



The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



It was billed as the last UH-1 Huey Air Assault ever conducted by the US Army when 21st Cavalry Brigade did a grand job of planning, organizing and executing Fort Hood's version of their Huey Farewell Ceremony. The heart of the day's celebration were commemorative flights for all soldiers who fought and served in Vietnam. At the sorties included a hovering stop for a moment of reflection amongst the many Vietnam Veterans interred at the State of Texas Veterans Cemetery.

Complete details of all the day's celebration can be found on page 5 of this, our May & June 2013 edition of The VHPA Aviator.....

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FROM THE STAFF AT HQ!

First – We would like to say THANK YOU to members that have called and emailed HQ with their updated address, phone or email information! This is a HUGE help to us!

We are diligently trying to get our database information as current as possible. We know that many of our members are retired and go south in the winter to avoid the cold, ice & snow and others head north in the summer to avoid the stifling heat. The problem is, we are spending lots of additional money in postage and envelopes to resend items (mostly the Aviator) to our dues current members, when we really don't have to; money that is needed to seek out new members to grow the Association.

PLEASE help us out. If you are going to be away from your published address, call HQ at 800-505-8472 or send an email to hq@vhpa.org with your temporary address and the dates you will be away from home. That way we can pay for mailing your items just one time – to your temporary address during the time you are there and to your permanent address when you return home. Of course if you are moving permanently, we need that revised address information as soon as possible.

Life Members do not receive annual invoices for membership dues, so they don't always remember to notify HQ of any changes in address or changes in their phone numbers, but we really need that info as well.

We would love to update the database with current email addresses for everyone as well. There are updates that are sent out to everyone via email, plus it's great for making contact with old friends.

We are also in the process of updating the units served in Vietnam for each member. This is also a helpful tool for making contact with old friends that you served with.

If HQ can do anything to make VHPA a better value for you, **PLEASE LET US KNOW.** We are here to help you!

See you in San Francisco!

Sherry Rodgers
VHPA Office Manager

AVIATOR PRIVACY STATEMENT

The VHPA Aviator contains member privacy information the VHPA considers proprietary and confidential. This information, including but not limited to the VHPA Chapter list, shall not be used for commercial solicitation purposes or for any correspondence related thereto without prior written authorization from the VHPA president. Correspondence relating to commercial purposes or solicitations shall only be sent to the VHPA Officers, Committee Chairmen and/or Staff listed in this publication.

E-mail items to The Aviator at: Aviator@vhpa.org

THE VHPA AVIATOR, THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION (ISSN 1930-5737) (USPS 001-497) is published six times yearly ~ January, March, May, July, September & November.

The VHPA is organized as a 501 (c) (19) fraternal military organization and one copy of each newsletter is included in each of our Member's Dues, yearly subscriptions to the Aviator are available to non-members for \$36.00.

Published by See David Adams, Enterprises, LLC,
2900 Arbor Court, Round Rock, Texas, 78681
for the VHPA, headquartered at 2100 N. Highway 360,
Suite 907, Grand Prairie, TX 75050.

Periodicals Publications postage paid at Round Rock,
Texas and additional mailing points.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
VHPA HQ, 2100 N. Highway 360, Suite 907, Grand Prairie, TX 75050

I'M A VIETNAM VETERAN, THAT'S WHAT I AM

By LTC (Ret.) Donald E. Long

I'm a Vietnam Veteran, that's what I am
I did my best for my Uncle Sam.
While doing my best, I made it through,
But others, America, have died for you.

You don't know the hurt, don't know the pain,
That when I came back, things weren't the same.
And you also don't know the joy inside
For the job I did, I have such pride.

The sad thing is, not everyone was there
To see me fight with rules "unfair";
To see my love for my fellow man;
To see my sacrifice in the air, jungle, and sand.

I didn't run to Canada, or try to hide.
It wasn't my horse but I had to ride.
I had a family, friends and others to protect.
If you tried to understand, I'd get more respect.

I don't expect you to know how I feel.
You got your knowledge from a TV reel.
You don't know that the truth about the war
Is better learned from those who went ashore.

It doesn't matter that history is wrong.
It matters that I can still sing my song
Of pride...and joy...for my Uncle Sam.
I'm a Vietnam Veteran, that's what I am.

It's too bad congress, newsmen and such
Weren't concerned enough to want to touch
My soul while I was passing the test.
Instead they thought "what makes me look best?"

But I don't concern myself with them
Whose ignorance and selfishness still wear thin.
Instead I think now of what to do
To continue to glorify old "red, white and blue".

If you should ask me "how it was over there?"
I'd reply "the public, over here, was very unfair".
I'd also say our politicians blew it.
They confused Chicago with Ban Me Thuot.

These things can't hurt me now my brother.
I understand and will soon help another
To love those words that sound so grand,
"I'm a Vietnam Veteran, that's what I am",
"I'm a Vietnam Veteran....that's what I am".

The above was sent to us by (Ret.) LTC Donald E. Long. It was originally part of a speech he made at a reunion of the 14th Avn. Bn. in the early 1990's. "I wrote the poem and read it at the end of the speech. It went over extremely well and I believe the speech and poem did make the men there that day feel better. Hopefully, this poem can also make one or two more of our Members feel good about their lives."

LTC Long served in Vietnam with both the 176th Avn Co and the 161st Avn Co of the 14th Avn Bn. He also served as the Bn Ops Officer for the 123rd Avn Bn and later as commander of B Co (Aeroscout), 123rd Avn Bn, 16th Avn Gp, Americal Division.

He may be reached at: [REDACTED]

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VHPA HEADQUARTERS

1-800-505-VHPA (8472)

VHPA ELECTRONIC MAIL ADDRESSES

VHPA Headquarters	HQ@VHPA.org
President of The VHPA	President@VHPA.org
VHPA Secretary/Treasurer	
VHPA Chapter Liaison	
Historical Chairman	
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Records/Database	Roush@VHPA.org
VHPA Calendar Project	Calendar@VHPA.org
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VHPA Memory Map Project	
VHPA Scholarships Program	
VHPA Aviator Newsletter	Aviator@VHPA.org

Official Web Site of the VHPA
www.VHPA.org

From John Sorensen, President of the VHPA



If each one of us has not used the old saying, "Time flies when you're having fun!", we've certainly all heard it. Well, that's the way I feel as I realized this is my last column to write as your President, and what a year, what a privilege, and what an honor it has been!

Through the efforts of many others, the VHPA continues to grow. Did you notice that 25% of the new members listed in the last issue of this magazine served in either the Navy, Marine Corps, or Air Force. Let's hope that each of these new members find a home in the VHPA and one of our state chapters. I, like most of us, served in the Army, but remember we were all on the same team! To all our new members, I say welcome to the VHPA, thank you for your service, and welcome home.

Registrations continue to come in daily for our upcoming reunion in San Francisco, and events are selling out. Everything indicates a very successful, enjoyable, and memorable reunion is on the horizon. I certainly hope you are planning to be there as the VHPA marks 30 years. My special thanks go out to our National Reunion Committee members and our event coordinator for a job well done.

Sincere thanks also go to our HQ staff, Sherry Rodgers and Ashley Bird, our committee chairmen, and to the members of the Executive Council. Each one places the interests of our Association ahead of personal interests and are deserving of our gratitude and appreciation. They certainly have mine.

Lastly, saving the best for last, my sincere thanks goes out to each one of you for the honor of being your President. As I said upon assuming this office, *"I do not, nor have I ever considered myself a hero, but I am privileged and honored to stand with them, and to walk among them."* So, to each one of you: *Thank you from the bottom of my heart!*

See you in San Francisco!

My War Souvenir, a Browning Hi-Power 9mm Pistol

Manufactured in Belgium & with Chinese markings.....By Rex Gooch

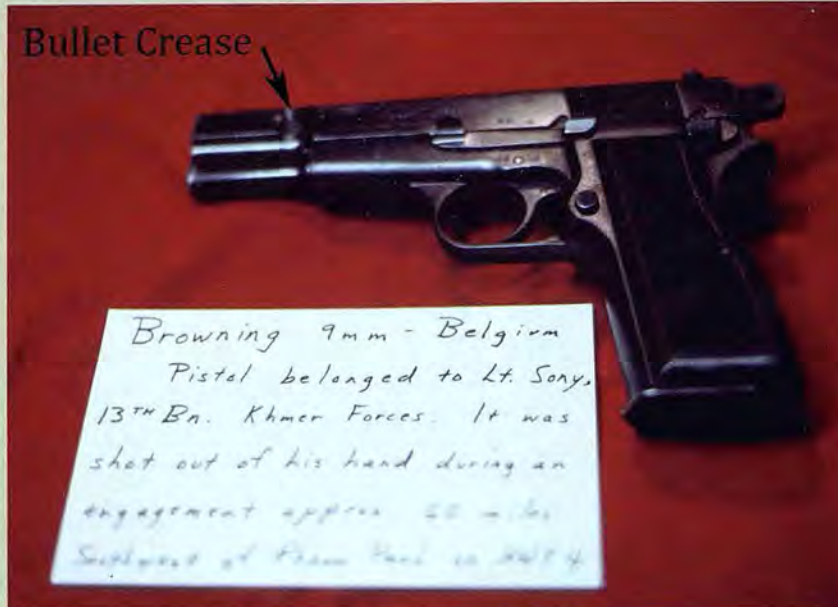
I served in Vietnam in 1971-72 as an Army helicopter pilot with Lighthorse C/3/17 Air Cavalry. We were based at Vinh Long Army Airfield in the southern portion of Vietnam known as the Delta, or as the Army designated it, IV Corp, South Vietnam. During this time, we were given many missions flying into Cambodia. We typically departed Vinh Long before sunup and flew to the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) outpost at Chi Lang, on the Cambodia/Vietnam border. Landing at Chi Lang, we refueled our helicopters and received our mission briefing before

continuing into Cambodia. Khmer Forces (Cambodian Army) military advisors flew with us and served as interpreters and coordinators between the Khmer ground troops and our air operations. These Cambodian officers were well educated and spoke excellent English.

I met and became good friends with Lieutenant Choum Sony, one of the Khmer Forces advisors. One day, he showed me a damaged Browning Hi-Power 9mm pistol and asked if I would be interested in trading for it. I enthusiastically said, "Yes." I wanted a war souvenir and I thought this pistol would be perfect. Lt. Sony indicated he wanted to trade his pistol for a boom box (big radio with cassette player). We made arrangements to make the trade when I returned to Chi Lang. Back at Vinh Long, I went to the PX (Post Exchange) and bought the largest Sony boom box in stock. It was about 30 inches long with large speakers on each end. It had a cassette player, AM/FM radio and a handheld microphone for recording.

Several days later, I was scheduled to fly another mission into Cambodia. When we approached Chi Lang, I placed a radio call to operations asking that they notify Lt. Sony of our arrival. After we landed at Chi Lang, Lt. Sony came out to the PSP helipad as we were shutting down our Huey and tying down the rotor blades. As he approached, he reached into his fatigue jacket pocket and pulled out the Browning 9mm pistol. I retrieved the new Sony Boom Box from behind my pilots' seat and we made the exchange. Smiling broadly, Lt. Sony turned on his new "rock and roll" apparatus and dialed in AFN, the American Forces Network. When a popular rock song began playing, Lt. Sony grasped the microphone and started singing. To our surprise, he had a wonderful singing voice. He explained that he was lead singer with a rock band in his hometown, Phnom Penh.

As I examined my war trophy, I found that the pistol had a bullet crease in the barrel slide, about an inch from the end of the barrel. Lt. Sony explained that the pistol had belonged to his brother who was in the 13th Battalion,



Browning 9mm Pistol - Photo taken in Vietnam

Khmer forces. He told the story of how this pistol was shot out of his brother's hand during a nighttime engagement with the Khmer Rouge about 60 miles southwest of Phnom Penh, near Highway 4. Coincidentally, I flew over this area several times flying command support for the Cambodian army.

Lt. Sony's brother found the pistol the following morning. The impact of the bullet damaged the pistol to the extent that it was no longer operational. Being worthless as a firearm, he gave the pistol to his brother to barter as a war souvenir.

Later, as I examined the pistol, I noticed it had Browning Firearms markings in English indicating it was manufactured in Belgium. It also had Chinese markings. While I have never confirmed it, I have been told these are Chinese Armory markings, meaning the pistol came through China to Cambodia.

When I attempted to operate the pistol, I found the bullet crease on the end of the barrel slide prohibited the slide from retracting to the backmost, locked position. Thus, the slide stop would not engage and not allow the pistol to be disassembled. I was persistent and kept forcing the barrel slide back until I eventually was able to engage the slide lock. This permitted me to disassemble the pistol. I then used a rattail file to remove the protrusion on the inside of the barrel slide so the pistol would function. After completing the government paperwork for returning firearms, I brought the pistol home with me when I departed Vietnam.

The story does not end there. This pistol, along with other guns, was stolen when our home was burglarized in 1992. Later, the police found the pistol on the burglar when he was caught breaking into a high school. This pistol was the only gun returned to me after the robbery, likely because the bullet crease made it easily identifiable. I fired this pistol one time. It is highly inaccurate, probably due to rust inside the barrel caused by firing corrosive military ammunition.



Lieutenant Choum Sony - Khmer Forces 1971

Note: In early 1972, President Nixon was on TV stating that US troops were not in Cambodia. Yet, we were flying there almost daily. In our mission briefings, we were told we could not land in Cambodia. We had to fly our mission and return to Chi Lang to refuel. This posed the obvious question, "What if we have maintenance problems and have to land?" The answer: "Don't."

Rex Gooch

E-mail: [REDACTED]

COVER STORY

One Last Air Assault for our Beloved UH-1 Huey

By VHPA Member George VanRiper

Rain and humidity soaked my clothes as I walked toward the hangar reminding me that it was the beginning of the rainy season in Chu Lai and it would soon turn cold in Vietnam. Our helicopters sat in revetments exposed to sun, salt, rain, sand, lightning and incoming rocket or mortar fire. Despite all this most of them cranked-up when needed and flew us into combat and usually brought us home. They also have that unforgettable "whop, whop, whop," rotor sound that most Vietnam veterans love.

Rain and humidity again soaked my clothes as I walked toward a hangar in Texas on a Saturday morning in August; only this time it was for final farewell mission of the last three UH-1 Huey helicopters remaining at Fort Hood. The rain would hide my tears as I joined with other old soldiers who came to pay our respects to a dear friend. It was a bitter sweet day for most of us, we had at least forty years of memories attached to Bell UH-1 helicopters. I am not sure who loved them the most, the men who flew them and maintained them, or the men who rode on them into and out of the killing fields of Vietnam.

Fort Hood's 21st Cavalry Brigade did a grand job of planning, organizing and executing this Huey Farewell Ceremony. The heart of the day's celebration was commemorative flights for former crew members and soldiers who fought in Vietnam. Despite the morning rain the sorties were accomplished safely, and were deeply appreciated by those who participated in their last ride. A static display in the early afternoon allowed for many friendships to be rekindled between retired soldiers in the Fort Hood area and new friendships to be formed between retired and active duty soldiers.

We regrouped in dry clothes Saturday evening at the Phantom Warrior Club on Fort Hood to hear COL Neil S. Hersey, Commander 21st Cav Brigade speak of the Huey's unique and honorable history of service. COL Hersey was followed by LTG (ret) Paul E. Funk who gave his remembrances of the Huey's role in combat in Vietnam. He compared the Huey's long and distinguished service history to that of the B-52 Bomber, another Vietnam vintage aircraft still in service today.

All in all it was a very proud day for us Vietnam veterans and our younger brothers and sisters on active duty. It was also a fitting tribute to the venerable UH-1 Huey helicopter, complete with the unforgettable rotor sound of "whop-whop-whop"....

George VanRiper
Harker Heights, Texas

E-Mail: [REDACTED]



Isn't it beautiful when those crosstubes form the perfect X, now that's formation flying.



Before each flight a safety briefing was given to all who rode in the Air Assaults



Fort Hood's last three Hueys on approach to the First Cav hanger at Robert Grey Army Airfield, Fort Hood, Texas.

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator,

I want to extend my compliments to you on the format for the most recent issue with it's emphasis on humor. Humor could always be found in the midst of the chaos of our war and was a priceless commodity to break the nearly unbearable tension that followed those near death experiences. Those that had the emotional makeup to find a laugh or two in the misery of that soldier who ended up tumbling down a hillside, in a porta potty, blown over by a "Big Windy" seem to have come home, led normal fairly well adjusted lives, and managed to be successful contributing members of society. Thank you for remembering those among us with a grin on our face and a twinkle in our eyes!

By the way, the photo on the cover of the 'Donut Dollies', seems to be a Charlie Troop 1/9th LOH, circa 1968-69, on the south side of the strip at Phouc Vinh. The 'Dolly' on the lower left seems vaguely familiar and may have engaged in 'Dirty Dancing' one evening in the Squadron Officers Club. It probably never happened and was just a wishful fantasy?

*Continued tailwinds,
(Cavalier 13 - C/1/9)*

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Editor's note - we here at the Aviator also received some very nice comments on our last issue from (among others) Tom Sands (great Front Cover!), from James Mabrey (the best Aviator I have ever read) and Robert Anderson (Thanks for a great Mar/Apr VHPA Aviator Magazine). We want to thank all of our contributors who sent in their work for you to enjoy and we would love to do another "Lighter Side" issue next year. And we can, if you guys out there send us some stories to fill it up!

To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator,

Let me preface this by saying that while I am a seasonal employee of Princess Cruise Line and work at the pier in Seattle during the Alaskan cruise season, I'm not "hyping" this cruise to try and drum up income for my employer. I am sending this to you because I think it's a great way to help generate a fund-raising project that will assist Vietnam Veterans while providing an enjoyable cruise opportunity to those who take advantage of it.

Princess Cruise Lines is offering a 4-day Western Caribbean cruise from Houston, Texas departing November 5, 2013 where a portion of your fare ranging from \$100 to \$300 per person, depending on state-room category, will be evenly donated on your behalf to the two Section 501(c)(3) exempt public charities. This donation is fully tax deductible and Princess Cruises will provide you with a written acknowledgment of your donation for your tax records. Then, your donation will be matched by Princess Cruise Lines and will then be given in equal amounts to both the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Inc. and Operation Homefront Inc.

The President of Princess is himself a veteran of the Vietnam conflict and he is hoping to raise \$1 million dollars for those 2 charities. Where else can you take a cruise and get credit for a charitable donation at the same time? I am providing both the regular company website URL and the URL for the Cruising For A Cause cruise below. A more detailed explanation of the cruise can be found on the second website. BTW - Joe Galloway has just been added to the list of dignitaries that will be accompanying the passengers on this cruise.

Normal Princess website: <http://www.princess.com>

Website for the Veterans' cruise itself:

<http://www.princess.com/cruisingforacause/#.UUeWAsotf3>

Tom Putnam

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator,

I thought it very interesting that in the March/April Aviator, on pg. 34 a letter from Steve Maher requested more info on the Army's role in helicopters spraying of agent orange, he mentioned that "some" sources at the DA had said no Army helicopters sprayed agent orange.

Flipping several pages over, to pg. 38, there in all it's glory, in an article by Tony Humphreys, is a picture of what appears to be an Army helicopter spraying, of all things, AGENT ORANGE! Guess this is what's referred to as "poetic justice?" PS: Y'all should send a copy of the Aviator to Steve with this info attached.....

Sincerely,

Tom Wood, CW4, USA, Rct. (M02443)

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Editor's note - I received an e-mail from Steve letting me know that he has received feedback from almost a dozen of our members and is very appreciative of what we have sent him, including a copy of the issue complete with the photo mentioned above. Tony Humphreys, the man that wrote the story about the VA's new policy on Agent Orange, also wrote us to say that he had just received his copy of an informative, no-cost VA publication entitled Agent Orange Review. It is a periodic newsletter published by the VA for the benefit of RVN Vets and it is sent to all Vets who are on the VA's Agent Orange Registry. It is available to all RVN Vets and you can request a free subscription by sending a written request to: Department of Veterans Affairs, AITC-ATTN: Mailing List Update (32B), 1615 Woodward Street, Austin, TX 78772-0001. The newsletter is also available online at www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/agentorange



The Sky Behind Me

The Author, Byron Edgington flew at Camp Eagle with A Co. 101st AHB, under the Comanchero 23 callsign in 1970-'71 - The Sky Behind Me is memoir of his forty-year aviation career. Edgington logged 12,500 hours in 20 different aircraft. This is the story of his life from Vietnam to herding bears in Alaska, spotting tuna off Peru, counting power poles, crossing O'Hare International at rush hour in a JetRanger, flying more than 3,000 medical patients in Iowa, 2,500 aerial tours of Kauai and serving in Guard units in three states - It's all in the book.



Byron in January of 1971, between missions on the runway at Khe Sahn. Most likely taken by his crewchief, Gil Alvarado.

The Sky Behind Me: A Memoir of Flying & Life
(\$17.95 - 301 pages) By Byron Edgington,
ISBN: 978-1622490370 is available at your local book store, Amazon or other on-line book suppliers.

To The Editor of the VHPA Aviator,

I really enjoyed the story that you ran about FireHawk Helicopters that ran in the in the VHPA's in the News section of last year's September/October issue (#30-05). It was great to catch up on the current life of my old friend Chuck Brainerd who always was one to amaze me with his knowledge and ingenuity. I thought our Members would enjoy some photos of how I first served with Chuck while we were both in Vietnam.

