

DALLAS, TX.

-1996-

AIR AMERICA REUNION 1996
MAY 31 THRU JUNE 2--BRISTOL SUITES HOTEL
DALLAS, TX



History

Memorial Plaque

Stamp Effort

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The right to choose your own way and to be free and safe from tyranny is not guaranteed, nor should it be taken for granted. It is preserved by people who are willing to jeopardize their own life to secure it. The freedom you enjoy today was secured by an act that occurred in the past. The freedom you desire tomorrow may have to be secured by an act that you or someone else must do today.

Since 1947, a few brave commercial pilots have risked their lives to defend freedom and American interests across the world. From China to Vietnam, Air America pilots flew mission after mission, saving countless lives despite the danger to themselves. We invite you to explore our website to learn more about these not so well known American heroes.

A Story of Tigers, Cats and Eagles

by LEON V. LaSHOMB

Civil Air Transport (C.A.T.), originally organized in 1947 by Claire L. Chennault and Whiting Willauer, operated refugee and resupply flights in support of Generalissimo Chiang Kai-Shek's forces on the China mainland from 1947 to 1950. C.A.T. assisted the Generalissimo in evacuating his forces from the mainland to Taiwan.

C.A.T. moved its operations to Taiwan following the retreat of the American-backed Free China government to that island fortress. Commercial air routes ranging from Tokyo to Bangkok were established by C.A.T., which began concentrating on transporting paying passengers throughout the Far East.

Because the Korean War demanded a secure air transport for our government's operations, Civil Air Transport was purchased by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). After the Korean War era, Air America was established to carry on operations under U.S. government contracts in the Far East.

The Vietnam conflict drew Air America, Bird & Sons, and Continental Air Service into Southeast Asia where bases were established in major cities and remote areas of Thailand, Laos and South Vietnam. A variety of U.S. government agencies were active in those countries and contracted with Air America for flight and related support services.

In the 1970s the Pacific Corporation (including Air America) operated one of the largest fleets of aircraft in the world.

Some of the original employees of C.A.T. and Air America were, like Gen. Chennault, former "Flying Tigers" and veterans of the World War II China campaign. As the organization grew in size and scope, crew and support personnel were recruited from all branches of the military services and from civilian sources. These individuals were the most highly skilled, adventurous and patriotic aviation personnel who could be found.

Some were captured, some are still missing, and many of them died during those difficult operational years which ended with the final Air America helicopter evacuation flights from the roof of the U.S. Embassy in Saigon on April 29, 1975.

A secondary aspect of most U.S. government contracts undertaken by Air America, Air Asia and C.A.T. was the training of local national employees in the countries where bases were established. Under the prevailing hostile and warlike conditions, many of those local aviation employees died alongside their mentors and co-workers.

The **Tigers, Cats and Eagles** who flew the aircraft, repaired those aircraft and supported the missions have erected a memorial to properly honor those who are gone and whose stories may not have been told before now. The McDermott Library at the University of Texas at Dallas is the home of this memorial and the archives of this unique group of participants in one of history's least known and generally misunderstood aviation enterprises. □

A partial list of members attending the 1996 reunion.

FIRST	LAST	FIRST	LAST	FIRST	LAST
Ed	Adams	Gary	Edwards	Jean	Landry
Stacy, Kelly & Amy	Adams	Clyde & Mary	Ellis	Charles & Among	Lane
Ellie	Adams-Eakin	Don & Mary Ann	Fell	J. L.	Lauterback
Harry & Jessie	Aderholt	Jerry	Fink	Bob & (Son) Roger	Leonard
Jim & Kathleen	Alexander	Chet	Folck	Bill & Mary Jane	Leonard
Tank	Allen	Dick	Ford	Ed	Leonard
Roland (Big Andy)	Andersen	Larry & Glenda	Fraser	Dee	Lister
Bill & Jackie	Andresevic	Dan	Gamelin	Bob	Mahaffey
Frank	Balsley	Lee	Garner	Glen	Marlowe
Barney	Baxter	Gary & Martha	Gentz	Mike & Kay	Marshall
Mr & Mrs Tom	Bees	Stormy	Glindeman	Ted & Carolyn	Mauldin
Bill	Bergman	Ben	Gowen	John	McCarthy
Harry	Bernier	Norma & Chuck	Green	John & Geanie	McManners
John	Berry	Rip & Jeanne	Green	John & Sandi	McRaine
Burma	Berry	Jim & Hildegard	Green	Barbara & Pauline	McRaine
Hank	Bland	John & Audrey	Greenway	2 Grandchildren (J & S)	McRaine
Milton & Lou	Bloodsworth	Gus	Gustafson	Jim	Mehring
J. C. & Janet	Bond	Chuck	Haist	John, Chin & Audrey	Melton
Vlad	Broz	Pinky	Halstead	Kay	Merkel-Borff
Terry & Guest	Bruner	Cliff	Hamilton	Boyd	Mesecher
Greg	Burch	John	Hanson	Gilbert	Mexwell
Marius	Burke	Al & Barbara	Harris	Kenny & Guest	Miller
John	Burkhart	Joe	Hazen	Jim	Milne
Francis & Marion Settle	Burmeister	Ben & Sahn	Heathman	Joe & Elizabeth	Mish
Tom	Butler	Ted & Suzanne	Helmers	Paul & Bonnie (Lyon)	Montgomery
Tony	Byrne	Jason	Herold	Jim & Debbe (Puldue)	Moran
George & Maria	Calhoun	Bob	Herold	Ed & Marie	Morelaand
Martha	Carlson	Floyd & Dona	Hildebrand	Gayle	Morrison
Al & Lucette	Cates	Chuck	Hilton	Susan & (Dau) Brianna	Mulholland
Jim & Sandy	Christiansen	Pamela	Hines	Inez	Mulholland
Vince & Doris	Clarke	Herman & Angela	Hines	Jane	Mullins
Brownie	Coble	Don	Hopp	Lucky	Mulqueen
Chauncey & Hai	Collard	Lee	Howell	Bob	Murray
Bob	Collins	Bruce	Jachens	Pat	Myers
Dave & Suong	Conley	Herman	Jackson	Jack	Neiman
Roger & Guest	Cook	Miles	Johnson	Hue	Nguyen
Dave & June	Crowell	Brian & Juliette	Johnson	Julie	Olson
Matt & Marilyn	Daddio	Blair & Tiffany	Johnson	Clarice	Osborne
Lee	Dammon	Carolyn	Jones	Robin	Osborne
Ken	Davenport	Sam	Jordan	Don	Overfield
Charlie	Davis	Paul & Ernestine	Kachikis	Jim (Mule)	Parker
Arden & Nataya	Davis	Duane & Peggy	Keele	Suthida	Parker
Bob	Dawson	Art & Tam	Kenyon	Willie	Parker
Phil	Dembitsky	Jim	Kilcullen	Luke & Dorothy	Peters
Ben & Kippi	Densley	Jack	Knotts	Porter	Pierce
Frank	DeVito	Bill	Korbel	Scott	Pirkle
Virgil	Domino	Mike	LaDue	Robin	Pirkle
Fred	Duvall	Ted & Lynn	Lamb	Debbie	Pirkle

FIRST	LAST	FIRST	LAST
Fred	Platt	Phil	Vaughan
Tony	Poe	Hank	Verbrugghen
Delight	Poske	Stan	Waite
Diane	Poske-Nesom	Jesse	Walton
Walt & Kim	Ranallo	Roger	Warner
Jim & Jeed	Rhyne	Jake & Barbara	Wehrell
Bucky	Richards	Helen	Wight
Earl	Richmond	Iva & (Dau) Kay	Williams
Glenn & Daisy	Riley	Danny	Williams
George & Cecilia	Ritter	(Dirty) Jim	Wilson
Michelle (Dau George)	Ritter	Alan & Lana	Wilson
Vickie & (Son) Josh	Ritter	John & Carolyn	Wiren
Phillipe	Ritter	Nyle	Wiren
Brett & Tracy	Ritter	Glenn & Wanda	Woods
Rob	Roberts	T. E.	Yarbrough
Michelle	Roberts	Jim & Rosanne	Zimmerman
Tom	Roberts	Entries 208	Total 282
Patsy	Roberts		zzz
Walt & Barbara	Rosenfield		
Tom	Sailer		
Larry & Judy	Sall		
Monty	Sandoval		
Mike	Seale		
Connie	Seigris		
Jim & Pat	Shive		
BJ & Jean	Singleton		
Jack & Uyvonda	Slager		
Angelo & Elaine	Spelios		
Larry	Stadoulis		
John	Stallman		
Lerry	Stark		
Devin	Stewart		
Rick	Strba		
Cam	Stuart		
Brian	Sullivan		
Amb. Bill	Sullivan		
Ryan	Sullivan		
Emmet	Sullivan		
Carmen & Arlene	Sylvester		
Chuck & Debbie	Taylor		
Paul & Guest	Thompson		
Stan & Chau	Thompson		
Jack & Linda	Thompson		
Ngo	Tin		
Jerry	Toman		
Barbara	Trees		
Warren	Trest		
Tom	Trowbridge		

It was May 1996 in Dallas, Texas--time once again for the AIR AMERICA reunion. Guest began arriving early from all parts of the world by every conceivable mode of transportation so as not to miss any of the festivities.



Activities kicked off at the check-in desk in the lobby of the hotel.

For some, it had been only a year since the last meeting; for others, it had been years.

Everyone quickly got on with the check-in so that they could get to the really important business of locating the hospitality suite and catching up on the latest gossip.



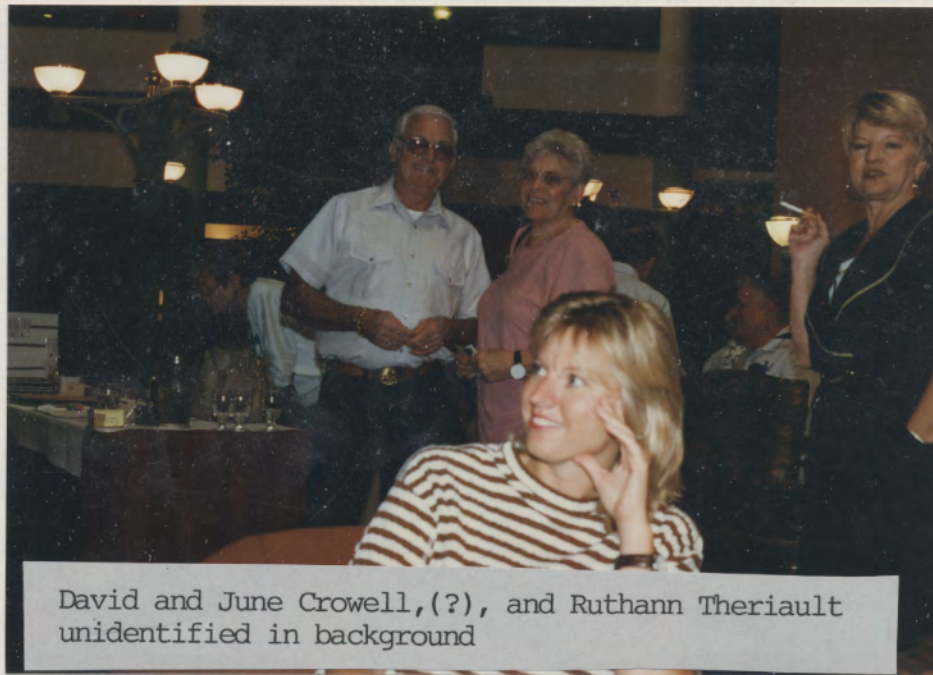
Norma Green, Chauncy Collard, Matt and Marilyn Daddio



Ruthann Theriault and Glenna Fraser



Brian Johnson, Ed Moreland, Ruthann Theriault, Paul Montgomery (?), and Al Cates



David and June Crowell, (?), and Ruthann Theriault unidentified in background

By the way, you won't see any pictures of Chuck and Norma Green setting up the registration table this year. Last year's early going at the check-in table (as caught on film) was just too embarrassing for everyone. Besides nobody took their picture this year!! They were there though.

Nobody captured Dan Gamelin setting up his sales table either. Dan isn't bothered by it though. He says anyone wishing to see his picture can stop by any U.S. Post Office. (They weren't very flattering, Dan.)



What's with Gary?

It's his new self-improvement course. "How to Beat Some Sense into Your Head".

Yoowhee!

This learning process is painful.

Ben Densley, Hal Augustine, and Gary Gentz in background guy in cap looks like B.J. Singleton and guy in white shirt looks like Jesse Walton



Want to hear a good war story?

Not right now, I'm eating.

Jake Werell and B.J. Singleton unidentified lady in background (but bless her heart, she's looking at the picture albums) don't know who the pilot is, but he shows up at a lot of our reunions

Before going on with the reunion activities, I would like to take time out to thank all those who sent pictures of all the beautiful people who attended. Without the photographers in our midst, no one would see what a great time we were having and how old and run down we were becoming and what complete asses we were making of our selves and that we were losing our hair and wrinkles were hanging down to our knees and our teeth were yellow with nicotine stains and we were making goo-goo eyes at our friends wives and well you get the gist of what I saying. All we would have of these wonderful reunions would be legends to be embellished upon in later years and nice wispy warm memories that we could make of what we wished.

Therefore, for those of you with good lawyers, I am providing a list of the people who sent me these pictures:

Jack and Linda Thompson (who supplied some names I would never have come up with-Thanks)
(a big culprit)

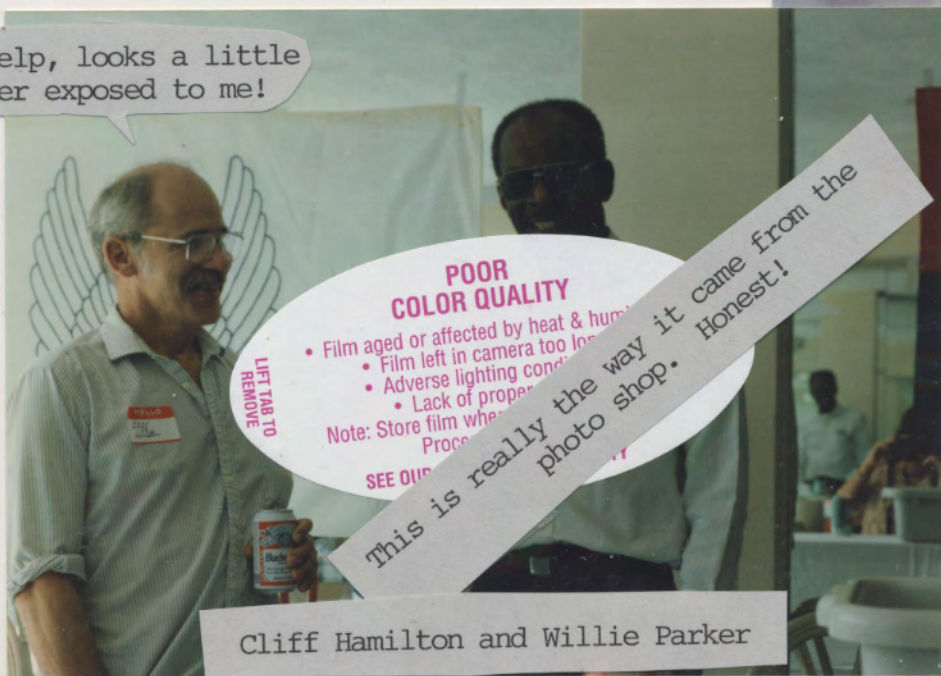
Peggy Keele
Brownie Coble
Ellie adams
Terry Bruner and
Kathy Rosalas

Hope I snitched on everybody.

Some examples of their great work follow:



Yelp, looks a little over exposed to me!



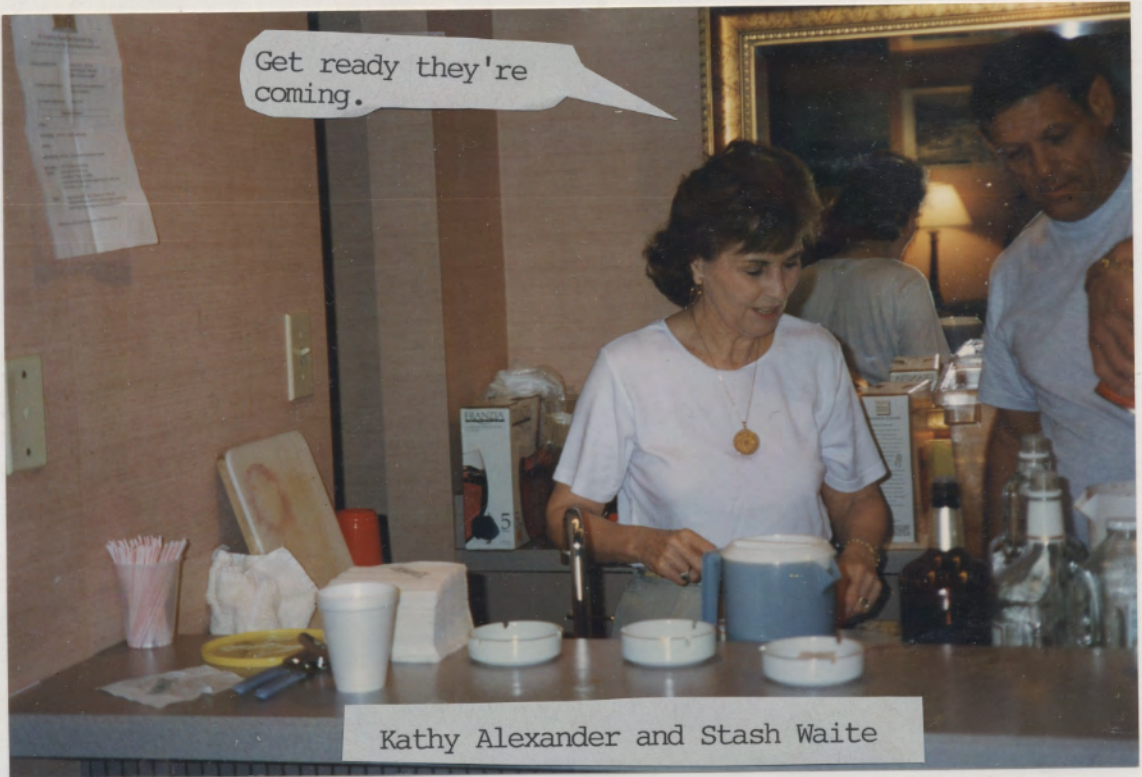
Cliff Hamilton and Willie Parker

ON TO THE HOSPITALITY SUITE---



Where is the durn place?

Back here!



Get ready they're coming.

Kathy Alexander and Stash Waite



Oh there you are



Jane Mullins, Jean Landry, Glenna Fraser, Dee Lister (partially hidden), Bob Mehaffey
In background-Jim Milne, #1 and #2 unidentified

I was wrong, a picture of the registration desk was taken.



Norma Green checks in Willie Parker



Someone invited the dummy back, I see. I've never been able to get a word out of him, much less a good war story. Still they keep inviting him back. Someone must like him.

THE HOSPITALITY SUITE



Jim and Kathy Alexander get the bar into operation. Along with....



Gary and Martha Gantz who are serving Hal Augustine, Frank Devito, and Norma Green

So....., the most important part of the reunion (for a few more years at least) has been attended to with quite efficiency. PARTY IS ON!

The success of the hospitality suite is always due to the many people who volunteer their time behind the bar. Thanks!

A moment of silence in tribute to those who served.



Kathy Alexander and Stan Waite

They think they're heros....
they should be on this side of the bar
and have to tell all the war stories and
drink all the drinks I have to in just
one year of reunion attending!!



Peggy Keele



Fred Platt, Martha Gentz, Hal Augustine, and Peggy Keele

And to all the others**THANKS.**

Old friendships are renewed; and possibly, some new friendships are started up.



David Crowell



Mike Seale, John Burkhart, and
Chauncey Collard



Jake Wehrell



Carol Lashomb and Gary Gentz



Bill Andresevic, Vlad Broz's glasses, and
Scott Pirkle



Joe Hazen and Delight Poske



Hal Augustine, Arden Davis, Gary Gentz, Rick Strba's rear and reflection, and Martha Gentz's reflection



Mike Marshall and Willie Parker
unidentified in background



Ted and Carolyn Mauldin talk with Porter Pierce
unidentified lady in foreground



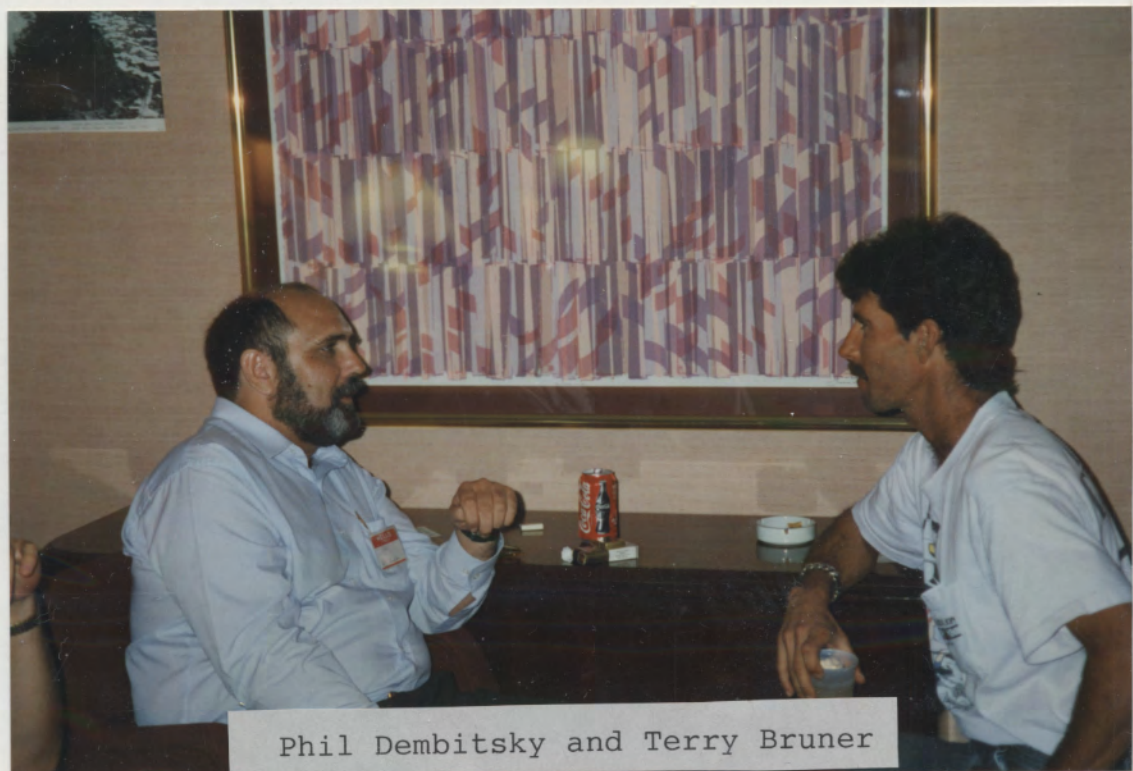
B.J. Singleton and Danny Williams
Looks like Arden Davis at left



Carol Lashomb, Larry Sall, and Jean Landry



J.L. Lauterback, Chris Densley,
and Kippi Densley



Phil Dembitsky and Terry Bruner



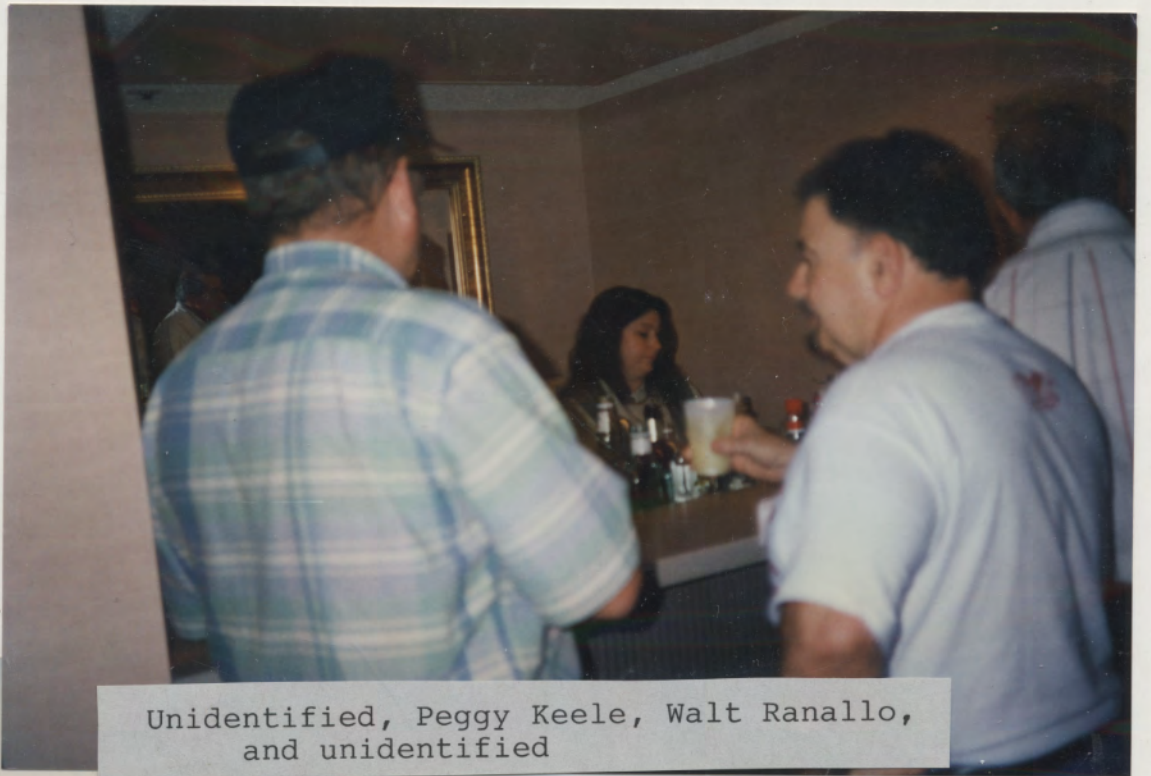
June Crowell



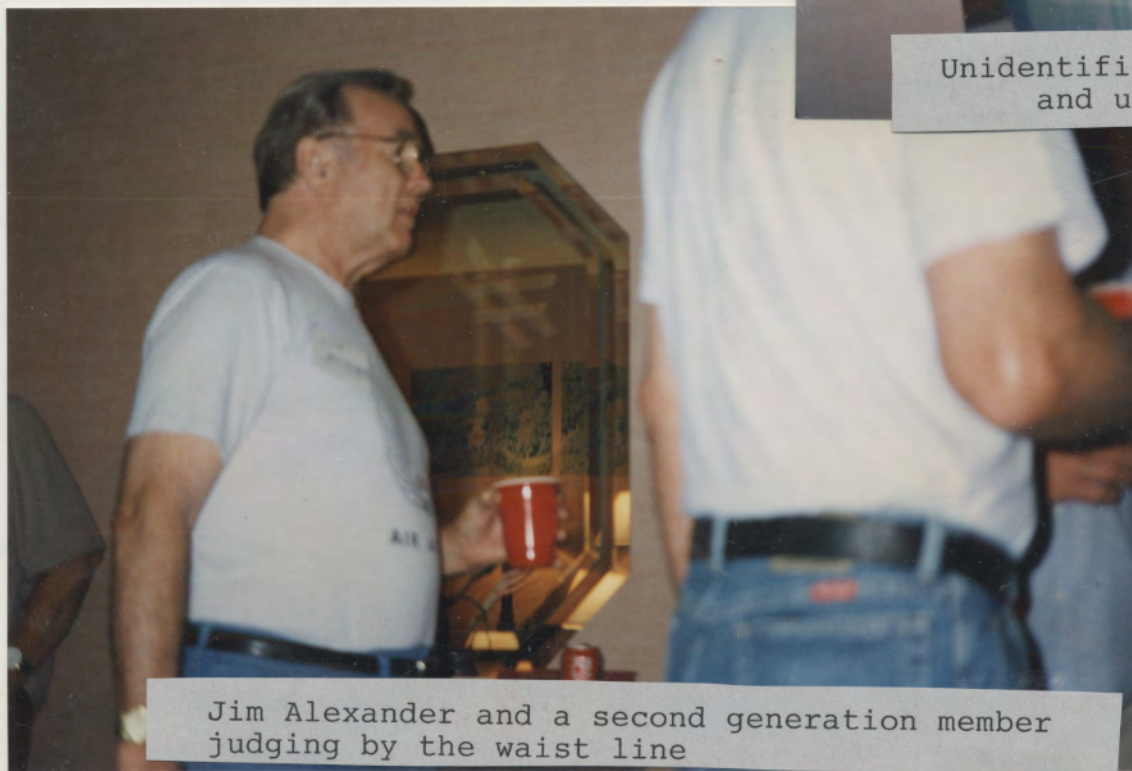
Unidentified lady on couch, unidentified, J.L.
Lauterback, Phenprapha Augustine, Phil Dembitsky,
unidentified, Rick Strba, Dave Crowell, and Hal
Augustine



Kippi Densley, Ruthann Theriault, Unidentified lady on couch, Dee Lister, Bruce Jachens ?, and unidentified



Unidentified, Peggy Keele, Walt Ranallo, and unidentified



Jim Alexander and a second generation member judging by the waist line



Michelle Roberts with son Tom Roberts - in background Chuck Green looks at pictures, at right Rick Strba



Hal Augustine talks mechanic talk to Frank Devito, Tom Sailer eavesdrops, but doesn't understand a word of it



Chuck Green, Tom Roberts, Patsy Roberts, and Rick Strba's famous drinking arm



Rosie and Barbara Rosenfield



Chin and Audrey Melton



Hal Augustine, Frank Devito, and Danny Williams (Picture taken from their most photogenic sides.)

