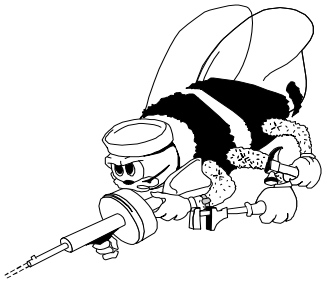


MCB 2 Reunion Association

Volume 10, Issue 3

May 30, 2014



SEABEES

A Newsletter for Former US Naval

Mobile Construction Battalion 2 Personnel

and host to CBD 1802, CBD 1804, CBMU 1, CBMU 101, CBMU 553 and CBMU 577

BRANSON!

Seabees Are Coming!

August 26-28, 2015

Start Making Plans!

Pete, Clorinda and I made a trip to Branson to search out the best location for our reunion and we think we have found it! See page 7 for pictures of the hospitality room. It is a separate house large enough for our hospitality room on one end and the meeting / banquet room on the other.

Rooms are located just a short walk away from the hospitality room and room rates are \$65 per night, single or double occupancy, with breakfast included! There is a wonderful morning stage show that is held in the same building as breakfast.

See Make Plans! (Continued on page 2)

ATTRACTIONS IN BRANSON

There are many excellent shows to enjoy in Branson and we will take advantage of three of them, two evening shows and one morning show. The evening shows are Dolly Parton's Dixie Stampede and the Legends in Concert in the Dick Clark American Bandstand Theater. The morning show is The Bretts, and for those with computers, check out thebrettsshow.com. This is a highly-charged, energetic show presented by the Brett family; father, mother, two sons and a daughter that pays tribute to the military and recognizes veterans in the audience. The show begins at 10:00 am, so will be a good fit right after break-

See Branson (Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1) *Make Plans!*

This is a must see show and we will have it as an available attraction.

We are putting our venue together, and we listened to you in Washington, DC. We are offering two evening shows and more time visiting with each other. The two shows are close to the motel and a shuttle is available. Put the dates Wednesday, August 26 thru Friday, August 28 on your calendar and start making plans. You might want to arrive a day or two earlier or stay a few days longer and enjoy Branson at the same room rates!

The Commander and Staff

Our leadership consists of:

**Commander
Pete Elliott**

Staff:

Paul D'Angelo
David Haines
Vic Jaccino
Don McLain
Rich Nelson, Vice Commander
Malcolm Pearson
John Petronka
Stoney Serrett, Commander Emeritus
Scott Williams, Sec'y/Treas./Publisher

See our web page:

<http://mcb2seabeereunion.com/>

(Continued from page 1) *Branson*

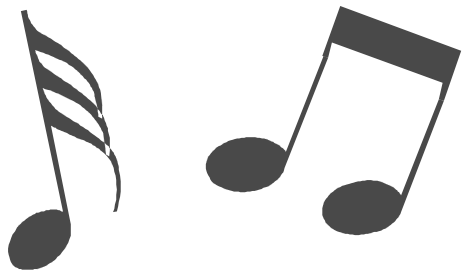
fast as it is in the same building as the breakfast restaurant. Couldn't be more convenient! Breakfast and a show! The evening shows are early evening and will give you plenty of time to enjoy the show and return to the hospitality room and visit with all your friends.

And, we will be able to provide our own beverage refreshments as we did in Washington, DC. So, we will have low-cost beer, wine, sodas, juices, water and snacks. More later on costs and plans. Just block out the dates on your calendar!

SEABEES

*June - September
Dates to Remember*

June 1, 1950	MCB 2 Commissioned.
June 4, 1942	Battle of Midway.
June 6, 1944	Seabees land at Normandy as Naval Combat Demolition Units.
June 15, 1944	Seabees land on Saipan.
June 25, 1950	Korean War begins.
June 29, 1952	MCB2 arrived at Cubi Point for first time.
June 30, 1943	Seabees land with 9th Marine Division, Solomon Islands.
July 4	Independence Day
July 25, 1956	Cubi Point NAS Commissioned.
July 26, 1944	Seabees land on Tinian.
Aug. 6, 1945	Bombing of Hiroshima.
Aug. 7, 1942	1st Marine Division lands on Guadalcanal.
Aug. 9, 1942	Battle of Savo Island
Aug. 9, 1945	Bombing of Nagasaki
Aug. 9, 1956	MCB 2 Decommissioned.
Aug. 11, 1942	USNCTC Camp Endicott, Davisville, RI commissioned 'Original home of the Seabees.'
Aug. 14, 1945	Japan accepts terms of Potsdam Declaration.
Aug. 20, 1942	OIC, 6th NCB, arrives at Guadalcanal; first CEC/Seabee Officer to enter a combat zone.
Sept. 1, 1939	Germany invades Poland. WWII begins.
Sept. 1, 1942	6th NCB Seabees arrive at Guadalcanal, first Seabees to enter a combat zone.
Sept. 2, 1945	Formal surrender of Japan. WWII ends.



