



The VHHPA Newsletter

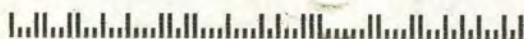
Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association ®

Winter 2003-04 Vol. 22, No. 1



Members of the Blue Max (C/1/229), training in the Long Bow at Fort Hood, TX, shared their experiences and day with Reed Kimzey and Tom Payne, VHHPA life members who served together in the 118th Assault Helicopter Company Thunderbirds in Vietnam. Shown in the photo are (from left) WO1 Ed Smith, CW2 Chris Smith, CW2 Jerry Works, Kimzey, CW3 Zac Noble, Payne, CW2 Matt Uran, CW2 Kirk Shands, CW2 Buzz Kruszona and 1st Lt. Ashley Lee. Fort Bragg is home station to the Blue Max. Story on Page 9.

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From the President

As we move into 2004, I would like to bring you up-to-date on some issues and initiatives that have been our focus during the past months. This is not a "year in review," but more a continuing chapter in our organization's growth and development. Some of the "good" and some of the "not so good."

Membership

The Goal of the VHPA is to find all potential members and encourage them to join. Many have and, with your encouragement, more will. During the search process we will, unfortunately, find that some have passed away. This, too, is an important part of our objective.

During the past year we have used several commercial resources to help us find contact address information for those eligible for VHPA membership. The results have been tremendous.

More than 12,000 names have been processed with updated addresses for most. We have one more batch of more than 1,200 names that will complete the task.

A major challenge was to find those who had been discharged prior to the military's transition from "US," "NG," "RA," "W" and "O" numbers to SSAN's. With a Social Security Number, we could, with a high probability of success, find a potential member. Without the SSAN, we had to go through a second records search.

The Directory you received in late October is objective evidence of our success. We had to reduce some of our "standard" content to make room for new member information. As the Directory editor, Gary Roush, noted in his comments, we hit the thickness limit.

We already have received questions and comments regarding the changes and the accuracy of the Directory content.

Why were the email addresses deleted? Two reasons: Space and accuracy. We need the space for the new names



Dana Young

and we cannot keep up with the changes in email addresses.

While the internet and email is quick and inexpensive, it was felt that, if you see a name you would like to contact, a valid mailing address would be of more use than an inaccurate email address.

Would it be possible to have a second publication with the information that has been removed? Could it be made available on the web or on CD? We are looking at that possibility, but there would be a cost associated with developing and sustaining that effort.

When you looked through the Directory, you probably noted some entries had nothing more than a flight school class number or a branch of service. This is where we need your help.

When you see a name with your class number and no further information, let us know what you know. If you have any orders with the person's name, copy us. If you have kept contact, update us.

And, finally, if you see a name of someone who was in your flight school class, graduated and did not go to RVN, let us know. The latter condition would apply to National Guard and Reserve members who went to flight school and then returned to their units.

Legal

In the last newsletter, I referred to an accompanying article that would update you on the status of legal actions that were consuming our organization's time and resources.

Unfortunately, that article did not get completed in time to make the cutoff and mine did. That article is in this issue and it is one I encourage you to read. It will, I hope, answer most of your questions and dispel rumors that have been circulating for the past months.

Unfortunately, this is not a closed chapter. I will provide more information as it becomes available.

Reunions

Last issue I mentioned our effort to develop a long-term relationship with a national hotel chain that would give us accessibility to new locations, room for all attendees to stay in one facility, keep competitive rates, and have consistent standards at each reunion site.

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Classified ads

SEEKING REVOLVER: I am looking for a Smith & Wesson .38 special that most Army helicopter pilots carried in Vietnam. If anyone knows of a source please contact Mike at [redacted] or email [redacted]. Also, does anyone know the actual model number and barrel length?

E-mail items to Newsletter at:
swickard@vhpa.org

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This information, including but not limited to the VHPA Chapter list, shall not be used for commercial solicitation purposes or for any correspondence related thereto without prior written authorization from the VHPA president.

Correspondence relating to commercial purposes or solicitations shall only be sent to those officers, committee chairmen, and staff listed above.

VHPA legal challenges

In June 2002, former member Gary Wineteer, represented by former member Tom Elliston as his attorney, filed suit in Platte County, MO, against the VHPA.

Wineteer's suit alleged that the law of Kansas, VHPA's state of incorporation, required the VHPA to permit proxy voting at VHPA business meetings by members who had obtained proxies from members not present, and that the VHPA's long-standing policy against proxy voting was unlawful.

At a hearing in June 2002, the Missouri court denied Wineteer's motion for an injunction to allow proxy voting at the Las Vegas Reunion in July 2002, but otherwise did not address final resolution of the merits of the suit.

Thereafter, the VHPA filed a motion to dismiss on procedural grounds that the VHPA was not subject to the jurisdiction of Missouri courts, and therefore should not be subject to further litigation there. The trial court granted the VHPA's motion at a hearing in November 2002, and Wineteer appealed.

On Dec. 2, 2003, the Missouri Court of Appeals reversed that dismissal, holding that the trial court did have jurisdiction over the VHPA, due in part to its prior support of Wineteer's efforts to organize the Mid-America Chapter. The appellate court did not consider or address the merits of Wineteer's claims on the proxy voting issue, which shall now be subject to further proceedings in the trial court.

Meanwhile, in December 2002, the month after the Missouri trial court's initial dismissal of the Missouri case, Elliston, representing himself, filed another suit against the VHPA in Chase County, KS.

Elliston claimed in that suit the Executive Council was not a lawful governing body under Kansas law, the VHPA was operating as a veterans organization in violation of its Articles of Incorporation, and the Executive Council lacked the power to terminate Elliston's membership.

Once again, he also sought a court order allowing proxy voting for the Orlando Reunion's business meeting in July 2003, but this time there was no court hearing prior to the reunion.

Following the reunion, the Kansas trial court held a hearing on the merits of Elliston's claims in September 2003. After a presentation of evidence and arguments from both sides, the Kansas trial court ruled against Elliston on all counts, and entered judgment in favor of the VHPA. Elliston has until late January 2004 to decide whether to file an appeal.

The defense of these cases is being handled by the VHPA's legal firm of Gunn, Shank, and Stover of Kansas City, MO. VHPA member and attorney Charlie Rayl is assisting in the defense of the Kansas suit.

VHPA's attorneys believe the claims of the Kansas and Missouri suits lack merit, and the VHPA will prevail in both suits.

Letters

Pilot seeks name of rescued man

Would you help me locate someone from my past who I never really met?

On a rainy winters night in 1971 while serving with the Hornets at Chu Lai, the order went out for a flair drop mission. Oh lucky me. I was a pretty new aircraft commander and night flying in the rain just didn't thrill me.

The only briefing we received was that the flair ship was needed to assist in a perimeter search. Despite my weather apprehensions, it had now become our mission, and as a crew we were going to get it done. Little did we know that rewards would justify the risks.

We got airborne right away and met up with the medevac ship that had been searching. It seemed that the perimeter defense helicopter had gone down in the rain and together we would look for answers.

With the low clouds, we weren't sure how effective the flares would be. We climbed through the clouds. The crew, despite the cold and rain, dropped our flairs.

My tactical ticket and the light from the flares in the clouds made for some very challenging moments. I remember wishing I had saved my old "hood" from Fort Rucker.

After a couple of hours, the medevac ship which had been covering the search a lot longer then we had decided to turn in. We had refueled just 15 minutes prior and decided to stay. While we continued to search, we established radio contact with some troops on the perimeter.



A call from one the soldiers came across the FM radio. He had heard a voice on the water calling out for help. We proceeded to that area as the winds and rain picked up.

Though we really wanted to find this voice, the thought of pressing our luck by flying into the clouds again to drop more flares excited no one, so we elected to cover to the area at about a 10-foot hover.

We put the witches hat to good use as we covered the area with our light. Another hour had passed and we hadn't yet come up with anything.

As luck would have it, a strong gust of wind turned our tail around very abruptly. When it did, we spotted a reflection that led us to a fellow floating on some of the wreckage.

At first we were going to attempt to extract him from the water ourselves. As we hovered down, it was immediately apparent the seas were just too rough. It was dark except for our lights, yet I could see desperation in his eyes and determination to not lose him in the faces of my crew. It was obvious that our hovering above him was taking a toll on him. I was reluctant to move off because he needed him to know that we were not going to abandon him.

As I remember, the crewman stood in the doorway ready to risk the waters to keep our pilot afloat if need be. I called the tower at Chu Lai and had it launch the medevac to recover the pilot. We maintained contact with the pilot until the medevac ship showed up. They did a great job of getting him out of the water very quickly as we watched.

