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THE SCOOP SHEET

Information For And About Members Of The First Marine Aircraft Wing Association – Vietnam Service
<http://firstmaw.homestead.com>

Winter 2023

Issue 59



REUNION AT HILTON PENSACOLA BEACH



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President	Bernie LaPira
Vice President	Bill Walden
Secretary	Al Frater
Treasurer	Jerry Sergeant



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ...

Marines of the 1st MAW Association- Vietnam Service

Happy New Year 2023

Finally we had our Reunion October 13-16th 2022. It was held at the Hilton Pensacola Beach, Florida. I want to personally thank everyone who attended. The number of people who contributed to this reunion were many. I feel if I try to list them all, I would surely miss someone. So for all who contributed, a big thank you.

I would like to thank our quest speaker, Retired U.S Marine Lt. Col. Charles D. Lea. He gave a very informative speak about Vietnam and it's history.

The transportation was provided by Beach Bum Trolley. Who can forget the great lunch we had at the Cubi Bar Cafe located at the National Navy Aviation Museum. Thank you Tom.

We visited the Memorial Vietnam wall which was celebrating it's 30th anniversary. In addition we had a memorial service at the Museum and spent time on the grounds. As if it was planned, the Blue Angels were practicing maneuvers at the same time we were there. Amazing.

I would also like to thank our photographer, Stacy, who took many photos at the Hotel and at the Museum and our Audio visual personnel who did a great job providing needed equipment at the Saturday Dinner.

Last but not least, the BOD for helping me pull this off. Many hours were spent on Zoom and numerous phone calls were made to make sure we had a great reunion.

There will be more information coming in the Scoop. Our next reunion will be in New Orleans 2024. We will be starting getting ready for this early this summer. Exact dates will be discussed at our next BOD meeting.

Semper Fi. Bernie LaPira

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, 6321 Auburn Ave 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 teanal330@gmail.com 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

Check out our PX page If anyone wants something let us know. Contact Al Frater at teanal330@gmail.com for 201-906-1197 for information.

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 Pictures



Guest of Honor Lt Col Charles Lea
with our President Bernie Lapira

MORE REUNION PICTURES



**One of the Last WWII Marine Aviators
By Al Frater**

Sam Folsom a Marine aviator in WWII who I volunteered with me on the USS Intrepid has recently passed way at 102



Samuel Folsom, 102, Who Fought the Japanese Above Guadalcanal, Dies

He went to war at 22 with limited flying experience but dodged Zeros, knocked out bombers and won the Distinguished Flying Cross and a Purple Heart.

Samuel Folsom, one of the last surviving Marine fighter pilots of World War II, who engaged in aerial dogfights and shot down two Japanese bombers in the horrific struggle for the strategic island of Guadalcanal at a crucial juncture in the Pacific war, died in Sherman Oaks, Calif. He was 102. Mr. Folsom's son, Gerrit, said he died at the Village at Sherman Oaks, a retirement community.

In the vast undertaking to capture and hold Guadalcanal in the late summer and fall of 1942, Lieutenant Folsom was a 22-year-old aviator who had never flown at high altitude and had fired the wing guns of his Grumman F4F Wildcat only once, in a training exercise in California.

But he loved flying and, sent into the thick of air combat over Guadalcanal in the first major Allied land offensive since the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, he had two essential qualities for survival: guts and luck. His 40-pilot squadron battled Japanese Zeros that escorted the Imperial Navy's cigar-shaped "Betty bombers," the twin-engine Mitsubishi G4M attack planes that were his squadron's prime targets.

During Lieutenant Folsom's three months on the island, nearly half of his squadron's pilots were killed or wounded. In dogfights, the faster, more maneuverable Zeros often riddled his plane with bullets. He was wounded twice by shrapnel and once by a bullet that gashed his leg. When he ran out of ammunition, he escaped by flying into clouds and circling back to his tiny airstrip, Henderson Field.



Samuel Folsom in an undated photo. “At the time we shipped out, none of us second lieutenants had ever worn an oxygen mask,” he said. “Our experience was more than limited. It was almost nonexistent.”Credit...Veterans History

Lieutenant Folsom was awarded the Purple Heart and the Distinguished flying cross and went on to a distinguished flying career, commanding night fighter squadrons in battles over Okinawa and the Korean war. He was a high altitude test pilot, served in the office of Naval operations in Washington and for 2 years was the assistant Naval attache at the American Embassy in Norway. He retired from active service in 1958 as a Lieutenant Colonel

He made headlines in 1998 when at 77 he entered a bank on the Upper West Side and found a robbery in progress. He ran out, alerted two police officers and helped them subdue the suspect, pinning his arm so the officers could handcuff him. Samuel Bruce Folsom Jr. was born in Quincy, Mass., on July 24, 1920, to Samuel and May Folsom. Samuel, who never used the “Jr.,” was adopted in infancy by an uncle and aunt, Frank and Florence Lindsey, and raised in Pea-

Samuel Bruce Folsom Jr. was born in Quincy, Mass., on July 24, 1920, to Samuel and May Folsom. Samuel, who never used the “Jr.,” was adopted in infancy by an uncle and aunt, Frank and Florence Lindsey, and raised in Peabody, Mass., where he attended public schools and graduated from Peabody High School in 1938. A younger sister, May, and brother, Charles, were raised by their mother and other relatives in Schenectady, N.Y.

