VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

The VHPA Newsletter

P.O. Box 9592 Wichita, KS 67277 Volume 5, No. 3 September 1988

"The Woc Roc" and "Larry Clark Day". From left to right, Dave Owens, President; Larry Clark, Founder; Jay Elliott, Vice President.

I want to thank all of the Executive Council and the other VHPA members that were involved in the special recognition that I received on July 2 at "The Rock" during our visit to Ft. Wolters. For those of you that were not there, I was very surprised and honored to receive a Texas State Senate Proclamation that proclaimed July 3rd as "Larry K. Clark Day" in Texas and declared me an Honorary Citizen of the State of Texas.

The efforts to accomplish this started last year, and somehow was kept a total secret right up to the time of the presentation. Believe me it was a total surprise and an honor that I never expected. For all of those that were involved in arranging for the award, I thank you.

The award should have so many other names of those that helped me with getting the VHPA up and running. Without the labor, support and advice given by so many I could have never even pulled off the first reunion. In the early days of the VHPA, which was only five years ago, there were many times that we almost gave up. But a late night phone call with a friend across the country would get the adrenaline flowing again and the work continued.

Many of you do not know that only a few days before that first reunion in Phoenix, there were only 18 people pre-registered and we were ready to cancel the hotel and just have a cookout in my back yard. Compare that to almost 1,000 at the last reunion in Ft. Worth.

Again, thank you for the award which is made of paper, ink and words of praise which I feel that I must share with so many others that supported me in my efforts. An even greater reward for me is to see two old friends meet at a reunion for the first time in many years. The back slapping, hugs and grins that I see between them is reward enough for all of my efforts to get the VHPA started.

Larry K. Clark
Founder

Past President's Roll Call

I hope that everyone that attended the "88" Reunion had an excellent time, I sure did. I would like to thank Jay Elliott (President '89) for giving me the President's column one more time so that I could express my sincere gratitude to all of the people that worked so hard to put on a great Reunion.

Your Reunion "88" Committee was:

David Owens . Committee Chairman
Jay Elliott . . . . . Local Coordinator
Bob Lakey . . Military Co-coordinator
Paul Beverung . . . . . "WOC" Rock
Bud Holzman . . . . . "WOC" Rock
Hayden Jones . . . . . "WOC" Rock
Willie Casper . . . . . Ft. Wolters and Mineral Wells
CW3 Ron Kinman . . . . . "WOC" Rock-Ft. Rucker

Corporate donors were:

Johnston Transportation . . . . . "WOC" Rock
Truck, Trailer and Equipment, Inc. . . . . "WOC" Rock
Saft America . . . . . Scholarship Fund

A special thanks goes out to the VHPA Arizona & Ohio River Chapters, along with the City of Mineral Wells, for their invaluable assistance to our successful Reunion '88.

Mr. Bill Rhodes, Chairman of the Tourism Committee;

Mr. Greg Harrison, City Manager;

Mr. H.C. Powell, Director of Public Works;

Mr. Bill McLelland, Director of Parks and Recreation;

Mrs. Pat Burwell, Library Director, Boyce Ditto Public Library;

Cpt. Gary L. Hillman, Commander, UTES NO. 2, Texas National Guard;

Ms. Debbie Clark, Committee Chairman for Refreshments and Entertainment;

Mr. Bill Atkinson, Committee Chairman for food plus his well-designed tabloid "Welcome Home";

Mrs. Linda Horton and Mrs. Jan Walls, co-chairmen of the American Legion Post No. 75 Ladies Auxiliary for decorations and banners;

Mr. John Stahl, chairman of greeters, with 14 members of the Fort Wolters Retired Officers Association;

Mrs. Sandra Midkiff and Glynda Snyder;

Mr. Carl Kessler for the utilization of his Fort Wolters property;

Mr. Kevin O'Cuilinn, Fort Wolters Association;

O'Neal Distributing Company-Coors;

WesTex Vending Company- Coors;

Coca-Cola Bottling Company for refreshments;

Park Inn for their hospitality;

Mr. Huey Long for his coordination of the Southern Airways Flight and Academic Department Reunion with the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association Reunion;

The Mineral Wells Index for great coverage of the reunion plus the 2,000 copies of the tabloid "Welcome Home";

Radio Station, KISA and KYXS for great radio coverage of the reunion.

