

DRAGONFLIGHT



25 MAR 2002

REUNION

As I was reminded by many of you over these past several weeks, this year's reunion will be held the third to the sixth of October 2002, at the Airport Crown Plaza, St Louis, MO. This is the 30th Anniversary of the closing of Camp Holloway and the Battalion leaving RVN. I would really appreciate everyone's help on this one to see if we can't make it the largest gathering of members of the battalion since we left RVN.

It's time for you to write of the past. Thirty years have gone by, but in our hearts we are still those brave young men who did the deed.

Every time I sit down to write, stories start to tumble through my mind, good and bad. Our accomplishments and failures, all those "no shit" that's the way it happened stories, are our history. We need all kinds of stuff from why we bounced down the PSP, to the Friday evening fish dinners, whose main course consisted of un-rehydrated deep fried de-hydrated fish, to the buckets of water washing the blood out of the back of ships used for Med-evac.



Camp Holloway, RVN 1963 - 1972

In order for us to get this material in print, you have to take a couple of minutes to sit down and write it. It does not have to be fancy and I promise we only change your language if it can't be read (ie) really bad spelling or to clarify something you write in passion that needs to be made understandable. I've started to work on the new Dragonfire Chronicles, but some of the units histories have not been worked on in years. In fact some of the units have nothing but some basic history that I entered years ago in the first Dragonfire.

So now you have two very important things to accomplish this month. The first is to write to me a little bit about what you remember.

Second its time to make your reservation for this year's reunion. This "next year" stuff does not cut it. As we approach 60 we must learn to recognize our mortality and "next year" for all to many of us never arrives.



I've talked to so many of you on the phone and read your letters and email, but we've never touched flesh and had a drink together. Far too many of those with whom we first made contact are no longer here. We never had the chance to sit and talk. Their bodies betrayed them. Too many of them said, "not this year", but maybe next year.

There is no real excuse not to come. We've kept the prices as cheap as possible. For \$65, you get 3 days of great company, all your snacks, and drinks plus a sit down dinner. For \$30.00 more you can bring you wife or significant other. The hotel is charging \$72.00 a night. Right now air transportation is dirt cheap. St Louis is a major American Airlines Hub, and it is at most a two day drive from anywhere in the country except California. The hotel is near the airport so their courtesy van, means you don't even have to rent a car.

If we have enough interest there are tours, riverboat cruises, shopping trips and gambling to keep those who want to do those things busy. So now its up to you. We as always respect your decision, but remember you will always know someone there, me. We need you there to make this reunion a success. Thanks, Vern

Hi Vern

Thanks for sending the patch.. I am giving it to a mentally handicapped boy in Wisconsin, that I met, his name is Dillon. When Dillon saw the patch on my coat he came right over to me and looked at and touched the patch, the whole time I was there. I met his parents when they came to get Dillon because they thought he was bothering me. I told them I did not mind and Dillon and I had a nice talk, I don't know for sure what it was about but he sure loved our patch. Jerry

PS. I met a friend of Dillon's dad. He was in the 4th Div, right across the street the same time I was there.

Thank you Jerry, say hi to Dillon from all of us.
Dragon 11

Dear Vern

I find the newsletters interesting. I served in the 170th and 119th avn. companies at CP Holloway from Jan 66 to Dec 66.

I was in the maintenance section in both companies working on the flightline across the runway from the control tower. I also worked in the four hanger buildings. I crewed for a while in both the 170th and 119th. Our Maintenance Officer was WO Jim Crowen. A guy I met at Ft Rucker was in charge of the tool crib, by the Maint tents, by the hanger bldgs. It consisted of two conex's, back to back. Some of the folks I served with and remember are, Hurbert Hurst, Tom Miller



**IT IS WITH DEEP REGRET THAT I HAVE
TO REPORT THE DEATH OF
COL. JOHN C. HUGHES
HE COMMANDED THE BATTALION IN
1965, AND BY THE ACCOUNTS OF ALL
TO THOSE WHO KNEW HIM HE
WAS A DAMN FINE SOLDIER AND
COMMANDER.**

**COL HUGHES WAS A INSPIRATION TO
ALL OF US WHO MET HIM AT THE THE
REUNION FOUR YEARS AGO. IF YOU
HAVE THE GROUP PICTURES OF THAT
REUNION. HE SAT RIGHT IN FRONT
AND HAD THE CAV HAT.**



Roy Strawser, Roswell, Jim Nowack, Michael Verdecchia, Pertello, Horchkiss, Kien, Tom Tubo, Garrison, Don Raines, Bruke, Blamey. That's all I can think of but it may help locate others from the 170th Dennis Kedrowski

Thank you Dennis and your letter again points out the main purpose of the Battalion Organization. So many of us were transfused, promoted, demoted, attached and detached that only the lucky few made it all the way through without changing units. So a battalion organization makes a lot of sense from that stand point. We hope to see you in October

Dragon 11



Hi Vern

I hope whoever is attempting to correct the record will include the assigned Medical Det, Security Det., and Signal Det that were assigned and co-located with the 119th from 1963 thru 1965. They assuredly were a critical part of our success as a military organization.

