



# The VHPA Newsletter

Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association ®

November/December 1997 Vol. 15, No. 6

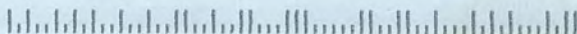


Donald R. Joyce photo

Army UH-1 "Hueys" return to their base at Pleiku after taking troops into battle in a combat assault. The photo was taken in June 1967.

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## From the President

Greetings and salutations! Our reunion planning is moving forward.

The Fort Wolters Chapter is making arrangements to try to bring in Eric Burden and the Animals. If you don't know who they are, you should turn in your wings.

On the chapter's budget the group was listed as the Animal; maybe we'll get them at a reduced rate.

As you know, Nashville is a go and we are finalizing arrangements for Reunion 2000. If you are in the DC area and interested in organizing a reunion, please call Charlie Rayl or me.

We are losing the services of a good friend and colleague.

Mike Law is stepping down from most of his volunteer duties and beginning a new role in missionary work. Mike has been an active participant in the VHPA from the early days of our organization.

His imprint is on many of the services and projects the VHPA is involved in today. He has been a president and a member of the Executive Council, the prime mover behind the historical documentation, the VHPA calendar, and the development of the Membership Directory.

Most of what we have today in these projects is due to Mike's untiring efforts. He will be retaining his involvement in the historical committee, but we will need a new directory chairman.

We will all miss Mike and all his great work. Good luck to you, buddy, and stay away from those cannibals.

Anyone interested in chairing the membership directory, please contact Mike or any of the EC members.

Chapter articles in the newsletter are a good way to contact potential members in your area. Let's hear from the chapters about what is going on in their areas.

Some changes are in the mill.

The EC has approved a time-payment plan for a Life Membership. The fee will include an administrative charge of \$10 per year for a total of \$480 if you choose this method.

Please don't try to use this option at this time. We need to work out the administrative details with the management company.

The membership application form will be modified to allow for this option when everything is in place.

Also, to encourage and reward members who recruit new members, we will award two free registrations at the next reunion to the member who has the largest number of new members since the last reunion.

It's time to start thinking about new members for the EC. Being on the EC or most of the committees involves several hours of work each week.

We need men who are willing and able to commit to this extra effort. If you believe you have the time, energy and capability to help your association, consider running for the Council. Solicitations for nominees will be in forthcoming newsletters.

Finally, an admission of failure. I promised Jack Swickard (of Roswell, NM) I would bring back from Ireland two leprechauns to trade for an alien and a southpaw to be named later.

I checked every pub in the land (quite a sacrifice), but was unable to secure a volunteer. Sorry, Jack, I tried my best.

### Some reminders, quality control checks:

- Please renew your VHPA membership when it's due. This saves us some money if we don't have to bug you with repeated renewal forms.

- Have you received your 1997 Directory? If not, contact VHPA Headquarters. And check it for accuracy.

— Mike Hurley, President

## VHPA Headquarters will relocate, effective Dec. 1

In continued efforts to improve member services, the VHPA Executive Council will relocate VHPA Headquarters to the firm of Marcia Fritz & Co., effective Dec. 1.

With the help of loyal member and previous contractor Ross McCoy, this should be a seamless transition that will provide full-time staffing and a

renewed emphasis on timely communication, member retention and overall growth of the VHPA at no additional cost to the association.

In support of the new contract holder, McCoy has relocated to the new Headquarters office.

The address of the VHPA at the new contractor is:

*VHPA Headquarters*  
5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200  
Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7621

Members can still call the VHPA toll-free at (800) 505-VHPA.

The new fax number at Headquarters is: [REDACTED]

E-mail address is: [REDACTED]

## Classified ads

**POSITION WANTED:** Experienced helicopter pilot looking for a position in the areas of EMS, natural resources or public service. Experience: Regular Army, Indiana National Guard. Class 68-27. Call Bill Resor at [REDACTED]

**CALORAD:** All natural wellness product. Would you like to lose inches/weight while you sleep? Build lean muscle mass? No diet or exercise necessary. Too good to be true? An 86% long-term success rate speaks for itself. Available retail or wholesale in an excellent business opportunity. Call VHPA member Paul Uster (L200) at [REDACTED] Extension/PIN 8936, or [REDACTED]

THE VHPA NEWSLETTER (ISSN 0896-3037)(USPS 001-497) is published six times yearly — February, April, June, August, October and December. Annual dues are \$30 or Life membership for \$450. Yearly subscription for nonmembers is \$30. Published by the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, 5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7621. Periodicals Publications postage paid at Sacramento, CA, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE VHPA NEWSLETTER, 5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7621.



## VHPA OFFICERS, COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND STAFF 1997-98

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Midterm Member	Bob Johnson
Junior Member	David Rittman
SECRETARY/TREASURER	Dan Ferguson
FOUNDER	Larry Clark

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Historical	Bob Davies
Membership	Hayden "Pappy" Jones
Public Relations	Ken Fritz
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Gathering (HAI)	David Rittman
1998 Reunion	Angelo Spelios
Site Selection	Kenny Bunn
Chaplain	John Plummer
DIRECTORY EDITOR	Mike Law
NEWSLETTER EDITOR	Jack Swickard
Assistant editors	Charles Rayl, "Pappy" Jones
Contributing writers	Mike Law, Mel Canon

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Webmaster	webmaster@vhpa.org

## VHPA chapters

Ohio River LZ Chapter	Jack W. Shrode Jr., President [REDACTED]
Great Lakes Chapter	John Becker, President [REDACTED] 4 home
North Carolina Chapter	Vic Rose, President [REDACTED]
New England Chapter	Bob Whitford, Past President [REDACTED] home work
Fort Wolters Chapter	Charles Holley, President [REDACTED]
Mardi Gras Chapter	Don Hunt, President Lee Overstreet, Vice President New Orleans, LA
Florida LZ Chapter	Judd Chapin, Executive Director [REDACTED] Airport
California Chapter North	Rich Buzen, President [REDACTED]

## How Dave earned the nickname 'Mud Puppy'

**MIKE LAW**  
**DIRECTORY EDITOR**

I have to add just one more story I learned at the VHCMA Reunion from a former crewmember, Dave Vollmar, who served with the 611th TC Company, the "Tailboards."

While explaining details to me about the 611th's CH-47 recovery team, Dave mentioned that his nickname in Vietnam was "Mud Puppy."

I stopped him right there because I knew here was a story that I needed.

Dave was flying a mission with a CW4 Newman and



Lee Strickland (VHPA Life member) as pilots.

While the Huey was hovering about 12 feet up, something poked him in one of his eyes. He was so distracted by the injury that he accidentally fell out of the helicopter.

Other than knocking the wind out of him and covering him with mud, he survived all right.

He was smiling as he told me the story. "I was a mess, but glad to get back in the Huey," he finished.

"Mud Puppy" follows right along!

Dave said he believes CW4 Newman was on his fourth tour during 1968!

**QUESTION:** Since the VHPA does not have a Newman who flew for the 611th TC Co in the membership database, does anyone know this man?



## New VHPA member provides information

After seven or eight years of saying, "Yea, I'm gonna join VHPA," I finally did.

Looking through the new Directory and Newsletter, I felt I could contribute some information regarding the death of a fellow gun pilot.

I offer the following concerning CW2 John William Mursch:

John was a member of A Troop, 7/17th Air Cavalry when I met him in June 1970. John was on his second tour and had, in fact, just returned from a 30-day leave; he had extended his tour six months.

I had arrived in-country around June 9 and, after processing and a short school in An Khe, I was to go on my first mission.



I was the "sand bag." John was the AC, back seater of our AH-1G. Our mission required us to stage out of Dak To II. On the ride up there John, against policy, took me for a low-level run up the highway. The troop commander, Maj. Rackley, saw the low-level flight. He grounded John (for 30 days, I believe) upon completion of the day's mission.

During the time John was grounded, he was put in charge of several different details. One of these was to supervise the burning of vegetation around the perimeter of Camp Holloway, specifically that area known as the "Christmas Tree."

On a day in late June or early July, John was performing this duty. I know that he had several soldiers working with him and a 49 Charlie full of JP4. The drill was to hose an area down with the JP4; move the stuff off and then burn it. Apparently it didn't work that way, however.

There was a fire and the 49 Charlie exploded. I'm pretty sure the driver was killed. John received burns over most of his body. He was evacuated to the hospital in Pleiku. I believe John died at the hospital in Pleiku before he could be stabilized and evacuated to the States or Japan. I believe the last "Checkmate" soldier to see John at the hospital was CW2 Larry Cranford.

VHPA member Gary Downs was the gun platoon leader at the time of this incident. Ray Connolly (?) and Dennis Clausen were the section leaders, I believe.

Rick Brooks  
CW4, USA (Ret)  
Knight 28

**EDITORS NOTE:** We would like to identify the enlisted man killed in this incident. If you can help, please contact Gary Roush at [roush@vhpa.org](mailto:roush@vhpa.org) or [REDACTED].

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## VHPA Product Order Form

**MAIL FORM TO:** VHPA  
5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200  
Citrus Heights, CA 95610  
(800) 505-VHPA

**(FAX CREDIT CARD ORDERS: (916) 966-8743)**

New VHPA bumper stickers	\$1/each	_____
New round window stickers	\$1/each	_____
Back VHPA Newsletters (Complete sets only, limited availability.)	\$20/set (\$5 P&H each set)	_____
1994 VHPA Directory	\$10/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
1995 VHPA Directory	\$10/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
Vol. 1 Historical Reference Directory	\$15/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
Vol. 2 Historical Reference Directory	\$20/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____
1995 VHPA Calendar	\$5/each (\$3 P&H each)	_____
1996 VHPA Calendar	\$5/each (\$3 P&H each)	_____
1995-96 VHPA Calendar set	\$10/set (\$5 P&H set)	_____
VHPA History Book, Vol. 1 Turner Publishing limited edition. Only 17 left.	\$50/each (\$5 P&H each)	_____

**GRAND TOTAL** \_\_\_\_\_

### TO ORDER

Send check/money order or charge to your VISA or MasterCard credit card.

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City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



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## Roommate hit in head helping supply BOQ

The note about looking for the Playboys set off a cascade of memories about the Playboys.

The 334th Attack Helicopter Company was the first "all gun" company in Vietnam, one of their platoons was called the Playboys, and one of my roommates from flight school was a fire team leader for the Playboys, WO Roger Cameron.

