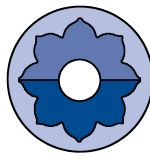




River Currents



A PUBLICATION OF
THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 15, NUMBER 1
SPRING 2006

MRFA MOURNS LOSS OF A TRUE HERO

Lt. General William B. Fulton, USA, Ret., who served as the Association of the United States Army's director of industry affairs, died 20 January 2006 in Arlington, Virginia. He was 86.

Joining the AUSA staff shortly after retiring from the service as the director of the Army staff at the Department of the Army, Fulton was in charge of the Association's Sustaining Member Program, advertising for both ARMY Magazine and AUSA NEWS, the Annual Meeting and Exposition and the growing symposia program, a series of professional development forums held around the country each year dealing with timely topics affecting national defense, the posture of the Army and the men and women who serve.

The MRFA and our Country lost a true American hero in General Fulton. He was one of a kind, a true Officer and Gentleman. A Soldier's, Soldier, the likes of whom we will not see again in our lifetime. The General loved and respected all who served in Vietnam. He once told me that he fought in three wars but the bravest of the brave were the young men who served in Vietnam.

He will be deeply missed by all who knew him and we who knew him are better off today for having known the General. He was such a Gentleman.

Keep Marching, Keep Marching...
Albert

Fulton served with AUSA from May 1977 to January 1985. A native of Berkley, California, Fulton graduated from the University of California at Berkley in 1938 with a bachelor's degree in political science and a commission in the United States Army. He was an honor graduate of the Reserve Officer's Training Program (ROTC).

As a newly commissioned second lieutenant of infantry, Fulton was assigned to an infantry replacement center in Oregon. He then entered World War II and joined the 91st Infantry Division in North Africa where he commanded a platoon.

As a captain, Fulton commanded a company that moved into Italy and fought in the Rome-Arno Campaign, experienced combat in the North Appenines to Bologna and then saw action in the Po Valley--its final campaign of the war. For his gallantry and heroism in combat, he was awarded the Nation's second highest award for valor--the Distinguished Service Cross.

Returning to the United States to attend

the Command and General Staff College, Fulton then held a variety of assignments first in Germany, then an instructor at the Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia.

During the Korean War, he was on the planning staff, and later G1, with Headquarters, Army Forces Far East Advanced, before joining the 4th Infantry Division as a battalion commander.

After an assignment in the Pentagon in research and development, Fulton attended the Air War College at Maxwell Air Force Base, served as a member of a special study group in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and was a member of the Army War College's staff and faculty; during which time he completed his studies for a Master's degree in international relations from George Washington University.

Fulton then joined the re-activated 9th Infantry Division, the "Old Reliables" at Fort Riley, Kansas.

As the United States increased its troop commitment to Southeast Asia, Fulton became the commander of the Division's 2nd Brigade and, under his leadership, his unit expanded from a handful of officers and noncommissioned officers into a full-strength, combat-ready fighting unit that was deployed to Vietnam in late January 1967.

While in-country, Fulton launched combat operations in the Mekong River Delta and later, because of its combat efficiencies in this new endeavor, the brigade teamed up with Navy Task Force 117 to form the Mobile Riverine Force, an effective and proficient joint fighting unit of historic proportions.

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3rd/60th Reactivated

By Albert "Monti" Montillo B Co 3rd/60th 9th Infantry Division Vietnam 4/6-9/68

The Army recently decided to deactivate the 1st Battalion 28th Infantry and reactivate the 3rd Battalion 60th Infantry, The battalion CO, Lt Col Christopher Rizzo located the MRFA web site and soon thereafter made contact with John Sperry. John contacted several members of Bravo Company and a group of us attended the ceremony held at Fort Jackson, South Carolina, November 16, 2005. We were greeted warmly by Lt Col Rizzo and we shared some camaraderie with B Co 3rd/60th. He explained how impressed he was with the response from John Sperry and Bob Stumpf and to have us attend the ceremony. He told us this is a Basic Training battalion and their new salute greeting will be "River Raiders!" He admitted they really wanted to use "Wild Ones" but considering this is a Basic Training unit felt that inappropriate. The ceremony was formal and impressive, the inactivation of two battal-

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FROM THE GALLEY

ALBERT MOORE, MRFA PRESIDENT

May 4-6, 2006, MRFA

Gathering of the Troops, Crews & Guests in Indianapolis, Indiana

Some of you may remember as far back to our reunions at the Galt House in Louisville, Kentucky (94-95), and our first reunion at the Drawbridge in 1997. In 1994 and 1996, we had what we called a "unit gatherings" at the Galt House and the Drawbridge, where you the members could come and check the hotel and areas out prior to our reunions. This went over real well with the membership. We will be doing the same thing in at the Adam's Mark Hotel by the Airport in Indianapolis. It will start on Thursday, May 4, 2006

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From the Galley

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and check-out is on Sunday the 7th. Now, the gatherings are somewhat different than the reunions. We will not have any activities planned such as a meal, dance, etc., but we will have a hospitality room available with snacks and beverages. There will be no registration fee for this gathering, so if you live in the area and just want to come and visit that's fine, too. This is also a good time for some of you that have missed our prior reunions to come and visit. There will be a free shuttle service to and from the airport; the courtesy phone for the airport shuttle service is located in the baggage area. For those of you wishing to visit downtown and the local mall, the hotel will be providing free shuttle service to and from downtown. The hotel has free parking; but there are no RV hook-ups. The hotel has a large parking area so there will be no problem finding a parking space. Room rates are \$79 a night. You have to make your own reservations. You may contact the hotel directly by calling (317) 248-2481. Be sure to mention you're making your reservations under the Mobile Riverine Force Association. For more information on the hotel, contact Reggie Vaughn, Sales Manager, (317) 381-6127 (his direct-dial line) or e-mail rvaughn@adamsmark.com. You may also contact Angela Jordan, Convention Sales Manager at ajordan@adamsmark.com. The Adam's Mark by the Airport is located at 2544 Executive Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46241. Or, check them out on the internet at www.adamsmark.com; click on the link to the Indianapolis Adam's Mark.

Indianapolis, Indiana

adam's mark.
Indianapolis

IS HONORED TO WELCOME

MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION
9th INFANTRY DIVISION

THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION & 9th INFANTRY DIVISION

2006 GATHERING OF THE TROOPS AND CREWS

We thank you for choosing the Adam's Mark Hotel Indianapolis as your new home for your 2006 Gathering of the Troops and Crews and your reunion in 2007 and 2008. We are committed to serve those who have served!

If you should have any questions regarding the venue or the location specific area, please do not hesitate to give us a call.

See you in May!
The Adam's Mark Team

Things to See and Do in Indianapolis

FROM THE VP ROY MOSEMAN

We will be at the ADAM'S MARK HOTEL in Indianapolis, IN, in May 2006 for a gathering of the troops and crews. Our next reunion will be at the Adam's Mark in August '07. The Adam's Mark is a beautiful hotel located within 10 minutes of the airport and close to downtown attractions. It is large enough to handle our association and well equipped with the amenities that we require. They will be a gracious host and willing to accommodate our every need. Adam's Mark will undergo a \$10 million renovation that will be complete before our '07 reunion.



