



River Currents



A PUBLICATION OF
THE MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION

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From the Galley

Hope this finds each and every one of you doing well and okay and getting ready for some cold weather. For those of you who attended the reunion, I want to thank you from the officers and board members and for me. It was a very enjoyable reunion and everyone seemed to have a good time. We had some new folks attend for their first time and it was nice meeting and seeing them. A couple told me they could kick themselves in the rear for not attending sooner. With being in a new hotel, there were a few mishaps but they were taken care of right away—the shuttle to and from the airport and the individual hospitality rooms. Frank Jones our new reunion coordinator is working with the hotel on making the shuttle service more convenient and the cost of the individual hospitality rooms more affordable. Frank will have more on this in his column in upcoming newsletters. When working with a new hotel, you will have a few problems—all and all I think the hotel did an outstanding job for our first reunion there. The majority of the folks I spoke with wanted us to be sure and use the Marriott for our 2015 reunion. I think the room rates were excellent for a Marriott and the food in the hotel was above average for a hotel. The Lounge did a great job, even though they did not heed our warning that they would be overrun. But they also took care of this right away all we had to do is ask and the service was there and taken care of. Rooms were nice and clean, the patio with the waterfall, and our flags were just perfect.

The dance room was well done; better than we have had before, and the DJ was great. Museum Room was well done by Doc Pries and his assistants. Gunner Stanley and his products crew did a great job as always. Herb Franklin and Bob and Frank did an excellent job with the snacks and there were always fresh coffee and doughnuts. Herb went out every morning to the local Dunkin' Donuts and got them fresh; he bought so many they were giving us a discount. Registration as always is a little hectic but George and his ladies did a great job making sure any mistakes were taken care of. As always our Raffle Queen Mable Springer and her crew did an outstanding job with the raffles. Mable gives it her best to help bring in more funds in to help the association and she makes it fun in doing so. I believe it's the big smile she always has for everyone. Thanks to Bruce Graff for driving the MRFA Memorial and Museum trailer to the reunion. Bruce has done a great job with the MRFA Memorial and Museum trailer. Lots of folks went through the trailer, although the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Veterans Day 2013 Washington, DC

MORE VETERANS DAY PHOTOS ON PAGE 9



Reunion Notes: Museum Room Display

by Bob 'Doc' Pries 2nd/47th (Mech) Infantry

The 2013 MRFA Reunion's Museum Room was a big hit. Over the course of Wednesday to Friday, many MRFA Members, guests, hotel staff, and others walked throughout the room admiring the huge collection of memorabilia the Association displayed.

A recent addition to the Association's collection was a huge hit with all—the model of T-92-2 built and donated by Paul Kasper of the 15th Combat Engineers.

All who walked through the museum expressed amazement with the detail of this Tango Boat. The Association cannot adequately express its gratitude and thanks to Paul Kasper for donating this wonderful Tango. Well done, Brother Kasper. Thank you!

Another hit was the model weapons display.

I happened to overhear a few good war stories as members checked out the weapons!

The weapons were purchased and donated by a few members. The Helo on the ATC was donated by Tony Moonshine Spradling and Jim Hinkle. The Association thanks Bob 'Doc' Pries, Bill Brennan, Bill Sinclair, Dave Lull, Doug Smith and Dwight Strickland for their work to make the Museum Room the success it was. Bravo Zulu! Well done, Brothers! ★

MORE REUNION PHOTOS ON PAGES 2 & 3

Reunion Notes:

Founding MRFA Member Recognized at 2013 Reunion

Frank Jones, MRFA Secretary/Reunion Coordinator

At the 2013 reunion in Indianapolis, we presented Albert "Cookie Man" Moore with a plaque honoring his 21 years of service to the MRFA. Albert was a founding member of the MRFA and has been our President since 1992. This Association would not be what it is today without Albert's hard work and his great ideas. The MRFA is a unique association with Army and Navy members. There are no other groups like ours. We now have 3,200 active members and still growing, even with all the members we lose each year. Although his health has been on a downward swing, he has continued his hard work and dedication to the MRFA. He has been in charge of all the large reunions up to this



Albert Moore and Gunner Stanley

to make sure everyone attending had a great time. He also oversees the *River Current* newsletter and all Veteran's reports that he sends

to the MRFA members. I, for one, am honored to call Albert a friend. I am looking forward to many more years of his leadership.

Inscribed on the plaque:

In Appreciate of Your Outstanding Dedication and Service to the Mobile River Force Association as a Founding Member, Plank Owner, and President since 1992. "You are the man that keeps us afloat!"

Bravo Zulo!

Officers, Board of Directors, and Membership

I personally want to thank all Board Members, members, wives, and significant others that volunteered their time to work at this year's reunion. Special thanks to Albert and Georgie for their patience and training skills for the new guy.

Thanks also to the speakers and Memorial Service participants. You made this reunion one to remember. I also want to thank the hotel staff at the Indianapolis Marriott East for their outstanding service and hospitality. It was a fantastic reunion! Thanks again, Frank Jones

See you at the Indianapolis Marriott East in Indianapolis in 2015. ★

Raffle and Other Winners

Wendell Affield and Cratis McLaughlin won \$475 each in the 50/25/25 drawing. Rose Antoon won the beautiful stitching of The Wall by Esther Lightwine. Ed Gorczyk won the shadow box. James Giles and Jeff Campbell won the guns.

Ambush Survivors Reunited 45 Years Later: Memories from August 18, 1968

by Wendell Affield

(To put this blog post in context, please read the August 18 post.)

Reunions can be poignant, frightening, illuminating. This past week my wife, Patti, and I attended the 2013 Mobile Riverine Force Association Reunion held in Indianapolis. I was saddened to see how age and Agent Orange illnesses have ravaged our ranks. One of the founding members of the MRFA stoically told me, "The doctors give me about 12 months." But there were moments of disbelief, too. About a year ago, Larry Reid, Nashville, Tennessee, an army veteran who had been riding our boat when we were ambushed on August 18, 1968, discovered "*Muddy Jungle Rivers*" on Amazon and purchased it. Over the past 12 months, we've been in touch. On the first day of the reunion, he introduced himself. We compared notes on how our lives have evolved over

the past four decades. The second day of the reunion Larry came up to me and said, "I found three guys who were in the well deck on August 18." It was an intense experience.

Larry R. McCormick, Amarillo, Texas, looked at me, frowned, and shook his head. "I thought you were dead these past 45 years." "Why would you think that?" I said. "Because of all the blood dripping down from your cox'n flat above me, and the boat kept running into things." "Each time rockets hit my armor plating I kept getting knocked down," I told him.

He asked an unusual question then—one I've never thought about. "How many times were you hit?" I have always considered the ambush one action—not multiple injuries. I thought back for a time and told him, "Four, I suppose."

We all visited then and recalled that hot Sunday afternoon and I thought again how each

of us remembered differently yet there were some memories held by all. David L. Cowley, from "The Great State of Texas" brought up what we all remembered most vividly. Blood splattered everywhere; blood trickling across the well deck. Heroism of already wounded men, cradling smoldering crates as they struggled across the slick deck to throw grenades and ammo overboard before it exploded.

