



The VHPA Newsletter

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association®

March 1992 Vol. 10, No. 1

Above the clouds



A CH-47A "Chinook" appears frozen in time and place above the clouds as it flies a mission. The aircraft belonged to A Company, 228th ASHB, 1st Cavalry Division, at Bearcat. (Photo courtesy of Thomas C. Ellis)

Pilot recalls being shot down twice while flying CH-21's.

Page 3

Members comment on keeping reunions on Fourth of July weekend.

Page 10

M0296 02/93

Ohio River Valley Chapter to meet

The Ohio River Valley Chapter of VHPA will host its annual family get-together and business meeting on Feb. 28- March 1 in Indianapolis.

Meeting headquarters will be the Holiday Inn at Union Station downtown.

The weekend event will begin Feb. 28 with early bird visiting in the hospitality room.

Registration will be conducted from

10:30 a.m. until noon on Feb. 29, followed by lunch at noon in the food court at the station.

There will be a business meeting for members, and shopping and swimming for the ladies, from 1-2:30 p.m.

The hospitality room will be open from 2:30 until 5 p.m.

A reception, cash bar and buffet dinner will begin at 6 p.m. A coat and tie is recommended for the men.

On March 1, breakfast brunch will be served at the Louisiana Street Restaurant starting at 10 a.m.

Room reservations may be made by calling the Holiday Inn at (317) 631-2221, while dinner reservations may be made by contacting Felix Miller or Bob Truitt at (800) 326-7464, Ext. 8210.

Cost of the buffet dinner is \$17.95 per person.

Reunions

Feb. 28-March 1

DUSTOFF Association's 13th Annual Reunion, San Antonio, TX. Contact: DUSTOFF Association, P.O. Box 8091, Wainwright Station, San Antonio, TX 78208

May 15-17

Fourth Annual Vietnam Veterans Reunion, Frankfort, KY. Contact: LZ Bluegrass Inc., P.O. Box 4884, Louisville, KY 40204.

May 15-17

U.S.A.F. Helicopter Pilot Association Reunion, Hope Hotel and Conference Center, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Dayton, OH.

Open to all U.S.A.F. helicopter pilots. Contact: Lt. Col. Frank Harvey, 7259 Nixon, Derby, KS 67037. Or call (316) 652-5205 or DSN 743-5205.

Theme of reunion is delivery of first helicopter to U.S. Army Air Corps at Wright Field in Dayton by Igor Sikorsky, along with chief pilot Les Morris, on May 18, 1942.

July 16-19

USMC/Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Reunion, Washington, DC. Contact: USMC/Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Reunion, 11151 Alejo Place, San Diego, CA 92124.

Late 1992

Reunion of 161st Aviation Company and 170th Aviation Company, 14th Aviation Battalion, Louisville, KY, area. Contact: Harvey York, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

VHPA to man booth at AAAA convention

VHPA will man a booth at the Army Aviation Association of America Annual Convention April 8-12 in Atlanta.

Any VHPA member interested in helping with this effort should contact Mike Law at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] (home) or [REDACTED] (work).

VHPA OFFICERS COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND STAFF 1991-92

PRESIDENT.....Gary Slaughter

VICE PRESIDENT.....Mike Law

PAST PRESIDENT.....Greg Ross

MEMBERS AT LARGE

Senior Member.....Ron Wright

Midterm Member.....Phil Marshall

Junior Member.....Ken Fritz

SECRETARY/TREASURER.....Dan Ferguson

FOUNDER.....Larry Clark

COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Historical.....Bill Greenhalgh

Membership.....Jack Glennon

Records/Database.....Gary Roush

1992 Reunion.....Kenny Bunn

1993 Reunion.....Paul Uster

Gathering (HAI).....Jack Jordan

DIRECTORY EDITOR.....Mike Law

NEWSLETTER EDITOR.....Jack Swickard

Assistant Editors.....Greg Ross, Jack Glennon

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES.....Natalie Titus

VHPA ACCOUNTING.....Melinda Wieck

VHPA ADVISERS

Legal Adviser.....Charles R. Rayl

Financial Adviser.....Phillip G. Monte

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (513) 721-VHPA

THE VHPA NEWSLETTER (ISSN 0896-3037)(USPS 001-497) is published five times yearly -- March, June, September, October, and December. October's issue is the annual membership directory. Annual dues are \$30 or Life membership for \$450. Yearly subscription for nonmembers is \$12. Published by the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, 7 West Seventh Street, Suite 1990, Cincinnati, OH 45202. Second-class postage paid at Cincinnati, OH. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE VHPA NEWSLETTER, 7 West Seventh Street, Suite 1990, Cincinnati, OH 45202.



A flight of CH-21s from the 93rd Transportation Company returns from Rach Gia, Kien Giang Province. (U.S. Army photo)

Pilot shot down twice in CH-21's

EDITOR'S NOTE: Author Philip Chinnery, in Chapter 2 of his recently published book, "Vietnam: The Helicopter War," describes the use of Army CH-21 helicopters during the early 1960s in South Vietnam.

One of the CH-21 aviators, CW2 William McKenzie, described to Chinnery two occasions on which he was shot down while aboard the "Flying Banana."

This is his description, as told to Chinnery:

I was shot down the first time in a CH-21C during a routine training mission with Vietnamese Rangers at their base just northwest of Nha Trang, if memory serves me.

We were working with Special Forces advisers in providing on-the-job training in rigging the 81mm and 4.2mm mortars to be slung externally from one location to another.