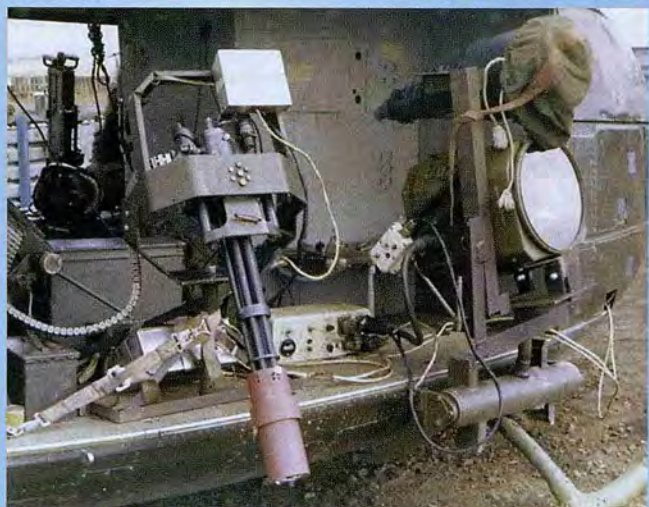
Chuck was the Chief Pilot and A/C for one of the specially equipped Nighthawk H Model's in our unit (the 57th Assault Helicopter Company) based in Pleiku, Vietnam.

The Nighthawks we flew were armed with a door mounted M-134 mini gun, Starlight Scope and Xeon light on the left side. The right side was armed with an M2-.50 cal machine gun and a M-60 machine gun on the right side.

Chuck named his bird "REVENGE" in honor of Jeff A Coffin who was KIA south of Pleiku on 22 Nov 71. On most nights I flew cover for Chuck in a C-model gunship, but I also logged several hours as Revenge 31's Peter-Pilot. More missions than you would expect just called for dropping Chu Hoi leaflets but when we got into a fight, the NVA were definitely not happy to see us show up.

Regards,
James E. Nunn
E-Mail: [REDACTED]

CW2 James Nunn, Pleiku RVN, 1971



UPCOMING REUNIONS

**A Troop, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry,
101st Airborne (Airmobile) Division
May 1-5, 2013, San Diego, California**

POS is Mike Mabe, [REDACTED] E-Mail: [REDACTED]

All veterans who served with the 121st Aviation Co.(AML), 121st Assault Helicopter Co. (AHC), the 93rd Trans Co (Lt.Hel.), the 80th Trans Det. (Avn. Maint.) and all other attached and supporting units.

May 16-19, Fort Worth, Texas,

Hosted by the 121st Avn Association, Inc. Details at: <http://121avn.org/> or by contacting secretary, John Schmied [REDACTED] or David Cunningham [REDACTED]

**B Troop 7/17th AIR CAV & ALL Ruthless Riders
3-7 June 2013, Las Vegas, NV**

POC(s) - Buddy Harp: [REDACTED]

Rich Heffernan: [REDACTED]

Johnnie Griffiths: [REDACTED]

<http://www.b717.homestead.com>

Anyone who served with the 282nd AHC "Black Cats & Alley Cats" in any capacity, including civilian technicians.

**June 13-15 2013 at the Crowne Plaza,
Lenexa (Kansas City), Kansas**

POC is Fred Churchill [REDACTED] Jose Cano [REDACTED] e-mail: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] or Ray Jennings [REDACTED] e-mail: [REDACTED]

The 335th AHC "Cowboys"

June 17-22, 2013 in Las Vegas, NV

POC is Dominic Fino, Email: [REDACTED]

**10th Anniversary of the 134th Assault Helicopter Company
June 19-23, 2013 in Corpus Christi, Texas.**

Reunion is open to anyone that was in the 134th AHC or attached Companies regardless of rank, their family and their friends are also welcome.

POC - Jim & Judy Downen [REDACTED] or Kirk Muth [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] or see our website: <http://www.134thahc.com>.

**Reunion of anyone who served the 161st Aviation Company,
the 406th TC and its support units.**

Washington, DC area, Saturday, June 22, 2013

Held in conjunction with the Vietnam Helicopter Crew Member Association (VHCMA Reunion (June 19-22). The VHCMA is open to men who served as part of the helicopter crew in Vietnam, both enlisted or officers. In short, everyone will be welcomed in that we all served with honor in the helicopter war.

POC is John Hastings, John.Hastings [REDACTED]

or phone [REDACTED]

Full details also available at our unit website: www.161ahc.org

Reunion of WOC Class 66-23/67-1 - Class Blast 2013

September 5-8, 2013, Embassy Suites @KCI, Kansas City, Missouri

POC is Tom Percy, E-mail: tsp@cox.net or phone 479-855-4666

**The First Annual Last Reunion of the 170th AHC,
Vietnam 1965-71, "The Bikinis"**

All 52nd Aviation Battalion veterans are invited.

September 26-29, 2013 in St Louis, MO

POC- Henry Winther [REDACTED] or 170th.org

**All who served with the 187th Assault Helicopter Company
Blackhawks - Crusaders - Rat Pack**

November 7 - 11, Orleans Hotel & Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada

POC: John T. Wilson; Email: [REDACTED] or see <http://www.187thahc.net>

**Want to see your Reunion publicized here?
Send details to: Aviator@VHPA.org**

Vietnam Combat Helicopter T-Shirts

SALE ON!! - buy any two 58's, AH-1-G or the new Huey T-Shirts (or mix and match them) and get the third shirt **FREE!**

(Or) Buy any one shirt and get the second shirt for **HALF OFF!**

Price includes Sales Tax



\$24



\$24



\$24



\$24



\$28

UH-1 Polo Shirts now available! Only \$4.00 more!

For Selection, Payment & Shipping... GO TO ~

<http://northwestvets.com/spurs/miller-2.htm>

QUESTIONS?

or 619-997-1421

A Mighty Pat On The Back

By Charles W. Abbey

Army Aviation Warrant Officers - indeed all Warrant Officers in my experience - are members of a unique brotherhood of Army professional men and women. Aviation Warrants, the Army's specialized corps of full-time aircraft handlers, from time-to-time allow some few of us Commissioned aviators to assist them with certain of the more simple flying skills.

I have long noted that compliments of any degree, extended by aviation Chief Warrant Officers to Commissioned aviators, are few; possibly because we seldom measure-up to their high standards of military flying skill - at least in their studied opinion.

Once however, I recall receiving a strong compliment if oblique - from a well seasoned and respected Chief Warrant Officer (who incidentally happened to be a relative of one of aviators' greatest pioneers)... This compliment, recalled from time-to-time has pleased me and has evoked pleasant smiles of recollection.

In this instance, the setting was a rotary wing instrument flight simulator at Fort Rucker, Alabama. It should be noted that helicopter simulators of the day, unlike the old blue "Link" box of a thing, were large, technologically advanced, fully articulated machines with exactly duplicate cockpit controls and instrument panels of the UH-1 helicopter and came complete with the helicopter's noise and "feel". Computer console operators monitored the operation of several simulators and were able to furnish experience on many diverse airways or aerodrome sites during a

single training session. When compared to actual flying, these machines were a cost effective bargain.

Now for the compliment: He, the Chief Warrant Officer Four was the Instrument Flight Examiner conducting an extensive annual instrument flight certification renewal...I, the Lieutenant Colonel, was the examinee, "under the hood" and I was sweating bullets.

Required examinations of this sort were often somewhat difficult to schedule since they required a block or two of scarce simulator time and due to busy schedules, frequently were conducted well after duty hours. If you were not careful, things could get a little testy in the cockpit.

We had flown (what seemed like a five hour) an instrument round-robin flight and my IFE friend was having great fun pulling circuit breakers to disable certain flight instruments, revising my flight clearances and injecting nasty weather with which I was expected to deal, calmly and efficiently. . .more bullets.

Finally, it was over and perhaps by some fluke I had passed the flight check. Before beginning his incisive and thorough debrief, as the Examiner gathered his notes and materials, he voiced the aforementioned and long-remembered gracious compliment of my flying performance.



"Gee Sir, did you use to be a Warrant Officer?"



Charles W. Abby
USA, LTC (Ret.)
Clemmons, NC






The Cub Inn is a 5,000-square-foot log cabin that offers unique charm that blends our love of aviation with the great outdoors. Located in California's Sierra Nevada mountains just 25 miles from Yosemite National Park, our five guest rooms sleep either two or four people, and they all feature a private bath.

Our guests start each day with a hearty country breakfast and are also invited to join us in the living room each evening to enjoy a glass of wine and a light snack. The Cub Inn is the life-long dream of husband and wife team, Piper Cub owner and pilot Charleen Beam and VHPA Life Member Joe Riley.

Full details and booking information are available on our website:
TheCubInn.com
 Or call us at: 209-962-0403
 (land line) to book.

Only 3 hours from the 2013 Reunion Reserve Now!

The Cub Inn

All four of Bill's Books,
**The Afgan Deception, Tank Witch,
 Causal Connection and Toltancina**
 are available at:
www.MyNovelTales.com



TOLTANICA

Archeology assistant professor Austin Tripp, an expert in Mesoamerican civilizations, accepts an assignment to a recently discovered, ancient Toltec city. The lack of any artifacts shrouds the city in a mystery as to why the entire population vanished, and took everything with them.

CAUSAL CONNECTION

Detective Milo Necalli, an energetic veteran investigator with the Phoenix Police Department's Night Detective Unit, is secretly delighted when he is assigned to investigate the death of a man who was found asphyxiated and shrink-wrapped - inside an empty waterbed mattress.



VHPA Member Bill Hatounian is a 24-year military veteran and a retired Army Aviator. He served with the 1st Squadron, 4th United States Cavalry in Vietnam and after active duty, he flew with the 997th AHC of the Arizona Army National Guard. He has recently retired from being both a pilot and a Lieutenant with the Phoenix Police Department and is enjoying retired life by writing books, being active and traveling with his wife.



\$20



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Dennis Crouch

Virginia Beach, VA. 23464

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\$15



Come see our booth at the VHPA 2013 Reunion

2013 REUNION STATUS REPORT

from the Reunion Committee and Mike Law, Reunion Chairman

Speaking for the VHPA Executive Council, the Headquarters Staff, and the entire Reunion Committee – I want to share several ideas with you. I'm writing this on Easter Sunday, 31 March so please factor this date into the following ideas:

First, we mentioned in the last issue, we made a significant reduction in the number of Reunion pages starting with the Mar/Apr issue of The Aviator. Instead of taking 6 to 8 pages, we are down to 3 or 4. Now, for those who don't have access to a copy of the Jan/Feb issue or need a full copy of all printed Reunion material, please contact HQ who will gladly provide you with a copy of our special 8-page Reunion Guide. Naturally www.vhpa.org contains all the details and up to date information.

Second, a word of warning ~ the VHPA's Hilton San Francisco room block is 73% sold out! Now to the hotel's credit, they have expanded our contract room block significantly. For example, for the night of 1 July the VHPA contract had 40 rooms. As of Easter Sunday, we've sold 126 and the hotel has set the block at 151! I want to point out to everyone that the Hilton is doing this because they will make money; HOWEVER they did not have to do so under the contract. Yes, this is a huge hotel! Yes, they must honor the VHPA rate from June 28 through 10 July, but they only have to do that through Tuesday, June 11th. How much longer will they generously increase the block? Will they still honor the VHPA room rate after June 11th? Don't know. Message - book ASAP or be prepared for some expense alternatives!! People have had good luck using the hotel's reservation line 415-771-1400.

Third, THANK YOU for heeding our repeated pleas to register early. Depending on which 'forecasting technique' you favor, our currently registered 900 adults projects to a final attendance of more than 1,800. This compares favorably with the New Orleans Reunion and better than both the San Diego and San Antonio Reunions. So, sports fans, we have a good one on tap!

Fourth, let's put the 'zoom lens' on the KIA/MIA Gold Star Family Breakfast. Attendance at this event has steadily increased in the last few years. As of 1 April, 2012 had 38 registered to attend. 2013 has nearly double at 68. What's going on? Ernie and Ann Arzabal attend most every VHPA Reunion. Ernie met Eddie Molino in flight class 69-36. These two American Indians became friends. Ernie was the Best Man at Eddie's wedding. Eddie served in C/7/1st Air Cav and died 10 May 1970 when their C&C Huey crashed after throwing a main blade. Ernie escorted Eddie's body home and has stayed in touch with the Molino family who live in Nevada for years. This year

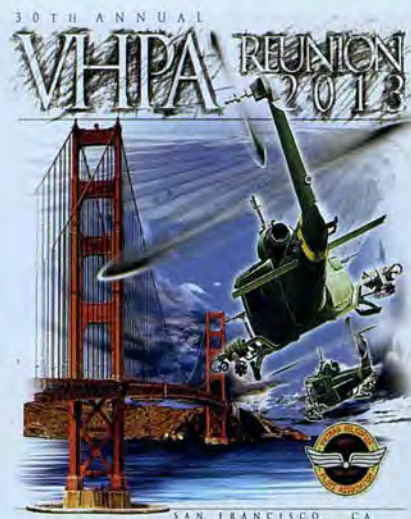
Eddie's sister, Connie Hopper, and brother, George Molino, are coming with several other family members to attend the Gold Star Family Breakfast because the Reunion is relatively near-by. Many of us 'talk about' inviting KIA Family members to a VHPA Reunion. Ernie is my hero! He did it!!! This is exactly what a Reunion is all about!

Fifth, I can't describe how excited I am about having so many Black helicopter pilots join us for this Reunion. While the center piece is Herb Metoyer's HPF presentation titled "the Collective History of Black Helicopter Pilots" scheduled for Saturday, July 6th 2 to 4 pm. I am excited to announce that Herb's friends, Vic Thornton (current president of the United States Army Black Aviation Association - USABAA) plus J Nance and Clovis Jones will be joining Herb. Additionally the Black helicopter pilots will have their own TOC for the entire Reunion. As good fortune would have it, the VHPA has access to a DOD database that contains ethnic codes so we "crossed" it with the VHPA database that is color blind to get a roster of 559 Black helicopter pilots. Sadly many have passed on, were KIAs, or don't have a good mailing address in our database. But we mailed a special invitation to 420. The response is impressive!!

Sixth, using similar techniques to those outlined above, we mailed out a special invitation to more than 600 guys who served with the 1/9th Cav ~ pilots, crew chiefs, gunners, Blues, clerks, bakers and mechanics to join us at this Reunion. This invitation does NOT REPLACE the normal Bullwhip Squadron Association Reunions ~ just an opportunity for anyone interested in meeting up during the VHPA Reunion to do so.

Seventh, I'm a little disappointed at the rate of Mini-Reunion sign-ups. Please go to the Reunion Information page on www.vhpa.org and click the 'Here is what is already scheduled' link on the Mini-Reunion line (two below the Reunion logo). If you see your unit's mini on the schedule, GREAT; but if not, complete the form to request one.

Questions? Comments? As always get in touch with HQ at 800-505-8472 or Mike Law at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]



Executive Council Election At The ABM

June 15, 2013 is Fast Approaching Get Involved:

The election will take place at the Annual Business Meeting during the 2013 reunion in San Francisco, CA. to fill the positions of Vice President (VP) and Junior Member at Large, and each brings a three-year commitment to ensure leadership continuity. The elected VP candidate will serve the first year as Vice President, the following year as President, and the final year as Immediate Past President; the elected Member at Large will serve one year as Junior, one year as Midterm, and one year as Senior Member at Large. Rules for conducting the election shall be provided in the application packet.

The requirement for candidates is straightforward: the individual must be an active member for one year prior to the first day of the 2013 annual VHPA National Reunion. The nomination process is easy, as well. You may personally volunteer or you may nominate another active VHPA member who is willing to serve. The nomination, however, must be received in writing (e-mail or letter) by John Shafer, the VHPA EC Junior-Member at Large and Election Coordinator not later than midnight, June 15, 2013.

John Shafer will provide you with an application packet and form to complete and return. The nominee form details basic biographical information which will be posted to the VHPA website by June 20, 2013. This notice itself fulfills VHPA policy to notify members and to seek nominees for the Vice President and Junior Member at Large positions.

John Shafer's contact information is:

Email [REDACTED]

Seattle, WA 98102-6538

Day time phone [REDACTED]

Cell [REDACTED]

Official Schedule of Events - The 30th Annual Reunion of the VHPA San Francisco, California, 2 through 6 July, 2013

Updated as of 15 February, 2013

See our Website at: www.VHPA.org for the latest details and to register for the Reunion

Tuesday – July 2nd, 2013

11:00 am – 11:00 pm	O'Club open
9:30 am – 3:00 pm	Tour of the USS Hornet Aircraft Carrier
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Vendor Room open
1:00 pm – 8:00 pm	Welcome desk and Registration desk open
1:00 pm – 8:00 pm	T-Shirt pick-up available
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Tour Desk open
5:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Group dinner at the Fisherman's Grotto Restaurant
5:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Group dinner at Franciscan Crab Restaurant
5:30 pm – 8:00 pm	Group dinner at Fog Harbor Fish House
7:00 pm – 10:00 pm	Early Bird Reception

Wednesday – July 3rd, 2013

7:30 am – 9:00 am	Tour Desk open
8:00 am – 5:00 pm	Welcome Desk and Registration open
8:00 am – 8:00 pm	Pre-Registration open
8:00 am – 5:00 pm	T-Shirt pick-up available
9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Vendor Room open
9:30 am – 3:00 pm	Tour of the USS Hornet Aircraft Carrier
1:00 pm – 11:00 pm	Mini-Reunions/TOC's
8:30 am – 4:30 pm	Day in Napa: Beringer & Castle Di Amorosa Vineyards
9:00 am – 1:00 pm	City Tour #1
9:45 am – 3:00 pm	Alcatraz Tour #1
11:00 am – 11:00 pm	O'Club open
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Bridge to Bridge Cruise
2:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Poker Tournament #1
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Banquet seating desk open
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Tour Desk open
5:00 pm – 7:30 pm	Group dinner at The Stinking Rose Restaurant
5:00 pm – 7:30 pm	Group dinner at the R & G Lounge (Chinese)
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	1st Time Attendee Reception
7:30 pm – 10:00 pm	Welcome reception
8:30 pm – 10:00 pm	Bob Hope USO Show

Thursday – July 4th, 2013

7:00 am – 2:00 pm	Golf Outing
7:30 am – 9:00 am	Tour Desk open
8:00 am – 11:00 pm	Mini-Reunions/TOC's
8:30 am – 4:30 pm	Pre-Registration open
8:30 am – 4:30 pm	T-Shirt pick up
8:30 am – 4:30 pm	Registration Desk open
9:00 am – 3:30 pm	Muir Woods & Sausalito Tour
9:00 am – 10:00 am	HPF #1 - Vietnam's Impact on Helicopter Development
9:00 am – 1:00 pm	City Tour #2
9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Vendor Room open
9:30 am – 12:30 pm	Cable Car & Walk-the-Bridge tour #1
10:45 am – 12:00 pm	Writers panel discussion
11:00 am – 11:00 pm	O'Club open
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Cable Car Tour #1
1:00 pm – 4:30 pm	Tour Desk open
2:30 pm – 4:00 pm	HPF #2 - AH-64 Apache Development
3:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Banquet seating desk open
5:30 pm – 10:00 pm	Dinner & Fireworks Cruise

Reunion Continuing Events:

Unit Mini-Reunions and Unit TOC's are scheduled daily at various times every day of the Reunion – see HQ for a separate schedule for your individual unit's date, time and room assignment.

The Vendor Room – first opens on July 2nd at 1:00pm and remains open daily from 9:00am – 5:00pm through the last day of the Reunion, July the 6th

The O Club – Open from 11:00am till 11:00 pm on 2 through 5 July, on 6 July open only from 12:00 noon till 5:00 PM.

Friday – July 5th, 2013

7:30 am – 9:00 am	KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast
7:30 am – 9:30 am	Tour Desk open
8:30 am – 2:30 pm	Day in Napa, Beringer Vineyards
8:30 am – 4:30 pm	Registration/Pre-registration/T-Shirt pick-up
9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Vendor Room open
9:00 am – 11:00 pm	Mini-Reunions/TOC's
10:00 am – 12:00 pm	Quilters' Show & Tell w/Outing
10:00 am – 4:00 pm	Hillier Museum & Helicopter Display
10:00 am – 5:00 pm	Hillier Museum & Helicopter Display & Tank Museum
11:00 am – 11:00 pm	O'Club open
12:00 pm – 2:30 pm	Information Presentations
12:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Alcatraz Tour #2
1:00 pm – 4:30 pm	California Academy of Science
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm	Cable Car Tour #2
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Banquet seating desk open
2:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Poker Tournament #2

Saturday – July 6th, 2013

8:00 am – 9:30 am	Memorial Service
8:00 am – 5:00 pm	Mini-Reunions/TOC's
9:00 am – 5:00 pm	Vendor Room open
9:30 am – 3:00 pm	Registration desk open
10:00 am – 12:30 pm	Annual Business Meeting
10:30 am – 1:30 pm	Spousal Mystery Theater & Lunch
12:00 pm – 5:00 pm	O'Club open
12:30 pm – 1:00 pm	President's Recognition
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm	VHPA Chapter President's Meeting
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Mini-Reunions/TOC's
1:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Cable Car and Walk the Bridge tour #2
2:00 pm – 4:00 pm	HPF #3 - Collective History of Black Helicopter Pilots
4:00 pm – 6:00 pm	Banquet seating desk open
5:45 pm – 11:00 pm	Closing Banquet & Dance

WOC CHORUS SINGERS!

Your leader Mike Rouilier has a new e-mail address.

Contact him at: [REDACTED]

Mike is still looking for a few more "Good Men" to join them!

ABOVE IT ALL!
Your Ticket To Aerial Adventures

Book now for the 2013 Reunion!!

