



THE SCOOP SHEET

Issue 49

*Information For And About Members Of The First
Marine Aircraft Wing Association – Vietnam Service*

Winter 2017



Reunion 2017 San Diego Embassy Suites Sept 14-17

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Marines with Marine Medium Tiltrotor Squadron (VMM) 165 inspect an MV-22B Osprey after a training flight aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar, Calif.

Photo by Sgt Michael Thorn

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ...



Semper Fi to all our members and family and wishing that 2017 brings us all peace , health and lots of love !

After a few cancellations, Reunion 2017 in San Diego has been booked. The hotel is The Embassy Suites San Diego Downtown across the street from The Midway. The price is \$ 149.00 + tax with Free Breakfast and a Happy Hour at the lobby bar from 1700-1900. Memories of New Orleans. We will have a tour of Our Flying Leatherneck Historical Museum at MCAS Miramar and working on a tour of VMGR-352. Our Memorial Service will be at the base chapel on Friday AM which is also National POW/MIA Day. Friday evening we have a dinner cruise on The Hornblower Cruises across the street from our hotel followed by China Beach Night at the hotel .

Saturday morning we have our business meeting. Any member interested in nominating another member for any position, or any member willing to step up and continue to carry the ball for our Association, please advise us in advance .

Our Saturday evening banquet will be held at The Harbor House by The Bay, also across the street from our hotel . We are receiving veteran discounts at both The Hornblower and The Harbor House. parking is free across the street from the hotel at a navy parking lot with proper ID.

I was forced to cancel the June reunion in October during my visit to San Diego due to A Rock & Roll Explosion occurring the same weekend as we would have been there. Still remember The Sci Fi convention we had in Tysons Corner, DC in 1992

During my October visit I met Gen. Bob Butcher founder of our museum and also Maj. Roger Herman, founder of Pop-a-Smoke and Gen. Butcher advised me that their Blue Angels Air show will be the weekend of Sept. 22-23 and the base is closed except for their air show with about 1/2 million people expected so I booked for the following week and after booking, I was advised that the base will also be closed that weekend and that services on base may not be available, so I had to move it again to September 14-17. Being a Marine, I have learned to adapt and thank God, overcome.

I expect Our 29th Anniversary Reunion will be one of our best, but only if You, our members make it happen. For the first time, I have requested a memorial table with pictures of our departed members and hope that some of their widows and family will also attend in their honor. also a reminder of submissions for our scholarship. Remember our grand children also qualify .

See You in September !

SEMPER FI

Your President

Frank(PACO) Arce



MEMBERSHIP NOTES

DUES RENEWALS Membership Renewals

Membership Renewals

Just a reminder to annual members, your dues are now due every January. Please help our association save postage and mail expense by sending in your \$25.00 renewal dues now.

Mail in your check payable to: 1st MAW Vietnam Service, c/o Jerry Sergeant, 603 63rd Ave W. Lot A-10, Bradenton, FL 34207

Any additional questions regarding membership may also be directed to the above address or emailed to: jleesarge@hotmail.com

Jerry Sergeant
Treasury and acting Membership Chairman

ELECTRONIC SCOOP

The Electronic Scoop list is growing. Any other members who desires to receive their "Scoop" electronically in order to reduce mailing and publishing costs please contact Al Frater at teanal@optonline.net and please cc Frank Arce at frankpaco69@aol.com. Those members who have requested an electronic SCOOP will be removed from the mailing list as requested.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED - UPDATE

Volunteers are always welcomed for Veterans day at the wall. For those who live near Quantico VA and the National Museum of the Marine Corps The Heritage Foundation is seeking tour Guides for the Museum. Training will be provided. Contact the Marine Corps Heritage Foundation at 703-640-7965..

PX

We only have one item on our PX page the 1st MAW window sticker. If anyone wants something else us know. I will have the window stickers at the reunion for \$2.00. Contact Al Frater at teanal@optonline.net for 201-906-1197or information.