Sip.
Sip.

Slosh. Gurgle.
Quick another one!

Slurp. Slurp
Give me another
drink, hurry!



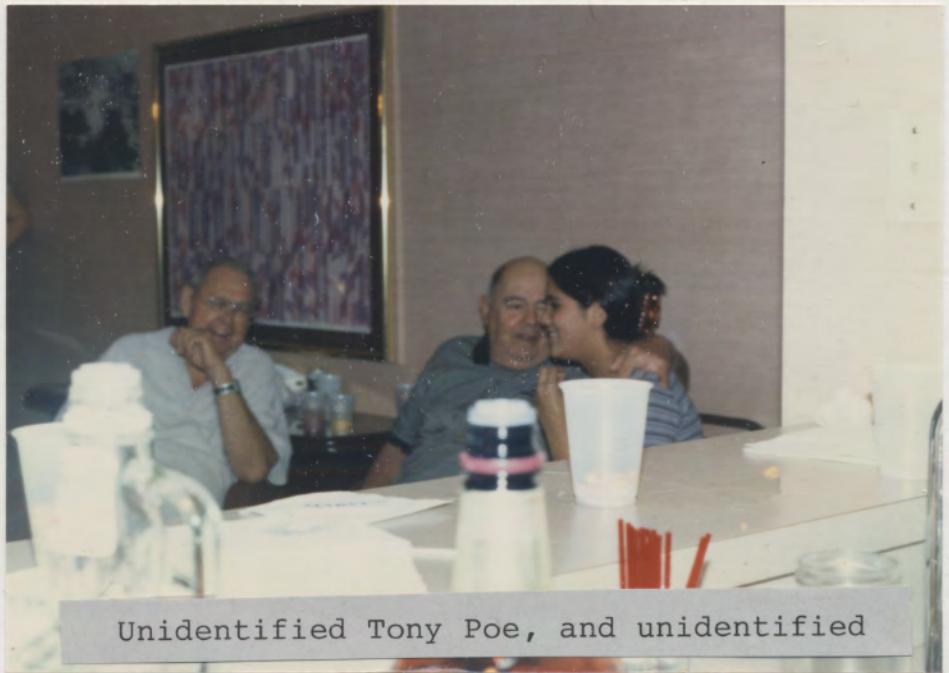
Unidentified and Chuck Haist



Norma Green
Unidentified in background



Jack Knotts, Ed Moreland, Jerry Fink, and
unidentified
in background Phil Vaughan in orange shirt



Unidentified Tony Poe, and unidentified



Hey buddy how come you
never talk?

Chuck Green ?, Mike Marshall, Robbie Roberts,
unidentified, and Hal Augustine



Unidentified, Frank Devito, Ed Leonard, Duane
Keele, and Lucky Mulqueen unidentified hair-do

What's the catch?

Since you're two of my better customers, I can let you boys have two of these twenty dollar chit books I have in this box for just \$12.95.



Emmet Sullivan, Danny Williams, and Chuck Green In background-do not recognize anyone

I'll go try the Baptist convention on the next floor.

Damn, there goes another eyebrow.



I wonder if I should have allowed Chuck a little more pocket money?

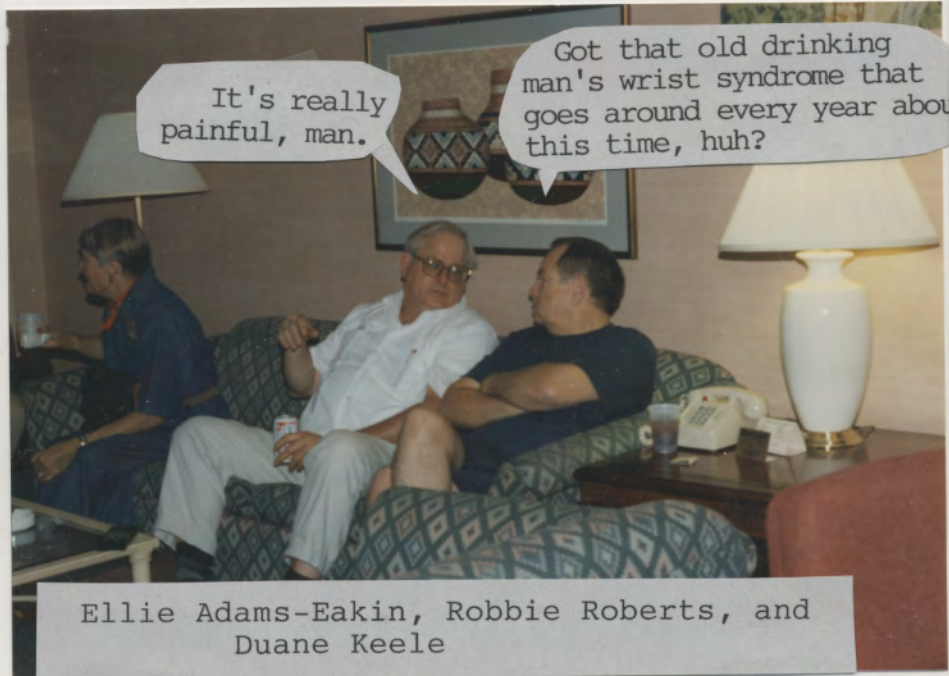
Norma and Chuck Green, Frank Devito, and Danny Williams (Fellow behind Danny is probably Hal Augustine)



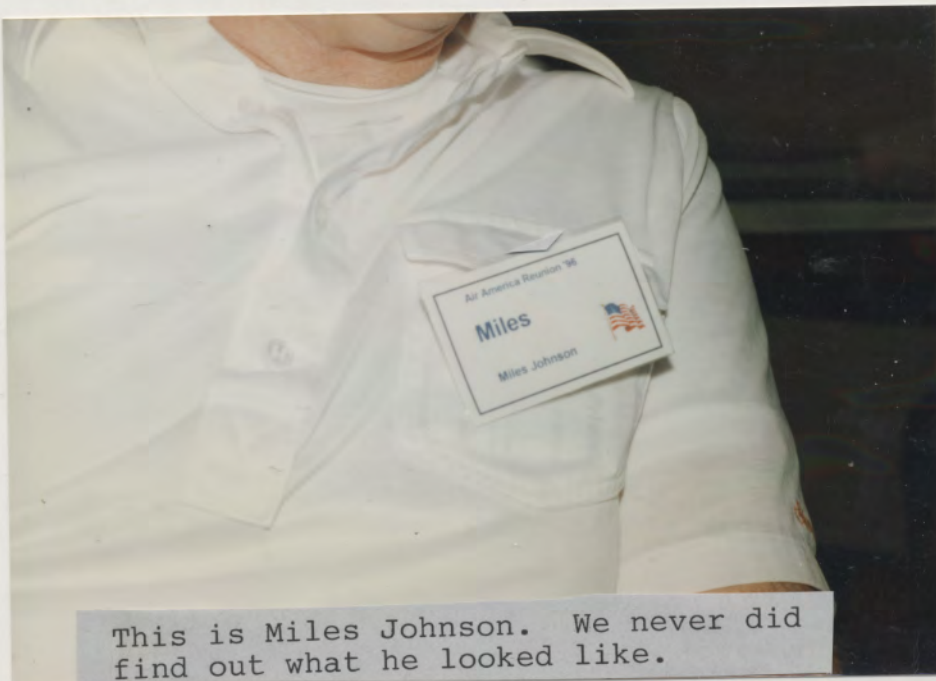
Robbie Roberts, Emmet Sullivan's leg, Danny Williams, and Norma Green To right unidentified man and Jim Zimmerman drinking beer-I think

It's really painful, man.

Got that old drinking man's wrist syndrome that goes around every year about this time, huh?



Ellie Adams-Eakin, Robbie Roberts, and Duane Keele



This is Miles Johnson. We never did find out what he looked like.

Oh yeah...

My Daddy can whip your daddy any day...

Now Norma...



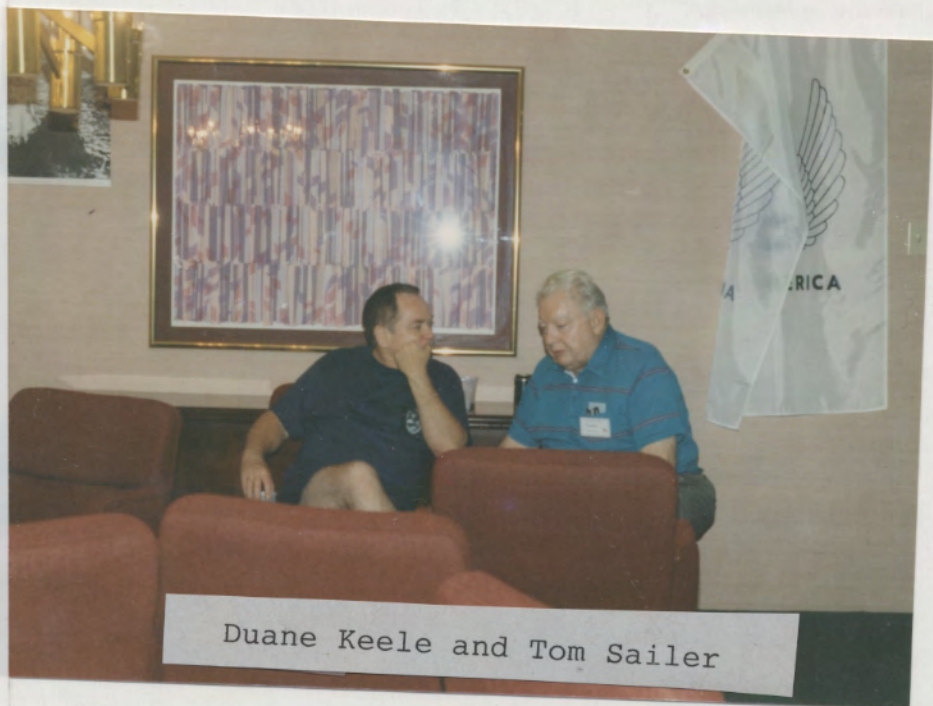
Chuck and Norma Green, Charlie Lane, Tony Byrne, and Marius Burke



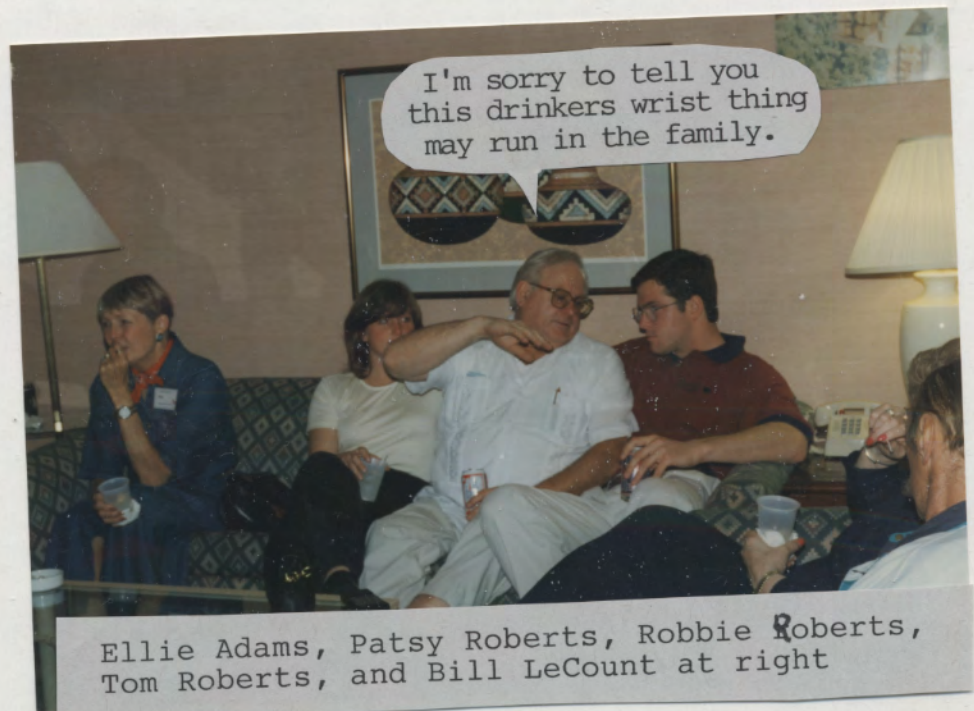
Emmet Sullivan, Danny Williams, and Unidentified couple at right



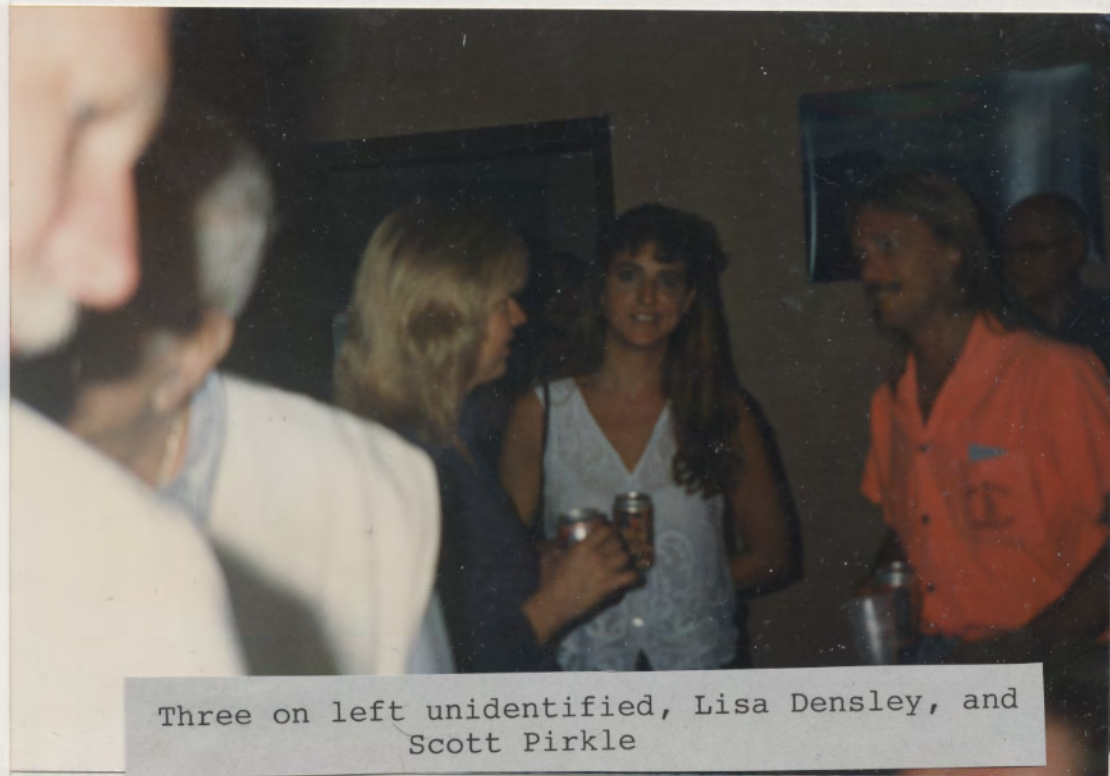
Mike Seale, Unidentified, Gen. Harry Aderholt, Jack Thompson, Jesse Aderholt, and Linda Thompson



Duane Keele and Tom Sailer



Ellie Adams, Patsy Roberts, Robbie Roberts, Tom Roberts, and Bill LeCount at right



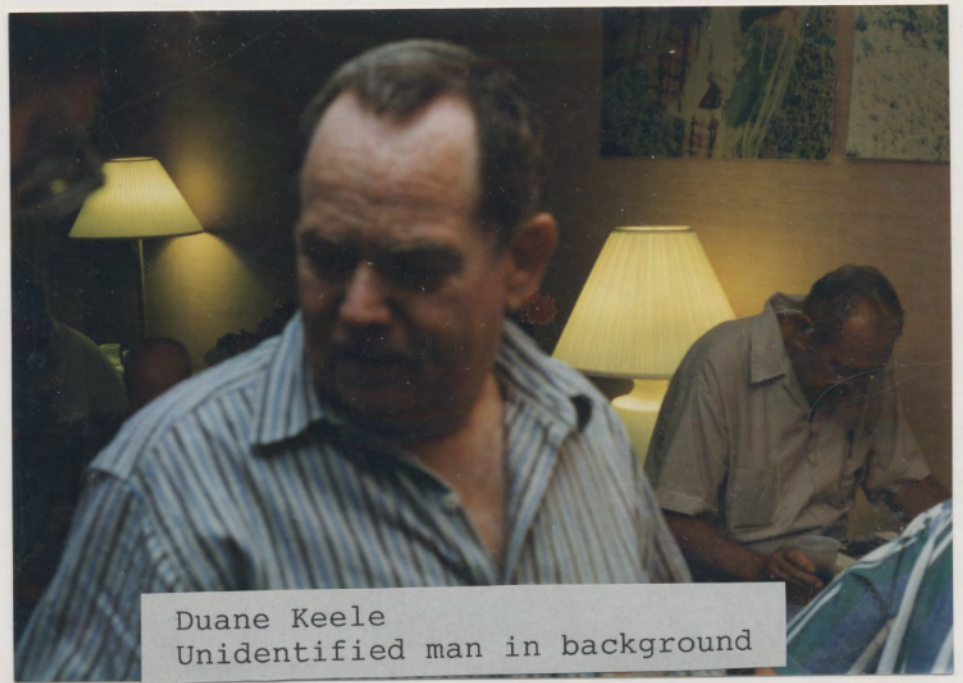
Three on left unidentified, Lisa Densley, and Scott Pirkle



Chuck Green
(I love this man.)



Lee Howell ? . Norma and Chuck Green



Duane Keele
Unidentified man in background



Manny and Barbara (Alexander) Saxiones



Herm Jackson with unidentified couple



Martha meets the mysterious Air America pilot Friday.



Norma Green



Martha Gentz

Martha slips back into the hospitality suite Saturday night.....



Got a cigarette, big guy?



Mike Seale and Sandy McRainey
Jane Mullins in background



Dan Gamelin, Frank Devito, Bob Murray, and
Walt Ranallo



Left-Jack Knotts, Right-Bucky Richards
Center-people eating breakfast, Frank Devito
in "T" shirt

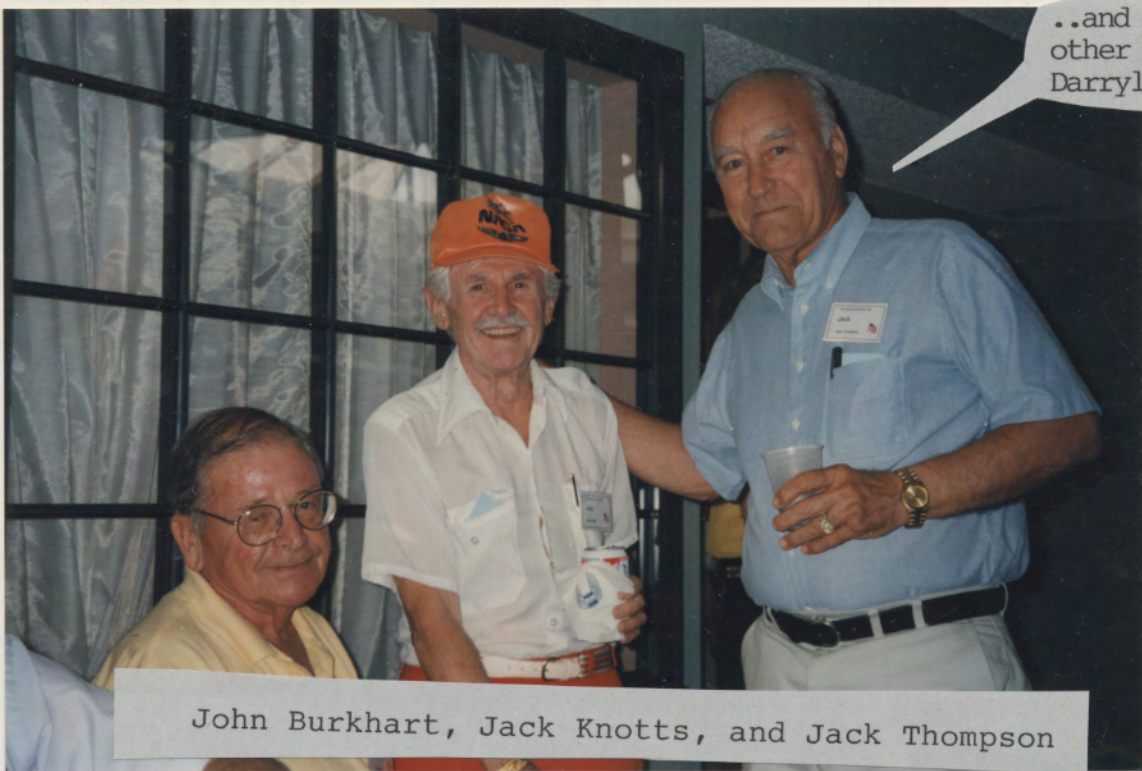
My God! I
think this is
San Diego!!

Oh! Charlie,
How could you
screw up my
reunion?

This isn,t VEGAS?



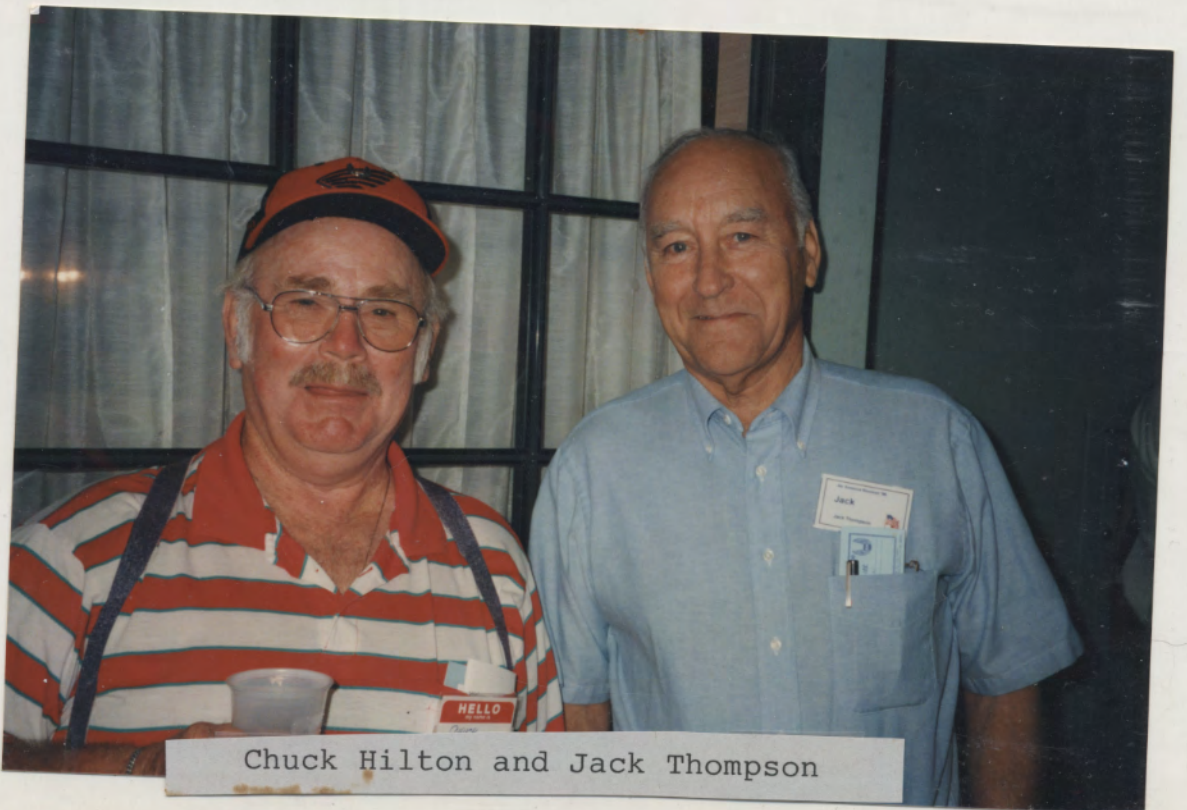
Charlie and Among Lane with Jack Knotts



John Burkhart, Jack Knotts, and Jack Thompson



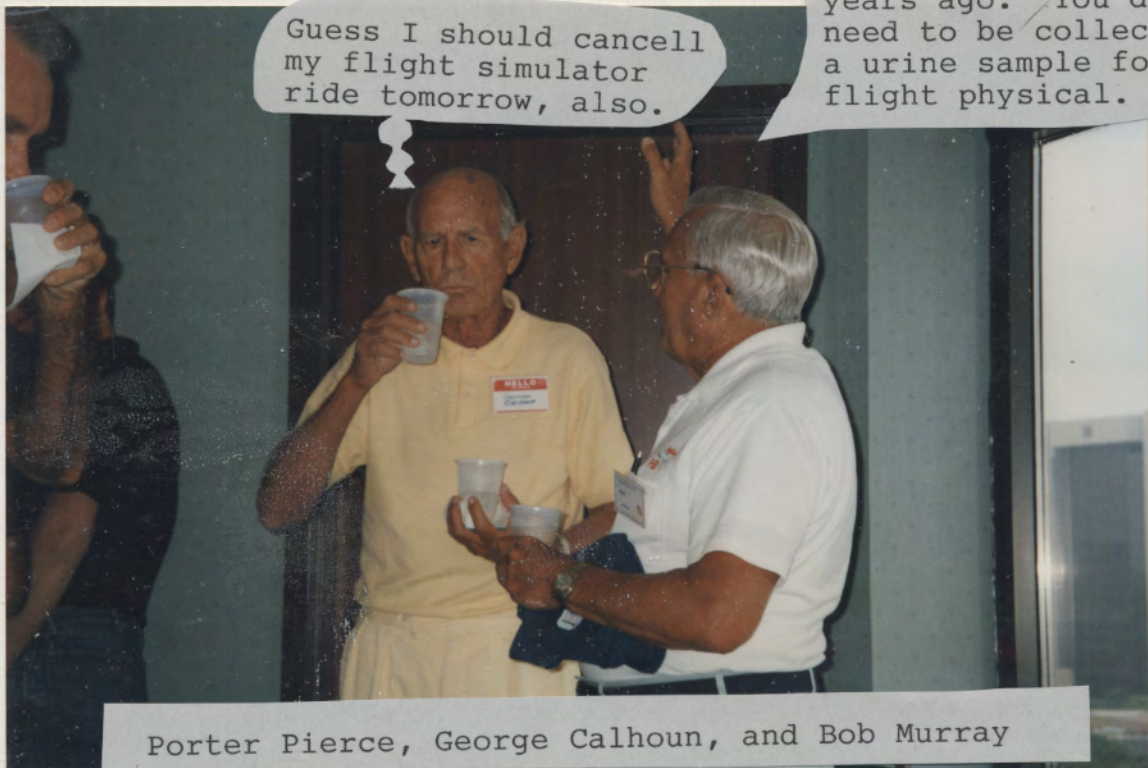
Unidentified, Chuck Hilton, Jack Thompson, Bob Murray, Ted Mauldin, and John Stallman



Chuck Hilton and Jack Thompson

My God, Shakey, they
revoked your license
years ago. You don't
need to be collecting
a urine sample for a
flight physical.

