



Charlie Company
Newsletter



1st Battalion-20th Infantry
11th LIB ~ Americal Div.
www.charlie1-20.org
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2009 REUNION IS ALMOST HERE!

The fourth annual Charlie Company Reunion will be held at the Hilton Cincinnati Airport on the weekend of June 12-13. It is not too late to make reservations and join us for a wonderful weekend. Call the Hilton at 859-371-4400 and tell them you want to make reservations for the Charlie Company Reunion.

We have a block of rooms reserved at the rate of \$89 a night that will be good three days before and three days after the reunion. The Hilton will honor this rate if we go over our block as long as space is available. At the cut-off date, June 5, the Hilton will release any unreserved rooms for general sale. Any reservation received after the cut-off date will be accepted on a space and rate available basis.

We had a slight problem around May 1 with the online registration. We found the solution was to increase our block of thirty rooms! The last reservation list from the Hilton showed thirty-eight names and updates since then gets us to an estimate of seventy-five if all can attend!

AGENDA

Although the official start date of the reunion is Friday the 12th, you will find a small group as early as Wednesday. Our time for the hospitality room doesn't begin until Thursday morning and someone from the Wednesday crew will be there probably after breakfast. Twenty of the thirty-eight names registered will be there sometime Thursday! We've been to the Montgomery Inn for ribs and the Hofbrauhaus for German food before on Thursdays and may return to one of those. It is not a scheduled event but we car-pooled and several enjoyed the trip.

Friday's planned events are a trip to the Florence Antique Mall from 1-3 p.m. The Hilton will shuttle

those wanting to attend and will meet around 12:45 p.m. in the hotel lobby. We will have a reception at 3 p.m. although many may not notice! By that time most have arrived and are too busy with old friends to notice. The Hilton does provide good punch and cookies and we will let you know when they arrive. Friday night at 6 p.m. is our first buffet. After the buffet we will return to the hospitality room for a brief business meeting. The hospitality room will close around midnight but there are no bed checks!

Saturday morning will find some golfers out early. The ladies brunch at Yesterdays Café and Tea Room will be from noon until whenever. The Hilton will again be providing a shuttle service for us to the brunch, Saturday night's buffet will also begin at 6 p.m. and we will return to the hospitality room for a memorial toast to conclude our official events.

We will have several who "do their own thing: Saturday and that is just fine too. We want this to be an enjoyable time for all. If this is like previous reunions, you will find some have stayed in the hospitality room enjoying refreshments, company and memorabilia while others have gone on a riverboat cruise, to the zoo or to some of the attractions near Newport on the Levee. The NKYCVB will provide us with maps and brochures that we will have for you at the registration table.

For many of you who have never attended the reunion and it looks like that right now it will be thirty or so, this is a casual affair. You will see shorts, jeans, t-shirts along with slacks with button down or golf type shirts. If you see a coat and a tie at our events, they probably work for the Hilton!

You are on your own from breakfast and lunch. There is a restaurant in the Hilton and they will give

a 10% discount for all Charlie Company attendees. There is a Cracker Barrel within walking distance of the hotel and many meet there for breakfast.

CHECKLIST FOR REUNION ATTENDEES

Please make sure you've taken care of the following items before June 5 if you are planning on attending the reunion.

MEALS: The Hilton is giving us a special meal rate that includes tax and gratuity for our meals together Friday and Saturday night. We have to send them a final count a week before our reunion and prepay the total amount for all meals. If you plan to eat with us, please send a check or money order before June 5 (payable to Charlie Company 1-20) for \$20 per meal per person to Mike Stinnett (see Contact Information). These meals are, of course, optional and can be for one night only. The menu is available on our web site.

NAME BADGES: The NKYCVB is again providing name badges for our reunion that includes a first name and nickname (if applicable). If this will be your first reunion (including wife, child, etc.), we will submit the names from our reservation list that may not have a wife or child's first name. So please let us know how you want your name badge printed.

HATS & T-SHIRTS: We will have hats and t-shirts for sell at the reunion. Let Dan know if you need a hat (\$16) and let Mike know if you need a t-shirt (\$12). Be sure to include the size of the shirt. Examples can be spotted in our newsletters and a better picture is posted on the web site. We do not order many extras and have quickly sold out so please place the orders before the reunion to be sure one is available. You may order a hat or t-shirt if you are not attending the reunion but we will have to charge extra for shipping.

GOLF: Bud Vincent and Mike Feltes will need to know if you would like to join them for a round of golf Saturday morning. Nine have signed up to play so far.

LADIES BRUNCH: We currently have made tentative reservations for twelve at Yesterday's Café and Tea Room for a Saturday brunch at noon. We

need to know how many want to attend so we can give them an actual count around the first of June.

The only item that needs to be prepaid is the meals. We just need a count for the Antique Mall, Tea Room, golf, and hat & t-shirts (size too). You can now register online with the Hilton and also fill out your intentions for each event at our web site <charlie1-20.org/events>.

REGIONAL REFRESHMENTS

One of the perks we've gotten from the Hilton is being able to bring our own food and drinks into our hospitality room. A fun and easy way to stock the hospitality room has been to ask folks to bring a few samples of refreshments made near where they live. If you want to help, bring something to represent the "homeland" and don't feel like you have to provide enough for everyone. A sampling has been plenty these past years thanks to the generosity of participants.

Wives, Is This Your First Reunion?

