



POST SOLANT AMITY

And the Members of "G" Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Marine Regiment



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Two Years and Much Progress

It was nearly two years ago that efforts began in earnest to find the former members of the Third Platoon, G-2-6-2.

A short piece about the capture of the Santa Maria written on the website for the USS Gearing, prompted Trevor Davies to reach out to its author. Then a lead provided access to Ron Smith. Thought was given to initiating a website. That done, a serious search was begun to find the balance of the "Lost Platoon."

You could not begin to imagine the number of people contacted and the various means used to reach out to those of us that have been found, thus far. Hundreds of leads were obtained from the former crew of the Gearing, from internet searches, from old newspaper stories, ex-wives(!), mothers and daughters. All leads were followed.

Several hundred phone calls were made and, when finally found, each member was questioned about the possibility of their having additional knowledge that would help us find still more of

us. Sadly, on occasion, our inquiries proved painful, as was the case when learning of the probable...later confirmed... death of John Hynes, in New York.

Slowly, the list of former members of 3-G-2-6, sought after and found, grew. In addition to learning about the whereabouts of 13 members of the Third platoon, contact has been made with Dick Landry from the Second platoon and Ed Hart from the First.

Late last year, George Bitsoli came onboard. Seated at his California based computer, he proceeded to search God only knows how many chat rooms and ships' registries. Emailing sailors and jarheads alike, he found still more leads and historical records that helped to put more of those times we shared together in clearer perspective.

Included among the contacts was a former Gunnery Sergeant LaMarr, who had been assigned to helicopter unit HMR-264 Sub-Unit I on the LSD Hermitage. LaMarr was sitting on a goldmine of photos taken just prior to



Greens with Fourragere — Frank Schmidt & Joe Teklits, on liberty in Rota, Spain 1961...along with you.

and during Solant Amity I. Most of those photos were added to your website, at solantamity.com.

If you haven't been there for a while, you might want to check it out. It contains more than 35 megabytes of platoon information, photos and history.

And Marine, that is one hell-of-a-lot of "stuff."



Grant the wish of a child with a life-threatening medical conditions. Donate to your local chapter of the Make-a-Wish Foundation.

"Battle Cry" and the author that changed your life

It was fifty years ago that a book written by Leon Uris started rearranging the brain cells of many later providing the manpower for G-2-6.

Uris, born August 3rd in 1924, a high school dropout in the middle of his senior year, joined the Corps shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, in December 1941.

He served as a radio operator during the Guadalcanal and Tarawa campaigns. At one point, he was hospitalized in San Francisco for malaria. There he met and subsequently married a Marine

sergeant, Betty Beck, in January 1945.

Though initially unsuccessful, he persisted in his writing efforts despite, or perhaps because of, three times failing a high school English course and receiving an untold number of publishing house rejection slips.

In 1950, he began work based on his WWII experiences, which you may not have known were with the 2nd Battalion of the 6th Marines.

Published by G.P. Putnam's Sons in 1953, "Battle Cry" was a commercial success. And, it was a

success because it was so uplifting and patriotic when compared to the war epics provided by the likes of Norman Mailer, James Jones and Irwin Shaw.

Subsequent successes included: "Mila 18," "Exodus," "Topaz," "Trinity" and "QB-VII." And, his more recent and last novel, scheduled for October release, "O'Hara's Choice," is a love story involving Marine Corps history. Thus, his first and last literary novels were USMC related.

Uris Died on 21 June 03. He was 78 years old.

Youthful Exuberance

Day and night, the converted WWII carrier, USS Boxer, steamed back-and-forth off the coast of Cuba. It was still two years before the Missile Crisis but the political tensions seemed ripe for just about anything.

Troops of the 2nd Battalion, 6th Marines spent their time doing what infantry do aboard ships of the gator fleet: little to nothing. One eats, sleeps, cleans ones body, rifle and compartment then mopes about the ship, sucking on cigarettes and comparing sea stories with other Marines about the shore side conquests of the last port of call. Many, being little more than 18 years old, could not have cared less about events worldwide or even so close as Castro's Cuba. We were a legion of "what, me worry?" teenagers with a lot of firepower.

One fine day in 1960, while the twelve-hundred or so troops began their scheduled and patient wait on the chow line, the shrill sound of a boson's whistle blared over the ship's PA system. There followed an announcement declaring that the sailors and Marines onboard were to become part of a major effort to assist in the evacuation of American citizens from Cuba. The roar of blind approval exceeded the decibel level of the PA system and the Marines disassembled, the ladders and passageways clearing of the hungry masses.

Returning to the abyss of the troop compartment, it was necessary at times to pass through the tidy quarters of the ship's crew. There, the off-duty component of sailors had, nearly to a man, taken to writing notes to mom, pop and Peggy-Sue about the pending conflict in which we were all soon, fer' dang sure, destined to find ourselves engaged.

When reaching the crowded, stiflingly hot bowels of the ship, one saw Marines sitting cross-legged on steel decks amidst seabags and boundless paraphernalia, silently cleaning their weapons, sharpening bayonets and K-bars, with nary a pen nor piece of paper to be seen.

Marines ARE different.

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See the whole story at:
SolantAmity.com

The First Marines in Monrovia

The Good, the Bad and the Inspirational

Investigating the whereabouts of so many long gone from the radar screen "ain't" easy. But that is not to say that the search has not been fun and filled with moments sometimes sad and, at others, best defined as outstanding. Then, there have been those with mixed emotional impacts. After all, forty years provides ample opportunity to furnish anyone of us with a fair amount of losses and rewards.

