

# DRAGONFLIGHT

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20 DEC 03

## MY COLUMN

I hope you are all well and that the Holidays have been good to you and your families. Dorothy and I wish to extend Seasons Greeting to all of you .

Gerry is now getting caught up on the website and for those of you who have not looked lately just type in , 52dcab.com, no caps or spaces and it will come up. If we can work out how to do it, we will start posting, the Dragonflights in the web site, Gerry and I are working on how to do this.

I've been going through the stuff sent to me over the years, there is a enough material to start a to make a good display in a museum and enough written reminisces and histories to fill several books. I feel there are a lot of lessons learned that need to be learned again. So I contacted the Army Aviation Museum and Rucker and offered all this material to them at some time in the future when we have finished adding to it. I have not yet received their answer but I imagine they will accept it. If not we will find another home for it, we might even try the Smithsonian.

In conjunction with this I am asking you to once again to do two things, the first and most important thing is for you to sit down and write your story, it does not have to be long or fancy, but write it and secondly send me copies of pictures, documents any thing you have from that time. I would prefer copies because if you send me originals I can't guaranty you will ever get them back. Send to me to add to the collection, then come to the Reunion to see the collection.

*I've been saving this letter for a year, to include it in this news letter. The young lady(she is not so young anymore but it's the way I remember her) is the longest serving member of the battalion while it was based at Cp Holloway. I've invited her to attend the reunion in St Louis as our guest of honor and that we will pay for her trip, room etc.. She has agreed in principle to do so but it was hard for her to plan so far in advance. I recently sent her a letter to verify if coming and am awaiting her answer now. Dragon 11*

Dear Vern

Thank you so much for the book. I have read some stories in this book over and over again to remember the 52d CAB had carried out so many great and dangerous missions in such a outstanding manner.

Many men (soldiers EM and Officers) had died or sacrificed their life to protect their country from the communist aggression. I myself although not a American soldier fighting on the battlefield, however always side by side with the US Soldiers in any where they need me as a interpreter and translator, from 1964 until 1973.

Unfortunately, in April 30, 1975 event, it's a much suffering to me to know that the South Vietnam was defeated by the communist of North Vietnam and the US Army left me behind. I cried and hurt for 22 years to live under the communist yoke toll the date I leave Vietnam to settle in the USA. (1996)

Now sometime I have to encourage myself that I'm lucky, we are lucky. We still survive after many years of fighting in the terrible war, now we're in the USA a free-dom country. We should do something to remember and be grateful to those who died or sacrificed their life in Vietnam (continued page 3)

Dear Vern

You have reached the widow of the late Errol H. Van Eaton. It is with continued sadness that I must inform you of BG Van Eaton's death in a helicopter crash while supporting the UN in the Republic of Haiti, during March of 1999. I have appreciated receiving your newsletters in the past as they give me a clearer perspective of what life was like for Errol during that time of his life.

Thank you for your efforts at keeping this special group of veterans informed and connected

Suzan Van Eaton

*Even though we are very late in doing so we extend our condolences to you. I want you to know that from its inception this organization has considered the families of its members as part of our extended family. I want to extend a open invitation to you to participate in anything we do. You will always be welcome. Vern*

**Date:** 11/2/2003

**Subject:** To's Fine!

Hi Everyone, It's Jane, passing a message on to you. Ty called this morning and he is ok. It was his unit's chinook that was shot~do"11 but he was not flying and is fine. He wanted me to pass that along. I thank all of you for your concern, support and prayers. I appreciate it very much. I will write more later as I get more information. From To-"God bless you and God bless the USA!" ..Jane

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**Subject:** 189th - MAJ Richard Caldwell

Hi **Bill** and all,

Richard Caldwell was MAJ Caldwell then. He was the commander of the 604th Maint Detachment and formed up with us at Fort Carson and went over to Camp Holloway with the unit. I don't remember how long he remained in the 604th but it was quite a long time. He and his people did us a great job keeping the ships flying. I especially remember him flying out to recovery missions for downed Huey and realizing that they only got out in the country side during those recovery actions while the rest of us flew there all the time. I'll bet he has a lot of stories about where us screwy aviators got ships shot up and damaged - all he had to do was lead the recovery into each of those places.

November 11, 2003 12: 13 PM

**Subject:** Jane's Update on Ty!

Hi everyone, I wanted to give some additional information to those of you that may not have it from other sources.

It was Ty's company that had the chinook shot down last Sunday. He was not flying and is fine. Official information was very slow' coming out. They did have three soldiers killed and two injured. One pilot killed was from Ty's unit and the other pilot killed was from the Peoria unit. The crew member killed and the two injured soldiers were also from Ty's unit in Davenport. One of the injured is in Walter Reed, MD and the other is still in Germany and there is no official word on their injuries but the soldier in Walter Reed has been joined by his wife. We are still praying for those families and the loved ones of the fallen soldiers.

