



**VIETNAM
HELICOPTER
PILOTS
ASSOCIATION**

The VHPA Newsletter

P.O. Box 9592

Wichita, KS 67277

Volume 5, No. 1

March 1988



THE PRESENT DAYS, AH64A "Apache" is looped by Test Pilots Cap Parlier (former Marine) and Ed Wilson (former Navy "Seawolf").

Photo by McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Company

President's Roll Call

The "Gathering" was held Sunday night 7 February. 117 Helicopter Pilots (32 new members) and a bunch of goodlooking women attended the event. A special thanks to Larry Ford (a non-member) for setting up the Helicopter model display, Malcomb Campbell for being the local co-ordinator and last but not least, Saft America, Inc. for helping sponsor the "Gathering". We had so much fun we are going to do it again in January, 1989 in New Orleans. The "Gathering" will be held in conjunction with Helicopter Association International (HAI) annual convention.

A Scholarship program has been established. The V.H.P.A. is looking for corporate memberships to help provide the endowed funds to operate the Scholarship fund. If you work for a corporation that would like to participate in this worthy endeavor, please contact me. I will provide you with all the appropriate materials and I am available to meet with the corporation, if needed. The first scholarship will be awarded at the '89 Reunion.

The Reunion Committee is putting the finishing touches on the "88" Reunion (Ft. Worth). See you there.

C. David Owens
Darkhorse 26
Guardian 31



Street of memories, Fort Wolters.

Photo by Rick Schwab

VHPA Newsletter

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INCOMING MAIL

CAN HELICOPTERS LOOP!!

Hello Mr. Gould, how are you? I vaguely remember you years ago as a friend of my father. He gets the VHPA Newsletter and that's how I came across your name.

This guy (a fool with his money) bet me \$20 that a helicopter cannot do a loop and I'd like you to send me proof, conclusive, that it can be done. Of course, if you can't (I know you're busy) I'll understand, but I won't give up until I free him of his financial burden.

If you could send me proof I'd really be grateful and a little less poor.

Frank H. Miller III
[REDACTED]

Frank, don't spend your 20 bucks in one place. All kinds of helicopters, from the OH6 to the CH53, have been looped. Hope the cover photo is proof enough. Say Hi to your dad, he's one of the good guys. Ed.

TRIVIAL WHAT IS IT?

What is it? You have to be kidding! Anyone going through Wolters should be as familiar with this landmark as the "Boll Weevil" monument in Enterprise, Alabama (which by the way has made it into "Trivial Pursuit" history).

This pair of OH-23D main rotor blades provides access to the world's greatest swimming hole, better known as the "solo dunk". The blades were donated and erected by a WOC class and are just to the left of the main entrance of the Mineral Wells Holiday Inn. Although I'm a little fuzzy on the details and history, there is a small plaque located half way up the blade on the right that gives the details of when they were placed there and the class number. I saw it earlier this year when I visited Fort Wolters while attending the HAL convention with my wife. Couldn't believe that the old blades were still standing after all these years. Somebody must be waxing them! Unfortunately this is the only momento to

be found to remind anyone that we had been there "Above the Best". Wolters has since been turned into an industrial park but the barracks and most other buildings are still there. Even the arch at the main gate is still standing although the wording has changed and the aviator wings were probably taken by the last WOC to leave for Rucker. It was an extremely emotional experience going back after nearly 20 years and remembering things like it was yesterday. I'll be visiting Fort Rucker in February (on my annual trek in search of a warmer climate). I doubt if it can compare to the experience of seeing old Wolters again. Haven't been back to Rucker since April 1971 when I decided to take Uncle Sam's offer of an early out like so many other WO's. Back then I was an IP teaching out at Shell Army Airfield (BI in a TH-13T).

By the way, I'm considering having a plaque made (to be placed at the Holiday Inn for all to see) that would be dedicated to all who went through Wolters. If anyone has any ideas on this, I would like to hear from you. See you all at Wolters in July '88.

Larry Durocher
(Tomahawk 13)
[REDACTED]

Well, we think the "Blades" ought to be in "Trivial Pursuit", too. Ed.

MOST FAMOUS PAIR?

I'm sure there isn't a helicopter pilot around who does not know "What is it?". You should get a lot of response to this one, so maybe I can at least be one of the first!!

If you really wanted to be a chopper pilot you hoped and prayed you would solo after 8-10 hours of stick time at Fort Wolters. The bus would stop by the Holiday Inn in beautiful downtown Mineral Wells and after soloing you either walked or were dragged under these rotor blades and then thrown into the swimming pool. Then photos were taken with classmates around the "most

famous pair of rotor blades" known to man.

Carl Fletcher Flemer III
(Dolphin 07)
[REDACTED]

Whew!! Glad you said "rotor blades", we could have just seen the heat from Dolly. Ed.

A LATRINE BULL FROG

What is it? Looks like the Rotor Blade Arch at the Holiday Inn in Mineral Wells. Seems to me all of us got carried under it then dumped in the pool, Nomex, boots and all after the first solo.

I think you may have opened up a new area for tall tales, that being the goings on at Wolters. If you want some really funny stories, ask Dick Ashman about the rocket attacks from the roof of the 5th WOC Barracks, or about the boiler room parties. Our flight (A-2) didn't really go along with the companies mascot, a genuine tiger cub. We had a tortoise painted up like a TAC officers helmet, and he had the run of the place. Seems to me we also had a huge bullfrog that lived in the latrine.

Jack Conway
[REDACTED]

Well that was a good start, Jack, how about the rest of the story? Ed.

SAW THE BLADES GO UP!

Well you've really placed one picture which I can identify with some fond memories! The crossed OH23 Blades with the appropriate sign were constructed at the Holiday Inn between Mineral Wells and Ft. Wolters, Texas. My wife, Carol, my son, David, and I stayed there for over ten days so we could find some housing. We arrived there on the 4th of July 1967. During the next week the crossed blades were placed by the pool. The color hatted WOC classes would bring in the first man to solo, carry him through the blades, and throw him into the pool. It was a heritage item started by them with some real class.

As the class leader for my class, we did not use or come up with something as clever as the crossed blades. We all flew TH55's with those skinny blades anyways! Hard to match too!!

Continued on next page

David, Carol and I enjoyed the comradeship shown through the use of the blades and pool "dunking"! I'm assuming (and you know what that makes of you and me) that they were used through the expansion of Ft. Wolters until the decline in the early 70's. I was at Ft. Sill then and flew to Wolters several times until it was totally closed. I am not aware what happened to the blades.

Mike Stamilio
(Red Leg 6)

The Blades are still there, Mike. Rick Schwab's photo is a recent one, so you can feast your eyeball's upon them once again come 4th of July. Ed.



KISS THOSE BLADES!!

You're going to be getting a deuce-and-a-half load of mail with correct answers to the "What Is It?" photo in the latest newsletter, so I figured I'd add my two cents worth.

These blades are the entrance to "Solo Alley", located at the Holiday Inn on Highway 180 East, about a mile or

so west of the Wolters main gate. Unfortunately, I can't give you any of the history connected with the blades themselves. I remember that when I got to Wolters in July of '69, within the first week we had all heard about Solo Alley and we all looked forward to getting dunked in the Holiday Inn pool the day of our first supervised solo. It's been over 18 years since I kissed the blades but it's still one of the proudest days I can remember.

I'm enclosing a photograph, (don't know whether or not you can use it) of yours truly getting a boost to perform the first part of the ritual. Compare the photo with the one used in the newsletter and you'll see that the sign has changed. In my picture the sign says:

SOLO ALLEY Under these rotor blades pass the finest helicopter students in the world

There's probably a guy in an office somewhere who can come up with the exact statistics about how many student pilots took part in the solo tradition. I wouldn't even begin to guess... all I know is that I'm damn proud to have been one of them.