Come Visit The Famous Golden Gate Bridge

Come Visit The Famous Alcatraz Island

San Francisco HELICOPTERS

1-800-400-2404
www.sfhelicopters.com

Want to set up Vendor Table at the Reunion?

Know any Vendors you would like us to invite to our Reunion?



Please contact our Vendor Room Chairman:
Woody McFarlin

Phone: [REDACTED] E-Mail: [REDACTED] Home or [REDACTED] Cell [REDACTED]

Want to help out HQ at this year's Reunion?

We need volunteers to help with numerous duties at this year's Reunion - registration packets, name tags, tickets, manning the Information, Banquet and T-Shirt booths. The list goes on and on.

Full details are available by calling HQ (1-800-505-VHPA) and asking to speak to Rebecca

*Honor the lives of the fallen
by gathering with the loved
ones they left behind*

GOLD STAR FAMILY BREAKFAST

For Veterans and KIA/MIA Families

They will never be forgotten.

This is an opportunity for family and friends of the fallen to be among veterans, to learn of the camaraderie that their loved one experienced.

We all loved - and lost - the same people.

Let's remember them together.



The Gold Star Family Breakfast will be held during the 2013 Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association Reunion

Where: Hilton San Francisco Union Square - Imperial Room A on 2nd level
333 O'Farrell Street, San Francisco - 415-771-1400

When: 7:30-9:00 am Friday, July 5, 2013

Questions about the breakfast: Julie Kink, Family Contacts Committee Member

Pre-Reunion: [REDACTED] or During Reunion: call her room @ Hilton

Reunion information: <http://www.vhpa.org/news.htm> or 800-505-VHPA (8472)

COMBAT HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION



Come see our
booth at the
VHPA 2013
Reunion

DUTY • HONOR • COURAGE • NEVER EVER FORGET

CHPA is an all-service, non-profit, military association of active duty, NG, Reserve, and former U.S. combat rotary wing pilots from all wars.

Our purpose is Unity, Legacy, and Remembrance of fallen comrades.

For Information on Preserving Our Legacy, visit the website or request a brochure from our HQ in Divide Colorado

www.CHPA-US.org

Combat Helicopter Pilots Association
PO Box 42
Divide CO 80814-0042

COMBAT HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION

DUTY • HONOR • COURAGE • NEVER EVER FORGET

VHPA 30th Annual Reunion • San Francisco, CA • 2-6 July 2013

NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

Toll Free (800) 505-VHPA (8472)

Email HQ@vhp.org

Fax (817) 200-7309

Information and register online at www.vhp.org or mail completed form to:

VHPA Headquarters, 2100 N Highway 360, Suite 907, Grand Prairie, TX 75050

Member name:	Member No.:	Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Address:		Address change? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
City:	State:	Zip:
Email address:	Telephone: ()	
Wife/guest name:	Hometown:	21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes/Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Guest name:	Hometown:	21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes/Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Guest name:	Hometown:	21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes/Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes
Guest name:	Hometown:	21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes/Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes

EVENT	#Attending	Price	Total
Registration through 4/30/2013*		@\$25	
Registration 5/1/2013 and after*		@\$35	
Registration for under age 21		@\$15	
Tour of the USS Hornet #1 (includes box lunch) (July 2)		@\$65	
Grossmont at Fishers SOLD OUT (July 2)	SOLD OUT	@\$65	SOLD OUT
Grossmont at Fog Harbor SOLD OUT (July 2)	SOLD OUT	@\$65	SOLD OUT
Early Bird Reception (July 2)		No Charge	
Tour of the USS Hornet #2 (includes box lunch) (July 2)		@\$65	
City Tour #1 (July 3)		@\$31	
Alcazar SOLD OUT (July 3)	SOLD OUT	@\$75	SOLD OUT
Bridge to Bridge Cruise (July 3)		@\$45	
Poker Tournament #1 (July 3)		@\$25	
Grossmont at R&G SOLD OUT (July 3)	SOLD OUT	@\$65	SOLD OUT
Grossmont at Stinking SOLD OUT (July 3)	SOLD OUT	@\$55	SOLD OUT
1st Time Attendee Reception (July 3)		No Charge	
Welcome Reception (July 3)		No Charge	
Bob Hope USO Show (July 3)		@\$30	
Golf Outing with Lunch ** (July 4)		@\$136	
Muir Woods & Sausalito Tour (July 4)		@\$56	
City Tour #2 (July 4)		@\$31	
Cable Car & Walk-the-Bridge #1 (July 4)		@\$40	
Writers Panel Presentation (July 4)		No Charge	
Cable Car Tour #1 (July 4)		@\$34	
Dinner Cruise (fireworks viewing) ** (July 4)		@\$159	
KIAMIA Gold Star Breakfast (July 5)		@\$20	
Gold Star Breakfast Sponsorship (July 5)		@\$20	
Winery Tour & Lunch #2 (July 5)		@\$92	
Hiller Museum & Helicopter Display (July 5)		@\$55	
Hiller Museum & Helicopter Display & Tank Museum (July 5)		@\$80	
Alcazar SOLD OUT (July 5)	SOLD OUT	@\$75	SOLD OUT
California Academy of Science Tour (July 5)		@\$41	
Cable Car Tour #2 (July 5)		@\$34	
Quilt Show & Tell w/outing (July 5)		No Charge	
Poker Tournament #2 (July 5)		@\$25	
Memorial Service (July 6)		No Charge	
Spousal Murder Mystery & Lunch (July 6)		@\$55	
Annual Business Meeting (July 6)		No Charge	
Cable Car & Walk-the-Bridge #2 (July 6)		@\$40	
Closing Banquet - Adult (July 6)		@\$76	
Closing Banquet - Child (July 6)		@\$18	
Non-Registered Guest at Banquet (July 6)		@\$90	
Total From Sidebars	XXXXX	XXXXX	
VHPA Dues (if not dues current) 1 year		@\$36	
VHPA Dues (if not dues current) 3 years		@\$99	
Life membership (Call HQ for exact amount)		@\$10	
2013 CD or Paper Directory Fee		@\$10	
Mult. Year CD or Paper Directory Fee (# of Years x \$10)			

** Denotes a Non-Refundable Event

GRAND TOTAL \$

HPF Event Fee \$25.00

One \$25.00 PER-FAMILY fee buys access to every one of the three HPF events for 2013. You will also receive a CD of all of last year's HPF and WSC events. For 2013, this ticket may also be purchased at the door of each event. Remember, every person in your family gets in under this one ticket.

Total \$

T-Shirts

Total \$

S@\$18 M@\$18 L@\$18
XL@\$18 XXL@\$19 XXXL@\$20

Banquet Meal

Beef Fish Vegetable

Voluntary Contributions:

VHPA Membership Fund \$
VHPA Scholarship Fund \$
VHPA General Fund \$
Vietnam War Museum \$
VHPA Reunion Sponsorship \$

REFUND POLICY

IMPORTANT: Please review the details of the Refund Policy, including the limited opportunity to purchase a Refund Guaranty available only on a one-time basis at the time of registration, which is posted online at the official VHPA website:

www.vhp.org

Refund Gurantee Fee

(10% of Total Events) \$

OFFICIAL REGISTRATION
CANCELLATION DATE IS Noon,
CST, Wednesday, 19 June 2013

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT

MC/Visa #:

Exp. Date:

Signature:

CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYMENT

In lieu of a credit card, you can mail a check or money order payable to "VHPA" with form.

* Each person 21 and older must pay the full registration fee, except for banquet-only guests.



Wyakin Warrior Foundation to join us in SFO

At this year's Annual Reunion in San Francisco, on Friday, July 5th, at 1PM you will have the opportunity to learn about a truly unique organization for helping severely wounded and injured veterans.

The Wyakin Warrior Foundation is a non profit (501c3), nationwide organization based in Boise, Idaho that was founded solely for the purpose of assisting severely wounded, disabled and injured veterans of the post 9/11 era transition from the trauma of life-altering wounds or injuries to successful and rewarding careers in civilian life. The Foundation is unique due to the comprehensive educational, professional development; multi-level mentoring and networking the Warrior is offered.

WHAT IS A WYAKIN: According to Native American legend, a wyakin is a spiritual guide that advises and protects a person throughout his or her life. The foundation's motto is: They served. They sacrificed. Now it is our turn to help our country's wounded soliders.

The Wyakin Warriors come to us from all branches of the military and from all parts of the country. We give the veteran a full ride, fifty-one month scholarship to a post secondary institution (including all tuition, fees and housing expenses not paid for by the GI Bill). The cost per Warrior for the 51 month program is approximately \$50,000 and a new student is not brought into the program until the entire amount has been identified. There is no academic grade requirement to be accepted into the program and the warrior may choose either a four year degree program or a shorter professional or technical program. Currently we are sending our warriors to Boise State University or the College of Western Idaho. Now into our third year, we have a 100% retention rate.

On Friday, July 5, at 1PM, The Wyakin Warrior Foundation will be giving an open and informational presentation to the attendees of the VHPA Reunion about the organization, and what we do. The presentation will be extremely educational and informative, and I urge you and your families to attend. We will also have an information booth open in the vendor area for the reunion.

You may know a veteran who has returned from the War on Terror, who is looking for a way to transition back to civilian life. After learning about us, you may wish to tell him or her about our foundation. To date, over 50,000 American service men and women have been wounded in Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Around 17,000 of them were wounded severely enough to prevent their return to duty. As the conflicts continue, more veterans will need help. And that's what we are trying to do.

I am a two tour veteran of the Vietnam War, and a life member of VHPA. I was introduced to the Wyakin Warrior Foundation a little over a year ago after I met US Navy Captain Jeff Bacon, (the founder of

Introducing Our New Class

Alexander Crown –



from League City, TX. Infantry soldier, U.S. Army. Injured by a land mine while on a dismounted patrol in Afghanistan. Studying Zoology at Boise State University.

Christian Emry –



from Kuna, ID. Navy Air traffic controller and former Marine. Severe blood disorder. Interested in working with prosthetics and currently studying Kinesiology at BSU.

James Donaldson –



from Washington State. Supply specialist, U.S. Army. Injured by an explosively formed projectile during a convoy in Iraq. Studying Computer Science at BSU and wants to pursue a career in Digital Forensics and Cyber-Security.

George Nickel –



from Youngstown, OH. Staff Sergeant, U.S. Army. Injured by an improvised explosive device in Baghdad, Iraq. He is studying Social Work at BSU and will continue on to seek a Masters in

Social Work. Ultimately, George wants to give back to the Veteran community and be a counselor for service members and their families.

Kyley Trausch –



from Edgerton, OH. U.S. Air Force. Severe heart condition exacerbated by military training and treatment, requiring a pacemaker. She is studying Social Work at BSU and will continue on to earn her Masters in Social Work. Kyley is the first female Warrior inducted and is setting a high standard for those that follow.

Rodney White –



from Billings, MT. Corpsman in U.S. Navy. Suffered injuries in lower back from mortar shrapnel while on patrol in Afghanistan. He is currently preparing for Nursing School at BSU and is pursuing a career as an active duty Navy Nurse.

*Just over one year
ago the
Wyakin Warrior
Foundation
was nothing more
than an idea.*

the organization). Once he explained the program to me, I had to get involved. Our staff is made almost entirely of volunteers who give their time and energy to the organization and the vast majority of staff members are retired or prior military officers, many of whom have been awarded the Purple Heart.

The USO has named the Wyakin Warrior Foundation "Best in Class", and the two organizations recently entered into a formal partnership.

More information is available through our Website:
<http://www.wyakin.org/> or from me directly.

Thanks for your time and hope to see you in San Francisco!

Cliff Gaston

E-mail: [REDACTED]



Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office

DPMO recently posted the accounting for Major Larry J. Hanley, USAFR, listed as MIA in Laos on November 4, 1969, while flying an F105D Thunderchief. His remains were recovered February 24, 2012, and identified on March 8, 2013.

The number of Americans announced as returned and identified since the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 is now 932; another 63 US personnel, recovered post-incident and identified before the end of the war, bring the total to 995. Of the 1,651 total unreturned American veterans from the Vietnam War, our POW/MIAs, 90% were lost in Vietnam or in areas of Laos and Cambodia under Vietnam's wartime control. Detailed numbers are Vietnam – 1,278 (VN-469, VS-809); Laos – 313; Cambodia – 55; Peoples Republic of China territorial waters – 7. Over 450 of these were over-water losses, these losses are among the 630 DPMO lists as No Further Pursuit (NFP).

JOINT FIELD OPERATIONS: In early March, a Joint Field Activity (JFA) began in Laos, but consisted of only three Recovery Teams (RTs) with no Investigation Team (IT) deployed, and is expected to conclude on April 10th. Recently, and at long last, the Lao Government decided to renew a business license for Helicopters New Zealand, the foreign company previously contracted by JPAC to provide smaller, certified-safe helicopter support for access to remote sites. The next JFA in Laos will be May 2 – June 15th, consisting of four RTs, and again there will be no ITs deployed from JPAC Headquarters in Hawaii. In Vietnam, a Joint Advance Work (JAW) Team began preparation for arrival of a full JPAC contingent on March 12th. A JFA is now ongoing in Vietnam with three RTs and two Vietnamese Recovery Teams (VRTs) working at five different locations in southern provinces. This operation is expected to conclude on April 14.

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Above:
Enjoying the magnificent views during the new Ha Long Bay post tour. Right: Some of last year's VHPA group in the Delta are powered by one horse power!



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Memorial Service for "Blue Max" Aviator WO1 Francis McDowall

Conducted at Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport
By members Max Torrence (Superhook 16) and Rick Lester (Joker 94)



On November 8th 2012, at the world's busiest airport, travelers passing through the Main Atrium paused to witness a dedication ceremony being conducted to honor the memory of a local Soldier killed in action during the Vietnam conflict.

WO1 Francis McDowall, Jr. from Lawrenceville, Georgia served as a "Blue Max" Cobra helicopter pilot with C Battery, 2nd of the 20th Aerial Rocket Artillery based in Quan Loi, South Vietnam. On August 12, 1969, he was killed in action while fighting to repel a North Vietnamese Army attack on Landing Zone Andy. His skillful and aggressive actions while employing his aircraft to defeat the enemy forces attempting to overrun the landing zone denied their advance and saved the lives of his fellow soldiers.

WO1 McDowall was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross and Purple Heart for his selfless actions.

The dedication ceremony on November 8, 2012, was hosted by the Atlanta Vietnam Veterans Business Association (AVVBA.org), an association composed of approximately 350 successful business men and women from the Atlanta area and who take the words, "Never Forget" as their creed. The AVVBA originally dedicated a memorial to WO1 McDowall back in 1991 at the airport, but when new construction closed that concourse, the management of the Airport invited them to

re-dedicate a new memorial in Mr. McDowall's honor.

This time the Members of the association were able to procure an actual Cobra helicopter rotor blade that had been used in service in Vietnam to appropriately serve as the centerpiece for the memorial. The memorial itself was also relocated to the Main Atrium to allow easier access for WO1 McDowall's family and friends and to make it more visible to the traveling public. The blade was positioned on the Atrium wall directly below the Atlanta Airport's USO.

The ceremony was attended by WO1 McDowall's four sisters and extended family, seven members of the Blue Max unit with whom he served in Vietnam and numerous other members of the AVVBA. The keynote speaker for the event was an association member who serves as the Civilian Aide to the Secretary of the Army for Georgia.

The Atlanta Vietnam Veterans Business Association takes pride in its mission to honor those from the Atlanta area who were lost in Vietnam. When you travel through the Atlanta Airport please take time to salute one of our own who, with his life, proved his dedication to his country and to his fellow soldiers.

Looking For some help....

My son just bought this "Cherry looking" OH-23/UH-12B Raven helicopter. Both he and I are looking for some help with the "tips" on flying and maintaining her that you just can't find in any of the printed and formal flight manuals. Heck, the Dash-10 that was passed to us is dated April 1958!

I know nothing about paddle-boards, wooden blades, etc., but I'm sure a lot of you out there do, and if so, please contact me and we'll both get started "picking your brain"!

Jeff Houser, Apache 12

E-Mail: [REDACTED]



“A Pilot’s Daughter”

By: Jamie Paye Collins

When I was eleven years old, I used to walk down the streets of Stuttgart, Germany on an American army base, holding my father’s hand. Nearly all of my childhood memories invoke a clear mental image in my mind of my father wearing that olive green flight suit bearing his name, embossed and stitched in black letters on that nametag proudly affixed to the front of it, along with all of those other patches lining the arms, my favorite of which were the small, black and silver bars that lined the top of his sleeve. I candidly admit that at the time, I didn’t understand what it meant to have a pilot as a father. I didn’t really understand what it would mean in life to be a pilot’s daughter.

I didn’t fully understand the significance of his chosen profession or its role in helping to assure freedom for the rest of us. I didn’t realize that wearing that uniform meant that he could, at any time, be called into war if there ever was one, because there hadn’t been one for so long, the thought never crept into my mind. All I knew is my dad flew helicopters, and I was his daughter.

I wasn’t really aware of the tremendous respect that existed between my father and any military member he saluted when they passed us by on that sidewalk, and he quickly dropped my hand to offer a proper salute.

I didn’t realize what it truly meant on the rare occasions when I overheard my father mention that he had done two separate tours in a war torn place called Vietnam. As a Cobra pilot, he strapped himself into two-man gunships and flew them into the horizon, often into hot zones, to rain fire down upon the fields where it was needed, providing relief and much needed cover and support for those walking hell on earth among the rice paddy fields and green backdrop of a place called ‘nam.

As my father walked along side me throughout my childhood, I didn’t realize that he had an emotional scar etched deeply upon his heart from losing his best friend, Harold McCaslin, Jr., on what turned out to be that courageous, young pilot’s last birthday – his 24th. As fate would have it, the dinner and drinks the two shared at the Officers’ Club the evening prior to Mac’s gunship being shot out of the sky would serve as a beautiful, but painful memory of a final farewell; one last celebration of camaraderie and friendship that daddy and Mac would ultimately share. I never saw that scar hiding beneath daddy’s smile. I didn’t realize. It never showed.

Walking down that sidewalk at the age of eleven, I had no clue that my father had previously been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism in battle. To me he was just “daddy.” It wasn’t until my mid-twenties that I had the opportunity to read the following words in an e-mail from my aunt:

For heroism while participating in aerial flight evidenced by voluntary actions above and beyond the call of duty: Warrant Officer Paye distinguished himself by exceptionally valorous actions in aerial flight, while acting as an aircraft commander of a Cobra gunship scrambled to aid two besieged outposts and an ambushed supply convoy, in the Republic of Vietnam. Warrant Officer Paye arrived on station and found he could only obtain 500 feet of altitude because of low cloud cover. Despite this handicap he decided to engage the enemy positions. As he began his attack he immediately came under intense automatic weapons fire from numerous locations. Warrant Officer Paye continued his attack until all of the enemy positions had been silenced. His heroic actions were in keeping with the highest military traditions and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

I didn’t know how lucky I was to have a father who returned from war, to meet his future wife and start a family, so I could one day hold his hand and walk down that sidewalk all those years later. My father had returned, but so many others hadn’t. I didn’t realize what so many others had lost – a chance at life, a family, happiness, opportunity, and a chance to walk around smiling, with a small scar etched upon their hearts, living life.

I didn’t realize when I used to play with all of the zippers which intricately lined my father’s green flight suit, that one day my own little boy would be the one tugging at those same zippers that lined his arms. For starters, I never realized I would have a son, much less a father who would still proudly be pulling himself into that same beautiful, olive green flight suit at the ripe age of sixty-something (all these years later) to help bring light and life to others by becom-

ing involved with a very special veteran’s group called American Huey 369.

I never realized I would have the opportunity to watch him fly a Huey helicopter for the first time in more than twenty years. Neither did he. Smiling proudly as he landed at the “moving wall” in our own hometown of Indianapolis as a grown man, still wearing that same olive green flight suit. I didn’t realize that tears would flood my eyes and stream down my face, tears of pride, reliving a small piece of my childhood, as I watched him and the crew step off of that chopper, striding toward us, holding their helmets beside them and beaming with pride, as my husband, son, and I looked on. It seems I had forgotten... I was a pilot’s daughter. I had forgotten what that flight suit looked like. I had forgotten how well my father wore it, with pride.

I didn’t realize that one day, I would sit in the same stands of Lambeau Field, where daddy once sat through “The Ice Bowl” in his hometown of Green Bay, Wisconsin, all those years ago with his brothers, just attempting to stay warm and avoid frostbite while watching the Packers play a game that would make history. I never knew I would watch him gallantly live a dream, as he flew the whirling blades of that Huey up and over the top of a packed stadium during a flyover of LZ Lambeau as a tribute to all of his brothers in arms – those living, and gone, but never forgotten. There I sat – a pilot’s daughter.

I didn’t realize that I would one day have an opportunity to sit inside that same Huey, as my dad flew it. Like something out of a movie, we buzzed along cornfields, as the air whipped back wildly back against our faces, flapping our clothing, and tugging at our hearts, because for a brief moment, we felt what it would be like to be on that Huey in Vietnam. I never realized what it must have felt like for him and others to strap themselves into gunships and Hueys, not knowing if they’d ever land it again. I didn’t realize “fly boys” are a proud and rare breed who would tempt fate any day of the week when called to fly; any time, any place, to help anyone.

I didn’t realize that I would get to watch my dad deeply impact the lives of veterans and their family members just by being there, supporting them, talking with them, telling stories, laughing and crying with them, and often flying over the graves of fallen military brothers to pay them tribute, in many ways helping to heal the small, invisible scars left upon the hearts of those remaining, which lay dormant and undetected, hiding behind their smiles. I didn’t realize how proud I would be to look into my dad’s face, as I walked down the sidewalk a grown woman, to realize that so easily, fate could have turned out a different way. Yet, here I sit, typing these words... a pilot’s daughter.