Well, I never got to meet that fellow. He stayed at the Chu Lai hospital for a while. My commanding officer, Maj. Smith, did visit him, along with the battalion commander.

I have often wondered what happened to that fellow. As I look back, it was a very bright spot in my life. If anyone can help provide me with any information on how I can locate this man I never met, I sure would appreciate it.

CW2 John J. Butler

Hornet 42

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From the President

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We should be able to share the results of these negotiations in the next newsletter.

Dallas 2004

The 2004 Reunion is going to be another in a series of memorable events. All of us have been to Texas and most have been to Dallas, but few of us will have had, until now, the experiences you will have in 2004.

The facility, Adams Mark, is located in the heart of Dallas, with access to public transportation, historic sites, shopping, restaurants and much more.

While we have not tried to fill your calendar before you arrive, we have put together slices of Texas that you might miss. A Welcome Gathering, Mini Reunions, The Mesquite Championship Rodeo and Barbecue, Vince Vance and the Valiants and the closing night Banquet will provide the core activities.

Golf, a visit to the site of the National Vietnam War Museum and other individually selected activities will fill out the agenda.

The online registration is up and running, links to special offers from airlines and rental car providers are available. Check out the site periodically to keep up to date with who is coming and activity updates.

Just in case you missed the article in the last newsletter about our new tax status, take a quick look. Remember, when you renew your membership, it is deductible. Time to consider a life membership . . .

— Dana M. Young, President

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P.S. — To my crewmates on this mission: Thank you one and all. I have attempted to respect your privacy by not mentioning your names. Please contact me if you can and we can talk about the results of this letter.

Soldiers in Gulf, Delta share some similarities

I am a National Guard soldier currently deployed to the Persian Gulf. Thirty-five years ago, I was a young Army helicopter pilot stationed in the Delta of South Vietnam.

Recently, I have been thinking of the similarities and the differences between then and now.

Then . . . if a soldier was 25 years old, we called him Grandpa. Now . . . when we call a soldier Grandpa, he really is one.

Then, I remember seeing forklifts unloading pallets of beer in Vietnam. Here in Kuwait forklifts unload pallets of bottled water (no beer here).

Then, we used to dream and talk of "Round-Eyed American Girls." Now, the soldier working next to you may very well be an American girl (they comprise about 12 percent of us and generally they are hard working, competent and professional).

In Vietnam, we were scroungers and fabricators. We would drag up wooden crates and steel barrels and use re-straightened nails to make shelves and bookcases.

In this respect, the soldiers in today's Army are still the same. I am continually amazed how 2x4's and plywood can be used to make life a little more comfortable.

As I walk between the rows of tents, I see elaborate covered patios with homemade chairs and foot rests, benches and tables. Some enterprising troops have even built a retreat between the tents ("The Sand Lizard Saloon," complete with a plywood bar and "Saxon," the two-foot-long sand lizard, where after a long, hot, dusty day, you can have a cold Coke or a non-alcoholic beer.

There are flagpoles next to tents with flags flying and signs with arrows that point to towns that are far away. Some things change, but thoughts of home and X's on calendars will always be the same.

In Vietnam, we were young and bold. We would fly our aircraft out to the bush each day and operate where the rubber meets the road. We were the tip of the sword — in the action — and we walked with a swagger. We disliked REMFs. We called them straphangers and bean counters. And we looked at them with contempt.

Here in Kuwait, I am a REMF. I am a rear echelon pencil pusher. I'm not always sure where my Kevelar is, but I know where the mess hall and the MWR tent are located,



Argentine Army pilots continue flying Hueys

A couple years ago, I was surfing the Net regarding Vietnam helicopters when I ran across an inquiry for Vietnam helicopter pilots that flew one of two UH-1H's that had flown in Vietnam. The tail numbers were listed and the units.

One of the aircraft flew with the 158th Lancers and the other was one of "my" birds from the 237th DMZ Dustoff.

What followed has been a wonderful friendship with several pilots in the Argentine Army who are keeping these Hueys flying; and they are flying them the way we used to fly them! Low and fast, pushing the proverbial envelope!

I highly encourage viewing their website — www.uhclub.com.ar

There is lots on wonderful footage and photos of these two aircraft still flying today in Argentina. It will put a smile on your face, I guarantee it.

Please be sure to leave a message for them when you do visit. Although the site is in Spanish, you will have no trouble navigating it. My contact there, Juan Souto, speaks gooder English than I do, so they will have no trouble translating your comments. Enjoy!

Phil Marshall
DMZ Dustoff 711
Quang Tri, Camp Evans 1969

and I know where the best latrines are.

Each morning, the flight crews gather in my operations tent and I give them a weather update; they file their flight plans and they walk out to their helicopters with their bravado and their battle rattle. I give them a smile and a wave . . . and a quiet prayer. Late in the day they walk back into the flight operations tent, completely exhausted, dragging their rattle and drinking water in large gulps. They call me "Sir" and salute me, and look at me with contempt.

CW5 Douglas Gandy
Company G, 149th Aviation
Oklahoma Army National Guard
Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

Post Script:

When I wrote the paper then and now, I was in Kuwait, sitting in the flight operations tent with not much to do. I didn't know it then, but there was another significant experience still ahead of me.

Seven months after the activation of two Army National Guard units, one from Texas and the other from Oklahoma, we received orders to clean up and pack up.

After 1,800 hours of blade time, flying troops and equipment, beans and bullets, to areas all over Iraq, it was

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time to go home. I am happy to tell you my prayers were answered and all our boots went home standing tall.

It seemed long ago that we were called to hang up our civilian clothes and go from weekend guardsmen to full-time Army combat soldiers. The process of joining the two units into one is a complex process and we were doing it in short order to deploy into a combat environment.

First we convoyed to Fort Hood to SRP (soldier readiness processing), which involves everything from updating shots and wills to requalifying on the weapons range. Then flying the Chinook helicopters to a Texas port to load them and all the support equipment for shipment to the other side of the world. It, as my Dad would say, "boggles the mind."

We regrouped in Kuwait to operate as a Chinook helicopter support unit. And now it was time to reverse the process.

Finally, we were on the plane going back to Fort Hood. As we were flying over the Atlantic, the pilot told us we would be making a short stop at Bangor, Maine, for fuel. "Not long, so take a stretch break and we'll be on our way to Fort Hood."

As we were walking down the airport corridor, I looked around at our band of troops. We have had a lot of experiences together. From the bone chilling day at the Fort Hood firing range to the eye-watering experience of the gas chamber. Making the best of living in the hot, crowded warehouse in Camp Arifjon. The incredible heat of the Iraq desert and the choking dust storms. The long, hot days and the lonely nights were almost over.

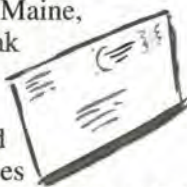
As we walked toward the terminal, I again began thinking of a time long past.

In Vietnam, we were shipped over alone, and then joined a unit, spent a year's tour of duty, and then returned home alone. I remember walking down an airport corridor much like this one, wearing my uniform with a new Purple Heart on it and carrying duffel bag.

The people around me didn't say anything to me or even look at me. They didn't know that right behind me were the sounds and the smells of combat. As people crissed and crossed all around me, no one knew that right behind me there were young ghosts standing, watching me walk away.

As we walked around a corner at the Bangor Airport, we saw a large group of people ahead of us. As we got closer, we saw flags and signs, men and women and young teen-agers. As we reached them, the men began shaking our hands and the women were hugging us. "There must be a mistake. We are from Texas an Oklahoma. We just stopped here to . . ."

"Welcome Home . . . We are so proud of you . . . Thank You for serving our country. This is no mistake; we meet all the military aircraft that land here. We have Cokes



Very old friend seeks pilot's current address

Your email address has been given to me in the hopes that you will be able to find a very old friend of mine I met in Europe in April 1970. He had just finished in Vietnam as a medical helicopter pilot and was stationed in Permasens, West Germany.

His name is Pedro Pablo Ortiz, from U.S.A., date of birth 29 June. His close friend at that time was Rex Keyes and they had been together in Vietnam.

I have an address for him in Richmond, TX, but would like more details if possible and I believe you may be able to post this in the biannual magazine. My name is Lynne Gresham, and I am originally from what was Rhodesia, now living in Malawi, Central Africa.

Lynne Gresham
Malawi, Central Africa

and home-made cookies and on this table are phones you can use to call your families and friends; we might even find a cold beer if you would like. Did we tell you we are so proud of all of you? Some of you are so young . . . and some of you are so . . . experienced . . . and I can't believe those attractive young girls are really soldiers."

