the last paycheck and send you forms to fill out in order to give you back that portion due you for the days when your spouse was alive. Be aware that if your spouse had a service-connected disability and his or her pay was non-taxable, the check you get back will be taxable.

4. If your spouse was disabled and collecting a VA disability check (CRSC), the VA will need to be notified, as well. They too will require the last month's pay to be returned. Either you can send it or if it is directly deposited, they will withdraw it. So, make certain that you leave enough money in the account to cover the withdrawal. The VA will also send you forms to fill out in order to get the money returned to you. The CRSC check will not be taxable.

You will need copies of the death certificate for all these actions and other documents as well.

5. Notify any life insurance companies as soon as possible. It helps to have the money to live on while the other benefits are in the works, and insurance companies are usually pretty quick in their payments, once they receive a copy of the death certificate.

Army and Navy KIA Update

All,

I just returned from vacation and am catching up on e-mails and noted a number of messages on this subject. To provide some background of KIA databases used to list names on the MRFA trailer, please take a few minutes to read the info below.

I have received a number of messages from MRFA members who provided information regarding unit listing errors on our trailer. My research to date shows that the data on our trailer matches the government's data that has been proven to have numerous errors. The errors are a result of the Defense Department's Southeast Asia Combat Area Combined Casualty File (the 1993 "CACCF") and the Army Adjutant General's casualty database (the "TAGCEN" file), which contain many errors.

Those databases were and remain a tremendous resource for anyone who is interested in the Vietnam War, but they had three shortcomings:

While casualties from all service branches were included, there was no unit-of-assignment information except for Army casualties (taken from the TAGCEN file), and that was limited to the Division or separate Brigade levels.

No provision for routine updating and correction was made, since the information was considered to be of a static nature.

The DOD CACCF and TAGCEN files contain numerous errors in the spelling of place and personal names, and some errors in the Army unit assignment data.

As an entirely separate event, Korean War Army veteran Richard Coffelt became aware that there was no reliable information available on unit assignments for our Vietnam dead, and he determined to develop a reliable data set for the Army's Vietnam dead. Coffelt began by collecting names from unit memorials, gravestones, and other similar sources before beginning a truly major effort: he funded, from his own pocket, research in the Nixon and Johnson Presidential Libraries to collect and collate information from the Presidential Letters of Condolences stored in the two Libraries. Two Vietnam veterans, David Argabright and Richard Arnold, learned of Coffelt's project and joined him in collecting and collating unit of assignment data. As additional resources became available, the Coffelt effort grew from an Army-only to an all-branches identification effort.

A third effort was started within the Department of the Navy by retired Admiral Elmo Zumwalt, who

had served as Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Vietnam, before culminating his career as the Chief of Naval Operations. In the early 1990s, Admiral Zumwalt persuaded the Navy to subsidize an effort to identify the unit-of-assignment for the Navy's Vietnam dead, and retired Chief Warrant Officer Ralph Fries was chosen to do the work. Fries ended up viewing the Bureau of Naval Personnel and National Archives records for every Navy casualty in Vietnam.

A fourth effort was begun by the staff of The Virtual Wall®, who collected and collated some 20,000 assignment records from a variety of available sources, predominantly memorial requests for The Virtual Wall and Internet-based unit memorials. The sources used were "softer" than the official-records approach used in the Coffelt and Zumwalt/Fries initiatives, and the information gathered consequently less certain.

These separate efforts came together in early 2002, with the Navy and Virtual Wall data integrated with the Coffelt data. The resulting compilation has been named "the Coffelt Database" in honor of Richard Coffelt and was turned over to the National Archives in June '02 as a public domain document.

However, the Coffelt Database is not a static resource. When it was turned over to the National Archives, the Coffelt Database contained over 54,000 casualty records with unit identification down to Company level or equivalent (except for those men and women assigned to higher echelons). The database continues to be updated as additional information is uncovered and the data integration and conflict resolution process is not yet completed. The evolving nature of the Coffelt Database demands a central point for maintaining and publishing the "current" version of the database. You can access the latest info at <http://www.virtualwall.org/docs/cdb-excel.zip>.

I am working to double check the info provided by our members and we will make needed changes to the listing on our trailer once that is completed. Since I am still working full time, I squeeze this in to my schedule as time permits. I have personally done much research on KIA listings and understand the frustration these errors cause, but ask for your patience as we work through this. We will make corrections to our trailer, but getting the DOD and associated agencies to correct their records will probably be a major undertaking. Our goal is to have the trailer corrected before our next reunion.

In Brotherhood,
Doc Pries

6. Also, don't forget to notify health insurance companies and auto insurance companies, AAA, or any other places where your spouse was paying premiums that no longer will need to be paid. Any premiums that you don't have to pay any longer will help conserve on expenses.

The above are initial steps that, if you can accomplish quickly, will help you in the long run.

Future articles in this column will delve into more details on military benefits, other resources available to you, and getting through all the red tape.

Paula Wright (Scott)

I have asked Paula to keep us updated on VA matters so this will be a new part of River Currents. I want to thank Paula for volunteering to do the VA updates for us. Paula is no lightweight when it comes to knowing the system. She was also a U.S. Army Drill Sgt. for a number of years. Paula Wright is the widow of beloved member Richard "Scotty" Scott, Gunners Mate Chief U.S. Navy (Ret.). You may contact Paula at thewrightthings@verizon.net.

Albert

C.R.I.P. UNITS

A Short History of the CRIP Units

The CRIP units were from the 1st BDE based initially at Long Thanh North (next to Camp Bear Cat) and the 3d BDE based at the main base (BDE HQ) at Tan An. The acronym "CRIP" stood for "Combined Reconnaissance and Intelligence Platoon" or "Combat Reconnaissance and Intelligence Platoon," depending on who you talk to.

The original concept starting in 1967, as I understand it, was to field a combined US Army and Vietnamese reconnaissance and intelligence unit made up from volunteers from the 9th ID with the Vietnamese personnel coming from the Provincial Reconnaissance Units (PRU) of the ARVN. The PRUs were actually like a private army for the Vietnamese provincial and district chiefs. Some of those PRUs were Hoi Chanhs (ex-VC or NVA)... like our Tiger Scouts. I think the 25th ID also formed CRIP units, but I don't know of any other US Army division or separate brigade

that had them.

