VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

The VHPA Newsletter

P.O. Box 9592 Wichita, KS 67277 Volume 5, No. 2 June 1988

THE BEGINNING. Half way to those shiny wings, a "closely-cropped, skinny..." Greg Ross at the front gate, Fort Wolters, 1966.
Photo by Greg Ross

President's Roll Call

As my Presidency comes to a close, it is time to reflect on the past and look ahead to the future. When this organization started, it was hard to imagine that in five short years we would have grown to almost 4,000 members. The longevity of VHPA can be seen in the growing numbers of members each month and the ever increasing life membership. Each member should make it his goal to find two new members. We are a diminishing group (they don't make anymore Vietnam combat pilots) so, please take the time to find that old classmate or the guy from your old unit that you keep asking yourself about (I wonder what happened to.....).

Things change as we get older. We move, change jobs, and some even change wives; but one thing will never change, we are Vietnam Helicopter Pilots. We wrote the history on helicopter warfare and because of us, the helicopter went from the Bell 47 (OH-13) era to an era of fast, efficient and reliable helicopters. The helicopters we developed are now flying "Life Flight", offshore for the oil industry, for the "new" modern Military and almost every aspect of rotorwing flight. Many a good helicopter pilot gave his youth and/or his life for the world to enjoy the benefits of the modern helicopter.

There are many things that I am proud of in my life. Being a Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and your President are my proudest. As you go thru life always remember that you are a **VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOT** and be damn proud of it. I am and will always be.

C. David Owens

[redacted]

Presentation to SAFT AMERICA for their sponsorship of the "Gathering '88" at the 1988 HAI Convention. Left to right: Bill Ringer, former VHPA President; Larry Clark, VHPA Founder; Walt Prettyman, SAFT AMERICA Marketing Manager; C. David Owens, VHPA President; and Mike McDonald, past VHPA President.

FROM THE EDITOR:

As they say, "all good things must come to an end", so, after four years of being privileged to be your Newsletter Editor, I am going to turn the "reins" over to some other lucky person. And I mean LUCKY, because I have never done anything more gratifying than cranking out newsletters that have pleased you all.

I know that after four years as your Editor you know quite a bit about me, know how much I believe in this organization and "us 'un" helicopter pilots that are its members. So, what am I going to do? Take it easy? Abandon you characters? NOT ON YOUR LIFE! The VHPA is just too important to me to stop being involved, but fair play dictates I refrain from announcing future plans until the Reunion. See you there!!

Roger Gould
Editor

VHPA OFFICERS and COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN 1987-88

PRESIDENT
C. Dave Owens

FOUNDER
Larry Clark

VICE PRESIDENT
Jay Elliott

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Mike Law

MEMBERS AT LARGE
Dave Greiger
Greg Ross
Paul Uster

MEMBERSHIP
Joe Schreiber

PUBLIC RELATIONS
Mike McDonald

HISTORICAL
Dan Hutchinson

RECORDS / DATA BASE
Paul Erway

KIA / MIA DATA BASE
Gary Roush

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
Roger Gould

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES
Debra A. Fuqua

VHPA Newsletter

Published by
Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association
Wichita Mid-Continent Airport
2120 Airport Road/P.O. Box 9592
Wichita, KS 67277/Phone 316/946-4047
Roger Gould, Editor

The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association Newsletter is distributed to members of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.

VHPA membership is open to all helicopter pilots who flew in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Era (1961-1975). Annual dues are $20.00 or Life Membership for $300.00. The price of a yearly subscription for non-members is $12.00.

The VHPA Newsletter is published five times a year, March, June, September, October, December, by the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, P.O. Box 9592, Wichita, KS 67277. Second class postage pending paid at Wichita, KS.

The VHPA is a non-profit war veterans organization filed under Section 501(c) (19) of the Internal Revenue Service.

Material published in the VHPA NEWSLETTER is contributed by members and other interested persons. Letters to the editor are welcome. As space permits, we will publish as many as possible. Letters are subject to editing for brevity and accuracy. The VHPA does not guarantee or endorse any product, organization or person mentioned in this publication. Mail to: Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 9592, Wichita, KS 67277.

POSTMASTER: Send change of address to:

VHPA Newsletter
P.O. Box 9592
Wichita, KS 67277

INCOMING MAIL

HELICOPTERS WITH DIRT FLOORS

Just received March's Newsletter and the picture of BEECH ARMY HOSPITAL at Ft. Wolters really hit home. You said future helicopter pilots were born there, and in my case that's come true. My son was born at BAH in 1969, is now a member of my National Guard unit, 1st Squadron, 110th CAVALRY, Massachusetts Army National Guard. He has taken the test for Flight School, and we have our hopes he will become a third generation aviation warrant officer. (My father-in-law was an Army Air Corps Warrant Officer in WWII.) Interesting to note that because Ft. Wolters was federal property, his Texas State Birth Certificate records place of birth at Justice Precinct #3, Parker County, Texas. All folks born at BEECH, have no city or town listed as place of birth. My son says it feels like he was born on the side of the road! I guess they form a sort of special sub-group of VHPA all themselves. After all in 1969, the doctors estimated about 50-75 babies were born there per month!

Can't wait for the Reunion in Ft. Worth/Ft. Wolters! I just returned from Ft. Rucker UH-1 IP school and what a "culture shock"! It was interesting to return after a 21 year absence (graduated in June 1967). Worst part was seeing; a) all of the aircraft we used to fly (UH-1A, B, C, D, TH-55A, OH-23, TH-13T) in the museum; b) being told all of our class pictures were also in the museum; and c) seeing the old "blue box" instrument simulator in the museum. As of this month, all students will begin primary training right off in the UH-1 (remember, that was our "advanced" aircraft). After 21 years in this business, it kinda feels like we've flown helicopters with "dirt floors". Seeing the Apache close up, and the Blackhawk, plus the OH-58D with all of the computerized systems, etc., makes me realize how much we really did with so little in 'Nam. It also drove home to me how much war is really a YOUNG man's "game". Rucker is also a real 2nd Lt. "farm" — so many, so young, so enthusiastic. Those of us that survived and are members of the Benevolent and Protective Brotherhood of Them What Have Been Shot At And Lived, and are still flying need to teach these folks how to survive.