Notes from our members:

From **Howard Cornwell**: I think I missed the Good Guy List. I'm sending a check including late charges [thanks]..... from **Vern (Nancy Ammentorp)**: Enclosed is a check for **Vern's** dues [thanks]. Also, he needs a couple American flags plus one white and one blue Seabee flags. Use the extra for postage or wherever you need it, Thanks and keep the interesting emails coming. We enjoy reading them..... from **Mary Henrichson**: Sure hope Spring is coming soon [and enclosed a check in memory of **Duane**]..... from **Mary Dick** [for all the Good Guys]: Not much to report here. **Chip** has started his 7th year of doing therapy visits. He will be 12 in May and I thank God he is doing so well for a big dog [Yellow Lab]. I'm still looking for a job in Jacksonville, Florida but the market is slow, probably because of the ineptitude in DC. Hope you and Rachel are staying warm and dry. What a crazy winter [Amen!]..... from **Ray Sorrentino**: I didn't see my name on the Good Guy List, so enclosed is a check for dues plus [thank you]. **Claire** and I enjoyed the Washington Reunion. You all did a fine job of it with rearranging tours because of the government shut down. I would also like to thank Mr. 'B', our tour guide. I hope we're all around to enjoy the Branson reunion..... received dues from **Ben Lally, Ralph Bokern, Joe DeFranco, Frank Mingo, Ron Howatson, Ballard Credeur, Ken Catchpole, Herb Liverman, Dwight Yetter, Dan Svendsen, Philip Brunelle**, [thanks all].....from **Jack Wilson**: I thought I had better pay my dues before I go into the St. Louis University hospital February 26 for another operation on my gums. The doctor is going to take out my last two upper jaw teeth as he found some more cancer there. He said I can be fitted with special dentures but that will probably cost a small fortune. This old Seabee will be 80 this October and my stinger has gotten a



little dull but I can still fly. Say a prayer for me as I need all the help I can get [you got it, **Jack**]..... from **Yvonne Fowler Meredith**: I so enjoy your Newsletters, the history is just amazing. There are so many different stories out there to be told. I keep hoping there still may be someone out there that may have known my husband CE3 **Robert (Bob) Earl Fowler**, who served with MCB 2 from March to August 1956 at Subic Bay. I have no information or names to go with this time frame. He was transferred to MCB 3 in August 1956 and left Port Hueneme October 25, 1956 with the Advanced Detail to Singly Point under Lt. Cdr. Manley until MCB 3's return to the states in July 1957. I did uncover another last name: **Romer**, who worked with him. I could have the spelling wrong, maybe **Ronver**. There also was a Mechanic Chief **McDowell** he had mentioned. You do have my email address and I do receive the email copy of the Newsletter. Thank you for all you do. It is much appreciated by us all. [a check was sent in memory of **Bob**]. [Contact **Yvonne** at pstar@ctaz.com]..... from **Jim Cain**: I appreciate your endeavors in keeping the group together [**Jim** sent a check for dues plus. Thanks]..... from **John Stock**: My check enclosed for dues and a little extra for whatever you need it for. Sorry we missed the reunion. **Mary** wasn't feeling good at the time and then had to have open heart surgery, so that really put a damper on things. She is doing fine now and hopefully will be fully recovered in the near future. By the way, can anyone tell me how to access the Memorial Brick Layout at the Seabee Museum? Supposedly, you can go on line and get a look at it. I asked the people at Gulfport about it and they referred me to the museum curator at Hueneme and she referred me back to the people at Gulfport for the info. Does this situation sound familiar to anyone? I would appreciate the info if anyone has it. Contact **John** at JohnMaryStock@gmail.com..... from **Ralph (Pat) Presson**: Sorry I'm late with the dues [you're not and thanks]. I'll do better next time as it is written on my calendar again.....from **Bert Helms**: Please put me back on the Good Guy List [done and thanks]. Forgot again. Served in both MCB 2 and CBMU 1..... from **Roy Peak**: My older brother sent me your note of February 14 and thanks for the compliment. When I visited him in 1985, he was putting together the mailing of class news and activities for his 1945 USCG Acad-