The original CRIP units supposedly were trained by the CIA and were involved in the Phoenix Program. Later in the war, the PRUs may have been removed from these units and the name may have been changed to "Combat" from "Combined." At that point, they functioned more as the 1st and/or 3d Brigade's recon platoons. The 2d BDE/MRF had the 9th ID LRRPs and the SEALs performing the same types of operations in their AO.

Our old friend, "Doc" Wolfson (a/k/a Oliver Klotzoff) served as a medic with the 3d BDE CRIP out of Tan and Rach Kien in 1967... I think he may have been gone by the time that Mr. Gannon joined them in 1968. I am sending a copy of this message to him, just in case he knows of any of the guys from 1968.

I have corresponded with a couple of the guys from the 1st BDE CRIP out of Long Thanh, as some of those guys were initially in Echo 2/39 Recon in 1967... but don't know any from the 3d BDE (at Tan An) in 68.

Thanks to Jim Stone for providing us with this information.

Saving Rademacher

"What he did, it's beyond understanding"

By Barb Kromphardt

Princeton: A few weeks ago, the Rev. Bernard Windmiller received a telephone call from the past. He said to me, "Are you Chaplain Windmiller?" and I said, "Yes." Windmiller recalled. He said, "Well, I think I was with you in the big battle we had on the 19 of June 1967." And he said, "I think I'm the man that you saved."

It will be 41 years ago this summer. Windmiller had been working as a chaplain minister, but he was also a reserve Army chaplain, and he had been called up to active duty in Vietnam in 1966, leaving behind his wife and four small children. He wasn't considered a combatant, and he didn't carry a gun. He was just to be there for the boys. "My job was just to look after their moral and religious needs," Windmiller said. Then one day he followed those boys into the hell along the Rach Gia River that was known as Operation Concordia.

On the internet, the 9th Infantry Division 4th Battalion/47th Infantry has a web site (www.9thinfantrydivision.com) that tells the story of June 19, 1967. Among the pictures and maps is a letter Windmiller wrote to his wife, Esther, about that day, and it was that letter that Jim Rademacher found. He said, "When I read it, I said I have to be the man because

you described some things that fit so well with me." Windmiller said. He said "All of this fits. I want to meet you."

The Windmillers invited Radmacher and his wife to spend the weekend with them, and they accepted the invitation. "We spent all of our waking hours talking," Windmiller said. "We just talked so much and talked so much, and the question that he kept asking me, over and over again throughout the whole weekend, was 'Why did you do this? Why did you save my life?' Windmiller told him he didn't really think about the why when they were in the heat of combat. "You do what is the right thing to do; you do what you have to do." And I said, "And you were out there in the middle of this rice paddy and you were yelling for help." Windmiller said there wasn't anyone else who could help. "Everybody else was engaged, or wounded, or killed," he said. "We lost a lot of people that day." Windmiller said he did what he did because it was the right thing to do. "Anybody else would have done the same thing in my position," he said. I said to him, "You needed help, and I was the only guy there that could do this." Radmacher protested. He said, "But you didn't have too. You put your own life in danger for me," Windmiller said. Windmiller said it was wonderful meeting with Radmacher. "Not so much that I saved somebody, but to see that here was a guy whose life was saved." He said, "He went back home, married his high school sweetheart, and raised a family." Windmiller said, "God was able to use him on that battlefield to help save a life, and he is pleased that Radmacher became a Christian after the event." I told him, "I helped save your physical life, but God has given you a spiritual life, and that, to me, was the best thing that could have happened." Windmiller said he hasn't lived with a lot of questions over this day in his life although he's often wondered about

what happened to the young soldier. Now he knows. "Now I know who this man was--this young boy then, what happened to him, and where he is now, and that brings me a great deal of joy," he said.

Letter to Mrs. Esther Windmiller from her husband, Chaplain Benard Windmiller June 20, 1967.

The VC initial burst of fire wounded three men in our Charlie Blitzes element. So I dropped my pack and started up along the rice paddy dike to reach those wounded men. I was scared but kept my head. I knew I had to help those men. I would run like crazy and then dive behind a dike, run and dive. I made it to a shack and took cover behind it. The two wounded were right out in the middle of the rice paddies. After a couple of minutes, the medic came, and we both took off running out to the two wounded. We threw ourselves beside them and hugged the ground as the bullets went zinging over our heads. We got them bandaged. One boy had a chest wound, and the other one was hit in the right wrist, left upper arm, and left ankle. He had some broken bones and was in a lot of pain. I stayed with them for about an hour, flat on my stomach, with bullets still zinging over my head every so often. Finally a Med Evac chopper came in, but we had no stretcher to take this lad over to the chopper. The chopper took off with other wounded. Finally we got a poncho, cut off his pack and were able to slip the poncho under him. It caused him much pain. I was able to talk with these boys to assure them of God's presence and all would be well. They seemed so glad that the chaplain was there for them. Finally, the other lad who was helping and I grabbed hold of each corner of the poncho at his legs and literally inched our way along on our stomachs, pulling him behind us. He was yelling in pain but there was nothing else we could do, since we were starting to receive heavier fire. The chopper came, and we got him aboard.

We received the above article from Bill Reynolds, C Co 4th/47th. Since the article was sent by a paper copy, it had to be retyped and put in a format for the printer. I want to thank Miss Patty Corrick for assisting with this. Miss Patty is the wife of Board Member Rich Corrick. Patty has also helped with River Currents in the past. Thanks Miss Patty!



Company E (LRP), 50th Infantry**20 December 1967 to 1 February 1969 (as Co. E [LRP], 50th Infantry)****1 February 1969 to 23 Aug 1969 (as Co. E, 75th Infantry [Ranger]; First tour)****1 Oct 1969 to 12 Oct 1970 (as Co. E, 75th Infantry [Ranger]; Second tour)**

Echo Rangers

We are grateful to the 75th Ranger Association for the following information.

Throughout history the need for a small, highly trained, far ranging unit to perform reconnaissance, surveillance, target acquisition, and special type combat missions has been readily apparent. In Vietnam this need was met by instituting a Long Range Patrol program to provide each major combat unit with this special capability.

Rather than create an entirely new unit designation for such an elite force, the Department of the Army looked to its rich and varied heritage and on 1 February 1969 designated the 75th Infantry Regiment, the present successor to the famous 5307th Composite Unit (MERRILLS MARAUDERS) as the parent organization for all Department of the Army designated Long Range Patrol (LRP) units and the parenthetical designation (RANGER) in lieu of (LRP) for these units. As a result, the 50th Infantry Detachment (LRP), formally the 9th Infantry Division LRRP (Provisional) assigned to the 9th Infantry Division, became Company E (Ranger), 75th Infantry.