While there, I had the opportunity to meet and talk with many WOC's. They couldn't believe you can still go to school after 20+ years. But Mother Rucker is a possessive old girl and doesn't let go easily of her brood.

For any old members of the Class of 67-9 and the 117th Assault Helicopter Company (1967-68), Beachbums and Warlords, I'm hoping to see you at the reunion in July. I'm still flying as Training Officer in IP in the UH-1M, yes the updated "Charlie" model gunship, in D Troop, 1-110th CAVALRY, Mass ARNG.

And finally, I've enclosed a list of the Class of 67-9 for your records. In the membership directory you have a list of our brothers who were killed. I'd like to fill in some gaps: WO Gary D. Shepphard, 67-9 KIA; WO Robert L. Scott, 67-9 KIA; WO Wallace W. Leeper, 67-9 MIA; WO Lawrence J. Stark, 67-9 KIA; WO John J. Foden, 117th, KIA; Lt. Robert H. King, 117th KIA — good friends, good men, died in a good cause. I was sorry to miss our reunion in D.C. I go every Veteran's Day to "The Wall" to visit my friends and remember. I bring my children so they will remember the lessons of Vietnam.

Robert A. Skiba
[redacted]

Know how you feel, Robert, it's hard to forget pointing out decaying H-19 and H-21 hulks at Davis-Monthan AFB, a couple years back, and getting the response, "You flew THAT!!, I didn't think you were that old." Ed.

[redacted]

OLE JIM FAZEKAS' TAC

Just received the March Newsletter and as always, enjoy the letters.

Reference the rotor blades at the Holiday Inn of Mineral Wells. What about the rest of us that went through Ft. Wolters before there was a Holiday Inn pool? We got tossed in the farm pond on the way back in from stage field #4. By the way, it was just as great a feeling.

Noted that Jim Fazekas had a letter, and a TAC no less. Lucky that I taught him well as a candidate. I along with others were some of the first Warrant Officers used as TAC's in 1965. (By the way, they didn't ask, they assigned you this position.)

So, I have been putting extra polish on my black helmet and looking forward to the 1988 reunion at Ft. Worth. There may be a few of the old candidates there and even money says they can't pass inspection. (That's not new, is it?)

P.S. Classes 66-13, 66-23, 67-7, and 67-15 BE READY!

P.S.S. Can you publish pictures from slides?

Roy J. Lowery
(Rattler 13)
TAC Officer, 3rd WOC 65-67
[redacted]

It's easier if you could have prints made from the slides, Roy. Also, by making prints, your priceless slides are at less risk. Ed.

No kidding, a VIP helipad in Vietnam, anyone remember where this was? ***Photo by Bruce Leach***

Continued on next page

WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL US?

While everyone else was worried only of soloing, I was concerned with drowning, too. Sure, they all heard me say I couldn't swim, but somehow in the frenzy of the moment the words were lost and I got pitched anyway. I remember gasping for air and flailing my arms as non-swimmers do and, then, before going down for the third time, my roommate, Harry Zalesny, reached out and literally pulled me out by the hair: then, the crazed group coming to its senses and asking, "Why didn't you tell us...?" Wish I could have been there when Harry was in trouble. Don't know the particulars of his death, but both he and another roomie, Bill "Rocky" Walters, didn't come home. Damned shame.

Was glad to hear that James P. Fazekas "made it". Always thought him to be a bit deranged — the man seemed to dislike WOC's more than "Charlie and hemorrhoids — like we were a blight in HIS army. I gotta admit that facing the enemy was much easier after experiencing him. Hell, he wasn't even my TAC Officer; thank God for TAC's like Stephen Dillman!

Bruce V. Wyrwitzke
[redacted]

You really must of wanted to be a helicopter pilot, Bruce. With your extra worries, bad, bad, James P. Fazekas, and a last name the TACs probably couldn't spell Vietnam must have been a relief. Ed.

JILL'S HOBBY

Hello, how are you today? I hope this finds you well. Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Jill Chandler; I am 25 years old, and live in Spokane, Washington.

I have a hobby of collecting autographed photos of men who fought in the air battles of World War I through Vietnam. I would like to write to some of the men who were helicopter pilots in Vietnam. I hope that you can assist me in acquiring some addresses to these men so that I can write to them.

Jill Chandler
[redacted]

Some hobby, Jill, be interesting to hear how a young gal picked such a subject. Ed.

HELICOPTER PILOTS DO IT WITH CLASS

I recently received my first copy of the Newsletter and was impressed. For some reason, mental deterioration probably, I hadn't expected as professional a product as I received. I should have known that if it was done by helicopter pilots it would be first class.

My mission in life now will be to try to sign up as many of the remaining 14,000 Vietnam helicopter pilots as I can find. I've already got two prospective members on the hook.

If you need any leg work or a contact in the Seattle area, please feel free to call on me.

Bob Hoffman
(Bandit 32)
(Superbee 6)
[redacted]

Thanks for the offer of help, Bob, maybe you could help Jill Chandler with her unusual hobby. Ed.

JOIN ME'S

Here's my application form, dues, and a question. Why did I take so long to join? I heard about you a year ago from CW3 Joe McGovern (1160th Trans, Heavy Helicopter, GA ARNG) but like everything else, I put it off, thinking you were just like all the other "Join Me's" trying to get 20 bucks from me. Then another member, Maj. Dan Marshall, gave me a bunch of back issues of the magazine. I couldn't believe how professional it was, how the memories came back, and how proud I was of my tour there. But the thing that got me most were the poems by Maj. Mike O'Donnell you published in one of the 1986 issues.

Enclosed is one of his poems that I don't think you've printed. I found it in a Newsweek article about two years ago and had it under the glass on the center of my desk ever since. I cried when I read it, for Mike O'Donnell and all my friends who would never read it because it was written for them. If you haven't already published it, I hope you will. It speaks volumes... for those who did, as well as those who didn't, come back.

