



The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



Welcome to our July & August 2014
"Heavy Lift" edition of the VHPA Aviator

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Issue 32-04 ~ July/August 2014

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

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From the President of the VHPA -
BOB HESSELBEIN



Who would have guessed some forty-plus years ago when we were worrying about RPM, torque, gunfire and a flickering master caution light that someday we would share an organization created to honor those very moments of high excitement? One of the VHPA articles of incorporation states our mission is to "...enhance and accredit the cohesiveness, esprit de corps, and traditions of valor..." I interpret that to mean gathering, remembering and honoring our fellow pilots and crewmen--the ones who were lions in the air, the ones who were characters on the ground, and those who kept us going regardless of the situation, good or bad.

Although we are now decades past our combat experience in Southeast Asia, the VHPA mission statement is sustained by unpaid volunteer members, individuals who do a great deal of the important grunt work required to keep our organization energized and successful. They quietly work in the background, and we all benefit from their labor on our behalf. They are superb!

If you look at our new "masthead" on page three of this issue, you will see a duty roster of our volunteers and their contact information, but the list is incomplete. As examples, VHPA members Robert Howard, Rick Couch and Larry Wintz routinely augment the office staff at the Grand Prairie HQ and assist with administrative functions; others, such as the members of the Ohio River LZ Chapter, made the superb, 31st Annual Reunion at Louisville a resounding success; and others members quietly step forward to staff other special projects.

How many more years will we be able to sustain our level of participation is uncertain, but each day brings us closer to our "final checkride." We are reminded of that when we read the Aviator's Taps section. It is not a cheery thought, but we are beginning to age out, and it is a reality we must begin planning for within our "last man standing" organization. We certainly don't need to establish the deconstruction plan this month, but sometime in the next few years a serious conversation will have to begin.

In the meantime, the VHPA needs more members to join our band of volunteers. Many committees are operating without a copilot to take the controls if something happens to the aircraft commander. We need redundancy to ensure the VHPA mission is not interrupted. Now, despite your father's advice to "Never volunteer, son," you have in the past (to earn your wings) and you should consider it now. I guarantee you'll find the duties fulfilling.

Amazing! Forty-some years since we shared the fire of combat, and still our brotherhood remains bonded and strong! Who would have guessed we'd survive our time of combat, endure, and continue to enjoy the friendship of our comrades-in-arms?

Bob Hesselbein

FROM THE STAFF AT HQ!

We still have a few t-shirts left from R2013 in San Francisco and R2011 in Orlando. If anyone is interested, call HQ to see if we have your size available.

Thank you so much to the members that have called or sent in their changes to contact information! This assures that you do not miss any issues of your newsletter. If you have not received an issue lately, give us a call to make sure we have your correct address on file. If you move, please to let us know your new address!

Also, you can go on line to <https://directory.vhpa.org> and log in with your member number, then set up a password or use your social security number. Then on the left side will be a box with red lettering that says "Other Services". Under "Other Services" will be a box that says "Update My Information". Click on this button and you can make updates directly to your information.

Please remember that the deadline to order paper or CD directories for 2014 is August 31. The directories will be shipped to you in October. You can place an order by calling HQ at 800-505-8472.

As always, our goal is to make VHPA the best it can be for you, the members! If there is anything that we can do to make that happen, PLEASE LET US KNOW!

Sherry Rodgers
VHPA Office Manager

Important news concerning our Membership Directory cut-off Date

The deadline for new information and changes for the paper and CD membership directories is 15 August 2014. Please send changes and updates to HQ at HQ@vhpa.org or go online to <https://directory.vhpa.org/> and make your contact information updates and changes before the cut-off date. From the left side menu, select Update My Information to see what is currently on file with the VHPA and then make any needed corrections there. The online membership directory is updated weekly, but the paper and CD directories are only updated right before they are printed.

If you want a paper or CD membership directory for 2014, please notify HQ by 1 September of this year.

There is an extra charge for these directories and after September 1st, the price goes up because we do not print many extra copies and in fact, they may no longer be available. This is particularly important for our Life Members as there are no personalized written reminder of these dates made to you from our HQ.

As always, the directories will be printed in September and mailed in October. Any questions, please let me know.

Gary Roush
Membership Directory Editor
webmaster@vhpa.org



The story of the last flight of Huey 67-17658

by Wm E. 'Rob' Roberts

On May 31, 1969, US Army UH-1 Helicopter # 67-17658 made its last flight in the Republic of Vietnam.

The Pilot in Command that day was WO Ron Snider; I, WO Wm E. 'Rob' Roberts, was the co-pilot. Our crew chief that day was SP4 Mark Lennick and our Door Gunner was PFC Dave Haglund. We were flying our 5th "log" (code for ash and trash) mission for the day. This one was to Fire Base Eagle's Nest (a small outpost on a mountain-top, several thousand feet high) that overlooked the entire A Shau Valley. As it turned out, the crash of Huey 17658 occurred just as the battle for Hamburger Hill was coming to a close.

Prior to this terrible day: all of our aircraft and flight crewmembers had seen many, many long and treacherous hours of flying Combat Assault Missions into and out of the area of the Battle for Hamburger Hill. On the 10th of May, 1969, we kicked off Operation Apache Snow which quickly changed into the Battle for Hamburger Hill. By May 31st, our flight crews from "The Lancers" of B Company, 158 Assault Helicopter Battalion, 101st Airborne Division were dog tired, having flown combat missions both day and night. The idea of the crew rest reg. was just a figment of our imagination.

Captain Dan Martin was our Platoon Leader; he was an exceptional Leader, both brave and competent. I learned a great deal from him. I believe that he is probably the reason I am alive today. Most of the crews had rotated into Vietnam together from Ft. Carson Colorado in February of 1969. B Company first set up in Da Nang then moved to Camp Evans, our base at the start of the Battle for Hamburger Hill. In April and May of 1969, B Company had a bunch of brand new Peter Pilots rotate in, one of which was yours truly. I was assigned to Captain Dan Martin's Platoon; and I ended up flying mostly with him and Warrant Officers Dan Shea, Ron Snider, "Doc" Smith, Ed Sakenes and Ben F. Sutton. I had the opportunity to learn a great deal. I watched what others were doing and I did as I was told. Those were the rules for us FNG's.

On this particular day we departed Camp Sally just after noon on a routine resupply mission. The mission brief directed us to begin with a resupply drop to a Landing Zone in the vicinity of Dong Ap Bia (Hamburger Hill itself) and then continue to Eagles Nest. After radio contact was established with Eagles Nest, we requested they "pop smoke", since there were no Pathfinders or Ground Guides around to help us. The men (Infantry troops from the 2nd Battalion of the 501st Infantry) did just that. We were able to determine that we needed to make our pinnacle approach into the wind, heading roughly south to southwest. We made our approach and came to a 5 foot hover - when all of a sudden, out of the corner of my eye, I saw the swirl of a object being blown into our aircraft by the rotor wash. The "crash" that followed started with a loud bang, immediately followed

by the complete loss of anti-torque control.

The aircraft started a violent one hundred-eighty degree turn to the left. The pilot did not cut the throttle, but immediately reduced the collective pitch to crash land the aircraft. The left skid hit the ground first, then the right skid, the Huey remained upright and aircraft skidded to the right 2 or 3 feet. Then my right seat frame collapsed, the skids collapsed and the cross members were driven up into the hard points of the airframe. The bang happened when the short-shaft exploded due to the sudden stoppage of the tail rotor. What caused the accident? It seems that a poncho liner had been blown into the air where the rotor wash carried it into the tail rotor... and that's when all hell broke loose!

As we hit the ground and the aircraft came to a halt, I remember pulling the emergency door jettison handle, and running for safety. I thought, surely the aircraft was going to catch fire and explode, but thank God, that didn't

happen. A moment later I returned to the aircraft and assisted with the shut down. The Huey was so badly damaged it had to be taken back to the factory for a complete rebuild. All of us aircrew were Medevac'd to the Field Hospital at Phu Bia. There were no major injuries among any of us and we were back flying the next day.



WO Wm E. "Rob" Roberts pictured at Firebase Airborne, 1969.



The crew of 17658 closes out the log book after the crash on the Eagles Nest. Show here, (from left) are: C/E Mark Lennick, C/P WO Wm E. "Rob" Roberts, A/C WO Ron Snider and D/G David Haglund

As an aside, if the PIC had followed the Emergency Procedures for a Tail Rotor Failure and chopped the throttle, we would have most likely slammed into the Bunkers on top of that mountain; and continued over the side falling several thousand feet to the valley floor below. We would certainly have all been killed!

Actually, this was the second time I had gone down in the first thirty days of flying with the Lancers. The first time was on a flight with CWO Snyder at the controls. We were at a high hover, (around one-hundred fifty feet) due to the tall trees, during a troop re-supply on Hamburger Hill. We came under fire and a round had struck the rotor head. We flew the remainder of the mission and made it back to the Valley Floor. After shutdown, we found that the mast bumping retaining stop had been shot off - Just another day with the Lancers!

Forty years later I found out that 67-17658 had been rebuilt, served with several US Army stateside units and was now sitting at the War Bird Museum in Cape Canaveral, Florida where it was being maintained in flying condition. I took the opportunity to visit there one summer day, along with my father. The men of the War Bird Museum let me sit in her cockpit and the smells brought back every feeling I had on that day in May, so long, long ago....

Wm E. "Rob" Roberts, LTC (USA, Ret) EdD
Lancer 62A

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

PRIMARY HELICOPTER CENTER U.S. ARMY FORT WOLTERS TEXAS

From the August 16, 2013 edition of the
Mineral Wells Index

THEY'RE BACK

By Libby Cluettstaff reporter,
used by permission

Starting around 2:30 p.m., Wednesday, August 14th 2013, members of the Fort Wolters Gate Committee worked to reinstall the two helicopters that grace the pedestals on either side of the arched entrance to the former, historic Primary Helicopter Center.

Both birds – the Hiller OH-23 and the Hughes TH-55 – sustained extensive damage during the May 15 hailstorm, including holes in the bubble canopies of both.

Fort Wolters Gate Committee Chair Ronny Collins said B.J. Ashley Sr. and David Kessler restored the aircraft. He said the committee had a bubble donated for the Hiller, and, including the cost of parts, the total post-hail restoration amounted to only \$700.00.

But restoring the damaged helicopters required a great deal of labor and Kessler said they took longer than he expected, noting, "We did an extensive amount of repair on the Hughes." "On the Hiller it was basically the bubble," Kessler told the Index. "On the Hughes, we did a complete repaint, based on the pictures we have

and our faded memory of the past."

While they had the helicopters in the shop, Ashley and Kessler worked to match the TH-55 to the color of the original helicopter installed when Fort Wolters was an active military base. "Our charge was to put the thing back the way it was," Kessler told the Index.

When asked how he feels about the gate today, he said, "To

quote [Duck Dynasty's] Phil Robertson, 'Happy, happy, happy' and, he said later, "Tickled pink."

"B.J. and I were never satisfied with the color of the TH-55," which he said was the factory orange color and not "international red" – one of two main colors Kessler said the military used, with olive drab being the other. They also painted the tail boom white, he explained, "because that's the color it was in an original photo." "It was a chore on the 55," he said, which included some additional repairs after wind damaged more than just the bubble.

"It's our honor to work on those things and to give back to the guys who served," Kessler added. "We took that project on to honor servicemen and those who aided that era. I'm happy they're up and will look for an extended period of time."



Fort Wolters Gate Committee Chair Ronny Collins photographed the arrival of the OH-23 helicopters' return from the right seat of Jerry Stagg's vintage, and still flyable, Fort Wolters' TH-55 training helicopter. (Photo courtesy of the Mineral Wells Index)



B.J. Ashley helps position the Hughes TH-55 into place. He and David Kessler worked to restore both of the helicopters, damaged in the May 15 hailstorm. (Photo courtesy of the Mineral Wells Index)



The entranceway's TH-55 today (Photo courtesy of the Member Rex Gooch)

DEFOLIANT MISSION

by Jim Cameron

April 27, 1969 about 8 AM our crew was assigned a defoliant mission in the Da Nang area. I was the PP in my 2nd month in-country flying a UH-1D Huey from the 176th AHC (Minuteman), 14th Btn., Americal Div. We flew to the 3MAAF (aka the ROK Marines) base pad on the beach at the Southern perimeter of Da Nang not far from the end of the runways. A US Sp4 directed the ROK Marines in loading a large tank in the cargo area with sprayers that extended a couple of feet past the Crew Chief and Gunner seats on each side—We had spray pipe wings!!

This was my first and last time seeing the ROK Marines in action. A Lt. used his boot like nobody I have ever seen to inspire his soldiers to get the tank on and liquid into the tank. Boots work—it didn't take long. We would see this action every time we returned to refill the tank and we were the only ones laughing. On the 2nd refill, we went to their Chow Hall for cokes and got to meet Miss South Korea from the 1968 Miss Universe Pageant who was visiting her troops to boost morale. We gave the usual how do you do, nice to meetcha, smile, smile, bow and went back to work.

The Mission:

Go to the area near their Western Perimeter where Charlie was hiding and spray the Green vegetation so it will turn brown in 48 hours, we were told. We hooked up with 2 Cobras from the F/8 Blue Ghosts and we led while they trailed to blow away the VC should we take fire. From the beach, we got on the North end of the Tree/Jungle line that extended a few clicks inland and started our spray runs heading South and inside the tree line and with each oval pass we worked toward the beach. The Defoliant (Agent Orange) dropped like rain. We made several runs and refills during the morning and heard a few AK pops, but could not identify a target and drop a smoke, so the Cobras never got to do their thing. After a few, we were fed lunch, then went to Da Nang to refuel. The break lasted a couple of hours.

We loaded up for the first afternoon run and then the "I will never forget this" event happened. We started our first run that was now taking us to the edge of the jungle where it met a field with grass and some scattered trees. We were straight and level at 60 knots, at about 50' high as usual and the AC was in control while I was looking at the tree line, as was the gunner who had a smoke grenade in his hand ready to mark a target—gunships trailing by one half click at altitude—SOP for this mission.

Suddenly there were people coming out of the jungle—I had my hand lightly on the cyclic mike and the gunner was yelling "dinks in the open," when I pressed the button and yelled "Cease Fire" My pilots' eyes picked up a camouflage helmet as I was about to direct the Cobras to "go hot". The A/C spotted them at the same time and saw the platoon of the US Marines apparently on a scouting mission. He immediately did a hard left turn and came around again to see 30 Marines smiling and waving at us as we passed by. I don't remember what the Cobra guys were saying

on the radio, but it was not real positive.

We were "SHOOK"! Those Marines will never know how close they came to friendly fire and a very bad day. We radioed HQ and reported the incident and ended the mission. I never heard about it again.

I have a clear recollection of this experience and thank God for good eyes and a slow trigger finger.



Jim Cameron in Vietnam

Jim Cameron
CW2, 176th AHC
(Minuteman),
E-Mail:
[REDACTED]

PS: I extended my tour in Viet Nam to 18 months to get the early out and worked Southern I Corps the whole time without any other incident quite like this one.



ROK soldiers filling up the spray system's tanks with agent orange.



George photographs a couple in his tour group



Every year since 2008, I've taken a group of 25 to the heart of the Central Highlands of Vietnam. We tour Saigon first then the Mekong Delta. Three nights in Pleiku and one in Kontum allows us time for visits from Camp Enari to Ben Het including Montagnard Villages and orphanages. We see Kontum, Dakto, Tan Canh, and much more. We drive the passes on the way to the beach resorts of Quy Nhon and Nha Trang. Have lunch in An Khe. We will stop where you want and see what you came to see. This tour is about your return experience. See the web site for detailed itinerary.

The tour starts in Saigon on Jan 22 and ends there Feb 3. The costs is \$1620 per person/double occupancy, single supplement \$575. Included is transportation on our 40 passenger A/C bus (with Wi-Fi), in-country flights, hotels, most meals, entrance fees, English speaking guide and lots more. Tour extensions to Delat and Angkor Wat are available. Not included is your roundtrip flight to Vietnam.

For full details and to register for this tour, go to our website at: www.Brothersforever.us or contact me directly at 540-220-9266 (cell), 800-248-1690 (office) or georgedese@comcast.net



George DeSerres, CW4, Ret
Flight class 66-13,
Gun Pilot for 189th AHC and 117th AHC,
Slick Pilot for the 189th AHC



Army Officer Candidate School Fort Knox, KY ~ 1965-1968

An OCS at Fort Knox All Class Reunion
is scheduled for October 9-12, 2014
in Louisville, KY.

For more information about the reunion and the first
ever book about OCS at Fort Knox during 1965-1968,
Contact Doug at 970-206-0624
or email burmester_4@msn.com



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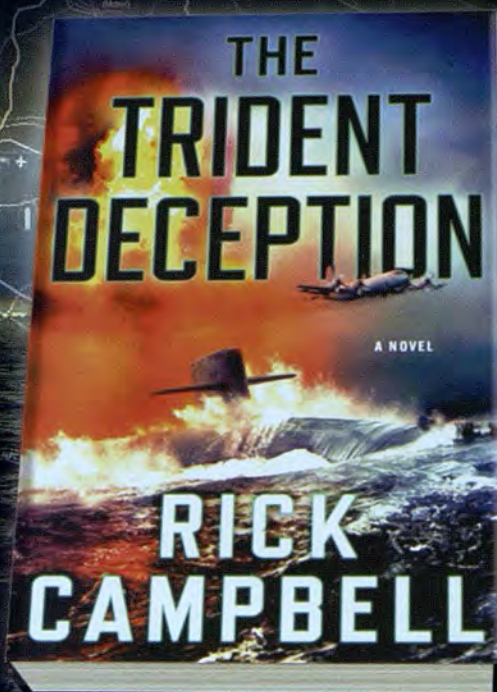
or email:

TheReunionBrat@hotmail.com

Activities planned include visits to the Armed Forces
Military Museum, Mac Dill AFB and Clearwater Marine
Aquarium. Our Hospitality Room is open throughout the
Gathering and this year, our formal closing dinner will
especially honor the DFC Recipients of the Korean War.

"THE BEST NOVEL ABOUT A SUBMARINE SINCE *THE HUNT FOR RED OCTOBER*."

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★..... ★

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 St. Martin's Press

An Unanticipated Engagement

By Bob Hesselbein

The moment was completely unanticipated. We were surrounded: two helicopter pilots and a crew chief, one infantryman, a Marine captain and his Vietnamese counterpart. We were deep in Uncle Ho's territory and surrounded by dozens of veteran North Vietnamese soldiers who were comfortable in jungle terrain and nighttime conditions. They knew exactly where we were, who we were, and fully understood our limited ability to defend ourselves.

But it was not a place or time of mortal combat; it was Saturday evening, September 7, 2013 in the Moung Thanh Hotel dining room. We were five American veterans and one Vietnamese interpreter.

Worn, and still wearing the shorts and t-shirts of the day's long walk through the old French-Vietnamese battlefields of Dien Bien Phu, we found ourselves fully surrounded by older, well-dressed Vietnamese gentlemen and their wives. Our interpreter was discretely asked if we were Frenchmen visiting the 1954 battlefield where France surrendered over ten - thousand men to the Viet Minh. The group became animated when informed that we were American soldiers, returning to Vietnam for the first time since our combat tours some forty-plus years ago. They were also veterans, visiting Dien Bien Phu for a military reunion of their own; and asked us to join them.

Theses surviving North Vietnamese soldiers of the 324th Division, People's Army of Viet Nam (PAVN), had fought against us: in "I" Corp from 1967 through TET, LAM SON 719 and the DMZ battles of 1975. They had served throughout the years of the "American War," and we were the first Americans they had met outside of battle.

Bridging the gap of 40 years, this weaponless reintroduction was an amazing reunion of smiles and respect. It included the sharing of family pictures, and awkward attempts to bridge the communication gap of unshared languages. We old American veterans were quickly scattered among the tables of old Vietnamese soldiers while our interpreter strived to choreograph the many different conversations.

Frankly, the unplanned engagement shook me. After meeting these fellow survivors of war, our enemies, I had to



A group picture with US and North Vietnamese Army veterans posing at an unplanned reunion in 2013.



The rusted remains of a howitzer guarding the overgrown Khe Sanh Combat Base

excuse myself. I stepped out of the room to deal with a stunning epiphany. Those I sought to destroy in 1972 from the cockpit of a heavily armed attack helicopter were equally young, and desiring the same things for their future that I wished for my own. The realization was clear - they fought to serve their country, just as we fought to serve our own. I knew their conditions in the jungle were terrible. They fought without a chance of R & R or to return home, until their death or victory. Reflecting on the horror of their combat conditions, I was moved to tears by their kindness and willingness to not only overlook the war's devastation but to celebrate survival with old opponents.

As the evening progressed we joined them on a long bus ride over bumpy dirt roads to enjoy an evening of native T'ai people's cultural dances and exhibits. Strong rice moonshine,



Bob Hesselbein loading rockets in Vietnam, a few weeks after his 20th birthday.

served by T'ai women in traditional clothing, led to a blurry celebration that lasted very late into the night. We parted reluctantly in the early hours of Sunday morning with smiling nods and gentle handshakes in the Vietnamese manner, and the engagement came to an end.

Reflecting on my 2013 visit to Vietnam, I can report the devastated wartime landscapes I remembered are now gone, recovered by fresh forest, farm fields and homes. My return to the former war zone revealed little to recognize beyond the mountain skylines, rivers, rice paddies humidity and the heat remembered in my daily thoughts. The recollections of old, however, are now supplanted by fresh images and memories of a healing land and friendly, gracious people.

The greatest memory of my 2013 return, however, is not the



Today Bob volunteers flying Air-One, a dedicated public safety OH-58 helicopter. Bob also serves as this years President of the VHPA

revisited jungles and fading battlefields of my combat days; it is the unexpected meeting of former combatants who survived and joined together in the Moun Thanh Hotel to prove old enemies can remember and forgive.

Bob Hesselbein
E Mail: President@VHPA.org

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USAFSS Intelligence Analyst 1964-74

USAF Admin Supervisor 1974-83

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1963-64 Basic Lackland AFB, Tx

1964-68 RAF Chicksands, England

1968-71 NSA Ft. Meade, Md.

1971-74 Osan AB, ROK

1974-83 Vandenberg AFB, Ca



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Contact: John Conway
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www.vhpamuseum.org

ONE FOR THE RECORDS

by Gary Krehbiel

In my 23 years in military aviation, I took many orientation rides. Naturally, I don't remember much about those rides with the exception of one. That one happens to be my very first orientation ride. In January of 1970, I was assigned to D Troop 1/1 Cav, Chu Lai Vietnam. I arrived at the unit along with two other pilots. We were told that the commander was flying, and that he would welcome us later in the day. In the meantime, we were taken to supply to draw our supplies and then shown to our hootches.

Later that afternoon, we were summoned to the commander's office. He welcomed us and explained the roll of the air cavalry. He explained that we would fly as a team and that there was always at least one Loach for low level observation, one Cobra gunship for cover of the Loach or support of ground troops, and one Huey complete with a squad of Blues (Troop infantry) who performed detailed searches or on occasion protection/recovery of a downed aircrew. He told us that he would like us to fly one week in each aircraft and then we could choose which platoon we wanted. He further explained that he would not require us to fly in Scouts, and that if we did choose Scouts he didn't want us to fly Scouts for more than six months. In flight school, we had been told that the average life expectancy of a Scout pilot was six months, and I figured that the CO had pretty much confirmed that fact. I was married at the time and my wife was eight months pregnant with our first child, so I really didn't want anything to do with Scouts. Unfortunately, I was number three to pick what we were going to fly that first week and Scouts were all that was left. During Tac-X in flight school, the instructors had pounded into us that as new W-1's we were first going to have to prove ourselves, and that initially we would be assigned the primary duty of monitoring the engine and transmission gauges when flying. I didn't feel that saying that I didn't want to fly Scouts would reflect very well on me as a Newbie, so I reluctantly said I'd try Scouts. After all, it would only be for a week, and what could happen in a week.

