



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

Issue 31

www.firstmaw.homestead.com

Spring 2009



Remember these? Photo complements of First MAW member Jeff Burstein



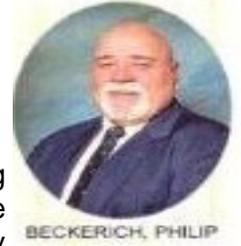
Pictures complements of First MAW Member Jeff Burstein

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ...

To: ALMARFIRSTMAWASSOCIATION
From: Association President
Subj: Presidents Message



Marines: It is less than six months before our next reunion in Beaufort, SC. I am looking forward to seeing all my fellow Vietnam First Marine Aircraft Wing Veteran's once again. In the Scoop you will find a tentative itinerary for the Reunion, which will probably be tweaked as needed before the actual reunion. Remember, per our last reunion, I will need volunteers to man the Hospitality Room, do set ups etc. I cannot as well as the very few do everything and won't. If you want the hospitality room open longer than you have to volunteer by name or sign up to help when you register at arrival in Beaufort. That is precisely why I hired the "Reunion Brats" for the last reunion. I have not, to date received any nominations for officers for the next two years. Someone must step up because I am stepping down after ten Years. Although members have been reserving rooms very few have sent in their registration fees. If you are getting any income tax back or if there is another economic incentive put it to good use and register for the reunion. If you have any suggestions or questions email me at yw37@optonline.net or write me at 111 Sedgwick Ave, Apt. 2M Yonkers, NY 10705-2653. Please feel free to send articles to our scoop editor Al Frater, his email is teanal@verizon.net. Take care. Have a great Memorial Day. Thank a Vet, Thank yourself.

As many of you know we are members of the National Marine Corps Council. You can Google NMCC to find out more information but I have to report some of the important information from Saturday's meeting to you. As you know we are not a political association and never endorse political candidates. We however, are all advocates and ambassadors for the Marine Corps as all Marine Associations are. First of all if you live close to Chicago there will be a Marine week in Chicago. The Marine Corps wants to get out the word to America about the Marine Corps. It will be a week- long event May 11-17, 2009. A different city is planned for each year. The Marine Corps Drum & Bugle Corps as well as the SDP (Silent Drill Platoon) will be there to find out more details go to Marines.mil/Marine week . Next our War Memorial, which was privately funded by Marines is beginning to fall apart from the inside out and the Marble slabs around the base of the memorial are falling down. Additionally an organization called Iwoflags.org has been replacing the flag monthly. It seems that the Parks department rarely if ever even changes torn flags. Well this organization does and they are heading up a fund raiser to save our memorial. Marines paid for the original statue and I know we will raise the money to fix and repair the statue too. Now a little about the Young Marines which was started by some Marine Corps Leaguers in 1959 (50th anniversary) and was chartered by General Wallace M. Greene in 1965. Ten years ago there were 50 units now there are over three hundred and growing with the newest one in New Jersey. I would like to use the Young Marines Parris Island unit as our banquet Color guard and perhaps give them a donation from our association. It seems that the new political powers have stopped donating any funding to the Young Marines.

Lastly, the Marine Corps is currently tasked to send 10,200 Marines to Afghanistan and they really need three things to get the job done. First of all the Marines need at least 38 amphibious ships to fulfill their missions. The Navy has 31 and not all of those in good repair. Marines need the F-35 to replace the aging Harrier and the Expeditionary Fighting Vehicle (EFV) to replace the AAV's. So, if you are inclined to write or email your congressional representatives or Senators, do so and tell what the Marines need. I will close with a sad note. When I got home on Sunday I received some bad news MSGT Joe Russo passed away. He was a member of our association and we served together with HMM-165 in Vietnam. He used to live in Yonkers but has been in Hopewell Junction about an hour north of Yonkers the last five or six years. His funeral is this Wednesday April 23rd and I will miss him very much. He is in my prayers as I know he will be in yours.

MEMBERSHIP NOTES

DUES RENEWALS

So far this year, the dues renewal rate continues to be **very** good! You guys are doing a great job! Please keep it up, and a **Thank You** goes out to all of you.. Later this year, the reminders will go out for the Life Members who are on the installment plan (a good deal!). But if this means YOU, you can help by sending in your installment payment ahead of time to save us some work.