I am looking at a picture of Roger and myself standing before a brand new Playboy Cobra, the bunny head visible on the side of the helicopter.

That was the first Cobra I had ever seen in Vietnam and Roger was the pilot.

Roger was a quiet man from North Dakota. Hard working, smart, and full of life. I got the ride of my life with Roger at the controls of his Cobra, I even managed a few approaches from the front seat.

Roger was not happy with the new Cobras. Roger was one of the first Cobra team leaders in Vietnam, and was learning new tactics every day, trying to use his C model skills in a new machine, without making the fatal mistake.

Tet 1968 was in full rage; the dinks had set up a .51 right downtown. That .51 was knocking the s\*\*\* out of everything that got near it.

The BOQ was pretty much surrounded and they had no weapons or ammo and were about to be overrun.

*I do not remember the Peter Pilot's name, but what a spectacular save. I had seen other men killed in the air at the controls, I knew Roger was dead by the way the Cobra dropped out of the sky.*

I went up on guard and found Roger.

As I hovered over the BOQ, dropping weapons and ammo through the roof, Roger and his wing were laying down heavy fire so I could get in and out in one piece.

A second .51 opened up from the top of a building and had them in crossfire, Roger was hit in the head and the Cobra almost hit the ground.

I do not remember the Peter Pilot's name but what a spectacular save. I had seen other men killed in the air at the controls, I knew Roger was dead by the way the Cobra dropped out of the sky.

When I hear the word Playboy, I think of Roger.

Remember Roger for me this year on the 11th.

Wayne R. "Crash" Coe

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Roger Cameron was KIA Jan. 31, 1968. He was in flight class 67-3 and was flying AH-1G 66-15301 when this incident happened.

## E-mail question draws responses

### E-mail address should be included

I like the idea of e-mail addresses in the directory. One vote in favor.

John C. Ross

### Addresses not compromising

I don't think that published e-mail addresses would be any more compromising than the present practice of publishing home addresses in the directory. Feel free to publish mine.

Leslie H. Combs

### Publishing addresses a great idea

I have just received the September/October 1997 edition of The VHPA



Newsletter.

The question "Could VHPA Directory include e-mail addresses?" asked by Ron Corbin is a great idea. I think this would be a wonderful and easy way to renew old friendships and I, for one, would like to see e-mail addresses included in the listings.

I understand and applaud the association's efforts in protecting our privacy, but as home addresses are listed, to include e-mail addresses shouldn't effect anyone's privacy. Just my two cents . . .

CW5 Rodney H. Rowe, USA Retired  
C/717th Air Cav, 1970-71

### Privacy of e-mail not a concern

I, for one, would not be concerned about privacy and letting me e-mail address out. I wouldn't even mind if my telephone number was included.

CW4 Roy E. Ziegler I (Retired)

### E-mail address more anonymous

Including e-mail addresses in the VHPA Directory wouldn't jeopardize our privacy.

Hell, it's more anonymous than a mailing address! I'm for it because it is a convenient way to contact old friends, probably more current than old addresses and easy for an addressee to access, no matter where he might be.

Count my vote as a "Yeah."

Jim Meunier

Spartan 26

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## Please include e-mail addresses

I would like to see e-mail addresses in the directory. You already have my home, at least my e-mail address won't bring unwanted visitors to my door.

Please include this and my home e-mail:

George Miller



## What's big deal about addresses?

Please add our e-mail addresses to the directory and anywhere else our names come up.

They are supplied on a volunteer basis anyway, so what's the big deal?

I can't stop the USnail from stuffing my box with junk, so why should I worry about electronics? Besides, if it gets to be a problem, I can always subscribe to one of those "spam haters."

Earl Doty, aka Ranger 29

## E-mail address directory favored

I am in favor of a directory of e-mail addresses of VHPA members.

At the last reunion in Orlando, many of my old buddies asked if I had an e-mail address. I'd like to know if any of my buddies are in cyberspace also.

Chuck Restivo

## E-mail addresses should be in directory

I am a new Internet addict . . . but I feel it would not be a problem for my address to be a part of the official VHPA Directory.

In fact, I would like to see updates in the six newsletter on e-mail addresses.

Jay Elliott

## Publishing e-mail addresses fine

I think it's fine to publish e-mail addresses as long as the member agrees.

Obviously, there will be some who do not want their e-mail published, so make a box to check on the application.

Barry McHenry, LUTCF, RHU  
Fort Worth, Texas 76180

## E-mail addresses should be added

Yes, I would like to see e-mail addresses added to listings in the annual Membership Directory. Mine is:

Tom Hartley  
Apache "Rags" 29

## All communications should have addresses

I am in favor of including e-mail addresses in all forms of communication, especially the Membership Directory.

Whether or not the inclusion of e-mail addresses is a matter of privacy seems to miss the point. If I were given a choice, I would authorize you to list my e-mail address before using my residence address.

With the advent, and wider-based usage, of the Internet, I am able to keep in touch with many old friends who otherwise would only have gotten an annual card with a very short note.

Thanks for posting the death notice for Col. John B. Stockton. Our careers touched at Fort Benning and in Vietnam and my life is richer because of that period in my professional life.

Is any consideration being given to collecting personal accounts or recollections of this officer and his splendid career?

Dennis P. Vasey

## E-mail addresses great for communicating

I would very much like to see e-mail addresses in the Directory. Great for easy communication with old and new friends. Please put mine in next issue.

Gary L. Calhoun  
Dustoff 16

## Letter from combat zone has a familiar ring to it

*Today I saw the tents of the troops of the 101st Airborne. They are too close together. One enemy rocket or a fire and they'll all go up in smoke.*

*In Basic Training at Fort Polk they told us to scatter out a little. The fuel trucks are too close together, too. There are either no fire trucks or they are belong to the Air Force, Navy or Marines and they are too far away from us to be of much use.*

*Fire is a real possibility as it gets colder and the guys try to stay warm in the tents. One of the troops told me that he has seen a lot of tarantulas and more than one cobra (the deadly snake with fangs, not the one from Bell Helicopter) and yet they still wear rubber thongs around the area to and from the showers, etc.*

*The helicopters are tied down very nicely, but if any of our rockets or guns go off, hopefully the most we lose will be some of our helicopters. They are lined up, loaded and pointing at each other.*

*We don't have extra helicopters, so either way would sure be a waste that with some careful thought and planning . . . Oh, well, we do the best we can with what we have and our guys are really trained to do the job. We'll all be careful. I promise.*

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*I'll write more later. Say hello to everyone at home. I love you.*



Although I wrote the above to my wife from Saudi Arabia in 1990, from where did you think it was written?

In fairness, the Army does have more rules to protect us from ourselves, but often conditions do not permit us to obey them all completely.

And we did have an Apache launch a Hellfire missile into an ammo dump without command while parked, we had soldiers struck by poisonous cobras in the sand, and we had tents catch fire and burn to the ground all in a neat row in 1990. Substitute gunship for Apache and rocket for Hellfires — in 1969.

We had a similar fire truck situation, too, because now the Army has civilian contract fire crews. So in most cases we don't have decent fire suppression that can be deployed with the troops. We did the best we could and we were trained, but . . .

Ken Fritz  
Chu Lai 1968-'69  
Saudi 1990-'91

## 'The Wonder Warthog' lives on after removal

Nose art, in the military sense, are the pictures, slogans or sayings that are painted on combat aircraft.

This art dates back to the First World War, which saw the first airplanes used in combat. Aviators and aircrews have always been known for their individuality and this is reflected in the nose art of their aircraft.

Nose art continued through World War II, the Korean War and into Vietnam.

To keep an even flow of experienced combat crews in Vietnam, the Army adopted a policy of infusing aviators with combat experience into new units arriving in country.

I was transferred to a new helicopter company when it arrived in Vietnam. When I joined the new unit, it had just received its aircraft and the commander told the flight platoons that they could paint nose art on them before engaging in combat flying.

There were several artists in the unit and the aircraft began sporting their new look.

One crew painted the image of a pig wearing a cape and flying through the air much as Superman or Mighty Mouse might when they were saving the day.

Under this figure was the title "The Wonder Warthog." This emblem was well done, with vivid colors and excellent lines.

A few days later, I noticed that the image was painted over and replaced with stenciled letters: "PHILBERT DESINEX"

Six months later, as I was completing my combat tour,

## Helicopter crewmember asks for help on claim

I need help to establish a VA disability claim.

Anyone who can remember occurrences from BOOMERANG 019 or from BOUNTY HUNTER 22? (I think this was the tail number) would be a help.

Naturally, they were both with the 191st AHC between June 1967 and June 1968.

If you can help, please contact me at [REDACTED]

Thank you,  
Dick Calton  
VHCMA member

this flight crew filled me in on the events concerning this piece of art.

The commander of this unit was called "The Wonder Warthog" by the soldiers in this unit, of course, behind his back. Most assuredly, the commander in question was aware of this and ordered the nose art removed from this helicopter.

The story goes that the Wonder Warthog was a spoof on super heroes who appeared in publications in the early 1960s. My efforts to find out more of this super hero has been in vain. I had heard that he once appeared in the *Readers Digest*, but no record of this exists.

When the commander ordered the removal of this art, the crew in question immediately responded with the replacement words "Philbert Desinex."

Unknown to the commander, Philbert Desinex is the alter ego of the Wonder Warthog, much as Clark Kent is to Superman.

This story has been in my mind ever since my war years, and remains a topic of conversation when I run into veterans of that war. Though 30 years have passed, most of this story is as accurate as fading memories allow.

*I hope the commander has reconciled himself to the fact that although his name may be forgotten, certainly "The Wonder Warthog, aka Philbert Desinex," will live on . . .*

Thoughts of this fine crew and their dedication indicate the best that America had to offer in those difficult times. I hope the commander has reconciled himself to the fact that although his name may be forgotten, certainly "The Wonder Warthog, aka Philbert Desinex," will live on in the minds of his combat crews for life.

George Miller  
CW4, US Army (Retired)  
Hillclimber 28  
Pachyderm 3B

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## Family Contacts Committee composed of volunteers

The Family Contacts Committee of VHFCN is a group of volunteers who assist family members of helicopter crewmen and pilots who were casualties of the Vietnam War by finding information and/or putting them in contact with friends of their departed loved-one.

*To facilitate contacts between family members and buddies, we try to find men who served in the same unit in Vietnam or attended flight school or technical school with the casualty.*

We cooperate with the Friends of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial (FVVM) and encourage participation in FVVM's In-Touch program.