I am a pilot’s daughter.

I didn’t realize what that meant. Today I do.

*Proudly,
A Pilot’s Daughter*

Jamie Collins is a Litigation Paralegal and Professional Writer who resides in Indianapolis, Indiana with her husband, Chris, and their young son, Gavin. She posted this article as a tribute to her father on Veteran’s Day in 2012 on her popular paralegal blog: *The Paralegal Society™*. It was the ultimate honor for her to have the opportunity to share this personal and heartfelt tribute with other veterans. You can reach Jamie at: [REDACTED]



Sharing your Vietnam Aviation Experience...

by VHPA Member Rex Gooch

If you are like me, you have a treasure trove of memories related to your aviation experience, especially flying in Vietnam. You recall the excitement of flight school, the thrill of learning to hover, your first solo flight and, eventually, graduation. After that, you were sent to Vietnam where you refined your flying skills while proudly serving your country in an aviation unit. You mastered your flying machine in ways you never imagined and supported our troops on the ground, sea and in the air.

Your Vietnam experience is most likely a varied recollection of emotions: pride, excitement, exhilaration and, sometimes, fear, sorrow and disappointment. All those memories are rattling around in your brain and, at times, you wish you could share those events and happenings. Quite likely, you already meet with aviator buddies for coffee or you attend Veteran functions like the VHPA reunions and enjoy swapping stories with your lifelong friends. You instantly reconnect with your buddies and it is like all those years are compressed and you are back in the cockpit, flying low level over the jungles of Vietnam. This is rewarding and somewhat cathartic, but somewhere inside you, there is a wish to convey what you personally experienced with your family and friends, because many of them have no idea what you encountered in Vietnam.

I found myself in this situation in 2005. I had shared some of my stories with close friends and found that those who had no military service had difficulty relating to what I had experienced. One day, I met with my good friend and pastor, George Kirsten, a Navy helicopter pilot and Vietnam Veteran, who, like me, had survived a horrific crash and lost a close friend. We were talking through our stories and shedding a few tears when we realized how our lives had been redefined by our military service. What we experienced while flying helicopters had made a profound difference in our lives. We agreed that we should record our thoughts and feelings into a written history to share with family, friends and, perhaps, even future generations.

There was a moment of apprehension before I began writing when I wondered if I could keep my story from turning into a gory tragedy, a compilation of death, injuries and disasters. As I pondered this project, my concerns faded away when I realized my primary motivation: I wanted to leave a legacy for my grandchildren. I wanted them to understand what "Pa Rex" did in the military. My new focus zeroed in on my pride in serving my country, and, especially, the thrill and excitement of flying helicopters. This, combined with my desire to share my stories with friends and other family members, provided the incentive I needed.

I took out my laptop computer and started to write. My fingers began flying over the keyboard. My mind led me down the pathways of happenings and occurrences that had become foggy and distant over the years. To my delight, this instinctive script unfolding in my thoughts was more remembrance of the good events that had taken

place and little emphasis on the unfortunate ones. Soon, my mind filled with so many stories that it was necessary to sort and organize my thoughts, disregarding those I believed were not worthy of recording and noting those that were. And, I discovered that, for me, it was the funny or rewarding stories that were making their way into the forefront of my writing.

Initially, I imagined this project would result in 15 to 20 typewritten pages and take a couple of months to prepare. I wrote in my spare time and, as I got more involved in the project, I found it expanding

and somewhat taking on a life of its own. Several times, my wife, Karen, would review the text and make suggested changes, mostly of a grammatical nature. It was great to have a "second set of eyes" read my document and make suggestions that enhanced the overall readability.

Once I had the first draft prepared, I asked my good friend, George Hart, to review and offer suggestions. George encouraged me to share my emotions and feelings

where possible. This was a very worthwhile suggestion and while it took some soul searching to honestly document my feelings, there is no question this made the document far more interesting to the reader. After many revisions and almost two years of effort, I completed my first edition with 67 typewritten pages, including several pages of color photographs. This may sound daunting, but it should not discourage you from embarking on your own project. You will find your history takes less or more time because the length of the document depends on how much you desire to include. Most importantly, once you are finished, it should tell your story in your words and hold your reader's interest.

Next came the big question. Now that I had completed my document, what would I do with it? There were several options, ranging from simply printing the typewritten pages to having a hardcover book published. I decided to do the latter and self-publish a book I could give to family and friends. After some research, I found an Internet publishing company that met my needs, LULU.com. It is one of many self-publishing sites available so should you decide to self-publish, simply compare features and prices to determine which one is appropriate for your project.

After making several pre-publishing decisions regarding book size, color vs. black and white photos, hardcover or soft cover, I was able to upload my document to Lulu. After reviewing and modifying the "print ready" document, I ordered and received a prototype book, which contained no errors or flaws. Now I could order as many books as I needed.

I self-published my book in 2007 and issued a revised edition in 2010. I gave my book to 35 family members and friends. Most often, their comments expressed appreciation for the book and how they enjoyed reading about my experiences. My wife and stepsons, who did not know me during my military service years in Vietnam, say they have a better understanding of what I experienced and how my military service defined who I am today. The most unexpected feedback came from my father, who called me immediately after he read my book and said, "I never realized what you went through in Vietnam, I am really proud of what you did." This was the first and only time my father told me he was proud of me. I realize that it was only after reading my book that he fully understood what had happened to me in that far-away time and place. I am so grateful for that. Without question, the entire effort has been more rewarding than I ever expected.

Oh yes, my grandchildren are seven and nine years old and it will be several years before they will be ready to read my book. Whenever that time comes, their books have been set aside for them and I trust they will enjoy reading my stories and come to understand what I experienced in Vietnam.



If you decide to document your experiences, here is a checklist to get you started:

1. START WRITING

- a. As you think of events you want to include in your book, make notes that can serve as thought provokers when you get to that topic in your document.
- b. Start with a lead-in. I started my story describing how I joined the Army, progressing through flight school and, ultimately going to Vietnam. You may want to provide some history to "tell the story" of how you became an aviator and how you got to Vietnam.
- c. Try to tell your story while minimizing the use of "I." You don't want it to sound like, "I did this and I did that."
- d. Like my friend George suggested, try to write about your emotions and how you felt at the time you experienced the event.

2. CHECK YOUR FACTS (OUR MEMORIES ARE NOT WHAT THEY USED TO BE)

- a. Aircraft statistics are readily available online.
- b. Vietnam maps are available online.
- c. If your story includes other pilots, ask them to review that portion of your write-up. On several occasions, I found my friends had better recall of the events than I did.
- d. If your writing identifies others by name or quotes others, send that portion of your text to them for approval. You do not want your buddies upset with you when they read your work.

3. ASK SOMEONE TO REVIEW YOUR WORK

- a. Your spouse can be a great source of input on your document. It always helps to have a second set of eyes review your work.
- b. Ask a friend you can trust to be honest with you to read and review your work.

4. Do you want to include photos?

- a. Most Vietnam Veterans have a stash of many photos. They make great additions to your written document and complement your story. You will need to convert your photos to a JPEG digital image. The best format

for printing is 300 ppi (pixels per inch) and sized to fit on your page. For example: 3 inches x 4 inches, 300 ppi

- i. Color slides or negatives can be scanned and converted to JPEG digital images. There are individuals and online services that will convert your images for you if you do not have a scanner. Typically, you mail your images to be scanned and they will return your original images with a CD of the digital files.
- ii. Prints can be scanned and converted to JPEG images as well.
- iii. You may find your color images have faded or the colors have shifted with age. This can be corrected in Photoshop or other software programs after the digital image is prepared. Most online scanning services can do this as well.
- b. You can insert photos into the body of your text or you can devote several pages exclusively to photos. I did both.

5. DO YOU NEED A COPYRIGHT?

- a. Your work is under copyright protection the moment it is created. It is a good idea to add a copyright notice to the front of

your document. Here is an example of what I used:

©2007, Rex Gooch

- b. Should you register with the copyright office to be protected?

- i. No. In general, registration is voluntary. You will have to register, however, if you wish to bring a lawsuit for infringement of your work in the US.

- ii. Registration is easy and relatively inexpensive. For more information go to this web site:

www.copyright.gov/

6. DETERMINE YOUR FORMAT

- a. Typewritten pages
 - i. Office service stores like FedEx Kinkos can print multiple copies of your document. They can also punch and bind your pages.
- b. Book Options – Various online services will compile and print your book. Pricing will depend on several pre-publishing decisions.
 - i. Generally color photos are more expensive than black and white
 - ii. Hardcover books are more expensive than paperbacks.
 - iii. Binding options range from coil bound to casewrap.

7. PUBLISH YOUR WORK

Select a publishing service. Some, like Lulu, have tutorials guiding you through the steps to create your book. The following steps are based on my experience with Lulu.com.

- a. Select format size, binding options, color vs. B&W, etc. You will see a cost estimate after making your selections.
- b. Get an ISBN if you plan to sell your book. Lulu offers this service for free. Without an ISBN your book will only have your publisher as a point of sale. Remember Amazon has about 50% of the US retail book market.
- c. Upload your finished document to the publisher. This can be a Word or PDF file.
- d. Compile a Print Ready file. The publisher's software will convert your document into the format you selected. You can see how the text will appear on the pages of your book and allow you to edit if necessary.
- e. Build your cover. Publishing services may provide templates. Photos can be uploaded for inclusion on your cover.
- f. Describe your project. Provide a brief narrative about your book. This narrative will be published on the Lulu web site alongside your book and provides prospective buyers with a short summary.
- g. Review your project details, a summary of all the decisions you have made regarding your book.
- h. Save and Finish
- i. Purchase a copy for your proof.
- j. Order your personal copies of the book. Generally book prices are lower when you order multiple copies.

Finally, I found that writing and sharing my Vietnam stories with family and friends to be enriching and personally rewarding. My book continues to be a bridge between the generations in my family and with old and new friends. Should you decide to share your stories, I wish you a similar experience.

Rex Gooch

E-Mail: [REDACTED]



From Near Death in Vietnam to Dust

By Chuck and Leslie Ramsdell

In 1964 it was a given, that if I did not go to college, I would be drafted. Reserve Officer Training Corp (ROTC) looked like a good option and after the first two years of ROTC, I went to summer camp at Fort Lewis, Washington. One of the questions they asked us was "Is anybody interested in becoming a pilot?" It sounded like a hoot to me so I threw up my hand.

In normal military fashion, I went through a whole series of tests that took two days and included a very comprehensive eyes examination, amazingly, I passed everything. In June of 1968, I graduated from college, married my college

sweetheart, Leslie, was commission in the Army, and bought a 1965 Ford Mustang convertible for \$1300. We then drove to Fort Sill Oklahoma, maxed out a credit card, and borrowed a \$100 from Leslie's dad and headed for field artillery school.

Once branch qualified, I went on to basic flight school. The good news, my pay went from \$440 a month up to \$1120 a month, the bad news, flight school was a temporary duty station in route to my permanent assignment in the Republic of South Vietnam. Flight school was very competitive, typically a third of the class washed out but even at that rate, 500 students graduated each rotation. I wondered why the military need so many pilots, I would soon find out!

The first week of class, the assignment was to learn to hover. We trained in a TH-55, originally designed by Hughes aircraft as the helicopter to be in every American's garage, costing around \$20,000. It was a small two place aircraft powered by a 360 cubic inch flat six, similar to a Volkswagen engine. I really liked flying but I

had one limitation. When your left hand is on the collective, which is the pitch in the blades and throttle, your right hand is on the cyclic, which controls pitch path plane, landing lights, radios, communication, and trim. Your feet control the pitch in the tail rotor. Your head controls the direction the weapons are pointed on more advanced helicopters. Whenever I flew, my nose would itch and I had nothing left to scratch it with. Even with this limitation, I made it through flight school and finished in the top third of my class. I was headed for Vietnam.

When I signed into my unit, the 182nd Thunderbirds, the XO (executive officer) ask me if I wanted to fly or if I want an administrative type job, since I was a captain instead of a warrant officer, I had this choice. After preparing to be a combat pilot for the past twelve months, I was given the opportunity to greatly reduce the likelihood of injury or death. I was surprised but I had planned to be a combat pilot and I wasn't going to change my plan. I filled out a bunch of forms and headed out to supply to get my side arm, a snub nose 38, my helmet, and my chicken plate. The chicken plate, made of a metal composite, protected your chest from small arms fire. They came in four sizes: small, medium, large, and extra large. Everybody wanted the smallest chicken plate because they didn't want to carry any extra weight. By the time my turn came, the only size left was extra large. It turns out I would be grateful for that extra large chicken plate.

I loved flying in Vietnam. A normal day consisted of flying four, eight, or twelve helicopters in formation, usually supported by two gunships. We would pick up a unit of infantry and transport them to an area or a Landing Zone. The infantry, in theory, would sweep the Vietcong ahead of them. Then we would pick up the infantry again and leap frog the enemy, catching them going the other way. When we went into a Landing Zone, the theory was, to bring so much firepower on the area that the enemy was destroyed or demoralized. Then deploy all of our troops on the ground at the same time eliminating any opposition. If heavy opposition was expected, we could get support from the Air Force, but they could only stay on target for fifteen minutes. The gunships were the next support, followed by our own crew chief and door gunner firing machine guns out of each side of our aircraft. The one thing you did not want was to take on unfriendly fire during final approach. Before a helicopter lands it must flair to kill off its forward speed and then come to a hover about three feet off the ground, then gradually settle on to the ground. The troops needed to off load the helicopter and secure the Landing Zone fast, because this is when the helicopter is the most vulnerable.

One time when we were transporting Army of the Republic of Vietnam troops (ARVN), they were slow getting out of the helicopter. The ARVN troops were small, usually about 120 pounds each. On this mission, we had a door gunner that weighed about 220 pounds and when we hovered, the flight leader said he was taking ground fire and the ARVNs were in no hurry to get out. Our door gunner grabbed the closest ARVN and threw him out the door from a five-foot hover, this action sped the unloading process up considerably. All the pilots would try to get that door gunner assigned to their bird.

Leslie, my wife, an Army nurse declined an assignment in Presidio, California to volunteer to be with me in Vietnam. She arrived in country after completing the Army training program in San Antonio, Texas. Dressed in jungle fatigues and looking so wholesome, she was beautiful, and she still is. As an officer, she served as a nurse and a supervisor, she also volunteered to conducted medical clinics at an orphanage. Leslie gave vaccinations to babies so under nourished that she couldn't find enough body fat to insert the needle. We could not help being embarrassed to be Americans whose fellow countrymen fathered and then abandon all these babies.



June 1968 Graduated from college, got married, took a commission, and drove to Ft Sill, OK on a credit card, maxed it out, and then borrowed a \$100 from Leslie's dad. Could afford to buy a cup of coffee only one day a week



ing off Flying Skills 40 Years Later...

When you fly every day, all day long, you get pretty damn good. Some of the pilots got so good at hovering that it felt like they were on the ground. It was a source of pride to have a good-looking formation. Our unit had twelve birds that made up three diamond formations. Holding a nice tight formation was difficult, especially in turbulent air. In a diamond formation, the lead bird is number one, the bird on the left number two, the bird on the right number three, and the last bird is number four. I flew the number four position. At school, they taught us to fly no closer than three rotor lengths at any time. In rough air, the closer you flew the easier it was to hold a good looking formation because all of the helicopters would be in the same air at the same time. Helicopter one and three sometimes flew with overlapping blades but I wanted no part of that game. I was the new guy and nobody was flying off of my position so I held my three rotor lengths.

One clear day we headed up to Highway 1; we navigated IFR (I fly roads). Just before Highway 1, bird number three got too close to bird number one. The helicopters made contact, caught on fire, and came apart. Eight people died. Now I understood why so many pilots were needed.

The maximum number of hours you could fly by regulation in a thirty-day period was one hundred and forty, I was always up against the max. I loved flying, but I was afraid to make friends for fear that they would be killed. The Japanese kamikaze pilots in world war two had a better chance of survival because they ran out of planes. We were told that most accidents were caused by pilot error, we were also told that the most likely time for an accident occurred during the first three months of a tour or the last month, just before going home. I was starting to feel pretty competent in my ability to fly the missions. The missions were usually interesting, I had figured out how to fly with the professional soldiers. I already had my favorite 220 pound door gunner, my second choice was a Black Panther who slept with his machine gun. You wouldn't want to drink beer with him but he was a damn good door gunner. Each Huey had two pilots, a door gunner, and a crew chief, the aircraft commander was selected according to time in country, not rank.

After only two months in country serving as a co-pilot on a night mission to take a radar technician to a unit that had a company of Vietcong soldiers passing through their area. My aircraft commander was a warrant officer with less than thirty days left on his tour of duty; he was about my size, he had one of those highly coveted small chicken plates. The ground troops had called for a hunter killer team, which consisted of a Cobra Gunship and a Light Observation helicopter; however, they were not available because they needed to refuel. During the day, we owned the land, but at night, it all changed. Our aircraft commander decided he would deviate from our primary mission and support this platoon of infantrymen on the ground. He told them to shoot a forty-millimeter grenade launcher where they thought the Vietcong were located and then we would investigate. The shots were fired; we moved in to investigate, when we turned on the landing lights we saw wounded Vietcong, and they saw us. All at once over thirty soldiers, shooting AK 47s, hoses us down. First, they killed the engine and then they hit the squash plate, which controls the main rotor. The main rotor went to full pitch bleeding off RPMs (revolutions per minute) and then the bird dropped like a rock. Before we hit the ground, I was able to turn off the electrical switches preventing the bird from catching on fire. When the helicopter hit the ground, the door gunner, the crew chief, and the technician were all standing, they were able to absorb the impact in their legs. The aircraft commander and I were seated. We hit so hard that both of our backs were broken. Thrown forward, we were restrained by our seat belts and our chicken plates, the commander with his small chicken plate and me with my extra large one. After crushing three vertebrae in my back, the large chicken plate acted like a stretcher, not allowing the damaged vertebrae to sever the spinal cord. The aircraft commander's small chicken plate did not prevent spinal cord damage, he was paralyzed

Continued on page 38



From the Editor of the VHPA Aviator

Frankly it's every Editor's nightmare, you publish a story or a photo in your magazine that is credited to the wrong author, or the wrong photographer, and sure enough you later hear from the person who should be credited for the work. All of us in the publishing business know that creating anything well-written or well-photographed only comes after a lot of hard work, and the true originator of any product needs to be fairly credited for their creation. Beside, it's just good manners that we run our publications that way... Unfortunately I have received two such e-mails this month and they both initially had me sweating bullets – Were they mad at me? Did I violate their copyrights? And even, were they thinking of taking me to court because I ran their story without their permission (it happens all the time in the business)?

In the middle of April, I heard from Doug Donnell, he's the webmaster for the D troop, 1st of the 10th Cav (www.theoriginaldtroop.com). Remember that story we carried in Issue 31-01, the one titled 93 OH-23's were lost in Vietnam? Because of e-mail confusion I credited the story to one of the men who sent it to me instead of the real author, Doug Donnell. He told me he first saw the story while he was attending a Reunion of his Vietnam Unit in Washington D.C. when someone showed him a copy of the Aviator. And while being pleased to see the story running in our newsletter, "it would have been even nicer to see it properly credited". He went on to say "You have my permission to use whatever copy you like from the website, please just tell your audience that I am the correct author of this piece of "dazzling" prose. I made my apologies to Doug for the mistake but even better than hearing from me, perhaps some of you out there could tell him how much you also enjoyed his story, Doug's e-mail address is: [REDACTED]

Also remember the article we ran in this last issue (31-02) titled "Everything I Need to Know in Life, I Learned as a Helicopter Pilot in Vietnam"? Well it was sent to me without any credit for its origination, so I added: Author Unknown to the header. Well sure enough, about a week

after the issue "hit the stands" so to speak, I hear from Bobby McBride letting me know that he was the Author of the piece.

Well it turns out that Bobby was also delighted to see his story printed in the Aviator. It also turns out that this was Bobby's first issue of the Aviator as he is one of our newest Aviator subscribers. But most of all, he only wanted one thing in return for us running his story (and indeed violating his copyright), and that was for me to run the last two lines of the "official version" of the article, and here they are:

Many thanks to my fellow Vietnam Helicopter Flight Crewmember brothers who helped compile this list: J.C. Pennington; Lee Westbrook; Bob Blum; Ron Timberlake; Darryl James.

You see, Bobby was a crew chief with the TOMAHAWKS of the 128th AHC and was stationed in Phu Loi, Vietnam from 1968-1970, and the correct name for the article really is "Everything I Need to Know in Life, I Learned as a Helicopter Crewman in Vietnam"?

Those aren't the only two differences in both versions but they are the main ones as I suspect that since the original version reads so well that many people have tailored it to fit their own requirements. They say that copying is the most sincere form of flattery, I feel this story just once again shows how much gratitude we all owe to our aircrew members, and fellow soldiers from those days in Vietnam.

Turns out that Bobby has lived a great life after Vietnam, with a little coaxing I have gotten him to send us a couple of photos and the brief Bio which appear below. If you get a chance, perhaps you could drop Bobby a note letting him know how much you enjoyed his story and then welcome him into the VHPA family. He may be reached at: [REDACTED]

But everyone out there please be careful about what you send me, and also please understand when I can't run everything you send me, especially if the "ownership" of the story can't be verified or permission to run the story can't be obtained.

David Adams, Editor of the VHPA Aviator

EVERYTHING I NEEDED TO KNOW IN LIFE I LEARNED AS A HELICOPTER ~~PILOT~~ CREWMAN IN VIETNAM.