"Yes, Ma'am, they are — and we are."

"What was it like flying helicopters over there?"

"Well, it's like putting on 50 pounds of battle rattle (mostly equipment that you hope to never have to use) and climbing into a hot oven and then having someone throw sand at you for 8-10 hours. Then, in those conditions, maintain the discipline to follow procedures and the checklist. Maintain the SA and crew integrity to operate the aircraft in a hostile environment. And the hostile environment is not just the man with a shoulder-fired rocket, but the heat, and the dust, the almost invisible towers and high-lines, fatigue, thrust, 15,000 moving parts, any one of which could cause a bad day, and the ever-present pilots' enemy, gravity."

Operating the aircraft in these conditions is a challenge and there are no second chances.

"Are those young girls really able to work as soldiers?"

"Yes, Sir, I can tell you they are. One day I was trying to be the gentleman my mother raised and I offered to carry part of a girl's load. She told me, in a direct soldier manner, that she could carry her load and for me stay in my lane and worry about my load."

"I was an enlisted crewman in the Air Force. What do your enlisted soldiers do on the helicopters?"

"Well, I'll tell you — not much. They are the first to get to the aircraft in the morning and the last to leave at night. They are mechanics when it is broken and they can take it apart and put it back together. When the passengers arrive they become crew chiefs. They have to be part diplomat and part nightclub bouncer. They have to be part medic

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and part mother hen.

"As loadmasters, they are responsible for loading the aircraft and calculating the all-important weight and balance. As flight engineers, they sit between the pilots on the flight deck and help with the check list and SA. Always SA. From the first day of flight school, we learn that being aware of the situation is the difference between being a crewmember and being a passenger.

"And, in their free time, they man the machine guns mounted on the side doors and the fantail. I know I speak for all the pilots and officers when I say, 'We salute the enlisted crewmembers for a hard job done well.'"

As we are called to reboard the aircraft, there is more handshaking and hugging. As we walk down the terminal corridor, we wave goodbye to our new friends in Bangor.

Back on the plane, the youngsters are joking and laughing (it never ends), but some of us sit quietly. As we turn and make eye contact with each other, we nod. We are thinking the same thing. This was nice . . . This was how it should have been.

Thanks, Bangor, and thanks to all the towns and cities



that have welcomed us home. It is appreciated.

CW5 Douglas Gandy
OMD, 3501 Military Circle
Oklahoma City, OK 73111

Most valuable recognition of service came at party

Many of us have been decorated for some things we did and some we didn't, and despite all the awards, received a mixed review of our service during the '70s, given the tenor of the times.

The most valuable recognition of my Vietnam service came then, not on a battlefield or parade ground, but in a drunken stupor at a AAAA Convention.

It was 1972 or '73. There we were, as CW4 Merlin Handley would say, about 1,000 of us at the AAAA Convention at the big Sheraton Hotel in Washington, DC, having a big time.

It was the final banquet and we had been preparing for some time that afternoon. We were all three sheets to the wind by the time dinner came. We were having a grand time eating, drinking, telling war stories and other tall tales.

Then a lone soldier slipped through the curtain at the

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George G. Reese Jr.



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back of the hall. He had come through the service entrance and had nobody with him. He was in full dress uniform.

Some of the guys over that way had squinted hard and realized that it was Gen. Creighton A. Abrams, the chief of staff of the Army. They hollered "Attention!" and after maybe three minutes, we all got to our feet and faced the general in silence.

He waited patiently and when he had our attention, he rendered a silent hand salute and held it for about 10 seconds. Then, without a word, he about-faced and marched out of the hall the way he came.

You could have heard a pin drop for two or three more minutes before we went back to our party.

The Army way:

Friends' names start with same letters

I just got my 2003 roster. It was enjoyable looking up old names when I got to thinking: We are all grouped alphabetically.

I was in the "S" group; my friends were Tom Story, Jim Spear and someone not in my flight class, but he was Richard Starns. I got to looking at other names and found the same thing.

The guy responsible for me joining up was Dan Clark. His good friends and classmates were Bruce Carter and Danny Carlton. Two other good friends were Wes Gager and Dave Hall; they were classmates.

Looking over my old flight school roster, I realized that most of my old friends last name started with "S" or "R."

Greg Smith
Satin 19

This man generated enormous respect. He was a soldier's soldier. As a lieutenant colonel in the Battle of the Bulge, he used to receive Infantry lieutenants as casualty replacements every night in his armor battalion. He would give them a "field armor officer's basic course" from midnight until 5 a.m. before they went into battle for the first time in a tank. He fought like that for weeks.

We all knew we had been paid the ultimate compliment from a gallant brave old soldier who respected us as his equal.

It was the finest tribute I have ever received. I relate it here for those who were not there, because he meant it for all of us.

Charles Heberle
Tacoma, WA

Commander chose unique way to discipline soldiers

During the early 1960s as a unit commander, I was faced with a situation that I chose to handle in a special and unique way.

Upon entering the company area each morning, usually before 0630, I would always go straight to the orderly room and question the Charge of Quarters (CQ) concerning the previous night's events.

On this particular day, the CQ informed me that two of the young privates had gotten into a fist fight on the second floor of the barracks and that he and several others in the company had broken up the rather serious "fisticuffs" exercise.

One of the individuals, I noted, was to be promoted to private first class on that day, an event that all young troopers looked forward to with great anticipation.

Both of these two individuals had shown to have the

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potential to quickly become a major contributor to the unit mission of aircraft maintenance.

Other than the usual spunk displayed by young troopers of the early '60s, there was a positive indication of potential and I felt like that both deserved treatment other than through non-judicial punishment.

After the 0730 work formation, I instructed the first sergeant to have both of the troopers standing by outside the office for me to take care of as a first order of business that morning. As soon as the formation was over, both young troopers promptly reported to the orderly room.

I intentionally took my time looking over the morning report, signing it, briefly looking over other correspondence before turning my attention to the two soldiers waiting outside.

My first action was to call the first trooper in who was to have been promoted on that day. The first sergeant came in with him and closed the office door. After the usual report and salute, I began by saying, "Attention to orders . . . and read the unit promotion order."

I next proceeded to walk around the desk, present the stripes along with a copy of the orders, and next shook his hand.

After returning to my desk, I dismissed the soldier, who saluted, with an obvious expression of amazement on his face.

My next step was to have the first sergeant bring both of the young troopers into the room. Again, after the required report and salutes, I began an oral review of the CQ report and pointed out the articles in the Uniform Code of Military Justice with the punishments that were appropriate to the reported offenses.

I lectured to both of them, I chewed on them, and I also pointed out the various directions that they were headed based upon their previous night's behavior. I next gave them two alternatives: Non-judicial punishment or each could participate in a field training exercise in the open field next to the barracks.

The exercise I described would require each to provide a shelter half joined together to form sleeping accommodations for two. The exercise was to last one week, to begin at 1900 and end at 0530 during the period. Both agreed to the field exercise.

I checked on them closely during the following week, as did the CQ. There were no incidents, even though both got "ribbed" constantly during the week while at work. Both completed the week's exercise without incident.

The results of my action was seen in the months that followed. Both of these young soldiers went on to advance in rank and became experienced, reliable aircraft mechanics and, more importantly, the best of friends. Wherever



Comments about training at Fort Wolters correct

Hello Tom: Just noticed your comment about Wolters training for confined areas in *The VHPA Newsletter* and you're absolutely correct.

I took another look at the photo on the front of Vol. 20, No. 6, and realize why I made the comment I did. To me it's not a confined area as the chopper sits in a very open area with no confinement at all. But the caption says "atop a pinnacle," so that's it and training must have been in progress.

Anyway, I'll bet you've been in much tighter places and thanks for straightening me out.

Jack Knotts

there was one, almost always there would be the other.

Upon my departure from the unit, both of these soldiers came up to me and thanked me for handling the situation many months before in the manner that I did.

I will forever feel that my course of action did more toward making these two individuals into mature adults than would any sort of non-judicial punishment.

James B. Thompson

Old Vietnam Dogs learn new tricks at Fort Hood

You may have read the article in the July/August *Newsletter* about "Young Dogs Learn Old Tricks." It was the story about Apache SIP/IE pilot CW3 Zac Noble of C/1-229 Aviation Regiment, (Blue Max), and their recent deployment to Afghanistan.

Zac, you see, had printed the 118th Assault Helicopter Company Thunderbird Bandit gunship tactics used in Vietnam from their website and distributed them to the men of the Blue Max. This story is a sequel to the previous article and tells how two "Old Dogs" made a recent trip to Fort Hood to meet and learn about Apache Longbow flying and tactics.

