

LRRP RANGER ASSOCIATION



1966 VIETNAM 1971

SUA SPONTE

1999 Fall issue of the 196th LRRPs, E-51st LRPS, and G-75th Rangers

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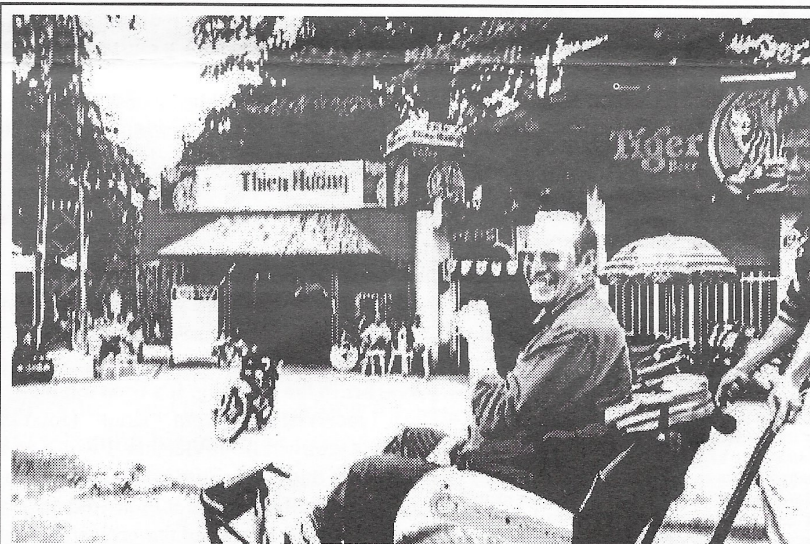
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Cyclos

by Michael "Ho" Chu

All photos for this article are courtesy of Michael "Ho" Chu



Cyclo rider David L. Swires being pedaled down the street, on his way to the Cholon marketplace. Located a short distance from Saigon, Cholon is dominated by ethnic Chinese. Does Dave look like he is enjoying himself?

David Swires calls them rickshaws but, in Vietnam, they are known as cyclos. Cyclos are 3 wheel bicycles outfitted with a passenger cab at the front and the operator is located towards the rear. Although designed for a single passenger, I saw as many as three Vietnamese crammed onto a single cyclobicycle.

(Michael's article is continued on page 3)

Sua Sponte

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Sua Sponte is the official newsletter published quarterly by the Company G (RANGER) 75th Infantry Association.

Change of Address: Sua Sponte does not maintain the mailing list. All addresses are maintained by the Treasurer. Receivers of Sua Sponte are encouraged to keep the Association informed of any address changes.

Membership Information: All former members of E/51 and G/75 are eligible to receive Sua Sponte. Membership applications can be obtained by contacting the Association at any of the addresses or phone numbers listed above.

Newsletter Submittals: Article, photos, announcements, etc. are always welcomed. Sua Sponte reserves the right to accept and edit all materials as necessary. All submitted photos will be returned if requested. Authorship and photo credits will be provided. Submittal of written articles may be hand written, typed or on computer disk. We can translate most files. Macintosh is preferred.

Deadlines: Sua Sponte is published quarterly in March, June, September and December. Absolute deadlines for submitting material for the newsletter is the first of each month identified above. Time sensitive material will take precedence. Send material to the Sua Sponte address in Bemidji, Mn.

I suppose that it's OK for me to use this column to vent a little steam so here goes. I've been fighting with Boeing for the last three months regarding their stopping matching funds for the Ranger Memorial Foundation (RMF). I earmarked the funds to be applied to the Endowment Fund, which is set aside to pay for educating the children of Rangers killed in action or in training. McDonnell Douglas matched over \$30,000 but because Boeing does not support Memorials, my request was rejected. This was after two letters to the CEO, many, many letters and e-mails to the Vice President of Community & Education Relations. Had the money gone to any other type of educational fund foundation, University or College, Boeing would have matched it without question. What hurt me the most was that RMF refused to engrave the last 10 bricks ordered in December of last year. Only after Lori and I paid the difference between what was sent and \$2400 (10 X \$240) did the RMF agree to engrave. My only question is how could such a noble quest turn into such a cluster f__k?