Last but not least, I would like to thank all of those who attended for their patience and understanding. Please take the time to write a thank you note to the City of Mineral Wells. Also write to the Reunion "89" Chairman with your likes, dislikes, and any suggestions you might have. Hope to see you at "The Gathering 89" (15 Jan., New Orleans) and/or in Chicago.

C. David Owens
Past President "88"
(Darkhorse 26)
(Guardian 31)

FROM THE EDITOR:

If it ain't broke, don't fix it. Good advice I've heard all my life. This newsletter is now my responsibility and unless you, the membership, desire a change, it will remain fixed. Roger left me his child in excellent health and I can only hope to continue his tradition. I will, however, enjoy hearing any suggestions from the membership that may improve the newsletter. Complaints or suggestions for improvement, let me hear them all.

This Newsletter is dedicated to the 1988 Reunion (The Return Home To Ft. Wolters). I hope it invokes fond memories from those that attended as well as those who were unable to attend. Join me in expressing your appreciation to the citizens of Mineral Wells by writing the Editor, Mineral Wells Index, [redacted], or the Mineral Wells Chamber of Commerce.

What A Party!

Mike McDonald
Editor

VHPA OFFICERS and COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN 1988-89

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VICE PRESIDENT . . . . . Roger Gould

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INCOMING MAIL

YOU CAN'T SAY NO

I was not going to the Reunion in Dallas because I did not want to spend the money. When Friday morning, July 1, rolled around, however, I caved in and bought an airline ticket. As it turned out, I had a great time at the Saturday night blowout; and again at the Sunday night party. I knew I would because I figured it would be a repeat performance of last year at the Queen Mary which is right down the road from my home.

About 3:30 a.m. on Sunday, in a hotel room filled with some old friends as well as some new friends, I looked around and decided that I really liked everyone in the room. It seems odd, but for the first time since I received my draft notice, more than twenty years ago, I found something worth my four years in the Army and the shift in direction my life took because of my time in the military. It was the friendship of the people in that room whom I would have never known had it not been for the Vietnam war and the role each of us chose to play.

I think that it is safe to say that the people who flew helicopters in Vietnam, along with the women who shared their lives, were and are bedrock Americans. Watching the emerging groups of old friends having fun at the two parties, I thought of a former Army CAV pilot I wanted to see. He'll be at the next Reunion if I have to beat his brains out to get him there.

He and his wife love to party and the way I see it we need all the help we can get in sharing the good times that many of us missed during the turbulence of the war years. VHPA has evolved as the helicopter pilots' fraternity with parties that surpass any that I attended in college. Heck, until Sunday night I did not know that it was possible for anyone to stand on his head and consume alcohol at the same time. Guess you learn something new every day.

Ross Ivey
615 Esplanade 609
Redondo Beach, CA 90277

You just explained why we exist and what makes the VHPA a success. By the way Larry Brown told me that only CAV pilots can consume alcohol while inverted. Sounds like a challenge. Ed.

FAZEKAS REPLIES

Responding to two letters in the June '88 Newsletter, yes, indeed I remember Roy Lowery — he of the (in)famous, "What's the matter, Candidate, don't you like it here?" phrase, spoken like the voice of doom from beneath a lowered shiny black TAC helmet liner. Ha! GUARANTEED to strike fear and terror into the hearts of many a lowly Pre-Flighter. Those of us who became TACs used Roy's models in many instances most effectively. A good teacher, as he says, and a pretty good guy once all the harassment requirements were satisfied. We in 66-13 enjoyed it, and I, for one, felt we were the better for Roy's (and others) attentions.

Continued on next page

VHPA billboard "thanks" to Bob Johnson, Lamar Advertising and Mid-West Co. — 40 billboards in 38 cities.

And the second, from Bruce Wyrwitzke — unfortunately, I don't remember Bruce very well, but he must be alluding to an incident where he was less than a model Candidate and I had to speak sharply to him. Nonetheless, I too am glad to see that he made it, and after all — his comment about rather facing the VC than me — wasn't that just what it was all about? Again, along with Phil Marshall, sometimes all of us do something right. Finally, I agree — Steve Dillman was an outstanding colleague and an excellent TAC.

Sorry, I couldn't make the Reunion, hope to make the one in '89. I trust a good time was had by all?

