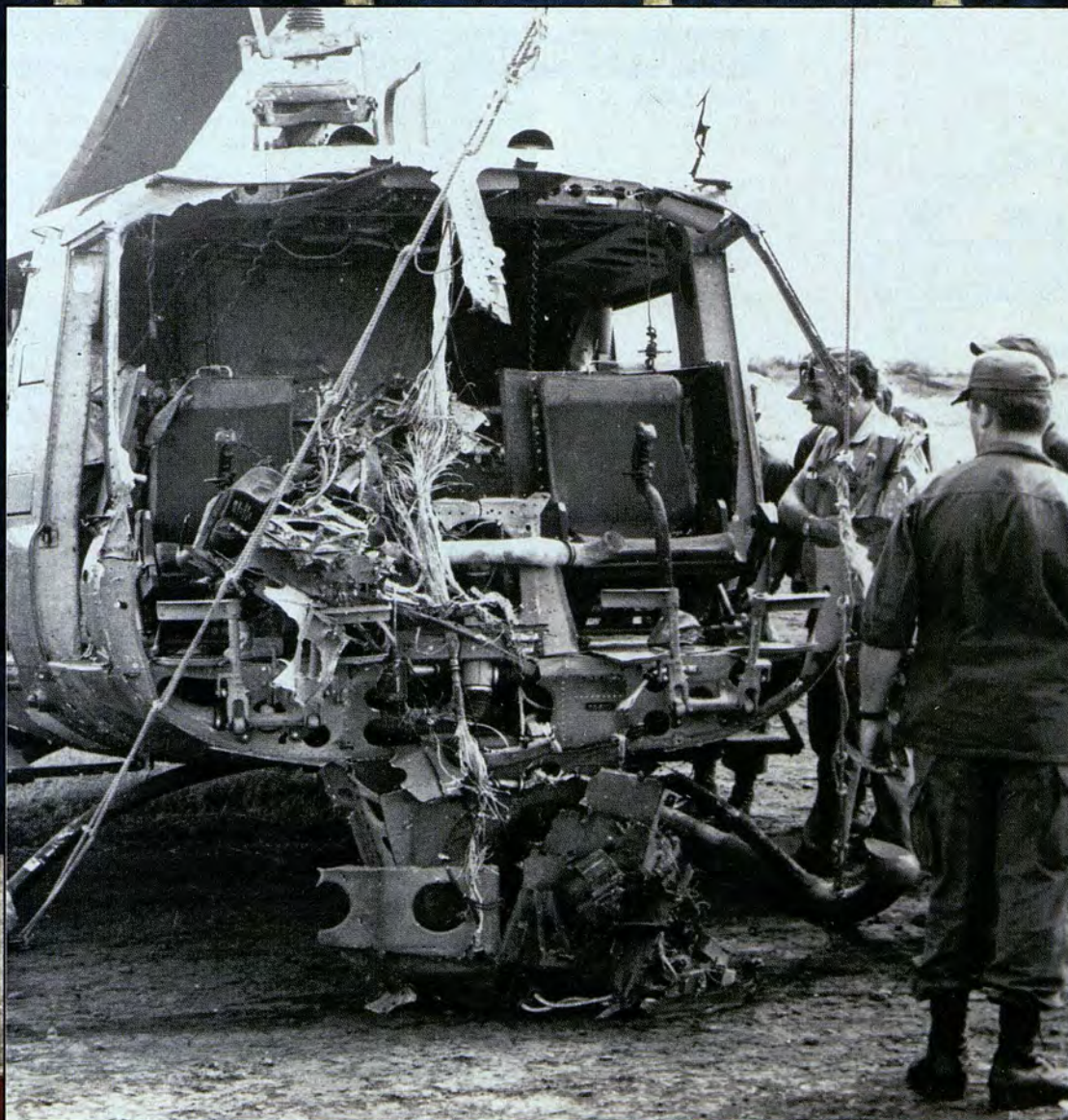




The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



The Last Scramble of the 57th AHC - Page 28

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Junior Member	John Sorensen	
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INTERESTING LINKS ON THE WEB

<https://www.dvidshub.net/video/395572/jerry-wellin-world-war-ii-veteran-interview>

The June issue of the Fort Worth Aviation Museum's monthly newsletter is available through Mail Chimp on the following link. Hope you enjoy it.

http://eepurl.com/boW7_P



VHPA Aviator Newsletter:
Aviator@VHPA.org

VHPA WebSite:
VHPA.org

VHPA Headquarters
and Headquarter Staff
contact Information

Phone:
1-800-505-VHPA (8472)

E-Mail:
HQ@VHPA.org

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

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The Mug



After 47 years, I still have it. It still looks like it did the day R.G. Goodson gave it to me.

I had just finished soloing and we went out for a few beers. He was a grizzly old WWII bomber pilot working as an IP contractor for Southern Airways. We had a few laughs and drank a few beers. While I

felt proud of my accomplishment, he probably thought "this kid will never make it"!

I remember one day like it was yesterday. In a football field size area he told me to hover the OH-13. I couldn't do it- even in an area that size! He held the cyclic using only his thumb and forefinger and 'froze' us in place. He yelled, saying I could do it. Soon, I could. Looking at that mug over the years; I thought of RG.

I wondered how many young boys he taught how to fly? I doubt he's still with us, yet I still have the gift he bestowed. After several moves, it is still resting safely with me in retirement here in Florida.

By Michael A Holt
Bounty Hunter 23,
191 AHC 68-69

FROM THE VHPA STAFF AT HQ!

Be sure to make your Reunion registration! Numerous events, having maximum capacities, are filling up fast! You don't want to miss out on these special events! We do have waiting lists for these events. If you are interested in any of these, marked as sold out, please call HQ to place your name on the waiting list. There are a few events for which we have one ticket available. If you have any questions concerning tours or events, be sure to give us a call; we will be happy to help. We hope to see you there!

Don't forget...if you move, be sure to call HQ with an update to your contact information! This assures that you do not miss any issues of your newsletter.

You may also go on line to <https://directory.vhpa.org> and log in with your member number. Create a password or use your social security number; next on the left side will be a box with red lettering that says "Other Services". Under "Other Services" click on the box labeled "Update My Information". You may then update your information.

If you know of anyone that served as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam and they are not a member of VHPA, give us a call and we will determine if they are in our database. We would love to send them membership information and a copy of the newsletter for their review. Ideally, we would love for them to become a member!

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.

*Note: Please call HQ to pre-order
the 2015 CD Directory for \$10
and the 2015 Paper Directory for \$15.*

Sherry Rodgers
VHPA ~ Office Manager

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From the President of the VHPA -
BOB HESSELBEIN



By the time you read this column I will be close to joining the ranks of those who are past presidents, leaders who at one time presided over the VHPA since the early '80's. I wish to thank you for the honor. The role of president provides a great perspective and understanding of the organization, and full respect for the handful of volunteers and staff who do so very much for so very many.

The unfettered view from the president's chair is astonishing. I see the members of the Executive Council working together to improve the quality of membership services, draw additional combat helicopter pilots into the organization, ensure the most efficient use of your dues, safeguard and grow VHPA investments, expand important communications, manage our scholarship program, orchestrate the many aspects of our outstanding annual reunions, collect historical data, honor our lost through memorial legacies, and a most crucial task: to constantly plan for the future.

I wish to thank you for your support during my presidency. Your encouragement, along with the mentoring and guidance provided by the Executive Council (EC), has helped the VHPA keep focus and move forward in important directions. During this one year term we have

accomplished much: enriched our relationship with many of the independent VHPA chapters across the country (thank you, Chapter Chairman John Sorensen); reached out and restored fraternal relationships to fellow Vietnam Veteran organizations such as the Vietnam Helicopter Crew Member Association (VHCMA); and installed a living tree within Arlington National Cemetery to our lost wartime brothers, due for dedication on August 28th.

I believe the most memorable experience of my time as VHPA President will be the ongoing effort to erect a strong granite memorial to the almost 6,000 helicopter pilots and crewmembers that died in the Vietnam War. This complicated, bureaucratic process began with discussions before my term began, and it will undoubtedly continue into the next VHPA presidential cycle. The

encouragement of the EC motivated me to write and present proposals to have the memorial installed within Arlington National Cemetery. Additionally, your constituent messages to elected representatives asking their support for the memorial's placement has kept this proposal moving. This effort fully reminds me of our brave persistence in the face of combat adversity.

We have many years to go before the "last man" organization of the VHPA is down to that last pilot, and I am honored to be able to say I had my small part along the way. I leave this assignment with reflection and gratitude. Little did I think as a nineteen-year old helicopter gunship pilot in Vietnam that I would hold a lifelong bond with the heroes I served alongside so many years ago—and all because of the VHPA. You were then; you remain now... magnificent heroes!

Respectfully,

Bob Hesselbein

The End of a Forty – Seven Year Search

"I have been looking for these guys for forty-seven years. They saved my life."

Emotions were high, and many tears were shed, when these words were spoken by former United States Marine Hubert H. Hunnicutt upon meeting the ARA crew that rescued him on April 18th 1968.

The occasion was the Aerial Rocket Artillery Association reunion dinner banquet on May 9th, 2015, held in Columbus, Georgia. The association was celebrating the fifty year anniversary of the deployment of ARA to Vietnam.

Hunnicutt, who now resides in Winder, Georgia had contacted Col. (Ret.) Bruce Wilder in August, 2013 looking for information on the crew that rescued him near Khe Sanh on April 18th 1968. Wilder referred him to Maj. (Ret) Larry Mobley who had been with B Battery, 2/20th ARA at that time. After much research and many phone calls, the crew was located.

On April 16th 1968, Corporal Hunnicutt, a member of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division was shot in the right hand, right elbow and left ankle. He also sustained a grenade wound in the left armpit, when the left flank of his unit was struck by enemy fire from hidden fortified positions. They were climbing up a ridge, attempting to relieve Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines; a unit which had heavy casualties. The Charlie company commander, both platoon commanders, a platoon sergeant, and several squad leaders went down with wounds. Corporal Hunnicutt pulled his Company Commander from an open area and provided him with first aid along with other wounded Marines. Hunnicutt then carried him through the night and the next day working his way back to safety. Unfortunately, the Captain died. On the night of April 17-18, Hunnicutt fell into a ravine, breaking his right shoulder. A Bravo Battery, 2/20th ARA helicopter crewed by WO1 Jerry Sommers, WO1 Sherod Mallow, and crew chief SP4 Alan Heidbreder rescued Corporal Hunnicutt at approximately 1400 hours, on April 18th, and transported him to Khe Sanh for medical treatment. For his action, Corporal Hunnicutt was submitted for the Medal

of Honor, later downgraded to the Navy Cross.

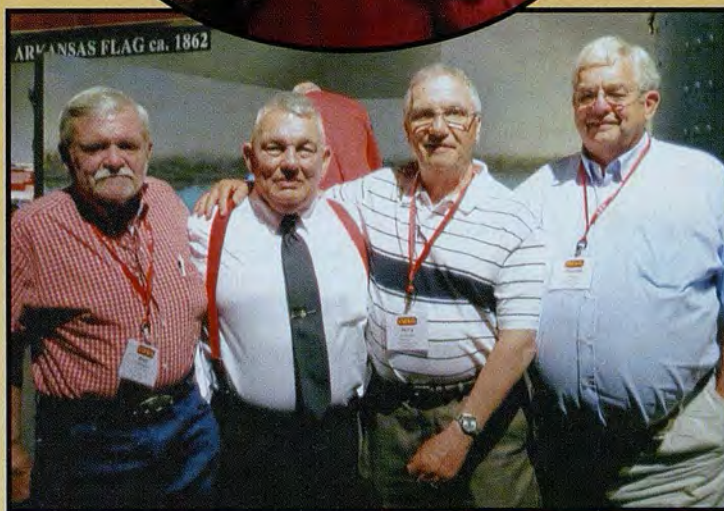
Corporal Hunnicutt was released from the hospital in 1969. He was discharged from the Marine Corps and later joined the Marine Corps Reserves. He was recalled to active duty in 1990 and fought in Operation Desert Storm. Hunnicutt worked for the State Department/United Nations in Bosnia and Kosovo as a peacekeeper from 1999 until 2002. He also worked in law enforcement for many years.

Earlier, on April 17th 1968, another crew from Bravo Battery rescued a wounded marine from Hunnicutt's unit.

By Larry Mobley



Comrades in Arms
in an emotional
moment



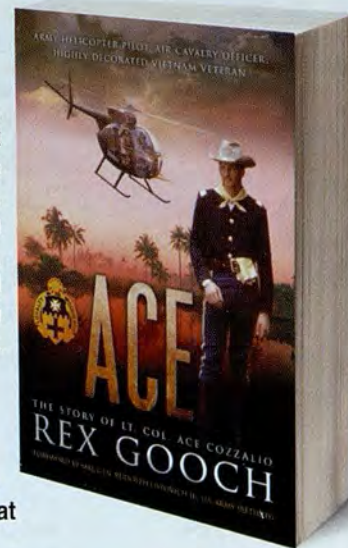
L to R Alan Heidbreder, Hubert Hunnicutt, Jerry Sommers, Sherod Mallow

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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 56 new Members to the VHPA!