Just for background, I was a maintenance officer for both C Trp, 3/17th Cav at Vinh Long from Jan.-Mar. '72, and for C Trp, 16th Cav at Can Tho from Mar.-Apr. '72. Yeah, I'm one of those REMF's that kept those beasts flying, but remember, maintenance officers were pilots too. I got out in '75 and started flying Cranes in the Georgia Guard til Dec. of '87 when I turned over command of the 1160th Trans Co and joined the USAR. I still keep my hand in though since I work for the Army, Aviation Systems Command (AVSCOM) putting on aircraft modifications. I've got some pictures of maintenance platoon patches from the Delta that I'll send as soon as I can find them. Here's my money and my support. Count me in.

Dale D. DeRoia
(Scavenger 57)
(Dark Horse 47/46)
[redacted]

BARRY GELLER was the first to send us Mike's poems and we published "SAVE A PLACE INSIDE OF YOU" in the November 1985 issue of the Newsletter. But like you, Dale, we also believe it "speaks volumes", so here it is again. By the way, this poem appears at the conclusion of the movie HAMBURGER HILL. Ed.

If you are able
Save for them a place
inside of you...
And save one backward glance
when you are leaving
for the places they can
no longer go....
Be not ashamed to say
you loved them,
though you may not have always....
Take what they have left
and what they have taught you
with their dying
and keep it with your own....
And in that time
when men decide and feel safe
to call the war insane
take one moment to embrace
those gentle heroes
you left behind.

michael davis o'donnell
1 Jan 1970

Continued on next page

PHOENIX REUNION

If Ft. Rucker is the mother of Rotary Wing Aviation, then Ft. Wolters is surely where conception took place. What an appropriate location for part of our VHPA '88 reunion. I've been looking forward to it since the announcement was made at the '86 reunion in D.C.

My experience at the '86 reunion was highlighted by the appearance of a few old familiar faces. I thought then, that the only improvement would be the appearance of a *lot* of old familiar faces. With this thought in mind and VHPA directory in hand, an effort was undertaken to bring together PHOENIX of C/158 Avn Bn, 101 ABN DIV at the '88 reunion. To date about 40 have been located and the response has been positive. The 17 Phoenix listed in the VHPA directory yielded an additional 20-25 names/addresses. As reunion flyers go out to non-members, VHPA applications are enclosed. As the VHPA membership continues to grow, and the Newsletter has increased circulation, I thought announcing the reunion might provide even more response.

While I am making announcements, I would like to say my hat's off to you folks who founded, nurtured and promoted this organization into what it is today. As the membership approaches 3,000, I hope you realize what you have accomplished in such a relatively short period of time. The comraderie of this small fraternity is unique, and your efforts are sincerely appreciated by all. Thanks.

Jack Glennon
(Phoenix 51)
[redacted]

With announcements like this, you can keep on announcing, Jack, maybe besides the most number of a Flight School Class at the reunion, we can have a new category, the most from a particular unit. Ed.

NOT IN MEMORY

Looking at that vulture on the nose of that UH-1D brought back a lot of memories. I went over to RVN with the 188th AHC in late April 1967, from Fort Campbell, KY, and we were stationed at Dau Tieng, just north of the "Iron Triangle" and War Zone C. Being "FNGs" we were farmed out to various units throughout III Corps to gain some experience for a couple of weeks before returning to our units and going operational. I was sent to the 162nd AHC at Phuoc Vinh, the "Vultures" and I learned a lot from those ACs before becoming one myself upon return to my unit.

While training with those guys I asked if they ever were mortared and the answer was "not in memory". On my birthday, 11 May, we were mortared for the first time that anyone can remember, plus it was my first time since being in country, being an FNG and all.

They had a great "O" club and they partied hard as well as working hard. That night, being my birthday, I was supposed to buy the bar a round, but being a new guy only training with them and in view of the mortar attack, it was overlooked. If any of those guys ever come within range of Palm Bay, I'd be happy to buy them a drink. I learned a lot from them.

Chuck Restivo
(Black Widow 27)
[redacted]

Of all the ways to get out of buying a round, yours "ole mortar magnet Chuck", beats all. There may be a message in the, "ever come within RANGE of Palm Bay, I'd be happy to BUY them a drink." Ed.

AVIATING ARTIST!!

The "What is it?" on the March Newsletter is the insignia of the 162nd AHC, the "Vultures".

I served with the Vultures from Feb. to July '67 before receiving a free trip home compliments of a VC bullet. During my tenure with the Vultures, this insignia was being phased in, the previous one having been a Vulture sitting on a tree branch wearing a flight helmet.

The Vultures were at Phuoc Vinh during my tour and later they moved to somewhere farther south, Can Tho or Dong Tam I think. I would be interested in hearing from my former Vultures or Geronimoes with whom I served a subsequent tour, Jan. '69 to Jan. '70.

Paul D. Fretts
[redacted]

For you folks that don't know it, Paul is a heck of an artist. He specializes in helicopter sketches, the UH-1H below being one of them. Paul has offered to let the VHPA use his drawings on the next Membership Directory, and we for one think that is ONE GRAND IDEA. Ed.

Pen and ink drawing by VHPA member, Paul Fretts.

Continued on next page

THE DUSTOFF LEGACY

At the recent HAI convention, I was honored to receive the MBB Golden Hour Award. The award was for contributions to the civilian helicopter industry in the field of Emergency Medical Service (civilian Dustoff). Receiving the award was a real honor, however, many others have also shared their military knowledge as I have, with the civilian community, providing a real return on "Uncle's" investment.

The credit for my experience must go to the Army Aviation program, the Medical Services Corps and the 57th Med Detachment. "The Original Dustoff". Of course people make up those elements and there were many fine individuals who helped. Accusations have been made that Dustoff pilots were crazy flying single ship missions, in all kinds of weather, day or night, often into hot LZ's without time for gun support, all under the motto "Until We Have Your Wounded." Crazy is not the correct analogy but instead dedication to help our fellow man. Perhaps we also attracted less attention going in by ourselves but we still lost our share of colleagues.