In the fall of 1966, the 9th Infantry Division formed a division Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) platoon after division commander, Maj. Gen. George S. Eckhardt flew to Vietnam on an orientation tour of the combat theater. Major General Eckhardt noted that each division contained a long range patrol unit. He arrived back at Fort Riley, Kansas, where the Division was completing preparations for its scheduled December deployment to Vietnam, and ordered the immediate organization of a reconnaissance platoon for his own division. Capt.

James Tedrick, Lt. Winslow Stetson, and Lt. Edwin Garrison were chosen as the officers for the LRRP Platoon. They interviewed and screened the records of 130 volunteer soldiers and selected the best 40. The provisional unit was known as the "War Eagle Platoon." In November 1966, the LRRP Platoon completed the Jungle Warfare School in Panama. Captain Tedrick conducted an extra week of tropical training following the regular 2-week course. Platoon members were

shipped to Vietnam in January 1967.

At the Special Forces MACV Recondo School at Nha Trang, the entire 9th Infantry Division LRRPs became recondo-qualified. Meanwhile, the unit adjusted to its combat operating area. The division operated primarily in the lowlands south of Saigon, the Rung Sat Special Zone, and the Mekong Delta. Torrential rains and year-round water exposed patrollers to high rates of disabling skin disease. Reconnaissance troops often suffered extensive inflammatory lesions and rampant skin infections. And by the fourth month of tropical service, nearly three-fourths of all Infantrymen had recognizable infections. The Bear Cat-Long Thanh area east of Saigon was where the division was initially concentrated. The new base, Dong Tam, was constructed by dredging the My Tho River to produce enough fill to build a major installation in the Mekong Delta. It was located 5 miles west of My Tho in Dinh Tuong Province.

On 8 July 1967, the 9th Long Range Patrol Detachment (LRPD) was formalized. Borrowing General Marshall's World War II phrase, the Division LRPD was "well brought up." During June and July, the LRPD completed 43 patrols and clashed 18 times with enemy forces. Through August and September, the LRPD continued to fill. By October it had reached full authorized strength of 119 personnel and was rated fully operational. Each platoon contained a command section and eight, six-man teams.

Some teams of the division LRPD rendered reconnaissance for 2nd Brigade in Operation CORONADO and entered the Viet Cong Cam Son secret base area while other teams supported the 1st Brigade in Operation AKRON and uncovered a massive underground system of enemy tunnels and bunkers. The LRPD also conducted important military intelligence tasks for the Mobile Riverine Force within the Mekong Delta.

Maj. General George C. O'Connor activated Company E (Long Range Patrol), 50th Infantry, to give the 9th Infantry Division specialized ground reconnaissance support on 20 December 1967. The long range patrol company absorbed the LRPD and was designated as "Reliable Reconnaissance" after the division nickname of "Old Reliabes."

During January 1968, the Navy SEAL teams began joint operations with Reliable Reconnaissance. LRPDs did this to gain training and experience

in the Delta environment. The missions designated as SEAL-ECHO were the highly selective patrols. They were inserted by Navy patrol boats, plastic assault boats, helicopters, and Boston whalers. The SEAL-ECHO troops used supporting artillery and airstrikes to destroy larger targets.

Maj. Gen. Julian J. Ewell assumed command of the 9th Infantry Division in February 1968. He authorized the Reliable Reconnaissance company to acquire a similar capacity to the 3rd Brigade Combined Reconnaissance and Intelligence Platoon as a result of the Tet-68 battles. Company E received permission to employ available Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU) personnel from the Central Intelligence Agency's Project Phoenix program. The PRU troops were hardened anticommunist troops dedicated to destroying the Viet Cong infrastructure. The PRU troops generally possessed very high esprit and great knowledge of Viet Cong operating methods. From November 1968 through January 1969, the last 3 months of Company E's existence, the Reliable Reconnaissance teams conducted 217 patrols and engaged the enemy in 102 separate actions. The company was credited with capturing 11 prisoners and killing 84 Viet Cong by direct fire.

SGT Joseph J. Florio (Hamden, Conn.), Co. E, 50th Inf (Abn.), 9th Inf Div, displays the Bronze Star and Purple Heart that he was awarded upon return from a long range patrol in the Mekong Delta, 1968.

On 1 February 1969, the Department of the Army reorganized the 75th Infantry as the parent regiment for long range patrol companies under the combat arms regimental system. Maj. Gen. Ewell activated Company E (Ranger), 75th Infantry, from Company E, 50th Infantry. The rangers were known as "Echo Rangers" or "Riverine Rangers," because they mostly dealt with riverine and canal reconnaissance, even though the company was only partly assigned to the Mobile Riverine Force. Ranger Company E took advantage of dry season conditions to harass suspected Viet Cong supply lines from activation until the end of April. The Riverine Rangers conducted 244 patrols and reported 134 observations of enemy activity. They clashed with the Viet Cong during 111 patrols and were credited with capturing 5 prisoners and killing 169 Viet Cong. When the 9th Infantry Division began phasing out of Vietnam in July 1969, the rangers renamed themselves "Kudzu Rangers" after the operational code word for the close-in defense of Dong Tam. The ranger company phased its teams out of the Kudzu business by 3 August.

On 23 August 1969, the Army formally de-



SGT. JOSEPH J. FLORIO
HAMDEN, CT

Battle of Long Binh and Bien Hoa Area

Taken from Mounted Combat in Vietnam from Vietnam Studies

The cavalry battles on the northwestern side of Saigon blunted one of two major attacks toward the capital. The enemy made his other effort in the Long Binh-Bien Hoa area, 22 kilometers northeast of Saigon. This huge, sprawling, logistical, and command complex had been carved out of a rubber plantation early in the war. It contained II Field Force headquarters; III Corps South Vietnamese Army headquarters; the U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, III Corps advisory headquarters; U.S. Army, Vietnam, headquarters; Bien Hoa Air Base; and the mammoth Long Binh Logistics Depot.

On the night of 30 January, the 2d Battalion, 47th Infantry (Mechanized), commanded by Lieutenant Colonel John B. Tower, moved to Long Binh as a reaction force for the 199th Light Infantry Brigade. The battalion dispersed by companies to screen for possible Viet Cong and North Vietnamese infiltrators. The battalion was also instructed to be prepared to reinforce critical command, control, and logistical installations in the giant complex.