I brought up the black army sergeant who had come up to man our abandoned 0.50-caliber machine gun. I told again how he had been severely maimed when a B-40 rocket burned through the armor and he took a direct hit. Cleve Chick, Elkridge, Maryland, recalled that he was a career man who had recently joined the platoon. Most of the men didn't know him. "Thomas," Cleve said. "His last name was Thomas."

Larry gave me a list of 23 army men who were on ATC 112-11 who received a Purple Heart for wounds received on August 18. Two names are missing: Hector Lugo-Mojica, who was Killed in Action, and the black sergeant named Thomas.

I wonder if Sergeant Thomas was the senior man onboard ATC 112-11 on August 18. I believe in the chaos of the day his act of heroism went unnoticed and unrecorded. I would very much like to identify the sergeant. If he did not survive his wounds, his family deserves to know of his actions. If he did survive and is still alive, I would very much like to meet him.

I am humbled that "*Muddy Jungle Rivers*" was the catalyst that brought us together. Each of these men has a story of that afternoon and if they would like to write it, I will post it on this blog. ★



Eight survivors from left to right: Larry Reid, Cleve Chick, David L. Cowley, Larry R. McCormick, Wendell Affield

Met for the First Time in 45 Years at the MRFA Reunion

by Ed Gorczyk (edgorczyk@gmail.com)

Art Mann and I were both assigned to Alpha Boat 91-3. We typically manned the port and starboard 0.30-caliber machine guns on the stern of the boat. I was a Seaman; Art was an Engineman 3rd Class. Alpha boats didn't have the same level of armor as Monitors and Tango boats and firing a machine gun from the open stern of an Alpha boat during a firefight was very dangerous and there was little protection from B-40 and RPG shrapnel. The last time we had seen each other was midway through our tour of duty in 1968. After a major ambush on May 8, 1968, in which most of our boat crew was wounded while leading a column of boats through the infamous Crossroads, Art Mann was awarded another Purple Heart, his third in 6 months. Unlike our Army counterpart, the Navy had a policy of reassigning sailors who were unlucky enough to be wounded three times to a more friendly duty station. Art departed the Mekong Delta in June of 1968 and we lost touch with one another. 45 years later Ed saw a name on the MRFA email list and wondered if it was his old lost buddy. After reconnecting on the Internet, we decided to meet in person at the 2013 reunion in Indianapolis. With picture in hand, Ed hunted through the large banquet hall looking for someone who resembled the snapshot. With a big grin and a hearty hug, the two Riverines were reunited, still buddies after 45 years. ★



Ed Gorczyk and Art Mann RivRon 9-A-91-3



Ed Gorczyk & Art Mann in Vietnam

Hello Albert

Below is a picture from the reunion in Indy in August 2013. The short guy on the right is Ray Tarnecki. Ray went to Nam with A Company, 3rd of the 60th and carried the 9th Division Colors from the ship to the shore at Vung Tau in 1966. On the left is Jerry Schuebel, B Company, 3rd of the 60th. Jerry was charged with taking the colors from Fort Lewis, Washington, to Fort Riley, Kansas, to their present permanent location upon the 9th Division being deactivated.

These are two of the great guys that make us all proud to have served in the Mobile Riverine Force.

*Respectfully submitted, Charles Howe
B Company, 3/60 (1967-68)*



Jerry Schuebel & Ray Tarnecki

Indy Reunion 2013 Photos



Speaker Robert Bischoff



Speaker Padre Johnson



Gunner presented flag
to Ty Dawley



Albert Moore presents certificate to Gloria Owings



Albert, Robin Bartell (Graphic Designer
for River Currents), & Frank Jones



Speaker Mel Pender



Rufus Campbell,
bag piper



Gunner presented flag
to Barbara Davis

Ambush on Hai Muoi Canal, Vietnam 18 August 1968

Posted by Wendell Affield

Forty-five years have passed since that Sunday afternoon. This evening I sit in my meadow and reflect on the years I've been gifted. Evening rays pierce gray clouds as dry west wind rattles reed canary seed heads. In the distance, two bald eagles spiral on thermals, high above an Angus carcass decomposing in the neighbor's pasture. And again I wonder why I am here when men a few feet away were maimed or killed. It was just another monotonous operation. Travel up another narrow river, search for the elusive Viet Cong.

Five men died—four sailors and one army corporal. Eighty-two were seriously wounded.

For the full 18 August 1968 Operating Report go to <http://www.mrfa.org/rpts/aug68/R181530Z.pdf>.

pdf.

Killed In Action that Sunday afternoon 08/18/68 on ASPB-112-1 in Dinh Tuong: Stephen C. Brunton, BM3, Ukiah, CA; Billy D. Roy, BM3, Oklahoma City, OK; Edward R. Darville III, GMG3, Hialeah, FL; Patrick J. Griffin, RM3, Topeka, KS; and Lugo-Mojica Hector CPL Toa Baja, Puerto Rico, E Co 4th Bn 47th Inf.

Mobile Riverine Force Association web site provided the details for this post (<http://www.mrfa.org/>).

We will remember all who have gone before us at the Mobile Riverine Force Association Reunion, August 28-September 1, 2013. For more information go to <http://www.mrfa.org/2013.Reunion.htm>

This past year, after I published *Muddy Jungle Rivers*, I've been humbled by the comments I've received from the men who served on the boats. Thank you.

You might mention that this past year, the University of Minnesota, Bemidji, used the book in three classes—two history classes and one class studying memory and writing.

This autumn semester, University of Indiana, South Bend will be using *Muddy Jungle Rivers* in a History of the Vietnam War class.

I look forward to visiting with you next week. Wendell Affield, Author: *Muddy Jungle Rivers*, Hawthorn Petal Press, LLC, PO Box 652, Bemidji, MN 56619-0652, web: www.wendellaffield.com. ★



Above Left: Within the first 20 seconds of the ambush, Armor Troop Carrier (ATC) 112-11 takes 3 rockets in the well deck, incapacitating a full platoon of army troops. • Middle photo: A black army sergeant manning this 50-caliber machine gun was severely maimed when a B-40 rocket burned through the 1-inch armor. He was a true hero. I was medevac'd that day and have never been able to learn his identity. I've heard conflicting stories—that he died, that he lived, and received the Silver Star. • At right: Two rockets struck the cox'n flat. The first tore the bar armor aside, the second burned through, spraying me and the radioman with shrapnel. Usually when this happened, the sailors inside were killed.

Itchy Trigger Finger Sparks Cong Disaster from *The Evening News*, Harrisburg, PA, December 5, 1967

A Viet Cong guerilla with an itchy trigger finger fired prematurely and tipped off U.S. and South Vietnamese troops to a 400-man Cong ambush in the Mekong Delta. When the battle ended most of the guerillas were killed, a U.S. spokesman said today. The Allied troops altered by what Brig. Gen William B. Fulton called a "hell of a mistake" swarmed ashore from Armored Troop Carriers (Tango Boats) and shattered the Red Force in one of the great victories of the Mekong Delta. The 11-hour battle was fought yesterday.