All have joined our Association during the period from March 18 - May 28, 2015

Bailey William Everett 'Bill' San Jose California Army 70-1 C/227 AHB 1 CAV in 70-71	Coalson Tony M. Anniston Alabama Army 67-14 AIR AMERICA in 70-75	Lahood Robert J. 'Pepe' Morton Illinois Marine Corps HMM-164 in 72	North Lowell F. ** Fairbanks Alaska Army 66-21 66-23 4 AVN 4 INF in 67-68
Bean Louis D. Forest Virginia Army 69-28 23 ART GRP in 67-68; 52 ART GRP in 70-71	Conner James O ** North Bend Washington Army 67-19 67-17 116 AHC in 67-68; 135 AHC in 68	McCalister William L. San Antonio Texas Army 68-20 68-34 A/3/17 CAV in 69-70	Nowakowski Gerald V. 'Jerry' ** Granbury Texas Army 70-31 176 AHC in 70-71
Bearden Joseph M. Rising Sun Maryland Army 68-8 68-10 A/229 AVN in 69; 7/1 CAV in 70	Dahlen Timothy S. 'Tim' Speonk New York Army 69-1 C/7/1 CAV in 69; D/3/5 CAV in 69-70	McNeill Douglas M. 'Mac' Wilsonville Oregon Army 70-11 70-7 A/158 AHB 101 ABN in 70-71	Olsson Thomas W. 'Tom' ** Seattle Washington Army 69-21 D/3/4 CAV in 69-70
Bennett William J. Manlius New York Army 66-7 B/25 AVN 25 INF in 66-67	Dearing Munro G. ** Fremont California Air Force 68-A 38 ARRS in 69-70	Merna Robert L. 'Bob' ** Chelmsford Massachusetts Air Force	Owings William Murphy 'Bill' ** Lake Wales Florida Army 59-5 20 TC CO in 67-68; 520 TC BN
Bixby William E. 'Bix' Skipperville Alabama Army 67-7	Fleming Gregory R. Lewes Delaware Army 69-49 C/2/17 CAV 101 ABN in 70-71	Miller Barry W. 'Bar' ** La Crosse Wisconsin Army 71-46 F/9 CAV in 72-73	Paasch Earl K. Sun City West Arizona Army 68-520 68-36 B/101 AVN 101 ABN in 69; HHC 101 AVN 101 ABN in 69-70
Blacker Blair K. ** Homestead Florida Army 67-7	Gunter Larry D. 'Lar' Bridge City Texas Army 68-27 68-515 195 AHC in 68-69	Miller Stanley H. Alpharetta Georgia Army 69-34 D/3/4 CAV in 70-71	Richey David L. Noblesville Indiana Army 67-20 67-24 A/1 AVN 1 INF in 68-69
Bresette Allen A 'Al' ** Indianapolis Indiana Army 60-8 61 AHC in 63-64; 162 AHC in 67-68; 3/17 CAV in 71-72	Hatch Billy F 'Bill' Little Rock Arkansas Army 67-4 C/7/17 CAV in 67-68; F/8 CAV in 68; F/4 CAV in 71-72	Mitchell Samuel E. 'Sam' Saltillo Mississippi Army 70-7 70-5 B/4/77 ARA 101 ABN in 70-71	Ritter Jack H. Reedville Virginia Army 66-21 66-23 118 AHC in 67-68
Burch Thomas E 'Tom' Odessa Florida Army 66-23 66-21 174 AHC in 66-67	Holman Homer P. 'Pat' ** Oklahoma City Oklahoma Army 174 AHC in 66; 161 AHC in 65-66; HHC 14 CAB in 66	Mokrzycki Thomas J. 'Ski' ** Ozark Alabama Army 66-7 66-5 197 AHC in 66-67; 334 AHC in 66-67; 57 AHC in 69-70	Rynott Keith Jacob ** Dothan Alabama Army UTT HC in 62-63; 25 AVN 25 INF in 66-67
Byram Arthur C ** Spring Texas Army 69-12 69-10 20 ENG BDE in 69-70	Isaak Robert J. 'Bob' ** Spotsylvania Virginia Air Force 21 SOS 14 ACW in 70-71	Moore Walter B. 'Bruce' San Antonio Texas Army 173 AHC in 66-67; 162 AHC in 70-71	Sanders Larry F. ** Riverdale Georgia Army 6 AIRLIFT PLAT in 63-64; 190 AHC in 66-67
Crider Jesie A (Corrected Spelling) Herrin Illinois Army 70-12 MACV FLT DET in 66-67; IIFFV ARTY in 70-71	Jewell Thomas K. Gloversville New York Army 70-40 228 ASHB 1 CAV in 71; 68 AVN in 71	Muller Joseph F. Huntersville North Carolina Army 69-2 191 AHC in 69-70	Satcher James L. 'Satch' Wichita Falls Texas Army 69-49 190 AHC in 70-71; 118 AHC in 70-71
Caron Robert P. 'Bob' ** Fort Walton Beach Florida Army 57-3 147 ASHC in 65-66; MACV FLT DET in 66-67; AIR AMERICA SAIGON in 67-68; AIR AMERICA THAILAND in 68-73; AIR AMERICA SAIGON in 73-75	Kemp Freddie Lee ** Springfield Virginia Army 121 AHC in 66-67; HHC 11 CAB in 70-71	Mullin Elbert E. 'Moon' ** Mannford Oklahoma Army 62-2W 93 TC CO in 63; 101 ABN DIV in 68-69	Schommer John ** Palmer Alaska Army 573 TC DET in 62-63; HHC 12 CAG in 67; 21 AVN in 68
		Neu Robert F. 'Bob' Saint Louis Missouri Army 70-11 70-7 282 AHC in 70-71	

The Send Off

The Time: July 1970.

The Place: 24th EVAC, Long Binh, RVN.

It had been a bad crash; the pilot, WO-1 James Miller, was lucky to be alive.

Jim was a flight school buddy and good friend of mine, so I decided to round up some of his other "stick" buddies and pay him a visit at the hospital. We flew up to the Evac and solemnly entered the ward. Expecting the worst, we were pleasantly surprised to find Jim propped up in bed and chatting with the "Dust-Off" pilot who had flown him in from the field. WO-1 Stan Shaffer was another flight school alumnus so this was shaping up into a real reunion.

He was extremely happy to see us as he had just been notified he was being shipped back to the states that evening. After the initial shock wore off, we decided a proper send-off was the only noble course of action. Before Jim could protest, we were all out the door!

We asked Stan if he knew where any "O" clubs were. Stanley P. Shaffer, former Marine, second tour Viet Nam vet, pilot extraordinaire, knew where ALL the clubs were! Our plan was to buy a steak dinner with all the trimmings and present it to Jim as a fitting farewell tribute. We had our mission.

We saw a jeep with US Army painted on it and agreed since we were all Army also, it must be ours. We drove to the nearest club and ordered the biggest steak they had. While waiting for the meal, it was suggested we all join and toast to Jim's continued good health. A hearty libation was concocted and eagerly consumed. The dinner's preparation lagged, so one more toast was performed. Upon the steak's arrival, it was met with a lusty cheer and another hearty toast. We "carefully" wrapped all the contents of the meal in a series of paper plates, and I stuffed it in the lower leg pocket of my flight suit. Properly fortified and of good cheer, we started the drive back to the hospital. Along the route, someone commented a good steak deserves a good wine. The jeep was stopped, and we all spread out in search of "The" appropriate wine. Within 30 minutes, I had returned to the jeep flushed with success. I had found "The" fitting

wine. We all had found "The" fitting wine. All 23 bottles of it! The remaining trip to the Evac was made amidst a wine tasting contest.

Entering the ward with great fanfare, we presented Jim with his sumptuous repast which by now greatly resembled fresh "road kill". As he ate, the bottles were passed around the assembled warrior clan; and the ward echoed with stories of the brave deeds and valorous acts of our departing brother.

"Enter the Head Nurse!" The small, thin lady froze in her steps. She paled visibly, her mouth moving but only uttering small barking sounds. She staggered towards an oxygen tank and breathed deeply from the mask. As the color returned to her face, it was markedly intensified by the fire in her eyes! With no regard for our regal status as warrior gods, she reviled us with terms and expressions not normally associated within the field of medicine. Our explanations fell on deaf ears as this "Healer from Hell" castigated us with a litany of violated regulations and health codes as well as aspersions towards our parentage. We fell back but regrouped smartly. We prepared to stand and defend our sacred and long honored right of debauchery. She advanced on us with glowering eyes. Those of us who could still focus our eyes stared intently back. Even though we recognized the odds were stacked impossibly against us, the five of us would valiantly stand our ground despite impending doom.

The crackling silence only broke when Jim's sleepy voice informed us all the wine was gone.

A proper, albeit hasty, goodbye was made as we all wished Jim "Godspeed" and a quick trip home. With that, we warriors departed, honor intact and mission accomplished, to find kindly refuge with hearty drink so as to strengthen ourselves for the rigors of tomorrow's battle and the performance of brave deeds.

Chief Ed
Beavercreek TWP, OH
VHPA L 04775

Silva Herbert P. 'Herb'
Chesterfield Missouri
Marine Corps
69-08 69-24
HML-367 in 70-71

Smejkal Daniel J.
Mount Juliet Tennessee
Army
67-503 67-23
11 GS in 67-68

Smith Richard P. 'RIP' **
Shalimar Florida
Air Force
20 SOS 14 ACW in 66-67

Snyder Michael W.
New Albany Indiana
Army
68-510 68-16

Vermillion Christopher R. 'Chris'
New Market Maryland
Army
69-3 69-7
C/7/17 CAV in 69-70

White Jackie R. 'Rookie'
Swartz Creek Michigan
Army
70-43
F/4 CAV in 71-72

Whitlow William F. 'JR'
Sunset Beach North Carolina
Army
69-45
117 AHC in 70-71

Wolfsen James L **
Rancho Palos Verdes California
Marine Corps
HMM-164 in 68-69

Wood Phillip E. 'Phill'
Fayetteville North Carolina
Army
70-11 70-7
2 BDE 1 CAV in 67-68; 247 MED
DET in 70-71

Wooten Robert D. 'Bob' **
Winchester Kentucky
Army
70-11 70-7
101 ABN DIV in 66; 7/17 CAV in 71

Zynda Gerald I. 'Jerry' **
Alvin Texas
Army
64-4W 67-1
121 AHC in 66-67; E/82 ARTY 1
CAV in 70; C/2/20 ARA 1 CAV in
70-71; F/79 AFA 1 CAV in 71

QUILTER'S SHOW AND TELL

Due to the generosity of the quilters last year at the VHPA Reunion, we received enough blocks to allow us to present four quilts to Veterans this year. Many thanks are due those who donated blocks, the ladies who constructed the tops, and to Roslyn Atwood who quilted three of the four quilts.

This is just the beginning. This new tradition has resulted in a request for more blocks next year. Please bring your blocks to 'Show and Tell' at the DC Reunion. Please also bring both completed or in progress projects you wish to share.

All who are interested are invited to join us in this mission. We would love to have you participate and come to share at the Show and Tell.

The requirements for the blocks are the same as last year:



Roslyn Atwood (L), and Kathleen Sherfey (R) display a quilt given to a VHPA member



A sample of the many blocks donated at the Louisville Reunion

■ Color scheme: red, white and blue, you may use one, two or all three colors

■ The blocks must be 12 1/2" x 12 1/2" unfinished. Please use 1/4" seams in your assembly.

■ Block design is your choice, there are many to choose from; Rail Fence, 9-patch, Grandmother's Flower Garden, Appliqué block, Robbing Peter to Pay Paul, Orange Peel, Bow Tie, just to name a few. They may be simple or as complex as you like.

■ Make one or more blocks as you wish, we will construct as many quilts as possible from the donated blocks and any blocks left over will be saved for the following year.

■ Please bring your block(s) to the 2015 VHPA Reunion. If you are unable to attend you may send the block(s) to me, Kathleen Sherfey, 12420 W 53rd Terr., Shawnee, KS 66216 not later than September 30th.

If you have any questions contact me at [redacted] and in the subject line type VHPA Quilters or call [redacted].

Coming Soon!



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Update: Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Memorial

Work to establish the granite memorial within Arlington National Cemetery honoring the almost 6,000 helicopter pilots and crewmembers killed in the Vietnam War continues. As of June 8, 2015, the Secretary of the Army has not decided the fate of the proposal.

The VHPA is confident the memorial deserves to join the 139 memorials already in ANC, scattered among the over 400,000 existing graves. Arlington holds memorials honoring handfuls of individuals for brief events, and the helicopter crews who fought and died in the

Vietnam combat environment for 14 years have earned the right to this recognition with their lives.