I left the CO's office and proceeded to the unit lounge to meet the Scout Platoon leader, Cpt. LaFleur. When I entered the lounge I was greeted with a cry of "New Guy", and everyone raised their drinks. I looked around in amazement and noticed this one guy at the bar who had this awesome handle-bar mustache. It didn't look regulation to me, but maybe we could get by with this kind of stuff in combat. The guy behind the bar explained the lounge payment system and asked me what he could get me. I ordered a drink and asked him to point out Cpt. LaFleur. To my surprise, he pointed to the guy with the "stash". I introduced myself and told Cpt. LaFleur that I would be flying Scouts my first week. Cpt. LaFleur first informed me that everyone called him "Pepe", and that is would be OK to use his nickname around fellow crewmembers. He then asked me when I would be ready to fly. Again, remembering Tac-X, I said, "tomorrow". He said he was flying the next day and I could fly with him. He then paused and said, "Wait, you may not want to do that. I've been shot down the last three months between the 12th and 16th, and tomorrow is the 12th." Damn that Tac-X. I told him again that I was ready to fly and would gladly fly with him.

The next morning, Cpt. LaFleur met me at the flight-line and we started with a map orientation of our area-of-operation (AO). He pointed out two valleys and stated that this was where most of the rockets that hit Chu Lai came from. They were appropriately called



Show here are Nick Lappos, Cobra pilot who provided gun cover for that fateful mission, Gary Krehbiel the author of the mission and Russ Elderbaum, the gunner who was "lucky" enough to be with Gary and Pepe that day.

the North and South Rocket Pockets. He also stated that our unit had a daily first-light and last-light mission, and that those missions were normally flown in the Rocket Pockets. He further pointed out an area in the Southern Rocket Pocket called the Horse Shoe. The name came from the fact that a river had a bend that resembled a horse shoe. Pepe stated that this was a bad area and that this is where he had been shot down. I don't remember how many times he said it, but think it was more than once. After the map orientation, we were briefed on our first-light mission. We were to perform a visual reconnaissance (VR) in the Northern Rocket Pocket. Thank God that didn't include the Horse Shoe. With any luck, I could avoid that area during my week in Scouts.

We then proceeded to the flight line, and Cpt. LaFleur showed me the preflight inspection of an OH-6. He also briefed me on the AR-15 that I would be carrying as the observer in the left seat. With that done, we climbed in along with the door gunner Russ Elderbaum who sat behind Pepe. After securing ourselves, Pepe showed me the start-up procedures, established radio contact with the Gunship and Huey, and we were off. Immediately, I saw that we were flying at about 10' off the ground, and I felt like a target-of-opportunity. While I was hoping that we would eventually gain altitude, we never did. On the way to the VR area, Pepe was pointing out numerous land marks. Once we were in the assigned area, we began slow right hand circles so that Pepe could see and report findings, and the door gunner could provide evasive cover in case of enemy contact. I was in the left seat, and not only didn't I see what they were reporting, my ride was somewhat like that of a merry-go-round. I was able to fight off the dizziness, but I was becoming frustrated at not seeing anything that they were reporting. Then we got a radio call from base operations stating that there had been enemy activity in the Horse Shoe the night before and that our mission was changed. We were enroute to the Horse Shoe. While I felt a sense of panic, I was comforted by the cool demeanor of Cpt. LaFleur. He was calmly pointing out new landmarks and showed no concern about going into the Horseshoe.

Upon arriving on station, we made several high speed passes so as not to pose an easy target if enemy were still present. Seeing no enemy and taking no fire, we slowed down to perform a detailed VR. After a short while, Pepe came to a hover and started sliding





Close up photo of the left seat area where Gary was flying that day. While Gary was taking these photos, a unit maintenance man, not knowing who Gary was, commented to his friends "Damn, I feel sorry for that guy in the left seat."

sideways. He reported a trail with boot prints. As we progressed, the trail came in view on my side. Finally I could see what he was reporting, and I was just starting to feel a sense of accomplishment when all of a sudden there was a volley of automatic gun fire and plexiglass began flying everywhere. I looked forward to see what was going on and I was staring down the barrel of five or six enemy weapons that were ablaze and pointed directly at us. Pepe rather calmly reported "taking fire" and spun the aircraft around to put the tail towards the enemy. And then, as I heard the engine winding down, Pepe rather calmly, said "going down". How in the hell could this guy stay so calm with all that was happening? I looked down and saw that we were headed for what I equated to a small Kansas farm pond. Later I found out it was a water filled Arc-Light bomb crater. We settled into the water and the aircraft immediately rolled right. Instantly Pepe was under water and started flailing around. I could only believe that he had been shot. As we were settling further in the water, I analyzed that this water couldn't be that deep and that my side of the aircraft probably wouldn't go under. I purposely left my seat belt on to give me some leverage in lifting Pepe out. By this time I could feel Pepe kicking me in the chest and shoulder and realized that he was diving instead of coming to the top of the water. I bent down under water and struggled to get him turned around and pushed out through my door. As I got him part way out the door, the door gunner was outside the aircraft helping me wrestle him out between me and the door post. As we got him free, I suddenly realized that I had miscalculated, and that I was going under water too. As the water came up over my chin, I began struggling to get out. I found that I was pinned for some reason. I began to panic and struggled harder, but I still couldn't get free. I was going to drown. I took a final breath before my head went under and continued trying to free myself for a short while. Then I stopped as I realized it was for naught. It became very dark under water, and when I could hold my breath no longer and my lungs began to fill with water, I said a final prayer asking God to take care of my wife and unborn child. This was how my life was going to end. And then the strangest thing happened. It got very bright, almost blinding light and I felt someone gently touch my shoulder and a quiet voice said one word, "seatbelt". It dawned on me that I had purposely left my seat belt fastened for leverage. I used my last ounce of strength to unfasten the belt and get my head above water. As I came up choking, other crewmembers said that I popped up out the aircraft like a Jack-in-the-Box. Once out, I found Pepe still gasping for air, but he stated that he hadn't been shot. He said that he was struggling because he couldn't figure out which way was up.

Fortunately, it turned out that the aircraft did not go completely under. The left side of the belly and left skid were sticking out of the

water. I say fortunately, because it provided some cover from the enemy who were still firing at us in the water. We were sitting ducks. The Cobra came to a high hover over us and was firing on the enemy. We were hunkered down, standing on the right skid, and firing our .38's over our heads in the general direction of the enemy. Suddenly, the door gunner slid over the side of the aircraft and dove back inside. I assumed that he was going to try to get his M-60, but when he came back up he had his arms full of FRAG grenades that he carried in the back of the aircraft. We started pulling pins and tossing FRAG's. Then we saw that the Huey on short final to extract us was making a go-around for some reason. I don't know if our grenades killed any enemy, but they had managed to drive our rescue aircraft off. The crew later reported that they thought our FRAG's were some type of heavy enemy fire. When we stopped throwing grenades, the Huey was immediately hovering over the bomb crater and the Blues were at the door waving us over. The enemy were still shooting and the Huey door gunners were returning fire. The whole time the Cobra was still hovering and providing cover. It was apparent that everyone was laying down their lives to try to save us. God bless the brotherhood, although as a Newbie I didn't understand that concept yet. The door gunner and I helped Pepe over to the aircraft and the Blues pulled him in. Then the door gunner and I grabbed the skid and with the help of the Blues got inside the aircraft.

As we lifted-off, I laid on the floor, and my mind began running amuck. I tried to comprehend what had just happened, and I began to shake severely. We were soaked, and it was quite cold with the wind blowing through the aircraft with the doors open. Actually, I'm sure that more than anything, I was shaking from coming down from an adrenaline rush. Enroute back to the flight line, it was confirmed that we had all made it out of the aircraft unharmed.

Back at operations, we were met by the commander and what seemed like the whole unit. Everyone was patting us on the back, and I got ribbed about getting my cherry broken on my first mission. The Commander asked me what I thought of Loaches and if I wanted to continue flying Scouts. Damn that Tac-X, I again said yes. That evening we had a Battalion Hail and Farewell, and when the commander introduced me, he told the story of my first flight in Vietnam and stated that I told him that I wanted to continue flying Scouts. While I might have said that, I damn sure meant for the rest of the week, not for good.

AFTERWORD ~ One month after this incident, I was checked out to fly scouts as the aircraft commander and was flying as part of a heavy team. We were diverted to perform a bomb damage assessment (BDA) of a suspected enemy base camp on the side of a mountain. I approached the area at a higher speed as Pepe had shown me. We saw a number of bunkers, but no enemy. As I reached the top of the mountain and started to swing back down, I had a check-valve failure and settled through 75' trees on the side of a mountain. We sustained only minor injuries. After a frantic low-crawl to a small open area, we made it out with the help of the other Loach pilot who pulled us out one at a time and took us down to a landing area large enough for a Huey. Once again, the Cobras guarded over us with no concern for their own safety. You gotta love the Air Cavalry concept and teamwork. It looked like I was continuing Pepe's string of going down between the 12th and 16th of each month. The following month I went to the flight surgeon on the 11th and asked to be grounded. When I told him my story, he agreed that it made sense, and grounded me. On the 17th, I was placed back on flight status, and that seemed to break the streak. I flew Loaches the rest of my tour and although I took hits numerous times, I didn't crash again. So much for an only six-month life expectancy.

Gary Krehbiel

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For this man....

Editor's note: Out of the blue this week Chris Jensen sent me this remarkable photo in the hopes that one of our members could ID the pilot shown.

In his E-Mail, Chris said "I was a motion picture photographer with the 221st Signal Company in Vietnam and took this picture with my personal camera at Khe Sanh early in 1971. Last month I was sorting through my old negatives before scanning them onto a CD when I thought this pilot might like a copy of this photo.



So, if you can help me in this mission, please contact me at the below E-mail address and we'll get the ball rolling!"

Thanks,

Chris Jensen, Bethlehem, NH

E-mail: [REDACTED]

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Bucket List Checkmark

by John "Pepe" LaDue

Ever wondered if you can still do that backflip off of the diving board? How about hitting that curveball from your baseball playing days? How about flying that trainer you flew in flight school? I have, and although the first two questions will remain unanswered, the possibility of answering the third question just needed the place and the opportunity. This past June, the planets lined up, and I found myself at the controls of what I thought to be the modern version of the venerable 'Mattel Messerschmitt', the Hughes TH-55A. It wasn't the aircraft I trained in (the H-23), but it was the aircraft I flew as a primary IP for two years, in 1968-69, at Ft. Wolters.

Earlier this year, an out-of-the-blue phone call from Bill "Moon" Mullen (the new VHPA President) set in motion a series of



events that led to another checkmark on my bucket list. I had recently joined the VHPA, Bill had seen my name and address on the new member list, noticed that I lived only 45 minutes away, and invited me to meet him for lunch. We met, answered the prerequisite "Where were you, who were you with, and when were you there?" questions, and I apparently left him with a good enough impression that he invited me down to an annual fundraiser for his local airport.

The "where's and when's" were listed on a flyer he gave me, and I noticed that they were going to offer helicopter and airplane rides. That perked my interest and I contacted the airport to find out who was going to conduct the helicopter rides. Hi-Tech Helicopters (at the Pocono Mountains Municipal Airport) was the answer and I found out that they offered the gamut of helicopter flight training from private to CFI flight ratings. Hmmm, I thought, this is getting interesting. When I asked what kind of aircraft they flew, the answer came back, "it's a Sikorsky Global S-300CBI". The time, place and opportunity had finally come together. A number of phone calls and e-mails ensued to coordinate schedules and I booked an hour's worth of stick time for the end of June.

When the long awaited day finally arrived, my cousin (a helicopter FNG) and I drove down and met the instructor. We went through the basic info, and the instructor and I took off for a local area flight. It was a beautiful day for flying. We toured the area, flew a couple of traffic patterns, and hovered for a few minutes. I had a great time, although I did question why a grizzled, 66 yr. old, veteran combat helicopter pilot would have allowed someone who looked like he had just graduated from 8th grade take him up in any kind of aircraft. My senior bias had been very quickly allayed, by the instructor's professionalism and personality. After 40 minutes we landed and I let him take my cousin up for his first ever helicopter flight, for twenty minutes. In retrospect, I graded my own flight at about a C, maybe a C-. A little overcorrecting, a little late on the throttle adjustments, and a little too much time with my head in the cockpit. No pink slip, though. Not too bad after a 38 year hiatus, and most importantly, it was fun.

Now if I could just find a generous Huey Owner :)

John "Pepe" LaDue

B&D/227th AHB, 1st Cav Div, 1966-1967

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To The Editor of the VHPA Aviator,

In response to Ira McComic's excellent story in our April-May issue about landing a Cobra on a Barge. For me a similar experience did not come with any previous instructions, let alone an experienced instructor pilot.

One day, while staging out of Rach Gai during the wet season, fuel could not be flown in to our refueling pad by our CH-47's. Our mission was running a little long and I became concerned what we were going to do for gas when our C&C Bird came up with the brilliant idea for us to just fly out to the barge where all the fuel was coming from anyway – and what a mistake that was. I should have known what was ahead when I contacted the barge and told them what I wanted to do, but I didn't exactly know just where they were. Not a problem said the man on the radio, "Just" fly due west out into the South China Sea and when we hear your rotor blades, we'll further direct you in. About 20 stressful minutes later I saw a "postage stamp" floating in the water and heard that same radio man say "we're right on your nose about one mile away, you're cleared to land on the port side".

Of course I didn't have any idea what the port side meant, but to this day I can recall his exact next words - "When all of the Whiskey's gone, the Port is Left. What color is Port, Red". Meaning the red light is on the left side. Then, after having that damn barge bob and pitch for 3 or 4 minutes under me due to choppy seas, I finally committed to bottoming the pitch the next time it touched my skids; the landing was harrowing, scary and pitted my stomach. But at least I got some really needed fuel. When it came time for takeoff with our 1,250 pounds of fresh fuel, we had more "fun" trying to clear the barbed wire fencing that surrounded the barge's deck, but that's a story for another day.

All in all, it was a truly memorable experience.

Donn "Mixer" Wilimzik

Apache 31, Gun Platoon, A Troop, 7/1 Air Cav

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator,

I closed my story (return to Vietnam, Issue 32-05 of the VHPA Aviator) about the tour of Vietnam my wife, Sharon, and I enjoyed in 2012 with a statement about my desire to take our son Marcos back to Vietnam if the opportunity ever presented itself. Well the opportunity did open up again and in March 2014, Marcos and I traveled the 2014 version of our 2012 tour itinerary. We again had an awesome adventure.

Today I really don't want to send you another story about what we saw and did but I did want the membership to know that on this tour, organized by VHPA member George DeSerres under the auspices of his tour company Brothers Forever, we were offered plenty of free time for exploring on our own. Our group travels were unrestricted except for our visits to the Jarai and Bahnar Montagnard villages which were first coordinated with the government. I'm told that generally, Montagnard villages are generally "Off Limits" without government approval. I can also report that the, free time, self directed touring in the cities we visited was pleasant, interesting and safe. Safe from crime that is, crossing the streets on foot is another matter.

I want the Membership to also know that it will be my pleasure to encourage and assist veterans interested in returning to Vietnam. Remember that I really do not have "a dog in the hunt" in the Return to Vietnam Tour business and I will be glad to offer some "neutral" advice to anyone thinking about returning to Vietnam. Feel free to contact me at the below e-mail address.

Stephen Willett, Ghost Rider 32

To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator,

Because people are now able to manipulate photographic images with digital computer programs, the graduating class at Hunter Army Airfield on 18 November 1969 (Class 69-37) is the only graduating class photograph of that era where each graduating member can be identified on the actual photograph. For some reason the primary flight school photographs

taken at Fort Wolters has the name of each class member on each photograph, however each of the advanced flight school photographs at Fort Hunter are just unidentified aviators taken in a group photograph..

Hopefully, someone in the membership could add the names to both the ORWAC and WORWAC group photographs so every member of each class can be identified on the actual photograph. The time to tackle these projects is fast approaching the point where if it isn't performed soon, the photographs will become just a collection of photographs with nameless faces staring back at the viewer with all those aviators faces never identified! Interested in helping me? Contact...

Eric Bray

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator

David, I didn't mean to clutter your inbox, but I wanted you to have a chance to feel as good as I do about the contact I made with Kenny Kile, the man that sent us a "Looking For.... Information concerning the death of SP4 John Terrence (Terry) Kile" letter that that we ran in this last issue.

I was really able to help Kenny learn a lot about the death of his little brother and I was also able to provide several more leads to him about Terry's life in Vietnam with D Co, 227th AHB.

I know this is exactly why the "Looking for" column exists, and I am sure this was far from the only time when a request has produced positive results; but to me there's nothing quite like the satisfaction that comes from helping someone fill a hole in their life. I dearly love "The Aviator" and Gary's database and the membership directory on the website. Thanks for all you do on behalf of the rest of us.

Jim Kurtz

To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator,

I received my copy of your newsletter today, what a great publication. You guys do a nice job on it.

Thank you very much, for both the copy of your newsletter and for presenting my poem so nicely. I am grateful that Veterans will see it. It feels very special to me and I can't thank you enough. It feels like I won a prize for my writing! I will treasure it always and I hope your readers enjoyed the poem.

Connie Bomstead

Author of last issue's "Steel Horses" poem

To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator,

Greetings, and thank you for posting the note in your last news letter about my wishing to preserve the history the 128th Tomahawks. I wanted you to know that I have received a couple of e-mails concerning disposition of the pictures from both former 128th members and also the U.S. Army Aviation Museum at Ft. Rucker. (Kind'a ironic that they would be the first to respond since they were the ones who suggested I contact you folks!) The Museum seemed genuinely interested in scanning them to their archives and returning the originals back to me.

This is great news! There were more than just a few Officers and Enlisted that were instrumental in making the transition from the beloved Huey to the Blackhawk and they deserve to be recognized for their efforts or at the very least acknowledged for being part of this brief period of 128th history. I don't know when the 128th was deactivated last, but I think it's important that it be remembered that the Tomahawks flew-on after VN with the same dedication and camaraderie of our predecessors. (Albeit the only shots fired at us, as I recall, were "friendly fire" from our buddies in the ROK Army!) I think we did the 128th proud! And I am equally humble and proud to have played a minor role during this time.

Again I thank you very much for your effort and time in posting the note on the website and look forward to any future correspondence.

Very best regards,
Dave McDaniel



To the Editor of the VHPA Aviator

Here is a picture of four Vietnam Veteran helicopter pilots who finally met up in Afghanistan - 45 years after the last one left Vietnam, and while we are all still flying chop-

pers (and I'm don't mean Harleys, although at least one of us is still doing that also).

Since Vietnam, we've all gone through some variation of the typical ex-Vietnam helicopter pilot's gauntlet of flying: EMS, ENG, Corporate pilot, Airline pilot, Government contract pilot, offshore, Forest Service, National Guard, Various foreign government jobs, etc.

Finding Vietnam Vets in Afghanistan is rare enough, but finding four ex-Vietnam pilots at the same time and place was certainly worth a remembrance photo. Pictured here are (LtoR): Fred Sistrunk (69-27), Ward Harris (66-3), Wally Reder (69-41), and Chuck Robbins (66-23). At the time of this picture (late summer of 2013), we were flying Bell-214ST's, and Sikorsky S-61's for AAR Airlift Group, shown at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Shindand in Afghanistan.

Regards,
Chuck Robbins

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Two 160th SOAR CW5's of Black Hawk Down legacy, retire

By Staff Sgt. Thaddius S. Dawkins II, U.S. Army Special Operations Aviation Command | Updated Yesterday

FORT CAMPBELL, KY — As the A Company, 1st Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment hangar began to fill with people, it was clear this wasn't just another retirement ceremony. This ceremony had an even greater significance than most others. After all, CW5 Karl H. Maier and CW5 George "Billy" Cook had more than 70-years of combined Army Service — with more than 50 of those years spent as Night Stalkers.

CW 5 Maier was the longest-tenured Night Stalker in the 160th SOAR (A). He had been in the unit since 1986, with a majority of his time serving in the same company. CW5 Cook wasn't too far behind, having served 24-years in the legendary unit. "Pretty much everything you've read in any book about the 160th, Karl was a part of," said one of the flight-leads who first met Maier 20 years ago. "In 23 years of Aviation service, I have not met anyone with more professional military Aviation knowledge than Karl Maier. "Karl and Billy have always been that mark on the wall that we have tried to achieve at the professional level," he added.

"I often talk about Karl, describing him as the hero who landed the Little Bird in the streets of Mogadishu to save the Ranger unit — the ultimate expression of courage in my book," said Maj. Gen. (P) Kevin W. Mangum, former 160th SOAR commander and having just changed command as the Aviation Branch Commander. "And as the consummate and quiet professional and for over 20 years Karl successfully resisted telling his story to anybody who would ask. Mangum closed his speech to the large audience attending the ceremony by saying it was a "sad, but very sweet and happy day." "We always say that no one is so important that if you left today someone isn't going to be able to back-fill you." "But Karl and Billy don't fall into that. Trying to replace them is going to be impossible."



Two 160th SOAR CW5s of Black Hawk Down Legacy, Retire: CW5 George "Billy" Cook and CW5 Karl H. Maier stand with Col. John R. Evans Jr., 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment during a retirement ceremony Friday at Fort Campbell, Ky. Cook and Maier retired following a combined 70-years of service, with more than 50 years spent as Night Stalkers. Photo by 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment.



The Razorbacks of the 120th Assault Helicopter Company (AHC) are celebrating their 50th year of continuous Active Duty Flight Operation with two special Reunions this fall and all Razorback crewmembers and support staff are invited to attend.

Full details of the Reunions, commemorative T-Shirts and a possible 'Gathering in Fort Carson' are available from Steve Bookout, 641-792-2941 or toadhall@pcpartner.net

Over Da Swamp reunion: 5, 6, & 7 SEP 14 at the Prince Conti Hotel in the New Orleans French Quarter. Special room rates available. For further information, please contact:

Bookout: 641-792-2941 or toadhall@pcpartner.net

Daffrons: 719-429-5212 or daffr2@hotmail.com

Ft. Rucker reunion: 11, 12, 13, & 14 SEP 14 at the Holiday Inn Express in Enterprise, Alabama. Special room rates available. MAJ Chad Payne's original oil painting of a Razorbacks Light Fire Team will be presented to the Aviation Museum. For further information, please contact:

Striblings: 229 924-1763 . **Spains:** 706 207-8352 or 706 255-0213

The Editor very much wishes to apologize to John Barron and Frank Mays for botching the job of running their correct callsigns in our last issue. The caption on the photograph in the story written by John Barron — (Memories and Thoughts

on Memorial Day) should have read: Frank Mays, Condor 25 (on left) and John Barron, Condor 27 share a minute at the flight line next to Charlie Troop's revetments in Phu Bai.