The committee consists of Julie Kink and members of VHPA and VHCMA.

Many relatives and buddies of

Vietnam War casualties are eager to get in touch with each other. Some have been searching for years, others have started just recently. We have heard from wives, fathers, sisters, daughters, sons, and nieces.

Some are searching for detailed reports of the casualty incident, others are trying to find out more about "What kind of person was he, his likes and dislikes, his quirks, what made him laugh?"

Sometimes, the search is to learn about the father who never met his son or daughter.

To provide detailed information about the casualty incident, we can search both official government casualty records if we have them, and eyewitness reports from members of VHPA or VHCMA (usually friends of the casualty).

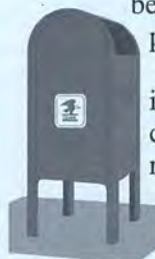
To facilitate contacts between family members and buddies, we try to find men who served in the same unit in Vietnam or attended flight school or technical school with the casualty.

Flight school took almost a year and forged very close friendships. Flight crews in Vietnam depended on each other for daily survival; we frequently risked our lives for

each other.

The bonds of camaraderie extend beyond those who knew each other to include a "brotherhood" of all those who crewed on helicopters in that war.

We begin the search with an e-mail poll of more than 400 crewmen and pilots we know have Internet accounts. Then we search our membership databases for men from the same unit or class. We cannot release names of members, so we mail out the letters or make the first phone calls ourselves.



Family members are warmly welcomed into the extended family of Vietnam helicopter crews. We encourage them to participate in reunions of the VHCMA in June, the VHPA in July, and VHFCN gatherings on Veterans Day weekend in Washington.

We encourage private, personal, communication between family members and our membership. Our members have escorted family members to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial or Moving Wall.

We recognize that had events been a little different, a loved-one of ours could today be looking for information about one of us.

The committee now has a web page that explains our program and will have links to success stories and lists of casualties that have relatives searching for buddies. The web page is at [www.iinc.com/VirtualWall/contacts](http://www.iinc.com/VirtualWall/contacts)

For more information, contact the chairman, Gary Thewlis at [REDACTED]

Jim Schueckler  
[REDACTED]

## Classmates get together during Orlando reunion

Being an airline type (ATA), our schedules come out once a month, so it is sometimes not easy to plan until about the 25th, once you know what line you are on for the following month.

George Garrety and I were classmates and we finally put six of our original 28 classmates together at the Orlando reunion.

We were a fixed-wing class WORWAC 66-5. Most of the class had gone on to RWQC 67-4 for 60 hours in an OH-13 and then on to Fort Benning for an in company UH-1D 25-hour transition.

Then on to units forming in the states to get a little more stick time before the ultimate RVN experience.

Only if you were there, do you know. We lost three to accidents first year in country and have lost two more to accidents and one to cancer since. Some are out there who won't come around, and then there are the rest we are still trying to find.

The WW II reunions that I've been around always seem to have so many people, but they were typically "in it as a unit till it was over." Ours was a one-year rotation and,

## Association does good work

Got my Newsletter today and was very sorry to read that Dave Transki had died. He and I were classmates.

This is the first time I've had a chance to check out the website. Keep up the good work; there are many of us who still remember . . . and can't forget.

W.W. McGowan II  
Playtex 21  
[REDACTED]

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with an infusion, I follow my class, the 134th AHC and the 48th AHC.

So I got to go to Oshkosh this year and worked the VHPA booth. I'm the one you missed, Bob Smith.

Lots of people who stopped knew a guy from work or had an old neighbor who they thought flew helicopters in RVN. It was great being able to open up the current Directory and find their names.

Garrety talked to one potential member who was quite embarrassed, as he was in a crash and suffered memory loss. I was so sorry I did not see him, as he thought he was in the 134th AHC or at least had orders at one time that said so. Now, even though the new Directory is out, he is still not listed.

Maybe he was in-country only three days. It could have been any one of us it happened to. If you knew or have on your class roster a Gerald G. Bodway, he'd like to talk to you and fill in the blanks.

His address is 3108 Oxford Road, Madison, WI 53205, (608) 238-1202, crash memory loss around Jan. 14, 1970.

This is what VHPA is here for, I hope, to find and remember us all.

Larry Wigger  
Devil 21 and Joker 55  
[REDACTED]

## New Membership Directory shows 'Charlie model shuffle'

Thanks for another absolutely terrific Membership Directory! I especially love the action shot of the Biere 33 Charlie model on the cover. It's so real I could hear it! How in the world did you get the lateral "Charlie model shuffle" to show up in the photo?

Did you notice the crew member in the back with his raised arm and fist yelling, "YESSS!"?

## Did you receive Directory?

Some VHPA members have contacted headquarters and said they had not received their 1997 Membership Directory.

If you have not received your Membership Directory by now, please contact VHPA Headquarters at:

(800) 505-VHPA (voice)  
(916) 966-8743 (fax)  
HQ@vhpa.org (e-mail)

In addition, dues-current members who have not received their VHPA membership card and members who are not receiving *The VHPA Newsletter* should notify headquarters.

The new address of VHPA Headquarters is 5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7621.

## Why was platoon leader's name left out of listings?

I was wondering if you could help me find so info on someone.

I arrived at the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in July of 1968. My aerscout platoon leader was Maj. Cunningham, Pete may have been his first name.

Shortly thereafter he went for a ride with an Air Force FAC. They never returned. We searched for about five days before giving up.

I was made the platoon leader and was wounded in October and was sent home. Several months later I was told that they had found them still strapped in the aircraft.

I have never seen his name listed anywhere and would sure like to know what gives. He was a good man and I hope he hasn't been forgotten somehow. Any help would appreciated.

Thanks in advance.

Gary Worthy

Hi, Gary,

The officer you replaced was Maj. Norman N. Cunningham. He was in flight class 67-26 and killed 9/24/68 in a fixed wing. Because he was killed in a fixed wing and his MOS was listed as 61204, we did not have him identified as a helicopter pilot. That has now been corrected so he will appear in the KIA section of the 1998 membership directory.

Thanks for asking the question.

Gary Roush  
webmaster@vhpa.org

No Blackhawk or Apache pilot will ever have that kind of exhilaration, will they? It's amazing what you guys can do with all the new technology!

Keep up the great work. I look forward to the next directory. I have read almost the entire book cover to cover already. If I find an error, I'll be sure to let you know so you can constantly improve the VHPA. Be All You Can Be, right?

Ken Fritz  
[REDACTED]



## Writer seeking information

Aviation writer (and former U.S. Army helicopter crew chief — Vietnam, 1971-72) seeks photography, unit data and related material on Bell AH-1 Cobras for book.

Material is carefully handled, copied, credited and promptly returned. In addition, contributors receive a complimentary copy of the book.

Wayne Mutza  
[REDACTED]



## Taps

### Melvin H. "Mike" Drake

Melvin H. "Mike" Drake died Oct. 8 from an aneurism in Wilmington, DE.

He graduated from flight school Class 68-513 and was in 68-23 at Fort Wolters.

He served in Vietnam with the 128 Assault Helicopter Company from October 1968-1969.

While with the 128 Assault Helicopter Company, he received an Article 15 for flying under the Newport Bridge.

After Vietnam, he was an instructor at Fort Rucker, then spent eight years on the Bell contract in Iran.

### Bruce English

Bruce English of Glendale, AZ, was killed in a motor vehicle accident on Oct. 12 near Abbeville, LA, after a weekend of camping and shooting with many of his VHPA and Air Log friends.

Bruce was returning to his job as a Bell 214ST captain with Air Logistics when the accident occurred.

Bruce was an Army graduate of Class 70-23 and flew with A/227th, 1st Cav in RVN.

He was the first captain I flew with when I checked out in the S-76.

Quick with a funny anecdote, he could always be counted on to buy you a beer or help fix your car. No matter what you had broken, Bruce could fix it. I only wish he were still here to repair the crack in the world his passing has left.

He will be painfully missed.

— Kenny Bunn

### William D. "Dave" Mason

William D. "Dave" Mason, my friend of 29 years, died from an apparent heart attack in his home in Green Valley, AZ, on Sept. 27.

A member of class 67-5, Dave flew in Vietnam with the 119th Assault Helicopter Company "Gators" out of Pleiku in 1967-68.

He returned to Hunter AAF and was a Contact Division IP until being seriously injured and disabled in a training accident in early July 1969. He spent the next 18 months in military hospitals and subsequently was "retired" from the Army.

Dave was a VHPA member and had attended a number of reunions. He remained in touch with several "stick buddies" over the years and was always proud of his service.

He is survived by his mother in Fort Madison, IA, a sister, two brothers and an adult son, Christopher.

Paul Hart (66-23/67-1)  
C 1/9th, 1st Cav, 1967-68

### Richard "Dick" I. Rehn

It is my sad duty to report the passing of retired CW4 Richard "Dick" I. Rehn on Nov. 4.

Dick retired with 30 years of service, 25 in Army Aviation. Funeral services were held at the new Chapel at Fort Rucker.

He was in flight school Class 64-4W and was born Oct. 25, 1936.

George Miller  
WORWAC 65-3 (Green Hats)  
Hillclimber 28  
Pachyderm 3B  
Satellite 77

### Don G. Shroyer

Don G. "Strac" Shroyer died on his dairy farm in Eufaula, OK, on Aug. 15 of a heart attack. He was 54.

He was born April 24, 1943, in Elkader, Iowa, the son of Lyle and Helen Gmelin Shroyer.

Don attended Oklahoma State University, graduating in 1965 with an ROTC commission.

He attended ORWAC 66-10 and received his wings in July 1966. He served two tours in Vietnam, the first with the 1st Cavalry Division and the second as a fixed-wing pilot.

Don was discharged from active duty in 1973 and joined the Oklahoma National Guard, where he served with the 245th Aviation (Special Ops) Battalion. He retired from the Guard, after more than 20 years, as lieutenant colonel.

After retirement, Don started a security guard business, Security Patrol Services, and traveled throughout the Southern and Eastern states guarding coal mines during strikes. Later he started a home monitoring security business which is still in existence under the name of Security Patrol Services, which his wife will continue operating.

Don was still in the dairy business with his brother at the time of his death.

He is survived by his wife Sue of the home; a son, L.J. Shroyer; and two brothers and a sister.

Tom Payne  
ORWAC 66-10

### Isaac R. Sisk

VHPA member retired Col. Isaac R. Sisk died Oct. 23 in Sacramento, CA.