At 0100 on 31 January, at the same time Tan Son Nhut was attacked, a well-coordinated assault was launched against the Long Binh-Bien Hoa complex from all points of the compass. At least four Viet Cong or North Vietnamese Army battalions were involved, and for a time the command post of the mechanized battalion was flooded with reports of enemy action. All elements were placed on alert and at 0445, the battalion was ordered to reinforce the Long Binh ammunition depot, the III Corps South Vietnamese Army headquarters, and the III Corps prisoner of war compound.

Company B, minus one rifle platoon, arrived at the ammunition dump at 0630 and, after coordinating with the defenders, moved into the area. The company was greeted by sniper fire, which knocked several infantrymen off their vehicles and diverted attention from the Viet Cong who were placing satchel charges in and around the ammunition bunkers. Despite the knowledge that they were operating in the midst of tons of explosives, men of the 2d Battalion, 47th Infantry (Mechanized), ran from bunker to bunker retrieving explosive charges, as other troops sought out and killed the snipers and sappers. At 0750 several bunkers in the storage area blew up and Company B suffered four casualties. The remainder of the day the company continued working through the area, clearing bunkers, and forcing the enemy to withdraw. The II Field Force ordered Company B to remain in the ammunition dump as a security force, despite Colonel Tower's plea that they be used elsewhere.

Carrying out the battalion's second mission, Company C, 2d Battalion, 47th Infantry, arrived at 0554 at the III Corps South Vietnamese Army headquarters, which was under heavy enemy assault. Attacking from march column, Company C crashed into the flank of the Viet Cong forces, pinning them down with machine gun fire while the infantry dismounted and overran the position. The final assault required house-to-house fighting before the enemy was defeated. With the headquarters compound secure, at the cost of eight men wounded and one APC lost, the company moved to the prisoner compound east of Bien Hoa City. Again meeting strong resistance and fighting from house-to-house, the dismounted troopers finally overran the enemy positions in the late afternoon with a savage attack supported by the mounted machine guns. At 1730, the Viet Cong withdrew and Company C returned to the South Vietnamese corps headquarters, where it maintained security throughout the night.



With two companies fighting the enemy in widely separated locations, the 2d Battalion, 47th Infantry, was given a third mission to reinforce a unit of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade near the village of Ho Nai on National Highway 1. Company A and the battalion headquarters moved north to link up with the infantry. The enemy attack was seriously threatening installations to the east of Bien Hoa, and to relieve this pressure the mechanized infantry of Company A joined elements of the 4th Battalion, 12th Infantry, and 2d Battalion, 3d Infantry, in an attack north of Highway 1. The final successful assault was preceded by gunship and artillery fire and aided by machine guns from the APCs that forced the enemy from hastily dug foxholes. When the smoke and dust settled, bodies of 42 of the Viet Cong were found, along with assorted weapons and equipment. At dark Company A, 2d Battalion, 47th Infantry, moved to a night position near the post of Long Binh.

The second act in the battle for Long Binh and Bien Hoa had begun while the 2d Battalion, 47th Infantry, was fighting its widely separated battles. Early on the morning of 31 January, Troop A, 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry, was acting as a security force for an artillery unit at Fire Support Base Apple, 28 kilometers east of Bien Hoa on National Highway 1. At 0100 the troop, commanded by Captain Ralph B. Garretson, was alerted to move. At 0230 Captain Garretson was directed to leave a platoon at the fire base and move the remainder of his troop toward Bien Hoa; he was to receive further instructions while he was en route. Troop A moved immediately, leaving the 3d Platoon to furnish security for the artillery.

There were early indications of things to come as the troop entered the town of Trang Bom on Highway 1 and ran into a company-size ambush. The fight lasted only 5 minutes

as the troop, still moving, concentrated its fire along the roadside and rode through the ambush. The troopers, receiving sporadic fire along the way, reached a concrete bridge 18 kilometers east of Bien Hoa. After the first tank crossed the bridge, a thunderous explosion dropped the span into the stream. The ACAVs had no trouble fording the stream, but with the exception of the one that had already crossed the tanks had to be left at the bridge.

Now out of radio contact with both the squadron headquarters and Bien Hoa, the troop continued on to the city to find the square filled with two companies of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese soldiers. The 1st Platoon charged through the enemy not realizing who they were. By the time Captain Garretson arrived, however, the enemy force had dispersed and opened fire, disabling two ACAVs. The 2d Platoon pushed aside the disabled vehicles and entered the square in a hail of machine gun fire. After this brief action, the small cavalry force consisted of one tank and eight ACAVs.

Continuing to move, the troop was joined by the squadron commander, Lieutenant Colonel Hugh J. Bartley, who directed Captain Garretson to Bien Hoa Air Base. As he flew over the troop, Colonel Bartley spotted an enemy ambush just outside the base, with several hundred Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops in the ditches near the southeast entrance. The men quickly moved off the road some 30 to 40 meters behind the ambush, firing as they went, and destroying the enemy force on one side of the road.

After entering the base, the cavalry force was attached to a battalion of the 101st Airborne Division, which was attempting to reduce the enemy forces on the base perimeter. The cavalrymen were split between two companies of infantry attacking a position at the southeast corner of the air base. The battle lasted most of the day, culminating in a breakout attempt by the enemy that was stopped short by the cavalry troop. In this fight the 2d Platoon lost two ACAVs; the one tank lost two crews and took 19 hits from rocket grenades but was still operational. For the rest of the day the troop was the reaction force for the air base defense. The next morning Troop A returned to Fire Support Base Apple; it had suffered five killed and 23 wounded.

The final curtain was rung down on the Long Binh-Bien Hoa battle by the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment on 1 February. Although the regiment was conducting operations in the thick jungles of War Zone C, on the morning of 31 January the entire unit pulled out, consolidated, and moved over 103 kilometers to Bien Hoa, all in 8 hours. The regiment had completely circled the Long Binh-Bien Hoa complex by 2100 that night. The next day U.S. airborne infantry and the 3d Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, swept through Bien Hoa and cleared the town. For the rest of the month, the 11th Armored Cavalry remained in the Long Binh-Bien Hoa and Saigon areas.

White Hat Airlines Aircofat Vietnam

The Naval Air Facility detachment at Tan Son Nhut was a Naval aviation organization that had special meaning to the thousands of Sailors throughout the Mekong Delta and along the coast of the Republic of Vietnam.