To review: the memorial effort commenced in early 2014 to have a suitable memorial designed, the proposal submitted and approved, and the monument in place for an August 28th, 2015 dedication in conjunction with the 2015 VHPA Annual Reunion. Faulty information from the Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) Historian suggested this was a feasible plan.

Complying with all stringent requirements, the VHPA delivered the first complete proposal on September 3, 2014, the first received by ANC in many years. Following a long, silent wait for internal actions by the ANC staff, the VHPA was invited to make a presentation to the Arlington National Cemetery Advisory Committee (ANCAC).

The VHPA provided a compelling presentation to ANCAC on March 26, 2015 justifying the placement of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots and Crewmember Memorial. Following the presentation, three Vietnam Veterans on the ANCAC voted to support the memorial; the other three, however, voted against it believing cemetery space in ANC should be reserved for burials, not memorials. The result was a deadlocked vote, 3/3.

This did not end the proposal process, however, as the ANCAC only advises the Secretary of the Army.

May 6, 2015

The Honorable John M. McHugh
Secretary of the Army
101 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310-0101

Re: Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Memorial Proposal - Arlington National Cemetery

Dear Mr. Secretary,

I'm enclosing a photograph of me, my mom, and my brother David when he left for Vietnam in 1969. We fully expected him to return. He did come back, but it was just a month later, and he was in a box covered with an American flag. David was killed in action at age 19 while flying a helicopter in Phuoc Vinh, Vietnam.

As a Vietnam Gold Star Sister, I am writing to ask your support in helping the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association place a memorial honoring the thousands of helicopter pilots and crewmen who died serving their country in the Vietnam War, the war commonly known as "The Helicopter War."

Almost 20 percent of Vietnam War casualties buried in Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) are helicopter crewmembers; in addition, inside ANC rest complete helicopter crews whose remains were recovered and interred into shared graves many years after the end of the Vietnam War. The cemetery continues to be the ultimate destination for many who survived helicopter combat in Southeast Asia and qualify for burial in this unique national cemetery. The principal justification for establishing a lasting memorial to the brave helicopter pilots and crewmembers who lost their lives in the Vietnam War is that no other such memorial exists.

The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA) submitted a complete application proposal to Arlington National Cemetery on September 3, 2014 that fully complied with all requirements. They were assured the full process would be completed in time to allow for installation of the modest monument and dedication of the memorial on August 28, 2015. I ask for your help in ensuring this memorial is approved.

I believe the ultimate strength of a memorial lies in its ability to speak to the hearts of those whose lives were most impacted by the loss that it represents. As Vietnam Gold Star Families, we would like to see our brothers memorialized before we are gone and the world forgets about the Vietnam War.

Respectfully,

Julie Kink
sister of Warrant Officer David Kink
C Troop 1/9th Cavalry Killed in Action August 3, 1969
<http://www.virtualwall.org/dk/KinkDR01a.htm>
Honorary Member, VHPA
118 Stoneway Trail
Madison, AL 35758
cell 651-206-2542
kink100@att.net

The Secretary of the Army, Mr. John McHugh, will make the final decision as to whether this memorial moves forward or not. The ANCAC sent their report of their findings within 60 days of the March 26th meeting, and now the Secretary of the Army has an additional 150 days to make his decision.

The VHPA leadership is doing all it can to encourage Mr. McHugh's approval. An email blast notified thousands to contact their federal legislators to encourage approval; President Bob Hesselbein reached out to other veteran organizations. Support is coming from many organizations: Quad-A, the Vietnam Helicopter Crew Member Association, the Order of Daedalians, the Gold Star Families and others. We also have the support of many legislators, thanks mainly to your dedicated constituent requests.

An approval by the Secretary of the Army is not the end of the process, however. The proposal then moves to the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts (CFA), an organization that reviews and further approves memorial designs and locations within the greater Washington, DC area. The VHPA anticipated this step, and submitted the monument design for an unofficial review early in the process. Based on feedback, the monument proposal was revised to incorporate the suggested revisions. We are confident they will approve the design and location.

Finally, the proposal is submitted to Congress for a 60 day review. Coming during the 50th Commemoration of the Vietnam War, the monument review should move through this particular step in the process without difficulty.

Although unable to dedicate this important remembrance at

the 2015 Annual Reunion as hoped, we will remain persistent and establish the Vietnam Helicopter Pilot and Crewmember Memorial. We will not allow our nation to forget the sacrifice of our courageous friends who gave all for this great country.

From: The Executive Council

TAMMY BALDWIN
WISCONSIN

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 26, 2015

COMMITTEE:
APPROPRIATIONS
BUDGET
HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS
HOMELAND SECURITY
AND GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Mr. John McHugh
Secretary of the Army
United States Army
1400 Defense Pentagon
Washington, DC 20301-1400

Dear Secretary McHugh:

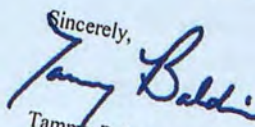
I am pleased to offer my support to the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and their proposal for a Vietnam Helicopter Pilots and Crewmember Memorial to be placed in Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

Helicopters, their pilots, and crewmembers played a significant role in the Vietnam War. So much so, that it is colloquially known as "the helicopter war." Between December 1961 and May 1975, nearly 12,000 helicopters were deployed in Vietnam by all branches of the Military, including the Army, Marine Corps, Navy and Air Force. Helicopters assisted with combat assault, resupply, medical evacuation, close air support, command and control, rescue, and night illumination efforts. Of the helicopters deployed, more than 5,000 were destroyed and over 4,500 helicopter pilots and crewmembers lost their lives. In fact, helicopter crewmembers account for 9% of all service members killed in action during the Vietnam War. Yet, as of today no national memorial exists that recognizes the shared, common valor of all helicopter pilots and crewmembers who gave their full measure of devotion and their lives in service to their nation in the Vietnam War.

It is my understanding that the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association has met all the criteria necessary for consideration of their proposed memorial to honor fallen helicopter crewmembers from all branches of the Military at Arlington National Cemetery. Additionally, the scope and design of the memorial does not infringe upon the need to reserve space for burials at ANC, as it can be placed in an existing landscaped area or over ground set aside for underground utilities. Furthermore, I believe it is fitting to honor helicopter pilots and crewmembers who served in the Vietnam War with a national memorial of recognition for their bravery and selflessness in paying the ultimate sacrifice in service to our Country.

I am honored to support projects such as this one that recognize the men and women, both past and present, who commit their lives to the defense of the values we hold dear. For this reason, I respectfully request that you give full and fair consideration to the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association's request to establish a National Memorial on the hallowed grounds of Arlington National Cemetery.

Thank you for your service and thoughtful consideration of this request. If you have further questions regarding my support for this project, please feel free to contact Todd Crouch in my Madison office. He can be reached at 608-264-5338.

Sincerely,

Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

Editors note:
shown are two of
the letters sent to
the Secretary of
the Army.

BUFFY



It was 1971, my 12th year with the US Air Force. I was a Major and had 3000 hours in fixed wing aircraft: 1000 hours in B-47s, and nearly 2000 hours in B-52s that included 24 combat missions. In the Air Force's infinite wisdom, I had been through rotary wing transition, and was now flying HH-53s, the Jolly Green. Assigned to the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, we were based out of NKP (Nakhon Phanom, Thailand). Major Fred Hartstein and I were aircraft commanders, and often flew two-aircraft missions together, i.e. search and recovery of downed air- men in Laos and North Vietnam.

Two new pilots had just reported in to our unit: Captain Dale Stovall and Captain David Pannabecker. They both had time in C-141s before the Air Force decided to put them through helicopter flight school. I gave them a brief tour that started with the Officers' quarters.

"And by the way," I said to the two new pilots as we neared the end of the tour, "you'll both have shared duties as the BCO."

Cpts. Stovall and Pannabecker looked at each other for an answer to the unasked question, "the BCO?" Pannabecker, with thinning hair on top but a full mustache, tried to maintain his military bearing and said nothing. Stovall, on the other hand, with a full head of thick red hair and a happy-go-lucky air about him, turned back toward me as a smile spread across his face, "Okay, Major Gamble, what's the BCO?" I stepped out of the building and waved for the two new pilots to follow. We didn't have far to walk before we came to a large cage containing our mascot, a young Sun Bear. They are native to the jungles of South East Asia, and we had purchased him in town for \$100.

"Captain," I said as I threw my arm around Stovall, "you have the distinction of being the very first Bear Control Officer. Pannabecker here will be your assistant." Both Stovall and Pannabecker started laughing. "Captains," I said as I opened the

cage door and picked up the bear in my arms, "meet Buffy."

Stovall and Pannabecker laughed harder, as they understood the naming of the bear. The Air Force nickname for B-52s is BUF— Big, Ugly, Fellow, or something like that. The nickname for the HH-53 was BUFF— Big, Ugly, Fat...Fellow. Gritty language often peppers the military environment, so the reader may have already figured out Fellow was sometimes substituted with a saltier term.



Buffy 1: HH-53 of the 40th AARS that participated in the Son Tay Raid, on display at, and photo credit to, the USAF National Museum

"As BCOs," I explained, "your duties will be the care, feeding, bathing, and exercising of Buffy... any questions?" They had no questions, so cuddled with Buffy and settled in to their quarters. Both were soon flying missions.

It doesn't take long, especially

flying in combat, for someone to do something meriting special attention. We were returning to NKP from a TDY assignment in Ubon, Thailand, flying over western Laos with Major Hartstein in lead and my aircraft trailing. The flight was boring, we were over territory not subject to enemy contact, the pararescue men (PJs) were dozing off on the seats, and we were at 1500 feet AGL, high enough to avoid small arms fire. (As a former B-52 pilot, however, 1500 feet was low level as far as I was concerned).

Suddenly, Hartstein's HH-53 dropped altitude as he cried out over the radio, "Taking fire, taking fire." My pucker factor went on high, and I immediately dropped collective and began juking left and right as I descended, following Hartstein down to tree top level. Hartstein continued evasive maneuvers, and I followed as we flew "real" low level, through the treetops, bobbing and weaving across the river back into Thailand. My crew and I never heard any gunfire. Hartstein reported everything was "in the green," so we continued to NKP.

Back at the base, and upon inspection of Hartstein's HH-53, it was found to have indeed taken a round - except the hole on the exterior of his helicopter was an exit round. Apparently, one of Hartstein's pararescue specialists had fallen asleep and somehow, while rolling over on the stretcher, accidentally fired off a round. Not aware of what he had done, he too thought it was enemy fire until presented with the evidence. The pararescue crewmember received plenty of attention from his fellow PJs. Major Hartstein, on the other hand, was the aircraft commander. He was ultimately responsible for his and his crewmembers actions. So, for his personal courage and bravery under fire, his fearlessness, his willingness to disregard his personal safety and carry on with the flight, we presented him with his own personal titanium seat and gave him the honorary title of "old iron pants."

On a more serious note, on 27 Mar 72, Pannabecker was aircraft commander in a Jolly, flying second ship, into Cambodia on an escort mission. Upon locating the aircraft to be escorted, the lead Jolly radioed, "Tally ho," the signal he had visual contact. When there was no response from Pannabecker, the lead aircraft made a 180 turn, only to see a column of black smoke rising from the dense jungle 5 miles behind. The lead Jolly flew back and lowered his PJ team into the area, but the heat from the wreckage prevented them from approaching the site. Several hours later, a second attempt to recover remains was unsuccessful due to hostile forces in the area. Captain Pannabecker and his crew were later declared KIA/BNR. We never knew, and

they probably never knew, what hit them.

In May of 1972, a weapons control officer by the name of Roger Locher successfully ejected from a crippled F-4 and landed only forty miles from downtown Hanoi. He evaded capture for over twenty-two days before he could make radio contact with an F-4 on a mission over Hanoi. On June 1, Captain Stovall attempted a rescue but was forced back by ground fire, surface-to-air missiles, and two MIGs. On June 2, the commanding officer of the 7th Air Force, General John Vogt, cancelled all bombing missions for North Vietnam and sent a task force of 114 aircraft - F-4s, EB-66s, A-1Es, F-105s, including Captain Stovall in his Jolly, to retrieve Locher. "We shut down the war to go get Locher," Stovall later said. When Stovall finally pulled Locher aboard his Jolly, they were only sixty miles from Hanoi. It was the deepest rescue inside North Vietnam during the war. No aircraft were lost during the rescue. For his actions that day, Captain Stovall was awarded the Air Force Cross.



Photo credit Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre

Stovall, who retired in 1993 as a Brigadier General, must also be remembered for his dedication to his duties as BCO. In 1975, he flew back to Thailand on his own dime and brought Buffy back to the US where he placed him in the St. Louis Zoo to live out his life. Stovall was therefore the first, and last, official Bear Control Officer for the 40th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron.