Thanks to all of you for your support and prayers. The soldiers are struggling with this crisis, as are the families who lost loved ones. We are reaching out in support of them and each other and we WILL move past this crisis \with the help of God and each other.

I know that Ty would be sending a message to all of the veterans on this Veteran's Day, if he could, so from Ty.. "Thanks for your service and sacrifice to our country and God Bless America! "

I just have to add that I am so proud of Ty and all of those who have or are putting their lives on the line for us They are all my HERO'S. Jane

Hi Vern,

I gave you an incorrect address for Mike Taylor, the author of the story on the campaign of Dak Seang. If in question, tell them to contact me, and I will steer them to Mike.

For your info, a Dan Weiss from John Hopkins is interested in a book on Captain Michael O'Donnell's mission, the crew and pax lost in Cambodia in 1970.

Jim Lake, Tom Bennie, and I attended the memorial ceremony for Col Don Summers in South Carolina last month. Don died of cancer, but think you have met him at one of the reunions. He was to make the Lake of the Ozarks one, health got too bad.

Yes Sir,

I will mail you my \$\$\$ for the 52nd gathering. I didn't see the name or number of the hotel we are staying at... Look forward to seeing you!! George

George:

Thanks for having Vern put out the word. I downloaded your email to him, and you gave him the wrong email address. You told Vern it is (That particular typo happens all the time.)

Mike Taylor's correct email address is

I took it from the title of my first published book, which was my Harvard classical archaeology Ph.D. thesis title: "The Tyrant Slayers: The Heroic Image in Fifth Century B.C. Athenian Art and Politics."

Sorry for having such an obscure handle, unlike Bikini 6. Anyway, I thought you might want to give Vern my correct address. Tell them to call me, too, if they like.

Roger's story is truly amazing, a tribute to the tenacity of the human spirit and of his human spirit in particular.

One question: When I was with the Bikinis up at Kontum, it was never mentioned to me that there was an MIA from the unit. Was it not mentioned because it was a highly classified secret.

Michael W. Taylor

Name: Les Baker

E-Mail: [\[redacted\]](#) Homepage Title: Homepage

Unit Assigned 52d DaNang Gunship Pit Dates in unit 64-65

Trying to locate Jackie Dearman. He was at Camp Holloway around time of 65 overrun. Also received letter from Bob Jonta 3rd pit 119th. He is looking for PLT picture. If any avail contact me I'll link up. I think Bob would like to hear from people he served with. I have his address. Saw comments from James June in Oct 03 Dragonflight. Trying to locate my door gunner Ray Outlaw aka "flying bandit". Last time I saw him was downtown DaNang before he rotated. Have pictures I want to send him. Has anyone been able to provide Warren Smith USMC with any info on 64 action where USMC tried to award 52nd pilot with Navy Cross. Sent him names of individuals I thought might have knowledge that would help. Les Baker  
Can someone out there help less? Dragon-11

(cont frompage 1)

I think we should have the names in the wall of the memorial or have the statue in the US for remembrance of all heroes who died while serving in the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion or at Camp Holloway. These men cannot be forgotten.

In this book I found many names especially some of my ex-boss. I will write to say Hi, just to let them know I am in the USA now.

Thank you again for the book. I appreciated your kindness.

Sincerely Yours

Minh Lap Nguyen

*Now you may not remember the name but I am sure if you ever went to Battalion Hqtrs you saw the very pretty young Lady who worked there, always wearing traditional dress. So I really hope she can make it so we can welcome her into our midst and hear more about what I am sure is a facinating story. If any of you are interested in helping host our guest please contact me. I really would like to gather as many commanders and others who worked with and new her to be here to greet her and weccome back to our fold.. So contact me ASAP.*

### Dragon 11

THE PLEI ME SOCIETY S. Vaughn Binzer, Archivist & Editor

Email:

Re: Plei Me book

Dear Vern:

It's been a while since we've been in contact. Los Angeles finally wore me down so I moved here to Lexington about three years ago. Recently I returned to work on the book about the Plei Me battle and hope to have a complete draft by the Special Forces Association convention this coming June.

There remain several people from the 52nd CAB and other Holloway units that could provide more of their involvement in the battle.

Among them is then Captain Thompson who was the operations officer of one of the companies. During my tour as operations advisor on the Pleiku Sector Advisory Team we worked together quite frequently..

In addition to official histories, after-action reports, magazine stories and books, there are about 80 people who have provided their personal information about the battle from their vantage point. Anyone who was involved with the battle in any capacity is a member of The Plei Me Society. Send no money.

hope your association is thriving and that you are in good health and happy.