Mail emergency repair parts for PBR river patrol craft, general supplies, and transportation to Saigon for R&R flights are a sampling of the services provided by White Hat Airlines.

The small detachment was stationed at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Saigon and holds the distinction of being the Navy's only "In-country" airline charged with the task of supporting all Naval Forces in the central and southern regions of the Republic of Vietnam.

White Hat Airlines was responsible for supporting Market Time and Game Warden Operations, Mobile Riverine Forces, and all of Naval Support Activity, Saigon's detachments, and mobile bases.

The unit evolved from a Naval Support Activity Detachment that was activated in June 1966 with only one aircraft. At that time, it was known as "Aircofat." In July 1968, the unit was



reassigned to become a detachment of the U.S. Naval Air Facility, Cam Ranh Bay with LCDR Robert J. Tomenendal designated as the first Officer-in-Charge.

The detachment grew rapidly due to the increased Navy commitment to the Republic of Vietnam now having eight aircraft consisting of three C117Ds and five UH-34D helicopters.

A high degree of professional "know-how" was required to conduct operations under the adverse conditions found in Vietnam. The C117Ds regularly landed on short metal runways and dirt strips only 65 feet wide. There

were little or no prepared surfaces on the runway edges, and no overrun, leaving virtually no margin for error.

The helicopter operations were often conducted near maximum weights, with landings on ships and barges. Some landings required the combined efforts of both the pilot and crewman. Other common landing spots were soccer fields, dirt roads and rice paddies.



USS Hunterdon County: First into Cambodia

The amphibious tank landing ship USS Hunterdon County entered Cambodian waters May 12 to become the first United States navy vessel to do so. Designed to stage, refuel, and rearm UH-1 gunship helicopters, USS Hunterdon County is a support ship also capable of supplying, maintaining, and repairing river patrol craft, acting as a roving communications center and providing gunfire support of her own. Since entering Cambodia, the 838 tank landing ship has been providing support to the forces of the Republic of Vietnam and their U.S. Army and Navy advisors. Her record of more than 5,000 consecutive accident-free helicopter landings in Vietnam has grown steadily in Cambodia, with the rearming of as many as 40 "birds" a day. The "birds" include the Navy's attack "Hueys," the Army's rocket-carrying "Cobras," and helicopters of the Republic of Vietnam's Air Force. In addition she has supplied fuel and food to the U.S. Naval Forces patrolling the Mekong River. These units included river patrol boats (PCFs), river assault groups (RAGs), and various other amphibious assault and patrol craft. Commanded by Lieutenant Commander Warren



H. Fischer, USS Hunterdon County has an impressive record on the rivers of the Mekong Delta. In 1967, following extensive overhaul and modernization, USS Hunterdon County sailed for the Republic of Vietnam. She has operated on the rivers and coastal waters of that Republic since that time. During this period, USS Hunterdon County assisted in the capture of one of the largest Viet Cong arms caches in the Mekong Delta on March 29, 1969, and in August of the same year, established the record for the furthest transit of the Bassac River by a U.S. Navy vessel. Three hundred twenty-seven feet long, USS Hunterdon County carries a crew of 135 men and is a member of Landing Ship Flotilla One based in Yokosuka, Japan.

Volume 22, Number 12 AM-
PHIBIOUS FORCE PACIFIC
FLEET June 19, 1970

Rabbi Arnold E. Resnicoff served onboard USS Hunterdon County from August 1969 to August 1970, as a line officer--prior to his ordination as a Rabbi in 1976. He was Junior Officer of the Deck on May 12, 1970, when the USS Hunterdon County became the first commissioned vessel to enter Cambodia, as reported in this newspaper article.

New MRFA Product

Check out the new Navy and Army River Rat T-shirts! Beautiful full-color screenprinting on white. Each sells for only \$22.00 and includes all shipping and handling.

To order, fill out the info below, clip and send with your check or money order payable to the MRFA, to Products Chairman Bob Van-Druff: 2906 SE Starlite Dr., Topeka, KS 66605. If you have questions you may also phone 785-267-1526 or email bvdmrfa@cox.net.

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Get Well Wishes

Stella Nelson is not doing very well. She had a stroke about 3 weeks ago and has been living with her son in the PA area since last December. She moved to her son's place as a result of Doc being unable to care for her (he was hospitalized and in rehab from a bad car accident he was involved with last December). Doc has since recovered and is in GA getting the new house constructed. Needless to say, he is heart broken and needs some phone calls to cheer him up (478-987-4090). If anyone else is in the area, Doc can use a visit. Doc is at Box 493 RT #1, Hawkinsville, GA 31036.

Harry Kahn had a heart attack and double bypass surgery, but is now home and doing well. Harry was on 132-12 and T27 1969 and 1970. You may contact Harry at 8155 Outer Lincoln Ave., Newburg, IN 47630, 812-490-1026, e-mail veteran@sigecom.net.

John Gilmartin is in the VA hospital in Massachusetts. Biopsy results show cancer in lung particles. It is the same cancer that is traveling throughout his body. Let's remember John, his wife Sandra, and his family in our thoughts and prayers. May God provide His comfort and guidance to them all during this time of trouble. John was on C-151-2 (08/68-06/69). You may contact his wife Sandra at 131 W Crystal Lake Rd, Haverhill, MA 01832-1062, 978-372-5012; john.gilmartin@state.ma.us.

SFC Sammy L. Davis, USA (Ret.), Congressional Medal of Honor recipient for heroism in Nov. 1967, successfully underwent open heart surgery on Fri., 5 Sept. in Indiana.

According to his wife - Dixie - "Sammy came through the surgery with flying colors". His address is: Sammy L. Davis, CMH, 3376 1,000th Street, RR 2, Box 80A, Flat Rock, IL 62427-9802. Dixie asks that we not call for at least a week.

In Memory Of

This section is for the members who wish to sponsor the MRFA by placing a notice in memory of one 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 4 issues.

