



The VHPA Newsletter

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association ®

April 1995 Vol. 13, No. 2



A Huey lands on an armored troop carrier hospital belonging to Task Force 117, Mobile Riverine Force, in the Mekong Delta of South Vietnam in 1968.

M00296 02/96

From the President

As you may have already seen, it has become my sad duty to preside over the loss of the first President of the VHPA. Don Hildebrand passed away as a result of a heart attack last November and became the first Council member of this organization to pass on.

That he was the very first President makes his loss doubly hard. I recall a conversation that I had with Larry Clark about the first Reunion when they didn't know whether or not they should cancel the hotel room and have it in Larry's backyard. The distance that we have traveled since then is phenomenal, yet it shows how far we must travel . . . while we can.

There are so many out there who, for one reason or another, choose not to join or not to attend a reunion. If you need a reason to join and attend, how about for those who can't? Our hearts go out to Don's family, as well as the families of all those who appear in this month's rather lengthy "Taps" section.

As you may have noticed, there is a change concerning the Online Forum that has been associated with the VHPA. Mel Canon and his group have done an outstanding job of reaching and recruiting members, many of whom had never heard of us.

Because this electronic medium allows us to reach greater numbers of people (and potential members), it also allows greater numbers to be tuned to us — including those outside of the organization. For that reason, we have asked the forum to remain separate from the VHPA, both to give it the flexibility it needs and to protect the organization as a whole. The NetHeads still have the support of the VHPA.

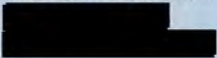
Another change that will take place concerns the timing of the Business Meeting during the Kansas City Reunion. To accommodate the City of Parkville, MO, and its July 4th parade, we have decided to move the Business Meeting to Sunday. This means we will have the meeting on the first official day of the Reunion instead of the last.

Here's hoping that your registration is in the mail for Kansas City.

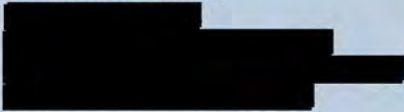
— Kenny Bunn, President

VHPA chapters

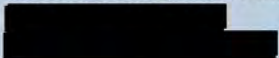
Ohio River LZ Chapter
Paul Cotter, President



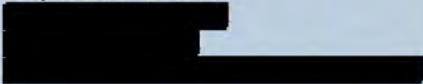
Great Lakes Chapter (Northeastern Illinois)
John Becker, President



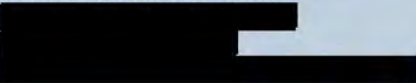
Bruce Rodewald, Vice President



North Carolina Chapter
Gary Kimbrell, President

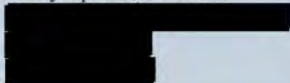


New England Chapter
Bob Whitford, Past President



Mardi Gras Chapter
Don Hunt, President
Lee Overstreet, Vice President
New Orleans, LA

Florida LZ Chapter
Barry Speare, President



First VHPA president Don Hildebrand dies

Don C. Hildebrand, the first president of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, died Nov. 30, 1994, of a massive heart attack.

At the time of his death, he was on business in Grand Prairie, TX.

Hildebrand was operator of Southwest Helicopters Inc. of Tucson, AZ.

He was a member of flight school classes 66-21 and 66-23, and served with the 281st AHC in Vietnam in 1967-68.

Hildebrand is survived by his wife Kathy, who suggested that any donations in her husband's name be made to the VHPA.

"Don's association with the VHPA was a significant part of his life that he was quite proud of," Mrs. Hildebrand wrote. "He was especially touched at the convention in Phoenix when he was recognized as the first president of the VHPA."

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Newsletter.....74127.442@compuserve.com
Jack Swickard, editor

Seeking VHPA office?

The names of VHPA members who wish to run for the VHPA offices of vice president and junior member at large of the Executive Council must be submitted in writing to the Nominating Committee chairman.

Nominations will be accepted by the Nominating Committee chairman prior to 6 p.m. Saturday, July 1, 1995.

Nominations may be mailed or faxed in time to be received by the Nominating Committee chairman prior to June 29, 1995, as he will be attending the reunion starting June 30, 1995. Nominations may also be submitted to the chairman at the reunion.

To mail or fax nominations, send them to:

Charles R. Rayl, chairman
VHPA Nominating Committee

Fax: (

Seeking

I am assisting Dennis Foley, who served two tours in RVN. He contacted me on-line with the following:

"I served in several long range patrol/Ranger and SF units — which means I have lots of friends who flew over there. I'm trying to track down my lead gunship pilot on one tour — Joe T. Stroud. I last saw him at Fort Leavenworth. He was a LTC in MI then.

"Any help would be appreciated."

— Dennis Foley

If you have any info, please let me know. My on-line address is: [REDACTED] My telephone number is (Atlanta) [REDACTED]

Doug Russell
B/227 AHB, 1st Air Cav, 69-70
Potato Masher 18
WORWAC 68-23
[REDACTED]

I'm looking for James C. Taylor (J.C. Taylor) who flew C model guns for B Company, 4th Avn. Bn., 4th Inf. Div. in 1968-69. Never heard from him after his DEROS in 1969.

Bruce Loughridge
[REDACTED]

We are looking for members of class 67-3 to meet at the Reunion in Kansas City.

Anyone who knows someone who was in that class, contact Art "Steve" Stevenson, [REDACTED] or Alan Dukuette [REDACTED].

Videotapes and photos of the class will be shown, especially the WOC Rock.

Art "Steve" Stevenson
[REDACTED]

I am a member of the VHPA, and I am seeking information. Do you have names of places where I can order helicopter models for a bookshelf?

I flew the CH-47 Chinook A, B and C models, and I am seeking models.

I had one from the 1970s, but the model company does not have these anymore. I would appreciate any help.

Regis M. Smith
[REDACTED]

Daughter faithfully attended reunions

This is a rather difficult but necessary letter for me. On Dec. 24, 1994, my daughter Casey Carroll Goldthorpe was killed in an automobile accident, a great loss to our family.

During her 20 years of life, she had managed to attend six annual VHPA reunions — Chicago, Fort Worth, New Orleans, Reno, Scottsdale, Philadelphia.

She once told me how much she had enjoyed the way the membership enjoyed themselves at reunions and stated she would always attend reunions. They had become a significant part of her life.

If you could, I would like you — if possible — to make a mention of her death in the Newsletter. The reason: Over the years of reunion attendance, my children have made bonds with other members' children, plus services rendered.

Starting in New Orleans, my daughter baby sat for Mr. and Mrs. Ken Fritz. That's how we became friends of the Fritzes. Larry Brown's children have become friends with mine.

At a reunion, if a child sees you, an adult, they always ask the whereabouts of your children.

That's why I feel it's necessary for her death notice to be placed in the Newsletter, because of the pending question of where is your daughter at the next reunion.

When my daughter was put to rest, she had with her a VHPA pin, my blood wings and a sabre.

James C. Goldthorpe

EDITOR'S NOTE: Casey Carroll Goldthorpe, daughter of James C. and Theresa Ann McCormick Goldthorpe, was born May 23, 1974, at Fort Campbell, KY. She attended Frostburg State University for two years, transferring to the University of Maryland in September 1994.

155th AHC rescues two Air Force pilots

I don't know if Gary has any record of one of us pulling a brother in blue out, but two 155th Assault Helicopter Company Falcon crews pulled two out.

The first was a B-57 jock who had about six feet of wing blown off by an AAA during the battle of Plei Me in October 1965. Plei Me was the NVA's warmup for the Ia Drang.

The second one was an F-4 driver who punched out over the beach off Bong Son. The gunner had to shoot the sharks away from this poor sucker during the pickup.

Continued on Page 5

VHPA Product Order Form

MAIL FORM TO:

VHPA
7 W. Seventh St.
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Cincinnati, OH 45202

FAX NUMBER FOR

CREDIT CARD ORDERS: (513) 721-5315

VHPA bumper stickers	\$1/each	_____
Back VHPA Newsletters (Complete sets only.)	\$20/set	_____
1992 VHPA Directory. (7/17 Cav history)	\$10/each	_____
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Vol. 2 Historical Reference Directory*	\$20/each (\$5 P&H per order)	_____
Researcher's Edition 1994 Directory	\$14/each	_____
1995 VHPA Calendar	\$7/each (\$3 P&H per order)	_____

GRAND TOTAL _____

*Available in April 1995

TO ORDER

Send check/money order or charge to your VISA, MasterCard or Discover card.

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Address _____

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Credit card No. _____

Expiration date _____

Signature _____

Continued from Page 4

Both were reeeaaalllly glad to see us and I don't think it mattered that we were wearing jungle fatigues and flying green machines without USAF markings.