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 Phil Beckerich at yw37@optonline.net and Al Frater at teanal@verizon.net. **THE SCOOP CAN BE ACCESSED FROM THE WEB SITE WWW.FIRSTMAW.HOMESTEAD.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..

EDITORS NOTES

Please email me any articles or noteworthy events about our members and Association (electronic pictures accepted). All articles and pictures become property of the association and cannot be returned.

Al Frater teanal@verizon.net

COLT DONATION

In the interests of patriotism and in recognition of our Vietnam service, the Colt's Firearms Manufacturing Company has once again donated a firearm to us. If you will remember, Colt donated a M1911A1 which we raffled off at reunions, with all proceeds going to our Scholarship Fund. This time they have donated a Match Grade HBAR to us, for the same purpose. Many thanks to LtGen Keys (USMC-Ret) of Colts for the donation and to our good friends and loyal Members, Bob "Raggie" Sebetka of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, and Robert Milburn who once again did the legwork for the acquisition of this splendid gift.



Remembering Vietnam USO Shows and R & R by David H. Hugel*

Much has been written about what Marine pilots and crewmen did during the Vietnam War. The many harrowing missions transporting Marines into combat, resupplying troops in the field and the heroic rescue missions of those wounded or killed in action are well chronicled, but I've seen little written about what these Marines did in their off duty time to relax and recharge for their next mission.

We had our clubs and, when security conditions permitted, went into the nearest town on liberty to frequent local bars and nightclubs. There were also nightly movies at many bases allowing us to escape to a calmer, less threatening world through the magic of cinematography. Without question though the two most popular recreational options among the Marines I served with were R&R and the occasional USO show that toured the country, entertaining troops and giving us a close up look at real live American women, often for the first time in many months.

The USO Show That Brought The House Down

One of these USO shows, billed as "Jubilee '63," staged a performance for Marines, airmen, and soldiers from nearby bases at the Marine Da Nang airbase, the home of Operation Shufly, the night of August 19, 1963. Veteran comic Earl Nickel, who had played such legendary theatrical venues as the Palladium in London and Alhambra in Paris, served as master of ceremonies. Billed as a banjo-vocal-comedy act, husband and wife Myrna and Jerry Music provided several lively folk music numbers. Other members of the small troupe included Karen Springer a piano playing vocalist, and dancer Kelly Robbins, and was rounded out with Jim Robinson playing electric bass and Ray Qualey on drums. The show took place in what we used every night as our movie theater. It was a large room with sheets of white plywood erected at one end serving as the screen, and rows metal chairs radiating out from the screen that served as the seating area. However, based on the enthusiastic reception of the overflow audience attending the show, that night it could have been the biggest, brightest New York or Las Vegas show house. While the details of the show have faded as the years have passed, it was an unforgettable evening for all who attended

Hong Kong R & R Memories

For those who share this newsletter with their wives and significant others, don't worry I won't go into those behind closed doors details that are best forgotten. During these early days of the war there weren't many options for R & R. We could go to Okinawa, Japan, or Hong Kong on a free flight for 2-3 days of non-changeable leave. There were also occasional flights to Thailand, but more exotic locations such as Australia and Hawaii were not yet available as R&R destinations. Having heard numerous stories about Hong Kong and wanting to see if they were true, I signed up for a flight to that fabled port of call along with a couple of my buddies from the Marine airbase in Da Nang, Bob Silverberg, and Bill Speckles, in August 1963.

By tradition, Shufly Marines stayed at the Clover Hotel on Nathan Road, but we didn't have to worry about finding it. When we arrived at Kai Tak airport there was always a driver from the Peninsula tailor shop to meet us once we cleared customs and immigration. Once we had gathered our luggage and squeezed into his small van, he would take us to the hotel, where we enjoyed a complimentary beer as we checked in before being whisked off to the tailor shop.