Ike was a dual rated Army Aviator and retired after 25 years of active duty. He was a native of Oklahoma and a member of flight school Class 56-13.

His rotary wing tour in Vietnam was with the 175th Assault Helicopter Company in 1966-67. Ike reluctantly left his slot as lift platoon leader with the 175th when he was transferred to a 1st Aviation Brigade staff position for the balance of his 1967 tour.

In the 16 years since Ike retired from active duty, he

Continued on Page 12



# Old Warrior wonders about men

*The following story was posted to the Internet. I was deeply moved by its images and its message. It was written by Lee Westbrook, a former Gladiator.*

*Lee is also the author of "The Sword and the Shield," a book about his own spiritual journey.*

*This story speaks for itself and needs no further elaboration from me. I hope you enjoy it as much as I did.*

— The Rev. John Plummer

Watching the shabbily dressed men standing around in small groups, The Old Warrior observed that some of them were in quiet, yet animated discussion, a word or two occasionally drifting on the wind, laughter, cursing, bits and pieces.

One part of his mind silently wondered who

they were and why they were here. Another part of his mind knew the answer, but was not yet willing to accept what his eyes saw. He knew that this place was not a haven for street bums and homeless people.

Who, then, are these people, why are they here, he wondered? Was this not, after all, a place of reverence, he thought? What gave them the right to violate the reverence and respect due this place, and this moment?

Immediately, The Old Warrior was embarrassed by his patronizing thoughts. He realized that these men were just like him: Vietnam Veterans drawn here for what ever reason, probably to seek a connection of some sort with the past.

Since that day his past had mercilessly flung itself into his present, he had done his homework and he knew the men he saw before him were indeed the accepted stereotype paraded before the public by a still unrepentant news media, but they were not typical veterans of the war in Vietnam.

He knew that most veterans managed to move themselves into main stream America after their service in the war. He knew that hundreds of thousands of them had become educated, led successful lives, raised families, and held responsible positions in their communities.

Again, and without warning, the person he had become came into conflict with the man he had been. He had put the war behind him, hadn't he? He was educated, wasn't he? He had a family; a loving and caring wife and three well-adjusted children, didn't he? He was a prominent and responsible citizen in his community, respected by all who knew him. Wasn't that enough to make him totally unlike these . . . those people?

Just look at them, his mind railed. Just look at their appearance. Bits and pieces of old uniforms; unkempt hair and beards; old combat boots, some held together with

gray duct tape. They were quite obviously at the very bottom of the social and economic structure.

And again he was embarrassed by his pretentious judgment of these men. He knew that the only difference between what he saw before him and the man he had become was missed opportunity and hope denied.

What the other part of his mind was unwilling to accept was that these poor souls before him represented not the norm, but what may be only the tip of the iceberg. He was beginning to see a greater destruction hidden beneath the seemingly calm surface, patiently waiting to destroy the unsuspecting vessel that ventured too close, and it frightened him.

He knew that the appearance of stability has little to do with the degree of anguish or even the level of torment humans can endure. Under different circumstances he had seen it in others, and here, now, in his own self. He knew that fear of the truth was often a stumbling block to answers that would heal, and he felt his own fear welling up inside him.

He came here to find understanding and now he was more confused than ever. His eyes tightly closed he silently prayed for the understanding he so desperately needed.

Slowly his mind began to loosen its grip on the present, and allow the past to speak to him. The man he had been, so many years ago, in a war-torn land so far away, clawed his way to the surface. He had been like them, and nothing could change that. Was this the tip of his personal iceberg?

*He did not see the shabbily dressed man, similar in appearance to the others, come up beside him. He was visibly startled when the man made his presence known.*

For the first time in his life he saw real meaning to the old saying, "There, but for the Grace of God, go I."

"In fact," he wondered aloud, "they are just like me, but without the breaks that came my way."

No word was spoken. No sound was made. Was it a brush of clothing, a whisper on the wind? There was no sound to alert him to the presence of another. He did not see the shabbily dressed man, similar in appearance to the others, come up beside him. He was visibly startled when the man made his presence known.

What was that smell? Ever so slight; a mere hint of a fragrance. Was that a rose? Impossible! Not here in the dead of winter, and freezing cold. There could be no roses. What then?

Their eyes locked, and although no word was spoken, The Worm of Fear deep within The Old Warrior's bowels

See THE STRANGER, Page 12





# The Stranger wore old field jacket

Continued from Page 11

stopped its wriggling, and he began to warm from the inside.

Before him stood a man of average build with long, unkempt hair and a scraggly beard of a length that witnessed it had seldom been trimmed.

The stranger was shrugged down in an old Army issue field jacket. There was a full color patch on the right sleeve at the shoulder, one he had never seen before. It was a flaming, double edge sword of gold on a royal blue shield, trimmed in gold. On one side of the sword was a white bird, on the other a bright red heart. Its position on the right sleeve at the shoulder said the bearer had served in combat with that organization.

On his feet were combat boots which had seen better days. And again the adage about the Grace of God was slammed home to him. The clarity of how easily it could be him standing there instead of this seemingly unwashed excuse of a man was frightening. Again a shudder went through him.

The stranger spoke in a voice so soft and melodic. The Old Warrior knew there was nothing to fear. "You wonder about them, don't you?" Before he could answer, The Stranger went on.

"According to the times, it is a gathering of warriors. Their hearts are afire, their intent is pure. They are frustrated because they cannot charge to the sound of battle. They have no where else to go, so they came here. Each in his own way, all for the same reason. They want to do something, and as before they are not allowed. They have already given their hearts. All they have left is their souls, which to them holds little value. They are in ignorance, and they are in need of a teacher. You are one of them, yes? But you are not one with them. Not yet. What say

you now, friend?"

The Old Warrior tried to speak, desperately wanted to speak, but the words hung in his throat. Without knowing why, he knew he was in the presence of someone special. Holding his gaze for as long as possible, The Stranger slowly turned and began to walk away. Desperate for understanding The Old Warrior regained his composure enough to speak one word.

"Wait!"

The Stranger stopped and slowly turned. The Old Warrior pointed in the direction of the small groups of men standing about in the snow and asked, "Are you with them?"

There came a softness to the stranger's eyes, and the warmth of a smile special between long time friends. It was a loving smile with just a hint of sadness. "Yes I am, even though they have not yet accepted me." Then his scared right hand opened toward The Wall. "And with them."

And again, the ever so faint scent of roses was in the air.

*He quickly got to his feet  
and wiped his eyes. He  
looked everywhere  
but The Stranger was  
nowhere to be seen.*

Suddenly enormous emotion rose up inside The Old Warrior. The years of self-discipline could not choke off the cry of anguish, and he could do nothing to stop the blinding tears. He

could no longer hold himself erect, and fell to his knees. His sobs were uncontrollable, and such was their intensity that his lungs cried out for air.

After a few moments his anguish subsided and he slowly regained his composure. He quickly got to his feet and wiped his eyes. He looked everywhere but The Stranger was nowhere to be seen. Only the small groups

See WORDS, Page 13

## Taps

Continued from Page 10

had been selling real estate and was active in Prison Ministries.

His wife, Joan; mother, Ruby Sisk of Oklahoma City; one sister, two sons, three daughters and eight grandchildren survive Ike.

Jay Riseden  
Gunslinger 35  
128th AHC, 1967-68

## Family in the cockpit

The VHPA Newsletter is looking for relatives who flew helicopters in Vietnam.

If you had a natural brother, a father, a son or any other close relative who flew helicopters in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, please tell your story in the Newsletter.

Send stories and photos, if available, to the editor of The VHPA Newsletter, [REDACTED]



# Words of The Stranger were clear

Continued from Page 12

of old soldiers huddled across the way. And the faint hint of roses.

WHAT NOW?

The words of The Stranger were clear in the mind of The Old Warrior, and he marveled at their simplicity and power. He had found all the names, but now what? Like Job of the Old Testament, all that he feared was now upon him. And that was it, wasn't it: All these years he only thought he had buried the past. All he had done was to run ahead of it.

Now he could plainly see that the past was like his own shadow following every twist and turn, every trick he used to avoid capture. But when he finally did turn to look back there it was, ever with him, ever part of him, part of his soul.

Finally, he could run no more. His past had captured his present and he was at once a prisoner of a war; a prisoner in his own mind, trapped by his own deeds, good and evil. Yes, there were evil deeds, weren't there. There always are. What now?

There had to be a reason for all this and The Old Warrior knew he had to find it. Once again he was looking for

a trip wire with a blade of grass held tightly between his lips. But with trip wires he could simply back away and select another route. That was not an option now.

The destruction was buried beneath the surface and would have to be carefully excavated. For this he had to find a different method to get beyond the trap so diabolically placed in the way. What? In the way? In the way? That was it! The Way! How many times had he preached on the subject contained in the words spoken by the man from Galilee; that He was The Way.

Suddenly The Old Warrior turned pastor realized that he had never fully understood what this man Jesus was all about. Suddenly it was clear to him that all along he had not truly believed, or even fully understood, all that he thought he knew.

But how could that be, he thought? Was he not a man of God? Was he not the pastor of large and successful church? Had he not dedicated his life to the ministry? How could this be?

His soul cried out for an answer, for a direction, but all he could see was the shroud of his own doubt and unbelief, and he knew that before he would find peace he had to strip away the doubt.

"What is happening to me?" he cried out.  
"... and Jesus saith unto him, I am The Way, the Truth, and the Life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."  
(John 14:6)

— Lee Westbrook



## VHPA briefs

### VHPA thanks Joe Kline

The VHPA and, especially, Ken Fritz extend thanks to artist Joe Kline for the use of his magnificent Charlie models in action in the print "Have Guns, Will Travel" that Joe so graciously let us use in the 1998 VHPA Calendar.

Joe has been a true supporter of the VHPA and his latest offering of a Chinook, titled "Iron Dance," is really a fantastic print.

Joe can customize his art to reflect individual unit markings, tail numbers, antennas, etc., so you don't have to have a beautiful picture of someone else's helicopter in Vietnam.

Check out his advertisement in the September/October VHPA Newsletter to see the Chinook. It's inside on the back cover.

Contact Joe Kline [redacted] voice [redacted]; or e-mail [redacted] to find out about all the options and his other works.

Tell him you are with VHPA and say hello. He's really

a great guy!

### Calendar photos on CD?

Is anyone interested in the VHPA calendar photos on a CD? We are checking into the viability of this as a new VHPA product.