The greatest reward for all our efforts to use helicopters for emergency medical purposes, either civilian or military, is the effect on human lives. Lives saved and reduced morbidity can be attributed to the Dustoff mission. A friend took their six-year-old son to see an MBB 105 up close since the boy was flown in some weeks before with a severe head injury and in shock. He was told that the helicopter saved his life. The machine certainly helped but in reality, the people involved with the aircraft save lives. Pilots, maintenance personnel, nurses, medics, air traffic controllers, and others all contribute to a system which maximizes the use of the aircraft safely.

What have we accomplished? Millions of people now have aeromedical services available providing health care quicker and more efficiently than ever before in our history. The U.S. Army pioneered the concept, a transition to the civilian market place and the expansion of the service availability to the small town America has taken place.

I often wonder how many names did we keep off "The Wall". How many prayers did we answer as we flared at the LZ perimeter coming in hot to avoid (hopefully) ground fire? How many individuals got another chance at life to contribute to this great nation? The important fact is that the job got done. We would profess:

Day or Night,
Rainy or Bright,
You call,
We haul,
57th Dustoff,
"The Originals"
(Ron Lingle, Dustoff 69, author)

The Dustoff legacy will live on through every helicopter medical mission flown, a legacy to all Army Aviation.

J. Craig Honaman
(Dustoff 70)
[redacted]

GREAT GOING!! Craig, you do us proud. Your last paragraph reminds us that the legacy involves EVERY Medavac flown, many of them by NON-Dustoff crews of all the services, they too helped to keep many names off "THE WALL". Ed.

HOSPITAL-BASED EMS INNOVATOR HONORED WITH HAI's MBB GOLDEN HOUR AWARD

J. Craig Honaman, former Executive Vice President of Tallahassee Memorial Regional Medical Center, and pioneer of hospital-based EMS programs, is the recipient of the 1987 MBB Golden Hour Award.

Honaman's experience in the aeromedical use of helicopters spans over 20 years. He served in Vietnam as an Army medevac helicopter pilot and was highly decorated for his service. In 1971 as an Administrative Assistant at Baptist Hospital in Pensacola, FL, he began promoting the relatively new concept of using medically equipped helicopters at civilian hospitals. It was not until 1976 that his "Life Flight" Program at Baptist Hospital became the third hospital-based EMS helicopter operation. The program demonstrated the feasibility of EMS helicopter operations in a medium size service area.

In 1982 Honaman established the 45th hospital based EMS operation at Tallahassee Memorial Regional Medical Center. There he created the comprehensive Safety and Program Improvement System for EMS operations which contributed to the success of the program and is emulated by other EMS programs.

Honaman is a member and past Chairman of the Florida EMS Advisory Council. He has assisted a number of hospitals in establishing their respective programs and has published a number of articles on hospital-based EMS programs.

The MBB Golden Hour Award was established in 1982 to honor an outstanding contribution to the advancement of the use of helicopters in emergency medical service.

HAI is the professional trade association of over 1,000 member organizations, in 41 nations, who operate manufacture, or otherwise support the civil helicopter. HAI is dedicated to the advancement of the civil helicopter as a safe and efficient method of transportation, and to the advancement of the civil helicopter industry.

(Press Release)
Helicopter
Association
International

The "never neat enough" displays, "Fifty demerits, candidate, there's fly feces on the Brasso can."
Photo by Greg Ross

Continued on next page

AH, THE GOOD OLD DAYS!

Please enroll me as a member of the VHPA; I can't take anymore arm twisting and guilt trips from Greg Ross. He makes a fellow feel like a Communist for not being a member.

In order to retaliate, I've enclosed a few pictures of interest. One shows Greg and me by the pool at Ft. Wolters in July 1966. Now all VHPA members will see him for the skinny, closely-cropped Communist that he is!

The other photos are a smattering of the usual Vietnam stuff, including a rather dramatic one taken at the Dak To airstrip in November 1967, during the battle for Hill 875. Flying a UH-1C gunship for A Trp, 7th/17th Cav, in support of the 4th Inf. Div. out of Camp Enari, we had just repositioned from the POL area to the rearming area when the NVA started dropping mortar rounds on where we had been 30 seconds previously. Their fire was well directed and very accurate, and took out the POL and rearming areas in seconds. By then, we were at 500 feet and 140 knots, still grabbing for door handles and seat belts! AH, THE GOOD OLD DAYS!

Robert N. Steinbrunn
[redacted]

Sorry, we couldn't see you skinny guys by the pool, Bob, but lack of space got us. But, check out the cover. Ed.

Dak To Airstrip, 30 seconds from oblivion, NVA mortaring POL area while UH-1C attempts to rearm, aircraft having been repositioned from POL area 30 seconds previously! ***Photo by Bob Steinbrunn***

AVIATOR FO!

Maybe this is a good time to share part of my tour experience with you. I arrived in-country April 1971 and flew "slicks" with D troop 1/10 Cav out of An Khe and An Son. After eight months our unit stepped down in December 1971. Having been assigned the extra duty of "supply officer", one of my last duties was to insure the colors were shipped to Washington, D.C. and turn in the property books in Saigon.

Returning to An Son, I thought I would be reassigned to the 129 AHC or another Cav unit. No such luck! As it turned out, 1Lt. artillery officers were in short supply in Jan. 1972, slick pilots were not. My next assignment — forward observer A Battery 3/82 Artillery 196 Infantry Brigade. I was one of four or five aviation artillery Lt.'s that got tapped for this assignment.

I spent my last four months "humping the bush" with A Co. 2nd Bn 196 Infantry northwest of Da Nang as an FO! Naturally the grunt CO thought it was great I was there, no longer could he be accused of not preparing LZ's properly.

Sometimes I think about the other aviator FO's who were assigned to other infantry units at the same time. Several were new in-country. I wonder if they ever made it to an aviation unit? At least I got eight months of flying in. Have you ever heard from anyone with a similar story? Enclosed is a picture of the aviator FO.

Doug Neil
[redacted]

This sounds like the old, "which came first?", dilemma, "the chicken or the egg?". Was it Ft. Sill or Charlie's love of FO's that caused the shortage? Ed.

AVIATOR FO, the 196th's famous Doug Neil. ***Photo by Doug Neil***

Continued on next page

WE WERE THERE!