I remain

Fraternally,
James P. Fazekas
CW4 (Ret)
US Army
[redacted]

We missed you at Wolters, James, but rest assured there were TAC's in attendance to check for proper etiquette in the chow hall. Ed.

BBQ in the old messhall — 987 served.

TAC ATTACK — Your worst nightmare. Phil Marshall returns to Ft. Wolters.

Continued on next page

JUST FLYIN' BY

On Saturday morning, July 2nd, I was on my way from the Police Heliport to a ribbon-cutting ceremony at our newest airport in Fort Worth, "Fort Worth Spinks Airport". As I passed downtown and saw all of the buses lined up for the trip down memory lane in Mineral Wells, I took the opportunity of getting some shots, thinking you might like to use one in the Newsletter.

I had just joined VHPA a couple of weeks prior to the convention and didn't really know what to expect. Due to duty requirements, I could only make the Welcome Party on Friday night and I was impressed by the huge turnout.

I enjoyed my first Newsletter so much that I am enclosing an order and check for all of the back issues.

Keep up the good work,
Al Smith
(Fullback One Three)
1st Brigade, 1st Cav.
An Khe 65-66

Currently:
Chief Pilot
Fort Worth Police Department
[redacted]

Thanks for the pictures, Al. There is a lot of history in the back issues, enjoy. Ed.

Where *is* Bus No. 8??

CALLING ALL SCOUT PILOTS

I am writing on behalf of a member of our Association for over twenty-two years now, Matt Brennan. Matt has written two books on the Vietnam War, "Brennan's War" and "Headhunters". The first was his story and the second is a collection of stories from the men who served in our reconnaissance squadron — the 1/9th CAV. Both books were published in hardback by Presidio Press and in paperback by Pocket Books. The paperback version of "Headhunters" will be available in November of this year.

Mr. Brennan has expressed an interest in editing another collection of stories by scout pilots, gunners and observers from all scout units that served in Vietnam. Matt served for twenty-six months with 1/9th CAV and had the opportunity to observe the scout crews in action on a daily basis. He thinks that their bravery and heavy casualties make them some of the unsung heroes of the war, and men whose stories should be told.

This book would tell America about the aero-scouts and give as many veterans as possible the chance to tell their own stories. I would appreciate it if you could mention this book in an editorial or publish an announcement similar to the one attached. The book would address part of the war whose telling is long overdue.

His address is:
Matt Brennan
[redacted]

Sincerely,
Robert F. Litle, Jr.
COL USA (Ret)
Executive Director
1st Calvary Division Association
Alumni of The First Team
[redacted]

Asking scout pilots to tell war stories?!? I thought you tried to shut them up. Seriously, you fearless scouts deserve the recognition, so write Matt, ASAP! Ed.

Continued on next page

ROC MOVER

This is just a short note to let you know how much I enjoyed being able to be a part of moving the "WOC Roc".

For me this was a fun and satisfying end to a year's effort to get the Roc back under the watchful eyes of the candidates. And, it all started when I read a letter from a member in the Newsletter, I think he was from New Mexico, wanting to know if the WOC Roc was still there and what color she was.

Thanks again,

[redacted]

Many thanks from us all for moving our beloved WOC Roc with such care. Now, who is going to remove the blue and yellow paint from Pappy's new trailer? Ed.

WHO RESCUED ROBERT ANDREWS?

Please include the following in your next newsletter.

I crashed an AH-1G Cobra in the jungle of Laos, near the Ah Shau Valley, on October 8, 1969. I was picked up on the side of a mountain on October 13, by an OH-6, which was escorted by a number of Cobras and Hueys. Unfortunately, I didn't catch the names of my rescuers.

I would like the opportunity to say thanks to those who were involved and especially to the OH-6 crew who picked me up. If anyone out there has some information, I would appreciate hearing from you.

Thanks,
Robert Andrews
(D Co., 158 Avn., 101 ABN)

[redacted]

I sincerely hope you guys out there can help Robert. I would like to hear more about this story, keep us informed. Ed.

A POEM FOR WOC'S

I was most impressed with the poems of Michael Davis O'Donnell, which you printed in the June 1988 issue of VHPA. They were not only moving, poignant, full of pathos, but especially a reminder of whom was there, and why they were there.