Indianapolis is a fairly large city with a small town atmosphere. It really is beautiful with its downtown parks and over 2 miles of canals winding through the city. One can rent a paddle boat or take a gondola ride through the canal with a slow and peaceful view of this beautiful city. If you are a race fan or not, the Indianapolis Motor Speedway is a treat for you. Situated only 5.05 miles from downtown the speedway has a racing museum, a golf course, and a nice restaurant within the infield. They also offer bus rides around the track that includes a history of the track. There is also the Indianapolis Speed dome that features a 1.5 mile oval and figure 8 track that host late model, figure 8, and stock car racing year round. If you like wine or interested in a tour of a winery, Indianapolis is the place for you. There are several wineries close by that offers tours and tasting. The Easley Winery is in the middle of

downtown and easily accessible. If museums are your thing, you are in luck. There are many museums in the area including the Crispus Attucks Museum, the Eiteljorg Museum of American Indians and Western Art, the Freetown Village, the Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame, the Indiana Medical History Museum, the Colonel Eli Lilly War Museum, and Congressional Medal of Honor Memorial. Indianapolis also has the Indiana State Library, the American Legion Headquarters, and the Indiana War Memorial Plaza Historic District where a Soldier and Sailors large monument is located, plus it has the second most war memorials and monuments of any city in the United States--only Washington, DC, has more. There are many places to shop including the downtown Circle Centre with shops in many of the buildings connected by sky bridges. If you like animals, there is the world famous Indianapolis zoo with animals of all kinds for your grandchildren or your young children to see. For a few of you, there is the Caribbean Cove Indoor Water Park within 15 miles of downtown. Start planning now to attend our '06 gathering or our '07 reunion at the Adam's Mark Hotel in Indianapolis. For more information on the Indianapolis, area feel free to contact Paul Williams, Meeting and Sales Manager, at the Indianapolis Convention and Visitors Bureau 1-800-956-INDY, e-mail pwilliams@indianapolis.org or go to their web site www.indy.org.

My First Mortar Attack

By John Robinson 9th MP Co

After graduating from military police school at Fort Gordon, Georgia, in late June 1968, my entire company received orders for Vietnam. Returning from a 30-day leave, we first spent a few days in San Francisco processing before flying to Vietnam.

Our first few days in country was in processing at Bear Cat before receiving our weapons. I was with PFC's Ben Pearsall, Zack Robinson and Harold Smith. We were assigned to the 9th Military Police Company; our orders were for Dong Tam. The night before leaving for Dong Tam, we were all in a tent around 2300 hours. In the tent there were 20 men--10 to a side. PFC

Zack Robinson was at the far end of the tent. The opposite end was where the bunker was. All of a sudden, we heard a very loud explosion. Before anyone could react, PFC Zack Robinson was running past everyone toward the bunker in his underwear and t-shirt, no socks or boots. He ran so fast--similar to a 100-yard dash--everyone else could do nothing but laugh.

You had to be there to really enjoy this laugh because it was an outgoing round.

Fortunately, all of us are still in contact with one another. Of course, Zack doesn't remember any of this.

John Robinson served with 9th MP Co. 8/68-7/69. You may contact John at 21 Craig Rd., Bear, DE 19701-1125. 302-322-6309 or e-mail rjohnboy1@aol.com.

3rd/60th Reactivated

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ions and the reactivation of two. Seeing the 3rd/60th banner unveiled and presented was a beautiful sight for each of us. After the ceremony, we were invited to attend a reception and were surprised when Lt Col Rizzo introduced each of us, individually, to the audience, and asked us to step forward and receive a framed certificate. We are now Honorary Life Members of the 3rd Battalion 60th Infantry, Fort Jackson, South Carolina. Prior to introducing us, Rizzo pointed out the banner Sperry mailed him which was on display in the reception area. Later, we took many photos in front of the banner. Those attending were John and Barb Iannucci, Lou and Elsie De Old, Mitch Purdue, Bob Nichols, and myself, Albert Montillo. I can't express adequately how we were treated. Lt Col Rizzo gave us his full time and was generally sincere about how he felt about our attendance. He



extended an open invitation for us to return anytime, and I believe he meant it. He also encouraged us to show up on Saturday for PT, we declined. Each of us I'm sure felt this was a special event in our respective lives. I know I do. I also came away with a new appreciation for our all Volunteer Army, which I can't express adequately.

VC Nurse Leads 2nd/39th to Hideout

Rach Kien

Seven VC who buried themselves alive to escape detection were found by 9th Inf Division soldiers being led to a hospital complex by a former enemy nurse. The nurse had rallied to the government under the Chieu Hoi program 13 September and the next day volunteered to take men of the 2nd Battalion, 39th Infantry, to a VC hospital where she had worked. Company A was inserted and she led them to a large house enclosed by a storm fence.

"The VC were using the house as a hospital," said 1st LT Phil Ward of Houston, Texas, A Co. 2nd/39th platoon leader. There were 11 beds for wounded, the hospital was very clean, and had running water, toilets and three showers. After searching the hospital and finding medical supplies and clothing, 2nd/39th elements began sweeping the surrounding area. Spec 4 Anderson Durham, 22 of Dallas, Texas, spotted an enemy running into a bunker and detained him. The suspect said more VC were in the area hiding in tunnels and bunkers. Minutes later eight VC were seen running toward a wood line.



The 1st Brigade elements opened up on them killing all eight during a brief firefight.

The search continued in the area indicated by the suspect when Private 1st Class George L. Greendeer, 24 of Dallas, Wisconsin, hit something hard as he probed the ground with his bayonet. He started digging and found a suspect hiding underground in a 50-gallon barrel. It had been cut in half and a layer of wood covered the top. "I couldn't believe it," Greendeer said. The suspect told interpreters he had been underground for a day and a half. Continuing his search, Greendeer found five more barrels containing suspects who had buried themselves alive more than 30 hours earlier. In one, a suspect nurse and a man were found plus a .45 cal. pistol. Also discovered were VC flags, documents, a flag with a hammer and sickle and a picture of Ho Chi Minh. "I still can't figure how they could live in the barrels so long," Greendeer said.

Taken from the October 2nd 1968 issue of the Old Reliable Vol 2, No 39

Clerks Turned Infantrymen Repel Assault

TAN AN SOUTH

The 9th Division's Reliable Academy stressed the point that any member of the Army can be involved in a firefight.

Several supply clerks of the 2nd/47th (Mech) Infantry found out how true that was as they turned combatants here 16

September to repel a Viet Cong ground attack against the 2nd/47th compound. Heavy fighting began at midnight when the VC attempted to penetrate the compound from two sides. Supported by the newly formed "Panther Patrol," the clerks turned back the charge. When the fighting ended at 3 am, seven VC had been killed. "We arrived at the compound several days ago," explained Specialist Five Neil Clark

Note from Albert

As you all know, we have the CCB at Coronado and we have a great working party that takes care of the boat. The working party is getting older and without the help and assistance of a few sons and grandsons of our members the working party would not be able to keep the boat up the maintenance as they have done in the past. Some of you that live in the immediate area have often e-mailed or called me wanting to know about the boat and how to visit the boat. One problem is none have offered to assist with the working party and upkeep of the boat. We have a few working party members who travel a few 100 miles once a month to be on the working party. The working party meets once a month and usually has some type of cook-out at the end of the work day. I know a lot of you are still in the work force but so are some of the active working party members we have. It would be appreciated if a few of you would step forward and offer your time and effort with the boat. You don't have to do it every month, but a few times a year would be appreciated. If you are not retired Army or Navy, all you have to do is contact Charles Campbell or Everett Jones and they will see that you get on base. You can find their phone numbers and e-mail addresses in the working party update posted here.

Working Party Update

If you live in the San Diego area and would like to assist in the restoration of CCB-18 by being an MRFA volunteer on the working party, Army or Navy, contact Charles Campbell, 677 G St. SP#1, Chula Vista, CA 91910; 619-427-6835 or e-mail: ccicec@aol.com or Everett Jones at 1947 Gotham St., Chula Vista, CA 91913, 619-421-3721; oneerj@pacbel.net.

PLEASE NOTE:

YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE is printed on the front of your issue of River Currents.

of New York City, one of the supply clerks involved in the battle. "It was apparent that the VC were probing our defense to see how strong we were. They discovered that even clerks can be tough fighters as we repelled their attack before they could get close to our perimeter," Clark added.