The Americas put the Viet Cong dead at 235 and said 15 guerillas were captured trying to hide underwater by breathing through reed tubes. U.S. losses were put 13 killed and 128 wounded. South Vietnamese Marines lost 41 killed in one of their most heroic attacks.

The Mekong Delta

Another Mekong Delta battle was over, but the men of the 9th Infantry Division still were hunting down

guerrillas' survivors in the swamps 65 miles southwest of Saigon. A UPI reporter reported from the Delta that the infantrymen just back from the scene reported a charge through withering Viet Cong rocket and small arms by South Vietnamese was backed by the 9th Infantry and the sailors of the Mobile Riverine Force. "It was like a small Iwo Jima" U.S. Marine (Advisor) Maj. Paul L. Carlson 30 of San Clemente, CA, said of the Monday battle. Carlson was senior adviser to the Vietnamese Marines who killed 154 of the Communist themselves.

The other Viet Cong were killed by troops of the 9th Infantry Division and Sailors of the Navy's Riverine Assault Force, who put the troops ashore from the landing craft and stayed on to shell the VC hastily rected bunkers with deck guns. At one point the Sailors were firing from about 75 feet away. "We haven't gotten this close since John Paul Jones" said Captain Robert S. Salzer of Falls Church, VA, Commander of the Riverine Forces. ★

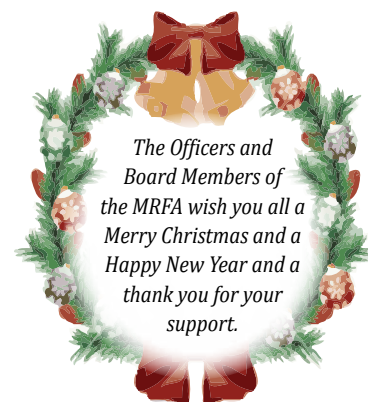
GALLEY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

weather was hot; it had a good turnout. At the 2015 reunion, the trailer will be in a different location close to the front of the hotel instead of the back where it will be easier to enter and see on both sides. Had some say the trailer inside and out brought back many memories, and some said they got chills just looking at all the pictures, etc., Good job Bruce. Bruce is also assisted by the Membership and Treasurer Chairman, Charlie Ardinger. Thanks to you as well Boats.

Memorial services by chaplains Richard MacCullagh and Jim Johnson went over great as usual and with the reading of the names of our departed brothers and sisters since our last reunion by James Johnson, Dave Schoenian, Richard MacCullagh, and Diana Taylor. Dave Schoenian as always did a great job with the missing man ceremony. Rufus did an excellent job with the bag pipes. Don Blankenship did a great job announcing the speakers who all did an outstanding job; some of the best we have had.

What can I say Gunner Stanley did his usual outstanding job with the flag presentations. The little lady running all over the place taking pictures and helping everyone was our one and only Georgie Ardinger. I'm sure I have missed someone or something, if so please excuse me. All and all you the members made the reunion a great success and we appreciate all your support and assistances in doing so and all the volunteers a big Bravo Zulu to you all.

One person that was noticeably missing and was asked about by many was Major General Blackie Bolduc. We missed you General; we hope to see you in 2015. *Albert* ★



From the Membership

Seeking Information

From Jeff Robinson

My dad was Herman David Robinson of A Co. 4th/47th Infantry, 9th Inf Div KIA August 24, 1968, from LaGrange, GA.

My dad lost his life 7 days after my first birthday, so I never knew him or much about his life. I am interested in hearing from anyone that knew him that wouldn't mind sharing some memories they have of him.

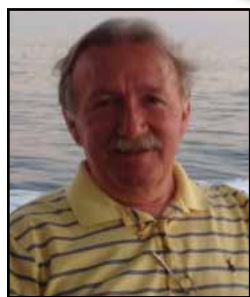
Thank you. **Jeff Robinson, 2164 Forrest Place NW, Atlanta, GA 30318, 404-805-4632, jrobinson@actiontireco.com**

Brothers (and others),

Dennis McDougall was able to make the reunion. Was a bit tired, naturally, but was GREAT to see him. Still has a hard road ahead while he awaits a stem cell transplant and afterwards as well.

His note below speaks for itself.

If you didn't make the reunion, it was great to see our brothers and spouses—much laughter and only tears of joy. Each time we are together, we



Dennis McDougall

grow closer together. Who would have ever thought that as a result of that awful mess in Vietnam, we would be so close and have so much love for one another.

God has blessed us all in many ways and having Dennis at the reunion in Indy was one of them.

Love you all, **Jim Johnson, 3/60th Infantry, 1967-68**

Jim, please send this out.

My dear friends and their wonderful spouses: Now that a week has passed I have had a chance to absorb all the emotions I experienced during the reunion. It was great that I was not bombarded with pity but, rather, with support and encouragement. Unfortunately, I had a tough week physically and probably was not too much

fun to be around. I appreciate all the understanding by everyone.

The send-off that was given to me on Saturday night was something that very many people never get a chance to have happen to them. Obviously, I was brought to tears as I realized that I was in the presence of the finest people that this country has produced . . . men and women. Know that all of you will remain in my heart for the rest of my time.

Love to all, Dennis

Charlie, I want to thank you and all of the MRFA for everything you did for me during my stay at the reunion.

I was deeply touched by receiving the honorary membership. My husband, George, really looked forward to attending the reunions—you all are a fantastic bunch.

My family and I thank all of you from the bottom of our hearts.

The family of George Owings

Dear Albert & Association

Where to begin this letter—Let me first apologize for taking so long

thanking you for a most memorable week and with the Mobile Riverine Force convention. To see Don & Lyn Blankenship, Bob Pries, and all the wonderful people was a big plus.

Pray that Albert will feel a lot better in the coming years. Look forward to seeing you at the next convention.

Thank you for your hospitality. It was much appreciated. I've enclosed a check #4872 of \$100. Please use it for the *River Currents* paper—next convention or whatever.

I find the *River Currents* a much informative paper. It helps me to know a wee bit of what you men had to go through in Vietnam.

I will close forever grateful to all you brave men and women.

Janice Dahlke, American Gold Star Mother

To Albert, Georgie, and all the members of the MRFA

After returning from our trip to the MRFA reunion in Indy, I am feeling so honored to have met so many of you there! It is really amazing to see so many people connecting, and reconnecting from

shared experiences that go back four decades. Oh how I wish I could remember all your names!

Being born in the late-70s, I cannot fully comprehend this time in America's history, but I have always been intrigued to know more about Vietnam vets, your experiences while serving, and since returning home. (My dad served in Long Binh in 1969-70, but he has never really talked about his time there.) I am enjoying learning more about MRFA units through the *River Currents* newsletter, and thanks to those of you I met in Indy that answered my questions and shared your time with me. You are an amazing group.

Thanks so much Charlie and Georgie, and Albert for inviting me to the reunion; enclosed please find a check to help offset some of the costs of putting this event together. It is an experience I shall not forget.