In fact, the B-57 driver had been in a bomb crater for over 24 hours, missed a pickup by an HH-43 "Swishey" and kissed everybody in the crew when he got onboard.

Sorry to go on with a war story, guys, but Kurt's story stirred some gray matter that had been asleep and the story just popped out.

Jim Sewell
WORWAC 65-9

Helicopter crew rescues AF pilot

Are there any records of Air Force pilots being pulled out by helicopter crews? I pulled one out of the trees to the east of Saigon sometime in late 1969. He had taken fire over Hanoi and flew back before he bailed out.

I wonder who he was and whatever happened to him . . . My memory is like a sieve, but I do remember his smiling face as the crew chief and gunner helped him into the aircraft.

Kurt Adams
Robin Hood 16

Bypass gives member time to learn computer

I just received the latest copy of the Newsletter and there was mention in it of members who had gotten computers for Christmas. Mine was not a Christmas present as such, but arrived three days before the holiday.

On Christmas day I went to the hospital with chest pains and three days later had gone through triple-bypass. So, I have had a couple of months to become familiar with my new toy before going back to work.

I became a member of VHPA early on, since my membership number is 0631. I have not been an active member for a few years now for reasons even I can't explain. I guess I should get active again. It was good to read about our legacy again.

I'll try to stay in touch as time goes by, but I still don't know much about these machines and I am totally at a loss on the NET.

Tom Schalk
Gladiator 36
57th AHC
Camp Holloway 1971-72

Former ARVN officer sends letter from Vietnam

Tim Harper served in Vietnam with 5th Special Forces during 1967, 1968 and 1969.

On a return visit, he was approached by Mr. Tran Van Giau, given the following letter and asked if he could help. Knowing I was a member of VHPA, Tim passed the letter on to me.

Would you please publish the letter for us in your next Newsletter? We are, naturally, interested in the outcome.

Gary M. Wiltrout

Officer rescues U.S. pilot after helicopter crashes

I am Tran Van Giau — born in 1931. I worked for the V.N. General Staff and my last rank was second lieutenant. I rescued a U.S. helicopter pilot captain from peril as follows:

One day in 1966 (or 1967), at 1 o'clock p.m., I was working in the office and heard the sound of a helicopter from the direction of northeast.

Suddenly, the helicopter was falling down near my office. The distance was more than 10 meters. I went out right away and intended to salvage some persons from peril.

Many friends of mine said it was very dangerous because the helicopter could be exploded or burnt out. Although they cried loudly, I approached nearer and nearer, and saw a U.S. pilot lying in the cabin. He gave me sign to help him from there, and I tried my best to open the cabin door, but in vain.

Returning to my office, I found an iron bar and easily unfastened the door, and helped him out of the cabin. He whispered and wanted me to help a V.N. interpreter behind. A moment later, I saw the interpreter die because he had no helmet.

The pilot captain was very shocked when hearing that sad news, although he was in very bad condition. After that, a friend of mine and I drove a "Jeep" and took the pilot to the U.S. hospital, located near the Tan Son Nhut airport. On entering the hospital, I met many U.S. doctors and told them about the situation that happened.

I was back in my office and forgot to ask the pilot's name, and did not know about the captain's life later.

At present, I write this account so that the H.O. office can examine again. I look forward to hearing from the H.O. office soon, especially about my H.O. case.

Mr. Tran Van Giau

Continued on Page 6

Continued from Page 5

Australian serviceman has dead pilot's helmet

My name is Dave Barr, and I have recently completed an around-the-world motorcycle trip. While on the trip, in Australia, I came upon a man who had been in Vietnam in 1970-71. Mr. Mitchell was a tank driver in the Australian army.

Mitchell told me that in May or June of 1970, they were receiving close aerial support from Cobra gunships of AR-334 Squadron against strong VC forces that were operating in the area.

He said one of the Cobras was shot down, and one of the pilots was critically wounded. The Australians extracted the pilots, and got them to safety.

Mitchell . . . asked me to attempt to find the family of this man

. . .

The flying helmet of the wounded pilot was removed, and soon a Dust-Off medevac arrived and took them away. They sadly found out that the wounded pilot had died.

Mitchell still has this pilot's flying helmet, and asked me to attempt to find the family of this man; that if possible, the helmet may be turned over to them.

There was some information on the helmet, it said "FINNEY," "Jerry's Raiders," "Sq. 334," and a badge with a Cobra on it.

I have a friend who is a member of the VHPA. He allowed me to go through his books that list all the air crew personnel who were killed during the war.

I came upon the name of a pilot, "Hedeman Wayne Howard" (perhaps FINNEY was a nickname), who was KIA on May 13, 1970. His squadron was AR-334. Shot down in an area known as Angelswing, PUCCI, the medevac flew to Tay Ninh. That is what is stated in the small obituary, printed in the book published by the Association. Whether or not this man was "FINNEY" still remains to be seen.

Perhaps Mitchell, being disabled while serving in Vietnam, has his dates wrong.

What I need is to find anyone who may be able to lead me to the family. I would hope that you may be able to help me find the family of this fallen pilot.

A little about my history, I am a vet, as well. I served in the Marines, and was stationed at Marble Mountain, Da Nang, April 1970 to April 1971, in HML-167, Huey gunships. My MOS was a crew chief, and doorgunner.

Dave Barr
P.O. Box 8633
Bodfish, CA 93205

'Limpid flower' call sign becomes 'Flower Power'

We had a CEOI (SOI in the old days) that gave us instructions to call ourselves "Limpid Flower" (followed by the aircraft's number). It didn't take an hour in the AO before some Minuteman called in with "Flower Power."

By the end of the day, the battalion S-2 had overheard it and changed the call sign with some strong language about deviating from procedure. What did the strap-hangers expect from deviates?!

This is an anecdote from 1969, 176th AHC, Chu Lai.

Ken Fritz
Orangevale, CA

Pilot's wife treasures affiliation with VHPA

Of all the titles I have, the one I treasure most is OW (original wife). Because my husband chose to marry long after the war, I have not paid the dues most original wives have.

I have learned a great deal from the wonderful wives (OWs, second, and third wives) I have met through VHPA. Each woman has a unique story about being the wife of a Vietnam veteran pilot.

These friends have their own set of "war stories" that are stored in shoeboxes. Letters faithfully written each day to the young man they so bravely sent off to war, often accompanied with pictures of treasures they had left far behind.

Jobs and moves all over the world in the military (most have a Fort Bragg or Fort Rucker story) are laughed about.

As one listens to them reminisce of days long ago, the tales include the pain of homecomings that included nightmares and drinking; but much more than that are stories that include accomplishments since Vietnam.

Children have grown and followed in Dad's footsteps to be pilots. Successful careers and jobs have taken their toll with the passing of time, and memories fade.

One of the first things I have learned is that aviation will always be my husband's first love and I must share his time and energy with the love of the open sky and the challenge that flying affords.

Even for those who no longer fly, there is a tiny piece of their soul that forever remains aligned with the thrill of being airborne.

There is another piece of their soul that forever remains touched by Vietnam. Memories come back in so many ways.

As the strains of "We Gotta Get Out of This Place" fill the dance floor and the clapping and singing start, the

Continued on Page 7

Continued from Page 6

music takes us back with songs we all listened to in the '60s and '70s.

Embellished with the pictures and videos, it bridges the passage of time back to the days when we were all much younger and far less wiser.

VHPA provides a wonderful opportunity at the reunions for the rotary wing memories to take place for pilots and their wives.

I am very proud of what my husband and those who served with him represent. Hope you can join us in Kansas City!

Bev Wigger
Greensburg, IN

EDITOR'S NOTE: Bev Wigger's husband, Larry Wigger, was in flight school class 66-5. Wigger served with the 134th AHC in 1967 and the 48th AHC in 1968. Larry Wigger is a captain with American Trans Air.

'Flame Bath' missions released JP-4, av gas

After reading in the December issue about the bombing missions, I thought I had to throw in my 2 cents worth.

In the spring of 1970, while assigned to A Company, 25th Infantry Division ("Little Bears"), we occasionally had sling-load missions we called "Flame Bath."

We would pick up three 55-gallon drums, two of JP-4 and one of av gas. They were secured together with ropes and trip flares strung between.

When released, the trip flares would fire, thereby guaranteeing the gas and fuel would ignite.

We would drop it from 500 feet, flying at 60 knots, releasing the load when the target area was in the middle of the chin bubble.

The fireball was very impressive, blowing to about 100 feet in the air. It did an excellent job of clearing mines and

booby traps.