Thanking you all for your service,  
Vaughn Binzer, aka Sol

*I received this in March but had placed it in the wrong stack and just got to it. I know that Vaughn would still like you to contact him if you where connected to the Plei Me battle so use the addresses at the top of this column to do so.*

Dragon-11

Unit Assigned 52d Aviation Bn Hbn Dates in unit Jan-Nov '69

Comments I ran the 52nd HQ photo lab which operated as the Special Services photo lab in the evenings. I was a PFC given an O1's slot. We didn't have any unrated O1's in an aircraft BN. I still do not know who turned my name in for that job. I had been originally assigned to the HQ security attachment. Had the good fortune to meet and teach photography and B & W printing to many friends that year. The lab was one of the few opportunities for many to escape the reality of where we were and the many losses in a manner which did not include alcohol or the local brothels. The officers and enlisted men of the 52nd A VN BN will always remain some of my most vivid memories of friendships born in that wartorn land. Their sacrificies and off duty escapades are the paint of the picture of Viet Nam I shall forever keep in my mind.

I will try to digitize a few of my photos for the group some day. I especially like the ones of CWO Paul Heller of the 119th, a comical, cocky young pilot from Chicago's northside. Old Sgt. Vettner, almost 60 then, a Floridian is another unique character Mike Lopez, who later became one of the youngest CW4's in Army history, only to quit the service before his 20 yrs in a dispute with Army brass deployed in Germany over unsafe aircraft. Many others! Hope to join the group sometime downstream at a reunion.

Randy Patterson

*It's good to here from you Randy, we would appreciate any and all photos and stories, please consider joining us in St Louis 7-10 Oct 2004.* Dragon-11

Vern

The 119th is planning a reunion in Texas following the VHPA reunion in Dallas. The reunion will be at Dave Weissinger's farm, in North East Texas. You can contact Dave or my self for more information.

Bob Taylor

rtaylo5@swbell.net

*We hope you guys have a great time down there, send us some picture for the Bn website, of the Hooch you have built down there.* Dragon-11

Dear Vern, Here is the excerpt of the 1964 history of the battalion, written by Bruce Mauldin. Will try to make the 2004 reunion but at my age.....

Glenn Parmeter Alligator 6

*Glenn we are all getting younger, stay well and we will see you in October. Thank you for the history, it is appreciated.* Dragon 11

REUNION /GENERAL PURPOSE FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ WIFES NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
HOME PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail \_\_\_\_\_  
UNIT \_\_\_\_\_ DATES \_\_\_\_\_  
UNIT \_\_\_\_\_ DATES \_\_\_\_\_  
CALL SIGNS \_\_\_\_\_

DUES [\$20.00 1 yr] [\$35.00 2 yrs] [\$180.00 life] or four payments of \$45.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
REUNION REGISTRATION \$40.00 for member -\$45.00 for member and guest. \_\_\_\_\_  
WINE TASTING TOUR Friday 8 Oct \$53.00 per person. \_\_\_\_\_  
GRANTS FARM TOUR Saturday 9 Oct \$19.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

DINNER /FUN & GAMES/DANCING \$35.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

BATTALION COIN  
Available for purchase 7 Oct 2004 \$5.00ea. at reunion or \$10.00ea. if mailed \_\_\_\_\_

BATTALION PATCHES \$4.50ea. postage included  
TOTALS \_\_\_\_\_

If you have not yet received a Membership card please check here. \_\_\_\_\_  
As you noticed prices are up a bit. But we've changed things. There are no charges for the hospitality suite and all beverages, coffee and snacks are complimentary. Registration includes a complimentary coin for each member. Because of our experience last time with so many late registrations, after 1 Sep 2004 and at the door registration will be \$50.00 for the member and \$55 for member and wife. We appreciate all who can to send the money when they register because meals and tours must be paid for in advance, if this is a problem send half when you register and the rest when you arrive.

I have changed the cost of the wine tour this is something really special.  
October 8, 2004 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.  
Spend the day discovering some of Missouri's loveliest spots as you travel over sections of old pioneer trails. The past beckons round each bend and over each hill.  
Tucked away in the Femme Osage valley in a wooded hillside setting is the home that Daniel Boone helped build and where he spent his last years. You'll tour the house that rises four stories and is filled with period pieces, some of which were owned by the Boone family, Costumed interpreters will make Boonesville Village come alive as they describe the other 19th century buildings now reconstructed on the site.  
Just a short trip away you'll enjoy a boxed lunch at Mount Pleasant Winery. The oldest in the area, it was founded in 1881 by Georg Munch and was revived by the Dressel family in 1966. A tour of the limestone cellars and some wine tasting is on the afternoon's agenda.  
The cost of \$53.00 per person is based on a minimum of 35 people per motorcoach and includes an experienced guide, a 54-passenger motorcoach, admission at the Daniel Boone Home. boxed lunch, winery tour, amngements and all reservations.