We would land and load the mortar crew aboard, lift to a hover and be guided into position for hookup by a ground crew.

Another trainee would make the hookup and we would depart in a flight of a couple of miles, place our load into position following the trainee's arm and hand signals, land and off-load the mortar crew. The same procedure was followed for the return trip, with crews alternating jobs when they were felt to be somewhat proficient.

Following a break for lunch and the traditional Vietnam

"siesta," we were on short final with an external load when we heard a loud "bang," felt a jolt and immediately received a severe vibration in the controls.

We continued our approach, dropped our load, landed and shut the aircraft down. On exiting the aircraft, we found that our trainees and their advisers had taken up defensive positions.

When it became obvious that no attack was forthcoming, our stalwart trainees combed the area and found the remains of a crude pipe bomb planted in the ground so the force of the blast was directed upward. This bomb had been packed with everything imaginable, I suppose.

Inspection of the helicopter revealed that an aft rotor blade had been struck on the leading edge of the blade spar by a 6-inch steel bolt which had been deflected downward through a Plexiglass window, lodging in the cabin floor just aft of the rescue door under the second troop seat. (The crew chief kept the bolt as a souvenir.)

One of the other aft blades was damaged by an unknown object which went through the wooden part of the blade. Temporary repairs were made by removing most of the splinters, sanding, and a wrap or two of "100 mph tape" around the blade.

The flight back to Nha Trang was relatively uneventful

Continued on Page 4

CH-21 shot down in ARVN training area

Continued from Page 3

except for some very weird vibrations that involved a little "white knuckle" flying. A new blade was flown down from Qui Nhon, and we were back at work the next day.

I'd like to point out that this happened in a supposedly secure ARVN training area.

I was not on the controls when we took the hit, but assisted in the dropping of the load and landing because the severe control vibration was almost too much for one person to handle.

I have no doubt that the helicopter would have torn itself apart if allowed to run very much longer.

I was serving as aircraft commander of a CH-21C on a combat assault mission carrying a load of ARVN troops the second time I was shot down.

My pilot was the company commander of the 8th Transportation Company (Light Helicopter), Maj. Charles Hardesty.

This particular mission was based on ARVN intelligence which had determined that the VC were massing for an attack on a military rail convoy headed north toward Qui Nhon.

We put all flyable aircraft on the mission and flew to Tuy Hoa where we refueled and loaded up with ARVN troops and headed for the objective some distance south of Tuy Hoa.

As we neared our LZ, the CO called for No. 2 to lead the flight in, as he wanted to observe as much of the operation as possible.

I made a couple of orbits and fell in behind the last aircraft to set up my approach. With two ships ahead of us and landing in trail, I noticed several bright flashes and puffs of smoke in the LZ.

Shortly after, someone radioed, "Mortars. Get the hell

out!"

Already committed to a landing, I drove on in and dropped my troops -- the last one probably leaving the aircraft some 10 feet or so from the ground, having taken longer than the 5 seconds or so we allowed them to clear the aircraft.

As I reached the coast and began a turn to the north, a warning light lit up on the panel. The aft transmission oil pressure gauge showed a steady drop.

I put out a "May Day" call and dropped in altitude until the nose gear was just skimming the water.

The CO asked over the intercom if I was planning to ditch. I replied that I was going to continue to fly until I could find a safe place to land -- or until the aft transmission seized and I had to ditch, hoping we could be able to survive it.

Spotting a small island or sandbar with a sunken ship from World War II just offshore, I headed for it and landed with no trouble.

The ship bird-dogging us came in behind and we were suddenly surrounded by

ARVN troops. Where they came from, I'll never know, for the island/sandbar appeared to be completely deserted when we touched down.

After making arrangements with the ARVN commander to provide security for the helicopter until we could get a maintenance team to repair it, the major and I climbed aboard the other helicopter as very relieved and happy passengers for the flight back to Qui Nhon.

I later learned that one round had penetrated the transmission and dropped to the bottom of the casing with no damage to the gears.

In all, we flew that gallant old girl for more than 20 minutes with zero oil pressure.



A CH-21 lies on its side after crashing into an embankment after landing ARVN troops near Cau Mau. (U.S. Army photo)

Seeking . . .

All former members of HHC, 3rd Brigade, Aviation Snoopy Flight interested in a mini-reunion at the VHPA convention in Atlanta contact Al Eason, P.O. Box 46403, Washington, DC 20050-6403.

Or call DSN 227-6073; [REDACTED]

All "Boomerangs" and "Bounty Hunters" interested in a reunion of the 191st Assault Helicopter Company, 214th Combat Aviation Battalion, please contact:

☐ Jack E. Tiesing, 341 Chanda Lane, New Albany, IN 47150. Or call [REDACTED] before 2 p.m.

☐ Troy McKenna, 22 [REDACTED]

I'm trying to locate my aircraft commander in Nam, WO Walker, or any of the other pilots of the 188th Assault Helicopter Company "Black Widows."

Dick Detra, Gunner
[REDACTED]

I would like to replace my husband's graduating class picture. He is CW3 James D. Barton II, Class 69-17 B-3 Fourth WOC.

I can be reached at [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. Or call [REDACTED] (home); [REDACTED] (office).

Rose C. Barton

I am looking for Larry Carmichael, Class 70-6, Fort Wolters.

His last known address was his mother's house on Euclid Avenue in Indianapolis.

Lt. Col. Ronald W. Rankin
[REDACTED]

I'm writing to you to ask if you have or know where I can find a list of the whereabouts of the pilots who served in the 191st Assault Helicopter Company in Vietnam from 1969-70.