Bruce Nelson
(Dustoff 153)

WOW! Some two cents, great photo, Bruce, you win! Ed.



Kissing the Blades.

Photo by Bruce Nelson

THERE AT THE BEGINNING

I can't help but smile as I read the newsletter about most of the WOC classes (all in fact) out of Ft. Wolters, TX. I was one of flight of "old" (Some had wheels) H-23's out of Ft. Sill which made the fly-by opening up Ft. Wolters in 19--, whatever year that was. 1956 I believe it was.

And as I read "Fanny" memories from Wayne Wollins how well I remember those LRRP drops and "hairy" pickups. I had a flight commander (Maj) who the minute I arrived in the company area pointed at me and said "your mine". I'm sure he wished otherwise at times. I was the only CWO in the unit the "whole" year I was there. He felt he! was the only one who could successfully drop and pickup the LRRP. And those first four months in country yours truly was right beside him wishing otherwise.

Then the picture on page 13 by Skip Budny titled "A little speed tape and schedule for the morning" brought back memories of working way into the wee hours of the Am getting A/C up for early flights.

And yes the "Green Tape" (Speed tape) patched many, many bullet holes in the blades and A/C body and out they went again.

Bob Bigelow

Not too many folks can say, "I kicked the tire and lite the fire", on a OH23!! Ed.

COLLECTION OF MEMORIES

The 1987 Membership Directory is GREAT!! Such a collection of Memories! I would like to include a few additions and corrections that would make me feel better and get the records straight.

On 31 July 1967 a mid-air collision occurred near Tuy Hoa/Phu Hiep. Two UH1C gunships from the 188th AHC (Spider) (Blackwidow was the slick call sign) were called out at night, for a purpose that later proved very stupid. Shortly after takeoff, while maneuvering, the aircraft collided and eight friends were lost. Three of the pilots were: Robert Michael Wallace, James Robert Poggemeyer, and Henry Clay Cauthen, Sr. I can't recall the 4th pilot's name. The enlisted crewmembers were the best in the platoon. It was my gun team!

Continued on next page

After more than 20 years I can still remember specific details of that night. I'm sure there are many others who can also.

Thank you for the dedicated time and effort to maintain these records. There are a great number of us who appreciate it! Maybe I can find a few good old pictures to send in.

Herb Sims
(Spider 50)

Thanks, Herb, we could always use a "few good old" photos. Ed.



CALLING 14,000

I just received the 1987 Membership Directory — Excellent!!!! A total improvement over the 1986 one. We, members, must now get the other 14,000 on record and into the Directory as soon as possible. I have sent application forms to three (3) other pilots that I know of that are not listed in the Directory. One, a Navy pilot flew with the group down in the Delta, another flew with UTT, an old CWO Retired (also) Bob Roberts.

Just a short update on two (2) of the guys that I knew of. Captain Jay Mitchell and 1st Lieutenant William Gottschalk were lost on 5/12/67, during a flight between Key Ha (Chu Lai) to Marble Mountain, flying a CH-46 with HMM-262 (Echo Tango's). My Best Man at my wedding was the Door Gunner on that flight — Cpl. Jimmy Akstin. The aircraft was part of a two (2) aircraft flight going to RON at Marble Mountain — then go up to Dong Ha early the next morning. It is felt that the reason that they were lost was due to mechanical failure — there was no radio message of anything wrong, and they were approximately 1/2 mile out over the South China Sea. It was several days later that their bodies were recovered from the sea. It has only been in the past several months that I have begun to deal with the loss of Jimmy — as dear a friend as I will ever have. Years later — I flew "Guns" — and I used to

tell myself that every kill was one for Jimmy.

I hope this helps, as I am able to deal with it — I'll try to get you caught up on some more of the guys we lost....

James "Sneaky" White

You bet it helps, Sneaky, be interesting to hear how you became an "Army Gunney". Also, what's this "old CWO Retired (also)" business? Ed.

MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY GOT 'EM

Quite soon you should be receiving membership applications from 10-12 members of my National Guard unit here, in Chicago. I had been after these folks for some time to join the VHPA, but it took the NEW FORMATED Membership Directory to swing them over. I suppose it helped a bit by informing them that the 1989 reunion is scheduled for Chicago.

Larry Pluhar
(Stagecoach 25 & Phoenix 24)

Music to Mike Law's ears, as he was the driving force behind the NEW MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY. Ed.

ONE BIT-WORTH A MEMBERSHIP

Both the Newsletter and the Directory are great!

As a matter of fact, that's why I'm writing.

Last year I found the name of a buddy of mine, listed in the directory, that had gone down in a Charlie Model, been badly burned and had broken his back. The doctors had said he would probably be paralyzed from the neck down for the rest of his life, but from the Directory, I learned he was flying again!!!

**Help The VHPA.
Get A Friend
To Join Today**

Just that one bit of news made my membership well worth it.

This year I found my TAC in the Directory and by coincidence read a letter written by him in the December Newsletter (Robert "Russ" Jones, Spit and Shine TAC).

These two and other finds have meant a lot to me, so I've broken down and written this letter (something I hate to do and am not very good at it, so please don't print it). The purpose of this letter is not only to express my thanks, but also to send you some two-year-old addresses that might mean a lot to some of the other guys.

William E. Bowman

[REDACTED]
am
96925

John L. Enright

[REDACTED]
02771

Dennis C. Graves

[REDACTED]
03038

John P. Keenan

Alton L. Maurais

Steven F. Moy

David Nuttall

William H. Pond

Carl W. Kimmich
(Polecat 47)

You may hate it, but you write a fine letter, Carl, hence, we are ignoring the "don't print it" request. Ed.

Continued on next page

DIRECTORY EVOKES MEMORIES

First of all, congratulations on the excellent Directory! I received it several days ago and have scarcely put it down. It has brought back so many memories, and I will be using it to write the many friends I have lost contact of but shared so much with during our flying years.

In regards to further information about those persons on the list of KIA/MIA, I can fill in at least one spot. WO1 Ian McIntosh has the notation "NEED TO VERIFY" beside his name. I was the scout for the first team on station after Ian went down and can relate, as best I recall, the events surrounding his death. Ian was the new guy in our group ("Scouts", A Trp., 2/17th Air Cav, 101st) so no one knew him well, but my impression is that he was from Scotland, rather than Canada. Anyway, he went out for his initial area of operations (AO) orientation flight as co-pilot for Cpt. Robert Young, the Scout Platoon Commander and a fine pilot and soldier. The AO, known to us as the "Laotian Salient", had been heating up; and we had begun to take considerable fire along Road 616 where it entered SVN from Laos. Later, we discovered a heavily defended NVA field hospital had been established there.

Anyway, while scouting the area, the aircraft (OH-6) took small arms fire and went down. The "Chase" picked up Cpt. Young, but McIntosh's body was left behind, still strapped to the seat. Cpt. Young was in considerable pain from a hard landing, but he assured us all (and later assured a hearing board) that McIntosh was killed by small arms fire before A/C hit the ground. We made several attempts to recover the A/C and the body, but the ground fire was too intense and it was determined that the "Blues" could not be inserted, nor defended, in the location of the crash. Several weeks later the Minigun was still strapped to the side so we destroyed the A/C with rockets, and I remember the grenades it carried "cooking off". We all felt it had been left intact there to lure us back in for recovery.

During Lam Son 719, the area was occupied by friendlies, but I don't recall any further reports on the fate of McIntosh or his body. The hearing board determined him "KIA" by small arms fire.

