# LIMA CO. 3/5/1 MARINES

## VIETNAM 1966-1971

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Lima Company

## APRIL 2024 ❖ NEWSLETTER #142

### Lima Co. 3 / 5 / 1 ❖ 39th Reunion
### Doubletree Hotel St. Louis at Westport
### June 5 - 9, 2024, St. Louis, Missouri

Only 50 days to the reunion! Have you made your hotel reservations? Travel arrangements? Submitted your shirt, hat and banquet reservations using the order form?

There are 26 Marines, Corpsmen and civilians signed up;
with spouses and family we are expecting about 50 people in attendance…

**BUT THERE IS ROOM FOR MORE… YOU!!!**

Reunion information can be found in Newsletters # 139, 140 or 141.
The newsletters are on the Lima 3/5 website.

## COMPANY MEMBERSHIP

Dan Cantrell and I have put in considerable effort to update our membership roster, which is stored on my home computer. We hope to find a bunch of the missing… "but it ain't easy."

Found or updated information: 40 men
Lost Contact: 10 missing souls
Deaths: 33 updates

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Active | 374 | 652 |
| Lost Contact | 129 | |
| Died | 147 | |
| Do Not Contact | 2 | |
| Relative | 8 | |

←← TOTAL LIMA 3/5/1 MARINES & CORPMEN

## SEMPER FIDELIS

# COMPANY STORIES

WES THOMAS

Dave Acton *(Lima 3/5 Newsletter Editor)* asked me to write this up on my career, which was a great one, even with a few bumps along the way!

My career started in 81's *(mortars)* as a private in Hawaii with 2/4; made meritorious CPL, not bad, then volunteered for Marine Barracks Sasebo, Japan for two years and made SGT. Shipped over for 6 years and made my three choices, get this last choice, 2nd Marine Division. Med cruise was fantastic, 13 ports and I was assigned to be the Admiral's driver while in port. On return was given orders for Vietnam with 3/5; assigned 3rd Section Leader for 81's attached to Lima. In 1966 made Staff Sergeant and was transferred to 1/1 as Asst. Platoon Leader of 81's and remained there until orders for Drill Instructor school came in.

I told Acton my orders were first to see the Nut Doctor in MCRD San Diego and there were at least 50 of us going thru evaluation. One after another they saw us then I went in and was there for at least 10 minutes and when I came out the rest of the future "hats" *(DI's)* said what happened in there? I told him I volunteered! Haha!

On to Parris Island and the same thing there, but I alerted them what was going to happen! From 1967 to '69 I had four recruit platoons as an Assistant Drill Instructor and five as the Senior Drill Instructor. During this time, I had some unfortunate issues experienced by recruits and I was in front of the LtCol of the Battalion a number of times.

I was put up for Outstanding Combat Leadership, where your record book goes before a board at HQMC for promotion to 2nd Lt, and was not thinking that I would be selected at the time. Next, I was selected for DI of the Quarter, which came with meritorious promotion to GySgt.
I was called into the 1stSgt's office for a call from Regiment G-1; my LtCol, who I had seen many times, said we have never had this happen before¾you made 2ndLt and you made GySgt. One day, a DI in 1st Bn and the next day, Series Officer in 3rd Bn.

Since I had zero college at the time, I knew keeping my commission probably wasn't going to happen, so I called my LtCol in Regiment and asked for a field where former enlisted officers and CWO's worked¾Ordnance and Ammo, so I chose Ammo. It was a while before he returned my call with a package deal, he said!

School at Quantico and back to Vietnam, however I'm an infantry Officer, so in Vietnam they were going to put me in an MP Bn; so I asked the CWO to go to Ammo Company and he thought I was another young 2nd Lt, but I told him "I'm just like you, enlisted with 10 years in," and that worked!

My tour was exciting, BUT I got reverted to GySgt. Then I went to Camp Pentleton and was there a short while and received a call from a MSGT; she said we are going to keep you as 1st Lt for awhile because we think you're going to be selected to become a Warrant Officer¾well that didn't happen. Now I'm a GySgt again, when I received a call from a CAPT at Marine Barracks Portsmouth New Hampshire. He selected me, out of five GySgt's, to be his Guard Chief; he said I could refuse it if I wished. My first question was what happened to the last one? Relieved for incompetence, he said, and I was on my way. I was there for 18 months, put in for Warrant Officer Program and was selected WO1 Ammo MOS.

