



Newsletter of the USMC/Vietnam Helicopter Pilots & Aircrew Reunion

1 JANUARY 1996

FROM THE REUNION PLANNING HOOCH....

By this time, all of you should have received your 1996 Reunion information packets. We sent them out in early November. If anyone has not received theirs, give us a call ASAP at our new phone/fax number (619) 279-3424, and we will send you another right away. As of the date of this mailing, we're down to 170 days and a wake up before the big Las Vegas reunion. If you haven't made your hotel reservations yet, you need to do so immediately. Even though it's a while before the reunion, our contract with the hotel requires us to have a firm room number commitment in place by the end of this month. So, as the enclosed flyer states, you need to call today! Also, of course, you need to send in your registration form to us along with your check to confirm your attendance.

Well, things are coming together very nicely for the reunion. The interest level is quite high and the plans are falling into place as we had hoped. While we won't know for sure about some of the entertainment and celebrities for a while, we can tell you about one person that we have locked on for sure. We were going to keep it *top secret*, but we're not very good at that, and wanted to give you a little look at something we've got planned.

Do you remember a very sultry female D.J. voice from the AFVN radio broadcasts in Vietnam? She played all of our favorite rock and roll songs of the 60's, and kept us informed of the news back in *The World*. Well, guess what, her name is Chris Noel, and she will be at our reunion! During the Saturday night poolside rock 'n roll party she will be hosting for us and playing all the great old songs that we associated with our time in-country. You're gonna love it! O.K., no more security leaks. We gotta try to save some surprises.

Enclosed in this newsletter you will find your new membership card. We hope that you like the design we came up with. The card also contains our new phone/fax number for the organization's HQ hooch in San Diego. We recommend that you use a permanent black ink fine point marker to put your name on the card.

Additionally, you will also find the 1996 dues form and its return envelope enclosed. Please send in the form and your '96 dues check as soon as you can so that we may turn our full attention to putting together the reunion. Thanks for your help on this. We're a little more pressed for time than in the past, since the reunion will be held earlier in the year than ever before. Remember, June 21st-24th @ Bally's. Be there. *Lock and load* for some fun.....and get ready to rock n' roll!

The History Book saga continues.....

Our battle with Turner Publishing Co. is ongoing as we try to get them to finish our history book. Mike Leahy our project honcho, and I, have made numerous attempts trying to get these people to finish in a timely manner. All that we can say at this point is that they are inchng towards completion. Had we known three years ago what we now know about their operation, we definitely would not have used them. However, at this point we don't have much of an option. Our only consolation is that there are a number of other veteran's groups out there that have been having the same problems with them for an even longer time. The good news is that the finished product should be a first class book that we will be proud of. Below are some excerpts from Mike's latest correspondence with me. Gomenasai.

Roger Herman

.....talked with Bob Martin at Turner Publishing yesterday. He expects the book to be distributed in the 2nd Qtr. of '96. He was glad we were going to put out some information on this update in our upcoming newsletter. He said this would keep the organization a bunch of "happy campers." I immediately informed him that this was a slip in the recently mailed update from Turner, and that we were NOT a bunch of happy campers. He says his workload is tremendous and insists that he wants to deliver a first class product. They expect the final count of member biographies to reach between 400 and 500. This slippage in the schedule allows for more members, especially new members, to submit their bios if they haven't done so as yet. While we are very displeased with the length of time it has taken to get our book published, I for one feel certain that the end result will be truly something we will cherish all of our lives. I know that our families will always be grateful to know the supreme contributions and sacrifices we made during our Vietnam service. I would like any member to write or call me for an order blank right away if they don't have one.

MIKE LEAHY
1227 Mallard Bay Road
Hampstead, N.C. 28443
(910) 270-3629



The following letter, written by one of our members, was received recently. Maybe you can help.....

A retired Marine friend of mine met the people named below in Arizona. Their son was a helo pilot with MAG-16. They don't know if he was flying 34's or Hueys. They would like to hear from anyone that knew him. He was officially listed as MIA on 25 Sept 1966. His name was 1/LT Dean W. Reiter. His parents can be contacted at the following address:

Mr. Nes Rittle
c/o VFW Post #10386, Jon L Street
Kingman, AZ 86401
Home Phone (520) 757-2347

See you in Vegas and Semper Fi...

Denny Scbreiner

.....Of Air Medals, DFM's and other career enhancing awards

The "Best Headwork And Change Of Address Award" for 1995 goes to Steve Boulton. He moved from a place named "Clinton Township."