G. Edward Arledge for LCDR Loren Cobb, USN Executive Officer and Commanding Officer of USS Indra ARL-37
Jack Benedict for C Co 4th/47th 66-68, C Co 3rd/60th 69, and E Co 3rd/60th Inf KIA 4/7/68
Jerry Bogart for Jack Bogart USS Tom Green Cty LST 1159 12/22/06
Maj/General 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 & Navy KIAs
Frank T. Buck, FN USN for son, ENFN Frank H. Buck T-92-10 KIA 12/28/67
James J. Byrnes for members of the Junk Force, Dung Island
Lee Connell for 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, Dennis Mattox 1st/501st 101st Abn KIA 08/23/69
Gene Cooper for Steve Brichford FT2 68/69 and Jerry Roleofs 67-68 USS White River LSMR-536
Janice Dahlke for son Randy Mueller D Co. 2nd/47th KIA 03/03/69
Ted Fetting B Co 2nd/60th Inf. 10/67-2/68 for all from B Co. 2nd/60th and KIA 2/2/68 Fred Jansonivs (ND), Eloy "Stevie" Le Blanc (CA), and Roy Phillips (IL)
Nan Fulton for Lt/Gen 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 6/19/67
Regina Gooden for Sgt Lloyd Earl Valentine B Co 3rd/47th Inf (9/5/68)
Fred Gottwald for Sgt. Walter J. Garstkiewicz C Co 3rd/60th and C Co 6th/31st KIA 01/09/70
David Hammond for Lt Willie Kitchen C Co 3rd/47th (1967/69) killed in an automobile accident 1992
Jeffie Hanks for Seaman John E. Hollis died 11/11/70 Kien Phong
Gerald Johnston USS Nye Cty for James "Willie" Willeford Nye Cty LST-1067 11/28/66, friend, and sailor 19-year-old (RIP Buddy)
James Long Sr. ComRivFlot-One Staff 11/67-11/68 for Carol Ann, beloved wife
David Lynn for Howard Burns (QM2), Robert Bouchet (SM2), and Herman Miller (GM3) 08/11/68 IUWG-1-3 Qui Nhon
Richard MacCullagh for John Phillips HMC

Adam Metts for Donald L. Bruckart T-111-2 KIA 03/31/69
James A. Morse for Mark W. Weachter CTO-3
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, and SGT William D. Mize B-2 2nd/47th 5th/60th KIA 10/28/67
Sgt. Okey Toothman for Sgt Sam Saavedra 3rd/47th and Sgt Booker T. Myles 3rd/47th
John Philp for LTC William B. Cronin 2nd/47th KIA 04/27/67 and for Colonel Arthur D. Moreland USA (Ret.) 2nd/47th (4/67-12/67)
Tom Sanborn for Spec4 Thomas H. Williams A Co 4th/47th Inf KIA 08/24/68 near Kia Lay, Spec4 David Thorton A Co 4th/47th Inf KIA 11/07/68 on Toi Son (VC) Island, and 1st Lt James L. Tarte A Co 4th/47th Inf KIA 8/24/68 near Kai Lay
Robert Sutton for LT James Frost Vin Te Canal Chau Duc KIA 11/69
Robert Thacker for Earl T. Pelhan Jr. SSG KIA 15th Combat Engineers
Steven Totcoff for brother CPL Dennis S. Totcoff B Co 3rd/47th KIA 5/2/68
USS Guide MSO-447 for Shipmate and Brother Harold Foster
Tommy Walker USS Haverfield DER 393 (12/63-07/67)

MRFA

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Please Note: This form may be used for New Memberships, Renewals and Changes of Address. Be sure to check the appropriate box.

SEEKING... How members reach out to assist others. It's all a brotherhood not to be broken.

Dear Mr. Moore

Please forgive my intrusion but I am looking for information pertaining to my father Jack E. (Jackie) Rodgers. He was a Staff Sergeant of A Company 3rd/60th Battalion 9th Infantry Division. I have his DD214 but I don't really understand them so I am going by what I know. Please let me know if you know of him. He just passed away in March of this year and I would love to hear more about the man I adored so much. I cherish each and every second that I had with him but for some reason I just can't let it go. I have to know more about him. I know he was commanding the 2nd platoon as well as the 4th. I know he was in Long Binh, Vihn Long, Dong Tam, and An Duc and in-country 67-68 (from what I've gathered from his letters, he could have been there longer than that; there were lots of gaps due to being out in the field). Please if you know of him, I would like to know more about him. I know this isn't exactly what you had in mind when you put your e-mail address out there but I don't know what else to do. Thank you and God Bless You Albert. You have no idea how much this means to me. My address is Heidi Roth, 1501 Hollyhill Dr. Champaign, IL. 61821, heidi_r_77@yahoo.com.



I am trying to locate information and/or photos of my brother Joseph Vincent Stack who was killed in Dinh Tuong, south Vietnam. Although, he was not with his unit (B Company 3rd/39th) long, I thought Joseph was KIA 11/25/68 he came in-country 10/29/68. Maybe someone from his unit may have taken a photo of him with some of the other guys? I

understand he was part of the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF). I found out he boarded a boat at 8:30 a.m. at Dong Tam. Four boats (RAD-151) headed south into Dinh Tuong Province and debarked at 11:00 a.m. At 4:30 p.m., one of their men tripped a booby-trap which killed my brother.

I would like more information about that day of fighting and where my brother was taken too? I hope to find someone who would have known him or was with him on that day. Any recommendation how to proceed? Once again, many thanks for your assistance and I look forward to hearing back from you.

Mrs. Kathy Hebner, 1309 S. Catalina Ave #C, Redondo Beach, CA 90277, gidget311@verizon.net.

Veteran's Day, Washington DC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Virginia 22201, for November 8 to 11. 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 cutoff date of October 18, 2008, so make your reservations soon.

There will be a hospitality room available November 9 and 10. Come join us as we honor our Fallen Brothers on Veterans Day 2008. We look forward to seeing you in DC.

For more information, you may contact Board Member Bob Pries at 9702 Friar Tuck Drive, West Chester, OH 45069, 513-755-1223 or email rpries@cinci.rr.com.

PLEASE NOTE: YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE IS NOW PRINTED ON THE FRONT OF YOUR ISSUE OF RIVER CURRENTS.

TAPS

May our brothers rest in peace. On the passing of a brother, little can be said as to what man would do for his brother. Rest peaceful and Godspeed my brothers and sisters...

LCDR Loren H. Cobb (USN Ret.) passed away peacefully on the afternoon of June 12, 2008. CDR Cobb was Captain of the USS Indra (ARL-37) from September 1967 to January 1970. He was a World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War Veteran. CDR Cobb will be greatly missed by all whom he knew and served with. He was a fine skipper, a great Captain and shipmate. Please contact his grandson, Gerrick Danielson, at: gerrick@gldndr.com.