Suits and shoes were made to order and custom fitted in three days at bargain basement prices, and many of the tailors offered free drinks as we were serviced at their shops. While custom-made suits may have been a big attraction, there was much, much more to see and do in this fascinating city. The bright lights, strange language and sounds of this vibrant port city, commercial center and market place promised us an

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In the days before cassettes, CDs and iPods, reel-to-reel tape players were the state of the art in sound systems so one of the first things I bought was a Sony model for about \$100. It was one of the best investments I ever made, and once a buddy back in Da Nang built me a headset from surveyed aircraft headset parts (as I recall, it had two left ear pads), it gave me untold hours of musical enjoyment. I also bought a Minolta twin lens reflex camera which I used to chronicle the remainder of my trip to Hong Kong (including the photos used in this article), and day to day activities around the base and town for the rest of my tour in Da Nang. Like the bargain hunters Marines are notoriously known to be, Bob and Bill also took advantage of the discounted prices for custom-made suits, cameras, electronics and handcrafted jewelry.

After shopping, sightseeing was high on our agenda of things to do. The three of us took a tour that hit the most popular sites of that period including the ancient walled city, Victoria Peak on Hong Kong Island with its incomparable view of the harbor and Kowloon, with Mainland China as a distant backdrop, the floating junk city of Aberdeen where an unimaginable number of small sampans were wedged together to house an un-tolled number of the Colony's newly arrived residents, and of course the incomparable Tiger Balm Gardens, the former estate of a wealthy businessman filled with brightly colored concrete statues of characters from Chinese mythology. We even had lunch at the Tai Pak floating restaurant, that many of us first saw in the 1960 movie The World of Suzie Wong starring William Holden and Nancy Kwan. At one point on the tour, we could look from a hillside into Mainland China but in those Cold War days we were prohibited from crossing the border into that forbidden land.

Evenings we enjoyed dinner and drinks at some of Hong Kong's "real" nightclubs, which featured a wide range of professional entertainers and variety acts from adagio dancers to "Big Band" style orchestras. One of our favorites were the Pilipino groups, that could play just about anything their audience wanted: Romantic Latino music, American Rock & Roll and Country Western, and even the newest craze – The Beatles and other British Rock groups from those early days. As for the food, our taste buds were exposed to a variety of new dishes from Regional Chinese to Continental European, as well as my personal favorite Italian. There was American style food including steak, but I was not prepared for the meal I had one day featuring Japan's world famous "melt in your mouth" Kobe beef steak. It was truly one of the most memorable meals and best pieces of meat I have ever eaten.

Within a year or so of returning to the States and leaving the Marine Corps to attend college, a new TV adventure-drama, "I Spy" (one of the first regular network shows broadcast in color) starring Robert Culp and Bill Cosby debuted. The program was filmed in Hong Kong during its first couple years, and watching it each week brought back many memories of that now far distant city. Hopefully this article has stirred a few memories for Marines who traveled to Hong Kong for R&R or saw one of the many USO Shows that toured Vietnam during the course of the war.

* From April 1963- Jan. 1964 Dave Hugel served as a Marine photographer at the Marine's Da Nang airbase as part of Operation Shufly. He recently retired from a senior position in the US Department of Transportation that he held during the last two and one half years of the Bush Administration.



USO Show performers Karen Springer at the piano, Jim Robinson playing an electric bass and Ray Qualey on drums.



Myrna and Jerry Music play one of their folk music numbers



MC Earl Nickel doing a comic skit as Karen Springer plays the piano



Dancer Kelly Robbins performs before an enthusiastic crowd of Marines, soldiers and airmen.