Here we are gathered by the pool, sucking down some Miller "low life" beer at 8:00 a.m.

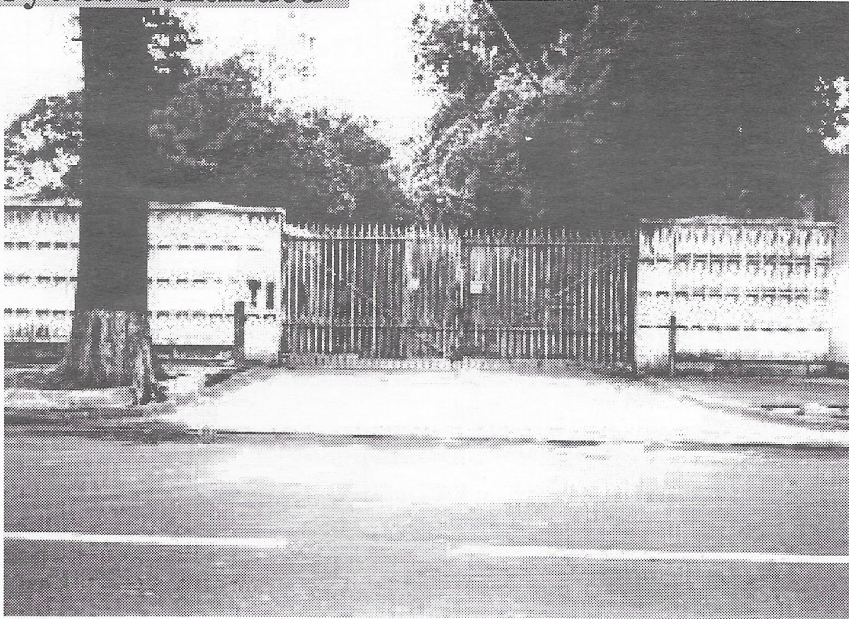
I received a phone call last month from "Phantom" (Shawn Ranahan). What a pleasant surprise to find out that he was in Phoenix and had some time to spend with us. We made arrangements to meet at my house and I met him at the door with a beer in hand (see photo). He is now flying helicopters for an oil company in Canada. I took him to Boeing's facility here and showed him the AH64D Apache assembly line. We pondered taking one for a joy ride but (thankfully) were sober enough not to. We had a great time and Lori and I sent him on his way the next afternoon. I can understand someone going to Canada after Vietnam somewhat, but cannot comprehend how someone could spend \$50,000 of his own money to learn how to fly helicopters when the Army would have gladly taught him for free. Anyway, it was great to have someone to drink beer with at 0800 hrs in the morning. It's been too many years since we've all done that. A few days later I received a call from "Kraut" (John Fritzinger). He, Mike Chu and Dave Swires had just returned from Vietnam. I won't go into their trip, as I know there is an article about it in this issue. Fritz asked me if I had received a postcard. I said no, we had moved and he probably had sent it to my old address. We talked for about an hour and then said our good-byes. I received the postcard a few days later as the Postal Service didn't want to return it all the way to Vietnam. I did have a little trouble explaining the card to Lori. It read: Dear Dad, Why you no come see Mamasan and me? It has been beaucoup years.

Your loving son, Nuyen
 If any of you are teetering on whether or not to go back to Vietnam via Rucksack 2000 with Earl Toomey next year, I suggest you talk to Fritz, Mike or Dave. It sounds like they had a great time.

Be sure to check your name and address in the new roster. With all the area code changes lately, I'm sure that there are some amendments that need to be made. Contact Frank Svensson through our website: <http://www.paulbunyan.net/users/ssponte/> or by snail mail.

