



# THE SCOOP SHEET

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

Issue 24

[www.firstmaw.homestead.com](http://www.firstmaw.homestead.com)

Summer 2007



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**A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ...**

To: ALMARFIRSTMAWASSOCIATION  
From: Association President  
Subj: Presidents Message

Marines:

For all the members, member's families and friends of members that attended our reunion in Branson, Thank You. We had a good time in spite of the low turn out. The final numbers on the reunion are not in yet and will be available in the next Scoop after this one. Reunion 2009 will be in Beaufort, SC ( with Hampton , VA as a back up) and 2011 will be in the Washington, DC/Quantico ( Museum of the Marine Corps) area. Hampton is a backup for Beaufort because as of yet there isn't a single place large enough for a banquet, etc. I will not redo the poor service provided by the MCAS Beaufort "O" club we had in 1997. The Promised convention center in Beaufort is supposed to be ready by next year but, as always, seeing is believing. I want to specifically thank all those who helped out at the reunion with a special thanks to CWO4/Gunny Joe McGadden for his generous contributions of coffee mugs , cups and travel mugs. OOH! RAH!. The Association Officers and Coordinators remain the same with the exception of Vice President. Our new VP is John Krankus. Thank you John and every other member who is giving their time to help support this Association. I also want to again thank Al Frater for taking over the task as "Scoop " Editor, John Newport for membership. They're both new to these two forever endeavors. I would like to propose a By-Laws change to our Scholarship eligibility requirements. That is to open eligibility to Grand Children (yes we're that old), great grandchildren and perhaps even Nieces or Nephews. Please email me, write me or send a reply to the Scoop Editor on your thoughts. So, enjoy the rest of your summer. I will be heading out to Winter Park , Colorado for a Veteran's Appreciation Motorcycle rally for my vacation before going back to the classroom. Take care Brother's ! Semper Fidelis Phil Beckerich Association President.

*Semper Fidelis*  
*Phil Beckerich III*  
*Association President*

yw37@optonline.net

## 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.

### FMAW SEABAG

#### Electronic Scoop

Thanks to all the members who attended this years reunion we added another 35 names to the electronic Scoop list. 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 Memorial Day and 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

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

I have not received any emails or comments regarding this idea please email me at yw37@optonline.net Hence I am repeating last issues food for thought. One of the options for the future of this Association is to become a special chapter of the Marine Corps Aviation Association. This will permit the Association to exist as the membership continues to diminish with time. The choice seems that we either open up membership or become a chapter of a larger organization.

### New Book by First MAW Member

As of June 2007, Flying Death - The Vietnam Experience became available through Authorhouse. This book was written by Sam Beamon, a helicopter crew chief and a Life Member of the 1st MAW. The story is about his years in the Marine Corps and the intense pressures of being a part of a flight crew. The setting is during the turbulent nineteen-sixties and its many problems. This story gives a different perspective of flying, fighting and the Vietnam War as seen through the eyes of a crew chief.

Throughout the many years, stories have been told of the Vietnam War, but there hasn't been the story told of the lives of the flight crews. Who were the individuals that manned the chopper? Who did the continuous maintenance on the aircraft? What did it take to complete the mission of supporting the troops? What other pressures were endured by the flight crew? No matter what conflict that a chopper and its crews fly into; the job, feelings and the level of responsibility are the same.

Some of these question were answered while others needed time to find the answer

The book is available online at [www.authorhouse.com](http://www.authorhouse.com).

### Reunion

2009 reunion scheduled for Beauford SC

## Vietnam Files

### Fist MAW in Vietnam

The First Marine Aircraft Wing's service in Vietnam started in April 1962 when HMM 362 flew into the Mekong Delta to set up operations in the Soc Trang Airfield through 1975 when Helicopters of HMM 164 evacuated the last Americans from the U.S. Embassy in Saigon. While early missions involved Marine helicopters providing logistics support for South Vietnam, this role quickly expanded when 1st MAW Pilots and crewmen were called upon to perform their traditional role of providing close air support for Marine combat units as American involvement in the war escalated.

Helicopters played an extensive role in air operations in Vietnam, as Marine pilots flew CH-34s and later CH-46's and CH-53's to transport Marines into landing zones near suspected enemy concentrations, and to evacuate the wounded following combat engagements. Helicopters supplemented by C130 transports where there were landing strips, were also used to re-supply Marines in the field at remote outposts. Other Marine pilots flew UH-1E Hueys and AH-1 Cobras. Many of these choppers provided reconnaissance and armed air cover for combat air operations.

The build up of American troops resulted in the deployment of Marine Corps' attack and fighter aircraft including the Douglas A-4 and the McDonnell F4-B, as well as maintenance, ordnance, and other support personnel necessary.

The role played by Marine aviators and the importance of Marine aircraft in Vietnam may never be properly told. In addition to aerial observation and reconnaissance, close air support, saturation bombing, strafing runs, medical evacuations and delivering the mail, aircraft provided a great morale boost to ground units while seriously demoralizing the enemy.