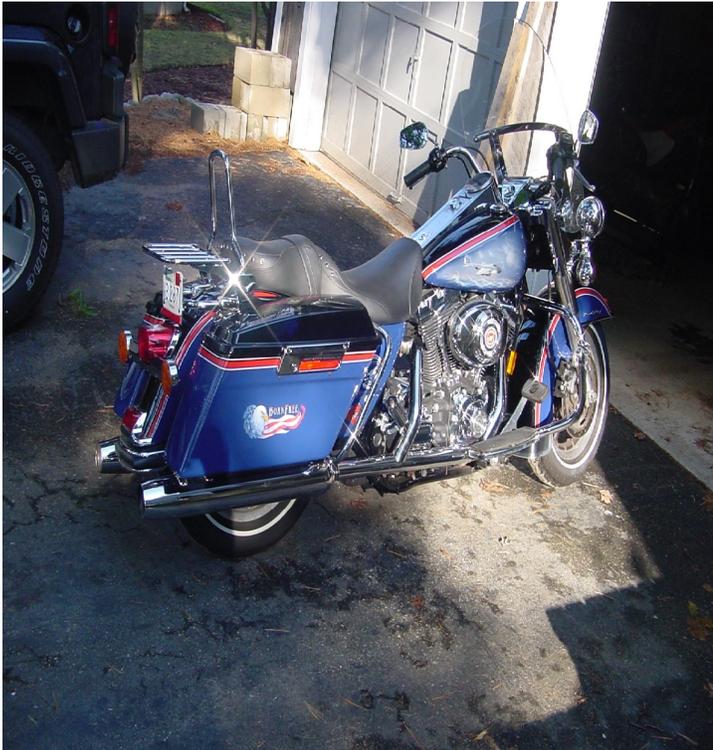
Hong Kong Harbor from atop Victoria Peak looking toward Kowloon and the China Mainland.



Shuffy Marines Bob Silverberg, left and Bill Speckles, right with our tour guide at Tiger Balm Gardens in Hong Kong.

**Photos by
Gray Kramer**

Thought the members might enjoy these pictures. I served with VMA533 and VMA225 68-69 as a b/n. The five names on the left saddle bag are those of my friends that I flew with and didn't make it back. (my own mini "wall") A friend of my daughters did the air brush work. Made my eyeballs sweat a bit.



The place has changed since we went through but it still produces Marines



All photos compliments of Member Jeff Burstein

SCHOLARSHIP

The First MAW Association will award five scholarships of \$500 each during Reunion '09. To qualify for a scholarship, applicants must meet the following qualifications:

Be a FIRSTMAW ASSN. regular member in good standing (i.e., dues are up to date), their spouse, dependent, or direct descendent. Further, the member must have a minimum of one-year membership as of June 1, 2009.

-OR

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

-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.

Applicant must be presently 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 Veterans Memorial Means to Me.**
- 2. What all Americans can do to solve the energy crisis**
- 3. How I plan to use my education to aide society**
- 4. Why I support our Marines who are in harms way**

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

The essay must be typed. Do not include applicants name on the essay. Attach a separate sheet of paper containing applicant's name, member's name and membership number, address, and phone number. A letter from a counselor or other school official verifying that applicant is currently enrolled. The letter must be on school letterhead.

A copy of student transcripts

The essay must be postmarked no later than June 15, 2009.

Mail the essay to:

First MAW Association – Vietnam Service
111 Sedgwick Avenue
Apt 2M
Yonkers, NY 10705-2653

PX News

Here are some of the items we have at your First MAWVNS PX. Help support your association.
http://1stmaw.wamarinesmc.us/mawpx/index.php?main_page=index

Challenge Coin \$7



FMAW Logo hat: \$18



Hat Doober:



Vietnam Necklace: \$11



POW Necklace: \$11



Vietnam Ribbon: \$3.50 '64-'75



Vietnam Vet: \$3.50



Vietnam Pin: \$3.50



Flag set: \$3.50



Marine Corps Pin: \$3.50



Semper Fi Pin: \$3.50



Marble Mountain: \$3.50



Danang Pin: \$3.50



Natural Death Hats \$18



1stMAWVNS pin:\$3.50



Sm Combat Aircrew Pin: \$4



Crew Chief Pin: \$3.50



Pilot Pin: \$7



Navy Flight Off: \$7



U.S.M.C. Pin: \$3.50



Combat Action Rb:



MCorps: \$3.50



First MAW: \$18.00



FMF Corpsman:



REGISTRATION FORM FOR THE FIRST MARINE AIR-CRAFT
WING ASSOCIATION (VIETNAM SERVICE)
2009 REUNION OCTOBER 8-11 2009

NAME _____

NICKNAME/CALL SIGN _____

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

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

(For Confirmation of Receipt)

