



Newsletter of "The Ghost Battalion"
Vietnam Veterans of 2nd Bn 1st Marines

www.FirstMarines.org



Volume 12 Issue 1

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Officers & Trustees

Dedicated November 8, 2013



ROAD TO THE MONUMENT

by Phil Leslie, Bruce Oliver and Dale Williams



After more than 30 months from an idea to completion, it was both humbling and exciting for the Monument Committee, Officers and Trustees to finally see our monument dedicated on 8 November 2013 at the Memorial Park, National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA. The Committee consisted of Myself, Bruce Oliver and Dale Williams and three members, Jack Klimp, Bill White and Clyde Woods. We reported to the Board of Trustees who had the final say on every facet of the project. I was amazed that we sorted thru the myriad of concepts and designs to arrive at the most significant monument [My unbiased opinion] concept and design at the NMMC Memorial Park. Although I was "The Chairman", I had little to do because of the professionalism, dedication and perseverance of the team – all of them. These Gentlemen, are without a doubt, "The Professionals".

Initially, The Team met with Mark Joyce [MSgt USMC Ret], VP Museum Operations who oversees the Semper Fidelis Memorial Park adjacent to the museum where all of the monuments are located.

(continued)

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Road to the Monument Continued

Mark informed us of the parameters for the monument, and that the design as well as each inscription would have to be reviewed by a committee which included a representative from the Marine Corps Historical Branch before we could obtain any approval to proceed. We then walked the entire park and viewed, photographed, and discussed each monument.

A few weeks after the initial meeting with Mark he informed Clyde Woods there were only four unclaimed spots for a monument available at the park. Clyde paid the \$1000 down payment on the spot and secured the monument space. That was the first donation to the monument fund. Our members donated sufficient funds to complete the monument.

The team met several times over the next few months at the NMMC / Memorial Park and visited two monument businesses in the Manassas, VA area. Again, we took more photographs and found more attributes we did not want in our monument. However, at that time we had no idea of what we wanted except it had to be different from all the rest and had to represent men and valor of 2dBn, 1st Marines.

“The Team” did none of these things in a vacuum. Each meeting at Quantico or each issue was also discussed with the Officers and Trustees who had the final say on how to proceed. The initial design concept we all agreed on was that the First Marine Division Diamond had to be a part of the monument. Not just inscribed on granite, but somehow incorporated into the monument design.

The membership was asked to submit ideas, but only three were submitted. Trustee Dale Williams then made two almost full size cardboard mockups which we erected at the monument site pieced together with Duct Tape. One of Dale’s designs became the form that morphed into the final approved design. Much debate and discussion then went into each word inscribed on the monument and its placement including the dedication statement, ‘To All Who Served Or Supported’.

Initially, we requested bids from four monument companies. Of those, one did not reply, another considered the work, but declined because of other work. Of the two remaining vendors, we selected Kline Memorials of Manassas, VA. Rick Burroughs was the project manager. All materials and workmanship are 100% USA. The monument is granite is “American Black” and was quarried in Pennsylvania, cut and polished in Elberton, Ga., and engraved in Manassas, VA.

A hearty Semper Fi to the significant contributors to the monument design, placement and dedication Program:

- Master Sergeant Mark Joyce, USMC (RET) – VP, Museum Operations;
- John Morgan: John Morgan Art, Charlotte, NC Created first designs of the monument
- Greg Jones, Greg Jones Design Portland, OR: Created first designs of the monument.
- Bill Guillot: OMNOVA Solutions, Inc., Monroe, NC: Large Scale prints of Monument concept.
- Tony Mills: L&M Granite, Elberton, GA. Cut and polished the monument stone
- Robert Firvida: Galicia Construction. Set monument and memorial bricks.
- Rebecca Joy Allen: Student Wingate Univ, NC Created Original Art of monument at no cost.
- Beth Crumley USMC Historical Branch, Quantico. Researched Unit Awards.
- Nancy Hoffman, Leatherneck Magazine. Proof Reader for inscriptions and dedication program
- LtCol Sean Smith, USMC. Dedication Program Bagpiper
- MGySgt John Rode USMC Ret. Dedication Program Bagpiper
- LCdr David M. Todd, CHC, USN. Dedication Program Chaplain

And, last but not the least are the members who contributed their money to make this dream a possibility.

