

Semper Fi

"THE SCUTTLEBUTT"

<http://www.mcltraecoheedet115.org/>

August 2015 Edition



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SSgt Walter F. "Trae" Cohee III
Detachment # 115
Salisbury, MD

DETACHMENT OFFICERS

2015 - 2016

Commandant: Ed Elder

Senior Vice Commandant: Bob Miller
Judge Advocate: Ed Hearthway
Paymaster: Andy Bouma
Sgt-At-Arms: Walt Cohee

Junior Vice Commandant: Gene Powell
Junior Past Commandant: Bill Marsich
Adjutant: Richard Hyson
Chaplain: Rhuel Goslee

Web Sergeant: Don Elseroad

Original Charter Date May 10, 1970

MEETING TIME & PLACE

Meetings are always held on the second Wednesday of each month. The next regularly scheduled meeting would be held on September 9th, 2015 at 1900 (7:00 P.M.) at the American Legion Post 64, 1109 American Legion Road, Salisbury, MD 21801.

Please make every effort to attend.

Upcoming Holiday's & Events



All 2015 Conventions are now history. Information on 2016 Conventions will begin to appear shortly and will appear here as the information becomes available.

"Sick or in Distress"

MCL Members Jimmy Lee & Gloria HOWARD, Jeanne COHEE and Tom CORCORAN are having or have recently had various health problems. Please keep these folks and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

"Membership Happenings"

(Please advise the Editor of any errors or omissions)

<u>SEPTEMBER "HAPPY BIRTHDAYS"</u> 9th Sandra BOUMA 10th Sharon MILLS 17th Danny PARSONS	<u>SEPTEMBER ANNIVERSARIES</u> 5th Jeanne & Walter COHEE (43 yrs) 11th Sally & Terry HERLING (45 yrs)
<u>SEPTEMBER MCL ANNIVERSARIES</u> Louis JONES (9 yrs) David MILLS (6 yrs) Diana MERRITT (4 yrs)	<u>MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS DUE IN SEPTEMBER</u> Louis JONES Diana MERRITT David MILLS
<u>WELCOME ABOARD</u> None reported to your editor	<u>MEMBERSHIP'S RENEWED</u> Richard CARRILLO Tina LINDSTROM Jeff MERRITT Danny PARSONS

DON'T LET YOUR MEMBERSHIP LAPSE

Please send your \$24.00 checks made payable to "MCL Det 115" to our paymaster.

Andy Bouma, Paymaster
32175 Bonhill Dr
Salisbury, MD 21804-1464



DON'T DELAY...JOIN TODAY
THEN CONSIDER GOING 'LIFE'
NOW IS THE TIME TO DO IT

Most Americans Do Not Know About The Last 41 Names On The Vietnam Memorial...

Most Americans do not know that the last 41 names on the Vietnam Memorial, "The Wall," are from a battle that took place barely two weeks after the fall of Saigon to the North Vietnamese in 1975. It is called the Mayaguez Operation and is often a forgotten part of the Vietnam War. But we will do what we can here to keep the memory of this event and those who took part in it alive.

It was May of 1975. The last Americans, including the U.S. Ambassador, had left in the chaotic evacuation from Saigon only a few days before, bringing an end to the Vietnam War for American troops.

But it was not over yet.

A rogue element of the Khmer Rouge, Cambodian Navy boarded an American Merchant Vessel, the Mayaguez, and took it and everyone aboard hostage. It was an act of high seas piracy. The boat was seized in international waters and was taken to a small Cambodian island called Koh Tang. There was fear that the ship and its crew would be taken to mainland Cambodia. A poorly planned rescue operation was hastily put together by the U.S.

The only ground forces that were available at the time were United States Marines stationed in Okinawa, Japan. Those Marines were part of the 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines, an infantry battalion which had distinguished itself earlier in the Vietnam War in the defense of Khe Sanh during the 1968 Tet Offensive. They were flown immediately from their base in Okinawa to the American air base at Utapao, Thailand. Because of the chaos of U.S. forces leaving Vietnam only two weeks earlier, the only helicopters that were available for inserting and extracting these Marines were Air Force HH53s, otherwise known as, "Jolly Green Giants." This combined effort of the U.S. Marines and the U.S. Air Force took place long before we began the modern habit of joint military training.

They would have to go into this attack without really knowing each other's methods.

The Air Force HH53s were not originally designed for this purpose either. They are huge helicopters designed to do heavy work. They are nothing like the smaller Hueys that were built to be quick and agile, as well as heavily armed. These American Marines and airmen would have to draw upon their natural capacities for independence and ingenuity to get this job done.