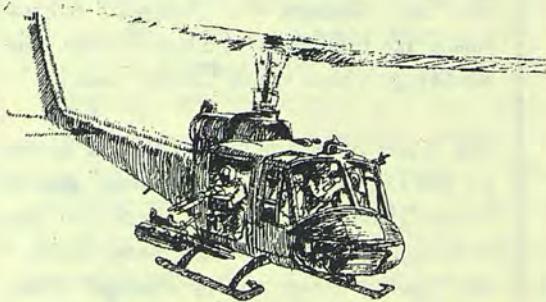
The "Worst Active Duty Bird Colonel's Excuse For Not Paying Dues On Time Award" goes to Terry "Horsenipple Sierra" Curtis for the following....."I got my check back, 'cause I didn't put a stamp on the envelope. One thousand Gomens!"

The "I'm Not Sure If I'm Paid Up Or Not, But I'll Be At The '96 Reunion.....Unless Award" goes to Ed McGaa for the following....."Don't know if my dues are due or not. I missed Pensacola (daughter's wedding, couldn't get her to change the date). I'll be in Las Vegas unless I'm dead from 1. Sushi, 2. Plum Wine, 3. Suspicious Boyfriends / Husbands, 4. Playing goalie for my kid's hockey team practice. P.S., Choice number 4 is the most likely."

The "It Pays To Advertise / We Don't Get Mad, We Get Even Award" goes to Jim Hauf for...."Please send me some more 'Jane' stickers. Someone removed mine from my flight bag. Now why would anyone object to such a message to our buddy Jane?"

The USMC/Vietnam Helicopter Pilots & Aircrew Reunion is a non-profit veterans organization incorporated in California. The corporate and newsletter offices are located at 11151 Alejo Place, San Diego, CA 92124. The office Phone/Fax number is (619) 279-3424. The newsletters, published four times a year, provide information on the group and its reunions. The dues/newsletter rate is \$25.00 a year.

FREE FIRE ZONE



INCOMING!!..... mail, not arty. The following letters to the editor reflect the views of the readers. They'll probably also re-kindle thoughts of long ago memories of *no shit* war stories, good friends, fluctuating oil pressures, taking fire from "friendly" villes, "one pers", emergency recon extracts, and those imaginary (but very real sounding at the time) engine noises, that always occurred in the middle of a *hot* night medevac. And, after the mission, they would always.... "*ground check - O.K.*"

YOU CAN'T MAKE THIS STUFF UP !

.....since we did not want to miss the 1996 reunion, my wife and I have moved to Las Vegas. My door and beer cooler are open to any old friends in need of a room and a place to tell "Sea Stories". My phone number can be obtained from information. Also, if you need any help on the reunion, call me. I'm retired now and am a whiz bang party giver. *SEMPER FI*

Hal Meyer
HMM-365

.....where have I been? Having never heard of your organization until the article in the Sept/Oct '95 issue of *Semper Fidelis*. I guess I'm one of the few who never got the word. South Carolina is like that.

Tom "Magnet Ass" Knowles
(FNG)

.....I have an old uncle who served in WWII. He always told me that he caught the "clap" five times in France and that he cured it every time but the first time. Now, I'm beginning to understand his forgetfulness. Fortunately, with the heavy use of *Aqua Velva* both internally and mostly external, I was able to escape Vietnam without suffering from any of the dread diseases. Unfortunately, I do suffer occasionally from an often terminal case of forgetfulness. That's why my dues are in arrears. The moral, if any, to this story is go on and take a chance....get some. Whether or not you catch a dread disease, or even cure it, it will not prevent the inevitable.....forgetfulness.

With all "dues" respect,
C.P. Maddocks
VMO-2 Historian

In response to the question that we posed in the last newsletter asking whether or not any of you would be interested in returning to Vietnam, the answers were as we anticipated. A small sampling follows.....

Yeah, as SECNAV! Otherwise, are you out of your f@#king mind..... Only if nuclear equipped..... Sure, right after my IRS audit and before my dental appointment for a root canal..... Can I send my ex-wife instead, please..... You perhaps know the meaning of the words "FAT CHANCE"!!!

The following personal advertisement appeared in a local "PennySaver" newspaper. See if it doesn't bring back a few WestPac memories and put a smile on your face too. Some things never change.
Marines you numba one! Semper Fi.