I have another question regarding the omission of a name I can't

remember, but I am sure is not on the list. Page 170 lists Cpt. Ted Taylor whose death I am also familiar with, but I can't recall who was his co-pilot on the day they went in. I looked at all the names on the list to find another with the same date of death, but no reasonable possibilities turned up. I'm almost certain they should share the same date of death due to the circumstances under which "Tits" Taylor was killed. I was the scout for a "heavy pink w/chase" going out in support of a radio intercept/communications post near the Laotian border (I don't know much about that post except that I think it was there for most of the time I was in Nam. It must have been in a good position because I think it was defended by just a handful of indigenous troops and although they were frequently attacked, they always seemed to hang on). The post was on a mountaintop and was socked in when we got there, so we never did fire for them; but we circled a while looking for openings. Our circles took us over the "pink line" and on one, we took some heavy AA fire (23mm and 37mm) "Tits" reported being hit but was still flying. We decided to return to base (Qunag Tri) via Khe Sahn and the Da Kron River Valley.

"Tits" was reporting heavy vibrations and had trouble controlling the Snake. I flew up under him and I observed a large hole near the mini-gun turret, but my impression was that the damage appeared to have been caused by an internal explosion as opposed to a hit, but that was pretty subjective. I could see nothing to indicate control problems (leaking hydraulic fluid, etc.). We tried to convince "Tits" to set down on the abandoned runway at Khe Sahn and ride the chase ship home, but he seemed to think he had the situation under control until we passed Khe Sahn and were approaching Fire Base Sheppard (also abandoned). There, the vibrations got worse and "Tits" agreed to salvo his rockers at the FB and abandon the A/C there. After salvoing (to set off any booby traps) the vibrations decreased and the A/C became more manageable, so we passed Sheppard, continuing up the River Valley. Then his engine quit.

We talked him all the way down and he set the Snake perfectly in the river (the sides of the valley were too steep and dense to go anywhere else). The Snake settled upright on its skids with the blades above the water. "Tits" and his co-pilot climbed out and onto the rotor head with the chase ship on its way down. I was patrolling the river-

bank and the other Snake was covering the recovery. As "Tits" and his front seater grasped the skids of the chase, all hell broke loose from the north side of the river. I don't know if "Tits" and the front seater were hit and fell into the water or just couldn't hold on to the skids as the chase ship started to pull up, but both fell into the water still wearing their "Chicken Plates". I looked downstream for them, taking lots of fire, until the remaining Snake ran out of ordnance. Another team was scrambled and they also searched until dark. For several more days we caught hell along the river looking for them, but there were no traces. Eleven months later, when returning from the AO with ordnance, many teams would drop down and run the river in hopes of spotting them — no luck.

Since they both went in on the same day, under the same conditions, I would think they would be declared MIA or KIA on the same date, but as I mentioned, I can find no record of an A Trp 2/17th pilot dying on 7-15-71, the date listed for "Tits" death. Maybe you can check your source for the information on "Tits" and find the name of his front seater, or maybe the years have dimmed my memory, but I'm almost positive that both of them went into the water.

Mike Wise

Interesting. Glad you could fill in some of the blanks, Mike, we will take your info anytime.

UNUSUAL CHARLIE MODEL

After receiving the 1987 Membership Directory, I was unable to keep from writing. The picture on the front of the 1987 Directory is a very fitting one because it shows the 118th Assault Helicopter Company, in trail, on the ground refueling during a Battalion sized lift in III Corps. The picture was also apparently taken around 1966 or before, as evidenced by the white helmets on several pilots. Also, most likely, the place was Lai Khai, Cu Chi or even Tay Ninh. Anyway, that is a guess — hope you tell us next newsletter. The 118th, or Thunderbirds were one of the first 2 aviation units in Vietnam and along with the 120th that arrived in the years prior to 1960. They initially flew the CH-21 "Flying Banana" until receiving the UH-1B in early 1964. They were both part

Continued on next page

of the 145th Combat Avn Bn, "First in Vietnam" and were based in Saigon at Ton Son Nhut Airport (later moved to Bien Hoa in early 1966).

I served with the 118th Thunderbirds from August '66 to August '67. Originally assigned to the 197th Avn Co. (previously the UTT) I arrived in country at Camp Alpha, Tan Son Nhut, and was diverted by the 145th CAB S-1 to the 118th along with fellow classmate (66-10), Lt. Reed T. Kimzey. We flew "Slicks" for 3 months until I got tired of taking "hits" and then moved to the Gun Platoon as Bandit 32. As a fire team leader my assigned "Bird" was Bandit 2 which was a UH-1C armed in the configuration called a "Frog". The "Frog" consisted of 38-2.75" folding fin rockets and 250 rounds of 40MM grenade from a nose mounted launcher. With this weight, fuel was limited to 800-900 pounds. I never saw another UH-1C configured in this fashion. I will look for a picture to send in the future.

Thomas H. Payne
[REDACTED]

According to Pete Harlen's "UH1C HEUY" from the Cobra Company, the "Frog" configuration was fairly common, with one or 2 per gun platoon. Your version can more accurately be called a "Heavy Frog", 19 pairs of 2.75's vs. 7 pairs on the standard "Frog". Ed.

ONE MAIN ROTOR TOO MANY

Just received my December issue of the VHPA Newsletter, and noticed that it's time to renew my subscription. Enclosed is my \$20 check for another year's reminiscing. I was quite interested in the letter BG (ret) Scott sent to the 174th Avn. Co., giving permission to use the shark's teeth motif on its gunships. I was in the 174th from Oct. '66 to June '67, and can remember either that letter or a similar one proudly displayed in the "Sharks" tent.

I really enjoyed looking over the '87 directory, and counting out my old classmates, fellow Sharks and Dolphins. One small correction: in the directory you had me listed as in the 147th Avn. Co. It was actually the 174th Avn. Co. The typo is quite timely, since we in the Avn Bde of the Minnesota Guard, just reorganized into the regimental system. The designation: you guessed it, the 147th Aviation.

I see that there are only 37 VHPA members in Minnesota. Hope to cure that in the near future.

Matt Brockway
(Dolphin)
[REDACTED]

Someone thought you looked like a "Hook" pilot, Matt, besides where would you choose, Vung Tau or Duc Pho? Ed.

EVERYONE A FRIEND

Please find enclosed my reunion reservation and a check to cover the various events. My wife and I were unable to attend Long Beach. We, and I emphasize we, regretted not being able to attend, since we had such a wonderful time in Washington, D.C. I renewed friendships after a sixteen year lapse as if a single conversation had been interrupted by a new guy looking for the flight line. I spent considerable time with a comrade who thought that I was KIA. I made new friends easily and readily.

I recount these personal items, because I am aware that there are active members, and I assume potential members, who are leery of attending a reunion. Their reasons range from a fear of not finding anyone they know, to the fear of being covered by an avalanche of war stories. The latter should be a concern as I am sure that there are already LZ preps underway at the Hyatt. I would hope that every member finds an old friend, but the truth is that everyone there is a friend. I encourage everyone to attend and bring their fears with them.

Richard McClain
(Boomerang 13)
[REDACTED]

It would be very difficult to express the meaning of our reunions any better, Richard, and we appreciate your early reservation. Ed.

"LAST TIGER"

My class was 63-7W, half of the class went to Fort Rucker, the rest of us became 63-7W(T) and graduated from Wolters. We were the last class to have this honor. There were 19 WOC's and two Warrants that made up this class (at Wolters).

Looking forward to the Reunion at Fort Worth. If all classmates from 63-7W would contact me, we can have

a get together at the reunion. Also "Wild Bill" Fraker was "Playboy Lead" in '65 and has or is writing a book about Vietnam — one hell of a pilot, plus the boy can write.