*By VHPA member Gary Gamble
and, as told to, VHPA member Russell Jones*

The Huey Pilot

He walks to the slick casually, 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 and 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 cabin and after fingering 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]

The Versatile Chinook

*This incident occurred a few months into my tour with Varsity
(B Co/159th ASHB)*

Each morning, when the first mission of the day launched, we had a standby Chinook run-up in case a mission aircraft was not able to get off. This day I was the standby pilot and Dale Petersen was the Aircraft Commander. The mission launched and we went back to our hootches and standby-mode with our eyes closed.

Later in the morning, Dale came to my hootch to tell me we had a mission to the city of Hue, about 8 miles away. A truck had overturned; GIs were trapped and needed our help. He wanted me to get our aircraft started while he went to Operations to be briefed.

Our procedure with L-11 engines was to start the left engine, get it to flight RPM, shut down the APU, and then start the right engine. This was always done with both pilots in their seats. I didn't wait for Dale; I was starting the right engine when he arrived. We finished the start and I made the takeoff for Hue - Dale had me fly while he made the radio calls.

Dale gave me the details in the few minutes it took us to get to the site. A 5-ton truck had swerved to avoid hitting a Vietnamese on a bicycle. When the truck swerved, it missed the bridge it was approaching, and rolled upside-down, almost ending up in the

river below.

During the short flight, the FE connected six slings and attached them to the cargo hook. Next to the river were trees some 100 feet tall, so we had to hover with the Chinook's nose in the trees while we dropped our sling. We were to lift the truck cab, which was almost in the river, so rescuers could pull out the GIs.

If we lifted the cab too much, the truck would slide into the river. If we let it back down, the truck would crush the rescuers. After several minutes hovering at 100 feet with nothing to reference but the limbs of the trees blowing around in our rotor-wash and the crew chief's instructions over the intercom, the rescuers pulled both GIs from the truck's cab. Unfortunately, one was killed when the truck went off the road.

We found out later it took only eleven minutes from the time of the first call to our operations until we were hovering over the truck. Although this was just another mission among the many we all flew, it will always stand out in my memory.

By Life Member Tom Hirschler

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READY FOR THE DEDICATION

On May 11, 2015 VHPA members stood vigil as a young Red Maple tree was carefully planted into the soil of Arlington National Cemetery's Section 35. They gathered to witness the placing of the tree the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association will dedicate August 28th, 2015.

The idea of placing a living tree within Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) was first discussed in early 2014, but sidelined as the effort to place a stone monument memorial to the thousands of helicopter pilots and crewmembers who died in the Vietnam War took center focus (note: at the time of this writing, the Secretary of the Army is considering approval of the stone memorial). When it became clear the approval process would take far longer than the VHPA leadership was initially advised, attention once again turned to installing a living tree in time for dedication during the 2015 Annual Reunion.

The March 11, 2015 request to place a living tree within Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) was quickly approved by the ANC staff. The VHPA would provide a specific tree (Red Maple "Red Sunset," minimum thickness of 2.5 inch caliper), arrange all associated transportation and planting, and pay all costs. Once approval was given, the VHPA Old Dominion Chapter, led by Chapter President Don Agren, quickly organized, providing the specific tree requested by ANC and coordinating the planting arrangements. Life Member and tree nursery owner Carl "Fletch" Flemer donated the tree.

ANC experiences twenty-two to twenty-seven funerals every day. Coordinating the tree placement and planting to deconflict from burial ceremonies is a task coordinated by ANC Horticulture Division Chief Stephen Van Hoven. Stephen proved extraordinarily helpful and was on hand to advise as the tree was placed along Memorial Drive, barely a stone's throw from the Memorial Amphitheater, where the 10:00 AM, August 28th dedication service will be held.

Once the planting was complete, a small ceremony was held. Reverend John Hoffmann, a VHPA member, provided a gentle prayer, and



Special Thanks...

I extend my deepest and utmost thanks and appreciation to those who went above and beyond to make yesterday's (May 11th) tree dedication ceremony one to remember forever. I wish to recognize:

- Fletch Flemer, Ingleside Plantation Nursery for donating and delivering the tree to the site.
- Stephen Van Hoven, Horticulture Division Chief Arlington National Cemetery, for giving us the perfect spot to plant our tree and helping with all the arrangements.
- Bill Baker, for finding and coordinating the planter, Casey Trees with Arlington National Cemetery.
- Reverend John Hoffmann, for his dedication prayer.
- Jim Woodworth and crew of Casey Trees for their professionalism, efficiency and superior care they showed while planting our tree.
- Bob Hesselbein, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots President for his help in getting approval for the donation and his presence, support and words.
- Moon Mullen and John Powell from VHPA for their attendance.
- The Honorable Generals Carl McNair and Jack Nicholson for their attendance.
- All of the VHPA members, wives and guests for your support and help.

Don Agren

**President, Old Dominion Chapter,
Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association.**

then closing comments by others ended the event. The tree now awaits the August dedication ceremony.

The tree will provide rich color and shade from the warm sun for



VHPA Members attending the tree planting

many generations of visitors to enjoy, but it isn't simply about color and shading; it is about remembering and honoring all helicopter pilots and crewmembers who gave their lives for this country in the Vietnam War. It is about the almost six thousand who answered their nation's call when so many would not. It is for the heroes both

known and unknown, who gallantly served their comrades-in-arms and, as Abraham Lincoln spoke at Gettysburg, "...gave the last full measure of devotion."

By Bob Hesselbein

The Apparently Never-Ending Saga of the Rescue of Buzzard 44 and Stan Cherrie's Pork Tenderloin Sandwiches and Chocolate Milk

After 47 years, my memories of the details surrounding most of the missions I flew while I was in Vietnam are pretty much just a blur. But, I can still remember a few of those missions, as if they happened yesterday.

One of the missions I am able to recall, involved the rescue of an Air Force pilot whose call sign was, as well as I remember, something like Buzzard 44.

To set the stage for this story, I digress a bit here to remind everyone of the difficulties fully-loaded UH-1C Model Huey Gunships sometimes had in getting airborne. With that in mind, I'd like to take you back in time to February of 1968, when some of the big battles of the Tet Offensive were still raging, and the 191st Assault Helicopter Company was supporting an Infantry Brigade that placed a Forward Command Post in some dried-out rice paddies, on the outskirts of Saigon.

Because of the location of the Infantry Brigade's Forward Command Post, the 191st was using the Naval Base at Nha Be to rearm and refuel, as that Naval Base was only about five miles down-river from Saigon. Those who have been to Nha Be will no doubt remember the Navy had a terrific Mess Hall, and a Heliport with a very short runway that ended at the river's edge. That short runway would sometimes make for some challenging take-offs by our overloaded Huey Gunships.

On the day of Buzzard 44's rescue, I was the "FNG Peter Pilot" on a 191st UH-1C Model Huey Gunship named Mother Goose. The exploits of Mother Goose and her crew, have become the stuff of legend within the 191st, and articles about that old war bird and her larger-than-life crew, have previously appeared in several magazines, including the VHPA Aviator. This story will be different, as it is intended to present a lighter, and somewhat humorous, portrayal of one of the finest Air Crews I have ever had the privilege of flying with:

1. First, there was Stan Cherrie, who was Mother Goose's Aircraft Commander.
2. Then, there were Skip Waugh and Rich Fleming, who were



'Mother Goose' circa 1968



Aircraft Commander of 'Mother Goose'
- Stan Cherrie

Mother Goose's Crew Chief and Door Gunner.

3. Finally, there was Mother Goose herself, whose official name was Bell Helicopter 66-15107.

As shown in the photo, Mother Goose was one of those UH-1C Model Huey Gunships that flew into combat loaded for bear, with two 19-shot rocket pods, a nose cannon loaded with 400 rounds of 40 mm grenades, and two M-60s with about 5,000 rounds of ammo.

In the battles raging in and around Saigon during the Tet Offensive, we had learned if we were going to survive going up against the large Main Force VC Units we were encountering, we needed to load Mother Goose with all of the weapons and ammo she could carry, and then load some more. While carrying this extra weight did make for some interesting takeoffs, it normally didn't remain much of a problem, because we would usually burn off a lot of fuel by the time we were back into the fight.

Around lunch time, while Stan Cherrie's light fire team was rearming and refueling at the Naval Base, Stan disappeared for awhile. About the time we were finishing the rearming process, Stan showed up with a big grin on his face, carrying a big-old sack.

As we were preparing for takeoff, we learned while we had been busy humping rockets, etc.,

Stan exercised some of the initiative that served him well as he went on to become a General. He talked the people at the Navy's Mess Hall into making lunch for our light fire team, and had them fill the big-old sack with pork tenderloin sandwiches and chocolate milk.

Because of the extra weight the Goose was carrying, or the density altitude, or whatever, that day the Goose needed just about every foot of the Navy's runway to get airborne.

After takeoff, we didn't have a chance to burn off much of the fuel we had just taken on, because we were instructed to land at the Infantry Brigade's Forward Command Post, and await further instructions. Almost immediately after we landed at the Command Post, Buzzard 44 was shot down and had to bail out

of his fast-mover. This resulted in our light fire team being scrambled to cover Buzzard 44's rescue.

OK, so here's the deal: As Mother Goose was bouncing along trying to get airborne; it was becoming increasingly apparent the Goose was going to have a problem clearing the dike at the end of that dried-out rice paddy. Stan ordered Skip Waugh and Rich Fleming to lighten the load by pitching stuff out of the Goose we didn't absolutely need for this mission. Skip and Rich did what they were told, and the Goose leaped into the air. We cleared the dike with about a foot or so to spare, and the rescue of Buzzard 44 went off without a hitch. Buzzard 44 was one happy dude, as he didn't even have a chance to get very dirty before he was picked up. Which should have made for an equally happy day for our light fire team... but, it didn't....because we had to spend a good portion of the rest of the day listening to Stan whine about pork tenderloin sandwiches and chocolate milk. When Skip and Rich were lightening the load, one of the things they pitched out of the Goose, was the very big-old sack of pork tenderloin sandwiches and chocolate milk Stan had looked forward to enjoying. It's kind of hard to watch a grown man cry. Particularly while he's fumbling around trying to open a C Ration Can of Ham & Lima Beans, and mumbling something about pork tenderloin sandwiches and chocolate milk.

We knew we were going to have to put up with a lot of jokes and ridicule from our fellow 191sters about those lost pork tenderloin sandwiches and chocolate milk, but we sort of figured this story would just fade away after we completed our tours in Vietnam, and went our separate ways. But, much to our chagrin, that did not happen. This story kept getting told and retold, at every 191st Reunion (or at least at every 191st Reunion I attended). After we realized this story wasn't going to go away, we decided we might as well suck it up, and come up with something to memorialize the mission to support the rescue of Buzzard 44.

Merriam-Webster's on-line dictionary defines the verb "memorialize" as "to do or create something that causes people to remember a person, thing, or event". Upon hearing about something called a Short Snorter, we decided it would be a good way to memorialize the mission. Short Snorters were commonly used by World War II Air Crews, and typically consisted of a signed Silver Certificate, which as you know, was the old one dollar bill you could take to a bank, and exchange for a Silver Dollar. If your Air Crew had signed a Short Snorter, and someone could not produce it upon request, that person would usually owe you a dollar or a drink (i.e. a "short snort", because for some reason it was believed aviation and alcohol did not mix well). After a little research about Short Snorters, we



The Naval Base at Hha Be



L Skip Waugh, Rich Fleming - CE, DG



Picture of 'Short Snorter bill'

learned as the Short Snorter craze caught on, some of our Presidents and most of our Astronauts had gotten on board with the craze, and used Short Snorters for some of their more important events and missions. We figured if Short

Snorters worked for Presidents and Astronauts, they ought to work just fine for us.

Oh, and before I forget to tell you this, despite what I said earlier about usually owing dollar or a drink, we also learned there actually weren't any hard and fast rules that applied to Short Snorters, other than rules the Air Crews agreed upon for themselves. The rule we adopted dictated -When we got together, if someone could not produce his Short Snorter, that person would have to buy pork tenderloin sandwiches and chocolate milk for the rest of Mother Goose's crew. Despite all of the years that have gone by, Stan Cherrie and the rest of Mother Goose's crew are patiently waiting for one of us to screw up by not producing his Short Snorter, so we can finally sit down together, and have that long overdue lunch of pork tenderloin sandwiches and chocolate milk.