The Marines were told that they would be going up against lightly armed and ill-trained fishermen and pirates. They soon found out that they were really up against a Khmer Rouge Battalion of about 400 well-armed and highly experienced men. This became apparent in the early moments of the attack. In the first wave, four of the Jolly Green Giants were shot down with significant loss of life. Quite quickly, the original attack force of HH53 Jolly Green Giants would be reduced to only three operable platforms. It was these three that would have to go in again and again, under heavy and concentrated enemy fire, to extricate the Marines of 2/9.

This would prove to be a harrowing task. It would give us a true hero as well. Air Force First Lieutenant Robert Blough...

At dusk, the first two Air Force HH53s came in taking very heavy fire from the Khmer Rouge force that had pinned the Marines on the beach. They loaded as many Marines as they could and lifted off to take them out to the aircraft carrier, USS Coral Sea, which was steaming toward the battle, but was still a 30 minute flight away. The HH53 Air Force pilots, despite the incredibly heavy weapons fire that greeted them each time they came in, would do everything necessary to get those Marines out of harm's way.

One of the HH53 pilots was Air Force 1st Lieutenant, Robert Blough. He was flying the HH53 with the call sign "Jolly44." He came in taking heavy machine gun fire as 36 of the Marines rushed aboard his craft, part of which was in the water. Many of the Marines were wounded. The helicopter was designed to carry a maximum of 25. It was severely overloaded, but Lt. Blough lifted off and headed out to sea to the USS Coral Sea. It was dark by now and overcast. Lt. Blough spotted the USS Harold E. Holt, a small Destroyer Escort, which had a small helipad on its aft deck. He decided to utilize that helipad to unload his Marines and head back to the island to pick up more.

The problem was that the helipad was not made for a helicopter the size of a Jolly Green Giant. Lt. Blough had to "fit" that helicopter onto that small helipad with absolute precision. He put his nose wheel down at one corner of the square helipad, and then he gently settled the two large wheels of the craft into opposite corners. He really didn't land the big helicopter. He had to keep 50% power keeping the craft steady.

He was literally flying forward keeping pace with the moving ship, but at a 45 degree angle from the direction the ship was headed in.

He also had to keep his big rotary blade from striking any part of the Holt or there would be a disaster and tremendous loss of life. He did this all with determination and great skill. When the Marines were all off-loaded, he took off and headed back to Koh Tang Island to pick up more Marines. For his actions that day, Lt. Blough was awarded the Silver Star, but the almost 80 Marines whose lives were saved that day felt that he deserved a much higher decoration.

The Marines and the Air Force personnel who were killed in action that day would become the last 41 names to be carved into the Vietnam Memorial. The cost of that battle was great, but those Marines of 2nd Battalion, 9th Marines and their Air Force brothers that took part in the Mayaguez Operation have become true brothers in arms. They have formed an association that meets regularly and it has become a valuable part of the healing that these men needed over the decades that have passed since their return home.

We here at The Veterans Site are honored to keep alive the memory of what those United States Marines and Air Force heroes did that day on behalf of the crew of the American Merchant Vessel, Mayaguez. When called upon in a moment of crisis, they came through with courage and honor. They fulfilled their mission.

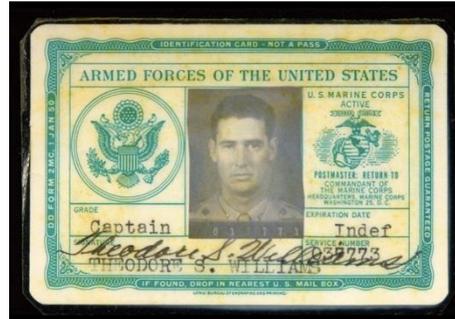
We offer our gratitude for their uncommon courage and dedication to duty. For those who fell on that mission, we offer our prayers and we promise to never forget their sacrifice and that of their families.

Semper Fi and Aim High. Fly, Fight, Win!

Ted Williams was John Glenn's Wingman

When asked to name the greatest team he was ever on, Ted Williams said, "The US Marines."

Ted Williams was John Glenn's wingman, flying F-9Fs in Korea.



The Boston Red Sox slugger, who wore No. 9 as a major leaguer, was assigned to an F-9 Panther jet as a pilot. Ted flew a total of 39 combat missions in Korea. He was selected by his commander John Glenn (later the astronaut, senator, and "septuagenonaut") to fly as Glenn's wingman.