S/SGT Jack E. Rodgers passed away March 26, 2008, due to prostate cancer that quickly spread throughout his body. S/SGT Rodgers served with 2nd Plt, A Company 3rd/60th Inf (1967-68). You may contact his daughter Heidi Roth at 813 E Short St., Tuscola, IL 61953, 217-253-2128, e-mail heidi_r_77@yahoo.com.

Member **Ed Garcia** recently passed away. Ed served on the USS Kemper County LST-854 (08/64-09/66). All we have for his wife's name is M. E. Garcia at 5115 Torpedo Pl., Albuquerque, NM 87120.

Member **Jack Peachey** passed away November 25, 2007. Jack served on M-111-1 from February 1968 to January 1969. You may contact his wife Jean at 2103 Mission Ave, Charleston SC 29414-6004, (843)-556-1860.

Member **Philip Mohler** passed away after a lengthy illness. Phillip was buried July 11, 2008, in Jacksonville, FL. Phillip served on the USS Sphinx ARL-24 (1971). You may contact his wife Constance Mohler at 10816 Hawaii Dr. S., Jacksonville, FL 32246, 904-642-6626, e-mail p.philmohler@comcast.net.

Member **Daniel E. Guy** was killed in a motorcycle wreck July 7, 2008, in Monroe, Georgia. Daniel served in Inshore Undersea Warfare Group-One Unit 2 Cam Rahn Bay (11/66 and 1/68). You may contact the family c/o 1002 Jericho Rd., Monroe, GA 30656, 770-867-3798.

EMC David Lampher US Navy, Ret. passed away in July 2008 from asbestos cancer related. David served on the USS Benewah APB-35 as a EM1 and EMC 1966-68. You may contact the family c/o 2819 Irvine Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85086, 623-465-0285.

Michael Tramo passed away in May 2004. Michael served in B Co 6th/31st 9th Infantry Division dates (UA). You may contact the family at 1039 Calhoun Ave., Bronx, NY 10465, 718-829-0695.

Member **Roger Cuff** passed away August 2000. Roger served with B Co 631st and A Co 4th/47th (1969-70). You may contact the family c/o Nancy Cuff, 8628 Ball Rd., Weedsport, NY 13166, 315-834-9710.

Jerry Hunter passed away April 27, 2008, due to problems with his heart following heart surgery. Jerry served on the USS Mercer APB-39 (1968-69) with the Mobile Riverine Force TF-117. You may contact his wife Jo Hunter at P.O. Box 1021, Rathdrum, ID 83858, e-mail mykia_1998@msn.com.



Capt. Burton Brooks Witham Jr., 85, US Navy (Ret.) of Englewood, FL, formerly of Virginia Beach, passed away peacefully Aug. 7, 2008. Burt was born in Portland, Maine, the son of Burton B. and Celia A. Witham. He served in the U.S. Navy for 32 years and retired in 1973. Captain Witham was Commander of Task Force 116 Gamewardens, mid 1966-April 1967. Burt was a 32nd degree Mason, an avid hobbyist, and community volunteer. He is survived by his daughters, Mary Huddleston of Huntersville, NC. Anne Kilpatrick of Easley, SC; three granddaughters and two great-granddaughters. He was preceded in death by his wife of 47 years, Caroline Milliken Witham. A memorial service will be held in Englewood, FL, in October with family and friends.



Fannie Rainwater, wife of member Loy K. Rainwater, passed away June 2, 2008, after a lengthy battle with cancer. Fannie was a nice lady who always had a cheerful smile and disposition. She was a big part of the two USS Guide reunions she was able to attend. Fannie is survived by her husband Loy K. "Boats" Rainwater, 3526 Pine Knolls Dr., Sulphur, LA 70663, 337-527-7839, e-mail boats7367@aol.com. May she rest in peace...USS Guide MSO-447 Shipmates and Friends.

Joanne L. Franklin, wife of member Paul R. Franklin, passed away July 20, 2008, from cancer. You may contact her husband Paul Franklin at 561 Stanton St. Niles, OH 44446, 330-652-0162, e-mail jfranklin2@neo.rr.com. Paul served with C Co 4th/47th 9th Inf Div (9/68-6/69). May she rest in peace.



I am very sad to say that I just talked to Will Davis, the beloved company commander of B Company 3/60 in 6/67-6/68 and later as adjutant. His daughter, **Jodie Davis**, was murdered the end of last week by a boy friend. Jodie was a very vivacious young single mother and was a paralegal. Jodie was 41 years old and had two teenaged sons from her previous marriage. I talked to her a couple of years after her mother died and it was very apparent that she loved her father dearly.



Wilbert Davis is one of the most respected veterans of 3/60th that I know. Will lost his wife a few years ago and now his daughter to a senseless murder. You may contact Major Wilbert Davis at 712 Clayton St. Aberdeen, MD 21001, 410-272-5853, e-mail mjrwill-davis@comcast.net.

William James White, 61, passed away on Tuesday, August 26, 2008 at Baptist Hospital in Jacksonville. Bill was wounded in Vietnam while serving with Alpha Co, 2nd Battalion, 39th Infantry in 1967-68. He spent 2 years in Walter Reed Army Hospital. He is survived by his wife of 39 years, Karen, sons, Brian, Zachary, Nathan and Brandon as well as daughter, Rebecca.

John L. Otteson, son and stepson of Sara and Albert Moore passed away June 20, 2008. John had been in declining health for a number of years. He was 45 years old. Losing a child is one of the hardest things a person can go through no matter what age; they will always remain your child. May our son John rest in peace.



Albert & Sara

I've got to re-up with the MRFA...I think my membership expired in March. Don't worry about treating me like a LTC....I'm still an E-4 at heart. I walked up to a two-star ROTC (at Ark St U) classmate of mine 2 weeks ago who is still on active duty and said "how you doin'""*%\$! He didn't know what to do until he turned around and recognized me...then he became good ole Simmons again...just like back in 1974. By the end of 1970 after I pulled my 68-69 tour in Nam and pulled a year in Germany, with side trip to Fort Leonard Wood, I went back to college in 71 and went through ROTC and picked up a commission in 74, went back onto active duty in 1974 and got out again in 1985 when I made Major and stayed first in the Ala Nat Guard and then in the Reserves when I moved back to

Echo Rangers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

activated Company E (Ranger), 75th Infantry. The provisional "Go-Devil Ranger" company, also known as the separate 3rd Brigade of the 9th Infantry Division, formally established as an independent unit on 26 July 1969, was unaffected by this paper ruse. On 24 September, the U.S. Army Pacific reactivated Company E by General Order 705 and the U.S. Army Vietnam headquarters published orders re-assigning Company E to the 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry.