(Continued from page 3)

emy Class. Quite a task. Please take me off your mailing list. I looked thru the 19 February issue and could only make out the headings. I need, but don't have an enlarger and glaucoma is making me blind. I already use a white cane outside. Bummer



from **Duane Keech**: Thanks so much for keeping the Newsletter going. I really enjoy it. [Thank you! I have removed about 200 names for the mailing list but still mail about 300 Newsletters. This reduction in mailing has reduced the cost by about \$150 for each mailing but still runs about \$600 per issue, so all the added money sent really helps. When I first started this in October 1997, it cost \$1.11 per issue for printing and mailing a 22-page Newsletter. The last issue cost \$1.91 for each 16-page issue. I hope this explains it for all. Scott] The enclosed check is to get me back on the Good Guy List and whatever else that it is needed for [done! And thanks].....

from **Merle Schnepf**: It has been a long time since I sent in a check for dues. I still enjoy the Newsletter about MCB 2. I was in the P.I. and MCB 2 from 1954 to 1956. **John Boehme** (?) was there at the same time. I attended the reunion in Denver way back when. My wife and I have been so busy raising, training and showing English Cocker dogs that there seems to be a show every time there's a reunion. The sun is slowly going down on all the old MCB 2 members. Soon we will all be a memory. It was nice back then to be young and full of it, but times do change. [thanks for your check, **Merle**. Contact him at Schnepfecs@aol.com].....

from **Glenn Sisco**: Sorry I fell off the Good Guy List. It wasn't intentional, just plain forgot [yep, that happens and thanks for getting back on the list]. My check is enclosed, dues plus extra for the 'other things'. Hope all is well or at least as good as can be expected [all is well!]..... from **George Dorge**: My check for dues is enclosed [thanks]. Late as always and the Good Guy List was my reminder. Hope you got thawed out from winter [We did! Contact **George** at gdorge@embarqmail.com].....

from **Tony Marcella**: I was in MCB 2 in 1951 and in the Seabees until 1955. Enclosed is my check for dues [thanks]..... from **Chuck (Helen) McCabe**: Looks like it's time to check in with you again. Here's a

check for our dues [thank you]. Sorry we're late. We just got home from Yuma a week ago. As usual, we enjoyed our winter there. We get sunshine every



day there, even when it rains, which is not often. Our rain showers are very short, maybe 10 minutes and then the sun comes back. Now it's time to do some spring work before we head for Neale Bay to do our fishing. We go up the middle of April and fish for two weeks to a month. When we get back from there, its time to start planting the garden. We still put in a large garden and do lots of canning. We hope to get to the next reunion. We'll try real hard and hope to see you there..... from **Bob Marshall**: Sorry to be late with our dues as we were in California [thanks for the check]..... from **Claude Garcenot**: In accordance with our phone conversation, enclosed is my check for dues plus a bit extra for whatever is needed [thank you]. I would still like to receive my Newsletter by mail. Thank you again for the Seabee flag. I am looking forward to receiving it so that I can put it on the wall of my VFW Post. Keep up the good work,,,,, from **Frank Betonte**: I'm sorry I'm late with my dues. Enclosed is my check and a little extra to help out [thanks]..... from **Frank Castlevicchi**: Enclosed is my check in memory of my brother **Mike**. [thank you very much, **Frank**. You and **Mike** enjoyed our reunions and I remember when your plane had to land in Little Rock because of the World Trade Center terror attack and you drove on to San Antonio. You and **Mike** have been great supporters.] from **Ray Sorrentino**: When we were at K-6, we picked up Ted Williams' jet after he shot off the end of the runway into the rice paddies. Some of the guys flew on the same C-46 back to Japan with him. [See the story on page 6 about Ted Williams that I sent around to those on the Internet.]..... from **Bob Janson**: I enjoyed your email about John **Glenn** and **Ted Williams**. Both were stationed at K-3 at the same time I was there with CBMU 1/101. **Glenn** was originally posted to the Air Force base at Taegu but requested a transfer to K-3 to get experience flying the Panther jet fighter-bombers. I never met **Glenn** but I did play a softball game with **Ted Williams** in a Seabees versus Marines game. Also, with **Jerry Coleman** of the NY Yankees at second base. **Ted** was in the outfield, of course. Great experience! Another famous Marine pilot at K-3 was **Ed McMahan** (later with **Johnny Carson**) flying those little single engine "spotter" planes. Memories!..... from **Ken Chew**: I didn't see my name on the Good Gut List. You can put my name back on the list. Here's a check for dues [thanks]..... from **Rod-**



