



THE SCOOP SHEET

Issue 45

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

Spring 2015



Here is our own Dave Hugel with Medal of Honor winner Woody Williams.



Al Frater celebrating the 70th anniversary of Iwo Jima with Iwo Jima veterans Gene Isconetti and Frank Hall also Diane Hawkins (MOH winner Sgt John Basilone's Niece)



Hampton INN Pensacola Beach

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ...



Semper Fi Marines !

As We approach Reunion 2015, with about 30 and a wake up, I can say this will be our finest hour . I expect many walk-ins, especially for our banquet. We have met all of our requirements to the Hampton Inn in Pensacola Beach. I have asked and our hotel rep has said she will try to keep more rooms available as long as possible. Our cut off date is April 30. Our room rates are in the contract for 3 days before and 3 days after at the same rate.

Our tour on Friday to NAS Pensacola and their museum should be an unforgettable experience for all of us and should bring back memories of our youth and our past. Many of our schools in Millington, Tn. are now in NAS. Don't forget to bring your memorabilia from there and our tours with 1st MAW. This will be followed by our memorial service at Their Veterans Memorial Park where they have a half scale model of The Viet Nam Veterans Memorial. This will also be followed by our China Beach Night on the beach (Our First Ever) with a Hawaiian BBQ. On Sat. we will have our business meeting and elections. Anyone interested in a position on our board, please advise us through Jerry or Al. This will be followed by our banquet . Our guest speaker will be Capt. Ben Cascio, The one-eyed Ugly Angel. Some of You have had the honor to serve with this great Marine hero and it will be my pleasure to have him and his Mrs. join us for the first time on Our 27th anniversary. Sunday will end with a breakfast and a few tears.

We need more participation from you our members. For years Rob, Joe and Phil asked for the same thing and now I also ask. Like you all read when you joined our Marines at your recruiting station ' We're looking for a Few Good Men , Again ' how Rob got me to join. We also need more contributions to our scholarship fund that I started in Parris Island in 1997 and now We are watching our grand children reap their reward. We will again have an auction of very old memorabilia to raise funds for this great cause so this will be a good way to contribute.

Transportation can be provided by a 1st MAW Marine named Freddie at 850-501-4448 to and from airport .



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..

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 Frank Arce 646-752-0447 or email him at frankpaco69@aol.com

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.

The Da Nang airbase was a fascinating place for aviation buffs in 1963 Article and Photos by David H. Hugel

In 1963 Marines shared the Da Nang airbase with U.S. and Vietnamese Air Force units and the aircraft they were flying at that time. The U.S. Army and Air America were also known to fly missions out of the Da Nang airfield as well.

Marines were flying the recently re-designated **H-34D** Sikorsky helicopter known as the Seahorse, as they fulfilled their mission of providing airlift support to ARVN forces fighting Communist Viet Cong guerillas. The Seahorse was a versatile and reliable aircraft. It would prove to be a workhorse during the course of the next seven years of the Vietnam War until being retired from combat in 1969, replaced by the CH-46 built by Boeing-Vertol

Marines also flew a few single engine **OE-1** Bird Dog planes for aerial observation missions and had one WWII vintage **R 4D** used for resupply runs. Twice a week shuttles from 1st MAW Headquarters in Iwakuni, Japan arrived at the Da Nang airfield delivering needed supplies and replacement troops. These daylong shuttle flights were made by Marine pilots flying the powerful four engine turboprop **GV-1** Hercules built by Lockheed, later re-designated the C-130. Updated models of the plane are still fulfilling the Marine Corps' air transport needs

One aircraft Marines were not flying in Vietnam at the time was the **UH-1E, Huey** helicopter, built by Bell Aircraft. During a January 1964 tour of the Da Nang airbase, Marine Commandant Gen. Wallace Greene and his entourage closely inspected the rocket and machine gun configurations of an Army Huey at the base. Marines would take delivery of the aircraft modified to meet their operational needs in February. In 1965, the Huey began its long service in Vietnam as an observation aircraft, gunship and flying medical evacuation missions.

