

DRAGONFLIGHT

24 DEC 01

How Old Am I?

Just like everyone of you I sat and stared at my TV on Sept. ^{11th} ~~ninth~~. As flames roared into the sky and the building collapsed, an anger built with-in me that made me want to lash out. I wanted to destroy those who had hurt and killed so many. Just like you though I came to the realization that my 60 year old body will not cooperate with the thoughts running through my 21 year old mind.

This is not our war. It's our sons, nephews and grandsons toting this burden. I've got two nephews Andrew and Frankie JR, one a marine, is out in one of those amphibious task forces in the gulf and the other is in the 82D, both grunts, and both may soon be in "harms way".

I hope their trainers and leaders have done their jobs. That all our nephews, sons, and grandsons are prepared to do what must be done and that they come home to us carrying their shields not on them.

Our Organization

What is the 52d CAB & Cp Holloway Association. We've been asked that question several times lately.

The battallion organization has evolved and grown, when it started we had a clean sheet of paper to work with. There were no company, or detachment organizations. If you were a pilot you belonged to the VHPA

and if you were a crew member you belonged to the VHCMA. For all the rest (non-flyers) there were associate memberships and little or no recognition. When you attend one of those prestegeous organizations reunions, you were lucky to run into anyone you knew or even some one from Pleiku, unless you made prior arrangements to meet them there.

We started the battallion organization nine years ago, because we were asked to by you the battalion. I had no idea what I was getting into and neither did many of you, I am sure. By hook and by crook we have tracked down 1800 of you and we still add names each day. You don't realise how many lists we have been through, but its worth it if it brings us together once more if only for a brief while.

About reunions, the Battalion has a reunion every other year and some of the individual companies have company reunions during the off year and then join the battalion during the even years.

MORNING REPORT

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE remember if anything happens to one it effects us all. So us the morning report. Let us know if some one is ill or has passed away, this includes you so please inform your loved ones to let us know a call to either Gerry or myself, will get the information posted in the Morning Report and your old friends from a long time ago will have a chance to send you a get well card and or to

to say a prayer or two.

For those of you out there who have not done it check out the Morning Report. just look up 52D CAB on the net then click on (Morning Report)

REUNION PICTURES

I know many of you have attended several even all six of the Battalion reunions. we are assembling a photographic history of them Bill Trimble is in charge of this operation, so if you have some duplicates of reunions past you would like to donate please contact Bill at [REDACTED] and he will let you know where to send them.

DUES

Several have asked about dues. We collect them once a year, they are due in January, except for Life Members and those who pay ahead several years at a time. So if you know yours are due sending them in now will save us the postage of a reminder note.

THIS SEASON

Thirtyfour years ago I as a 26 year old Staff Sergeant learning the hard way how to shoot mortars. You, were everything from 19 year old WO-1's who flew far to well for your age, to 50 year old WWII retreds who had seen one to many battles already. You were church going, booze guzzeling,

continued page 3, col 1

Vernon, I was a Warrant Officer pilot with the first platoon of the 119 from June 67 to June 68. Like most of us, I look back on those days with mixed emotions. "The best of times and the worst of times." I tried to spend as much of my year as I could away from Holloway and the mandatory every other night guard duty for my crew. I probably spent as many nights in the field at Dak To or Kon Tum as anyone in the unit. Still, I pulled my regular turn as Office of the Guard and on hot alert to drop flares. Two of my more memorable nights were the night an A-1 took off from the AF base and had an engine failure, did a 180 turn and made a wheels up landing, uphill, with minimum runway lighting on our old PSP strip. I got a call from the guard station at the end of the runway telling me that the plane had slid off of the end of the runway and through the wire. The question from the young guards was, what should we do? I remember suggesting they go out and recover the pilot and escort him back inside of our parameter, which they did. Needless to say, this initiated many phone calls and much paper work, which, I always tried to avoid. No luck that night.

My other memorable night, we were the flair alert ship. This was probably in December prior to Tet, as we were beginning to get mortared regularly. At any rate, either the security patrol heard something or a few rounds had started coming in and we were launched. If memory serves me, the activity was north of the field. We had climbed to about 3,000 feet above ground level and had been vectored into the general area where the tubes were supposed to be located. One of the crew members spotted the flash of what he said were the tubes and we started dropping flares. The crew chief and door gunner had shoved a couple out the door, when there was a flash in the back of the ship. I knew immediately, that one of the flares had popped open inside the aircraft and also knew that that were at least a half dozen more of those big beauties lying on the floor. I knew that if the crew in the back didn't get the flair that had popped open, with the chute deployed, out the door, old 67374 was going to turn into one big flash bulb. Since I am here to tell the tail, you also know that they in fact did manage to roll or man handle it out the door, where it went off a second or less after it hit the slip stream. In the mean time, I had jumped on the guard frequency and issued a May Day, the only time I ever did that in my year in country, and put the aircraft in a diving decent. I honestly thought we were all dead and was hoping to get the aircraft close to the ground before the big event. What difference it would have made, I don't know, but it seemed like the right thing to do at the time.