On Nov. 14, 2003, Reed Kimzey and I flew in my Beechcraft Bonanza, N5QB, to Killeen, TX. We were to be the guests of CW3 Zac Noble (selected for CW4) and the men of the Blue Max who were training at Fort Hood.

The morning was overcast, but cool, for the two-hour flight from Tulsa, OK. At our ages, we sipped lightly on coffee during breakfast for the flight.

Upon landing at Killeen, Noble came to pick us up. First impression, "gosh these guys are so young and good looking!" (I have since realized that we also were young

Continued on Page 10

Letters

Continued from Page 9

and handsome back in the '60s, too.)

The short trip to the airfield was spent learning some details about the training the Blue Max was receiving in the Long Bow Apache at Fort Hood. We also learned about some of the fantastic capabilities it promised when they returned to their home station in North Carolina in a couple weeks.

Zac originally had been a Cobra pilot back in the late '80s and knew about running and diving gunship fire. He said he had been everywhere from Bosnia to Afghanistan and Korea and more. In the past eight years, he has been home only about three years! Wow, talk about dedication.

I told him he must have a fantastic wife and family to tolerate such separation. Zac agreed and said, he was a lucky man, for sure.

We met many of the men — and one woman — of the Blue Max as we toured the offices and maintenance areas within the huge hangar. They all seemed glad we had taken the time to fly down and meet them. Most had been with the unit for a while, even when it deployed to Afghanistan and most were well-experienced in Army aviation and the

Apache.

They showed us the cockpit, systems and inner workings of the Apache Longbow as best we had time. After a lowly Huey, the Apache Longbow is a perplexing aircraft whose systems and cockpit are difficult to comprehend.

Even for Reed Kimzey, who flies Russian helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft for a living, it was a stretch!

With minds awl and thoroughly confused by the complex Apache Longbow, we departed the Fort Hood Airfield for a local Mexican restaurant and another round of introductions to more men (no women this time) of the Blue Max.

I gave little thought to what we would be doing after lunch. I just chowed down on spicy Mexican tacos and enchiladas with reckless abandon, much to my detriment later.

After lunch, Zac took us back to the airfield and to another hangar, which was filled with numerous OD trailers on jacks . . . the Apache Longbow flight simulators. There we met the very friendly and former Army aviator who is now the civilian in charge.

We learned about the simulators and how they functioned. We learned some of how they are used for training in the Longbow, including debriefing and observation by



Continued on Page 11



and



Invite the VHPA to the dedication ceremony for The National Vietnam War Museum



Static Displays

July 3, 2004

Aircraft Flybys



- Visit the Museum site and walk the property
- Tour Fort Wolters, Mineral Wells, and Downing Heliport
- Enjoy real Texas Bar-B-Q and entertainment
- Maybe meet your old Fort Wolters IP



\$25 – Cheap!
Bus, Beer, & Barbecue

Relax on the bus from the hotel, tell war stories, watch videos, and don't miss this once in a lifetime event!

Bring your camera, bring your tape recorder, and bring your memories, but most importantly, bring yourself to Mineral Wells for this celebration!

\$25 per person covers transportation, all the barbecue you can eat and all the beer, soda, or water you can drink.

Letters

Continued from Page 10

one crew of another crew in real-time.

Then Zac said, "well you got any time to let these 'Old Dogs' ride the Longbow for a few minutes."

"Sure," he said, "I got a little VIP program they can try out!"

So, for the next 45 minutes, Reed

Kimzey and Tom Payne were back in the cockpit again . . . of the Apache Longbow, this time. We shot tanks, chased the enemy, crashed, took off again, crashed, flew gun cover for slicks and crashed, again. We even landed on the deck of a carrier and I crashed, again!

It was a real experience and one that showed each of us just how far helicopters and helicopter pilots have progressed in technology since our day.

I have to tell you, however, I got a little queasy after the Mexican enchiladas and tacos from lunch as I tried to "fly" the Apache Longbow by the seat of my pants. Reed did some better than I did and crashed only once, I think. Definitely not a good feeling!

As the day was slipping away, Zac drove us back to the Blue Max hangar and the flight line for some pictures with the men, and one woman, next to an Apache Longbow. What a hoot and what an eye-opener Reed Kimzey and I had received.

As we drove back to our Bonanza at Killeen Airport, Zac told us how much he appreciated our coming. He gave each of us a very nice poster signed by the men, and one



Reed T. Kimzey practices on the simulator.

woman, of the Blue Max. I, of course, gave him my 118th Bandit cap with its Bandit logo, proudly embroidered on it. Zac said he was going to ask me where he could get one of those caps. It was a fair trade, in my books.

As Reed and I flew in the darkening overcast sky the two hours back to Tulsa, we talked about our trip. We both had been amazed at how young and handsome the men, and one woman, were who we had met that day.

We both agreed that we were very proud of our men and women in the military and the magnificent job they are all doing in the name of freedom and the preservation of American, as we know it today. We made a point to tell them that, too, before we left. Their dedication and morale seemed as high as ours was, more than 35 years ago.



Their training and knowledge was noticeably

far more advanced as was ours, over 35 years ago. And, their resolve to be the very best they could be in the accomplishment of their mission was, like ours was, over 35 years ago.

Much of the human aspect was the same, but many of the tricks are different, to be sure. We have much to be proud of as Americans in our stretched-thin military.

We landed back at

Tulsa in light rain and a wet, slick runway. No problem, though. Home at last. We both jumped out of the Bonanza and sprinted for the latrine. Then returned to push N5QB into its hangar.

Old Dogs we definitely are! Age does make a difference, yes it does. We used to not have to do that.

Tom Payne
Tulsa, OK



Tom Payne, former VHPA president, sits in the cockpit of an Apache Longbow during a visit to the Blue Max at Fort Hood.

Pilot's daughter seeks friends of her father

My name is Sherry Leach Landrum and I am looking for any information of anyone that might have served with my Dad, CW2 James Willis Leach, in Vietnam.

He was with the Army, C Company, 228th Assault Support Helicopter Company, 1st Cavalry Division. He was in class 64-4W.

He was killed in action on Nov. 18, 1966, along with all crew members of CH-47A, 63-07910. We also were stationed at Fort Rucker in 1965-66; he was a helicopter instructor.

Sherry Landrum

Taps

James Dwight Barry

James "Jim" Dwight Barry of College Station, TX, died Dec. 1 when the Bell 407 helicopter he was piloting crashed in the Gulf of Mexico as he was returning from an oil rig. He was 61.

He was born Nov. 25, 1942 in Manhattan, KS, the son of a B-24 pilot who died in a crash in the Philippines near the end of World War II. He grew up in Corpus Christi, TX, dreaming of being a pilot.

As a student at Texas A&M University, Barry was a member of the Corps of Cadets, the Ross Volunteers, and the Singing Cadets. He earned a bachelor of science degree in Industrial Technology in 1965.

He began Naval Officer's Training School for the Navy the following year and soon began flight training.

Barry served on the carriers USS Intrepid and USS Roosevelt, flying helicopters for anti-submarine and search-and-rescue missions around the world, including a tour in Vietnam.

His nine medals and other decorations included the Air Medal for meritorious achievement.

He was a security officer for the Pacific Missile Range in Hawaii before his honorable discharge as a lieutenant in 1976.

Barry then began a 27-year career as a pilot with Lafayette, LA-based Petroleum Helicopters Inc. He worked in the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean, and the Rocky Mountains.

He was a captain for PHI when he died.

Barry also restored and flew vintage aircraft as a member of the Commemorative Air Force.

Survivors include sons Dwight of Denton, TX, Jason of Centennial, CO, and James of Bryan, TX; and granddaughter Kate of Denton, TX.

Richard "Pat" Paul Bray

Richard "Pat" Paul Bray died Dec. 18.

Bray served in the Marine Corps from 1950-73, with a tour in Korea, where he received two Purple Heart Medals.

He then attended OCS and flight school. Bray served in Vietnam in 1964 and 1965, earning a Distinguished Flying Cross.

He commanded HMH-363 at Santa Ana, CA, after his Vietnam tour.

Alie H. Campbell

Retired CW3 Alie H. Campbell, 75, died Jan. 3 at Lake Charles, LA.

Campbell was a member of flight school classes 57-

11 and 57-12.

He was employed for Petroleum Helicopter for more than 20 years after serving in the Army for 20 years.

Darwin G. Edwards

Retired Lt. Col. Darwin G. Edwards, 67, died Nov. 22 after a lengthy illness.