Fritz, I will get even!
 Shawn, Where is my Randall?
 CRABS

Cyclos Continued



Gates of History

Gates of the former US Embassy in Saigon where thousands of Vietnamese civilians were left behind, just before the fall of Saigon in April 1975. Except for the gates and perimeter walls, all structures within the compound have since been demolished and apart from a few museums, there are no remnants of the war anywhere in the city.

While visiting Saigon, the cyclo became my preferred mode of transportation. Although relatively slow, it allows one to get elbow to elbow with the street traffic and street activities throughout the city. The breeze in the face, the exciting scent of street food vending stands as well as witnessing the common, everyday life while pedaling down the tree lined streets of Saigon was exhilarating and distinctly different from being on the inside of a taxi cab.

The "Lonely Planet" travel guide for Vietnam contained a sobering description of the cyclos. According to the Planet, many of the cyclo drivers were former professional men or ARVN officers but like many others who sided with the South Vietnamese government, they were punished. After the cease-fire they were stripped of their citizenship and sent to re-education camps for many years. Even after 20 years, many are prevented from returning to the jobs they are qualified for and most do not have an official residence permit, meaning they cannot own property or businesses.

I met my cyclo driver outside the gates of the War Remnant Museum. He offered to take me to the site of the former American Embassy for one US dollar. Along the way he pointed out many interesting features of the city. I ended up retaining his services for the rest of the day. His name was Nguyen Van Dung. It sounded like "Duke" so that is what I called him. Over coffee at a street café I learned that he was 45 years old and had been pedaling his cyclo for over 10 years. I also learned that he was a former ARVN lieutenant in an armor unit at Da Nang from 1971 to 1975. We quickly became friends and had several long conversations about the war years. I did not however ask him about the "re-education" years as it seemed to be too early in our friendship to make such inquiries.

After dropping me at my hotel that evening Duke offered to pick me up again for more touring the next day. Since Fritz and Swires had already departed earlier that day, I figured it would be a good way to spend my last day in Vietnam.

Duke was at curbside promptly at 10am and we continued our tour, visiting several Saigon market places and pagodas. He cautioned me about pick pockets at the market places and the protocol at religious pagodas.

(Michael's article continued on page 4)

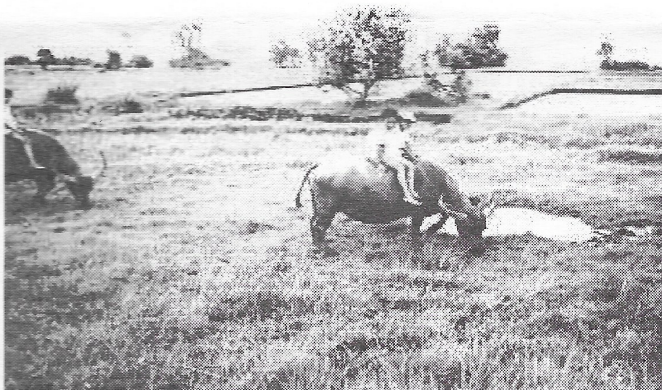
Cyclos Cont'd



Pho Bihn Noodle Shop

Michael Chu, David Swires, and John Fritzinger at the Bihn Noodle Shop, Saigon. The elderly gentleman is Mr. Ngo Toai, former VC strategist. The attack on the US Embassy during the 1968 Tet offensive was planned at the mezzanine above his restaurant.

Towards evening I asked him to take me to the Bihn noodle shop for some Pho and Vietnamese spring rolls. This particular noodle shop is a place Fritz, Swires and I had found several days earlier. It is owned by Mr. Ngo Toai but operated by his son, grandson and other family members. We had learned that the elderly Ngo was a prominent figure in the Peoples Liberation Army (known as the Viet Cong) and he was one of the masterminds in planning the attack on the U.S... Embassy during the 1968 Tet offense. In fact, the strategic planning occurred in the mezzanine of his noodle shop, and he had the credentials and honor certificates to prove it!