NAME OF GUESTS _____

BUFFET/BANQUET MEAL SELECTION BEEF ___ CHICKEN ___ FISH ___

SHIRT SIZE(S) S ___ M ___ L ___ XL ___ XXL ___ XXXL ___

PLEASE LIST ANY SPECIAL NEEDS: _____

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY NOTIFY _____

IS THIS YOUR FIRST REUNION? YES ___ NO ___ NOT SURE ___ DON'T CARE ___

REGISTRATION FEES INCLUDES : HOSPITALITY ROOM, EMBROIDERED POLO SHIRT, CHINA BEACH NIGHT & PICKIN', AND BANQUET

NUMBER OF PERSONS ATTENDING ___ X \$140.00 = _____

REUNION SHIRT _____ X \$ 25.00 = _____

SUNDAY BRUNCH/FAREWELL _____ X \$ 20.00 = _____

OPTIONAL CARRIAGE TOUR OF BEAUFORT SC FOR THE LADIES DURING OUR NATIONAL BUSINESS MEETING

SATURDAY OCTOBER 10 2009 ON OR ABOUT 09:30-10:00 _____ X \$15.00 = _____

TOTAL AMOUNT INCLUDED \$ _____

PAYMENT IS DUE NO LATER THAN AUGUST 31 2009(THIS IS NECESSARY IN ORDER TO HAVE THE SHIRTS EMBROIDERED AND NAME TAGS PRINTED etc.)

PLEASE SEND PAYMENTS TO THE FOLLOWING ADDRESS:
(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**

Reunion Itinerary:
Subject to change before the Reunion.

Thursday 8 Oct '09:

Registration 1200-1800
Hospitality Room will open @ 1800 -2400 (dependent on help to stock the room volunteers to manage the room) It is possible to open earlier with help. Please remember we do not have a service to assist in providing coverage and stocking of the hospitality room. The Hospitality room must be shut down by 2400 per South Carolina law.

Friday 9 Oct '09:

0800-0815 departure for MCRD Parris Island to view Recruit Graduation @ 0900
PX visit from after Graduation to about 1200 (lunch on your own)
12:30 Departure for MCAS Beaufort for Static Display.
1400 Return to Quality INN (formally the Inn at Town Center).
1800 Hospitality Room reopens for "China Beach night."
2400 Hospitality Room closes.

Saturday 10 Oct '09:

0900-1200 National Business Meeting Elections.
Ladies Carriage tour (pending final Arrangements)
1200-1630 free time.
1645-1700 departure for the Lyceum for our Banquet.
(Happy Hour 1730-1830)
1800 Colors and our Banquet begins.
The first bus back to the Hotel will be On or about 1030-1045.
2400 Banquet ends and the last buses Depart for the hotel.

Sunday 11 Oct '09 10:30-1200 Farewell brunch at the
Lyceum.