By Ed McKee, Life Member

Editor's Note: Like the Air Crew described in this story, Mother Goose survived her time in Vietnam, and is currently on display at VFW Post 9095 in Little Rock, Arkansas. See e.g. the article entitled BELL HELICOPTER 66-15107---A UH-1C HUEY GUNSHIP NAMED MOTHER GOOSE, that appeared in the January/February 2012 Edition of The VHPA AVIATOR. Additional information about the 191st and the Air Crew involved in this story can be obtained from the 191st website, which is located at www.191ahc.org. And there is a link to a page for video slideshows on the front page of the 191st website, and one of those video slideshows depicts Skip and Rich presenting a silver pilot's wing bracelet, and a letter of appreciation to Bud Patnode, the 191st AHC's first combat commander, and the first president of the 191st AHC Association. And another of those video slideshows depicts many of the personnel of the 191st who were privileged to fly Mother Goose in combat. Bill Janes, the Vice President of the 191st AHC Association, is the creator and webmaster of the 191st website and Bill can be reached at Email: [REDACTED]

This piece was written by Bob Norris, a former Naval aviator who also did a three year exchange tour flying the F-15 Eagle. He is now an accomplished author of entertaining books about U.S. Naval Aviation including Check Six and Fly Off.. This is his response to a letter from an aspiring fighter pilot on which military academy to attend.

Letter on Whether to Become an Army/Naval Aviator, or an Air Force Pilot

Young Man,

Congratulations on your selection to the Army, Naval and Air Force Academies. Your goal of becoming a pilot is impressive and a fine way to serve your country. As you requested, I'd be happy to share some insight into which service would be the best choice. Each service has a distinctly different culture. You need to ask yourself "Which one am I more likely to thrive in?"

USAF Snapshot: The USAF is exceptionally well organized and well run. Their training programs are terrific. All pilots are groomed to meet high standards for knowledge and professionalism. Their aircraft are top-notch and extremely well maintained. Their facilities are excellent. Their enlisted personnel are the brightest and the best trained. The USAF is homogenous and macro. No matter where you go, you'll know what to expect, what is expected of you, and you'll be given the training & tools you need to meet those expectations. You will never be put in a situation over your head. Over a 20-year career you will be home for most important family events. Your Mom would want you to be an Air Force pilot...so would your wife. Your Dad would want your sister to marry one.

Navy Snapshot: Aviators are part of the Navy, but so are Black Shoes (surface warfare) and Bubble Heads (submariners). Furthermore, the Navy is split into two distinctly different Fleets (West and East Coast). The Navy is heterogeneous and micro. Your squadron is your home; it may be great, average, or awful. A squadron can go from one extreme to the other before you know it. You will spend months preparing for cruise and months on cruise. The quality of the aircraft varies directly with the availability of parts. Senior Navy enlisted men are the salt of the earth; you'll be proud if you earn their respect. Junior enlisted vary from terrific to the troubled kid the judge made join the service. You will be given the opportunity to lead these people during your career; you will be humbled and get your hands dirty. The quality of your training will vary and sometimes you will be over your head. You will miss many important family events. There will be long stretches of tedious duty aboard ship. You will fly in very bad weather and/or at night and you will be scared many times. You will fly with legends in the Navy and they will kick your butt until you become a lethal force. And some days - when the scheduling Gods have smiled upon you - your jet will catapult into a glorious morning over a far-away sea and you will be drop-jawed that someone would pay you to do it. The hottest girl in the bar wants to meet the Naval Aviator. That bar is in Singapore.

The bottom line, son, if you gotta ask... pack warm & good luck in Colorado.

P.S.: Air Force pilots wear scarves and iron their flight suits.

P.P.S. And oh, yes, the Army helicopter pilot program? Don't even think about it unless you got a pair bigger than basketballs. Those guys are completely crazy!

Final Update on the 32nd Reunion of the VHPA

Final Update Prior to the 32nd Reunion of the VHPA

By Mike Law, Chairman of the VHPA Reunion Committee

Speaking for the VHPA Executive Council, the Headquarters Staff, and the entire Reunion Committee, I cordially invite you to attend the VHPA's 32nd Annual Reunion in Washington, DC from Tuesday, August 25th through Saturday, August 30th, 2015 at The Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. We have a wonderful Reunion planned for you, your family, and your friends! Since this is the last status report we can give you prior to the Reunion, here are **Eight** points for your consideration.

First: Thanks to all who have registered early and reserved your hotel room! For the rest of you, please don't procrastinate!

The Morning Report on www.vhpa.org, lists more than 700 members or subscribers registered. We expect the final attendance to be more than 1,000 (2,100 adults adding companions). As of early June, 95+% of the VHPA's room block is **taken**. For those who haven't reserved a room, please note:

- Rooms are available every night from 21 Aug thru 1 Sep. There are no sold out nights.
- Recently the hotel promised the VHPA any and all their unsold rooms until at least the contract cutoff date of Friday, 31 July. Our original contract was capped at 950. We can now exceed that. The hotel may charge whatever price they wish for any reservation after that cutoff date.
- The Galt House rooms for the 2014 Reunion were

"sold out". A significant number of rooms were sold at two overflow hotels. Our current 2015 pick-up already exceeds the R2014 numbers! Luckily the Wardman Park Marriott has more room, **yet** we could sell it out as happened in 2006.

Message: Last minute hopefuls might be disappointed!

Second: Getting to the Marriott Wardman Park, 2660 Woodley Road, N.W., Washington, DC 20008.

Please refer to the Reunion Information Page (then the link on the line that reads: "Everything you need to know about the 2015 reunion") on www.vhpa.org. The Transportation from the Airport paragraph reads: "Because the hotel is an easy walk from the Woodley Park Zoo/Adams Morgan Metro Station on the Red Line, no airport shuttle is planned for this Reunion. A metro card can be purchased at the airport. There is an elevator at the corner

of Woodley Road and Connecticut Ave for handicap access to/from the Metro. The estimated cab fare from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport is \$30 one way and the estimated cab fare from Washington Dulles International Airport is \$60 one way."

Third: Welcome all USABAA Members and Friends!

I recently had a delightful phone call from VHPA Life Member and current United States Army Black Aviator Association (USABAA) President Clovis Jones,



announcing that the association voted to co-locate their annual meeting with the VHPA Reunion. This is a wonderful step forward leveraging the 'good times' we enjoyed at the San Francisco and Louisville Reunions! I know good people like Herb Metoyer, Joe Ponds, and our incoming VHPA President Clyde Romero will be more than happy to see these two associations get even closer.

Fourth: Our first late August Reunion.

Traditionally our Reunions are on or near the 4th of July. Since this one is 8 weeks later, all of our historical projection and trending data may not apply. We are, of course, monitoring tour sales and room night pick-up. Every day we learn from those trends. That said, we are able to provide even twice the tickets of the current total for events such as the Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum and our Arlington National Cemetery Dedication Ceremony. We won't run out of lanyards but we might run out of lapel pins if there is a huge last minute surge of attendees.

*Message = Y'all are welcome to come now, ya hear!
Do let us know as early as possible.*

Fifth: Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum near Dulles.

Recently I visited the museum with the caterer chosen for the 27 Aug event. My last visit was during the VHPA 2006 Reunion. **Wow!** Expect to be impressed. Three hangars are full versus the wonderful but somewhat sparse collection that I recall. You have three options for dining locations: alongside the iconic SR-71 Blackbird, behind the rocket nozzles of the Space Shuttle Discovery, or near the Vietnam Era helicopters. In addition to the hundreds of aircraft, rockets, and space craft, you will have the option to: visit with docents in each area, watch the IMAX movie, visit the gift shop and to go up in the control tower. My favorite is the second story view of the entire Restoration Hangar. They have Flak-Bait (google 'Flak Bait Smithsonian') completely disassembled. If I understand it correctly, this Martin B-26B Marauder sustained more battle damage (yet was repaired and remained operational) than any other bomber in WW II. **Please look for specially prepared VHPA maps and guides we'll have available at the Marriott to help you to:**

- (1) not get lost!
- (2) be able to quickly find a place to eat; and
- (3) know the exact location of the exhibits you wish to visit.

Sixth: The VHPA Memorial and Tree Dedication Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery.

Not to take anything away from President Bob's article in this issue, this will be a 'once in a lifetime event' for most of us! We have approvals to use three of our 56 passenger buses to shuttle people from the main bus parking area to the auditorium for the ceremony. This will be faster than using cemetery trams. The VHPA's tree was planted a short distance from the auditorium. The original ceremony has been continually enhanced through the work of Bob's team.

Seventh: the VHPA Reunion Committee really needs Volunteer – please and thanks.

We are extremely grateful for the efforts of Don Agren, President of the Virginia Old Dominion Chapter, and the Chapter leadership. They have 'taken up' where the Ohio River LZ Chapter left off last year. Please log on to www.vhpa.org and see the "Volunteer schedule" located just to the right of the Reunion logo. A "Duty Roster" is displayed, listing dates, tasks, number of people needed, etc. Some are easy – Bus Captain on a tour bus. Some are critical such as redeeming T-Shirt tickets or providing packets to those who preregistered. We appreciate the many who have already volunteered, however, we need more! **Thanks!**

Eighth: Safe Journey!

Eleven years ago while Dianna and I were on a mission for our church to Ghana West Africa, we heard these words often from these easy to love people: **"Safe journey"**. It was so heart-felt, so genuine, and so loving! Sadly, each year there are accidents involving our people coming to, or returning from the Reunion. This is the last published opportunity for the Reunion Committee to communicate with you prior to shaking your hand in Washington...so **Safe Journey**

In closing, please look to www.vhpa.org for all your Reunion needs! This VHPA Reunion follows our pattern of having literally a "hundred moving parts." As **great** as The Aviator is (and it is great) there is no way we can communicate details and current tour status using printed media alone. Please log on to www.vhpa.org, and refer to the **Reunion Information page**.

Questions or Comments...? As always get in touch with HQ at 800-505-8472 or Mike Law at [REDACTED]

VHPA'S 32nd Annual Reunion ~ Washington, DC ~ August 25-30, 2015

NATIONAL REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

For information and to register online: www.vhpa.org or mail completed form to:

VHPA Headquarters, 2100 North Highway 360, Suite 907, Grand Prairie, TX 75050

Toll Free: (800) 505-VHPA (8472)

Email: HQ@vhpa.org

Fax: (817) 200-7309

Member name:	DOB:	Member No:
Address:	Telephone:	Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
City:	State:	Zip: Address Change? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
Email address:	Phone:	
Spouse name:	City:	DOB: 21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> yes Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
Guest name:	City:	DOB: 21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> yes Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
Guest name:	City:	DOB: 21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> yes Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
Guest name:	City:	DOB: 21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> yes Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes
Guest name:	City:	DOB: 21 or older? <input type="checkbox"/> yes Wheelchair? <input type="checkbox"/> yes

EVENT	DATE	NUMBER	PRICE	TOTAL
Registration through 6/30/2015 **			\$ 25 EA	
Registration for under age 21 **			\$ 15 EA	
Registration 7/1/2015 and after			\$ 35 EA	
Mall & Monuments Shuttle	Aug 25-29		\$ 26 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #1	Aug 25	Sold Out	\$ 26 EA	Sold Out
Pentagon Tour #1	Aug 25	Sold Out	\$ 17 EA	Sold Out
Memorial Collections Tour #2	Aug 25		\$ 26 EA	
Pentagon Tour #2	Aug 25		\$ 17 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #3	Aug 25	Sold Out	\$ 26 EA	Sold Out
Early Bird Gathering	Aug 25		N/C EA	
KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast	Aug 26		\$ 22 EA	
Breakfast w/Speaker #1 SGT Barry McAlpine	Aug 26		\$ 22 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #4	Aug 26	Sold Out	\$ 26 EA	Sold Out
Gettysburg Tour	Aug 26		\$ 48 EA	
Pentagon Tour #3	Aug 26		\$ 17 EA	
Mt. Vernon #1	Aug 26	Sold Out	\$ 52 EA	Sold Out
Writers Presentation	Aug 26		N/C EA	
Museum of the Marine Corps Quantico #1	Aug 26		\$40 EA	
Mt. Vernon #2	Aug 26		\$52 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #5	Aug 26	Sold Out	\$26 EA	Sold Out
Pentagon Tour #4	Aug 26		\$17 EA	
Memorial Collections Tour #6	Aug 26	Sold Out	\$26 EA	Sold Out
1st Time Attendee Reception	Aug 26		N/C EA	
Welcome Reception w/ Entertainment	Aug 26		N/C EA	
Golf Outing - Andrews South Golf Course	Aug 27		\$121 EA	
VHPA Legacy Breakfast	Aug 27		\$22 EA	
Water Cruise #1 via Alexandria	Aug 27	Sold Out	\$38 EA	Sold Out
Mt. Vernon #3	Aug 27	Sold Out	\$52 EA	Sold Out
National Archives College Park Tour	Aug 27	Sold Out	\$26 EA	Sold Out
Water Cruise #2 via Georgetown	Aug 27	Sold Out	\$38 EA	Sold Out
Mt. Vernon #4	Aug 27		\$52 EA	
Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Dinner	Aug 27		\$143 EA	
Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Dinner-Child	Aug 27		\$100 EA	
Breakfast w/Speaker #3 Kim Mitchell	Aug 28		\$22 EA	
ANC Memorial Dedication	Aug 28		\$26 EA	
Water Cruise #3 via Alexandria	Aug 28	Sold Out	\$38 EA	Sold Out
Museum of the Marine Corps Quantico #2	Aug 28		\$40 EA	
Water Cruise #4 via Georgetown	Aug 28	Sold Out	\$38 EA	Sold Out
US Marine Corp Evening Parade	Aug 28		\$40 EA	
Movie Night - Double Feature	Aug 28		N/C EA	
Pre-Memorial Service Breakfast	Aug 29		\$22 EA	
Memorial Service	Aug 29		N/C EA	
Spouse/Guest Event at Kennedy Center for the Arts	Aug 29		\$55 EA	
Closing Banquet - Adult	Aug 29		\$75 EA	
Closing Banquet - Child	Aug 29		\$19 EA	
Non-Registered Guest at Banquet	Aug 29		\$85 EA	
Total From Sidebars				
VHPA Dues (if not dues current) *** 1 year @ \$36 or 3 years @ \$99			\$36/\$99	
Life Membership (Call HQ for exact amount) **				
2015 CD Directory Fee *** (# of years x \$10)			\$10 EA	
2015 Paper Directory Fee *** (# of years x \$15)			\$15 EA	
GRAND TOTAL				

* Date of Birth must be provided for each person registered. Certain tours require this info.

