

**MARINE FIGHTING SQUADRON-311**

**MARINE ATTACK SQUADRON-311**

**THE FIGHTIN' 311 TOMCATS**

**SEPTEMBER 2009 EDITION**

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**TOMCAT HISTORY PROJECT**

I was concerned, when I started the project, that I wouldn't be able to collect a lot of information about the early beginnings of the squadron but boy I was mistaken! The 1942-46 guys really chipped in and contributed a great deal of photos and information about that time period. As the info came in and as I read individual stories I could see the squadron evolving from its earliest beginnings and that was very exiting reading.

I can't say that without mentioning the names of the Marines who sent me the information and personal accounts. The first packet I received was from Rendol Whidden from Winter Haven, FL which contained, among many photos, a working roster of everyone assigned to VMF-311 on 1 December 1943. There are many names on that roster that are or have been on my roster. This roster was copied and given to all those 311 reunion attendees in the early 90s and now I have a copy to put into the history book. Elizabeth Barrett, Virginia Beach, VA, widow of Corsair pilot Raymond Barrett, sent me copies of official USMC news releases that recorded his shoot down of Japanese planes over Okinawa and original photos of Corsairs and a squadron newsletter "VMF-311 On Okinawa". Don Moler from Mt. Orab, Ohio, sent me a copy of his complete time in the military that he wrote for his family. He was one of the first 311 Tomcats. Ray Bowers, Luckey, Ohio is also one of the original squadron members and sent me his recollections joining the Marines and being assigned to 311 just before they shipped out to Wallis Island. Bob Leavengood, Ft. Pierce, FL, joined the squadron in November 1944 on Roi Namur and was assigned in the engineering section and sent a picture of everyone in the engineering section at Chimu, Okinawa. Ron Birchler, Venice, FL, sent pictures and gave an account of the April 1, 1945 landing on Okinawa. George Zaborowski, Parma, OH, called me and relayed information about him and Clayton Cushman being part of the original group that formed at Page Field.

I'm confident that the list will go on. You Marines from the 1942-49 are a valuable part of the squadron history and your stories need to be preserved not only for your families but for the future generations of Tomcats. I sincerely thank all of you that have contributed thus far and ask you to "keep 'er coming!"

Gaines Davis, Fernandia Beach, FL, sent me a group picture of, what I gather, a group of pilots standing in front of an A-4 April 11-15 1960. All the names are written on the photo. Names that I recognize are Col. Rushlaw, Gustafson (I think he was with the squadron in Chu Lai in 67) and Cornish (that might be Lou Cornish). Thanks Gaines, this will go in the 1960-69 books.

I've expounded quite a bit on the early days of the squadron but I don't want to take away from the

importance of later years from 1950 to present. You Marines who served under the TOMCAT logo have a bond not only as Marines but being a part of the best fixed wing outfit in the Corps history. Write it down, dupe your pictures and we'll preserve it. Thanks TOMCATS!!!

**Tomcat Fact: July 1970: With reduction in 1<sup>st</sup> MAW forces, 311 moved to Da Nang but despite the additional work, the ordnancemen loaded 1,082 tons of explosives and the 50,000 combat hour was logged.**

2.

#### **NEW ALUMNI**

**BURNS, ARTHUR L.**                **7090 E. 30 ¾ Rd., Cadillac, MI 49601-9116; 231-468-2238**  
**[albplb@chartermi.net](mailto:albplb@chartermi.net); 1978-82; El Toro, West Pac:**  
**Aviation Data Analyst.**

#### **ADDRESS CHANGES**

**CATCHING, EMILY**                **101 Lakeway Court, Cary, NC 27511; 919-460-2898**

**HERBER, JACK**                **4113 76<sup>TH</sup> Ave. NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98335-6265**

**MENDENHALL, CLINT**                **2501 Nottingham St. NW, Massillon, OH 44646-2737**

**WOLTMAN, CLYDE COL.**                **7318 Churchill Rd., McLean VA 22101; 703-692-4327**

#### **EMAIL CHANGES**

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**WOLTMAN, CLYDE COL.**                **[clyde.woltman@usmc.mil](mailto:clyde.woltman@usmc.mil)**