(Continued from page 4)

ney White: Enclosed is a check for dues and put the rest in the kitty as I know it is needed [yes, it is and thanks!]. I hope all had a good time at the DC reunion in October as I was unable to make it. Hopefully, next time..... from **Dave (Darla) Budworth:** We called **Stoney** last Sunday. He wasn't there but he called us back several hours later. We both got to talk to him and he was the same old **Stoney** as always. You sure wouldn't know he was 89! He told me he lived in a mobile home on his son's property and said he was going to live there the rest of his life. He said his son wanted him to stay. He talked about **Gladys** and how much he missed her. He still is as sharp as a tack. We were both so happy we were able to talk to him. He talked to **Dave** about the guys they know from MOB 2. I sure am he would like to hear from more of them..... from **L.P. (Pop) Burleigh:** Enclosed is a check for my dues [thanks]. I hope you and yours are well and doing just fine [we are and thanks]. **Estelle** and I are hanging in there, doing OK, not any new problems but enough of the old ones (LOL!). I see **Eugene** and **Jo McDonagh** are paying their dues. I tried calling them but I cannot reach them and I cannot get them on email either. We are supposed to have frost in the morning. I covered some of my tomato plants and I hope I don't lose them. We had a crazy winter this year [tell me about it!]. Hello to all of you out there. I hope everyone is doing good. I miss not going to the reunions I received a newspaper from **Stiles** and **Virginia Stevens** from the Virgin Islands. Lots of interesting news about Wounded Warriors and a Col. Ben Mitchell coordinated the Heroes in Paradise program. Lots of very interesting news about basketball programs and comradery among the Wounded Warriors..... from **Bobby McMillan:** I don't keep good records and I know that's not good as it sometimes comes back to bite me. I know I sent a check a few years ago and I suspect it's about time I upgraded my membership, so I'm enclosing another check to be sure I stay on the Good Guys List [you're still on!]. I'm 80 years old but I hope I have to renew again in the future [me, too!]..... from **Linda K. Elliott:** My father, **John T. Bober** Lt., USN, Ret. passed away on February 27, 2014. He was very proud of his 30 years of service in the Navy, as was his family. I kindly request that you discontinue sending the SEABEES Newsletter to his address.



God bless you and the women and men who serve our country now as well as those who served our country in the past..... from **Frank Castlevecchi:** Here is a check for the flags and thanks a lot from **Jack Wilson:** [**Jack** wrote an email asking for a couple T shirts] The T shirts are great! Thanks. Keep the extra for your trouble [thank you!]..... Well, that's all the letters for this issue. I appreciate all the letters sent and I try to publish all, or at least the portions you want published. Please make plans for August 26-28. We were able to get the best rates for that time and should be nice weather. It is a beautiful part of our country and I hope you can drive there, but, if not, there is an airport in Branson and a shuttle taxi is available. I will put the name of the hotel in a future issue but it is too early to contact them. We need to wait until after 2015 arrives. Thanks to all for helping to keep us publishing. Scott

Cletus and Billy Bob

Cletus is passing by Billy Bob's hay barn one day when, through a gap in the door, he sees Billy Bob doing a slow and sensual striptease in front of an old green John Deere.

Buttocks clenched, he performs a slow pirouette, and gently slides off first the right strap of his overalls, followed by the left.... He then hunches his shoulders forward and in a classic striptease move, lets his overalls fall down to his hips, revealing a torn and frayed plaid shirt.

Then, grabbing both sides of his shirt, he rips it apart to reveal his stained T-shirt underneath. With a final flourish, he tears the T-shirt from his body, and hurls his baseball cap onto a pile of hay.

Having seen enough, Cletus rushes in and says, "What the world're ya doing, Billy Bob?"