In 1963 the Army was flying another interesting aircraft, the **CV-2 Caribou** to deliver supplies to remote outposts with short runways. The aircraft was very narrow, but had a wide wingspan and tail nearly as tall as that of the C-130, giving it the ability to land and take off in a much shorter distance than conventional transports. The Caribou could carry 32 troops or two jeeps and could land on runways only 1200 feet in length. I experienced one dramatic take off on a Caribou while traveling with Gen. Greene up near Hue in January 1964. The rear hatch /ramp was left open to permit air to circulate in the hot cargo compartment where we were seated. Once we were securely belted in and the plane began a steep ascent. Looking to my left, I found myself staring straight down at the ground until we attained a safe altitude and the plane leveled off. It was the most exciting takeoff I have ever experienced

Many of the aircraft used by the Vietnamese Air Force like the **A-1 Skyraider** and **T-28 Trojan** were well known to Americans, having been flown by Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force pilots during the 1950s. The A-1, built by Douglas and formerly known as the AD, was a piston powered, prop driven attack bomber flown by Navy and Marine pilots, that saw extensive combat action during the Korean War. The model flown by Vietnamese pilots, had 4- 20 mm canon, and could carry a 3,000-pound payload of bombs, torpedoes and rockets. The T-28, used to train American pilots since the early 1950s, had been reconfigured as an attack aircraft with wing pylons that could carry bombs, napalm and rockets. It also boasted 7.6 and .50 caliber machine guns.

In addition to training Vietnamese pilots the U.S. Air Force was flying a couple aircraft I had never seen before, **C-123 transports** and **B-26 bombers**. Built by Fairchild, the-123 was a smaller, two engine version of the C-130, used primarily for resupply missions to small, remote landing fields. When fitted with spraying equipment, the aircraft was also used to disperse the defoliant "Agent Orange," and as a jump platform for training Army airborne units. A few, used for VIP transportation were armed with machine guns, prompting one Air Force general to dub his plane the "VC"-123. The other plane I had never seen before was a relic of the Korean War, the Douglas B-26 Invader. I noticed one flying as an armed escort for the Caribou I was a passenger on along with Gen. Greene and several senior Marine Corps officers up in northern I Corps during the Commandant's January 1964 inspection tour. The plane that bristled with .50 caliber machine guns had Vietnamese Air Force markings*, but not much was known about missions it flew during that period.

Hardcore aviation buffs may have more insight into the aircraft I observed in and around the Da Nang airbase during my tour there, but I was impressed with the historic background of the older aircraft and interested to learn the role newer models would play in future years of the war.

*It is difficult to distinguish the markings on Vietnamese Air Force aircraft from those of U.S. planes in B & W photos because the markings look identical. In color photos the difference is obvious. While both countries used a White star on a Blue circle, the stripes on either side of the circle on the Vietnamese planes were Yellow and Red as opposed to White and Red stripes on U.S. aircraft.

Aircraft in Vietnam



Marine Corps Commandant Gen Wallace M. Greene Jr. center, is briefed by an Army officer on the Huey helicopters offensive armaments during his tour of DaNang in January 1964. Other Marine Corps Officers in Gen Greenes entourage include future Commandant Maj. Gen. Robert Cushman, far left in sunglasses, Maj. Gen. Louis Robertshaw, Deputy Chief of Staff for Aviation, far right, and Col Andre D Gomez Shufly CO, 2nd from right. Marines began flying Hueys in Vietnam



A UH-34 Helicopter from HMM-261 on a mission under the watchful eye of Marine OE-1 Bird Dog observation plane in the mountainous I Corps region in Vietnam



A Marine honor guard stands by to welcome the Commanding General of the 1st MAW arriving on his CV-1, later re-designated the C-130. The GC-1 was Shufly's life-line to the our Headquarters in Iwakuni to DaNang delivering needed supplies and replacement troops.