While flying an air strike on a troop encampment near Kyomipo, Williams' F-9 was hit by hostile ground fire. Ted commented later: "The funny thing was I didn't feel anything. I knew I was hit when the stick started shaking like mad in my hands. Then everything went out, my radio, my landing gear, everything. The red warning lights went on all over the plane." The F-9 Panther had a centrifugal flow engine and normally caught fire when hit. The tail would literally blow off most stricken aircraft. The standard orders were to eject from any Panther with a fire in the rear of the plane. Ted's aircraft was indeed on fire, and was trailing smoke and flames. Glenn and the other pilots on the mission were yelling over their radios for Williams to get out. However, with his radio out, Williams could not hear their warnings and he could not see the condition of the rear of his aircraft. Glenn and another Panther flown by Larry Hawkins came up alongside Williams and lead him to the nearest friendly airfield. Fighting to hold the plane together, Ted brought his Panther in at more than 200-MPH for a crash landing on the Marsden-matted strip. With no landing gear, dive brakes, or functioning flaps, the flaming Panther jet skidded down the runway for more than 3000 feet. Williams got out of the aircraft only moments before it was totally engulfed in flames. Ted Williams survived his tour of duty in Korea and returned to major league baseball.

Pssst: Ted missed out flying combat missions during WW II, because his flying and gunnery skills were so good that he was kept as an instructor for much of the War. During advanced training at Pensacola, Florida Ted would accurately shoot the sleeve targets to shreds while shooting out of wing-overs, zooms, and barrel rolls. He broke the all-time record for 'hits' at the school.

Following Pensacola, Ted was sent to Jacksonville for advanced gunnery training. This is the payoff test for potential combat pilots. Ted set all the records for reflexes, coordination, and visual reaction time. As a result of his stunning success he was made an instructor at Bronson field to put Marine aviation cadets through their final paces.

By 1945 Ted got his wish and was finally transferred to a combat wing, but weeks later the War was over. He was discharged from the military in December of 1945. Seven years later, in December of 1952, Ted was recalled to active duty as a Marine Corps fighter pilot.

Semper Fi, Ted!

Vietnam....Did you know

Only 1/3 of all Vietnam Vets are alive today! The Wall

A little history most people will never know.

Interesting Veterans Statistics off the Vietnam Memorial Wall.

There are 58,267 names now listed on that polished black wall, including those added in 2010.

The names are arranged in the order in which they were taken from us by date and within each date the names are alphabetized. It is hard to believe it is 57 years since the first casualty.

The first known casualty was Richard B. Fitzgibbon, of North Weymouth, Mass. Listed by the U.S. Department of Defense as having been killed on June 8, 1956. His name is listed on the Wall with that of his son, Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Richard B. Fitzgibbon III, who was killed on Sept. 7, 1965.

There are three sets of fathers and sons on the Wall.

39,996 on the Wall were just 22 or younger.

8,283 were just 19 years old.

The largest age group, 33,103 were 18 years old.

12 soldiers on the Wall were 17 years old.

5 soldiers on the Wall were 16 years old.

One soldier, PFC Dan Bullock was 15 years old.

997 soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam..

1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam..

31 sets of brothers are on the Wall.

Thirty one sets of parents lost two of their sons.

54 soldiers attended Thomas Edison High School in Philadelphia. I wonder why so many from one school.

8 Women are on the Wall, Nursing the wounded.

244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War; 153 of them are on the Wall.

Beallsville, Ohio with a population of 475 lost 6 of her sons.

West Virginia had the highest casualty rate per capita in the nation. There are 711 West Virginians on the Wall.

The Marines of Morenci - They led some of the scrappiest high school football and basketball teams that the little Arizona copper town of Morenci (pop. 5,058) had ever known and cheered. They enjoyed roaring beer busts. In quieter moments, they rode horses along the Coronado Trail, stalked deer in the Apache National Forest. And in the patriotic camaraderie typical of Morenci's mining families, the nine graduates of Morenci High enlisted as a group in the Marine Corps. Their service began on Independence Day, 1966. Only 3 returned home.

The Buddies of Midvale - LeRoy Tafoya, Jimmy Martinez, Tom Gonzales were all boyhood friends and lived on three consecutive streets in Midvale, Utah on Fifth, Sixth and Seventh avenues. They lived only a few yards apart. They played ball at the adjacent sandlot ball field. And they all went to Vietnam. In a span of 16 dark days in late 1967, all three would be killed. LeRoy was killed on Wednesday, Nov. 22, the fourth anniversary of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Jimmy died less than 24 hours later on Thanksgiving Day.

Tom was shot dead assaulting the enemy on Dec. 7, Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.

The most casualty deaths for a single day was on January 31, 1968 ~ 245 deaths.

The most casualty deaths for a single month was May 1968 - 2,415 casualties were incurred.