Robin Bartell, Graphic Designer for River Currents newsletter 2011-2013, designs@springgrove.coop

"Shorty"

by Lyn Noe USS Benewah APB-35
(idahonoe@yahoo.com)

Lonnie Ray Parker, "Shorty," was one of those guys who just oozed life. He fit his name standing about 5 feet tall and built like a wine barrel. You always knew when Shorty was coming down your way, because his belly laugh usually preceded him. Everyone in Engineering loved this guy. He would cheer you up when all hell had just broken loose. Our day to day activities in 1969, had become routine and to be honest boring. Besides battling the mosquitoes who would feast on us day and night, there was little proof of war. All the helicopter gunfights and boat raids were off in the distance.

Shorty, when he wasn't working his tail off, was often found on shore at the local base bar toasting his way into deep non-sobriety. Many a night, you could hear him come back onto the pontoon platform laughing, singing, and trying his best to keep his legs under him.

On the bridge crew was signalman, Eric Senior, SM3, a slender, blond-haired, ex-hippie

from California who had converted to Mormonism some 9 months earlier. A nicer guy you wouldn't meet. He was not a bridge snob and would spend many hours visiting other sections all over the Benewah getting to know and getting known by other divisions. He held true to his beliefs so he never smoked or drank. He and Shorty became good friends.

One day while battling those before mentioned mosquitoes, Eric came to me and told me he was escorting Shorty to the base for one of his tumblers as we were then anchored just off Vung Tau for a short R & R. He told me that Shorty had come to him stating that he felt as though something bad was going to happen to him. I asked if he had any idea just what, and Eric said, "No, he just had a bad feeling and wanted someone to watch out for him and that he would buy Eric all the soft drinks he wanted, if he would just make sure that he got back to the ship in one piece."

I had heard of people having intuitions about fore-coming doom, but this was the first time I had personally known anyone. Well, as planned, the two took off with Shorty laugh booming the way to shore with Eric on the lookout. About 3 hours later, Eric, with Shorty

in tow, leaning heavily on his escort returned to the ship. Eric came up on the bridge and we talked about his evening and assured me that he had gotten Shorty back and he was now song-snogging his way to dreamland.

About an hour and a half later, the emergency call went out—Man Overboard. Everyone rush to their stations. Lights were scanned across the river to find the lost man. After about an hour and a half, the search was given up and all hands were called to order to take a head count on who could be missing. When all was done, Shorty, Lonnie Parker, was the only one missing. A search of the ship was done to see if he may have crawled off into some corner to sleep himself to sobriety, but to no luck. Shorty's ESP had been right on. Something bad did happen to him. No one knows how it happened. If he had gone outside to take a leak or to throw-up doesn't make sense as there was a head just off his berthing area. Shorty's body surface about 3 days later and brought back to the ship and packaged for his return home.

Now to some this story makes sense seeing how Shorty was pretty well plowed, but 2

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Army to Navy... and Back!

by 2LT Gary P. Hale, C Co.
3/39 Inf, Vietnam 1969
(gphale@verizon.net)

In about May/June 1969, we received word that parts of the 9th Division were going to be pulled out of Vietnam. We heard that one Brigade would be left behind so naturally we believed it would be us. Turned out we were wrong.

I was the 2nd platoon leader in Company C, 3/39 Inf., 1st bde., and we were located at FSB Moore, just east of Cai Lay on Highway 4. Our bde. had two other battalions located to the west of us, 2/39 Inf. and 4/39 Inf. Our AO was basically west of Dong Tam out to about the Wagon Wheel and from the river north up and into the Plain of Reeds. We had also been to the Muc Hoa area up on the Cambodian Border for a short time. Lots of our missions were around My Phu Tay, Cam Son Special Zone, Snoopy's Nose, the Rice Mill, and Ap Bac. We did the typical infantry stuff on a daily basis: combat patrols, airmobile insertions, security operations, and night ambushes. We were usually out for 3 days and then back to FSB Moore for security ops and to dry our feet. About once a month, we got back to Dong Tam for a stand down and a couple of days to rest and recreate.

We knew about the Mobile Riverine Force but that was about it. We just knew that they worked with the Navy and lived the "Life of Riley" on ships in the river.

When the first units were announced to leave Vietnam, I believe it was the 2nd bde that was to schedule to depart first. After them, our 1st bde was scheduled to go home. There was a lot of switching of troops between different units. I believe if you had been there for about 9+ months you were reassigned to the 2nd bde. Those soldiers in-country for about 6-9 months were assigned to 1st bde and the newbies, less than 6 months, were assigned to 3rd bde., which was to stay in Vietnam.

After the Mobile Riverine guys departed for Fort Lewis, WA, in about July 1969, our bde. was to

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Delta Brings Back Close-Quarters Naval War with the MRF in the Mekong Delta (PAQ)

by LTJG John Collins 1968 RivDiv-92 MRF-TF-117

Few present day Naval Officers participate in a single close-range battle with enemy forces during an entire career. Yet LTJG John P. Collins Jr. of Silver Springs, MD, has already led his River Division of 25 river assault boats through 10 fire fights with Viet Cong forces in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam in less than 4 months.

Collins reported to River Assault Division 92 last November as chief staff officer. However, when the River Divisions Commanding Officer was killed in action in March (03/18/68 David H. Wyrick, LT, Alliance, OH, 1100, CO, M-92-1 [Dinh Tuong]), Collins became the acting commander.

His boat division is part of the Army-Navy Mobile Riverine Force that conducts strike operations against Viet Cong guerrillas along the vast network of rivers, streams, and canals that interlace the Delta.

Collins first firefight occurred shortly before midnight January 31 when his boat division was transiting the treacherous Rach Ruong Canal about 5 miles northeast of the town of Sa Dec. "Suddenly we were being attacked from both banks of the narrow canal with rockets, recoilless rifle an automatic weapons fire," the 24-year-old LTJG related.

"We immediately opened fire against an enemy we could not see because of the darkness and because of the dense vegetation along the shore line. However, we could see the flashes made when Charlie fired his weapons and these gave us a target to shoot. One of my first concerns was that some of the boats might go aground in the shallow and crooked stream in which case we may all be trapped in the enemy's front yard. The fight lasted a good 20 minutes before we were able to maneuver out of the ambush area." Only one Navy man was lost in the engagement; probably because of the rugged construction of the river assault craft.

All but a few of the boats in the Mobile Riverine Force are World War II LCM-6 landing craft that have specially reconfigured for close-quarters combat in the Delta environs. All are heavily armed and equipped with a protective shield of bar trigger armor—a 14-inch layer of Styrofoam and a 1-inch plate of compressed steel around the original boat hull. The craft are able to withstand all but the heaviest of enemy armament.

In a typical operation, these assault operations carry Army infantrymen into a combat area, provide fore and logistic support set up interdiction patrols,

and establish blockades to prevent the enemy from escaping by water. Collins regards a battle 4 as his most severe engagement. Three Navy men* were killed and 36 wounded in that attack near the cross-roads of the Ba Lai River and Giao Ho Canal about 10 miles southeast of My Tho. We were proceeding up the Ba Lai and were about to beach a battalion of the Riverine Infantry 9th Inf. Div., when the boats of my division came under a heavy rocket attack from both banks of the river. In less than a minute, 10 of my boats had been hit, including Monitor 92-1 which I was riding.

"My boats immediately opened up on the enemy positions with all our weapons that included 40- and 20-mm cannons, machine gun launched grenades, and 50- and 30-caliber machine gun fire. And we completed our mission of beaching and landing our embarked infantrymen who engaged our attackers from positions ashore.