** Each person 21 & older must pay the full registration fee, except banquet-only guests.

*** Denotes a contribution, donation or fee that is not refundable as part of any cancellation process.

Aug 25 Group Dinners	
Café Paradiso @ \$62	\$
Lebanese Taverna @ \$56	\$
Open City Diner @ \$58	\$
Petit Plats @ \$62	\$

Aug 26 Group Dinners	
Café Paradiso @ \$62	\$
Lebanese Taverna @ \$56	\$
Open City Diner @ \$58	\$
Petit Plats @ \$62	\$

Banquet Meal		
___ Beef	___ Fish	___ Pasta

Banquet Seating Preference	

___ S @ \$18	___ M @ \$18	___ L @ \$18
___ XL @ \$18	___ XXL @ \$19	___ XXXL @ \$20
T-Shirts		Total \$ _____

*** Voluntary Contributions:	
Gold Star Sponsorship @ \$22	\$
Membership Fund @ \$10	\$
Reunion Sponsorship @ \$10	\$
Scholarship Fund @ \$10	\$
Vietnam War Museum @ \$10	\$

IMPORTANT: Please review the details of the Refund Policy, including the limited opportunity to purchase a Refund Guaranty available only on a one-time basis at the time of registration, which is posted online at the VHPA website: www.vhpa.org

REFUND GUARANTEE FEE
10% of Total Events \$ _____

OFFICIAL REGISTRATION CANCELLATION
DATE IS CLOSE OF BUSINESS, CST
FRIDAY, 14 AUGUST 2015

CREDIT CARD PAYMENT	
MC/Visa # _____	
Expiration Date: _____	
Signature: _____	

CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYMENT
In lieu of a credit card, you can mail a check or money order payable to "VHPA" with your completed form

Official Schedule

Visit our website at: www.VHPA.org for the latest details and to register for the reunion

Time	Event
Monday, August 24	
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Welcome Desk & Pre-registration & T-shirt Pickup
4:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Registration & Tour Desk
Tuesday, August 25	
7:30am - 8:00pm	Welcome Desk & Pre-registration & T-shirt Pickup
7:30 am - 12:00 pm	Registration & Tour Desk
8:00 am - 11:00 am	Memorial Collections Tour #1
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Pentagon Tour #1
10:00 am - 5:00 pm	Mall & Monuments Shuttle
11:00 am - 11:00 pm	O' Club open
11:15 am - 2:15 pm	Memorial Collections Tour #2
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Pentagon Tour # 2
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Registration & Tour Desk
2:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Memorial Collections Tour #3
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Café Paradiso
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Lebanese Taverna
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Open City Diner
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Petit Plats
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm	Registration & Tour Desk
7:00 pm - 10:00 pm	Early Bird Gathering w/Entertainment
Wednesday, August 26	
7:30am - 8:00pm	Welcome Desk & Pre-registration & T-shirt Pickup
7:30 am - 9:00 am	KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast
7:30 am - 9:00 am	Breakfast w/Speaker #1 SGT Barry McAlpine
7:30 am - 12:00 pm	Registration Desk
8:00 am - 11:00 am	Memorial Collections Tour #4
8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Gettysburg Tour
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Pentagon Tour #3
9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Mt. Vernon #1
9:30 am - 11:30 am	Writers Presentation
9:30 am - 3:30 pm	Museum of the Marine Corps @ Quantico #1
11:00 am - 5:00 pm	Mt. Vernon #2
11:15 am - 2:15 pm	Memorial Collections Tour #5
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Pentagon Tour # 4
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Registration
2:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Memorial Collections Tour #6
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Café Paradiso
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Lebanese Taverna
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Open City Diner
5:00 pm - 7:00 pm	Group Dinners @ Petit Plats
7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	1st Time Attendee Reception
7:30 pm - 10:00 pm	Welcome Reception w/ Entertainment

Of Events

Time	Event
Thursday, August 27	
6:30 am - 3:00 pm	Golf Outing - Andrews South Golf Course
7:00 am - 12:00 pm	Registration Desk
7:30 am - 9:00 am	VHPA Legacy Breakfast
8:00 am - 5:00 pm	Welcome Desk & Pre-registration & T-shirt Pickup
9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Monuments By Water Cruise # 1 via Alexandria
9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Mt. Vernon #3
9:30 am - 1:00 pm	National Archives College Park Tour
10:00 am - 4:00 pm	Monuments By Water Cruise # 2 via Georgetown
11:00 am - 5:00 pm	Mt. Vernon #4
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Registration Desk
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Quilters Show & Tell
5:30 pm - 11:30 pm	Air and Space Museum Udvar-Hazy Dinner
Friday, August 28	
7:30 am - 9:00 am	Breakfast w/Speaker #3 - Kim Mitchell
8:00 am - 12:00 pm	Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
8:30 am - 12:30 pm	Arlington National Cemetery Memorial Dedication
9:00 am - 3:00 pm	Monuments By Water Cruise #3 via Alexandria
9:30 am - 3:30 pm	National Museum of the Marine Corps @ Quantico #2
10:00 am - 4:00 pm	Monuments By Water Cruise # 4 via Georgetown
1:00 pm - 5:00 pm	Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
5:00 pm - 11:00 pm	US Marine Corp Evening Parade
7:00 pm - 9:45 pm	Double Feature Movie Night "The last Days in Vietnam" & "Soldiers' Sanctuary"
Saturday, August 29	
7:30 am - 8:45 am	Pre-Memorial Breakfast
9:00 am - 9:30 am	Memorial Service
9:00 am - 12:00 pm	Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts
10:00 am - 12:30 pm	Annual Business Meeting
10:00 am - 2:00 pm	Spouse/Guest Event at Kennedy Center for the Arts
12:30 pm - 1:00 pm	Presidents Recognition
12:30 pm - 1:30 pm	Chapter President Meeting
1:00 pm - 4:00 pm	Consolidated Reg, Pre-reg & T-shirts
5:45 pm - 10:30 pm	Closing Banquet & Dance

REUNION CONTINUING EVENTS:

Unit Mini-Reunions and Unit TOC's are scheduled daily at various times -
See schedule posted in the Registration Area

The Vendor Room - Opens August 25th at 1:00 PM and remains open daily from 9:00 am - 5:00 pm through the last day of the Reunion, August 29th and 28, and from 12:30 pm to 10:00 pm on August 29th

The O'Club - Open from 11:00am - 11:00pm on August 25 through August 28, open 12:30pm -11:00pm on August 29

Mall & Monuments Shuttle will run August 26 through August 28 10:am-5:00pm

Mall & Monuments Shuttle will run August 29 12:00pm-5:00pm

Bring your Existing Lanyard to the DC Reunion

Lanyards cost the VHPA approximately \$2.50 to \$3.00 each. Reusing them saves our Association money. It costs Membership about \$3.00 every time we send out a Membership Packet in an attempt to add a potential member to our organization. The Reunion Chairman, Mike Law, expects over two thousand attendees at the DC Reunion. If half of those reuse their lanyards we can devote over \$2500 in savings for recruiting efforts. In addition, it's a great way to keep up with your Reunion pins.



Please bring your lanyards and reuse them.

ATTENTION! ALL UNITED STATES ARMY BLACK AVIATION ASSOCIATION MEMBERS



USABAA is happy to announce
we're convocating with VHPA
in Washington, DC at the
VHPA 2015 REUNION.

We invite all USABAA members to attend.

AUG. 26th-29th
The Marriott Wardman Park

2660 Woodley Road, N.W., Washington, DC 20008

Register at www.usabaa.info
Call: 888.606.3700



We are excited
the Reunion
is in our back-
yard in 2015!

Vietnam Helo Operations "Rotorheads Return"

NEW 20 Sept—3 Oct & 7—20 May 2016

"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

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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. Sept with airfare from LAX-\$3595. 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 in Vietnam in 1996!

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Things They Didn't Teach in Flight School or OCS

I arrived in Vietnam on March 24, 1969 with my unit, originally designated G Troop, 15th Cav at Ft. Hood. Upon departure from Bergstrom AFB, Texas, we became Charlie Troop, 2/17 Cav, 101st Airborne. We discovered the change while leaving Yakota, Japan. Enroute to RVN our troop commander, Major Bill Zierdt, provided us with 101st patches. Because our aircraft would be delivered in about two weeks, I had time for a side trip. I went to Chu Lai to fly a couple of combat missions with B Troop, 17th Cav, the Blue Ghosts. After a couple of months of flying the AH-1G Cobra, I became an Aircraft Commander.

We were losing scout pilots on a fairly regular basis, so had corresponding influxes of new pilots. Major Zierdt assigned most of them to transition into the OH-6A helicopter and become Loach scout pilots. Most of these new scout pilots became an indispensable part of the unit as well as outstanding troopers.

One scout pilot stands out in my mind above all the others: WO1 Homer Shuman was a soldier's soldier. He was on his second tour in Nam; the first had been as a sergeant in the 173rd Airborne. Following that tour, he became a Green Beret. He then decided to attend flight school.

One night, after Homer had been in the troop about a month, he visited my hootch carrying an Army manual. He asked me: "Have you heard of a 2.75" rocket with a 17 pound warhead?" My answer was: "No. What are you talking about?" He showed me a section of a Cav troop TO&E authorizing use of those rockets. Wow! We ordered a basic load of them for the troop. A few days later, he asked about WP (white phosphorous) rockets. He had never heard of them either; and we ordered a basic load. He next asked me about flechette rockets (10 pound warheads with 2,200 twenty-grain finned nails in each warhead). Again, I answered: "No. We obtained these as well. We used the 17 pound rockets to blow stuff up, of course, and we used the WP rockets to mark targets, or burn them. When I fired the first flechette rockets, I think I had the same feeling a Naval aviator has during a night landing on a carrier. When that first pair of rockets exploded about 750 feet from the aircraft, I could not imagine being on the ground and having 4,400 nails coming down at me.

A few weeks later, Homer came to my hootch about 22:00 and asked me if I had heard of powdered CS gas. I knew nothing about this stuff. He said we could get a 55 gallon barrel of it in 8 pound bags. I ordered a barrel, having no idea how to employ it.

A couple of days later, he and I were flying a last-light mission, which started at the Seabees' rock crusher plant at QL1 south of Hue, and extended as far toward the A Shau Valley as I wanted to go. When Homer started flying around the rock crusher, he found 6 holes, about 3 feet around and 3 feet deep that had not been there before. They were leading straight from a rice paddy to the rock crusher. Naturally, being the curious type, I called the RTO at the rock crusher to find out if they had dug them for some reason. Of course, their answer was, "Huh, what are you talking about?" I advised them of our discovery, then Homer suggested the VC were digging them during the day to attack at night. We briefly discussed the matter, until I had a little light go on in my head. I told Homer to go back to our fire base, LZ Sally, and bring back two bags of powdered CS for each hole. When he

got back, he was choking and could barely talk, and told me he had to fly the loach sideways to keep the fumes from getting to him. He dropped 16 pounds of powdered CS gas in each hole, while at a 10 foot hover, causing the paper bags to burst on impact. The rock crusher was never attacked at night. Was it the powdered CS, or did the VC just decide it wasn't worth it? I'll never know. I wasn't aware of the use of powdered CS before this mission.

Sometime later, we found a location used by the NVA to truck equipment as well as move foot troops into the A Shau Valley. Homer found a place (in Nam, I think! I never found the white line on the ground designating the border between Vietnam and Laos) where the trucks could not by-pass. He dropped 48 pounds of powdered CS gas there, and the foot trail. The next morning, we saw where the first couple of trucks went through the CS. The tire tracks showed all of the following vehicles leaving the road only to become stuck. That must have shocked them! We couldn't determine the results for the troops on foot, so we decided to use another idea Homer came up with.

