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courtesy of: Dean Grau

Dear Phoenix:

18 Oct. 1990

In the past couple of weeks it was brought to my attention that it has been some time since a Phoenix newsletter has made it's way out of Va. Beach and into the hearts and homes of all you lovely folks. I apologize for this temporary lapse in communication, as I did not realize that this publication was awaited with the same anticipation normally reserved only for the arrival of Santa Clause. I guess I needed a catalyst to get me jump started again. It arrived two weeks ago.

On Friday, October 5th at 10:00 AM, David Nelson, Ralph Moreira, Joel Hatley and Michael King were buried at Arlington National Cemetery with full military honors. They were the crew of a Phoenix aircraft that was shot down on March 5, 1971. The remains were recovered this past January and returned for burial in late September.

For those of you who knew any or all of the crewmembers and would have liked to attend the ceremony, I regret that the short time frame prevented wide spread notification. We received the details 48 hours in advance and contacted as many people as possible. With some guys having only a few hours between notification and catching a plane, the Phoenix were well represented. Once again the unity, camaraderie, kindred spirits, whatever you choose to call it, kicked in. Dean, Kerry and Russell Grau came in from Minnesota, Ken Mayberry from Nebraska, Rick Scrugham from Tennessee, Bruce Updyke from Indiana, Chuck Doty from Maryland, Tom Marshall from Florida, Don Davis from Chicago, Tom Cullen from Connecticut along with Mike Sloniker and myself.

We didn't know if we would have the opportunity to talk with the families, but when they heard we were there, they requested we meet with them after the ceremony. You cannot imagine and I cannot describe the gratitude expressed by the families at being given the opportunity just to talk to someone who had actually known their sons and brothers. After 19 1/2 years of anguish and doubts and of dealing with the impersonal nature inherent in any bureaucracy, they were truly touched. The relief in the faces and in the voices of the family members could be detected as they realized the person they stood next to and chatted with had often times done the same with their loved ones so long ago. The knowledge that after almost 20 years, they were not the only ones who remembered, seemed to be of great comfort.

Without exception, every Phoenix in attendance agreed that however far his trip, however short the notice, the results were worth the effort a hundredfold.

The enclosed poem was written by Mrs. Evelyn Hatley 19 years ago and read at the funeral service. The next day we saw a framed

copy at "The Wall" placed at the bottom of panel #4W which contains the names of David, Ralph, Joel and Michael. It's poignant verses elicited the same reactions from strangers who read it as it had from family and friends in the chapel. May David, Ralph, Joel, Michael and thier families now rest in peace.

As a footnote, several family members requested that they be included on the mailing list for this newsletter in order to keep up with the Phoenix. At least one has expressed an interest in attending the next Phoenix reunion.

#### NEW ORLEANS REUNION

With the possible exception of Mardi Gras, Bourbon Street may never again see the likes of the crew that the VHPA unleashed on it Friday night, July 6th; and the sternwheeler Natchez will never make a livelier trip down the Mississippi River. For those of you who could not attend, the VHPA/Phoenix reunion in New Orleans was a sight to behold. Not only because of the aforementioned events, but also the hours spent in the Phoenix hospitality suite, around the pool and over dinner. Great times with great friends.

We had 25 Phoenix in attendance, along with 11 wives/dates. Of those 25, 14 were in Chicago and 11 were attending their first Phoenix reunion. That makes a total of 45 of us who have attended at least one reunion in the last 2 years. To those of you who sent hospitality suite money, but were unable to attend, we all thank you. The suite was our HQ and the key to it all. We spent your money well. With the addition of a couple of particularly generous donations, we had enough to partially stock the bar and provide everyone with a cooler cup with a Phoenix patch on the front and a memorial listing of Phoenix casualties on the back. Thanks to Ric Kincaid for a sizable chunk of change and to a Phoenix benefactor who prefers to remain anonymous for the resources that enabled us to provide more than the hospitality suite.