Guess I should cancell
my flight simulator
ride tomorrow, also.



Porter Pierce, George Calhoun, and Bob Murray



John McCarthy

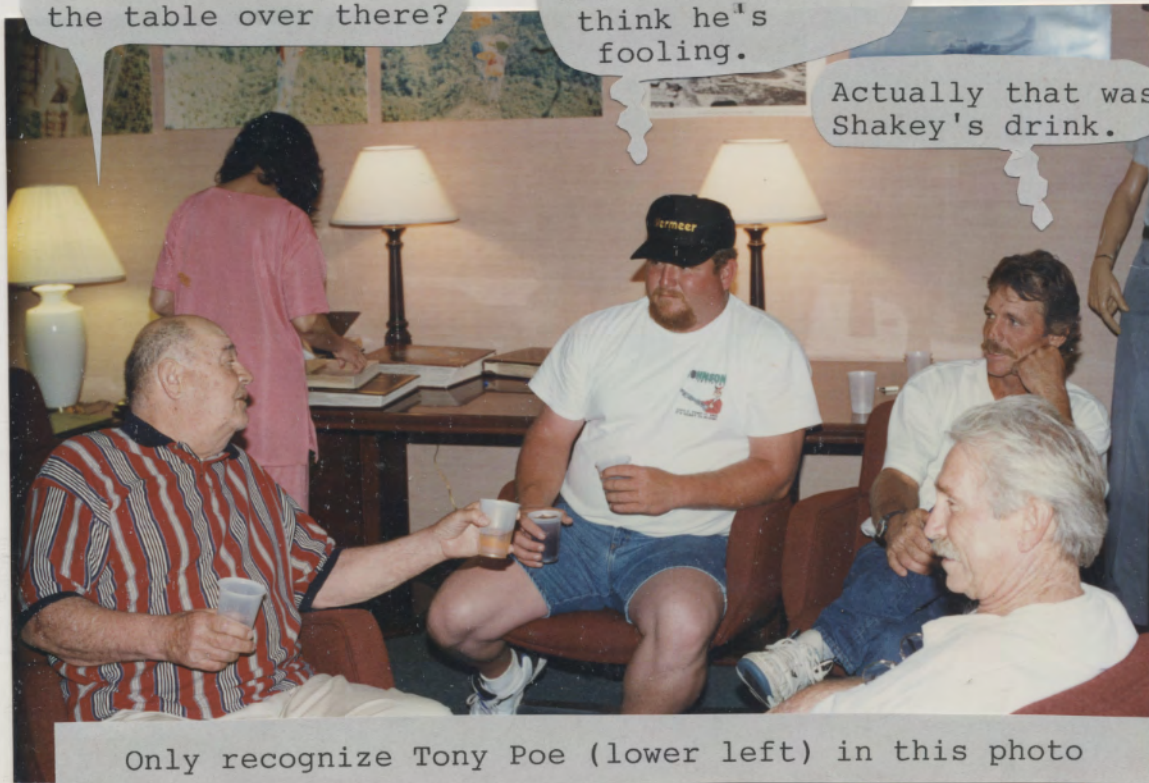


Tony Byrne and Rick Strba

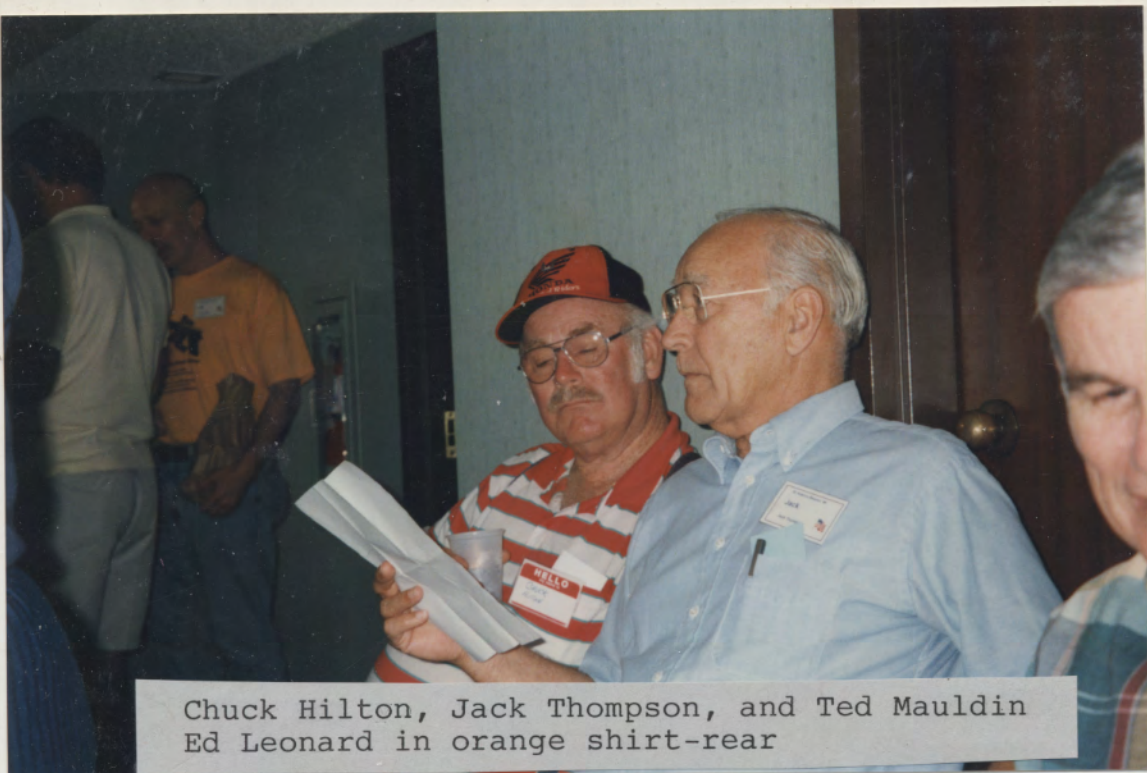
Want to finish this
drink Shakey left on
the table over there?

Who does this Bozo
think he's
fooling.

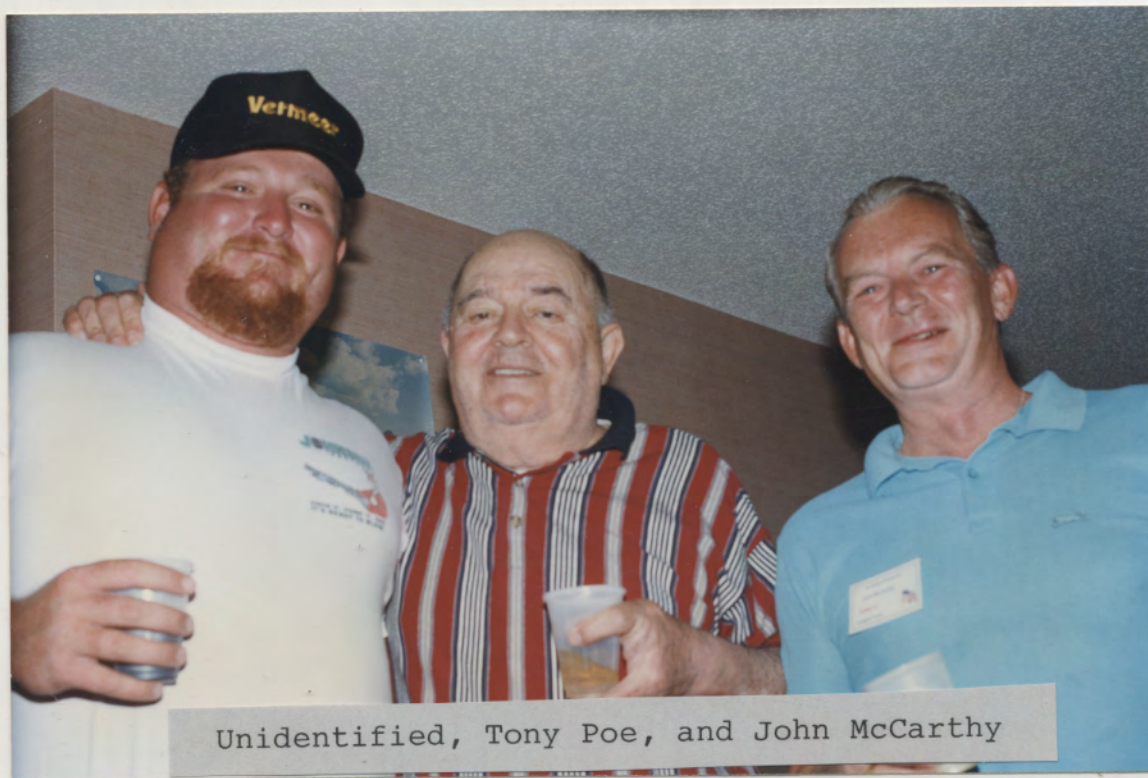
Actually that was
Shakey's drink.



Only recognize Tony Poe (lower left) in this photo



Chuck Hilton, Jack Thompson, and Ted Mauldin
Ed Leonard in orange shirt-rear



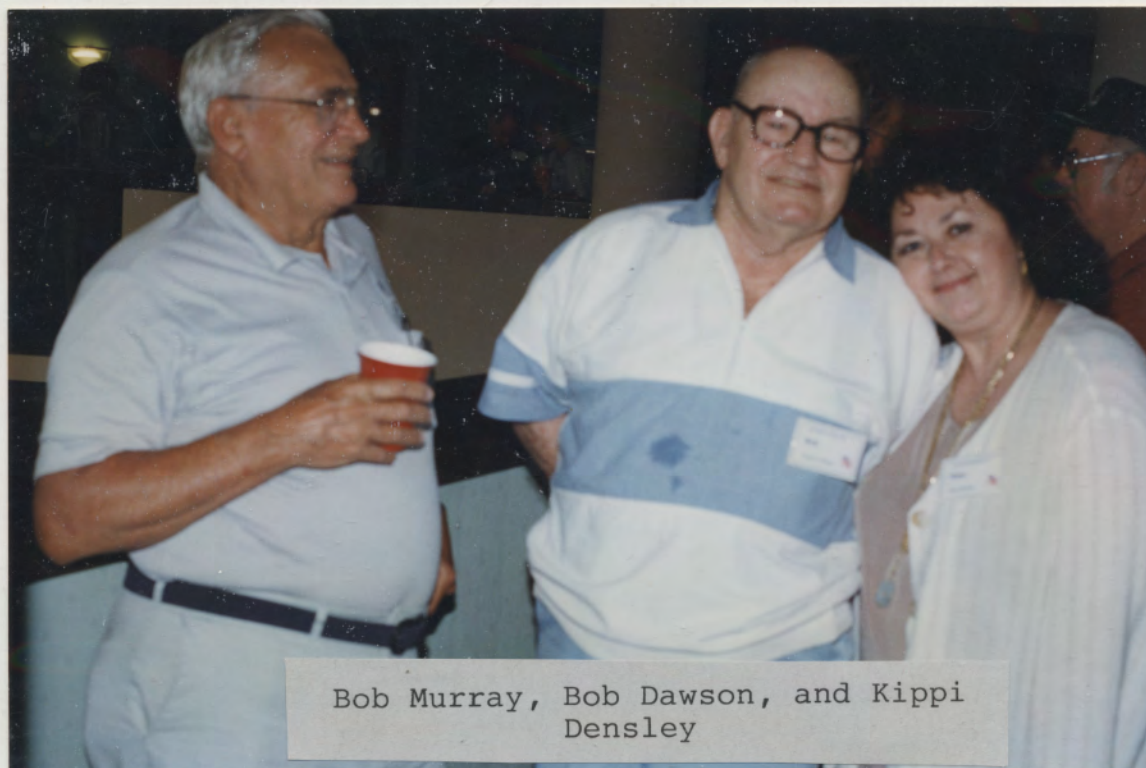
Unidentified, Tony Poe, and John McCarthy



Bob Dawson, Herm Jackson, and Bob
Murray



Jack Thompson, John Stallman, and Chuck Hilton



Bob Murray, Bob Dawson, and Kippi Densley



Porter Pierce and John Burkhardt
Mike Seale in back



Carol Toman, Ruthann Theriault, Dee Lister, looks like Phenprapha Augustine petting Emmitt Smith, unidentified lady, and Chris Densley Ted and Carolyn Mauldin looking at pictures



Fred Platt, Martha Gentz, Hal Augustine, and Peggy Keele

To bring a little culture to the photo album this year, I thought I would include a bit of prose and poetry dedicated to our beloved pilots and mechanics whom we all idolize. So here it is -

I want to be a pilot.

"I want to be a pilot when I grow up because it's fun and easy to do. Pilots don't need much school, they just have to learn numbers so they can read instruments. I guess they should be able to read maps so they can find their way if they get lost. Pilots should be brave so they won't get scared if it's foggy and they can't see or if a wing or motor falls off they should stay calm so they'll know what to do.

Pilots have to have good eyes so they can see through the clouds and they can't be afraid of the lightning or thunder because they are closer to them than we are. The salary pilots make is another thing I like. They make more money than they can spend. This is because most people think airplane flying is dangerous except pilots don't because they know how easy it is. There isn't much I don't like, except girls like pilots and all the stewardesses want to marry them and they always have to chase them away so they won't bother them. I hope I don't get airsick because if I do I couldn't be a pilot and would have to go to work."



A fifth grader



John Burkhart



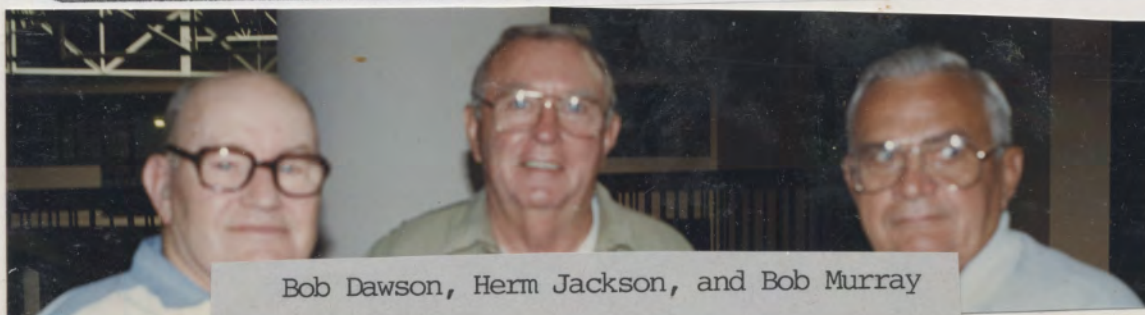
Tom Sailer



Phil Vaughan, Al Cates, and Larry Fraser



Jean Landry with Brianna Mulholland

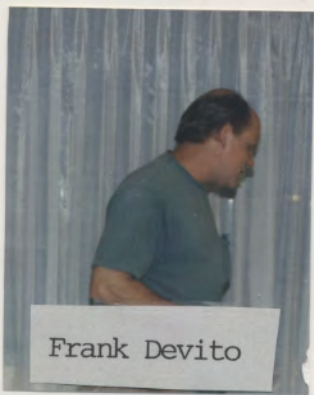


Bob Dawson, Herm Jackson, and Bob Murray

An Ode to Mechanics



Stash Waite



Frank Devito

Ah shucks!



Danny Williams

Through the history of world aviation many names have come to the fore. Great deeds of the past in our memory will last, as they're joined by more and more.

When man first started his labor in his quest to conquer the sky he was designer, mechanic, and pilot, and he built a machine that would fly but somehow the order got twisted, and then in the public's eye the only man that could be seen was the man who knew how to fly.

The pilot was everyone's hero, he was brave, he was bold, he was grand, as he stood by his battered old biplane with his goggles and helmet in hand.

To be sure these pilots all earned it, to fly you have to have guts.

And they blazed their names in the hall of fame on wings with bailing wire struts.

But for each of these flying heroes there were thousands of little renown, and these were the men who worked on the planes but kept their feet on the ground.

We all know the name of Lindbergh, and we've read of his flight to fame.

But think if you can, of his maintenance man, can you remember his name?

And think of our wartime heroes, Gabreski, Jabara, and Scott.

Can you tell me the names of their crew chiefs?

A thousand to one you cannot.

Now pilots are highly trained people, and wings are not easily won.

But without the work of the maintenance man our pilots would march with a gun.

So when you see mighty aircraft as they mark their way through the air, the "grease-stained man" with the wrench in his hand is the man who put them there.



Hal "Augie" Augustine and Gary Gentz



Willie Parker



Greg Burch



Rick Strba

'Bout time we got some recognition.



Dave Crowell

Sorry-when I started looking up kickers, the closest thing I could come up wit was something about cowboys...???

There are no neat poems about KICKERS.



There's no poems about kickers...???

I can't believe there's no #@*\$%#**! POEMS about kickers.

Settle down boys and drink your Crystale.



Pilots like mechanics better than kickers. I always knew that.

Dan Gamelin

What's prose?

Lucky Mulqueeny, Ed Leonard, Peggy Keele (honorary kickerette), Cliff Hamilton in background Lucette and Al Cates with Don Overfield



Prose is guys who get paid for doing something.

Translated: I'm so happy to be here.

Bill LeCount

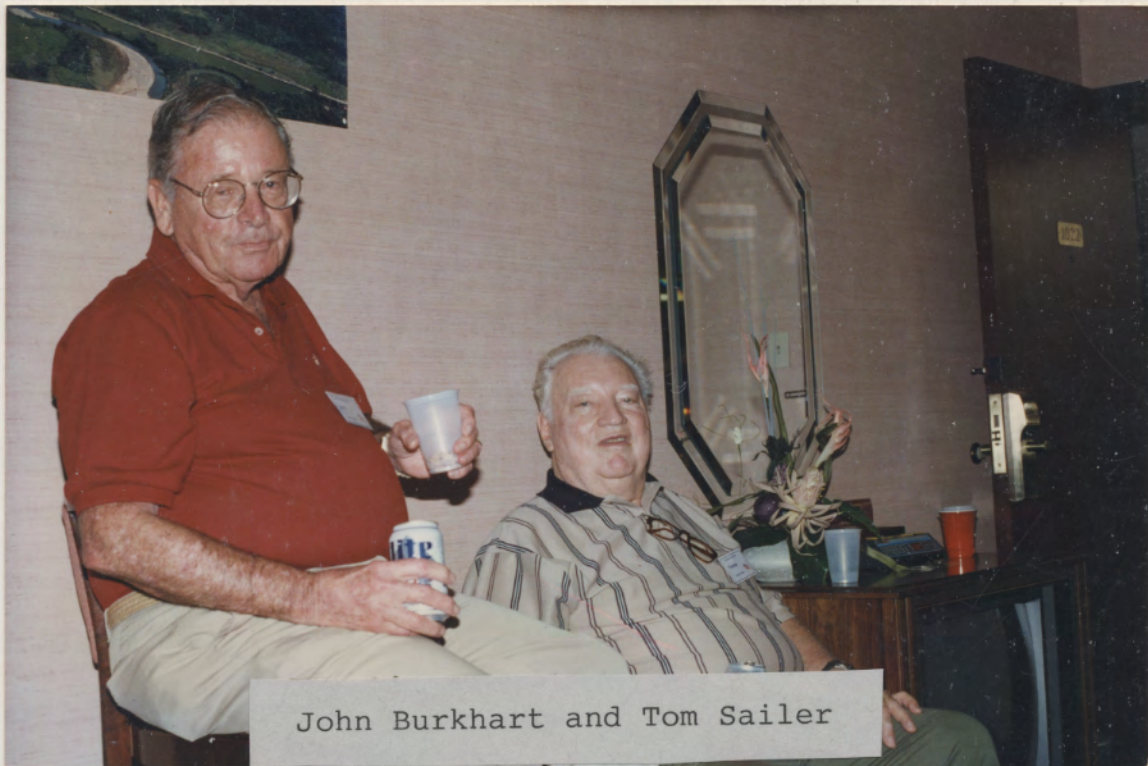


Chuck Haist

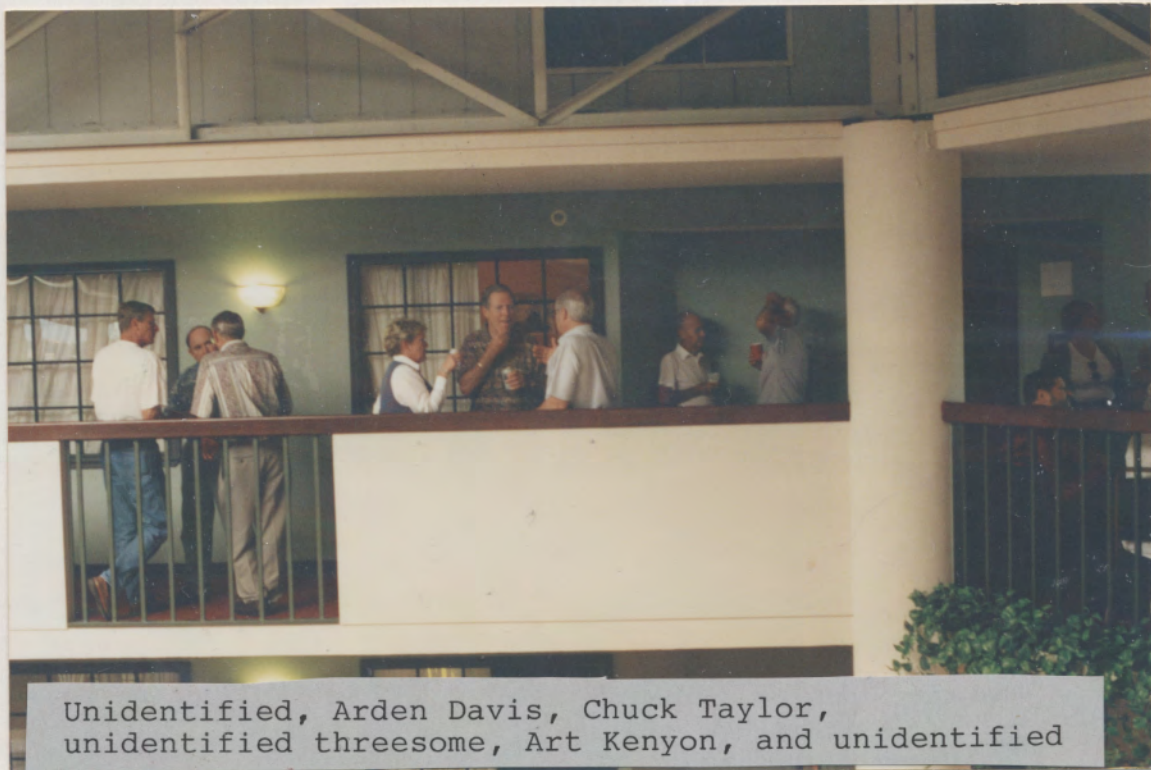


Robbie Roberts (His son Tom Roberts at right)

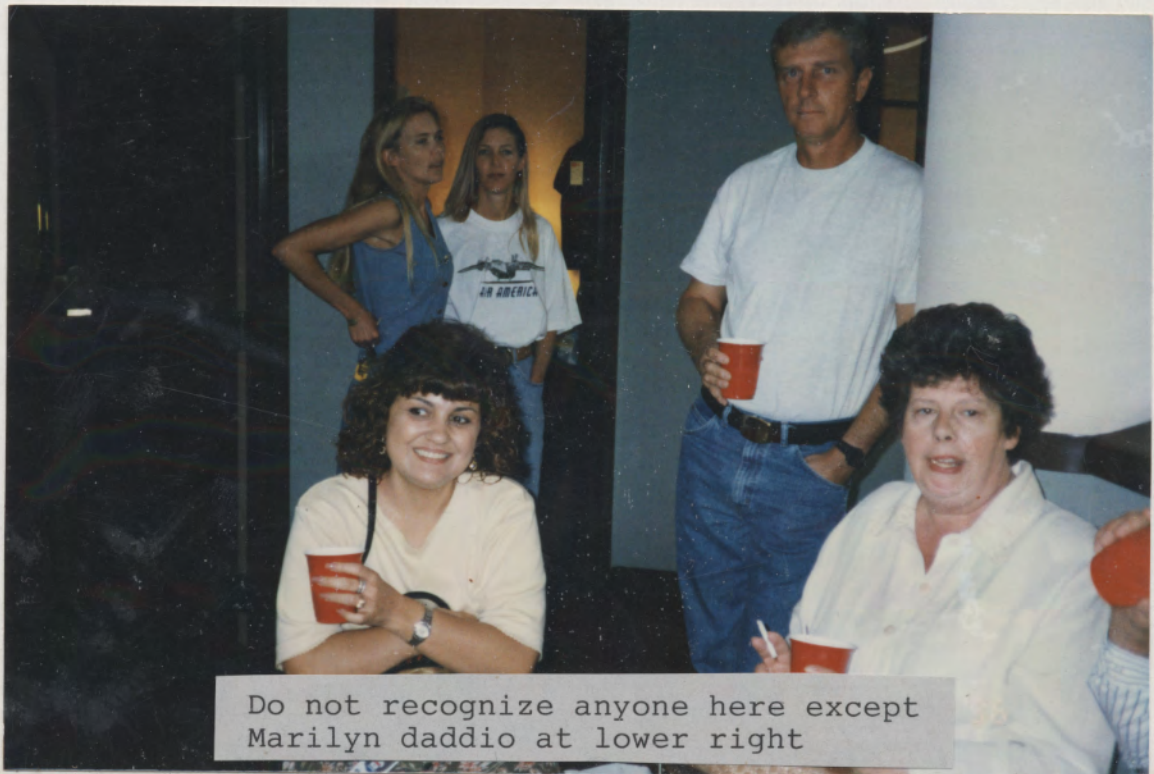
Psssst!