Two of those tales on the downside have to do with John Hynes of the 3rd Platoon and Harold A. Moore of the 1st. Both police officers [Hynes from NYC and Moore being part of Boston's S.W.A.T. Unit] died off duty, more than 25 years ago. The first died in an auto accident and the second of a heart attack, during a morning workout.

Stories with mixed blessings include those of Gary Fusco, Amadio DeBonaventura and, former 2nd Squad Leader, Delwin E. Bailey. Mixed because we know what happened to these three men up to only certain points and once again they went off the radar. Gary moved to California, married, had two children, owned two ice cream parlors and the trail cooled as of 1995. DeBo, whom I thought would assuredly appear on at least one episode of the Sopranos, well, his trail disappeared after we learned that he had been a cop in Philadelphia, retired in 1987 and was still collecting a pension in 2002. And, then, more recently, I learned that Bailey was likely the same Delwin E. Bailey that served as a Gunnery Sergeant, near Hue, Vietnam in 1969 with the Headquarters Unit of CACO 3-4. An

incredible amounts of time and effort have been spent in following up leads on all three of these men, as yet, to no avail.

Then there are the inspirational finds: Charlie LaMarr, retired career Marine and former member of the Helicopter Unit on the Hermitage and virtual historian of the 60's and Nam era; and, Edward Hart, who, aside from being a 1st Platoon Squad Leader with "G" Company, is also a retired career Marine and veteran of three tours in Nam. Because of LaMarr's experiences and his incites into the military and political machination of the republic [aka: United States] and his outstanding slide collection depicting the Solant experience, his efforts are portrayed as part of a

"If I'd been born two hundred years ago, I would have been a pirate"

dedicated collection on the website. Which, now, leaves me with the need to discuss the last listed "character," if you will.

Ed Hart, who was 69 on 17 Aug 03, has had at least one major achievement that few EVER manage to experience, no matter what their age.

In 1995, Ed Hart, at the age of 61

set out on a greater than three year journey with a 29 foot sailboat on an astonishing single-handed effort AROUND THE WORLD. In doing so, he touched upon 22 nations, among them: the Marshall Islands, Guam, Palau, Sri Lanka, Maldives Islands, Chagos, Seychelles Islands, Kenya, Zanzibar, Mozambique, Durban, Cape Town, St. Helena, Ascension Island, Brazil, Trinidad, Venezuela, Bonaire and Costa Rica. At one point, he was run down by a 19,000 ton, 600 foot cargo ship, which caused injury to him and substantial damage to the mast support system, pulpit and the hull. On another occasion, he awoke to find what was clearly the sound of water filling what was supposed to be the dry side of the hull. His propeller shaft had worked its way loose, requiring him to take an unplanned swim in the Indian ocean, no less than 1000 miles from land, in order to reset and repack the prop shaft. After but slowing the leak, he made one very long trek to Sri Lanka for repairs.

The entire story can be retrieved from the website, on a new page soon to be dedicated to members of G-2-6 not of the 3rd Platoon.

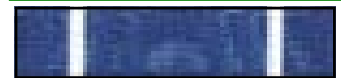


Hart, after 52 days at sea

Mailed as a black on white copy, a fully colorized version will be found at our website, where on page one you will find a link to a downloadable version.

I hope you've enjoyed this first effort. Send in your stories by e-or- snail mail to make for an even better next issue.

Semper Fi; Ed Shea



For those wondering what the ribbon posted in the upper right side of the first page was, it is the United Nations Medal Ribbon... one of which you rate but will never receive

Expectations for Future of Both the Newsletter and Website

More than forty years have passed since most of us have seen even one other member of G-2-6. In addition, there has been a great deal of history simultaneously lost because of fading memory and gained through our collective life-experiences since departing one another's company in 1962.

Some argue that the events of so long ago hold little value. But they do. The children and grandchildren of our membership have told me so. They've explained to me that finding the things they did in the pages of the Solant Amity website about their fathers and "grandpa" has helped them to feel closer to men whom they sometimes felt were a bit distant or aloof.

And, for the website to have accomplished that no small miracle,

I am grateful.

Yet, I feel that within our balding heads are still more events of those so very long ago not yet drawn from our memories or, if remembered, that have not been talked of or written down. I'd like to learn of them and "put 'em to print" for you., for our families and for those who share an interest in those times.

If you dare to think that there is little to write about, I ask that you pause and reflect for a just one second after reading each of the following terms: enlistment, boot camp, barracks and shipboard conditions, shore liberty, mess duty, field conditions and training, unusual personalities, discipline, helicopter take-offs & landings, Vieques, Recife, Immediate Standby, M-1 versus M14

or M16, cargo net versus Amtrak landings, beginnings of Smith's radio career...compliments of the US Navy. If what happened to me has happened to you, you began having thoughts of things I would like to put in this newsletter and subsequently on our internet website.

EVERYONE has one or more stories. Please, share them.

You may have returned to a former location assignment: PI, Lejeune or Quantico. Or, perhaps to a ship you were once on, we certainly shared plenty. Or, perhaps, like amateur archeologists Debra and Dave Beraudo, you've visited some place like the Code-Talkers Museum on the Navaho reservation. Whatever, wherever: please help by sharing the tale with us all.