When I returned from Vietnam in 1968 to Ft. Wolters to become a flight instructor, WOC dropouts (DOR-dropped at own request) were at an all-time high and for a variety of reasons: political, family, media, military, and perhaps most of all, the candidate himself questioning whether all the OCS-type pressure, coupled with the steam-cooker of flight school, was really worth it. What, possibly, could the rewards be?

I was moved to write the following lines, published in the Friday, 21 Feb 69 issue of the Fort Wolters Trumpet. The rhythm and meter was stolen from my

Continued on next page

The beginning of a journey — the end of an era.

favorite poet, Robert Service, a Briton who spent many years in Alaska.

The words and emotions, however, are strictly my own.

Best Regards,
Bob Steinbrunn

[redacted]

To fly, you express our feelings so eloquently. Thanks for sharing your poem with us. Ed.

With Apologies to Robert Service

The Airman's Story

By CW2 Robert N. Steinbrunn
MOI Flight III

It's a measure of man
to stick to a plan,
to reach for what's followed by few.
And he who attains
the desire that remains
will unto his own self be true.

Oh, I've worked and I've toiled,
my hands have been soiled,
and often I've watched
from the ground.
The beauty I saw
in a wing over all....
Are the dreams of a mortal unsound?

As I went through my prime
and bided my time
I listened and gathered my lore.
I foresaw a day
when flight came my way
and made up the pain gone before.

Now I've soared and I've spun,
I've laughed and had fun,
I've flung out my spirit on high!
And time without number
I've bathed in rapt wonder
at the glory that's there in the sky.

Oh, the brilliance of clouds;
the moonlight enshrouds
all the turmoil that lurks down below.
For the grace of a plane
brings peace home again,
the airman gives thanks it is so.

It's a measure of man
to stick to a plan,
to reach for what's followed by few.
And he who attains
the desire that remains
will unto his own self be true.

FINDING FRIENDS

I would like to place a notice somewhere in the next newsletter. I'm trying to help the daughter of a First Cav crane pilot, Robert "Shady" Lane, who was killed on January 5, 1966. She was ten when he died and she'd like to hear from someone who knew her father over there. Her address: Vickie Mata, 1193 D Skyview Loop, Honolulu, HI 96818.

Thanks for any help you can give me.

Sincerely,
Robert Mason
P.O. Box 1517
High Springs, FL 32643

OK, guys, let's do what we do best. Finding people is why we exist. Thanks, Robert, for your concern. Ed.

RETURNING TO VIETNAM

Every time I get together with Vietnam helicopter pilots, one topic always works its way into the conversation — Wouldn't it be great to go back to Nam for a few weeks?

I've toyed with the idea for several years and finally decided to do something about it. Next April, my bride and I will visit Vietnam. It ain't easy, but it can be done. My travel agent tells me that the cost of this venture can be cut dramatically if we can put a group together and take advantage of group rates and discounts.

The prospect of returning to Vietnam with a bunch of old ladies with blue hair sounds almost as exciting as a visit to "The Red Cross Recreation Center",

Continued on next page

Time's Up — Load The Buses — David Owens, "Pappy" Jones (L-R).

and it immediately occurred to me that there must be at least a couple dozen VHPA members out there who are as soft headed as I am.

The ground work has already been laid and Effie and I would really prefer to have VHPA members and their guests join us for what promises to be a most memorable vacation. The itinerary is still not firm but will include two days in Bangkok and eight days in Vietnam, with stops in Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), Vung Tau, Phan Thiet, Nha Trang, Da Nang, and Hue all possible. If we can get about 15 or 20 couples to join us, the cost would be around $2,500 per person, for air fare, hotels, meals, and ground transportation. The beach party at Vung Tau alone should be well worth the price.

Please pass the word along via the newsletter that anyone interested in joining us should contact me as soon as possible at: P.O. Box 12, Casco, Maine 04015.

Finally, I have some good news and some bad news for those who plan to join us. The good news is that this time we probably will not get shot at and we can bring our own women. The bad news is that Uncle Sam will not pick up the tab for this tour.

Sincerely,
Dan Juneau
Cobra Rogue
Condor 13
P.O. Box 12
Casco, Maine 04015
207/627-4261

Sounds like you have it all together. Many people have asked, it's now time for action. If you stop by Chu Lai, I know where some Balantine is hidden. Ed.

Your Letters, Comments And Suggestions Are Always Welcome.

Carter Harman (standing left), Banquet Speaker, Lalaghat, India February 1944 prior to first U.S. combat helicopter flight.