Dear David,

Just where do I begin? I served in Vietnam from March 1968 thru March 1970 as a crew chief with the TOMAHAWKS of the 128th AHC. After I returned home, I went to work as a full time employee for the Washington Army National Guard working on helicopters for the next ten years. During that time I also attended school nights and started my family. In 1980 I was injured on the job and was provided with vocational rehabilitation so that I could be retrained for a new career. I was so interested in the vocational rehabilitation program that I took a job in the field and continued my education to achieve my Master's degree as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor. In 1985 I went to work for the State of Washington's Department of Labor & Industries as a Voc Rehabilitation counselor and continued working for the State in various capacities within the Department of Labor & Industries.

In the mid 90's I bought a computer and connected with a group of Vietnam Vets and started revisiting my experiences in Vietnam. In 2004 after about a year of steady decline I found myself in a deep depression, I was diagnosed with PTSD and was forced to retire from my job. This was especially hard for me because I didn't believe that there was such a thing as PTSD and how could it possibly happen to me? With the help of my family and the VA, I survived those years and have come to accept and understand why I suffered from such an illness. In 2005 my wife and I moved to Portland, Oregon and bought a floating home on the Columbia River. Living on the river has been the best decision imaginable and has helped me deal with my demons. In about 2009 I got a call from my best friend from Vietnam, Phil Cypret, we had lost touch for all those

years and he found my name on a website for the 128th. We have since visited back and forth a few times and have stayed in touch, we will both be attending the VHCMA reunion in June. Phil was the crew chief for the smoke ship that is currently on display in the Smithsonian Museum.

My life today consists of a lot of reading and playing games on my computer. In the summer, I spend many sunny afternoons on my boat just relaxing or sitting on my deck watching my grandkids swimming and playing in the river. My wife and I took our motor home on a couple of extensive trips and traveled thru 34 states, just seeing the country and visiting family and friends. I especially enjoy visiting military and air museums.

Life has dealt me a couple of body blows, but I am still in the ring swinging.

Regards, Bobby McBride



Bobby McBride, Tomahawk crew chief with the 128th AHC, 1968



Bobby visits Fort Rucker, 2012

ARMY OKS WOMEN AS SPEC OPS AVIATORS

ArmyTimes

From the pages of the Army Times, By Joe Gould - Staff writer

Posted : Friday Jan 11, 2013 12:14:48 EST

Women have been cleared for Army special operations.

The Army is recruiting women to become pilots and crew chiefs for the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment for the first time as part of its ongoing effort to expand roles for women in the service. The move by the 160th is the result of an appeal by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Ray Odierno to expand combat roles for women.

"We are looking for women to serve in the cockpit, we'll start with a pilot [trial] program, and assuming there's no significant issues, we'll integrate women," said Brig. Gen. Clayton Hutmacher, the commander of Army Special Operations Aviation Command. "We plan on going out and actively recruiting women. We're fully supportive of this initiative."

Women would serve as pilots of 160th aircraft and non-rated women would serve as crew chiefs in the backs of those aircraft, said Col. John Evans, the regimental commander. Conventional aviation units are typically employed downrange frequently over longer periods, while special operations aviation units are often deployed heavily over shorter periods and in more austere conditions, with less support. Much of what the 160th does are dangerous and highly classified missions in support of special operations forces.

Women already serve as aviators and on air crews within conventional units in the aviation branch. Since the early 1990s, women have served in cavalry and attack missions that were closed to them up until that point, Evans said. Though Evans would not discuss specifics, he said women are already "doing lots of operational things in SOF." "This will certainly be one of the first forays for Army Special Operations Command, putting them in this type of role," Evans said.

Hutmacher emphasized that there will be one standard for both men and women as the assessment and selection process becomes gender-agnostic. Evans said he has informed his troops. "As we bring these very talented female candidates into the 160th, they will understand up front that there is but one standard, and they're going to have to meet that to be a part of the organization," Evans said. "As I've talked to senior female officers in the Army, they say they would expect no less. They don't want special consideration."

Candidates must complete an application packet, kicking off a process that takes several months. The expectation is that by summer the 160th will assess its first female candidates. Both Evans and Hutmacher said women will be recruited first in limited numbers and that they expect them to be fully integrated into the formation after the pilot program.

Odierno had issued broad guidance for leaders to examine which roles could be opened to women, and the question of female special operations aviators filtered down from Army Special Operations Command to Army Special Operations Aviation Command and the 160th itself. "We've had them in Apaches and OH-58Ds for twenty years now. What is it about the 160th mission set you believe is unsuitable for them, and our answer is 'Well, there's nothing,'" Evans said.

Hutmacher described Army senior leaders as "very supportive" of the move. He said it was inevitable and that he was "very excited" by it. The move is expected to aid pilot shortages, increasing the pool of available candidates, Hutmacher said.

Both Hutmacher and Evans said they have not heard any signs of displeasure from the ranks in reaction. Hutmacher said he assembled warrant officers and commanders to prepare them for the move.

"I haven't gotten any push-back," Hutmacher said. "If you think about it, we have already integrated gays into the military, and that, I don't see it as a problem. We represent the values of the American people."

"Militaries go through evolutions," Evans said. "We have homosexuals serving in the military and there was a lot of consternation about that, it's come to pass, and lo and behold we've seen little impact."

<http://www.armytimes.com/news/2013/01/army-oks-women-specops-aviators-011113w/>



Bell Helicopter recently delivered the 100th of a planned total of 349, H-1 helicopters during a ceremony at its Amarillo Assembly Center. The Marine H-1 helicopter program is comprised of both the UH-1Y utility helicopter and the AH-1Z attack helicopter. The UH-1A story began back in 1959 with the U.S. Army and it progressed through various versions ending with the M model. The "Huey", as it was affectionately known, also served as the foundation for the Cobra attack gun ship. These helicopters also have a long Marine Corps lineage going back to the original basic Huey helicopter, first deployed during the Vietnam War in 1963 as the UH-1E.

RANDOM (AND NOT SO RANDOM) THOUGHTS...

By Tom Garcia – USAF Pilot and VHPA Life Member

In 1967 I was assigned to the USAF's 20th Helicopter Squadron later (and still today, the 20th SOS) at Nha Trang, RVN. We were looking for a job, being the only USAF Huey unit in Vietnam.

There were odd jobs such as one I flew for USN called Operation Market Time where we flew the central RVN coastline looking for North Vietnam coastal traffic infiltrators. Also, there was training conducted by we few instructor pilots for the younger troops (Lts.) who had a fair amount of total time but not much operational experience, or at least varied experience, having obtained most of their logbook entries in the SAC missile support business.

One of the things we practiced was the "Kingbee" approach. It wasn't called that then but I'm now calling it that after the originators, the Vietnamese H-34 pilots. It's a diving spiral approach from 3,000' or so. The idea being: that your altitude, heading and position over the ground are all constantly changing. It's supposed to make it harder for enemy gunners to get a good bead on you.

The tough part was timing it so you were on exactly the right heading at the bottom, i.e., in the LZ. First a demonstration then the student worked on it 'till he got it right. In practice the Kingbee spiral approach was not often used although it was a lot of fun to practice. A lot of our combat approaches were the Air Force "standard" version, not much different from landing at a Minuteman missile silo in Montana, except they were darn near diving autorotations as we were in a big hurry to get down into the LZ. Long after Vietnam I was still doing the Kingbee Spiral as a form of recreation in the Davis-Monthan AZ helicopter practice area.

Joe Brown and I came up with something called the "high/low" Special Forces insertion procedure. No doubt other units used it but we dreamed it up without outside help, just another example of lack of communication between units. Unfortunately we didn't have the opportunity to talk to the Army very much though we could have learned a lot from them.

The high/low approach works this way: Low bird is right down on the deck and doesn't really have any idea as to where he is relative to the LZ. The High bird [3,000 feet or so above y-the Low Bird] is giving him directions that might sound like this: "Five degrees left... Hold your heading... Three degrees right... Looking good... Coming up over your last little hill... Start your flare... Pull it back--pull it back!--There you are, at the LZ."

I recall that I was always the low bird and Joe was always high,



but this is 45 years later. Probably I just remember the fun things and being high bird would not have been that interesting or memorable.

Joe Brown was an excellent pilot. He had a previous tour in Vietnam as an Air Force SA-16 pilot. It was possible to volunteer for an additional RVN tour in the AF and also pick your aircraft. Joe volunteered and selected helicopters. So the AF sent him to helicopter school prior to the 20th HS assignment.

I highly recommend a book titled SILENT BIRDMEN by Al Rampone, it is to the [Army] helicopter war what Jack Boughton's THUD

RIDGE and GOING DOWNTOWN were to the Thud [F-105] Driver's war. I learned a lot from Ramp's book.

Never knew the hoist control on the pilots cyclic was called the Chinese hat, on Air Force jets it's the trim switch utilized in all four directions from center and always called simply the "trim switch." AF Huey pilots (former jet pilots) would say, "You use the trim switch to run the

hoist up and down?"

Below is an example of Ramp's story of a training mission to Hon Tre Island shortly after his arrival in-country.

"We're starting our approach," said the instructor. Lock your inertia reel, and call out my power." "OK," I said. Then after thinking about what [he] had said was "Why do you want me to lock my inertia reel?" The answer was, "I don't want you falling on the cyclic if you get shot." So, I learned something else new." I also vaguely recall having the copilot call out power at various times but the inertia reel thing was new to me. The information comes a little bit late, 25 years after I needed it.

It seems that every outfit had to learn many things from scratch in Vietnam, reinventing the wheel over and over again. There was no organized way to exchange information between units. I hope things have improved by now.....

Final note: I did use the inertial lock thing during a preflight briefing for my copilot during an H-21 night flight in Alaska in 1970. "In case of an engine failure dump the external fuel tank and also reach over and lock my shoulder harness lock." As it happened we did have a failure of sorts (blade failure) and we did crash in the tall timber. Me with my harness locked per the plan.

Tom Garcia

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

CURRENT VHPA CHAPTERS

ALASKA CHAPTER
Victor Micol, President

ARIZONA CHAPTER
Bill Sorenson, President
7903 E. Plata Ave.

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER NORTH
Ken Fritz, President

CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER
Tom Mc Millen, President

FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER
Mike Sheuerman, President

GEORGIA CHAPTER
Bill Mc Rae, President

LOUISIANA GULF COAST CHAPTER
Victor Lent, President
P.O. Box 111
Arabi, LA 70032
(504) 201-9070
colvlent@earthlink.net

MICHIGAN CHAPTER
Charley Martin, President

MINNESOTA CHAPTER
Ray Wilson, President

MONTANA CHAPTER
Todd Brandoff, President

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER
Les Haas, President

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER
Pete Purnell, President

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER
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OHIO RIVER LZ CHAPTER
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OLD DOMINION CHAPTER
President: Don Agren

SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER
Jim Miles

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER
Russ Emory, President

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER
Hal Bergdahl

THE ALAMO CHAPTER
San Antonio, Texas
Jim Martinson, President

SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER
(Celebrate Freedom) Chapter
Larry Russell, President

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER
Sven Akesson, President

VHPA OF FLORIDA
Tom Rountree, President

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER
Don LeMaster, President

IN DIRE NEED OF ASSISTANCE

We have closed three of our Chapters – Hawaii, Fort Rucker and New England.

All three closed from lack of interest, participation and/or leadership. I really would like to see some of you out there step forward and restart these Chapters and/or even start a new Chapter close to your home.

I know we're all getting older but we're not dead yet! How about it men – a little help would really be appreciated.

Jack Salm - National Chapter Liaison - E-Mail:

The VHPA and Chapters share information and guidance with one another for the mutual benefit of each other. All of our Chapters are separate and independently managed organizations not under control of the VHPA. The VHPA is not authorized to act as an agent or a representative for any of the Chapters nor are any of the Chapters authorized to act as agent or representative for any of the other Chapters or the VHPA as a whole.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

ARIZONA CHAPTER

I want to thank everyone that could make it to the meeting we had on Jan 19th. We had a pretty good turn out and it was good seeing some old and new faces. There were a few people that didn't know if they could make it that showed up and a few last minute bow-outs. I want to thank Damon Cecil for making the arrangements for the use of the Post 35 facilities and for Chef John to open his kitchen early.

I would like to have another function sometime in April in the Scottsdale area at an American Legion or VFW. If anyone has a location they know of, please let me know so I can make some arrangements. For the members in the Tucson area, I'd like to have something there in May so if anyone down there knows of a good location, please let me know. The reason I want to use a military organization is they allow smoking which most commercial locations don't, plus any areas we select also must have a "smoke free" area as some members have respiratory issues.

Also, if anyone has any ideas for a meeting, please let me know. The best to everyone and I hope to see you at the next meeting!!

Bill Sorenson, President

CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER

The Central New York Chapter of the VHPA met at the Steak and Sundae Restaurant in Syracuse, NY on Saturday, March 23rd. As always, we all enjoyed an hour and a half discussing a variety of subjects from Huey engine failures to current gun control legislation. We also welcomed two new members from the local Syracuse area, Jim Woodworth and Rick DeVine into the Chapter.

Our next meeting will be at Roger Baker's home on September 7, 2013 in Jamesville, NY. Directions and meeting time will be announced later.

Tom McMillen, President

FT WOLTERS CHAPTER

The June meeting will be June 1st at the National Vietnam War Museum site just east of Mineral Wells on Hwy 180. It is being held in conjunction with the adding of 10 names to the permanent Vietnam Wall replica on the museum grounds. The program will commence at 10AM. Active duty personnel from the three branches represented by the additions will address those in attendance. Our Chapter meeting will begin after the ceremony and will include a barbeque lunch. Guys, bring \$25 and help cover the lunches of the active duty Aviators from Ft Hood and Horse Cavalrymen from Ft Sill. Also, a group picture will be taken at the newly refurbished Ft Wolters Main Gate for publication in the AVIATOR. This is a really special event and I encourage every VHPA member in the area to attend even if you are not a Chapter member. The Museum grounds and Gift Shop will be open before and after the ceremony.

After two years the Ft Wolters Chapter is finally getting a competent President. Adam Steczko is replacing me after this meeting. I'd like to thank the members of the Chapter for putting up with me for so long. I know it wasn't easy. I intend to stay active especially in recruiting.

Mike Sheuerman, Chapter President

GEORGIA CHAPTER

The Georgia Chapter holds a Saturday morning breakfast meeting every other month. We also furnish speakers to high schools and colleges, Boy Scout Troops, other youth organizations, and civic groups who want to learn more about the Vietnam War, from those who participated in it.

Our local Newnan High School teaches a course on the Vietnam War, and the Georgia Chapter provides our assistance to them whenever possible, like their Student-Vet Connect activities planned for 17 May. We'll do it again in October. The GA Chapter also donated the funding needed to take the NHS students on a field trip last fall to the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation facilities at Tara Field in Jonesboro. There the students get to see up close and climb in some of the helicopters they have heard about in class. It's a good learning experience for the students, and as expected, the crew at the AAHF are always great Hosts.

Our March meeting featured Dave Sherrard as our Guest Speaker. Dave is one

of the founding members of the GA Chapter. Dave served two tours in Vietnam. The first was with C/2/327 Infantry in 1967, and the second as an aviator and CO of the 92nd AHC in 69/70. He is currently Deputy Chief of Staff, Aviation Directorate, ARFORGEN Branch, at FORSCOM at Ft. Bragg. Dave presented a detailed and interesting briefing on the future of Army Aviation, including some expected aircraft modifications, unit force structure requirements, and the advancements in drone aircraft and their usage.

To those former Vietnam Helicopter Pilots in the Atlanta area, who would like to check us out and/or join our group, please see our web site at www.gavhpa.org for the next meeting date or contact me at [REDACTED] or via telephone at [REDACTED]

Bill McRae, President

LOUISIANA GULF COAST CHAPTER

Things have changed little since the 2012 Reunion here in New Orleans. We are still having a good time enjoying life in the Big Easy but will admit to missing our visitors from 2012. When are you coming back? We have consolidated our VHPA Chapter Meetings with the quarterly meetings of the Louisiana Army National Guard Aviation retired community. The meetings are held in the New Orleans area. VHPA members and other interested parties should contact me at the email address below. Our chapter welcomes both pilots and crew members. Meeting and Chapter info may be obtained at: [REDACTED]

Victor Lent, President

OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

Our Next Meeting will be held on Saturday, April 6, @ 1300 hours at Legend Brewery, call or e-mail me for full details. .

We are holding our Spring Fling 2013 at the Flying Circus in Bealeton, Virginia on Sunday, May 19th. We invite all our brothers in Northern, Western & Eastern Virginia to pack a picnic basket and join us to watch the antique "flying Machines" perform feats of daring and skill from this 200 Acre Air Park.

Entrance fee is \$10.00 for Old Dominion Chapter VHPA and friends of Adult age, 3 to 12 years \$7.00, under 3 is free. Airplane rides for a fee begin @ 11:00AM, Airshow begins at 2:30 PM and is over around 4:00PM. The event web site is www.flyingcircusairshow.com, their address is 5114 Ritchie Rd (rte 644) Bealeton, VA 22712 Tel: 540-439-8661.

Please e-mail me [REDACTED] your best estimate of how many will attend by 19 April 2013

or call me at home @ [REDACTED] Credit Cards are accepted at front gate but it's cash only at Fifi's Café Snack Bar.

Don Agren, President

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER

The Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association built our Vietnam War Museum by retrofitting a forty-eight foot freight trailer into a mobile museum to tell the story of the role of helicopters and aircrews in the Vietnam War. It is built in a trailer because the Chapter members believed that being mobile it can be easily exhibited in different locations. Since the very successful first showing at the 2005 Veteran's Day Celebration in Greeley Colorado, the Museum has been to venues such as schools, air shows, veteran's memorials and patriotic holidays. This Memorial day it will be displayed with the Traveling Wall along with Bill McPherson's UH-1 "Mike" Model in Memorial Park in Ft. Collins, Colorado for a Memorial Day Celebration. We estimate that over 10,000 people have visited the Helicopter War Museum, shared the experiences of the helicopter aircrews, and learned of the Vietnam War from veteran pilot Chapter members who serve as docents.

The museum is currently under renovation. The Museum Development Committee has been inventorying, cataloging, and reorganizing the artifacts. Yes, these relics are aging, most of which are almost 50 years old. Our latest prized acquisition is a glare shield to complete our right-half Huey Cockpit model display inside the trailer.

To that end we are updating some of the memorabilia and artifacts. We are

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

looking for among other things, a web belt with .45 cal. Or .38 holster, a chicken plate with the cloth holder and Velcro, an AK-47 (in most any condition because it will be rendered inoperative), and a Vietnam tactical map used in a pilot mission briefing. In addition, just about any memorabilia and pictures depicting WOC life at Fort Wolters, Fort Rucker and Hunter Stewart would be appreciated. Please contact our Chapter President Hal Bergdahl [REDACTED] or Dale House [REDACTED] with any thing you'd like to donate or loan to the museum. We are also looking for an OH-6 or Huey that we can display outside the museum. Any and all contributions or ideas are welcome.

Other chapter activities are: Chapter Members are participating in Honor Flight for WW II vets and others on May 6. Chapter Members are supporting the Gold Star Convention being held here Colorado later this year. The Chapter is going forward with gathering Oral History's of Chapter Members. Chapter Officer elections will be held at the June 15, 2013, meeting being held at the American Legion Post #1, Denver CO.

Hal Bergdahl, President

ALAMO CHAPTER

Texas is the only state in our great country which existed as a republic before it joined our union. Everyone knows that one battle of the Texas revolution was fought at the Alamo in what is now downtown San Antonio. That one did not end well, but a couple of months later, on April 21st, 1836, Sam Houston and his Texian Army defeated General Santa Anna at the battle of San Jacinto and won independence from Mexico. Even today, March 2nd, the day Texas declared independence at Washington-on-the-Brazos (River), is a big deal in this state.

So, our chapter filled up a bus on that date this year, a Saturday, and headed to Luckenbach, Texas, to help them celebrate Texas Independence Day. Willie was not there, but the Texas Rangers, dressed in 1836 garb, conducted a ceremony to retire and burn one Texas flag, and to raise a new one. The ceremony was followed by folk and country-western singers, outdoors in beautiful weather. If brave enough, you could even ride a huge Longhorn steer who sported a saddle.



Yes, they sell beer at Luckenbach. We partied with scores of bikers, ranchers, city folk, and a few jealous visitors from northern states. Our chapter banner was proudly displayed and we were well-received.

Thank goodness we had the bus. Do not worry; another revolution is not brewing, just an appreciation for history and good times.

Another dinner meeting at the Barn Door Restaurant will be held in June, and on September 13-14 we plan a trip to Fredericksburg, Texas, to enjoy the Hangar Hotel and a play at the Rock Box Theater. In December, we will have a Christmas party, with details still pending.

Jim Martinson, President



VHPA OF FLORIDA CHAPTER



The members listed in the photo are from left to right: Dan LaFleur, Bryan O'Reilly, and Harry Bryant.

February was a free month for the VHPAF; however, March and April will be two of our busiest months. On March 23rd we were at the Hillsborough County Veterans Park, Tampa, FL to support the "Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans and Medal of Honor" program where MG Karl R. Horst, Chief of Staff, USCENTCOM, was the Guest Speaker. Then on March 24th we supported the Vietnam Veterans Chapter 787's Giant Car Show. At both events we had the OH-6, LOACH opened up and staffed with VHPAF members to explain its main Vietnam mission as a scout.

