

In praise of the Infantry...

Despite their huge sacrifices in war, infantrymen are seldom accorded the respect they rate.

"It has borne the brunt of human conflict through the ages," according to *Encyclopedia Britannica*, "and has been called the 'Queen of Battle'."

That title was earned by American infantrymen on blood-drenched battlefields from Camden in the Revolutionary War to Ira Drang Valley in Vietnam. In special recognition of their role in war, the War Department created the Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB) in 1943.

As Erich C. Ludvigsen wrote in the Army, "The CIB was created for infantrymen in infantry units at a time (1943) when they were doing 70% of the fighting and dying—a proportion that has not changed much despite the ever-increasing application of technology to war, and is likely to increase in infantry oriented low-intensity conflict."

Unfortunately, not every American is proud of first-line combat soldiers, the men who, in every one of our wars, led the way and bled profusely as a result, much more so than any other branch of service (see the accompanying chart).

World War II infantrymen, in particular, have faced badly at the hands of military historians and journalist. In their views, GIs simply should not

have been on the field of battle as the almighty Wehrmacht. Korean War and Vietnam War infantrymen have not fared much better.

Even today, in Bosnia and Kosovo American infantrymen are reputedly far less professional than their British, French and German counterparts.

This attitude toward infantrymen is not a modern-day phenomenon. While individual units may have been singled out for praise, the branch as a whole has not received just recognition. That was left to GI-Cartoonist Bill Mauldin and war correspondent Ernie Pyle. Pyle's goal was to cover "the tiny percentage of our vast Army who are actually up there doing and dying." The public has simply never appreciated the magnificent service rendered by the infantry during the past 226 years.

Tradition of Versatility

The American infantry's beginnings were humble. On June 14, 1775 (the day of the Army's inception), the Continental Congress authorized 10 companies of riflemen to be raised in Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia as part of the new Continental Army. That makes the U.S. Infantry branch older than the Declaration of Independence itself.

Although its weapons, equipment and tactics have become increasingly sophisticated (some might say too much so), the mission infantry still has the same basic

mission: to get to the battlefield and to close with and destroy the enemy. As such, the infantry is the most flexible and most mobile of the Army's combat arms.

It can move by land, sea, or air and arrive at its destination ready to fight. It can land by parachute, conduct both air assaults and amphibious operations, operate effectively under all weather conditions and overcome natural and man-made obstacles.

Uncomplimented 'Joe'

Just who has been the U.S. infantrymen? He is the tired and hungry Continental soldier standing in the cold at Valley Forge; the brave men wearing blue or gray at Shiloh and Gettysburg; and the tough professional in a lonely outpost on the Western Frontier.

He has put streamers on the Army's battle flag recalling fights in the Spanish American War and WWI. Without hope or chance of relief or rescue, he fought desperately at Bataan and Corregidor, gaining valuable time for America to mobilize. Infantrymen fought more limited wars in Korea and Vietnam, helped liberate Grenada, restored stability in Panama and faced off

against a tyrant in Iraq.

An infantrymen is the lone soldier whose foxhole marks the Army's forward progress. He is the unaccomplished "Joe" who fights without promise of reward. He carries on because of discipline, pride, belief in a cause and for not wanting to let down his comrades. As Pyle put it, if for no other reason, "at least for each other."

Periodically—down the through the centuries—some have implied the infantryman's days were numbered, suggesting he be released to the junkyard of history. Yet the foot soldier has demonstrated again and again that individual courage, good leadership and fighting spirit does make a difference in battle.

Since 1775, the U.S. infantryman has been called upon to perform prodigious deeds, both in war and peace—not for fame or fortune, but because those deeds needing doing. If the U.S. is to maintain its liberties, it will, as in the past, depend on the fortitude and gallantry of its infantrymen.

Ernie Pyle — appropriately regarded as the soldiers ambassador to America" as usual, got it right: I love the infantry because they are underdogs. They are the mud-rain-frost-and-wind boys...In the end, they are the guys that wars can't be won without."

— Taken from August 2001 issue of the VFW magazine.

From the Galley

ALBERT MOORE, NATIONAL PRESIDENT

Just a few lines to wish each and every one of you a happy holiday season and to thank everyone for all the support you have given the Association this past year just as you have done in previous years, it's most appreciated. Without your continued support the MRFA would not be the strong and vibrant Association it is today. As always I cannot say enough about your Officers and Board members. It's an honor and a privilege to be able to work with such a fine group of individuals, as well as their spouses, who give us tremendous support. From our very beginning I have been very fortunate to have had a great group of folks on the board to work with. If not for them we would not be where we are today.

We're looking for a great reunion in San Diego in June 2002. CCB-18 will be ready. We're in the process of obtaining weapons for her through the Army. All in all she's in good shape thanks to a few volunteers who live in the area and a couple who live a few hundred miles away that have given their time and effort. We do have a new CCB coordinator, Charles Campbell, USN (Ret.). More info on Boats Campbell later in this newsletter. Your Association is in great shape, as far as membership is concerned; and doing well financially. I see no problems at all in our future as long as we remain as a team and work together as a unit of brothers, and sisters, we'll remain one of the better Vietnam Veterans Associations around, if not the best. Sara and I wish each and everyone of you a great holiday season and a prosperous New Year.

Al Moore

Attention Members:

From Roy Moseman, Vice President

For those of you who know Albert Moore, you know that the last thing he wants is a lot of attention. However, I think the members should know that around the first week in September, Albert lost sight in his right eye. The doctors really don't know why but they have told him that the loss of sight is permanent. The good news is that his left eye is fine and at this time shows no sign of future problems. I would just like for everyone to keep Albert in their thoughts and prayers. We have a lot of great officers and board members in the Association but I can't think of anyone that could keep the MRFA going the way Albert does.

River Assault Squadron 15 (3RD-4TH Infantry)

It was June 13, 1969. River Assault Squadron 15 had been relocated from enemy Base Area 480 in Chuong Thien and Kien Giang Provinces to the Dong Tam area because we were getting "short". I recalled only moving 9th Infantry Division troops on only 3 or 4 occasions. River Assault Divisions 151 and 152 had spent our year carrying out tactical operations with the Vietnamese Marines and ARVN. I found myself deeply fearful once again as our tour was coming to an end. A short RAD 152 operation near Ben Tre would be a "piece of cake" after what we'd been through down south.



The drone of our engines and the sweltering heat were accosting my senses as I sat on the ladder close to the ramp on my T-152-1 boat. Suddenly I heard several rockets launched from the riverbank. I turned and saw Z-152-1 lurch to her side from the impact of multiple hits. Our column of 9 boats began suppressing the intense fire as we attempted to maneuver through the well planned ambush.

After clearing the ambush zone we learned that T-152-6 and T-152-11 had also taken rocket hits. The casualty rate was very high amidst Navy personnel and 3/4th Infantry troops. To successfully evacuate them it was determined that we needed to reverse our direction in order to get to a safer landing zone. We suppressed yet another Viet Cong attack as we moved through the area of the initial firefight.

Shortly after reaching a remote Fire Support Base

Army medevac choppers were arriving to ferry the dead and wounded out to evacuation hospitals. In the aftermath we learned that 4 Army troopers had been killed and 26 Army and Navy personnel had been wounded. More 3/4th grunts had to be airlifted in to replace those who were medevaced. Charlie had served us a large "piece of cake" and it wasn't over yet.

Only June 15th our assault craft moved into position to extract troops that we had offloaded earlier in the day. Their search and destroy mission had not led to contact. As our ramp was being lowered I heard a loud cracking noise followed by a thump. The winch cable had snapped causing the ramp to drop onto the muddy riverbank. I used my sound powered phone to tell our boat captain that I would rig up to raise it manually with the chain hoist. The other Tango boats were busy loading their troops.

