

# StoneBridge **TRUCKING**

# NEWSLETTER

Issue Number 6: **FALL 2018**

**EXPEDITING AND SMALL LOAD TRUCKING**

**The *GLUE*  
That *KEEPS*  
Us *MOVING***

StoneBridge Operator & Mechanic

**Charlie Mann**



## **A STORY OF SERVICE**

**It's a Family Affair for  
StoneBridge Operator**

**Doug Spon**





# Driver in the Spotlight

Ask any trucking company what the most important part of their company's operation is and you will almost always receive the same answer:

**“Drivers and Fleet Maintenance”.**



A company is as only good as its drivers, and the good drivers cannot perform to their ability without the equipment to do so. Managing and maintaining a fleet brings many challenges. In 2017, StoneBridge Trucking was experiencing a significant amount of growth in which farming out its maintenance to a 3<sup>rd</sup> party shop was no longer efficient nor responsible. Simply, StoneBridge CEO Shane Kennedy needed help.

*“I needed a guy to oversee the entire maintenance operation. I needed someone who was trustworthy, experienced, efficient, honest, and took initiative. Charlie Mann was a close friend of my father and someone who I personally liked, but I had no idea whether he would be the correct hire for the StoneBridge Maintenance Program. He not only was the correct hire, but he was the perfect hire.”*

Over the last year, Charlie Mann literally has been the

**“GLUE THAT KEPT US MOVING”.**

# Driver in the Spotlight

Charlie Mann was born in Louisville, KY in 1954 and his family quickly moved to Lebanon, IN thereafter. The son of John and Nita, his father joined the Navy at the age of 15 years old and later became a truck driver, while his mother Nita stayed at home to raise his 5 brothers and sister. In 1972, he graduated high school and worked at Kroger to pay his way through community college. During the summer of 1975, he continued his education by transferring to the University of Kentucky and would proudly graduate in 1977 with a degree in Agriculture. Not only is he proud of his Wildcat education, he is extremely proud of the process of graduating. ***"I worked the entire way through and completely paid my own way. I worked hard and am proud of what I accomplished."***

With a degree in Agriculture, Charlie would spend many years doing what he was educated to do: Working in the midwestern farm system. Starting in 1980, he managed the Pumphrey's Hog Farm while he and his then wife Joanne started and raised a family. They have two boys together. His son John has 5 children and serves in the Navy specializing in Nuclear Propulsion. His son David is a US Army Captain and has a baby girl.

In 1993, Charlie went to work for Farm Bureau COOP as a Swine Service Specialist. In 1997 he continued his career in Frankfort, until the farm was sold in 2010. At that point he worked in Greenfield until he joined StoneBridge in 2017. When Charlie joined StoneBridge, he was ready for a new path. ***"I was ready for a change. I wanted a different pace and given my relationship with Butch Kennedy, I felt StoneBridge would be a good fit."*** In 2010, the Frankfort farm where Charlie worked was shut-down for 6 months and Charlie joined StoneBridge as a driver during that time. ***"I had a good feel for what StoneBridge was about and felt comfortable from day one given my history with them."***

What caught Charlie off guard was the amount of growth StoneBridge was experiencing when he arrived. In 2010, StoneBridge had 4 box trucks with a team of 8 drivers while Butch Kennedy ran the entire operation. In July 2017, Stonebridge had 10 trucks with a team of 15 drivers. ***"It has become an energy driven company. Parts are always moving. When the phone rings, I never know what to expect. You must be flexible and be prepared to learn something new. One second things will be quiet and then all chaos will break***



***out as the customers start calling for expedites."***

For a small company experiencing growth, the maintenance job can be both frustrating and unforgiving at times and you must have a positive attitude. StoneBridge Operations Manager Brad Stephens quickly noticed why Charlie was fit for the position:

***"Charlie always has a wonderful attitude. Nothing phases him. Regardless of the situation, he always handles everything with poise. He also elevates the entire mood at StoneBridge in a positive way. He is always telling a joke and laughing, regardless of whether we get the joke or not."***

# Driver in the Spotlight



Charlie Mann and his girlfriend Joyce pose for a picture in Florida.

Simply,  
Charlie Mann  
is ALWAYS  
on call and  
ALWAYS  
answers the  
call.

When orientation takes place for a new StoneBridge team member, our business is always described as “**ORGANIZED CHAOS**”. In the world of expediting, the job of StoneBridge is to always be part of the solution for a customer’s problem. We are always on call requiring a lot from the mechanic. Over the last year, Charlie Mann has always been on call. He has been on call to do a last-second fix to a truck. He has been on call to do a last-minute run when there were no other StoneBridge drivers available. He has been on call to take a phone call at 1am in the morning when a StoneBridge operator is experiencing mechanical issues. **Simply, Charlie Mann is ALWAYS on call and ALWAYS answers the call.**

***“Charlie Mann is my friend first and foremost. As a friend, I truly love him dearly. He is a wonderful person. Along with this, I cannot imagine how StoneBridge would have kept it together with their growth over the last year without him. Given the amount of development we have experienced, things could have and should have easily fallen apart, but they didn’t. They didn’t because Charlie was part of the team and helped in more ways than we even know.”***

~ StoneBridge Founder Butch Kennedy



# A STORY OF SERVICE

American  
Veteran  
Owned



American  
Veteran  
Driven

StoneBridge is proud of its commitment to the service of those who have served and serving. Our company is owned by veterans and employs many who have a history of service to their country.