"Good grief, Cletus, ya scared the bejeebers out of me," says an obviously embarrassed Billy Bob. "But me'n the wife been havin' trouble lately in the bedroom d'partment, and the therapist suggested I do something sexy to a tractor."

(Don't make me come 'splain this to you! Read the last line again, slowly.)

Ted Williams

When asked to name the greatest team he was even on, Ted 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, would now be 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, to fly as his 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 were 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 matting 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.

Ted missed out flying combat missions during WWII 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 Bronston 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 1945. Seven years later, in December 1952, Ted was recalled to active duty as a Marine Corps fighter pilot in Korea.

I've reached the age
where happy hour is
a nap.

Who to contact about your dues

Scott Williams, Sec'y/Treas.
MCB 2 Reunion Association
725 Summer Ridge Dr.
Villa Rica, GA 30180
(770-456-4246)

e-mail: williash@aol.com

make checks payable to:
Scott Williams/MCB 2 (or CBMU 1, etc.)

Dues are \$25/year

(more, if you can)

January - December

This is what keeps us going
and enables us to send this Newsletter.

Web page: <http://mcb2seabeereunion.com/>



Above and below: The separate building that we will use for our hospitality room, meeting room and banquet. There are kitchen facilities between the rooms.



Our Fallen Comrades

- Chuck Adrianson Marine, K-3 4/1/2014
- John T. Bober MCB2 2/27/14
- Willard V. Cousins MCB 2 12/19/2013
- Milford P. Hollingsworth MCB 2 2013
- Ambrose R. Johnson MCB 2 5/9/2014
- Clyde A. Stenholm MCB 2 4/30/14

May they live on in our memories

NON SEQUITUR BY WILEY



All: I received this story some time ago and saved it to be used when I had space. I think this is a good time to put it in print. I am writing this Newsletter on Memorial Day, May 26, 2014 and thought this story was very appropriate. Can Do, Semper Fi and Keep 'em flying...