As I began releasing the chain on the chain hoist all hell broke loose. The Viet Cong had seized the opportunity to launch another ambush. I frantically hooked up the chain hoist and began manually cranking up the heavy ramp. All of a sudden I was almost knocked down by a muzzle blast. Glancing to our portside I saw M-152-1 firing point blank into the jungle. She fired a couple of more rounds and then moved away. The adrenaline screamed through my body as I worked the large chain hoist. I could hear the battle raging behind our boat. The jungle in front of me was being torn to pieces by our weapons. I yelled at our boat captain when the ramp finally locked into place. Just as quickly we backed off the riverbank and joined the battle. As we moved out of the ambush zone the last of our machine guns finally became silent.

Again radio reports confirmed many wounded. Z-152-1 had been hit once again along with T-152-7 and M-152-1. We all scrambled to rig a Tango boat for medical evacuation. A report came in from M-152-1 that our Officer in Charge, LTJG Tom Kelley, had been seri-

ously wounded. He had only been with RAD 152 for this one short operation having come over from RAS 9. The choppers arrived quickly and the wounded were whisked off.

I endured a few more harrowing experiences before our replacements arrived to take over T-152-1. What a relief to finally be away from those deadly rivers and canals.

In 1984 I spotted a "Gung Ho Annual" magazine lying on a desk. As I glanced through it I came across an article entitled "The Brown Water Navy in Vietnam". Much to my surprise the author had written about the June 15, 1969 firefight mentioned above. It was then, 15 years after the fact, that I found out LTJG Thomas G. Kelley had become the recipient of the Navy Medal of Honor for his heroic actions that day. Here is a portion of his citation:

"Sustaining serious head wounds from the blast, which hurled him to the deck of the monitor, Lieutenant Commander Kelley disregarded his severe injuries and attempted to continue directing the other boats. Although unable to move from the deck or speak clearly into the radio, he succeeded in relaying his commands through 1 of his men until the enemy attack was silenced and the boats were able to move to an area of safety."

As we all know it was not popular to be a Vietnam veteran for years following the war. That day, in the quiet of my own surroundings, I took great pride again in the fact that we all did our jobs and we did them extremely well under such adverse conditions. To know that we had a Congressional Medal of Honor recipient in our midst was the "icing" on the cake. You may contact Mike Harris. 2196 N 14th St., Coos Bay, OR 97420; 541-267-4755. RAS 15 - RAD 152 - T-152-1 July 1968 - July 1969 www.riverinesailor.com.



My Experience After A Stand Down

TIMOTHY HOLLAR

Besides firefights, hot LZs, hot beach landings and the thrills and chills of life on a tango (after getting off the line) my most memorable experience was after a stand-down in Dong Tam.

We were either on the Benewah or the Colleton, on the Song My Tho outside of Dong Tam. Many of us went into Dong Tam, to the PX, EM or NCO club, or the movies. We were to be back at the barracks ship by a certain time, I think 1800, for judging of a beard growing contest (a morale thing) I think there was only two of us in the running, Mancel "chap" Chapman and I. At the appointed time "Tommy" and "Griff" and I were at the boat dock in Dong Tam waiting for a ride back to the ship. "Chap" was already on the pontoon that was tied to the ship.

While Tommy, Griff and I waited, a crowd gathered for the return trip. No boat showed up, so a couple sail-

ors commandeered one that was tied to the dock. We got aboard (maybe 18 or 20 of us) and took off for the ships — we thought.

When we left the bay at Dong Tam, the Navy Guy's, more than a little liquored up, took a left, for My Tho. We tried to convince them that, beside the fact we were all going to be AWOL, it was to late to be wandering around a city that was Charlie's at night.

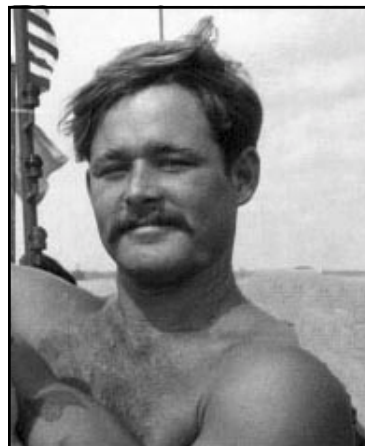
Unfortunately most of the guy's were tanked, Army and Navy alike. We lost the argument and ended up in My Tho. Everyone went their separate ways. Tommy, Griff and I stuck together. We headed for the main drag, looking for a convoy, or any way to return to Dong Tam. No luck!! It started to get dark and we finally found a Vietnamese police station. We communicated that we wanted to stay there for the night. We couldn't con-

tact the ship. They had a phone but there seemed to be no connection between the Vietnamese police and the US military

I think the Vietnamese got a kick out of playing host to Americans who volunteered to sleep in their jail.

The next morning we left our hosts and hitched a ride with a convoy to Dong Tam, hopped a boat to the ship and spent a long time explaining our way out of an article 15 or other punishment. We never did find out what happened to the navy guy's, but their absence confirmed our story and kept us off the hot seat. Oh, Chap won the beard contest and a R&R to Vung Tau.

You can contact Timothy Hollar C/O 7385 Thunderbird Ln., Stanton, CA 90680, phone 714-527-5121; Tim served in C/CO/3rd/60th 4/68 / 3/69.



The Parade

BY FRANK GUBALA

This is not a story about me, rather one that was told to me at the 2001 MRFA reunion. Since this was my first Military Reunion since I had left the service. I did not know what to expect. At first I was very nervous and did not know if I could cope with it all. But my wife Joyce and I decided to attend for the full 4 days, and as the days went by I realized that this was a good thing for me.



Frank Gubala with his wife Joyce.

Attendance at the reunion was about 1500 Army and Navy men and their wives. Joyce and I decided we would not just hang out with the Army people. But would socialize with whom ever we met,

On the 3rd day we were running late for breakfast and arrived at the dining just before they took the food away. As we filled our plates and looked around the room. Most of the people were leaving. There was a man and his wife just behind us, so we asked them if they would share a table. They said yes and we sat down together. They introduced themselves; Frank & Linda Jones from St. Louis. At first things were a little uncomfortable, but as the conversation progressed. We learned he was in the Navy and they had lived in St. Louis all of their lives. About that time a very tall man came in and asked to join us. His name is Walter Lineberger III. From Jackson Hole, Wyoming; he was also Navy.

We finished our meals and continued talking over coffee. We learned a lot about each other as talk flowed. Then Walter told us about his business and how he was called a hero for saving a woman's life. From a burning building in his hometown, and how even the Governor honored him.

Frank Jones from St. Louis then told his story.

Frank told how he did his 12 month tour in Nam, felt that he did nothing special, and came home to his wife and 7 month old baby boy. He arrived in St. Louis very late and went directly to parents home where the families talked and visited till 2 or 3 a.m. being so late, Frank and Linda excused themselves to go to their home. Before they left, his Mother told him to be back at the house at 9:00am. He told his Mother he wanted to sleep in, but she insisted and he agreed.

The next morning Frank, Linda and baby walked to his parents' home. When they got to the corner of the street where his parents lived. The street was blocked. His 10 year old sister and her friends had made signs and confetti, and all of the children and adults from the neighborhood stayed home that day and gave him a "WELCOME HOME" parade on his street.

We all set there with tears in our eyes. Walter told how he was mugged in San Francisco. I told how I came home on a stretcher and had to have a Military Police escort to get past the protesters outside of Andrews Air Force Base going to Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, DC.

We never saw our friends again during the rest of the reunion. But, to this day, even though Joyce and I have told this story many times. We cannot hold back the tears before finishing it. Frank Gubala served A-CO-3rd/47th 1968. You may contact Frank and Joyce at 199 Oakridge Av. Kenmore, NY. 14217 E-mail fgubala@aol.com Frank



Jones served as a Boat Captain on Tango 48 during 1969 and 1970.

Frank & Linda Jones

Doc Peterson Remembers...