It worked really well for us, except the one time the ropes broke and I burned up a Vietnamese rice paddy.

Russ Janus
Little Bear 13
Manhattan Beach, CA

Experiences different on Chinook CS drops

I read with great interest the various descriptions of the CS drops in Vietnam.

Like Jim Dooley, I was a Chinook pilot but I was with B Company, 228th. We, too, did CS drops, but our experiences were quite different.

The biggest problem we had with the CS drops were the fuses. Unfortunately, the fuses were not reliable. They were set with a device similar to a static pull on a parachute drop.

Often, the fuses would be jerked completely out of the 55-gallon drums.

It was general policy to be escorted by a Bronco. The Bronco's job was to fire rockets into the drums, either as they fell or as they were laying on the ground. This was difficult because we generally dropped into a tertiary level of jungle.

Although we were fortunate enough never to have any of the drums go off inside of the aircraft (I suspect it would have been catastrophic), we have always had the smell and feel of the gas.

Frequently, we would fly the aircraft out of trim, causing a draft through the cockpit and side doors to evacuate the cabin.

Finally, as often as not, the airspeed over the drop zone was 30 knots or less.

I was in RVN during the latter part of '68 and the entire year of '69. I was stationed at Bear Cat with B Company. During the latter part of '69, there did not appear to be any confirmation as to the effectiveness of the gas drops.

As a consequence, we found it difficult to take the program very seriously because of the number of "duds."

Michael B. Rainey

Information sought on 1st Cavalry unit

Anyone with information (unit histories, names, whatever) on 2nd Bn, 20th Aerial Rocket Artillery, 1st Air Cav. Div. or interested in helping compile said unit's history, please contact the undersigned via e-mail at:

Howard T. Comer

Lighthorse mini-reunion planned in Kansas City

Lighthorse pilots serving with D/3/5 and C/3/17 will hold a mini-reunion on Monday afternoon, July 3, at the Kansas City VHPA Reunion.

Those planning to attend should bring photos, color slides, videotapes, war souvenirs and other memorabilia. Wear your white Cav hat and plan to have a great time.

Challenge coins for 5th and 17th Cav are available this year. For more information on the mini-reunion or the challenge coins, contact Rex Gooch, [redacted]

[redacted] or call [redacted]
[redacted] or America Online at [redacted]

Rex Gooch

Taps

Charles Baird

Charles Baird of York Haven, PA, died Jan. 18 while flying an Augusta 109 helicopter near Lancaster, PA.

Baird was a corporate pilot for an oil distribution company. Two company officials also were killed in the crash.

A member of flight school class 65-1W, Baird served with the 281st AHC, the 116th AHC and the 334th AHC in Vietnam.

He was a member of the VHPA Database Committee and had attended most VHPA reunions.

Baird is survived by his wife Beverly and two children.

Edward P. Clinton

Retired Maj. Edward P. Clinton of Jonesboro, GA, died Jan. 19.

He was an Army aviator who served with aviation units of the 4th Infantry Division and the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam in 1970.

At the time of his retirement from active duty, Clinton was stationed at Fort McPherson.

He is survived by his wife Dolly Clinton; daughters Lindsey Ann Clinton of Jonesboro and Candice Marie Clinton of Miami, FL.

Robert Dorsey Cloud

Robert Dorsey Cloud of Moreno Valley, CA, died Jan. 15.

He was a graduate of flight school class 63-6 and served with the 179th ASHC in Vietnam in 1969.

Cloud was employed by Southern California Edison for 39 years, the last 28 years as a helicopter pilot.

He was active in the Professional Helicopter Pilots Association of California and served six years on the Helicopter Association International board.

Cloud is survived by his wife Constance, three daughters, Margaret Ann Cloud of Moreno Valley, Cathleen Sue Cane of Riverside, CA, and Linda Kay Montano of Grants Pass, OR.

Richard Wayne Hinders

Retired CW4 Richard Wayne Hinders of Enterprise, AL, died at 9 p.m. on Jan. 18 — three hours before his 45th birthday — at a Dothan hospital.

Hinders had been having stomach pain for some time. On the evening of Jan. 17, he was admitted to Lyster Army Hospital at Fort Rucker, taken to Flowers Hospital in Dothan the following morning for a CAT scan and then transported back to Lyster.

When his condition worsened late in the afternoon, he was taken to Southeast Alabama Medical Center in Dothan, where he underwent intestinal surgery. Hinders died of complications, including gangrene.

Hinders was a 20-year veteran of the Army and had

resided in Enterprise for the past 15 years. He was employed as a flight instructor at Fort Rucker and was associated with Dare Enterprises.

Kenneth W. Mosley

Kenneth W. Mosley, 54, died of cancer Jan. 27 in his Alexandria, VA, home.

He served two tours of duty in Vietnam, where he was a helicopter medical evacuation pilot.

During his Army service from 1965-82, Mosley attained the rank of captain.

He had been a logistics analyst for Information Spectrum Inc., a government contractor in Crystal City, since 1983.

Mosley is survived by his wife Dolores and three stepsons.

C.O. O'Donnell

C.O. O'Donnell of Springfield, IL, died.

George D. Somerville

Retired CW4 George D. Somerville of Killeen, TX, died Jan. 4 of cancer in a Temple, TX, hospital.

He served as an Army Aviation maintenance officer and pilot, serving in Vietnam, before retiring in 1990 after 30 years of military service.

He is survived by his wife Martha "Becky," two sons, a daughter and his mother.

R. "Gene" Eugene Tolls

R. "Gene" Eugene Tolls of Medford, OR, was killed in a traffic accident in early November 1994.

Tolls served as a Marine helicopter pilot in 1968-70 with HMM-262 in Vietnam.

He was a helicopter logging pilot.

Jimmy Tucker

Pilot Jimmy Tucker of Bluewater Bay, FL, was one of two people killed in a helicopter crash near Perry, FL, on Nov. 4, 1994.

He was 60.

At the time of the crash, Tucker's helicopter was headed toward a Perry hospital to pick up a patient and return to Tallahassee Memorial Regional Medical Center, where Tucker was employed by Omni Flight of Dallas.

Also killed in the crash was paramedic Richard Thompson. A nurse-paramedic was injured.

Tucker retired from the Army in 1981 as a major after 25 years of active military service.

He served two tours in Vietnam, and held the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star Medal and Air Medal with 34 oak leaf clusters.

Tucker is survived by his wife Margaret, and three daughters, Rhonda Tucker of Birmingham, AL, Brenda Elliott of Enterprise, AL, and Linda Carey of Gulf Breeze, FL.



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VHPA2 4/95



Marchers throng Main Street of Parkville, MO, during the annual Fourth of July parade. See Page 11.

Register early, keep expenses down

DAVE RITTMAN
REUNION COMMITTEE

The Kansas City reunion committee has advice for VHPA members attending this year's reunion July 1-5: Register early!

Though early registration — with a \$10 break on registration fees — runs through May 31, the reunion committee has scheduled a wide array of events.

This means transportation must be scheduled carefully, and early guarantees are required to obtain tickets for sold-out events and to keep reunion expenses down.

There will be trips to a Royals-White Sox baseball game, the Kansas City Zoo, the Truman Library, World of Oceans and World of Fun, the VHPA Golf Tournament, a riverboat casino, the Nelson-Atkins Art Museum and a tour of Kansas City.

Availability of some events is limited — and it's first-come, first-serve.

Early registration also will allow reunion organizers to plan inexpensive transportation from the Kansas City airport to reunion headquarters at the Westin Crown Center.

Motor coaches seating up to 47 passengers with large VHPA signs

will run between the airport and the Westin every half hour from 11 a.m.-7 p.m. on Saturday, July 1.

Cost of the trip is only \$5 per person, compared to \$11 each way on the "private" airport shuttle.

- Buses will stop at U.S. Air Gate 5/6* and American Airlines Gate 16 in the Terminal A baggage areas at the top of each hour and at half past each hour.

- Buses will stop at Southwest Airlines Gate 28* and Delta Airlines Gate 39 in the Terminal B baggage areas 10 minutes and 40 minutes past each hour.

- Buses will stop at United Airlines Gate 56* in the Terminal C baggage areas 20 minutes and 50 minutes past each hour.

(NOTE: The asterisk denotes gates where VHPA bus representatives will be standing by to assist. These individuals are in constant radio contact with the shuttle buses. If you are arriving on other airlines, it will only be a brief walk to one of these locations.)

After the reunion, on July 5, bus transportation back to the airport can be arranged for \$5 per person at a sign-up desk in the hotel lobby.

Buses will run every 30 minutes

from 7 a.m.-3 p.m.