Please e-mail [PR@vhpa.org](mailto:PR@vhpa.org) or write to Ken Fritz, c/o VHPA Headquarters.

Let me know what you think a reasonable price would be for 12 photos that may be used as screen savers, etc.

### Calendar features 15 photos

Turner Publishers has again worked very hard to provide a quality 1998 VHPA Calendar.

This will be a limited edition printing of 2,000 copies of this collectible 11-by-14-inch calendar, featuring 15 helicopter photos, most taken by VHPA members, all with a story to tell.

None of these photos are repeats from previous calendars or VHPA Newsletters.

The full color cover is "Have Guns, Will Travel," by renowned artist and Vietnam helicopter crew member Joe Kline.

The calendar price is \$12 each, plus shipping and handling. Please call Turner directly at (800) 788-3350 to order your calendars.



# Directory cover photo has an error

**MIKE LAW**  
**DIRECTORY EDITOR**

Did you find the "where's Waldo error" in the cover photo on the 1997 Directory?

Well, lots of VHFAers have! Jim Spiers, the owner of the slide, and I have received lots of calls.

Most everyone asks questions like, "How did the 175th Assault Helicopter Company get a tandem seat Charlie Model?" Very funny!!!

OK, OK, I'll explain how this unusual aircraft modification came to pass.

I assume everyone knows that printers scan photographs into their computer systems to produce the color separations necessary to print a color image. Basically they scanned a high-resolution print of Jim's slide.

Next, they use a photo editing process called cloning to develop additional background material required for the publication. You can see the sky in Jim's slide magically goes to the top of the page and, magically, the same color appears on the book's spine.

However, one slip of the cursor and one click of the mouse; and voila — the pilot's window was copied and pasted to the right of the windshield.

OK — why wasn't this caught in a proofing step? Good question!

In years past, I did proof the Directory and errors were detected, but this year my wife and I were on R&R in Italy and my company sent me back to Europe when I returned. Not wanting to delay the schedule, I had the printer fax me a few interior pages and called that good.

Mistake? Yes. A fatal error? I don't think so.

The good news is that to the untrained eye, the cover looks great. For example, I showed it to my wife and she could not find the error until I pointed it out to her.

However, the VHFA mailed 5,000 copies to "trained eyes" and I'll bet most every member found the error.

Jim said it is actually a blessing. He believes he is receiving more phone calls to kid him than he would have if the photo had been perfect.

By the way, Jim believes a warrant officer named John Losure was flying the right seat in the gunship. If anyone knows what happened to John or who the pilot is in that photo, please let us know.

Anyway, we hope each member enjoys the Directory.

I welcome any comments about the Directory. Contact Mike Law, [REDACTED]

(evenings).



Jerry Temple, Worwac 66/15-17, C/D, 227th AHB, First Calvary '66-67 (Rattlesnake 39) is the owner of **JERRY TEMPLE AVIATION**, an aircraft brokerage firm specializing in the marketing and sales of quality Cessna twins.

Prior to launching JTA in

1994, Temple held marketing and sales positions with the Cessna Aircraft Company, its distributors, retail dealerships, and modification centers.

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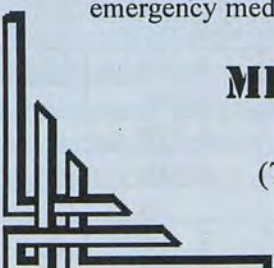
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## Some actions occurred outside Nam

**MIKE LAW**  
VHPA DIRECTORY EDITOR

As announced in the last Newsletter, the Directory Committee is researching helicopter activities that happened outside of Vietnam for the History section in the 1998 Directory.

The following is an example of an FOB (Flight Over the Board) mission. It was taken from SOG by John L. Plaster (Simon & Schuster publishers) and from The Helicopter War by Philip Chinnery (Naval Institute Press).

USAF 1st Lt. James P. Fleming was flying his second day as a UH-1F slick AC for the 20th Special Operations Squadron on Nov. 26, 1968. The rest of his crew were: Maj. Paul McClellan, pilot; Staff Sgt. Fred Cook, gunner; and J.J. Johnson, gunner.

That morning as part of a flight of five (two gunships and three slicks)

Green Hornets, he had departed Duc Co and inserted Recon Team Chisel for SOG CCS (Command and Control South) in Cambodian target Tango-51 as part of Operation Daniel Boone.

It was CCS's custom to name their recon teams for tools, e.g. RT Saw or RT Hammer.

The One-Zero (team leader) of Chisel was Staff Sgt. Ancil "Sonny" Franks. The One-One (assistant team leader) was Sgt. Charles Hughes.

Capt. Randolph Harrison, the new CO of the CCS Recon Company, was a team member who came along to learn how his men worked.

Three Montagnards made up the rest of the recon team.

The Green Hornets returned to Duc Co for lunch and fuel. Mid-afternoon the flight inserted another team further south in Cambodia.

In the mean time, Chisel had moved quickly toward a wide river

where they were to surveil enemy boat traffic.

The NVA hit the team as they were setting up their site and trapped them in a small depression near the river.

Hughes' initial radio calls were not answered. As the NVA threw more troops into the battle, Chisel was surrounded on three sides and pinned against the river.

Their next set of radio calls were picked up by their Covey FAC, USAF Maj. Charles E. Anonsen, flying in a Cessna O-2 Skymaster.

He alerted the Green Hornets, now returning to Duc Co, and they diverted toward Chisel but were low on fuel.

The two gunships attacked the NVA and knocked out two 12.7 mm heavy machine guns only 200 yards from Chisel.

Capt. Dave W. Miller's gunship was shot down. They managed to

See SINGLE, Page 17

## VHPA HISTORY BOOK, 2ND EDITION

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# Single slick, gunship left on station

**Continued from Page 16**

land in a clearing and were immediately rescued by Maj. Dale L. Eppinger, Slick Lead, who then departed for Duc Co for fuel.

Another slick had to depart for fuel, leaving only Fleming's slick and Maj. Leonard Gonzales' gunship on station with the FAC.

The gunship continued to engage the NVA, but took hits.

When Fleming told the FAC that he had to get the RT out now or depart for fuel, the FAC directed the Huey around a low hill to mask the approach from enemy fire.

At high speed, they came in over the river and nosed the Huey into the bank where Chisel should have been. The NVA, however, had launched another attack and the six member team was too busy shooting for their lives to make it to the Huey.

Chisel radioed, "They've got us! They've got us! Get out, get out!" to the Huey.

As Fleming backed the Huey into the river, Chisel blew their last claymores and the Huey crew saw an NVA's body thrown in the air.

Gonzales later recalled, "It was a sheer miracle that he wasn't shot down on takeoff."

Fleming asked, "What's going on down there?" as he reached altitude and surveyed the situation.

"We blew them back," Hughes said, "but we're out of claymores and can't hold out much longer."

Fleming knew it would be over an hour before the refueled Green Hornets returned, figured there was only about an hour of daylight left, and determined that the river was too wide to swim and too open to rush across.

He told the other aircraft, "We'll give it one more try."

Gonzales said, "I'll make one more pass over 'em, give 'em everything we have, but then I've got to get out of here."

Fleming fell in behind the gunship.

At first he couldn't find the team, yet he knew he was getting close by the volume of enemy ricochets coming off the river.

Then a doorgunner saw one Montagnard leap into the river and move toward the Huey with four men close behind.

Even Franks couldn't believe the Huey hadn't been shot down or driven off by all the enemy fire.

Despite AK fire and exploding rockets, Fleming held the bird rock-steady in what the Air Force citation later called "a feat of unbelievable flying skill."

The crew could see NVA trotting and crouching along the riverbank as the gunners alternated between firing their machine guns and pulling men aboard.

At last five recon men were aboard, but Harrison was not there.

Even though Fleming knew Randy best of all these men, he knew he had

to leave or be shot down right there.

As he began pulling back from the bank, Harrison suddenly appeared in the bushes as he sprayed fire at the unseen enemy.

The lanky captain ran four strides, jumped into the water, stroked twice and snared a rope ladder Cook managed to throw out to him.

Dragging the man through the water, Fleming catapulted them above the trees as several hands heaved Harrison aboard.

Fleming and McClellan were so focused on what they were doing that it was several seconds before they noticed the shattered windshield.

The fuel gauge read "empty" as they landed at Duc Co.

Randy Harrison grabbed Jim Fleming by the head and shouted, "You sweet motherf#\$%^+!" — the highest form of heart-felt compliment SOG soldiers paid those who supported them.

Franks said, "They were great people. Every one of 'em there, there wasn't none of 'em flinching."

In all, two Air Medals, 11 Distinguished Flying Crosses, one Silver Star were awarded, with Gonzales receiving the Air Force Cross and Fleming the Medal of Honor.

If you were involved in any Flight Over the Board (FOB) missions, please contact Mike Law, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (evenings).

## VHPA briefs

### Photos should have been returned

Those who have submitted photos for the 1998 VHPA Calendar should have received their photos back from Ken Fritz by the time they read this issue of *The VHPA Newsletter*.

If not, call Fritz at [REDACTED] or send him an e-mail message at [PR@vhpa.org](mailto:PR@vhpa.org) and remind him.

Fritz put the photos in the mail to their contributors on Nov. 14.

## Advertising rates

Display advertising rates for the VHPA Newsletter are:

- Full page, \$500.
- One-half page, \$250.
- One-quarter page, \$125.
- Business card size, \$45.

Classified advertising is \$1 per line or \$7 per inch, whichever is highest.

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



# Pilot training made up along way

KEN BORDING

I may be able to fill in some of the gaps regarding the 48th Assault Helicopter Company "Blue Star's" Republic of Korean (ROK) Army pilot training program.

I really use the term "program" quite loosely, because initially we just made it up as we went along.

*While I pondered using insanity as a defense, my CP turned and said, "Well, I'm outta here! Have fun!"*

It was late July or early August 1967 and I was your basic issue Wobbly One UH-1D type with one exception: My platoon leader, Capt. David Kidd, had made me a "tag-you're-it" instructor pilot.

He was about to go home himself and he had just signed off his replacement. When I look back and realize I was an IP seven months out of flight school, my knees get weak!

My tour was grinding along as the Blue Stars and Jokers provided direct support to the ROK White Horse and Tiger Divisions. We were all happy as proverbial clams after settling down at Ninh Hoa in relatively good living conditions after months of being the gypsies of II and III Corps.