#### Plaque Presentation

To all of you involved in any way with the plaque that I was presented in New Orleans, again my sincere thanks and appreciation. Since many of you that were responsible for the plaque were in Chicago, but could not be in New Orleans, the text follows:

To Jack Glennon with our deepest gratitude.

The thirty four members of the Phoenix flight, who arose from the ashes of our VietNam memories, in Chicago, on July 4th 1989, wish to thank you for assuming the role of AMC and reuniting so many of us in one place, at one time.

Many of us began this flight fearful of an emotionally "Hot LZ" full of booby traps, NVA and FOD. We found only friendlies.

For most of us, this was the first time we had spoken to each other since our DROS. The experience was religious; and had a permanent, positive impact on each of our lives---possibly unequaled in the past twenty years.

Your monumental, single-handed efforts to reunite us will forever be remembered and appreciated.

Thanks to you, many of us are no longer afraid to remember.

We love you. We salute you. God bless you.

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signed

Bob Brooks	Tom Marshall
Don Cornwell	Ken Mayberry
Tom Cullen	Pat McKeany
Don Davis	Frank Metsker
Butch Doan	Roy Miller
Chuck Doty	Wayne Moline
Bruce Fairley	Sean Moore
Jack Glennon	Jamie Navarrette
Dean Grau	Ron Nyhan
John Hodnett	Otto Offereins
Randy House	Ted Olson
Bruce Ianacone	Larry Pluhar
John Kamps	David Rayburn
Bob Kelly	John Ross
Skip Lee	Rick Scrugham
Gerald Lord	John Trotter
Bob Marrs	Bruce Updyke

Recently Located

John Eaton  
Bob Sauer  
Jim Rademacher  
JOHN BOTTMAN  
Locator Service

Chris Ross(Jack's lovely wife) has a contact at a professional agency that can, given a name and a social security number, locate the address of most anybody. Chris has utilized it once already and had an address within a week. There is a \$16.00 charge per name. I am enclosing a list of names and SSAN of former Phoenix that were available on old orders. If you can add to this list please do. Also, if you see a name that you are willing to invest 16 bucks to locate, send a check to Chris Ross, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Phoenix in the Bookstore

One of our own, Layne Heath-Phoenix 23-April 69-April 70 has written a novel entitled CW2. The first half of the book is set at Camp Evans with the Phoenix, and his description of the place would allow you to identify it even if you didn't know it was the Phoenix company area. Read it and see if you see yourself anywhere within it's pages.

VHPA RENO 1991 ???

As I have mentioned previously, any plans that we make for future reunions are a reflection of the input received from you. About a year ago we made an attempt to solicit individual input from each of you. The collection method turned out to be a little flawed, but I was surprised at what did make it back. There was overwhelming support for the New Orleans reunion.

Info Removed by VNCA

There is one constant that will always be a factor in the planning process, and that is the answer to the question - "Who else is going to come?" Barring a 72 way conference call, I don't know how to accurately collect this data in a reasonably timely manner. At this point, there seem to be three categories of reunion interest levels:

1) Once a year is great with me. These are the guys/gals who make an annual vacation trip out of the reunion-not necessarily the

VHPA reunion, but the Phoenix.

2) Every 2-3 years would be better. This category represents guys who (a) are concerned that the enthusiasm we've generated in the last couple of years cannot be sustained with an annual event. (b) think that an event planned and announced a couple of years in advance would greatly enhance the turnout.

3) I've decided, not to decide. This category is much smaller than the first two, but represents guys who have not decided if they want to attend a reunion yet, but have decided to not tell anyone that they haven't decided.

Now the first two categories both have some merit, and a few of the thoughts received are:

1) Since we do not heavily participate in the VHPA activities, lets do our own reunion.

We may not participate in all of the VHPA activities, but look at New Orleans: the Natchez boat trip, Friday night's Real Helicopter Pilots roll call on Bourbon St., Saturday night's banquet. Besides, the VHPA does all the planning and logistic work for us; plus you almost always run into someone that you knew from flight school or some other place at the VHPA reunion. Since the VHPA events are optional and you pay only for the ones you attend, we would lose a lot of benefits and gain only the flexibility to change the date if we tried to plan our own. Personally I like the idea of the hotel being full of nothing but helicopter pilots.

