

VHCMA INTERNET

If you ever "Surf the Net" the VHCMA now has a Home Page on the Internet or the World Wide Web. The VHCMA newsletter editor is setup to communicate with other members using electronic mail — or E-Mail.



Articles, notices and letters for publication can be sent to the Newsletter directly by Internet E-Mail.

The old address at CompuServe has been dropped and you may contact the VHCMA at the INTERNET address.

Email: vhcma@airmail.net

The VHCMA Home Page Address is:

<http://web2.airmail.net/vhcma>

VHCMA Newsletters

Just a reminder that the VHCMA is always in need of stories, articles or photos of interest concerning helicopters of the Vietnam War.

You may send any newsletter material directly to John Hastings, the editor for the VHCMA Newsletter.

John H. Hastings
2323 Harrison Avenue
Fort Worth, Texas 76110
(817) 923-2561

Anything that relates to membership, merchandise orders, the memorial should still be referred to Charlie at the VHCMA office. The staff for the VHCMA appreciates your support and welcomes any and all comments or suggestions.

If you wish to contribute anything prepared on a computer, if possible, send a 3.5 diskette. Your material should be saved in TEXT format. Since I have to transcribe any contributed material, this would help me tremendously. If you wish your diskette returned, please include a SASE.

Weird Stanley Looking For...

I was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam in 68-69 and again in 70-71, call sign Bandit 13, Killerspade 13, and Guardian 9. If you know anyone that knew of or heard of Weird Stanley, I'd like to here from them.

via the Internet
wstanley@dcs-chico.com

240th AHC MAD DOGS

Hello, John;

I'm interested in finding people who once served in the 240th AHC "Mad Dogs" as a surprise for my father. I talked to my father about this a little, and he said he wasn't interested, but he said it with little emotion, so I think he thinks about it a lot more than he lets on at times. Only him and people like you and the other survivors can know what it really was like over there, I can only see what pain he shows me at times, and read about it. As I said before, I'm in the Army now (actually national guard, cuz I like to fly but got tired of the RA BS) and am "carrying on the family bizness" as an aircrewmember. And our tactics and survivability today is based on what you guys had to figure out and learn to stay alive, and we owe you guys bigtime.

Most of our CW4s and some 3's are former 'Nam pilots, and are the best we got. We also have some EM's that are vets and they too, are among the best we got.

Anyway, if you could please find out how many are left from 11/69 - 11/70 and if I could possibly get a list, I'd really appreciate it, and if anyone else could email or write me, I'd get it to dad ASAP.

Also, my dad got a bronze star with a V, but won't tell me why. If anyone remembers what he did, please write me and give me a brief story. I'm damned proud of that man, but he'll probably go to his grave not telling me.

His name is MSG (ret) Jack W. Power Jr.

He was a SP6 door gunner, crew chief, TI with the 240th between 11/69 - 11/70. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely;

SGT Jack W. Power III
9001 323rd ST CT S
Roy, WA 98580
e-mail 103601,364@compuserve.com

(via Internet E-mail)

Advertising in The VHCMA Newsletter

The VHCMA is now accepting advertising in the Newsletter to help offset the cost of the Newsletter and other Association expenses.

Contact Charlie Rains at the VHCMA office for special member rates.

The 188th Black Widow Reunion and Sally Mae

The following is a Reunion Report from the 188th AHC Historian Dick Detra. A mini-reunion was also held at the VHPA reunion, in July at Santa Clara, California.

Ron Merlock, John Moore, Dennis Pierpoint (AKA Point), and myself had planned a 28th year reunion of the 188th Assault Helicopter Company's finest, the "Black Widows," held the first week of April 1996. Our LZ was the western slope of the Washington state beautiful Olympic Peninsula. We had world class steelhead trout fishing at our fingertips, and the Olympic Mountain as a backdrop.

It all started with John Moore, 2nd Platoon crew chief, flying into San Francisco International Airport, from East Liverpool, Ohio. He called earlier to inform me that his flight number was 119. I took this as a good omen for our trip, being that the tail number on the slick that Ron and I crewed was 16119 (better known for her door art work, "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds").

After picking up John and stowing his gear, we drove 10 minutes north to Brisbane. My fiancee Karma and I showed him sights around San Francisco's Waterfront and ending at the Eagles Lodge in Brisbane. Our mode of transportation to the reunion was a 1959 Edsel Ranger Sedan named "Sally Mae," with 6 cylinders and 3 on the tree. She was sporting a new two tone paint job, desert tan/snow white, and new chrome. In other words, the "brothers" would be cruising... After making some last minute repairs to "Sally Mae" we packed up and headed north out of town, across the bay bridge.

Ron, a 2nd Platoon crew chief, met John and I at a gas station in Eugene, Oregon. We followed Ron to his home to spend the night. We were treated to an elk dinner with all the trimmings by Ron and his wife, Robin. After dinner we drank beer and watched 600 quality slides, taken during our tour in the Western III Corps AO. John, Ron, and I

had shared the same tent at Dau Tieng, which was the base camp for the 3rd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division.