JANUARY 26, 1969 ... a former 1st platoon Bravo Company member, Kenneth P. Johnson, was working with Captain Laniers RTO when he grabbed a Vietnamese sign nailed to a coconut tree. Said sign was also attached to U.S. style claymore mine. The resulting blast killed Kenny and severely wounded 9 other guys. I refused to give up on Kenny; fought till the Dustoff arrived; and though he had regained a heartbeat (confirmed by a second soldier at the time), Kenny was pronounced dead half an hour after reaching Tan An Hospital. For 32 years, I have carried the guilt of my friend Kenny's death, not so much as I didn't do enough everything possible, because I believe I did. But because I believed that Kenny's wife had had a baby girl, one he never got to see, and that has haunted me ever since.

The little girl comes into my dreams and asks why send her daddy home. For 32 years this is the only nightmare from my service. Three years ago I began to look for Kenny's wife and daughter, but without much luck. I did find Wayne Johnson, 1st platoon leader that day, and was happy to hear that he had not been blinded that day, as I had been lead to believe.

My good friend Cheryl Roberts jumped into the search, and made contact with an old friend from the Johnson family. He provided me with Kenny's brother and mother's phone numbers. I wrote the brother who passed my letter on to Kenny's older sister, she called me tonight. We spoke for about half an hour and she floored me with the news that the family had no knowl-

edge of Kenny's wife ever having a child with Kenny, that in fact she had DEAR JOHN'ed him around Christmas 1968 and left the area. This sister Joyce, has had limited contact with Kenny's wife over the years, and contact with the Army over Kenny's records; there is nothing to indicate such a child existed. I didn't know what to say. If Kenny didn't tell me he had a baby girl, I cannot explain where I got the idea. I remember when my daughter Tracie was born in January of '72; holding her for the first time, and suddenly realizing I was doing something Kenny could never do; feeling so lucky to be able to do so, and yet guilty that I could and he never would.

Joyce had indicated she would double check with Kenny's wife's brother to confirm if the girl was ever pregnant with Kenny's child. She says it is possible, there are conflicting stories as to why the girl left the area, but even so, says it's highly unlikely.

Question is, where does this leave me? Have I been living a lie for 32 years! If so how did it develop? Confusion reigns. I sit here dazed like never before, and needed to share this with people I care about and feel can understand. So if you read this, you are someone I highly respect and care for.

You may contact Harold Doc Peterson C/O 32 Shore Rd., Lake Hopatcong, NJ 07849. Phone 973-663-1954, or email BVOBNAID@aol.com.

Doc Peterson served with Bravo Co. 2nd/47th (Mech) Infantry, 9/68 - 10/69.

Historic Fleets

Among the few World War II construction ships and craft remaining in the U.S. Navy service are the Benewah-class berthing barges Mercer (APL-39, ex IX-502, APB-39, and Nueces (APL-40, ex IX-503, APB-40) Both employed in Japan. As their string of hull numbers indicate, they have had interesting careers. Intended as transports and accommodations ships for crews of floating dry docks in forward areas, the six Benewahs class were authorized on 17, December 1943 as APLs 35-40. To distinguish them from the APL-2 class barges, the Navy retyped the Benewahs as APB-'Barracks Ship. Self Propelled' on 8, August 1944. The Benewah (APB-35),



USS Benewah APB-35 1952.

Colleton (APB-36), Echols (APB-37), Marlboro (APB-38), Mercer (APB-39), Nueces (APB-40), were built by the Boston Naval Ship Yard to a modified version of the standard LST (landing ship tank) design, on the same 328 foot hull propelled by two 800-horsepower diesels.

All six ships were completed after the war and served for two decades mainly in such roles as receiving ships and accommodation ships attached to the mothball fleet anchorage's before going into reserve themselves. The Marlboro was stricken from in December 1963, and the Echols, still in her original configuration. Was designated IX-504 in 1971 and used as barracks barge for Submarine crews at Groton, CT until stricken in December 1995. The other four were reactivated in 1967-68 after major modification and used as Barracks ships with the riverine force in Vietnam. The 0-3 level deckhouse was lengthened and surmounted by a helicopter platform, an enlarged bridge superstructure was topped by a sturdy tripod mast to support new communications antennas; and the surviving armament

Of two quad 40-mm antiaircraft gun mounts was supplemented by two single-fire 3 inch guns.

On their return from Vietnam in 1970 the four were returned to reserve. The Colleton was stricken on 6, January 1973 and scrapped, but the others were reactivated as IX—Miscellaneous, Unclassified—for use as non-self-propelled accommodations barges at ship yards. The Benewah became IX-311 in February 1971 but was stricken in 1973 and turned over to the Navy of the Philippines who subsequently in 1975 sunk her for use as a barrier reef. The Mercer and Nueces, reactivated on 1 November 1975 as IX-502 and IX-503, respectively, remain in use 55 years after their completion, with the hull numbers returned to APL-39 and APL-40 on 7, March 2001. Neither ship is self propelled the engine have been gutted out as has all the gear on the bridge they're truly barges now.



USS Nueces APB-40 is in Japan today.

MRFA Catalog Products

New shirt designs feature fully embroidered logos. **All shirts are \$22.50 each (includes S/H) Please indicate quantity and size in space provided.**

- Combat Action Ribbon (Tan) (Qty: _____ / Sz: _____) MRF Vietnam (Ash) (Qty: _____ / Sz: _____)
 9th Inf. Div. Vietnam (Dk. Blue) (Qty: _____ / Sz: _____) River Assault Force (Ash) (Qty: _____ / Sz: _____)
 Combat Infantry Badge (Ash) (Qty: _____ / Sz: _____) MRFA Army & Navy (Ash) (Qty: _____ / Sz: _____)
 Boats ASPB Tango Monitor (Ash) (Qty: _____ / Sz: _____)

(# of Shirts: _____)
x \$22.50 each = \$ _____



New hat designs feature fully embroidered logos. **All hats are \$21.50 each (includes S/H) Please indicate quantity in the space provided.**

- MRFA (Dark Blue) (Qty: _____) Purple Heart Hats (White) 9th Div. (Qty: _____) MRFA (Qty: _____)
 Combat Medic (Black) (Qty: _____) Boat Hats (Off White with Blue Bill)
 CIB Hat (White) (Qty: _____) Monitor (Qty: _____) Tango (Qty: _____) ASPB (Qty: _____)
 9th Inf Div. (Dark Blue) (Qty: _____)

(# of Hats: _____)
x \$21.50 each = \$ _____



MRFA Poster In Full Color (Qty: _____ x \$27.50 each = \$ _____)

Patches MRFA (Qty: _____) 9th Infantry (Qty: _____) TF-117 (Qty: _____)
Specify: River Rat (Qty: _____) (Qty: _____ x \$4.00 each = \$ _____)

MRFA Bumper Sticker Full Color Vinyl Decal (Qty: _____ x \$4.00 each = \$ _____)

Hat Pin MRFA 9th Infantry Pin (# of Pins: _____ x \$3.00 each = \$ _____)

MRFA Video "Force Afloat" (Qty: _____ x \$27.50 each = \$ _____)

"Ambush" Limited edition print by Bill McGrath. (Qty: _____ x \$150.00 each = \$ _____)

Personalized MRFA Coffee Mug Specify items of your choice or, check this box for None
MRFA Member's Name (maximum of 16 characters/spaces) Rank (max. 4 characters/spaces)

Command in Vietnam (maximum 20 characters) _____

Specify insignia for reverse side of the mug: Army Navy USMC USCG None
(Qty: _____ x \$25.00 each = \$ _____)

MRFA or 9th Infantry Division Jackets All Jackets Are Embroidered with MRFA or 9th Infantry Division Logo.
Jackets are available in: Black, Silver, Royal Blue or White.