Carter Harman (seated); — VHPA Beauties: Stephanie Ross, Sue Gould and Lynn Slaughter — VHPA Uglies: Gary Slaughter, new Member at Large; Roger Gould, new Vice President.

Helicopter pilots make big splash at Holiday Inn.

The Race

Bus driver, Jose Garcia Lopez Garcia, saw that his passengers' attitudes had changed during the time they'd been away. He'd been waiting in his bus for six hours while they'd been eating and drinking at an industrial park in Texas that had once been a helicopter flight school. His passengers had all gone through this flight school and the local town, Mineral Wells, was throwing them a party.

A local businessman had given out a couple hundred cases of Coors and the pilots and their wives were a lot more cheerful than when they had arrived. When a local man, Pete, got on board to be their tour-guide for the ride around the old base and downtown, the change in his passengers' attitude was evident.

As they got underway, Pete the tour-guide said that his wife was a native of the area — a much better guide than he — but she couldn't be with them. The passengers cheered at this.

When Pete said that the reason his wife couldn't be there was because she'd had two strokes and couldn't walk, the passengers cheered at that, too.

During the tour around downtown Mineral Wells, the pilots cheered at the old library building. And then they cheered at the new library building.

The pilots even cheered when Pete claimed that the road they were riding on at that moment was the exact route that Pete used everyday to avoid the traffic over on the main road on his way to work.

Many of these pilots were drunk, Jose decided.

Jose drove bus number eight. The passengers were reminded of this by their group leader so they'd stay with the same bus. "Eight, eight," one pilot yelled to clarify the notion. "You know, it's shaped like a little snowman!" When that convoy — twelve busloads of spirited pilots and their spouses — arrived at the Mineral Wells Holiday Inn and began to throw each other — fully clothed — into the pool, Jose worried about the future: The condition of his bus. His job.

Eventually, the passengers straggled back from their swim meet, grinning, laughing, dripping.

When the bus was loaded up for the trip back to Fort Worth, Jose sensed a new vitality among his passengers. When they got the convoy underway, and before they'd gone two miles down the highway, a bus flashed past Jose's. Jose's passengers went insane: "Catch them!" they yelled. Jose noticed also that the people in the other bus had signed obscene gestures at his passengers as they went by.

"Go! Go! Go!" The pilots and their wives chanted.

Jose, a shy man by nature, found himself caught up in the spirit of the race. Jose pressed pedal to metal on a downhill run.

"Go! Go! Go!" The bus drummed with the chant. As they passed number nine, Jose saw — could he believe his eyes? — Jose saw the *buttocks* of man leering from a window.

"Pressed ham!" yelled a pilot.

"I'm in love!" a woman yelled.

Eight cruised ahead and took the lead, but the victory was short-lived. The course took an uphill run and Jose's bus — a dog B-model someone

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said — bogged down at the effort. Nine flashed past. This time Jose saw three moons, ass against glass, staring rudely at the slackers. Jose laughed harder than he had in a long time — so did his passengers.

"We gotta beat those guys," someone shouted.

"Money", yelled another. "Bribe the driver!"

What are they doing? thought Jose.

A pilot took up a collection from the gang: fifty dollars. He took this money up to Jose and showed it to him, bill by bill. "Fifty bucks if we get there first," said the man.

Why? thought Jose. Why would anyone care if they got back to the hotel first. What difference did it make? These were *not* normal people.

But fifty dollars is fifty dollars. However, Jose lamented, number eight was still a dog and even floored, the bus fell behind the pack. Eventually, even a flatbed truck — carrying a large boulder (they called it the WOC Rock?) layered with the paint each of a hundred flight school classes had plastered on it over the years — passed them. "A rock!" a pilot yelled. "We're being passed by a goddamn rock!"

When all the buses and even the rock were out of sight, the pilots began trading intellectual nuggets that Jose had never considered.

"Did you people ever think," one man announced, "that you'd ever live to see the day when we'd all have more money than John Connally?" The passengers cheered and applauded. "And," the man continued, "have more religion than Jimmy Swaggart?" Applause and whistles echoed inside the bus. "Or to have had more heterosexual sex than Rock Hudson?" The crowd went wild.

"What's that?" asked a pilot up front. His wife punched him.

Jose despaired of ever winning the fifty dollars.