A few weeks earlier, he arrived at my hootch about 21:00, dragging a case of 'frag' grenades. He asked me if I had ever heard of delay-fuse grenades, and I told him, "No, I have not! And you're not going to do whatever it is you're planning in my hootch!" I'm pretty brave after a couple hours of drinking rum and coke! Anyway, he showed me how to unscrew the fuse in a frag grenade and screw on a delay fuse. When you squeezed an ampule on the fuse and pulled the pin, the grenade would explode in 4 - 5 hours. So, we obtained fuses!

Having decided the powdered CS wasn't going to work on troops walking into Nam, Homer loaded up 50 of the delay fuse grenades and dropped them late in the evening on the trail they were using. Did this work? I have no idea, but we realized a couple of days later, they were no longer using this trail.

I thought Homer couldn't possibly top these ideas...yet he made another evening visit, this time dragging a case of C-4 explosives. He wanted my nearly empty Ritz Cracker can. I told him no, he couldn't have it, but he insisted. Eventually, I gave in. He planned to make homemade bombs to drop on green bamboo hootches in the A Shau Valley; because WP wouldn't burn them. He then punched two holes in the can on opposite sides and put in a layer of C-4. Next, he acquired scrap from the metal shop and placed the pieces over the C-4 layer. He continued this metal/C-4 sandwich until the can was full. When we were in the Valley and he found a hootch we couldn't burn with WP rockets, he would tell his crew chief to insert two 30 second fuses, light them and drop them through the grass roof of the hootch and, BOOM. Sometimes, he could see someone inside the hootch. My problem with this idea was the possibility of a tracer round from an AK-47 (or worse a .51 caliber gun setting off the bomb. Homer insisted it would not, but I still had my doubts. When he's dealing with a soldier's soldier, a very young captain just doesn't argue- and WO1 Homer Shuman was a soldier's soldier!

By Rod McClellan

The First Time I Was Shot At!

Some talking head said in reference to a professional athlete getting arrested at four o'clock in the morning: "nothing good happens between midnight and six in the morning..." What he probably didn't realize was anyone who's flown a helicopter at night, over the water a long way from land or a ship already knew that.

Since Navy helicopters generally fly below one thousand feet, full moons are a blessing. In the Navy they are known as "commander's moons" because they provide almost enough light to read. Back in the days before night vision goggles, star light didn't do much to provide visibility. If one was really, really lucky, the stars and moonlight could provide a horizon to help you keep the helicopter right side up.

The date was February 16th, 1970, and I was in Navy vernacular a 2P which is the abbreviation for second pilot. In Navy parlance, the unofficial word used is "nugget" which is a polite term for a brand new, first cruise co-pilot who knows nothing and is not much more than excess baggage.

So there I was... It was pitch-assed black as are most nights at sea, and we were flying plane guard. No clouds, no moon, air temperature in the eighties and water temperature in the 70s. I was still so new; I hadn't yet mastered the black art of maintaining a steady hover forty feet over the water.

We were boring holes in the sky at five hundred feet when this obnoxious warbling beeping sound rudely interrupted and stopped all conversation in the UH-2C helicopter. However, this time, there was not one but two, which even I knew the crew was from either an F-4 or an A-6. We were doubly blessed. Two rescues, one flight!

As per our procedures, I flipped the UHF radio to the homing mode and we got a bearing. The HAC (helicopter aircraft commander) put the needle on the radio magnetic indicator on the nose and accelerated to one hundred and ten knots. While we were accelerating, the controller on the E-2 (a twin engine, carrier based turbo-prop the Navy uses for airborne command and control) gave us a heading to fly and an estimate of the distance where they thought the F-4 went in.

Their vector and our radio magnetic indicator more or less agreed to the direction we were flying. The distance, however, was bit of a surprise because at fifty miles from where we were orbiting, it was roughly a half an hour away.

Half an hour there, half an hour back plus half an hour of fuel burned equaled an hour and a half. In a helicopter which had two and a half hours of fuel from light off to flame out, it gave us an hour to find the crew, hover to pick them up and get back to the boat. Piece of cake!!!

About half-way to the survivors, the pilot came up on his survival radio to let us know he was hurt and couldn't get into his raft. Both the pilot and his back-seater a.k.a. known in the Navy as a radar intercept officer managed to turn on their strobe lights. From five hundred feet over the water, we spotted both of them about two or three miles out. Their pencil flares lit up the sky like the Fourth of July.

After we finished the rescue check list, we descended to two hundred feet which was the altitude from which we should, according to the NATOPS manual, start our approach to a night hover. I looked back and the second crewman was sitting in the cabin door ready to be lowered to help the pilot. About a quarter mile from the survivor,

the aircraft commander manually flew down to a steady forty foot hover, about fifty feet from the survivor to keep him from being blasted by the rotor wash. Down went the rescue swimmer.

I was concentrating my scan on the engine and transmission as well as torque gauges while the pilot flew the helicopter when we got a flash of yellow light in the cockpit. Suddenly the helicopter was hard to control. The master caution light was still out so I looked down at the center console between our seats and the automatic stabilization equipment or ASE "off" light was flashing yellow. The best way to describe trying to hover a helicopter on instruments at night over the water with no visual references is akin to trying to stand on a large, rapidly rotating greased sphere.

Now we had three guys in the water: The pilot, the radar intercept officer and our air crewman.

The manual said we were to "reset the ASE." Each time I turned the ASE on; it would work for a few seconds and then send random inputs to the controls. After the second time, I used my flashlight to find the circuit breakers on the overhead panel that controlled the ASE and pulled them out. I waited about ten seconds, and then pushed them back in. Nothing helped.

Without the ASE, we couldn't use the hover indicator which had two needles that if you kept centered meant you were in a stable hover. Think of how one flies an ILS, but in this case, a helicopter in a hover. It also had an indicator tied to the radar altimeter so with the needles centered and the height indicator centered; you were in a stable hover and not climbing or descending.

So I came up with the bright idea of using the fixed light that shined down and to the right with the moveable searchlight. I'd adjust them so at forty feet, the beams would converge. If they were in an "X," it meant we were too low, and if they were split apart, we would be too high.

The HAC said let's try it, but let's do it for fifty versus the normal hover height of forty feet. So, we flew along at sixty knots on the radar altimeter while I set up the lights. What we hadn't figured out was how to get into a hover. With no visual horizon and the black sea below, we had no visual references. To say we were gyrating around was an understatement.

Meanwhile, in the background, the pilot was calling everybody in the world telling him the helicopter wasn't picking him up. Finally, I fessed up and told the E-2 "Angel 22 had a stabilization problem, stand-by!"

We were too busy staying out of the water so I ignored all the radio calls asking for a situation report figuring we were having enough trouble. The last thing we needed was to spend time answering questions from someone a long way from the rescue scene.

What I found out later was the admiral's staff and air wing commander took my terse stand-by as "shut the f—k up, let us do our job." But those fun and games came later.

We managed to get the helicopter in a semi-stable hover and crept back over the pilot. As the 2P, I was shifting between heads-down to monitor the engine and drive train instruments and heads-out to help keep us out of the water. Off in the distance which was less than a quarter a mile away, we could see the strobe from the RIO. Despite several attempts from the E-2 and us, we couldn't raise him on the radio.

One of the times I looked up, I saw this red streak go by the nose of the helicopter. Having never seen it before, I didn't know what it was. I looked up again, and another one followed. This time, it passed only a few feet from the cockpit, and was followed by a third in less than a second.

Then there was a gap in time. As we were pulling out of the hover with the swimmer and the pilot in the cabin, six more went whizzing by. This time, the HAC, said those were tracers and someone is shooting at us. So that's what tracers look like!

The rescue of the RIO went more or less as planned given the H-2 was much lighter and we sort of figured out how to use the lights to gauge both height and drift in a hover. Luckily, we didn't have to put the swimmer back in the water.

Rather than being grateful he didn't have to wait an hour for a second helo to fly out to where he was floating in his raft, the RIO started screaming at the air crewman once he was on board. By now, we were back at five hundred feet and up to one hundred knots headed back to the carrier.

The senior air crewman gave him a spare headset and that's when he told us he thought we were going to leave him. He was out of pencil flares and his radio didn't work so in order to get our attention, he started firing tracer rounds from his .38 special. At first, he'd fire two in rapid sequence. When we didn't respond to the first three pairs, he reloaded and fired three in two batches. Each time, he was aiming to make sure the rounds went past the nose of the helicopter so we would see them. When we started to leave the hover, he was so sure we were going to leave him floating in his raft he emptied all five

rounds AT the helicopter! Thank God he was using a stubby revolver with a three inch barrel and was not a very good shot.

This rescue, my first, took place about twenty miles south of the island of Vieques which is about eight miles off the eastern tip of Puerto Rico. A portion of the island was used by the Navy as a bombing range since World War II.

The story didn't end here. The good news was our crew was nominated by the Navy for the Harmon International Aviation Award. We didn't win, but it was gratifying. An Air Medal or a Distinguished Flying Cross would have been nicer but our Officer in Charge thought we were just doing our job and demonstrating how well we were trained! So, no medal.

Second, we had to explain our comments to the heavies on the ship who nodded sagely and then told me we needed to be more explicit. Right! In the training command, they teach you to aviate, navigate and communicate in that order. Aviating keeps you in the air and out of the water, navigating keeps you from a sudden stop in a cumulo-granite cloud. Communicating has a time and place.

Nonetheless, I still got a chewing out because they were trying to make the decision as to whether or not to launch a second helo and we weren't giving them any information. At which point, I innocently as an O-2 can, told an O-6, "Sir, you didn't need my input to make that decision!" At which time, what little was left of my scrawny ass was consumed.

By Marc Liebman

COMBAT HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION



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**COMBAT HELICOPTER
PILOTS ASSOCIATION**

The Last Scramble of the 57th Assault Helicopter Company

I am proud to have been a member of the 57th AHC from August 1972 until February 1973. My most profound appreciation goes to fellow members of the 57th: Cobra crews (Cougars), 1LTs Ben Hek, Larry Holden, WO1s Raol Archambault, Michael Pancake, Jack McCutchen, Harry Adams, Wayne Simmons, Nicholas Harrington; Huey crews (Gladiators), CW2 Rich Clover, 1LT Bill Baxter, SP5 Charles Thompson, SP4 Fulton Holmes. Due to the brotherhood, dedication, skill, and extreme courage of those individuals, WO1 Gary Onofry, SP4 Jeffery Smith (Smitty), Major John Sullivan, 1LT Charlie, an unknown Regional Force Militia soldier, and I (SP4 John Ross), lived past Oct 16th 1972. CPT Hans Langhammer - in operations, Covey 7-8 - who initiated our rescue, and others who assisted also deserve our thanks.

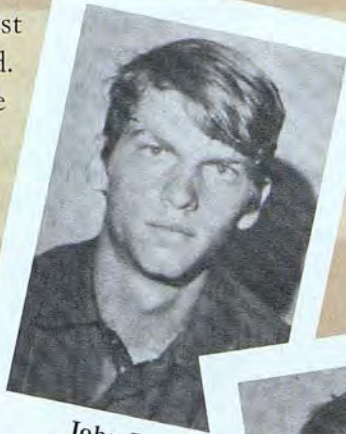
On 16 October 1972, at approximately 13:00 our crew was asked to attempt a medevac at FSB (Fire Support Base) 43. Also known as St George, the FSB was approximately 30 miles south of Pleiku at a fork in the road on Hwy. 14. It was manned mostly by Regional Force Militia (Ruff Puffs as we called them). Mr. Onofry was our AC (Aircraft Commander) and LT Jim Dugger our PP (Peter Pilot). I was the Crew Chief and my good friend Smitty was our door gunner. He and I arrived in country at the same time and were assigned to the 48th AHC until it stood down in early August. I don't know why I was the Crew Chief. He worked on a P.E. team at the 48th, and had forgotten more about a Huey than I would ever know. He was a North Carolina farm boy, stocky and tough as nails. He was not to be messed with and nobody did after a couple of incidents at the E.M. club up on the hill involving the Cav unit.