NEW WEB PAGE URL

Our WEB page is now up and running thanks to the effort of Manty Hopey.
<http://firstmaw.homestead.com>

1st MAW NOW ON FACEBOOK

We are now moving to the modern age and have a Group on FACEBOOK. If you are a FACEBOOK user please join our Group. at "**First Marine Air wing Association - Vietnam Service**". If you are not a FACEBOOK member, join FACEBOOK and our Group. Information and photos will continue to be posted on our group. Please post any pictures or comments on our group.



Reunion 2017

Reunion 2017 , Our 29th Anniversary will be held at The Embassy Suites San Diego At The Bay Downtown on Sept. 14-17, 2017 .

\$149.00 a night+tax (was \$185.00) + Free Breakfast + Free 2 Hour Open Bar 1700-1900 . All Rooms Double Suites .

Friday trip to MCAS 3rd MAW Miramar Marine Aircraft Museum and Base Chapel for Our Annual Memorial Service . 1700

Friday a Dinner Cruise followed by China Beach at The Hotel Pool .

Sat. Business meeting and Our Banquet at 1800 .

Registration forms on the following page

REUNION 2017
San Diego, California Registration Form
FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING ASSOCIATION VIETNAM SERVICE

Thursday, September 14th, Friday 15th, Saturday 16th and Sunday 17th, 2017

MEMBER NAME _____

NICKNAME/CALL SIGN (for use on name tag) _____

YEAR/UNIT (i.e. 67-68 VMFA-323) _____

ADDRESS _____

Contact PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

(For Confirmation of Receipt)

NAME OF GUESTS ATTENDING WITH MEMBER _____

GUEST NAME (s) (for name tags) _____

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY NOTIFY (Name & number) _____

REGISTRATION FEE INCLUDES : HOSPITALITY ROOM, Trip to MCAS Miramar Aviation Museum,
China Beach Dinner Cruise and REUNION BANQUET MEAL

NUMBER ATTENDING REUNION ____ X \$165.00 (per person) = \$ _____

NUMBER OF REUNION SHIRTS \$20.00 (each) Circle Size with quantity(s) M__ L__ XL__ 2XL__ 3XL__ (4XL__)

TOTAL AMOUNT INCLUDED \$ _____

PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN Monday, August 14th (THIS IS NECESSARY TO ESTABLISH & FINALIZE SHIRT ORDERS, MEALS, TRIPS, FUNCTIONS, NAME TAGS etc.) After this date some functions or items may not be available, or **LATE FEES MAY BE INCURRED AFTER Monday, August 14th, 2017**

PLEASE SEND PAYMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:
(MAKE, CHECKS or MONEY ORDERS PAYABLE TO: **FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING ASSOCIATION**)

FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING ASSOCIATION
C/O TREASURER, JERRY SERGEANT (phone 989-992-6809 or email jleesarge@hotmail.com)
603 63rd Ave W. Lot A-10
Bradenton, FL 34207

NOTE: Room rates of \$149 + tax(12.5%) have been negotiated with the, Embassy Suites Bay-Downtown.
Reservations must be made by August 14th, 2017 to receive this rate.

For hotel reservations Use Group Code MAR. Contact the Embassy Suites San Diego, Bay Downtown direct at (619) 239-2400 Ask for "Reservations".

Street address: 601 Pacific Hwy, San Diego, CA 92101

Please Note: Parking is valet only at \$46 per day. No self-parking available.

Embassy Suites offers: Free made to order breakfast and complimentary 2 hour nightly reception.

NOTE

Reunion participation is for paid members and registered guests. Membership is available to all qualified individuals. Please check the association's website at www.firstmaw.homestead.com for membership details and application form information.

MAG-16 Provided Helicopter Support for Operation Backpack During the Spring of 1964 **By David H. Hugel**

A Marine buddy recently sent me a story that appeared on the Internet about a joint exercise the US was participating in along with several Pacific Rim countries. The story featured a photo of a fleet of war ships somewhere in the Pacific Ocean. Seeing the photo brought back memories of Operation Backpack, a similar exercise I participated in when I was serving with MAG-16 on Okinawa during the spring on 1964.