John Burkhart and Tom Sailer



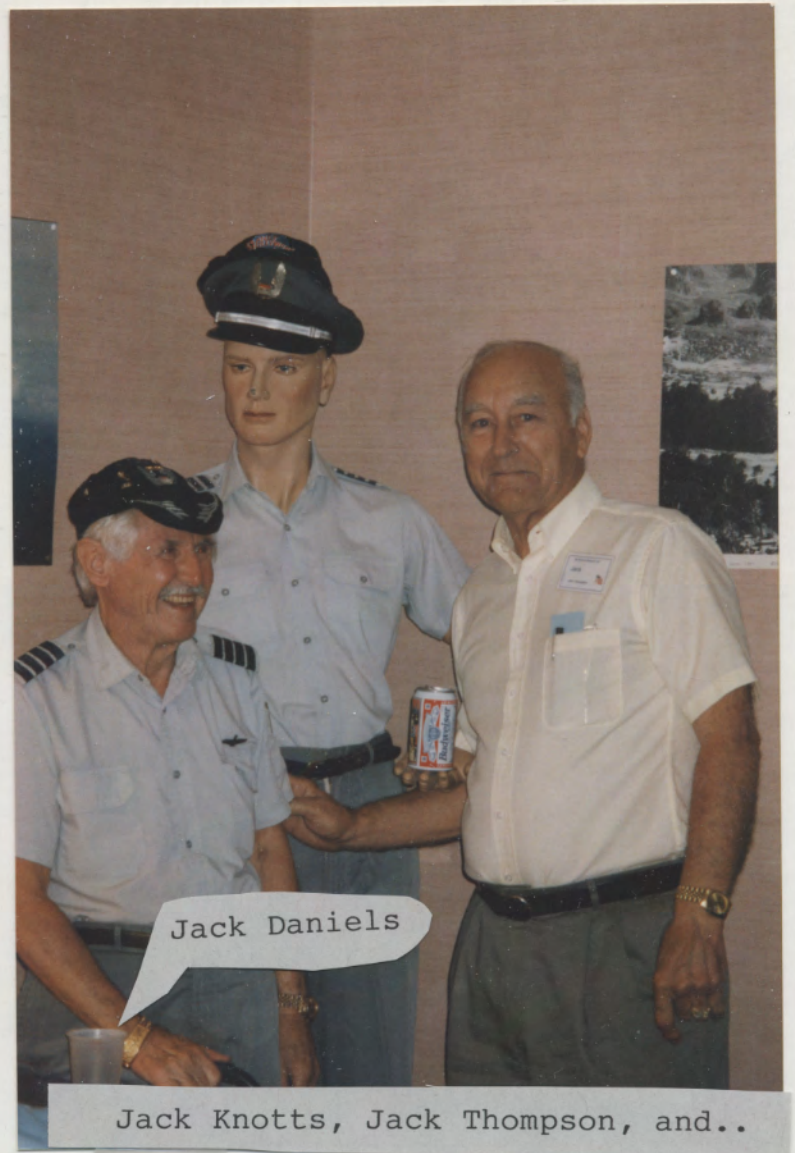
Unidentified, Arden Davis, Chuck Taylor, unidentified threesome, Art Kenyon, and unidentified



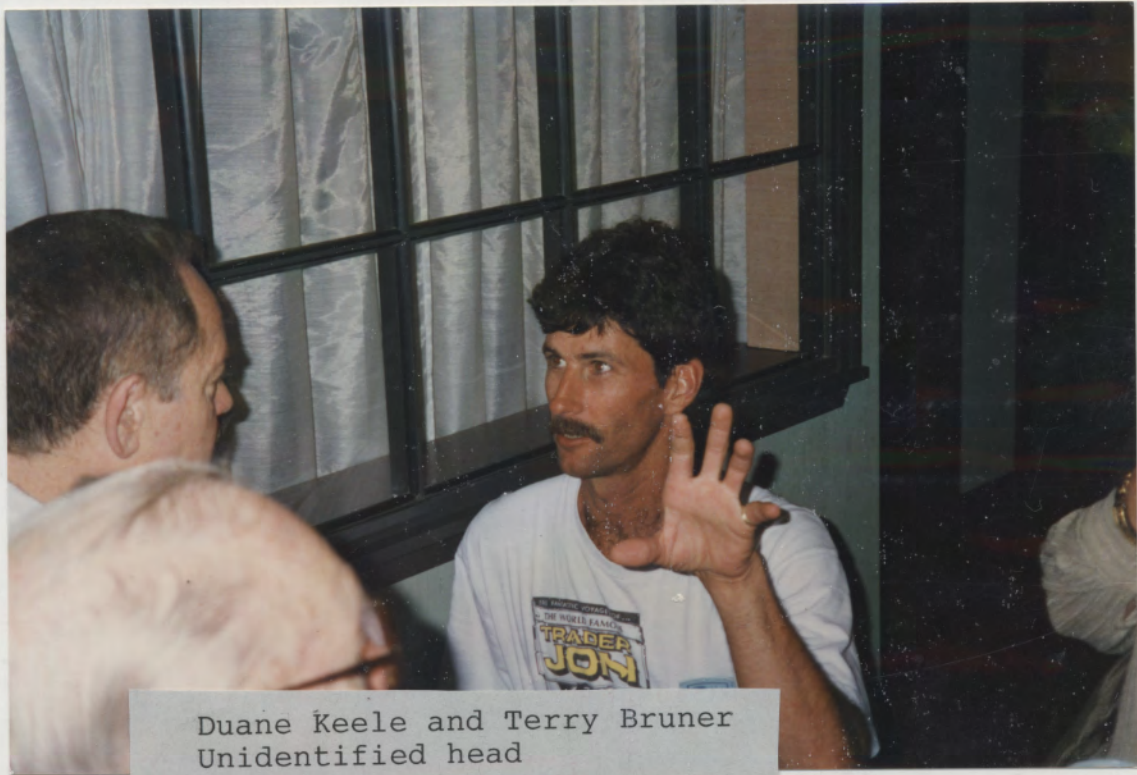
Do not recognize anyone here except Marilyn daddio at lower right



Tony Poe and John McCarthy



Jack Knotts, Jack Thompson, and..



Duane Keele and Terry Bruner
Unidentified head



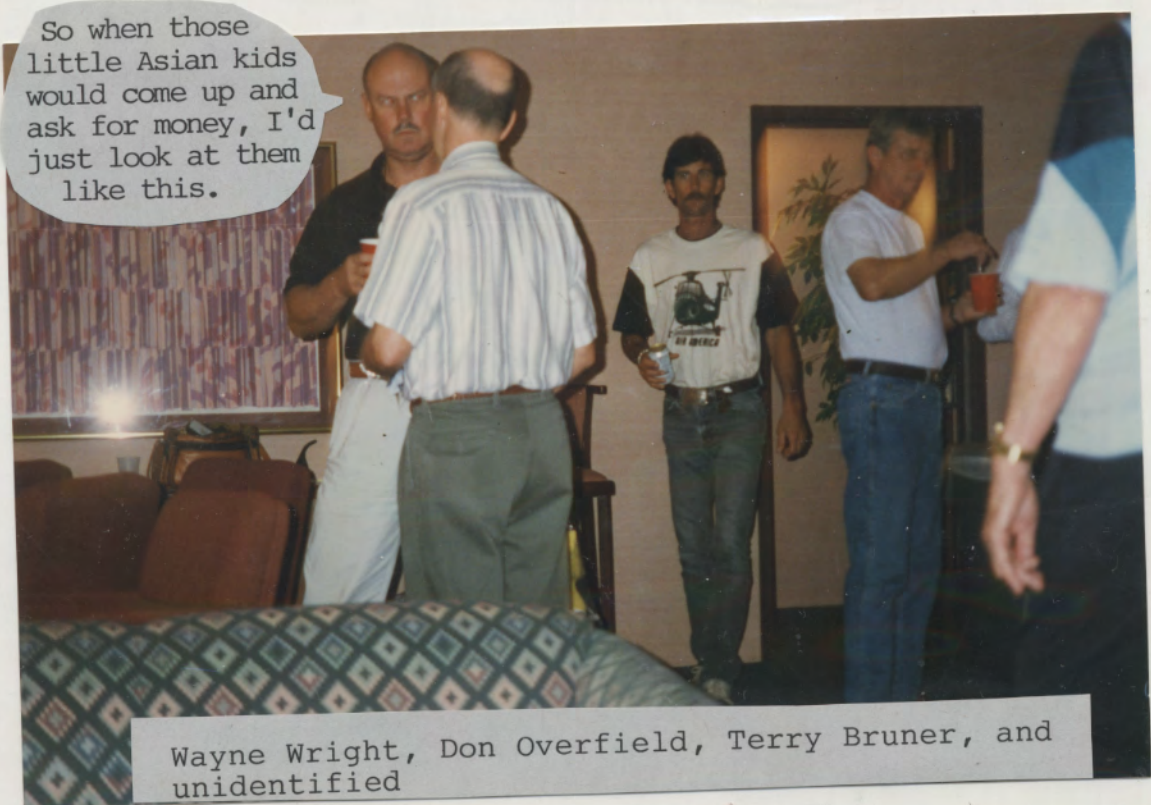
Kathy Alexander



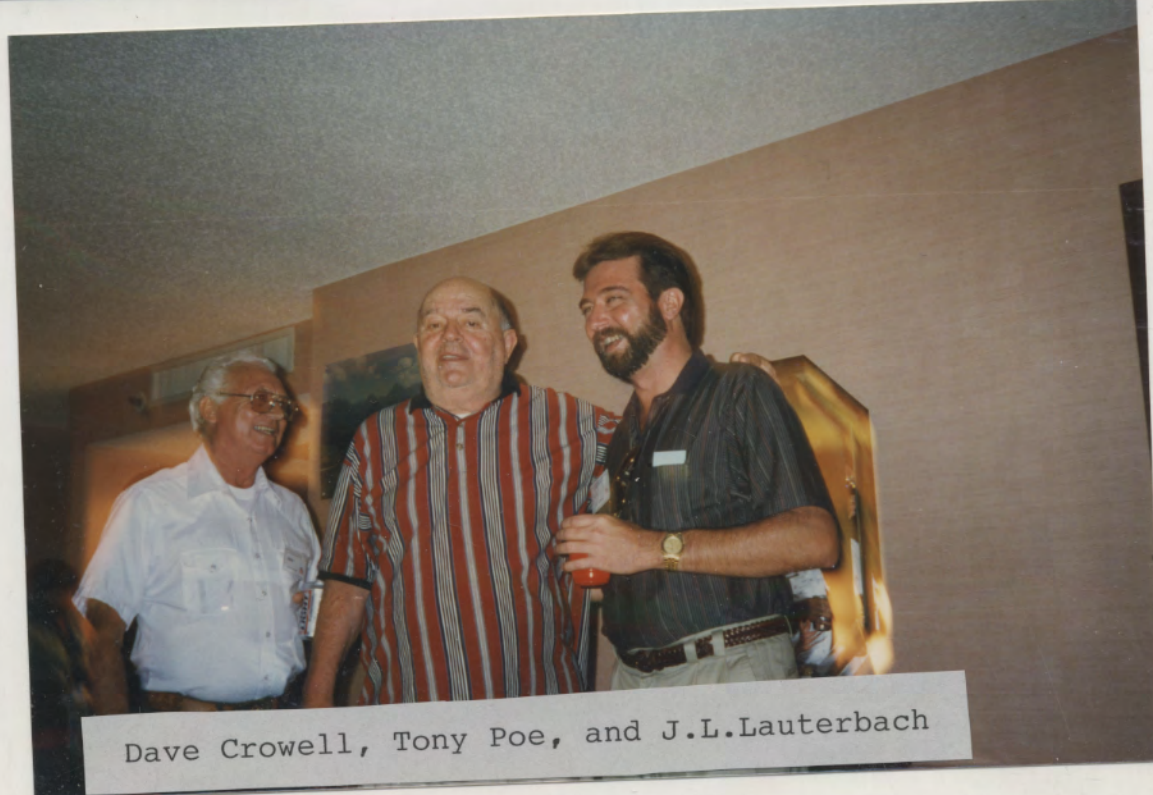
Chuck Haist, Carmen Sylvester, Norma Green, Jim Zimmerman, and Chuck Green



Ken Miller, Carmen Sylvester, Norma and Chuck Green



Wayne Wright, Don Overfield, Terry Bruner, and unidentified

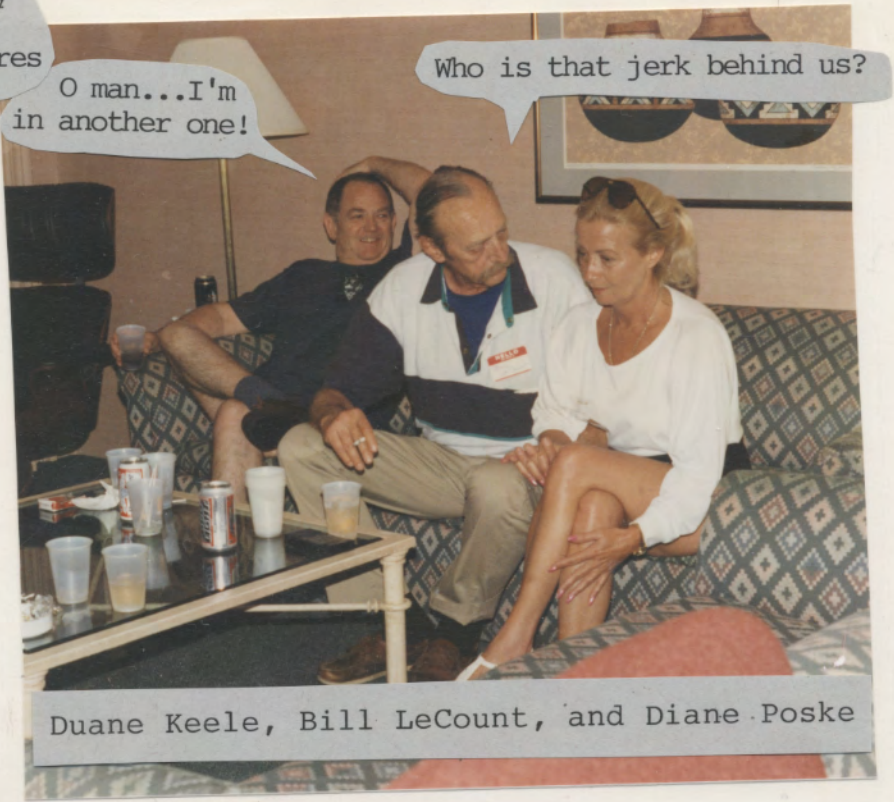
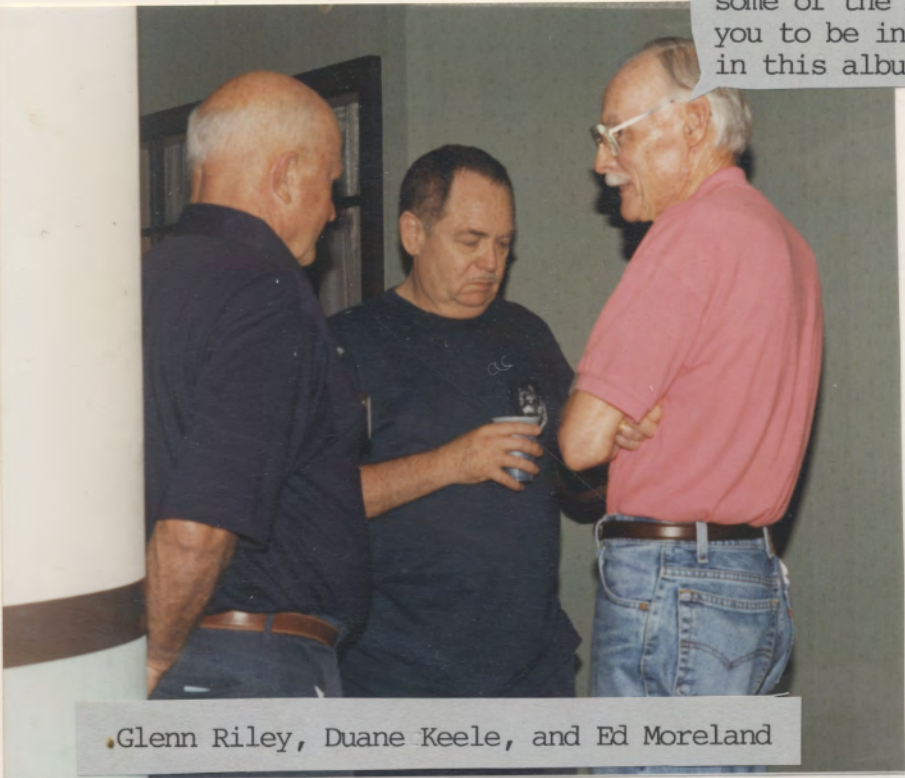


Dave Crowell, Tony Poe, and J.L.Lauterbach

Its a petition signed by some of the members for you to be in less pictures in this album.

O man...I'm in another one!

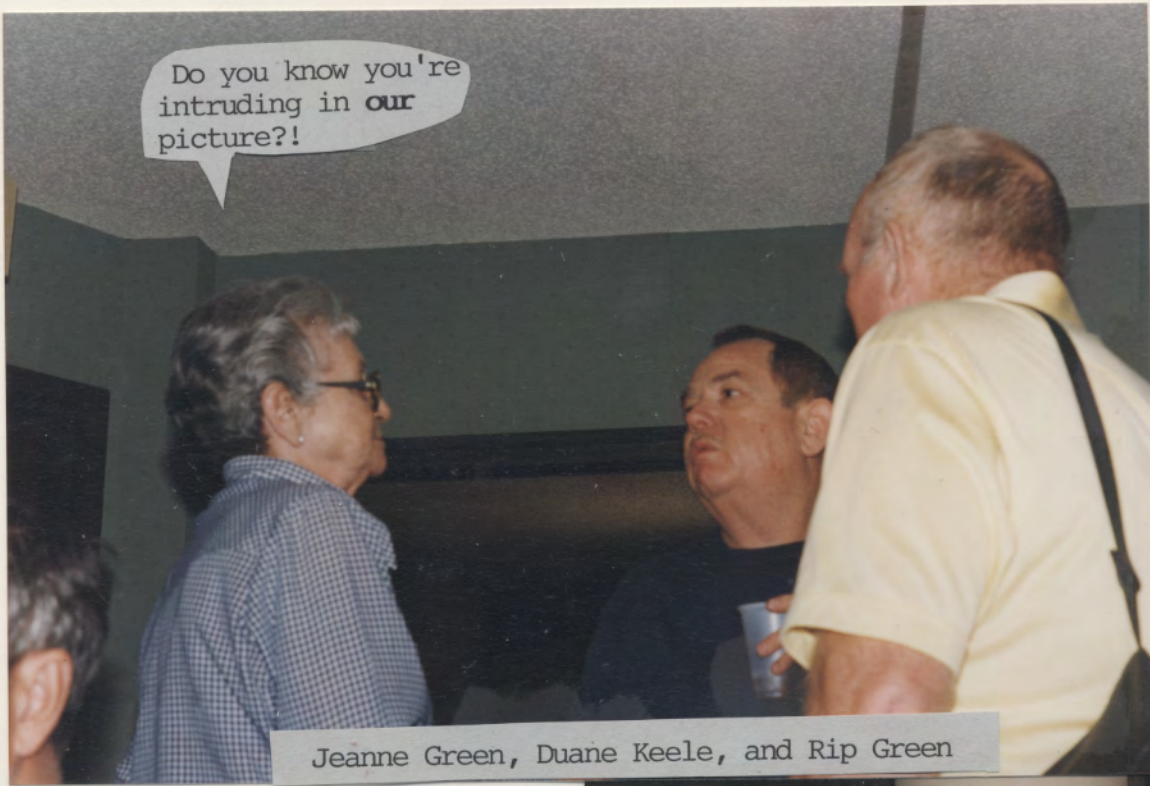
Who is that jerk behind us?



Glenn Riley, Duane Keele, and Ed Moreland

Duane Keele, Bill LeCount, and Diane Poske

Do you know you're intruding in **our** picture?!



Jeanne Green, Duane Keele, and Rip Green

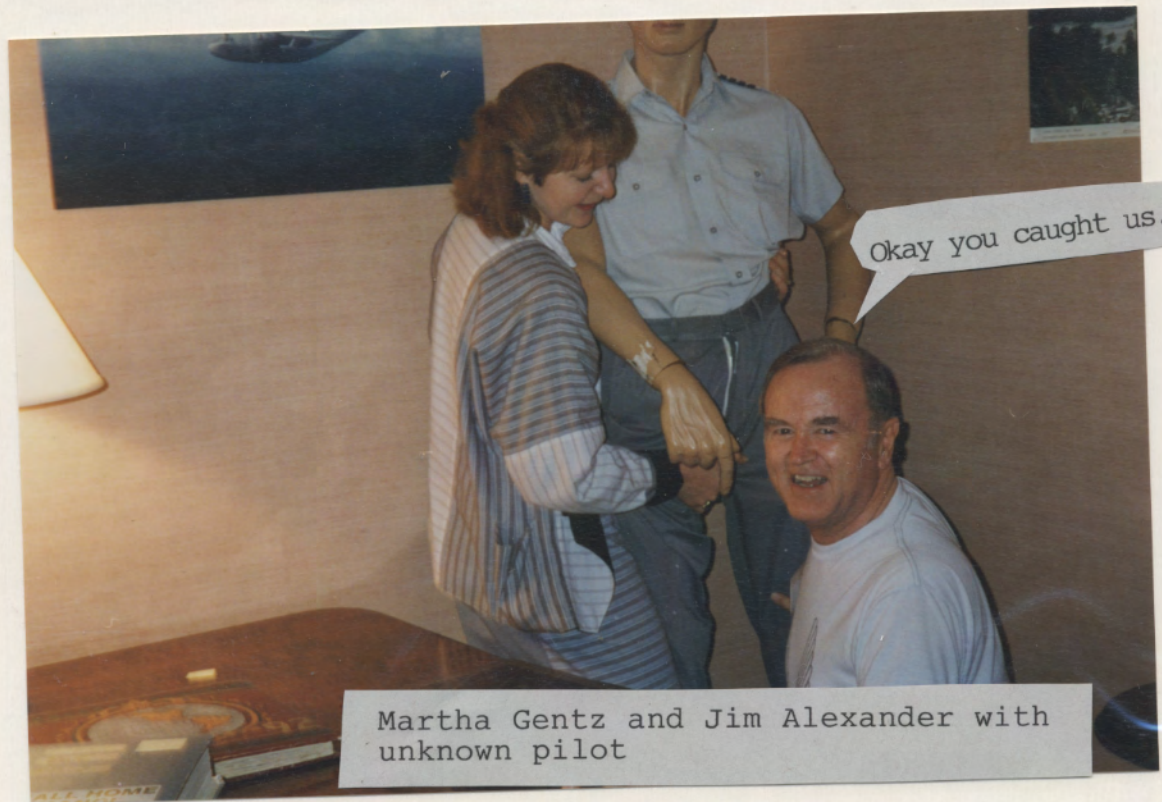
..so I said, "Peggy takes the pictures, I stick them in the book; so I'll be in as many bloody pictures as I wanna be!"



Duane Keele, Emmet Sullivan, and Rick Strba



Duane Keele and Chuck Green



Martha Gentz and Jim Alexander with unknown pilot

Saturday always means **business meeting**. Appatently nobody with a camera attended. At least I did not receive any photos of the meeting. Probably no one could focus a camera or anything else at that hour of the morning.

Anyway, the main order of the day was the changing of the guard. John McRainey took over as the new president, and Al Cates became the new vice president.

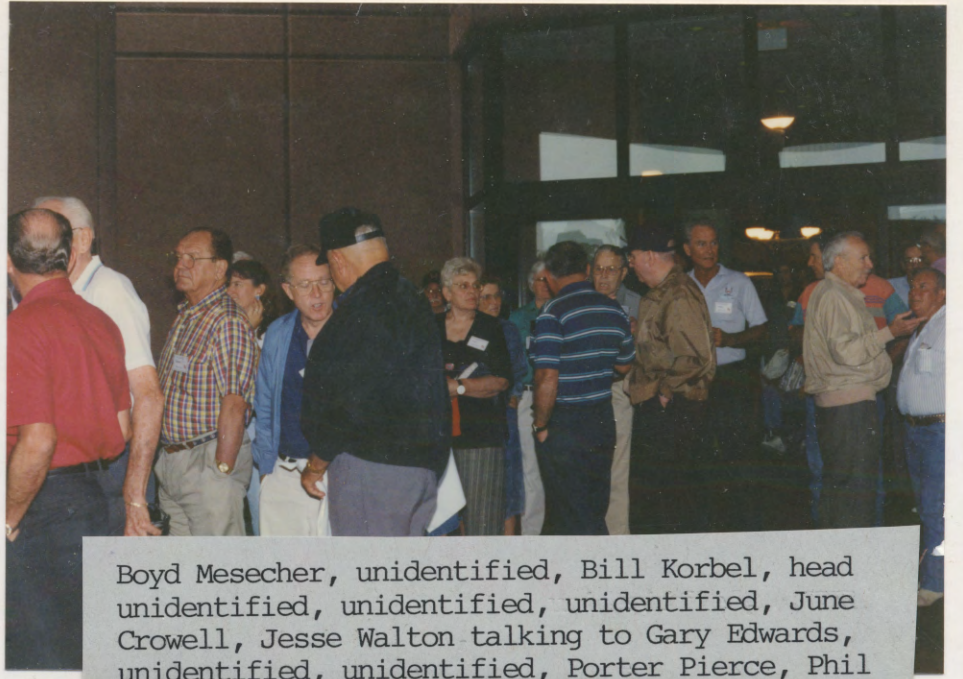
That afternoon, a major storm hit Dallas with hail, strong winds and possibly a tornado. I do not think there was anything **prophetic** about this however. Dallas has a lot of storms.



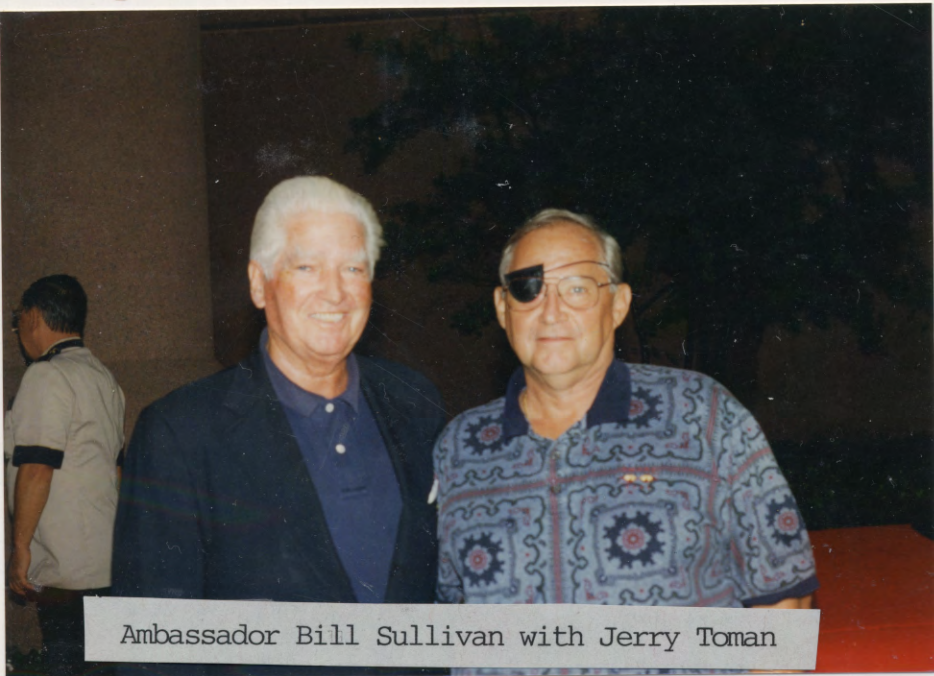
Saturday afternoon brought a lull to the hospitality suite activities and every one boarded the buses to travel up to the McDermott Library Special Collections Department of the University of Texas at Dallas.