AIRWING MEDAL OF HONOR WINNER– VIETNAM

U.S. Marine Corps Medal of Honor Recipients Vietnam War CLAUSEN, RAYMOND MICHAEL

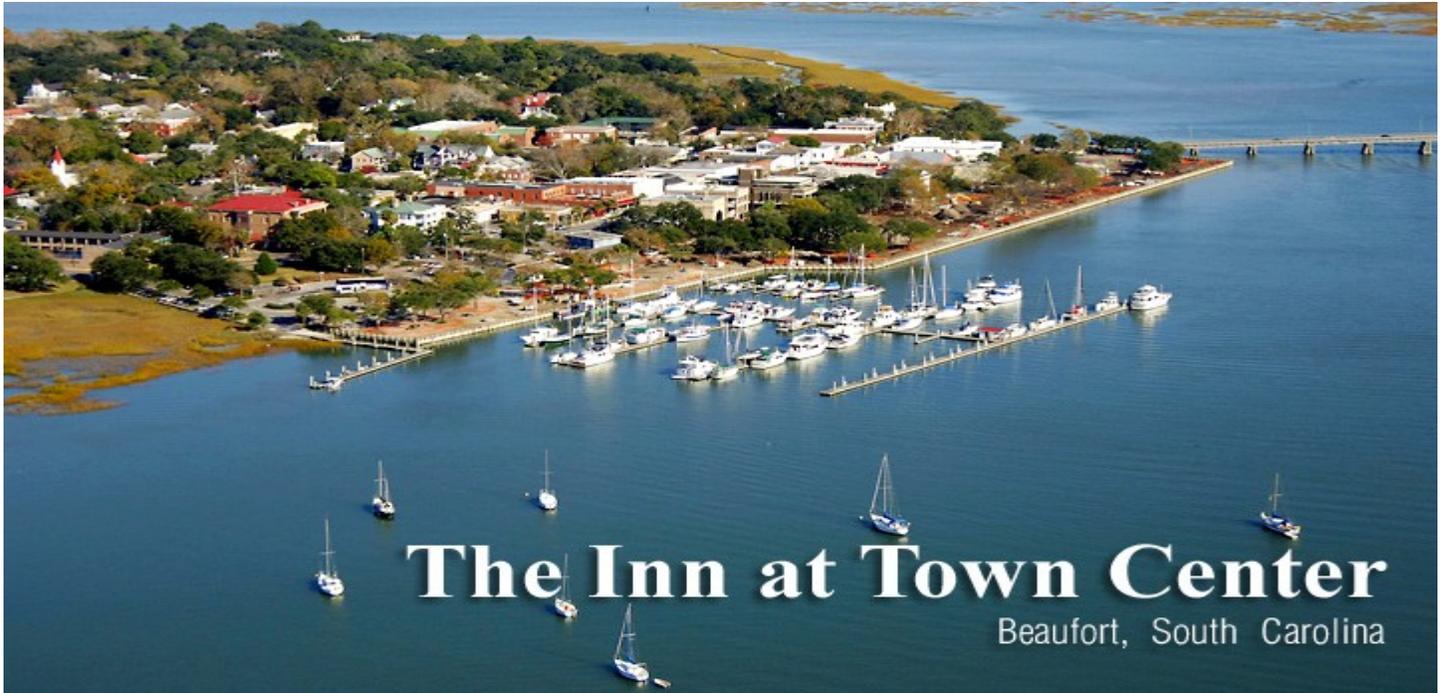


Private First Class, U.S. Marine Corps
Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 263, Marine Aircraft Group 16 (MAG-16), 1st Marine Aircraft Wing
Date of Action: January 31, 1970

Citation:

The Medal of Honor is presented to Raymond Michael Clausen, Private First Class, U.S. Marine Corps, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty on 31 January 1970, while serving with Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron Two Hundred Sixty-Three, Marine Aircraft Group Sixteen (MAG-16), First Marine Aircraft Wing, during operations against enemy forces in the Republic of Vietnam. Participating in a helicopter rescue mission to extract elements of a platoon which had inadvertently entered a minefield while attacking enemy positions, Private First Class Clausen skillfully guided the helicopter pilot to a landing in an area cleared by one of several mine explosions. With 11 Marines wounded, one dead, and the remaining eight Marines holding their positions for fear of detonating other mines, Private First Class Clausen quickly leaped from the helicopter and, in the face of enemy fire, moved across the extremely hazardous mine-laden area to assist in carrying casualties to the waiting helicopter and in placing them aboard. Despite the ever-present threat of further mine explosions, he continued his valiant efforts, leaving the comparatively safe area of the helicopter on six separate occasions to carry out his rescue efforts. On one occasion while he was carrying one of the wounded, another mine detonated, killing a corpsman and wounding three other men. Only when he was certain that all Marines were safely aboard did he signal the pilot to lift the helicopter. By the courageous, determined and inspiring efforts in the face of the utmost danger, Private First Class Clausen upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and of the U.S. Naval Service.

Born: 10/14/1947 at New Orleans, Louisiana
Home Town: New Orleans, Louisiana



REUNION 2009 SITE

**First Marine Aircraft Wing Association –
Vietnam Service
567 Rivercrest Drive
Woodstock, GA 30188**

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.