#### **TAPS**

<b>BARRETT, RAYMOND</b>	<b>Virginia Beach, VA, 9 Feb 2009; Corsair Pilot, Roi Namur, Okinawa</b>
<b>CATCHING, FRED</b>	<b>Raleigh, NC, 18 Feb 2009; 1960-61 El Toro, Avionics; Also served in WWII And Korea.</b>
<b>CROWE, JOHN T.</b>	<b>Yuma, AZ, 10 August 2009; K-3 Po Hang 1954</b>
<b>MCKEEVER, ROBERT</b>	<b>Lisbon, OH (no other info)</b>

(Names will be read at the memorial service at Reunion 2010.-jg)

### **DONATIONS**

Monetary donations since the last newsletter: Elizabeth Barrett, Virginia Beach, VA; Joel Williams, Lykens, PA; and Don Moler, Mt. Orab, OH. Thanks Marines!!

***TOMCAT FACT: 10 Dec 1950: LTC Neil MacIntyre and Major William Crowe, flying CAS for the 8<sup>th</sup> Army marked the first time Marine Corps jet aircraft had been used in combat.***

3.

### **LOST IN THE MAIL**

<b>HARNETZ, MIKE</b>	<b>LKA Florissant, MO</b>
<b>TIERNAN, TERRY</b>	<b>LKA Spring Hill, FL</b>

### **SEARCHING FOR INFO....**

I posted this list in a prior newsletter and filled in a lot of blanks but am still looking for some. I have on record obviously your name and address. I also record the years you were with 311, where was 311 when you were with it and what your job was or is in the squadron or group attached to the squadron or MAG. Some names I'm missing all the info, some only parts of it so if your name is here call me, send me a letter or email me and I can get the rest of the blanks filled in: Mike Berger, Chet Bigalow, Jim Booth, Warren Bragg, Don Checksfield, Clinton Collins, Lou Cornish, Philip Corral, Ried Dahart, Billy Dale, Rod Daley, Jack Dalton, Tommy Dobsch, Bill Finnigan, Ernest Gilbert, Tony Golas, Joe Gregorcyk, Milt Griffin, Walt Grist, Bill Hall, Chuck Harris, Joe Henry, Ernie House, Jack Hoxie, Barry Ickes, Chuck Ingle, Dewey Jackson, Wade Kelly, George King, Ed Kroyer, Tom Lackovic, Col. Robert Lewis, Carl Loysen, Dan Lutty, Jack Mattos, Speed McLean, Clint Mendenhall, Brian Mendouca, Diane Murdock, Jim Navies, John Outhout, James Panknin, Lou Pashby, Bernard Quinn, Alvin Ransom, Jack Reed, Mat Rielly, Bill Sammut, Millard Savage, Rich Serfilipi, Conrad Skow, Bill Smorey, John Smyth, Paul Soucy, Bob Sprunck, Al Tedeschi, Tom turner, Terry Tiernan, Ken Urban, Jack Vancil, Norm Von Allmen, Bob Wheaton, and Howard Worman.

Typing the list I feel a little like a dummy because I've known a lot of these names and spoke to many of them over the years and the info I may have buried back in the early newsletters and haven't dug out yet. Some of you may know or served with some of the guys on this list, that would work also.

## **LET'S HEAR FROM THE TROOPS.....**

**GABRIAL GERSTEL, SAN JOSE, CA:** "Just letting you know again, that I am not a 311 Alumni Marine. I was with squadron 124 and the first squadron to fly Corsairs off of a carrier, the USS Essex. I was not a pilot. I was a mechanic and the Navy called us plane captains.

James Kommandat and I were in the same platoon (32) at Parris Island. He ended up with 311 and I with 124. We wrote a few letters to each other after the war. I asked him if he went to his reunions and he said that he didn't know they had them. At that time I was getting the Leatherneck Magazine also the American Legion Magazine and one day I was going through one of them and there was an article about 311 having a reunion. I wrote to him and told him of the article and at the same time wrote to you to send him the reunion info. I don't know if he attended any or not. He lived in Painsville, Ohio and passed away many years ago.

I am 84 years old now and have missed my last three reunions. I don't like getting old. I suggest you take me off your roster to save the paperwork, stamps and other moneys involved.