On March 30th we met at the Lakeland Linder Regional Airport the site of Sun-N-Fun where we erected our GP Medium tent which housed our memorabilia, we also set up our sales trailer and canopy, got the OH-6 in place, and set up our coin operated OH-6 for the kids. Just to watch a bunch of 60 and 70 year olds putting the tent up is a real treat and normally a lot of fun – for those watching! Once the tent was up we had a short meeting followed by a cookout for all that attended.

Then April 9th – 14th is Sun-N-Fun fly-in, an event the VHPAF has supported for years. The theme for this year's Sun-N-Fun will be the 40th Anniversary of Operation Homecoming – the return of the Vietnam POW's. If you happen to be in central Florida during this period please stop by and say Hi.

On April 21st – 28th we will be in Melbourne, FL with the OH-6, Sales, and the coin operated OH-6 for the Moving Wall and the "Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion". This is one of the longest running and largest Vietnam Veterans Reunion's held in Florida.

In May we have already scheduled two events: "The Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home Parade" on May 18th, Armed Forces Day, in Tavares, FL and The American Legion Post 152, Tampa, FL on May 25th to support their Annual Car Show.

If you are a member of VHPA and wish to join our chapter or just stop by at one of the events we support, you can contact us at our web site VHPAF.org

Tom Rountree, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER NORTH

The chapter is anticipating a large turnout for the reunion in San Francisco (please do not say "Frisco"), and we are prepping the MOC for the Reunion with some new interior changes and fresh exterior logo paint.

We have finally obtained some rotor blades for our Charlie model and they should be cleaned up, painted and installed by the time the reunion rolls around, but parking and security for the aircraft in SF looks to be impossible. We will keep working on that and hope to have an update on that status soon.

I've included a photo of the new 175th AHC nose art for our Charlie model, our aircraft flew with the 175th and so did our member Mike Nord, so it's appropriate for our aircraft. We will also be among the vendors at the reunion, so drop in there and visit with us, renew your dues and swap lies. Everything you purchase from vendors at the reunion helps support VHPA (10% of sales goes to VHPA) as well as the vendors, and God knows our

chapter needs the help! Recent activity has been slow, but we have cleaned out the storage area and sold a lot of scrap parts to provide more room at Western Truck School (free indoor storage of the Huey, tow truck, and MOC - courtesy of Mike Nord and WTS).

We plan to be at the next 'Vettes for Vets' show in Sacramento on May 26th. Email Ken for times and location. Our ammo cans at the Bryte VFW and at Action Military Surplus in Citrus Heights continue to collect donations for the Huey restoration project and we all thank them for their generous assistance.

Ken Fritz, President



OHIO RIVER LZ CHAPTER



Shown here at the Annual Reunion of the Ohio LZ Chapter of the VHPA are (L to R) Bill "Moon" Mullen of the VHPA, Major General Edward J. Mechenier, Guest Speaker and Jack Mecham, President of the Ohio River LZ Chapter..

My wife Maggie and I were invited to attend the annual reunion of the Ohio River LZ Chapter in Cincinnati, Ohio. The Reunion was attended by over 130 members and guests and it was a terrific weekend family event.

Bob Hamilton was the reunion chairman and everything he planned was fun and first class. At

first we only knew a few people there, but we quickly find out, that no matter your rank, no matter the years you served, no matter the A/C you flew, no matter the unit you served with, no matter your religion, skin color or

nationality.....we are all brothers from the same oak tree. It didn't take long before we felt a part of the chapter family.

Major General Edward J. Mechenier was the guest speaker. He was shot down and spent over 6 years as a POW in the Hanoi Hilton. He displayed drawings of the tortures he endured during his captivity and amazingly, he was able to intertwine his presentation with humor. He also explained the communication system they developed in prison and the jokes they unknowingly played on the prison guards. Upon his release, Ed returned to the states where he and his wife wanted to start a family. But it was not to be so they adopted a Vietnamese daughter. A few years later they decided their daughter should not grow up as a only child, so they adopted another daughter from Thailand. The girls so enriched their lives that they have now adopted a Korean baby girl. Their family was finally complete. Well not quite as Mrs. Mechenier soon found out she was pregnant and a baby boy was born. It was a pleasure to meet all and share dinner with them.

I am so proud to be one of us....Welcome Home and God Bless You!

Moon Mullen, Vice-President of the VHPA

SOUTH CAROLINA (CELEBRATE FREEDOM) CHAPTER



The local chapter made a visit to three schools in Florence, SC last month. We took Cobra 520 on its custom-built trailer and gave our pep talk speech about staying in school and to be sure to get your diploma. To concentrate on learning STEM subjects (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math). We open up the cockpit and all of the cowlings. We talk about all of the careers that are represented by this aircraft. 99% of the kids we talked to had never been that close to a helicopter. We talked to at least 1,000 students from a high school, a career center and a middle school. Our members get such a thrill working with the kids. Our schools are in bad shape and we get a lot of "thank you's" from the students as well as the teachers.

Included is a picture of Cobra 520, and its custom-built (by us) trailer plus the 1989 Ford Army tractor truck I bought from Federal Surplus. We drove this rig to Maine last year for a POW/MIA festival (1,000 miles one way) and they want us back again this year! HOOAH! In April we're taking the big rig to Florida! E-mail us if you want to be a part of our Chapter!

Larry Russell, President

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

We had a great meeting and BBQ at Wings and Rotors Museum at French Valley Airport. Thank you Pat Rogers, Executive Director of the museum for a great place they have our meeting. The UH1, OH58s, TH55 and H34 sure brought back a lot of memories for all of us.

We now have almost \$4,000.00 in our chapter fund. Last year we were able to donate \$1,000 to the Vietnam War Museum in Mineral Wells but this year we would like to donate at least \$2,000.00 to the Wounded Warrior Project. Starting now we will take donations from our members and once we reach \$1,000.00 in donations from them, the Chapter fund will match it for a total

donation of \$2000.00 to their project. Donations can be sent to Dick McCaig, Treasurer So Cal VHPA, [REDACTED] Dr., Santee, CA 92071.

Swen Atkinson, President



Members of the Southern California Chapter of the VHPA gather at the Wings and Rotors Museum at French Valley Airport, California.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

The South Missouri Chapter of VHPA held its first quarterly meeting of 2013 at Tan-Tar-A Resort, in Osage Beach, Missouri. Our sincere thanks go out to the Tan-Tar-A staff and to chapter member Mike Dorf for their contributions to making this meeting one of our best ever.

The program was a photo presentation, by chapter Vice President Bill Thompson, of the Army Aviation Museum at Fort Rucker. It was quite interesting to see all the changes that have taken place there. Bill, who had not been back to Rucker in 40+ years was amazed at all the changes throughout the post, and, if you have not been back recently, you owe it to yourself to go! Great job, Bill!

Our chapter continues to grow. In attendance at his meeting were four first-time attendees, including a member, his wife and two guests. One of the guests joined our chapter, bringing our membership to 92. As I've mentioned previously, we have members living in adjoining states and, if you don't have a chapter in your area, the



Back Row, Left to Right: Back : John Sorensen, Paul Harvey, Ed Smith, John Wilkinson, Roger Caffery, Lew Phillips, Mike Dorf, MikMikulan, Mike Warren, Terry Wilund, Syd Morrow, J.D. Twenter, Gene Perkins, Bud Moentmann, Holly Moentmann. Middle Row: Bill Thompson, Glenna Harvey, Harris Flanagan, Joe Finder, Kim Phillips, Robin Mikulan, Don Merritt, John Reed, John Kennebec, Carol McClurg, Ralph McClurg. Front Row: Russ Emory, Jane Emory, Linda Finder, Liz Sorensen, Quinetta Rudledge, Leonard Rudledge, Ron Clifton not pictured.

South Missouri Chapter will welcome you. Come check us out.

The second quarterly meeting is being planned for early June, in the St. Louis area. Be sure to check our website, vhpasmo.org, as details of this meeting are finalized. Our third quarterly meeting will feature election of new officers. If you are interested in a chapter leadership position, email me, (Russ Emory) at [redacted] or call me at [redacted].

Chapter members are looking forward to the 30th Annual VHPA Reunion in San Francisco, and all indications point to another memorable gathering. Our thanks go out to chapter member, and current VHPA President, John Sorensen and to the VHPA staff for what will certainly be another great reunion.

The South Missouri Chapter also wishes to express our sincere thanks to those serving our great country today, and to all veterans who have kept our country free.

Russ Emory, President

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

Our first general meeting for 2013 was held at Famous Dave's BBQ in Tacoma on February 23rd. President Mark Hansen brought the membership up to date on the Huey restoration project we are working in conjunction with Northwest Helicopters. Our chapter's painting fund will help with the "new" replacement helicopter once Northwest is ready to begin the painting process. Mark also challenged each of the members to bring in at least one new chapter member in the next year and provided some innovative techniques to help convince our fellow VHPA members of the merits in joining our state chapter. Discussions continued regarding a chapter "challenge coin." Final design proposals were accepted by the membership.

The next order of business was the nomination and selection of new officers. Our immediate past Vice President, Don LeMaster, was selected as our new chapter President. Jim LePenske



The Members of the Washington State Chapter of the VHPA get together at Famous Dave's BBQ in Tacoma, Washington on February 23 for their first meeting of the year.

assumes the position of Vice President and Hal Thornton is our new Senior Member at Large, serving as our Director for Programs and Planning. Dave Eck is our Midterm Member at Large, taking on the duties as Director of Membership. Our Junior Member at Large is Steve Ludwig, who will serve as our Director of Communications. Bill Lyons is now our Secretary and J C Combs begins his service as Sergeant at Arms. Outgoing president, Mark Hansen, was presented a plaque in recognition for his outstanding service to our chapter. Thank you Mark for all your hard work and the rest of you guys who agreed to step up and serve the chapter!

Our next meeting will be held on July 13th during the Olympic Airshow at the Olympia Airport. Look for specific information for the meeting place and time on our website (vhpawa.org). After the good response we had last year, we will again hold a membership meeting in Eastern Washington later this year. Details will be posted on our website. Given the proximity of the VHPA National Reunion in San Francisco, we are expecting a good chapter turnout for the event and look forward to joining our brother VHPA members in July!

Don LeMaster, President



Passing the torch to the new president of the Chapter - shown here (L to R), Dave Hansen, outgoing Chapter President; Don LeMaster, incoming Chapter President and John Shafer, Chapter Treasurer and Junior Member At-Large of the VHPA Executive Council.

TROLLING FOR NEW MEMBERS



VHPA Member Denny Javens sent us this photo of his camper parked in Zion National Park last Thanksgiving weekend. When I asked Denny for a better description of the photo - he send back this information....

In Vietnam I flew slicks as a 1st LT, asst. platoon leader with the 192nd AHC's Polecats and Tiger Sharks. We were located in Dong Ba Thin, my call sign was Polecat19 but my nickname was "Lunchmeat". When the 192nd stood down I was transferred to the 7/17th Cav located at Pleiku and was assigned to D Troop 7/17th as a platoon leader for our grunts. I also did some flying in my spare time with the other aviation companies while with the 7/17th. I came into country May 71' and left April 72'

For the next 23 years I worked in the medical device industry and for the last 10 years I have been managing communities in California. Several years ago I read that the Northern California chapter of the VHPA had made up some very large stickers (like the one in the picture). I put the one shown in the photo onto a board and each time I go camping, I place this sign out in front of my RV. Every time I put out the sign I have people stop and talk about the VHPA, my Unit or their experiences in Vietnam.

Besides other pilots, several of the guys who stopped by were crew chiefs and interested in joining an organization for helicopter crews. I use the sign and my window stickers to remind people of our existence and how proud I/we are of our efforts in that war. Try it, you'll be pleasantly surprised at who stops by to talk!

BLY, Kenneth M II. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 66-4Q, flew in Vietnam with the 213st ASHC in 1967-68 under the Blackcat call sign

Kenneth M. Bly II, 73, died Aug. 24, 2012 at his home. He was born in Fort Wayne and he was an Army Career Veteran of the Viet Nam War.

Surviving is his wife, Patricia Bly; one son, three grandchildren, four siblings and a host of nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by both a brother and a sister. To send online condolences, please visit www.covingtonmemorial.com.

DREVES, Alfred F. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 68-6 and flew in Vietnam with A/101 AVN 101 ABN (1968-69) and HHC, 1st AVN BDE (1971-72) under the Comanchero 3 call sign.

Alfred F. 'Al' Dreves passed away on Wednesday, March 6, 2013 in Lawton, OK. Al was a 1959 graduate of Schalmont High School and in 1960 joined the Army. He served two tours of duty in Vietnam. While in the service Al received many awards and medals including Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, and numerous Army Commendations and air medals. He retired from the Oklahoma National Guard with the rank of major. Al was a volunteer firefighter for Cox's Store Volunteer Fire Dept. from 1989 until the present. He served as chief for 17 years. Al was the first person in Oklahoma to receive the Volunteer Firefighter of the Year award in 2009. He was a member of the Lawton Rangers, his local VFW Post, M.O.W.W., and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association.

Survivors include his wife Jody, one son, one brother, one sister, four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and a host of loving friends. Interment with full military honors took place at Fort Sill National Cemetery in Oklahoma. Contributions may be made to the Cox's Store Volunteer Fire Dept., 14810 Northeast Rogers Lane, Lawton, OK 73507.

FLEIG, John R. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 68-517/68-31, he flew in Vietnam in 1968-69 with A/123 AVN, 23 INF DIV.

John Robert Fleig, 65, of Ames, Iowa died on August 21, 2012, of lung cancer. John was born in Ames, Iowa, he earned his Bachelors and Masters degree in Engineering from Iowa State University.

John proudly served his country during Vietnam in the US Army as a helicopter pilot. In Vietnam he flew with the 23rd Division, Americal, out of Chu Lai. John often shared his memory of flying over the China Sea to the music of "Light My Fire". He served in Vietnam from December of 1968 to December of 1969. His total time in the military was from November of 1968 to May of 1971.

John is survived by his wife Connie, of Ames,



Iowa. John worked for the Iowa Department of Transportation for 17 years prior to his death. John was very proud to have served in the military and had earned the rank of CW2. Please share your condolences or fond memories with his wife Connie at [REDACTED]

HOLMBERG, Bruce Graduated flight training with Flight Class 66-6, flew in Vietnam with A Co, 229th AHB, 1st Cav Div in Phu Loi (1966-67) under the Hacksaw 3 call sign and with the A/4AVN, 4th Inf Div (1969-70) under the Lizard 8 call sign.

Bruce Holmberg passed away on January 26, 2009 at the National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, MD, after a long and courageous battle with multiple myeloma. He is buried at the West Point Cemetery.

Bruce graduated from the United States Military Academy in June 1961 and was commissioned in the Artillery. He earned his jump wings and Ranger Tab at Ft. Benning, GA, and, upon completion of the Artillery Officers Basic Course at Ft. Sill, OK, he was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Division at Ft. Bragg, NC. After attending flight school in early 1966, Bruce served in Vietnam in 1966-67 and then attended the Artillery Advanced course at Ft. Sill in 1967. After a three year tour in the Tactical Department at West Point, Bruce received his MBA at Farleigh Dickenson University in 1971. In addition to serving in several Field Artillery command positions in Korea and Europe, he graduated from the Armed Forces Staff College and Army War College. In 1983 Bruce was assigned to the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and retired in 1984. His military awards include the following: Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, three awards of the Meritorious Service Medal, the Bronze Star with "V" for valor, Bronze Star with 2 oak leaf clusters, Air Medal, and Army Commendation Medal.

Bruce is survived by his wife, Joan, their two daughters and four grandchildren.

HOWE, Paul Brian. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 66-20.

Paul Brian Howe, age 57, died December 27, 2003 in Ash Fork, AZ. Big Paul was born in Los Angeles, CA, and he married his wife Jackie on December 27, 2002 in Flagstaff, AZ. He lived the past 40 years in the Grand Canyon, Williams, and most recently Ash Fork areas of Arizona.

Paul served in the US Army during the Vietnam War from 1968 to 1976. He was very active in the community involving fund raising, being the local Santa Claus, and the Grand Marshal at the Grand Canyon 2003 4th of July Parade. He was a past Vice Commander at the American Legion, as well as other positions. He was a member of the Sons of the American Legion, 40 and 8 Society, Veterans of Foreign wars, and Scottish-American Military Society. Paul designed the web pages for most of the

societies he held membership in. He was very active in community events. He is survived by his wife and one brother.

KILLMER, Charles Edward. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 67-4Q and 66-5FW, flew in Vietnam with D Troop, 3/5 Cav (1967-68), 1st Avn Co (1969-70) and the 144th Avn (1970) under the Crusader 2 call sign.



CW4 Charles Killmer, Jr., age 77, of Douglasville, GA passed away Sunday, March 24, 2013.

Charlie was a Veteran of the U.S. Army and was a member of Midway United Methodist Church. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. He loved working with model railroads and would always manage to set up a small layout in the family quarters. CW4 Killmer enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1953, where he trained to be a medic. After spending 10 years as a medic, he set out to pursue his dream and became a pilot. In May of 1966, he graduated from Flight School at Ft. Rucker, AL qualified to fly helicopters. A short while later he was sent to Vietnam. After returning, he transitioned into flying airplanes. After completing this training, he was sent back to Vietnam doing radio reconnaissance. During his career he attended night school at Embry Riddle Aeronautical University where he obtained his Bachelor's degree in Aviation Safety. Charlie retired after spending 30 years in the Army. He then went to work at Flight Safety International where he spent many enjoyable years as a Flight Instructor.

On October 11, 1958, he married Elaine Gardner, who he had met while he was stationed at Fort Devens, MA. They moved several times during Charlie's career and spent three years in Germany and two years in Turkey. All other assignments were in the U.S. except for those times Charlie spent in Vietnam. Charlie and Elaine both loved to travel. They have been to all 50 states and 12 different countries. Land/Sea cruises were their favorite way to travel.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Elaine M. Killmer; two sons, one daughter, four grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Inurnment of his cremated remains took place at Georgia National Cemetery in Canton, GA. Those who wish to express condolences or share a special memory may do so online at www.whitleygarnier.com

KRIEGER, Robert Lanier Graduated flight training with Flight Class 70-34, flew in Vietnam with the 120th AHC (1970-72) under the Razorback 37 call sign

Robert "Rob" Lanier Krieger, a prominent Winter Haven businessman, philanthropist, and decorated Vietnam War helicopter pilot, died Thursday, February 14, 2013 in Indian River County of injuries

received in an airplane accident. He was 65.

Born in Sewickley, Pennsylvania, soon after college graduation, Rob was drafted into the Army and was quickly singled out for Officer Candidate School, following which he entered helicopter training. His dual tours of Vietnam extended to 1972 when he was honorably discharged with the rank of captain. As a member of the "Razorbacks", he piloted gunships, reconnaissance missions, medical evacuations as well as occasionally transporting the brass, including Gen. William Westmoreland. From his two combat tours, Rob was awarded, among other medals, the Bronze Star Medal for distinguished meritorious service, the Army commendation medal and the air medal for heroism.

Rob returned to Winter Haven with the savings he had accumulated from Army service and purchased New Electric. Starting with two trucks and one employee, Rob grew his business to what it is now, a major residential, commercial, and industrial contractor in Central Florida. Rob supported many causes and was a member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and Airplane Owners & Pilots Association and the Citrus Center Boys & Girls Clubs. He also owned and operated a family cattle ranch, was an avid hunter, reader and a fisherman. His appreciation of family, work, community and country stemmed from his experiences at war. "I should have been killed a dozen times in Vietnam," he once told a friend, "and when I got out of there safely I vowed I wouldn't waste a day of my life, that I would see every sight and do everything I possibly could in this world."

Rob was preceded in death by his wife Nancy, but he is survived by his mother, one son, one daughter one brother, numerous nieces and nephews and his best hunting buddy, his chocolate lab "Brown."

The family requests donations be made to the Citrus Center Boys & Girls Club, 2400 Havendale Blvd, Winter Haven Florida 33881.

LARKIN, Charles Early Graduated flight training with Flight Class 55-K, flew in Vietnam with the 57th TC Co. (1961-62) and the 173rd AHC (1967-68) under the Crossbow 44 callsign.

Charles "Charly" "Pops" Earle Larkin, 82, of Medford, Oregon passed away February 8, 2013 at his home. He was born February 20, 1930 in Elk Falls, Kansas, he graduated from St. Anthony's Catholic School in Gardena, California then served in the U.S. Army until 1978, attaining the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 4 (CWO4). His military career included Airborne Paratrooper, Army Medic, Helicopter and Fixed-Wing Pilot, and Pilot Instructor. Charles served two tours in Vietnam as a pilot, one year in Korea, five years in Germany, and many stateside assignments. He was the recipient of many awards and medals including three Purple Hearts.

Charly married Alice Maxine Caviness in 1950 in Bennettsville, South Carolina. They were happily married for 62 years until his death, he was a devoted husband and father. Charles enjoyed and loved his family, camping, street rodding, motorcycles,

fishing, hunting, and especially enjoyed the outdoors. Pops was the "Patriarch" of our family and left us with this special message - Above All Else....Be Cool

Charles is lovingly remembered by his wife, Alice Maxine Larkin of Medford; one daughter, two grandsons, one granddaughter, one brother, two sisters and many nieces, nephews, and other relatives and friends.

McCULLAR, Francis Max. No flight school or Vietnam Service information is available through VHPA records.

COL (Ret.) Francis Max McCullar, formerly of Enterprise, AL, passed away on Thursday, February 14, 2013 at his daughter Maxine's home in Acworth, GA. He was 93.

We have lost a truly great and inspiring man, Max McCullar. It was impossible to know him and not adore him, and he had a positive impact on everyone he met. So much so that when he moved from Alabama to Georgia at 91, the entire town shut down and threw him a parade, declaring it Max McCullar Day.