Gary Jones
[REDACTED]

You heard him, 63-7W, you know that saying about "when the Tiger roars". Ed.



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FOGGY PEAKS-APPOINTMENT ONLY

GREAT TIMING

Although I could not locate an actual roster or graduation orders, (I'm sure they are in the attic somewhere), this class picture may be the next best thing.

I lost contact with my classmates many years ago, however, I do remember that Lt. Porrazzo, Lt. Roe, and Mr. Parsons were all KIA in Vietnam.

This class was split after Ft. Wolters and we actually graduated as two different classes. I hope some of my classmates will show up at the reunion this year. In my case, since I live in Ft. Worth, I don't have an excuse to miss it this year.

Chet Uszynski
[REDACTED]

Sorry, Chet, the photo COPY won't reproduce well, but at the same time your letter arrived, Ray O'Donohue, sent us YOUR class roster. See CHET'S CLASS TOO! Ed.

**Your Letters,
Comments And
Suggestions
Are Always
Welcome.**

Continued on next page

CHET'S CLASS TOO!

You guys are doing one hell of a job, please keep up the good work. Here are copies of the rosters from my graduations at Ft. Wolters and Ft. Rucker. They may help to fill out the names of those who served.

I look forward to the newsletter, brings back some of the good memories. Thanks very much for those memories.

Ray O'Donohue
(Satan 17)

Helps ole Chet, now he doesn't have to crawl around in the attic. Thanks, Ray, see GREAT TIMING. Ed.

TWO TOURS, SAME CALL SIGN

Recently I was in the waiting area of Chaparral Aviation in San Antonio and saw a copy of your newsletter. It was my first indication that an organization existed and I am delighted to enclose my application. During my helicopter tours, I served as the scout platoon leader of D Troop, 1/4th Cav., 1st Inf. Div. The troop call sign was Darkhorse with four platoons: scouts-Outcasts, Guns-Mustangs, Lift-The Four Horsemen, and an infantry platoon called the Aero Rifles. The troop was located at Phu Loi until the standdown of the division in March '70 when the troop was redesignated C Troop, 16th Cavalry and assigned to the 13th Aviation Bn., 164th Combat Aviation Group. The Troop moved to Soc Trang and later moved north to Can Tho. I left Darkhorse in Dec. '69 and did not make the trip south but had the opportunity to return to country in September '71 and was assigned to D Troop 3/5th Cavalry which was at that time attached to the 101st Airborne Div. and working out of Quang Tri. I served as the weapons section leader with a call sign of Charliehorse 38. As the 101st began to standdown the troop was redesignated D Troop, 17th Cavalry (provisional) in Dec. '71 and moved to Camp Evans. In Jan. '72 the troop moved to Hue-Phu Bai and conducted operations until a standdown in Feb. '72. Having nothing better to do I volunteered to stay in country and arranged once again to return to Darkhorse (C/16), again becoming Darkhorse 16 from Feb. 15, '72 until I left RVN in July '72.

I enjoyed the letters in "incoming mail" and look forward to renewing old friendships. As a personal note, I would like to hear from old Darkhorse and Charliehorse pilots for input in a book I am working on about Air Cavalry operations in Vietnam. I can be contacted at the address listed below. My current assignment is as the DCSOPS of Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, and C-12's now serve as a poor substitute for the good old OH-6A.

Hugh L. Mills
(Darkhorse 16)

Thanks for joining us, Hugh. Wonder how many ended up with the same call sign on subsequent tours? Ed.

OL' JIM IS ALIVE!!

Regarding Phil Marshall's letter in the December Newsletter, ol' Jim Fazekas is indeed alive and well here in beautiful downtown New Jersey.

Needless to say I was pleased and honored by Phil's words; and, as he pointed out all of us only tried to do what we thought right. Sure, there were Candidates we thought less of than others, but then that's human nature. All in all, I thoroughly enjoyed being a TAC and consider it my most rewarding assignment in 24 Army years. I look back on it with a great deal of personal satisfaction that I, like Phil and many others, played a large part in the development, maturation and mostly preparation for combat of those in our charge. Those were good years; ones during which I felt I contributed the most.

Enclosed please find my application and dues, and a copy of an article I wrote for the March 1980 issue of AIR-POWER MAGAZINE. I hope you find it helpful, and I have some other photos you might find interesting. Please let me know.

Personally, after Wolters I trucked on back to 'Nam for a second tour this time flying RU-21D radio reconnaissance missions Nov. '69-Nov. '70; then to Omaha, Nebraska and Bootstrap followed by the Advanced Course at Rucker; then to Hawaii for four years as a Huey IP; an, ah, "interesting" five years at Campbell with the 101st; Germany for four and a half more flying from Stuttgart in Hueys, U-21's and C-12's; then finally to Ft. Dix, NJ IP-ing in a U-21 and Hueys until this past April

1st (an auspicious date) when I retired.

Currently I'm flying a Super King Air 300 for Executive Air Fleet out of Teterboro, NJ, and am Senior Captain on my account. Yes, I enjoy being retired and civilian flying in the corporate world; at least they treat pilots like adults. EAF is an outstanding company and probably the leader in the aviation management field, and the King Air 300 the best of its class in the turboprop field.

I look forward to a long association with the VHPA, and thanks again, Phil, for your comments. Occasionally all of us do something right.

James P. Fazekas
(Scorpion 939)

Great stuff, Jim. Phil Chinnery who just finished an outstanding book titled "AIR WAR IN VIETNAM", could have used your input. Ed.



CHOPPER JOCKS, GRUNTS & GUTS

I'm almost embarrassed to admit it, but until my good friend and classmate, Jim Greer, told me about VHPA I never thought there could be such an organization. And now I find out you've been around for three-plus years! Whoever put it together, Thanks! One thing I was hoping you published was a membership roster and the 1987 VHPA Directory answered that perfectly. (I've shown it to some ex-flying wing drivers I work with who are eligible for VPHA membership, and hopefully they'll forward the applications I gave them.) The Directory was obviously a labor of love and I'm glad Mike Law told us who put in those "fun filled hours." Heartfelt thanks to the Aviation Association Management Staff. I joined many others who poured over the names to find long lost friends. Happily I found some listed in the Membership/Friends Roster, but I was saddened to find two or three in the KIA/MIA and Deceased section. At least now I know.

Continued on next page

I'm also including portions of a letter my younger brother sent me for my last birthday. In it he had some stirring things to say about the helicopter pilots and crewmembers. I asked him if he'd mind me sending it to VHPA and the Vietnam Helicopter Crewmembers Association. (I don't have VHCA's address, so please forward this to them. This is as much for them as it is pilots.) A quick background: I flew sticks in 1969-70 in the Delta and got my "million dollar wound" two weeks before my brother arrived in II Corps for some adventurous hiking and camping as a LRRP. I'm proud of the job we did, that of supporting Americans such as my brother. In turn, it's obvious to me he was glad our support was available. With my brother's permission, here's a grunt's thank you letter to helicopter crews.

Phillip C. Miller, Jr.
(Cowboy 14)

Some Bro! Your brother's letter follows, thanks for sharing, Phillip. Ed.