When the enemy fire had dissipated, Collins ordered his boats to regroup in a relatively safe area to evacuate casualties. Three more times that day he had to take his boats back into the ambush area to beach additional troops and to evacuate the Army wounded since action ashore was too intense for medical evacuation helicopters to land. On two of the three trips, his boats again came under heavy fire.

LTJG John P. Collins went on to retire as a Navy Captain (O-6) and to command the USS John Hancock and Commander Destroyer Squadron-14. LtJg Collins was awarded the Silver Star for his actions taken that day.



USS John Hancock DD-981

*04/04/68 Samuel C. Chavous Jr., BMC, Cross City, FL, M-92-2 (Kien Hoa); 04/04/68 Douglas G. Morton, FN, Phoenix, AZ, M-91-3 (Kien Hoa); and 04/04/68 John D. Woodard, BM3, Clyde, NC, M-92-2 (Kien Hoa)
★

VA Caregiver Support Program adds Diagnosis Care Sheets

Subject: The VA Caregiver Support Program with the addition of two new Diagnosis Care Sheets: Family Caregivers Guide to Intimacy and to Parkinson's

The VA Caregiver Support Program is pleased to announce the addition of two new Diagnosis Care Sheets to our website, www.caregiver.va.gov. Both Care Sheets are in response to requests that we have received from Family Caregivers of Veterans. The two new Care Sheets are titled the Family Caregiver's Guide to Intimacy and the Family Caregiver's Guide to Parkinson's. Diagnosis Care Sheets include information about physical and mental symptoms, the impact of the condition on the Family Caregiver and caregiving tips. These and other Diagnosis Care Sheets, such as the Family Caregiver's Guide to Traumatic Brain Injury, the Family Caregiver's Guide to PTSD, and the Family Caregiver's Guide to Multiple Sclerosis, can be found here http://www.caregiver.va.gov/toolbox_sheets.asp.

Caregiver Services

<<http://www.caregiver.va.gov/index.asp>> Home >

<http://www.caregiver.va.gov/support_landing.asp> VA Caregiver Support Services >

You may know that VA provides benefits and services for Veterans, but did you know that VA also has a number of services designed specifically to support you in your role as a Family Caregiver? VA values your commitment as a partner in our pledge to care for those who have "borne the battle," and we have several support and service options designed with you in mind. The programs are available both in and out of your home to help you care for the Veteran you love and for yourself.

Caregiver Support

Asking for help isn't always easy—especially if you're not exactly sure what kind of support would be the best fit for your needs. Learn more about how VA's trained professionals can help you find the services and support that are right for you and the Veteran you care for.

Caregiver Support Line

With VA's Caregiver Support Line assistance is just a quick phone call away. Whether you're in need of immediate assistance or have questions about what services you may be eligible for, the caring

licensed professionals who answer the support line can

- * Tell you about the assistance available from VA.

- * Help you access services.

- * Connect you with the Caregiver Support Coordinator at a VA Medical Center near you.

- * Just listen, if that's what you need right now.

If you're just getting started with VA, calling the Caregiver Support Line is a great first step to take to learn more about the support that's available to you.

VA's Caregiver Support Line
1-855-260-3274 toll-free
Monday through Friday 8:00 am - 11:00 pm ET

Saturday 10:30 am - 6:00 pm ET
Caregiver Support Coordinator

Your local Caregiver Support Coordinator is a licensed professional who can support you by matching you with services for which you are eligible, and providing you with valuable information about resources that can help you stay smart, strong and organized as you care for the Veteran you love. Find your local Caregiver Support Coordinator by visiting our <http://www.caregiver.va.gov/help_landing.asp> Help Near Home page and entering your zip code.

Caregiver Services

Below are descriptions of various services available to Family Caregivers of Veterans. If you'd like additional information or are interested in signing up for any of the services listed below, contact VA's Caregiver Support Line or your local Caregiver Support Coordinator for assistance (see above).

Adult Day Health Care (ADHC) Centers

ADHC Centers are a safe and active environment with constant supervision designed for Veterans to get out of the home and participate in activities. It is a time for the Veteran you care for to socialize with other Veterans while you, the Family Caregiver, get some time for yourself. ADHC Centers employ caring professionals who will assess a Veteran's rehabilitation needs and help a Veteran accomplish various tasks so he or she can maintain or regain personal independence and dignity. The Veteran you care for will participate in rehabilitation based on his or her specific health assessment during the day (ADHC centers are generally open Monday through Friday during normal business hours). The ADHC Centers emphasize a

partnership with you, the Veteran you care for and Centers' staffs.

Home-Based Primary Care

Home-Based Primary Care (HBPC) is a program designed to deliver routine health care services to your home when the Veteran you care for has medical issues that make it challenging for him or her to travel. Home-Based Primary Care is staffed with medical professionals who will come to your home. Some of their services are primary care and nursing, managing medication, and helping plan and put together nutritious and tasty meals. Home-Based Primary Care can also include physical rehabilitation, mental health care for your Veteran, social work and referrals to VA and community services. This program can help ease the worry and stress of having to bring a Veteran to and from a VA medical center for routine medical appointments.

Skilled Home Care

The Skilled Home Care service provides a medical professional who comes to your home to help care for a homebound Veteran. Some of the care a Veteran can receive includes basic nursing services and physical, occupational, or speech therapies. To be eligible for this service, a Veteran must be homebound, which means he or she has difficulty traveling to and from appointments and so is in need of receiving medical services at home. The Skilled Home Care service is similar to Home-Based Primary Care, but it involves VA purchasing care for a Veteran from a licensed non-VA medical professional.

Homemaker and Home Health Aide Program

Feeding and bathing another person can be very stressful, physically taxing, and time-consuming for you. Often times, taking care of a Veteran's needs leaves no time for you to take care of your own needs. The Homemaker and Home Health Aide Program is designed to help a Veteran with personal care needs. Your local VA medical center can help arrange for a home health aide who will come to your home on a regular schedule to allow you time to take care of your own needs. Caring for yourself helps you stay strong for yourself and the Veteran you care for.

Home Telehealth

We know how difficult or challenging it can be to get the Veteran you care for to a VA medical center for assistance. The Home

Telehealth program is designed to give you ready access to a care coordinator by using technology (e.g., telephone, computers) in your home. The Home Telehealth program enhances and extends care management to you, the Family Caregiver. The program is typically offered to individuals who live at a distance from a VA Medical Center. Home Telehealth services can also include education and training or online and telephone support groups. Please contact your Caregiver Support Coordinator to discuss which telehealth programs are available at your VA.

Respite Care

As a Family Caregiver, it can be hard to find time for a much-needed break from your daily routine and care responsibilities so that you have some time for yourself. Respite is time for relaxing and renewing your own energy, and respite care can provide you with the time to do that. If a Veteran requires a Caregiver, you are eligible to receive up to 30 days of respite care per year. The care can be offered in a variety of settings including at your home or through temporary placement of a Veteran at a VA Community Living Center, a VA-contracted Community Residential Care Facility, or an Adult Day Health Care Center. Respite care may also be provided in response to a Family Caregiver's unexpected hospitalization, a need to go out of town, or a family emergency. Staying strong for your Veteran means staying strong yourself. By taking an opportunity to be refreshed through respite care, you may be amazed at how your fresh outlook will help you and your Veteran.