Army Colonel, Aviation, and WWII Vet, his last active duty assignment was as Commander of the Safety Center at Ft. Rucker, many years ago. Max was raised in Kingsville, Texas where his dad worked on the King Ranch; Texas Aggie and President of the class of 1940; avid hunter (even with bows and arrows!); master carpenter; guitar player; quilter; volunteer at the local elementary school-reading to the kindergarteners into his 90s; built his own ultra light airplane, "Awsome", in his garage that he flew solo well into his later years (painted maroon and white of course!); Atlanta Braves fan; lover of Blue Bell ice cream; loving husband; wonderful father; and an amazing grandfather and great-grandfather. He taught us all how to truly enjoy life. He never took a moment for granted and lived every second to the fullest until his last.

COL Max, you will be missed. "Love you lots, and we'll see you round." Colonel McCullar was preceded in death by his wife, Sarah Reed McCullar, and two brothers. Survivors include two daughters, four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

McDANIEL, Robert L. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 55, flew in Vietnam with HHC, 3rd CAB (1964-66), HHC 13th CAB (1967-68) and HHC 164th CAB (1968) under the Delta 6 callsign.



Col. Robert Lee McDaniel, 88, a retired officer of the U.S. Army, veteran of WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, and pioneer in the growth of modern Army aviation, passed away on February 9th at Inova Alexandria Hospital in Virginia.

He was born a military brat at Fort Bliss, a horse cavalry division post. He was named for his godfather, General R. L. Howze the division commander, whose son, General Hamilton H. Howze, is

considered by many to be the father of modern Army aviation — a connection that helped shape young McDaniel's future career path and contributions. He spent much of his childhood in Asia, an experience that proved valuable throughout his many deployments. He received his bachelor's degree from the United States Military Academy, a master's degree in aeronautical engineering from Georgia Institute of Technology, where he improved the rotor design for the UH-1 helicopter, and a master's degree in international affairs from George Washington University.

His military career spanned 28 years. Upon graduating from West Point in the class of 1945, he served with the 11th Airborne Division in the final days of World War II and in the occupation of Japan. He returned to Japan during the Korean War with the 187th Regimental Combat Team.

After Korea, he became an instructor at the Infantry School performing his critical role in Army aviation by writing and teaching the Army's first Air Mobility manual. From there, Col. McDaniel was selected by General Ham Howze to attend Georgia Tech to gain expert aeronautical engineering knowledge needed by Army decision makers. He earned a renowned reputation for his academic prowess studying for this graduate degree.

Upon receiving his graduate degree in Aeronautical Engineering, he rushed to the Pentagon and became totally immersed in the Air Mobility division of the Army Office of the Chief Research and Development. This vital 1961-64 period included the Howze Board, the transformation of the 11th Air Assault into the 1st Cavalry Division, the new LOH and UH1 helicopter programs, and type classification of the CH-47. His forte was in a wide range vertical/short take off and landing advanced development programs including the Bell XV-3 tilt rotor, the Lockheed XV-4A Humming Bird and the XV-6A Deflected Thrust predecessor of the Harrier. He became a leading advocate and proponent for the Sky Crane and the Heavy Lift Helicopter. He earned a reputation among the Army, the Air Force and the Office of Secretary of Defense as a bright and dynamic aeronautical engineer officer who strove to place Army aviation on the best path for the future. He was recognized with his first Legion Merit.

In 1964 to 1966 as commander of the 3rd Aviation Battalion, one of the largest aviation units in West Germany and he earned his second Legion of Merit. In 1967 he was placed in command of the 13th Combat Aviation Battalion in Vietnamese IV Corp. While air assaulting the Vietnamese soldiers into battle against the Viet Cong across the Delta, he merged his battalion with all of the separate aviation units in the Delta into the 164th Combat Aviation Group. Fortunately, the group activation in January 1968 occurred several weeks before the Battle of Tet, allowing unified Army aviation to apply overwhelming force to crush the enemy at the major battle locations. During his combat aviation command, he was awarded the Silver Star, a third

Legions of Merit, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, and 42 air medals.

On his return to the Pentagon, Col. McDaniel joined the Office of Defense Development Research and Engineering, supporting Dr. Johnnie Foster, furthering the best vertical lift approaches to support the country in the long term. His staff responsibility included all DoD helicopter and transport airplane developments, as well as many surface transportation systems. His work led to the approval, management, and funding for several major helicopter and transport aircraft programs, including the UTTAS (Blackhawk), the AAH (Apache), the Joint Heavy Lift Helicopter (YCH-61), and the AMST (C17). He also led an international program for the interchange of technology for rotorcraft and VSTOL aircraft. Although McDaniel did not win all of the decisions, he did ensure that the competing options were heard. Upon retirement he was recognized with his fourth Legion of Merit.

After leaving the military, Col. McDaniel continued to provide analytic and engineering services to the Army, DARPA, and OSD, as well as service on the Army Science Board. Those services include the development of the Javelin Missile Guidance System. His assessment of the Comanche helicopter development contributed to the Army decision to terminate the \$6B program and reallocate those resources to higher priority Army aviation needs. In May of 2012, he received the Order of St. Michael from the Army Aviation Association of America.

Col. McDaniel was a long-time Alexandria resident. He married his first wife while both served in Japan during its occupation. She was a decorated US Army Nurse, who served in WWII. She and Robert McDaniel had six children, and Rachel passed in 1983. He married his second wife, Jean Hughes McDaniel, at West Point in 1995. He is survived by Jean, as well as six children from his first marriage, two step-children, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. The family request that donations to his memory be made to the Wounded Warrior Project.

McHUGH, George W. "Butch" Jr. Graduated flight training with Flight class 68-20, flew in Vietnam with the 119th AHC (1970-1971) and the 52nd CAB (1970-1971) under the Gator 3 callsign.

George Wainright McHugh, Jr., 70, passed away on Friday, February 15, 2013, at Iberia Medical Center in Louisiana, interment followed at St. Michael Cemetery in St. Martinville, LA.

Mr. McHugh honorably served his country in the United States Army during the Vietnam War, where he was a helicopter pilot and JAG Officer. Having attained the rank of Captain, he was awarded two Purple Hearts, one Bronze Star, and three medals for Valor, as well as numerous other honors and medals.

Butch was an attorney for 34 years and also served

as a consultant for the St. Martin Parish Sheriff's Office. A true advocate for the citizens of St. Martin Parish, he was a member of the Governor's Commission for Addictive Disorders and served on the board for the Acadiana Human Services District. Butch possessed a heartfelt compassion and desire to assist anyone with addictive disorders - his help to them was infinite. He enjoyed spending time with his family at his camp every weekend, hunting and caring for his animals, while accompanied by his faithful companion, his dog, Sammy. He is survived by his loving wife, Sylvia Bienvenu McHugh of St. Martinville; two sons, one brother and his wife plus his sister and her husband.

PATTERSON, John Francis, no flight school or Vietnam Service information is available through VHPA records.

Ret. Lieutenant Colonel John Francis Patterson, 79, died on February 22, 2013 in Richardson, Texas. John was born in Nanty Glo, Pennsylvania and attended Penn State University and graduated from the University of Nebraska.

He was a career officer in the United States Army and served as an aviator of both fixed wing and helicopters in Italy, North Africa, Vietnam, Germany and many stateside posts. He was also a member of the US Army Corp of Engineers. John received numerous awards and medals for service before retiring in August 31, 1973. After his military career, John worked as an executive at the Hartford Group for 18 years before starting his own company, Omega Benefits Services. Upon retirement in 1998, his happiest times were spent with family. John was a great source of strength, pride and joy for his family and all who knew him. He was an exceptional man, a steadfast friend and a loving and deeply loved husband, father, brother and grandfather.

He is survived by his wife of 52 years, Sheila McDermott Patterson, their three children, nine grandchildren, and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews. There will be a military interment at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. Gifts in the memory of John F. Patterson may be sent to The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Agnes who taught at St. Mary's Parochial School, Nanty Glo, Pennsylvania. The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Agnes 320 County Road K Fond du Lac, Wisconsin 54937

RODRIGUEZ, Al. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 57-15, flew in Vietnam with the 120th AHC (1964-65), the 1/9th Cav. 1st Cav (1967) and C Troop, 7/1st Cav (1967-68) under the Comanche 6 and Sandpiper callsigns.

Colonel Al Rodriguez, founder of the current Arizona Chapter of the VHPA closed his flight plan



on 7 January 2013. Col. Rodriguez graduated from Flight School Class 57-15. He served in Vietnam with the following units and dates: 64-65, 120 AHC; 67, 1/9 Cav, 1st Cav Div and 67-68 C/7/1Cav. During his tours he was shot down 4 times and earned 2 Purple Hearts.

Col. Rodriguez also served as the Army Defense Attache' to El Salvador. During his duty there he rescued 200 Salvadoran and 25 Americans held hostage by leftist groups. During his 35 years and six months of service to our country he was awarded 68 medals and eight foreign medals from El Salvador, Argentina and Japan. During his funeral, the Attache' from El Salvador presented his wife with the flag of El Salvador. He is considered a National Hero in that country.

Col. Rodriguez remained very active after his retirement. He was the Mayor of Douglas Arizona from 1978-1980. He was a staunch supporter of military organizations to include the founding of the Arizona Chapter of the VHPA in 2000. He also formed the Police Boys Club in Douglas. His involvement in other organizations include: The American Red Cross, Saint Vincent de Paul, American Legion, Military Officers Association, Distinguished Flying Cross Society and the Purple Heart Association. If this all didn't keep him busy, he also managed Little League baseball, he was the Legislative Liaison for League of United Latin American Citizens and helped the Boy Scouts of America.

A loving husband and father, Col. Rodriguez is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Anita, his three sons, seven grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Col. Rodriguez will be missed by all. He was active throughout his life and believed greatly in our country and what it stood for.

Editors note - the above was sent to us by Member Bill Sorenson

SURGENER, Ronald L. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 68-3, flew in Vietnam with the 139th AHC (1969) the 134th AHC (1969) and the 1st BDE, 5th Mech (1968-1969)

Ronald L. Surgener, was born in Bakersfield, CA and passed away on February 25, 2013. He graduated from North High School in 1967 and from the University of California in Fresno with a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering in 1972.

He served his country as an Army Chief Warrant Officer. He was enormously proud of his duty in Vietnam as a Combat Helicopter Pilot. He was awarded two Air Medals for flying more than 50 combat missions, as well as the Army Commendation Medal for bravery, having survived being shot down twice. He took over the family business, McKee Electric in 1990. He devoted his time and attention to the operation of the business paying special emphasis to his employees about for whom he cared deeply. In 1999, he started RLS Industries also making that company a success. Ron was active in numerous civic activities and organizations and was a philanthropist. He was a member of the

TAPS

Masonic Lodge, Shriners, Elk's Lodge, Sheriff's Posse, and the Sheriff's Search and Rescue. He was one of the original members of Cooks from the Valley. Between 2002 and June 2004, he barbequed on USS Stennis, Truman, Lincoln and Bellau Wood. He "skipped" the rest of '04, and all of '05 and '06, as he had a couple of strokes. Most folks would have stayed home after that, but in '07 he came back and cooked for thousands more at CENTCOM, Southern Command, and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. In '08 he cooked at the U.S. Naval Academy and on July 4, 2010, for the Naval Command - CENTCOM in Bahrain and on Veterans Day 2010, for the men and women of the United States European Command. Of the twenty-three trips, Ron went to ten and helped serve more than 55,000 men and women throughout the world! In his spare time Ron enjoyed fishing, hunting, boating and golfing. Ron passed away on February 25, 2013.

He is survived by his wife, Nancy; his two sons, and his four grandchildren. Donations may be made to the charity of your choice in his remembrance.

THRALL, Dewell O. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 64, flew in Vietnam with the 1st INF (1965) and the TC CO in 1967.

The death of Major Dewell O. Thrall, who passed away on December 30, 1980 at the age of 50, has

just been reported to the VHPA by his wife Ann Thrall.

Ms. Thrall went on to say that her husband graduated from flight training in 1964, he then flew H-23 helicopters with 329th Geodetic survey of Libyan Desert out of Tripoli, Libya. While on that mission he found a lost, crashed World War II bomber (The Lady Be Good), the story of which was later made into a movie. She also told us that her husband rose to the rank of Major and flew "all the helicopters and airplanes the Army had at the time". She finished by letting us know he graduated from The School of Mines in Rolla, Missouri and that Major Thrall "went to flight school with Chuck Yeager".

Major Thrall is survived by his wife Ann Thrall and three children

The following death notices were received by the VHPA during the production period for this issue. But none of these men were ever members of the association nor were notices of their death reported to the Association by a member of the man's family, or by a member of the VHPA (they were obtained through an internet search). We have posted the TAPS information we received on these men on their individual listing at VHPA.org if you would like more information. If you are not able to retrieve the information on-line, call HQ for help (1-800-505-VHPA).

BROWN, Robert Dean. There is no information on this man's flight class or Vietnam service available on the VHPA website.

CADDELL, Herbert Anthony Graduated flight training with Flight Class 65-16, he flew in Vietnam with the 174th AHC (1965-66) and D/3/4 Cav (1966).

CATZOELA, Manual. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 70-07, flew in Vietnam with B Co., 158th AHB, 101 ABN.

CHAPMON, Clyde L. Graduated flight training with Flight Class 70-17.

CHOAT, Buddy Jack. No flight school or Vietnam service information is available through the VHPA records.

COLLINS, Larry M. No flight school or Vietnam service information is available through the VHPA records.

VASS, LTC Marshall B. No flight school or Vietnam service information is available through the VHPA records.

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"Looking For"

Looking For Gunslinger 33...

I'm looking for Gunslinger 33 as he was known on June 6, 1966. I have met an HH-43 Huskey pilot named Harold Salem who is looking for a gunship crew that rescued him that day. Harold described the aircraft (clearly a gunship) and the takeoff (a lot of bouncing around) that day; he thinks the crew's callsign might have been Firebird but mission data shows Gunslinger 33 as being the gunship on station that day.

Harold has pictures of another Huskey picking up their wounded before the gunship landed that would like to share with you. Contact me and I will put you in touch. He really wants to thank you for the thrilling ride!

Chuck Carlock

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For anyone who might have known Roger Schneider

My brother was Roger L Schneider he was a warrant office and a Helicopter pilot with the 1st Air Cav. He was killed in Hue in Feb 2, 1968,

Does any one out there remember him? Any information would be appreciated.

Thank you,

Ralph Schneider

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For someone who knew my father, 1LT Paul Silvey Colvin

I am the only child for 1st Lt Paul Silvey Colvin who was reported KIA on 08/01/1967. I believe he graduated flight school with Flight Class 66-12 and that he was flying with the 114th AHC at the time of his death.

I have five children, four boys and one girl and I am compiling information about my Dad for a book I am writing for my children. I have researched information on Dad's childhood and am now trying to put together something about his military career.

Thanks for any assistance your members might be able to provide,
Cheryl Colvin-Chambers

R-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking for former pilots Blackjack 29 and Gambler 26

I am a LRRP from K Co 75th Rangers. It seems like every mission I went on from July to November 1970 was flown by Blackjack 29 and covered by Gambler 26. I was also on the team that went light to provide security when Gambler 26 auto rotated in.

I have never have had the chance to thank those guys and I think it is about time.

Darryl Beals

Romeo 9

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For members of the 2nd Signal Group, 1st Signal Brigade in Vietnam

During the first weekend of February of this year, former members of the 2nd Signal Group, 1st Signal Brigade Aviation Unit (South) got together for a reunion at Fort Rucker. It was non-stop laughter for three days.

I would now like to make contact with other former members of the unit (either the northern or southern detachments) with the intention of having another such get together in a few years. If you are a former member, please contact me

L.C. Gram III

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For details on the history of Huey tail rotor chain bracelets

I am emailing at the suggestion of Larry Ford, from whom we have purchased some Huey rotor chain. My family business is Hartley Jewelers in Olympia, Washington. Since 1967, we have served the community

in many ways, most notably, as the trusted source for skilled goldsmiths and jewelers who perform repair, restoration and custom manufacturing of all kinds of jewelry. We recently learned about the Huey tail rotor chain bracelets when a client brought us a chain and asked us to make one. Since then, we have been fulfilled several orders and are now trying to acquiring more material.

Also, I have found very little information about the bracelets online. I have had several pilots and crewmen contact me about getting a bracelet made and while they have interesting stories to tell, I wonder if you can help me track down some information about the bracelets itself? It would be best to have first-hand accounts from veterans who have/had them, but, any information at this point would be helpful. I know many vets risked their lives to take these chains off of downed Hueys and if I could get any of those stories, it would help me compile a history of the bracelets.

Also, please note I am interested in acquiring more chain. Thank you for any help you can provide.

Respectfully,

Travis Thornton

Looking For Latino Veterans on the Vietnam War

I am currently producing a documentary for public television about the Latino experience during the Vietnam War. I've been reading through books and journals but I haven't had much luck finding data on Latino Vietnam Veterans.

I have checked with the Dept. of Veteran Affairs and while they have some information, I'm searching for studies a bit more specific. I'm looking for information regards to where Latino Vietnam Veterans went after the war as well as what role the American GI Forum played in helping returning veterans.

Would you happen to know where I could find this information? I am also interested in opinion surveys, participation rates, etc. Any information or leads would be much appreciated. Thank you for your time.

Susy Garciasalas

Associate Producer, Souvenir Pictures

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

www.souvenirpictures.com

Looking For - My Recruiter

The year was 1967, having graduated from high school a year before, I was already coming to terms with a daunting reality. I was quickly failing out of Wright State University.

During this time my brother David brought home a (at the time) popular magazine called Boy's Life. While casually flipping through it, I came across a recruiting advertisement for Warrant Officer Candidates (WOC). The specific line that captured my attention said "become a helicopter pilot."

In December of 1967, and with questions about WOC, I made my way to the Army Recruiting Office in Springfield, Ohio. I met with a Recruiting Sergeant, and quickly informed him of my aspiration to fly helicopter's. He told me that in order to do so, I would have to pass three exams; a physical, an eye examination (with a minimum vision of 20/20), and a basic intelligence test. Feeling overly confident, I signed up. On my way out, the Recruiter stopped me and said, "When you get out of flight school, come back and see me. I would like to know if you made it."

Upon arriving home, I informed my father (a Master Sergeant in the Air Force) of my intentions, and was surprised when a look of concern crossed his face. "Derry," he said "you didn't sign anything, did you?"

Upon telling him that I had, in fact, signed everything, he responded "Derry, all you have is a high school diploma. They're never going to let you fly a helicopter."

In February of 1968, I left for basic training. The eye test (which claimed a number of hopeful candidates) went smoothly. The physical was a walk in the park. But when it came time to take the intelligence test, we were informed that basic recruits would need to score at least 90 to pass. Those in the WOC, however, needed a score of at least 110 (which my recruiter had failed to mention). It turns out my father was almost right. My score: 110.

After flight school, I returned to Springfield to see my recruiter. I was dressed in my Officer's uniform with flight wings and a 1st Cav patch on my left shoulder. I informed him that I was on my way to Vietnam. Once again, as I was leaving, my recruiter said, "When you get back from Vietnam, come and see me. I would like to know if you made it."

In February of 1969, I went to Vietnam with the 1st Cavalry. Upon arriving in the country, I was assigned to the 189th Assault Helicopter Co. (AHC) in Pleiku; call sign "Ghostrider 27". The 189th AHC, along with the 57th AHC, 119th AHC, and 170th AHC all flew Command and Control Center (C.C.C.) missions for the 5th Special Forces - with

the 57th doing the majority of the flying. These flights were always, to say the least, interesting.

In late January of 1970, I was involved in my most unusual flight. Warrant Officer Del Cornell and I parachuted a 5th Special Forces team into Cambodia. It was a single ship night mission - no lights and no guns on the aircraft. We lifted off at 2am from The Parrots Beak, and while flying to the drop zone, we could see the lights of Phnom Penh. (As a side note; did anyone else parachute troops out of a helicopter into Cambodia?)

That was my last mission in Vietnam. When I returned to the United States in 1970, I again went to see my recruiter. When I could not find him, I inquired into his whereabouts. I was then informed that he was actually in advanced helicopter training at Fort Rucker, AL. I do not remember the name of my recruiter, however, if the man I am talking about is you. "I would like to know if you also made it home."

James "Derry" Ray
Class 68-23
189th AHC

E-Mail: [REDACTED]



Looking For the pilot in this photo...

I took this photo in 1968 at Rach Gia in the Mekong Delta, while assigned to MACV Advisory Team 55. It is being forwarded in case the man featured in the photo is a member of your organization thinking that he might enjoy this peek into the past...



I have several other high-quality photos of Hueys, Cobras and Chinooks taken during my tour that I will be sharing with the VHPA. My duties as Team S-4 often took me to the airfields around Rach Gia, and I usually had a camera available.

Thank you for your service,
COL Michael D. Treinen, AUS (Ret.)

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For help with ID'ing these two Cobras

While I was walking around a little town named Rock Creek, Ohio, I found this "Snake on a Stick". I thought maybe someone in the VHPA might know the history of this aircraft. About 5 miles from there, in Jefferson, Ohio, I found another Cobra on display. There's a plaque attached to it that reads: Property of the United States Army and the Jefferson VFW, Post 3334

I was hoping someone in the VHPA might be able to help me learn a little more about these two fine aircraft.

Sam Maki
E-Mail: [REDACTED]



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WELCOME TO THE VHPA!

Look the list over and if you recognize anyone, give them a call, drop them a line or send them an e-mail welcoming them into our Association. Full contact information is available either on-line in the Member Services section of our website, or through our staff at HQ by calling 1-800-505-VHPA.