After the flair went out the door, and I got the aircraft, my racing heart and shaking hands under control, we returned to Holloway. When I got on the ground I thought we would have a reception committee to see how badly we were damaged, considering my having issued the May Day. As I recall, there was no one there except the NCO who handled the flares wanting to load us up in case we needed to go out again. I was a basket case and the rest of the crew was not much better. We had been through a lot of combat by this time and had a pretty keen awareness of what was a truly dangerous situation and what wasn't. We all knew that we had just cheated death and thought the whole world was watching. To our surprise and chagrin, the rest of world had quickly returned to their routine were either already sleeping or still partying. I, again decided that spending time at Holloway had its own unique challenges and that myself and my crew were better off out in the field where we could better control our lives. I did my best to keep my distance for the rest of the year, coming back for clean clothes and aircraft maintenance as infrequently as possible.

All that was over thirty years ago. Unfortunately, I can't remember who my crew chief was that saved all of our lives that night, by getting that flare out the door in the nick of time. Whom ever he is, I owe my life to him. I am always indebted.

John Carrigan
"Gator 374"

John, I was there both nights and remember them well, thank you for sharing them.

DRAGON 11

From: [REDACTED]
Date: 11/16/2001 8:43:37 PM
Subject: Second Pres Unit Citation

I saw something about this in your latest newsletter. What is that all about.

I didn't even know we had a first Pres Unit Citation.

I was with 119 AHC Mar 66 to 67 as a UH1 driver. Did the unit get one during that time?

Send me a self addressed stamped envelope and I will send you copies of both unit citations — Dragon 11

From: Jan Oualline
Subject: 52d Aviation Battalion Crest

Vern, there was a vendor at the VHPA Reunion in Denver in July who can obtain the crest, and just about any other you might want. I can't remember the old gentleman's name, but he had served in the 101st Airborne and he obtained crests for about a dozen of us from the 119th who attended the reunion. Until I met him, I did not even know the 52d had an approved crest. For years I have been trying to obtain one of those unauthorized dragon crests we used to wear. Somehow I got home without one. Each crest cost us \$19 + \$2 for shipping.

His company is called "International Images, Ltd." Address:

[REDACTED] phone toll free [REDACTED] or phone [REDACTED] There is a website at: insignia@usimages.com. The old gentleman is completely trustworthy. We all gave him cash and he mailed out all our orders several weeks later.

Chuck Oualline

Thanks for the information Chuck Dragon 11

I contacted the company and this is the answer I received. Sounds to me like he comes up with original crests not duplicates and if so they would be worth the cost. If anyone else comes up with something let me know. I still wonder if the 52d Aviation Regt is not wearing our old crest, has anyone checked on this??

Hi Vernon, Thank you for your inquiry, much appreciated. Recently I sold five of the 52nd Avn Bn and they were beautiful pins. However, I do not have any inventory at this time so it would necessitate a search on my part and the s/h to get it her when I find it. Therefore, there would need to be a charge of \$19 plus \$2 s/h to locate and send to you is maybe two to three months or sooner possibly. Should you decide to place a paid order, just email me and include your Visa or MC card number, expiration date and the name that the card is in, we will immediately charge your card and begin our search. Should you want more than one in your order there would still be the same s/h charge or \$2 of the entire order. Should you want a hat or shirt with that and other insignias applied then let me know and I'll let you know the charges. Thanks and all the best, Chuck

Its time to start making plans to attend our 30 th Anniversary Reunion. So make those reservations, place a little money asside now, and meet us in St Louis.

Unit Assigned Det B-20, Pleiku, 5 SFGA

Dates in unit Aug 68 to Jan 69

Comments Dear All,

Good to see such sites as this.

Jim Bourke e-mail [redacted]

I am an Aussie who served with II Corps Mobile Strike Force while attached to 5 SFGA back in 68.

