



MPMA
Montford Point
Marine Association, Inc.

The Vietnam Experience
1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division



Mr. David W. Fortune
USMC Retired Cpl

DAVID W. FORTUNE USMC RETIRED (CPL.)



In 1965, three years after graduating from Overbrook High School a young David W. Fortune enlisted in the US Marine Corps. After completion of recruit training Marine Corps Recruit Depot (MCRD) Parris Island, South Carolina, he was transferred to Camp Geiger, North Carolina for further training. In September of 1965, Mr. Fortune then Private, reported to Camp Lejeune, NC and was assigned to 1st Battalion, 8th Marine Regiment, 2nd Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force (0311) riflemen.

In March of 1966, Lance Corporal Fortune was transferred to Camp Pendleton, California for advance infantry training. It was in April when he arrived in the Republic of South Vietnam, about 15 miles South of Da Nang and would be assigned to the Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, 3rd Marine Amphibious Force, later to be known as the “The Walking Dead”.

During his months in Vietnam he was involved in two major battles (Ky Lam Campaign and Prairie I) along with various search and destroy missions. During a patrol assignment David was severely wounded and subsequently shipped back to the States. After several months in the Philadelphia Naval Hospital, Corporal David Fortune was honorably discharged from the Marine Corps and placed on disability retirement.

Mr. Fortune was the recipient of many military awards and honors consisting of the Purple Heart; Presidential Unit Commendation Ribbon; Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation (Gallantry Cross Medal Color with Palm) Vietnam Service Medal with two Bronze Stars; Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation (Civil Action Medal, First Class Color with Palm) Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with 1960 Device; National Defense Medal and Combat Action Ribbon.

Currently, Mr. Fortune is actively involved with the Pennsylvania Veterans Museum; Montford Point Marine Association as the National Financial Secretary and past Philadelphia Chapter President, Adjutant Disabled American Veterans Chapter #113, National Order of Trench Rats (DAV), Philadelphia Detachment Marine Corps League, National Order of Devil Dogs (MCL), and the 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Network.

History of 1/9

During service in Vietnam the 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, earned by bravery and sacrifice, an honor and reverence, unique in the history of United States Marine Corps, the Battalion endured the Longest Sustained Combat and suffered the highest killed in action (KIA) rate in USMC history. The battalion was engaged in combat for 48 months, from June 16, 1965 to July 14, 1969. The battalion sustained at least one (KIA), during forty-seven of the 48 months of its Vietnam service. The battalion unit strength of 800 Marines, the KIA to unit strength rate was 76%.

The Vietnam War Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C., honors the supreme sacrifice of 605 Marines of the battalion.