Jim, I appreciate all the hard work to keep all the reunions going all over this country. Thank you and God Bless you all."

(I don't remember ever talking to Jim Kommandat after Gabe contacted me years ago. I know that he never made one of our reunions and that he passed not long after that. He was in one of the pictures that Rendol Whidden included in his packet. There is a camaraderie between squadrons in the Corps and most of us, regardless of time spent on active duty, spent time in other squadrons and I believe Marines who were in aviation enjoy reading about Marine aviation. Doesn't really make any difference what squadron. We have Marines on our roster from other squadrons and groups including our brothers the "Mud "Marines. So Gabe, if it's alright by you, I'll keep you on the mailing list and hope you enjoy the newsletter-jg)

**TOMCAT FACT: 14 January 1953: LTC Arthur Adams led the first F9F-5 combat mission. During WWII in the Northern Solomons he earned 3 Distinguished Flying Crosses and 13 Air Medals.**

4.

**ARTHUR BURNS, CADILLAC, MI:** "I had an odd curiosity come over me tonight and typed in "VMA-311" on my search engine and found your web site. I served with many commands during my 25 years in the Corps and VMA-311 was the best squadron I served with. I hope that my bio information is complete for us "old guys" that were a part of VMA-311's history. I look forward to hearing more about the squadron and the men that served in the unit and where they are now."

**LYLE PROUSE, STOCKBRIDGE, GA:** "I was just looking through the last TOMCAT mail out and saw the letter from M.C. (Tex) Butler of Hedwig, TX. He mentioned that I was his OIC in Chu Lai. Tex was one of the very finest NCOs I ever had the pleasure of working with. I've been in touch with his counterpart in the attached hydraulic shop, Sgt. Ed Hill, for several years and both he and Tex were just outstanding gents who made me look good even though I knew absolutely nothing about airframes or hydraulics.

When I got my first air medal I tried to bribe them to continue keeping me out of trouble by giving one the medal and the other the ribbon. It worked.

Over the Memorial Day period this past may, my wife Barbara and I were invited to MCAS Kaneohe to take part in a dedication ceremony renaming the air station "Carl Field" in honor of MGen Marion Carl. It was a touching ceremony, complete with all the precision of Marine events, goose bumps from the Marine band and the stirring marches, and that special "something" that speeds up the heart and reinvigorates the blood during such occasions.

We stayed at the base four nights and as I watched all the base activities it was a case of sweet nostalgia, flashing back to my days as a young marine and all the times in decades spent abroad various bases. What a gift we all share as Marines; no other service comes remotely close!

Thanks for all you and the others do to keep 311 alive. I hope to someday make a reunion if it's ever

moved out of my opening day deer season time.”

**PHILLIP CHILDERS, ROCKPORT, TX: (NEPHEW OF TOM FRENCH, CORPSMAN WWII):** I thought you might enjoy my Uncle's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday present. I found a WWII “Hell's Belles” patch and received it today. I have forwarded it to him to put on his new jacket. The 311 patch on the jacket was from the Viet Nam era but he didn't care, he was very happy. His comment was “Well it's about time!” there were people there from 100 to teens. A lot of history. WWII underwater team member who said his job was to blow islands off the face of the earth. Viet Nam Marines and Marine Corpsmen and a whole day of history. I wish I could still be there to hear all their stories. I would suggest that you tell your membership to record their stories for their families to give to them once they pass because once they are gone it no longer a living account. I have a great love for my uncle and am more proud of my history because of what he did and every last person who put on a uniform for whatever reason. Semper Fi.”

(Phil just reiterated what I've been talking about. No matter when you served or what you did it was important. When you put on the uniform of the armed forces and swore to protect against all enemies foreign and domestic you did something that only a fraction of the people in this country have done. Something that no matter what happens that's something they can't take from you and that's why it's worth recording and remembering!-jg)

**SHEILA MCCALLUM, GRANBURY , TEXAS:** “My dad, Joseph O. Lynch, was in VMF-311 from 11/51 to 3/52 and then was sent to VMO-6 until 7/52. We lost him in August, he was 88 years old. He was so proud of being a Marine fighter pilot and we were so proud of him. My family would really appreciate it if you would read his name at the next reunion. He was a captain in Korea.