Available combinations: Black jacket w/white or gold collar/cuffs. Specify: _____
Silver jacket w/black or white collar/cuffs. Jacket Color: _____
Blue jacket w/white or gold collar/cuffs _____
White jacket w/solid colors only. Collar/Cuffs: _____

Nylon Jacket Embroidered Back Only S-XXXL 135.00
Nylon Jacket (Embroidered Front & Back)
(Name on right front, unit on left front) S-XXXL 155.00
Quilted (Embroidered Back Only) S-XXXL 145.00
Quilted (Embroidered Front & Back) S-XXXL 165.00 (Qty: _____ x \$ _____ each = \$ _____)

GRAND TOTAL ENCLOSED \$ _____

Make check or money order out to the MRFA. Send to: MRFA, 2906 Starlite Dr., Topeka, KS 66605. You can contact products Chairman Bob VanDruff by calling 1-785-267-1526 or email bvdmrfa@networksplus.net.

Note: Due to the increase in postage over the last few years we have had to go up on our S/H there has also been an increase in cost from our product suppliers so we have had to go up on the products as well. This is the first increase of any kind the MRFA has had since our beginning in 1992. Albert Moore, MRFA President

The MRFA Thanks You For Your Help With CCB-18

In addition to the names previously posted in *River Currents*, we'd like to thank the following people for their donations to the CCB-18 Restoration Project:

New CCB-18 Contributors
Greg Witt USS Whitfield Cty LST-
William Flamm RivRon-15 C/5 - T/48 - T-2
Steve Kennedy USS Sphinx ARL-24
Lyn Noe USS Benewah APB-35

If you would like to be a CCB-18 Contributor please send a check or money to MRFA 1857 County Rd. A-14, Decorah, IA. 52101. Please make check or money order payable to the MRFA c/o CCB-18 Fund.

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

If you live in the San Diego area and would like to assist in the restoration of CCB-18 by being a MRFA volunteer (Working Party) Army or Navy member contact Charles Campbell 677 G St. Sp.#1 Chula Vista, CA 91910; phone 619-427-6835; email cccec@aol.com.



CCB-18 Reunion Calendar

The CCB-18 reunion calendar was the idea of Al Breininger COS for RivDiv-91. He also furnished the calendars. Al was also a driving force behind the Association obtaining the CCB. Mr. Breininger has been very active and supportive of the Association... It's greatly appreciated.

CCB-18 Dedication Speakers

Master of Ceremonies

Don Blankenship GM2 A-111-3 / A-151-21 1969-70

Invocation

- LTC Jim Johnson Chaplain USA Ret.
- Lt/General Patrick Hughes USA Ret. Plt Ldr. D/CO/4th 39th Infantry, 1969
- Commodore Wade C. Wells ComRivFlot-One USN Ret. 1966-1967
- Brigadier General Douglas Smith USA Ret. Cmdr 2nd/47th (Mech) Infantry 1968-69
- Captain O.W. Wright USN Active Commander Naval Recruit Command Great Lakes. II. Ex YN 3 USS Benewah APB-35 1966-67
- S/Sgt William Reynolds USA 3rd/47th Infantry 1966-67
- Lt Al Breininger USN Chief of Staff RivDiv-91 1966-67

Memorial Services

- Lt/Col Jim Johnson USA Ret. Chaplain 3rd/60th Inf.



Thanks For All Your Hard Work!
MRFA Salutes the Volunteers

Shown here from left to right: (Standing) Dutch Hearne, Don Blankenship, Chuck Campbell, Ralph Fries, Mike Wheeler; (Kneeling) David Hearne (left) and Everett Jones (right).

Don't Be Left Out! Make Your Reservations Soon!

MRFA & 9TH Infantry Division Reunion June 27TH – June 30TH • San Diego, CA

The Association will be holding its 2002 Reunion from June 27-30, in San Diego, CA.

We'll be staying at the Red Lion Hanalei Hotel in Mission Valley. Room rates are \$99.00 a night. These rates are good for three days prior to the reunion, and three days following the reunion. You may want to start making your reservation and plans ASAP. Call 1-800-882-0858, be sure to mention you're making

your reservations under the MRFA, our group booking number is 2755. There will be more information in the upcoming issues of *River Currents* prior to the reunion. There will be a dedication ceremony for CCB-18 Saturday June 29, at 1300 at the Naval Base at Coronado, with guest speakers from the MRF TF-117 and the 9TH Infantry Division. Since Coronado is a closed base we'll have to use a shuttle service to get on and off base for the ceremony. The cost will be \$10.00 per person; there will also be a reunion registration fee of \$25.00 for the member (this fee covers the member and his guest).

Those of you who do not want to take part in the ceremony don't have to. The reunion is open to all members of the MRFA and the 9TH Infantry Division no matter what unit you served with. For those of you on the West Coast who have never had the opportunity to attend one of the reunions, this will be a great time for you to do so. You won't be disappointed.

For more information on the reunion you may contact one of your officers or board members (see the list

later in this newsletter). If you need more information on the hotel contact Sales Manager Sally Gibbs at 1-800-700-3328. The web site for the Red Lion Hanalei is www.hanaleihotel.com For those of you interested in an individual unit hospitality room you will have to contact Sally Gibbs at the above phone number. The Hotel is located conveniently in Mission Valley (hotel circle) with easy access to Airport, Old Town, Sea World, Qualcomm Stadium, Balboa park, beaches and other San Diego attractions. Walking distance to fashion Valley Mall featuring over 140 specialty shops and restaurants Old Town Trolley boarding in front of hotel.

Hotel Amenities include: Complimentary shuttle to and from Fashion Valley Shopping Center, Old Town and San Diego Metropolitan Trolley Depot, large heated outdoor pool & spa, coin operated laundry facilities, Gift Shop, Fitness Center, Room Service, Valet Service. Also, two restaurants and lounge; the Peacock Café—serves breakfast, lunch and dinner; Islands Restaurant & Lounge—American and Pacific Rim Cuisine; Business center; rooms include coffee makers, hair dryers, data ports, iron & ironing boards.



Attractions in San Diego

- World famous San Diego Zoo
- San Diego Wild Animal Park
- Sea World of California
- Balboa Park Museums
- World Class Shopping
- 83 Golf Courses
- Nearby Mexico *Visit at your own risk.....*
- 18 major airlines serve San Diego's Lindbergh Field

Weather ideal year around weather with average temperatures between 70 and 75 Fahrenheit.

For more information on the area please call the San Diego Convention Bureau at 800-221-2818.

Motorcycle Ride West Coast 2002 Reunion

As we have for the past 6 or 7 years, my wife and I will be motorcycling to a reunion next year; we plan on doing the same for the 2002 reunion in San Diego. We travel 400-500 miles a day, and we stay off the interstate as much as possible. We will be camping along the way. We plan on leaving Allentown, PA, on Saturday, June 22nd. We will probably take the route through St. Louis and travel as much as possible on Route 66. If anyone would care to join us, either from the start or along the way, contact me by e-mail. I'm sure we can set something up.

Contact: Tom Bennis at tbvethog@aol.com; or c/o 4888 Apple Ln., Center Valley, PA 18034.

2002 Reunion Registration Form

at the Red Lion Hanalei Hotel
1-800-882-0858

June 27-30 in San Diego, California

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

Name: _____

Unit in Vietnam: _____

Name(s) wife & family/guest: _____

Street: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Registration fee (Member only, cost includes family and 1 guest) \$25.00

Bus Transportation fee / CCB-18 Dedication x \$10 each = _____

Registration fee (Non Members)* x \$50.00 each = _____

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

A non member is defined as a person who is eligible to be a member of the MRFA by having served in the MRF TF-117, TF-116, TF-115, the 9th Infantry Division or any Army/Navy supporting unit who has not joined the MRFA. (We've included a membership application with this issue.) The registration fee covers the member and/or guest, girlfriend, etc.

Please send your check or money order (payable to MRFA) before June 21, 2002 to:

MRFA Reunion
106 Bellevue Dr., Conover, NC 28613

When making your hotel reservations, be sure to mention that you are with the Mobile Riverine Force Association, using group number 2755.

