

Lima Co. 3/5 Reunion



VIETNAM 1966-1971

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Lima Company



July 2020 Newsletter #126

Picture Quilt at the 2010 Lima 3/5 Reunion



SEMPER FIDELIS

MEMBERSHIP INFO

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

If you have an **e-mail address** and you don't get the Roster updates or Newsletter via e-mail, send me your e-mail address to save on postage. We mail out 222 and e-mail 235.
Get an e-mail address.

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Doug Watson	Middleton, OH
John Mesterpay	Coral Gables, FL
Patrick Oliver	Bend, OR



LOST E-MAIL ADDRESS

Tim Blank

Mike Commings

Don Farrar

Lima 3/5 Vets,

I wish this coronavirus would go away. I really miss this years Reunion. We need to stay together and not miss any more Reunions.

Skip St. Clair passed away and now we don't have a host for the 2021 Lima 3/5 Reunion. If we want to go to Florida, we need a new Host from Florida. A Florida Lima 3/5 Vet can go ahead and find a hotel for our Reunion and get in touch with me. There are several Lima 3/5 Vets who live in Florida so you can get together. You can get in touch with each other and plan our Reunion. If you would want to get some help from me, let me know.

If I don't get any information by October from Vets who want a Florida Reunion, I will hope someone else will want to Host a Reunion. That could mean we can have the Reunion some where else than Florida. I would like to be able to put the Reunion information in the November e-mail Newsletter. I have to put it in the January printed and mailed Newsletter.

I hope someone will be the new Host.

Semper Fi,

Dan

TED CRISP SHORT STORIES

What knucklehead is shooting the Tracers?

One night while on bunker watch we took incoming fire from some Viet Cong in the local village. The procedure was to leave the protection of the bunker and spread out among the freshly dug trenches connecting the bunkers. The enemy generally targeted the bunker with rocket propelled grenades. This we did and continued to receive incoming rifle fire. We returned fire at what seemed to be the source of the shooting. Then I noticed that someone in our position was shooting red tracers back at the Cong. This is not what you would want to do as you immediately give away your position and make it easier for them to spot you and return fire. So I yelled loudly to the person who was shooting to knock it off and quit firing the tracers. I continued to fire my M16. More tracers were fired. I yelled again louder to stop firing the tracers. I then fired my rifle toward the enemy and come to a shocking realization. It was me who was firing the tracers. I had grabbed a magazine full of tracers I had specifically set aside in my magazine bandolier for entertainment shooting. All of a sudden a large explosion went off in front of me. The enemy had fired a mortar round at me as they now had my direction and range because of the tracers I shot. I quickly moved along the trench further down the line to get out of range.

Boy did I feel stupid.

Daisy Chain

After a long day of patrolling we were directed to set up a defensive perimeter for the night on a small hill in the midst of some rice patties.

After about 10 minutes in our new position and in the midst of digging our fighting holes, word came down from the company command post for everybody to freeze, in other words don't move. A Marine had tripped on a wire on the hill that turned out to be connected to a Daisy Chain; a complicated Booby Trap that was laid out in a circle containing eight 105 howitzer rounds all connected together. They were set to blow up all at once if the connecting wire was tripped. It didn't go off. We had to wait for our engineers to come and disable each artillery round and remove them before we could continue digging our fighting holes and set in for the night.

Thank you for not going off.

TAPS SKIP ST. CLAIR

Robert "Skip" St. Clair

Passed away 22 May 2020

Skip served in Vietnam with Lima 3/5, 1st Platoon 1st Squad, from May 66 till August 66. He was a Lcpl and his MOS was 0311. Skip got a Purple Heart on 12 Aug 66. He attended 25 Reunions.

Skip did a lot of work for the Lima 3/5 Reunions for a lot of years. He took care of all the Lima 3/5 Archives till 2007. He also was the Host for several Reunions.

We will miss you Skip.



TAPS FRAGER SPATES

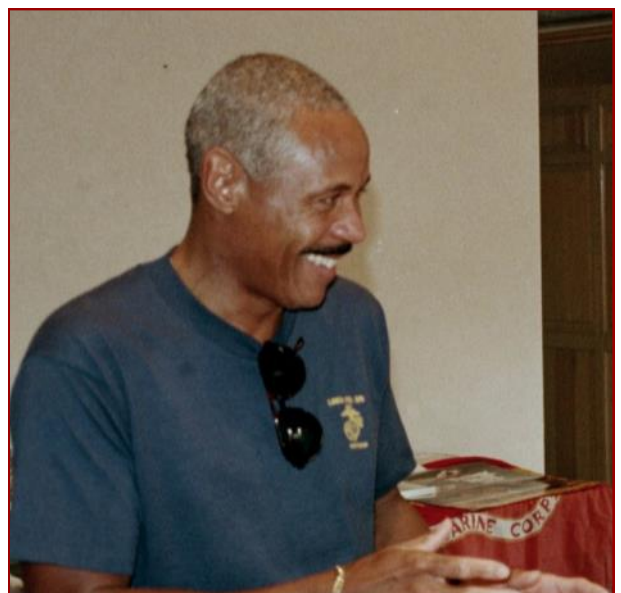
Frager Spates

Passed away June 7, 2020

Frager served in Vietnam with Lima 3/5 from January 1967 till September 1967. He was a Sgt. And his MOS was 0331, Machine gunner. Frager got 2 Purple Hearts on March 67 and Sept 67.

