



THE SCOOP SHEET

Issue 44

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

Winter 2014



IN



Hampton Inn Pensacola

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ...



Hope all survived Your summer and had a lot of new memories with Your loved ones. I just finished a trip to Pensacola , Fl. and the contract was signed for Reunion 2015 to be held at the beautiful , beach front , Hampton Inn Pensacola Beach , 2 Via de Luna Drive , Pensacola Beach , Fl. 32561 May 28-31 , 2015 . I believe that we will be treated, as always, like The Vets We are, at a First Class Hotel . We will have Our usual Complimentary Breakfast and Happy Hour at the pool Tiki bar 2 for 1 drinks. Also coolers are allowed at the two pools (open 24 hours) and beach.

The rates we got was the best I could find at that time of the year without staying at a motel and having our banquet and meetings wherever. Thanks to ' Frenchy ' Norm La Fontaine, for the surprise pick up at the airport and the trip to NAS Pensacola, where I met the powers that be that can't wait to show us what The New Air Crew looks like and other schools that many of us attended in Millington, Tn and now are located at NAS and also a visit to the Naval Aviation Museum.

Our Memorial Service will be at Their Veterans Memorial Park known as The Wall South, with a VietNam era HU-1M Huey. Our China Beach Night can be held after a possible group dinner (at Your expense) at our beach or the pools (need input). Our hospitality room will be available and fully stocked as usual. Our banquet will be on site with a buffet and cash bar or flask. Farewell breakfast can be free or we can order our own with the extra charge. I also want to thank G-Man, Lt. Col. David Glassman Ret. USMC for His quick last minute help on My visit. Also My taxi driver Freddie (Nam 1st LAMM Lt.) will be available 24-7 for airport and hotel pickup call him at 850-501-4448. Man 1st MAW Retirees in that area and I expect this reunion will be our finest hour!

I can only ask for your help in supporting Our Association In any way You can, be it financially or by submitting item for this Our Scoop, but especially by booking Your Reunion reservation ASAP and maybe bring a friend. We are also requesting items for our very successful auction. Also We still have the Reunion 2013 Banquet pictures for sale \$10.00, to support our scholarship. Another reminder to all of You GrandPa's, Your college grand kids are eligible for it .

Semper Fi !!!

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 Jerry Sergeant—Membership
5282 Ousterhout Drive
Sterling, MI 48659

Any questions contact Jerry Sergeant jleesarge@hotmail.com. 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 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..

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 425-313-0348 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 425-313-0348 or email him at wayco@comcast.net

NEW WEB PAGE URL

Our WEB page currently not working, we hope to have it back on line soon.

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.

Returning to Vietnam as a Tourist By David H. Hugel

After turning down several opportunities to tour Vietnam over the years, in December 2011 I decided to give it a try and signed up for a whirlwind tour of the country, sponsored by Military Historic Tours of Woodbridge Virginia. The 10-day tour took us from Ho Chi Ming City (a.k.a. Saigon), where we toured the former capital of South Vietnam, made day trips to the Mekong Delta and visited tourist and military sites in that region. We then flew north to Da Nang, and after seeing the sites in and around Da Nang, drove north through the mountainous and once deadly Hai Van Pass to Hue. With Hue as our base of operations, we made day trips to fabled Marine battle sites and fire bases including, Dong Ha, Khe Sanh, Con Thien and Camp Carroll. The tour concluded with a flight to Hanoi, where we spent a day visiting obligatory government sanctioned tourist sites. I wrote an article with my observations and impression of the tour that appeared in the March /April issue of Semper Fi magazine. Having written about Da Nang and China Beach in 1963 in the last issue of The Scoop Sheet, I decided to follow up on that story by writing this article about my observations of that area today.

Unlike my first arrival in Da Nang in April 1963, when I was greeted with a blast of hot air as I deplaned the Marine C-130 parked on the edge of the dusty airfield, our flight from Ho Chi Minh City arrived at the modern air terminal in a sleek Vietnam Airlines passenger jet. Arriving at night as a result of various delays and a power failure in Da Nang, it was surprisingly cool and dark. Thankfully, after dinner at a local restaurant the power was restored to our hotel on the Da Nang waterfront.