He was born and raised in Whigham, GA, where he attended high school.

Edwards served on active duty for four years as an enlisted man before being selected for the fourth class at the U.S. Air Force Academy.

He later earned degrees from the University of Georgia and the University of Arkansas.

Edwards was a decorated combat veteran, with 33 years of military service.

In Vietnam, he served with the 20th Special Operations Squadron.

He also served at Robins Air Force Base as a tanker crew member; at Homestead Robins Air Force Base, Florida, where he commanded a search and rescue unit; and at Washington, DC, with the 1st Helicopter Squadron.

His awards and decorations included the Silver Star Medal, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, three Meritorious Service Medals, the Purple Heart Medal, and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry.

After retiring from the Air Force in 1989, Edwards became curator of the Robins Air Force Base Museum of Aviation.

Edwards is survived by his wife, Sheila; their sons, Richard and Howard; and granddaughter.

Jesse W. Glance

Jesse W. Glance, 65, of Louisville died Jan. 13 at Norton Suburban Hospital.

He was a retired Army major and served with the Bullwhip Squadron, 1/9th Air Cavalry Squadron and the 336th Assault Helicopter Squadron.

Glance was a member of the Army Aviation Association of America, Military Officers Association of America, and the VFW Middletown Post.

Survivors include his wife Charlotte; his children, Jesse W. Glance IV, Janell

Glance, John Glance, Angela Christiansen and John Wells; and five grandchildren.

Henry Colon Fariss

Retired Maj. Henry Colon Fariss, 70, of Daleville, AL, died Jan. 7 at his home after a short illness.

Fariss was born May 28, 1933, in Bedford, VA. In addition to being the son of a World War II veteran, Fariss

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Glance

Taps

Continued from Page 12

experienced the loss of his older brother Jack.

He joined the Army as a private in 1953, and in 1957 graduated from flight school and received his appointment as a warrant officer.

After retiring from the Army in 1973, he served as a primary instructor pilot with the flight contractor at Fort Rucker.

Donald H. Haines

Donald H. Haines, 65, of Enterprise, AL, died Dec. 22 after an extended illness.

Haines was born in Washington, PA, and later moved to Baltimore, MD, where he entered the military.

During his Army career, he was awarded the Air Medal, Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart Medal.

After serving 20 years and two tours in Vietnam, he retired as a major. He then began a 21-year career as a flight instructor and flight commander at Fort Rucker.

John Wiley Hazlewood

John Wiley Hazlewood, 60, of South Hill, VA, died Dec. 21 at his home.

He was the owner/operator of Hazlewood Manufacturing (Trailer Sales and Service).

Hazlewood was an Army warrant officer helicopter pilot who flew in Vietnam with the 1st Cavalry Division's 1/9th.

He was recipient of the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star Medal, the Air Medal with 19 Oak Leaf Clusters and numerous other medals.

Hazlewood was past commander of Veterans of Foreign Wars Post Number 7166 South-Lacrosse, a member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and American Legion Post 79.

He is survived by his wife Mary Alice; two daughters, Mary Kay Myers and Laura Leigh Hazlewood; a son, John Wiley Hazlewood Jr.; and two grandchildren.

Robert Steele Jones Jr.

Robert Steele Jones Jr. died at his home in Higden, AR, on April 27 after a long and courageous battle with cancer. He was 68 years old.

He is survived by his wife, Catherine (Cay) Jones, children and grandchildren, as well as other relatives and many friends.

Robert was born in Weatherford, TX, and joined the Army in 1955.

After 30 years of service, he retired as a lieutenant colonel, having served two tours in Vietnam as a master aviator with top secret clearance, earning the Silver Star during the Tet Offensive in 1968, the Bronze Star Medal,

Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, Purple Heart Medal, three Vietnamese Crosses of Gallantry (with Palm and with Silver Star and Bronze Star) and 24 Air Medals. He was Ranger and Airborne qualified.

In 1957, as a young warrant officer helicopter pilot, he was one of the first pilots to fly H-21's from Fort Riley, KS, to Fort Richardson, AK, with the 80th Transportation Company (Light Helicopter).

Shortly after that he attended Artillery Officer's Candidate School before being sent to Vietnam (1962-63). Upon returning to the United States, he attended Airborne and Ranger courses and commanded a mechanized infantry rifle company at Fort Carson, CO.

In 1965, he received a branch transfer to the Armor Branch and attended the Armor Officer's Advance Course at Fort Knox, KY. He instructed in Air Cavalry there until being reassigned to command a recon airplane platoon in the Mekong Delta, where he became the company's executive and operations officer.

He later served three years as the executive officer of a tank battalion in West Germany and commanding officer of an aviation company and assistant VII Corps G-1.

From 1971-73, he was chief of the Graduate Rotary Wing Flight Training Division at the Aviation School at Fort Rucker, AL, and then was assigned to England as an exchange officer with the Royal Air Force where he flew British Wessex helicopters.

Beginning in the fall of 1974, he became the instructor of third year ROTC students as the professor of military science at the University of Arkansas, Pine Bluff. He left Pine Bluff and attended the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and became chief of the Career Training Division at Fort Rucker.

In 1982, he was assigned as a branch chief in the combined Forces Command in Seoul, South Korea, but returned to Fort Rucker in 1983 to become chief of the Emergency Operations Center and later chief of the Allied Military Training Division which trained NATO and Mideast allied flight students. From there he retired to Arkansas.

After retirement, he became involved in civic affairs and served his community. He was president of the Optimist Club, Chamber of Commerce and Board of Equalization for Cleburne County. He enjoyed playing the harmonica, reading, music and dancing."

Leland "Lee" Thornton Kennedy

Retired Col. Leland "Lee" Thornton Kennedy of Yorktown, VA, died Dec. 28. He was 69.

Kennedy was born Jan. 1, 1934, in Louisville, KY, to Edith and William Kennedy. He graduated from the University of Kentucky in 1955.

As a career Air Force officer, Kennedy flew the EC-121 (Radar Constellation) during the Cuban Missile Cri-

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Vietnam archive center seeks \$16.3 million

The Vietnam Center/Archives in Lubbock, TX, is seeking \$16.3 million in federal funds for the National Virtual Vietnam Archive Project.

This money would be used to digitize the Vietnam War-related materials in the National Archives, including the purchase of new scanning devices, highly controlled shipping of items to the Vietnam Archive using satellite monitoring, and additional part- and full-time employees.

Over the past couple of years, the Vietnam Center/Archives has been digitizing and making available over the Internet as many of its documents as possible. However, it is a slow and expensive process.

The Vietnam Center/Archives at Texas Tech University is the official depository for the VHPA of records,

information and memorabilia.

Many boxes full of information and data have been sent there over the years by the VHPA and some of its members for cataloging, preservation and safekeeping for future generations to view and study.

Items such as diaries, reports, documents, manuals, photos and maps about the Vietnam era are welcome and accepted.

William J. "Bill" Fitzgerald is the VHPA representative who sits on the Vietnam Center Advisory Board.

The selection of the Vietnam Center/Archives was a decision that will help ensure the safekeeping of documents about the Vietnam War for decades.

— Tom Payne

Taps

Continued from Page 13

sis, and later served two tours of duty in Vietnam.

During his first tour in Vietnam, he piloted the EC-121. In his second tour of duty, he distinguished himself piloting the HH-3E Jolly Green helicopter on rescue missions.

He was recipient of the Air Force Cross with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the Silver Star Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Air Medal with five Oak Leaf Clusters, and numerous other medals.

After 30 years of service, Kennedy retired at Langley Air Force Base, VA, as director of operations at TAC Headquarters.

After retirement, Kennedy served his community as a member of the York/Poquoson Social Service Board, serving as chairman for three years.

In addition, he incorporated his interest in woodworking and miniature shipbuilding into his own business, Why Knot, for many years.

He is survived by his wife Harriet June, three children, seven grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Charles N. King

Charles N. King of Jacksonville, FL, died Jan. 1 after an apparent heart attack. He was 56.

At the time of his death, he was library director at Edward Waters College, where he had worked for 24 years.

King was born in Arkansas and grew up in Texas and Missouri. He served in the Army's 1st Cavalry Division during the Vietnam War, piloting helicopters as a first lieutenant.

He graduated from Southwest Missouri State Univer-

sity and the University of Missouri in Columbia, where he earned a master's degree from the school's library science college.

He is survived by his wife, Carole L. Fader; his father, Walter D. King, and a brother, David King, both of Springfield, MO.

Warren "Randy" Porter

Retired Lt. Col. Warren "Randy" Porter died Jan. 5 in San Antonio, TX.