I'm not sure if this will come out the way I want it to or that anyone is interested, but I feel it's my turn to add to the story we all took part in.

Ref: Call sign unknown (Chet Uszynski's letter in Mar. '88, "Great Timing"). Lt. Lewis F. Porrazzo was a Scout pilot with SABER B Troop 1/9 Cav. in '67. We were on the Bong Son and the Blues were short a platoon leader, call sign BLUE. Lew (Lt. Parrazzo) being an Infantry Officer was asked to lead the Blues for a period of time until a replacement came in. He was leading the platoon, moving through an area of contact in the An Loa Valley. They came to a trench line dotted with many spider holes, and Lew moved along the trench, alone. He was killed in the trench. Lew was well liked by all personnel in the troop. Even though he had been with the Blues a short time they respected and trusted him. I was glad to have known him, a real original.

Ref: CRUSADER 38 (Bob Odenheimer's Letter Dec. '87 "Charlie, Your Parking Meter Has Expired!"). When D/3/5 Cav colors left "LIGHT HORSE" they did not go home but actually the colors were swapped with CHARLIE HORSE, (Call sign never changed) C Troop 3/17 Cav who at that time was working for 1/5 Mech (RED DEVIL) out of Quang Tri on the Khe Sanh, and during Lam Son 719 (LAOS) worked the Tri Border area doing a tough job as all Cav Troops had done, in an outstanding way. The CBS Tapes "Courage Under Fire" and "America Pulls Back" talk about C/3/17, then called D/3/5, and or personnel in the unit.

Side note: The then Major Rod Wolfe Commanded CHARLIE HORSE. Yes, that is the same BG Rod D. Wolfe now at Ft. Rucker.

Ref: DARK HORSE 16 (Hugh L. Mills's letter Mar. '88. "Two Tours, same call sign"). I was never able to carry the same call sign twice, 67-68 SABER 14 (B/1/9 Cav); Mar.-Nov. '70 CHARLIE HORSE 19 (C/3/17 Cav); Nov. '70-Mar. '71, EL LOBO WHITE (E/1/9 Cav). "Once you've flown Scouts what else is there!" I did however have the same two observers on different tours. SFC Don Crosby and SSG Leathers were Scout Observers with me 67-68 as SABER and in 70-71 as EL LOBO. As I remember, by the time it was all over, the two of them were scout observers in country about eight or nine years. (Crosby 3½+ and Leathers 4+). During the EL LOBO time we were only able to fly together a few times as we were ordered, by LTC R.W. Nevins (second tour as 1/9 Sqdn Commander) and his replacement LTC Putnam, not to be allowed to fly in the same aircraft. Something about wanting at least one of us to go home (10-11 plus years combined combat scout time). Enough about this as there are a million stories to tell and these "ain't no shit", stories. WE were there! Looking forward to Texas and the '88 reunion, and Yes, Ross, "I was in 67-1" My roommate was Albert (HAP) Brose (KIA 18 May '67).

Larry G. Brown
(Saber 14)
(Charlie Horse 19)
(El Lobo White)
[redacted]

Wow! We can see you're going to be a "story telling terror" at the Reunion, Larry. Hope to meet you. Ed.

CENTAURS AND COGNAC

I just received my March '88 Newsletter, as usual it was full of wonderful stories and memories.

I had two tours and was leaving on my third with orders in hand when I got a call from MILPERCEN that our involvement was over. I was with the "Centaurs" of the 25th Inf. Div.'s 3/4th Cav, D Trp., heavy weapons section leader and the originator of the Centaur insignia on their ships. I cut out of cardboard the stencil for marking the ships. The model for the insignia came from a Remy Martin Cognac figure I picked up in a bar in Hong Kong on R & R.

My second tour was as CO of the 121st Soc Trang "Tigers", Apr.-Nov. '69.

Chas A. Robinson
P.O. Box 1006
[redacted]

It figures that a helicopter pilot would find the model for a unit insignia on a booze bottle, and a classy one at that. Ed.

Centaur insignia on door of UH-1 being "held up" by a young Chas Robinson, waiting on a mission, Tay Ninh '67. ***Photo by Chas Robinson***

Continued on next page

Don't forget to make plans to attend the Sunday Brunch — 7/3 — during the 5th Annual VHPA Reunion July 1st through July 4th, 1988. Noted author of "Chickenhawk" Bob Mason will be the guest speaker. Autographed copies of "Chickenhawk" will be available, with profit proceeds to be applied to the scholarship fund.

145TH COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION (Vietnam) ASSOCIATION

JAMES L. BODKIN
National Director/Coordinator

3719 Forest Hill Ave.
Ft. Wayne, IN 46805

(219) 483-5149
(Home Phone)

145TH AVN ASSOCIATION FORMED

I really look forward to each issue of the Newsletter, although at times it is difficult to relate to some of the experiences and even the phraseology of the late 60's and early 70's Vietnam.

My tour was with the 118th Avn. Co. at Bien Hoa (3rd Platoon guns — Bandits) from Dec. 1964-Nov. 1965. As Thomas Payne touched on in his "Unusual Charlie Model" article in the March Newsletter, the 118th was a unit of the 145th Combat Avn. Battalion. Great article, Tom, but I would like to add that the 145th CAB (Vietnam) Association has been formed. Membership is open to all who served with units of the 145th in Vietnam. It was formed to re-establish comradery, to help other members in need, to correctly write the Units' history, and to organize reunion/get-togethers. A Newsletter is published and the membership cost is $10.00 per year. Contact: Jim Bodkin, [redacted] for further information.

Going back to Thomas Payne's "C" model article, and I can probably use some help here. My log book indicates that the 118th Bandits and other Gunship platoons in 1965 were using the "B" model configured with rocket pods of 24 per side. We called this ship the "Hog". Later on in 1965 the 40mm grenade launchers were added and the "Hog" became the "Frog". We were very weight limited, sacrificing fuel or rockets to stay under max gross. My first experience with the "B" model (540 rotor) or "C" model was as an IP at Rucker in March of 1966.