Upcoming Events for 2002

Not only will the Association be in San Diego, California next year, we'll also be in Minneapolis, Minnesota for a wreath laying at the 9TH Infantry and MRF Memorials at Ft. Snelling on Veterans Day. We'll be staying at the Days Inn right across the street from the Mall of America. We'll also have a gathering in Washington, DC on Veterans Day with a wreath laying at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. So we'll have our plate full next year.

If you can't make it to San Diego, you have two other options to pick from. More info in the Spring issue of *River Currents*.

Charlie Ardinger (Treasurer MRFA)
563-735-5924 georgie@reconnect.com

1967 Cruise Book Wade C. Wells



**Captain Wade C. Wells
Commander River Assault
Flotilla One**

In World War II, I saw American fighting men of great valor and courage. I saw the same kind of men in Korea. Before coming to Vietnam I wondered if American men today would measure up to those I knew in our previous wars. In a word, you have. You are a new breed of U.S. fighting man, the combat sailor, who fights with guts and conviction in close combat against brutal life-snuffing weapons. I have seen few in my Naval career who have pursued and persevered the way you have. Your service is a monument to the freedom for which we fight.

It is about you and for you that this book is put together. Cherish what memory it brings for your actions have just written a most exciting chapter in modern military history.

God's speed to each and every one of you.

W.C. Wells

Commander Task Force 117
Riverine Assault Force

Wreath Laying 2001



Get This Incredible MRFA POSTER for *Only \$6.95!*

During our membership drive and recruitment program, the MRFA will send this great poster for only \$6⁹⁵ to anyone who:

1. Purchases 3 year membership for \$30.00 (the \$27.50 per year rate does not apply in this case).
2. Make a \$30.00 donation to our newsletter *River Currents*.
3. Sign up three new members (cost \$10.00 per year, per new member).

Due to Overwhelming Demand, We Have Extended This Offer Through January 31, 2002.

If you are sending a donation as a River Currents Sponsor, send your check or money order (payable to the MRFA) to:
Albert Moore at 106 Belleview Dr., Conover, NC 28613.

Membership sign-ups, for you or someone else, should be directed to George Marthenze, Box 706, Elkhart Lake, WI 53020.



Please be sure to mention that you are taking advantage of this special offer!

Season's Greetings

The MREA wishes all our members and their families a safe and happy holiday season.

MRFA Paver at Soldier's Field Veteran's Memorial



Rochester, Minnesota

Thanks to the tireless effort of Charlie Ardinger, there is a new paver representing the Mobile Riverine Force located at the Soldiers Field Veterans Memorial in Rochester, Minnesota. Thanks to all the MRFA members who contributed to make this possible.



Dear Albert,

The roster for the 4th/39th is such a great idea I can't wait to contact some of the names on the list. My information on the roster is correct. My Mother just gave me some pictures of me when I worked with the MRF July 68 – Sept-68. In one pic' I'm standing on the USS Mercer the other shots are of me on T-132-1 and T-132-2. Once again I want to thank you for all that you do to keep us Army guy's together with you Navy guy's After 33 years this feels damn good.

Michael J. Ban 4th/39th Infantry 12-67 / 12-68

You can contact Michael at 5493 Steadman Dearborn, MI 48126; phone 313-582-9187; or e-mail banco@mediaone.net.

MRFA E-MAIL & ROSTERS

The Association is in the process of doing something new. What we have done is added an e-mail list for each unit we have in the Association. The reason for this is we can better serve you by keeping you updated by units on MRFA & Veterans affairs information. We'll also have your individual unit roster available for the members upon request. If you would like your E-mail address added to your unit roster, please send your name, unit, dates, and a postal address with your e-mail address (you do have to be a member of the MRFA to receive a roster). Dues are only \$10.00 a year. Membership application available in this issue of *River Currents*.

For the Navy ... send to Albert Moore, 106 Bellevue Dr., Conover, NC 28613; email mrfa@charter.net.

For the Army ... send to Board Member Frank Gubala, 199 Oakridge Av., Kenmore, NY 14217; email: Fgubala@aol.com.

...BOOKS...



Interested in purchasing the MRFA or 9th Division history book? Contact Turner Publishing at 800-788-3350.

Both books contain a full histories of the 9th Infantry and the MRF from its formation to its deactivation. It includes personal experience stories, veteran's biographies, statistics and dramatic photographs. This beautiful hardbound edition is printed on acid-free glossy paper, providing superior photo reproduction and longevity. A great idea for the upcoming holidays. Visit the MRFA web site, www.mrfa.org, for a link with an order form.

Check out our web site for these and other great books.

MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION

Member Ronald Cierski sent us this citation, which was awarded to the 93rd in recognition of their accomplishments.

The citation reads as follows:

The 93rd Engineer Battalion (Construction) distinguished itself in support of military operations in the Republic of Vietnam during the period 1 February 1968 to 30 September 1968. The officers and men of the battalion demonstrated technical expertise and determined resourcefulness in providing engineering support throughout III and IV Corps Tactical Zones. Assigned the task of preparing the Dong Tam Base Camp for the entire 9th Infantry Division, the personnel of the unit worked long and arduous hours under the most adverse conditions to construct roads, water systems and electrical powerplants and to solve the problems associated in building the foundation for a division-size operations and logistical center. Although also engaged in extensive land clearing operations and the construction of Long Thanh North Airfield, they molded the Dong Tam Base into an effective and well fortified encampment for the 9th Infantry Division with dedication and resourcefulness. The men of the 93rd Engineer Battalion overcame the engineering difficulties inherent in a combat environment and completed the six thousand foot airfield and supporting facilities at Long Thanh North Airfield in a remarkably short time. Through their unrelenting perseverance, consummate knowledge of engineering concepts and singular determination, the unit's members contributed immeasurably to the mission of the free world forces in the Republic of Vietnam. The remarkable proficiency and devotion to duty displayed by the men of the 93rd Engineer Battalion are in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect distinct credit upon them and upon the Armed Forces of the United States.

The 93rd Engineer Battalion (Construction)

So little is said about all the men from the 93rd Engineer Battalion. They are a proud group who supported the construction of the Dong Tam Base just after the Tet Offensive. They built the Long Than North air field.

TAPS...

*Those Gone But
Not Forgotten*



Colonel George "Bucky" Poole, USA (Ret). Passed away October 27, 2001 from cancer. Col. Poole was Commander of Bravo Co. 3rd/60th 1968-69. He was indeed an Officer and a Gentleman and will be missed by all who knew him. He was a true leader a man that accomplished his mission and truly cared for

the men he led into battle. He attended all the reunions and loved being with his men he truly cared for all. May he rest in peace. You may contact the family of Col. Poole C/O Mrs. George Poole at 19405 French Lace, Lutz, FL.

Jean George wife of member Jim George passed away August 7, 2001. You may contact the family at 1106 Grove Av., Royal Oak, MI 48067; phone 248-545-8624. Jim served on Alpha - 91-1 1967.

Kenneth Brasseaux passed away May 28, 2001. Ken served with IUWG-2 Cam Rahn Bay 6-66 & 12-67. You may contact the family C/O Belinda Brasseaux, 116 Hulin Rd., Broussard, LA 70518; phone 318-839-1551.

Buster Kahakua USN (Ret.) passed away from cancer May 8, 2001, he was 67 years of age at the time of his passing. Buster was one of the founding members of the MRFA, having served on Monitor-111-12 1967-68. Buster was also a disabled Korean and Vietnam War veteran and a retired field supervisor for the National Pake Service. He had previous service in the Coast Guard. He was buried with full military honors, including taps and color guard at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific on August 25, 2001. You may contact the family C/O Bernice Kahakua, 3661 S. Maryland Pkwy., PMB 200, Las Vegas, NV 89101; or email Skahakua@aol.com.