**All four of Bill's Books,
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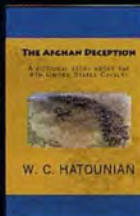


TANK WITCH

Doug Baker, a Vietnam War veteran and his National Guard tank crew are whisked through a warp in time and into another dimension. They have been summoned by a hag witch and find themselves in a medieval land, where they are unwittingly thrown into the social conflicts of the kingdom.

THE AFGHAN DECEPTION

Colonel Martin Daniels and the 4th United States Cavalry are inadvertently thrust into the world of international politics and intrigue in this historical fiction novel set in 1879. The relationship between two colonels of cavalry, one American and one British, could forever alter the fate of the British Empire.



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.




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HOOKS FOR SALE

or a Small Proposal for reducing the defense budget

By Robert F. Curtis

Recently, while perusing Trade-a-Plane under Turbine Helicopters for sale, I saw a listing for two Boeing CH-47Ds. I was amazed that the Army had finally taken seriously the idea first mooted by then-CW2 Jim Scott and myself, then-CW2 Bob Curtis, back during the Vietnam War. In August 1971 Jim (Call sign Playtex 11) and I (Call sign Playtex 12) were both short-timers with C Company, 159th Assault Support Helicopter Battalion, 101st Aviation Group, 101st Airborne Division (Air Mobile). (It just occurred to me that one reason the War was so expensive was the cost of all the ink needed just type out the full name of the Division, never mind the cost of training the extra clerks it took to do the actual typing.)

C Company's call sign, in those pre-politically correct days, was the "Playtex", motto, "We give living support". Alas, as soon as the company was resurrected back at Fort Campbell in 1972 the name became "Haulmark" (Somehow the motto, "When you care enough to send the very best" just doesn't have the same ring to it). In August 1971, Playtex was getting fewer missions and had lots of new aircraft commanders, so Jim and I, being short and all, were given "Mortar Watch" duty, which consisted of sitting in lawn chairs on the roof of the Officer's Club every evening with a pair of binoculars and a cooler full of beer. As long as we were up there no mortar rounds came in, so it must have worked. During one session, we decided that the Army had entirely too many Chinooks and perhaps, if we could sell one or two, we could use some of the money to buy First Class airline tickets from R of VN back to the US of A. To help the process, we painted the sign shown below:

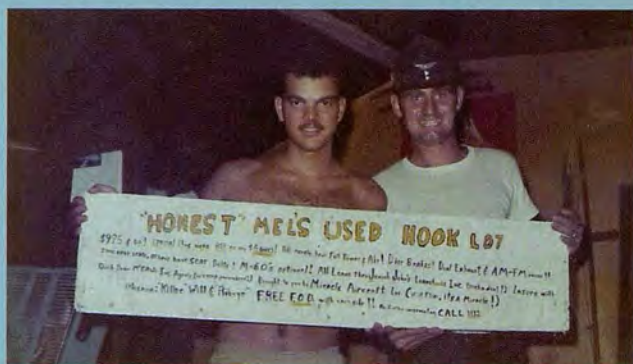


Photo Courtesy of Jim Scott

The Original 1971 Chinook Sales Team:

Jim Scott (L) and Bob Curtis (R)

Of course, being good Warrant Officers, we could not resist a few digs at the RLOs (Real Live Officers); hence Captain "Honest Mel" Utley, our CO, and Captain Chuck "Quick Draw" Magaw, our XO, among others. We hung the sign on the wire by the entrance to Liftmaster Pad, our little runway and parking ramp. We had a good laugh over that. In the fullness of time, we both rotated back to CONUS and the sign was forgotten. So we thought.

Flash forward to the 101st Reunion in 2004. It seems that Chuck

"Quick Draw" Magaw had taken the sign back to CONUS with him when Playtex stood down. Alas, the huge bra that hung in the Officer's Club did not make the return trip. Chuck, of course, took the sign to the Reunion and proudly showed it to the attendees as witnessed by the photo below:



Photo Courtesy of Jim Morrical
On the wire Liftmaster Pad

So, my friends, we, Jim Scott and I, had the original idea to pedal off a couple Chinooks to pick up a little extra coin. In that we thought of it, we think we should get about 10% (each) of whatever proceeds the folks at Redstone get from their garage (hangar?) sale. If you agree, please let Major General William T. (Tim) Crosby at PEO Aviation know. I'm sure he would like to hear from each and every one of you. Whether you agree or not, fly safe if you are still flying, but flying or not, please live as long as you possibly can, just to annoy your children with your war stories (I am sure that, just like mine, all of them are absolutely true).

Robert F. Curtis

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

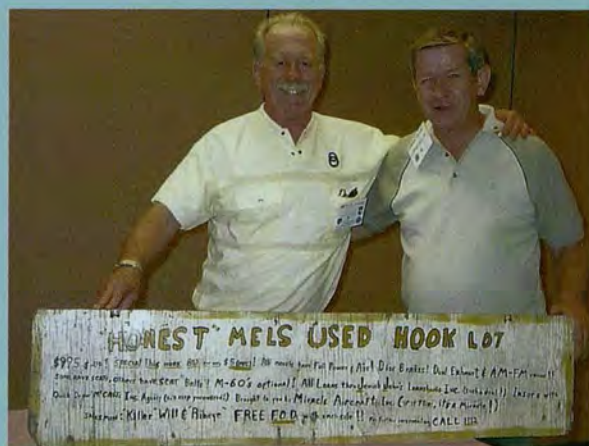


Photo Courtesy of Chuck Magaw

Sign of the times: Playtex's Boeing Tech Rep

Bryan Scofield (L) and Chuck Magaw (R)

GLADIATORS OF THE 57TH AHC LAND ON HO CHI MINH TRAIL

by Steve Sullivan

The 57th Assault Helicopter Company deployed from Ft. Bragg N. C. to Kon Tum in the Central Highlands of RVN in October 1967. Kon Tum was also the location of Forward Operating Base 2, or Command and Control Central, (CCC), a Special Forces base for the interdiction and intelligence gathering along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Over the years the Special Forces missions were referred to as: "FOB, Prairie Fire (Laos) Daniel Boone (Cambodia), and also SOG for Studies and Observation Group".

The 57th was assigned to the 52nd Aviation Battalion located thirty miles south in Pleiku. The 52nd Aviation Battalion Assault Helicopter Companies provided helicopter support to FOB 2. Air Force Green Hornet UH1-F models and the RVN King Bee H-34s also supported the mission. The King Bees and 57th helicopters often worked together.

57th slicks, nicknamed the 'Gladiators,' and the 'Cougar' gunships were frequently assigned the 'FOB' mission because of the 57th's proximity to FOB 2. In 1969 the 57th assumed the mission full time.

There were many memorable missions, but one that still remains a vivid memory for many of us happened on 1 March, 1968 when a 57th Gladiator slick landed on the Ho Chi Minh trail about 35 nautical miles inside Laos. Although it was called a "trail", where the slick landed was in fact, a well maintained, two-lane dirt road. The NVA defenders in that area of the 'trail' took their job seriously and were usually effective. This area of the 'trail' was not far from the infamous "Bra" which was a distinctive two curves in the nearby river.

The mission that day was to insert a Special Forces team near the road so they could place a sensor to pinpoint truck traffic during the night. This allowed for accurate targeting for B-52 Strikes.

On the day prior to this memorable mission, we had been briefed by a Special Forces sergeant on an insertion point. The team was to be landed in an area called "Hotel 9"; a square or rectangular designated block about 45 nautical miles west of Dak To, RVN (Hotel 9 was one of many blocks that were Areas of Operations for Special Forces teams. All of the 57th pilots winced, (a polite word used to describe pilot disbelief and unhappiness), because 'Hotel 9' included a major road intersection. 'Hotel 9' was a nasty area. It was teeming with NVA who were determined to defend a critical road junction

area of the 'trail'. The LZ was to be a small clearing near the trail.

Shortly after the briefing we launched four slicks, and two UH-C gunships (followed by two others thirty minutes later). As we headed west, we met up on the radio with a USAF O-2 forward air controller, known as a "Covey", accompanied by a Special Forces controller, a "Covey rider". Soon, two USAF A1-Es joined up in orbit overhead.

The gunships planned to fly low, once near the LZ. They would

verify the LZ and examine the area. If the area appeared clear, the slick with the team was to quickly drop from altitude and fall in behind the two gunships. The gunships would provide cover for the slick. As expected, we received heavy fire everywhere we turned. Finally, and with considerable reluctance, (and my whining as the lead gun) the Special Forces controller aborted the mission.

That evening, the Gladiator second platoon leader, Capt. Jack Koshinsky, met with me



"Cougar" Gun Pilots of the 57th AHC, (LtoR): Steve Sullivan, Dean Smith, Jim Mitchell, and Jerry Foster.

as the Cougar platoon leader to discuss the mission over an adult beverage. Jack said that the next day we would have to go back and try again. He thought that the best tactic would be to land right on the road. The team would put the sensor in, and within a couple of minutes he would return, land, grab the team and come home. This was to be one of those missions when you are really glad to go back into Viet Nam.

Although Jack was a superb pilot, a respected platoon leader, smart, courageous and a good friend, I told him that his plan was incredibly stupid. I added that it would get us all killed. Nevertheless, he said he thought it was the best option. He felt that it would spare us from repeatedly returning to Hotel 9 until the mission was accomplished; or until we ran into even worse trouble.

The next morning, Jack talked to the commander of FOB2 and convinced him that we should try to land the team right on the road, rather than several clicks away from it. We were soon on our way back to 'Hotel 9'. The C-model gunships were heavy and underpowered even with a partial load of ammo and 2/3 of fuel load. It was something you really noticed when leaving our launch site at Dak To, - 2,000 MSL, and hot. We could not hover at that density altitude and we were required to make running takeoffs. We wanted to avoid giving too much advance notice to the NVA, and we were too heavy to climb quickly. The gunships flew low-level from Dak To, west to Hotel 9. As we closed with the LZ, we zigged and zagged to confuse the NVA.

According to Jack's plan, the A-1Es dropped several 250 pound bombs on or near a wide spot in the road just ahead of our arrival. Since we were low level, and not particularly interested in consulting our maps, the 0-2 Covey pilot vectored us toward the precise spot.

Jack, flying a slick, with a small four man team on board, dropped down from altitude and got between the two gunships. The 0-2 pilot did a great job vectoring us to the site. When we reached an open area on the Ho Chi Minh trail, the lead gun, which I was flying, broke right and looked for NVA, and listened for fire. This 'break' also gave Jack the clues he needed (we were mostly over double canopy jungle) to decelerate so that he could land on the road without overshooting it. We saw and heard nothing. Jack decelerated and touched down very briefly. There was a big cloud of dust, the team was off the helicopter, and Jack was on his way back out.

Jack's crew chief, Henry Heberlein, recalls the landing: "As we were touching down I saw three large bunkers along the edge of the road. The bunkers were large enough to each handle twenty NVA. There were two heavy machine guns in each bunker with barrels pointing up. There were fires with rice pots cooking, but there was still no NVA to be seen. I told Captain Ski to look to his left NOW!" He said "This isn't good!" Henry recalls that the 'trail' here was a recently graded two lane dirt road.

As the slick came out of the LZ we proceeded further west to make a couple of dummy drops, ostensibly, to fool or confuse the NVA. I recall seeing the metal roof tops of the town of Attapeau, Laos as we made our wide circle to the west, we also spooked flocks of large white birds nesting in the jungle canopy. We fired a few bursts from the mini guns at the dummy drops to further distract the NVA.

After only a couple of minutes, the SF team was back on the radio calling for an extraction. We heard the sound of gunfire in the background. The 0-2 and two A1-Es were ready to pounce and deliver very close supporting fire. "Very close supporting fire" means that the team was on one side of the road and the A-1Es were strafing the other side. As the A-1Es began a strafing run, Jack went in just behind their stream of bullets.

The two gunships followed with suppressive fire. Jack landed on the road for the second time coming back out without seeming to stop.

Jack recalls that on the way out of Hotel 9 he had climbed to 3,000 feet when an NVA 23 mm cannon fired at him, fortunately, leading him a bit too far. Jack saw the tracers, rolled off the throttle, entered autorotation, and avoided getting hit. The two gunships low-levied home; because every time we tried to climb to altitude we received heavy fire. (This was in days before we all became NOE qualified.)

The crew chiefs and gunners all performed in their usual magnificent way: looking, listening, clearing turns, and putting out effective suppressing fire. There was one bullet in the slicks right cargo door that looked very much like a 7.62 round with a trajectory from above and behind his helicopter. (Jack did ask for close suppressing fire.)

Mission accomplished! The 57th had landed, and taken off, not once but twice on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. FOB2 had accomplished their mission. FOB 2 submitted Captain Jack Koshinsky for a Distinguished Flying Cross; which he was awarded.

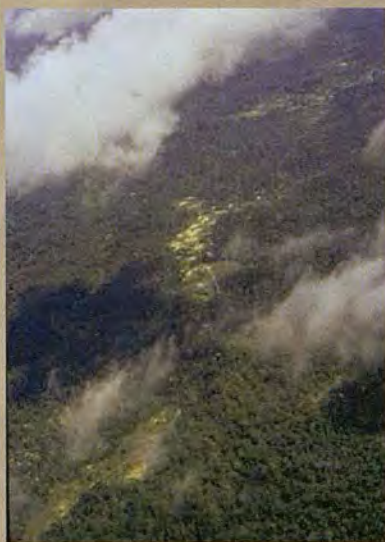


Photo of Gladiator pilot Capt. Jack Koshinsky taken shortly after a rocket took out his tent.

Editor's Note: John Foster, "Jack" Koshinsky passed away on 17 April 2014. His TAPS entry can be found on page 31 of this issue.

Steve Sullivan

E-Mail: [REDACTED]



A heavily bombed out section of the Ho Chi Minh "trail" in Laos



Photo of the Headquarters of the 57th AHC sign in Kon Tum, Vietnam



Overview of the 57th AHC's BOQ's and BEQ's in Kon Tum

A day of remembrances for members of B Company, 228th Avn Battalion

by Mike Brown

In May of this year, my wife Mary and I spent a delightful weekend at the home of Marco and Mary Beth Cordon in Round Rock, Texas. Mary and I are seasonal escapees from the spring rains at our home in western Washington State. After spending a couple of months in Houston, Marco suggested that we should take advantage of my presence in Texas by meeting with Ernie Isbell who was the CO of B Company, 229th AHB. It was his unit that we were supporting when we were shot down by the SA-7. Ernie quickly agreed to the get-together, and he invited the Ops Officer of B Company, Rick Barrett to join us. I invited Mike Sloniker who was Ops Officer of A Company, 229th AHB. Mike is a long-time advocate and friend of Blue Max.

We all met on April 1, 2014. There were five of us present, who had flown at An Loc, gathered in Ernie's office. Ernie set up a program in which he introduced all of us to about 15 people, including invited friends and his office staff. Ernie related his eyewitness account of Marco's and my 'shoot-down'. He then presented both Marco and I with detailed statues of Army aviators wearing the garb of our time. Finally, he invited Marco and me to speak of our experience. I chose to read the part from my book, *MIS-SILE!MISSILE!MISSILE!*, the part which describes our shoot-down. This was followed by a Q&A period.

It was a wonderful day. My heartfelt thanks go out to both Marco and Ernie for all making the event all that it was.



The five An Loc Veterans gather in Ernie Isbell's office, shown here (LtoR) are Mike Sloniker, Rick Barrett, Ernie Isbell, Mike Brown, and Marco Cordon. Marco and I are holding the statues which Ernie presented to us.



Mike Brown and Marco Cordon are photographed standing next to the Joe Kline painting *MISSILE!MISSILE!MISSILE!*

Mike Brown, Bluemax 36

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

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History of the Huey

The first flight of the Huey was by Pilot, Floyd Carlson on October 22, 1956 in Fort Worth, Texas. UH-1 aircraft have totaled more than 27,000,000+ flight hours since that first flight.

Army UH-1's totaled 7,531,955 flight hours in the Vietnam War between October 1966 and the end of 1975. The Huey Cobra (AH-1G) had 1,038,969 flight hours in Vietnam.

The Huey and the Cobra have more combat flight time than any other aircraft in the history of warfare.

Bell Helicopter built 10,005 Huey's from 1956 to 1975. Of the 10,005 production Huey's, 9,216 went to the U.S. Army, 127 to the U.S. Marine Corps, 79 to the U.S. Air Force and 42 to the U.S. Navy. The rest went to other countries.

Today, there are only 113 B models, 9 E models, 12 F models, 10 Training F Models, 1 HH-1K, 8 TH-1L's, 14 UH-1L, 3 M models, 1 P model, 5 civilian 205's and 547 UH-1H's still flying. In other words, there is just 723 Military-variant and flyable Huey models registered today.

The Huey remains a legend as the most successful rotorcraft in Aviation History.

There are specific tail numbers for the 11,827 total helicopters that served in the Vietnam War from all branches of the service. 1,925 Huey's were lost in combat, while 1,380 were lost in operational accidents. The high losses reflected their heavy use rather than a fragility of the aircraft, with the heavy use leading to crew fatigue that contributed to the high accident rate. Records indicate that 7,013 Huey's served in the Vietnam War. Almost all of those were with the Army. Huey aircraft casualties (KIA) include the loss of 1,074 pilots and 1,103 aircrew member.

Vietnam has been judged the "first helicopter war", and the Huey remains a symbol of the conflict far more than any other weapon. There are many images of Hueys. They range from those depicting dropping troops into landing zones, to pictures of Huey's thrown off aircraft carriers during the frantic final evacuation.

The UH-1's will always be a common sight in many of the world's military forces, and are still in first-line service in the US Marines.

USAF historians have claimed that nearly all battlefield casualties were evacuated by UH-1 helicopters.

References:

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<http://www.helis.com/60s/huey.php>

<http://www.huey.co.uk/imagegallery/huey509-5.php>

Sent to us by Member Tom Lasser
E-Mail: [REDACTED]



Picture credit to Dave Sauseda (door gunner 21st Signal Group 1969)

LtoR: Pilot WO1 Swain, Doorgunner SP4 Sauseda, Crew Chief SP5 Hendricks, Aircraft Commander CPT Townsend, all from 21st Signal Group Aviation Detachment

The Huey Pilot

Casualty he walks to the slick, a helmet with dark visor in his hand, stepping from the skid into the cockpit, the switches and dials at his command.

He may be tired from many runs, it seems he lives under this plexidome, but with the stick between his legs, and the pedals at his feet, he feels once again at home.

He fires up that turbine as the pre-flight is performed, the Jesus nut begins to turn, that machine begins to rock and now starts that steady "Whop," and air begins to churn.

As those massive blades begin to claw the air he skillfully lifts his baby off the ground, the tail begins to rise and the front seems to follow but no better pilot will be found.

I never saw his face, I never knew his name, but I'll never forget the day the Huey Pilot came.

With surgical precision he causes that Huey to hover, dip and dance behind a hill, then he routinely skims the tops of trees, rising only to have his Door Gunner make another kill.

He listens to the Peter Pilot and Crew Chief as well as he watches for popped smoke, glancing down he sees looks of relief on haggard faces, they know he will not choke.

With bullets pinging on the thin metal and stars appearing on the windshield he holds steady to the stick, people are screaming to his rear, mortars dropping dangerously near, but he maintains a firm control of his slick.

He saves a dozen lives and takes supplies where no one else wishes to go; for him it is just another day; at base camp he helps wash blood from the rear cabin and after he fingers new bullet holes he casually walks away.

I never saw his face, I never knew his name, but I'll never forget the day the Huey Pilot came.

Author Unknown

Submitted by VHPA Member Rex Gooch, e-mail: [REDACTED]

A Horse With No Name

By Member Donald Gaudreau

The other day I was relaxing, drinking coffee, and smoking my home grown Texas herbal medicine. I had the VHPA magazine in front of me. I wake up at sunrise every day. (I walk my dogs around my ranch and when I'm finished with that, I have time for myself since, everyone in the house is still sleeping.

I put America's Greatest Hits on the stereo and began reading your magazine. I do this often because I'm retired now and I can travel back in time to a magical place when I was young, strong and having the time of my life while flying for the 1st AIRCAV, 229th Avn Bn.

The classic tune: "A Horse With No Name" was playing in the background when I came upon the article "The Picture". I believe I was flying Yellow 2 as a Peter pilot the day the picture was taken. #917 was on the nose of the aircraft in the photo and it all started to come together - I remembered this bird. Next I dug out my pictures and there was the bird, but it wasn't #917, it was 617. As the Battalion S-2, I didn't get to fly much so I was a perpetual Peter pilot.

I loved to fly so I asked LTC Snyder our BN Commander to let me fly that day after I stayed up all night making out the operations board with CW2 Matson. I would pick the exciting missions and put myself in as Peter pilot. Then I would go out on the flight line, find the bird and meet the AC for that day's mission. That day, it was #917. I couldn't find it anywhere! I found #617, but not #917. Something wrong here! I went back to #617 and found #917 on the tail. I found out later that after taking 50 cal rounds through the nose, along with the engine, the nose panel was replaced and when it was being painted, the painter apparently inverted the 9 to a 6 thus it now read #617. It stayed that way for a while, maybe that's why the Crew Chief also painted Old Paint on the nose panel.

Later on I flew the same bird on a log mission where we were hauling water bladder's. We piled on one after another and pulled hover checks till we could hover without losing RPM's. The crew chief didn't like the results. He thought the engine wasn't properly adjusted and should have been able to produce more power. We reported his concerns to maintenance and forgot about it.

Days later I was given a rare day off. Not having to fly the next day, I stayed up all night drinking Mateus Wine and had only been asleep for an hour when I was awoken and asked to fly Peter pilot on a mission. I explained that I was still drunk but I would give it a try. My roommate, CPT Fanning had overheard the conversation and said he would take the mission. I said thanks, but you shouldn't do it since you have already quit flying and are two weeks from DEROS. He said "that's OK. This might be my last chance to fly, since my new assignment back in the world won't give me much of a chance to fly. Not only that, I shouldn't have quit this early". That's the curse of RLO's who love to fly.

Later that day CPT Fanning, and his copilot CW2 Jefferys stopped at a fire base on the way to pick up any grunts who needed a ride back to Bien Hoa. Usually there would be two to four, but that day I heard there were about twelve. They loaded them all, pulled a hover check and it was good to go. Unfortunately when they hit translational lift, they lost their engine and they went in nose first. It was fatal for all aboard, they were flying the "Horse With No Name" that day.

P.S. For our Member's consideration:

Did you ever think aircraft had personalities?

CPT Donald Gaudreau
229th AVN BN {S-2}, Call Sign "Deuce"
Bien Hoa 70-71
Phone [REDACTED]



Results of a .50 Cal round that passed through the floor and exited through the greenhouse and the main rotors of Old Paint, "The Horse With No Name".



Our Author Don Gaudreau, the one with the mustache, parties with his friends in Bien Hoa, 1970.

Crew Chief of Old Paint, "The Horse With No Name" poses beside the marker for the start of the Company Billets



Pilot and Co-Pilot pose in the cockpit of Old Paint, "The Horse With No Name" as the nose panel for Aircraft 917 incorrectly reads 617.