Cu Chi Landscape

Children on grazing buffalo (not to be confused with Gary Gentry). While we remembered much of the landscape as being littered with bomb craters, very few signs of the war remain. To their credit, the Vietnamese people have done a remarkable job of putting the war behind them. The country side is instead a continuous blanket of greenery. The scattered trees in the background, however, testify to the lingering effects of Agent Orange. The Cu Chi landscape was once heavily forested. Although, 30 years have past, it will still take many more before the natural forest returns.

Duke and I dug into the Pho soup and spring rolls placed before us. Tea was later brought to the table. While sipping the first cup I noticed the elderly Mr. Ngo descending from the living quarters above. He joined us for tea and we talked in broken English and Vietnamese. Knowing it was my last day in Vietnam, they both wished me a safe journey home and they eagerly shared wallet photos of their families. Unlike previous conversations with Mr. Ngo and Duke, nothing was said about the war years. It wasn't necessary. We all knew each others background. But still, it struck me as being an incredible dialog. A former high ranking VC, a former ARVN officer and a former US Army Ranger sipping tea together, wishing each other well!

It was dark and raining heavily by the time Duke got me back to the hotel. I tipped him with everything I had, saving just enough to pay for the taxi fare to the airport and the departure tax. I threw my clothes into my suitcase and started my countdown to departure. But still my mind was focused on the dinner at the Bihn noodle shop. As I boarded the taxi for my trip to the airport I realized that my undefined purpose in returning to Vietnam was answered at the Bihn noodle shop. My mission was accomplished.

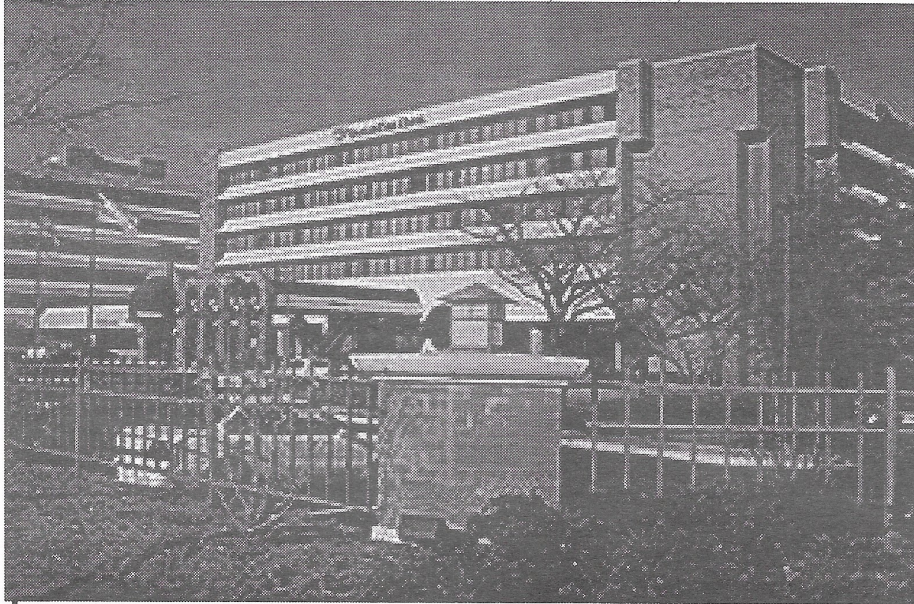
Michael S. Chu

Co. G (RANGER) 75th Infantry

SUA SPONTE 4

D.C. 2000 Update

by Earl Toomey



Located on the Metro Line, the site of our reunion is at Rockville, Maryland. All of you geography freaks know that D.C. is a stone's throw away from Maryland. One can land at the National Airport, jump on the Metro and be in Rockville without any problem. Information for ground service to our reunion site will be forthcoming.

Photo credit: Double Tree Hotel in Rockville, Maryland

Hi Guys, this is a proposed schedule. I need your input and info on this schedule. Please contact me for your Input!