They were the:

545th Trans CO, (Maint)

73rd Signal Det

94th Med Det

25th Inf. Sec/Door Gunners Det.

In early 1963 there were some Photo/ Recon Mowhawks/ L-19's attached to our unit but were quietly replaced to avoid treaty violations about introducing new weapons. I am still trying to track down the following personnel who served with me in 63-64. Can space be bought in the Dragonflight?

Jack (Jackie) Ray Calvert (Crash rescue) and truck driver 63 - 64 119th and 81st tr
Leo H. King 52D Air Traffic Tower
Controller Cp Holloway 63 - 64.

Gordon Fikes Door Gunner Det 25th Inf Div.

A note about call signs. In 63-64 they would change daily and were some times quite colorful. During a siege by the VC of the DAKTO complex of fortified hamlets, the 119th was staging out of Kontum. The air force had controllers on the ground directing traffic, their call sign that day was Whaleboat Control. The 119th slicks were "Dump Truck". The C-123 Providers

who were delivering bulk ammo , food and fuel that day were "Trash Cans" so the air was full of Whale Boats, Dump Trucks and Trash Cans.

David Braum

Thanks for the memories David, and see you don't have to buy space, just drop us a line , we will get it in some how. Dragon !!

Dear Vern

Although, a long way from retirement, I am enjoying Florida and working in rebuilding the aviation industry since 9/11

The attached story is an event that happened to me while flying the 0-1 Birdog for the 219th Avn Co (Recon) The event occurred while I was assigned to the 3rd Platoon located in Qui Nhon

I was in RVN from Sep '70 to Sep 71 Holloway was my home for my first 2 months. Then my home away from home when I flew in from the remote platoon locations The 219th "Dog House" was just outside the main O Club at Holloway. I lived just inside the Dog House's main door and spent many blurry nights playing cards or stumbling from the Club to my room. My future wife was an Army nurse assigned to the 71st Evac Hospital in Pleiku. We met while I was attending flight school and she preceded me in country by 5 months Our dates together were unusual in the fact that I would catch the Flare Ship from Holloway and jump off at the hospital medevac pad. The flare ship would pick me up later. Several times I was caught in a red alert and could not get back to Holloway. Fortunately, someone always called out my name as "present" when the headcount was taken in the 219th bunker. We married in Hawaii and returned to RVN (Qui Nhon) for our honeymoon. The night we returned a sapper blew up the Qui Nhon Port ammo dump behind our platoon HQ and created the biggest explosion any of us had ever seen up to then and since. Light filled shock waves radiated up and over our heads created a scene like no other. Lead from fire activated ammunition rounds rained down on us from every direction. Some honeymoon! By the way, we just celebrated our 31st wedding anniversary.

Hope you enjoy the attached story.

Bob Brewster Headhunter 37

Bob I enjoyed the cover letter as much as I did the story, so with your permission the story will be entered into the Dragonfire Chronicles and to give folks some incite into the 219th and your wedding story is just great also, so here it is for all to enjoy. Dragon 11



Subject: We Were Soldiers, Once....and Young

I wasn't that young when my first tour started in 62. I was rated on 30 Apr 55

I Landed Caribou #61-2392 in Korat RTAFB, Thailand, 21 June 62, after flying from Ft Benning, GA. (Scenes at Lawson AAF brought back memories)

First TDY trip to Tan Son Nhut.... 28 June 1962.

Helen and I saw "We Were Soldiers" this afternoon, in a theater about 1/4 full. It will take me several days to truly think about what I saw today. "Awesome"! Three scenes stick in my mind right now (not the flying and combat scenes, they cannot be described in mere words).

First.... The pre-dawn arrival of "LTC Moore" at the Ft. Benning parachute training towers, alone, prior to being joined by his Sergeant Major and his Company Commanders.... before the troop busses arrived. As a photographer, I thought the lighting and mood was superb.

Second.... "LTC Moore" wearing his dog-tags, as he went to bed with his wife.

Third.... The quick scene where a bucket of water was thrown into the Huey, and red blood flowed out the other door.

(Nov 67, Battle of DakTo, where we washed out the Chinooks each night, after carrying KIAs and wounded back to the Pleiku Field Hospital)

Many of us stood in silence and watched the "credits" at the end.... helped the eyes dry out. Out in the lobby, I saw a 15-year friend, a VN Special Forces retired Major. Neither of us could speak beyond nodding and agreeing. ... Wow!

Sometimes it feels like.... "Yesterday, All my troubles seem so far away"

Don Joyce

179th ASHC, Camp Holloway, Pleiku, 67 - 68.... 3rd Tour Guy

Thank you Don, by far the best film I've seen about our war.

Dragon 11

Dear Vern

I am enclosing a SASE for the information on the Presidential Unit Citations.

On another matter I am trying to find out whatever happened to , or a current address on WO Jerry Nash, a gun pilot during 66 - 67 era. Any help you can give would be greatly appreciated.

Gus Greyhosky

Gus your letter let's me clear up quite a few things.