Frager had been at 18 Reunions. He is always a good Marine and friend.

We will miss you Frager.



DAVE ACTON

MAIL CALL

By

David Acton

RVN '69 – '70

As a kid, I wanted to go to a military prep school—I read catalogues from multiple schools and was enamored with the pictures of cadets in dress uniforms. However, it was not to be; my grandmother thought I needed the discipline and structure offered by an Episcopal Church affiliated all-boys boarding school near her home in western Massachusetts. So, on a fall afternoon in 1962, my parents dropped me off at Lenox School for Boys.

I quickly adjusted to life at a boarding school, played football, hockey and lacrosse, participated in school plays, and as a senior served as the class vice-president and as a dorm proctor. In the fall of 1966, I was off to college where I planned to major in mathematics—why, I have no idea; guess I thought math was cool, or something like that.

My downfall started early—girls and 25¢ Genesee double draft beers (the drinking age was 18 in New York). After a year and three months, my grades were in the dump and I was asked to leave. In the spring of 1968, my draft board reclassified my status from II-S (student) to I-A (prime draftee for military service). Due to knee surgery for a college lacrosse injury, I was given a six-month deferment. In the summer of 1968, while my parents were away for several weeks, I signed enlistment papers for the Marine Corps. Mom was not happy; Dad didn't say much, as I recall, as he had been an Army artillery officer during WW II.

A train from Philadelphia took two dozen new Marine recruits to Charleston, South Carolina; a Greyhound Bus carried us from the train station to Parris Island. In dead-silence the bus passed through the main gate and arrived at the "yellow footprints." Eight weeks later I graduated with my first stripe, then it was off to Camp Geiger for four weeks of Advanced Infantry Training (AIT), where I became a mortarman (0341). While at AIT, I was encouraged to apply to Officer Candidate School, which I did, but wasn't selected to attend.

After two weeks leave, I reported to Camp Pendleton for immediate deployment to Vietnam. A plane load of replacements left from El Toro, refueled in Hawaii and landed on Okinawa. On July 5th, 1969 I deplaned in the heat of Da Nang and reality slapped me in the face—this is it, I'm in a war zone! My first unit was the 81 mm mortar platoon, H&S Co., 2nd Bn, 3rd Marines, 3rd Marine Division. In September, the 3rd Marine Division was being withdrawn from Vietnam and reassigned to Okinawa. I didn't have enough time "in-country," "too green," so I was transferred to Lima Co., 3rd Bn, 5th Marines, 1st Marine Division, where I joined the 60 mm mortar squad.

The day I joined the mortar unit, the squad leader, a sergeant I think, asked me if I'd like to be the radio operator for a week. Apparently, the regular radio operator had just gone on R&R and none of the other guys wanted to run the radio. Well, I didn't think the squad leader was really asking me a question, but rather giving me an order!—so I said "sure."

PRC—25 Field Radio

A week later we were told that the regular radio operator, upon returning from R&R, had talked his way into a job in the rear. Soooo, now I was the official 60 mm mortar radio operator, call sign "Lima Whiskey." It was a good fit for me, which involved lots of topographic map reading and the ability to estimate or calculate distances (remember, in college I wanted to major in math).



While in Vietnam, I was blessed with a strong and extensive family support network—my parents, my grandmother, siblings and cousins. Rarely was there a mail call that didn't include a letter or two or a package for me.

Lima Company had been in the bush for several weeks, when we were brought back to a fairly secure fire-base for a little down-time—hot chow, warm beer and mail from home. As I recall, mail was passed out by platoon—1st platoon, 2nd platoon, 3rd platoon and lastly the Company HQ which included the mortar squad and anybody else not part of the three rifle platoons.

Mail was delivered in red nylon bags. Someone would scoop the letters out of the bag and read off the recipient's name, who would respond with... "Here" or "That's me" or "Yo." After the letters were handed out, attention was turned to the bigger sack that had all the packages. On this particular afternoon the red nylon bag looked pretty full. The first box was pulled out... "Acton." The second box... "Acton." The third box... "Shit, Acton again." The fourth box... "What the hell, Acton!!" The fifth and last box in the bag... "**##*@ing Acton!**"

Packages from home often included: snacks, home-made cookies, white athletic socks, batteries for a transistor radio, Dinty Moor beef stew, and best-of-all, Scotch, home-made whiskey sours or Heublein cocktails-in-a-can.



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