Tour guide, four unidentified, Elizabeth Lashomb, Carole Lashomb, and three unidentified



Boyd Mesecher, unidentified, Bill Korbel, head unidentified, unidentified, unidentified, June Crowell, Jesse Walton talking to Gary Edwards, unidentified, unidentified, Porter Pierce, Phil Vaughan, Chauncey Collard, and Don Fell



Ambassador Bill Sullivan with Jerry Toman



L to R: Vlad Broz, Phil Vaughan, Tom Trowbridge, Jim Shive, Don Fell, unidentified, unidentified, Pat Shive, unidentified, Ben Densley, three unidentified, Terry Bruner, Chin Melton, three unidentified, Kathy Rosalas, Bob Murray, John Melton, and three at right front unidentified



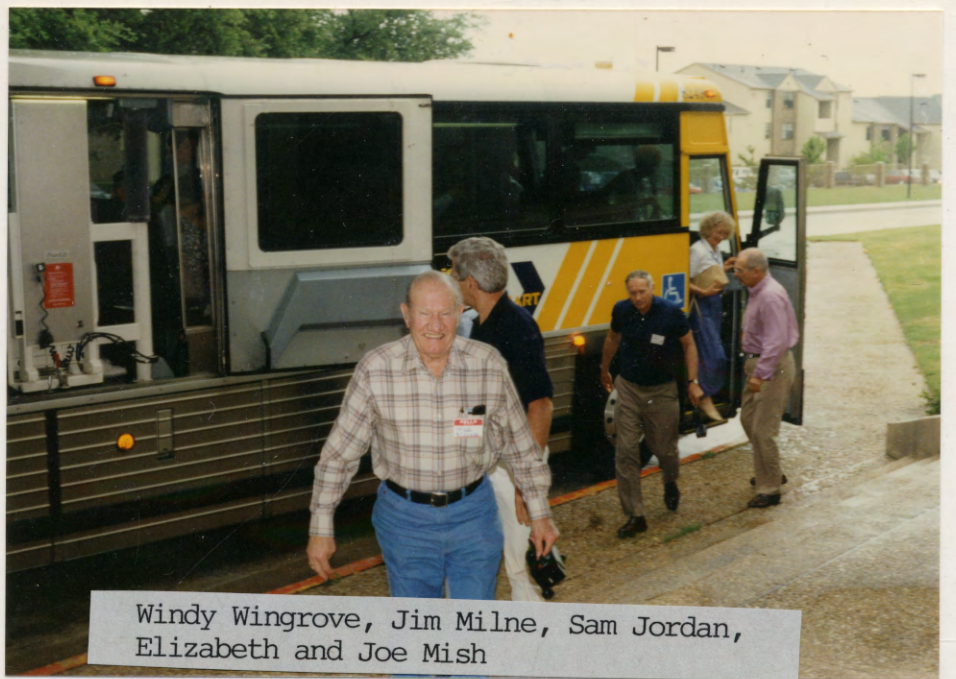
Jim Shive, unidentified back, unidentified lady, Terry Bruner in rear Chin Melton, unidentified cap, Unidentified young lady, John Melton, and unidentified



Ben Gowen Chin Melton, Duane Keele, Tom Trowbridge, unidentified back, and unidentified cap



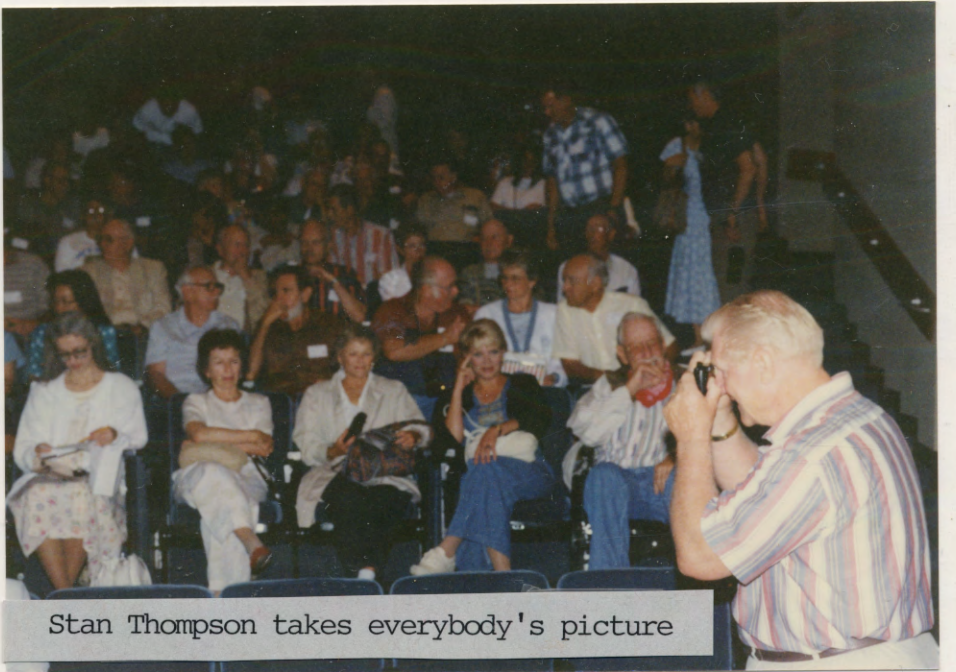
Vlad Broz, unidentified, Larry Stadoulis, unidentified, unidentified, and Ben Densley



Windy Wingrove, Jim Milne, Sam Jordan, Elizabeth and Joe Mish



Vlad Broz, Rosie Rosenfield, and assorted unidentified helpers



Stan Thompson takes everybody's picture



Larry Sall, Brian Johnson, and Gus Gustafson



Discovery Channel T.V. crew

After several speeches about the significance of our history to future historians, we adjourned to the library area to view a special exhibit set up for the occasion and hors-d'oeuvres.



Carole Lashomb

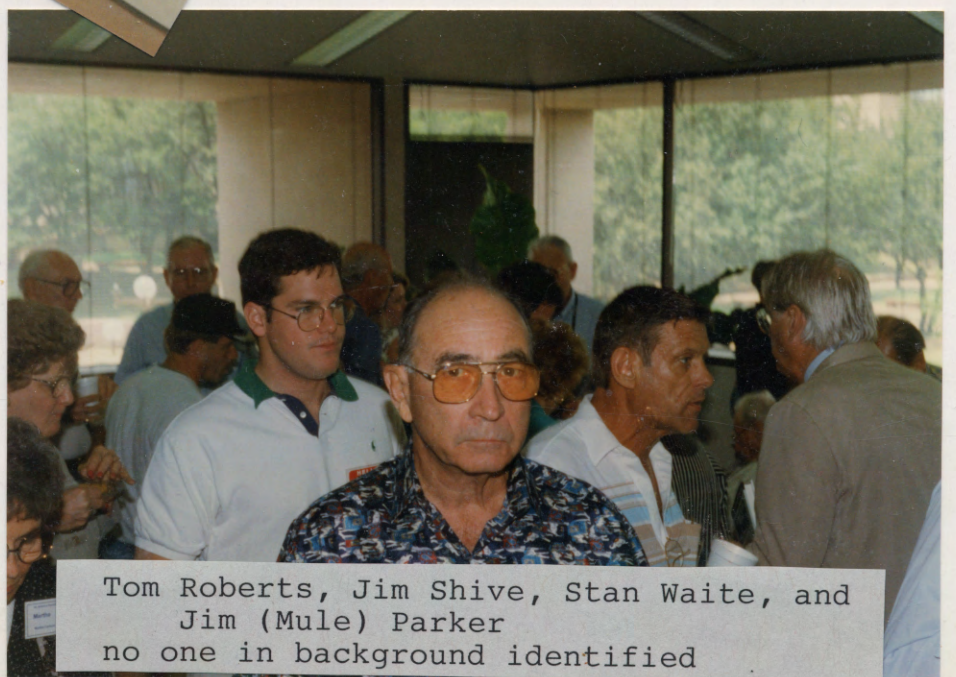


Bruce Jachens

Bruce was the only guest who came overly dressed, but no one embarrassed him by pointing it out.

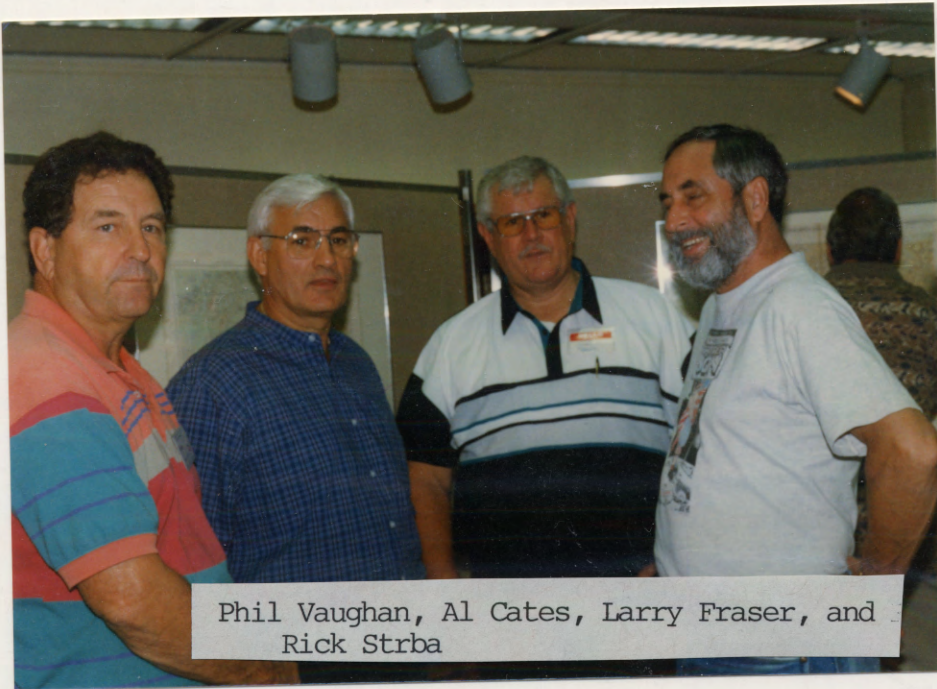
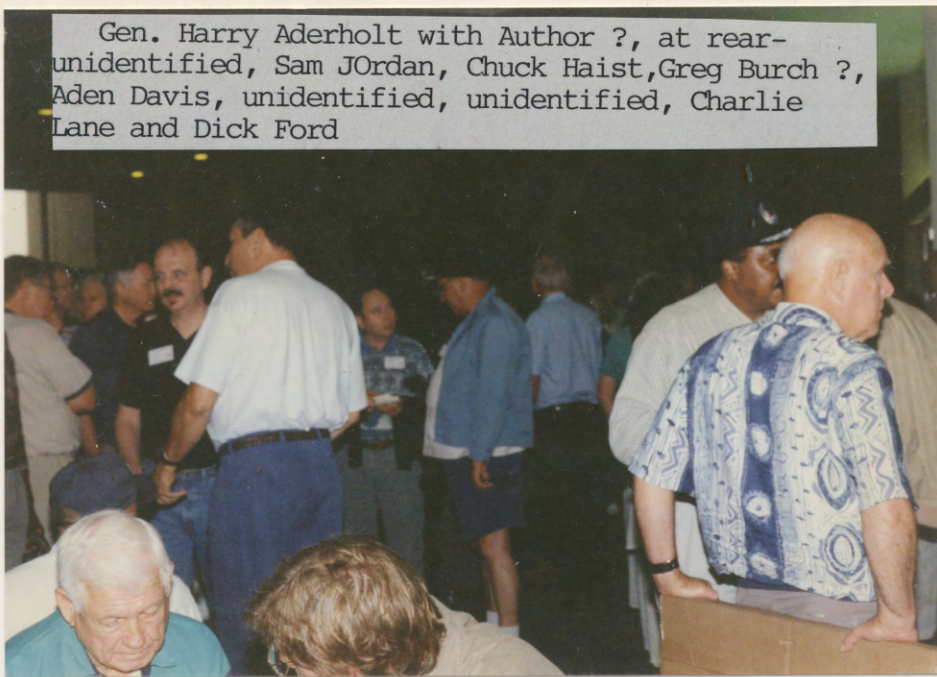


Stan and Chau Thompson, Jim Rhyne, unidentified, unidentified, unidentified, B.J. Singleton, and J.L. Lauterback



Tom Roberts, Jim Shive, Stan Waite, and Jim (Mule) Parker
no one in background identified

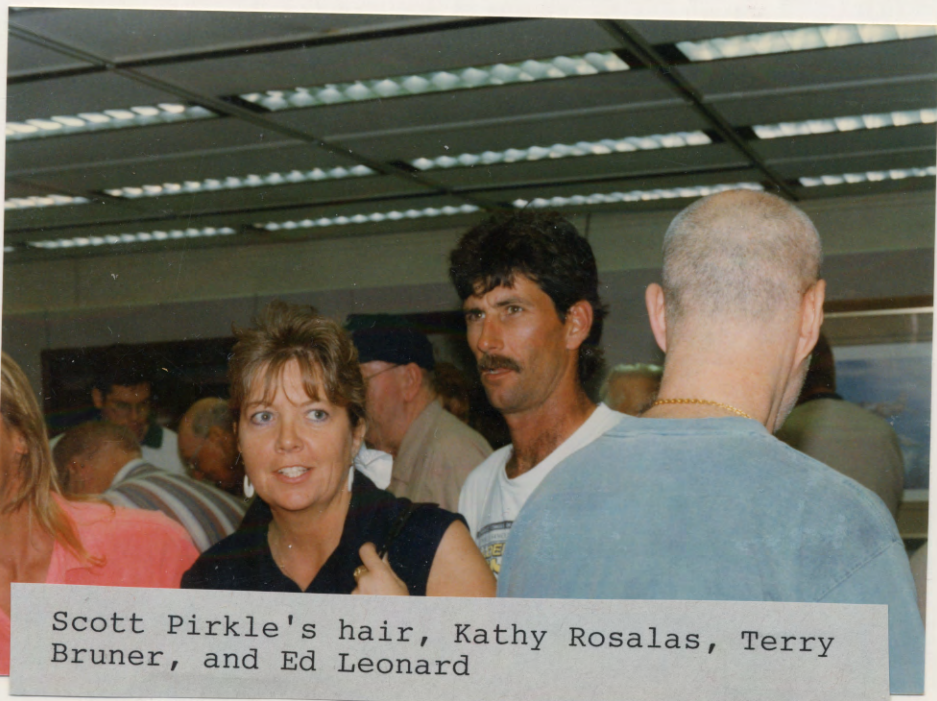
Gen. Harry Aderholt with Author ?, at rear-
unidentified, Sam Jordan, Chuck Haist, Greg Burch ?,
Aden Davis, unidentified, unidentified, Charlie
Lane and Dick Ford



Phil Vaughan, Al Cates, Larry Fraser, and
Rick Strba

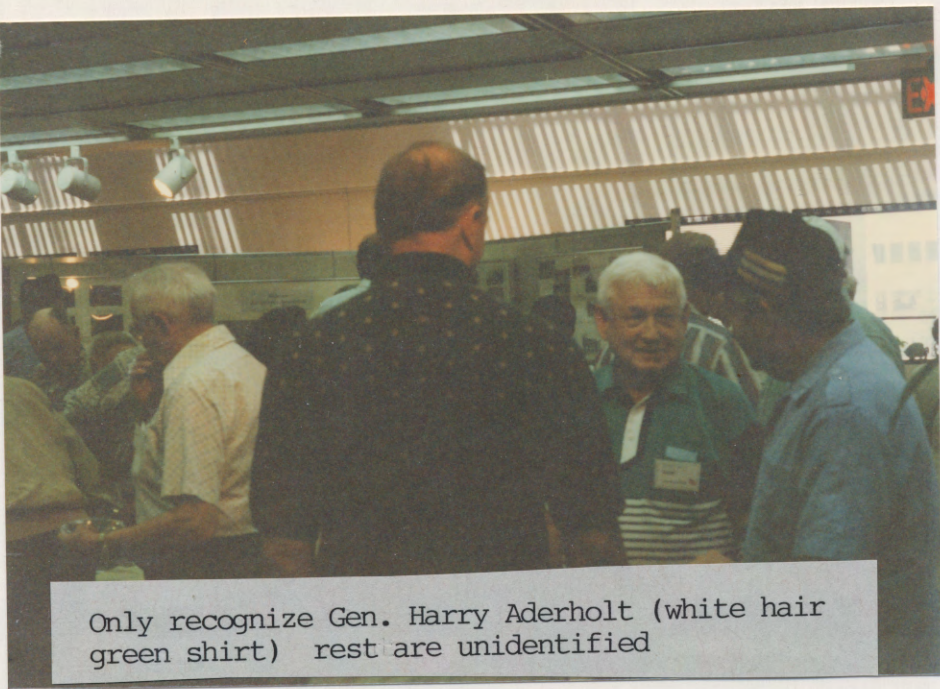


Marilyn and Matt Daddio with Jim (MULE) Parker

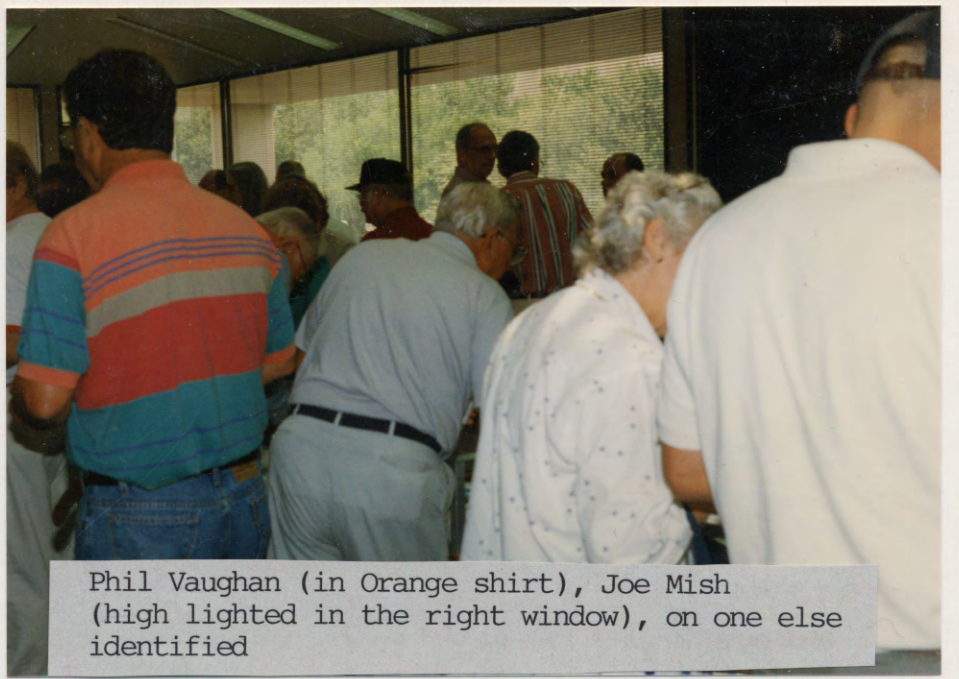


Scott Pirkle's hair, Kathy Rosalas, Terry
Bruner, and Ed Leonard





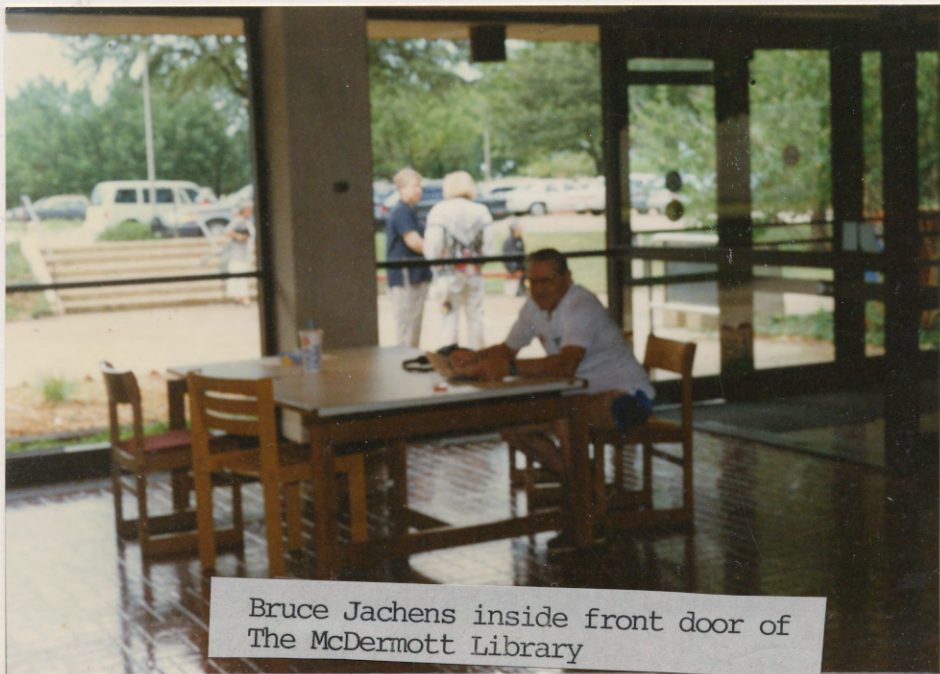
Only recognize Gen. Harry Aderholt (white hair green shirt) rest are unidentified



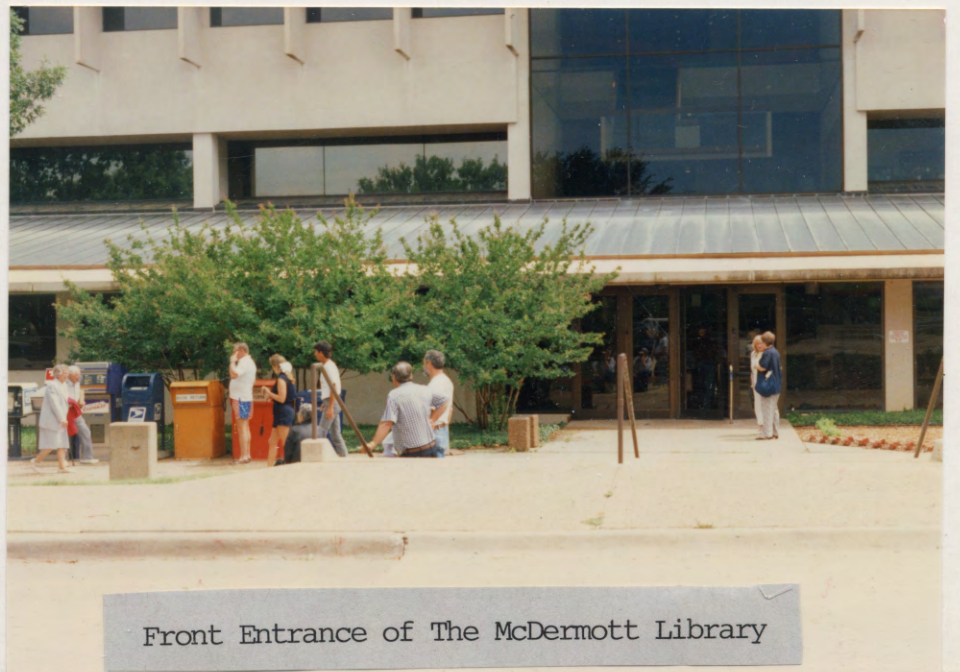
Phil Vaughan (in Orange shirt), Joe Mish (high lighted in the right window), on one else identified



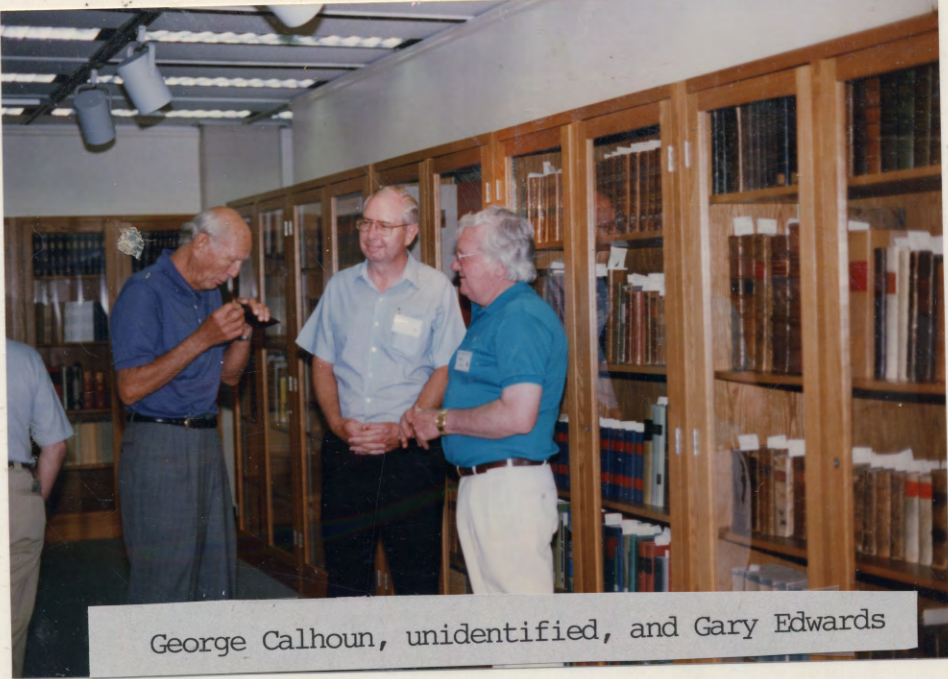
Lee Dammon, unidentified, Brian Johnson ?, Barbara and Jake Wehrell, unidentified, and B.J. Singleton



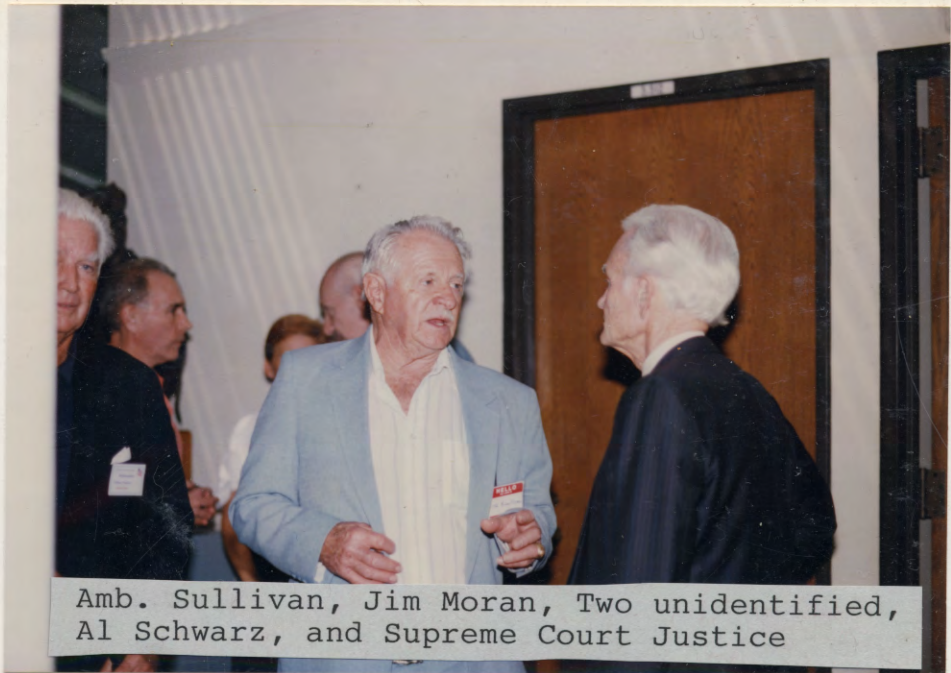
Bruce Jachens inside front door of The McDermott Library



Front Entrance of The McDermott Library



George Calhoun, unidentified, and Gary Edwards



Amb. Sullivan, Jim Moran, Two unidentified, Al Schwarz, and Supreme Court Justice

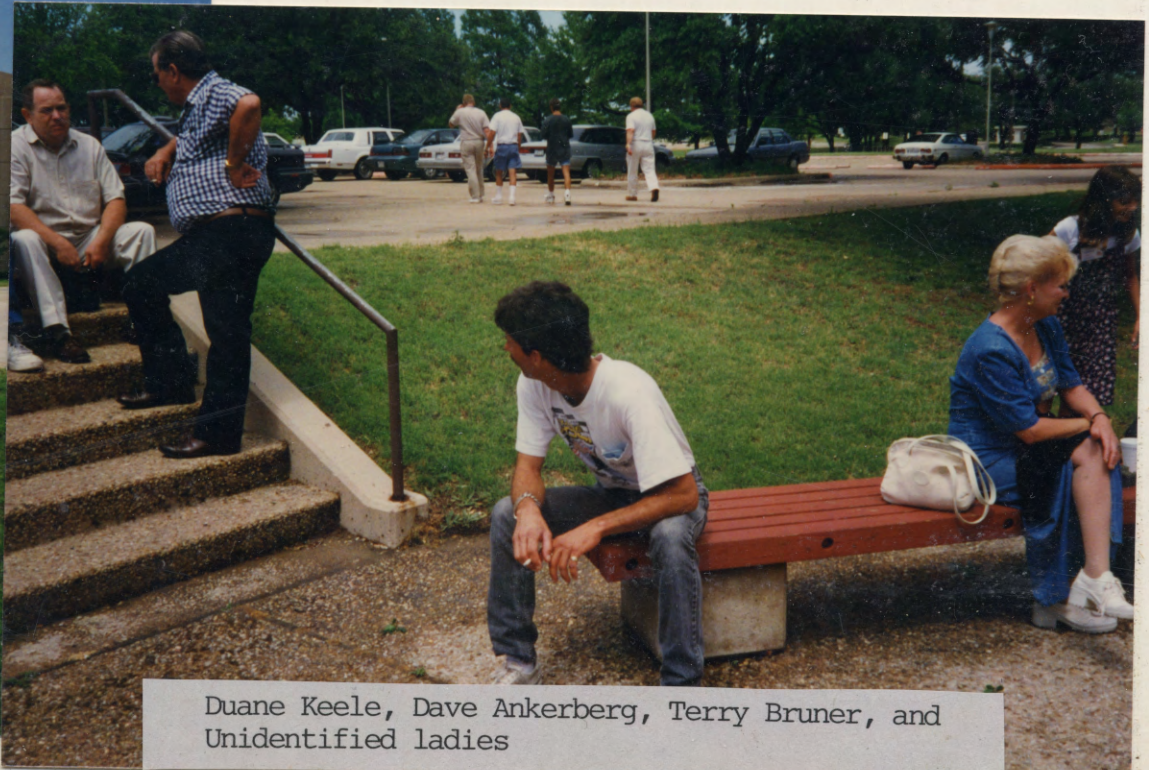


Brian Johnson Recognizes Jack Knotts for His outstanding achievement in clog dancing with a cane.