Incidently, I am delighted that the proud 118th was selected for the cover of the 1987 Membership Directory. Can anyone fill in the where and when of this photo? Also, can anyone explain the when and why of the designation change from Aviation Company to Assault Helicopter Company?

Ralph A. Orlando
[redacted]

Ok, we've plugged the 145th Avn. Association, Ralph, now help us get all pilot members of the Association to join the VHPA. By the way, Ralph makes his living in the left seat of an Eastern Airliner, look for him the next time you fly the "Wings of Man". Ed.

CALLING 69-3 PEOPLE

First, let me add my thanks to those of all the other members for the outstanding job that you folks are doing. Only by being of our group can you really know what VHPA means to us and how much we appreciate what you have done for us.

The members of 69-3 are trying to arrange a little get together during the upcoming VHPA convention and we would like to publicize it.

Jim Coleman is doing the organizing, and if any 69-3 people out there are attending the convention, we would like to hear from you. His address is:

Jim Coleman
1735 SE Locust Ave.
Portland, OR 97214
Home Phone: [redacted]
Office Phone: [redacted]

Richard "Jay" Tanner
[redacted]

At the rate things are going, we hope Texas is big enough for this reunion. Ed.

IT DON'T GET NO BETTER THAN THIS, pool at Phu Loi, 1967, built by the 116th HORNETS, inherited by the 213th BLACKCATS and 128th TOMAHAWKS when the 116th moved to Cu Chi. ***Photo by Roger Gould***

From The Executive Director

I'd like to thank those who took the time to provide comments concerning The Directory. Roger Gould was kind enough to find room in the March Newsletter for several of those letters. It does not take too much imagination after reading Gary Roush's long column on the KIA DECEASED database, to see that more could be presented in that area. I even had a good photo that I think will surprise and please many of you. This is not to say that I don't need more ideas; it's just to say thanks to those that have helped out so far.

I am sad to have to announce that we are unable to pull together some "flight class presentations" for the '88 Reunion. Initially, several people agree that it would be lots of laughs and something really special; but as they started pulling the materials together they ran into several "show stoppers". I appreciate those that tried and Ron Wright for trying to pull this together. I hope we can go back to "Unit History Presentations" at the '89 Reunion.

I am really looking forward to the '88 Reunion. I hope EACH AND EVERY ONE OF YOU gets a chance to shake Dave Owens' hand. He has "gone the extra mile" and then another ten extra miles after that to insure this Reunion is nothing short of FANTASTIC. Truly, we have been blessed with good VHPA Presidents in the past, but Dave has set a new standard of excellence for future Presidents to follow.

Mike Law
(Undertaker Lead)
'69 — Phan Thiet

Break-out your "Best" 60's Attire for the 5th Annual Reunion. We are "Dressing" for the Sunday evening cocktail party. A guaranteed "good time" will be had by all.

An Outlaw's Christmas (good grief, this is June, you idiot Editor! I know, but I like the picture.) ***Photo by Daniel Greve***

VHPA PRODUCT ORDER FORM

	Price	Total
Back VHPA Newsletters (Complete set only)	$15.00/Set	_____
1987 VHPA Directory (VHPA Members only) (While supplies last)	$10.00/each	_____
1987 Reunion Mugs	$2.75/each	_____
	Grand Total	_____

Send check/money order or charge to MasterCard/VISA

Account No._____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

MAIL FORM TO:
VHPA
P.O. Box 9592
Wichita, KS 67277

Help The VHPA. Get A Friend To Join Today

"Dust-Off" Collector's Plate Donated To VHPA

NILSSON'S of Solvang, CA, has donated a limited edition collector's plate titled "DUST-OFF" to the VHPA. This beautiful plate is by Artist Carl Pope and is the first in a series of four plates honoring the Americans who served their country during the Vietnam conflict. Portions of the proceeds from each plate sold will be donated directly to the VVMF by the producer. Information concerning obtaining one of these collector's plates can be obtained from: Stephen B. Nelson, President Nilsson's International Dealers in Fine Porcelain Art, P.O. Box 534, Solvang, CA 93463 [redacted].

Looking For...

RAY SIDES
Contact Charles Thurman, [redacted]

JOHNNY D. JACKSON
You're being sought by Daniel Greve, [redacted]

LEWIS SAIN
Please get a hold of Phil Watson [redacted]

HAROLD GLAZE
JIM LONGWORTH
DALE MORRIS
ED NAPIER
ROBERT PEWITT
RANDY RADIGAN
PAUL RAUBER
JACK REED
JEFF REIF
JIM RUCKER
Contact Greg Ross, 4551 North 8th Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49009

New Life Members

WAYNE R. ALEXANDER
[redacted]
67-13
67-68 B/25
Helicopter Pilot

PAUL J. BENOIT
[redacted]
68-3
68-69 A/1/9 CAV
1 CAV
Flight Instructor

GERALD "GERRY" W. MORGAN
[redacted]
69-29
70-71 101 CAB/101 AB
Airline Pilot

DAVID M. MATHIS
[redacted]
67-20
67-68 A/1/9 CAV
68-69 C/1/9 CAV
Mgr. Quality Assurance

DANIEL E. TYLER
[redacted]
69-45
70-70 C/229 AHB 1 ACD
70-71 HHC/229 AHB 1 ACD
Helicopter Pilot/Aviation Consultant/ Lawyer

You Too, Can Be A Life Member. Call VHPA For Details— [redacted]

It's VHPA Time!

Here it is, folks! A classy symbol of your VHPA membership that will look great even in a business suit. A quartz movement with gold tone case, leather band, and VHPA logo face for only $31.95 including tax and shipping. How can you beat that? This elegant watch is also available in a women's model for the same price. Why not buy one for the entire family?

VHPA WATCH OFFER

____ Men's @ $31.95 . . . . . = $_____
____ Women's @ $31.95 . . = $_____
CA Residents Add 6.5% . . . = $_____
Total . . . . . = $_____
Checks & Orders to: **VHPA Time**
P.O. Box 9592
Wichita, KS 67277

NOTE: Expect your watch in 5-7 weeks. Orders will be consolidated by the VHPA and submitted to the supplier monthly.