For the last two years I have been researching the case of SFC Anastacio Montez KIA 24 May 69 in an area about 14 km south of Ben Het. His body was not recovered.

The operation was named OPERATION DAN QUVEN 38A and PHASE II ran from 15 MAY to 3 JUN 69.

An attempt was made to dustoff Montez during the night of 24 May but was not successful. I have the name of the pilot, WO Snead, and the CO of Pleiku Dustoff, Maj Lench.

Does anyone remember the operation in May 69?

Can anyone give me more information on 52nd Avn Bn roles and organisation etc? Take care. Can anyone help the man out. Dragon-11

"continuation"

devoted husbands, and womanizers. You fought the enemy, each other, and the army, and were the heroes who every day accomplished missions that made our battalion what it was, one of the greatest fighting forces in that whole damn war.

They talk about, The Cav, The Big Red One, 173D, 4th Div, and all the rest but they were not you. You served longer, fought harder, supported more units and received less recognition than any of the Divisions. You are great folks and I am proud to have served with you.....

I figure that in the 10 plus years of our being in RVN somewhere between 15,000 and 18,000 soldiers were assigned or attached to the battalion. We have tracked down over 1800. That's 10%, we have a lot of work to do. I would like to see the next Dragonfire Chronicle just packed with new names and additional personal histories.

**Trying to locate: Members of HHD
52d Aviation Bn. Camp Holloway**

Branch of Service: Army

Unit was: HHD, 52d Aviation Bn.

Where served: Camp Holloway,
Pleiku, Vietnam

When served: 1966-67-68
Message is: I remember a lot of guys and would like to say hello to anyone if we can recollect each other. I was at Camp Holloway from Feb. 1967 to Feb. 1968 working in the personnel office. I was responsible for compiling all of the morning reports for the battalion and sending to Saigon by phone. Of course I could never get through. Man, how times have changed.

Please contact: Michael W. Moss
[redacted]

To: [redacted]

Subject: Looking for Phillip

Dear Tasha

I was assigned to the 604th TC from Nov 70 to Aug 71. During that period we had three commanders Majors Arthur Williams, James Satterwhite and Terry Tate. I'm sorry but I don't recall any officers with the name Phillip but it has been awhile. You might try contacting the National Archives Records Administration for a unit roster for that time period. Also, you should be mindful of the fact that we had American, Australian and New Zealand civilian contractors working with us. They were the only ones that no restrictions from going into town. I wish I could help you more but now you know for certain he was not the CO of the 604th. Do you know if he was a pilot or any other information? That could help track him down.

Dan Haskins

Thank you Dan I forwarded your message to the lady. I wish we could have been more help. Kids should know their grandparents.

We are receiving a few addressee "not known" again. For Pete's sake folks if you move please send us a new address card from the Post office. It's cheap and we can find you again

Vern,

Many people who were in 52nd CAB in the period 29 Oct '67 thru 30 Nov '67 are unable to receive their "Presidential unit Citation" because Military DA PAM 672-3 does not list units attached to 52nd CAB at the time.

I have contact with people who can suggest change but need units to verify.

Per Dragonfire Chronicles:

52nd CAB Security Platoon

125th ATC

57th AVN CO

119th AVN CO, 545th TC

155th AVN CO

170th AVN CO, 405th TC, 448th SD,
755th MD

179th AVN CO, 604th TC

189th AVN CO

I have added those who were attached per my recall. I need input to cover all. They may correct this but only once.

Paul R Wilson POC

There are 2 separate citations for the Presidential Unit citation, the SOG award reads from 24 Jan 64 to 30 Apr 72 and it is for the entire battalion, in the list of units the General Order lists 52ND AVIATION BATTALLION, so if you were assigned or attached to the Battalion during that time frame received this award according to GO 38.

Many of you have asked for copies of these citations. So they will be printed in the next Dragonfire Chronicle, also see the notice on the previous page

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 \$30.00 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. I'll talk about the tours again later once I find out your wishes. Crown Plaza [redacted] or [redacted]

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)

Speaking of the "Dragonfire Chronicles" we need your input , so sit down this winter and write something and send it to me. It does not have to be great writing , just truthful writing. we need your histories and stories to make the book better than it already is and that takes your help. So please sit down and let us know how it really was.

PLEASE LET ME KNOW WHAT KIND OF TOURS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE SCHEDULED, WINE COUNTRY TOUR, RIVER BOAT CRUISE/DINNER, OLD ST CHARLES, GAMBLING, GRANTS FARM I'LL GET PRICING FOR NEXT