I had one of them gold Rolexes too, before the oil industry went tits-up here in Dallas.

Wino, Bruce Jachens, Rick Strba, Dave Ankerberg, and Duane Keele



Duane Keele, Dave Ankerberg, Terry Bruner, and Unidentified ladies

Everyone returned to the hotel for a quick stop by the hospitality suite before dressing for the banquet Saturday night.



Danny Williams and Pinky Halstead



Frank Balsey and unidentified lady



Cliff Hamilton, Lucky Mulqueen, and Jack Knotts



Jim Shive and unidentified lady



Jack Knotts, Kathy Alexander ?, and Bucky Richards



Michelle Roberts, Gary Gentz, Hal Augustine, and Frank Devito



Tom Sailer and Gen. Harry Aderholt
Unidentified man in background



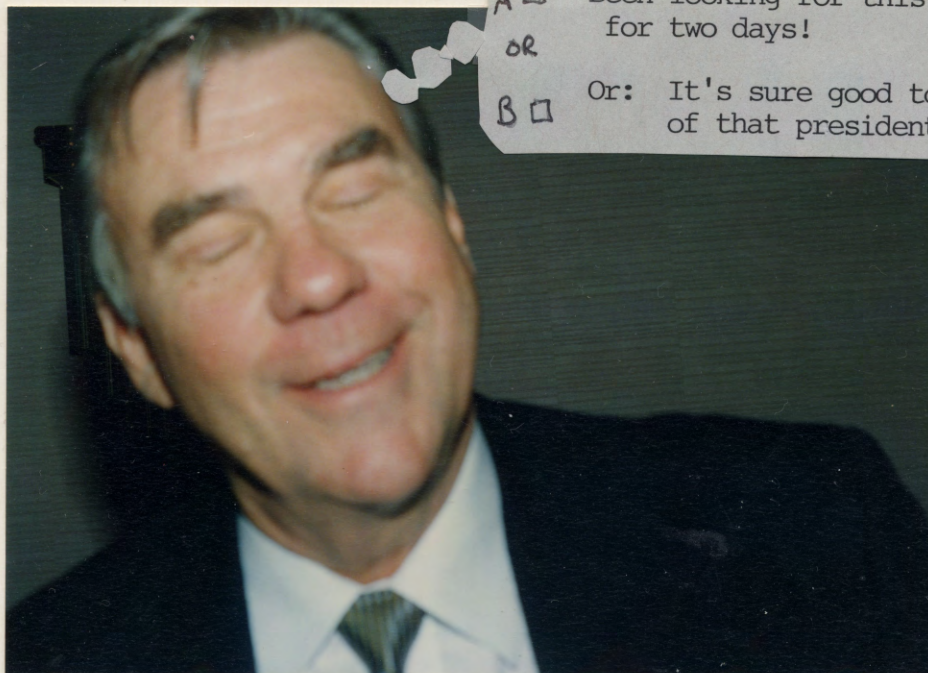
Unidentified ladies, stiff pilot, unidentified,
Duane Keele, Bob Murray, and Tom Sailer



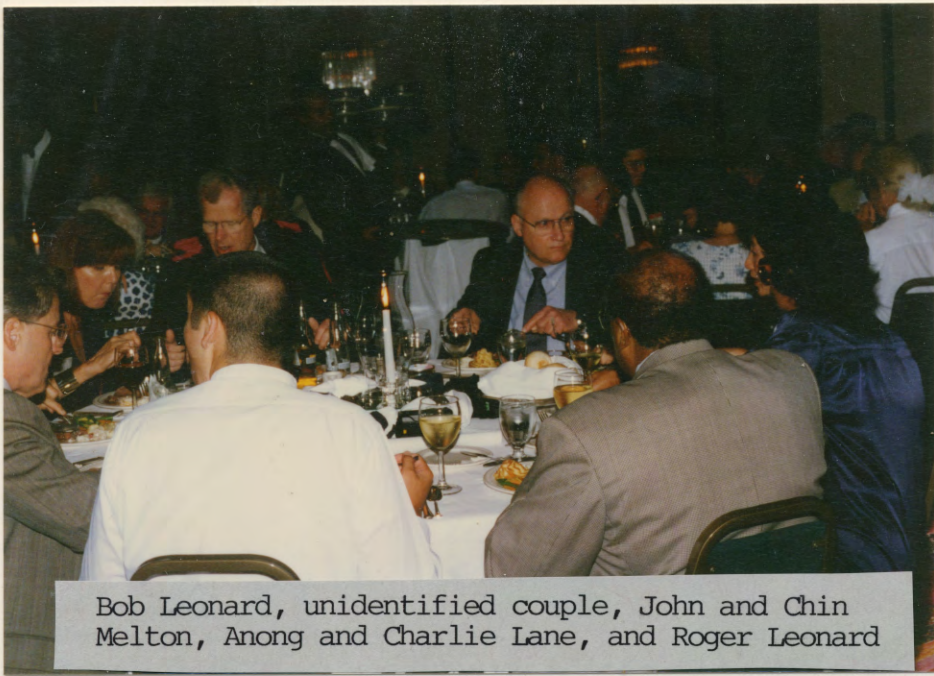
THE BANQUET

Whether by accident or design, no one got a picture (or at least sent in a picture) of the head table. However, our guest speaker was Ambassador William Sullivan shown a few pages back boarding the bus for the McDermott Library. He spoke of his experiences in Viet Nam with some behind the scenes looks at the strategic planning during the war. There were a couple of vedio tapes make of the speech, if anyone happens to be interested.

I did happen to get one picture of the out-going president. I do not know what was going through his mind at the time. You can choose between a couple of my thoughts of what might have been on his mind.



A ☐ Been looking for this restroom
or
B ☐ Or: It's sure good to be out
of that president's job!



Bob Leonard, unidentified couple, John and Chin Melton, Anong and Charlie Lane, and Roger Leonard



Chuck Haist, Luke and Dorothy Peters, Larry and Judy Sall, Paul Montgomery, Bonnie Lyon, Greg Burch, and Tony Byrne



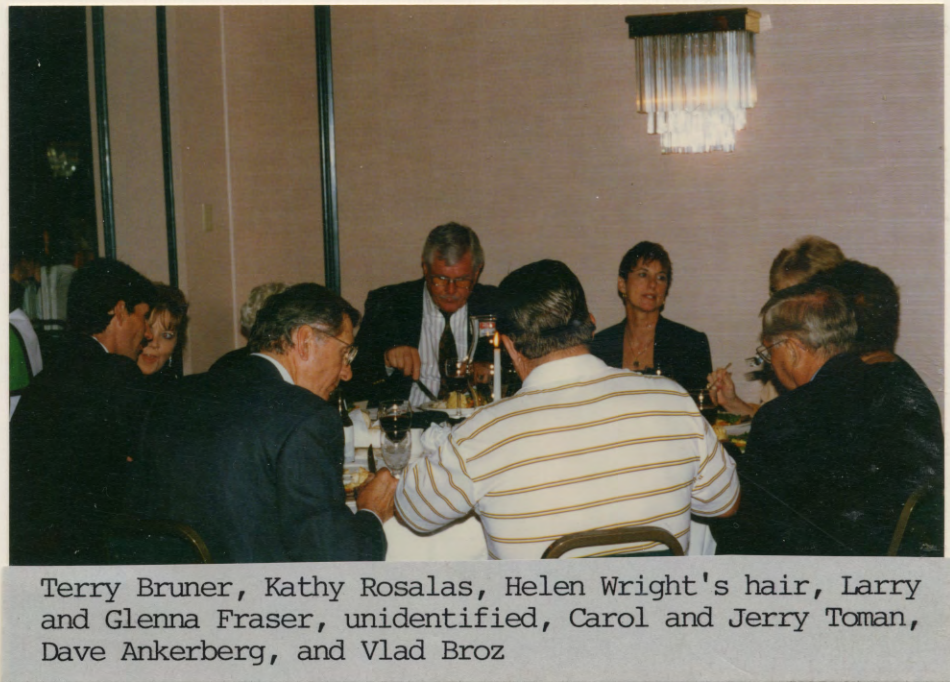
Unidentified, Jesse Walton, Monty Sandoval, Bill and Mary Jane Leonard, Norma and Chuck Green, unidentified couple, and unidentified



Marie and George Calhoun, Jim Milne, Joe and Elizabeth Mish, Virgil Domino, and unidentified



Gayle Morrison, unidentified couple, Carolyn and Ted Mauldin, Jeed and Jim Rhyne, Bucky Richards and Jack Knotts



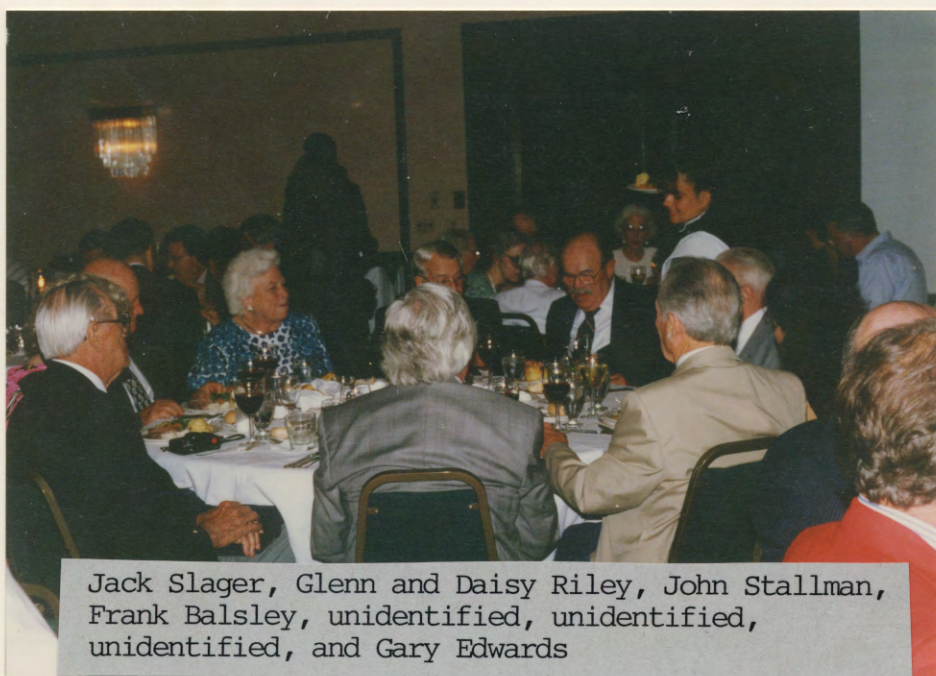
Terry Bruner, Kathy Rosalas, Helen Wright's hair, Larry and Glenna Fraser, unidentified, Carol and Jerry Toman, Dave Ankerberg, and Vlad Broz



Windy Wingrove, Vince and Doris Clarke, Art and Tam Kenyon, unidentified couple, J.C. and Janet Bond, and Jean Landry



Dan Gamelin, Bill Bergman, Bob Collins, unidentified, Stan Waite, Tom Butler ?, unidentified, unidentified, and unidentified



Jack Slager, Glenn and Daisy Riley, John Stallman, Frank Balsley, unidentified, unidentified, and Gary Edwards



Carmen Sylvester, Earl Richmond, Tom Roberts, Michelle Roberts, Bill Lecount, unidentified couple, Clyde and Mary Ellis, and Arlene Sylvester



Marie Moreland, Bill Korbek, Unidentified Couple, Angelo and Elaine Spelios, and Ed Moreland



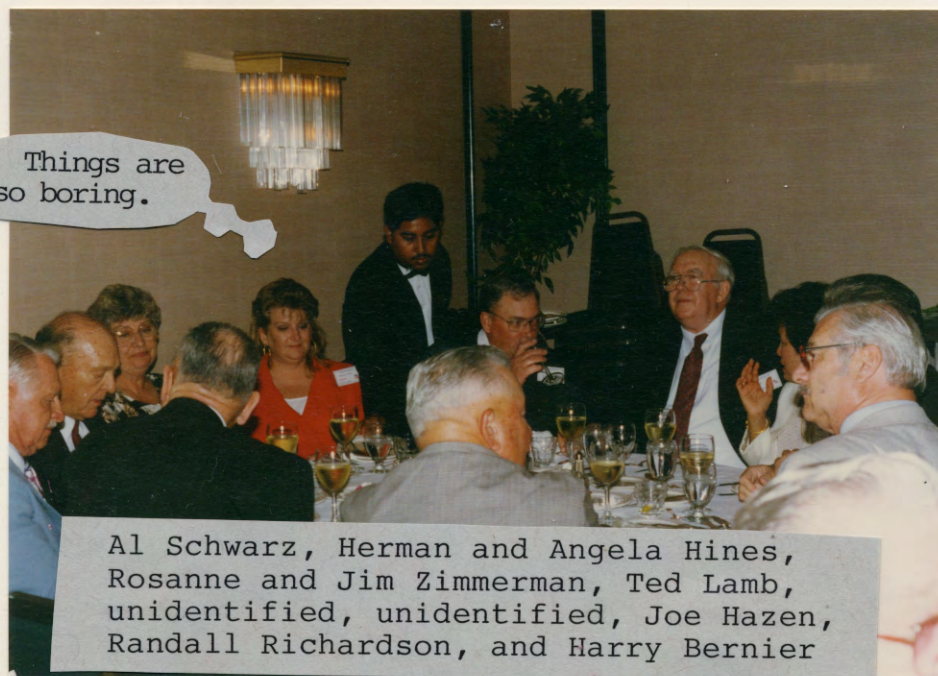
Luke and Dorthy Peters, Larry and Judy Sall, Paul and Bonnie (Lyon) Montgomery, Greg Burch, Tony Byrne, Chuck Haist, and Willie Parker



Jim and Kathy Alexander, unidentified, Wanda and Glenn Woods, Suzanne and Ted Helmers, Ruthann Theriault, and unidentified

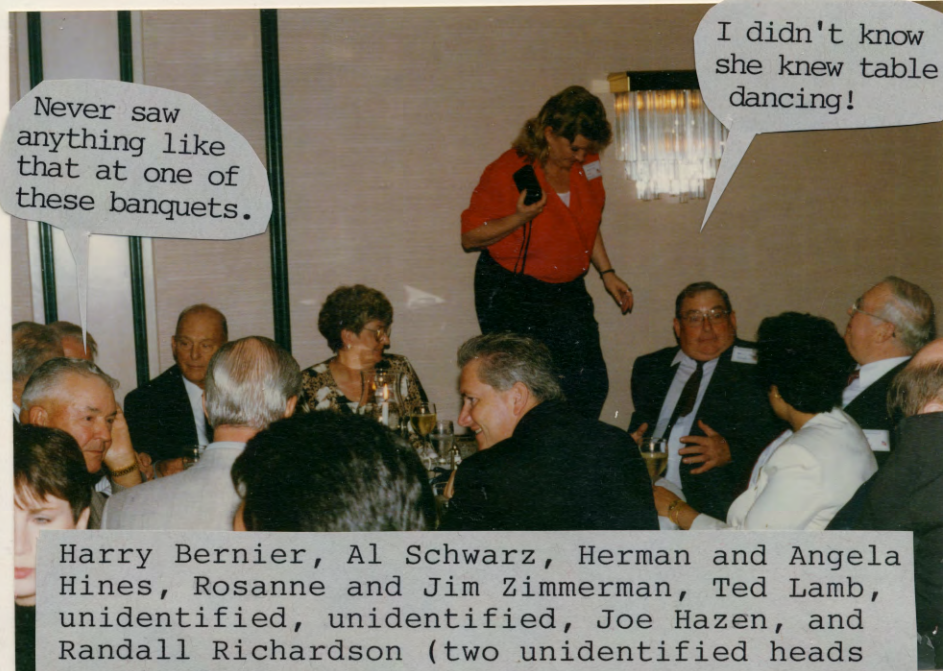


Unidentified, Walt and Kim Ranallo, Nguyen Thid and Chet Folck, unidentified, and Jerry Fink
At rear table-Ruthann Theriault, Glenn Woods, and Suzanne Helmers



Things are so boring.

Al Schwarz, Herman and Angela Hines, Rosanne and Jim Zimmerman, Ted Lamb, unidentified, unidentified, Joe Hazen, Randall Richardson, and Harry Bernier



Never saw anything like that at one of these banquets.

I didn't know she knew table dancing!

Harry Bernier, Al Schwarz, Herman and Angela Hines, Rosanne and Jim Zimmerman, Ted Lamb, unidentified, unidentified, Joe Hazen, and Randall Richardson (two unidentified heads in foreground)



Wonder where I left my rolaidis?

Unidentified, unidentified, unidentified, Audrey and John Greenway, Bob Dawson, Danny Williams, Arden and Nataya Davis



Unidentified, Connie Seigrist, Jim Andresevic, Jackie Andresevic, Barney Baxter, Tom Sailer, and unidentified (back to the left foreground)



Jessie and Harry Aderholt with Linda and Jack Thompson
 At next table is Luke and Dorthy Peters, Larry and Judy Sall, and Paul Montgomery



Martha Carlson, Clarice Osborne, and Robin Osborne
 In background: Ed Moreland, Angelo Spelios, Bruce Jachens, Peggy Keele, Pat and Jim Shive, and unidentified lady



Unidentified, unidentified, Chuck Taylor, Debbie Taylor ?, unidentified, and Frank Balsley



Terry Bruner, Kathy Rosalas, and Helen Wright



Don Overfield, unidentified, Fred Platt, unidentified, Jim Zimmerman, unidentified, unidentified couple, and Bob Dawson right bottom



Unidentified, unidentified, unidentified, Jesse Walton, Monty Sandoval, Bill and Mary Jane Leonard, Norma and Chuck Green, and unidentified



Unidentified, Herm Jackson, Bob Murray, unidentified, Mike Seale, unidentified, unidentified, unidentified, and unidentified



Jim Shive, unidentified couple, Jack Neiman, unidentified couple, Burma Berry, and unidentified



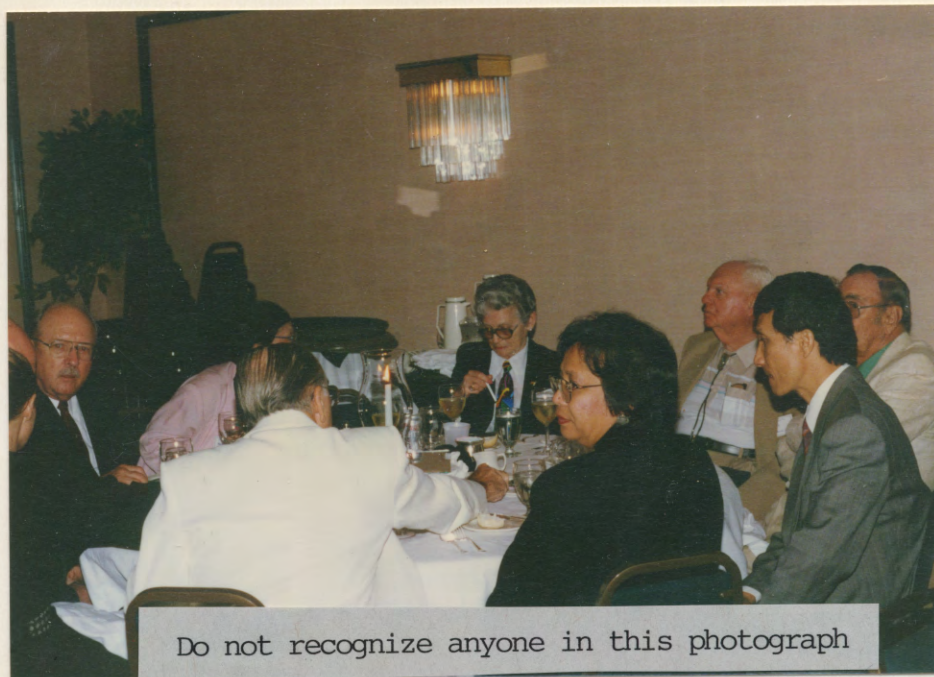
Unidentified, Lee Howell, Ben Gowen, Bruce Jachens (standing), Bob Mahaffey, Kippin and Ben Densley, unidentified, unidentified, and unidentified



Carole Lashomb, Elizabeth Lashomb, Stormy Glindeman, unidentified, unidentified, unidentified, unidentified, unidentified, and unidentified



Suong and Dave Conley, unidentified couple, unidentified couple, Stan and Chau Thompson. unidentified, and unidentified



Do not recognize anyone in this photograph



Do not recognize anyone in this photograph



All unidentified (that may be Blair Johnson in the light colored coat)



Do not know anyone at this table



Cliff Hamilton, Dan Gamelin, and Bill Bergman's red coat--at table in back, do not recognize anyone



Windy Windgrove
unidentified in back



Unidentified couple , J.C. and Janet Bond, unidentified,
Walt and Kim Ranallo, and unidentified



Marius Burke and John McRainer
Unidentified in back



Unidentified



Ed Adams, Sam Jordan, Jim Rhyne, Dick Ford,
and Ted and Carolyn Mauldin



Rip and Jeanne ? Green
In background--Gary Edwards at left, Mary and
Clyde Ellis in center with white blouse and
brown suit--unable to identify anyone else



Unidentified and unidentified



Luke and Dorothy Peters
Do not recognize anyone in background



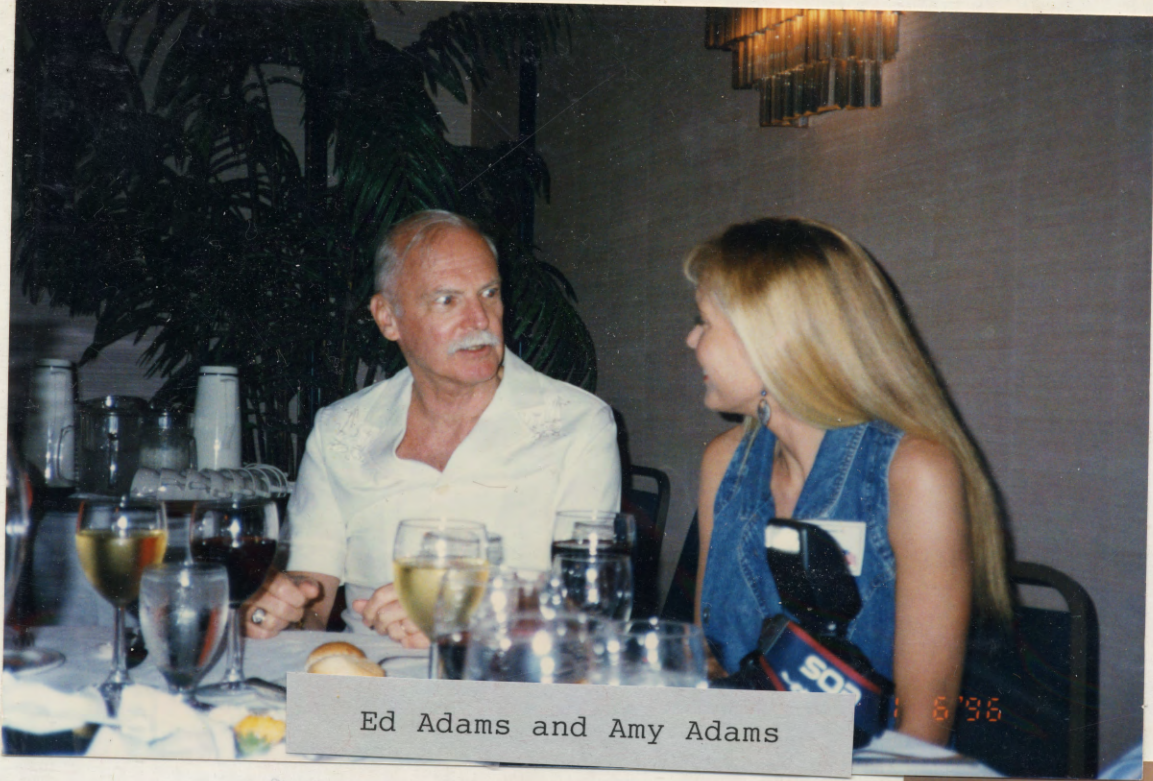
Brian Johnson and Sandi McRainey
in background unidentified lady with
Monty Sandoval