Many hard core Viet Cong and North Vietnamese soldiers surrendered to allied forces because of the continued pounding, strafing or hazing by Marine pilots and their aircraft. Without Marine pilots and their "birds," the story of Hill 881 or the results of the stand at Khe Sanh might have had a much different ending.



Marines board a CH-46 Sea Knight Helicopter on USS Siapan during beach landing training



2 USMC C-130J's VMGR-352 in a training exercise



US Marine Corps F-4S



UH-1D Huey offloading Troops in Vietnam



## VIETNAM FILES

On the ground in Vietnam, the enemy may be anywhere, but in the air, it's a different kind of war. The air belongs to allied jet jockeys, transport humpers and chopper poppas. Marine aircraft, regardless of size, shape or speed, drone unopposed through the skies of South Vietnam.

Marine close air support is like a poker hand with three jets as openers. Skyhawks, Phantoms and Intruders provide surprise, punch, speed and countless enemy casualties. The Intruder, an all-weather attack bomber, can carry 28 500-pound bombs, flying through any natural weather disturbance which grounds other aircraft. Supersonic Phantoms with bombs, rockets and the 20mm mini gun (which "burps" 4000 rounds a minute, or 65-70 rounds per second) provide headache number 44 to enemy guerrillas moving towards friendly lines. Skyhawks, stubby-winged jets, have recorded 120 sorties a day, dropping more than 10,000 tons of ordnance, up to 1000 pounders. But it isn't all jets in the 'Nam. Jumbo, cargo planes, as the C-130 Hercules, burdened with men, mail, chow and whatever else there's room for, waddle out to the flight line, grunt and groan, then lumber into the air like gooney birds. Observation craft, the O-1E Bird Dogs, unarmed and slow moving, carried six 2.75mm Willy Peter rockets for marking targets for the jets. Helicopters come in a variety of shapes and sizes. First, there was the thinly clad, mosquito-like Sea Horse. It was small and could carry a limited load, but it was a workhorse, and dependable. They ferried wounded from battle. They carried beans, bullets and broads. The latter, visiting USO troops. They flew plasma, VIPs, rockets or water. The Sea Knight was huge in comparison, and could carry a lot more weight. It also mounted .50 caliber machine, guns instead of the .30's the Sea Horses toted. Then came the Sea Stallion, an assault transport cargo helicopter, largest in the Free World's arsenal. Built especially for Marines, it carried 38 combat laden troops. Dubbed "Super Bird," it can trail a 20,000-pound external load. Top speed: 170 knots. A Huey is a polliwog-like machine with a bump for a nose and a sawed off cigar for an exhaust, but no one laughs as it "whomp whomps" across the sky. It carries a rocket pod on each side, mounting eighteen 2.75-inch rockets. Two mounted machine guns are situated atop the rocket pods. From the Huey evolved the Cobra, smaller, thinner, but with one hell of a sting! It boasts a rapid firing mini-gun pod that spits either 3000 7.62 rounds, or, with a flick of a switch, belches out a total of 279 40mm grenades. Alongside the Cobra's center are rocket pods that carry 56 high explosive rockets. Another innovation, introduced in Vietnam, is the OV-10A "Bronco," similar in design to the Lockheed Lightning or Black Widow of World War II. The plane is armed with four internal 7.62 machine guns, two on each side. It can carry a total load of 3600 pounds of bombs, or marking rockets, Sidewinder missiles or the fast-firing mini-guns. During the monsoon season, with torrential rains blanketing the airstrips, the enemy figured they'd have it knocked. No aircraft, they reasoned, could take off under such conditions.



They attacked. So did the Marine pilots.

Results? Heavy enemy casualties.

*The enemy may roam the paddy or jungle, but sometimes he forgets, the sky is ours!*

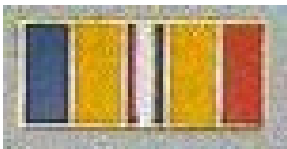
## PX News

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The PX is up and running with some real good items. All the items that you were able to purchase at the reunions now can be purchased online from our own PX. We are looking to add new items all the time, so if you know of a good item to include that would be a good seller, please let me know.

You can purchase by paying with a check or though Paypal.

Here are some items that we have in stock now.



Window Decal

These are just a few of the many items that you can get online from the First Marine Aircraft Wing Association Vietnam Service PX. Support your PX and make an order today.

Log on to the website: <http://www.1stmaw.com/> choose the Post Exchange link and do your shopping at home.

Any questions or remarks, please email me at [top@wamarinesmc.us](mailto:top@wamarinesmc.us).