Dear Phil,

Rather than send a card for your birthday I'd much rather take the time to express what has gone through my mind about it. These past few hours I've been thinking about you being shot down in 'Nam, crawling through that rice paddy and how out of place you must have felt. (I at least recall you relating that experience to me. I also thought of all the paddies I stomped through, from vill to vill, day and night, from mountain to mountain.) Your frail craft providing you the "protection" you'd become accustomed to, suddenly lying there in a tangled heap of burnt technology. What I wouldn't have given to have been there keeping Charlie off your tail. I think, "Wow... Phil had guts to have been tooling around up there, knowing one well placed slug could bring him crashing to the ground." Then my mind wanders to a morning with contact which left three dead NVA and a 500 Dong bill going to the States. The burst from an AK that passed just over my knee and through my armpit, those tracers moving in slow motion

toward me, and that one move in any direction would have ruined me right then and there. I remembered how after two hours in-country I called Bear Cat to be told you'd been shot down and were on your way back to the world. The reality of 'Nam hit me square between the eyes. I was looking forward to seeing you and now I was suddenly feeling so very alone. I remembered the hour I spent in the Chapel at Cam Ranh praying that you were still alive. When I received the photo of you in the hospital with Dad and the kids I was relieved and cried. A medic from California, Doc. Johnson, sat down with me and told me that modern technology would take care of you.

I remembered all the missions I went on and particularly that last one when I realized how you Chopper Jocks conjured up the guts to go where you were least prepared... the jungle floor. A slick came in and snatched a LRRP team from certain death. "White Band" NVA encircled our team, their comrades lying dead out there in our kill zone, a chopper coming in under the cover of two B-model guns dumping rocket and minigun fire into the surrounding terrain, the security fire we were laying down for the bird, us backing toward the Huey as our slugs tore into the bushes giving the slick time to settle, an avenue of fire opening and we dove into the chopper, the M-16 barrel burning my arms, and my tooth bouncing across the chopper floor and out the other side because I landed on my mouth when I dove into the slick. I remembered the M-60s giving constant security fire for the bird, those birds that remind everybody of 'Nam, with their green helmeted warriors manipulating the controls and lifting the huge things into the air, pulling away from the certain death that awaited us on the ground. I remembered the hugs and thumbs up that went around and the feeling of teamwork to see that this bird stayed together so we could all get home. I remembered our team huddled together looking out the plexiglass as the pilot flew over the kill zone one last time to observe the enemy dead... a de-

fiant move to the enemy just to say, "We got you, you creeps", flaunting our airmobility, brass flying all over the place from the M-60s as the gunner and crew chief had their last say. My last mission, the war's over for me, thanks to a tough slick crew with the guts to come in and get us out of that situation, and with the confidence in us that we would do all we could to protect the bird from the NVA. A few holes in the fuselage, maybe, but she flew us out of there. Oh, those wonderful Hueys! Happy birthday, Phil, and thanks for giving us grunts the hope we needed when the odds suddenly turned against us. I love you and God bless.

Signed: George

4 ARMED, 2 HEADED, LEFT FOOTED SOB'S

As a dues paying member of enough organizations to support a small third world country, my first impression was "I really don't need to join another one". Then Larry Pearson dropped a copy of the Newsletter in my lap. After reading it, I knew there was no other organization that I owed more allegiance to than those 4 ARMED, 2 HEADED, LEFT FOOTED COLLECTIVE PULLING SOB'S I served and flew with between 1964 and '68. SO HERE I AM!!

Dick Fortenberry
(Cobra 3)

Careful, Dick, those "leftfooted" remarks are going to make some "Hook" or "Frog" pilot jealous. Ed.

COPILOT FOR SON

Never get through the door with my VHPA Newsletter before I begin to read. Always looking to see if any of the guys from Vinh Long 1967 have spoken. Missed Long Beach, but enjoyed DCA '86 and needless to say counting days until DFW and Mineral Wells. My wife is also looking forward to the occasion. I would like to see the complete poem about the Gunship pilot, that was on the "Wall" at '86 DCA reunion, printed.

I am luck enough (blessed) to fly that great 'C' model — now called "M"

Continued on next page

model about 150 hours a year as a member of Army NG — except now my 21-year-old son is my copilot, IT'S GREAT!!

Thomas L. Mitchell
(Maverick 32)

Pudd, Croc 4, sent us the complete poem, Tom, someday when there's room we will print it all. Ed.

"DO NOTHIN' — TWO NOTHIN' "

Having passed up the chance to be a Charter Member, but thoroughly enjoying my ensuing membership, I now read with much interest each issue of the VHPA Newsletter. Although starting to write several times, I am finally getting to it and passing on some information:

1LT. Raymond Flynn, known as "Erroll" to all who knew him, was a member of D Troop, 3/5 Cavalry. He had the Call Sign of Longknife 20 and used to call himself "Do Nothin' — Two Nothin' ". He was a great jokester and a very good pilot, the kind that everybody thought was an "old guy" even when he was a FNG. He was killed by hostile fire with that dreaded of all wounds — the head shot. It happened at the end of the day on the way home from the AO. The Guns (Crusaders) and Scouts (War-wagons) had already departed and were on their way when the Slicks left. While flying under a cloud layer, and parallel to a canal (a Cardinal sin), the flight flew into a helicopter trap. Upon taking fire, "Erroll" dove to the left and took a shot in the left temple. After 7-10 days in the hospital, he finally died.

As Bob Odenheimer (Crusader 38) pointed out in the December Newsletter, D 3/5 moved around quite a bit. The Call Sign of Longknife for the Slicks, was in use at Vinh Long from mid-'69 until February '71, as part of D 3/5. The Troop Call Sign, Lighthorse, was also in use at Vinh Long as well. It should be pointed out that D 3/5 had one of the best combat records of any unit in the 1st Aviation Brigade.

Not having been a VHPA member in '85, I missed Tom Hestund's letter on "No Doors." I would like to point out that my A/C, 68-15405, had no doors, cargo or cockpit, on it. The cargo doors were off almost all of our H's and the previous AC of 405, Rich (?) Zimmerman (Longknife 23) had taken off the

cockpit doors, albeit accidentally. He tried the emergency release and, when that didn't work, knocked the doors loose with a hammer. By the time new doors came in, the door frame had warped and the doors would not fit. The only time it was a bother was during rainy season.

I would like to pass on a saying that I found on a "shitter" wall and carried around with me, before having it made into a plaque:

You've never lived until you've almost died; for those who've fought for it, life has a special meaning the protected will never know.

Tom Egleston
(Longknife 21)

Tom, your saying should remind us that in spite of the pain, the Vietnam experience forever altered our outlook and has made life that much sweeter for most of us. Ed.



BETTER PRODUCT

Just received a copy of the Newsletter and can't begin to tell you how much I enjoyed reading the letters from fellow "flingwing flyers", not to mention the fact that an organization such as this was long overdue.

Still in the Army and still on flight status. If I may make one observation regarding today's Army product (pilots) vs. the Vietnam Era product, it's the simple fact that having had to cope with woefully underpowered aircraft, collectively, we were better pilots.

George L. Kitchens
(Red Horse 3A & 6A)

You have a point, George, although having "cut our teeth" on 1st generation recip powered machines that frequently had to be "seduced into the air", we've heard the same line concerning Vietnam Era vs. PRE-VIETNAM Era types. Ed.

"SAFELY" VHPA

I have been attempting to recruit more members from the local area in Louisville and found three right here in this office. The FAA Flight Standards District Office in Louisville has four Vietnam era helicopter pilots, including myself. All of us are FAA Aviation Safety Inspectors.

Our office manager who was an Air Force C-130 driver takes a lot of flack when all of us are in the office at the same time. Since he is not helicopter rated, we constantly tell him that he has a "restricted pilots license" since he cannot hover. He keeps telling us that he plans to screen any new applications for inspectors to make sure that they are not former Army Helicopter Pilots.

Anyway, thought it was interesting that this office has four chopper drivers, all of which are now flying the stiff wing devices.

