

THE SPONSON BOX

USMC VIETNAM TANKERS REUNION



Nice secondary! On target one more time.

Volume 1, Issue 3

July/August 1998

Once a Marine Tanker...



Always a Marine Tanker...



Reunion Rescheduled

The deadline was 1 June 1998, for the deposits to be in for registration for the November 1998, *USMC Vietnam Tankers Reunion*. We only needed 20 deposits to be able to hold the rooms and the special rates at the Quality Inn, Arlington, Va.

Nearly 50 of the questionnaires that were returned to me indicated that those respondents were going to attend. Not enough of you responded with deposits for me to be able to accept the financial obligations involved in reserving the block of rooms. We have sent back all deposits received and any other donations given to us.

We are now rescheduling the reunion for the summer of 1999. Location and dates are yet to be determined.

A History of Marine Corps Tanks in Vietnam

James P. Coan was the first person to respond with his first person narrative entitled, *Tankers at Con Thien*.

Jim was with the 1st Platoon, Alpha Co., 3d Tank Bn. from September 1967, until July 1968. He was the platoon commander and had replaced 2/Lt. Tom Barry who had received his second purple heart in just two weeks at Con Thien.

Tom Barry is doing well. He is a financial consultant and lives in Rockville, Maryland.

Coan's *Tankers at Con Thien* is alive with factual happenings and emotional insight as to the trauma of combat and seeing young Marines die. He is also able to recall the names of many of those with whom he served.

Coan's account is the beginning of telling the history of our experiences in Vietnam.

107 Tank Crewmen Died in Vietnam from 1965 to 1970

06/26/65 - EUSTACE, ARTHUR B., JR. Sgt
Age: 25, Foxlake, IL
06/26/65 - SCHWANGER, FREDERICK, J. Cpl
Age: 20, Elizabethtown, PA
06/26/65 - ZUPANCIC, GEORGE P. Cpl
Age: 26, Detroit, MI
08/18/65 - LAIDLAW, WILLIAM C. Cpl
Age: 21, Cohasset, MA
12/23/65 - ASHMAN, JOHN F. L/Cpl
Age: 25, Scranton, PA
03/30/66 - COLEMAN, MCARTHUR L/Cpl
Age: 22, Masury, OH
03/30/66 - WHALEY, HENRY L. Cpl
Age: 23, New Haven, CT
05/20/66 - WILDMAN, RICHARD L. Pfc
Age: 19, Cleveland, OH
05/21/66 - FURR, JAMES H. L/Cpl
Age: 20, Concord, NC
07/21/66 - BRIGHT, RICHARD Pvt
Age: 20, Chula Vista, CA
07/31/66 - JOHNSON, LEE G. L/Cpl
Age: 19, Tulsa, OK
07/31/66 - BROWN, JOSEPH C. Cpl
Age: 20, Pasadena, MD
08/22/66 - CORSI, BOBBY G. Sgt
Age: 24, Columbus, OH
09/09/66 - MATTHEWS, EARL JR. SSgt
Age: 28, Florence, SC
09/21/66 - SEWELL, JOHN F. JR. Sgt
Age: 35, Severn, MD
09/24/66 - CHILDERS, ESTILL L. L/Cpl
Age: 21, Slater, MO
12/10/66 - MILLER, DOUGLAS J. Sgt
Age: 20, East Lansing, MI

The September issue will list those casualties of 1967; the November issue will have those who died in 1968 and the January issue will have 1969/1970.

Thank you, for the Generous Donations

I have received several donations and I wish to thank you for your generosity. The original donations have been returned to those donors, as those monies were earmarked for the actual reunion to be held this November. Other donations have since been received asking me to continue the effort to hold a summer reunion and to help with the cost of this newsletter.

Again, thanks to all who have helped.

Marine Corps Tankers Association (MCTA)

The MCTA was kind enough to ask our reunion "group" to become members of their fine organization. I received mail from Mr. Earl Huffstutler, Chief Financial Officer and Mr. Donald Gagnon, Editor of the MCTA newsletter.

Sgt. Maj. Huffstutler extended an invitation to the *Vietnam Marine Corps Tankers Reunion* to join the MCTA. He also felt the MCTA could add to the "History of Marine Corps Tanks in Vietnam".