Message from Dale Williams

As a part of the dedication, we had an original oil of the monument created for the cover of the dedication program. The original was sold at the banquet auction for \$260.00. We have available unframed ***prints of the original for \$25.00*** delivered. The prints fit an 11 X 17 frame. Some of you might have noticed that we had one of the prints framed and on display in the PX during the reunion.

Please make checks out to:

Vietnam Veterans of 2d Bn 1st Marines and send to:
Dale Williams 915 Waterview Lane Monroe, NC 28110



Also, there is enough space for about 300 more engraved bricks at our monument. The next order will be submitted in the Spring and those bricks will be installed in the summer. The sooner the order, the closer the brick will be to the front of the monument. Use the attached form on PAGE (3) and submit with your payment made out to the organization. If you have any questions please call me at 704-291-2370.

Memorial Bricks - Enclose 1 Form for Each Brick Ordered

ENGRAVED MEMORIAL BRICKS

A double row of Engraved Memorial Bricks line the pathways of the Semper Fidelis Memorial Park, National Museum of the Marine Corps, Quantico, VA. Additionally, approximately 450 bricks were placed around our monument and are available for engraving. As of the dedication, 112 of these had been sold. Each engraved brick honors the donor or another person. Each brick costs \$300 and you may order as many as you like.

Vietnam Veterans of 2d Bn. 1st Marines will continue to sell bricks as long as there is space to place them at our monument. The museum installs bricks several times a year. We will submit brick orders to the Museum in groups to coincide with their ordering and installation pattern.

Bricks must be paid for at the time of the order. Make check or money order payable to VV 2/1.

Engraving is limited to 3 lines of 20 characters each. A character includes all letters, punctuations and spaces. Each line must end with a full word or name (words and names will not be hyphenated and continued on the next line.)

Memorial Brick Inscription [1 form for each brick ordered]

Order Placed by:

Name: [LAST] _____ [FIRST] _____ [Middle Initial] _____.

Address[1]: _____.

Address[2]: _____.

City: _____ State _____ Zip _____.

Phone: _____

Email _____

Signature _____

PAYMENT INFORMATION:

Date: _____ Amount Received _____ [In Full / 4 Payments]

Authorized by: _____ Date _____

Send this form along with payment made out to Vietnam Veterans of 2d Bn 1st Mar to:

Dale Williams
915 Waterview Lane
Monroe, NC 28110

Gary Gordon



2014. Wow! It's here. Like many of you the older I get the faster the years appear to come and go. As is the case at this time we tend to give pause and reflect on the best and the worst of the year past and look with unseen hope into the year to come. Many even take the opportunity to pledge to do better and to resolve to any number of actions as if we are making plans to change what we have seen in our past. If you are like me the resolve tends to be lost rather quickly. Unlike me, our organization moves on getting better each year.

One reason for this improving is that shortly after our recent Dedication Reunion in Washington, DC, our Vietnam Veterans of 2/1 Board conducted a conference call that had the markings of this time of the New Year. We had an "After Action" call that allowed us to collectively look back at what was accomplished and worked well and to look forward and resolve to make things better in the coming year. As good as it gets, we believe we can make it better. You, our membership, deserve nothing less.

A change that worked a bit better this past year was to speed up the front desk registration process for our arrivals and check-in. We used information from the hotel's room registration, pre-paid registrations, and pre- transportation list to compose a master list of those planning to attend the reunion. As people arrived we only had to check our list and make note of meal payment, changes to your information, and such then moved quickly on. We have plans to even improve on this more. One area that did not work well was the process of getting one's meal choice tickets prior to the Banquet Dinner. We have already made plans on how to move this process along much better.

As is always the case we welcome feedback from our membership on ways we can improve in our services. We attempt to make your experience with this organization one that allows you the opportunity to get together, stay connected, and enjoy and reflect on the events of our collective past. Like time itself, we have a history, and we have our future. Happy New Year to all.