The other three inspectors are: Richard K. Chesson, Richard E. Kelly, Jr., and James E. Perkins. Here are also a few Vietnam types not listed in the directory, but still around: Daniel R. Keenan, Richard L. Sciolto, Peter A. LaRosa, John J. Parziale, William J. Koch, Elbert R. Poole, and Richard T. Fortenberry.

Thomas J. Ward

Small World!! Dick Fortenberry must have heard you calling, Tom, check his letter: 4 ARMED, 2 HEADED... HE'S NOW ONE OF US!! Wonder if Pete LaRosa ever unloaded his Qhin Nhon 'O' Club stock. Ed.

'FROG FLYERS'

The VHPA did one hell of a fine job on the 1987 Directory. Although we still do not have the Marine listings that I would like to see, progress is being made. I spread the word every chance I get. Enclosed is my check for dues.

An attempt was made to organize a reunion of our 'Nam Squadron' for 1987, but the response was very poor. Being die-hards, and with the help of the new Directory, we are trying again for 1988, and things are looking better this time around.

By the way, please find a picture of a CH-46 and start using it "sprinkled" through the newsletter along with all those Hueys, Chinooks, Jolly Greens, and Cranes that I am always seeing. A

Continued on next page

INCOMING MAIL, continued

lot of people seem to forget that the Marines used the CH-46 for all the same missions that the Army used the Huey slicks for, including assault troop lifts, med-evacs, recon inserts and extracts and resupply. During the early years, the CH-46 (along with the CH-34 and CH-53) supported two Marine Divisions and all of I Corps. Please guys, a little respect for us "Frog Flyers".

On a more somber but necessary note, I can add some information to two names on the KIA list. Bob Trigalet (page 171) and Tom Williams (page 174) were killed in a mid-air with an Army Huey during a big troop lift in Quang Tri Province. They were both in the same CH-46 attached to HMM-262, PMAG-39, 1st MAW, flying out of Quang Tri. Good men, but then they all were.

J.D. "Jim" Collins, III
(Chatterbox)

Maybe Dave Grieger will ask the artist who drew all those "other helicopters" to crank out a "Frog 46" or two, then we can honor your request, Jim. Ed.

MOVE OVER 67-1

Having read the letter from Greg Ross (Dec. '87) reference 23 Classmates, 20 Years Later, we are going to try to give WOC 67-1 some competition. Class 63-4W/4WT is having a 25th Anniversary reunion in conjunction with the 1988 VHPA reunion in Fort Worth.

For a little background, in the spring of 1987, a couple of class members, living in Alabama, came up with having a class reunion. After bouncing the idea off several other class members around dear old "Mother Rucker", the monumental task of finding everybody was begun. Slowly but surely, one contact would lead to another, roommates remembered hometowns, stick buddies remembered mother's or father's names, etc., etc. Telephone bills were rather high for the guys doing the locating. There were 62 graduates from Class 63-4W/4WT — 36 from 4W and 26 from 4WT (Tiger). Of the 62, seven are known deceased, 53 were located and only two are unknown — not located and no information found. (If anyone knows the location or status of Richard S. Chilton or Richard D. Clark,

please make contact with me or ask them to do so.) Class members are living in 25 states including Alaska and Hawaii plus Korea and American Samoa. Also, one just moved to the Philippines. As mentioned, one contact would lead to another and that one to another and so on (sound familiar Greg Ross?). By last count, five are still on active duty.

In June, the call went out for a 24th Anniversary reunion at Enterprise (Fort Rucker) from 21 to 23 August 1987. A total of 17 were able to attend including two wives of deceased classmates (not too bad for the first try and after 24 years). In addition to the guys living in lower Alabama, class members came from North and South Carolina, Oklahoma, Ohio and Texas. We had a real fun time and even located the class tombstone in Mineral Wells. It was transported to the reunion (the airline baggage handlers loved that one) and presented to the WOC Museum curator during reunion ceremonies. Bob Donnenwirth, Pat Jones, Charles Gilford, Gary Southwell, Don Byers and Harold Wright just did a fantastic job of organizing and hosting the 24th Anniversary reunion. Thanks also to their ladies.

Everyone was warned that the 25th would be held with details to follow. Letters are going in the mail this month (January) to give everyone time to make plans and reserve the July 4th weekend for Fort Worth. Included in the letters will be VHPA reunion registration and hotel reservation blanks. I'm really looking forward to Ju-

ly and the Silver Anniversary reunion of WOC Class 63-4W/4WT plus seeing other friends at the VHPA reunion. Thanks VHPA.

N. Keith Reed

Good show, Keith, we'd say the "gauntlet" is at Greg's feet. Any other challengers out there? Ed.

LAST ONE IN THE POOL, IS A.....!

After reading through my latest Newsletter, I want to thank E. Everett for asking about past issues of the Newsletter. I too am a new member and here is my \$15.

I've also included some photos. Among them is a swimming pool built by the aviation unit of the 3rd BDE, 9th Inf. Div. at Tan An in 1970. Who else had their own pool just outside their BOQ. It did come in handy on those hot, muggy days.

Michael La Barbera
(Merkin 12 & Commanche 21)

Well, Michael, we know of another pool (have photo) built in III Corps in 1966. We are going to publish the photo, after we receive the first correct details about it. Thanks for the other photos, they may just become a future "What is it?" Ed.



Pool at Tan An, 1970

Photo by Michael La Barbera

Continued on next page

MED-EVAC LIMITED EDITION

The enclosed photo has been sent to you at the insistence of one of your members. (My husband is in a Med-Evac unit and flies with several members of your organization). The original was an anniversary present for my husband. He liked it so well we had a limited edition of 220 printed to share with other enthusiasts. If you are interested, the prints are 19x25 inches, done in a black ink, printed on a 60 lb. cover stock of slight off white. The detail is done in stiple (small individual dots). Please contact me if interested.

Jackie Burger

Your husband is a lucky dude, a talented artist who appreciates helicopters for a wife. Ed.



MED-EVAC

Drawing by Jackie Burger

UNKNOWN "BLUEGHOST" IS "WILLY"!!

I am George W. Williams, "Willy", late of F/8th out of Chu Lai, '69-'70; referred to as "Name, Unknown" on the back cover of the Membership Directory. Before that Primary Instructor Pilot at Fort Wolter and before that "Crocodile 8" in the 119th AHC, Pleiku '66-'67. I was in Flight Class 66-11/66-13.

I would like a correction, if possible, as I am trying to locate former stick buddies and students; ran into several at the reunion in Long Beach, but am curious

about the fate of the rest.

George W. Williams

Shame on them other guys in the photo, not knowing a fellow "Blueghost". Ed.

HERMAN CALLS

First of all, it's that blasted time of year when dues are due. Not only is it tax time (@#\$%), but you want money too! Since my calculator is all warmed up for Uncle Sam, I've been doing some additional calculating. With annual dues of \$20.00, in fifteen years it will cost you the same as a lifetime membership. Now that might seem like a good deal to many of us when you consider inflation, however, when you consider fifteen envelopes and the cost of stamps, which are projected to rise to as high as \$1.00 by the year 2000, it makes a hell of a lot more sense to write one check, utilize one envelope, and one 22¢ stamp now. Therefore, please find enclosed my check for \$300 for a life membership in the finest organization that I've ever had the privilege of being associated with.

I spoke with Larry Clark at the HAI Convention in Las Vegas four years ago and joined immediately. I applaud Larry for his foresight in getting us started. Since that time, I have been fortunate enough to get about 20 other members. I have, through the efforts of many, been able to get in touch with many of my comrades from RVN, and several of my flight school buddies. I've attended the last two reunions, and after the first one swore that I will never miss another, so long as I am able to fly, drive, walk or crawl to it!