Taken from the October 2nd 1968 issue of the old Reliable.

Trading Movies Vietnam 1968 (Benewah)

Life for those of us "River Rats" in the Mekong Delta in 1968 was a contrast in extremes. We were bored for most of the day and night and then waited for that 1 or 2 hours each night when the fireworks started. Most of the time, we were bored. That is what happens when your job becomes a dull routine even in a war zone.

River Assault Flotilla One consisted of five ships, sometimes a couple more. We were a mobile floating base, able to up anchor and take us and our embarked Army troops, and their transport, anywhere in the Delta area of the Mekong River. We went where the action was. After the Mekong River flow into Vietnam from Cambodia to the west, it forms a delta. Within that delta, there are many rivers that eventually empty into the South China Sea. Although the river we operated on most of the time was the Tien Giang. I am going to just refer to it as the Mekong to avoid confusion.

There was plenty of action--at least for the Army troops and Navy boat crews who took off in their Armored Troop Carriers and other craft to sweep areas in the Delta. They would reach their zone of operation by way of the canals and smaller streams that flowed into the Mekong River. For those of us on the ships, it was the same routine, day after day. At night, it was a different story. The Army's fortified base at Dong Tam came under attack just about every night of the year. Anytime we were anchored near Dong Tam--which was often--we became part of the action in a curi-

ous way. Most of our ships were painted a dark green. That is quite a contrast from the usual Navy haze gray. The dark paint was used so we would not stand out against the river banks during the night and make us a target. We were also blacked out at night so we would not alert the enemy of our position. When the attack on the Army base started in the early hours before dawn, the ship would go to general quarters, or better known to civilians as "battle stations." Once at our guns and wearing helmets and flax jackets, we waited to see if the enemy would notice the huge darkened target halfway between them and the base they were shelling. Only once in the year I was aboard the ship did the enemy fire on us at night. Because of this, even going to general quarters with flashes of exploding mortar and rocket rounds lighting up Dong Tam became routine to us.

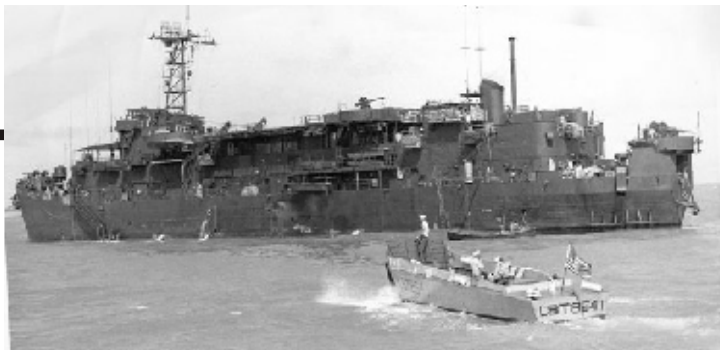
There was no recreation on the ship to speak of. Once a week, there would be beer call on the pontoons alongside. Those weren't much to brag about just a few 100 men standing on a scorching steel pontoon with no shade, drinking a couple of beers that soon became warm. When we officers weren't standing watch at anchor, which for me was the bridge, we were doing our daily routine jobs at our work stations, or were in our staterooms. Our only real form of entertainment, other than an occasional poker game, was watching movies. The enlisted watched their movies on the Mess Decks. The officers in the wardroom watched their movies in the officer's dining area. There were so many officers, Navy and Army, we ate in two sections. The wardroom wasn't big enough to hold all of us for meals. It also wasn't big enough to hold all of us for movies.

The senior officers got chairs during the movies. Most of the junior officers had to stand in the back of the room for the whole movie. If I was lucky, I got to sit on a trash can in the back corner. The wardroom was air conditioned, but it wasn't up to the task of overcoming the body heat of that many bodies. So it was always hot during a movie.

I remember one night there was a long movie.

When it was over and the light came on, there was an extra can of film next to the projector. We didn't even notice the break in the story line. It was hot enough in there as it was and the projector lamp was adding to the stifling heat; we didn't watch the extra can of film.

There were usually five ships in our flotilla on the river. Every time a supply ship (LST-AKL) came, we got a new batch of movies. When we saw all the movies, we



would swap with other ships. Eventually, we saw all the movies. Whenever a Navy ship showed up on the river, we would always ask if they had movies to trade.

Twice a day I stood anchor watch on the bridge as the Officer-of-the-Deck. Standing watch with me would be a quartermaster (to keep our position to make sure we didn't drag anchor) and a lookout. The Officer-of-the-Deck wore a pair of 8-power binoculars. On either side of the bridge was a huge 20-power pair of "big eyes" binoculars mounted on a swivel. They were so powerful that at night you could count the craters on the moon.

One day in particular, I was on watch. We were anchored next to the base at Dong Tam. This stretch of river is wide, but from there toward the sea it narrows considerably and runs straight as an arrow for about 5 miles or so. As I glanced downstream, I saw something coming my way but too far with my binoculars. I stepped over to the "big eyes" and trained them toward the southeast. There steaming toward us was an LST, Landing Ship Tank. It was one of the LSTs that brought supplies to the MRF and the base at Dong Tam. It was a long ways off, too far to read the number painted on her bows. In accordance with the Captain's standing orders, I called him on the phone to notify him that a ship was in sight. He immediately told me to ask the ship if they wanted to trade movies. The method of communicating between ships that were within sight of each other is to use a flashing light; this is a 12-inch light with shutters on the front so you can send message by Morse code.

I do remember it was almost 4:00 pm because I told the signalman to send the message to the ship about trading movies. I never knew what the reply was because my relief came on deck and I went below off duty. That was the end of that... or so I thought. I wasn't to learn the rest of the story for some months.

A few months later, the ships were anchored many miles from the Army base at Dong Tam. One of our junior officers coming back from R&R had flown into Dong Tam only to find the ship not there. While he was trying to arrange for a helicopter to fly him to the ship, he managed to strike up a conversation with an officer who was off

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VA Update

FYI Veteran's Survivors Miss Out on Pensions

Nearly 2 million poor veterans or the impoverished widows are probably missing out on as much as \$22 billion a year in pensions from the U.S. Government, but the Department of Veterans Affairs has had only limited success in finding them. Widows are hardest hit. According to a VA estimate, only one in seven of the survivors of the Nation's deceased soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, who probably could qualify for the pension, actually get the monthly checks. What's more, participation in the program is falling, according to a Knight Ridder analysis of VA records.

"The reason for the lax participation," a VA study said, "is that poor veterans generally are completely unaware that the program exists." "Veterans simply don't know about it," said Despina Hatton, who runs a senior law program for residents of Washoe County, Nevada, that seeks to help veterans or their widows receive the benefit. There are people such as a 72-year-old widow of a World War II sailor who lives in Nevada on \$9,732 a year on Social Security benefits. Frail, legally blind, suffering from dementia, and in need of

regular assistance at home, she could be eligible for \$1,608 more a year under the VA's formulas. That would boost her income by about 17 percent. She had never heard of the VA pension until recently. She's working to apply.