I do have some photos you might like, but no names as of now. I'll get with mom and see what she can come up with. Mom and dad lived in Arlington, Texas and he worked for bell helicopter after he retired from the Marines in 1964.

I wish I had found your web site while he was still alive, it would have meant so much to him. Thank you for keeping up with it, that is a wonderful honor for those that served in VMF-311.”

(Anyone from that time slot that remembers Capt. Lynch I'm sure that his family would love to hear anything you have to tell them. Sheila's email is [bsmccallum1@gmail.com](mailto:bsmccallum1@gmail.com) If you don't have a computer forward to me and I will relay-jg)

5.

**BOB LEAVENGOOD, FT. PIERCE, FL:** “I joined VMF-311 in November 1944 at Roi-Namur. I was in the engineering section. We moved out in March to the invasion of Okinawa. We were aboard the LST carrying napalm. Easter Sunday, 1945, when the airfield was secured, we went up the hill to Yontan airfield. We stayed there until they moved us north to Chimu airfield. When Japan surrendered, B-25s came in and we rode them to Yokosuka, Japan. We were there until December 1945 then we came back to the states.”

**RON BIRCHLER, VENICE, FL:** “I have kept myself from complaining about the landing date of VMF-311 on Okinawa. Every time I read about that memorable occasion, it seems that it only counts when the aircraft finally arrive. We actually began unloading our gear from LST 343 on “Love Day”. April 1, 1945 was a very memorable date, because not only did we arrive, it was April Fools Day and Easter Sunday as well. How could one forget that day! It was said that the First Division ,in 10 hours, had progressed to where they had estimated to be in 10 days. Within a very few days, the easy invasion was over and what proved to be the bloodiest battle of the Pacific was joined. Our planes arrived either two or three days later. This fact doesn't mean much at this point in my life, it's a point of pride. After all, we were a count of about 250 personnel on ground earlier than reported.

Two “by the ways”; Preparing for Okinawa, all our Corsairs were replaced at Roi-Namur with brand new F4U1Ds. Among other changes to the planes, our new ones carried 4-20mm cannons instead of 6-50 calibers. Also in Sgt. Canuf's letter in the May newsletter, he listed pilot's scores. The third name from the bottom was 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Jack M.—Palmyra, MO. I think the missing name was probably Rothweiler.

The enclosed pictures were copied from a book "This was the Battle for Okinawa" by Masaside Ota and was published by Naha Publishing Co. Pictures 1 and 2 show our Corsairs at Yontan airfield. Picture 3 is a Japanese Betty bomber which was the only one of 13 that tried to hit the field. After landing, the plane unloaded a group of suicide soldiers. Since they expected to die, we accommodated them."

(Bob Leavengood and Ron Birchler gave an account of the landing on Okinawa April 1<sup>st</sup> 1945. Did you know each other and were you on the same LST?-jg)

**RAY BOWERS, LUCKEY, OHIO:** "I enlisted in Lima, Ohio 3 October 1942, went to boot camp at Parris Island and then to Cherry Point Dec 42- Jan 43. Then moved on to NAS Jacksonville for 21 weeks, back to Cherry Point for about a month then to Page Field. Bishop, Bowers and Brown were the last three to join VMF-311. First time I saw a Corsair and ran it up! We went by train to Miramar for maybe a month and then about 21 days by ship to Wallis Island. Was there from Sept 43 until Jan 44. Then the pilots got more training.

From Wallis Island we went to Kwajalein Atoll and then finally to Roi-Namur by LCI. We were bombed the first part of February 1944. Our planes hadn't arrived yet. We moved over to Namur after the raid on Roi and we were there until about September 1944. We used Corsairs for bombers loading up the belly and wings. Charles Lindburgh flew the plane I was crew chief on. Back to California and furlough December 44, El Toro in Jan 45, F6F school in Memphis, back to El Toro then to San Francisco USMC Supply Depot, Back to El Toro in Aug 45 then discharged in Bainbridge ,Md Dec 1945.