In September of last year, I was able to participate in the LZ Bravo activities at Fleming Field in South St. Paul, MN. This is a weekend organized as a tribute to Vietnam veterans. When I returned home after the activities, I received the September, '87 issue of the newsletter. As usual, I immediately dropped everything that I had planned to do to read it from cover to cover. In it was a letter from a flight school buddy, who had just heard of the organization and joined as a life member right off. To find him was a real pleasure, but the irony was that he lives in St. Paul, where I had just spent the whole weekend! After finding his telephone number, I called, had a great conversation and

made plans to meet for lunch one day. The next week, on an AFTP for Guard, I got in my AH-1S, and flew up to see Tom. What a great reunion! It's events like this that we can all thank Larry for. I challenge each and everyone of you to get one of your buddies to join in 1988, so that many more mini-reunions can take place.

Also, in that newsletter was a recap of our Annual Business Meeting. I would like to make one correction to Mike's dialogue. He stated that "A small but elite group from Indiana offered ideas for 1991..." Reference was for a location for the 91 reunion.

As the one who, stood up at the business meeting to present the idea, I think I can speak for all of us at Indianapolis Heliport and say that although we are a relatively small group, we are not more elite than each and every one of the membership. I enclose a letter from the Vice President of the Indianapolis Heliport Corp., Vic Bandini. The letter was supposed to have arrived in time for me to have brought it to Long Beach, but due to a glitch with the Postal Service, it unfortunately didn't make it. In any case, I'd like to share it with you all now, and ask that you give our proposal some thought so that we may vote on it in Ft. Worth.

The heliport staff work closely with the Tourist and Development Board, and will be most willing to organize accommodations, etc. We have plenty of room for static displays, and perhaps a heliport dance would be appropriate! Give it some thought. I've also enclosed a photo of "Herman", our memorial. As Vic said in his letter, this truly is our place.

I've got some old nostalgia photos of Wolters being copied, and will send them on when I get them back. Have no time to wait now, if my dues are late I might get cut off, and we all know what that's like.

Have a safe trip to Texas and we'll see you all there.

Randy R. Zahn
(Cavalier 24)



Continued on next page

June 29, 1987

Mr. Randy Zahn
Lead Pilot
University of Wisconsin-Med Flight
[REDACTED]

Dear Randy:

I would like to respond to our conversation of the other day with an enthusiastic approval to have the 1989 VHPA Convention here in Indianapolis.

As you know, the founders of the Indianapolis Heliport Corporation are former Vietnam combat helicopter pilots and as such we have seen fit to dedicate our facility to all of our com-

rades in arms, past and present, living or deceased. No doubt you also know of our memorial tribute, our life size bronze statue of a helicopter air crewman whom we have accidentally and affectionately named Herman. All the VHPA members should consider the Indianapolis Downtown Heliport as their own, for certainly without the sacrifices, dedication and contributions made by all of us, the Heliport would not be standing today.

The Indianapolis Heliport Corporation would be pleased to act as host and coordinator for the 1989 VHPA reunion. Please let me know at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely yours,
Victor J. Bandini
Vice President, Operations



HERMAN, memorial to helicopter airmen at the Indianapolis Downtown Heliport.
Photo sent by Randy Zahn



AUSSIE HELICOPTER FAN!!

My father served as a pilot with No. 9 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force (OH-1H's), from '68-'69 at Vung Tau. I am not really writing for him, as he is now Chief Pilot with the OLD STATE EMERGENCY SERVICE. I am writing for me. I have grown up with stories that he has told me, it sounded exciting, but downright dangerous.

I have read and re-read many times Robert Mason's account in "Chickenhawk". I would really like to find out more about this unique and necessary association. I don't mean to pry, but I would just like to learn about more of what happened. Incidentally, I am going to become a helicopter pilot in 1988, flying Blackhawks, hopefully, for the Royal Australian Army.

Andrew Vintner
[REDACTED]

We would be privileged to have your Dad as a member, Andrew, so how about "twisting his arm" a bit. Membership is open to ALL helicopter pilots who flew in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Era (1961-1975). Ed.

ONE MORE TIME, PATCHES

Enclosed are copies of two patches I had made recently. I have looked for years for a company that would make one or two patches instead of the usual minimum of 50 or 100, and have finally found someone. Simple designs such as the 92nd AHC patch (2 colors) are \$5.00 each. More complex designs and colors similar to the 199th AVN (Bird Dog) patch (7 colors) are \$10-\$15.00. The girl who does the artwork is really good. The 199th patch was copied from a small, poor quality metal pin, and the black and white photo just doesn't do the patch justice. The address is: WINGS & THINGS MONOGRAMMING, 224 New Warrington Rd., Pen-

Continued on next page

sacola, Florida 32506, (904) 455-3081. They said they would be happy to take orders through the mail.

Woody Barnes
(Stallion 3 & Eagle 10)

Thanks, Woody, we have received many requests for units patches, now you have really opened the door. Ed.



Provided by Woody Barnes.



Dick Koenig, Flying Magazine's New Publisher

On October 1, 1987 Richard M. Koenig, a VHPA "Charter" member became FLYING'S sixth Publisher. Dick served two tours in Vietnam, the last one flying "C" model guns, as "Maverick Lead" for the 175th AHC. He still flies helicopters as a CH54A pilot for the Connecticut Army Guard.



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69 HMM 265
Corp. Pilot, E.A.F.

JEREL Q. NATION

69-41 69-43
70-71 B/4 4 INF
71 E/1/9 CAV 1 CAV
71 F/1/9 CAV 1 CAV
MMS Pilot

DONALD D. POND, JR.

68-12
69-70 AHC
70/92 AHC
Mfg. Rep.

WILL O. RADFORD

67-13
67-68 196 ASHC
68 271 ASHC
68-69 196 ASHC
ATC

CHARLES R. RAYL

67-6
67-68 A/7/17 CAV
68 52 CAB
Attorney

GEORGE REENSTRA

68-13
68-69 117 AHC
Mkt. Rep, Sikorsky

MICHAEL E. RIGNEY

69-41
70-71 162 AHC
Police Officer

RAYMOND F. ROOT

9/68
69-70 187 AHC
Food Broker

GARY M. SCHOOLER

67-17
68-69 178 ASHC
Commercial Pilot

GREGORY G. ROSS

67-1
67 C/7/17 CAV
67 F/8 CAV AMERICAL
Small Business Owner

MORGAN H. MILLS

67-7
67-68 335 AHC
70-71 174 AHC
Helicopter Pilot U.S.F.S.

JOE ANORGA

55-H
65-66 128 AHC
66 1 AVN BDE
Helicopter Pilot

THOMAS C. THOMAS

66-67 57 MED DET
Airline Pilot

THOMAS H. PAYNE

66-10
66-67 118 AHC
70 120 AVN
70-71 USA ATC BN
Real Estate/Rancher

HAROLD J. SMITH

68-1 68-503
68-69 A/101 101 ABN
Pilot Nat'l Guard

THOMAS F. WILEY

P.O. Box 266
Scarborough, NE 04074
67-1
67-68 195 AHC
Building Contractor



**You Too, Can Be
A Life Member.
Call VHPA For
Details—(316) 946-4047.**

From The Executive Director

I'd like to share with you some statistics about our fine association. We now have something in excess of 3,000 guys who have joined. Every day that goes by, we add two more. This is all well and good. We, however, also have something near 700 guys who once made enough effort to join but have allowed their membership to lapse. I, and others, read the comments you all write on your renewal cards. It seems the Newsletters, the Directory, and the Reunion are considered "good value" by many for their annual dues. But what about those 700? Our Membership Committee is preparing a short survey to go out to these good men. Hopefully through it we can learn what more we need to do or not do.