Scott

~~~~~  
The following is a little unknown part of the saga of the ending of hostilities known as the Vietnam War from an Air Force friend. Most are aware of the return of the POW's via the several timed airlifts out of Hanoi that became known as the "Hanoi Taxi". Another story and one that is earmarked by even more realistic sadness of the end events and retrieval of American heroes follows. Please read --- Dumpy

## The Hanoi Pick Up You Haven't Heard of Before

Some of you may know Jack O'Connor, who is the author of this missive. Frank and Ken, I know you knew him in the 48th ATS. Rick, Scott, Mike and Robert, you also know him, only as a neighbor at Hill AFB. Anyway, I thought you would all find this interesting. Tom

I'm sorry this has taken so long. I would be a great procrastinator if I ever got around to it!!

I've been toying for years about writing the full story, but just haven't done it. May still do it some day.

I'll give you a down and dirty version so I don't waste too much of your time.

A little background first: I had flown in and out of Hanoi twice before---flying out of U-Tapao AB, Thailand---with the peace negotiating team. Both times, we were ordered to wear civilian clothes and be nice to them. They took our pictures as we sat around a table for a briefing. The infamous "Rabbit" was in charge. At least that's who we thought it was. Big ears. They then took us to a hotel and fed us in a banquet room.

The food was delicious and we were ordered to drink their beer when offered. It didn't taste too bad and was only about 2-3% so the brass weren't concerned about us being able to fly afterwards. Then

they took us to museums---their War Museum on the first mission. They had parts of our warplanes that had been shot down and also showed us the gun where Hanoi Jane Fonda sat for that infamous picture. I don't know if it was the real gun or not---didn't matter---I think they just wanted a reaction.

They got none from any of us. We were allowed to take photos of certain areas. They wouldn't let us take pix of their rail marshaling yard which was full of bomb craters and wrecked engines---I got some anyway with my little Minox spy camera.

On the next trip they took us to the Peace Museum. Absolutely stunning!!! Lots of HUGE White Jade figures. A beautiful museum. Our bombs never got close to it. Strangely enough---they told us that the wrecked train yard was where they were fixing their engines. If you didn't know better, it could have looked true. There was not a single bomb crater outside of the yard. All buildings were intact!! A lot more happened there, but don't want to bore you with all the details. They were very proud of their many manhole covers in the sidewalks which they used to hide from our bombing raids. All three trips were interesting!!

Anyway, that was why I was chosen to lead a two ship formation to retrieve our Heroes. I just happened to be TDY at U-Tapao from Clark AB where I was stationed. That should set the stage. A little too wordy, but it should help you to understand my involvement.

I was one of only a few crew members on either plane to have been there before. Our Mission Commander was Col. Novas and we had a One Star on board with an open line to President Nixon. It was a fairly high priority mission.

After stopping in Saigon for a final briefing in Saigon, our two C-130E's (with augmented crews) left Tan son Nhut AB and went "feet wet" up the coast of Vietnam. We stayed about 30 miles off the coast so as not to bother anyone. We hit the mouth of the Red River and turned upstream toward our destination--- Gia Lam Airport just east of Hanoi.

We were encountering broken clouds which were getting worse. After going over Thuan Nghiep, the river straightens out considerably so I requested we drop to about 1500 ft so I could better make out the land-

(Continued on page 9)



*(Continued from page 8)*

marks---both on radar but mainly visual---when I could see the ground. I wasn't about to trust the radio aids from Gia Lam nor Hanoi. Before we descended, we could easily make out Hai Phong harbor on our radar about 40 miles to the Northeast so we were on track.

We made contact with Hanoi and advised them of our impending approach into their territory. This had all been pre-arranged, so no problem there. It was on up-river that they started screwing around with us and trying to subtly get us confused.

They were trying to get us lost and force us to abort the mission so they could say we caused an international incident by not picking up those who died in captivity when everything had been arranged. That's another reason I had been picked to lead. They tried to spoof us on earlier missions by moving the ADF and VORTAC ever so slightly to locations which would cause us to fly into restricted airspace. In fact, a crew a few weeks earlier bought the spoof and was threatened with a "shoot down" if they didn't abort the mission, so that made this mission even more critical. If you were watching closely enough, you could see the needles quiver a little each time they changed location. They were good at it though, so I had the other nav continually watch for that in case we lost visual or radar contact. I had my head out the front searching for ground fixes.