As to one name, Joe Sutula, he was over me on Corsairs at Roi-Namur. At the reunion at Cherry Point in 1993 I met him after 50 years. Two months after I received a letter from his wife that he had passed away. I appreciate the newsletter very much but the names I'd like to read are not there.

I have several pictures from Wallis and Roi-Namur but my son in MN has them. Thanks again."

**RON DYKSTRA, PHOENIX, AZ:** "I was the squadron's Data Analyst (QA) from 1988-92. I joined the TOMCATS right after their transition from El Toro to Yuma. I believe we were in the process of receiving AV-8B Harriers. We had only two when I checked in from H&MS-15. I knew our XO Maj "Stump" Branch when we were both at VMAT-102 prior to me going to H&MS-15. He was a Captain and my QAO when I left to go to Iwakuni. A year later when I checked back into MAG-13 "Stump" was the MAG-13 Duty Officer and was a Major. After VMA-311 stood up, he came over from MAG-13 to become our XO. I also knew LTC Woltman well before he became VMA-311 CO. He was also a Captain in VMAT-102. I was proud to have been a member of the TOMCATS during Desert Shield/ Desert Storm. It was a generation's contribution to a long and illustrious TOMCAT history. The only black mark for the squadron during that period was that my QAO was shot down. By the grace of God, he was released and reunited with the squadron upon our return to Yuma."

6.

**EDITORS NOTE:** I've received a number of letters and emails from TOMCATS that in the squadron from the 80s to the present and one thing I noticed- All the officers have nick names! Something that I don't think was prevalent earlier than that. When CO Mike Hile signed his name "Sieg" I should have known something was up.

**JIM LITTLE, UNION, NJ:** "I was attached to 311 at El Toro in 1987 from MAG-42 in Memphis and was only with them for the last WESTPAC with A4s. When we came back the squadron disbanded and went back to Yuma to pick up Harriers. My primary MOS was GSE, though I also qualified as a plane captain with A4s with other squadrons. While with 311 on WESTPAC, I was detached to H&MS in Iwakuni. After 311 disbanded I went to MALS (H&MS) at El Toro and did another WESTPAC. After that hump I went to MALS OMD, OA-4Ms until they disbanded then it was back to MALS until I went to the Gulf in 90-91. I was discharged when I got home."

**EMILY CATCHING, CARY, NC:** "It is with a heavy heart that I am informing you of the death of my husband, MSGT Fredrick E. Catching, on February 18, 2009, from a massive heart attack. He so loved the Marine Corps and the friends he made over the years. He was looking forward to the reunion next year."

**DONNA CASTO (EMAIL THRU FRED TOWNSLEY):** "I wanted to see if you knew or know anyone who might know how I can locate a WM by the name of Kathleen Ann Craig (maiden name) who served with VMA-311 TOMCATS in 1983 stationed at El Toro? I served in Yuma. WMs are rare especially good ones and I was hoping to find her. She worked in OPS and training. I think her married name is "Crouch". Any help is appreciated." (Her email is [drcasto04@yahoo.com](mailto:drcasto04@yahoo.com)) On the same Email DAVID CROUCH , CWO3 , VMA-311 1982-83 " Searching for dear friend Kathleen Craig, SGT , WM also was in IL for awhile. I served with Bill Blackburn 1982-84 time frame in VMA-311 and I was the Ordnance Officer when they were still A4s." ( His email is [dcrouch@caci.com](mailto:dcrouch@caci.com) )

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Evidently SGT Craig's married name is not Crouch, at least not David. If anyone can figure this one out you are doing better than me. Contact either one if you have any input-jg)

**CLYDE WOLTMAN, FORMER MAG-13 CO AND VMA-311 CO :** (this email came just after our last newsletter went out and we didn't get it included. Fred put it on the web page so you that have computers have seen this) " Your newsletter made mention of John Glenn's time with the squadron. I don't know if you were aware of this but a year ago last February we inaugurated the Yuma Marine Corps Aviation Association Squadron in the name of late LtGen Tom Miller, "Father of Marine Corps STOVL Aviation". His best friend since enlisting in the 40s, Senator and Veteran Marine John Glenn and his wife Annie were our guests of honor. The link below has some photos of the event, but most importantly some photos of the Senator and Mrs. Glenn visiting the VMA-311 Flight Line, they wouldn't have missed the opportunity for the world! It was an honor and a privilege to have the two of them address the team and walk the hallowed halls and reminisce about the "old days". And , of course, the Senator, as proven in the photos, would never pass up a chance to climb into an aircraft. A true warrior and genuine hero. BTW, a couple days after the visit, the squadron deployed to Marine Air Base Al Asad, Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. They returned this past November.