Line 1, Last, first, MI and/or nickname of new member; double asterisks (**) ID new life members

Line 2, his current city and state, branch of service

Line 3 -5 , his (Flight) Class and Vietnam (VN) Unit(s) served with, if that info is available

We also welcome these 65 new Members to our Association! All have joined the VHPA during the period from 4 February through 2 April, 2013

Babb, Jeffrey S. 'Jeff'
Huntington Beach, California, US Army
Flight Class(s): 70-48
VN combat unit(s): 1 AVN 1 INF

Bartholomew, Kenneth J 'Ken' **
Timonium, Maryland, US Army
Flight Class(s): 66-21
VN combat unit(s):
B/1/9 CAV 1 CAV in 67-68;
INFANT NETT in 70-71

Billings, Alan J. 'Patricia'
Chapin, South Carolina, US Navy
Flight Class(s): 04-65
VN combat unit(s): HC-1 in 66-67;
HA(L)-3 in 68-69; TACRON in 71-72;
TACRON in 73-74

Blackburn, Lloyd H.
Salt Lake City, Utah, US Army
Flight Class(s): 69-29 69-27
VN combat unit(s): 57 AHC in 70

Bunting, Stephen D **
Carpinteria, California, US Army
Flight Class(s): 70-28
VN combat unit(s):
C/16 CAV in 70-71

Chamberlain, William 'Sukosh' **
Harker Heights, Texas, US Army
Flight Class info not provided
VN combat unit(s):
120 AHC in 65-66; 52 CAB in 68-69;
HHC 1 AVN BDE in 69

Chapman, Michael B. 'Mike'
Baker, Louisiana, US Army
Flight Class(s): 70-27
VN combat unit(s): 92 AHC in 70-71

Clark, Steven H.
Sequim, Washington, US Army
Flight Class(s): 69-29
VN combat unit(s):
176 AHC in 70-71

Clements, John K 'Jack' **
Madison, Alabama, US Army
Flight Class(s): 54-L
VN combat unit(s):
20 TC CO in 67-68; 520 TC BN in 68

Crook, Peter
Sydney, NSW Australia,
Flight Class info not provided
VN combat unit(s): 161 IRF in 68-69

Czajak, Thomas W 'Tom'
Port Saint Lucie, Florida, US Army
Flight Class(s): 70-9 70-7
VN combat unit(s):
173 AHC in 70-71

Devine, Richard J.
Sandy Creek, New York, US Army
Flight Class(s): 66-21 66-19
VN combat unit(s):
B/227 AHB 1 CAV in 67-68

Dreiman, Richard J
Columbus, Ohio, US Army
Flight Class info not provided
VN combat unit(s):
D/3/4 CAV in 69-70

Duke, James E 'Jim' **
Corenlus, North Carolina, US Army
Flight Class(s): 66-5W 66-1
VN combat unit(s): A/227 AHB 1
CAV in 66-67; 71 AHC in 69-70

Ervi, James R. **
Salado, Texas, US Army
Flight Class(s): 58-2
VN combat unit(s):
D/229 AHB 1 CAV in 65-66;
E/725 MNT 25 INF in 69

Faucher, Dennis L.
Bradford, Pennsylvania, US Army
Flight Class(s): 71-25 71-21
VN combat unit(s):
129 AHC in 71-72

Felisberto, John Edward 'Flatbush'
Somerset, Massachusetts, US Army
Flight Class(s): 69-21
VN combat unit(s):
B/158 AHB 101 ABN in 69-70

Fisk, Randolph D
Mesa, Arizona, US Army
Flight Class(s): 68-4
VN combat unit(s):
A/158 AHB 101 ABN in 69-70

Gillingham, Dick **
Woodland Park, Colorado, US Army
Flight Class(s): 57-1
VN combat unit(s): 8 TC CO in 62-63; HHC/268 AVN BN in 67-68

Gillis, Travis O. 'T.O.'
Center, Texas, US Army
Flight Class(s): 68-505 68-3
VN combat unit(s): 189 AHC in 68-69

Goodwin, Arthur R. 'Art' **
San Clemente, California,
US Air Force
Flight Class(s): 55-K
VN combat unit(s):
21 SOS 14 ACW in 61

Hazelbaker, Vincil W. **
Kailua, Hawaii, US Marine Corps
Flight Class info not provided
VN combat unit(s): VMO-2 in 66

Heaberlin, James C 'Jim' **
Fort Collins, Colorado, US Army
Flight Class(s): 61-6
VN combat unit(s):
52 CAV in 64-65; 155 AHC in 65

Heermann, Lauren J
Haxtun, Colorado, US Army
Flight Class(s): 70-42
VN combat unit(s):
C/158 AVN 101 ABN in 71

Hill, Gary M.
Fairport Harbor, Ohio, US Army
Flight Class(s): 66-6
VN combat unit(s):
155 AHC in 66-67

Irwin, Roy J.
Saint Louis, Missouri, US Army
Flight Class(s): 68-4
VN combat unit(s):
71 AHC in 68-69; 17 CAG in 71-72

Kempton, Larry L.
Arlington, Texas, US Army
Flight Class(s): 68-4
VN combat unit(s):
B/158 AVN 101 ABN in 69-70

Kramp, Dennis D. 'Denny' **
Fountain Hills, Arizona, US Army
Flight Class(s): 69-16
VN combat unit(s):
B/4/77 ARA 101 ABN in 69-70

Lakin Gary
Parker, Colorado, US Army
Flight Class(s): 67-1 66-23
VN combat unit(s):
3/17 CAV in 67-68

Lane, Douglas
Knoxville, Tennessee, US Army
Flight Class(s): 70-39
VN combat unit(s):
71 AHC in 71; 116 AHC in 71

Leischner, Brandt L
Bloomingdale, Illinois, US Army
Flight Class(s): 69-45
VN combat unit(s): 192
AHC in 70-71

Lewey, Allen B. **
Battle Ground, Washington, US Army
Flight Class(s): 68-513 68-23
VN combat unit(s):
D/1/4 CAV 1 INF in 69

Lind, Kenneth R.
Rohnert Park, California, US Army
Flight Class(s): 67-501 67-21
VN combat unit(s): 335 AHC in 68;
229 AHB 1 CAV in 68-69

Lowe, Tony R. **
Lawrenceville, Georgia, US Army
Flight Class(s): 69-45 69-43
VN combat unit(s):
A/101 AVN 101 ABN in 70-71

Lowman, Raymond P. 'Ray' **
Huntsville, Alabama, US Army
Flight Class(s): 67-13
VN combat unit(s): 61 AHC in 67;
A/4 AVN 4 INF in 68; 120 AHC in 71

Meador, Jerome C. 'Jerry' **
Brant Lake, New York, US Army
Flight Class(s): 55-D
VN combat unit(s):
A/501 AVN in 66; 71 AHC in 66;
HHC 1 AVN BDE in 66-67

Melvin, James B **
Milan, Georgia, US Army
Flight Class(s): 63-3WT
VN combat unit(s):
610 TC CO in 66-67;
E/725 MNT 25 INF in 69-70

Nielsen, Robert D.
Sterling, Nebraska, US Army
Flight Class(s): 68-25
VN combat unit info not provided

Osenga, George **
Vesper, Wisconsin, US Army
Flight Class(s): 64-6W 65-8W
VN combat unit(s): 18 AVN in 63

Pepe, Michael J 'Mike'
Beaufort, South Carolina, US Army
Flight Class(s): 64-7W
VN combat unit(s): 220 AVN in 65;
11 ACR in 67-68

Plumb, Lawrance A. **
Mount Holly, Vermont, US Army
Flight Class(s): 69-7 69-3
VN combat unit(s): 71 AHC in 69-70

Putnam, Ronald A. **
Fairfax Station, Virginia, US Army
Flight Class(s): 70-1
VN combat unit(s): 48 AHC in 70-71

Reed, John D.
West Plains, Missouri, US Army
Flight Class(s): 67-15
VN combat unit(s):
C/228 ASHB 1 CAV in 68-69

Robillard, John A. 'Jack'
Punta Gorda, Florida,
US Marine Corps
Flight Class info not provided
VN combat unit(s):
HML-367 in 70-71;
AIR AMERICA THAILAND in 73-75

Ross, David R.
Pacific Palisades, California,
US Marine Corps
Flight Class(s): 70-18
VN combat unit(s):
HMM-164 in 71-72

Scofield, Thomas C.
Woodbridge, Virginia, US Army
Flight Class(s): 66-2
VN combat unit(s): 498 MED CO in
66-67; 68 MED DET in 68-69; HHC
15 MED 1 CAV in 68-69

Scott, Eugene **
Cleveland, Tennessee, US Army
Flight Class(s): 59-7
VN combat unit(s): 1 CAV DIV
in 65-66; 1 CAV DIV in 68-69

Sexton, Harry E. **
Laguna Beach, California, US
Marine Corps
Flight Class(s): 36-52
VN combat unit(s): HML-367 in 70

Sharp, Leonard J **
Enterprise, Alabama, US Army
Flight Class(s): 57-11
VN combat unit(s): 147 ASHC in 66-
67; HHC 269 CAB in 66-67; 330 TC
CO in 66-67; CAC in 71-72

Siemon, Aparicio Arthur j 'Arrturo'
Adjuntas, USA, US Army
Flight Class(s): 70-47 70-43
VN combat unit(s): 2/1 CAV in 71-72

Skavdahl, William T 'Chief' **
Harrison, Nebraska, US Army
Flight Class(s): 67-3
VN combat unit(s): 235 AWC in 67-
68; 175 AHC in 68

Steine, Joel Roger 'Joe'
Killeen, Texas, US Army
Flight Class(s): 56-13
VN combat unit(s): UTT in 62-63; 1/9
CAV in 65-66

Stevens, Joseph H.
West, Texas, US Army
Flight Class(s): 67-13
VN combat unit(s): 162 AHC in 67-
68; A/377 ARTY 101 ABN in 70-71

Sutton, Stephen L. 'Steve'
Fairfax, Virginia, US Air Force
Flight Class(s): 56-U
VN combat unit(s): 37 ARRS in 72

Temple, Roger A. **
Merrifield, Minnesota, US Army
Flight Class(s): 67-26
VN combat unit(s): A/1/9 CAV 1
CAV in 68-69

Tetu, Robert G.
Alexandria, Virginia, US Army
Flight Class info not provided
VN combat unit(s):
IIFV ARTY in 66-67

Trujillo, David C.
West Sacramento, California,
US Army
Flight Class(s): 69-9
VN combat unit(s):
163 AVN 101; ABN in 69-70

Walzer, William G 'Bill'
Westlake, Ohio, US Army
Flight Class(s): 67-501 67-23
VN combat unit(s):
174 AHC in 68-69

Wice, Leonard Paul 'Paul' **
White Plains, Kentucky, US Army
Flight Class(s): 63-7T
VN combat unit(s):
121 AHC in 64-65; 56 TC CO in 67-68

Witt, Milton P. 'Witt'
Houston, Texas, US Army
Flight Class info not provided
VN combat unit(s): 114 AVN in 64-65

Wood, Hurley L. 'Lee' **
Chandler, Arizona, US Army
Flight Class(s): 68-523 68-43
VN combat unit(s):
C/227 AHB 1 CAV in 69

Wood, John Leonard 'Len' **
Lutherville Timonium, Maryland, US
Army
Flight Class(s): 63-3Q
VN combat unit(s):
335 AHC in 66-67; HHC USARV in
70; 271 ASHC in 70-71

Woods, Glennon D **
Plano, Texas, Air America
Flight Class(s): 15-56
VN combat unit(s):
AIR AMERICA in 72-75

Worz, Donald R.
Cincinnati, Ohio, US Army
Flight Class(s): 67-501 67-23
VN combat unit info not provided

Zimmer, Bolko G. 'Bo'
Humboldt, Tennessee, US Army
Flight Class(s): 71-6
VN combat unit(s): 54 MED DET in
71; 236 MED DET in 71-72

The Wayward GPS.....By Andy Anderson

To say the day had not gone as planned would be an understatement. Betty and I set out for a trip to New Hampshire with a stop in Lexington, Kentucky to see our daughter Pam, and her family. We set the GPS with Pam's address and an enroute address for a hotel in Knoxville where we planned to spend the night. The trip was uneventful until the GPS passed up the first turn toward Knoxville where we thought the GPS lady should have taken us. Oh well we said, it will catch the next one. But it didn't and all at once we found ourselves in Nashville. "We'll just take I-40 to Knoxville and everything will be fine" we said to each other, but again the GPS malfunctioned and I missed the I-40 cutoff. All of a sudden we were now on our way to Louisville, and not Lexington, Kentucky.

Since we wished to spend the night in Tennessee, we decided to stop at the next town which happened to be White House. We pulled up to a Quality Inn and checked in. Upon asking about somewhere to eat we were told there was a Cracker Barrel right next door. Not wishing to eat at the Cracker Barrel, I inquired as to other places close by. Nothing but fast food places, I was told. The Cracker Barrel it is then.

I had on one of my Mohawk Reunion tee shirts and an Association cap. We had not been seated very long when suddenly a gentleman appeared at the front of our table. He said, "Pardon me, sir, did you fly Mohawks." I allowed as I had and then he asked if I had flown them in

Vietnam. I replied I had. He then said, "I had an incident happen in which my crew and I rescued a downed Mohawk pilot. I have always wondered what happened to that pilot. I can still see him running across a rice paddy, dragging his broken leg." At this point I replied, "His leg wasn't broken, he had a badly sprained ankle and you have just found him."

At this point, his wife and Betty joined us and there were handshakes, smiles and hugs all around. The gentleman was the crew chief on the helicopter that rescued me that very stormy night in Vietnam. Razorback was the call sign of the helicopter unit to which he was assigned and he and one of the other crew members were the ones that hauled me into that Razorback helicopter that night. That crew chief's name is Kirby Spain and he lives in Commerce, Georgia. He was on his way to a Razorback reunion very similar to our Mohawk reunions.

It is my fervent feeling that in this case God had a good laugh at what he had fostered. The circumstances leading up to this meeting were anything but normal occurrences and were indeed were such as to make us realize it really is a small world, influenced ever so often by a little celestial push.



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From Near Death, continued from page 21

from the shoulders down for the rest of his life. Immediately after the crash, with a punctured lung, I was the only one moving around. We had crashed in a rice paddy and it was now covered with JP 4. I tried to get my flight companions out of the aircraft for fear of fire, but my body was not up to the task, I laid down breathing heavy. I looked out over the rice paddy with the light provided by our superior firepower and I saw someone running. There was a rifle about ten feet away, as I crawled toward it a new burst of artillery went off backlighting my visitor. He was over six feet tall, he had to be an American soldier. The Vietcong were not looking for a fight that night of December 23 1969, but the next morning there were thirty-two of them that would never fight again.

My body was bruised and broken but I was happy to be alive.

I had exploratory surgery and was taken to the local field hospital where Leslie wheeled me and she didn't even recognize me, I wasn't good company by then anyway. They transported me to Japan in a Stryker frame where I stayed for eight weeks, being flipped over ever two hours. Then I was shipped off to Madigan General Hospital in Fort Lewis, Washington. In total, I spent thirteen months in or assigned to Army hospitals. The Army gave me a certificate of appreciation for the outstanding job I did as a reenlistment officer but they never gave me any recognition for my efforts in Vietnam. Due to the efforts of many people (including my father who worked at Sears with (by then) Senator Hatfield) Leslie's tour of duty was cut short and she was sent home to be with me.

Recently after almost being ashamed of serving in Vietnam for forty-two years, I went into Home Depot. I walked past a middle age cashier (I don't like the self checkout), I showed my veteran's card for the ten percent discount. The cashier hesitated, looked me in the eye, and said, "Thank you for serving." That was a small gesture but it was sincere and it means a lot to me. I always blush when that happens.

Over forty years have passed since flying helicopters in Vietnam, so why remember it now? This summer, at our usual family gathering at Lake Shasta, California, my sister-in-law purchased a helicopter ride for my brother. I had not flown a helicopter since my time in Vietnam. Would I remember how to fly? This helicopter had only four seats and there was the pilot, my brother, and his wife, Val, what would be the chances of me filling the fourth seat? As I was scheming to get myself invited, the phone

rang, and who is it but my brother Del, calling me to invite me along, God I love that guy! I was so excited I started chasing Dewey our dog, who I never play with, around the house.

When you spend four years learning and practicing a trade, the skills don't go away. They may be a little dusty but all they need is to be aroused. We scheduled the flight for July 6, 2012 at nine a.m., the departure location was Weed, Cali-



After delivering the infantry to begin their sweep in the morning, we would take our C-Rations, heat them with JP4 (jet fuel) for lunch and then head out to pick the infantry up again.

fornia. We spent the night at a motel in Weed, I was so excited I woke up at three then went back to sleep. Got up at six, exercised went to a bakery and bought a breakfast cookie. Started walking back to the motel and realized how good the cookie was, so I went back and bought one for Del. We headed out to the airport, Mount Shasta International Air Park, less than five miles away, it seemed like five hundred miles. We exited I-5 onto a gravel road, which was getting worse the further we drove. Found the airport, there was not a soul around. The airport looked like it hadn't been used in ten years, we wondered if we were at the right place and time. Only a few minutes later, we heard our ride came over the trees. The bird was a Robinson 44, a small four-place helicopter used for recreation but similar to the TH55 that I used in flight school.

Oh No, there were already two people in the helicopter. One was a 25-year-old girl and if the pilot had a choice, I didn't stand a chance. Did this mean I was stuck on the ground? I was so nervous, I was afraid to ask. When the main rotor coasted to a stop, I couldn't wait any longer, I needed to talk to the pilot. He was a wonderful young man, whose father served in Vietnam about the same time I did. The young man said he was honored to fly with me. Del and Val let me have the front seat. It probably wasn't legal but our pilot brought out the extension for all of the controls, we installed them and prepared for takeoff. I showed him my License that the ROTC had paid for 46 years before. After taking off he let me fly the helicopter and I flew for about an hour. The skills were not too bad, he let me do whatever I wanted.

By the way, my nose still itched when I flew the helicopter, some things never change! If you have an itch, scratch it!



Shown here after the Robinson flight are (L to R) Chuck Damsdell, Val Ramsdell; Chuck's sister-in-law, Chuck's new best friend; the Pilot of the Robinson and Chuck's brother; Del Ramsdell.

Chuck Ramsdell

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

BOOK REVIEWS

By **VHPA Life member:**
JOHN PENNY

E-MAIL: BOOKREVIEWS@VHPA.ORG



VHPA Life Member Gary L. Lucas who flew with the 334th AHC in 68-69 has written *Code Name: Total Eclipse*, a fictional story featuring Lee Dunaway, a Special Forces Lieutenant turned CIA undercover agent on a many layered journey of intrigue, sabotage, betrayal, and treason. The nature of Lee's "work" has pulled his marriage apart when his ex-wife calls to inform him their daughter has been kidnapped.

His quest to bring his daughter home safely leads him through a maze of deception, top-secret bases, evil doers, and questions about the integrity of his own

mentor. But that is not the half of it. For good measure, Lucas has thrown in a top secret space shuttle program, cold fusion energy, a plan to suborn the NORAD control center, the body of an ET, and Apache spiritualism.

Lucas has the background of top-secret aviation research along with the development and design of electronic security gadgets to make this a compelling story. All of this is tied together with excellent character development and a plot that makes his book a real page turner. Hopefully the futuristic events in the book will remain securely in the realm of fiction.

Code Name: Total Eclipse (\$13.77 sc, \$21.42 hc, 390 pages, \$3.99 – Kindle, also available in Nook) by Gary L. Lucas, ISBN: 978-1466954298 is available from your local book store, Amazon, Barnes and Noble, or other book suppliers.



SUGAR CREEK by VHPA Member Raland Patterson who served with B/229 AHB, 1CAV in 70-71 is a story of family, honor, faith, and roots set near his hometown of Blue Ridge in the Appalachian Mountains of northern Georgia. Patterson's characters are based on his relatives and friends that farmed the area for generations. It chronicles challenges to their way of life as WWII takes their young men into military service, leaving the families to make do.

Their lives were defined by the rising and setting of the sun, the weather, the seasons, planting and harvesting their crops. Infused with a fierce independence, all the while they also work to support one another. These are hardworking, self-reliant people who put aside something in the good times and "make do" in the hard times. They know the land and use their hands to provide what they need. Patterson weaves the stories of the men at war with those of the women left behind and the

multitude of hardships both faced. Surprisingly, some find horizons and possibilities they had not imagined.

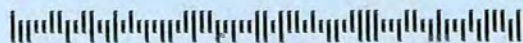
The characters in *Sugar Creek* are particularly well developed and Patterson takes you deep into their lives, loves, hopes, dreams and tragedies; making this a wonderful, enriching read. They are good people, living simple lives in a time during which America is changing profoundly. Each generation has its own struggles and challenges and *Sugar Creek* reminds us about an amazing generation and way of life that many of us from all across this nation sprang from. You will enjoy this book.

In addition to *Sugar Creek*, Patterson has written *Bear Cat*, a fictional account of his tour in RVN and is the author of other novels about the area around his hometown of Blue Ridge, Georgia. He plans to bring his books to the vendor's room at the reunion.

See his website at: rjpattersonbooks.com

Sugar Creek (\$15.00 paperback, 300 pages, \$12.99 - Kindle) by Raland J. Patterson, ISBN: 978-1463695347 is available from your local book store, Amazon, or other book suppliers.

Members - Have a book for John to Review? Contact him at: BookReviews@VHPA.org and don't forget to sign up for John's Writers Panel Presentation at this year's Reunion



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Issue 31-03

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