

Video of Bill Beck Surfing in Vietnam by Randy Orlowski

I thought Mike Blackledge's idea of writing down some of the memories we have of our classmates was a great one. I was already thinking of jotting down some of the experiences and adventures I shared with Bill Beck, probably more to preserve these reminiscences and stave off the effects of half-heimers which might start to creep in. The boss says it's already started, but what does she know.

Bill was more than just a classmate; we had become lifelong friends and shared many visits through the years. We also talked on the phone monthly or so up until his passing eight years ago. As a start, here's a video of the two of us in Vietnam that I converted from some 8mm film shot with a wind up camera I carried around with me. What's shown was far from the typical day I spent on the ground in country. It was taken when I was able to get a cushy staff job in relatively secure Qui Nhon for the last couple of months of my second RVN tour with the Corps of Engineers. Bill had flown into Saigon from his Air Force base in Taiwan for some business and was able to catch a chopper up the coast to my headquarters for a day of R&R. I wedged a surfboard into the back of my jeep and we took off to the beach a short ride away. I had some perfect, staccato, wipe out, guitar music on the video, but was warned off due to copyright infringement. You Tube allowed me to swap one of its free tunes in its place.

With little experience Bill did pretty well that day as we took turns on the board in the South China Sea. Unfortunately the film I salvaged didn't capture his best waves. From our homecoming visits I know that he had many friends throughout the class not just from the 16th Company. I hope that you all enjoy this film strip, which is on YouTube at <http://youtu.be/eUAAajAiNAE> .