Home Hospice Care

During the advanced stages of a terminal disease, Home Hospice Care can offer comfort and supportive services for you and the Veteran you care for in your own home. The professionals who provide Home Hospice Care understand the challenges you face and are there to help you and the Veteran you care for ease into the final stages of life. An interdisciplinary team of health care providers and volunteers from a local community hospice agency provide the services during this sad and challenging time. The team is there for you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Bereavement care (grief counseling) is also available for you and other immediate family. ★

Old Reliable

December 18, 1968

by 1LT Joe C. Swayze

ABOARD THE USS BENEWAH—During 1968, the 9th Division's Mobile Riverine Force (MRF), the joint Army-Navy strike force operating the rivers and canals interlacing the Delta, killed almost 3,000 Viet Cong in formerly inaccessible areas deep in the Delta.

The 2nd Brigade MRF has employed three infantry battalions, 3rd/60th, 3rd/47th, and 4/47th, rotating them between the floating base and Dong Tam. Naval Task Force 117 operates the boats from which the 2nd Brigade maneuvers.

The 3rd Battalion, 34th Artillery, supports from floating and land fire support bases. Fighter bombers from the 7th U.S. Air Force and gunships and light observation helicopters from Troop D, 3rd/5th Cavalry, 9th Aviation Battalion have provided air support to the brigade.

In early January during Operation CORONADO IX, the MRF operated in Vin Long Province searching out main force VC battalions. During a single action in western Dinh Tuong Province on January 10, 47 VC were killed.

Midway through Operation CORONADO XVIII, the enemy launched his TET offensive, a massive coordinated attack against the principal cities of the Delta, the MRF immediately sent troops to relieve My Tho, Cai Lay, and Vin Long.

Infantrymen from 3rd/60th and 3rd/47th moved to defend My Tho from four VC battalions. Thirty-six hours later, the MRF units had moved to Cai Lay and Vin Long to cut off the enemy operating there. In the first 12 days of TET, the MRF killed 345 VC.

On February 12, the MRF moved south to a new anchorage at Can Tho. During the rest of the month, the 3rd/47th and the 3rd/60th killed more than 300 VC in operations conducted around that Delta city.

On April 4, in the vicinity of the Ba Lai River, elements of the 3rd/47th and the 4/47th beached and assaulted an estimated VC battalion. Eighty-five VC were killed as a result of the action. In heavy contacts, the rest of April the MRF killed an additional 170 VC in Dinh Tuong and Kien Hoa Provinces.

During the third quarter of 1968, the 2nd Brigade conducted several significant operations. In late July and early August, the MRF combined with the 5th Vietnamese Marine Battalion and penetrated the rugged U Minh Forest deep in the Delta. They killed 250 VC and uncovered 101 weapons in 9 days.

On September 15, Operation HOMSTEAD was initiated kicking off the Kien Hoa Campaign for the MRF. The campaign was characterized by many water-mobile and airmobile operations in conjunction with pacification efforts.

"Our first job was to eliminate the 516th main force VC battalion and relieve pressure from Ben Tre. We could then begin to upgrade the local Vietnamese forces and initiate serious pacification efforts" said Major Donald L. Morelli, 2nd Brigade Operations Officer.

MEDCAP and ICAP teams leave daily for villages throughout the province to bring food and medical care. PSYOPS teams have dropped over nine million leaflets and have conducted over a hundred hours of loudspeaker air missions in October and November.

The MRF has enjoyed great success in presenting the South Vietnamese government's amnesty program. More than 100 Hoi Chanh came to the Chieu Hoi centers in Ken Hoa during October alone.

The MRF has accounted for 2,752 VC killed and detained 332 suspects and captured 632 weapons during the division's second year in Vietnam. ★

Revisiting June 19, 1967

by Jim Henke A Co (henkes@optonline.net)

For the past 45 years, not a day goes by that I do not revisit that terrible day in my life, as a member of Alpha Company 4th/47th Inf, 9th Inf Div. I was new to the company, and along with others, did not know what to expect out there in the paddies. We loaded onto the Navy tingos and had headed up the narrow rivers of the Delta. We were headed to a place called Ap Bac in Long An Province. We were put ashore by our Navy brothers and knew they would be on the rivers, while we set out in search of our enemy.

We walked all morning, and we were all exhausted for sure. Just before noon, as we walked across the rice paddies, all hell broke loose. We had walked into an L-shaped ambush, and our guys were falling fast. Many a fine soldier, who I had looked up to were either wounded or were lying out there dying. Between the 100 degree heat and the sun, plus the noise from the Artillery, gunships, and the air cover, we thought we were doomed for sure.

The enemy was well prepared, as they had well concealed bunkers, in the wood line. They had a field of fire on us and to move at all, meant you were next to get hit. Yet our medics ran from one wounded soldier to the next, exposing themselves, until they were hit. Noel West sticks in my head, as I watched him work on the guys, as we tried to give him and others some kind of cover. Eventually, he and the others fell. Doc Tabor and the other medics had their hands full all day. Our RTOs were eventually hit and made it impossible to call in the Arty, air cover, etc., on the correct position of the enemy. Some friendly fire eventually hurt our own, until some brave soldier from Alpha grabbed a radio, and contacted the forward air control to shift the fire.

The day was long and cost American troops dearly. Dust off choppers went down with our guys in it and had to stop coming in. Our guys that were hit

throughout the day had lost there since of direction and crawled the wrong way. The sheer noise alone was enough to do that, especially for a guy who is fighting for his life. To watch and see this, eat at you because you could not get to them. Many could have been saved, but it was impossible to get to them until night. By night, many had died, but many were still calling for help. As a perimeter was set up, some



of the bravest guys I knew tried to retrieve our wounded.

Padre Ray Johnson and two volunteers from the Navy medical boat moved out under fire from all direc-

tions and retrieved many of our soldiers and gave them medical attention at the boats. Eventually, the Padre was hit himself and had to stop. He and his crew were outstanding, and our Navy brothers were there with us that day and many other days when we needed them. They bled the same as we did on many a day, and we fought that year for one reason to stay alive and get home. When we saw the boats were coming our way, we knew we were out of that damn place and were always happy to see them.

That day was bad for everyone, as Charley Co and the others tried to get the pressure off of Alpha, but ran into their own hell. Finally, they hooked up with Alpha, but the damage was done. That night the enemy pulled out and never tried to get to us. Our sister company' tracked them the next day and made contact. A lot of the enemy died that day if you read the after action reports. I guess it really didn't matter to the guys of Alpha. They were hurt bad and would never be the same. Some 76 were wounded, and 32 dead, according to who you talk too. A

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

SHORTY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

months later, Michael Ferguson, RD1 was playing cards with hospital corpsmen aboard ship, stepped out to take a leak and ended up in the river as well and like Shorty his body surfaced about 3 days later. Now Ferguson, as much as I know, had not been drinking. He had just returned from his honeymoon in Australia and was on a "Love High."