The VA knows that many veterans and widows are missing out on the benefit. "We obviously are here for any veteran or survivor who qualifies," said a VA pension official "but so many of these people we don't know who they are or where they are." Indeed, a VA report from late 2004 recommended that the agency "improve its outreach efforts" with public service announcements and other pilot programs. While it made limited efforts to reach veterans or their widows through existing channels, it is "difficult to determine" whether such efforts have been successful, the numbers don't suggest they have been. In Fiscal Year 2005, there were fewer veterans and widows added to the pension rolls than there were in 2004. World War II and Korean War veterans are dying and are rapidly falling off the rolls. At the same time, the department said it's been "reasonably successful" in signing up new Viet-

nam Vets. Nonetheless, one VA estimate of the program shows the potential pool of poor veterans and widows without the pensions has remained unchanged for the past 4 years. The total number of pension cases fell to 541,000 in Fiscal Year 2005, the sixth straight year of declines. The VA actuary office predicts that the pension participation is likely to drop further, losing between 7,000 and 8,000 enrollees a year and falling below 500,000 participants by 2012, according to a VA report. At the same time, the separate 2004 report estimates that an additional 853,000 veterans and 1.1 million survivors--generally widows--could get the pension but don't. Of all those likely eligible, only 27 percent of veterans and 14 percent of widows receive the money. The VA's pension program is targeted at veterans who served their country during wartime but have falling on hard times. The program provides a monthly check to bring incomes up to a certain level. A veteran can make up to \$10,579 a year and qualify for the VA pension, while widows can make up to \$7,094 a year. Those who are homebound or in need of extra assistance can receive more. One reason why so many veterans are missing out on the program is the VA literature lists the program under the dozens it provides. But the program's name confuses many veterans: it's called a "disability pension," but a person doesn't have to be dis-

abled to receive it. Further, a "Summary of VA Benefits" on the Department's Web site doesn't spell out a central criterion of the program that veterans can qualify based on their age. (The age requirement is listed in other parts of the VA Web site and the VA said it will correct the error.) BASICALLY, any poor veteran, who is 65 or older and served during a war, in combat or not, is eligible for the program, the biggest problem is the majority of the poor or elderly veterans have never heard of the program. If you know of anyone whom you believe can be helped or assisted by this program, please pass this information on.

Why are there millions of veterans and widows nationwide who are not getting VA benefits? The simple reason is because they don't know they are qualified, but the real answer is much more complex: The VA is NOT required to tell veterans, dependents, or widows that they qualify for benefits. As strange as this may seem, the VA is under no obligation to inform anyone of any benefits. This is also true for veterans who already enrolled in the VA system. Millions of veterans in the VA system are only receiving some of their benefits.

Most veterans do not know that if they have at least a 10 percent service-connected disability, they can get free eyeglasses, hearing aids, and mobility devices, such as canes and walkers. Other little benefits go begging as well. Very few veterans know they can get a clothing allowance (now over \$600 a year) if they wear a prosthetic device that damage their clothing or use tropical medication for skin ailments. Why doesn't the VA inform veterans of their benefits? The VA's answer is simple because it is not a requirement. Up until 3 years ago, the VA had outreach programs designed to find and inform veterans of their benefits. These programs were cancelled by the VA Secretary at that time. The reason? The programs were "too successful" and it was felt the VA budget couldn't handle any more veterans into the system. Who suffers the most of the VA's "non information" policy? All veterans, but most of all its poorer veterans suffer the most. There has been legislation floating around Congress for years that would require the VA to inform all veterans of all available benefits. The legislation just keeps getting bounced from one committee to another committee hearing with no action taken. So we find ourselves in the unique situation of having the state informing veterans of their Federal benefits and look for more states to start doing this. The irony here is that as states look to save money, veterans will be the winners. But the real answer to the problem lies in the legislation to require the VA to inform all veterans of all their benefits.

HOW TO GET HELP...

No veteran or widow eligible for this program should be left out. Veterans and their widows or other dependents might be eligible for the Department of Veterans Affairs pension if they meet certain requirements:

► Veterans must have served during a time of war, even if not in combat, and they must be either permanently disabled or 65 or older.

► Their income must fall under a certain level.

► Widows of veterans can also apply, although their incomes must be even lower.

If you think you may qualify or know someone who may qualify for the benefit, go to www.vba.va.gov/bin/21/Milvsc/Docs/Pensoneg.doc. If you are a widow of a veteran, go to www.vba.vagov/bin/21/Milvsc/Docs/Dpeneg.doc. The VA also has a toll-free number (800-827-1000) for more information; or contact your state or local county VA representative.

NOW AVAILABLE!

- 1/35th scale of the Program 5 Command and Communications Boat limited edition. Resin kit is 20" long. Orders usually shipped within 2 to 3 weeks. Shipped via UPS with insurance and confirmation domestic shipping. Price: \$199.95 plus Tax \$20.00. Grand total \$215.00. Paint and glue not included. To order contact Masterpiece Models, 7907 NE St Johns Rd., Vancouver, WA 98665. For credit card and other info, call 360-256-1488. To see the model, go to <http://www.masterpiecemodels.com>, or info@masterpiecemodels.com. The Models are By MRFA Member Jack Carrico SFC Ret.
- McGrogan's Military Patches: 208-762-4481/New e-mail macpatch@mcgrogans.com. McGrogan's patches has one of the largest collection there is of Vietnam Patches--Army and Navy. Don will be on hand for our '07 reunion.
- Military Watches Etc. MRFA and 9th Inf 541-863-3144 or e-mail seaweed@frontiernet.net www.chiefsquarters.com
- Books: www.mrfa.org
- Supplier of Challenge Coins and Military Key Fobs (Frank Gubala) 716-873-4821 or e-mail fgubala@aol.com; or visit the website www.9thinfantry.bravepages.com
- Seaweeds Ships Histories and Photos 1-800-seaweed www.uss-seaweed.com
- GOING BACK: IndoChina Tours owned and operated by MRFA member Courtney Frobenius B Co 3rd/60th 9thInfDiv. 207 Decatur St. NW, Olympia, WA 98502. 360-570-2096 or e-mail indochinatours@olywa.net www.indochinators.com

The only products to be pictured in *River Currents* will be MRFA products.

Lt. David Wyrick

By Ronald McAbee M-92-1

Early on the morning of 18 March 1968, I was with River Assault Squadron 9 and their tango boats loaded with troops as the squadron proceeded toward Cai-Lay--the operation area on the Rach Ba Rai Canal. It was also known as "Snoopy's Nose." It was Charlie country.

The palm trees looked dead from previous fire fights. It was hot and humid, and the air was difficult to breathe. Around sunrise, we dropped the Army off on the left side of the canal and waited. Hours passed with no sign of the 514 VC Battalion. Around 4:00 pm we started to move upriver slowly. The Army commander decided to pick up the troops and proceed up the canal.

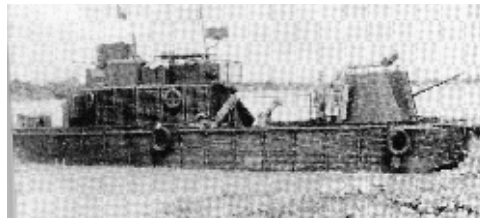
I was sitting in my 20-mm machine gun mount aboard M-92-1, with my hand and arm sticking out over the rim of my turret, talking to LT David Wyrick. He had been in country only 16 days. Underneath his helmet he wore a ball cap with the bill turned backward for good luck.

We were looking straight ahead toward the ASPB in front of us when a rocket hit and exploded on their right side. Black smoke poured from the boat. The squadron immediately began devastating fire into the right and left sides of the canal. Chris Kanabe and I (he was the starboard 50-caliber gunner) were firing our weapons on the right side of the canal when the Army radio suddenly shouted a "cease fire." We had been shooting at our own troops on the left side.

There was a pause in the fighting. Kanabe and Ramos, our port 50-caliber gunner, began handing me some ammunition stored underneath my turret. As they reached down for more ammo, we heard a loud BOOM! A B-40 rocket detonated on our right side between the coxswain flat and Kanabe's gun turret. It hit about 4 feet from us, and the blast knocked me back against my own gun turret.

I remember seeing a bright flash. The noise was incredible and black smoke was everywhere. Kanabe, Ramos, and myself were hit with small amounts of shrapnel! Our boat captain BM1 Billy Miller and helmsman Arthur Melling were critical. Everything seemed to be happening in microseconds. I looked down and saw pieces of shrapnel lodged in my legs; they were about the size of the end of my finger. I bent down and physically pulled them out. They were very hot, and one of them, in my left leg, was too deep to pull out.