But when number eight crested a hill near Fort Worth, Jose's spirits soared. He saw that several of the lead buses had pulled off the highway — to buy more beer he presumed. Two others, Nine and Ten, were coming up a ramp to the main highway, but Number Eight flashed past in a blur and Jose was suddenly in the lead.

The bus shook with the mayhem caused by the stroke of luck.

Nine and Ten were gaining — being "D" or even "H" models, suggested the pilots.

Jose took the turns like a demon race driver on the final lap. He had taken the bit. He'd gotten the spirit. Dog it was, Number Eight, but as one passenger yelled, "A good pilot makes do with what he's got."

A hard left and Number Eight swooped downtown with Nine hot on his tail. A Volkswagen blocked Number Eight and Nine glided past at a light. But with a series of deft maneuvers on the congested streets, Jose caught Number Nine at Houston Street.

They raced neck and neck, hubcap to hubcap, for one block — and then both buses took a wrong turn and missed the hotel.

Jose finished third. Not bad considering he'd been dealt a dog ship. Not bad at all. The pilots all said, "Hell of a race, Jose!" and they voted to give him the prize money anyway. Jose had done better than his best.

"Nice try," said a pilot getting off the bus. "It takes a set of onions to *go for it!*"

Jose grinned, shook his head and watched the pilots and their wives walking toward the hotel laughing. He wondered: What kind of people *are* they?

Why is everyone looking for Bus No. 8?

In Memory

Anthony R. Markovich, Jr.
June 18th, 1988
Aircraft accident
Class 67-1
3/17 CAV 67-68

Jerry Dan Rowland
April 24th, 1988
Unknown
Class 60-5
A/229 1 CAV 65-66
121 AHC 66
92 AHC 67-68
164 AVN SPT DET 68

LOST AT FIFTH ANNUAL REUNION

Member Glenn Storey is looking for a tote bag which was misplaced upon arrival at the Hyatt Regency. Please contact him at [redacted].

Looking For...

RICHARD B. "Pappy" COWAN
Contact David Kime, HC 37 Box 36, Valentine, NE 69201.

ANYONE
With information about Mike Taylor from El Paso, Texas. 1st AIR CAV, April, 1968, shot down and killed April 13th, 1969. Any pictures or anecdotes for his brother, Steve Taylor. Contact Paul Forhan, [redacted], or phone [redacted].

FORMER MEMBERS OF 189 AHC
If you were a Ghostrider or Avenger, please contact John Graysneck, P.O. Box 1485, Ardmore, OK 73402.

From The Executive Director

Another successful Reunion is added to VHPA's proud tradition. I know many of you took the opportunity to thank our President Dave Owens for all his hard work concerning this Reunion. I have spent many hours with him during this past year and really stand in awe at his dedication, imagination, leadership and professionalism. Truly he has "done us proud" and the Reunion was just another example.

I talked to quite a few people after Saturday's trip to Fort Wolters and Mineral Wells. Not one was disappointed. Indeed, they each had many and different positive feelings and impressions. The hours of work under the leadership of Willie Casper and the Mineral Wells Chamber of Commerce were clearly very evident. Certainly the pool party at the rotor blade motel, the great lunch and liberal supply of Coors beer, the tour guides for each of our buses, the welcoming ceremony, and all the grass cutting plus general clean up — these really impressed me. But my wife and I are still laughing at the guy who played the farmer during the welcoming ceremony. When he whipped out that little note pad and started reading off tail numbers of helicopters that used to buzz his cattle over twenty years ago and all with a straight face; I thought I was going to die!! Truly the town of Mineral Wells may have "owed us this one", but they "paid the debt in full". I am certain the Chamber of Commerce would be very pleased to receive your cards and letters thanking them for that fine day.

Lots of first timers attending and new members joining at this Reunion. Lots of people having lots of fun and lots of laughs especially at the two main dances. Lots of memories shared.

I am certain next year's Reunion will be a good one; but this one was clearly special!

Mike Law
(Undertaker Lead)
'69 — Phan Thiet

A smooth registration "thanks" to (left to right), Debra Fuqua, Kristi Swartzlander, Lynnette Hogeland and John Frank (not pictured) of AAM.