Semper Fi  
Top (Wayne Cook)  
First MAW Assoc VNS PX MGR



# First Marine Aircraft Wing Association (Vietnam Service) Reunion

June 28-July 1, 2007

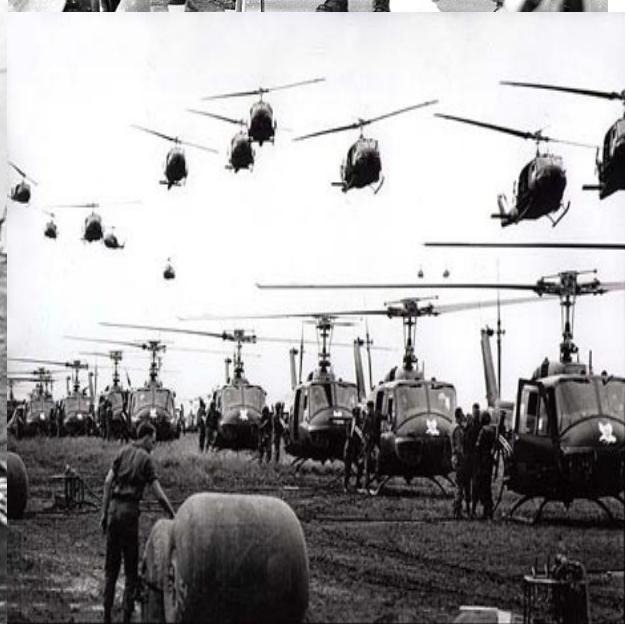
~~ Branson, Missouri ~~

*Was held at the Settle Inn Resort and Conference Center, 3850 Green Mountain Dr., Branson Missouri. It was well attended with about 101 total members and guests. We attends 2 shows “Take me back to the 60’s” and “The Showboat”. We also visited the Marine Corps legacy Museum in Harrison Arkansas. We also had time to meet old friends and make some new ones. Everyone had a great time and are looking forward to our next reunion in 2009. Here some Pictures of the reunion.*



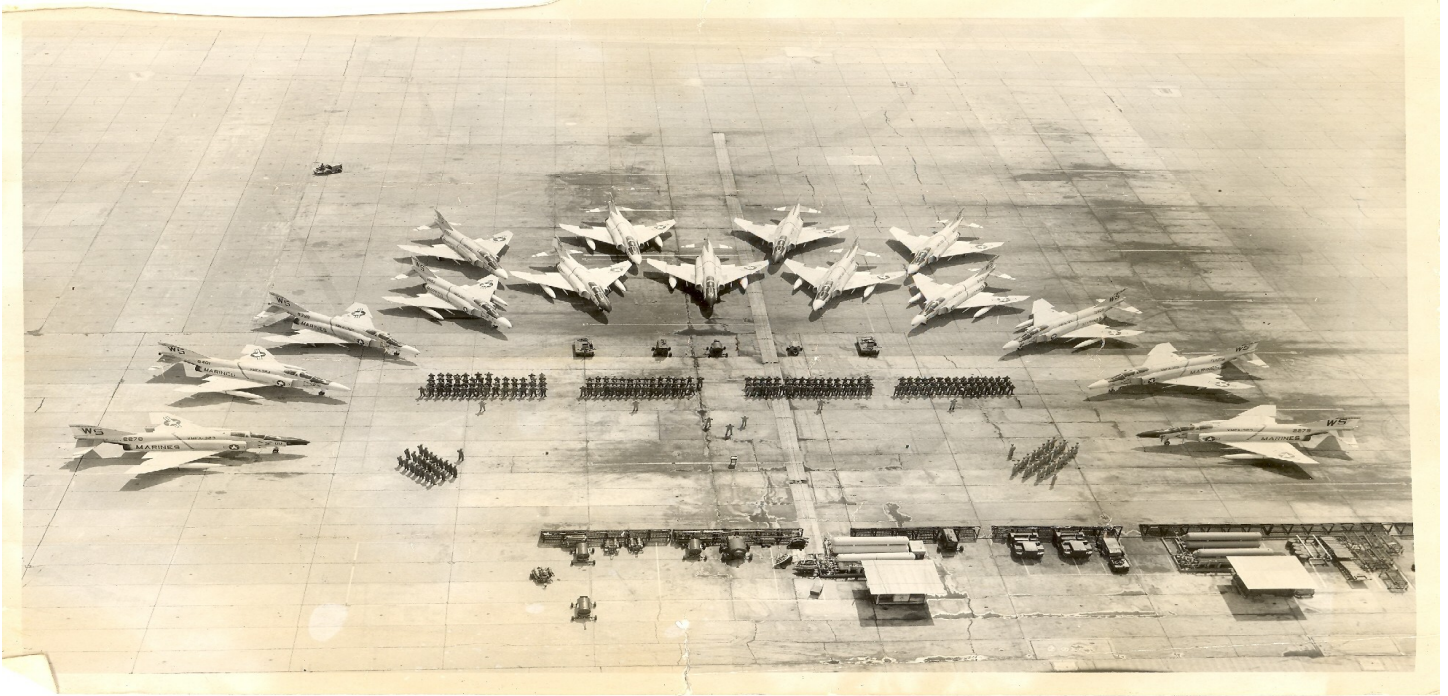


# Vietnam Photos









**VMFA-323 in Da Nang 1965**

**First Marine Aircraft Wing Association –  
Vietnam Service  
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Allentown, PA 18106-0532**

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.