The next morning, following an early breakfast, we began a driving tour of the city including a return trip to the airport to see it in the daylight. Regretfully, as I had been forewarned there wasn't much to see of former Marine and Air Force facilities I remembered from 1963. Our driver parked the tourism van and we walked up an unfinished ramp to the new civilian air terminal to get a better view of the airfield. Just to our left we saw a large arched roof hanger that I believe was the old Air Force hanger. Looking beyond the hanger toward the runway, it was apparent that not much remained of the old Marine airfield. A few scattered buildings and aircraft revetments built to protect the fighters and attack aircraft that replaced helicopters at the Da Nang airfield during later stages of the war were all that remained.

After our brief trip to the airfield we drove into the city that has changed a lot since 1963. We learned that Da Nang had grown to more than 900,000 people and many multi story buildings had replaced the one and two story ones I remember. While a few distinctive landmarks like the Roman Catholic church and orphanage were still there, many buildings from that earlier era have disappeared to make way for new hotels, residential and commercial buildings. Even the once popular watering hole, the Grand Hotel had been replaced by a new high-rise hotel. Our hotel on the waterfront overlooking the Han River, a glistening steel and glass structure, appeared to be one of the newest in the city. My room high above the streets gave me a panoramic view of the river looking east toward the South China Sea and Marble Mountain, while to the northwest I could see the city with its many new buildings scattered among the older ones.

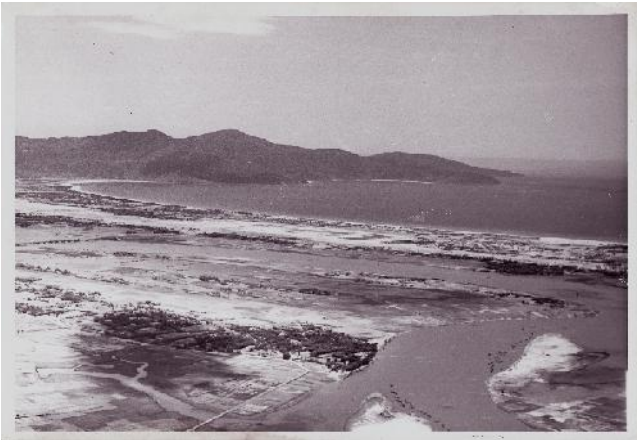
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Looking at several new bridges that spanned the river, I remembered in 1963 having to cross the river to get to China Beach by taking a couple slow old military ferries packed, with G.I.s in jeeps and civilians on foot or riding bikes. Another site that struck me was, unlike 1963 when the primary means of transportation in Da Nang was bicycles and cyclos, today the streets were crowded with countless fast moving motorbikes.

Knowing that some of us had served at the Marine airbase, our tour van driver took us on the road behind our old barracks compound that ran between the base and Dog Patch. To my surprise it was no longer a two-lane road, but a dual-lane highway with multi story buildings replacing the shanties of Dog Patch, but we saw no evidence of the old Marine barracks.

If the changes to the city of Da Nang were surprising, the extensive developments along the South China Sea and Marble Mountain were overwhelming. A 1963 aerial photo of the coast shows a barren stretch of beach with a number of small, scattered structures while a 2011 photo taken from Marble Mountain shows extensive development of the area. There are even new golf communities with million-dollar homes under construction. There have also been changes to Marble Mountain itself. In 1963, a statue of Buddha, a pagoda and temple originally built in 1826, had fallen into disrepair and were overrun with tropical vegetation. Our tour guide told us that since a 1990 restoration, they have become popular tourist destinations. The statues and jewelry sold by local merchants from their small shops around the mountain have also changed since 1963. Today modern spacious show rooms have replaced many of the small artisan shops. Another less well-known change is that the marble used to carve the art works is no longer mined from Marble Mountain. Because of historical preservation laws, the marble now must be mined and shipped in from distant locations.

We traveled from Da Nang to Hue in our van via Hai Van pass, a scenic but hairy drive on a winding, narrow road surround by steep hills. From Hue we continued our tour. Our brief stay in Da Nang brought back memories of my 1963 tour of duty in Vietnam and many visits to Da Nang and China Beach. It was fascinating to see how modernized the city and developed the near by sea side had become over the past 50 years. While many of the sites I remembered were inaccessible or have disappeared, it was encouraging to see that the Roman Catholic church I saw in Da Nang as well as ones I saw in Saigon and Hue were prospering. Likewise, Buddhist temples and those of other Asian religions also appear to be thriving. While the country is still a developing one it has made a lot of progress in many areas, and has many scenic, cultural and historic attractions worth seeing. I would encourage anyone interested in visiting Vietnam to explore the pros and cons, logistics and cost of making the trip. Information on the cost and itinerary of Vietnam tours can be found on the Military Historic Tours web site, www.miltours.com