Use the accompanying Reunion Registration Form to register for VHPA events and tours. After completing this form, mail or fax it to VHPA Headquarters in Cincinnati, OH. (The address and fax number are on the form.)

VHPA members should make hotel reservations on their own by calling the Westin Crown Center directly at (816) 474-4400 or central reservations at (800) 228-3000.

When making hotel reservations, tell the clerk you are with VHPA and take advantage of reunion special rate of \$69 per night.

Another advantage of registering early is getting a good table at the July 4 banquet.

This year when you fill out the Reunion Registration Form you can purchase one ticket, an entire table seating 10 people or several tables for you and your friends.

The reunion committee set up this seating option to prevent what has become the traditional stampede for banquet seating.

Because tickets will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis, people registering early will receive the choice tables.

VHPA to be the highlight of parade

The City of Parkville, located just outside of Kansas City, has asked the VHPA to march as a group in its Independence Day parade.

When town officials heard we were coming, they expressed a desire to have us as the centerpiece of their parade.

The Executive Council was reluctant to move the business meeting to accommodate them until hearing that during the time when anti-Vietnam war activities were sweeping most colleges, Park College and the City of Parkville organized pro-military demonstrations on its campus and within the city.

Plans are to bus to the city (about 15 minutes) and begin marching at 10 a.m. The parade route is 1.5 miles long and there will be trollies in the parade for those who find walking

Stop stampede for banquet seating

If you coordinate with your friends and plan ahead, you will not have to participate in the stampede for seating that has become a part of the reunion banquet.

When you fill out the *Reunion Registration Form*, you will be able to buy one ticket, an entire table of 10 seats or several tables for you and your friends.

It will be on a first-come, first-served basis, the best seats assigned as the orders come in.

When you arrive at the reunion, the tickets you purchased for you and your friends will be in your registration packet with numbered table assignments. At the banquet you will be required to give your numbered ticket to the waiter to obtain your seat and banquet meal.

difficult. Wives and children are encouraged to walk with us.

Unit banners are especially welcome. There is some type of food function planned for the end of the parade and will be held in the town

park. We should be returning to the hotel about 2 p.m.

Make plans to march in this parade and accept the accolades of the citizens of Parkville.

— Kenny Bunn



Book Now and Save to Kansas City! Exclusive VHPA Travel Discounts to the 1995 Reunion

Call the official travel agency of VHPA and receive exclusive airline and car rental discounts for travel to Kansas City. These are special VHPA rates, available only through Carlson Travel Network/Media Travel USA.

You save money and VHPA wins, too! CTN/Media Travel USA will make a donation to VHPA for each airline ticket purchase. Make plans now to meet in Kansas City July 1-5, and take advantage of the exclusive discounts provided by these companies:



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AIRLINES**



UNITED AIRLINES



Carlson Travel Network®

Media Travel USA

1-800-283-TRIP

Complete listing of reunion events

Saturday, July 1

11 a.m.-7 p.m. — VHPA shuttle bus runs from airport to hotel every 30 minutes.

11 a.m.-8 p.m. — Registration, third floor.

3-6 p.m. — Early bird cocktails, Garden Terrace next to waterfall.

6 p.m.-1 a.m. — Hawaiian "Early Bird" Pool Party.

Sunday, July 2

7-10 a.m. — Discounted buffet breakfast, main lobby area.

8-10:00 a.m. — Business Meeting, third floor conference area.

9 a.m.-7 p.m. — Vendors and Registration, third floor.

10-11 a.m. — Church service, third floor conference area.

10 a.m.-2 p.m. — Static Display at Liberty Memorial. (Hamburgers, hot-dogs, refreshments, etc. available at display.)

10 a.m.-5 p.m. — Mini-reunions.

Noon — Royals baseball bus departs hotel; will return about 4:30 p.m. after game.

Noon — Nelson-Atkins Museum bus departs hotel; will return about 5 p.m.

1-5 p.m. — Informal pool party for teen-agers, fifth floor outdoor pool; DJ will provide music.

5-5:30 p.m. — Reception, foyer area and century ballroom (bar will open at 4:30 p.m.)

5:30-6:45 p.m. — M*A*S*H Party/USO Show, full 35th Infantry Band and guests, Century Ballroom. (Remember to wear your fatigues, flight suit, an old uniform — and bring one for your wife or guest.)

6:45-10:15 p.m. — Party moves outside to Crown Center Terrace, just across street from hotel. Outdoor buffet, refreshments, fireworks, entertainment provided by Britt Small & Festival.

10:15 p.m.-12:30 a.m. Party moves back to Century Ballroom inside hotel. Dancing and partying, music provided by 35th Infantry Dance Band.

Monday, July 3

6-10 a.m. — Discounted buffet breakfast, main lobby area.

6:45 a.m. — Golf Tournament buses depart hotel for Paradise Point, Smithville, Mo. (Return to hotel estimated at about 2 p.m.; tee time at course is 7:30 a.m., shotgun style.)

8-10 a.m. — 5K Run or Crawl.

8-10 a.m. — Mini-reunions.

9 a.m.-5 p.m. — Vendors and Registration.

10:15 a.m. — Worlds of Fun and Oceans of Fun buses depart hotel. (Return to hotel about 5 p.m.)

Noon — Kansas City Zoo bus departs. (Return to hotel about 5 p.m.)

Noon — City of Kansas City guided bus tour departs. (Return to hotel about 5 p.m. Bus will stop for lunch.)

Noon — Truman Library Bus, which includes tour of Vaile Mansion and National Frontier Trails, will depart. (Bus will return about 5 p.m. Bus will stop for lunch.)

5:30-6:30 p.m. — Reception, Main Lobby area.

6:30-8:30 p.m. — Wild West Casino Party, buffet dinner.

6:30-10:30 p.m. — In-house, non-profit casino operation, including blackjack tables, slot machines, and roulette, craps, and other casino games.

8:45 p.m. — First wave of buses departs hotel enroute to riverboat for 10 p.m. "sailing." (First 350 "passengers" will be boarded on the riverboat.)

9 p.m.-1 a.m. — Phil Jay, well-known local radio personality, will "DJ" a dance and show in part of the ballroom.

9:30 p.m. — Second wave of buses departs hotel enroute to riverboat for 10 p.m. "sailing." (Next 350 "passengers" will be boarded on the riverboat.)

10:30 p.m. — Third wave of buses departs hotel enroute to riverboat for midnight "sailing." (Final load of "passengers" will be boarded on the riverboat.)

Midnight — First riverboat "cruise" ends, buses begin shuttling members back to hotel at 12:15 a.m. (For members who wish to remain, riverboat will "comp" an additional cruise at midnight, however last bus will leave boat at 3 a.m.)

Tuesday, July 4

2 a.m. — Second "cruise" ends. Passengers will be returned to hotel by bus.

3 a.m. — Last bus returns to hotel from riverboat.

7-9 a.m. — Discounted buffet breakfast, main lobby area.

8:15 a.m. — First wave of buses departs for parade and shopping tour in Historic Parkville.

9 a.m.-3 p.m. — Registration.

9:15 a.m. — Second wave of buses departs for parade and shopping tour in Historic Parkville.

10-11 a.m. — Parkville Parade (members, spouses and families can march or ride trolleys in the parade or be dropped off downtown to watch from curbside).

11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. — Shopping, barbecue/picnic lunch in the park or from street vendors. Free beer and soft drinks while they last, as well as volleyball, softball, etc.

1:30-4 p.m. — Buses shuttle back and forth between Parkville and hotel.

2-5 p.m. — Kids Pool Party, fifth floor outside area.

2-7 p.m. — Vendor area open.

2:30-4 p.m. — Mini-reunions.

6-7 p.m. — Reception, garden terrace and third floor foyer area.

7-8:30 p.m. — Final Banquet, Century Ballroom.

8:30-9 p.m. — Honor guard, missing man, brief awards.

9 p.m.-12:30 a.m. — Dancing.

Wednesday, July 5

6:30-10 a.m. — Discounted buffet breakfast, main lobby area.

7 a.m.-3 p.m. — VHPA shuttle bus leaves the hotel every 30 minutes for trip to airport.

Driving to reunion? Follow these directions

If you are driving to the reunion, here are directions to the Westin Crown Center, headquarters of the 1995 VHPA Reunion:

• **Traveling from the north (airport, Omaha, Des Moines):**

Take Interstate 29 or Interstate 35 South toward Kansas City (I-29 turns into I-35 just north of the city).

Cross the Paseo suspension bridge (Missouri River) and follow Interstate 70 East signs a short distance to Interstate 670 West. Sign will say, "I-670 to Wichita."