I had just settled into my job at the Futema photo lab after returning from a nine-month tour in Vietnam in mid-January 1964, when I had to pack my sea bag again to join Operation Backpack, an exercise in which the 1st MAW and 3rd MAR Div. joined Nationalist Chinese forces to stage an amphibious troop landing on the southern tip of Taiwan.

The day we were to embark from Okinawa on an LST, the USS Windham County, in late February the boarding time was unexpectedly moved up by a few hours. We boarded busses for the short drive from the air base to board the ship, which soon weighed anchor and departed port as we got settled into cramped quarters deep in the bowels of the ship. We had evening chow and sailed out to sea, by which time it had grown dark. The ship carried heavy-duty trucks including a large aviation fire truck that would be operating out of the airfield we would be setting up on Taiwan, still known by many as Formosa.

No reason was given at the time for our hasty departure and when I awoke the next morning I was shocked to see the large fleet of war ships we had joined since leaving port. It was the biggest collection of ships I had ever seen. I had no idea how many ships I saw stretched across the horizon but it reminded me of scenes from the movie "The Longest Day", that I had seen the year before while home of leave just before shipping out for the 1st MAW. We later learned that the reason for our hasty departure was that a big storm was predicted to hit Okinawa and they wanted as many ships as possible at sea when it did. Otherwise the weeklong trip to Taiwan, under simulated wartime convoy conditions went smoothly.

Our objective was an auxiliary Chinese airfield where we would set up a helicopter base and tent city, similar to what Marines had done at Soc Trang in Vietnam's Mekong Delta just two years earlier. On D-Day our ship lingered off shore as 3rd MAR Div. Marines disembarked from troop ships into landing craft to be shuttled ashore. I snapped a photo of one of the troop ships with rope landing nets extending from its main deck down to the water line where disembarking troops would be met by landing craft. I didn't know it at the time, but that very ship, the USNS Gen. Sultan, would carry me from Okinawa back to San Diego when my Far East tour ended in late April.

The LST was developed during WWII to transport tanks, trucks, and heavy vehicles to distant invasion beaches. It was slow, but could carry a heavy load of vehicular cargo, and with its shallow draft and huge hinged bow doors it could deposit the vehicles on the beach or connect with pontoon causeways each ship carried.

The fact that our ship was not scheduled to land until late in the day gave us an opportunity to watch the landing unfold, at least in our sector of the landing beach.

We saw the LSTs maneuver to drop the pontoon causeways they carried on the ship's exterior bulkhead that were assembled together with others to form a floating bridge between ships and the beach that heavy duty equipment and trucks including our air field fire truck would use to drive the couple hundred feet to shore. We too would use the causeway to reach the beach once the vehicles had been unloaded and from there travel to our ultimate destination.

The exercise lasted one week during which I photographed airfield activities in support of the infantry Marines participating in the exercise. One evening I received an unexpected invitation to attend a nearby Chinese USO like show where none of the performers spoke English, but they entertained the appreciative audience of U S and Chinese troops with circus acts that transcended the language barrier. I was told that Nationalist China's aged President Ching Kia-Shek was among those attending the show.

When the exercise concluded, I managed to catch a C-130 flight back to Okinawa to resume my duties at the photo lab. When I returned to Futema, I was a short timer, knowing that I would soon be boarding a homeward bound ship.



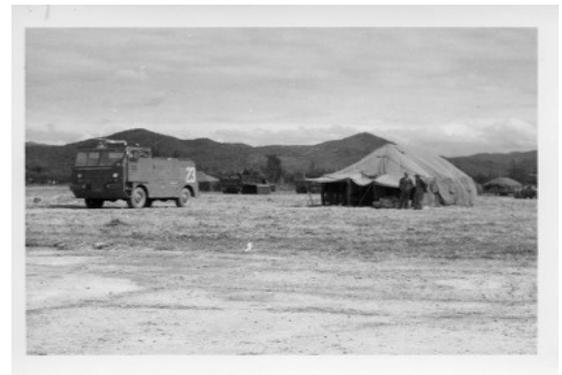
The USNS Gen. Sultan was one of the ships that disembarked troops into landing craft to be shuttled ashore. I had no idea at the time, but just a couple



The tent city built by MABS-16 Marines at the old auxiliary Chinese airfield was home for the MAG-16 Marines who participated in Operation Backpack.