John A. Austin Jr. passed away on January 3, 2000 from complications with multiple myeloma caused by Agent Orange at the VA Hospital in Phoenix, AZ. John served in the MRF from Nov. 68 to Nov. 69. He was a boat engineer and a .30 cal gunner on ASPBs in RivDiv-91 on ASPB-91-4 from Nov. 68 to Jan. 69; Jan. 69 to April of 69 John served in RivDiv-92 on ASPB-92-8. John served in RivDiv-153 on ASPB-6844 from April 69 to Nov. 69. You may contact the family C/O Kim Michel (daughter), 16279 W. Morning Glory St., Prescott, AZ 85338; phone 623-925-1449; or e-mail kima6904@cs.com Anyone remembering serving with John please contact Kim.

Col. Floyd H McAfee was buried at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors Jan. 6. 2001 Col McAfee was XO 3rd/47th 3/66 & 1/68. You may contact The family c/o Etta McAfee 2304 Oak Ridge Ct., Troy, MI 48098; 810-641-8680; E-mail fmcabee187@aol.com. Col McAfee had been a member of the association since 1995.

I would like to thank each and every member for their support over the past years. Without your support and participation there would be no Mobile Riverine Force Association. Although June 2002 and our San Diego reunion is eight months away it will be here before we know it. It appears that we will have a large turnout as usual, however there are many members that have never made one of our reunions. If you are one of them, please begin planning now for the reunion in June. I have said many times before, you will have the time of your life. I would also like to ask our members to take a little time during these upcoming cold winter months and you have nothing else to do, try to locate some of your old platoon members, shipmates or boatmates. Let them know about the MRFA. We would love to have them as new members and to see them in San Diego. Also, if some of your friends were members of the MRFA and have since dropped out or not been to a reunion in the last few years, give them a call and get them active again.

Thanks,
Roy Moseman, Vice President

Did you Know?

President Johnson awarded the first Presidential Unit Citation to a Navy or Marine Corps unit in Vietnam. The award for "extraordinary heroism in action" went to Mine Squadron 11's Detachment Alpha.

The detachment, 13 Minesweeping boats based at Nha Be, Vietnam, were part of MineRon 11 at Long Beach, CA. Each of the 57 boats were manned by 6 enlisted men with a first class (E-6) in charge. Detachment Alpha was singled out for its conduct of minesweeping under constant Viet Cong harassment on the Long Tau and Saigon Rivers from June 1, 1966 through February 1967.

The citation said the efforts of the unit "greatly facilitated subsequent military operations by allowing ocean going vessels to ply the rivers and to unload their cargo on the docks of Saigon. This kept U.S. military forces in Vietnam supplied with all materials necessary to sustain operations.

In Memory Of

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

Jack Benedick for C Co., 4th/47th 66-68 C Co., 3rd/60th 69
Jack Benedick for Cpt. John Hopkins C Co., 4th/47th KIA 5-6-68
Jack Benedick for Soldiers of C Co., 4th/47th & C Co., 3rd/60th
Henry Argon B Co., 2nd/47th Inf KIA 1967
Jerry Capol for all A Co., 3rd/39th Inf
ANDy O'Mara for Monte DeVere 9th MP KIA 1-10-70 & JonaTHan Lamm KIA 2-11-70
Robert Stumpf for Joseph Reese E Co., 3rd/60th Inf KIA 4-7-68
Larry Alushin USS White River LSMR 536
Jim Toney for Harold H. Hunter E Co., 3rd/60th Inf. KIA 1-27-69 & John T. Lynn E Co., 3rd/60th Inf. KIA 7-21-68
James J. Byrnes for members of The Junk Force, Dung IslaND
Roy Moseman for Oscar Santiago C Co., 4th/47th
James Roselli for Mark Schoenberger B Co., 3rd/39th Inf.

David Lynn for Harold F. Burns / Robert L. Bouchet, Herman A. Miller KIA 8-11-68 IUWG-1-3 Qui-Nhon
Capt. Peveril BluNDell , USN Ret. For Paul Wolfgang, RivAstSqd-13
Harley G. Timmerman, For Jerry Sessions RivRon-13 T-132-10
MS. Neal A. Now For Captain John G. Now USN Ret. ComRivFlot-One
Paul De Nicola B/3/60 for Alex Radisa PCFs 55-19
Charles Kaiser for FaTher CWO Charles M/ Kaiser 9th Inf Div WW-11
Lt/JG Robert B. Conaty XO RivDiv-131 69-69 For Paul Wolfgang RivAstSqd-13,
Sara & Al Moore For John Isaac Associate Member
Duane C. Cornwall for Peter P. Banels, Jr., (Zippo 5) - Passed away due to PTSD on January 12, 1998.

Hi MREA!!

Just wanted to let you know that I appreciate, all the info you have been e-mailing me. It has been a pleasure joining your organization, and has been a positive influence on me and my life. In the long ago past, I tried to stuff all my memories into deep recesses of the mind, that eventually began coming out on their own. Now I can explore your great web site, try to reconnect with "Old Mates" have picked up my "Unit Patches", and will be ordering catalog products. Also will be looking forward to attending my first MREA reunion next summer, and checking out the "Memorial" and the restored "CCB". My deepest thanks for all you're doing.

—Lorenzo Wright, 2271 SW 33rd St., Redmond, OR 97756.
541-548-3493 • e-mail lorenzosoil32@aol.com
Lorenzo served on Tango-111-13 from 1/69 to 1/70.

MRFA Get Well Wishes

MRFA Public Relations Director, Doug Brown (1097th Med. Boat Co.), who is in the hospital recovering from recent surgery. Contact Doug at 42 Carr Rd., Marshfield, MA 02050; or email brownprint@earthlink.net.

Billie Sanders ENC USN Ret. has been in the hospital for a lung operation but is now home and doing well. Bille served on CCB-112-1 in 1967. Contact: Billie Sanders, 3655 Fieldcrest Dr., Bowling Green, KY 42104; phone 270-746-0930 or email: riverrat_sa@yahoo.com.

Milton Keene, Capt., USA Ret. is in the hospital; he has had a serious colon operation but seems to be doing somewhat better. Milton served with A Co., 3rd/60th from 10-68 to 7/69. You may contact Milty at 2124 Scuffle Rd., NE, Thomas, GA 30824; 706-595-9777; email: milty52@aol.com.

Thomas J. Hains has been in the hospital with a serious heart attack. Tom served with B Co., 4th/47th from 4/68 to 5/69. Contact Tom at 215 E. Shortwood Dr., Round Lake Beach, IL 60073; phone 847-546-1316; or email haveco1@ameritech.net.

SEEKING VETERANS OF NAM

Editor's Note: If you would like to see a reunion notice posted in River Currents, forward your written request to: Albert Moore, 106 Belleview Dr., Conover, NC 28613. Deadlines are: Feb. 1st, May 1st, Aug. 1st, and Nov. 1st.

MARTIN E. ANDERSON BMCS RET.

is seeking anyone who remembers serving with him in RivRon-15 on R-1 and T-25 attached to YRBM-21 (3/70-11/70). He was BM1 at the time. Contact Boats at 6340 Gaines Ferry Rd., Flowery Branch, GA 30542; phone 770-967-8560; MARTY78USNRET@AOL.COM

UDT-SEAL ASSOCIATION MUSEUM

Located State Rd. A1A, Ft. Pierce, FL. POC: Jim Barnes 3216 Yale St. North, St. Petem, FL 33713. Or call 1-727-894-2848.

ATTACK BOAT SAILORS ASSOCIATION

WW-II-Korea-Vietnam, POC: Ed Brisbosi at P.O. Box 3328, Ft. Pierce, FL 34948.

USS MONTROSE (APA-212)

Seeking past crew members for all time periods, excellent group old White Hats. Contact Russ McDonald at 10072 Bonser Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92840; 714-636-6267; or e-mail gatornavy1@prodigy.net.

MILITARY PATCHES

Don "Boats" McGrogan has patches for all units of the MRF and the 9th Infantry Division as well as other units that served in Vietnam; excellent patches. Contact Boats at P.O. Box 502, Orfino, ID 83544. You may also e-mail macpatch@clearwater.net; or phone 208-476-7751.