Annual Business Meeting

President Dave Owens called the VHPA business meeting to order Sunday, 3 July, at 1 p.m. Over 250 members attended. Dave began the agenda with an update on the events since our last business meeting. In general, the past year was very successful. The services provided to the membership (Newsletter, Directory, Reunion) were better than at any time in our history. In terms of membership growth and activation, this was our best year yet. Our expenditures did not exceed income, indeed we have two impressive savings accounts. We were able to accomplish most everything we decided to do on the Queen Mary last year. Aviation Association Management (AAM) has done a good job of providing administrative services to VHPA. Based on this, the Executive Council approved a new two year contract with AAM effective this month. The Executive Council approved the establishment of the "Warren 'Matt' Sandlin VHPA Scholarship Fund" and we believe we can award the first scholarship at our next reunion. Plans for the following future reunions are proceeding nicely: "The Gathering" (our winter reunion held in conjunction with HAI on 15 Jan 1989) — Dave Owens chairman. The '89 Reunion in Chicago — Greg Ross chairman. The '90 Reunion in Pensacola, Florida — Gary Slaughter is acting chairman.

Dave announced that our second local chapter, the Ohio River LZ Chapter, successfully formed this year. Phil Marshal is their president. He stood and reminded everyone that information for joining the Chapter was in the registration area.

Dave mentioned that after years of service, some VHPA committee chairmen have asked the Executive Council for a rest. So there are a number of open positions and he quoted a very famous expression "We need a few good men!". He encouraged anyone interested in the following positions to please contact any Council member: Directory Editor, Newsletter Editor, Historical (VHPA), Historical (Vietnam), Membership, and Public Relations.

At this point, Dave asked Mike Law, the Executive Director, to present the recommended Constitution and Bylaw changes to the membership. This proved to be a lengthy but productive session during which the members approved five changes. The vote on a sixth change lacked the required two-thirds majority for approval. The approved changes will be reflected in the 1988/89 Directory. During the discussion, the membership received a one page summary of the VHPA financial status and approved two resolutions. First, that the Reunion registration packet include any Constitution and Bylaws changes in a format showing the existing wording, the new wording, plus majority and minority Executive Council opinions (if appropriate). In this way the membership can have time to ponder and discuss the changes prior to the business meeting. Second, to require an annual compilation review of VHPA financial matters by a CPA firm to insure compliance with IRS section 501C and to disclose the results in the Newsletter.

Next, Dave stated that we would have two committee reports. Gary Roush, the member of the Data Base Committee responsible for the KIA and Died After The War data base, told the membership that the data base currently has verified 2,185 helicopter pilot KIAs but only 100 who have died after the war. More information is needed and he encouraged all to help with this effort. In behalf of the Historical (Vietnam Era) Committee, Mike Law stated that the efforts to produce a Vietnam Helicopter Pilots' book with Taylor Publishing Co. announced at last year's Reunion, would soon start to materialize. By August 15th a flier will be mailed out with details about how materials will be gathered for this book. There will be two main sections: a short history of each company sized unit and an individual biographical section for those providing a 150 to 200 word biography with then and now photos.

For the election of new officers, Dave asked Paul Uster, an Executive Council member and the current Nominating Committee chairman, to conduct. Paul announced that there was only one candidate for the position of Vice President, namely Roger Gould, the recent Newsletter Editor. Roger spoke for a few minutes then the membership voted to sustain him as Vice President. Paul announced that there were two candidates for the Member at Large position. Both candidates addressed the membership then left the room for the vote. Gary Slaughter was elected.

Dave started the walk-on portion of the meeting by asking everyone and anyone that can add to the WOC Rock history to please send the material to him. A motion came from the floor to give VHPA Life Memberships to any Vietnam Era helicopter pilot who is 100% disabled and incapacitated. The membership approved this motion. Bob Beaudreault announced that there was an updated version of the video he made for the '85 Reunion in Houston. It will be available through VHPA with the proceeds going to the scholarship fund. Mike Law announced that we really needed to "get rid" of the mugs from the '87 Reunion, that it cost us about $120 to ship them down from Wichita and that everyone would have a "door prize" tonight if they were not sold. A motion came from the floor calling for a VHPA POW/MIA statement. Many, including Dave Owens and Roger Gould, voiced the opinion that this was a political issue and even though it is an important subject, it was not consistent with VHPA policies; rather it should be a matter for individual involvement. The membership sustained this opinion.

A motion came from the floor for adjournment and this was approved.

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