I am not picking on Gus, its just his letter remind me of some problems that I needed to address. First, if you want me to send you something a like copies , a roster etc, a self addressed stamped envelope helps to remind me to do just that, and cuts down on our postage too. Secondly if you send for something or order something from me and don't receive it bug the hell out of me until you do. I get forgetful and sometimes the post office looses stuff too. If you don't let me know about it, you are dissatisfied and I don't know why. Also if you send me money for something you should get a receipt, if you don't let me know about that also. Lastly if you are looking for someone I will check our most current roster first and then if I don't find it there I will place a note in the Dragonflight along with the name of who to contact. I try not to put addresses in the Paper but some times I forget, I rather act as a middleman in contact situations so we don't have problems.

Dragon 11

Vern

This is a web site that everyone should check out. It's excellent. www.thebattleofkontum.com

Ty Simmons

I agree Ty it is a excellet site by one of our 119th folks.

Dates in unit Dec 67 - Nov 68

Comments I have entered this website through the HIGHPOCKETS, Camp Holloway Web. I am looking for all members of the 119th AHC during any period

of time from when the unit was the 80th Trans through the end of duties in Vietnam. I am also looking for members of the 545th Trans, our maintenance unit. Contact me at the address above. Or go to the HIGHPOCKETS / 119th website and look for the information on the 119th REUNION which is scheduled for 3-18 August 2002.

Dave "Baby Huey" Weissinger

This is the first I've heard of it but now you have seen it the 119th is having a reunion in August, if you contact them at (

) I am sure you can get the rest of this information.

Dragon 11

Vern

I was at Holloway from 69 - 70. Could you get me some information on the reunion. Thanks for taking the time.

Tom E. Pathfinder 18

It's on the way Tom hope to see you in October.

Dragon 11

REUNION TOURS

IN ORDER FOR US TO BOOK TOURS WE NEED TO KNOW IN ADVANCE HOW MANY WANT TO GO WITH A MINIMUM OF 30 ON ANY GIVEN TOUR TO GET IT BOOKED. THEY WILL WILL COST BETWEEN \$20 AND \$47 EACH DEPENDING ON LENGTH AND IF THEIR IS A MEAL INVOLVED. I NEED TO HAVE HEAD COUNTS SOME TIME IN JUNE SO IF YOU ARE PLANNING ON ATTENDING, EVEN IF YOU ARE NOT REAL SURE YET. PLEASE LET ME KNOW NOW.

1. WINE COUNTRY TOUR , SEVERAL WINERIES, ALL DAY , ONE MEAL INVOLVED.
2. RIVERBOAT CRUISE AND MEAL DINNER 2 1/2 HRS PLUS AND TRANSPORTATION.
3. TOUR OLD ST CHARLES, OCTOBER FEST TIME.
4. VISIT HARRAHS CASINO, BUFFET LUNCH AND GAMBLE TO HEARTS CONTENT.
5. TOUR ST LOUIS 4 HOUR TOUR.
6. GRANTS FARM TOUR. 4 HOURS.

WELL THERE YOU ARE SO PLEASE USE THE BACK PAGE TO LET ME KNOW WHAT WE NEED TO SET UP AND ALSO LETS START GETTING THOSE HOTEL RESERVATIONS IN NOW, PLEASE.

NAME _____ WIFES NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____ FAX _____

UNIT _____ DATES _____

UNIT _____ DATES _____

CALLSIGNS _____

ARE YOU GOING TO ATTEND THIS YEARS REUNION?? YES MAYBE NO

DO YOU WISH TO BE A DUES PAYING MEMBER? IF SO LIFE MEMBERSHIPS CAN BE PAID IN FOUR EQUAL
INSTALMENTS OF \$40. 00 OR YOU CAN SUPPORT US YEARLY FOR \$20.00 A YEAR. PLEASE MAKE CHECKS
OUT TO "52D CAB REUNION". \$ _____

REUNION REGISTRATION COST \$35.00 PER MEMBER. \$ _____

DINNER DANCE COST \$30.00 EACH \$ _____

T-SHIRTS/DRAGONFIRE CHRONICLES (SEE BELOW) \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____

JUST A BUNCH OF QUICK NOTES

If you are even just considering coming to the Reunion this year please register at the hotel and send me a note letting me know what tours etc. you are going to attend. If you are sure you are going to come then please go ahead and send in your registration. Please note I raised the registration to \$35.00 per member, it used to be \$30.00, to defray the cost of insurance. Also we will no longer be asking for donations to cover food and drink in the hospitality suite. Crown Plaza

Dates to remember 3 to 6 October in St Louis, MO

We still have some stock left., t-shirts all sizes except for small and med. Large and extra large are \$12.00 and XX-large and xxx- large are \$14.00; plus \$5.00 shipping and handling and add \$1.00 for each shirt over 1.

We also have some Dragonfire Chronicles left. they are \$22.50 and this includes shipping. Remember the next edition will not be available until (REUNITED in 2002)

Please remember to contact me write : Vern Gano

Call : _____

e-mail _____

fax: _____ please send all faxes between 8 AM and 4 PM Central Time