He served with the 61st Assault Helicopter Company in 1967-68.

Allan Williams

Allan Williams died Oct. 31 at his home in Luling, TX. He was 61.

Williams was born on Oct. 23, 1942, in Oklahoma City. He graduated from Northwest Classen High School and attended the University of Central Oklahoma.

He joined the Army and began his tour of duty with the U.S. European Command as an Operations Specialist, 1st Aviation Detachment, Eyreux, France.

Upon his return from Europe, Williams completed training at the U.S. Army Aviation School at Fort Rucker, where he attained the rank of warrant officer.

He served with distinction in Vietnam as a pilot with the 119th Assault Helicopter Company, an intelligence officer and was a part of Special Operations.

After returning from Vietnam, Williams was a flight instructor at Fort Wolters.

After leaving the Army, he began a 25-year career with Air Logistics, Lafayette, LA.

He is survived by his wife Joyce, of the family home; two daughters, Allison Dunn and Wendy Robinson; and six grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his parents and a son.



Reunion

There's lots to do near Dallas headquarters

The Adams Mark, the 2004 Reunion hotel, in downtown Dallas has more than 1,800 rooms, several restaurants and all the space we could ever want or need for our reunion.

It also is located on a stop of DART — the Dallas Area Rail Transit System. The cost is \$2 per person to ride all day.

To board the DART, you simply walk out the doors on the north side of the Adams Mark and you are on the platform.

The train comes every 10-15 minutes. Two stops later, you are in the West End, a local tourist area with an abundance of eateries, shopping, entertainment, the Dallas World Aquarium and the Kennedy Museum on the sixth floor of the School Book Depository. The Eternal Flame Memorial is located three blocks to the south of the West End.

The original Neiman Marcus is located three blocks south and six blocks west of the hotel. It's within easy walking distance. There is old-time store charm.

The Dallas Museum of Art, three blocks north and two blocks west of the hotel, is world renown.

Deep Ellem is the local artisan/new age part of Dallas. Back in our youth, we would have called it a hippie area. Located three blocks east and three blocks south of the hotel, it has many good eating places, local artist shops and new wave nightclubs.

There also is the McKinney Avenue area a short distance from the hotel. A trolley at the first DART stop that will take you there. This area has upscale restaurants and shopping.

Outside of the local area, you will find several places of interest to visit.

For those who like to play the ponies, there is a world-class horse track 15 miles west of Dallas in Grand Prairie. Here you will see thoroughbred racing at its best. Post time is 6:30 p.m. during the week and 2 p.m. on the weekends.

The Cavanaugh Flight Museum is located at Addison Airport, 15 miles north of the hotel. It has a great display of vintage and combat aircraft. Sorry, only fixed-wing aircraft are on display.



The Dallas Historical Plaza is located in downtown Dallas near Elm and Houston streets. Its features include the Kennedy Memorial, the John Neely Bryan Cabin and the Old Red Courthouse, site of the Dallas Visitor Information Center.

There is the Fort Worth Stockyards for the those willing to drive 30 miles. The DART system can get you there in about an hour, with a small additional cost due to crossing the county line.

To view great Western art, visit the Amon Carter Museum west of downtown Fort Worth. You can take DART to Fort Worth and then get a cab to the museum.

I look forward to see all of you in Dallas. It's going to be a great reunion.

— Mike Sheuerman

Vince Vance to entertain

Vince Vance and his band will entertain VHPA Reunion attendees Saturday night, July 4.

Vince plays and sings the type of music we listened to during the Vietnam era.

His backup singers are extremely nice to look at.

Vinnie wrote and sang several songs you will remember. His most famous was "All I Want For Christmas Is You," a No. 1 best seller.

Vinnie is extremely patriotic.

— Mike Sheuerman

Reunion events

Rodeo highlight of reunion

One of the outstanding activities planned for the 2004 VHPA Reunion in Dallas is the Mesquite Rodeo.

Now, I know what you're saying: A rodeo in Dallas in July, temperature well over 100 degree outside, muggy,



dusty, and smelly . . .

I promise you it won't be like that. It's inside, it's air-conditioned, it isn't muggy, dusty or smelly. It's really a great time for all those attending. The Resistol Arena is home to several championship rodeos every year.

It is a short, 20-minute bus ride from our hotel. A three-meat barbecue dinner with all the trimmings, tea, lemonade and dessert (cash bar) will be served in a private facility prior to the start of the evening's entertainment.

VHPA members will ride in the Grand Entry carrying the Stars and Stripes and VHPA flag. You'll see bronc riding, steer wrestling, calf roping, chuckwagon racing, barrel racing, bull riding, wild steer milking and, my favorite, cowboy poker. If you haven't seen cowboy poker, you

haven't seen anything.

The buses will leave the hotel between 5:30 and 6 p.m., and we should be back by 11 p.m. It will be a fun time. Bring the kids. They will get to participate in one of the events.

Cost for the rodeo outing, including transportation and food, will run \$35 per person, \$30 for kids under 12.

See you at the rodeo, Partner.

— Mike Sheuerman

Motorcycles welcome at reunion

Those of you who own a motorcycle and like to ride, bring it to Dallas.

You can almost bet on the weather being better than it was in Orlando last year. If you rode there, you know what I'm talking about: Rain and lots of it. I drove and was in rain all the way across Louisiana and Florida.

The dedication of the National Vietnam War Museum in Mineral Wells on July 3 should make for a pretty good ride. Most of the folks attending will ride a bus.

The dedication is not an official function of the reunion and the proceeds the VHPA collects all go to the museum, so I'll pay for the bus, but ride my motorcycle.

You can contact me [REDACTED]

— Hayden Jones



Election

Candidates for national VHPA office sought

A new vice president and junior member at large will be elected at the annual business meeting July 2, 2004, in Dallas.

Elected members will serve a three-year term.

Dues current VHPA members interested in seeking national office must notify the Election Coordinator in writing no later than 90 days prior (April 2, 2004) to the start of the 2004 VHPA Reunion (July 1, 2004).

The National VHPA Election Policy can be found on the VHPA website under Selected Policies. Please direct all questions to the Election Coordinator.

Angelo Spelios
Election Coordinator

OR

Memoirs of
Korea and
Vietnam



Stories told
by an
Army Aviator

Army 'Copter 123
requesting ordering
instructions. Over.

Roger, Army 'Copter 123.
Contact Dorrance Publishing Co., Inc
1-800-788-7654 for further instructions.
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VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

21st Annual Reunion • Dallas, TX • July 1-4, 2004

NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION/HOTEL RESERVATION REQUEST FORM

Register online at www.vhpareunion.com or mail completed form to:

VHPA Headquarters, 5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7698

Fax signed credit card authorization to: (916) 966-8743

Member name:	Member No.:	Hotel room? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Flight class:	Chapter:	
1st combat unit:	Call sign:	Year(s):
2nd combat unit:	Call sign:	Year(s):
3rd combat unit:	Call sign:	Year(s):
Address:	Address change? ☐ Yes ☐ No	
City:	State:	Zip:
E-mail address:	Telephone: ()	Fax: ()
Wife/guest name:	Hometown:	18 or older? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Guest name:	Hometown:	18 or older? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Guest name:	Hometown:	18 or older? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Guest name:	Hometown:	18 or older? ☐ Yes ☐ No
Guest name:	Hometown:	18 or older? ☐ Yes ☐ No

A hotel registration form will be sent to you with your registration receipt. The hotel registration form must be completed and mailed to the Adams Mark Hotel. Telephone and fax requests will not be honored.

NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION INFORMATION

EVENT	No. of people	Price	Total
Registration through 4/30/2004*		@ \$45.00	
Registration after 4/30/2004*		@ \$55.00	
Total from sidebar	XXXXXX	XXXXXX	
Welcome reception for first reunion attendees only (July 1)		No charge	
Welcome reception (July 1)		@ \$15.00	
Spouse/guest entertainment (Brunch & Face Readers) (July 2)		@ \$25.00	
Mesquite Rodeo and Buffet Dinner (July 2)		@ \$35.00	
Fort Wolters Tour/National Museum Ceremony (July 3)		@ \$25.00	
Show and Dance (July 3)		@ \$20.00	
Golf Tournament (July 4)		@ \$95.00	
Final Banquet/Dance (July 4)		@ \$55.00	
VHPA dues (if not dues current)	1 year	@ \$36.00	
VHPA dues (if not dues current)	3 years	@ \$90.00	
Life membership		@ \$450.00	
GRAND TOTAL			

REUNION T-SHIRTS		
QTY.	SIZE	AMT.
	S@\$15.00	
	M@\$15.00	
	L@\$15.00	
	XL@\$15.00	
	XXL@\$17.00	
	XXXL@\$19.00	
SIDEBAR TOTAL:		

QTY.	BANQUET MEAL
	Beef
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Dedication

National Vietnam War Museum center of festivities

The National Vietnam War Museum is holding a dedication ceremony for the museum property to coincide with the VHPA 2004 Reunion in Dallas.