Also, could you please tell me if there is going to be a gathering of the 191st anytime in the future, and where.

Patrick O'Donnell
[REDACTED]

VHPA Product Order Form

MAIL FORM TO: VHPA

7 W. Seventh St.
Suite 1990
Cincinnati, OH 45202

Back VHPA newsletters \$20/set _____
(Complete sets only)

1991 VHPA Directory \$10/each _____
(VHPA members only,
while supplies last)

VHPA decals \$1/each _____

GRAND TOTAL _____

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

Name _____ Member No. _____

Credit Card No. _____

Expiration Date _____

Signature _____

Writers seek help on book

I would like to ask your help in the research for a book.

Another writer and I are preparing what we believe will be the definitive history of "blood chits."

Authors/researchers seek information, photos, stories regarding and samples of U.S., Allied and other blood chits from all periods/wars (World War II, Korea, Cold War/Cuban Missile Crisis, Vietnam and Persian Gulf) for definitive history.

Contact: The Blood Chit History Project, P.O. Box 11131, Berkeley, CA 94701-2131.

Thomas Wm. McGarry
Alameda, CA

VHPA receives HAI membership, booth space

Through the generosity of Frank Jensen and Helicopter Association International, membership and complimentary booth space have been given to VHPA at HAI's annual convention.

HAI's EXPO '92 will be March 22-24 in Las Vegas.

VHPA also will sponsor The Gathering from 5-9 p.m. on March 22 at the Las Vegas Hilton. Last year, in Los Angeles, 280 guests attended The Gathering.

Judges can still sign up for helping judge the 1992 Helicopter National Championships being held in conjunction with EXPO '92.

Deaths

John J. Tolson

Retired Lt. Gen. John Jarvis Tolson died of a heart attack Dec. 2 at Rex Hospital in Raleigh, N.C. He was 76.

Tolson commanded the 1st Air Cavalry Division in Vietnam and helped develop the Army's air-assault doctrine.

He became commanding general of the U.S. Army Aviation Center and commandant of the U.S. Army Aviation School at Fort Rucker, Ala., in 1965.

Tolson went to Vietnam in 1967 and led the 1st Air Cavalry during the Tet Offensive and the relief of Khe Sanh.

From 1968 to 1971, he commanded the XVIII Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Tolson retired from active duty in 1973 after serving as deputy commanding general of the Continental Army Command at Fort Monroe, Va.

Burial was at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington.

Ira C. Owens

Retired CW4 Ira C. Owens died Nov. 16 in Dallas of a brain tumor. He was 52.

Owens spent most of his Army career as a helicopter pilot, serving last with B Company, 227th Aviation Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas.

He was a Vietnam veteran, and was recipient of the Silver Star, Dis-

tinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Medal with Numerals, Army Commendation Medal, Purple Heart and Master Army Aviator Badge.

Owens retired from active duty in 1984 with 27 years of service.

He is survived with a son, Scott; a daughter, Diane; three brothers; three sisters; and his mother.

Burial was at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery in San Antonio.

Alan Larson

Alan Larson of Reno, Nev., died when the emergency medical helicopter he was flying crashed the night of Nov. 27 while transporting an injured man to a Reno hospital.

Larson, 44, was a VHPA member.

The Mono County Sheriff's Department reported Larson, two other crew members and the 33-year-old patient were killed when the helicopter crashed in windy, snowy weather near Bridgeport, Nev.

The helicopter, which belonged to Care Flight of Reno, was carrying the patient from a Mono County hospital to Reno when Larson radioed a distress message to his dispatcher.

About 15 minutes later, a passing motorist told the sheriff's department she had observed a helicopter out of control about 16 miles north of Bridgeport.

The motorist also reported seeing a "flash" after the helicopter dropped out of sight.

A Navy helicopter spotted the wreckage of Larson's aircraft the fol-

lowing morning. All four victims appeared to have been killed on impact and there was no evidence of fire, the Navy crew reported.

Also killed in the crash were the patient, Bobby Franco, 33, of Carson City; flight nurse Kathy Ohran, 36; and medical technician Don Matteoni, 36.

Peter Byrne

Peter Byrne, a VHPA member serving as chief pilot for Abu Dhabi Aviation, died in a motorcycle accident Dec. 8 in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.

He was 40.

Byrne was returning home from a bowling game about 3 a.m. when authorities believe he struck a tree after being sideswiped, said his mother, Elizabeth Byrne of St. Augustine, Fla.

Byrne enlisted in the Army in 1970 because he wanted to fly. After graduating from flight school, he was assigned to 162nd Assault Helicopter Company in South Vietnam.

After leaving the Army as a warrant officer, Byrne worked as a pilot for a number of oil and construction companies throughout the world. He joined Abu Dhabi Aviation seven years ago.

Besides his mother, Byrne is survived by a wife, Catherine; his father, William, of St. Augustine; two sisters, Elizabeth Luchsinger and Catherine Lewonka; and a brother, William J. Byrne.

Burial was at Long Island National Cemetery.

Classified Advertising

Pilot seeks employment: Comm. F/W and Helicopter Inst. F/W and Helicopter 5000 hrs. TT, 1800 multi./eng. hel., 3000 hrs. helicopter, BK 117 transition and factory ground school. Will relocate. Contact Phil Fusilier (1-800-555-1234) [redacted]

Newsletter advertising rates, policy

The Executive Council, at the recommendation of the editor, has approved the following advertising rates and policy for the VHPA Newsletter.

Display advertisements cost:

Full page -- \$500.