# COMPANY STORIES

WES THOMAS (continued)

First assignment was in PA, where I made CWO2 and was selected for Line Duty Officer 1st Lt. After 5years, I was assigned to duty in Okinawa and finally to Crane Army Ammunition Activity in Indiana, where I retired as Captain.  Moved back to PA, where I live presently.

That's my story and I'm sticking to it. Haha!

Thank You Marines from LIMA 3/5, I have enjoyed every minute I've been with you during the GOOD, the BAD and the UGLY.

WES THOMAS, CAPT (RETIRED) USMC 1960-80



A unique clock with the insignias' of all the the ranks Wes held during his 20 years in the Marine Corps.



# ? ? ? REUNION 2025 ? ? ?

*I NEED SOME VOLUNTEERS… **YOU, YOU AND YOU**… ONE STEP FORWARD!*

*AYE-AYE, SIR!*

LIMA COMPANY 3/5 MARINES, CORPSMEN and ASSOCIATES

Now is the time to give consideration to hosting our **40TH ANNUAL REUNION IN 2025,** that's right folks, the **BIG FOUR-O**. Volunteers are needed to make this a reality. Yes, it's over a year away, but that means there is plenty of time to make it happen. I hope… no, no… WE hope that there will be two or three proposals for our 40th reunion, presented this June during our business meeting at the St. Louis reunion.

Below are bullet points to help plan and organize a reunion.

Host responsibilities (that's you):

HOTEL

- Close to a metropolitan airport (hopefully)
- Preferably has airport shuttle service
- Clean modern rooms and related facilities (that's what we want)
- Not undergoing major renovations or construction (a real no-no)
- Offers a reasonable group room rate; the room rate for the last 10 reunions averaged $116 + tax = $130; shoot for no more than $150 total
- Preferably has on-site dining facilities, if not, then near-by restaurants within walking distance
- Banquet room for our exclusive use on Saturday night
- Hospitality room, at no additional charge, for our exclusive use, all day Wednesday through Saturday; stock the hospitality room with soda, beer, wine and liquor; **you will be reimbursed** based on purchase receipts (or talk with Dennis for different arrangements)
- On-site parking at no additional cost

BANQUET

- Food service to include two or more main course dishes, several side dishes and dessert
- Bar service during the entire banquet; non-alcoholic drinks, beer, wine and liquor
- Guest speaker
  - Active or retired military (preferably USMC); or
  - Someone with an interesting life story or awesome personal accomplishment
  - Reasonable speaker's fee (preferably none in exchange for a free dinner)
  - NO POLITICAL or IDEALOGICAL AGENDA
- Musical entertainment (optional); live music, DJ, or recorded

FLAG CEREMONY

- Arrange for an honor guard to present the National and Marine Corps colors
- FOR COLOR GUARDS (OUTSIDE OF 60 MILES OF A MARINE CORPS INSTALLATION):
  - Download the DD 2536 form
  - Complete the form and forward to the Marine Forces Reserve (MARFORRES) Community Relations at mfrcomrel@usmc.mil

# ? ? ? REUNION 2025 ? ? ?

LOCAL ACTIVITIES & ENTERTAINMENT (Helpful, but not necessary)

Provide information about local activities or entertainment that reunion attendees might enjoy; examples are:

- Major or minor league baseball
- Museums – science, history, art, entertainment, military, etc.
- Historical sites to tour
- Botanical garden
- Scenic tours; walking, driving, bus, boat
- Golf Courses

The local office of tourism can be a good resource

# REUNION 2025 OBSERVATIONS

"I personally feel like we should have our last reunion in Florida in honor of Captain Snowden, Hank and Skip, since they were the ones that started the reunions …just my thoughts." Submitted by Ken and Sherry Carman

*(Editors note: No one said 2025 will be our last reunion, but the reality is we are all old men, at least 71 years of age, many approaching 80, so the 2025 reunion should be special, a blowout… what do you think? How will you help to make it special?)*

This chart shows the attendance of Marines & Corpsmen at Lima Co. 3/5 reunions from 2000 to 2023. Early on, there were close to 80 of us, but now we number between 20 to 40; attendance is dropping due to age and health issues. As of mid April, there are 26 signed up for the 2024 St. Louis reunion. As I see it, the 2025 reunion—our 40th—is a big deal, so let's make it a big deal—no time left for saying "I wish I had gone."

**NOW OR NEVER.**