I am in agreement with him that we should all work together as members and historians.

Sgt. Maj. Huffstutler was 1st Sgt. of H&S Co, 5th Tanks when they were reverted to 1st Tank Bn. in 1966. Earl is a "triple banger" having served in W.W. II, Korea and Vietnam.

Don Gagnon suggested that he will reprint articles supplied from Vietnam tankers for future issues of the MCTA newsletter.

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Flash Back Memories

Do you have flashbacks? No, not the ones of incoming, convoy ambushes, hitting land mines, RPG's, 60mm "short rounds" or listening posts.

I'm talking about..."burning the shitters", large rats, bug repellent making your lips swell, smelling so bad you knew it had to be someone else, taking showers in the monsoons, eating ham and mothers and fighting for the fruit cocktail, or...

Using the grease gun, not the one with the 45 cal. magazine clip but the one with the real grease in it. Tightening the track, adjusting the road idler arm, slipping on the slope plate, wondering why they call it a "sponson box", picking up 30 cal. ammo

links from the turret deck, "timing" the 50 cal., yelling "fire-in-the-hole" because you were using C4 to remove rust-frozen torsion bars, or using C4 to heat your C-rations. Remember changing the anchor-plug because you use too much C4 to loosen the broken torsion bar, or...

The sledge hammer and the end-connectors, changing track. I could go on but I won't - filling sand bags, digging in...

Space A Travel

Veterans who are 100% total and permanent disabled are permitted to fly standby on any military air craft authorized to carry military personnel. You must have a DD Form 1173, identification and privilege card. Under box marked "Sponsor Service/Status" it must indicate your branch of service and have "DAVPRM", which means, Disabled American Veteran Permanent.

There are four priorities and three categories. Total and permanent disabled veterans fall under Priority 4 under Category A, B and C.

Category A: Transportation of Military Space Available Passengers Between the CONUS and Overseas Areas.

Category B: Transportation of Military Space Available Passengers Within and Between CONUS.

Category C: Transportation of Military Space Available Passengers With and Between Overseas Areas.

Priority #4:

1/ Unaccompanied retired military members and veterans rated totally and permanently disabled by the Department of Veterans Affairs. 2/ ROTC students who are receiving financial assistance and those enrolled in advanced training in uniform... 3/ Unaccompanied members of the Reserve components of the U.S. armed forces in the following categories: a/ Active status with forms DD 2 and a completed form DD 1853. b/ Reserve members who have received official notification of their retirement eligibility, but have not reached the age of 60.

Questionnaires?

Did you misplace the questionnaire I mailed to you, or did I goof and didn't mail one to you?

Give me a call at 508-548-9887 or Email me at WarVeteran@aol.com.

I'll be happy to send you a new one.


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Get your own medals certificate to display at home or at the office



SMEDLEY D. BUTLER
SERIAL NUMBER: 13691811
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
1965 - 1968
BRAVO CO., 3D TANK BN., 3D MARDIV
VIETNAM COMBAT VETERAN





IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE HIGHEST STANDARDS AND TRADITIONS SET FORTH BY THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY, THE ABOVE NAMED AS BEEN AWARDED THESE MEDALS, RIBBONS AND CITATIONS FOR ACTIONS AND BRAVERY DURING THE ABOVE PERIOD OF SERVICE TO HIS COUNTRY DURING A TIME OF ARMED CONFLICT

You can now proudly display your medals, ribbons and citations that you earned as a United States Marine.

This ready for framing 8 1/2" X 11" certificate is printed on 24 lbs. white parchment in full color. Will look great at home, in the family room or even at the office.

Note: These certificates are not endorsed by the U.S. Marine Corps or the Dept. of the Navy.

The cost is only \$9.00 per Certificate + \$1.00 postage & handling.