PAGE 22 - TS

Send It Fast, Call PennySaver 578-0000

AUGUST 22-26, 1985



PennySaver

Personals

See who you like! Call: **1-900-844-7722**

FREE

- ★ Video Mailboxes
- ★ Printed Ads
- ★ Message Pick-up

WOMEN SEEKING MEN

ALOHA.....I'm an exotic, dark eyed, long dark haired professional Hawaiian model, artist, and dancer. I'm also a gourmet cook, masseuse, old fashioned values, college grad, love the outdoors and trying new things. Looking for a Marine Corps officer any age for a quality relationship. In me you will find a person that respects the Corps as much as you do.



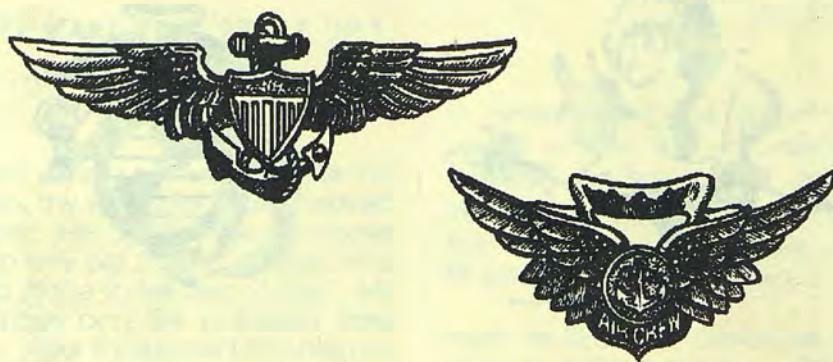
Yeah, right!

"I love you G.I. You buy me air-conditioned Honda?"

Honest, we really don't make this stuff up!

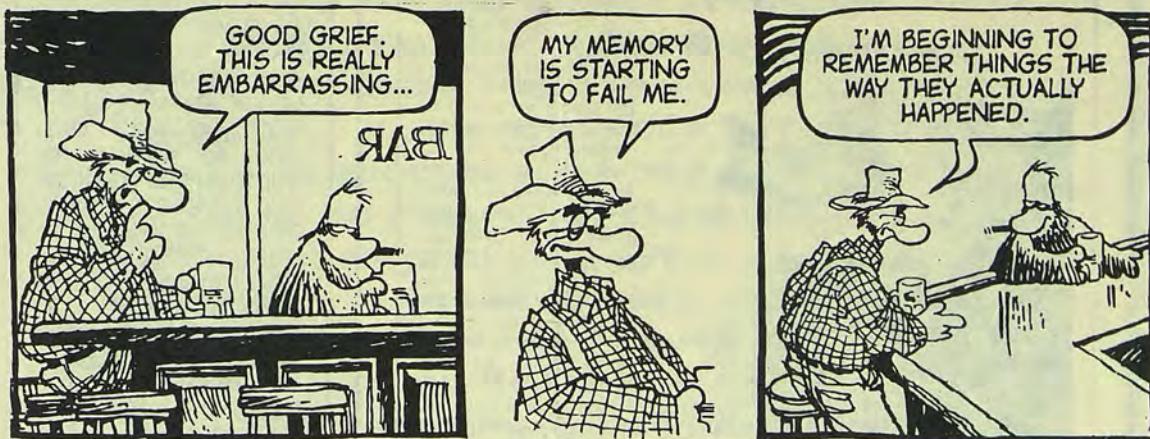
TUN TAVERN

.....the most celebrated event in the history of Tun Tavern occurred on November 10th, 1775. This is the officially recognized birthdate of the Continental Marines, forerunners of the U.S. Marine Corps. Robert Mullen assumed ownership of the tavern. And upon being commissioned by an act of Congress, he raised the first two battalions of Marines under the leadership of Samuel Nicholas. Nicholas was the first appointed Commandant of the Continental Marines, whose grandfather was a member of the Tun Tavern Lodge. He had fully recognized the importance the Tavern held to all residents and seafaring men of Philadelphia. It is this relationship between Mullen and Nicholas that the Tun Tavern is traced as the birthplace of The Corps. Each year on November 10th, around the world, the approximately seven million former and active duty Marines celebrate their heritage and the significance of this birthplace. These events are unprecedented in the annals of military history, mirroring the importance that Independence Day holds for all Americans. Virtually without exception, every Marine knows how important the Tun Tavern was toward the creation of the United States Marine Corps.



Thanks to Randy Drisgula and others for submitting the article from which the above excerpt was taken. We look forward to seeing all of the members of the USMC/Vietnam Helicopter Pilots & Aircrew Reunion in Las Vegas in June.