Saturday, July 3, promises to be even better than the Fort Wolters trip in 1998. The event includes all the barbecue you can eat, and all the beverages — beer, water and soft drinks — you can consume, along with entertainment and

equipment displays.

And, at \$25 a head, including round-trip transportation, it's a real bargain.

The dedication ceremony will start at 11 a.m. and last about 30 minutes. After that, you will be free to board buses for a quick area tour or start eating.

For those of us who can still fit into the seat, we plan to have an OH-23D and a TH-55A in school paint for photo opportunities, plus other military hardware, as available.

We've also invited Southern Airways to join us as they are having a reunion at the same time. You may even run into your old IP.

Radio Ranch, a local radio station, will operate a

remote broadcast from the site. We'll have taped music for entertainment and a large tent so you can eat in comfort, out of the Texas summer sun.

Expect the weather to be hot, because it's July in North Texas, so dress accordingly.

We'll do everything we can to make it as comfortable as possible at the museum grounds.

The ride from Dallas to the museum site will be in air-conditioned buses, with the opportunity to tell war stories, watch videos or just decompress from the previous days' activities.

For those who are so inclined, side trips to Fort Wolters, downtown Mineral Wells and the Mineral Wells Airport will be available, in the same air-conditioned buses, with a knowledgeable tour guide to point out the sites and sights.

If you haven't been back to Wolters/Mineral Wells since flight school, a lot has changed, but you will still recognize most of the landmarks. Of course, some of you who made the trip in 1998 may not remember what you saw — after all, we are all getting older.

It's shaping up to be quite an event, so it's something you won't want to miss. Register early to attend this event and you won't be disappointed.

Dallas has many unique distinctions

- Dallas ranks among the top cities in the nation in convention and meeting attendees — with more than 3.8 million people attending 3,600 conventions, leaving over \$4.2 billion behind.

- The Dallas Metro area is the No. 1 visitor and leisure destination in Texas.

- Dallas is the third most popular domestic business travel destination in America.

- Texas ranks second behind California as an overall travel destination for U.S. residents.

- There are non-stop flights to and from more cities in the United States at DFW International Airport than any other U.S. airport. It is a hub for American Airlines and Delta Airlines.

- Dallas is less than four hours away by scheduled air from the major cities of the United States, Canada and Mexico — no other place offers that convenience.

- Dallas-area hotels provide visitors with a wide diversity of lodging options and a choice of more than 65,000 hotel rooms.

- Texas is larger than the countries of France, Belgium, Holland, Switzerland and Luxembourg combined.

- Dallas has the largest urban arts district in America.

- The State Fair of Texas is the largest exposition in all of North America, with more than 3 million people in attendance in 24 days.

- Dallas has more restaurants per person than New York City.

- The Dallas light rail system (DART) is the most modern urban transportation system in the United States.

- The African American Museum in Dallas' historic Fair Park has one of the largest collections of African-American folk art in the nation.

- With 6.9 million square feet, the Dallas Market Center is the world's largest wholesale merchandise mart.

- The Dallas Arboretum features the largest publicly maintained collection of azaleas in the United States.

- The Dallas area annually receives \$10.6 billion from visitors.

- The Six Flags Over Texas theme park, next to Dallas, is larger than Disneyland.

- One in 10 Dallas area workers is employed by the hospitality industry.

- Dallas' Fair Park, a 277-acre National Historic Landmark, has the largest collection of 1930s art deco exposition-style architecture in the United States.

New life

Florida man restores, shows UH-1B from Vietnam

JACK SERIG SR.

John Kessler is a guy who carries his patriotism and his loyalty to the Army much, much further than most civilian citizens.

John, a former corporal of artillery (1965-67), is the proud owner of an UH-1B Huey helicopter that served in the Vietnam War. Its tail number is 62-4567.

John acquired his bird after hearing about a old helo hull in vacant lot where it had been vandalized in Ladysmith, Wis. A local VFW post had requested the Huey from Army surplus for use as a static display.

The post personnel decided that the helicopter was in too bad a condition to warrant space on their post grounds. They had it moved to the vacant lot, where John's source spotted it.

John acquired the Huey and had the hulk hauled to Fort Lauderdale, where he resides.

According to Gary Roush's Gold Book and separate FOIA research the aircraft, while in Vietnam, was assigned to the 120th Assault Helicopter Company at Saigon's Tan Son Nhut. It spent 10 months with Navy's Seawolves in the Cau Mau peninsula area before starting its second career at Fort Rucker.

John, a marine electrician by trade, has a hobby of fixing up things he acquires. He designed the trailer used for transporting his Huey and rebuilt the bird.

He uses a friend's Army CUCV (a 1982 Chevy K5 Blazer) to haul his find back and forth to numerous events in southeast Florida.

John estimates he participates in 10 air shows, parades and other events annually. I met him at the Pompano Air Show in 2001. He introduced me to local collectors (some veterans) who had brought restored military vehicles to the show for static display. They looked like they had just come off the assembly line.

But John's battle-scarred bird draws the most attention and he has the answers for all the questions that he

fields.

John has a phenomenal knowledge of aircraft and in particular of the Huey he owns. He always meets the public in uniform. I've seen him in fatigues with corporal stripes, the rank he attained while serving in the Army, or in a flight suit with warrant officer's insignia, which he sometimes dons to make his oral history presentations of the Huey more believable.



John Kessler, in flight suit, shows off his restored Huey at the annual Pompano Air Show in Florida. The door gunner is Al Lewis of Miami Beach, who was wounded on the Huey in 1971 while serving as a door gunner with the Razorbacks gunship platoon.

I met John again on Jan. 28, 2003, at the Jackie Gleason Theater in Miami Beach. He had been asked by the theater management to display 4567 for the opening of the popular stage play, *Miss Saigon*.

Upon arrival at the theater, the Huey's popularity was evident as passersby stopped to ask their myriad questions.

Many of the questions were about the auxiliary equipment John has, such as the demilled M-60 7.62 caliber machine gun, the training M-16A1 rifle and the armored vests.

A young-adult class from Miami-Dade Public Schools made a stop. Veterans from World War II, Vietnam and the Korean War stopped and visited.

Stagehands and actors from the *Miss Saigon* production came out and thanked John for his efforts.

Imagine the excitement when the theatergoers began to arrive.

John was interviewed by four television stations so the message of the Huey became a hot topic once again on the news in South Florida.

Special kudos to John are in order, especially when you consider that he is not a Vietnam vet — just a tremendous American. John is a valuable associate member of the Florida Chapter who carries our message to the public loud and clear.

Here is an historical summary of Kessler's UH-1B:

- It was flown 2,400 hours "In Country," 3,600 hours in CONUS.
- Built in July 1963 by Bell Helicopter Co., Fort

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Kessler's UH-1B has combat record

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Worth, TX. Assigned to Co. B, 4th Aviation, Fort Lewis, WA., until February 1966, then shipped to Vietnam with the 611th Transportation Company, serving through June 1967, when it was returned to Corpus Christi for a five-month gunship conversion.

- Flew with the 120th Assault Helicopter Company, based at Tan Son Nhut Air Base near Saigon (and later at Long Binh), as a Razorbacks gunship, flying close air support missions until January 1971.

During the first hours of the 1968 Tet Offensive, it was one of eight helicopters that defended the air base and the city. The Razorbacks were credited by the mayor of Saigon with saving the city.

- Transferred to the Navy Seawolves (Detachment 2) and flew gunship missions from Nha Bei into the Rung Sat Special Zone until October 1971.

- Returned to United States for a 10-month rebuild (ARADMAC).

- Joined the faculty at the Army Aviation School at Fort Rucker, training new pilots until March 1975.

- Transferred to an Army Reserve unit in St. Paul, MN, then to a Wisconsin National Guard unit. Its last flight was in January 1984. That unit cannibalized it, sealed the doors, and painted it for display.

- Sent to a VFW post in northwest Wisconsin in March 1986, but never displayed. Stored in a field. Vandalized.

- Sold to present owner late 1997 and shipped to South Florida for restoration and mobile display.

- First public display late 1998. New life begins.