Fly with the Pipesmoke Recovery Team - Vietnam Memories of two CHINOOKS, two PILOTS, two FLIGHT ENGINEERS and four MISSIONS

by Dan Walker

BRIEF BACKGROUND

Sam Newby and I, Transportation Branch Officers, started pilot training in May 1967 (Class 67-22). We, along with five others from the TC Branch, received orders for Chinook transition immediately upon graduation. After a month of Chinook training and two weeks leave, Sam and I arrived in-country on 11 March, 1968, at the 539th General Support Maintenance Company, Phu Loi. We were to become aircraft recovery pilots, sling-loading aircraft for the battalion companies and providing III Corp 'AC' recovery.

Additional 34th Transportation Group GS companies were located at Vung Tau & Na Trang. Each unit was assigned two Chinooks, two pilots and two crews. The 539th's State-side address was New Cumberland Army Depot, Carlisle, PA. After two months in transit, the company had been located at Phu Loi ten months. The Chinook pilots that traveled with the deployment were Cpt. George Helm, and CW2 Mike Harrington. When Sam and I arrived, Captain Helm had returned to the US. Mr. Mike Harrington, with three weeks remaining in country, had the unfortunate task of training both of us - no break for Mike as his DEROS drew near. Mike flew one day with Sam and the next with me. When not seated at the controls, we would relocate in the back, attempting to absorb what we could in the brief time available.

Our Chinooks were 'A' models, 66-19072 crewed by Flight Engineer, SPC 5 Claude 'Willie' Wilkinson. SPC5 Jim Theis was the Flight Engineer for 66-19073. Our unofficial call sign was "Swamp Rat" (named for the condition of unit's real estate upon arrival in Phu Loi). This was later changed to "Hexmate", taken from the unit's Dutch heritage. Recovery missions were directed by the 605 Direct Support Maintenance Company, call sign "Pipesmoke".

The 605 guys were good! They were trained and outfitted for the rigging of all types of Army aircraft. The prepping of a Huey took but minutes. They placed a strap over the front blade attached to the



Aircraft Recovery Team members: TOP ROW left to right: Flight Engineer Jim Theis, Gunners Wilson and Vernier. BOTTOM ROW left to right: Flight Engineer (Willie) Claude Wilkinson, Gunner Parker and Crew Chief (Mac) McLaughlin.



Another successful Pipesmoke recovery

front skids, then secured the rear blade with the second strap, which was crossed and secured around the tail boom. They then attached a quick disconnect to the mast, positioned a crewman on the Huey's roof, popped smoke and delivered approach and departure instructions to the Chinook pilots. Once set from the ground, we Hook drivers would make as quick

approach as practical. The Flight Engineers, Willie or Jim, would drop the 20-to-100 foot strap when clear and guide the approach to the hookup man standing on top of the Huey. If things went well, less than 45 seconds were needed to slam the hook in the strap's U-clevis, and the hookup man to jump off the chopper. Then with the strap tight, the Huey was lifted to make ground clearance, and the Chinook's power was increased to forward flight.

Once airborne, the rigging crew would escort the sling load for the initial portion of the return flight. They would then proceed ahead to prepare the drop-off spot, working the recovery process in reverse. Our Chinook crew consisted of, in addition to the pilots and a flight engineer, a left and right door gunner and a gunner strapped to the open rear ramp. That is how it was done!

FIRST ROUNDS

The second day that Sam and I are on our own, the mission is to Trang Bang. Sam likes the right seat, I the left. Neither of us have an advantage on the other in flying experience. Sam pilots one lift, I the next. It is two months after the start of the Tet Offensive. The ARVN compound at Trang Bang, located on Highway 1 midway between Saigon and Tay Ninh, is locked in a morning-long fire fight.

A Huey requires extraction from the helipad. Things are quiet by early afternoon. Pipesmoke arrives and takes a few minutes longer than normal to prep the bird.

This is Sam's flight and we are on station at 3000 feet several 'clicks' to the southwest. Smoke is popped and the approach made. The hookup completed, the crewman is clear, and the lift commences. At this point, AK-47 fire begins. A round is received near the flight engineer through the belly, another next to the ramp gunner. Then, one passes through the center of the left door gunner's window without hitting him and one is spent at my feet.

A bullet puncturing the aluminum skin makes a curious sound. It's a kind of quiet "pfit" sound! As all of us know from training, responsibility as the co-pilot is to monitor the instruments and be prepared to take the controls, should something happen to the pilot. I freeze, when we start taking rounds. I am not doing my job, the duty for which I have been trained. Has one second or twenty passed? In truth, I can't tell how much time has elapsed. When we reach flight altitude, control is passed to me to complete the lift to Cu Chi.

That first round has never been forgotten! The prayer that evening is that this Trang Bang experience would never be repeated. For the remainder of the tour, my prayer was answered!

LESSON IN COMMUNICATIONS

Not long after Trang Bang there was a Huey down in the area fifteen clicks NNW Cu Chi. It was mid-afternoon, after a fire fight all morning. We needed to retrieve the bird prior to nightfall. Pipesmoke arrived and prepped the chopper. Two C-model gunships were on station. We were approaching from the SE. Smoke had been popped. Our instructions were to "GO OUT THE WAY YOU CAME IN." This command can be interpreted two ways, either do a 'one-eighty' or depart on the inbound course. We chose the second option - the wrong one! We lifted the Huey out of the woods while attempting to gain altitude and forward airspeed, while flying directly over Charlie. God bless the gunship pilots! Upon seeing we were in trouble, each pilot made two mini-gun passes twenty meters off our right. We never took a round!

From that mission forward, a compass heading was given to detail the departure route.

FAITHFUL 'A' MODEL: #1

Later in the spring we were bringing a Huey and its crew from Quan Bo Duc's pad, near Cambodia and north of Quan Loi. We were level at 2800 feet, flying over triple canopy forest. There were some breaks of high grass, from past agricultural efforts, that contrast the woods. The aircraft (#66-19073) begins to vibrate severely, the instruments gyrate wildly and we are losing altitude. At the time both pilots are relatively new. We aimed for a grassy opening to make an emergency landing. We punch off the load at 25 feet. Upon impact, the Huey's nose bends fifteen degrees down, forward of the skid mounts (quickly becoming a salvage candidate). After setting down a short distance forward of the Huey, Jim is instructed to check up-top. I thought, "We've lost a transmission." Pipesmoke, flying ahead to prep the drop off spot, returns upon hearing our distress call. They report seeing NVA within two kilometers of us.

Spc5 Theis reports back from up-top, "No visible damage to structure, transmissions or engines," he says. Several thoughts are running through my mind: the time is currently 1500 hours, we will need a company of infantry on the ground, gun teams on station with tactical-air as

backup to secure the Hook, two engines and six blades removed to prep for the Vung Tau based Sky Crane lift, "CAPTAIN GOING DOWN WITH THE SHIP!"

We brainstormed for a minute attempting to discover the problem. We then started the APU and lit both engines in the "ground" position. Five transmission (two 90 degree engine boxes, one combining, a forward and an aft) temperatures and pressures were 'in the green'. We increased the right engine to "flight power and then to redline" power (860 ft. lbs. torque). Everything was smooth as the Hook became 'light'



Our Author, Lt. Dan Walker points out a bullet hole that passed close to his left knee.



Remains of "pickled off" Otter. This silhouette did not get added to Pipesmoke's aircraft's recovery paint job.

on its feet.

We then placed the right engine to "ground" and advanced the left engine to "flight." At 200 ft. lbs. of torque we discovered our problem - a damaged engine! As taught in flight school, "If you can hover, you can fly!" Pipesmoke landed. The Quan Bo Duc Huey's crew and our three gunners were added to a second Huey team that Pipesmoke called for assistance. We burnt off excess JP4 to lighten the load. Then, with three souls on board and mismatched Hook engine power settings, '073' hovered, then flew. A running landing was made at Quon Loi for an uneventful completion to our portion of the mission. Pipesmoke



Specialist 5 Jim Theis setting up the ramp gun on one of Pipesmoke's Chinooks



A Flight Engineer's view of slung-loaded Huey

returned to the downed Huey along with a 'Black Cat' Chinook to retrieve the chopper we left in the field.

The Lycoming engine Tech Rep, who subsequently inspected the right engine, ruled we had experienced "foreign object damage." Was it an AK-47 round?

FAITHFUL "A" MODEL: #2

It is now well into the rainy season. We're lifting a Pipesmoke rigged Otter from the Lai Khe artillery fire base on Highway 13, half-way between Phu Loi & Quan Loi. The Otter's unit is based in Vung Tau. The fixed wing rigging for lift is taking longer than planned. We refuel at Phu Loi. It is early afternoon. The weather is solid overcast at 1000 feet, light rain and 20 miles visibility. Vung Tau weather conditions are VFR. I'm flying. Our route parallels Highway 15, the road from Bien Hoa to Vung Tau. Less than ten miles out,

Vung Tau still reports VFR conditions.

There is a point a short distance from Vung Tau where the road passes a mountain on the east and a hill on the west. We are between these two, flying at 1000 feet with an Otter under tow. Suddenly we are in IFR conditions! The Otter starts to fly on its own and rises to contact the Chinook's belly. It falls, causing the Hook to pitch forward, then back. Willie, the Flight Engineer, requests permission to pull the hook's mechanical D-ring, releasing the bird. Request denied! Forward speed is slowed in attempt to recover control. We're losing altitude. The Otter flies the second time, quickly followed by the third. Sam sees the Otter out his right window. Our VSI (Vertical Speed Indicator) is showing a negative 3500 ft/min.

The Chinooks' twin electrical generators are powered from a short-shaft that runs between each main engine and the aft transmission and come to life above 180 rotor RPM. Normal flight is at 230 RPM. We lose all electrical power following the third hit from the Otter. There are three ways to open the Hook's hook: the pilot's normally activated electrical button, the co-pilots overhead emergency compressed air switch and the flight engineer's mechanical D-ring. At this moment, all three release options are deployed!

There is a pause after the Otter is released. I think, "How will this stressed bird respond?" Amazingly the Chinook transitions to "flight" RPM in a similar manner as in startup. We stabilize in an IFR hover, somewhere between two mountains. Vung Tau is called, and they again report VFR conditions, but cannot locate us on their radar! Slowly, we begin a vertical decent. At approximately 150 feet, looking through the rain, we see that we're hovering above an ARVN fixed wing air strip (later identified as Phuoc Le) and land at the end of it. Rain continues to pour with wind gusting heavily. While waiting ten minutes or so in order to determine what the next move should be, an Air American turbine powered prop fixed-wing lands. It makes a courier drop and conducts downwind takeoff with a pedal turn into the wind upon clearing the runway. Shortly thereafter, we are thankful to be hovering onto Vung Tau's airfield to begin filling out the lost Otter accident report.

There were many interesting missions flown by this small crew. Time ended for me in August, having been transferred to the 330th GS Company recovery team. These four lifts remain fresh in my memory 45 years after the facts.



1LT Dan Walker, 1LT Sam Newby and unknown CW3 stand in front of one of Pipesmoke's Chinooks



Spec 5 Claude "Willie" Wilkerson poses in front of crew door for Pipesmoke's Chinook 66-19072. Note the silhouettes documenting each of 072's successful aircraft recoveries.

Cpt. Dan Walker

E-Mail: [REDACTED]



"Looking For"

Looking For – WO Rank Insignia information

I was with the 187th AHC Crusaders, flying as Rat Pack 38 from, Feb/70 - Feb- 71. Upon return to CONUS, I with many others that wanted to stay in the Army, got RIF'ed in late 1971.

I have been going nuts trying to find out exactly when the new WO Rank Insignia became effective. I've never met anyone that seems to remember and the so-called "E-Bay Experts" all tell me that we all wore them (in both cloth and metal versions) while we were still in Vietnam. And I KNOW that's not right.

I would sure appreciate any information our members may have on this matter that could nail the dates down solid.

William Mike Hodges
Rat Pack "38"

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For Information about the 196th Helicopter Company

This is the unit that I served in as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam in 1968 and 1969 and as far as I can tell, there's no information on these men available anywhere on the internet. Can any of your members help me find more information on these men and this unit?

Mary Heikkinen

[REDACTED]

Looking For Warren Winter

My name is John Therrien and I am a retired First Sergeant who is looking for a gentleman that I went through basic training with. His name was Warren Winter(s) and after completing basic together, he went through rotary wing training. Military.com shows him to be a warrant officer/pilot.

Gary Roush has him in his database but his information is not current so I'm asking you to also put this out in case one of your members may still be in contact with him. Honestly, Warren might not have gone to Vietnam after flight school but I'm hoping a member of any of his old unit(s) could still help me

John Therrien, E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For anyone who might have known my Dad, Bruce R. Northrup

I am Bruce's daughter, Shai and I'm looking for anything (memories, photographs and even a story or two that your members might have of my father, Bruce R. Northrup

Please don't hesitate to contact me, thanks you for your time.

Shai Marie, E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For anyone who might have known my Dad, Ken Pfaff

I'm looking for someone who may have served with my dad. Ken Pfaff. He volunteered for Infantry Officers' Candidate school and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant. He then volunteered for Aviators' School, graduated, and was awarded aviator's wings to fly both Huey UH-1 Iroquois and OH13A Sioux observation helicopters. He was sent to Vietnam in June 1968 and served with the 14th Combat Aviation Battalion, 16th Combat Aviation Group located at Chu Lai and Da Nang, I Corps, the Central Highlands, Republic of Vietnam. During his tour of duty in 1968-69, Ken was promoted to the rank of Captain and awarded the Bronze Star and Air Medal for support of Ground Operations Against Hostile Forces. Any help in this matter would be greatly appreciated.

William Pfaff

E-mail: [REDACTED], phone [REDACTED]

Looking for.... "The Lone Ranger"

That's what I call this guy because after forty three years, I can't remember his call sign. I flew Cobras for B 2/20th ARA, 1st Cav. During Lam Son 719, we were attached to the 4/77th ARA, 101st. On March 3rd, 1971, we were at LZ LOLO. We had been at LOLO continuously from that first early morning insertion. In the early afternoon, after refueling and rearming, my wingman and I were headed back to LOLO. As we approached LOLO, I could see a lone Huey ahead and to my right. As we came abeam of him, he made a call on guard, "Any guns out here?" I responded to his call. He asked if we were crazy enough to cover him to help get some of the guys off that LZ. I told him that if he was crazy enough to go in, we were crazy enough to cover him. Not too much fire going in, but all hell broke loose while he was coming out.

This guy went above and beyond. I've always wanted to find out who he was. Thinking it might have been a Bob Clewell, I called him a few weeks ago but we ended up deciding it wasn't him. So, "Lone Ranger," if you're out there, please give me a call.

Ron Walters, VHPA member

Phone [REDACTED] or e-mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For Chuck Kelly

I stumbled across the name of POT VHPA member Charles E. Kelly, Jr. in the directory, and saw where we were notified of his death back in 2012. I was in the Warrant Officer Senior Course in 1980 with a Chuck Kelly, and then the two of us were selected to fly for the Golden Knights Parachute Team out of Ft. Bragg. After Chuck retired from active duty, he pretty much disappeared, and several of us old team members have been searching for him.

The date of birth and flight school class number on the VHPA entry would be right for the man I'm seeking. Is it possible that any of you members more information about his death? If I recall correctly, Chuck was the son of World War II hero and Medal of Honor recipient Charles E. "Commando" Kelly. Chuck rarely talked about his dad who left the family while Chuck was younger, but he seemed to always try to live up to his dad's notoriety.

I appreciate any information you can provide.

Robert M. Henderson, CW4 (USA, Retired)

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking for information on Cpt. George B. Rusnak, B Troop, 1st Sqdn. 9th Air Cav - KIA on 22 March 1967

I received so little when he was killed, now I would love to hear from anyone who knew him. Thank you in advance for your time.

Isabel D. Rusnak LaForge

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For.....Information on William Dwight Lang.

I'm looking for anyone who remembers Bill Lang. Bill claims to be a Vietnam Helicopter Pilot with the 1/7th Air Cav he also says he deployed with us to Vietnam from Fort Benning on 24 Nov 64. Bill probably was a Commissioned Officer back in 1964; I know he wasn't a Warrant Officer. I suspect Bill went through flight school as a fixed wing pilot and transitioned into helicopters at Fort Benning while we were waiting to deploy to Vietnam. If anyone of our members remembers him, please contact me so I can get this thing straightened out.

Regards, Dennis Reed, VHPA Life Member
Ruthless White 33, B/7/17 Cav

Email: [REDACTED]

Looking For home movies of your early days in the Army or of your tour in Vietnam

I am a producer with Lou Reda Productions, the documentary film production company behind National Geographic's Vietnam special "BROTHERS IN WAR" and the History Channel mini-series "VIETNAM IN HD". (www.redafilms.com)

We are currently beginning work on another Vietnam program and I am looking for home movie film collections to use in it. So, if you have color films that you shot at home or in Vietnam and you are interested in sharing them for a very worthwhile project, please write me back at this email address (vietnam@louredaproductions.com).

In exchange for granting Lou Reda Productions permission to use your home movies, we will transfer your films (8mm, super8 or 16mm) for free. We will clean your original film, put it through a high-resolution film scanner, and then return your original films and a DVD copy to you to keep.

If you do not have any films, but know someone who does, please pass along my contact information to anyone within your group.

Thank you for your help.

Liz Reph

Lou Reda Productions, vietnam@louredaproductions.com,
www.redafilms.com

Looking For Claw 3

My name is Shirley Williams and I am trying to locate a cobra pilot involved in a mission to extract RT (Recon Team) Kansas on 7 August 1971. The pilot I am looking for was flying as Claw 3 with the C/4/77 ARA...the Griffins, that day.

Claw 3 recorded the entire extraction mission and then gave the cassette to then WO1 Mike Williams who came in country on 15 Aug 71. Mike has kept the tape but he has forgotten the name of the pilot who gave it to him. Claw 3's wish.....when he handed that mini-cassette tape to Mike, was that Mike was always to protect it and eventually do what he could to make sure it ended up in the correct hands.

This is where I came into the story. Mike is my husband and in the 90's, after I helped get the tape "cleaned up" and put onto a CD; Mike and several other Marine Corps instructors have used that CD, along with a full power point presentation, to train Marine aircrews from around the world. I was also able to present a copy of the same materials to the only remaining member of RT Kansas. It also turns out that Lt. Hagen, who was killed in the first few minutes of that fight, was the last Army Medal of Honor recipient from the Vietnam War, which makes the recording of RT Kansas' extraction especially significant. I doubt that "Claw 3" knew at the time that his recording would be such a part of military history.

Now I really would like to contact him and let him know how all this has worked out. I would very much appreciate it if one of your members could help in my quest, as I still have several questions about the mission that day.

Shirley Williams

Phone 520 289 0886 or e-mail: [REDACTED]

Looking For.....Information of Huey B Model/M Model # 64-14179

First, I want to publicly thank the tremendous generosity of Life Member Jim Crawford who has donated a UH-1M model Huey to our Veterans Memorial Park. This is the "project" helicopter mentioned on page 23 of the Nov/Dec issue of The Aviator, the story about Jim's wishing to publicize the sale of his business Timberline Air Service.

From Gary Roush, we have obtained the Goldbook information on aircraft 64-14179. From OCT '66 through APR '67, it was assigned to 11 General Support Company, 1st CAV Division. A hard landing on 21 May '67 sent the aircraft to Corpus Christi. Upon returning to RVN, it was assigned to HHD, 11 AVN Bn (09/70-12/70) then to 11 CAB HHC (01/71-09/71) after which it returned to Bell Helicopter for a short stay before continuing its military service, ultimately as a "M" model.

As part of the restoration we would like to paint it in the "markings" of one of its RVN assignments. If any of you served in one of these units during the time that 179 (most likely a "B" model at that time) was there, we would appreciate any information, pictures, etc., you could supply us concerning the aircraft and the unit ID markings.

Our Veteran's memorial Park is located in SE Tennessee, about an hour north of Chattanooga and two hours SE of Nashville. Although we don't have a web site, we do have a Facebook page--Sequatchie County Veterans Memorial Park. We ask that you take a look at the page to get an idea of what our Park is all about.

Tentative plans have us dedicating the aircraft on this year's Veterans Day in November. We are extending an open invitation to all who flew or crewed 179 to attend the dedication. Further information on the progress of the restoration and the dedication will be posted on the Facebook page, as well as being sent to The Aviator.

You can reach me at the E-Mail address listed below or by mail at: Tom Egleston, c/o SCVMP, P.O. Box 1565, Dunlap, TN 37327. We look forward to hearing from anyone who may have information that can help in our restoration or in putting together an information file on 179. As an aside, I had the privilege of flying 179 for part of my time in the New Jersey ANG. In fact, we turned the aircraft over to a sheriff's department in New York in 1992.

Tom Egleston

LongKnife 21 D 3/5 CAV 70-71

Looking For...USMC Paymaster Pilot

A good friend of mine is dying from leukemia and needs some help.

In 1962 & 1963, he was based off shore onboard the USS Pickaway but was flown into Vietnam every month as a paymaster sent to pay the US Advisors at their various outposts throughout Vietnam. Perhaps you might remember him because he first carried (lots of) cash, then later MPC to pay these men.

His claim for treatment from the VA has been denied because he can't prove he was ever on the ground in Vietnam -- and we're hoping you can help us correct this injustice. If so, contact me at the below e-mail address and we'll get started.

Thank you for your service, Mike MacDonald
E-Mail: [REDACTED]

The VHPA Aviator is proud to announce that our printing partner, Shweiki Media of San Antonio, Texas has been selected to print the official San Antonio Spurs Championship Book that will be sold in newsstands and other outlets worldwide.

So congratulations Spurs fans on their fifth world championship, and to Shweiki Media for their important part in this celebration!





**Mine was earned in
Vietnam. By my dad.**

Marc M., USAA member

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ADKINSON, Charles A. III

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 68-521, flew in Vietnam with A Troop, 1/9th CAV, 1st CAVDIV (1969-70)

Charles A. "Chuck" Adkinson, CW5 (USA Retired), 66 of Marysville, Ohio died Saturday, May 17, 2014 at his residence with his devoted wife at his side following a 21-month journey with cancer. A husband, friend and Master Army Aviator, Chuck conquered life and inspired all who knew him with his courage, humility, and zest for life along the lines of excellence. He enlisted in the US Army on December 14, 1967, and retired from the Ohio Army National Guard on his 60th birthday following a stellar 40 year career. He bravely served as a combat helicopter pilot in Vietnam where he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star and numerous Air Medals, and later served a deployment to the Middle East during The Global War on Terror. Always modest, Chuck was admired for his professionalism, dedication, loyalty, and bravery by those that had the honor to serve and fight beside him.

He was a 1966 graduate of Dayton Chaminade High School, attended The Ohio State University, and received a Bachelor's Degree from Capital University. As a civilian, Chuck served as an international corporate pilot for AEP and Borden, among others. He attended Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic church and was a member of American Legion Post #79, VFW Post #3320, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and the Vintage Drag Bike Racing Association. Chuck appreciated vintage motorcycles and sports cars and restored several through the years. He was a compassionate animal lover and often brought home stray dogs and cats to care for. More than anything, he was a loving husband and the type of friend we should all be so lucky to have.

He was the oldest of 8 children, and was preceded in death by his sister. Survivors include his wife of 22 years, Susan Orr Adkinson; his six siblings, many nieces and nephews; and countless friends. Burial will take place at a later date at Arlington National Cemetery, Washington DC. Memorial contributions may be made to the Union County Humane Society.

ANTHONY, Keith Leroy

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 658-43 & 69-01, flew in Vietnam with the 1st CAV DIV (1965-66) and then Div Arty, 4th INF DIV (1969-70) under the Red Leg 5 call sign.