After a very short distance (keep to right), take the Broadway Exit. Turn left (south) onto Broadway. Go 0.8 mile to Pershing Road. Turn left (east) onto Pershing Road, go three blocks to hotel, on the right side.

(The hotel is located between Main Street and Grand Avenue.)

• **Traveling from the southwest (Wichita, Oklahoma City, Dallas):**

Take Interstate 35 North to the

Broadway Exit (near the center of town).

Turn right (south) onto Broadway. Go 0.8 mile to Pershing Road. Turn left (east) onto Pershing Road, go three blocks to the hotel, on the right side.

(The hotel is located between Main Street and Grand Avenue.)

• **Traveling from the west on Interstate 70 (Topeka, Denver):**

Follow Interstate 70 East toward Kansas City. Take Interstate 670 East Exit as you approach the downtown area.

Continue east on I-670 and follow signs "to I-70." Just after passing, but NOT taking the Interstate 35 cutoff, keep to the left and take the "Central Downtown Exit."

Turn right (south) on Central and go one short block to 16th Street, turn right (west) on 16th Street one short block to Broadway.

Turn left (south) on Broadway and

go 0.8 mile to Pershing Road. Turn left (east) onto Pershing Road, go three blocks to the hotel, on the right.

(The hotel is located between Main Street and Grand Avenue.)

• **Traveling from the south (Joplin, Springfield):**

Take Highway 71 to Interstate 435 North. At the junction of Interstate 70 (near the baseball and football stadiums) take the I-70 exit west toward Kansas City and follow directions below.

• **Traveling from the east on Interstate 70 (Columbia, St. Louis):**

Take Interstate 70 West toward the downtown area. Follow I-70 and Interstate 670 signs west to the Broadway Exit.

Turn left (south) and go 0.8 mile to Pershing Road. Turn left (east) on Pershing Road and go three blocks to hotel, which is on the right.

(The hotel is located between Main Street and Grand Avenue.)

Time, dates set aside for mini-reunions

BILL MEDSKER

MINI-REUNION COORDINATOR

Got your mini-reunion planned yet for the Kansas City Reunion?

If not, why not? It's time. VCRs and slide projectors will be available.

However, if any of you still have 8mm film, we suggest getting it converted to videotape — or plan on bringing a projector with you.

Mini-reunions are scheduled for Sunday, July 2, from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Monday, July 3, from 8-10 a.m.; and Tuesday, July 4, from 2-4 p.m.

There are big rooms and small rooms, and there are a lot of them, so gather up all the stuff the little woman is sick and tired of looking at and hearing about . . . and bring it to Kansas City.

Now you can show your treasures to someone who cares!

So far, here is the lineup of mini-reunions:

• Rex Gooch and the Lighthouse Air Cav have scheduled a mini-reunion.

Call Rex at ()

• Phil Marshall and Dust Off will have a gathering.

Call him at ()

• Richard Waldo and the 175th AHC will get together on Monday at 10 a.m. In his request, Rich made the statement, "Outlaws Rule."

Call him at ()

• John Quesenberry is the contact for the 187th Assault Helicopter Company. He's planning on 100 people.

Call him at () (fax).

• Doug Russell is planning for a meeting of online and Internet users at a mini-reunion. Demonstrations on how to communicate online will be given.

Doug can be contacted at () or at his e-mail address: (). His phone/fax number is ()

• Ken Fritz is helping put together a mini-reunion of three sister companies, the 176th AHC, the 71st AHC and the 174th AHC. Contact Ken at ()

It's easy to schedule a mini-reunion. Send your requests to:

Bill Medsker, () or phone/fax () 4521, or to Bob Smith, () or phone () or fax ()

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

12th Annual Reunion Kansas City, MO July 1-5, 1995

REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

Mail to: VHPA, 7 W. Seventh St., Suite 1990, Cincinnati, OH 45202

FAX signed credit card registrations to: (513) 721-5315

Name:	Member No.:	Arrival date?	Mode of travel?
Wife/Guest name:	No. of children:	Is this your first reunion?	
Names of additional guests:	How many reunions have you attended?		
Address:	Check here if notifying VHPA of an address change []		
City:	State:	ZIP:	Phone: ()

REGISTRATION FEES

	No. of people	Price	Total
Registration before 6/1/95*		@ \$ 25.00	
Registration after 6/1/95*		@ \$ 35.00	
Early Bird Luau (July 1)		@ \$ 10.00	
M*A*S*H Party (July 2) (Food, show and dance.)		@ \$ 25.00	
Riverboat casino (July 3) (Transportation, food, admission.)		@ \$ 25.00	
Banquet (July 4) (Order 1 or 100; stop the stampede.)		@ \$ 35.00	
Dues (if included)	1 year	@ \$ 30.00	
You can make 3 payments over 6-month Installment period if you wish	Life installment No. 1	@ \$150.00	
	Complete Life Membership	@ \$450.00	
	GRAND TOTAL		

Indicate if you want to participate in these activities

Royals' baseball game:
(July 2. Transportation, ticket.)
Cost: \$17

Nelson-Atkins Museum:
(July 2. Transportation, entrance fee.)
Cost: \$12

Kansas City Bus Tour:
(July 3. Transportation.)
Cost: \$12

Kansas City Zoo:
(July 3. Transportation, entrance fee.)
Cost: \$12

Truman Library:
(July 3. Transportation, entrance fee.)
Cost: \$12

Worlds of Fun/Oceans of Fun:
(July 3. Transportation, admission. Slight additional cost to enter both.)
Cost: \$21

Golf Tournament:
(July 3. Transportation, cart and entry fee.)
Cost: \$50

5k run or crawl:
(July 3.)
Cost: No charge

* Each adult 18 and older must pay the registration fee.

- ☐ Enclosed is my check or money order payable to "VHPA Reunion '95"
☐ Please charge my: MasterCard VISA Discover (circle one)

Credit card No.:	Expiration date:
Signature:	

REUNION NAME TAG INFORMATION

Name you want on name tag:	Call sign:
Name of wife/guest:	Flight school class: (Number or year for Army; branch and year for other services.)
1st combat unit:	Year(s):
2nd combat unit:	Year(s):
3rd combat unit:	Year(s):
Hometown or current residence:	

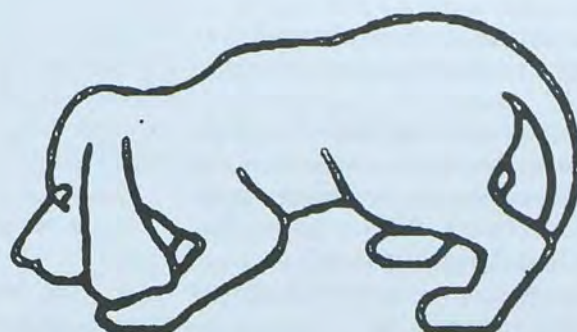
Refund policy: No refunds will be granted prior to the Reunion. All refund requests must be submitted to VHPA headquarters no later than Aug. 5, 1995, and must include all tickets received, plus proof of payment. Refunds will not be granted for fixed-price events (the Banquet is a fixed-price event) that lose money unless the entire Reunion has a positive cash balance. The VHPA headquarters will process and pay all refund requests within 10 days of completing the Reunion account balancing.

More information needed on KIAs

We need to verify whether the following KIAs flew helicopters in Vietnam:

RANK	DIRSORT	EVENT DATE	SERVICE
1LT	Ahouse, William C.	06/08/68	AR
CW4	Armstrong, Eugene Gerald Jr.	05/01/66	AR
WO1	Audilet, Franklin Delano	04/01/68	AR
MAJ	Baker, Ronald Boysen	02/10/70	AR
1LT	Barnes, Laurie Eugene	04/11/69	MC
CW3	Biegel, Robert Charles	01/31/68	AR
CW2	Boyles, Donald Ray	11/21/69	AR
WO1	Brady, James Alfred Sr.	07/02/68	AR
MAJ	Carroll, Robert Hugh	05/12/68	AR
CPT	Casey, Michael Dale	01/23/70	AR
2LT	Clark, Gary Richard	12/06/67	AR
LTC	Coast, Albert Frank	04/20/71	AR
CW2	Cook, Jimmie Dee	03/05/69	AR
CW2	Costello, Russell Ralph	09/04/70	AR
CW2	Crayne, Kenneth Eugene	12/01/70	AR
CW2	Cross, Alvin Euclid	04/17/70	AR
CW2	Danna, Joseph John Jr.	12/16/70	AR
MAJ	Davis, Roland K.	01/25/68	AR
WO1	Dennis, Bobbie Jefferson	10/18/66	AR
CW3	Fishleigh, Robert Junior	09/25/70	AR
CW2	Gelinas, Joseph Armand Rog	10/11/67	AR
1LT	Glowacki, Daniel Norbert	07/04/68	AR
CPT	Hawkins, Gordon Abner	06/11/68	AR
1LT	Heister, Richard Eugene	06/02/65	MC
CPT	Herold, Eric Gary	11/12/71	AR
CW3	Higdon, Ralph Taylor	10/03/68	AR
WO1	Hines, Randy Victor	06/19/71	AR
CW3	Ishihara, James Hiroshi	03/10/63	AR
WO1	Jones, Charles Spencer	02/14/69	AR
CPT	Jordan, Richard Kenneth	10/22/65	AR
1LT	Keithline, Richard Ward	02/28/69	AR
CW2	Kendrick, Homer Phillip	05/13/69	AR
WO1	King, Robert Douglas	12/04/67	AR
WO1	Kirby, James Eugene	02/11/69	AR
CW2	Koob, John Peter	12/17/68	AR
WO1	Lockhart, Freddie Lewis	11/25/70	AR
CW2	Loving, Martin Edwin	06/06/71	AR
WO1	Lowes, Richard Smith	03/05/68	AR
CPT	Lutz, Werner Erhard	06/02/65	MC
CPT	Lyon, John Paul	04/18/69	AR
CW2	Matthews, Kermit Leslie	12/04/70	AR
CPT	McCahan, Marlin Eugene	06/24/64	AR
CW2	Mobley, Warren Herbert	11/24/70	AR
CW2	Mostowski, Theodore	11/22/68	AR
CPT	Musgrove, John David	10/04/65	AF
WO1	Patterson, Gordon Lee	11/16/68	AR
CW2	Powers, Kenneth	01/03/71	AR
CW4	Railey, George Edmund	03/06/70	AR
WO1	Ripka, Herbert A.	05/27/67	AR
CPT	Roederer, John Stephen	07/03/67	MC
CW2	Sauls, Robert Ned	03/11/69	AR
CPT	Shafer, Thomas James	01/09/69	AR
CPT	Shumbris, Eugene Paul	12/09/69	AR
CW2	Simmons, Robert Lee	06/09/71	AR
CW2	Smith, Paul Wesley	05/05/68	AR
CW2	Stoelt, Harold Edwin	03/12/66	AR
CW2	Storie, Willard Gene	11/24/70	AR
CW3	Tarter, Bobby Lee	08/24/69	AR
1LT	Terrell, John Wesley	11/17/67	AR
LTC	Tobias, John Chilicott	06/14/70	AR
CPT	Uplinger, Barton John	02/19/68	MC
CW2	Varvell, David Lee	11/19/65	AR
1LT	West, William Edward	02/05/68	AR
WO1	Wright, Robert Norman	04/10/68	AR

— Gary Roush, Chairman of Database Committee
roush_gb@corning.com



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Many people regulars on network

MEL CANON

The online e-mail network has grown far beyond my original expectations.

We now have more than 155 people who have checked in. At least 60-70 of those are regular participants in the e-mail network. We've had a few check in and decide it wasn't for them . . . but most have stayed with the net once they've logged on.

As promised, I will not take up too much space with narrative here and will give you some more of the cockpit chatter from the Netheads who fly together out here in Cyberspace.

However, some changes are taking place with the online net that I must address.

First, please understand the online network is not an official function of VHPA. Consequently, it is not appropriate to use the VHPA name in its identification.

Since our forum reaches people who are not part of the VHPA, the bylaws of the VHPA require us to be an unofficial part and to change our name to protect the proprietary rights of the VHPA.

The online forum will henceforth be named "Vietnam Helicopter Flight Crew Network" (VHFCN). I will continue to report on the net's activities in The VHPA Newsletter but, as you can see from the title of this article, it will no longer be called VHPA Online, but will bear the title, "On The InterCom."

Since our forum is not official, I will no longer be listed as a staff member of the VHPA, but you can still fly a slot in the online formation by contacting me at my e-mail address listed above. I will still remain the net's coordinator and will assist you in getting formed up with us.

The online net will continue to serve VHPA in any capacity that provides complementary interaction. Some great things are about to take place on the net that will make it much more accessible to the various online services. I will keep you posted here . . . On the InterCom.

I appreciate all the participation and support this project has received from the membership and offer my sincerest apologies to the Executive Council of VHPA and the entire membership for unwittingly using the VHPA name without prior permission or consultation.

And now . . . "On the InterCom."

Late November-early December 1994

• From Muleskinner (Gary Roush, [REDACTED]) to Jim Schueckler: Hey Jim, are you still sore about the vertical spiraling takeoffs we

On The InterCom

used to make while you had to do running takeoffs

without wheels, or about blowing dust in your little slick, or blowing over your tent, or beating you to an LZ on a CA, or being able to taxi on wheels, or outrunning our gun cover, or climbing at 3,000 feet per minute when taking fire?

• From Polecat 356 (Jim Schueckler, [REDACTED]): Nawwww — just jealous that you had one more engine and four more rotor blades than I did! That's more than enough for another whole helicopter!

I knew a guy who joked once that "If the Stability Augmentation System on a Chinook goes bad, you can log your flight time as flying two different aircraft at the same time — because the front and back rotors think they are!" That be true?

• From Workhorse 16 (Charlie Eliason, [REDACTED]): Of course, there's always somebody "better" or "bigger" or "faster" or something . . . Try vertical at closer to 10,000 feet per minute while doing slow pedal turns for effect, hovering at 10 thousand or 12 thousand to cool off from the heat (temp or battle) . . . And maybe recovering by sling-load a downed CH-47 on the way back to the club . . .

• From Andy Dulay ([REDACTED]): Jerry Towler, no, I don't fly for Kalitta. Been there, done that. Actually I'm pushing that 747

around for United Parcel Service. I was flying the 727 and 757 and about every three years or so I get a wild hair to change airplanes.

Finally found one that I'm in no hurry to leave. The schedules are livable (as well as cargo can be), pay is good, never see any management types, as they're afraid to leave Louisville for more than a day or some new guy will climb up their backs!

So, I generally commute up to Kentucky from Orlando around 1 a.m. or so. Pick up the mail, grab a breakfast and launch out at 3:30 a.m. for Anchorage. Blow a day drinking beer, eating halibut chunks and watching the Eskimo women pull sledges around the city. Then each day hits a new city until I get home.

Seoul, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Anchorage. It's all downhill from there.

I got to Desert Shield/Storm back when that all happened. Watched a lot of my buddies who were still in the USAR get shipped over. I invited the ones I could find up into our airplane for dinner and a clean bathroom. You'd have thought I included them in my will or something!

My first two trips into the Dhahran area were with "Kotex, M&M's and 10 HumVees" in the back. That's a lot of vehicles, but it's a way lot more Kotex! A 747 freighter carries a lot of stuff. The face of war was changing to say the least. War is much more fun when you're getting paid correctly.

• From Blackcat (Ed Faught, [REDACTED]): Upon my return to the World, I was assigned to the 1st Cav at Fort Hood in a slick company that had one of those Cav numbers like C/127 or some such. After a few flights to Waco for lunch, I thought I might be able to fly a slick again without killing myself.

Along came a training exercise, where I was assigned chalk two in a simulated CA, or maybe all we did was drop some reservists in some LZ. We were doing fine until the CO (lead) yelled "There it is" and pro-

Continued on Page 17

Historical Reference a big bargain

The VHPA Historical Committee has worked long and hard to put together the first of a series of historical accounts of the helicopter units in Vietnam.

This has been a very difficult task and members have worked hard to get a quality product published.

Sales haven't been spectacular. It seems many VHPA members are not truly aware of the existence and value of the Historical Reference Directories.

Nowhere else will a person ever be able to find the correct and accurate stories of the men and the machines that bind us all together as the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.

For the price of a couple of paperback novels, you can have the first of a series of well-done history books about

For the price of a couple of paperback novels, you can have the first of a series of well-done history books . . .

the things that happened before many of us got to Vietnam.

If you don't have a copy, order one now. Find out why you were where you were (besides because you were told to be there!).

Volume 2 of the series is about to be printed. You can order it when you order Volume 1 if you don't already have it.

Your family will appreciate being able to read about you and their heritage without any political baloney. Think about it.

Take the initiative: Order the Historical Reference Directories now. Use the order form on Page 4 of this Newsletter or call VHPA Headquarters at (513) 721-VHPA.

— Ken Fritz, Vice President

'Hook pilot' response gets pilot off the hook

Continued from Page 16

ceeded to execute a really fine fighter-style wingover peel-off to an approach. I admired it so much I ended up lead.