It was then that some of us crew began to wonder if there just might have been some enemy onboard. We did have a contingent of Vietnamese Navy and so on.

I knew both of these men and so their lives and their ending have stayed with me these 40+ years with no finalization. If anyone knows more than I do, please let me know.

Lyn Noe

05/24/67 Sandy M. Rivers, SN, Philadelphia, PA (Phuoc Tuy); 9/25/69 Lonnie R. Parker, FN, Bessemer, AL (Phuoc Tuy); 11/28/69 Michael L. Ferguson, RD1, Rockwood, TN (Kien Phong); and 11/11/70 John E. Hollis, SN, Apple Spring, TX (Kien Phong). ★



More photos from Veterans Day 2013



ARMY TO NAVY... AND BACK AGAIN

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

depart from our Firebases, one at a time and move out onto the ships. The Vietnamese from the 7th ARVN Infantry Division moved into our FSB Moore and we moved back to Dong Tam. That is where we get to the meat of this story, Army to Navy.

A several day process was started to orient us to the ways of the Navy. We started to have classes, given by Navy personnel that tried to teach us what we needed to know in order to live on the "USS Benewah (APB-35). The ranks were all different. I am not sure we ever got the rank structure down pat. They tried their best to teach us that we were to sleep in racks, not bunks or cots. They talked about hulls, bulkheads, galleys, portholes, walkways, decks, and a hundred other terms that we were not familiar with. Our officers were to "mess" in the Captain's Wardroom up in "Officers' Country," wherever that was. We were to be served by stewards on white tablecloth and with real silverware. We were not to eat until the Captain arrived, I believe. There was to be no liquor or beer onboard ship. If we got beer, it was to be on a "barge" hooked up to the side of the ship. This did happen several times after combat missions. They taught us how to board the ship and depart the ship with salutes to the "Officer of the Day/Deck."

The enlisted men were crowded into berths, but at least they had a dry place to sleep. They ate in a crowded mess but they were happy to have hot meals and cold drinks. All in all this was not a bad place to spend time when not actually out fighting. At least the men could get a good night's sleep and not have to pull perimeter duty in a dirty bunker. I remember the nights being interrupted by the sound of concussion grenades going off in the water around the ship. We were told it was to keep enemy frogmen from setting charges on the hull. It must have



worked as the ship stayed intact while we were aboard.

Slowly, after we had been aboard ship for a few days, we began making the transition from Army to Navy, at least in some little ways. It was not long before we went back into the Army and started back out on patrols, but we did so by being transported in Armored Troop Carriers (Tangos). We made several missions onto the bank of the Mekong River. What I remember most was thinking about "D-Day landings" but in reality when the ramp went down and we charged off the end we immediately sunk to our knees in the worst and thickest mud that I had been in during my whole tour, and that is saying something. If there was an enemy waiting for us, we were all dead. That is all I could think of at the time. There was no charging the beach. It was just try to get to some semblance of dry ground before the shooting started. Lucky for us it never did. When we were picked back up and returned to the big ship, the sailors would douche us down and our equipment off with big high pressure hoses while on the barge. This was usually followed by a couple of beers. This was a good way to end a mission.

I think we were onboard the USS Benewah for about a week or two before we went ashore, were transported to the Dong Tam air pad, helicoptered to Tan Son Nut AFB and we flew out of Vietnam. Our battalion went by Air Force C-141s back to Schofield Barracks, HI. After a short tour of duty in the Navy we were finally back in the Army again.★

REVISITING CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

handful of guys from Alpha and the guys from other companies helped us police up our dead.

That played hard on the remaining few. Guys like Doc Tabor, JB Johnson, Jan Double, Tony Spradling, Sam Johnson, Scott Taylor, Doc Snider, W. Schatzle, Gerald Thurman, and many others saved many a life that day, but the real heroes were our guys that didn't make it. So many died that day, and many died in the later days to follow after the 19th, in the hospital. Jim Callan who was hit on the 17th was laying there watching his buddies come in from the 19th battle. Many a family was destroyed, and many a soldier would never be the same.

Back then they called it many things, shell shocked, etc. Today they call it PTSD. War is hell that's for sure, but the guys we lost that year will always be our heroes. To the Lt Philip Zum Mallen from Homewood, IL; Lt Fred Bertolino from Bushnell, IL; Noel West Doc from Tacoma, WA; and SP4 Eddie H. Stevens from Annapolis, MO, who many have said was the first to be hit that day and all our brothers who died, R.I.P. my friends, you will always be with us. To the rest of Alpha guys who were hit and made it that year like C. Meserino, J Vorn Dran, D. Nelson, Jim Judo Callan, Wayne Schatzle, and many others, I say Life is good, Enjoy. ★

Mobile Riverine Force Association Membership Application Form

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

NEWSLETTER DELIVERY

- ☐ Postal Delivery ☐ Go Green with Email

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- ☐ WW-II ☐ Korea ☐ Vietnam

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

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

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

MEMBERSHIP RATES

- ☐ 1 Year \$20 ☐ 3 Years \$50

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

Ambush Print

Beautiful limited edition print by artist Bill McGrath

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Bumper Stickers

Show your colors with pride. These durable vinyl bumper stickers will look great on your car or truck. Brilliant, bright detail on a weather-resistant vinyl. Help spread the word out about a great organization and maybe find someone right next door! Six great styles to choose from.



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In Memory Of

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

Tom Bogner for Jim Stone Echo Co 2nd/39th (02/68-02/69)

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

Bravo Charlie A 10 (04/69-04/70) for Terry Mason and Gil Reyna (Class NIOTC 2-69)

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

James "JC" Carroll (1097th Med Bt Co USA) for Donald L. (Stony) Stoneman

1097th Med Bt Co USA (died in-country) 12/16/68

Orville Daley for Merrill Davis USS Askari ARL-30 (1952-1953)

Ted Fetting for Eloy "Stevie" LeBlanc, Roy Phillips, and Fred Jansonius B Co.

2nd/60th and KIA 02/02/68

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

Tony Garvey for Wes Sade, Billy Olsen, and Staff Sgt James Williams C Co.

4th/47th 9th Inf

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

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

James Henke, Tony Spradling, Dave Nelson, James Callan, and the Band of Brothers for Sgt Gerald Thurman and Spec James B. Johnson, and all our Brothers lost on June 19, 1967, from A Co. 4th/47th 9th in AP BAC, Long An Province

Joe Hilliard for Joe Benack from Florida and Donald Hartzell from Pennsylvania Colleen Huber for Shawn Huber D Co. 3rd/47th Inf (10/68-01/69)

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

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

Robert Vernes, Charles Lewis KIAs 02/16/67; Gerald Novak KIA 03/02/67;

James Novotny, Oscar

Willie B. Lloyd for Capt Walter J. Riedemann USN (Ret.)

Richard MacCullagh for John (Doc) Phillips, HMC, USN (Ret) RivRon 15

Richard MacCullagh for Chaplain Rene L. Petit, LT, CC, RC, RivRon 13 and 15

Men of C Co. 4th/47th 1967 for our Brothers KIA 03/19/67 Benito Alaniz;

MIA 04/09/67 Ronald P. Schworer; KIA 04/13/67 Charles "Duffy" Black;

KIA 05/15/67 Donald M. Peterson; KIA 06/19/67 Robert J. Cara, Robert J.