One-half page -- \$250.

One-quarter page -- \$125.

The classified advertising rate is \$1 per line or \$7 per inch, whichever is higher.

These prices bring advertising

space charges into line with the cost of printing and mailing the Newsletter.

Advertising is solicited and approved by the Newsletter editor and assistant editors.

The VHPA Newsletter reserves the right to reject any advertisement.

Advertising revenue is used to help produce the Newsletter and limit the publication's dependence on membership dues.

Incoming mail

Photo kindles memories



The tail of a 1st Cav Huey is washed in the Bong Song River.

I read with interest the cover page of the December 1991 VHPA Newsletter, containing the photo of the UH-1B gunship from D/229th Aviation, 1st Cav.

It truly is a small world, as I was there that day in April 1967.

At the time I was a flight commander and operations officer for C/229th Aviation (call sign "Axle 3"), based for the moment at LZ English out on the Bong Song Plains north of Qui Nhon. The photo was taken just south of English in the Bong Song River, adjacent to the town of the same name.

The bridge in the background was originally a railroad that crossed the river just east of Highway 1, which would be behind the camera. When the highway bridge was blown up, the railroad bridge in the background was converted into a crossing for Highway 1.

D/229th had elements that supported us. They also were based at English, which had opened up earlier that spring. Because of all the dust and dirt at English, we would on occasion take a few aircraft that were "hopelessly" filthy and land on one of the shallow sand bars located in this part of the river.

The local kids would walk out to us from Bong Song, and for a few "P's" would wash the aircraft. We, in turn, brought treats from the Sunday pack-

ages for them.

Our unit helped to fund a local orphanage at Bong Song, and I believe one small girl came from there. She always was the hardest worker -- and one of the nicest of the group. We saw her often during those days -- I fear her life was difficult, and she always sought us out when we were in the area.

Landing in the river was tricky -- although we felt our pilots were up to it. One had to make sure you really were landing on a sand bar.

Later that summer an aircraft from another unit overturned in the river when they landed in the wrong area. With increased water supplies, which had been short, we decided to stop the practice due to safety. With the increased hostile activity on the Bong Song Plain, the risk of a sniper was significant and growing -- although we never had a problem.

George Reese might remember Dave Hockett (Tomcat 36) and John Metcheski (Tomcat 31) both from his unit. They were our guardian angels, who literally protected our flanks on every mission. We owed them a lot (and I'm sure George also.) Anyone heard from these two?

Dave Rittman

C/229th Aviation, 1st Cav

Pilot recalls holiday in Vietnam

I am sitting here by the fire waiting for the Thanksgiving dinner gong and reading the December VHPA Newsletter.

The picture of the D/229th B model reminded me of Thanksgiving in 1966 at Bong Song, Vietnam. The scene captured on the cover is identical to the place we C/227 used to wash our aircraft during the Bong Song Campaign.

Some of my classmates, (66-1) were in the 229th and the river was usually a place to socialize with friends and classmates. A favorite pastime for pilots was to sun on the overhead and the FNG's would almost always get the tender parts sunburned, as very few had swimsuits.

Well, Thanksgiving 1966 at Bong Song was, in spite of the place, very special. We had Doughnut Dollies and the press interviewing those who would talk nice. The cooks outdid themselves and the ammo crate tables under the cargo parachute canopy looked grand with the paper table clothes and the colorful paper turkey centerpieces.

Everyone was somewhat subdued and I was halfway through my year in hell. The food was great and I'm writing this, so that is great too.

A quarter of a century later on the same day, I still fly the same aircraft for a living, (AGR 1/214th AV RGT) and I am lucky enough to have in my unit approximately 20 pilots who know what it was like to have flown in Vietnam. You guys are doing a fine job with the Newsletter, keep up the good work.

John P. Leonard, 66-1

VHPA members meet in Cincinnati

VHPA members in Cincinnati and northern Kentucky decided to have a "Pre-Christmas" dinner at the Black Forest Restaurant on Dec. 7 in Cincinnati.

After many phone calls and letters, about 20 members and spouses showed up for what was a delicious meal and good fun.

Sometime during the evening, the band announced our party and that drew a round of applause. What a difference 20 or 30 years makes!

As a new member, I noticed a familiar closeness with the fellow pilots that I hadn't felt for quite some time. It was like the happy ending to a story that, at one time in my life, I thought would never come.

There were the normal conversations about families and kids. And, of course, the "war" stories.

Some of those who attended had



Steven J. Reed Jr.

never before come to a VHPA function, and it is quite probable that Paul Cotter's description of the annual reunions in New Orleans and Reno will boost attendance in Atlanta.

The dinner was organized by Pat Leary, Jerry Riches and Steve Reed.

I am really looking forward to many of these affairs, and believe me, joining

this organization is the best thing I've done in many years.

Steven J. Reed Jr.

Class 71-11

Black Widows

C/101 AHC, 101 ABN

EDITOR'S NOTE: Any dues-current member who is interested in getting the members in his area together may contact VHPA headquarters. Names, addresses and mailing labels can be provided by state, ZIP code, flight school class, or unit in Vietnam for a small administrative fee. Please remember that no commercial use of the names and addresses should be made.

If you are interested in starting your own chapter, you may contact Executive Council member Phil Marshall, who is the representative for chapter affairs.

Member can sympathize with letter

In March or June 1991, a C&C pilot wrote how he did not really feel accepted by other VHPA members, because some helicopter pilots supposedly look down on any pilot who was not "in the heat of it."

Well, I can understand where he was coming from.