In Memory

On 9 May 1988, **Bobby Raulston** lost his life doing what he loved and did so well, flying a helicopter. He was one of the Army's old time helicopter pilots, having graduated from flight school in 1957. Bobby, old friend, we'll miss you.

Your Letters, Comments And Suggestions Are Always Welcome.

VHPA "5th Reunion" T-Shirt
T-Shirts $9.95 each
S-M-L-XL

For Ordering Info:
D&G
Box 12105 / Columbus, GA 31907
404-563-7646

Schedule of Events
5th Reunion

Hyatt Regency, Ft. Worth, Texas
1 thru 4 July

Registration will be in the Texas Ballroom "D" on the third floor. Registration hours will be:

Friday: July 1 — 1300-1900
Saturday: July 2 — 0800-1800
Sunday: July 3 — 0900-1700

The vendors and memorabilia rooms are adjacent to registration in Texas Ballrooms "A-B-C". Vendor and memorabilia rooms will be open:

Friday: 1200-2000
Saturday: 1500-2000
Sunday: 0900-1800

Hotel Restaurant and Cocktail Lounge hours are:

Crystal Cactus (Lounge):
Friday: 1130-0200; Saturday: 1130-0200; Sunday: 1200-0100
Cafe Centennial:
Friday: 1700-1900 (buffet); Saturday: 0630-0800 and 1800-2000 (buffet)
Pool Bar:
Saturday: 1700-2400

Friday, July 1:

Welcome Party — 1900-2400 — Grand Crystal Ballroom
Cash bar, casual dress

Saturday, July 2:

Trip to Ft. Wolters — 0830 — Main St. Lobby Level
The busses will depart at 0830 and go direct to the Ft. Wolters Student Activity Building. Please dress for lots of walking and standing outside. Remember Summer Texas weather (hot and/or rain). We will have places to get out of sun or rain.

Welcome to Ft. Wolters — 1000-1100 S.A.B.
The City of Mineral Wells is sponsoring the day at Ft. Wolters. There will be former TAC Officers, former members of the Military Affairs Group, former flight instructors, 35mm slide tour around Post, and the movie "Wings Over Ft. Wolters".

Walking Tour — 1100-1200
The old barracks and mess hall will be open.

"WOC Rock" Ceremony — 1130 — "WOC Rock"
A short ceremony will take place and the "WOC Rock" will be loaded on a truck and sent to Ft. Rucker. The Rock will be placed at the entrance to the WOC Hall of Fame and the tradition of painting the "Rock" will start again.

Lunch — 1200-1300 — National Guard Mess Hall
A Texas barbecue will be hosted by the City of Mineral Wells to include free beer (Coors).

Helicopter Static Display — 1100-1400 — Across From Mess Hall

Bus Tour — 1400-1530
A slow drive thru Post to include Main Heliport, Officers' Club, Hospital, Main Post, Downtown Mineral Wells, Dowing Heliport and the Park Inn (the old Holiday Inn). A group photo will be taken at the "Rotor Blades".

Depart for Ft. Worth — 1600 — Park Inn

Rock 'n Roll Party — 2000-2400 — Grand Crystal Ballroom
Cash bar — dress casual

(Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12)

REUNION '88

Sunday, July 3:

Brunch – 1030-1230 – Grand Crystal Ballroom

Tickets are required and must be purchased from Registration. The guest speaker for the Brunch will be Bob Mason, author of "Chickenhawk". (Mr. Mason will be autographing books with the profit proceeds to apply towards the scholarship fund.) Food service will end at 1200. Dress casual.

Business Meeting – 1300-1500 – Grand Crystal Ballroom

Election of Officers and other agenda items.

Wives Gathering – 1300-1500 – Skylight Court

Helicopter Models – 1500-1700 – Promenade

Cocktail Party – 1830-1930 – Promenade

Cash bar. Wear what you wore in flight school or your best 60's stuff or whatever makes you happy.

Banquet – 1930-2130 – Grand Crystal Ballroom

The guest speaker is Carter Harmam. Carter flew the first helicopter rescue (1942). Tickets are required and must be purchased at registration before 2000 1 July. Cocktails and wine will not be served at the table, but may be purchased from several bars located in the Ballroom.

60's Dance – 2130-0200 – Grand Crystal Ballroom

Monday, July 4: GO HOME DAY. NO EVENTS PLANNED.

The old Baker Hotel, Mineral Wells, TX. ***Photo by Rick Schwab***

Transportation (DFW or LOVE)

For those not renting a car the "SUPER SHUTTLE" will take you to the Hotel for $15 or $45 per 7 pas. van. Reservations are recommended.

DFW [redacted]
Love [redacted]

American Airlines is offering 35% off of full coach, if the tickets are purchased 7 days in advance. Call [redacted] and ask for Star Number S-82042.

Budget Car Rental has Reunion rates from $15 to $40 a day. For information and reservation, call 1-800-772-3773. Reservation code is **VHPA.**

Babysitting Service with the Hyatt Regency can be prearranged by writing:

Gail Galuberman
c/o Hyatt Regency
[redacted]
817/876-1234

Anyone needing special assistance (handicap transportation, handicap rooms, etc.) contact the Reunion Chairman, ASAP, so that he can make arrangements to accommodate you.