Sign Up—Change Address or Update Information

Send this form to: GARY GORDON - 8911 WHITNEY CIRCLE, SAN ANTONIO TX 78254-5706
or E-Mail Gary Gordon at: GLGordan21@yahoo.com

FULL NAME:

ADDRESS (street, city, and zip code):

HOME PHONE:

CELLPHONE (optional):

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

ORGANIZATION NAME (i.e. Golf, Foxtrot, etc.):

RANK: MOS: YEAR(S) OF SERVICE IN VIETNAM: _____ to _____

(include nickname if your buddies knew you by that): _____

ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE "1st MARINE DIVISION ASSOCIATION: Yes _____ No _____

Presidents Message

Brothers, Families & Friends,

I trust that all of you had a very Merry Christmas and hope that your New Year is filled with happiness and good health.

Throughout the Newsletter you will read many comments about our reunion and monument dedication in DC this past November, so there is no reason for me to expand upon it, other than to say thank you to all that volunteered, donated and attended these two memorable events.

One thing that made the reunion so successful was that it was by far the largest turnout of Brothers, Families & Friends in the history of our association. We expected around 300 at the dedication and the best guess is that there were close to 450 in attendance. The banquet was a sold out success. After a lot of squeezing and moving tables around we had room to seat and enough food to serve 384 people in the hotel Ballroom and 380 dinners were served. Now that is cutting it close. A great reunion and a great week, thanks to all that helped and contributed to its success.

It's on to 2014 and our gathering in the great state of South Carolina and the city of Charleston. Here's the information on the hotel, the room rate and how to make your reservation.

Location: **The Inn Place Hotel** (formerly the Sheraton Charleston Airport)
4770 Goer Drive
North Charleston, SC 29406

The hotel will provide a complimentary shuttle service from the airport, free parking, indoor and outdoor pools, and complimentary wireless Internet in each guest room and the public space of the hotel, also, many of the rooms come with a refrigerator and microwave.

Room Rate: **\$99.00 per night**

For single, double, triple or quadruple occupancy, and if you want to come in early and/or leave later, the rate as offered will be the same three days prior to and three days after our scheduled reunion dates.

Dates: **7 November thru 11 November, 2014**

Reservations: **800-325-3535 or 843-747-1900**

**To guarantee the room rate be sure to identify yourself as part of the group
"Vietnam Veterans of 2d Battalion 1st Marines".**

Your trustees will be holding a midyear meeting at the hotel the end of this coming April and will be working on the agenda for the reunion, but you can be sure that one of the events will be a trip to MCRD Parris Island. Another item being discussed is restarting the Toys for Tots donations we began during our reunion in Reno, NV., a few years ago. More information on this will be posted after the midyear trustees meeting, but do plan on bringing an unwrapped Toys for Tots gift item when you attend this year's reunion.

I hope you all have had a chance to look at the hundreds of photos from the reunion and monument dedication posted to the website www.FirstMarines.org soon we will have a video of the monument dedication posted to the website which all should enjoy viewing.

*** Thanks to the generosity of all the members that helped raise more than \$70,000 in less than six months the Vietnam Veterans of the 2d Battalion 1st Marines now has one of most outstanding monuments in place at the National Museum of the Marine Corps.**

Secretary's Report from Ben Dickson**Vietnam Veterans of 2/1 Members Meeting
9 November 2013**

The meeting was called to order at 0900hrs by President Paul Mangan, followed by his leading the membership in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. All Officers and Trustees were in attendance, as well as 80 members participating.

Secretary Ben Dickson rose to read the minutes of the last meeting; a motion was made to forego the reading of the minutes and approve of them as posted last year. The motion was seconded and carried by voice vote with Bruce Oliver being the honorary Nay in memory of Ron Sampson, Golf Company 1969.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Paul announced that the building, dedication, and ceremony placing the 2/1 Veterans Monument at the NMMC is completed. To the sound of cheering and applause, Paul said this was made possible by the membership support, hard work of the committees involved and contributions from members and friends of 2/1. We all raised over \$73000.00 in the six months since donations were accepted. We have a first class monument, set records for attendance at dedication events at NMMC, and have given a lasting legacy for our friends and families to enjoy, that reflects the history and time that our Battalion spent living out the values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment to our Country, the Marine Corps, and our fellow Marine Warriors. Oohrah to a job well done by all of us!