Keith Leroy Anthony, Captain (USA Retired), of Sterling Virginia died Friday, March 28, 2014 at INOVA Loudoun Hospital, VA. He will be forever remembered for his service to his country, and as a devoted husband, father, grandfather and friend. Mr. Anthony was born November 20, 1941 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania; he was the oldest son to a family of four girls and four boys. The family moved to his grandparents' farm in Armstrong County western Pennsylvania where he grew up.



He retired from the US Army in December 1979 after twenty years of active service as a Captain and Sr. Army Aviator. He served thirty four months in Vietnam, initially as a helicopter door gunner with the 1st Cavalry Division and then as a pilot with the 4th Infantry Division. He flew 611 combat missions and thirty-three military awards and decorations including the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal (12 awards), Presidential Unit Citation. After leaving the military he worked in the Washington DC/Virginia area as a Logistics Engineering Consultant contractor for the US Navy finally retiring in 2005.

He was married to Mi Tae Kim whom he met while serving in the military for three years in the Republic of South Korea. She preceded him in death in 2007. Surviving are his daughter, her husband and their two children. Also surviving are two sisters, three brothers and their families. Burial with full military honors will be at Arlington National Cemetery at a date to be announced.

BORCK, Keith Roy

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 54-1, flew in Vietnam with the 93rd TC Co (1962-63) under the Tiger call sign

Roy Keith Borck, 84, of Sebring, FL passed away Monday, April 28, 2014. Keith was born in Baraboo, Michigan and was united in marriage to his wife Charlene (Smith) on November 9, 1950 at the North Freedom Baptist Church. Keith graduated from Baraboo High School in 1948 and after graduation Keith joined the United States Army.

While in the Army he trained to be a helicopter pilot and made it a career. In 1962 while serving in the Republic of Vietnam, Keith, distinguished himself by earning the Distinguished Service Cross (Our nation's second highest military medal) for extraordinary heroism in action. He was the first soldier to receive this award in the Viet Nam conflict. After Viet Nam, Keith proved to be one of the Army's top pilots by being selected to the "Executive Flight Detachment" tasked with moving our President around by helicopter. He completed his Army career with the "Executive Flight" having served the Lyndon Johnson and Richard Nixon administrations.

Keith and his wife lived in Key West, FL after the Army, for 30 years and spent the last 10 years in Sebring, FL. Keith is survived by his wife of 64 years, Charlene, one daughter, and two grandchildren. He was preceded in death by one son, David R. Borck. Memorials in his memory are requested to be sent to the Florida Sheriff Youth Ranch, Boys Ranch, FL 32060.

BOWLES, Robert "Bob" Douglas

Flew in Vietnam with the 128th AHC in 1967

Bob Bowles, LTC (USA Retired), 81, a loving husband, father and grandfather, died Friday, May 23, 2014. Bob was born Nov. 16, 1932, in Cabool, Mo.; he attended high school in Vandalia, Ill., and college in Fulton, Mo. In 1953, he was drafted into the U.S. Army, where he served a tour of duty in Korea and

two separate tours of duty in Vietnam as a helicopter and airplane pilot. He received numerous distinguished medals and retired in 1974 as a lieutenant colonel. Bob then went on to work for several different state agencies in Austin, Texas and retired after 20 years. He loved to travel and, most of all, he enjoyed playing golf.

Preceding him in death were his first wife and the mother of his child and grandson. Survivors include his wife of five years, Nellie Bowles, and her children.

BURKS, Howard

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 61-10, flew in Vietnam with the 128th AHC in 1965-66

Howard Burks, Major (USA, Retired), a longtime resident of Greenwood, Arkansas died peacefully in his home surrounded by his family Tuesday, January 14, 2014. He was a member of the Greenwood First Baptist Church, served on the Greenwood City Council and served as Chairman of the Greenwood Planning Commission. He was an Executive of Mid-America Industries in Fort Smith.

He had a long and distinguished career in the United States Army, serving three tours of duty in Germany and two tours of duty in Vietnam from 1966 to 1969. He was awarded the following medals: Legion of Merit, twice awarded the distinguished flying cross for valor, twice awarded the bronze star, awarded 22 air medals (4th awarded for valor), the Navy commendation medal for valor, the Army commendation medal, twice awarded the Vietnam cross of gallantry, the Vietnam service medal (7 campaign stars), and other meritorious awards. He retired as a Major in 1974 after 20 years of service to his country.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Nona Burks; one son and two daughters, seven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren.

BURTON, William F.

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 69-27, flew in Vietnam with 11th GS, 1st Cav Div (1970-71) and then with the 2/17th CAV, 101 ABN Div in 1972-75 under the Great White Eagle call sign

William F. Burton, CW3 (USA, Retired), of Enterprise, Alabama passed away Tuesday, March 18, 2014 at Medical Center Enterprise, AL.

CW3 Burton was born April 25, 1940 in Watertown, Tenn. He served his country during the Vietnam War as a maintenance supervisor and test pilot, and retired both from the US Army as a CW3 and from Dyncorp as a test pilot. He was also a 32nd Degree Mason with Carmichael Lodge. He was preceded in death by his first wife and one son. Survivors include his wife, Beba Burton of Enterprise, five children, ten grandchildren; three great-grandchildren, a sister, numerous nieces and nephews; and numerous other relatives and close friends.



Bill was in WORWAC 69-27. He attended AMOC and later became fixed-wing qualified. He was assigned to the 11th GS Co, 1st Cav Div at Phuoc Vinh in 1970. He was an excellent maintenance manager, and he was a great leader. As a maintenance-qualified pilot, he could have elected to fly only maintenance flights; however, he often chose to fly tactical missions including the RRU mission and OH-6A missions. He often worked late nights to keep the Generals' aircraft in the air.

Bill hosted pilots from his unit many times at his Enterprise home. Many of those who served with him miss him greatly.
Sent to us by Member Ralph McClurg

DAVIES, Daniel J.

Daniel J. Davies, Flight Class 69-41 and 69-37 flew in Vietnam 121 AHC (70) under the Tiger call sign and with C Troop/16 CAV (70-71) under the Dark Horse call sign.

On September 5, 2013 my brother and fellow Army Aviator Daniel J. Davies, 62, passed away at Fairfield Medical Center in Lancaster, Ohio. He had been ill for more than a year but never stopped the fight and enjoyed life to the fullest. To those of us who knew Dan would have expected nothing less. As a fellow aviator in the Ohio National Guard the two of us flew together a lot. Some referred to us as the dynamic duo. To me he was one of the finest pilots I had ever flown with and I trusted him as no other. In the Ohio Guard Dan made many friends and each has a special story about an adventure they had experienced with him. Yes, there was never a dull minute around him and the silence in his absence is so very noticeable.

Dan was born October 24, 1950 in Columbus Ohio and we both attended Ohio University at the same time, then we were in business together for many years manufacturing homes made with Structural Insulated Panels. In fact we were the early pioneers of that industry and have the arrows in our backs to prove it. Dan served in the US Army during Vietnam and in the Army National Guard retiring as a CW4 after 34 years of service. He finished his career working for the State of Ohio. Daniel will be missed by family, friends and colleagues who have had the pleasure to be associated with him during his lifetime. Daniel is survived by his wife Peggy Davies, two daughters, two sisters, one brother and three grandchildren.

Sent to us by VHPA Member Robert Davies

DUNHAM, Norbert D. "Dale" Dunham, USAF Aviator

"Dale" Dunham of Half Moon Bay, California, died unexpectedly on March 28, 2014. Born in Marquette, Mich., he spent his childhood in that forested, rural area on Lake Superior. Following high school he joined the U.S. Air Force because he wanted to fly. And indeed, he did: While he flew a number of



planes, he finally settled on being a helicopter pilot.

After 30 years in the U.S. Air Force, he retired as a lieutenant colonel at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, N.M. During his career he served at Edwards Air Force Base in California, K.I. Sawyer base in Marquette, Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland, and in England, France, Ethiopia, India, Vietnam, Okinawa and Washington, D.C. He served as the commander at Naha Air Base in Okinawa, flew rescue missions in Vietnam, and commanded the vice president's helicopter in Washington, D.C.

During a year on special assignment in Ethiopia, he spent much of his time living in the bush where he enjoyed hunting, as he had during his boyhood on Michigan's Upper Peninsula. He was proud of his trophies that grace record books and the walls of several natural history museums.

He married Judith Elliott in 1970 and together they raised her three children and had two sons. They moved to California in 1988 and settled in Half Moon Bay in 1990, where Dale took a job as Director of Emergency Planning at the San Francisco International Airport. He retired from the airport in 2004 to spend several dedicated years caring for his ailing wife. After her passing, he became involved in the Coastside and its issues. For several years he was a "conscience" of the Half Moon Bay City Council, speaking eloquently and with humor during the public comment period at nearly every meeting.

In 2009 he married his second wife, Bonnie McClung, who joined him in his Frenchman's Creek home. There he followed one of his passions by designing and building a koi pond. It was the third one he had built in his life. For the last five years, they involved themselves with family, friends, travel and making a loving home. "We were feeling young in old age; we were like kids. We loved being together," said Bonnie. "He had a deep appreciation for nature and the outdoors. He enjoyed beauty, natural and artistic. We stopped for sunsets."

FARMER, Danny C.

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 63-9. Flew in Vietnam with the 219th RAC (1967-68) under the Headhunter 26 call sign.

Danny C. Farmer, age 76, of Old Hickory, TN, died June 3, 2014. Mr. Farmer was a member of Hermitage Hills Baptist Church, he was also a retired Lieutenant Colonel in the U.S. Army. While serving in Vietnam, he received The Bronze Star Medal and The Meritorious Service Medal. Mr. Farmer was a member of the Military Officers Association of America and a member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association. Mr. Farmer served as the City Manager of Mt. Juliet, TN for 18 years and was a former president of the Tennessee City Managers Association. He was a member of the Mt. Juliet Breakfast Rotary Club, the Wilson County Grand Squares Square Dance Club and was an avid golfer.

Mr. Farmer is survived by wife of 58 years, Joan Farmer, their one son and two daughters and two grandchildren. Interment with full military honors was conducted at Woodlawn Memorial Park here in

Mt. Juliet. Memorials in Danny's memory may be made to The Alzheimer's Association, 4825 Trousdale Dr., Ste. 220, Nashville, TN 37220.

HERRON, William Dale

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 58-02 William Dale Herron CW3 (USA Retired), 86, of Elon, North Carolina passed away Thursday, May 1, 2014, at the Hospice Home in Burlington, North Carolina.

Dale retired as a Chief Warrant Officer 3, after serving 20 years in the U.S. Army as a helicopter pilot. He was also a Master Parachutist. Dale was a member of the North Carolina Chapter of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association. After leaving the Army, Dale later retired from American Jenbach Corporation as a Plant Sales Manager.

In addition to his wife, Doris, of the home, Dale is survived by two sons, one daughter, five grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by a grandson, two sisters and three brothers. The family requests memorials be made to the Hospice Home, 918 Chapel Hill Road, Burlington, NC 27215 or to the Wounded Warrior Project, P.O. Box 758517, Topeka, Kansas 66675

IZOLD, Richard Robert

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 69-19 & 65-19W, flew in Vietnam with the 117th AHC (1966) and then the 17th CAG (1967).

Richard Robert Izold, 72, of Anchorage, Alaska, passed away peacefully at home on May 9th, 2014. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio, at various times in his life he has been known as Richard, Dick, Dickie, and Large.

Dick joined the Army in 1962. He was trained and served as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam and Germany and received the following medals: Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal (20th Oak Leaf Cluster), Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, National Defense Service Medal, and the Bronze Star Medal. After his honorable discharge in 1969, he served in the reserves in Cleveland, in the 316th Medical Detachment (Helicopter Ambulance).

Dick moved to Alaska in the early 70's to work on the Alaska Pipeline. He became a contract helicopter pilot in the State, working mainly for Evergreen Helicopters, Alaska Helicopters, and Chugiak Aviation, until he landed permanently in Anchorage in 1990. Ultimately he started his own handyman business called Debenham Properties. He really didn't retire; he just picked up his screwdrivers and wrenches less frequently in these last few years. Friends and neighbors could count on him to help out until his last days. He also maintained his firearms license and enjoyed loading his own bullets and working on guns. Dick was a member of Amvets Post 49, the VFW, American Legion and the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.

He is survived by his wife of 32 years, Beth, aka The Warden; three daughters, six grandchildren, one sister, one brother and his beloved black cat Felix. He was a good man, husband, father and grandfather.

Dick was a large man with a large personality. He was a devout patriot whose loyalty to this country never wavered. He felt a great sadness, and even more anger, at what he believed was happening in this country, and he wasn't quiet about it. Nobody had trouble guessing at his beliefs. In his many emails he expressed such pain and confusion at how the politicians, both local and national, have squandered the sacrifices of the men and women who have defended this country, and have allowed this country to wander so far from its intended path.

He loved his neighbors, and most every day at 3:30 p.m. could be found in the neighbor's garage, spearheading the neighborhood Safety Committee. Many a national crisis was discussed (and solved) in those meetings. Two of his favorite phrases were "Get the Money!!" and "Keep your RPMs up!" One of his closest army buddies wrote: "The first time I flew with him he was as solid as a rock and I've loved him from that day on." This is Dick in a nutshell. Burial was at the Fort Richardson National Cemetery. Sent to us by Member Dorcey A. Wingo

KOSHINSKY, John Foster

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 67-6, flew in Vietnam with the 57th AHC (1967-68), the ASARV (1972) and HHC, 1st Avn Bde (1971-72). John (Jack) Foster Koshinsky Jr., LTC (USA Retired), died in Pensacola, Florida, Tuesday, April 17, 2014. He served 26 years in the National Guard and U.S. Army and was well known and respected as a courageous leader to the troops he served with both in combat and stateside assignments. He served two tours in Vietnam. Jack was awarded numerous awards for his bravery and leadership including the Distinguished Flying Cross for a daring mission into Laos where he landed twice on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. His call sign for his first RVN tour was "Ski".

Upon retirement from the Army in 1985, Jack joined ARIS Helicopters Ltd. based in of San Jose, California, owned by a friend and fellow platoon leader of the 57th AHC from their tour in 1967/68. Jack quickly became director of operations, Vice President and the President of a subsidiary company, International Helicopter Parts. Jack traveled extensively in Southeast Asia developing a very successful aircraft repair parts and component overhaul business. Jack played a significant role in the success of IHP and the parent company. In 1999 Jack was recruited by General Electric in Phoenix and took over operations responsibility for Garrett Aviation Parts Support. He was part of a Japanese led Kaizen Lean Six Sigma event for the Garrett Augusta, GA engine shop and also took the lead that ended in Garrett Aviation Parts Support becoming ISO 9002 certified. Jack was then approached by the Paragon certification team to work for them. He traveled extensively to Indonesia, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Singapore and the Philippines as President of The Paragon Group. One of those contacts invited he and wife Barbara to a company



sponsored golf tournament in Scotland which Jack – of course – won!

In 2001, Jack and his wife, Barbara, moved from California to Navarre, Florida and made it their home. Jack loved living on the water and all the wonderful people he and Barbara met. Jack served as President and Secretary of Navarre Towers for many terms and was well loved by all. He is survived by his loving wife, Barbara; and four children.

Special thanks to Greg Collier, M.D. from Pensacola Beach, Florida, who was a 57th pilot in 1968-69. Craig visited Jack and comforted Barbara just before his death. Greg received his in-country check out and orientation from Jack who was the 57th UH-1H IP as well as being the respected and loved second platoon leader.

Keep your rotor in the green, Jack.

Sent to us by Member Steve Sullivan

LEGGETT, Roy Hilton

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 657-12, flew in Vietnam with the 34th GS GRP (1966-67), the 478th HHC (1969-70) and the 382nd TC DET (1969) under the Hurricane call sign.

Roy Hilton Leggett, Sr. Major (USA Retired), 81, of Columbus, GA died Tuesday, April 8, 2014 at Columbus Hospice House. Major Leggett was born December 7, 1932 in Aberdeen, MS, he entered the US Army in 1952 and attended Warrant Officer Candidate School in 1957. During his career, he flew CH-34 helicopters in Germany and received a direct commission in Germany in 1961. After attending many advanced aviation courses, Roy spent two years in Vietnam commanding a CH-34 Company. His military career was completed after 20 years at Ft. Eustis, VA in 1972. Roy also obtained a Bachelor of Science degree from Troy State University in 1977.

Major Leggett later entered Civil Service work in 1979 while stationed at Ft. Benning. He continued to serve in this capacity at Ft. Eustis and Ft. Lee. Having obtained the position Chief of Contracting which later transitioned into his work at Columbus State University's Cunningham Center where he worked for Georgia Tech. He was active in many civilian and military organizations including past President of the Retired Officers Association.

He was preceded in death by his son, Frank C. Leggett, survivors include his loving wife, of 62 years, June Hale Carden Leggett of Columbus, GA, one son, one daughter, the wife of his deceased son, two grandchildren, his beloved Anne Carden Leggett and Lauren Durkee along with four great grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be sent to Columbus Hospice House, 7020 Moon Road Columbus, GA 31907

MACKIE, Tom

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 69-45, flew in Vietnam with the 189th AHC (1970) and the AFAT 2/2 (1970-71) under the Ghost Rider 25 callsign



Thomas Lynn Mackie passed away on April 11, 2014 at his home after a lengthy battle with cancer. He was born in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan. Tom's occupation when he retired was with Ken Graham Trucking Co. where he worked for 16 years as an Owner-Operator. In addition he worked as the SSM City Airport Manager and an Assistant Manager of Cloverland Oil.

Tom served in the United States Army as a Warrant Officer, Helicopter Pilot in Vietnam. He was a true Patriot. While serving his country, he received the following recognition: A Purple Heart, National Defense Service Medal, Volunteer Service Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Distinguished Flying Cross and the Army Aviator Badge. Tom always remained humble, never wanting to acknowledge his accolades.

Tom is survived by his loving wife, Dana, his beautiful daughter, Shelby Ann Louise; and her twin sons, Steve and Riley Angeli. He is also survived by a wonderful family loaded with brothers, sisters, nieces, nephews and co-workers at both the Cozy Inn and at Ken Graham Trucking. Donation in his memory may be made to Hospice of the EUP, 308 W. 12th Ave. Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.

MEACHAM, William Clayton

William Clayton "Dale" Meacham, Graduated flight training with Flight Class 67-20, flew in Viet Nam with B/101 AVN 101ABN (1st Tour), 7/1 CAV and 13 CAB (2nd Tour). Callsign Kingsman 25.



William Clayton Meacham, LTC (USA Retired) died on March 8, 2014 after a heroic battle with cancer. Heroic can only begin to describe Bill. His Silver Star, 3 DFCs, 3 Bronze Stars, and 2 Air Medals with "V" are only some of the many medals with which the Army attempts to recognize that trait.

He was born in Darlington S.C.; he grew up in Southern California, where he married Carole, his beloved wife on 26 February 1962. He enlisted in the Army that same year, went through airborne school, served a tour with the 504th Abn Battle Gp. in Germany and went on to graduate from OCS in June of 1966, OCS was followed by Flight School, where he graduated on Nov. 21, 1967. By January 1968 he was in Viet Nam with the unit that would soon become B Co. of the 101. After a short 6 month break at Ft. Gordon, GA, the Fixed Wing Qualification Course, and the Jungle Survival Course in the Philippines he was back in Viet Nam with the 1st Cav. Div. in time for the Cambodian Invasion of 1970. The remainder of Bill's Army career was spent in the California Army National Guard continuing to serve Army Aviation as a Huey pilot, Airfield Operations Officer and Airfield Commander of Los Alamitos Army Airfield. He retired from active duty in the NG's AGR system in January of 1988.

TAPS

After retirement he and Carole first moved to Grass Valley, California. Then in June of 1993 they moved to Ocala, Florida and ten years later to Shreveport, LA. Bill and Carole loved the VHPA as well as the reunions with the 101st Association, LRP, VHCMA, and Rakkasans and faithfully attended as many of them as was possible. The friendships he formed on duty and with other members of the VHPA were an important part of his life. The reunions of the last 15 years were attended also by their daughter Robin, who loved to sit with her father and the other guys to hear their stories. Most of all she loved to see the recognition by his peers of his quiet courage, humility, candor, and integrity.

Bill is survived by his beloved and devoted wife of 52 years, Carole, his daughter Robin Thompson, and a list of grieving friends that would fill several pages of this magazine. He will be interred at Arlington National Cemetery on 12 September, 2014 at 9:00 AM.

Bill's final contribution to the life and profession that he loved is a riveting account of our craft in his book; "Lest We Forget", chronicling his first Viet Nam tour with the 101st ABN. He concludes it by saying something that sums up his character and his devotion to all that he served; "This is Kingsman 25. GOD love you all. Out."

*Sent to us by Dale's friend
and fellow SoCal Chapter Member, Steven Lund*

NGUYEN, Howe, RSVN Aviator

Col. Howe Nguyen passed away peacefully on April 8, 2014, at a local nursing home. He was a resident at Fort Walton Rehab nursing home for the last five years. He was born Saigon, South Vietnam and came to the U.S. in 1975 right after the Fall of South Vietnam, he had been a resident of Fort Walton Beach for the last 39 years. He started working multiple jobs for Okaloosa County School Board to support his family, and retired after 20 years of faithful service. He was an avid fisherman and enjoyed gardening and cooking. He also enjoyed spending time with his family. Howe was a former Colonel in the South VN's Air Force. He had spent his 25 years of dedicated service as a career helicopter pilot starting in 1950 flying along with the French AF and then the USAF until the end of the war in 1975. He was selected as one of the first helicopter squadron (#211) commander when the South Vietnam's Air Force was established in 1955 at Nha Trang AB. He was flight trained first in France in the 50's and then the US in the 60's; he flew both French (H-19) and later transitioned to US helicopter version first with the H-34 then with UH-1 as part of the Vietnamization doctrine. As a command pilot he logged in 5500+ flight hours with over 120 combat missions over South and Central VN providing close air support as well as rescue and recovery. In 1967 he served as the 74th Composite Wing Commander at Can Tho AB followed with another assignment at Bien Hoa AB in 1969 as the 43rd Tactical Wing Commander. He was promoted to General of the fledgling SV's Air Force where he assumed the post in 1970 at Tan Son Nhut AB, (HQ VNAF). He was a courageous leader, a talented pilot and a

marvelous senior military commander.

Col. Howe is survived by his 5 children and their spouses, 9 grandchildren and 2 nephews from Florida, Texas and California. Donations in his name may be made to the US Air Force Armament Museum.

RYAN, John F.

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 67-503, flew in Vietnam with the 1st/9th CAV, 1st CAV DIV (1967-68)

John F. Ryan, 66, of Ingleside, Texas passed away May 3, 2014. He was born in Livingston, Montana and served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War where he received numerous distinguished honors. He eventually retired from McTurbin, Inc., in Corpus Christi.

He is survived by his loving wife of 30 years, Molly Ryan of Ingleside; one son, three daughters, one brother, one sister and 11 grandchildren. Donations in his name may be made to the American Cancer Society...

VHPA member Robert Chaison (Flight Class 67-591) adds; "John was fantastic gun pilot with the 1st of the 9th Cav. He was known country wide as the "Mad Bomber". I will miss him dearly,

SULLIVAN, Joseph L.