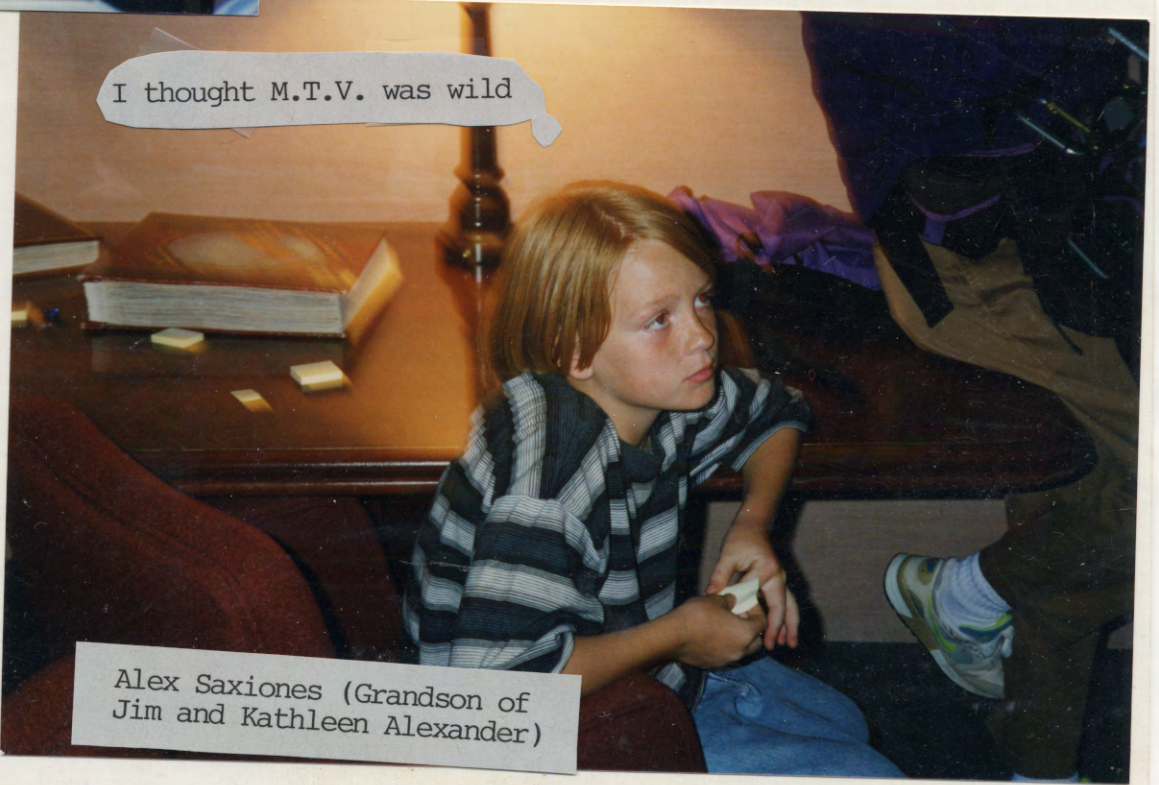
Unidentified



Inez Mulholland and Jack Neiman



Ed Adams and Amy Adams



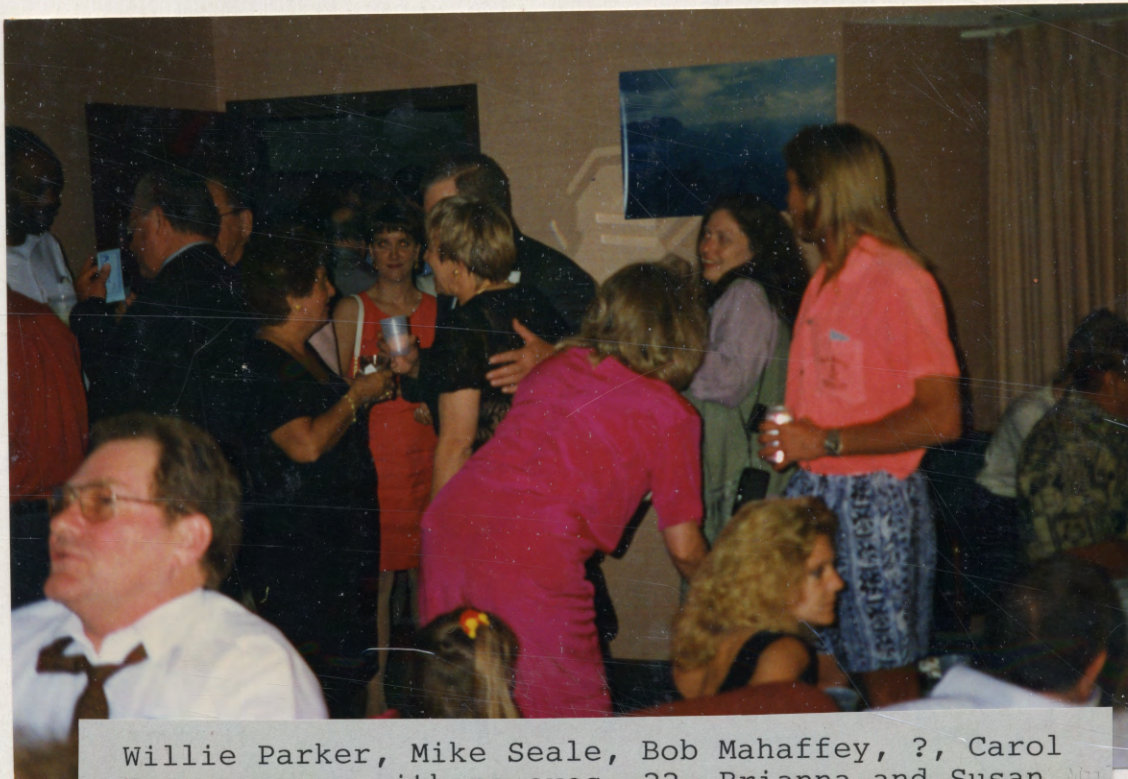
I thought M.T.V. was wild

Alex Saxiones (Grandson of Jim and Kathleen Alexander)

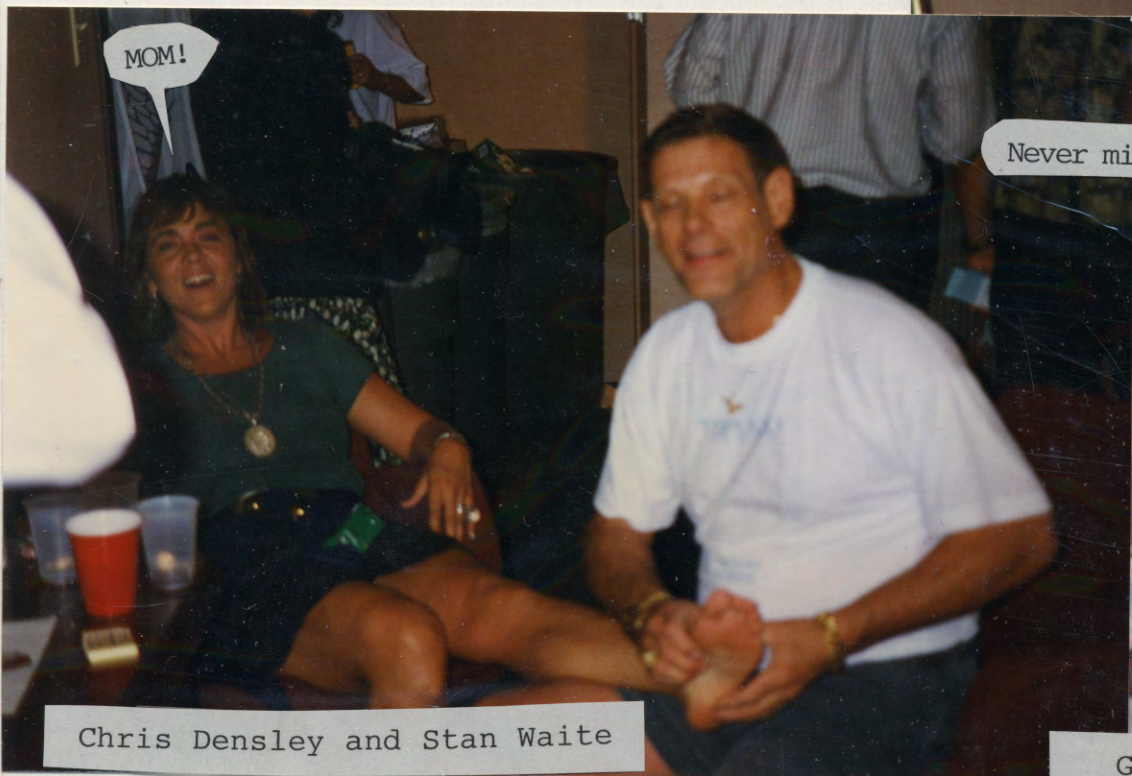


Jean Landry and Brianna Mulholland
Do not recognize others

As the banquet came to an end, the crowd filtered back to the hospitality suite for the final count down until Sunday afternoon.



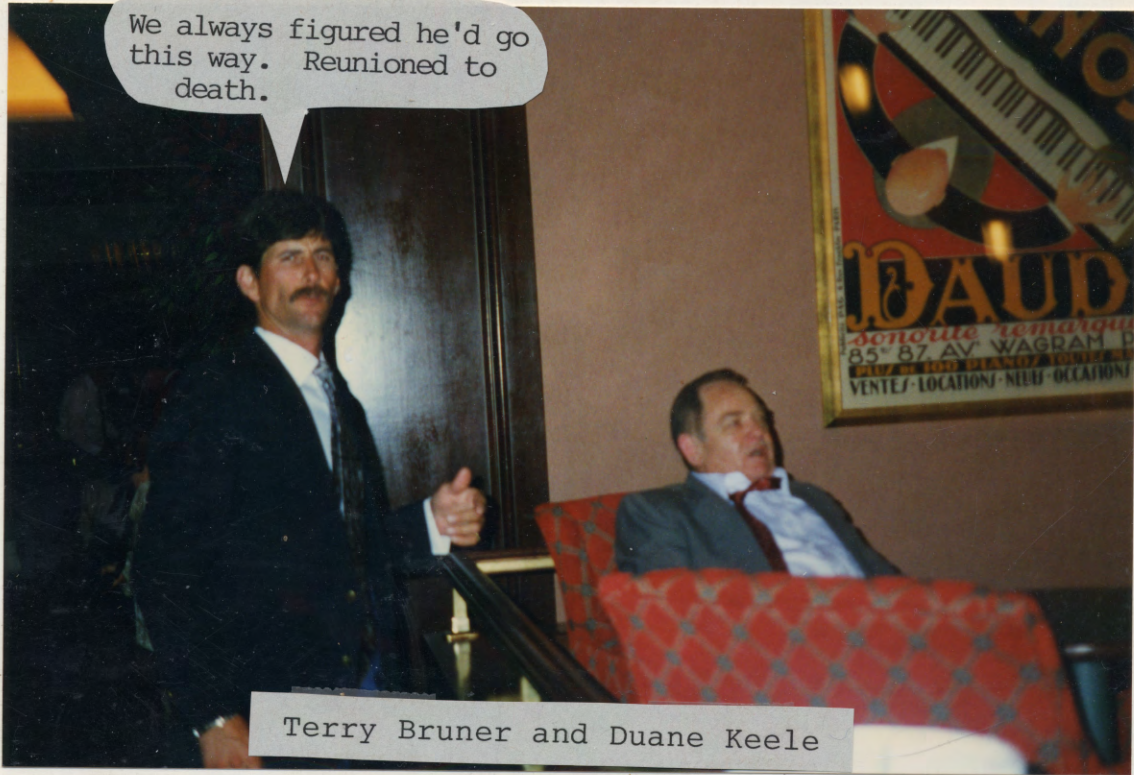
Willie Parker, Mike Seale, Bob Mahaffey, ?, Carol Toman, woman with no eyes, ??, Brianna and Susan Mulholland, Elizabeth Lashomb, Robin Pirkle, Scott Pirkle, Duane Keele, and unidentified



Chris Densley and Stan Waite



Glenna Fraser, Chris Densley, Unidentified and Stan "Stash" Waite



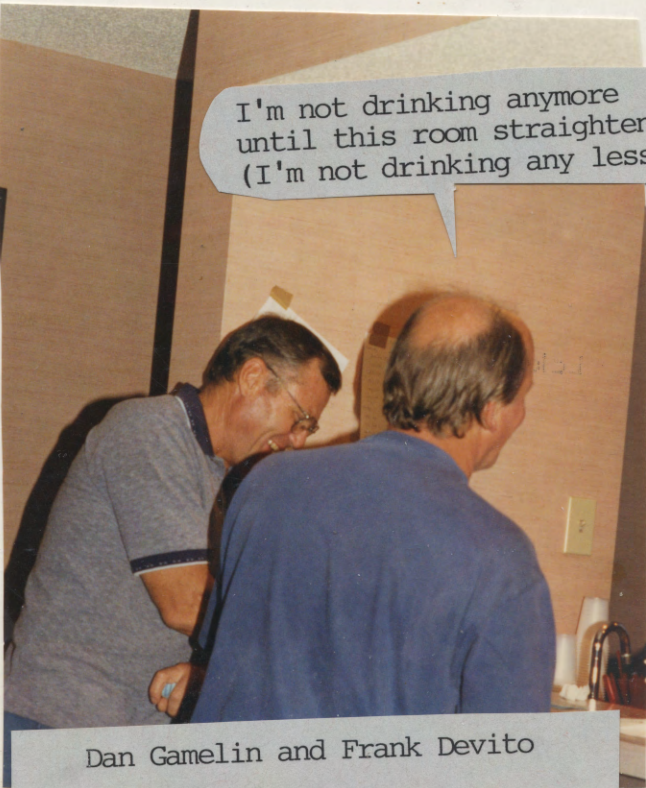
We always figured he'd go this way. Reunited to death.

Terry Bruner and Duane Keele



Will someone water my lizard?

Matt Daddio and Mike Seale



I'm not drinking anymore until this room straightens up. (I'm not drinking any less either.)

Dan Gamelin and Frank Devito

Okay, you can be my designated break dancer.

...and ah one and ah two..

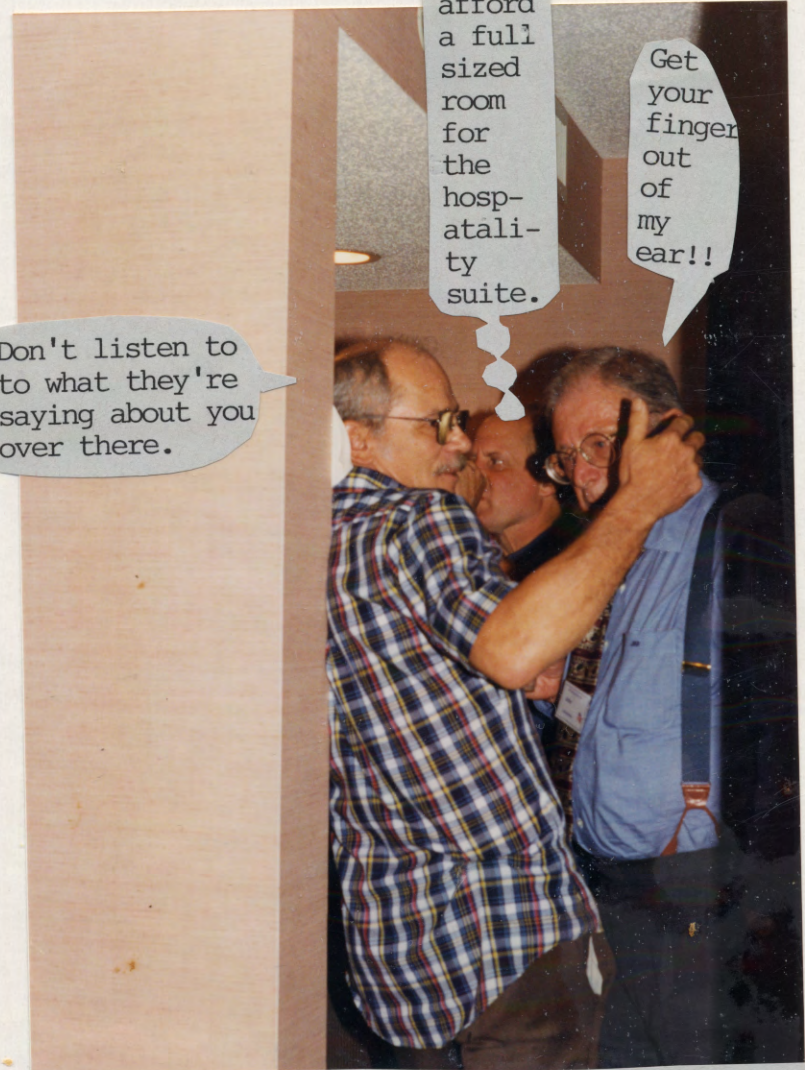


Mike Seale, Chin Melton, unidentified, Phenrapha Augustine's ponytail, and Dan Gamelin

Hope next year we can afford a full sized room for the hosp-atali-ty suite.

Get your finger out of my ear!!

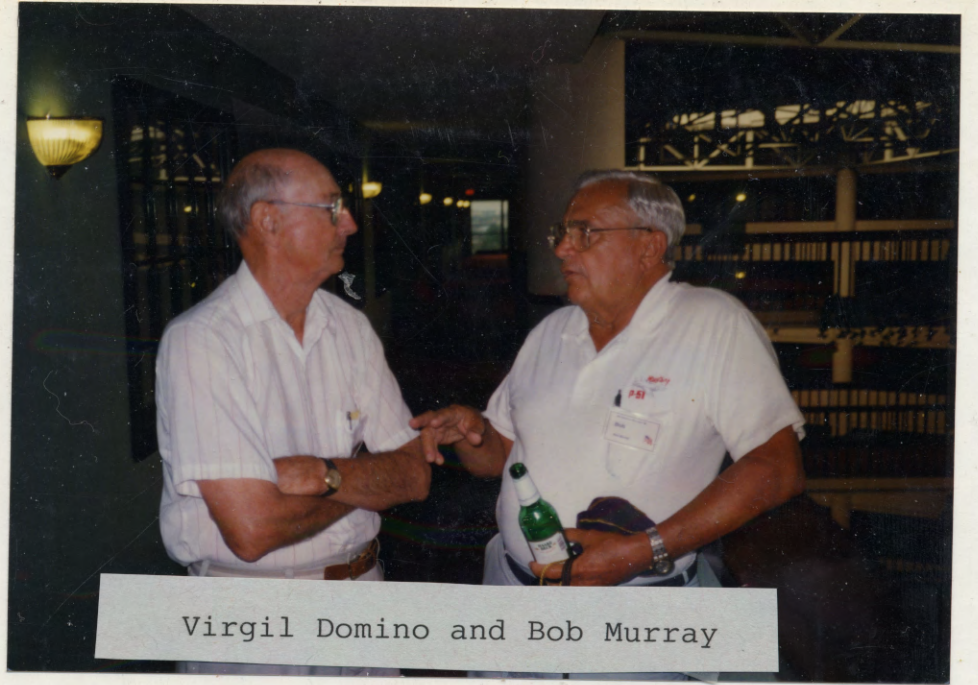
Don't listen to to what they're saying about you over there.



Cliff Hamilton, Frank Devito, and John Burkhart



Unidentified head, Mike Seale, unidentified lady, Phenrapha Augustine's ponytail, John Burkhart, two unidentified heads, and Joe Hazen



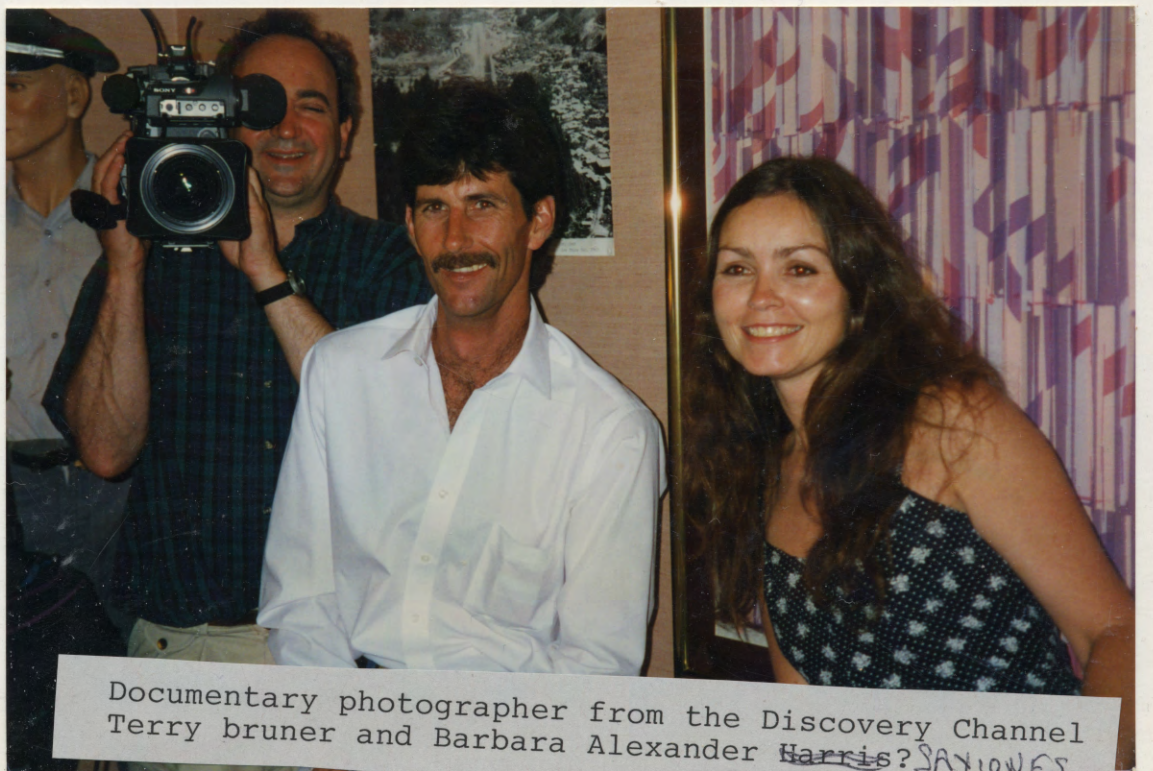
Virgil Domino and Bob Murray



This stuff turned solid overnight.

Don't drink that stuff man. I'll loan you a chit. Til next year anyway...

Robbie Roberts, Inez Mulholland, Cliff Hamilton, and Bill LeCount

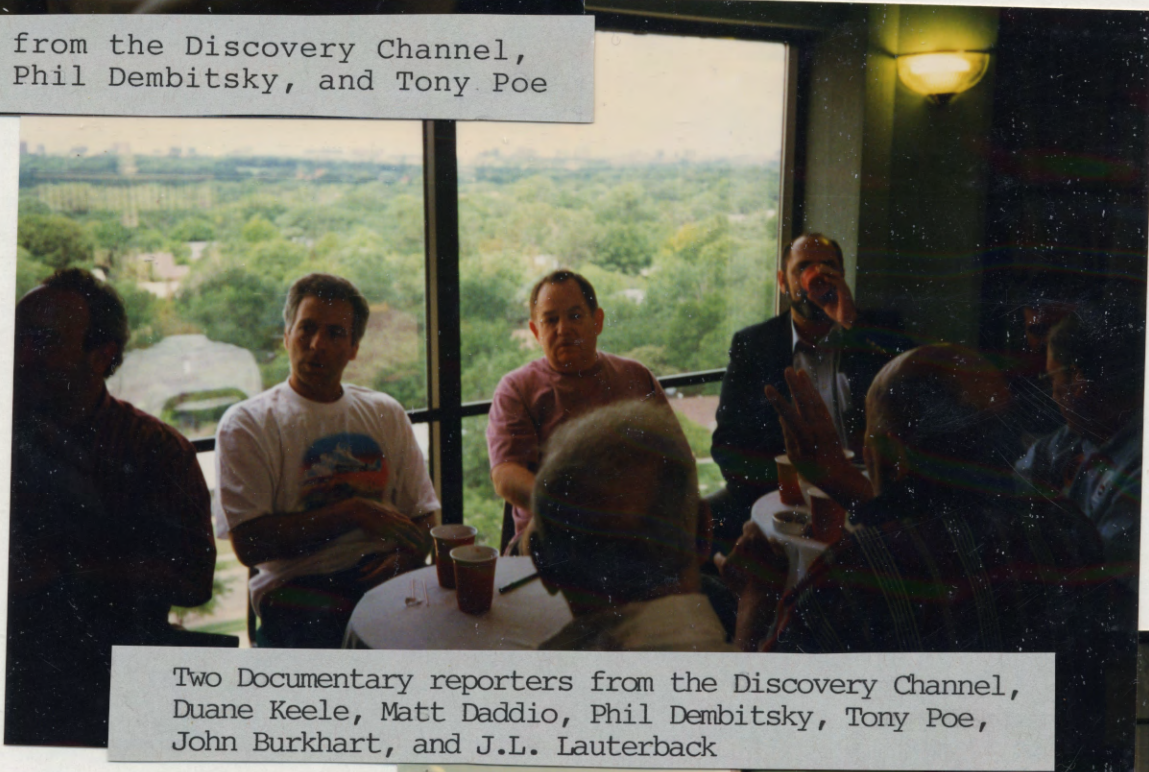


Documentary photographer from the Discovery Channel Terry bruner and Barbara Alexander ~~Harris~~? SAYIOWES

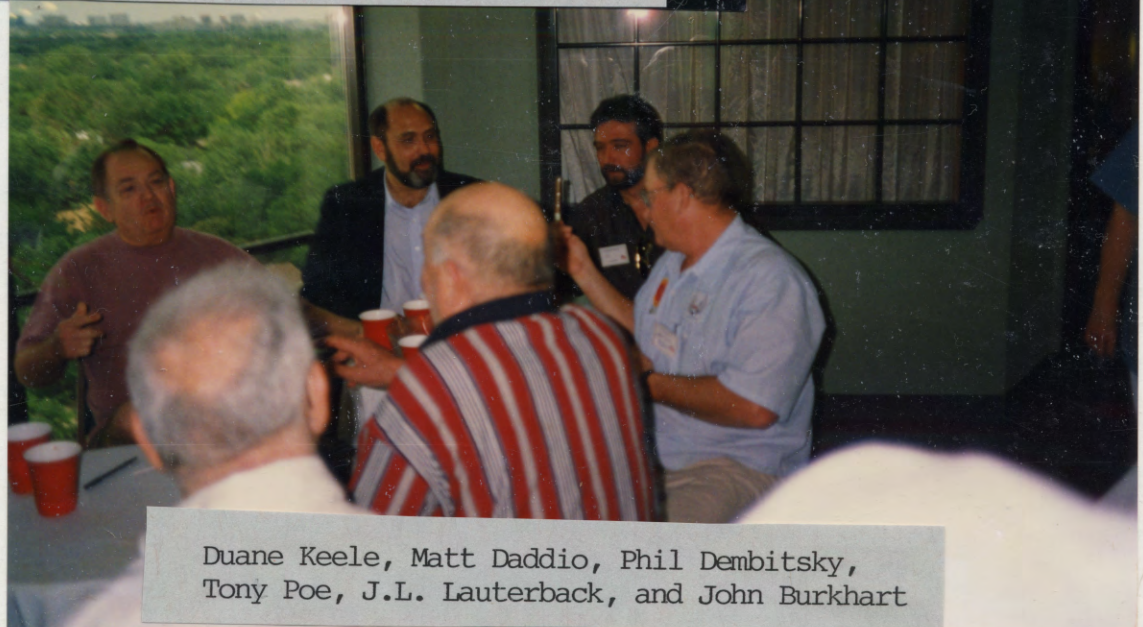
A great deal of Sunday afternoon was spent watching the Discovery Channel film Tony Poe for thier C.I.A. documentary.