The following notices have been posted to assist veterans who served in Vietnam. For more information about any of the notices, please call or write to the point of contact listed for that particular event.

VETERANS OF THE VIETNAM WAR INC. (NEW ADDRESS)

805 So. Township Blvd., Pittston, PA 18640; phone 570-603-9740; e-mail vvnwnatl@epix.net. Visit the web site at <http://www.vvnw.org>. If you have any questions call 1-800-Vietnam; ask for Mike or Nancy.

INTERESTING IN GOING BACK???

Contact Courtney and Trang Frobenius at Vietnam Indochina Tours, 207 Decatur St. NW, Olympia, WA 98502. You can also phone 1-360-570-2096, fax 360-570-2097, or e-mail indochinatours@olywa.net. We also have a link on the MRFA home page: www.mrfa.org. Vietnam Tours is owned by River Rat Frobenius 3rd/60th Inf. and his wife Trang.

NOTICES

SHIPS HISTORIES:

If you're seeking the history of the ship you served on contact: Seaweed's Ships Histories, P.O. Box 154, Sistersville, WV 26175; or phone 1-800-732-9333. They also have photos of almost all Navy ships.

DON'T FORGET!!! Your **MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATE** is now printed on the cover of each issue of River Currents.

Old Reliables
Charlie Ardinger
and Rich Corrick.



Combat Action Ribbon ARMY / NAVY

Eligibility Requirements

- (1) Awarded to members of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard (when the Coast Guard or units thereof operate under the control of the Navy) in the grade of captain / colonel and junior thereto, who have actively participated in ground or surface combat. Upon submission of evidence to their commanding officer, personnel who earned the Combat Infantryman Badge or Combat Medical Badge while a member of the U. S. Army may be authorized to wear the Combat Action Ribbon.
- (2) The principal eligibility criterion is that the individual must have participated in a bona fide ground or surface combat firefight or action during which he was under enemy fire and his performance while under fire was satisfactory. The following amplifying remarks are furnished as guidance.
 - (a) Personnel in riverine and coastal operations, – assaults, patrols, sweeps, ambushes, convoys, amphibious landings, and similar activities who have participated in fire fights are eligible.
 - (b) Personnel assigned to areas subjected to sustain mortar, missile, and artillery attacks actively participate in retaliatory or offensive actions are eligible.
 - (c) Personnel in clandestine or special operations such as reconnaissance and SEAL teams are eligible when the risk of enemy fire was great and expected to be encountered.
 - (d) Personnel aboard a ship are eligible when the

safety of the ship and the crew were endangered by enemy attack, such as a ship hit by a mine or a ship engaged by shore, surface, air or sub-surface elements.

- (e) Personnel eligible for the award of the Purple Heart would not necessarily qualify for the Combat Action Ribbon. 2-20 — SECNAVINST 1650. IF MMUG19W (f) The Combat Action Ribbon will not be awarded to personnel for aerial combat since the Strike/Flight Air Medal provides recognition for aerial combat exposure; however, a pilot or crewmember forced to escape or evade after being forced down could be eligible for the award.

Operations.

An individual, whose eligibility has been established in combat in any of the following listed operations, is authorized the award of the Combat Action Ribbon. Only one award per operation is authorized. Subsequent awards will be indicated by the use of a Gold Star on the ribbon:

- (1) Southeast Asia. From 1 March 1961 to 15 August 1973
- (2) Dominican Republic.
- (3), (4), (5) From 28 April 1965 to 21 September 1966. (No ships qualified) Saigon) 29 and
- (6) qualified
- (7) USS LIBERTY (AGTR 5) 8 and 9 June 1967. USS PUEBLO (AGER 2). 23 January 1968.

Operation FREQUENT WIND.

(Evacuation operations, 30 April 1975. (No ships qualified).

Operation MAYAGUEZ. 15 May 1975. (No ships Grenada. 24 October 1983 -2 November 1983. (No ships qualified)

- (8) Lebanon. 20 August 1982 to 1 August 1984. (No ships qualified)

(9) Persian Gulf

- (a), (b), (c) COMNAVSPECWAR Task Unit Tango - 22 Sep 1987 USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS (FFG 58) -14 Apr 1988 Operation PRAYING MANTIS -18 Apr 1988 2-21 SECNAVIXST 1650.IF 08AUGm
- (d) SAG BRAVO COMDESRON NINE STAFF EMBARKED ON USS MERRILL (DD 976) USS MERRILL (DD 976) HSL-35 DET 1 USS LYNDE MCCORMICK (DDG 8) USS TRENTON (LPD 14) CONTINGENCY MAGTF 2-88 HSL 44, DET 5 SAG CHARLIE USS WAINWRIGHT (CG 28) USS BAGLEY (FF 1069) HSL-35, DET 7 USS SIMPSON (FFC 56) HSL-42, DET 10 COMMANDER, NAVAL SPECIAL WARFARE TASK GROUP MIDDLE EAST FORCE SEAL TEAM TWO, THIRD PLATOON SAG DELTA COMDESRON TWENTY-TWO USS JACK WILLIAMS (FFG 24) HSL-32, DET 2 USS JOSEPH STRAUSS (DDG 16) USS O'BRIEN (DD 975) HSL-33, DET 2 CO, SPEC BOAT UNIT TWELVE SEAL TEAM 5, PLATOON C USS ELMER MONTGOMERY (FF 1082) AND USS VINCENNES (CG 49) -3 Jul 1988

Operation JUST CAUSE (Panama). 20 December 1989 -31 January 1990.

Operation DESERT STORM. 17 January 1991 -TBD c. Administrative Procedures. SECNAV determined which operations met the criteria for this award.

Requests for determination of eligibility of individuals for operation.

Assistance provided on this by Carrie VanDruff.





MRFA OFFICERS & Board Members

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E-Mail bvdmrfa@networksplus.net

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42 Carr Rd., Marshfield, MA 02050
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Fax 781-826-0753
E-Mail brownprint@earthlink.net

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580-638-2353 E-mail jimtony@tds.net

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336-578-2434

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E-mail don@bcres.com

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199 Oakridge Ave., Kenmore, NY 14217
716-873-4821 E-mail fgubala@aol.com

Dale (Doc) Jones (B Co., 4TH/47TH)
P.O. Box 1598, Florence, OR 97439
541-997-8600 E-mail dodcj@oregonfast.net

Jim Meehan (IUWG-1-4 Nha Trang)
3080 SW Shadow Ln., Palm City, FL 34990
561-287-4361 E-mail jemtug@adelphia.net

Bob Pawlicki (T-111-11)
3906 Military St., Port Huron, MI 48060
810-364-8604 E-mail TANGO11111@aol.com

Bob (Doc) Pries (B Co., 2ND/47TH (Mech) Inf.)
9702 Friartuck Dr., West Chester, OH 45069
513-755-1223 E-mail rpries@cinci.rr.com

Tom F. Schneider (F.O. 1/11TH Arty.)
10320 7TH St. Oscoda, MI 48750
517-739-2745

David Schoenian (C Co., 4TH-47TH)
1007 Wheeling Ave., Glen Dale, WV 26038
304-845-5574 E-mail hschoenian@aol.com

Frank Springer (T-131-9)
15002 Johnstone Rd., Oakley, MI 48649
517-725-9098 E-mail FMSpringer@juno.com

Chet Stanley (CCB-111-1)
205 Carolina Ave., Easley, SC 29640
864-306-8400 E-mail gunnerstan@aol.com

Jim Steffes (Cos-Divs 12-13)
26126 Mantle Dr., Sun City, CA 92586
909-301-4176 E-Mail PCF12crew@yahoo.com

Ron Wallace (B Co., 3RD/47TH)
2145 Enchanted Forest Rd.,
Eastsound, WA 98245
360-376-4294 E-mail judy13w@aol.com

John Weiss (C Co., 2ND-60TH Infantry)
401 Milrace Rd., Northampton, PA 18067
610-261-0316 E-mail JWeiss7068@enter.net