Working with the Koreans was good duty; lots of flying, just enough ground fire to keep the interest level up, great perimeter defense, and a nice, dry hooch in which to live.

Early one afternoon while approaching our FARP, being the highly skilled (read "stupid") young IP that I was, I rolled the throttle off on my unsuspecting, and now thoroughly, peeved right-seater. He executed a reasonable hovering auto in among the refuel hoses, all the while cursing this new-pain-in-the-backside IP.

As the refueling proceeded, our

operations officer approached my CP's door with what appeared to be another pilot. I say "appeared to be a pilot" because I didn't recognize him by his build, his being somewhat shorter than most of our pilots. To further complicate making the ID, his helmet was on, visor down, and everything he wore was brand, right out of the box, new!

The captain opened the right door and shouted into my CP's ear for some time. There was an animated exchange of gestures and I assumed he was explaining to my stick buddy that I was being relieved off all IP duties and would be FEBed by sundown!

While I pondered using insanity as a defense, my CP turned and said through the intercom, "Well, I'm outta here! Have fun!" With that, he hopped out of the right seat before I could say a word.

At this point, the captain came around the nose of the Huey. Now I'm sure BOTH of us are being grounded for life!

As the captain starts to explain 1st Aviation Brigade's latest plan to win the war, the unknown pilot then starts to climb into the right seat, with assistance from my now-laughing, former stick buddy. While I'm trying

*One of the few things I did clearly hear the boss say is: "Teach this guy how to fly!"*

Trying to divide my attention between keeping the Huey from rolling over due to all the unsolicited control inputs and trying to decipher the mind-boggling instructions I was getting from the captain, I'm thinking, "This is gotta be a joke!"

One of the few things I did clearly hear the boss say is: "Teach this guy how to fly!" I responded with, "Looks like I'm going to have to, because he sure as heck doesn't even know how to get in!"

My head snapped around to look over at "Mr. Smooth," only to watch in amazement as he raised his visor to reveal a very big smile residing on a

*Well, we survived the flight and that evening we had a little meeting, where we got the briefing.*

very oriental face! I instantly turned back to the captain, only to hear him say, "This is Capt. Moon (Sun, Lee, Kim, I don't remember which), he's a ROK Birddog pilot, never been

in a helicopter, and we're going to teach him to fly Hueys. Finish your local resupply mission with him and we'll explain it all later!"

Well, we survived the flight and that evening we had a little meeting, where we got the briefing. That's how the ROK Army Helicopter Pilot "program" started!

Young, inexperienced instructor pilots; mostly fixed-wing only ROK pilots whose grasp of the English language diminished the moment the engine started; doing basic helicopter qualification while flying combat assaults!

Please don't get the impression we were running some soft, in-country checkout school. These ROK pilots were dedicated aviators, put into an extremely difficult situation, trying to learn to fly what was then a complex aircraft, in a foreign language, where the stage fields were II Corps mountaintops or hot LZs. We scared the "beejezus" out of ourselves, yet to my recollection we never bent an aircraft while training.

Most of the company IPs flew ROK aviators almost every day. From Day 1 all training was done on CAs

See ROKS, Page 19



## ROKs practiced while on missions

**Continued from Page 18**

or Ash and Trash missions. Almost no flight time was available to teach skills, like, say HOVERING! The ROKs got their hovering practice over slingloads.

Ground school was conducted while sitting on cots at night, sharing one or two Dash 10s. Systems training consisted of climbing around on the aircraft during lulls in the mission. Emergency procedures were squeezed into straight and level time or returning to the FARP.

I think that most ROK pilots got the impression the only way to land

back at Ninh Hoa was to roll the throttle off at 800 feet and auto in! This was not Introduction to Helicopter Fundamentals, this was Advanced Helicopter Combat Techniques and Tactics!

It was frequently exciting, but in retrospect, the ROK aviators really did a great job. Heck, I had a hard enough time learning to fly helicopters where the native language was "Alabamian," let alone in a truly foreign tongue.

Language problems certainly made for some cheap thrills and even some laughs (afterward!). One day, while flying a long series of CAs, my ROK

student and I were taking turns on the controls.

When my turn came I was having problems seeing the other aircraft in the flight because his hat was laying on top of the instrument panel. I said rather nicely at first, "Capt. Moon (Sun, Lee, Kim, chose one), please move your hat!" What I got in return was a rather blank look and no action. After about a dozen more requests to move the #\$\$%\*^%\$ hat, still no movement.

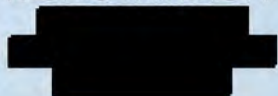
So I swapped hands on the controls, reached up, grabbed the hat, and  
**See KOREANS, Page 20**



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**NICK SKRINIKOFF**



## Calendar has various choppers

The 1998 VHPA Calendar has these helicopters inside: Chinook, Crane, Shawnee, Iroquois, Mohawk, Cobra and Choctaw.

There are 15 in all, and not all have complete descriptions, so when you get your calendar, look it over carefully and send to the Newsletter whatever information you may be able to add.

Your particular helicopter, unit, AO, mission may not be represented. That is only because you didn't send in a photo.

Help us do a complete job of showing every unit and every make and model. We especially need USAF, USMC and allied unit helicopter photos.

If you have photos suitable for the 1999 calendar, please send them to Ken Fritz c/o VHPA Headquarters for use in the calendar. The goal is to get the calendar ready to show at the next reunion and begin sales at the reunion in Fort Worth.

They need to be in my hands by April 1, 1998, for the job to be done by July for the reunion.

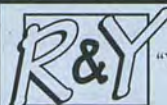
All photos should have the name of the photographer and a caption letting us know who, what, where and when about the subject. If you have a title for the photo, please include it, too.

If you wish to send a duplicate, please do so.

— Ken Fritz

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# Koreans took turns on schedule

Continued from Page 19

threw the \$&\*@(^\$ thing back into the troop compartment.

Capt. Moon (Sun, Lee, Kim, chose one) looked at me, smiled, and said: "Oh, that what you mean! I look everywhere for hat, see only CAP! Hat have brim all the way round, and I see no hat, only CAP!" After getting over being given a lesson in my own language, I better understood the difficulties of learning to fly in a foreign language.

*Lt. Col. Lee was quite impressive and he was more American than I was!*

As the ROKs became more proficient and we "signed them off," they started flying with some of the regular line ACs and took their turn on the flight schedule with the other Ameri-

can copilots.

About the time we were training our 14th Korean aviator, a ROK lieutenant colonel named Lee arrived at Ninh Hoa and I was called into the CO's hooch for a briefing.

Lt. Col. Lee was quite impressive and he was more American than I was! He had flown just about everything in both the U.S. and Korean armies to include the then-relatively new U-21 airplane.

Seemed that MACV was going to give the ROK Army a company of seven UH-1Ds being phased out of the 52nd Aviation Battalion as they upgraded to Hotel models and Lt. Col. Lee was to be the unit commander.

So the next morning two Blue Star slicks took off for Pleiku packed with all the ROK Army's UH-1 qualified pilots, plus Lt. Col. Lee and me! The trip up into the Central Highlands was uneventful, but upon arrival the real fun started.

To fully understand the level of enjoyment, imagine being a 21-year-old WO1 signing for seven UH-1Ds

to be turned over to an allied nation while the inventory was being done in Korean!

After signing away my life, I suddenly realized there was an even greater threat to that life.

We were about to fly a formation of seven helicopters from Pleiku to the ROK Army's new helicopter base in Nha Trang with six of the aircraft flown by all Korean crews who had never flown the Huey solo before! I was going to be the only American in this gaggle and I was suddenly feeling very lonely.

After a somewhat more thorough than normal preflight briefing, we launched off in what I thought was the safest formation, staggered trail. All seemed to be going OK. I say this because as Lead I couldn't see a darn thing going on back in the pack and all the radio calls were in Korean!

But I could tell one thing for certain, Lt. Col. Lee and his men were very proud and enjoying this flight more than any other in their respective careers.

In another hour or so we would be arriving to a huge ceremony complete

*"Mr. Ken, my men are very proud today and they want to fly like American Huey pilots."*

with bands, refreshments, generals from all the allied nations, and plenty of Korean and American reporters. This would be a glorious day for democracy and the Free World; if only we survived it!

About halfway to Nha Trang, a long radio exchange took place between my ROK right-seater and several of the other aircraft in the flight. I had no idea what was going on and feared the worst, like a forced landing or some other disaster.

As it turned out, my fly buddies were cooking up an arrival maneuver to suitably impress the gathered

brass.

Lt. Col. Lee turned to me and said: "Mr. Ken, my men are very proud today and they want to fly like American Huey pilots." (Oh, no!) He went on to explain that he and his men wanted to do a seven-aircraft high-over-head echelon break, something they had seen the Blue Stars do on many occasions upon returning from successful combat assaults.

I tried very diplomatically to explain all the reasons this was just not possible: (We hadn't practiced it; I was chicken; it would disrupt traffic at Nha Trang; I was chicken; it was too dangerous; I was chicken...!)

He was very persuasive, but I refused. He pointed out how hard his men had trained; I still resisted. He did everything short of pointing out that they were his darn helicopters, so I caved in and reluctantly said "yes." But I got his promise that we would brief it in detail!

So, for the next hour I would give some minor detail like we'd be breaking to the LEFT and Lt. Col. Lee would repeat the instruction in Korean to avoid any misunderstandings.