When I finally landed with the rest of the flight, the CO asked me what had gone wrong. I answered "Hook pilot, sir." He never said another word about it.

• From Potato Masher 18 (): You might be a redneck if directions to your house include "turn off the paved road."

You might be a redneck if you see no need for rest stops because you have an empty milk jug in the car.

You might be a redneck if you have to dress up the kids to go to Kmart.

You might be a redneck if you have a hefty bag for a passenger side window.

You might be a redneck if you consider a six pack and a bug zapper quality entertainment.

You might be a redneck if your lifetime goal is to own your own fireworks stand.

You might be a redneck if your father fully executes the "pull my finger" trick during Christmas dinner.

You might be a redneck if you have ever been too drunk to fish.

You might be a redneck if you wonder how service stations keep their restrooms so clean.

You might be a redneck if you think "The dishwasher is broke" means your wife has no money.

You might be a redneck if you think Volvo is a part of a woman's anatomy.

Well, so much for cockpit chatter . . . let's meet a couple of remeets to the net.

GLASSBORO, NJ — Hello, MIKE AUSTIN

. You'll remember Mike from his excellent closure article in February's Newsletter about his return to Vietnam in 1993.

Mike spent his tour as a "Blue Ghost" with F/8/CAV, '71-'72.

After the war, in the '70s, he tried his hand at cropdusting with a Bell 47 in Kansas. An unfortunate accident prompted his decision to sell the business and move to the West Coast, setting up a homestead in Seattle for the next 17 years. He now lives in New Jersey.

Mike says he'd trade his colonial two-story with pool in South Jersey for a small cabin in Washington in a heartbeat. Any offers?

OAKLYN, NJ — Hello, BOB ANDERSON (). Did you have any complaints about the Philly reunion? Here's the guy to talk to . . . Bob was co-chairman of that reunion.

He was with the 134th AHC in Vietnam. He is now a self-employed building contractor, but is back in school at Thomas Edison State College in an attempt to make a career change. Another one of us that doesn't know what he wants to be when he grows up. Ha!

Bob serves as vice chairman of the Planning Board in Oaklyn and is also teaching a DOS and Lotus course at the local high school. He says his body is getting too old for the construction business. There are lots of us out there who might agree with that, eh?

Well, that about wraps it up. Please place all your seats in an upright position and store all hand held articles in preparation for landing. C'ya next time when we listen in . . . On the InterCom.

VHPA briefs

Historical directory goes to printer

Volume 2 of the Historical Reference Directory went to the printer in April. It includes 12 short stories from nine authors, plus five unit histories: No 9 Squadron RAAF, the 14th CAB, the 119th and 129th AHC, and the 178th ASHC.

It has all the Army helicopter flight school class rosters known to the VHPA from January 1967 through the end of the Vietnam War. Finally, it lists details from over 10,000 records in the VHPA Incident Database for the period 1966 and 1967.

Use the form on Page 4 to order your copy.

1995 VHPA Calendar

Copies of the 1995 VHPA Calendar are still available. This year's edition contains fourteen 11 x 17-inch photos and is dedicated to all 2,177 helicopter pilot KIA/MIAs.

There are 12 color and 2 black-and-white pictures that include three pieces of art. There are two photos of USAF and two of USMC helicopters and lots of Huey pictures this year. Use the order form on Page 4.

1996 VHPA Calendar

There is still time to have your favorite photo in the 1996 VHPA Calendar. We especially need Army OH-13 and OH-23, plus Marine AH-1G and J, Vietnam photos.

If you have a picture that could be a candidate for the VHPA Calendar, please contact Mike Law at [REDACTED] (days) or [REDACTED] (evenings) as soon as possible.

The 1995 Membership Directory

The Directory Committee is considering dedicating the 1995 Directory to all tandem rotor helicopters that flew in

Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Era.

This includes CH-47s and CH-21s flown by the Army, CH-46s by the Marines, and HH-43s by the Air Force helicopter pilots.

If you have information about tandem rotor helicopters, please send it to the VHPA: Attn. The Directory Committee. Any questions concerning this matter can be directed to Mike Law at [REDACTED].

Fort Wolters Chapter forming

An organizational meeting and cookout to establish a Fort Wolters Chapter of the VHPA will be held at noon May 20 at the American Legion Hall in Mineral Wells, TX.

Anyone wishing to join this chapter is encouraged to attend — and to bring their family.

Information: Charles Holley at [REDACTED]

Orders can be filled in advance

Honor & Pride will be a vendor at the reunion again this year with authorized VHPA logo items.

The firm has invited members to order VHPA embroidered polo shirts, caps and jackets, as well as other items of interest. Call (800) 277-9374 to get them in time for the reunion.

Volunteers needed for expo

VHPA volunteers are needed for the booth to be set up at Southwest Regional Aviation Expo '95 in Phoenix, AZ, June 1-4.

Contact Ken Fritz ASAP. Telephone [REDACTED]

Scott to wear VHPA cap

NBC Television weatherman Willard Scott reportedly will be wearing a VHPA cap when he gives his weather report the morning of June 29.

Mini-reunions

176th, 174th, 71st AHCs

The 176th AHC, 174th AHC and 71st AHC want to have a mini-reunion at the 1995 VHPA Reunion in Kansas City in July.

All Minutemen, Dolphins, Rattlers, Firebirds, Sharks and Muskets should rally and bring their memorabilia to KC.

At Atlanta we had about 40 guys, in Philly we had 15 plus just from the 176th. At KC we should have the best attendance yet!

Contact Ken Fritz at [REDACTED] and get in on the fun!

Darkhorse crews

Attention Darkhorse drivers and crewmembers of D Troop, 1/4 Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division, and C Troop, 16th Cav (Air), 1st Aviation Brigade:

As a former crew chief from the lift platoon (Can Tho era), I would like to put together a mini-reunion during the annual VHPA and VHCMA reunions.

I am tentatively planning on attending the pilots reunion in Kansas City, July 1-5. I will be at the crewmembers reunion in St. Louis, July 5-9.

If interested in the mini-reunion idea or interested in putting together a mailing list of former unit members, please get in touch with me.

Dave Fesmire, CE, Darkhorse 751 and 704
P.O. Box 672
[REDACTED]

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JOE KLINE AVIATION ART

Red Lions wind up at Qui Nhon

DICK CLIFTON

I really enjoyed the 1994 Membership Directory — a super job! The attempt to fill in all the “blanks” is an awesome task. Please allow me to contribute to our collective (pun intended) memories.

HMM-363, the Red Lions, departed Long Beach Naval Yard on Aug. 11, 1965, on board the Princeton (LPH-5). The ship was literally crammed full of MAG-36 aircraft, support gear and personnel.

I was the embarkation officer, so I was up close and personal with the cargo. We had a total of 105 aircraft lashed down top-side and on the hangar deck with just enough flight deck remaining for very limited flight operations.

Besides my squadron's UH-34Ds (“Old Dogs,” we called them affectionately), we had two more HMMs, a few H-37 Dueces, some fixed-wing aircraft and VMO-6. I have several memories of that trip. We stopped in Hawaii for a few hours — just long enough for most guys to call home and say, “Hi.”

At least one of our HMM-363 guys was a skateboarder. The Navy really got upset when they found new skateboard tracks in some fresh deck paint!

We didn't receive our M-60 doorguns until the last minute. After we were under way, our gunners and crew chiefs thought it was Christmas time. They opened the crates, assembled the guns, and learned to fire them off the aft of the ship.

We stopped in the Philippines for a few days that included a training exercise. One of my roommates on the ship was an Infantry second lieutenant. During the exercise, he lost an eye when a blank round was fired from a rifle. I really felt sorry for him.

The squadron's special fund still had some money, so we flew in a few pallets of San Miguel beer. Part of my job was to secure this with our cargo

I also remember that we enjoyed a good relationship with the 197th Aviation guys — especially their gunships.

so the Navy wouldn't steal it from us. After we were in Vietnam, we rationed ourselves two bottles a day until it ran out. MAG-36 off-loaded a click or so north of Chu Lai onto a completely undeveloped area that would soon become another great Marine beach-side vacation spot — Ky Ha. They lived in tents on the sand for some time, but HMM-363 went north to Da Nang for a few weeks and then south to Qui Nhon in late September.

Our mission at Qui Nhon was troop/cargo transport and medevac support for various Army units, including a brigade from the 101st Airborne Division.

We were given some old French barracks on the Qui Nhon airfield. We quartered about 12 to 14 in each building. We had screens on the windows and indoor plumbing — that was the good part.

Going to town wasn't a problem. We always felt safe and enjoyed having a beer or some food.