Miller and Melling were moved to the lower compartment for medical attention and Kanabe took over the helmsman position. My ears were ringing unbelievably. I grabbed my ammunition and pulled it into my turret, reloaded my 20 mm and fired as rapidly as possible into the jungle. Suddenly my gun stopped firing. During my



haste to reload, I had left off the cover to my ammunition box and empty 20-mm shells had fallen and jammed the guide.

The only way to correct the problem was to remove my feeder to take the pressure off the ammunition belt. As I was standing to the side of my machine gun, I heard what sounded like hands clapping outside my gun mount. The VC has spotted me and they were firing away, the rounds were hitting inches from my face. As quickly as possible, I turned my turret out of the line of fire, removed the feeder, and got my 20 mm back in firing condition.

I then noticed I was standing in a great deal of blood. It was everywhere, running down the inside wall, on the deck, on my feet, and in my sandals. I knew I was bleeding, but not that bad. Then I remembered LT Wyrick sitting between the two 50-caliber gun turrets. This was his blood.

Neither Kanabe nor I could get to him; we had to fight our way out of the ambush first. I could hear a considerable amount of firing going on over the sound of my own machine gun. I thought it might be rockets hitting the river bank nearby, but I wasn't certain. It also could have been the exploding rounds from our 40-mm turret.

Once again my gun stopped firing, and for the second time I was out of ammunition. I swung my turret out of the VC firing line and looked behind us. To my disbelief, our other boats had turned around and were headed down the river. They were more than a 100 yards away from us, leaving us and the two ASPBs out there by ourselves. Our radio must have been damaged by the rocket because we hadn't heard the order to turn around. The two ASPBs had heard the order, but they were afraid to turn and go by us because of the intense firing from our 40 mm.

I crawled out of my turret to tell Kanabe about the situation. While I was struggling to get back into firing position, the firing slowed down and our boat turned around and left the ambush. We were finally safe, back with the rest of the squadron.

Our boat and the two ASPBs has taken several rockets and many small arms hits. When we pulled to the medevac boat to get the critical wounded out, I saw them gently place LT Wyrick on a stretcher. He had been severely injured and he was in critical condition. Corpsman Biddle administered CPR in a valiant attempt to keep him alive, but to no avail. Lieutenant David Wyrick died between 4:00 and 4:30 pm in the jungles of Vietnam on 18 March 1968.

Ronald McAbee served on the Monitor

92-1 from December 1967 through December 1968.

There was a Naval Chapel at the Long Beach Naval Station dedicated in memory of Lt. David Wyrick. When they closed the Naval Base down a number of years back, the association ask for the dedication plaque that was placed on the outside of the Chapel, unfortunately we never received a reply from the Navy Department on our request.

ARMY/NAVY Golf Tournament

Member David McCann has volunteered to put an Army and Navy golf tournament together for the '07 reunion. If anyone is interested in assisting David, please do so--C/O David McCann, 1263 Big Horn Rd, Helena, MT 59602. 406-442-8168 or e-mail bdalmcc@ixi.net. David served in RivRon 15 1970.

PIG OUT

As of right now, we will have a free pig-out in '06 and '07, the pig-outs by Dean and the 709th Maintenance and 99th Combat Support Battalion have gone over great and there is no way we can thank Dean enough for these cook outs. Also, we need to give thanks to all those who assisted Dean at our last reunion; they had a pig pickin' good time. Thanks folks!

Movies on the Benewah

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

that LST we had asked to trade movies with some months before. The officer was immediately asked to have dinner aboard the ship. She was anchored at Dong Tam. When the officer set down to eat with the LST's officers, they were eager to talk to him. They told him his ship was one "cool customer." The officer was puzzled by this remark. They went on.

They remembered vividly, months before when they rounded the last turn in the river many miles below Dong Tam. All at once they were ambushed by the enemy from both banks of the river. They received machine gun and RPG rounds that blew holes into the side of the ship. The ship went to general quarters as every man manned his battle station. As they returned fire with the enemy on both banks of the river and tried to steam away from the trap they had sailed into, they received a flashing light from the Benewah wanting to know if they wanted to trade movies.

By Lt/Jg Tom Sparkman USS Benewah 1968

A Tribute to Chaplain Nate Loesch

By Captain Al Dillon US Navy (Ret.)

The Navy Chaplain entered the ship's wardroom weary and dejected. His usually pleasant face was pale and drawn, etched by the stress of the mission from which he'd just returned. It was hours after midnight and though tired he knew he could not sleep.

He greeted the Captain with a glance and slumped into a seat at the dining table. "Cup of coffee Chaplain?" asked the Captain. The Chaplain nodded as if in deep thought. The Captain drew coffee from an urn on the sideboard. Placed a cup in front of the Chaplain and set opposite him.

"Lt. Wyrick is dead," said the Chaplain.

"Yes I heard," replied the Captain, "We got the report by radio."

The Chaplain and the Captain were friends. Thrown together by the war in the river, they had come to like and respect each other. The Chaplain could have resided aboard the flagship with his boss and the Commodore, but he chose to live aboard the LST where life was less formal.

The Chaplain stared at the Captain and said, "Wyrick had only been here 10 days. This was his first mission."

"Yes I know," said the Captain. He knew too that Wyrick had gone on the mission

because another officer was sick. Neither the Chaplain nor Wyrick were under the Captain's operational command. His ship merely provided hotel services for them and the combat soldiers and sailors.

The Chaplain turned his cup round and round in his hands staring at it absorbed in thought. The Captain waited in silence, he knew the Chaplain wanted to talk about what happened on the mission.

"We were going down a narrow canal," said the Chaplain. "The boats were traveling in a column. I was in the third boat. It was very dark."

The Captain listened intently, compassionately to this marvelous man who went into combat with the soldiers and sailors. He was not required to go officially. He could remain onboard the ship in relative safety, but he went voluntarily into "the valley of death" in the small boats. The men accepted his presence, they expected it. He was popular; he never preached to them, but they felt his goodness and were comforted.

The Chaplain took a sip of coffee and continued his story.

"There was a streak of light and an explosion hit the first boat. A B-40 rocket the

crew said. It came from one side of the canal. For several minutes, there was shooting and yelling and we fired back. Then it got quiet. We were past the enemy area." The command boat called by radio and asked for me. They said Lt. Wyrick was hurt bad and could I come aboard their boat. We took our boat alongside the command boat and I went aboard."

The Chaplain paused for another sip of coffee and went on with his story. "The rocket had torn open his stomach. He was conscious though I could see his insides were exposed and all torn up. He'd been given a shot of morphine and his pain was subsiding. I held his head in my lap. It took an hour and fifteen minutes for him to die. There were no helicopters available; we couldn't get him back to a doctor. He talked the whole time. I didn't know him 'till then. He was groggy, but he told me about his wife in San Diego. They had two little girls. He told me about his mother and his childhood. He never asked for anything. He just talked, we prayed together and he died."

Both men were silent. They sipped coffee. Several minutes passed. The Chaplain said softly yet urgently "I don't want to go out there again, Al."

"I know," said the Captain, "but you will. And the worst part of it is that you don't have to, but you will." And he did.

MRFA & 9th Infantry Division Mobile Museum

The museum will be at our next reunion in '07. Board Member Rick Corrick handles all aspects of the trailer. The trailer will be open from 9 am till 5 pm. If you have never had the opportunity to see the trailer please plan on doing so, it's an awesome display. All the 9th Infantry Division KIAs, Navy Task Forces 117-116-115 KIAs, as well as all in-country Navy Units and Coast Guard KIAs are listed on the outside of the trailer under their respective units. We have pictures of all the different units of the 9th and all Navy units posted behind plexiglass inside. Rich Corrick served on R-112-1, 1966-1967.