Then, they really tried to get us fouled up. The second plane was following closely, mainly by keeping us on their radar---depending on us to lead them in. Hanoi Approach Control called us and told us to take up a heading to final. The pilot started to turn and I virtually screamed into the mike "Negative, Negative--Maintain Heading". That was the first of three times they tried to get us to turn too soon. After the second time, Col. Novis told the pilot to ignore the tower and go by my direction only. I knew we were still about 30-45 miles out and they were doing their best to get us off course and lost in that bad weather with low ceilings and get us to an area with which we were not familiar. The weather was really bad---the cloud cover was closer to full than "broken". We would get a break in the undercast every mile or so. We descended to about 1000 ft which helped some.

Now---remember that bridge that they tried so hard

to take down during the war?? We lost a lot of Thuds & F-4's there. That bridge and a huge sand bar about 3 miles downstream were my aiming points. I was getting a little concerned when they weren't coming in view as fast as I thought they should. Guess I was just overly anxious. I checked radar and found both about 15 miles ahead. I alerted the pilot to be ready to turn and he relayed to #2 that we would turn in a couple of minutes.

Ground Approach had given up trying to get us to turn early after a few scoldings from them that we were ignoring their instructions. We did not answer. We descended a little farther so I could get a visual on both the sand bar and the bridge. I remembered where we had turned on my earlier approaches. We flew about 30 seconds past the sand bar, and with the bridge in sight, I told the pilot to turn to the appropriate heading---I seem to recall it was 335 degrees---but not sure now. Descent was begun and both planes broke out at about 750 feet. There it was ---right in front of us. I strapped myself in. The other aircraft radioed a "Talley Ho" so we knew everything was fine---or so we thought.

After we landed, Ground Control took over and marshaled us to the proper area to pick up the remains of our Guys. There were two green tents and they were having us come in and turn so that our prop wash would flow directly on the tents---probably blowing them away. Our Aircraft Commander called for neutral props and warned the second aircraft to do likewise. Both planes coasted in to a nice easy stop in the right place---I'm sure to the disappointment of the marshalling crews.

Col. Novas made the decision on the spot to set up an Honor Guard in front of each tent. This time, we were in our Class A's and were not under orders to associate with the enemy. We all felt better about that!! He sent us out two at a time at 15 minute intervals, Each pair did facing movements to relieve the previous pair as time dictated. The first pair at our tent was Col. Novas and our pilot.

The tent flaps were tied wide open. What the first set of Honor Guards---and ultimately all of us---saw was several stacks of green boxes with a rock on them with white painted names and dates. The sight was shocking and really ticked us off. Unfortunately, I do not remember any of the names. The boxes--- which in reality were coffins---were about 30

*(Continued on page 10)*

*(Continued from page 9)*

inches by 18 inches by 18 inches. It tore us up to think that our guys who had suffered so much were in those tiny green boxes. We all decided individually and as a team that the Vietnamese would never touch our fallen comrades again.

The Honor Guard rotation was maintained for well over two hours while the final release papers were being signed at their government offices in downtown Hanoi. Obviously, the North Vietnamese didn't know what to think of the Honor Guard. We saw the guys who had been our escorts on earlier trips. They smiled and waved at us. We glared back at them. Some civilians tried to get close to watch---they were chased back over the dikes by armed guards.

We were finally given the OK to load our precious cargo onto the waiting C-130's---their cargo ramps open, sat waiting. As the word came that we could begin returning our Guys to American Soil---in this case---our C-130's, the North Vietnamese moved in to begin loading. We immediately formed a cordon around the tents and, though unarmed, we motioned for them to stop and basically dared the armed Northern troops to try us. They stopped with a puzzled look on their faces---but never tried to cross the line. They had touched our Heroes for the last time.

It was early evening by then and the General was back by then and became part of our new makeshift Honor Guard---set up on both sides of the ramps. I was part of three pairs who tenderly picked up a "coffin" with its' "headstone" and proceeded up the ramp. Two more were inside the plane to place an American Flag over each man as he came on board. We exited thru the crew door to go retrieve another Hero. The General led the others on either side of the ramps in a "Hand Salute" as each box of remains passed on board. I don't remember exactly how many bodies we recovered---seems like 36---but each was treated with ultimate respect. We took our time to make sure all were properly honored. It took a considerable amount of time, but we didn't care. We did it right.

We finally all boarded and buttoned up the aircraft. As we were getting all four turning, I noticed the pilot had a wicked smile on his face. I listened on a discreet channel while he suggested to the other pilot to change pitch after they began moving and turn the planes so that the prop wash would now hit the tents

and the Vietnam officials and soldiers gathered around them.