The bad part was the ditch that separated our compound from a Vietnamese hospital and a POW camp. It was everyone's open sewer. When it didn't rain for awhile, the smell was pretty bad. And when the hospital cremated some of the dead. Vivid but not fond memories.

We had “good seats” for watching other units come to Vietnam. Naturally, the 1st Cav was impressive with Chinooks and Cranes.

We also watched the “invasion” of the Korean Tiger Division and the Korean Marine Brigade. They were a

fantastic bunch of warriors. We often overflowed their compound as we left for the first mission of the day. We'd pass rows of them practicing martial arts. It looked to us as if they were pummeling each other.

Once we were supporting a Korean operation. I was No. 2 into a pickup zone they had inadvertently marked with a tear gas grenade. Naturally, our rotors helped lots of people “enjoy” this mistake.

I remember getting on the ground and fighting not to rub my eyes. I looked out the window and noticed a ROK sergeant kicking and dragging this young soldier up the hill. If he lived though that, I'm certain he now knows the difference between a smoke and gas grenade!

The Red Lion's “vocabulary” added an expression during this period that we still find funny.

Once we had four 34s taking Nguyen Cao Ky to visit various outposts. He kept telling us he wanted to “land quietly.” He meant “unannounced,” but the thought of a 34's roaring Pratt and Whitney 1820 engine ever “landing quietly” was more than we could take with a straight face!

I also remember that we enjoyed a good relationship with the 197th Aviation guys — especially their gunships. We didn't have any gunships and were always glad to have them escort us.

Sadly I can still remember when Bob Dowling's UH-1B went down at sea off II Corps. HMM-363 had sent several 34s and the 197th a set of gunships to support an operation south of Qui Nhon for several days.

I am not certain about the circumstances that caused the helicopter to go down in the water, but I recalled that the crew were attacked by sharks before they could be rescued.

Anyway, this is what a Marine UH-34D squadron was doing at Qui Nhon in late '65. We stayed there until early March of '66 when we

Continued on Page 21

Squadron remained in Qui Nhon until March

Continued from Page 20

moved back to Ky Ha.

I can date this because we hadn't been at Ky Ha long before we lost "T-bird" (Tom Bird), Noah Kraft and their crew. It was at the end of the day and I was flying with them plus maybe two other ships down a long valley.

They were hit at altitude by enemy fire which did some damage and started a fire. They crashed and were all burned badly before we could get near enough to rescue them.

HMM-363 had lost a couple of guys KIA while we were at Qui Nhon, but this was the first time we lost an entire crew.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dick Clifton flew with HMM-363 in 1965-66 and with HMM-364 in 1966.

Calendar

May 17-19

The 4th Battalion, 101st Aviation Regiment will host a reunion at Fort Campbell, KY, of former members, including the "Comancheros" of A Company and "Kingsmen" of B Company who served in Vietnam.

Events include an open house at the 4th Battalion, static display of aircraft and equipment, an early bird social, tours, a memorial service and a reunion dinner with speaker.

Contacts: CW2 Laura Smith and CW2 John Pruden at HHC, 4/101st Avn Rgt, Fort Campbell, KY, or call [REDACTED].

June 9-11

The Reunion Committee and the

Fort Rucker Chapter of the Warrant Officer Association will commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Warrant Officer Corps.

Events include a brunch and a dinner-dance on June 10 at the Main Officers Club at Fort Rucker, and a picnic on June 11 at the Lake Lodge Picnic Area.

Contacts: Jack Hollen, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED], or call [REDACTED]; and Loy Roper [REDACTED].

June 16-18

Members of the 145th Combat Aviation Battalion will meet at Fort Rucker, AL.

Contact: Maj. Gen. Richard D. Kenyon, P.O. Box 39, Fort Rucker, [REDACTED].

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Rules of Engagement got to be ridiculous

JOHN PLUMMER
VHPA MEMBER

I was listening to Chris Wheeler the other day say that in 1971 the Rules of Engagement were simple: "If you could identify the person as hostile, you could blow him away."

In the late spring of 1972, the rules had gotten ridiculous. It was not enough to identify the person as hostile, they had to "be" hostile. In other words, they had to shoot first.

One day in May or June 1972, I was flying Maj. Gen. James F. Hollingsworth, commanding general of the Third Regional Assistance Command. Some of you might remember him as "Danger 79."

We were flying single ship, no gun security, when we saw a whole column of clearly identifiable NVA soldiers sitting beside a small road north of Lai Khe. Green pith helmets, AK-

As we flew past this gaggle of grinning and waving NVA regulars, I heard screaming from the back.

47s, and the whole shebang.

But they weren't firing at us, so technically there wasn't anything we could do. This, obviously, was unsatisfactory to an aggressive old war horse like Hollingsworth.

He asked in his wonderful Texas drawl, "Plummer, can you take this sumbitch any lower?"

When I allowed that I could, he ordered us down to 50 feet and on a course parallel and about 25 to 50 meters from the trail.

As we flew past this gaggle of

grinning and waving NVA regulars, I heard screaming from the back.

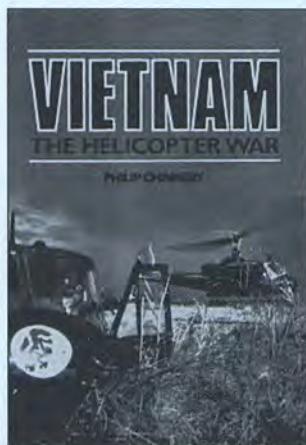
When I looked around, the general was on his knees, throwing C-Ration cans out the door and yelling: "Take that you #\$\$%*! You chicken#@\$\$s are too yellow to fight! Shoot, you sorry bast#\$&*s!"

Thank God, they didn't shoot or we would have been dead meat. I quickly informed the general that our "fathermaratchet" had gone into over-loop and the chrome-plated "gestelbin" was tarnished necessitating a return to base.

I wasn't about to fly down THAT road again!

This just demonstrates how ridiculous things were.

EDITOR'S NOTE: John Plummer — "Rev. Thunderhorse" — flew with the Air Cav Troop, 11th ACR in 1971-72 and with the 120 AHC in 1972.



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— Chris Genna, VHPA Newsletter

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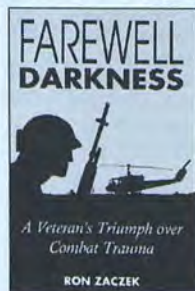
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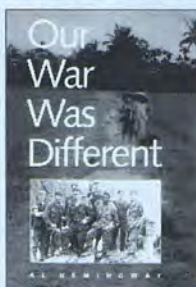
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Sometimes you have to turn off the light

VINCENT A. TORTOLANO

It had been one of those III Corps days where we had been flying insertions and capping all day long.

We had just rearmed and refueled for what seemed the hundredth time and it was now nighttime.

We were a heavy fire team supporting 10 slicks, 1 C&C and a maintenance ship. The slicks were inbound to the staging area with their first extraction and we were headed back to our capping station.

I was Peter Pilot flying the Charley model gunship. Bill Britt, a really great guy from North Carolina, was the AC when one of the most miraculous events of our young lives occurred.

Our wingman said it looked like a huge shotgun being fired when the hot end let go and blew out of the tailpipe. We immediately entered autorotation and began our descent to an incredibly hostile jungle.

We had been flying over jungle all day and knew there wasn't a clear area for miles. My mind flashed back to primary flight school and our first night training briefing.

Our instructor had started the briefing by saying, "If you have a night engine failure, turn on your landing light; if you don't like what you see, turn it off."

That is exactly what occurred. There, below us, brightly illuminated by the landing light was a thin layer of mist and fog. I called out to Bill, "We can't go through that stuff with the light on; we'll get vertigo."

We turned off the landing light.

We both knew without saying a word the layer was only 100 feet thick and about 200 feet above the top of the trees. We also knew we were about to terminate a night autorotation to the tops of the jungle.

We were both on the controls. Bill had never said, "I got it" and I had never said, "You got it, Bill."

The instant we came out of the clouds, I turned on the landing light. Directly below us, by the grace of God, lay a three-ship LZ.

I remember recognizing we were going to make it. I relaxed and said to Bill, "We can make this," hauled back on the collective and steeply flared.

I felt Bill push the nose forward as the tail rotor slid over the trees and into the clearing. We both still had our hands on the controls and this sense of both of us following through each other had been with me all through the autorotation.

Instinctively knowing this had to be a zero ground roll autorotation, we leveled at 50 feet and pulled in collective just prior to touchdown. She hit hard, spreading the skids, rocked up on the nose. We both yanked back hard, chopped off the tail boom and then sat dazed and numb for several seconds trying to grasp what had just happened.

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