



Black Cat Relus



A Publication For Veterans Of The
282nd Assault Helicopter Company

December 1991

ACROSS OUR DESK



Linda Byrd, Calvin Dennison

Congratulations to Tom and Carol Tomlinson who were married August 10th in Indian Harbour Beach, Florida. They now live in Orlando, Florida.

You all don't need to add her name to the roster because I've had them married for the past two years.

We wish you years of happiness.

Mike Peterson reports a balance in the Black Cat account of \$1,876.72.

Look who we have found, Michael McDonald. Quite some time ago one of you sent some orders with an old address of his parents. The letter we mailed to that address has been forwarded here and there and finally reached him. He writes that he is a heavy equipment diesel mechanic in beautiful southern California. He is divorced and has no children. His first love is auto racing and has been involved with off road racing teams and funny car drag racing. He will be sending some information on a couple of other Cats soon. (Hint, hint)

Michael G. McDonald

Give him a call and welcome him to the Black Cat Association.

Richard Petta has been real busy. He has sent about fifty photographs and some super 8 mm movies to Mike and Susie Peterson. They are transferring the movies to video tape so we can all see them at the next reunion.

Dick, as he prefers to be called, is looking for someone with a copy of orders with his Air Medal on them. He has no record anywhere.

While Dick was in Vietnam he ordered a 1968 Plymouth "Road Runner" from the PX at Red Beach. Here it is in all its splendor.



It has a 470 cubic inch displacement after boring out a 440 4:10 Dana. It also has staging brakes, two Holley 650 CFM carburetors, 4-speed, hi-rise tunnel ram, stainless steel hoses and brake lines, L60 x 15 rear, classic Cragars all around, 714 horse power and two M60's mounted in the grill. Dick retired the "Road Runner" and it is a show car today. In 1990 he drove it 23 miles and hasn't driven it at all this year. He says he will bring it to Texas. Why not, everyone else brings their Vietnam memorabilia to the reunion.

Larry McCracken is looking for James Manley, a pilot he flew with. Larry, according to the information I have gathered his middle name is Ernest and he is from Whitesboro, New York. I have scribbled in area code 315, lots of Manley's listed. The operator will give you two numbers at a time. People are really nice when you explain what you are doing. I have had some to get the phone book and give me all the

numbers listed for that name. Scratch out the ones you have already called and make a note if there was no answer or you'll end up really confused after a while. Good luck and let me know when you find him because you will.

Al Navarro is also looking for orders awarding him an Air Medal. You guys get your old orders out and see if you can help them out.

We got a letter from Joe Walters. His new address is in the change of address column. We will fill your request ASAP. Sure was great to hear from you.

I want to thank Dave and Pop for the following stories. I beg and plead in every newsletter for material to print. This is your newsletter so lets hear from you. Send it to Coleen Pullen at

WAR STORIES



by Dave Wall

I don't remember the day or date but it was sometime early in '68. The First Sergeant had just briefed me and Red Walker, my runner for the night. It was the usual briefing for CQ. Nothing was expected to happen, there hadn't been any activity near the base, Marble Mountain, for a few days and nothing was anticipated. Ah, a quiet night. Walker and I assumed duties and promptly settled in to watch TV, play some cards and make our rounds to make sure all was well. Can't remember what time it was but the TV show Combat had just come on the tube. If you guys remember, at the beginning of Combat there is a lot of explosions as they introduce the stars of the show i.e. Boom, Frank Lovejoy, Boom, Little John, Boom, Lt. So and So, BOOM!, What? BOOM! I said to Walker, open the door. As Walker opened the door BOOM! Uh oh, we were under a full blown mortar and rocket attack, except as happened occasionally they, Charlie, were laying um in a little short, missing the airfield and hitting the billets, mess hall and a handful of other buildings blown in all directions. If you guys can remember, in 1968 Headquarters Company's CQ bunker was four bags high, one bag thick and a piece of plywood on top. Guess who was in it first? I kept telling Red to put his flak jacket in front as it had no entrance cover. He refused as any sane man would. Well, as it turned out we did have a few casualties. Luckily the most serious was some intransit Colonel who stepped on a broken piece of light bulb and received a Purple Heart. Other than that just some rebuilding was necessary. But you know, I've always had a funny feeling when I see reruns of Combat!!!

ARE WE A TEAM?

by Pop Michaud

On the morning of the 21st of September a call came through Black Cat Operations stating a Black Cat ship was down at Quang Tri Province. Operations called the Cat Doctors which were the maintenance for the 282nd AHC. Cat Doctor #10 and one five looked at each other and said normal deal probably just a high oil temp. Within fifteen minutes both Cat Doctors and team were in the air. From DaNang to Quang Tri was just a one hour and fifteen minute flight. Upon arrival they found it was just an oil line. The team replaced the line and released the ship to fly their VIP's back to DaNang. The Cat Doctors and crew noticed the time and decided to have chow at MACV Compound. Departure from Quan Tri was about 1330 hours. They reached Pistol Pete, which was a PBR base, and saw that the weather was on the deck. It was zero zero weather. Pistol Pete advised them to stay until the weather cleared, which they did. It was about 1900 hours when the weather cleared up but, darkness set in. Well, Cat Doctor #10 decided it was time to head back. They wished their friends the best of luck and departed Pistol Pete. They were airborne fifteen minutes when a call on guard came through requesting any helicopter to answer. Well, #10 answered. The call was from an outfit that had a four man team surrounded and one was mortally wounded, could they give assistance. The answer was yes, Where do you want us? They asked for location and was told fifteen minutes from Dong Ha. The base camp said you are the people we need. You are the closest to us. Could you land at Dong Ha, refuel, and the tower will give you further instructions. While refueling Cat Doctor #10 called the tower and was instructed to fly north of the airfield until they saw two 3/4 ton trucks headlights and land between them. They found the lights and landed only to find it was a Special Forces camp. They were instructed to report to the Operations hut. They already had the jungle rigs to put on the Cat Doctors ship. Cat Doctors #10 and One Five were met by a Special Forces captain. He walked over to a huge map on the wall to show them where they were going. #10 and One Five looked at each other and realized they were going well into enemy territory. The captain must have seen their expression and said, men I have a four man reconnaissance team up there on that mountain, one is mortally wounded and he is the team Captain. The team thinks the world of him. The Cat Doctors asked what frequencies they would use and what would be going out to give them cover. First, he said, here is a list of freq's and you will be talking to the men on the ground on guard. For cover we're getting four Cobra gunships, one C&C ship and a flare ship from the Air Force. The gunships will be here as soon as your ship is rigged. The captain asked if any of us had used a jungle rig before. No was the answer. He gave both the Cat Doctors instructions on

