

Subject: The focus of the VHPA 2000 directory history

Date: Sun, 21 Nov 1999 13:24:59 -0500

From: Mike Sloniker

To:

Bill & Susan Russell

Chris White

Mike Williams

"Sloniker, Mike E"

CC: Gary Grow

, Gary Roush

Gary Thewlis

, George Miller

"

keith d wysong

, Ken Mayberry

Mark Byrd

"Michael J. Wheeler"

>

Pat Dougan

, "Robinson, John"

Ron Turner

, Tom Marshall

Williams Col Michael E

I sent the text, below as a candidate note for the VHPA newsletter concerning the VHPA directory history for 2000. It is self explanatory. Please read it and see my additional notes at the bottom:

For the VHPA 2000 directory, we will be tying together some past history, and compiling some new. The focus of the 2000 directory's history will be Northern I Corps from Da Nang north from 1964 to prior to the Spring Offensive of 72 that was covered in the 1999 directory. Your history will be in two versions. The usual 25 written pages of text in the directory and another CD ROM. The 1999 CD Rom only used 10% of the capacity so we will be adding more pictures and this time, digitized audio tapes made at the moment the history occurred. This will truly be a representation of all I Corps helicopter units, Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines and the Coast Guard exchange pilots with the Air Force, Air America, and the VNAF.

I want to start in 1964 when the Marines became active in the area with the CH-34s that were chronicled in a past VHPA history, the arrival of the UH-1A gunships from the UTT platoon that was attached to the 52d Avn

Bn, the influx of the Air Rescue and Recovery Service of the Air Force with focus on the US Coast Guard exchange crews in the ARRS squadrons. We can chronicle the Navy's SH-2 whose pilot was awarded the MOH. I am getting audio tapes digitized for the CD Rom and we can include the audio tape of the HH-53 that was shotdown by a Mig 17 firing an Atoll missile in 1970. The navy unit, HC-7, the Big Mothers who flew CH-3s off cruisers in the Gulf of Tonkin need to be recognized and I can get their history from the Naval Institute's "Proceedings" magazine which carried a two part history of that Search and Rescue Navy squadron.

I Corps offers a wealth of history with build up of the USMC units in 65, the arrival of Army aviation units in 66-68, the loss of the SF Camp at Khe Sahn with aerial evacuation coming from USMC CH-34s, the arrival of the 1st Cav during Tet 68, the 1st Cav units that assisted at Lang Vei, Operation Pegasus into Khe Sahn, the murderous CAs into the A Shau,

the loss of the first CH-54 to ground fire, the buildup and arrival of the 101st Aviation Group, for starters.

With this directory we can update the 1994 Lam Son 719 history with pictures and digitized audio tapes, and put it on the CD Rom also. I have four audio tapes of HH-53s making rescues that can be included. We have the opportunity to include the USAF's 21st Special Operations Squadron; a unit that flew exclusively in Laos and the southern part of North Vietnam coming into South Vietnam to refuel.

This is an opportunity for many units to reel in their history and get it into one living document.

What is needed from the membership to make this a success? Stories about the formation of units that went into I Corps, from the early units, the Marines, the 1st Cavalry's movement to I Corps from Bong Son, the action at Hue that netted a Medal of Honor, the first trips into the A Shua by the 1/9 Cav, for a start. I have documentation that shows the 227th and the 229th flew CCN missions in 68, for example.

The best of all worlds is for the data to be sent via email. Send it anyway you want to me, if you want your unit represented in the history that will be in the 2000 VHPA directory. I will be contacting many members via email and regular mail in this effort.

Mike Sloniker, VHPA Historian
sloniker@erols.com

Please pass this on to individual units nets, VHFCN or anybody that would be interested.

For the Navy guy on Helivets, let's put together a piece on Laasen the SH-2 driver that got the Medal of Honor for a night time rescue in the north. I am in contact with "Proceedings" for permission to use their articles on that rescue and the HC-7 Big Mothers.

The Chinook units are way overdue for recognition, so I want to have a go at the 228th and 159th that were in the same AO in I Corps. I have the 1969 Aviation Digests articles concerning the 228th hooks making radar approaches into the A Shau with external sling loads. I want to document further the inverted crash of the Mike Maloy's chinook, the 132d Hook that went inverted in Laos-the pilot cut the throttles and the thing crashed into the trees. Need George Miller and Mike Maloy consider putting some thoughts down on the organizing of the 159th units in the states from Ft Sill, etc and deployment to the Nam.

We need to roll hot on the USMC integration of the AH-1Gs, replacing the UH-1Es, and their gun cover on CCN missions at a minimum.

The ARRS units have a fantastic Jolly Green website and I am in contact with them. I have the audio of the Mig 17 shooting down the HH-53 in North Vietnam.

The special operators of the 21st SOS have some good data

I am very interested in putting down in a history the exploits of the 39th Trans Co in 64-65 that had CH-37s at Da Nang. Roy Kaufman and Ted Jenkins have sent some great notes in the past.

There is a thread of how the 1st Cav units and 101st Units pulled the same missions in I Corps. This directory provides an opportunity to

put together the history and beginnings of the 4/77 ARA and how it was modeled after the 2/20th ARA and manned with many 2/20th first tour crews.

The 478th rich history of the service of the CH-54s is important to get recorded.

I want to document the fall of the SF camp in the A Shau in 66, the CCN missions out of Khe Sahn by the 281st, the 174th and others in 67, the shelling of Dong Ha and the USMC units in 67, the artillery attacks on Con Thien, Tet 68 in I Corps, the arrival of the 1st Cav in Feb 68, their move to III Corps in Oct 68, the formation of the 101st units, the first blood at Hamburger Hill, the 101st units that made the trip to Chu Lai to assist the Americal and got blooded, the action around Ripcord in 1970, update LS 719 with digitized audio and pictures,etc.

Looks like a big order, and it is, however a LOT of this data has already passed around the internets I am updating LS 719 with pictures in the same method as I put together the CD Rom in the 99 directory. We can do this.

Wouldn't it be great to find out just who in the world the 282d AHC guys were and what they did?

I am ready to get after this.

One day we will have the entire helo VN history on a disk with sounds and pictures. Of course the project will never be completed, because this is a moving target with new guys showing up all the time who have key data.

Mike Sloniker