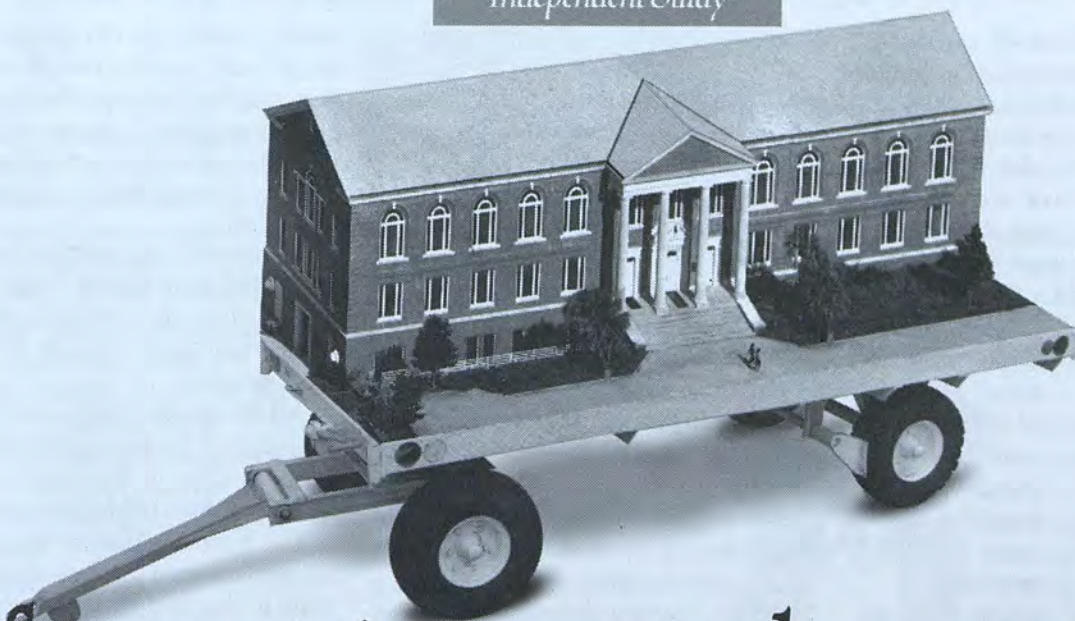
One of the things I repeated often and Lt. Col. Lee echoed was "do exactly what Lead does!" I would say something that took maybe 10 seconds to verbalize and Lt. Col. Lee would talk for two minutes!

Oh, well, either way it was sure to be a spectacular arrival! God, I wished I had bothered to learn the language! What was the Korean word for "left?"

Descending from our en route altitude, I gave Lt. Col. Lee the word to have 'em go to right echelon. Very precisely, each aircraft acknowledged the formation change in what I assume was the Korean equivalent of "Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven"! I strained to turn in my seat to see what was happening. To my utter amazement (and total joy), the other Hueys slid into position and formed up in a 3-5 rotor diameter right echelon. Then, to my total horror, all six

See WINGMEN, Page 22





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VHPA4 11/97



# Wingmen tightened the formation

Continued from Page 21

of our wingmen proceeded to "tighten it up" to 1-2 rotor widths, as they "got with the program," so to speak!

After warning the Nha Trang tower to seek overhead cover, we lined up on what must have been at least a 10-mile final from the west. One last time I repeated and Lt. Col. Lee echoed, "Left Break, 5 second interval, On Lead! Do exactly what Lead

does!" Lt. Col. Lee, firmly in command of his country's newest aerial fighting force, flew Lead on a steady course down the runway center-line.

As we approached the high-overhead

point opposite the 17th Aviation Group's ramp area, I looked down to see a huge crowd.

From 1,000 feet, I could almost hear the band! Korean crew chiefs even stood at attention to mark the spots where all seven of the ROK Army's UH-1Ds would park.

As the break point rapidly approached I had two distinct emotions: 1.) I was taking part of a historic day for the American and Korean Armies; 2.) I'm going to be remembered as the guy who caused aviation history's biggest and best documented mid-air collision!

It was now or never! I said "Break Left" into the intercom and closed my eyes. Lt. Col. Lee repeated the Korean version of the same order. When I opened my eyes we were in the steepest diving left turn I have ever experienced.

As we hit the 180-degree point in what had to be the Free World's tightest traffic pattern. I could look out to the right straight up through Lt. Col. Lee's door window and see Chalk 6 and 7 about to pitch up and over into the break! Awesome!

As we rolled out on short final, I

urged Lt. Col. Lee to "keep it moving" to the mid-field turn off. Since I hadn't heard any loud noises yet, I could only hope things were going OK back in the pack.

As we took the high-speed turnoff at 40-50 knots, I was amazed to look back and see all six of the other aircraft obediently hovering along behind us, five feet off the ground and still 1-2 rotor diameters away!

Turning into the ramp, I told Lt. Col. Lee to taxi to the last parking spot. That way, all the aircraft could hover in and park in chalk order.

But the first ROK crew chief would have none of that! He stood at attention and adamantly pointed his batons at the very first parking spot. Like a pitcher in the top of the ninth with the bases loaded, I just as adamantly shook off the sign. He

pointed again; I shook it off again and pointed down the line of rigid crew chiefs toward the far parking spot.

By this time things were really stacking up behind us and we were blowing flags, sheet cake, and generals' hats everywhere!

Once again, I caved in and Lt. Col. Lee hovered forward and lowered the collective to gently land the Pride of the ROK Army on Pad 1.

Now behind us were six other Korean Huey crews who had been told repeatedly to do exactly what Lead did. So as Lt. Col. Lee was about to make the smoothest landing of his life, good old Chalk 2 hovered right over the top of us en route to Parking Spot Two!

As we were slammed into the tarmac I looked up to see 2's skids pass exactly five feet above our whirling rotor disk as he pivoted into this parking space.

As Chalk 2 was about to settle

gently to earth, he too was driven into the ground as, you guessed it, Chalk 3 hovered five feet over the top of 1 and 2 into his parking space. Thus went the parade as each proud ROK aircrew did exactly what they were told to do!

As this seemingly unending line of sequential near-misses continued, I looked out at the reviewing stand to see a amazing reaction on the part of the spectators.

All the Americans seemed to be on the verge of breaking and running for their lives, but to their credit and their country's, they held their ground.

The Korean's present however, showed no such signs of flight, only pride in the skill and precision of their pilots! Yes, we had arrived!

The Korean pilots trained then and subsequently by the 48th Assault Helicopter Company were fine officers, able aviators, and patriots beyond all reason. They had been asked by their country and ours to do what was almost impossible: To learn to fly helicopters in a foreign land, in a foreign language, in a foreign war. They more than rose to the challenge!

P.S. As a postscript, shortly thereafter my tour was up. I had volunteered for a second tour so I returned to the States TDY to qualify in the CH-47.

Five months later I was back in 17th Group flying Hooks and loving it. One day my CO called me into his office and said that my records indicated I had trained ROK pilots. I was tempted to lie and swear that it was just a typo.

Seemed the ROK training program had moved from the 48th Assault Helicopter Company to 17th Group Headquarters in Nha Trang to be in a more "school house" environment. And guess who was being "drafted" back into the program.

I said something about going AWOL; he said something about MPs.

So four hours later I was in Nha Trang, once again training ROK aviators!

*As we were slammed into the tarmac, I looked up to see Two's skids pass exactly five feet above our whirling rotor disk.*



# Reunion features Fort Wolters visit

GERALD BRAZELL

The Fort Wolters Chapter welcomes the opportunity to host the nostalgic 1998 Reunion.

There are numerous events scheduled to provide entertainment and memories of the flight school experience for you and your family.

The Fort Wolters Extravaganza Tour and Barbecue Lunch will give you an opportunity to visit the barracks you felt were a prison . . . Now they are a minimum security facility. It was maximum for warrant officer candidates. Would anyone like to explain that?

The Vietnam Memorial Wall will be located at the future VHPA National Museum site in Mineral Wells, which will recognize the contribution of our members and fallen

**For reservations at  
The Worthington Hotel  
(Reunion Headquarters),  
call (800) 433-5677.**

comrades.

You can take photographs under the original rotor blades at the old Holiday Inn or maybe take a splash. The tour of Fort Wolters also will include several static helicopter displays for your viewing.

The Western Night Dinner and Dance will be held at the Radisson Hotel and will feature a sit-down dinner instead of a buffet. Be sure to polish up on your two-step for the dance after dinner.

The ladies social will be

held during the business meeting and will include a continental breakfast of assorted pastries, muffins and croissants, juices, tea and coffee, while enjoying the humor of our enjoyable speaker.

The golf tournament is scheduled at the old Carswell Air Force Base. There will be a limit of 72 golfers, so register early. Lunch will be provided and prizes awarded.

Saturday night, the banquet will be held at the Fort Worth Convention Center, with transportation to and from The Worthington and Radisson hotels. The dance will be held at The Worthington, with special entertainment planned.



# City embraces heritage of the Old West

FORT WORTH — In its youth, Fort Worth was a rough-and-tumble frontier town, dusty and lawless, home to the brave and the brawling, the soldier, the frontiersman, the outlaw.

Fort Worth today embraces the heritage of the Old West. It is a noticeable influence in the city's architecture, pace, fashion and culinary fare.

Visitors seem surprised to see a businessman in a Stetson or a police officer on horseback, but it's all a reflection of life in Fort Worth.

Originally settled in 1849 as an army outpost at a fork of the Trinity River, Camp Worth was one of eight forts assigned to protect settlers from Indian attacks.



Progress helped the growing settlement survive long after other such towns had blown away with the dust

of departing pioneers. The cattle industry was king for a generation of people working the Fort Worth leg of the historic Chisholm Trail.

Cowboys worked and played in the Stockyards district, driving cattle on Exchange Avenue to slaughterhouses and meat-packing plants headquartered in the city.

Many cattle continued the journey on the Chisholm Trail to its ending point in Kansas.

Today, the Stockyards National Historic District looks much the same as it did 100 years ago. In fact, the entire avenue is on the National Register of Historic Places.

perform at Billy Bob's Texas, the world's largest honkytonk. The entire historic district is recognized as much

for family entertainment and shopping as for saloons and boot-scootin.'



Down-  
town,  
glitter-  
ing  
sky-  
scrap-

ers form a ring around  
Sundance Square,  
Fort Worth's business

and entertainment district that is now restored to its original Victorian beauty, and filled with restaurants, live theaters, shops, museums and galleries.

Located in Sundance Square is the site of the \$60 million Nancy Lee & Perry R Bass Performance Hall, scheduled to open in early 1998. The center will be home to the city's renowned symphony, opera, ballet, theater and touring companies of all types.