Thanks to Our Members The Memorial Trailer is a Great Success!

The MRFA would like to thank the following members for their generous donations to our memorial trailer. If you would like to make a donation, please make check or money order payable to MRFA. Send to: Charlie Ardinger, 1857 County Rd. A-14, Decorah, IA 52101.

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Preston Banks HHC 3rd/47th INF
Gery Benedetti T-112-2 and T-112-6
Ralph H. Bigelow T-131-8 1968-69
Jerome H. "Jerry" Bogart USS Tom Green County LST 1159
MG Lucien Bolduc, Jr. USA (Ret.) CO 3rd/47th Infantry, 2/67-1/68
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Al Breiningr COS RivDiv-91 1966-67
Edward T. Brennan E Co 3rd/60th Infantry 02/68-02/69
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Lt Gen William B. Fulton, USA (Ret.) CO 2nd Bde., 9th Infantry Div.
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Jeffie L. Hanks USS Benawah
SFC Michael D. Hamner RivRon 13 / RivDiv 153
Michael A. Harris T-152-1
John "Jack" Herrmann ComRivDiv-92 1967-68
Lucien Hinkle HQC 3rd/60th Infantry 9th Inf Div
George Frank Humphreys, II E CO 3rd/39th Infantry
Don P. Jackson IUWG-1 Unit 1, Vung Tau
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Dale S. "Doc" Jones B Co. 4th/47th Infantry
David R. Jones Zippo 111-7
Richard T. Kane B-1 4th/47th & D Co 5th/60th Inf.
Chris R. Knabe M-92-1
Michael A. Knowlton YRBM-18 1/68-1/69
George C. Lang A-3 4th/47th Infantry
Walter F. Lineberger III XO RAD 91 1968-69
ENT William H. Little RivRon 11
Ed Lohf C/Co/4th/47th
Robert Lorman T-152-6 6/68-6/69
Stephen Luft B Co. 4th/47th Infantry
David E. Lull B-2 2nd/47th Infantry
Brian J. Mahoney USS Sphinx ARL-24
George J. Marthenze T-91-10
BMC Robert C. Martin, USN (Ret.) USS Benawah
William McCollum T-111-2
Bruce McIver T-131-7 RAID-72 3/69-3/70
Adam Metts T-111-2
John P. Miller C Co 3rd/47th Infantry



Nicholas Miller COS RIVASTDIV 152 7/68-6/69
Albert Moore USS Benawah
Chuck Morgan RivDiv 91 T-91-5
Roy D. Moseman C-2 4th/47th Infantry
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Christopher O. O'Isen T-131-8 5/68-5/69
SFC Claude Onley 3rd/60th Infantry
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Carl Petty A/Co/4th/39th Inf 1967-68
Bob "Doc" Pries B Co. 2nd/47th Infantry
Paul A. Ray Monitor 151-5 6/69-7/70
John J. Read USS Colleton ABP-35 In memory of nieces, Amy J. Gilbert and Kristen Wagner
Joe Rosner Monitor 6, RivRon 15
Thomas F. Scheider A Btry 1st/11th Art & B Co 2nd/39th Infantry
Harry David Schoenian C/CO/4th/47th Inf 67/78
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Charlie E. Taylor C-3 5th/60th Infantry
Robert (Bob) Thacker D/Co 15th Combat (Eng) 3/68-6/69
Jimmy Toney 3rd/60th Infantry
Ralph Tresser USS Benawah
Erol S. Tuzcu A Co. 3rd/60th Infantry
David Tyler RivDiv 132 M-3-6 T-24, 1969-70
Victor E. Unruh T-151-1
Roger C. Valentine USS Askari ARL-30
Robert E. Vandruff T-91-5 and T-92-4
Gen. William C. Westmoreland (COMUSMACV) 64-68
Gerald Weston C/91/7 A/91/7 1967-68
William H. Wulff B Co. 3rd/47th Infantry

The Naval Command in South Vietnam

In contrast to the carrier, amphibious, and naval gunfire support forces and, at least during early 1965, the Coastal Patrol Force, which Commander Seventh Fleet directed the Navy forces within South Vietnam, were operationally controlled by Commander Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (COMUSMACV). Initially, General Westmoreland exercised this command through the Chief, Naval Advisory Group. But the increasing demands of the war required a district operational rather than an advisory headquarters for Naval

units. As a result, on 1 April 1966 Naval Forces Vietnam was established to control the Navy units in II, III, and IV Corps Tactical Zones. This eventually included the major combat formations: Coastal Surveillance (Task Force 115), River Patrol Force (Task Force 116), and Riverine Assault Force (Task Force 117). The latter unit formed naval component of the joint Army-Navy Mobile Riverine Force.

Commander Naval Forces Vietnam (COM NAVFORV) also controlled the Naval Support Activity (NSA) Saigon, which supplied naval forces in II, III, and IV Corps areas.

Naval Support Activity, Danang, provided logistic support to all American Forces in I Corps, where predominant Marines presence demanded a naval supply establishment. Naval Support Activity, Danang, was under the operational control of Commander III Marines Amphibious Force.

COMNAVFORV also commanded the Naval Advisory Groups and the Seabees of the 3rd Naval Construction Brigade; the Military Sea Transportation Service Office, Vietnam, which coordinated the gargantuan sealift to Southeast Asia; the Officer-In-Charge of Construction Vietnam, who handled in-country construction by civilian contractors; the Naval Research and Development Unit, Vietnam, which tested new equipment in the field; and Commander Coast Guard Activities, Vietnam.

Information from the Naval Historical Center Washington, DC.



Note Recently, the USS Whitfield County (LST-1168) another 1159-class vessel met her sad ending as she was intentionally sunk by the Greek Navy to create a coral reef in the Aegean Sea. The USS Whitfield County served as part of the Mobile Riverine Force TF-117 during her service in the Vietnam War. A good percentage of the MRFA Army and Navy members should remember this fine ship and the gallant service it performed while serving with the MRF.

Mechanized Operations in the Mekong Delta

By MRFA Staff

The extensive rice paddies and mangrove swamps of the canal laced Delta were very different from the jungle area of Operation CEDAR FALLS-JUNCTION CITY in III Corps Tactical Zone. But in the Delta, with few high elevations, M113s could move as freely as rivers and major canals permitted. The 2nd Battalion 47th Infantry (Mechanized) and the 5th Battalion 60th Infantry (Mechanized) of the 9th Infantry Division's two armored units used in this region conducted successful combined American and Vietnamese operations throughout 1967. Typical missions included reconnaissance in force, route and convey security, night roadrunner operations, cordon and search of villages, and rapid reinforcement.

Flooded rice paddies slowed, but did not prevent cross-country movement. Small canals up to 3 m in width were crossed with balk bridging. In instances of larger canals and rivers, which were major obstacles because their banks were usually steep or composed of loose soil bulldozers or explosives were used to construct entry and exit routes. Mechanized units quickly discovered that when track shrouds were removed to prevent the buildup of mud between track and the hull, the M113s swimming ability was impaired. Navy

landing craft were therefore required for transportation across major rivers and canals. Route reconnaissance by air was always important but was essential during the monsoon season.

The Delta's open, level terrain permitted ground troops to engage the enemy with organic weapons at much greater range than that of the point blank fighting normal in the jungle. One of the hardest battles fought by mechanized infantry in the Delta occurred at the village of Ap Bac II on 2 May 1967. Ap Bac II was a base area for the 514th Viet Cong Battalion, and the enemy pattern of movement between base areas had suggested the probability of the battalion's presence near Ap Bac II on 2 May.