MAG-16 Marines from MCAF Futema disembark from the USS Windham County on a causeway in Taiwan on their way to set up a helicopter airbase



The MABS-16 crash crew operations tent and airfield fire truck stand by to respond to any emergency



The last vehicle drives down the LST ramp to the floating causeway connecting the ship to the landing beach



Once the last vehicles disembarked from the LST the remaining Marines followed down the ramp and headed for shore on the pontoon causeway.

Scholarship Requirements and Details

The First Marine Aircraft Wing Association, Vietnam Service will award up to five scholarships of \$500 each during Reunion 2017.

To qualify for a scholarship, applicants must meet the following qualifications:

Be a First Marine Aircraft Wing Association, Vietnam Service member in good standing (i.e., dues are paid up to date), their spouse, dependent or direct descendent. Further, the member must have a minimum of one-year membership as of September 1, 2016.

-OR

Be a spouse, dependent, or direct descendent of a deceased member of the First MAW Assn. VN Service

-OR

Be a spouse, dependent, or direct descendent of a Marine or member of another military service, who lost his/her life while serving in Vietnam with the First Marine Aircraft Wing.

-AND

Applicant must be currently **enrolled and attending**, in an accredited college, university, or trade school and be in good academic standing.

Applicant will be required to submit an essay of 300-350 words. The applicant can choose one of the following topics:

What the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial means to me.
What all Americans can do to solve the energy crisis.
How I plan to use my education to aid society.
Why I support our Marines in harm's way.

To compete for a scholarship, applicants must submit their essay in accordance with the following instructions:

1. The essay must be typed. **Do not include applicant's name on the essay page.** Attach a cover page with the applicants name, address, phone number and email address. The cover page must also include the name of the First MAW Assn. VN Service member and membership number, along with the applicant's relationship to the member (spouse, son, daughter, grandchild etc.).
2. Verification from a counselor or other school official confirming that the applicant is enrolled. This letter needs to be on school letterhead.
3. A copy of the student transcripts

The essay and required documents must be post marked no later than August 15, 2017.

Mail To:

First Marine Aircraft Wing Association-VN Service

c/o Phil Beckerich III

67 Blue Grouse Drive

Cannon City, CO 81212-9462

Vietnam Photos



Rocket Explosion at VMGR 152 sub Unit #1 DaNang



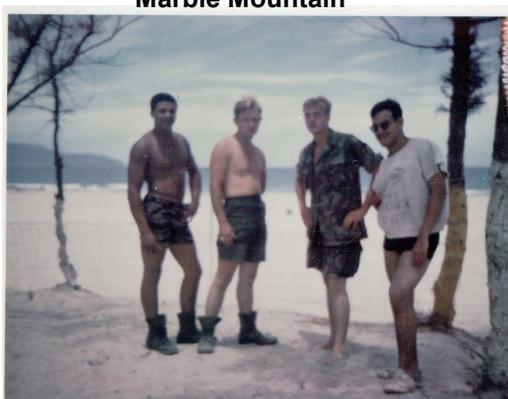
Frank Arce and Cpl. Wells at VMGR-152 Sub Unit # 1



**Da Nang August 22 , 1968
Huey's Rocket Attack**



Marble Mountain



**China Beach August 24 , 1969 Franks
20th Birthday and
Farewell Party !**



**First Marine Aircraft Wing Association –
Vietnam Service
603 63rd Ave W. Lot A-10,
Bradenton, FL 34207**

We are a fraternal organization of Marines and others who were attached to or supported First MAW units serving in the Vietnam War. The organization was founded in 1986 and incorporated as a not-for-profit entity in New York State in 1988. Our purpose is to reunite members of the First MAW either through scheduled reunions or by means of our newsletter, web site, or other various functions. The organization strives to disseminate information about our history as well as about legislation, entitlements, and welfare involving First MAW members.