Parking Rate at the Hyatt for VHPA is:

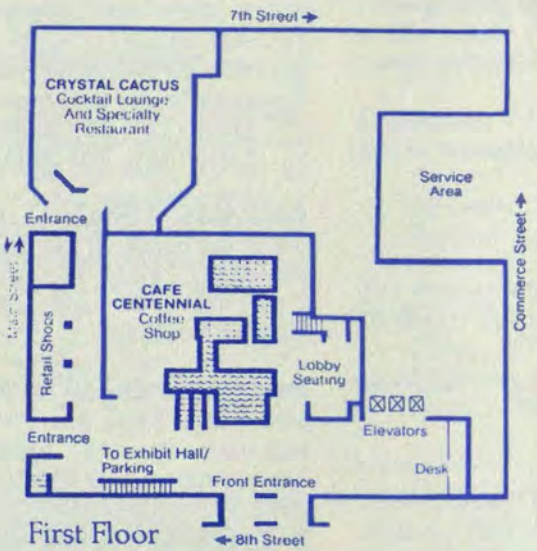
Self-parking: $3.00
Valet Parking: $5.00

Vacation Information:

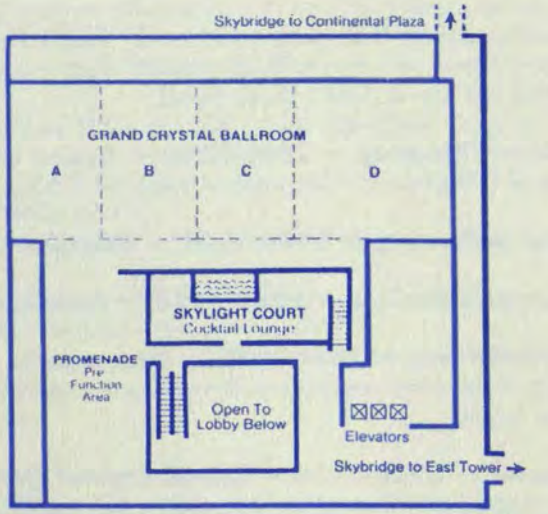
Fort Worth Visitors Bureau
Water Gardens Place
[redacted]
817/336-8791

Register as early as possible. It sure helps the Reunion Committee plan your reunion better and in a cost effective manner.

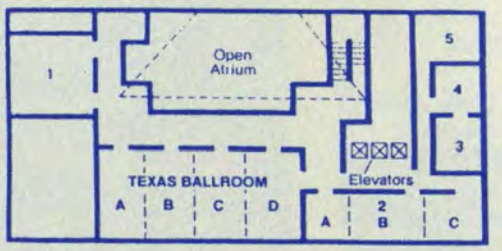
THE HYATT REGENCY — DFW



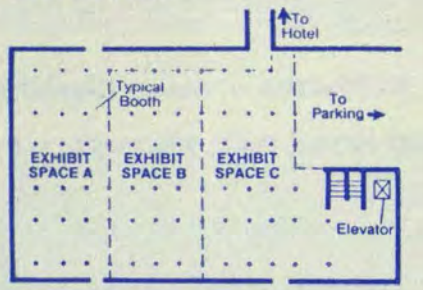
First Floor



Second Floor



Third Floor



Pavillion Exhibit Hall
(1st Level Parking Garage)

Attention VHPA Officer Candidates:

As the Fort Worth Reunion draws closer, it is time to think about the VHPA Officers to be elected in July. The position of Vice President and Junior Member-at-Large will be voted on.

As the present Junior Member-at-Large, one of my activities is making up the voting ballot. If you are interested in running for office or nominating someone, please forward the information to me. Nominating may be done until the day before the business meeting at the annual reunion.

Some rather vigorous campaigning has occurred in the past, so come prepared.

Paul E. Uster
(Undertaker 22)
Junior Member-at-Large
[redacted]

D & G DAVE GRIEGER P. O. BOX 12105 COLUMBUS, GA 31907 (404-563-7646 7-11 daily)

52. Golf Shirt (white, light blue) M, L, XL 14.00
52a. "LIFE MEMBER" 14.00
53. 1st Reunion ("Call Signs") T-Shirt M, L, XL 8.95
53a. Sweatshirt L, XL 14.50
55a. 4th Reunion "Long Beach" T-Shirt M, L, XL 8.95
54. VHPA "Logo" T-Shirt M, L, XL 8.95XXL 10.95
54a. Sweatshirt 14.50
57. VHPA Cap w/patch, w/eggs (white, navy, black, royal) .. 9.00
57a. "LIFE MEMBER" 9.00

58. Car License Plate 5.00
59. VHPA Patch 3.00
59a. VHPA patch "LIFE MEMBER" ... 3.00
56a. 1st Brig. (colored) 2.85
56b. 1st Brig. (O.D.) 2.85
60. Pin 3.00
61. Stickers (60) 3.50
62. Window Sticker 1.50

Send SASE for brochure

$4.00 Pins

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

Fifth Annual Reunion

1-4 July, 1988
Fort Worth, Texas

HOTEL REGISTRATION

Name: _____ No. of Persons in Party: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: ( ) _____ Arrival after 6:00 P.M.? _____

Arrival Date: _____ Departure Date: _____

Room Rates

☐ Single or Double $65.00 Rates are per night
Plus Tax of 13%
Rooms available for occupancy at 4:00 p.m.

THESE ARE SPECIAL RATES

Reservations must be received 30 days prior to arrival and include a deposit in amount of one night rate plus 13% tax.

FOR CREDIT CARD USERS

Card Type: ☐ MC ☐ VISA ☐ AMEX ☐ Diners

Other: _____

NUMBER: _____

Expires: _____/_____ Signature: _____

If deposit is by check, amount enclosed: $_____

DO NOT SEND TO VHPA — MAIL TO:
HYATT REGENCY FORT WORTH
815 Main St., Fort Worth, TX 76102
(817) 870-1234

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

Fifth Annual Reunion

1-4 July, 1988
Fort Worth, Texas

REUNION REGISTRATION

Name: _____ Member No. _____

Wife/Guest Name: _____ No. of Children _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

REGISTRATION FEES
$15.00 After 6/1/88 $25.00

Business Meeting Lunch
$15.00

Banquet
$30.00

Bus Trip to Wolters $10.00

(Dress Informal-'60s)

Number of Registrations: ☐ x 15 = $_____

Number of Brunches: ☐ x 15 = _____

Number of Bus Tickets: ☐ x 10 = _____
(Purchase Prior to 6/10/88)

Number attending Banquet: ☐ x 30 = $_____

Total: $_____

☐ Enclosed is a check/money order payable to VHPA
☐ Please charge my MasterCard/VISA

Account No. _____ Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

NAME TAG INFO

_____
(Name desired on your reunion nametag)

_____
(Flight School, Class No., Years)

_____
Combat Units and Years)

_____
(Hometown)

MAIL WITH CHECK TO:

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association
P.O. Box 9592 • Wichita, KS 67277