The next morning, we loaded up Sally Mae and cruised north, only to stop at a junk yard along I5 to pick over four '59 Edsels. I located a few items needed for Sally Mae's restoration, and we were on our way again.

Our next destination was Tumwater, Washington, where plans had been made to meet with Mark Hayes, a 1st Platoon pilot, during our tour of duty. He met us at the Olympic Brewery, where he worked. We talked over coffee, and before we left, we were given two cases of Pabst Blue Ribbon. This was added to our war chest, which included a case of "33" that I had purchased in San Francisco. Mark decided to take the rest of the day off and followed him into Olympia, Washington. Dennis Pierpoint (Point) also lived in Olympia with his wife Trish and son Darin. Point and I have kept in touch for years and had the good fortune of spending together our two year tour in the Army. Its too bad others from the unit have not kept in touch, considering our "Welcome Home" was a very hard adjustment; our lives had changed.

Anyway, Point had picked up our rented 29 foot RV and was in the process of loading gear into it, when the "brothers" pulled in. Dennis went through the same emotions I had earlier after picking up John at the airport and seeing Ron at the gas station. The air was thick with emotion from all of us. It was a sight to see the five of us together again. Basically, we all looked the same, just 28 years worth of hard miles on the old mind and body.

We managed to take time out from our emotional reunion, to get our gear stowed into the RV. We parked "Sally Mae" under the carport at Points. She had completed half the journey without any problems. Mark took his leave for home with all our promises to keep in touch with each other. Point and Ron drove the RV, while John and I followed in his Ford pickup with boat in tow. We headed due west to Aberdeen, then straight north to Forks, Washington. Forks is geographically the western most town on the continental United States, excluding Alaska.

The Olympic Peninsulas' western slope is a mixture of pristine National Forest, and Indian Reservations, crisscrossed by numerous glacier fed rivers, that empty into the Pacific Ocean. It is also home of the HoH Rain forest, with an annual rainfall of 300 inches.

That first week we were there, it rained 5 of the 7 days, so hard that we had had "monsoon" flashbacks from 1967. Thank god, we were steelhead fishing and not on a hot combat assault, scared out our minds. We had set up camp along the Bogeshield River. Point, our guide, decided to drop canvas awning that ran the entire length of the RV, because of the rain, and fish on the bottom. Point nailed one right after we had settled in. It was enjoyable and relaxing outside, talking about all those special memories from our time together. Ron had the best recall of anyone in our group. We laughed, drank, and bonded for all 7 days.

For our next adventure, I had made reservations for our group to fish with Archie Howard, an excellent guide. Point and I had hired before. Archie is a Quinault Indian from the Quinault Indian Reservation. (since we would be fishing on the Quinault River, it is required that we use a guide.) We parked the RV along the highway and Archie led us down a partially washed out dirt road, which came out along the river. The "brothers" loaded up both sleds, (flat bottom boats with outboard motors), that we would be fishing from, and we split up into two groups. Ron, Ed Pierpoint (Points brother), David (Ed's son), and Archie's partner left in the first boat. Archie, John, Point and myself, followed in the second.

It was a beautiful, clear day. No longer than it took the first boat to drop their lines into the water, when they had three fish on the lines. Ron experienced the thrill of a native steelhead trout breaking water, which have a reputation of being very hard to land. In boat two, John caught the first fish, a nice size Dolly Varden. We spent the entire day out on the river, our total catch was 13. Point and Ed earned bragging rights, each landing fish in excess of 20 pounds. It had been an exceptionally good day on the river, everyone was smiling, so we must

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have gotten our moneys worth. Ron volunteered to smoke the steelhead, back in Eugene, so we iced down the fish until we could get them into a freezer.

Later, that second week, we met up with Don Wilson and Louie Paklitzch. Dan had served in Vietnam in 1965, with the Navy. After a few days, he opened up and relayed his feelings from so long ago and resulted into a very healthy interaction. Don and Louie were friends of Points and had a house in Forks. They took us under their wing and showed us the art of digging for razor clams. After which we had a clam fry, where Dan showed how to clean them, while Louie did the cooking. Along with the clams, we eat Puget Sound Halibut... Louie did his best to cook them as fast as possible. We thanked Dan and Louie for their hospitality, and they presented us with a few bags of razor clams to take back home.

We headed back, in the rain, to Olympia, where we enjoyed a ferry ride across the Puget Sound from the Olympic

Peninsula to Edmonds. After getting lost numerous time, we located the RV rental center. After dropping off the RV, we piled into Points pickup and continued our trip to Olympia.