The original plan of the 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division, was to conduct an air-mobile search and destroy operation with two battalions of infantry, on 2 May. However, when no helicopters were available, the insertion of a blocking force was deleted from the plan. Movement of two battalions abreast without a blocking in the rear was regarded by many as "forcing toothpaste from a tube," and there appeared little likelihood of a significant encounter. Company C, 5th Battalion, 60th Infantry (Mechanized) manned the left

flank under the control of the 3rd/60th Infantry Battalion. Lt Larry Garner's mechanized company was given the deeper objective because of its mobility would permit a quick search of the area. It was hoped that tracked vehicles could make up for lack of a blocking force. By 0830 the M113s of Company C were advancing north, crossing paddies surrounded by narrow, dikes. Mostly dry, the paddies easily supported tracks, but crossing the many canals and streams proved more difficult. Company C found none of the enemy during its northward sweep; however to the east. Company A, 3rd/47th Infantry, encountered stiff resistance as it approached the Soui Sau.

The steep banks of the streams were dotted with thatched huts and lined with dense vegetation. A squad, maneuvering across the stream, was quickly pinned down by heavy automatic weapons fire. Within minutes all who had crossed the stream had been hit. Two companies of the 3rd/47th Infantry, moved to block the northern escape route. At 1300, with blocked forces in a reversed "C" C Company of the 5th/60th and A Company of the 3rd/60th Infantry were ordered east to fill the open end of the blocking positions. The eleven M113s of Company C had to

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

Mechanized Operations

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

maneuver through inundated areas that appeared impassable. Crossing two fairly large streams, the company chose routes that brought them abreast of Company A, 3rd/60th Infantry, on a 1,000-m assault line by approximately 1530. Under cover of artillery and air bombardments, the companies crossed more irrigation ditches and by 1700 were poised for the attack. On order, artillery fire stopped and the tracked vehicles surged forward, while blocking units supported by fire. The mechanized company moved rapidly across the rice paddy, its machine guns searching out the enemy bunkers along the wood line. At the wood line, infantrymen dismounted and attacked the enemy soldiers who had been pinned down by heavy fire. Although stunned by the shock of the assault, the enemy continued to resist, and the infantry was forced to move among the bunkers destroying the enemy with grenades.

Company A, moving on foot to the right of Company C, met with heavy resistances and finally stalled about a 100 m from the bunker line. The Company commander requested help from Company C, which

responded by moving four M113s to aid the dismounted attack. Since darkness had set in, further reinforcements were considered impractical and the units on hand had to finish the job. Additional fire support by the M113s, a charge by the attacking companies, and heavy fire superiority finally broke the enemy's defense. The Companies pressed the attack, forcing the Viet Cong from their bunkers and annihilating those who tried to escape. A sweep of the battle area early the next morning indicated that the enemy had lost the equivalent of a reinforced company. Two U.S. soldiers had died.

Colonel William B. Fulton, the 2nd brigade commander, noted the speed, shock effect, and heavy firepower provided by the personnel carriers, along with supporting artillery, had kept the enemy soldiers in their bunkers until the infantry was literally on top of them.

Lt/Col Edwin W. Chamberlin, Jr., commander of the 3rd/60th Infantry, stated that since the tracked vehicles proved capable of negotiating more terrain that had been thought possible, there should always be an initial attempt at using the tracks whenever possible.

SEEKING...

I am the younger brother of Scott Edward Saylor who was killed in action May 26, 1969, in Kien Hoa province while serving with D Co 3rd/60th Riverine Infantry. I would like to hear from anyone who served with my brother. Please contact David Saylor, 1572 Clayton Rd., West Chester, PA 19383 or e-mail dsaylor1@comcast.net.

My Cousin Herman A. Miller II ("He went by Ham") was killed August 11, 1968, in Binh Dinh Province while serving as a GMG3 with IUWG-1-3 at Qui Nhon. Two others died that day. Qm2 Howard Burns and SM2 Robert Bouchet. I would like to hear from anyone who knew my cousin. He was my hero and still is to this day. Please contact Gary Miller, 180 Central Ave., New Providence, NJ 07974. 908-898-1181 or e-mail Gary.miller@us.calyon.com.

47th Infantry Regiment Reunion

The 2nd Battalion 47th Infantry "Panthers", 9th Infantry Division Vietnam are once again hosting the 47th Infantry Regimental Reunion at the Holiday Inn-North in Columbus, Georgia, April 27-29, 2006. Room rates are \$65 per night, per room. You may begin making reservations at any time, but you must call before April 3, 2006 to get this rate. **THE BEST WAY TO MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS IS TO CALL THE HOTEL DIRECTLY AT 706-324-0231 and tell the reservation clerk the code is "47TH INFANTRY REUNION."** Alternately, you may call the Holiday Inn-North toll-free number at 1-888-465-4329.

Your Reunion Committee encourages you to make plans to attend and share in the camaraderie of the 2006 reunion. For additional information go to www.47inf.org or contact Bob Pries at 513-659-4974 or e-mail rpries@cinci.rr.com.

"Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it."

-- Dwight Eisenhower

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.

Jack Benedick for C Co 4th/47th 66-68, C Co 3rd/60th 69, & E Co 3rd/60th Inf KIA 4-7-68

James J. Byrnes for members of the Junk Force, Dung Island

James Roselli for Mark Schoenberger B Co 3rd/39th Inf.

Frank T. Buck SKCS Ret for Son ENFN Frank H. Buck KIA 12/28/67 T-92-10

John Philp for LTC William B. Cronin KIA 04/27/67 Co 2nd/47th

John Philp for Colonel Arthur D. Moreland USA (Ret.) 2nd/47th 4/67-12/67

Fred Gottwald for Sgt. Walter J. Garstkiewicz C Co 3rd/60th and C Co 6th/31st KIA 01/09/70

Gene Cooper for Steve Brichford FT2-68/69 and Jerry Roleofs 67-68 USS White River LSMR-536

Bill Brennan for Tom Swanick GMG3 USS White River LSMR-536

David Lynn for Howard Burns (QM2), Robert Bouchet (SM2), and Herman Miller (GM3) 08/11/68 IUWG-1-3

Brothers of the 2nd/47th for all Army and Navy KIAs Adam Metts for Donald L. Bruckart KIA 03/31/69

Tango-111-2 Robert Thacker for Earl T. Pelhan, Jr. SSG KIA 15th Combat Engineers

Larry Hunter for Sgt/Maj Daniel Williams U.S.A. (Ret) Lloyd W. Austin for Arthur M. Day KIA 5/8/69 D Co

4th/47 Inf James A. Morse for Mark W. Weachter CTO-3

V.P. Roy Moseman for Oscar Santiago C-2 4th/47th 10/67-10/68

Tom Sanborn 4th/47th Inf. for Spec4 David Thornton KIA 10/68 on Toi Son (VC) and 1st Lt James L. Tarte KIA

8/24/68 near Kai Lay

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. Mizc B-2 2nd /47th 5th/60th

KIA 10/28/67

Ted F. Fetting B Co 2nd/60th Inf. 10/67-2/68 for all from B Co. 2nd/60th and KIA 2/2/68 Fred

Jansoniv (ND), Elroy "Stevie" Le Blanc (CA), and Roy Phillips (IL)

Gerald Johnston USS Nye Cty for James "Willie" Willeford Nye Cty LST-1067 11/28/66, friend, and sailor 19-year-old (RIP Buddy)

Ellen Bergman for Henry Bergman C Co 3rd/34th and 3rd/60th Inf (09/68-05/69)

Gary Williams for Dale Winkel C Co 3rd/60th Inf (01/68-01/69)

CHECK OUT THE MRFA-9TH INFANTRY DIVISION WEBSITE: www.mrfa.org

Mike Harris is our web master. He does a great job with the web site. There's VA info, KIA info, and about anything you want on the 9th and the MRF and other in country units. Mike has it somewhere on the site. There are patches, books, and tour info on the web site. You may contact Mike Harris if you want a book, pictures, etc. posted on the web site. Mike makes the final decision on what's to be posted on the web site. Contact him by e-mail mekong152@charter.net. Mike served on Tango-152-1 68-69.