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 65-11, flew in Vietnam with A/501 Avn (1965-66), 281st AHC (1965) and B/229th Avn, 1st CAV (1966) under the Fang & Preacher call-signs

Joseph L. Sullivan, CW4, (USA Retired), age 70 of Little Rock, Arkansas passed away on March 28, 2014. Joseph graduated from Catholic High School and held a Bachelors Degree from UALR and a Masters Degree from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University.

Chief Sullivan joined the Army in October 1964 and upon graduation from Warrant Officer Candidate Helicopter Flight Training in September 1965, he arrived in Viet Nam in November of that year. Chief Sullivan was initially assigned to the 6th Aviation Platoon (Airlift) in direct support of the 5th Special Forces Group. The 6th Airlift Platoon and other aviation units were joined together and formed the 281st Assault Helicopter Company. The 281st AHC was the first U.S. Army Helicopter Company organized and trained as a Special Operations Aviation unit in the Republic of Vietnam. The 281st was placed under the Operational Control of the 5th Special Forces Group, Nha Trang RVN. Chief Sullivan's second assignment in Viet Nam was with the Bravo Company 229th Aviation Battalion, 1st Cav Division (airmobile).

Joseph was a life member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA), American Legion, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) and Disabled American Veterans (DAV). His military awards include the Air Medal, three awards of National Defense Service Medal (Viet Nam, Desert Storm and Enduring Freedom), three awards of the Army Com-



mendation Medal and others. Chief Sullivan retired from the Army in June 2003. Chief Sullivan also had a parallel civilian career with the State of Arkansas as a Senior Financial Examiner with the Arkansas Insurance Department.

His loving wife Wilma precedes him in death; survivors include his five children, numerous nieces, nephews, grandchildren, sisters and brothers. Memorials may be made to VHPA.org or American Cancer Society. To sign the online guestbook, go to www.griffinleggetthealeyroth.com

SCHANDER, Charles E "Chuck"

Graduated flight training with Flight Class 66-21 & 66-23, flew in Vietnam with the 191st AHC (1967-68) under the Boomerang call-sign.

Charles E. "Chuck" Schander, 73, of Winter Haven, Florida, died of lung cancer on April 8, 2014. Born in Berwyn, Illinois, he was a veteran of the United States Army and served in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot.

Chuck was a member of Christ Community Church, active in Big Brothers and volunteered for Meals on Wheels. He was a wonderful and caring husband, father, grandfather, great grandfather and brother. He was loved by all who knew him and will be greatly missed.

Chuck is survived by his wife Helen Schander, two sons, one stepson, eight grandchildren, three great grandchildren, one sister, many nieces and nephews and numerous friends he considered as his extended family. Donations in his memory may be made to Wounded Warrior Project by calling 813-804-4096.

Notice of the passing of the following nine Vietnam Military Aviators was also received by the VHPA during the production period for this issue. None of these men were ever members of the association, nor were the 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 all obtained through an internet search. Because of that, we have posted their TAPS information to their individual listings of the on-line membership directory being maintained at VHPA.org. If you are not able to retrieve the information on-line, call HQ for assistance (1-800-505-VHPA).

CLARK, Jeffrey T., US Army Aviator, Flight Class 69-17

ERBE, Robert Louis, COL (USA Retired), US Army aviator

FALLS, John, LTC (USA, Retired)

LARSON, Jan Christian – USAF Aviator

LYNN, David A., US Army Aviator, Flight Class 72-21 & 71-25

MALOY, Donald G., US Army Aviator

PERELLO, Felix Dixon Bates, WO, USA, flew with the 240th Assault Helicopter in Vietnam

SWINK, Terry, LTC (USA, Retired), US Army Aviator

YORK, Glen P., MAJ (USAF Retired)

Trends in today's Military Aviation...

Sikorsky's King Stallion rollout ~ come to the CH-53K party!

By Christopher P. Cavas of Defense News.com

It isn't often a new military helicopter is "revealed" to the public for the first time, so it's a real event whenever it takes place. Sikorsky Aircraft staged such a happening May 5, when it rolled out the first flying CH-53K heavy-lift helicopter, moments after Marine Corps commandant Gen. James Amos announced the new bird's name — King Stallion.

An audience of invited guests was on hand to ooh and ahh as doors were pushed back to reveal the King, which looks very much like earlier versions of the H-53. Inside, however, a great deal of the aircraft is all-new, from its digital, "glass cockpit" to fly-by-wire controls to extensive use of composites in place of aluminum.

The CH-53K is touted as the largest, most powerful helicopter ever designed and built by Sikorsky, and perpetuates the line of H-53s in production since the 1960s. The huge helo is designed to meet a US Marine Corps requirement for a vertical lift aircraft able to deliver an externally-slung load of 13 1/2 tons a distance of 110

nautical miles, hover for 30 minutes, then return to base — at sea or on land.

Sikorsky claims no other helicopter in service today can match that feat, pointing out that current CH-53E Super Stallions carry 4 tons under similar conditions.

The King Stallion features new General Electric Aviation T408 engines, providing 57 percent more power than CH-53E engines with about 20 percent lower specific fuel consumption. New all-composite main rotor blades, new transmission design, and a powerful tail rotor assembly that provides more thrust than a S-76 helicopter's main blades are also features of the King Stallion.

The aircraft displayed is the first of four System Development and Design (SDD) flight test air-

craft, scheduled to begin flying later this year.

A total of 200 King Stallions is planned to be ordered for the Marine Corps, with the first aircraft becoming operational in 2019.



The U.S. Navy's newest variant of the Fire Scout unmanned helicopter completes its first day of flying

By Andrea Shalal-Esa

WASHINGTON (Reuters) — October 31, 2013 - A larger and more powerful version of Northrop Grumman Corp's Fire Scout unmanned helicopter made its first two flights on Thursday, the U.S. Navy said as it plans to start using the new aircraft next year.

The MQ-8C Fire Scout took off and flew for 7 minutes in its first flight at Naval Base Ventura County in Point Mugu, California, the Navy and Northrop said in news releases. It reached an altitude of 500 feet and flew 9 minutes during a second flight.

Northrop said it had developed the new Fire Scout in just one year, much faster than normally seen in U.S. weapons programs. "It is a big accomplishment for the integrated government and industry team to fly this air vehicle for the first time," Captain Patrick Smith, the Navy's Fire Scout program manager, said in a release issued by the Navy.

He said the Navy would need fewer of the new surveillance helicopters since they had a longer range and could stay airborne longer. He said that would help meet urgent needs spelled out by the U.S. Africa and Special Operation commands. Northrop said the new version of the Fire Scout was designed to fly twice as long and carry three times as many sensors and other equipment as the current MQ-8B variant, which is on its seventh at-sea deployment for the Navy, supporting antipiracy missions on board Navy frigates.

The unmanned helicopter has also been used extensively in Afghanistan since

early 2011 to provide surveillance data to ground commanders.

Retired Admiral Gary Roughead, the former chief of naval operations who authorized operational use of the first Fire Scout two years earlier than planned, he welcomed the news about the larger aircraft's first flight.

"Even though we got a lot out of the first Fire Scout, the bigger airplane with the increased attributes is going to be very important, the helicopter could operate from a large number of Navy ships with smaller flight decks, giving commanders greater range and awareness" Roughead said.

Based on a larger commercial airframe with additional fuel tanks and an upgraded engine, the MQ-8C will be able to fly up to 12 hours or carry up to 2,600 pounds (1,180 kg),

Northrop said. George Vardoulakis, Northrop Grumman's vice president for medium-range tactical systems, said Northrop developed a bigger version of the Fire Scout after Navy operators asked for a system that could fly longer and carry more sensors.

"Changing out the airframe, installing control systems and avionics, and then conducting a first flight of the system in a year is truly remarkable," Vardoulakis said.

(Editing by Stephen Coates)
(Unfortunately this story IS NOT a joke — David Adams)



Trends in today's Military Aviation...

New Boeing Little Bird

The first production standard Boeing AH-6i Little Bird light attack/reconnaissance helicopter has made its maiden flight on 1 May 2014. Photo courtesy of Boeing.

The flight, which took place at Boeing's Mesa production facility in Arizona, lasted about 20 minutes and saw the helicopter flown in forward, rearward, and sideward directions at low elevations. Future tests will expand the flight envelope over the next several months.

In November 2013 Boeing disclosed it had signed its first customer for the AH-6i, which has been developed specifically for the international market (a version for the US Army is designated AH-6S). While company officials have so far declined to name that customer, IHS Jane's understands it to be the Saudi Arabian National Guard, which is to receive 24 helicopters.

Developed from the 1960s-era Hughes Model 369 (OH-6 Cayuse in US Army service), the AH-6i is the latest incarnation of the venerable Little Bird-series of helicopters currently fielded by international MD 500-series operators, and the US Special Operations Command in the guise of the AH/MH-6 Mission Enhanced Little Bird (MELB).

The AH-6i shares a lot of the attributes that made the OH-6 and later MD 500-series helicopters so successful, including the helicopter's diminutive size (the main rotor system is only 8.33 m in diameter, and from tip-to-tail it is only about 9.95 m in length), and a highly crash-resistant A-frame with rugged skid landing gear. Also, as with previous models, the AH-6i does not use hydraulics but utilises a straight mechanical flight-control system, making it more responsive to the pilot's commands, while simplifying maintenance.

The AH-6i advances the Little Bird in terms of its powerplant, payloads, and avionics. Its full-authority digital engine control (FADEC)-equipped

Rolls-Royce 250-C30R/3M powerplant (generating 650 shp but limited by the helicopter's drive system to 600 shp) is linked to a new six-bladed main rotor assembly with composite blades (compared to five metal blades before). This makes the AH-6i compliant with the US Army's 6k/95 benchmark for hovering out of ground effect (HOGE) with a typical mission weight (about 1,800 kg comprising two crew members, full fuel, and

weapons), and allows it to carry a four-station weapons plank as opposed to the usual two-station plank of previous generation Little Birds.

The AH-6i's payload fit includes the Dillon M134D 7.62 mm Gatling gun, General Dynamics GAU-19 12.7 mm Gatling gun, FN Herstal M3P 12.7 mm chain gun, Lockheed Martin AGM-114 Hellfire air-to-surface missiles, as well as a variety of seven-shot 'dumb' or laser-guided 70 mm rocket systems.

The enhanced avionics are based on the same software as the Boeing AH-64E Apache Guardian attack helicopter, affording it superior performance and increased interoperability, and comprises a digital 'glass' cockpit that features color multi-functional display units for both pilots, and a reduced number of avionics boxes which brings down the aircraft's overall weight (again, feeding into an increased payload performance). As the AH-6i has been developed for the international market, all the avionics are compliant with the International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR). The AH-6i is also equipped with a chin-mounted L-3 Wescam MX-15Di electro-optic/infrared (EO/IR) sensor turret.

Boeing has previously estimated a potential global market of around 700 helicopters for the Little Bird, including the US Army's Armed Aerial Scout requirement, the future of which is unclear at this time. This market is predominately geared at replacing ageing MD 500-series and AH-1 Cobra platforms.



Fort Carson unit gets Army's newest choppers

By Tom Roeder

*Colorado Springs Gazette (gazette.com),
used by permission, 28 October 2013*

The Army's newest helicopter is quiet, fast and has no trouble flying and fighting in the mountains.

And the AH-64E is getting rave reviews from Fort Carson soldiers who are among the first troops to fly the latest version of the Apache attack helicopter.

"It even has that new aircraft smell," said Capt. Chris Curran with the post's 1st Battalion of the 25th Aviation Regiment - the second unit in the Army to get the aircraft. Curran's battalion is flying the first of 24 of the helicopters it expects to receive in the coming months. The helicopter is a new version of the venerable Apache that first saw combat in the 1991 Persian Gulf War and has proven to be a flexible fighting tool for tracking and killing insurgents in Iraq and Afghanistan. But the older Apaches are loud,

don't fly in foul weather and have trouble, as most helicopters do, flying in the thin air of high altitudes.

The new "E" model, built at a Boeing plant in Arizona, has a whisper-quiet rotor, upgraded electronics and flight instruments and a powertrain that "lets you use all of the engine's power," said Chief Warrant Officer Micah Howell, who's flown the new helicopters. That extra power comes in handy in Colorado, where older Apaches had trouble dealing with the thin air, seldom taking off with full payloads of fuel and munitions. In testing, the newest Apache became the first military helicopter to hover at 6,000 feet with a full load of gear.

New aircraft are rare in the military these days, as the Pentagon works to cut spending by nearly \$1 trillion over 10 years. But getting top-notch helicopters was identified as a top priority, and the \$2 billion AH-64E program is proceeding as planned. The Apache has a well-earned reputation on the battlefield. A single helicopter can pack 16 tank-killing Hellfire missiles.

Trends in today's Military Aviation...

continued from pg 34...

The helicopter also is equipped with a full suite of cameras and sensors to spot enemy movement. The newest Apache is designed to control drones, vastly increasing the amount of territory one helicopter can cover, earning it the nickname "Apache Guardian."

The new helicopters went into full production in October 2012, and hit the training ranges at Fort Carson in earnest Oct. 22. The helicopters blasted targets with 30 mm cannons and fired rockets.

Curran said the simulated attacks help pilots learn how their new craft behaves in combat conditions.

Clearly evident on the training range was the quieter nature of the helicopter, which couldn't be heard from more than a couple of hundred yards away. Helicopters are traditionally loud, because rotor blades break the speed of sound as they whip through the sky. Howell said the new helicopter's relative quiet comes with a composite rotor that more efficiently slices through the air when compared with its metal predecessor. It's also quick, with a top speed approaching 200 mph.

Curran said pilots in the brigade are still learning its systems. The cockpit is virtually unchanged, but it now has the capability for instrument-only flight, allowing the new helicopters to navigate through clouds and guide



pilots to a safe landing using electronic tools. The helicopter, though, keeps the classic lines of the old Apache, with its angry bug look. The cockpit is also familiar to pilots and about 70 percent of the new bird's parts are the same as the older model, making it cheaper to maintain.

"It's basically a real improvement on an old platform," Curran said.

Time Runs Out On C-27J, the newest variant of the US Army Caribou

By Michael Hoffman

Monday, October 7th, 2013, Posted on-line at www.dodbuzz.com and reprinted here with permission.

The clock has ticked to zero on the C-27J as the first 21 cargo aircraft were set to be retired by Oct. 1, 2013. The Dayton Daily News has reported that the first twelve have been taken out of service and shipped to the boneyard at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. Even more C-27Js are set to be delivered to the Air Force only to be sent immediately to the boneyard.

This comes at an especially sensitive time with the government in the second week of the shutdown that occurred in Oct. After Congress failed to agree to a budget or continuing resolution for fiscal year 2014.

The original plan was to field a fleet of 38 C-27Js across the service as part of the Joint Cargo Aircraft Program. The Air Force had 15 C-27Js stationed at Guard bases and another two at Waco, Texas, at an L-3 Communications plant. Four more are on the books to be built by Alenia Aermacchi, in Italy and sent to the U.S. in fiscal year 2013. Those newly built aircraft were scheduled to be sent directly to the boneyard.

The Air Force spent about \$1.6 billion to purchase the 21 aircraft. Soon after the first C-27Js arrived in Afghanistan in 2011 to start resupplying deployed Army units, the Air Force said it could no longer afford the luxury of the aircraft. The C-27J found itself in the middle of the debate between the Air Force active duty and the Air National Guard. Guard officials said the Air Force leadership was unfairly hacking away at the Guard's budget in favor of active duty component's budget. The C-27J

fleet issue was the shining example that the Guard used to illustrate this.

Air Force leaders justified eliminating the C-27J fleet, noting that the C-130 could complete most of the missions. It could also perform the missions more economically, and it could do it cheaper. Air Force officials had argued that the sustainment costs were too expensive to keep the C-27J when compared to the C-130. Former Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. Norton Schwartz told Congress in 2012 it cost \$9,000 per hour to fly the C-27J and \$10,400 to fly the C-130. Even though the C-130 was slightly higher per hour, the C-130 is well established within the fleet and the Air Force couldn't afford to introduce and sustain the C-27J.

The Ohio Air National Guard, which is one of four Guard units that fly the C-27J, had developed their own cost estimates. Officials with the Ohio Guard said they arrived at a cost of only \$2,100 per hour to

fly the C-27J and \$7,000 per hour to fly the C-130.

Congress ordered the Air Force within the 2013 National Defense Authorization Act to form a working group and add 32 strategic airlifters. Lawmakers did not specify that those airlifters be C-27Js and former Air Force Secretary Michael Donley said it was unlikely the service will keep the Spartan fleet alive. The Air Force even flirted with the idea of even buying more C-27Js after it issued a request to industry on May 10 for proposals to purchase. That effort was thwarted by Congress even though language in a bill is what forced the Air Force to issue the request.

Air Force officials maintain that the service hasn't necessarily scrapped the aircraft. Instead the service is still waiting to hand off the C-27J to other agencies. No agencies have yet publicly said they want to obtain the aircraft.



VETERANS WITH A MISSION

Upcoming Vietnam Team Trip Opportunities!

In 2015, two teams of Veterans With A Mission will travel to Vietnam to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of United States involvement in the Vietnam War and with the people of Vietnam.

The first team visit is set for April 22 - May 8. This team will have extensive commutes to clinics and experience more of rural Vietnam. It will depart from Atlanta, GA, and arrive in Da Nang. Then it goes to Hue and is scheduled to work three days at the Floyd Olsen Memorial Clinic in Hong Ha. The team is also scheduled to go to a second clinic at Xuan Thuy in Quang Binh Province, VWAM's first trip to the former North Vietnam. Located four hours north of Hue, this team will conduct a three-day clinic near the location of VWAM's current water project. The team will return to Hue for one night; then travel to Da Nang two nights before returning to the US.

This area has a dense population of economically disadvantaged people suffering from water borne health issues. During the war, Quang Binh Province was in the top three in terms of bomb tonnage dropped by the US, and is the birth place of Vietnam's famous General Nguyen Giap.

The second team visit is set for May 14 - 29. This team will also depart from Atlanta, GA, but will go to Ho Chi Minh City for two nights before arriving in Da Nang. The team is scheduled to work one week at Hoa Bac Civilian and Military Clinic, which also serves ethnic minorities. It is located about 35 minutes outside of the city.

Participation on both teams are open to both medical/health and non_medical/health volunteers, and Vietnam vets are encouraged to return to Vietnam. There is a role for everyone to play on a team,



regardless of professional training or lack thereof! One of the highlights of the trip is the last evening in Da Nang when a celebratory dinner is held in honor of Vietnam and Vietnam Era vets, at the Furama Resort, near the former China Beach.

Trip price includes: International round-trip economy-class airfare from Atlanta (If you are on the west coast, you would fly out of SFO or LAX or SEA and meet the team in Seoul, South Korea) and all fly together into Vietnam; all hotels in Vietnam (4 or 5 Star) with daily breakfast; all team ground (Van) and air transportation (Economy-class) in Vietnam; Lunch each day the team has clinic; One dinner at the Furama Resort; T-shirt & tote-bag; Visa; Medical Evacuation Health Insurance;

All fees, service charges, and taxes.

It is your financial responsibility to get to the departure airport for the international flight.

Applications and pricing details can be can found on the Vets With A Mission web site, www.vetswithamission.org and then by clicking on the UPCOMING TRIPS tab.

If you need more information or want to discuss your participation on one of two trips, please contact Chuck Ward by email at vetswithamission@backroads.net or call his office at 803-405-9926.

Combat T-shirts make it to Afghanistan

VHPA Member and Aviator Advertiser Morgan Miller, the owner of the Vietnam Combat Helicopter T-Shirt line of clothing has just been sent this photo of an Air Force P.J. Blackhawk crew displaying one his T-Shirts while on deployment at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan. Looks like Morgan might have to re-name his company just Combat Helicopter T-Shirts!

You can own one of his distinctive shirts for yourself, to order just go to:

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



A Blessing of a Vietnam Veteran Helicopter 425

by Bill Jeczalik, VHPA Life Member

As most military aviators know, the US Army names all their aircraft after Indian tribes. The helicopter known to us as the Huey, started its military life as the Iroquois. Some readers may also be aware of the 2004 Huey restoration and tour documentary "In the Shadow of the Blade" which included an American Indian blessing of the souls who have flown or have ridden in the helicopter.

Our restoration effort, Project 425, is a private endeavor. Its aim is to restore a Vietnam Veteran Huey Helicopter (#68-16425), to display condition for public viewing. The aircraft flew 1,970 combat hours with the Warlords, B/123ABN, stationed in Chu Lai. During the last two weeks of January, 2014, we were invited to show the Huey at the South Florida Fair. One of the many other participants was the Native American dance troop, the Hitchiti Dancers. Early in the beginning of the fair's run, our leader, Mike Carroll, a former Chinook crew chief, spoke to Glenn Alexander. Glenn, also a Veteran and the dance group's advisor was asked about performing a similar ceremony on the last day of

the fair. Mike additionally loaned him a copy of "In the Shadow of the Blade". We also wrote a press release asking all Veterans to be present for the blessing.

At the appointed time, Mr. Alexander assembled about twenty dancers in full Indian dress around the helicopter. They performed a ceremony by burning sage, walking completely around the aircraft and allowing the smoke to waft into the interior. As he did this, he asked for a blessing on all souls who have ever flown or have ridden in the Iroquois. He invited Veterans to accompany him and one of those was MG Wayne Jackson, USA Ret, one of our "crew members". The ceremony concluded with a large circle comprised of alternating a Veteran and a dancer



completely surrounding the aircraft doing a side step movement around it to the rhythmical beat of the drum. I know for myself, the entire event was a moving, solemn experience.

Additional information about the blessing or our project can be found at [Facebook.com/groups/project425/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/project425/)

Photo courtesy of Best Light Images

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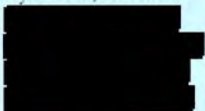
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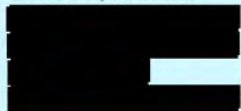
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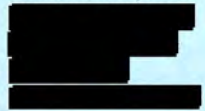
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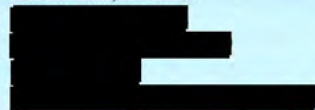
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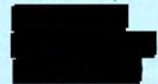
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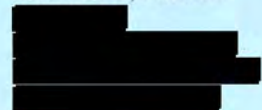
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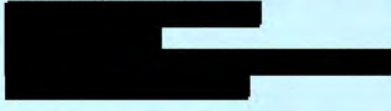
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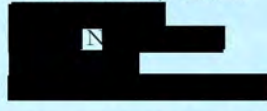
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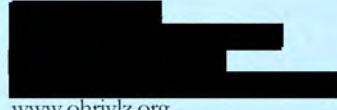
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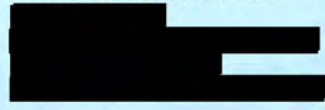
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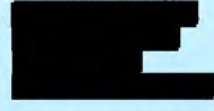
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OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

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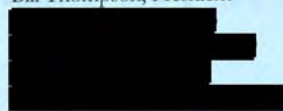
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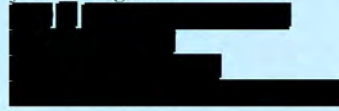
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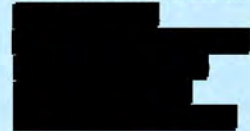
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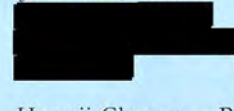
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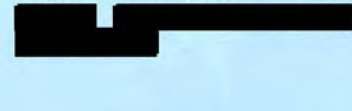
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Hawaii Chapter – Provisional

Ken DeHoff - POC



Notice to all Members of the VHPA

For a limited time, liaison between the National HQ of the VHPA and the Independent Chapters has reverted to John Sorensen of the Chapter Liaison National Committee. John can be reached at 417-759-7487 or via E-Mail at: jsorensen7106@gmail.com. Feel free to contact John concerning any details on opening your own local Chapter of the VHPA and/or for seeing what assistance is available from HQ to support your efforts.