Two Documentary reporters from the Discovery Channel, Duane Keele, Matt Daddio, Phil Dembitsky, and Tony Poe



Two Documentary reporters from the Discovery Channel, Duane Keele, Matt Daddio, Phil Dembitsky, Tony Poe, John Burkhart, and J.L. Lauterback



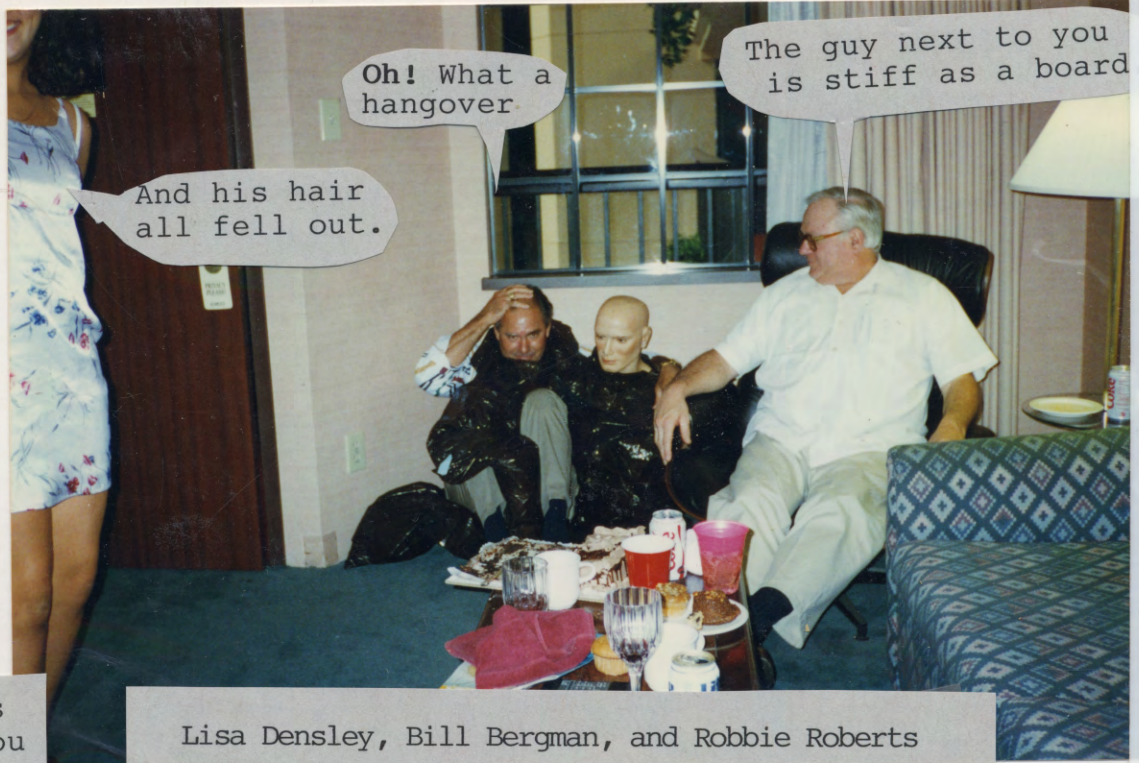
Duane Keele, Matt Daddio, Phil Dembitsky, Tony Poe, J.L. Lauterback, and John Burkhart

The majority fo the crowd also uses this time to say their farewells until the next meeting. There are some however, who hang on as long as possible.



Hey, Lucky, I may have found it.

After the reunion a few extra legs were turned in at the desk. If you are missing a leg, please contact your new president John McRainey.



Oh! What a hangover

The guy next to you is stiff as a board

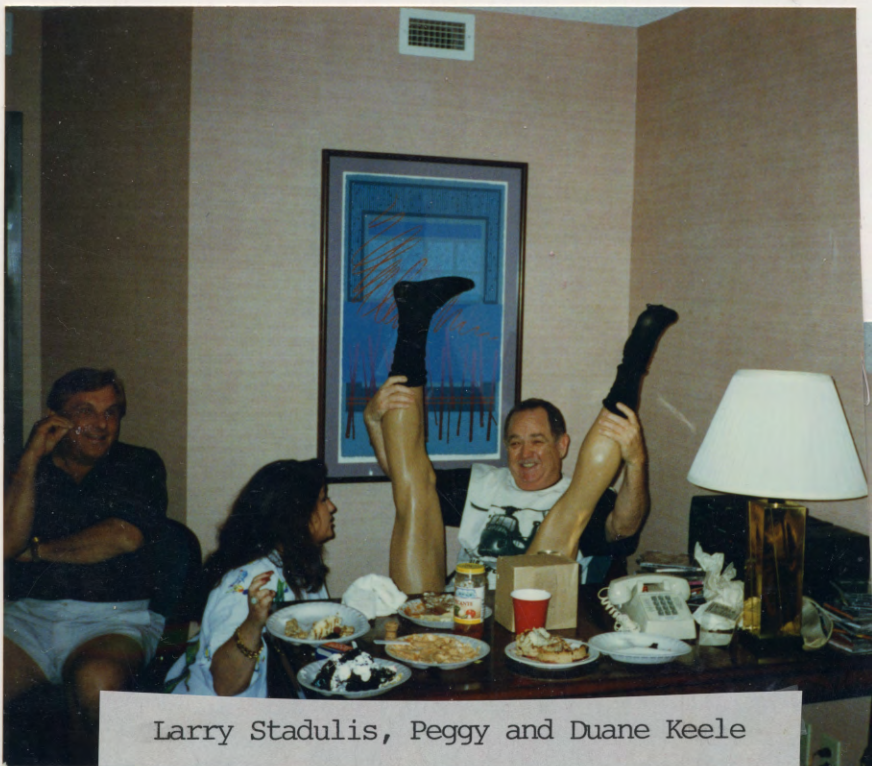
And his hair all fell out.

Lisa Densley, Bill Bergman, and Robbie Roberts

There are always some hijinks going on after the official end of the reunion. The crowd gathered in the Keele's room for probably 4 or 5 days. It wasn't a real pretty sight.



Peggy Keele, Larry Stadulis, and Duane Keele



Larry Stadulis, Peggy and Duane Keele

A FAMILY PORTRAIT

Robbie Adams, Peggy Adams, Larry Adams, Julliette Adams, Tiffany Adams, and Duane Adams



The Adams
(No relation to Ed)

Our Hmong friends received some media coverage in the Houston area this year. Whether or not it will help their cause remains to be seen.

Fierce fighters of Vietnam era abandoned

U.S. refuses to recognize Laotian vets

By **BILL SALISBURY**
Knight-Ridder Tribune News

WASHINGTON — Va Toua Vang is a veteran of America's secret war in Laos.

His left leg was shot off in 1964 during an attack on a North Vietnamese Army unit that was transporting arms down the Ho Chi Minh Trail to South Vietnam. The king of Laos awarded Vang a medal of honor for his bravery.

The 56-year-old Vang, who now lives in St. Paul, Minn., was one of the thousands of Hmong tribesmen who were recruited, armed, trained, directed and paid by the CIA — and promised help in the future.

"They said, 'If you win the war, you have your country. If you lose the war, we will take care of you guys,'" said Wangyee Vang of Fresno, Calif., president of Lao Veterans of America. "They said they would never abandon us."

But because the Hmong fought in a covert war, the U.S. government never publicly acknowledged their efforts then and doesn't recognize them as veterans now.

Without official veteran status, many former Hmong soldiers will be among the elderly and disabled legal immigrants losing their Supplemental Security Income benefits this summer, under the welfare law enacted last year.

Va Toua Vang would lose his sole source of income, a \$484 monthly SSI check.

The Vangs (who are not related) and about 45,000 other Hmong veterans and their dependents now are fighting to persuade the U.S. government to recognize them as veterans. As their undermanned lobbyists traverse Capitol Hill, they tell a story of heroism in a controversial war, bureaucratic obstacles, and broken promises.

Laotians, especially the ethnic Hmong, were fierce fighters for the United States from 1961 to 1975, and bore the brunt of responsibility for the U.S. war effort in Laos.



Maj. Fasue Vang, left, Lt. Cherpao Pha, center, and Lt. Va Toua Vang, right, are Hmong veterans of America's secret war in Laos who are seeking to be recognized as U.S. veterans.

Associated Press

That conflict was kept secret because the 1962 Geneva Accords, signed by the United States and other major powers, banned foreign troops and ostensibly kept Laos neutral. But North Vietnam maintained a large military force in Laos, and the United States responded by recruiting Hmong and other Lao forces to fight the Communists.

The Hmong, a fiercely independent mountain tribe of about 300,000, kept a 70,000-man North Vietnamese force and their Communist Pathet Lao allies engaged for more than 10 years. That prevented those forces from attacking U.S. troops in South Vietnam.

Hmong soldiers had three missions during the war, Wangyee Vang said during a recent visit to Capitol Hill. They rescued downed U.S. pilots, destroyed Communist supplies headed for South Vietnam, and fought Communist forces.

By U.S. government accounts, Hmong guerrilla units were effective fighting forces, as long as they received U.S. arms and air support.

Hmong troops saved U.S. tax dollars, as well as American lives. A recently declassified 1972 Rand Corp. study for the Defense Department said the cost of supplying and paying Hmong troops was "minor" compared with U.S. military operations in Vietnam.

"The unconventional war in Laos (was) perhaps the most cost-effective of all such U.S. ventures in Southeast Asia," the study said.

Although firm numbers are hard to find, the Lao Veterans of America estimated that as many as 40,000 Hmong soldiers and their families were killed in combat, more than 50,000 were wounded, and nearly 3,000 are missing.

Thousands more died of wounds, hunger, disease or drowning during

the mass evacuation across the Mekong River to neighboring Thailand after the United States pulled out of Southeast Asia in 1975.

Since then, an estimated 150,000 Hmong have emigrated to the United States. Many settled in Fresno, Calif., and St. Paul, Minn. There are also sizable populations in Alabama, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Washington and Wisconsin.

The new welfare law will cut off an estimated 500,000 legal immigrants from SSI benefits, which are given to elderly and disabled poor people. The law says that "honorably discharged alien veterans" who served in regular U.S. military units and their families qualify for benefits. But with the government refusing to recognize the Hmong as veterans, their benefits will be halted Aug. 22.

Hmong veterans are lobbying Congress to change that. A House Ways and Means subcommittee has begun considering whether to grant the Hmong special veterans status, as part of "technical corrections" to last year's welfare law.

Hmong veterans "deserve special consideration because they cooperated and sacrificed for our government and its armed forces during the Vietnam War," Rep. Cal Dooley, D-Calif., wrote in a letter to Ways and Means leaders. "It is wrong to abandon these men and women."

The Hmong face an uphill fight in Congress, however. Republican leaders are reluctant to increase federal spending for aliens. "We are not going to reopen last year's welfare reform bill," subcommittee Chairman E. Clay Shaw Jr., R-Fla., has said repeatedly.

Hmong veterans also must overcome a lack of military records showing that they were employed by the CIA, a Ways and Means Committee staffer said. Many Lao army records were destroyed during the war, others were captured by the Communists, and Hmong advocates have been unable to gain access to CIA payroll records, if any exist.

If the Hmong could document their service records, Congress "would do everything possible" to recognize them as veterans, the staff member said. Without those records, the government can't grant veteran status to Hmong ex-soldiers without giving it to every other Laotian refugee who made a claim. That would cost more than Congress is willing to spend.

The Lao veterans' organization doesn't know how many Hmong receive SSI benefits, but Wangyee Vang said someone in most Hmong families gets a benefit check.

They would not lose SSI eligibility if they were citizens, but many cannot meet U.S. naturalization requirements because they don't speak English. The Hmong didn't have a written language until the 1950s, which has made learning to read and write English more difficult.

Some Hmong veterans have refused to learn English because they want to return to their homeland. "If Laos becomes a democracy with free elections and respect for human rights, we should go back," Wangyee Vang said. But that country remains a dictatorship, and

prospects for Hmong repatriation are dim.

The Hmong veterans are a pitifully small force on Capitol Hill. When they can afford it, Vang, a former lieutenant colonel in the Hmong army, and a few other Lao veteran leaders come to Washington to buttonhole lawmakers.

Once legislators hear their story, they are sympathetic, said Philip Smith, a Washington lobbyist for Lao Veterans of America. "But even many of the best and brightest U.S. policymakers are unaware of the unique role the Hmong played in the defense of U.S. national security interests," he said.

Their immediate goal is to preserve welfare benefits for elderly and disabled veterans and their dependents.

Their second goal is to become U.S. citizens. They are lobbying for legislation to allow Lao veterans and their families waive three requirements for citizenship — knowledge of English, knowledge of U.S. history, and a five-year residency requirement. Those requirements have been waived for other immigrants who served in regular U.S. military forces.

That legislation has been pending in Congress for six years. Last year, the House incorporated the Laotian citizenship waiver into a sweeping immigration law, but the waiver was dropped by a House-Senate conference committee.

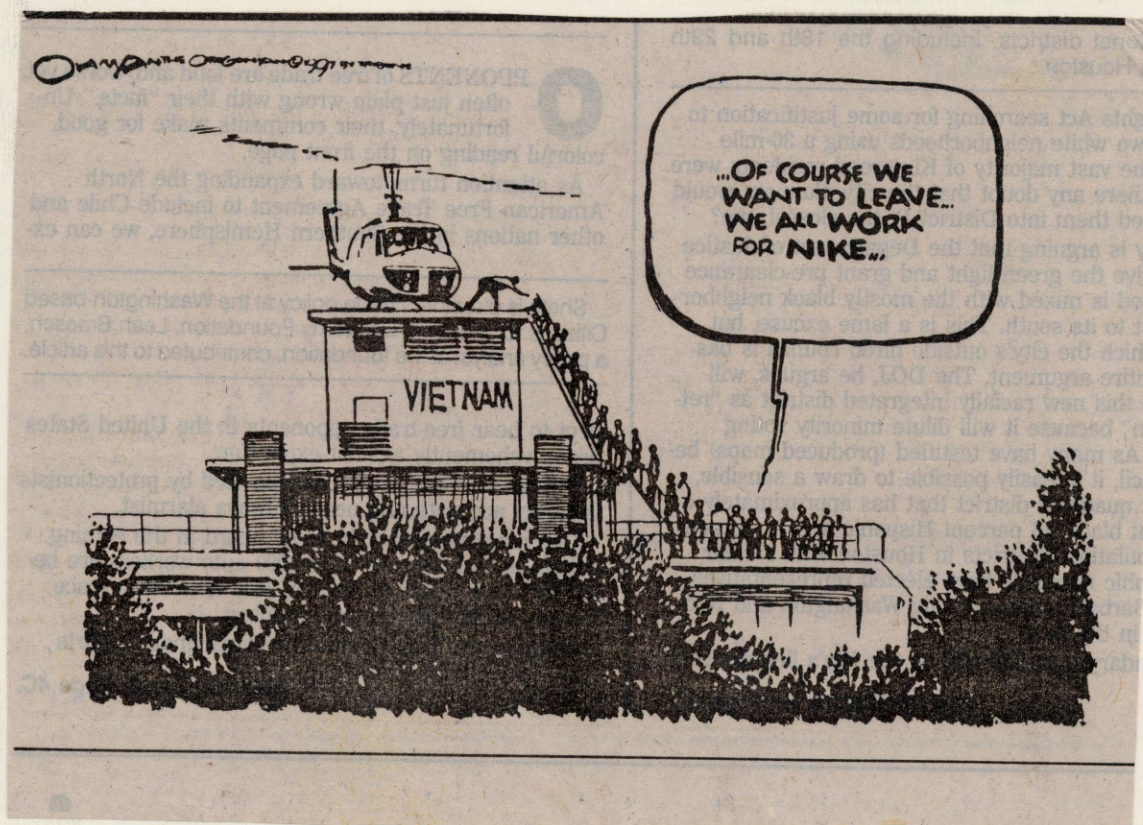
The bill's sponsor, Rep. Bruce Vento, D-Minn., said he will push the bill again this year with a greater urgency because of the threatened loss of welfare benefits.

On another front, the Lao organization has begun a cumbersome process of gathering information to apply to the Pentagon for recognition as veterans. That involves sorting through CIA, Defense and State Department documents for proof that individuals served, and trying to get more documents declassified, Smith said.

That approach is a long shot, an aide to Rep. Dooley said. The Pentagon has declined to recognize veterans who did not serve under U.S. commanders.

The veterans also are lobbying the Clinton administration to pressure the government of Laos to restore democracy and human rights so that Lao refugees can return without fear of reprisals. So far, they have had little success.

They finally got around to making
a political cartoon out of the
famous roof top landing.
Houston Post 1997



IN MEMORIAM

Remembering some of those who passed this year from past reunions:

George Stevens
(No photos available)

Dallas, Tx-1987



Dave Lampard

Carlsbad, Ca-1988

We Get pictures--

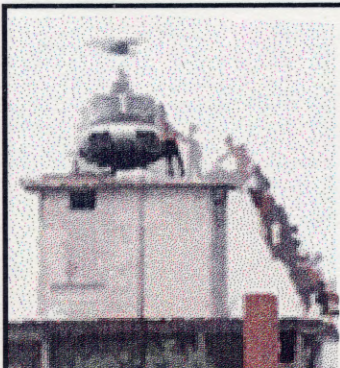


Dennis Grace sends in this picture of him at cardiac rehab
with his therapist.
Feb. '96



11/1/96

How @ 7:30 '96 get
much Better Than This



History

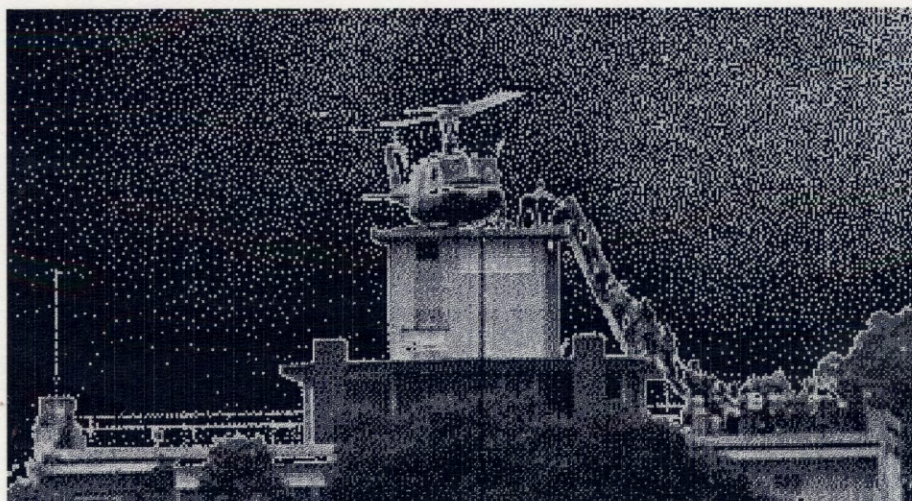
Memorial Plaque

Stamp Effort

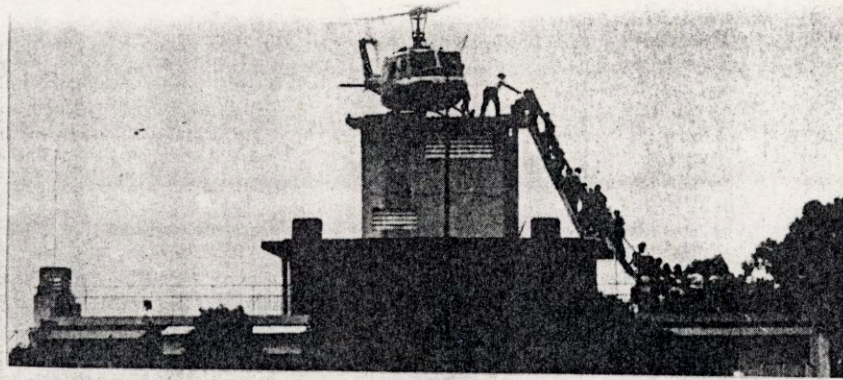
Newsletter

Links

In April 1975, this photo was taken while gathering refugees on top a building in downtown Saigon. This picture has been read about and seen by millions of people; however few realize that it is an Air America helicopter piloted by a civilian crew. The refugees in this picture, who were waiting for an opportunity to escape to freedom, feared for their very lives as an enemy force bent on revenge were closing in on the city. The crew could have abandoned the refugees and escaped; yet they continued to risk their lives to remove as many refugees as possible before turning their fate over to the North Vietnamese. This picture could have been taken hundreds of times from 1947 to 1975 all over South East Asia as thousands of refugees, downed US military pilots, and countless others were saved by civilian pilots who performed these acts voluntarily. They neither received, nor requested any recognition for these acts.



However; now is the time that we can give them that recognition. An AIR AMERICA FREEDOM STAMP can be struck in the image of the picture above. It would commemorate the effort performed by civilian pilots in South East Asia, and serve as a symbol for the continued vigilance necessary to preserve our freedom.



April 1975, Saigon was in chaos as thousands of refugees were trying to escape the North Vietnamese army overrunning their city. An Air America helicopter on a downtown rooftop is loading Vietnamese civilians fleeing for their lives.

Air America Inc. evolved in a very colorful and circuitous way from the Flying Tigers sent in the 1930s by President Roosevelt to aid pre-Communist China which was being raped by the armies and air forces of Imperial Japan.

Air America had many Irish Americans and even Irish-born crewmen, support personnel, a wife (Kilkenny's Liz Harding Nadalini, now of West Chester County) who were part of that wonderful, adventurous, testosterone-saturated, educational, insane, mad, free, dangerous way of life supporting official United States diplomatic and military efforts to keep this country safe.

There was the Sullivan, an admiral's son, who climbed out of his crashed helicopter and as it burned and he awaited a pick-up he sat composing his latest poem, "Ode To A Burning Helicopter." Poets and war don't mix too well.

There was the Irish-born Hennessey who when last read about was publishing Irish detective stories and hinting darkly about his snoop-and-poop days in the Mysterious East. Oh well.

There was no fiction about Patrick McCarthy of Dunmanway, Co. Cork who was killed in Laos. And Charles McCarthy was killed there. Larry Egan, in a sense, died there. Tom Moher was killed later. As were Tom O'Grady and Jim Sweeney. They are part of a long list.

The roster shows other names: Burke, Butler, Byrne, Carroll, Clarke, Clark, Coleman, Colman, Collins, Conley, Connor, Conroy, Dailey, Degan, Donovan, Donnelly, Driscoll, Finnerty, Finnegan, Ford, Fogarty, Carron, Gorman, Hurley, Kearney, Kehoe, Kelley, Kelly, Kennedy, Kilculen, Mitchell, Moran, Mullen, Mullins, Morrow, Mulqueen, Murphree, Murphy, Murray, Nolan, O'Brien, Reagan, Ragan, O'Kennon, O'Connor, Reagan, Quigley, Shine, Sullivan, Sweeney and so on.

I suppose many wanted to see the elephant and maybe meet Terry and the Pirates and the Dragon Lady. They saw the elephant, and the tiger, and the cobra, and many other of God's wonderful creatures.

They met Bill Colby, Ambassador Bill Sullivan, and Dick Secord, and the New York Irish case officer who earlier had helped nail Ernesto "Ché" Gue-

vara de la Serna, the medical doctor whose patrician Argentinian family is proud of their Irish heritage which came from Patricio Lynch, born in Galway in 1715.

They met pirates and worse.

They met the Dragon Lady, there were many of her. Some just said howdy; some married her; some just romanced her.

They even met Milt Caniff's son-in-law.

They lived their chosen roles, had some laughs, and good times, got shot down, captured, maimed, scared, and scarred, left good friends splattered in godforsaken places. Even got heroic from time to time. But served, faithfully. Lost their illusions, their innocence; maybe got cynical.

And paid their dues in fullest measure.

Got to look into the Inferno enough times to stare back and say, "Fuck you." Maybe had a miracle or two.

The right to choose your own way and to be free and safe from tyranny is not guaranteed, nor should it be taken for granted. It is preserved by those who are willing to risk their own life to secure it. The freedom you enjoy today was secured by an act that occurred in the past. The freedom you desire tomorrow may have to be secured by an act that you or someone else must do today.

In April, 1975, this photo was taken while gathering refugees on top a building in downtown Saigon. This picture has been read about and seen by millions of persons. Few realize that it is an Air America helicopter piloted by a civilian crew.

The refugees in this picture, who were desperately waiting for a chance to escape to freedom, feared for their very lives as an enemy force bent on revenge were closing in on Saigon. The crew could have abandoned the refugees and escaped; yet they continued to risk their lives to remove as many refugees as possible before turning their fate over to the North Vietnamese.

This picture could have been taken thousands of times from 1947 to 1975 all over South East Asia as thousands and thousands of refugees, downed U.S. military pilots, and countless others were saved by civilian pilots who performed these acts voluntarily. They neither received, nor requested any recognition for these acts.

However, now is the time that we can give them that recognition. An Air America Freedom Stamp can be struck in the image of the picture above. It would commemorate the effort performed by civilian pilots in South East Asia, and serve as a symbol for the continued vigilance necessary to preserve our freedom.

We need your support. Please send this simple message: "I support the Air America Freedom Stamp!" to:

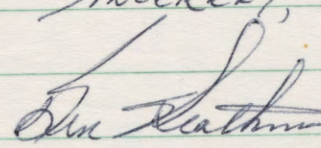
Citizens Stamp Advisory Committee
Stamp Management
U.S. Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW
Room 4474E
Washington, DC 20260-2437

John McRainey, President
AAM Association
(210) 687-4816
jmcrailey@aol.com
Allen E. Cates, Vice President
AAM Association
c/o SETAC (318) 988-2236
setac@setac.com

I MET HARRY BERNIER WHILE SPENDING THE WINTER IN CHAPALA MEXICO. WE STARTED TALKING AND FOUND THAT WE HAD WORKED IN THE SAME AREA OF OPERATIONS AT THE SAME TIME. I FLEW THE A-26 WITH THE 603RD AIR COMMANDOS OUT OF NAKHOM PHANOM IN '67-68 IN SUPPORT OF GENERAL VANG PAO, THE KC-135 WITH THE "YOUNG TIGER" OPERATION IN '69 AND '70, AND "CRICKET" C-130E'S IN '70 AND '71. AS YOU CAN SEE WE HAD A LOT OF THE SAME "FRIENDS". I'M A LIFE MEMBER OF THE AIR COMMANDO ASSN. AND TRY TO MAKE THE REUNIONS AT LEAST EVERY OTHER YEAR.

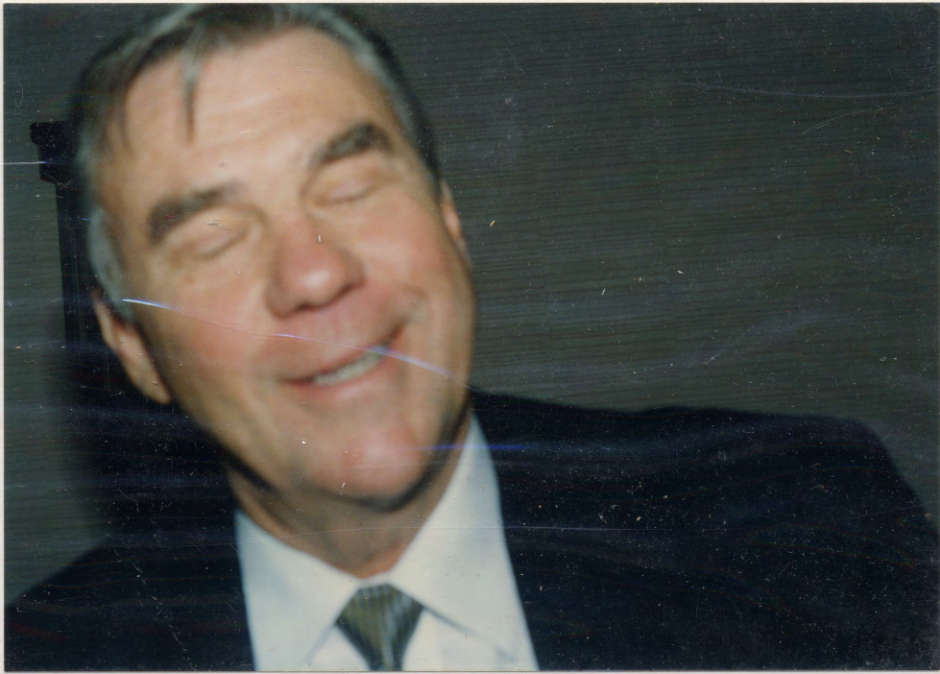
THE ENCLOSED SNAPSHOTS MAY JOG SOME MEMORIES -- THEY WERE TAKEN AT 20 ALTERNATE IN 1968. WAS INVITED UP TO RECEIVE ONE OF THE ANTIQUE HMONG TRIBE RIFLES AND A GOLD RING. SORRY I CAN'T REMEMBER THE "COMPANY" MAN'S NAME BUT ONE OF YOUR PEOPLE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SUPPLY THAT.

THANKS FOR THE INVITATION TO JOIN YOUR ORGANIZATION. I'M SURE YOUR FOLKS WOULD ENJOY VISITING/MEMBERSHIP IN THE AIR COMMANDOS. OUR REUNION IS ALWAYS IN FT. WALTON BEACH FLORIDA ON THE COLUMBUS DAY WEEKEND. IF ANYONE IS INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT ME.

SINCERELY,

DAN HEATH
NAAF (RET)



Let me say in conclusion how nice it has been being your leader.



Giddy-up big fellow, its a fur piece to Florida.