TAPS *Those gone but not forgotten*

Mourning A Hero

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

To record the successes of these operations, Fulton later authored a monograph titled "Vietnam Studies Riverine Operations, 1966-1969."

After becoming the 9th Division's assistant division commander, Fulton served in several key staff assignments in Washington and also as the deputy commanding general, U.S. Army Training Center (Infantry), Fort Polk, Louisiana; commanding general, 9th Infantry Division, Fort Lewis, Wash., and commanding general, U.S. Army Recruiting Command, Fort Sheridan, IL.

In addition to the Distinguished Service Cross, Fulton's other awards include the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit (three awards), the Bronze Star Medal, the Air Medal (14 awards), the Army Commendation Medal, and the Combat Infantryman Badge (two awards).

"General Bill Fulton was truly an American hero and a 'Soldier's Soldier,'" the president of the Association of the United States Army said.

"Serving in the Army for over 31 years in Italy, Germany, Korea, Japan, Vietnam, and the United States, General Fulton had a vision for the future of our Army especially in Vietnam, he was a pioneer in joint operations when he joined his forces with a Navy unit in the historic Riverine Operations," Gen. Gordon R. Sullivan, USA, Ret., said.

He added, "He brought that vision, dedication, and dynamic leadership to AUSA after he retired from active duty. He led this Association to new heights and helped put our Annual Meeting and Exposition on the path to becoming the world's largest and best land warfare forum."

Fulton is survived by his wife, the former Nancy Tuttle. They are the parents of four children, Claire, Judith, Laurie, and William Jr. You may contact Mrs. Nan Fulton c/o 4739 North 34th Rd., Arlington, VA 22207; 703-536-3922; or daughter Laurie E. Kroll 9886 Burke Pond Ct., Burke, VA 22015 703-250-2032.

General Fulton will be buried in Pocatello, ID with full Military Honors.

Member YNCS **Edward Q. Castle, U.S. Navy (Ret.)**, recently passed away. Senior

Chief Castle served on the staff of ComRivFlot-One 3/68-3/69. Contact the family at 402 Kingsway Dr. E., Terrytown, LA 70056-3080; 509-393-1342.

Jimmy W. Young passed away 11 December 2005 from a heart attack. Jimmy served with Company A of the 2nd/47th (Mech) Infantry 8/67-8/68. He was in the 4th platoon. You may contact the family at wife



Marie Young or daughter Audrey, PO Box 34, Livingston, TX 77351.

Member **John Magriplis** passed away 6/15/05. John served in the 3rd/34th Arty (riverine) 1968-69. Contact the family at Dispinia Magriplis, 3600 Anvers

Blvd., Jacksonville, FL 32210-5003; 904-771-9334.

Master Sergeant Sabino "Sam" Saavedra, U.S. Army (Ret.), passed away 5 November 2005. Sam served in C Co 3rd/47th 1966-1967. You may contact the family at Lupe Saavedra, 221 Pescard Way, Madera, CA 93638. 559-673-9550.

Curtis Hatterman passed away 12 December 2005. Curt served in C Co 5th/60th 9thInfDiv 6/68-10/68. He then served in C Co 1st/16th, 1st ID 10/68-06/69. Curt was a tireless worker for Vietnam veterans. He will be deeply missed. You can contact the family at Deborah Hatterman, 5521 Cedar Ridge Dr., Enid, OK 73703.

Rev Charles "Doc" Kovich passed away 28 June 2005. Doc served in B Co 3rd/60th 9thInfDiv as a medic 1968-69. Doc's lifelong ambition was to become a priest which was attained 6 years ago. Doc gave his all to those he served today as he did

those he served with in combat. You may contact the family at Mrs. A. Kovich, 167 Rear Chandler Ave, Johnstown, PA 15906; 814-539-6176.

Member William Rose, USN (Ret.), passed away 18 December 2005. William served on the USS St. Clair City LST 1096 (1965-66). You may contact the family at Mrs. Ileana Rose, 213 Pearl St. (Gilboa), Ottawa, OH 45875; 419-456-3318.

George E. Burtchell passed away from a heart attack 1 April 2000. George served on the USS Tutuila ARG-4 1965-67. George was onboard when she was attached to the Mobile Riverine Force In Vung Tau. You may contact



the family at Mrs. Rosemarie Burtchell, 34 Bell Road, Crossville, TN 39571; 931-484-6549 or e-mail nyc2tn@earthlink.net.

Dr. Elizabeth Ziegler passed away 2 January 2006 from complications of diabetes. Dr. Ziegler was a well-known Infectious disease expert and professor of medicine emeritus at the University of California School of Medicine at San Diego. Dr Ziegler was the wife of LT. Thomas W. Ziegler (ComRivFlot-One Staff Doctor) 1966-68. You may contact the family at Thomas W. Ziegler, 930 Gage St., San Diego, CA 92105.

Member **John P. Long** passed away February 23rd, 2006. John served on the USS Benewah APB-35 9-67/8-69 John was a friend and shipmate and will be missed by all. You may contact Sallie Long At: 6680 Pirch Way Elkridge, MD. 21075. 410-799-1599 lkng4ydsls@hotmail.com

Get Well Wishes

We wish good health and recovery for each and every one of our brothers

Member **Jon W. Fisher** has been in the hospital and is now fighting cancer of the lung. Jon served in A Co 3rd/60th Riverine Infantry 1967-68. You may contact Jon at Jon W. Fisher, 521 E. Columbia St., Mason, MI 48854. 515-676-3811 or e-mail jonfish@bellsouth.net.

Member **Michael Faughn** has been diagnosed with squamous cell carcinoma and is receiving treatment through the VA. Michael served on the USS Krishna ARL-38 67-68 out of An Thoi and Phu Quock Island. You may contact Michael at PMB 424 610N 1st St. Suite 5, Hamilton, MT 49840. 406-363-2254 or e-mail michaelfaughn@direcway.com.

Member **Larry Hunter** was recently diagnosed as having throat cancer and is now taking radiation treatment. The doctors told Larry that his cancer is in the early stages and the outcome looks okay.

Larry is an MRFA Board Member and served on the USS White River LSMR-536 1966-1967. You may contact Larry at 6363 Winding Way, Maineville, OH 45039. 513-677-2581 or e-mail LHunter536@aol.com.

Member **Bob VanDruff**, our Products Chairman and Board Member, had an operation 23 February for stomach cancer. Bob is now home and doing well and we wish him all the best for a full and speedy recovery. You may contact Bob C/O 2906 Starlite Dr., Topeka, KS 66605. 785-267-1526 or e-mail bvdmrfa@networksplus.net.

Member **Ray Pineau** has suffered a stroke and not doing all that well. Ray served in D&E Co's 4th/47th 1968-69. You may contact Ray at: 44 Lavoie Street, Jay, Maine 04239; 207-897-3898; rapineau@adelphia.net

Dave Magnuson is being treated for cancer of the mouth. Dave served in the 3rd/39th 68-69 you may contact Dave or Linda Magnuson At: 2848 W Stonybrook Dr. Anaheim, CA; 92804. magnusonlj@adelphia.net





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Maj. Gen. William B. Fulton

At the request of the MRFA this book is being reprinted in soft cover.

The book is 210 pages filled with photos and maps. You may purchase the book here on our products page. The book covers just about all of the units of the 9th (not just the 2nd brigade and MRF-TF-117). It covers a wide range of all the operations from 1966-69 in the Mekong Delta. For those of you who want a part of the 9th and MRF history, this book is a must-have!

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