1963 aerial view of China Beach and South China Sea



2011 view of China Beach and South China Sea from Marble Mountain



View of downtown Da Nang from the Greene Plaza Hotel looking to the northwest. Several older buildings includ-



Not much remains to be seen of old Marine airfield, except a few scattered buildings and aircraft revetments that were



View of Da Nang waterfront and river with bridges that replaced the ferry used by residents and GIs back in 1963 to cross the river. By 2011 motorbikes had also



The author holds a familiar locally brewed beer with a new label. Sometime after the end of the war a Scandinavian brewery took over the old French "33" brand in Vietnam but had to change the name to "333."

Navy Seabees Drill Well Increasing Shufly's Water Supply By David H. Hugel

In 1963 the Da Nang airbase had a chronic water shortage, requiring restrictions on the hours water was available for showers, shaving and operations like the photo lab that needed a reliable supply of fresh water. The heads didn't rely on running water, but had 50 gallon barrels filled with water from which Marines used large empty vegetable cans from the mess hall to scoop water to flush the toilets into a subterranean septic tank.

While Marines of Sub Unit #2 of MABS -16 refurbished the former French army base, built new buildings, and maintained the base's, plumbing and electrical infrastructure, occasionally Navy Seabees were called upon for more heavy duty projects. In early September, a 15-man Seabee team arrived in Da Nang from Okinawa to drill a new deep well to alleviate the Marine's water shortage problem.

It was hard work drilling a well more than 400 feet deep through solid marble under working conditions often hampered by heat, heavy rains and wind, but 41 days later, the Seabees accomplished their mission. The new well, said to be the deepest in Vietnam at the time, produced 60 gallons of water per minute that was pumped to surface, purified, and stored in a 1,000 gallon tank for future use.

On October 24, 1963, Shufly commanding officer Col. Andre Gomez officiated at a brief ceremony and threw the switch activating the new well's pump that would produce an increased, reliable flow of water to meet the needs of Marines living at the airbase.



Shufly C.O. Col. Andre Gomez throws the switch activating Shufly's new well pump with SSgt. Karl Nichol, MABS-16, Sub Unit # 2 utilities chief by his side, as Sub Unit commanding officer, Lt. Col. Earl Cassidy far left and Seabee crew boss, EO1 Pete Welty look on.

REUNION 2015
Pensacola Florida Registration Form
FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING ASSOCIATION VIETNAM SERVICE
Thursday, May 28th, Friday 29th and Saturday 30th, 2015

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, AVIATION MUSEUM TRIP,
CHINA BEACH BASH BUFFET and REUNION BANQUET BUFFET MEAL**

NUMBER ATTENDING REUNION _____ X \$150.00 (per person) = \$ _____

NUMBER OF REUNION SHIRTS \$20.00 (each) **Circle Size** with quantity(s) M _____ L _____ XL _____ 2XL _____ 3XL _____

TOTAL AMOUNT INCLUDED \$ _____

PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN Thursday April 30th, 2015 (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. **LATE FEES WILL BE INCURRED AFTER Friday, May 1st, 2015.**

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
5282 OUSTERHOUT DRIVE
STERLING, MI 48659**

NOTE: Room rates of \$159 + tax for Sound Side rooms and \$179 + tax for Gulf Side rooms, has been negotiated with the, Hampton Inn Pensacola Beach. **These rates are in effect until April 28, 2015 only.**

For hotel reservations Use Group Code FIR. Contact the **Hampton Inn direct at 1-850-932-6800.** Ask for "Reservations" or online www.hamptoninn.com

Street Address for those driving is: 2 Via de Luna Drive, Pensacola Beach, FL 32561

Reunion participation is for paid members and registered guests. Membership is available to all qualified individuals. Please check the association's website at www.1stmaw.com for membership details and application form information.

First Marine Aircraft Wing Association, Vietnam Service

Scholarship Requirements and Details

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

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 prior to the Reunion date.

-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 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:

1. What the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial means to me.
2. What all Americans can do to solve the energy crisis.
3. How I plan to use my education to aid society.
4. 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 documents must be post marked **30 Days prior to the Reunion.**

Mail To: First Marine Aircraft Wing Association-VN Service
c/o Jerry Sergeant, Treasurer
5282 Ousterhout Drive
Sterling, MI 48659



**First Marine Aircraft Wing Association –
Vietnam Service**
5282 Ousterhout Drive
Sterling, MI 48659

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.