There will be a CD produced in the future that will document the day. It will be made available to all and announced at a later date. All monies that are in excess of the costs of the monument will go back to the general fund, as was voted on at last years meeting. Don Huth stood and gave a very eloquent thank you to the Board, and all committees for a job well done. Paul again stated that it is ultimately the members who give the ok, donate the funds, and support such efforts which make things like this possible. It is always for and about the members.

TREASURERS REPORT

Mario reviewed the policy about posting our financial reports to the web and reminded everyone that all of his reports are available to every member if requested. The balance sheets and expense sheets were read. All members who requested them received copies. The reports were accepted as read. The organization remains on a firm financial footing and due diligence continues to be the ultimate goal of handling all the assets of 2/1.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Gary Gordon is pleased to announce that our membership continues to grow. He is working on some new computer systems to streamline and improve our roster, the means of updating, and the means for tracking down new leads. Many have assisted him in these efforts, especially Bruce Oliver, who works tirelessly to verify names and addresses of leads and contacts. Phil Odom discussed the get well fund and has donated \$100 for stamps to send cards to members and their families who are ill or who have passed away.

It was noted that we need input on any events in our members lives that may need addressing by the get well fund. Top Ski asked about support elements who served with us. There is a section on our website that addresses this issue, and we welcome those who may have supported and served with us.

(Continued Page 8)

Secretary's Report Continued**MONUMENT AND DEDICATION COMMITTEE**

Phil Leslie led a review of the committee, the members, how it was formed and a host of other details that had been mentioned in previous updates and newsletters. The monument and the dedication ceremony was the culmination of the years of hard work put in by all those involved. He noted that ours was the most well attended dedication event held at the NNMC to date. It surpassed the numbers for the Chesty Puller statue. We had in excess of 400 at the ceremony. Phil reminded those who have purchased bricks that we have the second most purchases behind the Marine Corps League, which is a national organization, with a much larger membership than us. Not to be missed is the outstanding speech given by General Klimp. It was an awe inspiring message given by a Warrior, to Warriors. We love that humble guy, as he works very hard behind the scenes to help us in any way he can, and never wants any credit. He is the hallmark of many, many men who do the same for 2/1 every day. Many thanks to all of you.

ELECTIONS

Two trustees and the secretary position are open for election. Gary Gordon and Bruce Oliver were nominated for the trustee positions, with no other nominees. Both were approved by a voice vote. Ben Dickson was nominated to serve another term as secretary. With no other nominees, he was approved by voice vote. Congratulations to those willing to serve another term for 2/1.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business brought up for discussion.

NEW BUSINESS

A lengthy discussion began about donations to groups from our funds. Many good viewpoints and opinions were brought out. There seemed to be agreement that we should concentrate on Marine organizations primarily, and those who help wounded warriors. It was also pointed out that we need to be very careful to investigate groups to make sure our donations are used wisely and with a good percentage of the donation going to the cause and not to those who administer the group. It was decided that a list will be drawn up from suggestions from the members. The board will use its due diligence to check them out, and set limits on the amounts that can be donated. A motion was made to let the board act on these recommendations; it was seconded, and passed by voice vote with the obligatory Nay from Bruce.

A suggestion was made to use some of the additional funding received for the monument, and to have a plaque made for the Wall of Honor at the home of 1st Marine Regiment, and put in place at our 50 year anniversary of landing in Vietnam. A motion was made for the board to go forward with the research for this, and it was approved by the membership.

Ollie suggested that at some point in the future we put a time capsule at the NNMC monument. This will be an agenda item for the Trustees midyear meeting.

Mr. Cates discussed with us his desire for our members to share photos of anyone that is on the wall. His organization would like to put a face to all who are there.

Vin Burdziuk gave us an update on the website and the card fund. Since 2001 we have had over 550,000 visitors to our web site, and over 250 members commented on the blog. We have sent out 20,000 updates, and 2600 newsletters this past year, sent 52 get well cards and 20 condolence cards. He thanks all who have sent info and welcomes anyone with info on our brothers and their families to contact him. We appreciate all the long hours and midnight oil that Vinnie spends working on our site.