2) The 4th of July weekend is a bad time for me to leave town.

Valid point since lots of folks have family outings, unfortunately I don't think it's going to change. Since it is a universal holiday and almost everyone has it off, I'd guess that for everyone who thinks that it is a bad time to have a reunion, there are at least a couple that think it's ideal.

Bottom line here folks is that without your input and ideas, we're kind of groping in the dark. I already know of a number of Phoenix that are planning to be in Reno. I guess they are category #1, they don't mind being out of town on the 4th, look forward to meeting old friends once a year and turn the trip into a vacation. The fact that the VHPA is in the same hotel is a bonus. So there may be a mini-Phoenix or a many-Phoenix reunion in Reno, right now I'm just looking for your opinions not your hotel reservation.

#### VHPA Membership Chairman

I think "yours truly" has been drafted by the VHPA to serve as membership chairman. Last time I was drafted, I met all of you guys so it can't be all that bad. If any of you have any brainstorms on increasing the profile of the organization and alerting all who are eligible for membership as to it's existence--send em on.

#### New Phoenix

I listed ~~34~~ names as recently located Phoenix, but that was technically incorrect. By unanimous vote of the Board of Directors, the Phoenix have decided to bestow honorary membership upon Mike Sloniker. You have read Mike's name in this newsletter many times as being a primary source of information, or locating a Phoenix or performing a myriad of other functions, all aiding in the dissemination of information to our group. Mike's assistance at the Nelson/Moreira/Hatley/King funeral was not only invaluable, but we would not have even known about it, except for Mike.

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Mike saw all of us together in Chicago and recognized something special, hence his affinity for our group and his continued support. Mike served a tour in VietNam as a cannon cocker with the 101st and another as a slick pilot with the Dolphins. However, we decided to overlook that in our decision. Mike's certificate of membership reads as follows:

Be it known to all that as of this date, Michael E. Sloniker, in recognition and appreciation for all that he has done for his fellow aviators, the VHPA and the Phoenix of C/158th Avn. Bn., is hereby designated an honorary member of the PHOENIX. This proclamation also carries with it an immediate promotion to civilian CW2, the highest attainable rank available to a former RLO, and the award of the call sign-Phoenix 1 Hotel. With much respect, admiration and appreciation, we the undersigned wish you good luck and Godspeed, and leave you with the following benediction:

Lord, when you have decided  
my life's work is now complete,  
and when you have determined  
that you and I should meet,  
I'll be ready to make the trip  
because my mission's done.  
Just let me come to Heaven  
aboard a UH-1.

Signed and in effect this 20th day of October, 1990.

RANDY HOUSE

As the 2nd Brigade commander of the 1st Cav, Randy is presently on extended vacation in the land of endless sands and sunny skies somewhere to the east of my location. Any of you that would like to drop Randy a line to complain about the unseasonably cool weather at your house, or to describe how beautiful the leaves are this autumn, I'm sure would endear yourselves to Randy forever. Randy can be reached at the following address, however I'll leave the topic of your correspondence up to your discretion.

COL Randolph W. House

[REDACTED]  
HHC 2 BDE  
1st CAV  
APO N.Y. 09306

Jack

P.S.

I HAVEN'T forgotten the updated directory,  
I'm waiting on a couple of new addresses,  
then plan on at least 2 weeks if I'm  
typing it.

Robert G. Wilson  
Barry L. Zimmerman  
Robert B. Dalton  
Larry J. Willette  
William K. Neeley  
Alan P. Gilles  
Donnell D. Mills  
Kenneth W. Montgomery  
Gregory B. Moody  
Phillip H. Nystrom  
Wallace A. Pryor  
Randal L. Willer  
Albert J. Ondira  
John G. Mills  
Robert A. Coleman  
Joseph R. Deschaine  
Leon H. Dixon  
Billy J. Valencia  
Paul Michal  
Steven H. Lewis  
William J. Majors  
Neil H. Livingston



\* unsure of first two digits of SSAN