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

THE ALAMO CHAPTER

By the time you read this, some of our members will have dropped in on buddies attending the Vietnam Helicopter Crewmembers Association (VHCMA) meeting in San Antonio on 24-28 June. Also in June, our Chapter will have met to socialize during Happy Hour and live music by James McMurty, in the famous Gruene Hall Dancehall, near New Braunfels, Texas. We stayed in the historic Faust Hotel in Gruene on 19-21 June where we participated in a great wine-tasting event.

Alamo Chapter members should watch their e-mails or consult the Chapter website www.vhpa-alamo.org for details of future plans, which include a Chapter meeting on a cruise ship to the Caribbean, and a Christmas party in December.

Chip Brown, President



OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

The Oklahoma Chapter of the VHPA has experienced exceptional membership growth since our first meeting in April. We are also making progress on developing a chapter logo, which should be available for viewing in the next issue of the Aviator. During our April meeting, the first officers for the Chapter were elected. Serving as President will be John Gaines, Vice-President "Mac" McAdoo, and Secretary Treasurer Rock Lyons.

At our next meeting we will be discussing participating in a service project to WW2 vets from Oklahoma through the Angel Flight Program. Our goal is to assist those WW2 veterans as long as there is a need. We will also be discussing other projects and activities to participate in.

John Gaines, President

UPPER MIDWEST CHAPTER

The Upper Midwest Chapter held their annual dinner meeting with invited spouses and significant others on 21 May at Mai Village - a local Vietnamese restaurant here in St. Paul, Minn. The evening was a big success with a nice atmosphere of friends gathering to celebrate completion of another year of our Chapter's work and congeniality. Twenty seven attendees enjoyed wonderful cuisine and camaraderie while welcoming a new family - COL George Stenehjelm, USA (Ret) and his wife Jean, from Edina, Minn. Into our Chapter. We were pleased and surprised by our Associate Member, Julie Kink, who arrived directly from the airport returning from visiting with her husband, VHPA member, Mike Sprayberry, in Ala. Those two need to get together soon to save on airfare.

Our President, LTC Bert Leach, USA (Ret), gave brief remarks to kick off the dinner which was followed by many stories told and appreciated by all. Spouses and significant others were apt listeners to the tales of danger and heroism of flying helicopters in Vietnam (some stories were even mostly true) and shared in the spirit of the evening. It was an enjoyable evening.

The Chapter's next bi-monthly meeting will be held at the historic Fort Snelling Officers Club on 23 July beginning at 11:30 followed by lunch and then our business meeting. Anyone wishing to find out about joining our Upper Midwest Chapter should contact President, Bert Leach at [REDACTED] and anyone wishing to attend our July meeting should RSVP to Russ Jowers at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. All are welcome.

Burt Leach, President *Submitted by Russ Jowers, Chapter Secretary*

FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER

Our September chapter meeting will be held at Logan's Road House restaurant, on Saturday, Sept 6th, 2014. The address is 948 N.E. Loop 820 in Hurst, Texas. The EC will meet at 11:30, followed by the general membership meeting beginning at noon (1200 hours). Flat rate for the meal is \$20 per person. Come early and enjoy the company of your friends.

Elections for chapter officers will be held during this meeting. As usual, all are welcomed to attend.

Adam Steczko, President

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

The South Missouri Chapter of VHPA was represented very well at the recent VHPA reunion in Louisville, KY. Several non-members from Missouri also attended, and I hope that chapter members had an opportunity to meet them and encouraged them to consider joining our Chapter.

If you were one of those who are from Missouri and not a member of our chapter, I would like to do two things: #1 - I would like to invite you to check us out by attending one of our meetings. Our chapter meets once each calendar quarter, at various locations throughout the state, and everyone, including wives, enjoys the fellowship and camaraderie of being together. I firmly believe you would enjoy it too!

#2, I would encourage you to check out our website, vhpasmo.org. This is our primary means of communication with our members and where the details of our meetings and other chapter activities are posted. Our website, however, is much more than just a bulletin board! It's where we post our pictures from Vietnam, where we can tell our story, in our own words, to preserve and to perpetuate our legacy. If you don't do it, who is going to tell your story, share your pictures, experiences, and memories? Each one of us wants to be remembered for our service to our country, that we flew helicopters in a very hostile environment, and that we served with honor and with pride. Come, join us, and let's preserve your legacy for the generations that follow!

As mentioned above, please check our website for the details of our upcoming quarterly meeting, then, plan on attending and bring a guest. See you there.

Bill Thompson, President

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

The general meeting held on May 3rd at the Log Jam in Grand Ledge was attended by nine members and one spouse. The attendees shared stories (swapped lies) from their experiences in RVN over lunch.

Our chapter's next major event will be participating with the Moving Wall in Hamburg, MI. It will be there through the Labor Day weekend August 28 - September 1. - themoving-wallhamburg.org

Besides the Wall there will be a Huey on display - Ameri-

canHuey369.com - and numerous military related displays. The event also includes a recreation of a Bob Hope USO Show featuring an excellent impersonator planned for Friday and Saturday evenings - August 29 & 30. The shows are planned to start at 8 pm each evening.

Our chapter will man a canopy/tent for three days of the event - Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, August 29-31, from 1000-1800 hours (10 am to 6 pm). Vice President Dave James, (davejamesj@yahoo.com) is the coordinator. Volunteers are needed to help cover during any part of those three days so let Dave know if you can help.

At press time, a chapter meeting is planned for Saturday, August 30, tentatively set for 6:30 pm at the Zukey Lake Tavern. Confirmation on time and location will be confirmed and emailed to chapter members.

As part of our recruiting efforts, chapter members are requested to invite any aircrew members who served in Vietnam to join us. And don't forget the spouses. Our bylaws provide for these associate members.

Rich Deer, President



Members of the Michigan Chapter of the VHPA gather last May in Grand Ledge, Michigan

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

ALASKA CHAPTER

What a wonderful Memorial event our chapter had opportunity to attend. Each year the State of Alaska holds an event about 140 miles north of Anchorage in our Denali State Park with folks who drive the distance to honor the military without the fanfare of news media. It is truly a respectful and remembrance event. This year one of our U.S. Senators, Lisa Murkowski, rode into the event on the back of a Harley, carrying the Alaska flag! What a start to a great event honoring our military brothers.

The event started for us as we headed north on Saturday, after a hot dog picnic on Long Lake, to the Princess Wilderness Lodge which gave us great rates for the weekend. After a nice dinner and get-it- going breakfast, we headed to the event on Sunday afternoon. A quick hot dog snack after the ceremony and then it was heading home for more ceremonies in Anchorage and Fort Richardson on Monday.

Our chapter was honored as the ceremony recognized one of our members, John Brown, and used the white flight helmet that he wore 2 of the 3 times he



Members of the Alaska Chapter "mount up" in front of the Princess Wilderness Lodge on their way to the Alaska State Veterans Memorial in Alaska's Denali State Park.



was shot down in Vietnam in the Fallen Soldier Ceremony. It was touching.

So after such a wonderful weekend of remembrance and honor, we are planning to make this event a chapter standard each year.

As our summer gets going, we are planning some serious fishing and getting out and enjoying a very good summer as the weather has been spectacular so far this year. We look forward to meeting many fellow pilots at the Reunion in Louisvilleuntil thenThere is pride in knowing we flew.

Lynn Kile, President

VHPA OF FLORIDA CHAPTER

April and May are always busy months for us. April brings Sun-N-Fun in Lakeland, FL and May brings the Vietnam and All Veterans Reunion in Melbourne, FL.

We actually started Sun-N-Fun in March when we met at the Lakeland Linder Airport to set up our GP Medium tent which houses our memorabilia display during Sun-N-Fun. Howard Smith instructed and supervised us in getting the tent up in record time and without any injuries! (Maybe a first for us.)

Then we descended on the airport on Tuesday morning of April 1st and completed the setup of the Sales area, positioned the OH-6, and got the "Little LOACH" in place and ready for the remainder of the week and on Sunday we started the breakdown of everything and moved everything to Howard's home, our pre-stage area for Melbourne. After six days of operating the memorabilia, sales, OH-6, and "Little LOACH" we were all tired and ready for a down week.

Then on Tuesday, April 29th Tom Tomlinson and I met at Howard's home to hook-up to the OH-6 and the sales trailer for the 3 _ hour's drive to Melbourne where we were met by our setup volunteers and we first got the OH-6 in place and then we got the sales trailer in place and erected our canopy. The last thing we did was to unload the "Little LOACH" and get it in place. While we were getting the sales area setup three of our members, Dan Brunger, Tom Frankenfield, and Frank Hoover assembled our "Freshly" painted vertical and 42 degree stabilizers on the OH-6. Now it looks like a real OH-6! For the next five days we worked the OH-6, sales and "Little LOACH" when we weren't taking cover from all of the liquid sunshine we received. Remember this is the Sunshine State!

In all, it requires a lot of work and great volunteers to put on these two events every year. I'm sure that as long as we are capable we will continue to support both events.

Then on May 15th we held our Board of Director's meeting at the Hillsborough County Veterans Park in Tampa, FL. We were back at the Veterans Park



Photo of the Chapter's display all set-up for the public's enjoyment in Melbourne, Florida



(LtoR): Members Bryan O'Reilly, Ken Mulholland, Chris Garbow and Tom Tomlinson enjoy the Memorial Day festivities at Tampa, Florida's Veterans Park.



(LtoR), Frank Hoover, Tom Frankenfield and Dan Brunger assembly the "New" vertical stabilizer and 42 degree before the show opens in Melbourne, Florida.

to observe the Memorial Day Ceremony and to make the OH-6 available to the many guests.

We get a breather now until July 4th when we will participate in the Brandon, FL 4th of July Parade. After the parade our next planned event will be our Annual Reunion from September 18th - 21st at the Plantation on Crystal River, Crystal River, FL.

This is a great gathering and we all have fun. We will have memorabilia, sales, and a great hospitality room with three great places for evening dinners. If anyone is interested in attending please visit our webpage at www.vhpaf.org and download the registration form and mail to Tom Tomlinson. The next firmly scheduled event will be the DeSoto County Veterans Appreciation Week from December 4th - 8th in Arcadia, FL.

As with all of our events all VHPA members are invited to attend and say Hi!

Tom Rountree, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

THE NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER OF THE VHPA

The North Alabama Chapter is preparing to be one of the most well represented chapters at the Louisville Reunion. We currently have more than 20 NAVHPA members signed up and we will have our own hospitality room for those who want someplace to hang out.

This spring has kept us occupied and out of trouble with work on Buc 3, our touring UH-1C/M. We have installed LED position lights that use much less battery power. Also, to avoid having to carry the signs, guns, steps, etc. in the aircraft while towing it to events, the chapter purchased an enclosed trailer. Now all the "stuff" has a place and we don't mar the paint putting stuff in and removing it later.

The NAVHPA displayed Buc 3 at the Second Annual Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home celebration at the Huntsville Veterans Memorial. It was the typical rainy and chilly March day but many were able to see and touch this veteran of Vietnam. One of those was the CE for Buc 5, Bob Utecht, who joined NAVHPA as an associate member. Six degrees of RVN separation.

Our next meeting was a Quarterly Fun Trip. We took a canoe/kayak trip on the Flint River on 31 May. We started out at Hampton Cove for the about 3-hour trip. After the workout, we met at El Olmeca in Hampton Cove for a happy hour and dinner.

The NAVHPA schedule really heats up after Memorial Day. A selection of our activities is shown below.

26 May - Memorial ceremony at Maple Hill Cemetery

14 June - Display at Ditto Landing (Huntsville) for NABA & United Cerebral Palsy

1-6 July - VHPA Reunion

9 August - Ardmore (AL) Car Show display

30 August - Display for 1st responders at Unsung Heroes in Huntsville

4 October - Madison (AL) Street Festival fund raiser

9 October - AAAA Picnic fund raiser, HSV Botanical Gardens



Les Haas, President



Buc 3 on display at the Second Annual Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home celebration in Huntsville, Alabama. It was an unseasonable rainy and chilly March day but many were still able to see and touch this Vietnam Veteran.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (SoCal) CHAPTER

This year our SoCal Chapter's annual St. Patrick's Day Meeting and BBQ was held at Wings And Rotors Museum at the French Valley Airport in Murrieta CA. Over twenty of our chapter members plus wives girlfriends and kids attended. We had a great time telling stories, eating BBQ and having few cool ones.

In March I attended the Fisher House SoCal Annual Meeting where I presented our Chapter Fundraiser check for \$1,580.99. This amount will be matched by the VA for a total contribution of \$3,160.00. Ground breaking will start this fall at the Long Beach VA for the 21 unit living facility, being built so family members have a place to stay while visiting injured and sick veterans at the VA Hospital.

Members of the So Cal Chapter then assisted VHPA National at the HAI Convention (Helicopter Association International) in Anaheim CA. We had an information booth and helped Mike Sheuerman (VHPA



Sven Akesson, President of the SoCal Chapter is shown presenting our Chapter Fundraising check to Steve Kurykendahl Pres/CEO of the Fisher House project for Southern California.



The SoCal Chapter helps man a VHPA booth at this year's HAI Convention. Shown here are John Harris, Sven Akesson, Mike Sheuerman, Tom Lasser and Bob Pulley



SoCal Chapter Members celebrate St. Patrick's Day at the Wings and Rotors Museum

Membership Chairman) find many new, returning and potential members. A special thanks to all the chapter members who were able to help man our booth.

This spring we entered a Chili Cookoff at The American Legion Post 299 in Chino CA. Our former President Carl Cortez dusted off his special chili recipe that almost won three years ago in Newport Beach, California that again served us well. Before that we almost won another chili cookoff with that recipe but were disqualified because the judges found a Margarita machine hidden behind the pot of chili. Now what's wrong with that?

Full details of these events, and what we also have planned for this summer are available at: www.VHPASoCal.org

Sven Akesson, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

Retirement has been good for the NCVH-PA in that we have more time to accommodate more requests for our static displays. Spring has been extremely busy with little indication of letting up this summer and fall so!

April 23-28 found us as part of the Virginia International Tattoo in Norfolk, VA. The Tattoo chose to honor Vietnam Veterans as their theme this year. During the daytime, a static display of four helicopters was set up outside the Scope Arena along with THE WALL THAT HEALS. The pilots and our helicopter were an integral part of the opening ceremonies at each performance as they pushed our Loach into the arena and set it up in the dark. When the lights came on, the pilots snapped to attention as the National Anthem was sung and the flag of our Nation was waved behind the helicopter. Our wives sat in the audience with pride and admiration for our representation of Vietnam Veterans. Pilots in front of the Loach in the attached picture below are: L/R Brock Nicholson, Larry Pigg, Sam McLamb, Joe Armstrong, J.D. Lawson, Terry Lanier, and Jerry Seago. Also helping with the display were Jim Baker and Vic Rose.

May 2nd found us in Myrtle Beach, SC, for a display at the Sheraton Convention Center also honoring Vietnam veterans. May 15-18, four helicopters were set up at the Marine Corp Airshow at Cherry Point, NC. Another May highlight was participating in the National Memorial Day Parade in Washington,

DC, on the 25th-27th. The pilots in attendance had their picture (attached) made with Miss America 2014, Nina Davuluri. The pilots, L/R are: Terry Lanier, J.D. Lawson, Brock Nicholson, Joe Armstrong, Larry Earles, and Jerry Seago. Also attached is a picture of our two Hueys with the Capital in the background while we waited for the parade to start. Also in May and on June 1, we supported two USO fund raising activities in NC.

The NCVHPA is enjoying traveling together and representing with dignity Vietnam Veterans. Upcoming events include continued work on the Vietnam Corridor display at the Pentagon. Check out our Facebook page, North Carolina Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.

Brock Nicholson, President Submitted by B. Seago and B. Nicholson



OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

Our last meeting was 3 May at Legend Brewery, 321 West 7th Street. Col Jim Holden officiated as the President and Vice President were out of town.

On June the first, the Chapter held an outing with families at the Flying Circus Air Show in Bealeton, VA. Check out their website; www.flyingcircusairshow.com. On April 5th, several members and spouses traveled to Ruckersville, VA meeting for lunch at the Blue Ridge Café. During lunch, we were briefed on the history and current plans of the Dogwood Vietnam Memorial in Charlottesville, VA, which was established in 1966 (yes that's not a mis-print, the year was 1966).

We then had a great tour of the Vietnam War Foundation Museum in Ruckersville, VA. This privately-funded museum contains a wealth of memorabilia and displays from the Vietnam era, including a UH-1D. More information can be found on their web site at www.vietnamwarfoundation.org

On May 19th, our members were invited to the Cosby High School Memorial Day Celebration. This was followed many Senior students interviewing veterans for their class projects. We had a Pearl Harbor Survivor, several other WWII Veterans, and Paul E. Galanti, Ex POW and now Commissioner of the Virginia Department of Veterans Services who gave a fantastic keynote speech. Over Memorial Day, we also had members attend the



Members of the Old Dominion Chapter of the VHPA gather in front of a display Huey at the Vietnam War Foundation Museum in Ruckersville, Virginia.

Ceremony in Richmond at the Virginia War Memorial and in Norfolk at their Memorial Day Service.

Our monthly meetings will be suspended thru the summer and will resume on Saturday 6 September at Legend Brewery in Richmond, VA.

Don Agren, President Submitted by Hugh W. Adams, Secretary

We just found out that the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund Healing Wall is scheduled to be at Southpark Mall in Colonial Heights, VA from Thursday 29 May thru Sunday 1 June. It is hosted by VFW Post 2239. Their web site is:

www.buildthecenter.vvmf.org/page/event/detail/thewallthathealsevent/jt8#sthash.lgE95Qh.dpuf

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

Our first general meeting for 2014 was held at Famous Dave's BBQ in Tacoma on February 8th. Chapter president Don LeMaster, opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by Chuck Brockway who led us in a prayer. We discussed our Huey restoration project at Northwest helicopters in Olympia, Washington. Treasurer John Shafer reported that our chapter's aircraft painting fund currently totals over \$1,500.00 but more donations are still needed to cover the cost of the painting our Huey. Of course, Volunteers are always welcome to stop by during the weekly work sessions at the hangar in Olympia. We should be ready for Veterans Day parade in November. We are still working with VHPA to assist in the establishment of an Oregon State Chapter. Our chapter member Don Lemaster spoke about this year's National Reunion and encouraged our members to attend this excellent event.

We held our nomination and selection of officers. J.C. Combs was elected as our new chapter President. Hal Thorton assumes the position of Vice President and Dave Eck is our new Senior Member at Large, serving as our Director for Programs and Planning. Steve Lodwig is our Midterm Member at Large taking

on the duties as Director of Membership. Following a vote to approve an amendment to our chapter by-laws allowing for the combination of the duties of the Junior Member at Large (Director of Communications) and the duties of our Chapter Secretary, Bill Lyons was elected to the position. John Shafer was Re-elected as our chapter Treasure and Jim Lepenske began his service as Sergeant at Arms.

Our June meeting was held at the Olympic Air Show at the Olympia Airport. Following the success of the previous couple of years, we are looking forward to holding a membership meeting in Eastern, Washington State in the September time frame.

The Washington State Chapter is an active veterans group and we invite all Vietnam Helicopter pilots to join us and re-connect with those

that you serve with so many years ago. Finally, thanks to the many members who put in the hours to make our state chapter a success. Your efforts are greatly appreciated!

J.C. Combs, President

Submitted by Bill Lyons



Members of the Washington State Chapter gather at famous Dave's BBQ, Tacoma, WA in February of the year.



Vietnam Helo Operations "Rotorheads Return"

24 Aug—6 Sep 2014 & 2—15 May 2015

"The bottom line is, the war is over. It really wasn't over till I came back," General Norman Schwarzkopf, during his 1993 return.
Tour Leader: John Powell, 1/9 Cav

Thanks for stopping by the MHT Table in Louisville!

MILITARY HISTORICAL TOURS (MHT)

is proud to offer VHPA tours as we begin the 50th Anniversaries of the Vietnam War. Come back with your VHPA brothers to visit places that have deep meaning for all helicopter pilots and crew. Our 15-day tour for only \$2495. Register now to get back in country with your buddies. You'll see our itineraries all over the internet but don't be fooled go with MHT who originated battlefield tours of Vietnam back in 1996!

Vietnam Veteran Owned & Operated!

Above: MHT group at Ho Chi Minh Mausoleum in Hanoi!
Right: Gunny R. Lee Erney went back with MHT to do his Mail-Call Vietnam episode.