Despite being on my share of combat assaults with both the 51 AHC (Bien Hoa) and the 187AHC (Tay Ninh) and some into "hot" LZs, for 24 years, I had trouble feeling accepted by other VHPA members because I was only in Vietnam three months and three days before the main rotor blade came through the cockpit after a crash and struck me in the head and, because of the brain damage I suffered, I do not know if I actually remember Vietnam or not.

I like to think I remember a lot but, considering the fact that I have lost most of the memory of the rest of my life before being injured, the truth probably is I have "constructed" memories of what I have been told to create a reality as exciting as any war movie I have ever seen.

I am so proud of being a VHPA member. As a matter of fact, of all the things I am in life, I am a Vietnam veteran and ex-helicopter pilot first. I spent three years in the Army hospital and VA hospital and am retired from the Army, rated as 100 percent disabled.

Despite my pride and conviction I HAVE paid my dues, I do not have any war stories. Likewise, I do not remember one single person I served with in Vietnam. My memories are real to me but there has never been anybody around to tell me I am incorrect.

Although I have been a VHPA member since 1986, until 1991 I had never attended a VHPA reunion -- simply because I was afraid to, afraid that somebody would tell me I did not belong. Kind of like, if I did not have, at least, one war story to tell at the bar, I would not fit in.

What I experienced was so different from my unfounded fears I hardly have words to describe how fantastic this reunion was for me. My very first contact with another VHPA member was the experience of having a person

welcome me to my first reunion and introduce me to other members at the bar. He did not ask me one single thing about my tour in Vietnam and, instead, welcomed me as another brother, because I flew helicopters in Vietnam. That was all that mattered.

Margaret, my fiancée in Reno and my wife now, and I met people we will never forget and had so much fun we talk about the reunion often. Despite almost having both of my legs amputated because they were so badly broken, we danced and danced and danced, and loved every second of it.

My dear God, the 8th Annual VHPA Reunion in Reno, Nev., has to be one of the most outstanding experiences of my life.

In closing, I need to say again that the 8th Annual Reunion in Reno, Nev., was one of the very best experiences of my entire life.

And, it is the VHPA members who made it that way. My heartfelt thanks to all of you.

James Meade, Ph.D.

Blackhawk 17

Portland, OR

Membership Directory sells organization

From the questions in the survey, not only is the intent to improve the association, it would appear we are approaching a financial crisis of some sort.

I feel the most desirable solution is to increase membership. Having made that statement, I must relay the following experience.

I recently graduated from Master Warrant Officer Training Course 91-2.

The class had 20 warrant officers with 22 to 40 years of service, the class average being 28 years. Nineteen were Vietnam veterans and, of that, nine were aviators eligible for membership in the VHPA.

Herein lies the problem: I circulated the VHPA Directory and several Newsletters.

During the tour of the "WOC Hall of Fame" at Fort Rucker, I explained that that was the same "WOC Rock" they saw at Fort Wolters, and the VHPA put it there.

After what I thought was a reasonable effort to generate interest, I was able to recruit but one new member. It was very disappointing.

So maybe I don't know how to sell the association, but the one success was strictly the result of the VHPA Directory. It sold the VHPA.

Keep the Directory, it works, and I'll keep trying.

Randal R. Lindsey
Master Warrant Officer 4
Fort Rucker, AL

Contest spurs member increase

Jack Glennon
Membership chairman

In order to allow ample time for layout and printing of the March VHPA Newsletter, I called VHPA in late January to request an updated printout of our membership drive standings.

I stood by the fax machine, amazed as it unleashed a roll of paper some eight feet long and containing 254 names.

These names were garnered from applications and information sheets sent in since mid-September by VHPA'ers who are participating in the membership drive.

(Within the same time frame, an additional 250 new members have joined VHPA who cannot directly be attributed to the drive.)

In a little more than four months, we have "policed- up" more than 500 helicopter pilots who now can enjoy the benefits of our association.

I hope each and every one shows up in Atlanta in July to witness firsthand what we are all about.

No one needs to be reminded that Vietnam helicopter pilots are out of production, and that one day we will go the way of the 2-cent Tootsie Pop.

However, since a lot of us still need a stepladder to look middle age in the

eye, that day is a long way off.

Until then, I think we owe it to ourselves and each other to enlighten and encourage all who are eligible to join in the brotherhood that is, as all who have attended a reunion will most certainly agree, something proud, unique and special.

All of us probably know at least one person who is eligible for VHPA membership who is not a member. If each of us were responsible for one additional member, our numbers would increase by thousands instead of hundreds. Let's get 'em all!!

Speaking of getting them all, Mike Murray is making a run at it.

Mike's herculean efforts have placed him comfortably in first place in the membership drive. Keep in mind, however, that most of Mike's points have been accumulated in the past three months, and we still have 2.5 months to go.

As of Jan. 27, the leaders are:

1. Mike Murray
2. James White
3. Joseph Kane
4. Thomas Jacoby
5. Richard Crawley
6. Bobby Bateman
7. Emory Eason

Because of these guys, and more

like them, VHPA has expanded its membership by 254 names.

Points in the contest, which runs through May 15, are awarded on the following schedule:

- ☐ Application information sheet from a nonmember who does not join -- 1 point.
- ☐ Application or renewal from a former member with at least a one-year lapse -- 2 points.
- ☐ Application for new membership -- 3 points.
- ☐ New member joins as a Life Member -- 4 points.