Company E, 75th Infantry was again activated on 1 October 1969, and the original Company E was discontinued and became the new Company E. The only difference was what they called themselves. They dropped "Riverine Rangers" and continued on with their newly acquired name, "Go-Devil Rangers." They left Vietnam on 12 October 1970, with the 3d Brigade, 9th Infantry Division.

No other combat recon units waged reconnaissance and intelligence-gathering operations under circumstances more difficult than those with the 9th Infantry Division in Vietnam. Despite this, the Reliable Reconnaissance Patrollers, Riverine Rangers, and Go-Devil Rangers manifested sound tactical doctrine and imaginative techniques in adjusting to the alien Mekong Delta environment and applied undeviating pressure against the Viet Cong havens and their supply lanes throughout the division term of service in Vietnam.

Albert Moore

Dear Al,

You most certainly may use any and all content pertaining to this fine unit. While they were not actually a physical part of our Battalion in Binh Dinh Province, they share our Regimental lineage and we are very proud of their service in your division.

In fact, I served briefly with the 3/47th (HHC) from June to August of 1968, before my return stateside.

Please reference our web site in your article www.75thrra.com/index-units.html!

Thank you!

Jim Sheppard, 1/50th Association Historian

northeast Arkansas till I retired as a LTC in Dec of 02. I was pulling duty at Pearl with CINCPAC when 911 happened...that was a trip.

As I remember the food on the Benewah was the best I had in Vietnam...I went in to Tan An with a Navy cook from the Benewah just before I came back to the world with the 3/60th to get some charcoal to cook steaks for 4 July on the boats and the Benewah on the 3 or 4 of July 69. We got down to the village in my old jeep (which the Sergeant Major let me use) to pick up the charcoal and figured out neither one of us had a weapon! And this was just 4 days before we were to come home! We just acted like we were packin' and nobody bothered us!

Thanks Albert, my re-up is in the mail!

LTC Rich Burns, Ret.

James Gannon's Story as Best I Can Recall

Born and raised an Iowa farm boy from a family of 14 kids. Graduated Mingo HS and went one year to Iowa State University before I decided to volunteer for the draft. Took a train from Des Moines to Fort Bliss, Texas, went through induction, etc., and then sent by bus to Fort Carson, Colorado. I was stationed with the 5th Inf. Div at Fort Carson, Colorado, for a little over a year, training mostly for riot control and operations in a Mechanized division. APCs and Guns. I wanted to fight for my country so I volunteered for Vietnam. Went through Fort Lewis, Wash. Tachikawa AFB, Cam Ranh Bay, and eventually to Bear Cat, Vietnam. Early Jan. 1968, I first was sent to the French fort and the night of arrival we were attacked by mortars and a guy was killed in the latrine. I did not know where the bunkers were so I just laid down in the middle of the road. Was at the French fort for maybe a week before I heard about CRIP and they were looking for a volunteer; therefore, I again volunteered for CRIP arriving late Jan or early Feb. of 1968.

I really enjoyed CRIP because we knew where we were going. We had Lt. Alexander as a CO and he was a great CO. Would have followed him anywhere. We had a big bunker of explosives and weapons that we could choose what we wanted to carry for the mission--the LAW was my favorite intimidator--we all split up the weight and took turns carrying different explosives. We had APCs and Jeeps for convoy support. During Tet of 68, the full bladders at the chopper base near us got blown up so we had to run a convoy of fuel tankers from Tan Sunut AFB through Saigon down Highway 4 to Tan An. When we went through Saigon, it was like no one lived there. We did not see a soul. Tan An got partly ran over by the NVA prior to Tet. It was totally insane. People shooting at each other--C4 all in the air. The whole village in front of us was blown

away and anything that moved got about a 100 bullets. The guys on perimeter were short timers and they hadn't seen much action their year in-country. They were not going to let anything stop their departure. Lt. Alexander asked for a volunteer to go out the next night on Listening Post. Rumor was they were going to come back and finish us off. Yes, somehow I volunteered again. I figured if some fighting started I would be better off going out with the ARVNs than coming back towards the base and a wall of lead. That was most fearful night in country.

Sorry for getting a little long winded.

Anyway I was shot around 20 miles ESE from our base on April 22, 1968. They dusted me off to Saigon where I had my operations.

Lt. Alexander came and visited me once with some of my gear before they sent me to the 249th General Hospital in Japan. I was put in a contaminated ward because of my infections. Eventually back to the world and Fort Leonardwood, MO, for a month before I was transferred to Fitzsimmons in Denver, Colorado. There I had some more operations and after about a year was released from the Army.

All is good and it would sure be nice to hook up with all of my old buddies and tell some stories.

Thanks for listening, aloha,

James P. Gannon
74-5000 Mamalahoa Hwy
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	MRF w/Vietnam Ribbon Vietnam (Olive Drab)				
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Michael Marquez A Co 3rd Plt 3rd/60th Inf (7/68-7/69)
Bob Marburger C Co 2nd/60th Inf (11/68-11/69)
James Masters USS Askari (09/69-08/70)
Phil McLaughlin Landing Ship Squadron 3 (08/67-09/69)
Thomas L. "Mac" McLemore T-112-7 (12/66-12/67)
Big Jim Meehan IUWG-1 Nha Trang
Adam Metts T-111-2 (8/69-10/69)
Terry Metzzen C Co 3rd/60th Inf (12/66-11/67)
Alan Metzzer LCUs NSA Danang
Cdr David Miller USN (Ret.) CO RivDiv 112 (11/67-12/68)
Nichols Miller COS RAS Div 152 (7/68-6/69)
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Bobby G. Moore USS St. Clair City (8/65-7/66)
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J. Russell & Alice Moore RivRon 9 A-91-5 (11/68-06/69)
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Roy & Lynn Moseman 4th/47th Inf
Co Van My TF-115.3.7 Cat Lo
Paul Nace USS Colleton (09/68-11/69)
Lynden R. Noe USS Benewah (04/69-12/69)
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Christopher Olsen T-131-8 (05/68-05/69)
John Oxley E Co. 3rd/47th Inf (01/65-11/67)
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Luis Peraza Casanova D Co. 3rd/60th Infantry (11/68-08/69)
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LTC Nathan Plotkin USA (Ret.) HQ 2nd Bde
BM1 W. R. Posey YTB-785 (1967-68)

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