The cartoon below was sent in by Bob Whaley. He couldn't help but be reminded of the "War Story" sessions at the reunions. We agree, it looks familiar. To sum it all up, "If you weren't a USMC hero pilot or aircrewman, you weren't..... or was it "The older we get, the better we were?"..... The pictures of the early in-country patches at the bottom of the page were sent in by Frank Heins. We'll publish more in future issues of "Pop A Smoke".



"MARINE HELO"

Helicopter War in Vietnam
With the U.S. Marine Corps

David M. Petteys



240 pages - 2 plates - 30 photographs in color and b/w

David M. Petteys - Box 1232 - Conifer, CO 80433-1232 - USA

Yes, send me _____ copies of "Marine Helo" - \$ 20.00 plus \$ 2.74 postage.

Amount enclosed _____

Send to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

DEDICATION

I wish to dedicate this book to all the Armed Service personnel who served in Vietnam, especially to the US Marine Corps, of which I am proud to have been a part.

The book may seem critical of Marine leadership at times. But I ask the reader to look at the historical context. This book is one person's recounting of the daily mental atmosphere in that time and place, warts and all. This includes the rumors, frustrations, pressures and anguish that are present in a combat environment.

In retrospect, most everyone who went to Vietnam did what their country asked them to do, right or wrong, to the best of his or her ability. Nothing in this book is meant to detract from the sacrifices made by these thousands of brave and effective leaders who in many cases were willing to lay down their lives.

David M. Petteys

"We're from the IRS and we're here to help you....."

As a veteran's non-profit organization that is incorporated under the 501(C) 19 category, we are able to extend to our members a nice tax privilege. Your annual donation / dues of \$25 is tax deductible. We are able to qualify for this because over 90% of our members are veterans. Don't forget this when you do your taxes.

Unfortunately, this deductibility does not apply to the checks that are written for the bi-annual reunions. In these cases, goods and services (i.e. meals, T-shirts, hats, etc.) are being provided in return.

Just a reminder that we want to keep this newsletter a reflection of our members' thoughts and memories. If you have anything that you would like to see published, drop us a line at our San Diego address. After having reviewed the appropriate writings and pictures, and determining that they are fit for distribution to the rest of the slightly deranged, but clever minds that read this newsletter, we will be happy to spread the wealth among your friends. Talk about your blank checks. Let us hear from you....

The song on the following page was sent in by Paul Kelly. He writes that he found it recently in an old seabag, and thought that we would like it (note the comments in the column immediately to your left). See if it doesn't bring back some memories for you also, as it did for us. Just as if it all happened yesterday. It's guaranteed to be sung again in Las Vegas this year at Reunion '96, along with a lot of others. It's time to start brushing up on all those golden oldies. See you there, Marines.....

"WE ARE THE MEN OF MAG-16"

(Sung to the tune of "The Green Berets")

We are the men of MAG-16,
Dirty, rough and fighting mean,
From way down south, we came this way,
Don't give a shit about any Green Beret,
We fly in choppers, we are real meanies,
Don't need no chutes, or those green beanies,
While you jump, we drink and f*@k,
We believe Green Berets, really suck,
With these hard hats upon our head,
We'd rather fly than end up dead,
So take your beret and silver wings,
Hang 'em in your ass with all your things,
We flew on missions for quite aways,
On medevacs, both night and days,
One hundred men we hauled today,
Not a f*@king one had a green beret,
We too hang wings upon our chest,
Can make the claim, we're America's best,
Our wings are gold, our hat's are green,
Rather than a Beret, I'll be a Marine,
Back in Oki, a nesan waits,
Pulls down her pants, jacks up her rates,
She's added up, all that flight pay,
And won't put out for a Green Beret,
I know this song won't be a hit,
But a good Marine don't give a shit,
And when it comes to glory, and to fame,
We'll kick your ass, and take your name.

The following is dedicated to the *Purple Foxes* of HMM-364, the one and only, original "GIVE A..... Well, you'll get the idea.



WHEN SOMEONE SAYS:

YOU DON'T KNOW JACK SCHITT

Now you can tell them the rest of the story. Jack Schitt is the only son of Awe Schitt and Oh Schitt. Awe Schitt, the fertilizer magnate married Oh Schitt, the owner of the Kneedeep Schitt Inn.

Jack Schitt married Noe Schitt and they produced six children. Holy Schitt, their first, passed away shortly after childbirth. Next came twin sons, Deep Schitt and Dip Schitt; two daughters, Fulla Schitt and Giva Schitt; and another son, Bull Schitt. Deep Schitt married Lotta Schitt and they had a son, Chicken Schitt.