For most Americans who read this they will only see the numbers that the Vietnam War created. To those of us who survived the war, and to the families of those who did not, we see the faces, we feel the pain that these numbers created. We are, until we too pass away, haunted with these numbers, because they were our friends, fathers, husbands, wives, sons and daughters. There are no noble wars, just noble warriors.

RAO Bulletins

Each month your editor attempted to review all RAO Bulletins and put articles deemed important to veterans into our newsletters.

However, what may be important to me may not be important to you and I may very possibly overlook something you as a veteran might like to know about, so I am providing a link below that will take you to the current bulletin so that you might look it over. The below bulletin is dated August 15th, 2015 and needs to view before September 1st or the link will no longer work.

[http://www.nhc-ul.com/Bulletin%20150815%20\(PDF%20Edition\).pdf](http://www.nhc-ul.com/Bulletin%20150815%20(PDF%20Edition).pdf)

EVERY DAY PRAYER REQUEST

"Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. Amen."

The following section is being modified and I pray I never have to go back to using it for its intended purpose. The last Marine to pay the ultimate sacrifice for God, Country and Corps was in early September 2014 with the last know service member giving his all in early December 2014.

This time around please view the info I have listed for the 4 Marines and Navy Petty Officer that were gunned down in Chattanooga. Other local Marine Veterans that answer the final roll call will also be listed as I find their obit's in the many I check each and every day.

"The Final Roll Call"



The following Marines and/or Corpsman paid the ultimate sacrifice for God, Country and Corps since the last Newsletter

Chattanooga killings

Marine Gunnery Sergeant Thomas Sullivan, age 40. The Pentagon said he had been enlisted nearly 18 years, serving two tours of duty in Iraq and earning two Purple Hearts. View full obit:

<http://www.sampsonchapels.com/book-of-memories/2199544/Sullivan-Gunnery-Sgt-Thomas/obituary.php>

Marine Lance Corporal Squire Wells, age 21. Wells had enlisted in February 2014 and was a field artillery cannoneer. View full obit: <http://obits.dignitymemorial.com/dignity-memorial/obituary.aspx?n=Skip-Wells&lc=7132&pid=175350180&mid=6528644>

Marine Sergeant Carson Holmquist, age 25 had completed two deployments as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. View full obit: http://www.swedberg-taylor.com/fh/obituaries/obituary.cfm?o_id=3250072&fh_id=11132

Marine Staff Sergeant David Wyatt, age 37 had been a Marine for more than 11 years and was deployed three times, including twice in Iraq. View full obit: <http://obits.dignitymemorial.com/dignity-memorial/obituary.aspx?n=David-Wyatt&lc=2233&pid=175325647&mid=6523780>

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Randall Smith, age 26, a reservist serving on active duty in Chattanooga View full obit: <http://www.progressnewspaper.org/Content/News/News/Article/PO2-RANDALL-SMITH/198/1182/190209>.

Local Marine Veterans that recently answered the final roll call

Milton "Bunky" Brooks Carew, age 67, passed away peacefully at his home in Salisbury on Monday, July 13, 2015. Bunky served in the United States Marine Corps during Vietnam from 1965 to 1971 reaching the rank of Sergeant.

View full obit: <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/delmarvanow/obituary.aspx?n=milton-carew&pid=175288191&fhid=7892>

On behalf of a grateful nation.

FREEDOM IS NOT FREE
Support Our Troops



I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands,
One Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

From your editor

If you are receiving this newsletter via "Snail Mail" and have email capability, please email me at 53usmc73@bvunet.net so that I can add you to my address book and cut down on the postage.

Any comments or suggestion on what should be in our newsletter! Articles/information you need! Let me know! The newsletter will go to press on or about the weekend following each meeting.

Don Elseroad, Editor

LINKS TO CHECK

Many of you if not all skip over these links. If you do you are missing out on some good stuff.

<http://www.staged.com/video?v=Klmb>

-- *Once a Marine, Always a Marine* --

GOD BLESS AMERICA



THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES ARE OWNED/OPERATED BY MARINES ON THE LOWER EASTERN SHORE. IF THE NEED ARISES, CHECK THEM OUT.

<p>Carl P. Hoffman, Jr. President</p> <p>Carl Hoffman & Associates <i>Accounting and Tax Service</i></p> <p>913-13 Snow Hill Road Salisbury, Maryland 21804</p> <p>410-749-7555 Fax 410-749-2088 www.choffmanassociates.com</p>	<p>ROUTE 13 NORTH & 101 ALEXANDER AVE SALISBURY, MD 21801</p> <p>DAVID GRANT</p>  <p>410-742-3243</p> <p> • COMPLETE AUTO & TRUCK REPAIR • 24 HOUR TOWING & ROADSIDE SERVICE </p>
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