Also, as a reminder, today (28 May 2009) LTC John "Sugar" Cane will relinquish command of VMA-311 to LTC Mike "Tumor" Gough.

Hope all is well. Your fellow TOMCATS would make you proud!"

(Col. Woltman is no longer MAG-13 CO and he is back working at the Pentagon. The photo link is <http://www.millerssquadron.com/photogallery.html> Also-----Notice the nick names? More on LTC Gough latter in this newsletter-jg)

**MARK PHANDER (EMAIL TO HIS FATHER, "PHANTOM" PHANDER):** Thought you'd like to share this with the 311 guys. It mentions Major Gibson (our guest speaker in Philly) and Ret. Gen Hagee. Nice to see this kind of recognition. Link is [http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap20090802/ap\\_on\\_re\\_us/us\\_hero\\_warship\\_christening](http://news.yahoo.com/s/ap20090802/ap_on_re_us/us_hero_warship_christening) Cpl. Jason Dunham who won the MOH in Iraq was honored with a ship in his name. Major Gibson was his CO at the time and is spearheading the Cpl. Jason Dunham Memorial Fund.

7.

**ELIZABETH BARRETT, VIRGINIA BEACH, VA:** "My husband, Raymond Barrett, a VMF-311 Corsair pilot, who served in Roi-Namur in 1944, died on 9 February 2009. Last week my daughter found some pictures tucked away in a book for years. One of the pictures was a squadron, and on the back we found all the names listed in my husband's handwriting. By an amazing coincidence, just a few days later, I found in my "save" pile of mail, your January newsletter with a copy of the very same photo but with a slight variation in identification. I'm sending you, along with Ray's list, a computer enhanced enlargement and copies of other pictures. I have included documentation to correct Ray's record of two downed enemy planes to four. Your list shows him as Raymond\_\_\_ of East Orange, NJ. The error in address can be contributed to confusion with my home town. He actually hailed from Plainsfield, NJ. Ray and I met in Jacksonville when he showed up at my Navy Link Trainer. We married a month later just a few weeks before he shipped out to the Pacific.

Thank you for your faithful chronicling of these inspiring events. I hope you will continue to send me the newsletters."

(We continue to send out the newsletter to widows of our alumni until they tell us different. Thanks again to Mrs. Barrett for the photos and the great contribution to the history book.-jg)

**As read earlier in the newsletter, on 28 May 2009, LTC Michael Gough assumed command of Marine Attack Squadron 311 from LTC John Cane.**

**Lieutenant Colonel Michael J. Gough**

**Commanding Officer**

**Marine Attack Squadron 311**

**LTC Gough graduated from James Madison University in 1988 with a BA in English. He worked in sales in the DC area until entering the Marine Corps Officer Candidate School in November 1989. After BOC he reported to Pensacola for flight training. After flight training and school, as a Harrier pilot, he reported to VMA-211 in Yuma, AZ. After three years and two successful 6 month deployments, one to Japan and one to the Persian Gulf aboard an amphibious aircraft carrier, he was accepted to the pilot exchange program with the Spanish navy. Before reporting to Spain, he graduated with honors from the Defense Language Institute. While in Spain, he integrated with the Spanish Armada's 9<sup>th</sup> Harrier Squadron and worked as the pilot training officer.**

**Upon completion of the exchange tour in Spain, he returned to Yuma and worked as the Air Group Landing Signal Officer and as the Current Operations Officer. He was then reassigned to VMA-211, this time as Aircraft maintenance Officer. During this tour, he was selected to be the Harrier Detachment OIC to the 13<sup>th</sup> MEU, which deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. Post deployment, he became the OPS Officer for the squadron and once again deployed, this time in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After returning from Iraq, LTC Gough attended the Naval War College, graduated with distinction, and was awarded a Master's Degree in National Security and Strategic Studies.**