100% OF THE MONIES COLLECTED WILL BE USED FOR EXPENSES IN CONNECTION WITH THE REUNION

COMPLETE NAME AND/OR RANK TO APPEAR ON MEDALS CERTIFICATE <hr/>			<u>Check Appropriate Boxes</u>	
SERIAL NUMBER TO APPEAR [IF WANTED] <hr/>			<input type="checkbox"/> *MOH <input type="checkbox"/> Navy Comm <input type="checkbox"/> *Navy Cross <input type="checkbox"/> Navy Unit <input type="checkbox"/> *NDSM <input type="checkbox"/> NMUC <input type="checkbox"/> *Silver Star <input type="checkbox"/> Good Conduct <input type="checkbox"/> *Legion Merit <input type="checkbox"/> MCEM <input type="checkbox"/> *Navy/Marine <input type="checkbox"/> National Def <input type="checkbox"/> *Bronze w/"V" <input type="checkbox"/> Vietnam SM <input type="checkbox"/> *Bronze Star <input type="checkbox"/> RVN PUC <input type="checkbox"/> *Purple Heart <input type="checkbox"/> RVN Gal Cross <input type="checkbox"/> Combat Action <input type="checkbox"/> RVN Civil Act <input type="checkbox"/> PUC <input type="checkbox"/> RVN Campaign	
COMPANY BATTALION MARINE DIVISION <hr/>				
I WISH TO ORDER: _____ X \$9.00 EACH/ TOTAL OF: \$ _____				
SHIPPING AND HANDLING: \$ _____ 1.00				
TOTAL OF CHECK IS: \$ _____				
MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: DICK CAREY, 7 BEDFORD ST, TEATICKET, MA 02536				
			Use additional Paper if Necessary	
			Note: * Copy of DD214 a <u>Must</u> for these Medals	



USMC Vietnam Tankers Reunion

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(508) 548-9887

Address Correction Requested

1-800-VIETNAM



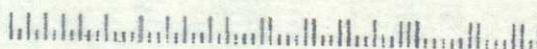
Life Member

First Class

FARGO, ND #1 07/30/98 15:50

Mr. Russell M Walters
203 Dixon Street
Deer Lodge MT 59722

39722X1134



USMC Vietnam Tankers Reunion Objectives & Goals

STATED OBJECTIVES

1. TO HOLD A REUNION AND PROVIDE A FORUM IN WHICH VIETNAM MARINE CORPS TANKERS MAY SHARE WITH OTHERS THEIR EXPERIENCES BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE VIETNAM WAR.
2. TO FOSTER CAMARADERIE AMONG ALL MARINE CORPS TANKERS WHO SERVED IN VIETNAM BETWEEN THE YEARS 1965 AND 1970, AND TO FURTHER THIS CAMARADERIE TO INCLUDE ALL MARINE CORPS TANKERS THAT HAVE SERVED AND WILL SERVE IN THE PAST, PRESENT AND IN THE FUTURE.
3. TO PROVIDE AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNTING OF THE EVENTS AND THE MEN WHO SERVED IN AMERICA'S LONGEST AND MOST CONTROVERSIAL ARMED CONFLICT.
4. TO ALLOW THE HEALING PROCESSES TO CONTINUE BY SHARING THE MEMORIES AND EMOTIONS OF THOSE WHO HAVE A NEED TO REMEMBER AND GRIEVE THE UNNECESSARY LOSSES OF YOUNG MEN WHO WERE AND ARE FELLOW MARINES, FRIENDS AND BROTHERS.

STATED GOALS

1. TO BRING TOGETHER ALL MEMBERS AND ATTACHED MEMBERS OF THE 1ST, 3D AND 5TH TANK BATTALIONS THAT SERVED IN VIETNAM BETWEEN THE YEARS 1965 AND 1970.
2. TO PUBLISH A HISTORIAL ACCOUNTING OF THE INDIVIDUALS AND UNITS OF THE 1ST, 3D AND 5TH TANK BATTALIONS DURING THE YEARS 1965 TO 1970 IN THE THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM.
3. TO PROVIDE A LINK FOR ALL VIETNAM VETERANS WHO SERVED WITH THE ABOVE MENTIONED UNITS WHO MAY NEED ASSISTANCE IN ESTABLISHING SERVICE-CONNECTION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS FOR INJURY, ILLNESS OR DISEASE CAUSE BY OR A RESULT OF THEIR SERVICE DURING THE VIETNAM WAR.
4. TO PROVIDE AN OPEN FORUM TO INFORM THE AMERICAN PUBLIC OF THE HISTORIES AND TRADITIONS OF THE UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS AND THE OFFICERS AND MEN WHO SERVED DURING AMERICA'S MOST CONTROVERSIAL WAR DURING THE 20TH CENTURY.