Jindra, Timothy A. Johnson, Forrest L. Ramos, Cameron A. Rice, David A.

Robin, Sheldon B. Schulman, Hubert J. Fink, Kenneth D. Frakes, William

M. Geier, John L. Winters; KIA 07/11/67 Marion "Butch" Eakins, Elmer F.

Kenney, Harold W. King, Philip A. Ferro, George E. Smith; KIA 07/29/67 Cecil

B. Bridges; KIA 09/29/67 James M. Sunday; KIA 10/06/67 Gale A. Allridge,

Danny D. Burkhead, Charles W. Davis; KIA 11/10/67 Charles W. Grizzle; and

KIA 05/06/68 John T. Hoskins

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

A R "Monti" Montillo for William "Bulldog" McLaughlin B Co 3rd/60th KIA

10/03/68 and Barry "Butch" Copp B Co 3rd/60th KIA 10/28/68

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

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

Albert and Sarah Moore for Capt Gerald Saucier CO USS Benewah APB-35

(09/66-02/68)

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

Roy Moseman and Dave Schoenian for Steve Carmine, Earnest Eatman Jr., Freddie Lewis, Robert McManus, Ron Muehlberg, Ron Panzer, Don Peterson, Don Pragman, Dennis Price, Larry J. Purcell, Bobby Freeman, Harry Hass, Stan Holton, Edmond "Red" Tolar, and SSG James

Jasper Northcutt for SSGT Henry T. Aragon B-2 2nd/47th KIA 08/23/67, SGT

James E. Boorman B-2 2nd/47th KIA 08/27/67, SP4 James D. Bronakoski

B-2 2nd/47th KIA 04/27/67, SP4 Michael G. Hartnett B-2 2nd/47th KIA

04/27/67, SGT William D. Mize B-2 2nd/47th and 5th/60th KIA 10/28/67,

CPL Harold K. Southwick B-2 2nd/47th Inf KIA 03/02/67 (first KIA in B Co.

2nd/47th in Vietnam), and PFC Robert C. Voltz B-1 2nd/47th Inf (Mech) KIA

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

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

Ken Sundberg for Michael David Sheahan 5th/60th KIA 02/25/68, Robert L.

Conley 5th/60th KIA 02/01/68, and Glenn Dean Taylor 5th/60th KIA 02/01/68

Robert Sutton for LT James F. Rost Jr. Vin Te Canal Chau Duc KIA 11/69

Robert Thacker for SFC Earl T. Pelhan, Jr., 15th Eng, 9th Inf Div, KIA in Delta Lo

Steven Totcoff for my brother CPL Dennis S. Totcoff B Co 3rd/47th 9th Inf Div

KIA 5/2/68

USS Guide MSO-447 for Shipmate and Brother Harold Foster

USS Westchester County sailors and soldiers killed and wounded in the mining on November 1, 1968

Henry Velez for my fallen brothers, B Co. 2nd/39th Inf

Ron and Judy Wallace for all those lost from 3rd/47th Inf

Gary Williams for Dale Winkel C Co. 3rd/60th 9th Inf (01/68-01/69)

CPT Steve Williams and MAJ Bob Bischoff in memory of 2LT David George

Williams, Co A, 4/47th, KIA 9/21/67

David Wilson 2nd/60th KIA 08/05/69, Timothy Shelton 4th/39th KIA 06/25/69,

Steven Murray 4th/39th KIA 05/26/69, Harvey Crabtree 2nd/4th Arty KIA

06/19/69, and Dennis Mattox 1st/501st 101st Abn KIA 08/23/69

Norman Emil Dechenne passed away October 13, 2001. EN2 Norm served on the USS Benewah (APB-35) from 09/66 to 03/68. You may contact his brother Ron Dechenne, 1320 E 9th St, Weiser, ID 83672 208-549-1604.

Shirley F. Blair, wife of member Norman Blair, passed away September 12, 2012. You may contact Norman Blair, PO Box 293, West Chester, GA. 31567, norman-blair99@yahoo.com. May our sister rest in peace.

1Lt Larry A. Gibby passed away from cancer June 8, 2012. Larry served with the 3rd/47th (1966-67). You may contact the family c/o 9614 Golden Dr., Vancouver, WA 98665.



Brown

Diane Brown, wife of member Doug Brown, passed away December 20, 2012. Diane and Doug were instrumental when the association first started with printing and sending out our newsletter "River Currents" for a number of years.

You may contact Doug Brown, 42 Carr Rd., Marshfield, MA 02050, 781-837-3663, dnbrown1955@yahoo.com.

Member **George A. Owings** passed away February 7, 2013. George served on the USS Fort Marion LSD-22 (1965-68). You may contact Gloria Owings, 699 Oak Park Dr, Choctaw OK 73020-7556, 405-390-2319, owings699@cox.net.



Ellingson

Paula Ellingson, wife of member Lou Ellingson, passed away August 14, 2013. You may contact Lou Ellingson, 13070 10th St NW, Watson, MN 56295-1135, 952-941-0532, lou18@comcast.net.

Member **Rasmus W. "Sonny" Rasmussen** passed away June 18, 2013. Rasmus served in RivRon 9 T-91-6 (01/67-11/67). He received the Navy Commendation Medal for Bravery. You may contact his widow Margie Rasmussen, 3600 American Way Apt 226, Missoula,

MT 59808-1377; 409-386-0955, sonras8@gmail.com.



Boyd

Member **Charles Boyd Jr.** passed away from Leukemia after 7½ weeks, July 7, 2013. Charles served in B Co. 3rd/47th Inf (01/67-01/68). You may contact his widow Clara, 8500 Kingsbird Loop Apt 816, Fort Myers, FL 33967-5781, 417-883-8624.



Sibuma in Vietnam



Sibuma

Member **Alejo V. Sibuma** passed away June 13, 2013. Alejo served with RivDiv ASPB-6857 (05/69-05/70). You may contact his widow S. Rene, 9325 51st Ave NE, Marysville, WA 98270-2336, 360-658-0839.

Member **George A. Kitchen** passed away April 27, 2010. George was the CO for River Division 92 (04/67-11/68). You may contact his widow Diane Kitchen, 8830 Plantation Dr., West Columbia, TX 77486-7146, 979-345-4149.

Member **Stanley Jones II** passed away December 12, 2012. Stanley served in RivRon 15 on T-47 (07/69-07/70). You may contact the family at PO Box 2127, West Monroe, LA 71294-2127.



Bokusky

Louis J. Bokusky passed away September 11, 2013. Louie served as a Seaman with River Assault Squadron 15 River Assault Division 152 onboard T-152-6 from July 1968 to July 1969.

Member **James I. Peter** passed away August 16, 2013. James served on the USS Askari ARL-30 (02/67-12/67). You may contact his family at 51057 155th St, Austin, MN 55912-6191, 507-437-1561, jamesipeter@yahoo.com.

*The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone;
it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave...*

—Patrick Henry

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



Mobile Riverine Force Association

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