MOBILE RIVERINE FORCE ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 706 • Elkhart Lake, WI 53020

Membership Application

New Member Renewal

CHANGE OF ADDRESS - MOVING

NAME: _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____

STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

PHONE: () _____

E-MAIL: _____

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

Pre Vietnam Vietnam

Army Member:

Unit: _____

Navy Member:

Ship, Boat Hull No. _____

or Nav Det: _____

Associate Member

Donation: _____

Membership Rates:

1 Yr. \$10.00 3 Years \$27.50

To become a member, mail your check or money order (payable to MRFA) to:

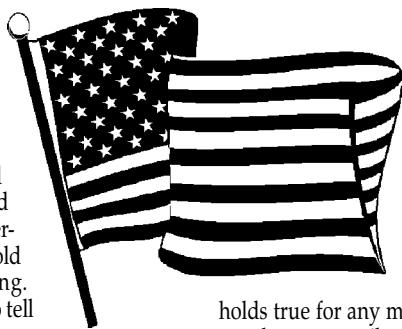
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THE MRFA COMES THROUGH AGAIN

On Thursday September 13th, only two days after the WTC and Pentagon attacks, my wife Lynne, who works for the University of Georgia, taped a small paper American flag to her office window and placed a red, white and blue bow on a testing room door. Later that morning her supervisor walked into her office and put the bow on her desk and told her that she had to take down her paper flag. She said the flag would intimidate the international students. The supervisor told another employee the same thing. Lynne called me, almost in tears, to tell me what had happened. As you can imagine, I hit the ceiling. I was so mad I couldn't think straight. I started to get into my car and take a trip over to her office but better judgment prevailed and I went



back into the house. I guess I would have been arrested had I made it to her office. I made phone calls to my State Senators and to my congressman. I then got on my computer and sent an email out to the MRFA email list. If you want action, just let the members of the MRFA get involved. By the next morning the Presidents office of the University of Georgia had received over forty phone calls and over 150 emails. When My wife went to work on Friday, the 14th of September, she was told to put her flag anywhere that she wanted to. Although I still don't understand why any of us would have to defend our right to display the American flag anywhere in the United States, it is a great feeling to know that when needed, I can always count on my brothers and sisters of the MRFA. That

holds true for any member as well. Thanks to everyone that sent emails, made phone calls and gave Lynne and I moral support.

Roy Moseman
Vice President

In this most difficult of times it is with great pride and honor that we salute the sons and daughters of our Association members who in are in the armed forces. We wish them a safe tour of duty, a quick resolution, and with God's care a swift return home.

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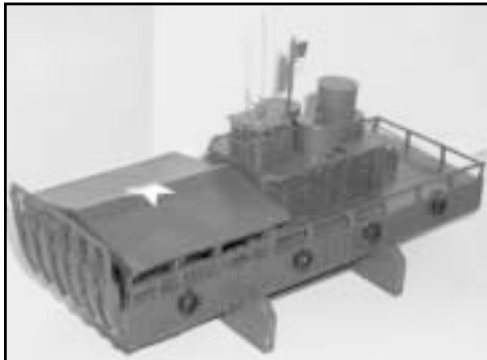
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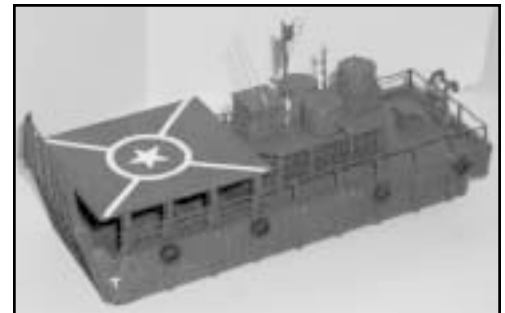


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"The Men In The Boats"

Written by: Lt/General Johnnie Corns, US Army (Ret.),
Operations Officer, 2nd Brigade 1967-68

The mist of the morning cools and softens the air
As the last of the soldiers heads down the steel stair.
He crossed the barge tied alongside the ship
And boarded the craft, making sure not to slip.

The assault craft and boats are now well under way
Executing the plan which was briefed yesterday
The boats flow out smoothly, moving into the line
From the air their formation looks dark, serpentine.

Up the brown, muddy river they move with the tide
Some enjoying the scenery on this their first ride.
Others seem not to care, unaware of the beauty
Their thoughts are focused on performing their duty.

These are the veterans who have been here before
Who've lived through the fire fights, not anxious for more.
But should one occur, these brave men are good
Their valor and skill is well understood.

The likes of this force is seldom seen
They fight from the water and are called riverine
Grant used them at Vicksburg in the great Civil War
And the French proved the concept on the Red River shore.

When the power was combined of Army and Navy
The first thoughts generated were just short of cagey.
But these didn't prevail when it came to a fight
Both soldiers and sailors knew what was right.

Soldiers saw water like moats 'round a castle
An unwelcome obstacle when it came to a battle.
But sailors saw water like the Daytona track
A way to get in and a way to get back.

Attacks from the water were new to their foe

Who aimed at the highways where troops usually go.
But for riverine troopers, this was the way
To attack with surprise at the first light of day.

And this was the plan they would follow today
To spring their attack, the riverine way.
Some early doubts for the plan soon arose
When they learned they'd be running right by Snoopy's Nose

An elaborate plan that would probably work well
But for boat crews and platoons it was difficult to tell.
Artillery was firing, of this they'd been told
A battalion in choppers found the first LZ cold..

But what was that pounding on the side of the craft
Shaking the boat from forward to aft.
An antitank rocket had exploded top side
But in spite of hot shrapnel, the platoon has survived.

There's a monitor turning to a stream up ahead
No one at the wheel, the helmsman is dead.
The assault craft turns wildly, rams into the bank
A split-second decision before the craft sank.

The infantry platoon along with the crew
Scramble ashore where the artillery blew.
Their foe is retreating, crawling over a dike
That's getting chewed up by a boat's forty mike

There's plenty of action, new troops have their fill
The artillery's pounding, the jets screaming shrill.
The time is at hand, it's good against evil
Death goes ashore through cordite and diesel.

But the noise of the battle slowly passes away
There are men to be cared for, there's time now to pray.
The enemy is pursued by chopper and boat.
Medics work wonders with lumps in their throats

It seems like forever, but they're back on the ship
Some slightly wounded - broken finger, bruised hip.

But thoughts are of Willy who made them all laugh
And of Jose and Bob who did not make it back.

They laugh at Frank's letter that he got from back home
The candy from his wife has been missent to Nome.
The box will be forwarded, though mangled and tattered
But Frank didn't care, it's the letter that mattered.

They laughed and they joked and played lots of pranks
And made a few jokes about those with some rank.
And every face beamed as the brass just announced
It was a main force enemy that they had just trounced.

That kind of news would be in their letters
But what mattered most was they had fought even
better.

There was a deep sense of pride when facing great dan-
ger
Of meeting a test, risking life for a stranger.

Most pictured the stranger as a small Asian child.
Who'd suffered so much in such a short while.
And the main thing, of course, that most of them feared
Was continuing to live being homeless and scared.

Many years have passed since the days of these battles
For each old Raider and Rat the memories still rattle.
A few of these warriors have even gone back
In search of something they feel that they lack.

Not to recall the carnage or view the rubble
But to see once again, those they helped when in trouble.
They're warmed by the smiles of kids three or four
But in the old U S A they have even more.

And the main experience that gives them a chill
Is to fly over the land, lush, green and now still.
To feel tears sting their eyes looking down at the moats
And feel their chests swell for the *Men in the Boats*.

Webmaster Don Blankenship has posted more great info on our web site:
www.mrfa.org. We now have 9th Infantry Division and MRF Medal of Honor Re-
cipients and all 9th Division KIA list, as well as more great stuff. Don continues to
strive to make this one of, if not the best informative web site out there. *Keep up
the great job Gunner!*

MRFA Web Site

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