**After school, he was assigned to the US Naval Academy, where he coordinated midshipman training and career development. He served as adjunct professor to the Language Studies Department and taught 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year Spanish and public speaking. His most recent assignment was a joint billet at the US Southern Command in Miami, where he served as Marine Corps Special Assistant and speech writer for the combatant Commander. During this assignment, he was awarded the Foreign Area Officer specialty for Latin America and Western Europe.**

**His personal decorations include the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Two air medals with combat distinguishing devices, two Flight / Strike air medals, two Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, a Joint Service Achievement Medal, the Spanish Meritorious Cross with white device and a number of campaign and service awards.**

**(I have emailed LTC Gough and introduced him to the alumni group. Those who have computers can catch this bio on the Official 311 web site. Send him an email welcome at [michael.gough@usmc.mil](mailto:michael.gough@usmc.mil) -jg)**

**TOMCAT FACT: 3 APRIL 2008: *One hundred and seventy two TOMCATS and ten harriers arrived at Al Asad Air base, Iraq to conduct flight operations in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. LTC John "Sugar" Cane Commanding.***

**8.**

**DON MOLER, MT ORAB, OH: (This is an excerpt from the Marine Corps chronicles that Don wrote to pass on to his family. He said I could use any part of it and I thought this was a good story to relate-jg) Okinawa- "Major (Perry) Shuman was a leader. He was stern with a reputation as an "ace". I had one experience with him I still don't believe happened. I developed an extremely painful toothache in May. After trying everything with the corpsman that did not work- I finally went to Headquarters to ask for help. When I walked into Shuman's office the first thing he said to me was "Where in the hell did you get those pants?" (I was wearing dungarees that had been patched many times and they indeed did look bad!) I told him "the quartermaster." He told me to get a new pair and throw the old ones away. When I explained why I was there and he grumped and said to the other officers "Do you know where the Navy has set up for medical services?" No one knew. He got up and said**



**"Come on boy, we'll go right now." He and I hiked about 3 or 4 miles to the north of Okinawa. It was really rugged terrain with woods, hills, across streams and a long distance. We finally came to an old house where the Navy had set up for doctors, dentists and other emergency services. He ordered them to work on my tooth as soon as possible. They did grind my tooth, filled it and we went back to Yontan feeling better with no pain."**

**(There are certain things that stick in your mind with extreme clarity over the years and as I read the part about the pants I vividly recall George Phander's "high water" trousers he wore on many occasions on the flight line in 67-68. I think those we issued originally to a Marine that was about 4'2". Not banging on your dress code "Phantom". It was a good source of humor!-jg)**

**WELL, I THINK IT'S A WRAP**

**On thing that I have failed to mention in the newsletters since Philly is one of our WWII alumni that was at the hotel. Lou Pashby, Farmington, MI came to see us. Lou, I'm sorry that I have neglected to mention this. It was a pleasure to meet you and your daughter. I hope at some time you can join us again.**

**LTC Gough informed me that the squadron would be returning prior to next years reunion and there was a strong possibility that they would be able to send a contingent to join us. I also mentioned to Col. Woltman that if he was close enough we might be able to coax him into coming and he said he would be glad to if possible. There is a couple of good positives to elated about!**

**This brings us to REUNION 2010. I know I said we would have something in concrete by this newsletter but it isn't happening. The only thing for sure is that it will be held 2<sup>nd</sup> of 3<sup>rd</sup> week in September 2010. We are still waiting for some information to come in from a couple places and as we know something for sure we will post it on the web site out at Fred's house and anywhere else we can put it. One thing is really certain and that being that by the next newsletter first couple weeks in December we will be sure of the site and have all the info. I know that many of you are still working and plan vacations for that week. So hang in there, we'll "git 'er done!"**

**I have a multitude of old pictures and new that I don't have room to put them in this issue.**

**We hope this finds you well. Full of Semper Fi and good health. When you hit your knees at night ask your God's safe keeping of the men and women in uniform who are or will be in harm's way.**

**Semper Fidelis,**

**For the Alumni Association**

**Jim Galchick**

**MARINE AIR- ON TIME- ON TARGET!!**