One of the things we will do differently next year is to mail the Directory in an envelope. I understand some of you receive some rather soiled ones and for that I truly apologize.

As I watch various members of the Executive Council and others prepare for the 88 Reunion, I really get excited! Oh sure, I've been back to Wolters once or twice since I left there in '68. Those visits were nice, but... this Reunion will be special... maybe not once in a lifetime, but close to it!! You all will make it special. I have visited The Wall many times. It always seems to me like being in church... a sacred place. Reunion '86 was special... we were there together again. Yeah — but, Wolters will be extra special!! I want to reread Bob Mason's "Chickenhawk" — the part about learning to hover... then go out to the "Rifle Range" and remember... yeah, I spent a decade here one afternoon while a great W2 tried to let me kill us both in a '23!! Worst sauna I've ever been in! I'd loose 5 lbs. and have to wring out my flightsuit after only a quarter hour there. Anyway, we've got a great show planned and hope you'll come. Someone famous said "IT DOESN'T GET BETTER THAN THIS"... I'm certain he was talking about a VHPA Reunion!!

Mike Law

Undertaker Lead '69 — Phan Thiet

DON'T FORGET TO MAIL YOUR REUNION REGISTRATION FORM FOR THE FIFTH ANNUAL REUNION INTO VHPA HEADQUARTERS TODAY!



"Don't panic, I'll kill that sucker even if I have to rip this ear off." A younger Mike McDonald with a handful of a young Bill Mann. Photo by Gary Freeman

From The Record/ Database "GRU"

I have been asked to explain how the KIA DECEASED part of the directory was compiled to help members know how to add information. The original source was from the Army Aviation Museum at Ft. Rucker and the inputs of a few members. Mike Law did most of this work which resulted in 785 names. I then added all of the Warrant Officers listed on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Since The Wall does not identify what the person did in Vietnam, a third source was needed. The VHPA purchased the complete computer listing of Vietnam era casualties on file at the National Archives which came from the Department of Defense and all of the services. One member had the Army portion of this database sorted for the 1st Aviation Brigade at his own expense and sent me a copy. I had it sorted by rank and air versus non-air casualty. This official information was then supplemented by about 200 letters and about 500 inputs at three reunions from members. Thanks everyone, I am sorry I do not have time to answer all of your letters.

Although this is "official" information, some of it is missing, misleading, inaccurate, or contradictory. It is therefore important to have all information verified by VHPA members. The official records include general categories of how casualties occurred, but do not contain any details. Also, the VHPA totals are higher than the DOD records. This is because the function other than as a pilot such as an Aircraft Commander, a passenger, or on the ground was not a helicopter pilot. One excellent example is a pilot who got killed by a sniper in an LZ after touchdown on a combat assault. The DOD records show him as a ground casualty, even though he was a pilot in a running helicopter when he got shot. His MOS is also inaccurate so he was identified as a helicopter pilot only by a member. What surprises me was that an Aircraft Commander is not counted as a pilot but as "other crew member".

Many of the MOS numbers on the DOD records are not accurate, so it is difficult to tell if a person listed as a helicopter passenger was a grunt, a fixed wing pilot, or a helicopter pilot. If there is any possibility of a person being a helicopter pilot, his name is on the list and marked with NEED TO VERIFY. I have taken out about 40 Army fixed

(Continued on Page 17)

wing only people, but I am certain there are still some left. Commissioned officers are difficult to identify by MOS as helicopter pilots, so there may be some missing.

The DAT (Died After Tour) and DDT (Died During Training) portions of the database are missing many details such as DOB, date died, cause of death, home, city and state and other details. Members are the only source of this information, so if you have any information, please pass it on.

Now for some statistics. According to The World Almanac, there were 8,744,000 troops who served in all U.S. military services during the Vietnam War between 1961 and 1973. According to the Congressional Research Service of the Library of Congress, there were 3,385,000 who served in Southeast Asia, and 2,594,000 who served in South Vietnam. Total KIA and MIA listed on The Wall are 58,132 which is 1.7% of the total who served in Southeast Asia, and 2.2% of the total who served in South Vietnam. The Southeast Asia comparison is the best because many of the Air Force and Navy casualties would have been listed in the 791,000 who were not stationed in South Vietnam. There were an estimated 2,183 helicopter pilots killed representing about 4% of the total casualties. We do not know yet how many helicopter pilots served in Vietnam, but my guess is that we had approximately 10% casualties which is about 6 times more than average.

This database has more information than what is shown in the directory. Hopefully this additional information can be published in the history book now being planned or by some other means in the future. One idea we are working on for the 1988 directory is to have an additional list of all deceased Vietnam Helicopter Pilots by date of death. Remember that this database will continue to grow since all of us will eventually be listed in it. Any ideas of improving this database are welcomed.

The database as listed in the 1987 directory has the following:



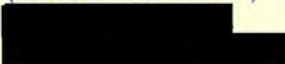
Service	KIA	MIA	TOTAL	AVERAGE
Army	1821	85	1906	25.3
Marine Corps ..	197	5	202	27.0
Air Force	39	5	44	31.7
Navy	31	0	31	26.8
Coast Guard ..	1	0	1	34.8
Total	2089	95	2184	25.6

NOTE: All MIA's have been declared dead by DOA except for one.

Died After Tour 81
 Died During Training 6
 NEED TO VERIFY 116

Rank	KIA/MIA	Average
WO1	863	23.2
CW2	300	27.0
CW3	56	28.7
CW4	6	42.7
ENS	2	23.3
2LT	21	25.1
1LT	384	24.7
LJG	17	25.6
CPT	383	27.1
LT	11	28.9
MAJ	111	33.2
LCR	2	34.0
LTC	21	38.0
COL	5	40.6
GEN	2	47.7

Gary B. Roush
 (Muleskinners '68-'69)



KIA/MIA/DAT/DDT

Killed In Action/Missing In Action/Died After Tour/Died During Training

INFORMATION

(Please be as complete as possible — add additional paper if you need more space.)

Name: _____ KIA MIA DAT DDT
 (Circle One)

Rank: _____ Date Died: _____ Birth Date: _____

Service: (Circle One) ARMY AIR FORCE MARINE NAVY

Unit(s) in Vietnam: _____

What caused death? _____

Type Aircraft: _____ Flight Class: _____

Hometown & State: _____

Your Name: _____ Phone: _____

Your Address: _____

Attach obituaries, accident reports, or other information. Send to VHPA, P.O. Box 9592, Wichita, KS 67277 or Gary B. Roush, 43 Overbrook Road, Painted Post, NY 14870.



"What is it?" Name unit and location.

Photo by Bruce G. Leach

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION
P. O. Box 9592 — Wichita, Kansas 67277 — (316) 946-4047



**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
 OR CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

OFFICE USE

APPLICATION: ☐ ANNUAL DUES: \$20
 ADDRESS CHANGE: ☐ LIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$300
 SUBSCRIPTION ONLY: \$12*
 (*included in annual dues)

MN _____
 DP _____

NAME: _____
 ADDRESS: _____
 CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
 HOME PHONE: () _____ WORK PHONE: () _____
 OCCUPATION: _____
 FLIGHT SCHOOL CLASS: _____ SERVICE BRANCH: _____
 COMBAT FLIGHT HOURS: _____ SSN: _____

Information about EACH Vietnam Tour:

DATE		UNIT	LOCATION	CALL SIGN
From	To			

Information about YOU: Helicopters flown, medals/awards, talents, hobbies, and anything else.

*****ALL FOR STATE
 10806 99/99 522 165

NOTE: This form may be used for DIRECTORY CORRECTIONS.