Samuel attended the Massachusetts Maritime Academy for two years and was commissioned an ensign. After serving on a Navy oiler in the Atlantic briefly, he acted on a longstanding desire to be a flier and obtained a transfer to flight training with the Marines

“At the time we shipped out, none of us second lieutenants had ever worn an oxygen mask, had probably never flown above 10 or 12 thousand feet,” he said. “Our experience was more than limited. It was almost nonexistent. But we went.”

In 1951, Mr. Folsom married Barbara Cole, a dance teacher, who survives him. In addition to her and their son, Gerrit, he is survived by their daughter, Lindsey Cole Folsom, and three grandchildren.

In 1958, Mr. Folsom joined Pan American World Airways, assisting the chairman, [Juan Trippe](#), to develop helicopters and heliports in New York. He became the Hertz Corporation executive in charge of East Coast real estate in 1973.

Mr. Folsom lived for many years in Manhattan and was a volunteer at the [Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum](#), the popular Midtown tourist destination on the Hudson.

Mr. Folsom appeared on NBC’s “Late Night With Conan O’Brien” and was invited to a policemen’s ball by the actor Harvey Keitel.

Story from Quora sent in by Alan Galvez

Did the A4 Skyhawk ever face the MIG 21Fishbed or MIG 17 Fresco during Vietnam? If so, how did it fare against them compared to other American Jets like the F-105 Thunderbird and F4Phantom

Yes, the Skyhawk did face MiG-17s and MiG-21s on a regular basis. But since the A-4 Skyhawk (The Scooter) was a light bomber, Skyhawks normally ran for their lives when engaged by them.

But **one time, the hunted became the hunter**, and the only time an A-4 has shot down another aircraft.



A-4 Skyhawk pilot, Theodore R. Swartz was assigned to the carrier, USS Bon Homme Richard off the coast of Vietnam in 1965. Swartz joined a strike package headed for the large airbase at Kep, nearby the heavily defended city of Hanoi.

The strike consisted of 22 aircraft, a mix of F-8 Crusaders as escort fighters, and the rest A-4s, armed to pound any useful targets at the airbase. On the way, two of the F-8s developed mechanical problems and had to return to the ship. That left their fighter coverage compromised, but the strike pressed on anyway.

This early in the war, bombing runs were conducted much the way they had been during World War Two. No CCIP, no laser targeting pods, no LGBs, no Shrike anti-radiation missiles, just the Mark 1 eyeball and a lot of training.

Swartz and his wingman were assigned to SEAD (Suppression of Enemy Air Defense). To this day, SEAD is still one of the most dangerous things a strike aircraft can do. So early in the Vietnam war, it was worse. Swartz's flight were armed with Zuni Rocket Pods, unguided 5-inch rockets. To use them, they had to get in close to the deadly SA-2 anti-air missile systems, and hopefully destroy the missile sites before they were shot down.



A-4 firing a Zuni rocket

As the strike package hit the airbase, destroying as many as 30 MiGs on the ground, Swartz and his wingman went after the air defenses. The pair started their attack run, but as they did, Swartz spotted a pair of MiG-17s taking off. He and his wingman fired their Zunis at the taxiing aircraft and destroyed both. As they pulled off their attack run, tracers the size of golf balls streaked past Swartz's canopy. They were under attack.

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Those missing F-8s would have been handy right then, but there was nothing for it. Swartz snap-rolled to port and yanked the stick back into his belly, a hard turn mostly with the intent of losing speed and forcing the attacking fighter to overshoot. The maneuver worked, and the MiG squirted out in front of him.



Well, the enemy was there, right in front of him, wasn't he? Swartz's Zuni rockets were unguided weapons, intended to hit ground targets, not air targets, but that's what he was configured to fire with at the moment (no time to prepare his 20mm cannons), so Swartz fired what he had ready. The first rocket clearly missed, but the naval aviator doggedly stayed on the six of his enemy, and fired another rocket.

Swartz's wingman called out a warning. Yet another MiG was on his tail. Swartz had milliseconds to react, and no time to see what his second shot did. He heaved his aircraft around in another hard turn, spoiling the second attack.

Swartz never saw what happened with his unorthodox aerial attack, but his wingman did. The MiG, crippled by Swartz's Zuni rocket fluttered down behind a hill and crashed, leaving a plume of black smoke behind to mark the victory.

To this day, A-4 Skyhawks are still flying, and some of these "bombers" were used in Aggressor squadrons to teach pilots how to dogfight. Nimble planes, Skyhawks were great for flying BFM. Yet, Swartz's kill was the only aerial kill ever made by a Skyhawk.

Navy Museum Pictures



Blue Angel at Practice



With one of our tour guides



PX

We now have available Auto window stickers and new Challenge coins. Anyone interested in purchasing them you can contact me at 201-907-1197 or email me at teanal330@gmail.com or send a check made out to "First Marine Airwing Association"

Al Frater
524 Sagamore Ave
Teaneck NJ 07666



Two for \$5.00



COINS are \$10.00 plus \$3.00 for shipping





**First Marine Aircraft Wing Association –
Vietnam Service
6321 Auburn Ave
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.