The turn was smooth, slow and graceful until the Load Master gave the word. Suddenly eight turbo-props were at full forward pitch for about 3-5 seconds and brakes on. They changed the pitch back to the taxi setting but we got turned around in time to see the tents flying and some of the folks we left were on the ground. We received departure instructions from the tower and thus began an uneventful trip back to Saigon and on to U-Tapao to the Identification folks stationed there. The General informed President Nixon that extraction had been completed successfully.

Further ID would be performed at Hickam AFB as necessary. Our Heroes were taken to Hickam AFB by C-141's. I have talked to many people about this extraction of our Fallen Comrades---and to a man---they thought that the C-141's did the entire mission. I hope someone will set the story straight someday. In fact, I have never seen anything about C-130's being involved with the extraction of the first of those who died in captivity. Believe me---I know they were!! I may have missed some story about it because I had to get busy for my PCS stateside the next month. I have never heard anything about that mission since.

Well, Bill, that's about it. As I said, a lot more little things happened on all three trips---even some funny things on the first two, but that third mission was the best thing I ever did in my 24 year USAF career. Sorry to be so wordy, and focused on "I" & "me", but I'm not sure how else I could tell it with any conviction.

PS: Somehow, I forgot to turn in my log and charts from the mission, and no one else thought about it. I had them for a long time, but they disappeared---probably on my move to CO from AL. I sure wish I could find them again!! They are really historical documents.

I did meet a woman at one of our OCS reunions whose husband was onboard that day. I was completely speechless as she thanked me.

Signed off,  
Jack O'Connor

# *The Good Guy List*

**For 2014**

Allan Alberg, Vern Ammentorp, Basil Arnold, Pat Badgett, Hank Bentsen, Daniel Beran, Frank Betonte, Ralph Bokern, Alexander (Cat) Borys, Philip Brunelle, L.P. 'Pop' Burleigh, Robert Bowdler, Don Bradley, David Budworth, Wayne Bulgerin, Jim Cain, Pat Carey, Ben Carlson, Ed Carlson, Ken Catchpole, Frank Chambers, Chuck Chapman, Ken Chew, Bob Colquhoun, Howard Cornwell, Ballard Credeur, Pat Cunningham, Paul D'Angelo, Joe DeFranco, Jim DeKeyser, Tony DeLeon, Ted Devit, Mary Dick (for all the Good Guys), George Dorge, Tom Dowd, Howard Doyle, Bob Elder, Pete Elliott, Doug Emond, Richard Farbo, Richard Forster, Jack Foster, Claude Garcenot, Robert Gardner, Bob Graf, Jim Green, George Gustin, Gordon Gwathney, Pauline (for Charlie) Hagemann, David Haines, Roger Hamilton, Ruth (for Alex) Hamilton, Roy Harris, Bob Hart, Frank Hayes, Ralph Heitt, Bert Helms, Mary (for Duane) Henrichson, Wayne Heple, Althea (for Gerald) Herr, Bob Hoare, Ray Hooter, Ron Howatson, Charles Ingalls, Vic Jacchino, Mal Jaeger, Bob Janson, Sharon (for Larry) Jessop, John Jurkash, Chuck Kangas, Duane Keech, Les Keller, Yung Hark Ketels, Denise King (for her Dad, Don Truskey), Bill Knight, Betty (for Emil) Krygier, Ben Lally, Ron Landrum, Thomas Lightbody, Herb Liverman, Charles Loeffler, Dale Lundstrom, Ivan Majetic, David Manley, Tony Marcella, James L. Marshall, Bob Marshall, Charles McCabe, Gene McDonagh, Don McLain, Bobby McMillan, Yvonne Fowler (for Bob Fowler) Meredith, Charles Minert, Frank Mingo, Gary 'Mitch' Mitchell, Bill Morin, Pat Morris, Paul Muma, Rich Nelson, Opal (for Paul) Neusetzer, Don Nitsche, Joe O'Brien, Al Olsen, Don Pastell, Mal Pearson, John Petronka, Ralph Presson, Sam Ragua, Bob Rasmussen, Gary Rawlings, Gerry Rice, Gene Robinson, Dale Rogers, George

Rosenvold, Tom Roy, C. Edner Rudolph, Paul Schell, Merle Schnepf, Jack Schrader, Stoney Serrett, Dick Sim, Glenn Sisco, Joe Sitkowski, Richard Skillicorn, Ray Sonnen, Ray Sorrentino, Gene Staples, Tom Stapleton, Clyde Stenholm, Lucy (for Lee) Stevens, Stiles Stevens, Larry Stevenson, John Stock, Willis Struecker, Dan Svendsen, James Taylor, William C. "Pete" Taylor, Richard Tittle, Judy (for Richard) Todd, Wayne Turley, Dick Walters, Bud Wheless, Rodney White, John Wilborn, Marshall Williams, R.G. 'Pete' Williams, Scott Williams, Bill Wisnowski, Gladys (for Jim) Womack and Dwight Yetter.

Everyone listed here has their dues paid at least through 2014, some much longer. If you don't find your name on this list, then maybe you have forgotten to send in your dues recently. All dues are paid through the calendar year, January 1 through December 31 (no dues card sent out). This list is as of May 26, 2014. There are currently 149 paid up members through 2014 from a mailing list of 295. If dues have not been sent for at least four years, they do not receive the Newsletter. There are 704 names on the full member roster (21 pages).

The Newsletter is sent primarily by email. If you have an email address and are not receiving the Newsletter by email, please send an email to Scott at willias@aol.com (SW)

**A clear conscience is usually  
the sign of a bad memory.**

## **Need a Membership Roster?**

If you have a need for an up-to-date membership roster, drop me a line with a couple of bucks and I'll send you one. We currently have 713 names and addresses of former CBD 1802, CBD 1804, CBMU 1/101, CBMU 577, and MCB 2 personnel, so this is a pretty thick directory (22 pages). Glad to have all aboard! And, if you would like a directory sorted by ZIP numbers, let me know. You can see who lives close to you or use it when you travel. And keep sending those cards and letters – especially the ones with checks!

Scott Williams

**MCB 2 Reunion Association, Inc.**

c/o Scott H. Williams  
725 Summer Ridge Dr.  
Villa Rica, GA 30180

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
LAS VEGAS, NV  
PERMIT NO. 6055

*Return Service Requested*

We're the **SEABEES** of the Navy