(Continued Page 9)

Secretary's Report Continued

Dan Kellum thanks all who have shared info with him, and encourages all to send info about a book he is writing about the operations we all were on while in country. He especially would like info on the location of the individual companies at the time, leaders, call signs and all other data.

Doc Bo made a request that at future reunions we have tables set up where each company can congregate, share info and stories, and locate missing friends. This will be an agenda item at the mid year meeting as we plan the reunion in Charleston.

Col. Duncan requested time to speak to the members and gave a speech about us all working together to return our communities to the values that we learned, the Warrior ethos that have made the Marines and the country such a great place. He encourages us all to reach out to vet organizations and our community to live out that pledge we made as young men to protect our country and its way of life. Contact him for more info on this and how to do this and organize in your community.



After several announcements about the dinner, a motion was made to adjourn, a second was made and the meeting was adjourned at 1059hrs.

Ben Dickson - Fox Company - 1968-1969



"How else are we going to pay for the war?"

BANQUET - Pre-Registration Form for the Vietnam Veterans of 2nd Bn 1st Marines 2014 Reunion

Make Check Payable to: **Vietnam Vets of 2d Bn 1st Marines**
 Mail to: **Mario Sagastume : Treasurer**
778 Silverado Estates Ct, Chico, CA 95973

A \$50.00 Deposit is requested for each meal ordered for the Banquet.
 The Deposit is (Refundable) upon notice to us that you won't be attending.
***** Children age 12 and under the meal is \$35.00 *****

NAME:

ADDRESS:

PHONE:

EMAIL IF AVAILABLE:

YEAR(S) IN VIETNAM _____ & COMPANY(S) _____

HOW MANY WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE _____

MEAL CHOICE(S) : Poultry _____ MEAT _____ SPECIAL DIET _____ Let us know at signup

CHILDREN(S) MEALS : Poultry _____ Meat _____ SPECIAL DIET _____ Let us know at signup

You Can Pre-Pay for Your Banquet Meal(s) using your Credit Card on our 2/1 Website Homepage with PayPal (OR) you can print this form and mail in a check.

Treasurer's Report



Many of you religiously express tremendous gratitude to the leadership of The Vietnam Veterans of 2/1 for the outstanding reunions and overall, for our work. I for one am awed at the membership for their support and unconditional trust placed on us. This creates an atmosphere for us to always act in a manner, and make decisions for the benefit and betterment of the Organization. Also, in a selfish way, we get more out of our work than we put in.

Thanks to your generosity, and continued support, your Organization is in the best financial condition to date. With no major or significant liabilities in our horizon, our liquidity should remain on excellent footing. As of this writing, our Bank balances were \$20,815.62 in the General Account and \$10,623.24 in the Monument Account.

A significant factor for our excellent revenues was the sale of bricks to be laid around the Monument. Please continue to promote this activity with other brothers who may not be aware of the program. Each brick purchased through us for \$300 is placed in the area of the Monument and generates \$90 for the Organization. Please see the details in Dale Williams's article.

Semper Fidelis, Mario Sagastume - Treasurer

YOUR VIDEOS NEEDED

If you took some Videos at our Monument Dedication and would like to have portions of them considered for our DVD Video we are having made please contact Dale Williams to make arrangements on how best to get it to him.

Dale Williams - Dale1949@earthlink.net



Reunion 2014 Charleston, SC 7-11 November, 2013

**The Inn Place Hotel
4770 Goer Drive
North Charleston, SC 29406**

<> Toll Free # 800-325-3535 <> 843-747-1900 <>

****To guarantee the room rate be sure to identify yourself as part of the group***

"Vietnam Veterans of 2d Battalion 1st Marines"

Room Rate \$99.00 per night

Make your reservations for this year's reunion now, you'll be glad you did!

Vietnam Veterans of 2d Bn 1st Marines is Tax Exempt under IRS 501(c)3 Non-Profit

Vietnam Veterans of 2d Bn 1st Marines 2014 Reunion in Charleston, SC