The Air Force C-123, was a smaller two-engine version of the C-130, used primarily for resupply missions to small, remote landing fields



The T-28, used to train American military pilots since the early 1950's, had been e-configured as a combat aircraft for the Vietnamese Air Force. It had wing pylons that could carry bombs, napalm and rockets as well as 7.6 and 50 caliber machine guns.



The Douglas B-26 Invader was a relic of the Korean war, that bristled with 50 caliber machine guns had Vietnamese Air Force markings and flew missions out of the Air Force side of the DaNang airbase.



Birddog



Carribou

Visiting Iwo Jima was a once in a lifetime experience
By David H. Hugel

My adventure began in late January when I received a message from the editor of Semper Fi magazine asking if I would be interested in writing an article about Hershel "Woody" Williams, a WWII Marine Corps veteran who received the Medal of Honor for his heroism during the bloody struggle for Iwo Jima. Williams, who had not been back to Iwo Jima since WWII, was scheduled to return in March 2015 to attend ceremonies commemorating the 70th anniversary of the epic battle.

It's every Marine's dream to visit Iwo Jima, so I couldn't pass up this unexpected opportunity, to make the trip with nearly 50 veterans of that battle. I eagerly accepted the assignment, made plans for the trip and began researching the article.

I met Woody Williams on February 21, the 70th anniversary of the Iwo Jima landing, when he was in Arlington, VA for the Iwo Jima Association of America's annual reunion. I interviewed him that evening for about an hour, and could tell from the beginning that it was going to be an interesting and fun assignment. During that first interview we talked about his early life as a West Virginia farm boy who served in the Civilian Conservation Corps, before joining the Marines following the outbreak of WWII, and his heroic mission as a flamethrower operator on Iwo Jima.

The trip was a long one that took me from Baltimore to San Francisco, and then on to Tokyo and Guam, where as a result of various delays I arrived at 2:30 AM local time. On Guam I joined 48 U.S. Iwo Jima veterans, their families' friends and history buffs for lectures on the Battle of Iwo Jima and tours of various sites on Guam where Marines fought in July 1944 to liberate the U.S. Territory seized by Japan in 1941.

At 4 AM on Saturday March 21 we all gathered in the hotel lobby for the short bus ride to the airport where we boarded a charter plane for the two-hour flight to Iwo Jima. Once there, we had time to tour the landing beaches and visit Mt. Suribachi before joining Japanese officials for the 70th anniversary commemoration ceremony. To walk along the black volcanic sand beach where Marines died during the fierce battle was an inspiring experience. Looking down on the exposed landing beaches from atop Mt. Suribachi gave me a better appreciation of the courage exhibited by those Marines who scampered ashore in the midst of withering artillery, machine gun and rifle fire to capture that small island so critical to America's Pacific War campaign to defeat Japan.

Seeing Iwo Jima first hand was a once in a lifetime, experience. More details on Woody Williams' fascinating life, and the tours on Guam and Iwo Jima can be found in my article that appears in the May/June issue of Semper Fi magazine.



Mt. Suribachi dominates the Iwo Jima landing beaches known for its black sand.



The view of Iwo Jima landing beaches, from Mt.



Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Joseph Dunford lays a wreath honoring Marines and other U.S. service members who died during the battle for Iwo Jima at the 70th Anniversary Commemoration

REUNION AGENDA

Thursday May 28th

Friday May 29th

9:00 AM

3 PM

6 PM

Saturday May 30th

9:00 AM

7 PM

Sunday May 31st

7-10 AM

Registration

Registration

Visit to NAS and Museum

Memorial Service

China Beach Night

Business Meeting

Banquet with Guest Speaker

Capt. Ben Cascio

Helicopter Pilot in Vietnam

Farewell Breakfast



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.