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2014

Travel...Where History Comes Alive

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 Unit(s) served with, if that info is available

We welcome these 36 new Members to the VHPA!
All have joined our Association during the period from 2 April through 1 June 2014

FIRST - A CORRECTED REPEAT FROM OUR LAST ISSUE:

Lambrecht, Jack E.
Kirkville, Missouri, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 62-2W
Vietnam Unit(s): 64-65 611 TC
DET in 1964-65 and 82 MED
DET in 1967 & 1968

Anderson, Thomas M 'Tom'
Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania,
US Army
Flight School Class(s): 71-36
Vietnam Unit(s):
D/229 AHB 1 CAV in 72

Astrik, Charles H. **
Fayetteville, North Carolina,
US Army
Flight School Class(s): 56-8
Vietnam Unit(s):
180 ASHC in 66-67

Ballman, George P. 'Butch' **
Raiford, Florida, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 67-7 67-3
Vietnam Unit(s):
3/5 CAV in 67-69

Benson, Dana G.
Kinston, North Carolina, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 70-37
Vietnam Unit info not provided

Chapman, George E. **
Indian Trail, North Carolina,
US Army
Flight School Class(s): 66-4Q
Vietnam Unit(s): 176 AHC in 67

Cory, Clarence
Ames, Iowa, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 66-20
Vietnam Unit(s):
173 AHC in 67-68

Davis, Allan D. **
Gulf Breeze, Florida,
US Marine Corps
Flight School Class info
not available
Vietnam Unit(s):
HMM-165 in 68-69

Erwin, Roy E.
Columbus, Ohio, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 69-45
Vietnam Unit info not provided

Green, Millard L. 'Duck'
Pinson, Alabama, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 67-9
Vietnam Unit(s): B/227 AHB 1
CAV; D/227 AWC 1 CAV

Hartman, Douglas H. 'Doug'
Montclair, New Jersey,
US Marine Corps
Flight School Class(s): 68-12
Vietnam Unit(s):
HMM-165 in 69-70

Hudson, Winston R. 'Bud'
La Follette, Tennessee,
US Marine Corps
Flight School Class(s): 69-2
Vietnam Unit(s):
HMM-262 in 69-70

Johnson, Robert H. 'Bob'
Mason, Ohio, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 70-2
Vietnam Unit(s):
D/1/10 CAV in 70-71

Jung, Joseph S
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin,
US Army
Flight School Class(s):
68-508 68-12
Vietnam Unit(s): 21 AVN in 68

Marsh, Leroy B. 'Brad'
Sebastopol, California, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 67-3
Vietnam Unit info not provided

Maynard, Kevin M. **
Aurora, Colorado, US Army
Flight School Class(s):
68-517 68-31
Vietnam Unit(s): HHC 1 BDE
101 ABN in 68-69

McCammon, Lloyd D. **
Slocumb, Alabama, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 67-15
Vietnam Unit(s): A/101 AVN 101
ABN in 67; B/4 AVN 4 INF in 68;
163 AVN 101 ABN in 71; 227
AHB 1 CAV in 72

McKenzie, James B. 'Jim'
Graford, Texas, US Army
Flight School Class(s):
68-512 68-20
Vietnam Unit(s):
57 AHC in 68-69

Patterson, James R.
Columbus, Ohio, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 69-21
Vietnam Unit(s):
B/7/1 CAV in 69-70

Rea, Paul W. **
Royse City, Texas, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 63-4
Vietnam Unit(s):
A/1/9 CAV 1 CAV in 66-67;
45 ENG GP in 71-72

Reeves, William W. 'Bill'
Masontown, West Virginia,
US Army
Flight School Class(s): 66-20
Vietnam Unit(s):
240 AHC in 67-68

Rupert, Douglas J. **
Simcoe, CANADA, US Army
Flight School Class(s):
69-29 69-31
Vietnam Unit(s):
HHC 326 MED in 70;
D/101 AWC 101 ABN in 70

Saunders, Alexander R. 'Read' **
Crossville, Tennessee,
US Army
Flight School Class(s): 70-21
Vietnam Unit(s):
237 MED in 1970

Schnoebelen, Mark D.
Sunrise Beach, Missouri,
US Army
Flight School Class(s):
68-24 68-42
Vietnam Unit(s):
191 AHC in 69; 176 AHC in 72;
129 AHC in 72

Smith, John M. 'Baby Face'
Deep Run, North Carolina,
US Army
Flight School Class(s): 68-25
Vietnam Unit(s):
57 AHC in 68-69

Spatz, Vernon R.
Aberdeen, Washington,
US Army
Flight School Class(s): 70-48
Vietnam Unit(s):
A/2/17 CAV 101 ABN in 70-71

Stewart, Harvey Edgar **
Huntsville, Alabama, US Army
Flight School Class(s):
53-B 54-F
Vietnam Unit(s): 118 AHC
in 64-65; 21 AVN in 69-70

Stuart, William A.
Ypsilanti, Michigan, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 70-48
Vietnam Unit(s):
129 AHC in 71-72

Timberlake, Vaughn K.
Corydon, Indiana, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 65-18
Vietnam Unit(s):
25 INF DIV in 66-67

Tognazzini, Victor D.
Santa Maria, California,
US Army
Flight School Class(s): 67-13
Vietnam Unit(s):
282 AHC in 67-68

Trapp, Turner Japhet **
Albertville, Alabama, US Army
Flight School Class(s):
53FW 54RW
Vietnam Unit(s): 179 ASHC in
66; 212 CAB in 68-69;
HHC 1 AVN BDE in 67

Wallace, Leroy G.
Gallatin, Missouri, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 69-27
Vietnam Unit(s):
175 AHC in 70-71

Ware, David A.
Rockport, Texas, US Army
Flight School Class(s):
66-5W 66-5
Vietnam Unit(s): 155 AHC in 66-
67; 245 SAC in 70-71; 131 SAC
in 70-71; CAC in 70-71

Whitacre, Charles J. 'Chuck'
Salado, Texas, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 69-18
Vietnam Unit(s): A/159 ASHB
101 ABN in 70-71

Wordehoff, Gerald F. 'Gerry' **
Cedar Rapids, Iowa,
US Marine Corps
Flight School Class(s): 64-10
Vietnam Unit(s):
HMM-265 in 66-67

Wright, Gilbert W. **
Kyle, Texas, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 68-507
Vietnam Unit(s):
A/1/9 CAV in 68-69

Wyatt, Henry L.
Forest, Virginia, US Army
Flight School Class(s): 67-8
Vietnam Unit(s):
3/17 CAV in 67-68;
187 AHC in 67-68

Upcoming Reunions

**2014 USABAA (United States Army Black Aviation Association)
2014 Reunion**

August 6-8, 2014, Sheraton Atlanta Hotel, Atlanta, GA
POC is CW5 (Ret) J Nance, Secretary, 256-759-0639

Gathering of the Combat Helicopter Pilot Association (CHPA)

September 7 - 10; Riverside, CA; Mission Inn and Spa
Contact HQ@chpa-us.org; 800-832-5144.
Details available at www.chpa-us.org.

**C Company, 227th Assault Helicopter Battalion,
1st Cav Div (Ghost Riders)**

September 17-21, Lombard Illinois
POC is Bruce A. Peterson, Ghost Rider 5 in 1970
Phone 630-391-3920 ~ E-mail: petersob@mchsi.com

**50th Anniversary Reunion of the
Outlaws, Mavericks, Bushwackers and Roadrunners
Vinh Long, Vietnam 1964-1972**

(the62d - A502d - 175th Assault Helicopter Companies)
September 18-22, Washington, D.C.

Contact: Tom Anderson (Teander@cox.net)
Info: VinhLongOutlaws.com (Click: Reunions)

**Gathering of the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) Society
September 21-25th, 2014**

Sheraton Sand Key Resort, Clearwater Beach/St. Petersburg, Florida
POC: The Reunion Brat at 360-663-2521 or: TheReunion-
Brat@hotmail.com

More information available at: www.DFCSOCIETY.ORG

Reunion of the 132nd "Hercules" and the 178th "Boxcars"

September 24-28, the Battlefield Holiday Inn in Manassas, VA
POC is Bill McRae, Herc 18 (70-71), E-Mail
wmcrae@mindspring.com, phone 770.843.3973
www.132ASHC.org

**Flying Circus Aviation Units - Headquarters & Headquarters
Company, 1st Brigade - 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)**

September 26-28 - St. Charles, Missouri

Details available at: www.flying-circus.org, then go to the page
labeled: 'Next Reunion'

POC for the Reunion is Tom Kuypers, phone (636) 947-1617
or E-mail: tokpachyderm@aol.com

USAF Air Rescue Association Reunion

October 26-30, Charleston, SC

POC: Al Gaily, Phone 208-382-6395 E-Mail: cagailey@yahoo.com
Full details at: http://airrescueassn.org

There's also a Pre -Reunion Cruise, Oct 21-26, POC is Mary Severns,
1-843-363-0600/3669 or arareunion@gmail.com

**Members of helicopter flight school class 66-12 (green hats),
December 1965 through August 1966.**

Hugh Smith and I are planning a class reunion in San Antonio
for the last half of 2014. Please contact me (Al Flory)
at: aflory54@satx.rr.com or by phone at 210-599-9673
if you are interested in joining us.

**WANT TO SEE YOUR REUNION LISTED HERE?
SEND DETAILS TO: AVIATOR@VHPA.ORG**

**The VHPA Calendar Project could,
borrowing a phrase from the famous Beatles' song,
use "A Little Help From My Friends."**

Let me back up for a minute. The 2015 Calendar is now in production. If all goes as planned those attending the Louisville Reunion will see copies, this is the VHPA's 22nd calendar. The project's goal has always been to refresh the memories of all those who flew and worked on helicopters in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War Era, and to record, preserve and display the events and activities that were important to veterans of that era. While it is not a fund raising activity, it must be a commercial success to continue year after year. The VHPA receives a 10% royalty from sales because it provides the source photos and narrative. Acclaim Press is responsible for the production, marketing, warehousing, and distribution of the calendars.

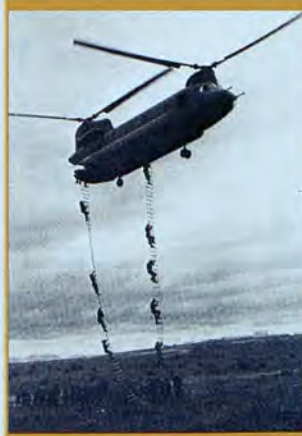
To borrow a military phrase, a gun is just a club without ammo. My friends ~ the VHPA Calendar Project needs more pictures! Sadly not just any old picture will do. Case in point ~ this neat photo of troops climbing ladders to get into a Chinook has great subject matter. But the digital quality is marginal at best. The digital image was scanned from the printed page of the 25th Infantry Division's 1966 yearbook. Additionally there was no caption with the photo so we don't know who, what, or even where it was taken. Even Photoshop can only do so much with this photo. The best that can be done is to present this photo as part of a collage of ten images all taken from that yearbook and make up the October 2015 page; which is a tribute to all those who served in and supported the Tropic Lightning with special emphasis on helicopters.

That's nice, but come on guys - we can do better than that!! Certainly with all the hookers we have in the VHPA, someone has a good 35mm

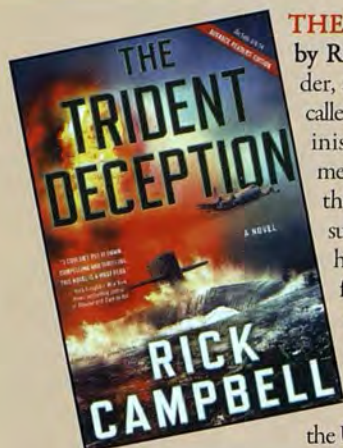
slide or good quality print of a ladder operation? That slide or print isn't doing much good in the box in the back of your closet. Here is your chance to become famous! Loan us the slide or print, we'll have it commercially scanned, return it to you, and print your name and story when the photograph gets published. Thanks, my friend!!

Mike Law, VHPA Calendar Editor,

calendar@vhpa.org.



By VHPA Life Member: JOHN PENNY



THE TRIDENT DECEPTION a novel by Rick Campbell, a retired Navy Commander, and a 20 year veteran of what was once called "The Silent Service" is a page-turner, reminiscent of Tom Clancy. The story commences beneath the vast Pacific Ocean when the USS Kentucky, a Trident class missile submarine carrying a full load of nuclear war heads receives an authenticated launch order followed quickly by a loss of all communications. What the crew does not know, is the order did not come from the U.S. Government.

A deadly game of cat and mouse for the USS Kentucky and her crew ensues as their own government tries to destroy them to avoid what could become a nuclear holocaust. The full assets of the U.S. Navy and Australian

Navy surface, air, and submarine assets are brought to bear on the USS Kentucky as it travels toward its launch position. The situation is also playing out in the White House and in the halls of the Pentagon which has been penetrated by foreign agents.

Campbell does a good job using the techno-speak of submarine operations. His character development is excellent for both the "good guys" on the USS Kentucky trying to do their duty, and parties onboard and onshore who are bent on seeing her missiles launched. Campbell maintains a compelling and fast paced reading experience from beginning to end. I highly recommend this book.

The Trident Deception by Rick Campbell, is available in Hardcover at bookstores everywhere (Barnes & Noble, Books-A-Million, or your local independent bookstore), or you can order the Hardcover or eBook (Kindle, Nook, iBook, or GooglePlay format for Android devices) from numerous on-line stores such as Amazon, BarnesandNoble.com, and iTunes.

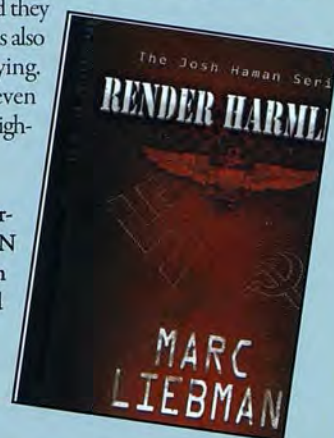
RENDER HARMLESS by VHPA Life Member Marc Liebman, is the next book in his Josh Haman Series that draws upon his protagonist's Vietnam War experiences with US Navy combat search and rescue and his knowledge of Navy helicopter SEAL operations. He has created an impressive novel set in the height of the Cold War replete with shady characters including KGB operatives, unreformed Nazis, East German spies, mercenaries, and Arab evil doers.

A group calling itself Red Hand has gone on a bombing spree in West Germany targeting German Jews, and killing American and British citizens in an attempt to undermine the West German government with the goal of creating a Fourth Reich. As if the problem of countering this situation were not enough, there is suspicion the West German police and intelligence agency and perhaps even the CIA have been compromised. A top secret task force is needed.

Josh Haman, on an exchange tour flying with the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm, joins an elite team led by a friend and Seal Team Six member. It is a tight and closely held group whose orders are to "render harmless" the members of Red Hand. For Haman it is also personal - very, very personal.

This is a book that is hard to put down and will keep you up late at night. Liebman is a master of the key element of fiction: character development. The bad guys are not just "the usual suspects" and they are well crafted and quite believable. There is also plenty of "white knuckles" helicopter flying. Comparisons with other writers like Steven Coonts and Tom Clancy come to mind. I highly recommend this book.

Render Harmless (544 pages, \$17.16 paperback, \$6.50 Kindle) by Marc Liebman, ISBN 978-1611793116 is available by order from your local book store, Amazon, Barnes and Noble, or other book suppliers as well as directly from Fireship Press at fireshippress.com. Signed copies are available at <http://www.marcliebman.com/>



FLYING HIGH by Life Member George Smith is a memoir of his service with the 119th AHC in 63-64 and the 71st AHC in 68-69. His journey to the cockpit of a Huey in RVN began in humble circumstances in the Pennsylvania coal country. With few prospects locally, he enlisted and headed for Ft. Knox two weeks after high school graduation. Basic training was followed by Advanced Aircraft Radio Repair and a summer assignment at Ft. Drum where he caught the flying bug. He soon found himself on orders to Sacramento Army Depot pending shipment to RVN.

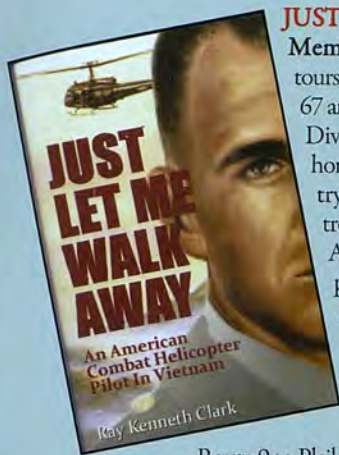
He missed that ship due to salmonella, but after recuperation at the Presidio he caught up with his unit, a combination of the 69th and 70th Signal Detachments attached to the 119th AHC at Camp Holloway, Pleiku, RVN. Smith frequently found ways to get away from the avionics shop and volunteered to fly as a gunner on the CH-21s and UH-1Bs often enough to earn an Air Medal. At the end of his

tour he served at the Atlanta Army Depot and at Ft. Belvoir where his application for flight school was approved. Graduation from WORWAC 67-23 was quickly followed by a ticket to Chu Lai and the 71st AHC Rattlers.

Smith arrived at Chu Lai shortly after the TET Offensive began in early 1968 and found a unit still haunted by the capture of Anton, Lewis, and Pfister. Even for an FNG who had crewed on his prior tour, there was plenty to learn quickly. The Central Highlands during monsoon with weather shrouded places such as LZ Ross, LZ Baldy, and Happy Valley, was an unwelcoming classroom and flight errors could prove deadly.

Flying High is an engaging memoir of both of Smith's Vietnam tours. His straight forward, informative writing style takes the reader along on those missions, sharing his own experiences and those of the men he served with 46 years ago. I recommend this book.

Flying High from Pleiku to Chu Lai (208 pages with photos, \$9.99 + postage), by George Smith, ISBN: 978-0578120133 is available at: www.ebay.com/itm/Flying-High-From-Pleiku-to-Chu-Lai-/161263785439 or from the author at: gas1luh1@yahoo.com and at the VHPA 2014 Reunion in Louisville.



JUST LET ME WALK AWAY by VHPA Life Member Ray Clark is a first rate memoir of his two tours in Vietnam with B/227 AVN 1 CAV in 66-67 and DIV ARTY 25 INF and D TRP 3/4 25 Inf Div in 1969. Clark, from a small town in Oklahoma was inspired, by his father, to serve his country. Clark joined the Army, becoming a paratrooper. After five years in the 82nd and 101st Airborne as a paratrooper and Ranger, he completed OCS and went on to graduate from flight school with class 65-22. A ticket to RVN and the 1st AIR CAV followed.

Assigned to B/227 at the "Golf Course" near An Khe, Clark's AO in the rainy and cloud shrouded Central Highlands was along

Route 9 to Pleiku and Duc Co, north to Kontum and south to Chu Pong Mountain. With the original members of the unit getting "short," the FNGs needed to quickly learn that the enemy, terrain and weather would be unforgiving. The unrelenting tempo of combat assaults, resupply under fire, and extractions from wreckage littered places like Chu Pong Mountain with impossible LZs took their toll.

Clark volunteered for a second tour in January 1969 with the expectation he would get his choice of assignment. Instead, he was assigned as 25th DIV

ARTY AVN Officer at Cu Chi – an odd assignment for an infantry officer. In July of 1969 Clark became the XO of D TRP 3/4th CAV 25th Inf Div. A month later, the CO left on emergency leave and did not return. Subsequently, Capt. Clark was made CO of that unit, a slot usually filled by a major. The unit had many problems, including a private who liked to shoot up the unit area and toss live grenades around now and then. The unit was also not performing as expected by division command and faced challenging interpretations of the Rules of Engagement.

"Just Let Me Walk Away" speaks to the fervent wish of any helicopter pilot experiencing an engine failure. Clark was shot down in a Huey, drove one into a tree on a blind night combat assault, had two engine failures four days apart, and blew one up in a mine field. He does a great job of detailing those, along with other dangerous missions he and the men in his units flew daily, interjected with a fair bit of humor regarding many of the absurdities of that war. This is a very thoughtful and well written book and I highly recommend it.

Just Let me Walk Away by Ray K. Clark (282 pages with photos, \$26.18 hardcover) ISBN 978-0615546706 is available by order from your local book store, Amazon, or other book suppliers. Signed copies are available at the book website: justletmewalkaway.com

TELL YOUR STORY

By James V. and Anne Weatherill

Jim: The history of VHPA members is a time capsule in the making. Without telling, writing, recording or video taping our reflections, our history will continue be what outsiders have made of our lives and sacrifices, rather than what actually occurred.

Anne: We who waited for our loved ones to come home share this history. We also have untold stories and unrecognized contributions and challenges.

Jim: Embarking on this journey—re-living those times—is not for the faint-hearted, but I believe that we need to reclaim our legacy. I started to write my story in 1980 and put it aside. I resumed in 2011. I shared the first few pages with a friend, who said Anne should add her experiences.

Anne: Jim had never talked about his time in Vietnam. I didn't ask. I thought he might not be strong enough to tell me, and I wasn't sure I was strong enough to hear it. When Jim's friend told me the manuscript needed my side, I said, "Absolutely not! I'm not going back there." But, I did.

Jim: Together we opened the untouched footlocker we hauled from place to place for more than 40 years. We read the letters. We had the original tape recorder, and it still worked. We listened to the voices from our past. It was like opening Pandora's box.



The 1968 photo that formed the background for the cover of Jim & Anne's book, *The Blades Carry Me*

Anne: We wrote and edited. We laughed some, and cried a lot. Jim's nightmares came back. We had heated discussions over what to include and how to say it. Then, we wrote and edited some more.

Jim: I used my Army orders, flight logs, maps, checklists, an online Chinook manual and conversations with other Chinook pilots and crew members to jog my memory about events and timeliness. Anne and I put together a small library of reference books to help us find just the right word, punctuation, grammar and solutions to other writing details.

During this time, VHPA added the writers' forums to the annual reunions. In 2012 in New



Jim and Anne on Flight School Graduation Day, Fort Rucker, Alabama 1967

Orleans, we learned about various ways others had approached the business of writing and publishing their stories. Alan Rinzler, a developmental editor, spoke at the 2013 reunion in San Francisco. He offered to work with VHPA members. We contacted him a couple months later. He read our manuscript and told us we didn't need an editor; we needed a platform.

Anne: A what?

Jim: A visible personal and Internet presence, preferably loaded with friends and followers. Our books about getting published also told us we needed a platform.

Anne: So, we bought books about building one. We attended free workshops at the local community college to learn about "likes" and "posts" and "tweets" and "hashtags," and "pinning," and getting "LinkedIn."

Jim: We took a lot of notes, then bought Internet domain names and created a Web page.

Anne: Waiting for an agent or publisher to pick up our book started to look less and less attractive. We decided that since we had to do the work ourselves anyway to market our book, we'd keep total control and self-publish.

Jim: One friend had a 1968 photograph that was perfect for our cover and agreed to let us use it. Another friend scanned and cleaned the slide and created the cover for our book.

Anne: Jim looked at the choices and selected a "print-on-demand" option. Once we got our book's interior formatted and submitted with the cover, it was ready to go.

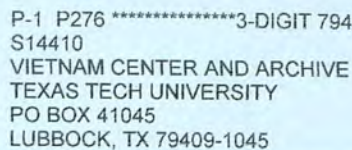
Jim: During this process, Anne and I learned about ourselves and each other. The ghosts have been subdued, if not silenced. Although we chose to produce and offer a book to the public, others might prefer a less ambitious, more private path. Any step is a beginning to reclaim our history. There is no wrong way to do this. Believe it or not, it will be harder to stop than to start.

The Weatherills recently published
THE BLADES CARRY ME:
Inside the Helicopter War in Vietnam.

For more details, or to contact Jim and Anne directly, go to: www.jamesweatherill.com



Jim & Anne Weatherill today



Calling all Screaming Eagle Aviation Soldiers Past and Present

We NEED your help to raise the \$600,000 required to build and sustain this lasting tribute to our fallen Aviation Soldiers. While there remain months of effort ahead, our first order of business is to secure funding necessary to build this long overdue memorial that will encompass every operation (Peace or War) that any 101st Aviation Soldier has ever participated.

This Memorial is long overdue-and all of the elements are now in place. The IRS approved our Tax Exempt Status; we have been approved by the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC # 7701 O); the Garrison Commander approved our Memorial Site at the intersection of Glider Road and Wickham Avenue on Campbell Army Airfield on July 26, 2013; and we have a designer finalizing the Memorial Design.

- 1) Provide for the creation and maintenance of the SEAA Memorial;
- 2) Support Memorial Services for deceased Soldiers to include support for their family members;
- 3) Support wounded, injured and ill Soldiers to include their family members;
- 4) Provide necessary comfort and aid to the 101st and 159th Combat Aviation Brigades (CAB) Soldiers and family members; and
- 5) Support the 101st and 159th CAB Soldiers and family members for educational, vocational, and or similar interests .

Please help us spread the word to all 101st Airborne Division Aviation Soldiers (past and present), and visit the SEAA web-site <http://101seaa.org> today to learn more about our organization, and to make an on-line Individual, or Corporate donation to the Memorial Fund. Your tax exempt donation and your Corporate Matching document can also be sent to "Screaming Eagle Aviation Association" c/o Robert L. Huffman, 3925 Sango Road, Clarksville, TN 37043. Full details of the project can be obtained by contacting me at [REDACTED], or via email at sschissler1@verizon.net.

To be sure, the SEAA's Leadership and operations are strictly volunteers; we have no paid staff members. Each of us enjoys fond memories of our Warrior Teams and Soldiers providing the finest Air Assault operations to Screaming Eagles throughout the world.



"Once an Eagle, Always an Eagle"

J. Scott Schisser
Fund Raising Chairman
2/17th CAV, 1996-1998
Screaming Eagle Aviation Association
www.101seaa.org