what to do. The gunships arrived, the Cat Doctor pulled pitch, they climbed 5,000 feet and over the mountains they went. When they arrived on station an hour and a half later the Air Force flare ship was there with the C&C ship. The area was mountainous terrain. They were in a valley surrounded with huge mountains 3,000 to 5,000 feet high. The C&C ship made radio contact with the Cat Doctor, the mountain to the right about 500 feet from the top and you will see a light. Cat Doctor approached the mountain with caution. They were 2,500 feet from the ground and it seemed to be straight down. They made radio contact with the team below, located them and dropped the rigs. A call came through that they were on, so the Cat Doctor slowly began to rise. Just as they broke through the ship jumped to the left. The crew looked down and saw there was only one man on the rig. The Cat Doctor quickly decided to land in the valley. With one man on board they could try again. They called the gunship leader and asked for cover while they landed. Talk about fire power, a pair covered the Cat Doctor while a pair rolled in on the valley. It looked like the 4th of July in your home town. Cat Doctor landed, the man jumped aboard and #10 asked what the situation was. As One Five pulled pitch the team member informed #10 that two were dead and the team captain was the one who fell off the rig. When they reached the mountain side they couldn't locate any sign of movement at all. They searched until their fuel was down to 300 pounds. The C&C ship advised them to head back. They were well above the mountains and starting back when a gun ship making one last pass spotted a light. He informed the C&C ship and hearing this the Cat Doctor returned to the area. The gunship leader said the light he saw was 200 feet further down. The Cat Doctor moved further down until #10 spotted something strange on a cliff. He informed the gun ship leader he was turning on the search light and would need cover. With the light he found a blood trail which went over the cliff about 50 feet and they followed it down. They hovered about fifteen minutes then informed C&C ship they must leave because of their fuel situation. While climbing straight up One Five informed the crew to haul in the rigs. One rig seemed to hang up. The crewchief informed the Cat Doctors they had the team leader on the other end. Cat Doctor radioed the gunship leader that he was putting the team leader down in the valley and would need the same cover as before. They put down as easy as possible because of the mans wounds. The gunner, crewchief and team member retrieved the wounded team leader. Returning the aircraft could only make Vandegriff. They put 100 pounds of fuel aboard, flew to the med pad and unloaded the wounded captain. They returned to Dong Ha for debriefing. The Cat Doctor returned to Marble Mountain with the satisfaction of a good mission.



CHANGE OF ADDRESSES

Clyde Harper [REDACTED]

Valentino Panzitta [REDACTED]

John Gilliam [REDACTED]

Joe Walters [REDACTED]

Cal Dennison [REDACTED]

Al Navarro [REDACTED]

W Harris Couch [REDACTED]

Glenn Ellis [REDACTED]

Jeff Perez [REDACTED]

Newsletters Returned With No Return Address

Danny Gaddis
James Hale
Robert McWilliams
Deta Schoonover
Eugene Bench III

Theron Talbot
Michael Snydsman
Alfred Sepeda
Wilfred Ledger Jr.

If you haven't mailed your \$15.00 Black Cat Association dues send it to:
Mike Peterson



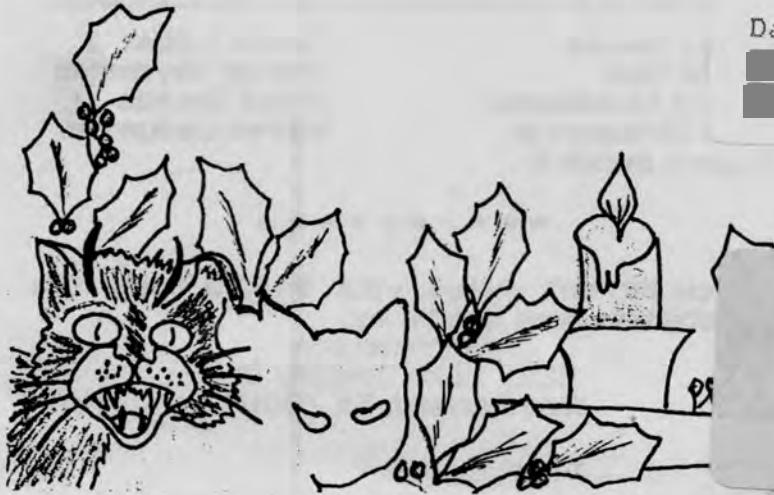
The gang in Denver last summer

Mike Peterson



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Danny G. Gaddis



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