Fulla Schitt and Giva Schitt married the Happens brothers. The Schitt Happens children are Dawg Schitt, Byrd Schitt and Horace Schitt. Bull Schitt just married a spicy number, Pisa Schitt, and they are awaiting the arrival of Baby Schitt. Now you know Jack Schitt.....OOORAH !

REUNION S. L. J. O.'s

(They forgot that you never volunteer)

HAC..... *Roger "Duke" Herman*
President / Reunion Coordinator
Newsletter & Directory Editor / Sr. Gofer

CO-PILOT..... *Norm "Frenchy" LaFountaine*
Vice-President / Paraloft OIC
Special Ops / Reunion Coordinator

CREWCHIEF..... *John "J.D." Barber*
Secretary / Reunion Coordinator
Sr. Recruiter / CD Rom Runner

GUNNER..... *Robert "Buz" Shantry*
Asst. Secretary / Comshaw Honcho
Reunion Coordinator / Emerg. Resupply

TEST PILOT..... *Ron "The Prince" Sabin*
Treasurer / Chief Financial Officer
Sports Director / Coffee Mess Officer

DOUGHNUT DOLLY..... *Madeline Herman*
Asst. to President / Admin. Support
G-2 Actual / Sr. Nurse

COMBAT ARTIST..... *Mike "Pogue" Leahy*
History Book OIC / Organization Historian
Pilot / Crewchief / Gunner / Great Guy

CAREER PLANNER..... *Harvey "769" Bell*
Legal Advisor / Special Ops
Johnny Cash Liaison / Dogpatch OIC





QUESTION: Please tell me again, oh wise fortune telling Doughnut Dolly..... Just exactly how does this annual dues and reunion thing work with the USMC/Vietnam Helicopter Pilots & Aircrew Reunion?

ANSWER: It's pretty straight forward, oh good-looking, big-spending combat Marine rotorhead. In order to adhere to the "KISS" principle we collect dues just once a year. This occurs at the beginning of the year so that we can cover all upcoming annual costs, and everybody pays up at the same time. "FNG's" who first "joined-up" during the last four months of the previous year, get a one time good deal and are also considered paid up for the following year. This keeps our record keeping simple, fair and easier to administer (especially for those of us who do all 'dis stuff and want to keep the paperwork to a minimum). This being a reunion year you should also make sure that you have made your hotel reservations with Bally's Hotel by now. We don't want you to have to pitch a tent in the parking lot and sleep on a "rubber lady" while the rest of us are inside the big air-conditioned hooch scratching, grinning and telling war stories. Also, send in your \$\$ to us for the 4 day reunion, G.I.

MINI-REUNION UPDATE

A gun pilot has *rolled in hot* to save the day. Al Barbour has "volunteered" to act as the Squadron Mini-Reunion Honcho for '96. He can be reached on the land line @ (703) 364-1474. If you would like to assist in your squadron's activities, give him a call ASAP.

Here is what we've got so far (we think)..... HMM-165 says they will have the hottest LZ (due in large part to their mamasan having burned down the four holer on the way to the Marble Mtn. E Club). *Phrog Phlyers* such as Bob Handley, Al Dickerson, "Wizzy" Wissmar and Al Rose will organize. VMO-2 headed up by Jim Moriarty and Charlie Maddocks have thrown down the gauntlet to all the '34, '46, '53 and Deuce types to see who really packs the gear. The *Foxes* of HMM-364 are back again to defend their title from the Pensacola beach party, with Con Silard commanding. The *Ugly Angels* of HMM-362 are already in translational lift with their op orders. Tom Hewes, Ben Cascio, Marc Sohm and "Doc" Jones are on the schedule. "Mo" Morin, Dan LeBlanc and Mike Tripp are up for the *Red Lions* of '363. "Gunny Nick" Nicholas will be helping to organize at least two squadron mini-reunions. "Red" Logan and John Cain will be getting the HMM-262 reunion together. "Rocky" Graziano and John Maltby have been "volunteered" to head up the HMM-361 rendezvous. And the list goes on.....

If you want to be a part of all this, now is the time to get involved. An award (not a DFM) will be presented to the best squadron hooch area. Call Al Barbour (S.L.J.O. in training) today!

OOORAH!

IN MEMORY OF ALL OF OUR FRIENDS
WHO WERE LOST IN THE VIETNAM WAR

Do not stand at my grave and weep; I am not there, I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow; I am diamond glints on the snow.

I am sunlight on ripened grain; I am the gentle autumn rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush; I am the swift uplifting rush,
Of quiet birds in circled flight; I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry; I am not there, I did not die.