If anyone has an interest in contacting John, he can be reached [REDACTED]; his email address is: [REDACTED]

NC group wins first place award

The North Carolina VHPA participated in "Celebrate Freedom 2003" on Nov. 8 and 9 at Woodward Field, Camden, SC.

"Celebrate Freedom" is an annual weekend event sponsored by the Celebrate Freedom Foundation of Columbia, SC. Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. C.W. Randall is chief executive officer.

The event includes static and aerial displays of modern and vintage military aircraft, military historical displays from World War II forward, and military re-enactors from World War II, Korea, Vietnam and Desert Storm.

NCVHPA members Jerry Seago, Bill McPherson, Joe Armstrong, Brock Nicholson, Wiley Hazelwood, Phil Keith, Don Watson, Phil Herlocker and Jim Baker attended. They took four Vietnam-era helicopters for static displays at the event.

On the second day of the weekend, the North Carolina Chapter, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, was awarded "First Place — Military Historical Exhibit (static) — Vietnam War Era."

Lt. Col. Jack Lovelady of the Celebrate Freedom Foundation presented the award.

Ohio River LZ plans reunion

The Ohio River LZ group will hold its annual reunion Feb. 27-29 at the Belterra Casino/Resort in southern Indiana.

Reunion attendees can check in to the resort after 4 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 27. A hospitality room will be open from noon until the last guest leaves.

On Feb. 28, the business meeting begins at 11 a.m. Box lunches will be available for those who want to remain and eat together at the conclusion of the meeting.

All attendees, including wives or friends, are invited to attend the business meeting.

The banquet will be held that night, beginning with the opening of a cash bar at 6 p.m.

Dinner begins at 7 p.m. Guest speaker is retired Col. Barbara Rounds-Kugler who spent 1968-69 in Chu Lai as an Army nurse.

On Sunday, Feb. 29, brunch will be served from 8-10 a.m. at the Belterra Buffet. An area has been aside for reunion attendees until 11 a.m.

You can register by phone at [REDACTED] or online at www.belterracasino.com

Register now for Reunion 2004 in Dallas — July 1-4

Dilemma

Pilot wonders if he should have made report

JACK SERIG SR.

It was early 1967. We were sitting amidst the broken outer walls of a Buddhist temple ruins close to the Seven Hills area deep in South Vietnam's Delta region.

Our security was provided by elements of a battalion of "soldiers of fortune" under the advisership of a young U.S. Special Forces captain.

The captain produced two 1-gallon pickle jars and invited me to take my choice of pickled enemy ears or fingers. I was astounded by the offer, but remained calm and asked for an explanation.

A few minutes before, I had dropped off the enlisted elements of his advisory team at one of the Seven Hills, near a cave entrance. Their mission was to explore the cave and see what it contained.

A tall, burly master sergeant led his team into the cave as I lifted off from the sloped hillside in a UH-D slick, property of the 281st Assault Helicopter Company headquartered at Nha Trang.

After landing back at the temple site, we could hear the team leader as he described, via radio, each turn and twist deep inside the cave. Also, he reported capturing large quantities of enemy supplies which he described in detail.

I marveled at the clear transmission and the captain explained their equipment was special, supplied by SOG (Special Operating Group). Surprised me again! I had no idea, as no one had told me, I'd be supporting a SOG mission until I surmised it as events were unfolding.

I was the platoon commander of a slick platoon. The other slick platoon in our company was always teamed with the gunship platoon. Their mission — inserting and evacuating the 5th Special Forces B-52 Delta Project Force throughout South Vietnam for intelligence-gathering purposes.

Project Delta was under the operational control of the

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5th Special Forces Group, co-located with my 281st Assault Helicopter Company at Nha Trang. The 281st also was under the direct operational control of 5th Special Forces.

Administrative control of the 281st Assault Helicopter Company rested with the 10th Aviation Battalion at Dong Ba Thin, located on the west side of Cam Ranh Bay.

My platoon of slicks was split into four detachments. Each detachment was in direct support of Special Forces operations in each of the four Corps' areas, generally flying combat support missions, moving people, equipment and supplies in and out of the far-flung Special Forces camps. On occasion, we provided emergency aerial supply support when the camps came under attack.

I would visit each detachment, for 7-10 days at a time, by hopping on Air Force or Army fixed-wing aircraft for district attorney Nang, Pleiku, Ban Me Thuot, Bien Hoa or Soc Trang, some of the main areas from which Special Forces operations were conducted.

There were no platoon relief pilots, except me, so my main task was to

relieve each detachment's pilots, allowing them to take a hard-earned break, sleep in, or R&R locally to get them away from constant 10-12 hour flying, seven days a week.

I had proceeded to Soc Trang to provide

relief for my slick crews there when I found myself at the Buddhist temple ruins where this story began.

In response to my request for an explanation of the pickled body parts, the captain explained — to the best of my recollection — that he was adviser to a special unit put together by SOG.

There were three companies of infantry, each commanded and staffed by people from their same ethnic groups. There was one company each of Cambodians, Montagnard and Chinese Nungs. These troops were, in effect, "Soldiers of Fortune," paid to seek out and kill the enemy in their assigned region of operations.

There was a battalion commander and staff organized from the people recruited. However, the Special Forces captain explained he was the de facto commander of the battalion.

The captain further explained the battalion's troops were paid extra for dead enemies. Since his unit couldn't carry enemy bodies around on extended hit-and-run field

I had proceeded to Soc Trang to provide relief for my slick crews there when I found myself at the Buddhist temple ruins where this story began.

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Captain's attitude was surprising

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combat operations, in order to confirm body count, they kept a finger or ear of each enemy killed preserved in the pickle jars until they could be turned in for the extra pay.

His "they do it, so we do it" attitude surprised, but did not impress me. But pickled ears and fingers? What happened to the idea of an officer's word and integrity?

During the captain's explanation, there were occasional breaks for radio talk between his team

leader in the cave and me, discussing the new findings of enemy supplies within the cave.

The captain continued: The Chinese Nungs had a special religious ceremony over dead enemies after combat action subsided. They would cut out the heart of the enemy and pray that the enemy spirit would be saved for the after-life. They then would cook and eat the enemy heart.

I asked the captain, "WHY, if he were, in fact, the de facto commander of this battalion, how could he, as an

The captain continued: The Chinese Nungs had a special religious ceremony over dead enemies after combat action subsided.

officer, allow such acts to happen?"

He responded that the Nungs were performing a religious ceremony. To the Nungs, it was nothing more than that. He claimed that had he or any of his American advisers interfered with the Nungs' religious customs, the Nungs likely would kill him and his advisers, and he could not permit that possibility to happen.

When the operation inside the cave at the Seven Hills had subsided, the captain asked me to retrieve his team.

I flew the team back to the Buddhist temple from the cave site and returned to Soc Trang.

Though I never saw the captain again, I heard several years later that he had received two fast promotions since our temple meeting.

Why have I written this story? I confess that over the years, I have suffered some guilt for not reporting the incident, acknowledging that it probably wouldn't have gone very far with the pressure from the body-count policy.

Had this incident been reported, the press undoubtedly would have looked for scalps, as they did in Lt. Calley's My Lai incident.

Thankfully, several people did report the Calley event, among them a courageous helicopter flight crew.

Should I have been so bold!

Show to focus on LAMSON 719

The Discovery Channel's "War Diaries" show is working on a series of six shows featuring stories from World War II, Korea, Gulf Wars I & II, Afghanistan and Vietnam.

The feature on Vietnam will be about LAMSON 719 and, although it will include stories from other units, the focus will be on the 48th Assault Helicopter Company and many individuals who flew on that operation.

The sequence of events so far has included taping in Trenton, NJ; Edgewood Arsenal, MD; the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington; and the Fort Rucker Aviation Museum.

During the reunion in Orlando, I was talking with a group of Cav guys and some of the 173rd Assault Helicopter Company pilots who flew with the 48th during LAMSON and a couple of them recalled mission briefings at Dong Helicopter Ambulance and Quang Tri, where

we met with many of the media representatives.

A few of them mentioned photographs they had which showed some of the better-known correspondents from that time and included Joe Galloway who was there on his second assignment with United Press International.

Galloway, who is now the senior military correspondent with Knight Ridder, has been interviewed for the documentary and we're trying to find some photos of him which might have been taken during the LAMSON 719 operation.

I'd like to ask that anyone who may have photos featuring media correspondents interacting with pilots who flew on the operation contact the producer at:

A specific request would be for those featuring Galloway, who was based out of Quang Tri.

— Rick Lester

Attend Reunion 2004 in Dallas July 1-4

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