VHPA members who accumulate the highest number of points as of May 15 will receive:

First prize: Two round-trip tickets good anywhere in the 48 contiguous states, plus a free room for three nights at the Atlanta Hilton during the 1992 Reunion. (If you live in or near Atlanta, these tickets are good anytime, not just for the reunion.)

Second prize: Free room for three nights at the Atlanta Hilton during the 1992 Reunion.

Third and fourth prizes: Room upgrades to the Tower level for three nights at the Atlanta Hilton, at reunion rates.

Fifth prize: A pair of banquet tickets for the 1992 Reunion in Atlanta.

Collectively speaking

Annual reunion

QUESTION: Do you favor keeping the reunion dates over the Fourth of July?

Number of responses -- 296

Yes -- 200 or 77 percent

No -- 61 or 23 percent

Comments:

"Whatever is convenient for the majority."

"Alternate each year -- 4th of July one year, ?? of ?? another year."

"Too many conflicts, too hot, travel congestion."

"I strongly support having and keeping the reunion on the 4th of July."

"Alternate between 4th of July and Labor Day."

"No strong feelings."

"Fall, for health reasons."

"Keep it on the 4th of July, but heat and humidity at reunion location are a factor."

"Most pilots work during the summer."

"Support the 4th of July date, however, as the VHPA age increases and our children leave school, a fall or winter reunion may be wise."

"The first thing I do each year is block out the dates of the reunion. The reunion is a family vacation for us. Don't change it."

QUESTION: Do you favor continued moving of reunion sites or establish four or five sites and rotate between them?

Number of responses -- 273

Continue to move -- 121 or 44 percent

Choose 4 or 5 -- 152 or 56 percent

Comments:

"Please, two sites in the East."

"Combine both by alternating and keeping best of both worlds."

"Like to see more East Coast cities."

"Five locations should be North, South, East, West and Central."

"Why does the reunion always have to be at a big city location?"

"Keep moving them. It's the most equitable to all the members."

"How about a cruise?"

"Choose 4 or 5 and rotate. It's getting expensive to attend."

"Whatever is the most simple way for air heads and beer drinkers to get there."

"Continue moving sites. That's how you got me to join. Make the first step convenience."

"Continue to look for improved sites, but do not compromise quality for mere change."

"Continue moving locations. We get tired of seeing the same sites."

Membership solicitations

QUESTION: Are you in favor of advertising with the hope of finding lost stick buddies, finances permitting?

Number of responses -- 282

Yes -- 247 or 88 percent

No -- 35 or 12 percent

Comments:

"Yes, but with limits."

"Yes. However, I think we should

continue to look for low-cost means to get the message out. Newspaper or TV interviews, local chapters marching in parades, setting up tables at shopping malls, etc."

"No, not unless and until some very good, determined efforts are made in publicity/press relations. It's my feeling we haven't given our best efforts yet. How many members know guys who could but won't join for various reasons? I can personally name 10-12 guys who will not join -- period! If one-half of VHPA knows 5-10 guys like these, that translates to approximately 10,000 guys who know about VHPA but won't join. That means there is a pretty small percentage of pilots out there who need to find out about us."

"Go for it!"

"Yes, but expand advertising with an increase in dues and also work on media contacts for free stories on national TV and magazines."

"Take out an ad in the top 20 newspapers in the country, stating our organization, our views, our numbers and our goals, and address and phone number."

"Yes, finances permitting. Advertising should be on a limited basis."

"I think word of mouth covers it. A national advertising campaign would be expensive and has no guarantee of hitting the target population. Ads in veterans magazines might help."

"Only if cost effective to do so. Is the cost/benefit there?"

"Maybe, depending on the style of advertising. I personally believe that as a member, it's my job to spread the word via word of mouth."

"Try it. If not successful, discontinue."

"That might prove to be a very expensive, low-yield approach. Best results may still be achieved by the personal member effort method."

"The first thing I do each year is block out the dates of the reunion. The reunion is a family vacation for us. Don't change it."

"Maybe, depending on the style of advertising. I personally believe that as a member, it's my job to spread the word via word of mouth."

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

Ninth Annual Reunion

Atlanta, GA

July 2-5, 1992

Reunion Registration

Name _____ Member No. _____
Wife/guest name _____ No. of children _____
Additional guest names _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
Expected arrival date _____ First reunion? _____
How many reunions have you attended? _____

REGISTRATION FEES

	No. of people	Price	Total
Registration before 6/1/92*	_____	@ \$ 20.00	\$ _____
Registration after 6/1/92*	_____	@ \$ 25.00	_____
Sun Valley Beach BBQ (July 3 afternoon, evening)	_____	@ \$ 27.50	_____
Banquet (July 4 evening)	_____	@ \$ 35.00	_____
Dues (if being included)	1 year	@ \$ 30.00	_____
	Life	@ \$450.00	_____
	GRAND TOTAL		\$ _____

_____ Enclosed is check/money order payable to: "VHPA Reunion '92"

_____ Please charge my: Circle credit card (Visa) (MasterCard) (Discover)

Credit card No. _____ Expiration date _____

Signature _____

NAME TAG INFORMATION

Name desired on name tag _____

Name of wife/guest _____

Flight school class (No. and year) _____ Call sign _____

Combat unit (first) _____ Year(s) _____

Combat unit (subsequent) _____ Year(s) _____

Hometown or current residence _____

MAIL TO:

VHPA

7 W. Seventh St., Suite 1990

Cincinnati, OH 45202

* Each adult 18 and older must pay registration.



Kenny's Alley in Underground Atlanta is near the site of 1992 VHPA Reunion headquarters.