PROPOSED REUNION SCHEDULE

Thursday, June 29, 2000	Advance Party Arrival and Setup
Friday, June 30, 2000	
1500 - 1800 hrs	Check-in and Reunion Registration
1800 hrs	Open Hospitality Room for cocktails
	War stories and a pay as you go bar with free hors d'oeuvres
2000 hrs	Reunion auction. This pays the bills for the Hospitality room and food
Saturday, July 1, 2000	
1000 hrs	Formation in front of the Hotel for pictures and trip to the Vietnam Wall and Memorial Service at the Wall
1500 hrs	Board meeting with location TBA
1600 hrs	General membership meeting with location TBA
1900 hrs	Dinner at area restaurants. Pay as you go
2400 hrs	Hospitality room closes
Sunday, July 2, 2000	
0900 hrs	Breakfast get together
1400 - 1600 hrs	Pool get together for drinks and fun
1900 hrs	Dinner at area restaurants. Pay as you go.
2400 hrs	Hospitality room closes
Monday, July 3, 2000	
0900 hrs	Breakfast at Hotel and check out with final drinks

- * All activities are casual dress.
- * Cocktail get together is a pay as you go bar.
- * Transportation to the Wall is Metro and on your own.
- * All dinners are pay as you go.
- * Association is paying for hors d'oeuvres and the Hospitality room.
- * Remember the auction items. This helps to pay for the bills too.



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Our Wall

Officers

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Concessions

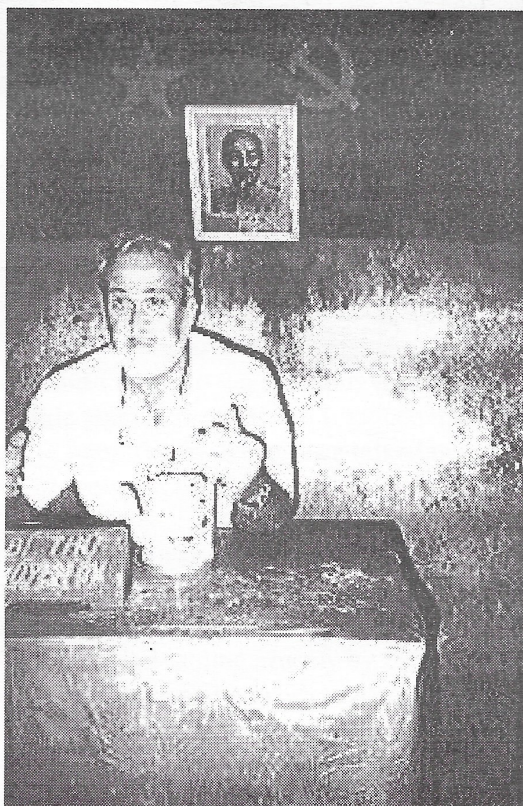
Sua Sponte

<http://www.paulbunyan.net/users/ssponte>

There are additions and improvements to our website with the help of our association members. For example, little things like correcting the spelling of "concessions" to concessions. Also, much to the help of our webmaster, Justin Stay, is the inclusion of the 196th emblem next to the Americal; the same as our masthead on Sua Sponte. Also wordage about "Who We Are". Thanks!

Feature Article

There have been several additions to this section on feature articles. Michael Chu's story of the cyclos is included. In addition, Bob Simpson has his article about, "The Only Iron tree in Vietnam". This fantastic article will be a feature article in the next issue of Sua Sponte. Not only that, but John Fritzinger has made a commitment to share some article(s) with our members in upcoming Sua Sponte and immediate inclusion to feature articles on our website. Help improve our site!



