

BRIAN C. FELDER

Looking for Bill Gray

It is the proverbial “needle in the haystack”,
this walking around looking for someone
who I might not even recognize if I were to see.
We served together in Vietnam a long, long time ago
and he was from here, DC that is,
so being on his turf this Memorial Day
I have come to the Wall
to see if I could find him in the gathered crowd.
But time has done a number on my generation
and I think the odds are long against me here.
It helps that he is black,
as most of these faces—like mine—are white,
but none have jumped out at me
as I have peered into them.
He is probably not here
but I will keep looking all the same,
because Marines take care of their own
and he is one of mine.
I was his Squad Leader then
but, more importantly, we were friends
and I want to know how his life has played out.
I will find him someday, of that I’m sure,
but, apparently, not today and not here,
here at the Wall on Memorial Day
where one looks back because one should.

BRIAN C. FELDER’S work has appeared in numerous journals, including *Poesia*, *Big Muddy*, *LummoX Journal*, *Backstreet*, and *Clark Street Review*. From the Midwest originally, Felder now resides in Delaware.