After unloading at Points, we contacted Mark Hayes and Bob Crow, both former "Black Widow" pilots. We invited them over for food, beer, and a slide show of our tour. Trish put out a huge spread for the crowd of families and friends that showed up. That evening we went over 600 slides and went through the whole gamut of emotions. Names finally had faces, memories resurfaced, questions answered. We were bonding once again. By the end of the evening, most of us were emotionally spent. It was too much to take in, in one evening, let alone think about and absorb. As everyone was leaving, we bid our goodbyes. Mark was given a steelhead trout in return for his donation to our war chest.

The next morning, the "brothers" washed "Sally Mae" and loaded up for the return trip. On the way back, Ron had us cruise the back roads into Eugene. The weather was clear, the countryside alive

with spring flowers. We stopped along the way and took photos of "Sally Mae". The best photos would be submitted to the Edsel Owners Club, for their 1997 calendar.

That night after arriving at Ron's house, we had a barbecue and then watched a video of actual footage of our unit. It was like being instantly transported back through time, reliving those times we all had thought best forgotten. What a rush!

We were up early the next morning. Although the three of us wanted to spend more time together, John had a Tuesday morning flight he had to catch for his trip home. En route back, John and I decided to take the longer scenic route through the Northern California Redwoods. We saw several large herds of Roosevelt Elk, grazing along side of the highway. We decided to stop for gas and when we pulled into the station, one of "Sally Maes" rear wheels split, causing a flat tire. We were fortunate, that it hadn't failed on the highway. We changed the wheel, filled up with gas, added a quart of oil and were under way again. Fourteen hours later, were arrived in Brisbane.

The next morning, John tried to pack up all his trophies from the vacation. He said "thanks for everything" to Karma, and then were off in "Sally Mae" again, cruising to the airport. His carry-on baggage was a cooler full of steelhead and razor clams. As I drove away, I watched John through the rearview mirror, enter the airport.

"Sally Mae" had average 20 miles to the gallon on our 1,800 mile trip and burned 1 quart of oil. Being able to go a vacation/reunion, in a restored vintage car like "Sally Mae," was like frosting on the cake, particularly with all the thumbs up we received from other motorists along the way. It was a trip all of us will remember for years to come. In retrospect, it made me sad, thinking about all those years we hadn't stayed in touch. Memories had surfaced, from a time most of us wanted to forget. To have been so close in combat and to have waited 28 years to unload some of that emotional excess baggage we brought back.

It was good... Life is good!



The "Brothers" left to right: John Moore, Ron Merlock, Dennis Pierpoint, and Dick Detra (kneeling)

"Wings" Documentary

Mr. Ted Duvall, of S.E.H. Productions in Alexandria, Virginia, is doing research work for a one hour documentary on the Huey for the Discovery Channel. There is no air date yet, but it will be part of the "Wings" series airing next season.

During this research phase, he has contacted the VHCMA in search of ideas or particularly memorable stories from a mission or a battle that might be further researched.

Another issue is film footage. What can make this program special are "home movies". It need not be only combat footage, although that is the most desirable. If anyone has any "home movies", then he would like to speak with you at the earliest chance.

This can be a great benefit for the VHCMA for exposure of our association to potential members. They have agreed to give us voice-over credit, in addition, to the trailing on-screen credit. We are pleased to be a resource for a program like this and will enable viewers to benefit from fresh film footage, photos and stories.

If anyone would like to contribute material, we ask that you contact Charlie Rains of the VHCMA office, so that we can arrange to connect you with Ted Duvall.

Helicopter Crew Member KIA Reference Directory

Since the VHPA KIA data was published in 1995, that data base has been expanded to include data from the VHCMA in regards to all crew members who lost their lives in the Vietnam War.

Through the hundreds of hours put in by Gary Roush, Mike Law, the VHCMA and the unit coordinators, two expanded Reference Directories will soon be available. The roster contains the names of all 4,814 individuals known to the VHCMA who served as crew members who are classified as KIA, MIA. The roster itself is maintained by Gary Roush, who is also the VHPA Data Base Committee Chairman.

Rank/Name ----->

Wall coord/Service/Unit ----->

Explanation: ----->

SP4 Adams, James Richard KIA 04/22/67

18E-067 AR 118AHC MOS: 11B20

Died not as a result of hostile action from weapons while serving as a door gunner on a UH-1D 66-09957

<----- Status/Date of Event

<----- Duty/MOS

<----- Type Helicopter/Tail Number

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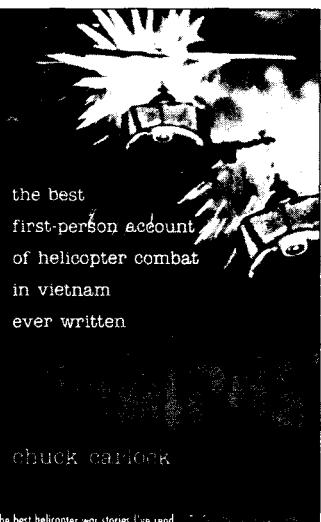
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