Cu Chi Tunnel

John Fritzinger issues instructions from a meeting room from deep within the Cu Chi tunnel complex. Located just outside of Saigon, the tunnels were started during the war with the French and were further developed during the "American" war. Over 100 miles of underground tunnels once existed, enabling the VC to wage war close to the capital city without being detected. Cu Chi was one of the heaviest bombed and defoliated areas in Vietnam. After the forest died, it was set on fire. The extent of the tunnels however remained essentially undetected throughout the war. Cu Chi was the AO of the 25th Division. Photo courtesy of Michael "Ho" Chu

1999 Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Co G (Ranger) 75th Infantry Association

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Al Stewart at 8:30 AM CDT in St. Louis, MO. Present at the meeting were Chairman of the Board Al Stewart, board members Steve Johnson, Steve Crabtree, Earl Toomey, John Bronson, Danny Jacks and Frank Svensson. From the executive branch those in attendance were association President Steve Crabtree and association Secretary/Treasurer Frank Svensson. With a quorum established, the meeting progressed.

Chairman Al Stewart requested a copy of the 1998 Board of Directors meeting. The minutes were read and a motion was made by John Bronson to accept the 1998 minutes as read. Steve Johnson seconded this motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Chairman Stewart requested that Secretary/Treasurer Svensson discuss the 1999 treasurer's report. Per the report, Mr. Svensson reported that the association owed money to no one except a small amount to the company that printed our 1999 reunion tee shirts for shipping plus expenses incurred while attending the 1999 reunion. Mr. Svensson also reported to the board that he had used his personal credit card to pay for the refreshments and rent for the hospitality suite and intended to write a reimbursement check at a later date for approximately \$280 plus another \$450 for the suite. The association balance currently with Charles Schwab was reported to be \$10,761.55. The treasurer further reported that the current lifetime membership balance is \$6,350.00. Since the inception of the association this money has yet to be touched. Current dues paying membership was announced as 132 plus 4 friends to the association. Steve Johnson motioned that the treasurer's report be approved as read, seconded by Earl Toomey. The motion was carried unanimously.

Chairman Stewart next moved on the old business. Mr. Stewart discussed the chain of events that lead up to the decision to have our 1999 reunion in Washington, D.C. and the subsequent events that lead to changing the site to Ft. Benning. The decision to make this change was driven by the fact that it appeared that Steve Crabtree had put together enough money in the form of donations to fund memorial bricks for all LRP/LRRP/Ranger KIA's in Vietnam. Mr. Stewart highlighted the various factors that he considered in making the decision to ask for the boards' permission to change the location of the 1998 reunion from Washington, D.C. to Ft. Benning. His discussion centered on the fact that this was a unique opportunity that occurred only once in a lifetime and that he felt we should at least consider making the change of location official. With this in mind, he decided to task Secretary/Treasurer Svensson with the responsibility of sending out a letter polling the eligible dues paying members as to their feelings and desires about this subject. Secretary/Treasurer Svensson reported that at the time we had 112 dues paying members and 51 of those members responded to the survey. The final tally of this vote was 26-25 in favor of changing the location of the 1998 reunion. Thus, Chairman Stewart made the decision to make the change. Mr. Toomey pointed out that only 12 people showed up at Ft. Benning and far more than that were in attendance at the Washington, D.C. site. It was generally agreed that this was apparently inconsistent with the final vote tally. It was agreed that this type of situation should be avoided at all costs in the future. Once a decision is made on a reunion location, it must be stuck to. John Bronson raised the issue of the election of Steve Crabtree to the position of president at the 1998 Ft. Benning reunion site.

(Business Notes Continued on page 11)

Rucksack 2000



Up-date on Rucksack 2000

By Earl Toomey

Subject: Rucksack 2000

Date: **Sat, 11 Sep 1999 22:19:22 EDT**

From: TOOMEYEK1@aol.com

To: ssponte@paulbunyan.net

Update on Rucksack 2000

By Earl Toomey

As of the St. Louis Reunion there are still a few seats open on the Trip to Vietnam the 14 - 24 January 2000 at the cost of \$ 1535 per person. If anyone is interested there is still a \$ 250 deposit with the remainder of \$ 1285 due on 15. October 1999.