See CULTURE, Page 25



# VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

15th Annual Reunion Fort Worth, TX July 1-5, 1998

## REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

Mail to: VHPA, 5530 Birdcage St., Suite 200, Citrus Heights, CA 95610-7621

FAX signed credit card registration to: (916) 966-8743

Name:	Member No.:	Arrival date:	Departure date:
Wife/Guest name:	No. of children*:	Is this your first reunion?	
Names of additional guests:	How many reunions have you attended?		
Address:	Check here if notifying VHPA of an address change [ ]		
City:	State:	ZIP:	Phone: ( )

### REGISTRATION FEES

	No. of people	Price	Total
Registration before 6/1/98*		@ \$ 25.00	
Registration after 6/1/98*		@ \$ 35.00	
Total from sidebar	XXXXXXXXXX	XXXXXXXXXX	
Early Bird Reception (July 1)		No host	
Bell Helicopter Tour (July 2)		@ \$ 5.00	
Fort Wolters Chapter Welcome Reception, Entertainment/Dance (July 2)		No host	
Fort Wolters Extravaganza Tour and Barbecue Lunch (July 3)		@ \$ 20.00	
Western Night Dinner/Dance Featuring Don Edwards (July 3)		@ \$ 25.00	
Ladies Social (July 4)		@ \$ 20.00	
Banquet & Dance (July 4)		@ \$ 35.00	
Special program planned		@ \$ 30.00	
Dues (if included)	1 year	@ \$ 30.00	
You can make 3 payments over 6-month Installment period if you wish	Life installment No. 1	@ \$150.00	
Complete Life Membership		@ \$450.00	
	<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>		

### INDICATE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE

<b>Golf Tournament:</b> (July 2 — 7 a.m.) <b>Cost: \$60. Limit: 72 players.</b>	
<b>5k Run:</b> (July 2 — 7 a.m.)	
<b>T-shirts:</b>	
Qty. Size Price	
S @ \$15.00	
M @ \$15.00	
L @ \$15.00	
XL @ \$15.00	
XXL @ \$15.00	
XXXL @ \$15.00	
<b>Sidebar total</b>	

<b>Entree choice</b>	<b>July 3</b>	<b>July 4</b>
Beef		
Chicken		
Pasta/Vegetable		

\* Each adult 18 and older must pay the registration fee.

- ☐ Enclosed is my check or money order payable to "VHPA Reunion '98"
- ☐ Please charge my MasterCard or VISA card (circle one)

Credit card No.:	Expiration date:
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### REUNION NAME TAG INFORMATION

Name you want on name tag:	Call sign:
Name of wife/guest:	Flight school class:
(Number or year for Army; branch and year for other services.)	
1st combat unit:	Year(s):
2nd combat unit:	Year(s):
3rd combat unit:	Year(s):
Hometown or current residence:	

**Refund policy:** No refunds will be granted before reunion. All refund requests must be submitted to VHPA Headquarters no later than Aug. 7, 1998, and must include all tickets received, plus proof of payment. Refunds will not be granted for fixed-price events that lose money unless the entire reunion has a positive cash balance. VHPA headquarters will process and pay all refund requests within 10 days of completing the reunion account balancing.



## Culture very strong in Fort Worth

**Continued from Page 23**

Thriving Sundance Square fills 14 blocks downtown with a broad array of entertainment options.

Now with 20 movie screens, retail development in a state of continual growth, a host of restaurants and cafes, and many other offerings, the streets bustle with activity throughout the day and well into the evening.

The Fort Worth Water Garden and the Fort Worth/Tarrant County Convention Center occupy what was once Hell's Half Acre, a brothel- and saloon-packed district where cowhands had their last bit of fun before heading out on the Chisholm Trail.

It also was their first stop on the way home, and their first chance to spend the wages burning holes in their pockets.

Cowtown boasts the nation's third-largest cultural district.

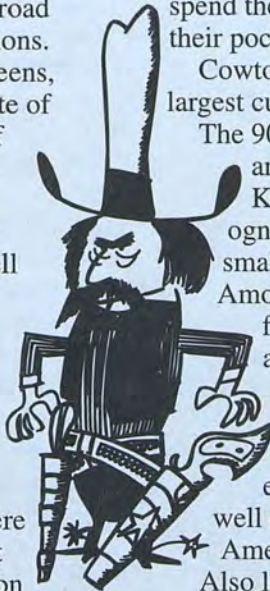
The 900-plus acres of Fort Worth's arts district are home to the Kimbell Art Museum — recognized as "America's best small museum" — and the Amon Carter Museum, renowned for its collection of the oils and bronze sculptures of Western artists Charles Russell and Fred-eric Remington, as well other notable American artists.

Also located in the cultural district, the Fort Worth Museum of Science

and History continually displays exhibits that have attracted attendance of more than one million visitors annually since 1986.

The Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas' oldest museum, displays 20th century masterpieces and regularly schedules special exhibits showcasing the world's acclaimed modern artists. Within walking distance of Fort Worth's celebrated museums are Casa Manana Theatre and Will Rogers Memorial Center, along with the Botanic and Japanese gardens.

The Fort Worth Zoo is world-renowned for its collection and exhibits, and for the natural habitats constructed to replicate the animal's homes in the wild.



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## War museum gaining momentum

If you attended the 1997 VHPA Reunion in Orlando, you may be aware of the museum effort begun two years ago by the Fort Wolters Chapter.

In fact, some of you purchased memorial bricks to help fund the museum.

Our plan is to create a world-class national museum, the first of its kind to record and preserve the history of the Vietnam conflict, a facility designed to provide the materials to allow researchers to study the subject and answer many of the questions society still has about the war.

Museums depend on visitors for at least part of their support, so a broad base of exhibit material increases the size of the population willing to attend and support the facility.

Our primary focus will be the Vietnam War, as seen through the eyes of the helicopter flight crew.

We also have an additional historical entity that expands our exhibit potential and provides a natural focus on airmobility and Vietnam. That entity is Fort Wolters, the place where the majority of Vietnam rotary wing aviators got their start.

Since Fort Wolters was a military post for 50 years, its history spans three of the four major U.S. wars in this century, and allows us to include exhibits from World War II and the Korean conflict as well as Vietnam.

Plans for the museum include a library area, displays of restored training and combat aircraft and equipment, displays of living quarters, models of facilities, photographic histories of facilities and operations areas, and artifacts relating to the history of Fort Wolters and Vietnam.

Within the museum grounds will be a Memorial Garden with winding walks and seating areas under the trees amid memorials to the veterans of World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

The chapter and its Museum Committee are proud to report the initial feasibility studies and the business plan are complete. They have been approved by our business advisers,

and we have an excellent facility under contract.

The facility, which includes an existing building, is between downtown Mineral Wells and Fort Wolters, on Highway 180 across from the Brazos Shopping Center.

The property is about 4.5 acres with over 500 feet of frontage on the highway, and on the new Texas State Park "Rails to Trails" hiking/biking trail, which runs through town.

The planned Memorial Garden will be between the hiking trail and the museum, providing park-like atmosphere leading to the museum. The museum building itself is over 43,000 square feet, and can be expanded to the east and west, and vertically, if necessary.

The property also provides an ample parking area, in addition to the three-acre garden area, and the building offers large, overhead doors at the rear for loading/unloading on what is essentially a private street.

We have arranged for the building and the adjoining property to the east, west and south, to be provided to the museum corporation as a gift.

However, we must purchase the strip of property between the building and the hiking trail/State Park, that will be used as the Memorial Garden area. This property, which is prime real estate, will be provided at discounted price, but we will still require an initial, near-term investment of approximately \$150,000. To acquire this, we must raise funds.

Our fund-raising will be conducted in two phases:

- Phase 1 is an appeal to all VHPA members to help us acquire the property outright, through the purchase of memorial bricks and monuments, and/or through donations.

- Phase 2 will be a professional effort being developed by our public relations consultants to solicit corporations, philanthropic organizations, and individuals nationwide, who have an interest in what we're trying to accomplish.

That effort, commissioned in Octo-

ber 1997, will require about a year to develop and initiate.

Once the funds are in place for the grounds, construction will begin with remodeling of the building exterior, to create a modern appearance, and the creation of the Memorial Garden.

Concurrently, the design and organization of the displays will be commissioned.

To accomplish Phase 1 funding goals, we are offering memorial bricks and granite monuments to pave the garden walks.

The Silver donation of \$100 acquires a memorial brick which can be engraved with up to three lines of 15 characters each, such as name, flight school class, Vietnam unit, etc.

A Gold donation of \$1,000 will acquire a larger, polished granite monument which will be prominently displayed around the grounds. These may be for either individual or group donations.

Since the museum is an IRS 501(c)(3) nonprofit educational organization with tax exempt status, all donations are tax deductible.

In order to make it convenient for you, we offer Visa and/or MasterCard and/or an extended payment plan, if that would be helpful.

All brick sales also provide a one-year membership in the Fort Wolters Chapter, for active VHPA members, and a subscription to the chapter newsletter to help you keep up with museum progress.

While the museum will cover Fort Wolters history, it is first and foremost a museum chronicling the Vietnam War effort. As such, we are told it will be the first U.S. museum dedicated to the Vietnam War.

One of our objectives is to contribute to the study of the war to explain what occurred in Vietnam, and why.

Join us, and together we can build a world-class facility that is a place of understanding and truth.

James L. Irwin  
Chairman FWCVHPA  
Museum/Historical Committee



## Fort Wolters/Vietnam National Museum

If you flew helicopters in Vietnam, it's a pretty good bet that your "birth" as a helicopter pilot took place at Fort Wolters, Texas. Whether you were a WOC or RLO, whether you flew TH-55s or OH-23s, you still remember the stage fields; the heliports; red, yellow, and white tire areas; and the Holiday Inn pool.

In an effort to preserve your memories, the Fort Wolters chapter is working to develop a permanent museum in the Mineral Wells area honoring Vietnam veterans, and to tell the real story of our involvement in this piece of American history. If you would like to support this effort, and leave a lasting memory of your time "Above the Finest," purchase one of our Memory Garden bricks commemorating your flight school class or Vietnam unit.

Remember, as a VHPA member, this is your museum, and your support will help ensure its success.

Your brick purchase includes a 1 year membership in the Fort Wolters chapter and a copy of the quarterly newsletter as an added benefit.



Please use the order form below, and mail your brick order to:

Ft. Wolters/Vietnam Museum, Rt. 1 Box 140, Graford, TX 76449

Order Form

Order Form

Order Form

## Fort Wolters/Vietnam National Museum

Picture your name and unit or class on one of these bricks.  
Be part of the legacy and leave a lasting memory of your  
time as a Vietnam rotary wing aviator.

Yes, I want to be part of the legacy and purchase a memorial brick.

☐ Enclosed is my check/money order for \$100.00.

FOR CREDIT CARD PAYMENT: Visa ☐ MC ☐

Enter your card number in the boxes below:

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Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please engrave my brick as shown below:

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|---|---|
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Address change       | <input type="checkbox"/> Life membership: \$450*                          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Directory correction | <input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter subscription only: \$30               |

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CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

WORK PHONE: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Please charge my MasterCard/Visa credit card
- ☐ Enclosed is a check/money order payable to VHPA

Credit card No.: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

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SOCIAL SECURITY NO.: \_\_\_\_\_

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2nd					
3rd					
4th					

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