Pat Bingham

This will be my 3rd Charlie Company Reunion and I can't wait! Three years ago when I was getting ready for my 1st reunion, I couldn't say the same. I had no idea what to expect, was afraid I wouldn't get to know anyone, and actually expected to be bored to tears all weekend. WRONG!!! I never touched the books I'd packed in my suitcase and left looking forward to the next reunion. Last year, we arrived one day early and this year, we plan to be there two days early.

Here's some of what you can expect at the reunion. The wives all seem to bond right away. There are usually several wives in the hospitality room and we will be watching for new attendees so we can make you feel welcome. We come from every walk of life, are all ages, and are scattered across the US. Yet, we leave all our differences at the door and feel very close to each other - you will too.

Many people wonder about the "Regional Snacks" we have in the hospitality room. Our first year, Mike and I had no idea what to bring, so we brought

nothing. That's okay too. However, it was so much fun tasting all the unique items that we couldn't wait to bring things to our second reunion. Some of the foods we've seen at the snack table are Moon Pies and RC Cola from Tennessee; Boiled Peanuts and Peach Cider from Georgia; Bourbon Balls and Ale 8 Soda from Kentucky; and much more. There is always plenty food.

If you worry about what to wear to the banquets, don't worry. We stay pretty casual and you will find a variety of outfits, from shorts to dress pants to Church dresses. Just come!! We don't care what you wear; we just want you there!!!

DUES

Our \$20 dues cover the time period of June 1 to May 31. This money is primarily used to print and mail the newsletters, pay for some reunion expenses and a few other minor expenses that occur during the year. A yearly financial report will be given at the reunion.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Do you have comments about the newsletter? Need information about our contacts or do you have information about other vets not on our list? Contact Dan Malin at (danielmalin@hotmail.com) --- 4136 Kenyon Avenue, Lorain, OH 44053 (440) 242-7664 or Mike Stinnett at (mike.stinnett@yahoo.com) or -- -319 Antioch Road, Clarksville, TN 37040 (931) 647-8917. The website continues to be updated. We have new photo albums, links to maps and to daily reports, and all previous newsletters and reunion reports.

Our Sympathy to... the family of John Barrows ('68) who passed away June 11, 2008 and to Joe ('68) & Vangie Grimes in the loss of their daughter, Veronica (45) who passed away January 26, 2009.

MEMORIAL DAY

In early May of 1969 I came across a stack of little red books at the PX in Ft. Lewis while processing for Vietnam. They were diaries... blank of course, waiting for you to write your story for the next year.

I purchased one and for the only time of my life, kept up with my story for almost one year. I have reread that story many times since then, usually at this time of the year. School would be out around Memorial Day and certain dates in life bring back memories. May 31 is one of those dates for me.

One of the guys mentioned several times in my diary is Duck Watters. Duck and I didn't know each other but arrived in country at the same time. We were assigned to second platoon but weren't in the same squad at first. At that time we had a four-man weapons squad in our platoon with two M-60's gunners and an assistant for each. Within a month or so I was the assistant to Pete Andrews and Duck later came to the squad to be James MacDonald's assistant after Ralph Moore left. From there on we were in the same squad and eventually carried the "pigs" until we got jobs in the rear. We came home together from Chu Lai to Cam Rahn Bay, Japan, Ft. Lewis, Washington; even flying to Chicago around midnight before he flew on to Ohio and I went to Nashville.

You would think our stories would be about the same for the year with all that in mind. We would be assigned to different squads for our daily "hikes" and the nightly "sleepovers" outside the company perimeter. However, talking about events these past few years has made me realize, although many things were the same, Duck's story is different.

For instance, on May 31 Duck's squad was walking point on the left flank and since he was being trained to walk point remembers being just behind Johnson who was walking point. Our squad must have walked point the previous "outing" since I remember being behind our Lt. and his RTO, Peanut and Collie, on the right flank. So close but neither of us knew what the other was seeing.

On September 15 we were going up the mountains to drop off a LURP team. Second platoon was walking point again but once more, I must have had the turn the day before and now my gun was walking drag for the company. That little bit of difference on where we were would make Duck's story that day very different from mine.

I thought of that a while, how two guys in the same place doing basically the same thing saw and

experienced things the other didn't. Where you were at a certain time made all the difference in the world in Vietnam. I don't have to tell you that... inches mattered sometimes. So I thought of our two stories, alike but different, just because of where we were in line. Then I realized there is actually a third story.

Tom Watson also came into Charlie Company and second platoon the same day as Duck and I, May 21st. Duck had gone to BASIC with him and they met up again before leaving Ft. Lewis. He would have gone home with Duck and me but his story had a different ending. I had gotten to know Tom too in the time before the May 31st. He was walking on the left flank when we pulled out the morning. I hadn't started walking yet when I saw him. I don't know why but I stuck my tongue out at him probably complete with a goofy face. He laughed.... it was a stupid thing to do on my part but I still remember the scene dimly with guys moving out and him grinning real big. Six or seven hours later I found out one of the bodies wrapped up in ponchos was Tom's. Duck

remembered he was a lineman for an electric company and was going to get married when he got home. So, unfortunately there is third story.... one that doesn't end "they lived happily ever after".

Events from forty years ago are getting faded now, faces are getting dim (thank goodness for picture albums) but it seems as if some of the good things have remained. I can still remember that smile; Earp always getting into something; Norman sharing goodies from home; and Heavy, a big guy from Houston with a big smile and a laugh to go with it. So each time I think of "my" story I am also remembering those who went through the same things I did and those who can not tell their story anymore. I am grateful good thoughts still remain of these men, both living and dead, who I consider a privilege to have known.

For a better tribute than this attempt, watch this online video: www.SteveAmerson.com/blades/