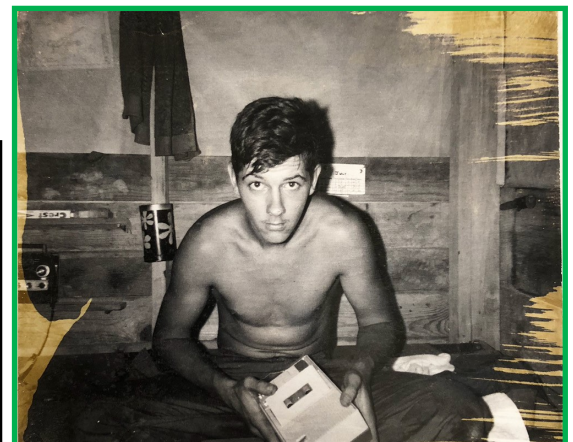


US Army  
Veteran  
Doug Spon

It is an absolute honor and privilege to serve in the United States Military. Quite often when I am in uniform, I am both amazed and appreciative when people go out of their way to say, **"Thank you for your service"**. With this level of appreciation comes a huge responsibility. A responsibility to wear the uniform with pride and carry yourself in a manner that shows a high level of respect the it demands. Not only are you representing your country and the military, you are also representing your family. If you ask a majority of those who volunteer to serve their country if someone in their family served, I would suffice to say many would proudly name a family member. Not only would they name them, they would have an honored inflection in their voice when answering.

In a past issue, I was pleased to tell my father Butch Kennedy's story of service. As I write this, I am delighted that I get to talk about another family member who I am **PROUD** to discuss.

**DOUG SPON IS  
A VIETNAM VETERAN . . .  
HE IS ALSO MY  
GRANDPA!!!**



Doug Spon at 18 years of age in Chu Lai, Vietnam

Born in 1950 in Sharon Pennsylvania to Ray and June Spon, Doug Spon grew up in family dedicated to service. Ray Spon served in the Navy, and his brother Rick Spon, retired from the US Navy in 2003 as a Commander. In December 1968, Doug Spon made the decision to also serve his country. Like many during this time he was posed with a very tough question: Enlist or get drafted?

At the time, the Army allowed him to enlist without a high school diploma. **"I was ready to go, I liked land, and liked fixing stuff. Being a mechanic in the US Army made sense."** Doug would attend Basic Training at Fort Benning, GA and Advanced Individual Training at Fort Jackson, SC. After completion of his training in May 1969, Doug Spon would receive orders to Chu Lai, Vietnam. Upon arrival Doug was stationed at LZ Baldy until he and a friend made a mistake. **"There was a base wide urinalysis. A Sergeant gave me a cup and told me to "fill it up". I did so, except I filled it with Vodka. Seemed funny at the time, but they didn't find the humor in it when the results came back."** Based on this, Doug was moved to LZ Siberia as punishment. During this time, although trained as a mechanic, he spent the majority of his time running convoys as part of the Quick Reaction Force (QRF).

# A STORY OF SERVICE

After a year in Vietnam, Doug would serve 2 years in Ft Bragg, NC where he would reenlist and receive orders to South Korea. On location, he spent his first 4 months as a mechanic until he was summoned to meet with a Sergeant Major. After formation, SGT Spon was told to get in a Jeep and go to Seoul. Following a two-hour drive, the subsequent conversation ensued:

**Sergeant Major:** "SGT Spon, you need a haircut."

**Sergeant Spon:** "You had me come all this way to tell me that?"

**Sergeant Major:** "No, you are going to be the General's Driver."

**Sergeant Spon:** "How?"

**Sergeant Major:** "You were selected."

**Sergeant Spon:** "How?"

**Sergeant Major:** . . (insert speechless pause here) . . . Get your stuff.



While in Vietnam, Doug was assigned to LZ Baldy / West 196th INF



SGT Spon with the General's car in Seoul, South Korea.

Doug would spend his remaining time in Korea as the General's Driver until he was stationed in Ft. Riley Kansas in April 1972 for 1.5 years as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. While there he was part of the 701<sup>st</sup> MSB and assigned to Alpha Company. (Ironically, when I (Shane Kennedy) joined the Army in 1999, I was stationed in Germany in the sister unit. I was assigned to Alpha Company 701<sup>st</sup> MSB in Kitzingen, Germany as part of the 1<sup>st</sup> ID in 2000). After Kansas, Doug received orders to Baumholder Germany where he would finish his career and receive an Honorable Discharge after 7 years, 9 months, and 23 days



Ray Spon joined the Navy as an Electrician's Mate in 1944.



CDR Rick Spon retired in 2003.



# A STORY OF SERVICE

*"I enjoyed my time in the military. It did a lot for me. I grew up."* After Doug completed his initial training, he returned home to visit with family. Growing up, he had a few "encounters" with the local deputy sheriff. When this same deputy saw him in uniform he stated,

***"This is the best decision you ever made young man".***



To this day, Doug always draws a close comparison with his professional career with his time in the service. He has spent his life either working as a mechanic, or in jobs that utilize his knowledge as a mechanic. At StoneBridge, he is called on quite often to help diagnose issues. Along with this, he enjoys his fellow Veterans at StoneBridge.

***"I really enjoy being around the guys. In the service, you look out for each other. You develop that bond in and out of the service. I share that same bond at StoneBridge Trucking."***



StoneBridge Operator Doug Spon operating a Jeep while stationed in Vietnam in 1969.