Atlanta reunion drawing near

Kenny Bunn 1992 Reunion Chairman

Time is drawing near for the 1992 VHPA Reunion in Atlanta July 2-5.

Reunion headquarters is the Atlanta Hilton and Towers on Courtland Street.

Reservations may be made by calling 1-800-HILTONS (1-800-445-8667). Be sure to mention you are registering for the VHPA Reunion.

If you arrive on Wednesday evening, you'll catch the other early birds in the Casablanca Bar on the lobby level.

We probably will spill out into the registration area so we can see who's arriving. There's plenty of seating.

Thursday will find us registering and checking the vendors out for T-shirts and other souvenirs.

This day is for you to catch up on the past year with your buddies and get ready for the welcome dance

Bunn chairs 1992 Reunion

Kenny Bunn, 1992 VHPA Reunion chairman, currently lives near Columbiana, AL, with his wife Elaine and two sons, Keegan, 11, and Kevin, 10.

He is a captain with Air Logistics in Patterson, LA. Bunn flies the Sikorsky S-76 and the Bell 412.

In country, he was assigned to the 92nd Assault Helicopter Company at Dong Ba Thin.

Thursday night.

I'm aware I said earlier that we would not do anything outside of the hotel -- but that was before I found Sun Valley Beach.

It is a pool that covers 1.5 acres,

with depths ranging from 4 inches to 10 feet, and seven slides, so be sure to bring the kids. We'll load onto buses at 2:15 p.m. Friday and make the short ride to Sun Valley Beach Park.

Later at the park, Boston butt roasts will be barbecued right before our eyes in the traditional Southern style. Our Southern cookout also will include potato salad, baked beans, grilled onions, watermelons and snow cones.

We'll also have unlimited soft drinks and iced tea.

Trams will run continuously from our pavilion to the pool. After 5 p.m., we will have the place to ourselves. The music will start at 6 p.m. for dancing or just listening.

There is a playground and volleyball pit next to the pavilion.

The buses will leave for the Hilton

Continued on Page 13

Banquet, dance will be held Saturday night

Continued from Page 12

about 10 p.m.

Saturday will offer the usual recovery period, before the Business Meeting, ladies function and children's pool party begin at 1 p.m.

The banquet and dance will be held that night, starting at 7 o'clock in the Grand Ballroom.

Besides planned reunion activities, Atlanta has much to offer VHPA members:

❑ Underground Atlanta originally was called Terminus because it was built over the terminus of the early rail lines that served the city.

The old rail lines are now streets, and the old freight buildings are restaurants, clubs and shops of every description.

My favorite street is Kenny's Alley (wonder why?).

❑ The Coca-Cola Museum, located near Underground Atlanta, contains memorabilia from the world of Coke.

❑ The Atlanta Zoo is one of the top five zoos in the United States.

Coors donates \$1,500 to VHPA

Coors Brewing Co. of Golden, CO, has donated \$1,500 to the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association to assist with the purchase of Coors beer for the 1992 Reunion.

"Coors Brewing Co. is pleased to be of assistance and delighted to be associated with this activity and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association," said Warren H. Hutchings, veterans affair manager for the brewing company.

"We wish you every success and thank you for thinking of Coors."

❑ Stone Mountain, the largest granite formation in the world into which is carved the likenesses of Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson and Jefferson Davis, has an authentic antebellum plantation, railroad and museum.

❑ Peachtree Center, just two blocks

from the hotel, offers shopping and a variety of fast-food restaurants.

The Atlanta Hilton and Towers also features various restaurants, including Cafe de la Paix and the Coffee House on the lobby level, Trader Vic's on the ground floor, and Nikolai's Roof.

Getting there

❑ If you are driving on Interstate 75/85 North: Exit at Piedmont (exit to the left, instead of to the right), drive one-half block, turn left on Baker, then drive one block and turn left on Courtland Street.

❑ If driving on Interstate 75/85 South: Exit on Courtland Street.

❑ If flying: The hotel is the first stop on the Airport Shuttle. The cost is \$7 one-way and \$12 roundtrip.

A MARTA (subway) station is located at the airport terminal. Get off at Peachtree Center Station and take the covered walkway to Courtland Street. Cost is \$1 per person.

Delta is the VHPA Reunion host airline. The airline's reservation telephone number is 1-800-241-6760; our file number is D0784.



The Coca-Cola Museum is one of downtown Atlanta's tourist attractions. The city is home to the soft drink company.

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

Ninth Annual Reunion

Atlanta, GA

July 2-5, 1992

Schedule of events

Wednesday (July 1)

Early Bird cocktails	Lobby Bar Area	7 p.m.- ?
----------------------	----------------	-----------

Thursday (July 2)

Vendors and registration	North Wing (2)*	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Welcome Dance	Grand Ballroom (2)	7:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.

Friday (July 3)

Vendors and registration	North Wing (2)	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Board buses for Sun Valley Beach	Hotel entrance	2:15 p.m.
Buses depart		2:30 p.m.
Barbecue (Music, swimming and games)	Sun Valley Beach	4:00 p.m.-9:45 p.m.
Buses depart for hotel	Sun Valley Beach	9:45 p.m.

Saturday (July 4)

Vendors and registration	North Wing (2)	9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.
Men's business meeting	Grand Salon (2)	1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
Ladies' function	Rockdale/Forsythe Room (2)	1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
Children's pool party	Poolside (3)	1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.
Pre-Banquet cocktails	Foyer (2)	6:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.
Banquet/Dance	Grand Ballroom (2)	7:00 p.m.-1:00 a.m.

