

USMC Class 38th OCC/BC 3-66 Alumni Profiles



Fred T. Frey

Date: April 25, 2011
Nick Name: Fred
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Co. & Platoon OCS: Capt Abele
Co. & Platoon TBS: D2
MOS: 0302
Rank: Captain

After leaving Quantico: A month of leave spent in Pennsylvania; then to Vietnam.
July 1966 – August 1967

Vietnam Tour:

Attached To: 3rd Bn, 7th Marines

Jobs in Nam: Platoon Commander of Lima 1; XO of Kilo 3/7

Locations in Nam: Chu Lai; 3/7 operating west of Rt. 1 and north of Song Tra Bong River; DMZ for Operation Prairie; Dai Loc area, SW of DaNang; South of Quang Ngai for two months

Operations in Nam: Prairie and Desoto. Several smaller ones

Experiences to Share:

Best:

I had a black platoon sergeant, SSgt Randal Walker (KIA on Desoto), and because of that, the company first sergeant sent many black Marines to first platoon...my first real interaction with African Americans. We played a football game in a rice paddy below Hill 10 near DaNang, blacks against whites. Played for over two hours; viscous tackle game with local villagers cheering both sides...final score 7-7. I can't imagine playing a game like that in any other venue. The dependency on each other and the shared sense of duty and adventure have never been duplicated in civilian life.

Worst:

Losing six men on Desoto and realizing that I could have made different decisions that might have changed the outcome. Quantico did not teach us everything. Neither best nor worst of my experiences, but a significant one, was the night the first rockets were fired by the NVA at DaNang Air Base. The rockets were fired in my platoon's TAOR at Hill 10 though my platoon was away on an operation in Arizona territory at the time. We were helilifted back to Hill 10 in the early AM and we quickly found the rocket launch sites, just outside a "friendly" village which we had not been allowed to patrol. All we found were charred pits and from that point we could see the smoke rising from the air strip six miles away. From that day a major mission of the Marines was to try to secure the "rocket belt". You've got to admit, our enemy was tenacious and pretty damn good.

Favorite Memories:

After Service:

Delivering my daughter, Rosemary, at home when the midwife didn't get there in time. Seeing my oldest son happily married and all my

children grow into ethical, caring and interesting people. Taking trips with Anne, some of which have been facilitated by these reunions. I enjoy golf, even though coming in last at the Quantico course four years ago!

Jobs:

In Service:

Camp Lejeune 2/2 where I met Sam McClenchie, Chuck Hendricks and others. Did a Med Cruise aboard APA Monrovia and then was CO of troops at Little Creek where we trained ROTC and Naval Academy Midshipmen in riverine and amphibious operations. Was also the only officer on 2/2's 8-man tackle football team in 2nd Marines league.

After Service:

After getting out in Jan. 1969, went to Europe for five months with Barry Lyngard. Then to graduate school at U of MD where I saw close-up the other side of the Vietnam War, the protestors and campus turmoil. How did our country survive the 60's? Did odd jobs and then settled down as a part-owner of a swimming pool company in Arlington, VA...still at it. Married Anne in 1974, divorced her and then, after five years, we remarried and are living happily ever after.

Other Comments:

At OCS Capt. Abele was the CO and Sgt's Maute and Martin were drill instructors. At TBS I roomed with Mark Haiman and shared suite with Mike Eposito and Randy Erickson. These reunions have been an opportunity to renew friendships and make new friends. I very much appreciate the hard work that many have done to make the reunions happen. As the years go by, my three plus years in the Corps loom larger and larger in my bank of memories. It was not a

time of fun and games, and most of it was serious stuff, but I grew up in the Corps. I owe a lot to those I served with including each of you.

Returned to Vietnam in 2008 with Sam McClenchie, Dave Wall, Dave Mellon, Steve Hines, Mitch Vickers and Chuck Sooter. Marvelous tour of old battlefields and Hanoi. Loved the country and the people. Almost nothing physical remains to show we were there. Finished up with a fascinating trip out to Dien Bien Phu. If you get the chance, go back and see what Vietnam has become. "The older we get, the better we were!"