A brief itinerary

Day 1	Depart LAX at 12:44 P.M.	Day 7	Flight to Nha Trang
Day 2	Arriving Saigon 11:55 P.M.	Day 8	Free day in Nha Trang
Day 3	Full day sight-seeing Saigon	Day 9	Flight to Saigon, free day
Day 4	Cu Chi, Tay Ninh, Cambodian border	Day 10	Free day Saigon, sightseeing
Day 5	Flight to Danang, then to Chu Lai	Day 11	Depart for Seoul, Korea with 24 hr Seoul sight-seeing
Day 6	Tour of Chu Lai, Quang Ngai		

Arriving back at LAX at 10:40 A.M. on the 24. January

Price of Tour includes all air transportation, hotels, breakfast, English speaking guides.

POC Earl L. Toomey (941-542-4306) TOOMEYEK1@aol.com

Tom Nash (201-991-8562) znhoboken@aol.com

Jerry Howard (360-825-8496)

The "Dutchman" and his wife may be going back to record history. Not necessarily with his famous 8mm of the OV-10 in the video "Who We Were", but rather (not Dan here) Who We Are and Damn Proud of it!

Looking forward to a good turnout and remember LRRP's and Rangers always lead the way!

Cartoons by Delbert

"Hey, Sarge, doesn't this remind you of McQuire training in Chu Lai?"



Seeing LRRPs and Rangers "dangling" from a McQuire rig was not an uncommon site at the Americal Recondo School, nor on some extractions that can be attested to by several members of our organization.

SUA SPONTE 

9/13/99 Treasurer's Report

ASSETS

<i>Cash and Bank Accounts</i>	<i>Cash 0.00</i>
<i>Checking (Charles Schwab)</i>	<i>\$10,711.61</i>
 <i>Total Cash & Bank Accounts</i>	 <i>\$10,711.61</i>
TOTAL ASSETS	\$10,711.61

LIABILITIES

OVERALL TOTAL

Category Description
9/1/98-9/13/99

INCOME

<i>April Interest</i>	<i>40.94</i>
<i>Concessions:</i>	
<i>Conc.- Shipping</i>	<i>11.50</i>
<i>Concessions- Other</i>	<i>1,133.00</i>
<i>Total Concession</i>	<i>1,144.50</i>
<i>December Interest</i>	<i>59.97</i>
<i>Donation- Friend</i>	<i>4.00</i>
<i>Donation- Member</i>	<i>30.00</i>
<i>Dues 1998</i>	<i>180.00</i>
<i>Dues 1999</i>	<i>890.00</i>
<i>Dues 2000</i>	<i>860.00</i>
<i>Dues 2001</i>	<i>40.00</i>
<i>Dues 2002</i>	<i>30.00</i>
<i>Total Dues</i>	<i>2,000.00</i>

<i>February Interest</i>	<i>43.38</i>
<i>January Interest</i>	<i>18.48</i>
<i>June Interest</i>	<i>116.27</i>
<i>March Interest</i>	<i>37.07</i>
<i>May Interest</i>	<i>42.19</i>
<i>November Interest</i>	<i>41.86</i>
<i>October Interest</i>	<i>39.78</i>
<i>Reemb. Printing Costs</i>	<i>102.84</i>
<i>September Interest</i>	<i>39.52</i>
<i>Web Page:</i>	
<i>Annual Fee</i>	<i>-20.00</i>
<i>Initial Set-up</i>	<i>-180.00</i>
<i>Total Web Page</i>	<i>200.00</i>
<u>TOTAL INCOME</u>	<u>3,558.80</u>

EXPENSES

<i>Concessions Expense</i>	<i>700.00</i>
<i>Filing Fee</i>	<i>10.00</i>
<i>Postage</i>	<i>150.00</i>
<i>Printing</i>	<i>1,400.00</i>
<i>Reemb. of Expense</i>	<i>740.00</i>
<i>Refund</i>	<i>54.01</i>
<i>Shipping- Conc.</i>	<i>50.00</i>
<i>Uncategorized Expense</i>	<i>0.00</i>
<u>TOTAL EXPENSE</u>	<u>3,104.01</u>