Sunday (July 5)

Depart	See you in 1993
--------	-----------------

* Parentheses indicate floor level.

Tours available for VHPA members, guests

Special guided sightseeing tours are available to VHPA members through Guidelines-Atlanta.

Advance reservations are recommended and must be accompanied by a check. Reservations should be received by June 1.

Tours include transportation from the Hilton Hotel, a guide, all admission fees, and meals when applicable.

Tickets may be picked up on the second floor, near the registration area, of the Hilton between 2 and 5 p.m. on June 30, from 9 a.m. until noon on July 1, and between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. on July 2.

No refunds or exchanges will be given after June 1 unless tours are cancelled because of insufficient interest. Each tour requires a minimum of 35 people per bus.

Each tour requires a minimum of 35 people per bus.

Tour I

"Newnan: The City of Homes" tour will be conducted July 1 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Explore a relatively undiscovered corner of the Old South -- Newnan, Ga., which was established in 1828. Tour three private homes, two built in the 1850s and the other in 1925.

Cost: \$44 per person.

Tour II

"Granite: You'll Love Stone Mountain" tour will be July 1 from 6:30 until 11:30 p.m.

Visit Stone Mountain Park, the world's largest granite monolith which

contains the images of Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee and "Stonewall" Jackson.

Barbecue buffet dinner, with banjo music, and laser show choreographed to music included. Cost: \$48 per person.

Tour III

"Atlanta: A Peach of a Town" tour will be given from 2 to 5 p.m. on July 2.

Sample Atlanta's attractions, including some of the sites selected for the 1996 Olympics and the 1994 Super Bowl.

Cost: \$22 per person.

Reservations may be made with: Guidelines-Atlanta, P.O. Box 52503, Atlanta, GA 30355. Include name, address and telephone number when writing for reservations.

Air Cav squadron to be featured

The VHPA Directory Committee plans to feature the 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cav in the history section of this year's edition.

The committee has copies of the following unit histories:

Headquarters Troop

- ☐ April 1, 1967 through Dec. 31, 1968.
- ☐ Jan. 1, 1969 through Dec. 31, 1969.

A Troop

- ☐ Feb. 4, 1967 through Dec. 31, 1968.
- ☐ Jan. 1, 1969 through Dec. 31, 1969.
- ☐ Jan. 1, 1971 through Feb. 16, 1972.

B Troop

- ☐ Feb. 4, 1967 through Jan. 1, 1969.
- ☐ Jan. 1, 1969 through Dec. 31, 1969.

C Troop (Original)

- ☐ Jan. 1, 1967 through Dec. 31, 1967.

C Troop (Replacement)

- ☐ Oct. 5, 1967 through Dec. 31, 1968.

D Troop

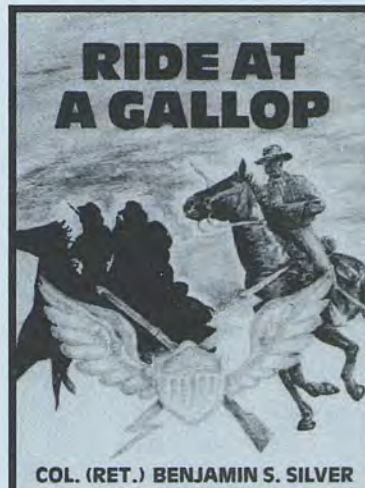
- ☐ April 1, 1967 through Dec. 31, 1968.

61st Aviation Company (AH)

(Attached to 7/17)

- ☐ Jan. 1, 1971 through Feb. 20, 1972.

Anyone with a copy of other 7/17 Unit History annual supplements is asked to contact Directory Editor Mike Law at [REDACTED]



NEW BOOK

- Hard Back • 416 Pages
- 328 Pictures/Diagrams
- Military History as it Happened

HOW TO ORDER A BOOK

COL BENJAMIN S. SILVER
123 North 30th St.
Gatesville, TX 76528

COST

\$25.00 (incl. mailing)
2.07 tax for TX. Res.

BACKGROUND

Twenty-five years ago a new concept "AIR ASSAULT" was introduced into combat in Vietnam by the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). It freed the individual soldier from the tyranny of terrain. In the 1920s the US Army went from horseflesh to horsepower. In the 1960s it went from horsepower to helicopter power. This concept was tested by the 11th Air Assault Division at Fort Benning, Ga., from Feb 1963 to June 1965. In the summer of 1965 the 11th Air Assault was inactivated, and the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) was activated and deployed to Vietnam. This history covers activation of the 11th AAD, equipping, training, testing, conversion to 1st Cav and combat in RVN.

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

7 W. Seventh St., Suite 1990 Cincinnati, OH 45202 (513) 721-VHPA

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR CHANGE OF ADDRESS

☐

APPLICATION

☐

ANNUAL DUES: \$30

☐

LIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$450

☐

ADDRESS CHANGE

☐

SUBSCRIPTION ONLY: \$12*

(*included in annual dues)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: () _____ WORK PHONE: () _____

OCCUPATION: _____

_____ Please charge my MasterCard/Visa/Discover _____ Enclosed is a check/money order payable to VHPA

Credit card No.: _____ Expiration date: _____

Signature: _____

FLIGHT SCHOOL CLASS: _____ SERVICE BRANCH: _____

COMBAT FLIGHT HOURS: _____ SOCIAL SECURITY NO.: _____

Information about each Vietnam tour:

DATE		UNIT	LOCATION	CALL SIGN
From	To			

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

How did you find out about the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association? _____

Were you recruited by another member? If so, who? _____