



THE SCOOP SHEET

Issue 45

Information For And About Members Of The First
Marine Aircraft Wing Association – Vietnam Service
www.1stmaw.com

Fall 2013



Arriving in New Orleans



Our Executive Board at the WWII museum



The Paddle wheeler for a ride on the
Mississippi

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ...



Happy Belated 238th Birthday Marines !

I pray that you and yours spent a memorable Veterans Day. May we never forget the many men and women that have paid the ultimate sacrifice, especially those that left us In Country!

Our 25th Anniversary Reunion in New Orleans was a success ! Thanks to all the members and their family for a great time. Our trip to the WW II Museum was very emotional, blessed at St Patrick's Church and had a big blast down the Mississippi. Our Banquet as always was very touching. The venue couldn't have been better. Once again our Marines from 4th MAW were there to serve us with their Color Guard, DJ and photographer. I know we had a few bumps along the way with the hotel renovation, and a few other things, but overall I've heard all had a great time. Want to thank the members for your support and trust in me for another term of office and also to my board, Jerry who has done a great job keeping us in the money and AI for all you do for us and Bill for doing what he does best for all the years I've known you, and Top for getting back on your feet after a very long distance move. All helped make this one of our best reunions. I'm already looking at sites in Pensacola for May - June 2015. Need your input on beach front (more \$ but also more luxury) or in town with onsite rest. and shops and ballroom (again more \$) or a motel and find our own way around town. I'm for the beach! Remember New Orleans free buffet breakfast and free happy hour only exist there, so we must pay anywhere else. Also looking for more reunion pictures. I have the formal pictures in a disk with all my pictures . Anyone interested, contact me and I'll burn a copy for You. Asking for a \$10.00 donation to our Scholarship Fund sent to Jerry. Also please don't post the formal pictures as they are copywrited. Some pictures are on our Facebook page. It was my pleasure to honor our Founding Father Rob Waters at our reunion. Listening to how we started was amazing and I'm honored to have known Him and been a Charter Life Member since reunion '88 and every reunion since. Also honored Phil Beckerich (he was very surprised) for his 10 years of service to us as our President, and when I got back I drove to Pa. to visit Kathy and Joe Amant and handed him personally his Plaque honoring him as our past President. I also was honored to attend, AI Frater's Marine Corps League— Gooney Bird Detachment , 238th Marine Corps Ball. Semper Fi! AI does a great job on our Scoop with mostly articles by Dave Hugel, but I know that we all have many stories and articles and memories that would help make our history last forever and never be forgotten! Want to wish all of you, my brothers in arms and your family and loved ones a very merry Christmas and a blessed holiday and may 2014 bring us all peace, health, happiness and lots of love and may we see all our troops home safe and sound !!!

SEMPER FIDELIS & May God Bless The USA !!!

Frank Paco Arce
Association President



MEMBERSHIP NOTES

DUES RENEWALS

Please send in your yearly dues of \$25.00. Send them to:

First Marine Aircraft Wing Association—Vietnam Service
c/o Wayne Cook—Membership
214 Point Cove
Beaufort, SC 29906

Any questions contact Wayne Cook 425-457-6931 or wayco@comcast.net. Subject should say First maw.

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 Wayne Cook at wayco@comcast.net and please cc Frank Arce at frankpaco69@aol.com and Al Frater at teanal@optonline.net. THE SCOOP CAN BE ACCESSED FROM THE WEB SITE **WWW.1stMAW.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..

LOCATOR LIST

There is now an updated locator list. Anyone that sees someone they want to contact, then they need to email Wayne Cook at wayco@comcast.net or call him at 425-457-6931 and he will send the information to that person to contact them.

PX

We have removed the PX page from this issue due to some price changes and that we were getting very few inquiries. However if you want to order any 1st MAW stuff please call Wayne Cook 425-457-6931 or email him at **wayco@comcast.net**

NEW WEB PAGE URL

Our WEB page is now accessed at **WWW.1stmaw.com**. This will make it easier to remember and it will be continually worked on to make it better.

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.

The untold story of an unusual mission undertaken by four Shufly Marines By David H. Hugel

In an article recently published by the Marine Corps League in Semper Fi magazine, I recount activities of a press team I was a member of, which first told the story of what Shufly Marines were doing to support our Vietnamese allies during 1963.

This article tells the story of one of the more unusual missions undertaken by Shufly Marines that received little media exposure at the time, but needs to be told. It's about four Staff NCOs from HMM-261 who volunteered to clear a heavily forested mountaintop for a new ARVN outpost and landing zone.

Shufly ISO Chief LCpl Dick Dawson asked me to accompany him on the mission to take photos to accompany an article he would be writing. After a slight delay in launching the mission, we departed for our destination, a short flight from the Da Nang airbase. As my helicopter approached the site one look at the mountaintop below told me that a lot of preliminary work had already been done. I could see a number of large trees lying on the ground, but much still needed to be done to turn the mountaintop into an outpost and LZ.

The Marines, assisted by Army advisors and ARVN troops, soon began the laborious task of felling the sturdy old mahogany trees and other wild tropical brush and trees with chainsaws and axes. It was a day when the temperature hovered at 90 degrees and the air dripped with humidity.

Recon Marines from Shufly's security detachment, and ARVN soldiers, provided a defensive perimeter to deter any VC who might be lurking in the remote rugged area from interfering with the tree clearing efforts. ARVN soldiers had already set up a temporary camp of poncho shelters and tents on the wooded site until a permanent outpost could be built.

Upon returning to the airbase, LCpl Dawson wrote a story on the day's activities, which along with a few of my photos, were sent to his mailing list of military related publications including Stars & Stripes. Today, 50 years later, I can find only one news clippings about the event, in the MCAS Cherry Point Windsock newspaper, where two paragraphs appear in the middle of a longer article combining a couple of Dawson's other stories accompanied by one of my photos.