TOTAL INCOME-EXPENSES 454.79

Frank Svensson Association Treasurer

Saigon Postcard

From John "kraut" Fritzinger



When is the last time that you got a post card from HOCHIMINH CITY-VIETNAM? Sua Sponte was sent this postcard for it's members: The Ben Thanh Market. (Photo credit: Hoang Duc Thu)

SUA SPONTE

Company News

Business Notes Cont'd from page 7

Mr. Toomey and Mr. Bronson felt that this was a problem due to the fact that there was no quorum at Ft. Benning the prior year. It was decided that Mr. Crabtree's prior year in office is to be considered an interim period with him as the acting president. Mr. Bronson felt it would best serve the association to reaffirm Mr. Crabtree's election to the position of president. Mr. Bronson moved that the board reaffirm Mr. Crabtree's position as president of the association with Earl Toomey seconding the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Stewart went on to raise the issue of reunion frequency. The discussion initially centered on the history of this question with respect to prior reunions and business meetings. In the past there have been those that were very insistent about holding reunions every year. The point was made that those people were no longer regularly attending our annual reunions. It was decided that a ballot would be sent out to all dues paying members requesting their input on this subject. Mr. Toomey pointed out that it would be best if this ballot were sent out just prior to the next business meeting at reunion 2000. This would allow the counting of these ballots at the business meeting. Steve Crabtree pointed out that the response would improve if we included a self-addressed, stamped envelope with these ballots. Chairman Stewart directed Secretary/Treasurer Svensson to develop such a ballot, submit it and finally send it out to the dues paying membership.

Under the heading of new business, Steve Johnson made a request that funding for the publication of Sua Sponte for the 1999-2000 period be considered and approved. He stated that he could once again publish and mail our quarterly newsletter with a budget of \$1800 for the year. Discussion followed that centered around the need for those who had the responsibility to do so to get their respective articles to Mr. Johnson in a timely fashion. This allows for the on-time publication and distribution of Sua Sponte. Mr. Svensson moved that the \$1800 request by Mr. Johnson be approved, Mr. Bronson seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

There was a brief discussion on the position of historian to the association. The big problem is finding someone who is interested in filling the position. The current historian, John Starnes, has expressed his desire to step away from the position. The matter was tabled for further discussion at a future business meeting.

The next subject discussed was the election of board members for the 1999-2000 year. At the start of the 1999 business meeting the following members were board members- Al Stewart, Rick Collier, Dave Moncada, John Bronson, Steve Crabtree, Danny Jacks, Steve Johnson, Frank Svensson and Earl Toomey. The terms for Mr. Bronson, Mr. Jacks and Mr. Johnson were up as of this meeting. Mr. Jacks, Mr. Crabtree and Mr. Svensson requested that their names be removed for consideration as board members. Mr. Svensson stated that he felt that the size of the board should be reduced and that the definition of a quorum should be changed from 2/3 to a simple majority. Mr. Jacks pointed out that we were lucky enough this year to have the people willing to run and assume board responsibility. He further stated that it was important to elect people to the board who would do the job correctly as opposed to voting in people based on their personalities or ability to party. After a moving speech by Danny Jacks, it was decided to leave the board at the current 9 members. Mr. Bronson made a motion to change the by-law definition of a quorum from 2/3 to simple majority. Mr. Crabtree seconded with the motion carrying unanimously. It was decided that a request would be made at the general membership meeting for those interested in becoming board members to step forward and offer their names.

Chairman Stewart asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Bronson made the motion, Mr. Johnson seconded. The motion passed unanimously.



Veteran's Day

Lest We Forget

**We Have Met
The Finest...**

**To
Let Them Rest...**

Lest We Forget

Our Vets

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Sua Sponte

Sua Sponte

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