According to the Windsock news article, based on Dawson's story, it was a productive day's work. During their six hours at the site the four staff NCOs and others had felled 25 trees, which were cut into sections and hauled away by helicopters or burned on the site. The four HMM-261 Staff NCOs who volunteered for the tree-cutting mission are not identified in the surviving news clipping, so in an effort to learn who they were the author posted a photo in Leatherneck magazine asking readers who they might be. According to responses received to that request and a page from the HMM-261 cruise book I received that included two of my photos of the tree cutting expedition, the Marines were GySgt Frank Black, GySgt Wesley Vanluverder, SSgt Capdepon and SSgt Lawrence Spacek.



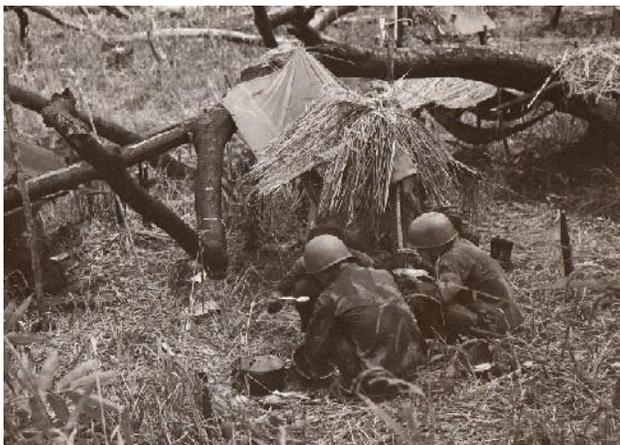
An aerial view of the mountaintop where Marine staff NCOs spent the day clearing trees for an ARVN outpost and landing zone. Upon a close inspection of the photo, a number of large previously felled trees, and ARVN tents and poncho shelters can clearly be seen. The two small circles in the lower left portion of the photo are gun emplacements with 105 mm howitzers.



One of HMM-261's helicopters lands in the dangerously small LZ Marines were working to expand.



HMM-261 Staff NCOs use a chainsaw to cut a tree during their 6 hour mission.



ARVN soldiers grab a quick meal at the temporary campsite on the mountaintop being cleared by Marines. In the background can be seen the poncho shelters where some slept while others guarded the site until the outpost could be completed.



Four HMM-261 Staff NCOs take a break from their tree-cutting mission to pose beside a 105 mm howitzer on the perimeter of the new ARVN outpost. Several Leatherneck readers identified three of the Marines as GySgt Frank Black, GySgt Wesley Vanluvender, SSgt Capdepon, and SSgt Lawrence Spacek.



Dog Patch as seen through the barbed wire fence that ran along the Marine compound at the Da Nang airbase. The two-lane road was the primary highway from north to south on Vietnam's east coast. A narrow gauge rail line ran parallel to the road between it and Dog Patch.



The Grand Hotel, drop off point for the SHUFLY liberty bus, where Marines could have a beer, something to eat or head for one of Da Nang's other entertainment attractions.



Street scene of Da Nang's market area. Note the scarcity of motor vehicle traffic



SHUFLY Marines wait for a ride to downtown Da Nang for liberty on the battered old school bus.



Some of Da Nang's popular bars, just a few blocks from the Grand Hotel. Note the fancy grillwork over windows and doors to deflect VC grenade attacks



Local residents take a break for a bite to eat on the street

Reunion 2013

New Orleans

Our reunion in New Orleans was one of our best reunions. We all had a great time meeting old and new friends. We even had some first timers there. While there we visited the WWII museum which was tremendous and on not to miss. We even had a special shoe by the Victory Bells that went on for a good hour. We also did dinner cruise on the Natchez, a true riverboat . Our banquet went very well . Our next reunion will be in Pensacola in 2015, and we hope to see more of our members attend. Here are a few of the pictures from reunion 2013.





HISTORY OF SERVICE NUMBERS FOR MARINE CORPS PERSONNEL

Prior to July 1, 1905, serial/service numbers, as some of us know them, were not used. The Corps was relatively small and enlisted men's case files at Headquarters, Marine Corps were simply filed alphabetically. If two or more names were the same, they were simply filed by date of enlistment.

On 1 July 1905, each enlisted man's case file was assigned a number, with the first number assigned as 20,000. It was not until 1 March 1941, as the Corps began expanding, that the case file numbers became identification or serial number for enlisted Marines. Also on that date, recruiting officers were assigned blocks of serial numbers for their recruiting districts. These numbers were assigned to each enlisted Marine and would be used during the enlisted man's entire enlisted service. These blocks of serial numbers produced some oddities, many times a Marine's serial number would tell you what part of the country he enlisted from, if he enlisted as a reservist or was a "draftee". Also the lower serial number did not always indicate the saltiest Marine.

In the early 1920's, a number was assigned to each officer's case file at Headquarters Marine Corps from an alphabetical listing. An officer's name that began with an "A" was assigned "01; names beginning with "B" were assigned "02", etc. All numbers were preceded by an "O" to distinguish them from enlisted men's numbers. On 7 October 1943 officer's case file numbers began being used for identification purposes when, in reality they were the officer's serial numbers.

The identification numbers were first called serial numbers, but on 3 May 1950, this term was changed to service numbers. On 1 January 1972 the use of service numbers was replaced by the individual's Social Security number as the primary identification number of Marines; and, the serial/service numbers began to fade into the history of our Corps.



REUNION 2013

**First Marine Aircraft Wing Association –
Vietnam Service
214 Point Cove
Beaufort, SC 29906**

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.