The FSB was several hundred yards inside a fork in the road a couple of miles south of the village My Tach. We didn't know precisely where the bad guys were, but the day before a small American Special Forces team had been on the run. Escaping hostiles hot on their heels, they made it to the firebase by nightfall. They were then extracted by an H Trp 7/17 Cav bird - our neighbors on the other side of the Christmas Tree (Heliport at Camp Holloway). We saw many Vietnamese civilians walking on the road which was always an indication something bad was coming. That morning we had worked for Major Williamson, the Senior MACV advisor for Pleiku Province. He coordinated with

his people at St George from his My Tach location. We picked up an LSA SP5, James Craig, at Camp Holloway to

take him to My Tach to repair radios. We were called out of there at mid-morning for a resupply trip to Kontum (where we stole a case of C rations). On our return trip, Major Williamson requested a VR (Visual Recon) around the FSB because they were receiving mortar fire. We made some low passes; seeing nothing we were released and returned to Camp Holloway for our lunch of appropriated C rations. As soon as we cranked for our departure, we received an urgent call. Major Williamson requested a Medevac at St George. There were injuries from the mortar fire. After another useless VR - hot this time, we decided to attempt the Medevac. I had an unauthorized free gun, but the pin that holds the pistol grip on fell out and rendered it useless. 1LT James Dugger was flying right seat that day. He was at the controls when we approached and landed in the Firebase from west to east. As soon as the dust settled, they started bringing out the wounded. Major Williamson appeared on the right side of the helicopter and stood on the toe of the skid while speaking into LT Dugger's microphone. He was pointing out NVA positions around us and advising the take off and direction to minimize enemy fire on our way out. We could hear a .51 cal banging away north of us and close by. I was attempting a safety wire repair on my gun during all of this, and we seemed to be on the ground forever. Napalm started hitting the tree line just to the east of us. I saw A1 Es making passes and felt better knowing TAC Air was on station. Just as we were about to take off, there was a sudden flash at the front of the aircraft with the chest-crushing concussion of an explosion. It set the helicopter back on the heels of the skids for a second, and produced a lot of white smoke. After a second it settled back down; I exited the helicopter and found Mr. Onofry semi-conscious, his head leaning on his shoulder, blindly groping for his seat belt release. I released it and helped him to the ground. It was pretty easy, since his door was blown off (as well as the nose of the aircraft). His left leg had multiple wounds below the knee and was badly broken. We hobbled to a bunker. I left him to check on LT Dugger, find Smitty and a radio, and retrieve the first aid kits and weapons from the helicopter. I found LT Dugger dead in his seat with a huge, through-and-through chest wound. The shrapnel had continued through his armored seat. I

next saw SP5 Craig lying next to the right skid with a serious head wound. He was still alive, but not for long. An ARVN Ranger appeared and helped me move them to a location between a conex and a bunker. That was all the time required for the FSB Vietnamese to strip all the weapons from the bird consisting of both door guns, three M16s and one CAR 15. I took LT Dugger's Colt 45 with me but left his dog tags and watch for some reason. I went looking for the commo bunker and found Major Williamson injured with a sucking chest wound. Then Smitty appeared. He helped me patch the hole in Major Williamson and then I found a PRC 25 radio. I guessed at a frequency-121.5 on VHF and started squawking using Major Williamson's call sign of 1-4 November. To my amazement I was immediately greeted with a reply from a FAC in the area with the call sign of Covey 7-8. I told him of our situation and the need to be extracted. He happened to be working the same area and was close enough to have a visual on the firebase. He told us to be cool and he would relay our situation to Pleiku. When I had located Major Williamson the incoming resumed. The mortars were falling like rain and the small arms sounded like a non-stop series of multiple strings of fire-crackers. We told the Major to stay put and we would be back for him. We left to go back to the bunker where I had placed Mr. Onofry. We ducked into a bunker on the opposite side because the fire was so intense. We found another American LT in this bunker named Charlie. When I got to Onofry's bunker I found another Major named Sullivan with a severe neck wound. Smitty had found and carried him there. He was very lucky, since his carotid artery was exposed but untouched. Although he had a golf-ball size trough through his neck and shoulder, he had minimal bleeding. FSB St George was a very small firebase so the incoming mortars were all very close. Dust and smoke constantly filled the inside of the bunker and the cordite hung in the air so thick it was hard to breathe. I got back to the bunker where Smitty and LT Charlie waited. We decided to gather everyone in the bunker



John Ross



Jeffrey Smith

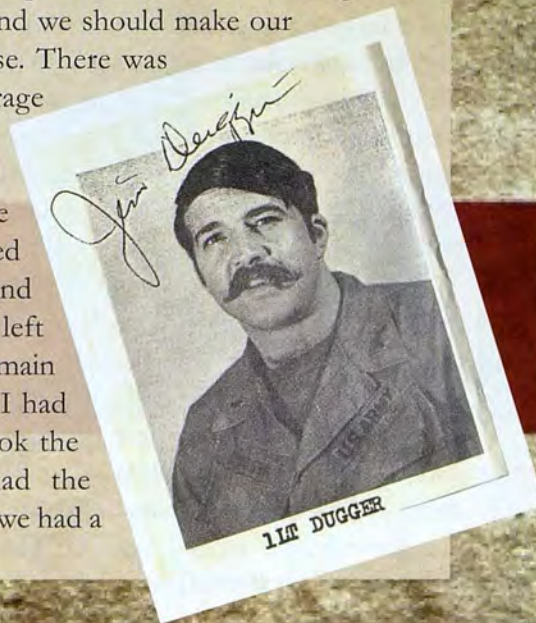
Onofry and Sullivan were using; but first, we had to get Major




Nick Harrington

Williamson. Just then, 122mm rockets started to come in. They made the mortars seem puny. The bunker we were in took a direct hit at the end away from us, killing several Ruff Puffs and sending shrapnel flying and bouncing around. We were lying flat on the floor and Smitty was cussing and swatting hot shrapnel that had landed on his back and butt. It opened up a large hole in the bunker and was closer to where we'd left Major Williamson. We crawled over what was left of the Ruff Puffs and made it down to his bunker finding it empty. We figured some of the Vietnamese must have taken him with them as they exited the firebase. This seemed to be the thing to do at this point, since it was obvious this place was in the process of being overrun. We made our way back to the bunker we had just left and retrieved the radio. The LT made the run across to Onofry and Williamson.

Their bunker was crammed with wounded Ruff Puffs; some with traumatic amputations. A radio message said help was on the way and we should make our way out of the firebase. There was one more intense barrage of mortars and rockets before we could leave. As soon as there was a lull, we gathered our people and gear and headed out. We left through the wide open main gate on the west side. I had Mr. Onofry. Smitty took the Major. LT Charlie had the radio and his M16 and we had a





wounded but ambulatory Ruff Puff tagging along. He was so bandaged up he looked like the old movie version of The Mummy. We finally made it out to the kill zone, some distance from the firebase, and laid down and hid in the grass. We couldn't believe the North Vietnamese hadn't seen us. The grass was only about knee high there. The NVA were in the kill zone around us finding and killing wounded Ruff Puffs hiding in the grass. We now heard the sound of helicopters in the distance which was music to our ears. We didn't know where all the NVA were or how close they were; so communication was pretty much at a whisper. Major Sullivan was in shock now and was starting to talk loudly and incoherently. Smitty was putting his hand over his mouth and telling him to shut the f—k up! Finally the Cobras appeared. We had given them our general location so they could wreak havoc; hopefully without killing us. I looked over at Hwy 14 which was just about 75 yards or more to our west and saw about a company-size unit double timing up the road from south to north. At first, I thought they were ARVNs from Phu Nohn and almost sat up to wave at them. Fortunately, I noticed the pith helmets and weapons and stayed put. The Cobras suddenly appeared and scattered them into the trees on the far west side across the road. They started raking the area around us with minigun and 40mm fire. As they made their pass, the NVA were also getting up out of the grass and running for the tree line to our west. The .51 just a couple hundred yards to our north was banging away at the Cobras along with what sounded like a thousand other small arms. It was suddenly so loud we were yelling into the radio. There were still a large number of mortars and rockets impacting in the firebase right behind us. If they knew what we did, they would have saved their ammo as I'm pretty sure we were the last ones out except for those too severely wounded to leave.

The Cobras stayed on station and kept them off of us for quite a while. What we really wanted to see was a Huey. The Cobras were good for taking the fight to the NVA but not doing us much good for a ride out of there. The first fire team was on station until they expended their ammo. There was only a short pause as they left to rearm/refuel before the next fire team arrived. The quiet during that pause was deafening. We definitely didn't want to find ourselves lying in that grass after dark. Once the second team arrived, it seemed like the world was on fire again. The Cobras were making runs all around the

area, including the other side of the firebase to the east and up to the north. There was no breeze, and the pink dust from the flechette rockets turned the sky pink. They nailed down the location of the .51 caliber and made a run at it. Flying NOE (Nap of the Earth) from south to north they were headed directly at us. We happened to be located between them and that gun. They fired their rockets, both H.E. and flechettes, as they passed over us. I remember what a sight it was to see them launch and almost look like they were coming for us. At the same time, the tracers from the .51 were flying in the opposite direction right over us at the approaching Cobras. The rockets flew over us and the flechettes burst right over us. That was immediately followed by the fluorescent hose of tracers from the mini guns, again right over us. The Cobras zoomed over us and made hard turns for another run but that gun would not be heard again. They flew off for a short time that seemed like forever. It was very quiet again. We couldn't even hear a helicopter.

The NVA were blowing whistles in the distance. Eventually a radio message told us of an attempt to get us. We could hear the rotor blades in the distance. It's funny how your ears get so attuned to a sound like that. Anybody who has ever been so exposed to helicopters can tell just by sound, if they are straight and level, coming toward you, flying perpendicular to your line of sight, or in a turn... even whether it is a lazy or a hard turn. This was exactly what we wanted to hear. We saw nothing, because everything was done at an altitude that barely qualified as flight. Yet, beyond the trees to our west we could hear it was headed straight for us. We were very excited now! I just hoped they could make it in and we could get on it and get out-without getting shot down or killed while getting on. We rose to our knees and had determined who would help the wounded when we heard a dreaded sound. The blade pop told us they were in a hard turn before we even saw them. Something about that scared me more than anything so far. Somebody said we're screwed. I think it was me that said: "Bullshit they aren't going to leave our asses out here." Maybe I was simply too scared to think anything else. Soon, however, we heard the good sound again. This time it got louder and louder until the most beautiful thing any of us had ever seen appeared. A Huey cleared the trees with a Cobra on each side and off to the rear for cover. The Huey was on the hottest approach I'd ever seen and went into a flare and landed just south of us about fifty yards away. They didn't know our exact location. The tail stinger touched first with

probably forty knots of forward speed and dragged for a short distance before the skids hit the ground. Still with forward speed it bounced to a stop. We grabbed our people and headed out. The Cobras circled, always with one pointed in our general direction to kill any threat that exposed itself, but were extremely exposed themselves. We hobbled and hopped across the open ground to the helicopter's left side door. Fulton Holmes, the Crew Chief had his gun up and was yelling at us to hurry up. I saw it was Mr. Clover in the left seat and felt even better.

CW2 Rich Clover was one of, if not the best, experienced Huey pilots in the Company and on his second tour. LT Charlie and the very ambulatory Ruff Puff Mummy made it to the bird first. Onofry and I were next. I ran him into the door and somehow got him inside but lost my balance and was stuck leaning in. Smitty and his Major arrived right behind us. Smitty grabbed me by my waist band and threw me in like a rag doll, then threw his Major in and jumped in himself. I didn't recognize the Peter Pilot. His head was turned looking at us and his eyes were the size of dinner plates. He was looking at me and I started screaming to go. Mr. Clover jerked it off the ground and dropped the nose to about a 45 degree angle and we roared out of there without taking a single hit. No small thing to me, as I learned later, that Rich Clover jumped on the chance to pull our fat out of the fire with an eight-month, three-week pregnant wife back home. Landing in a large open area and sitting on the ground for that long and in range of that many NVA had to be as dangerous as any extraction to have ever ended in success. It certainly wouldn't

have ended well if the Cougars hadn't had them off balance. It turned out the right seat Peter Pilot on that bird was Lt. Bill Baxter who was on his first orientation flight in country, welcome to the 57th Bill!

The NVA walked into the firebase that night but didn't keep it for long. It took a week to re-secure the area enough to recover the bodies of LT Dugger and SP5 Craig and the helicopter. An E.O.D. team had to be called in, as

the bodies and the helicopter were all booby-trapped. We also learned LT Dugger's watch was found on the wrist of an NVA troop our guys killed while retaking the area. This pleased me very much. LT Dugger and SP5 Craig's bodies were desecrated by the NVA that found them in the firebase. I think there is a good chance the NVA troop that had his watch had something to do with that. I don't know how he was killed but I can only hope it was with flechettes and hurt like hell.

There are conflicting stories about how Major

Williamson got out. I

don't know how, but am thankful he did. I know I was at the 67th EVAC hospital until at least early evening and didn't see him. I also went back to visit Mr. Onofry every day until he was stable enough to be sent home and didn't see him there. I ran into Major Williamson a month or so later in the Ban Don area but we didn't talk about how he got out except some of the Ruff Puffs or ARVNs in the firebase helped him. We just agreed we were glad we made it, and he gave me an NVA flag.

Continued on page 38



57th AHC Reunion: Left to Right - Ben Hek, Fred Wasner, John Ross, Fulton Holmes, Bruce Kilian, Sid Chambers, Rich Clover, Gary Onofry, Mike Kuruzar, Jim Orahoad and Bob Wilson.



ILT Dugger's seat

~ From the Editor ~

I never fully appreciated the phrase: "No good deed goes unpunished." Recently, however, a situation that fit the quote occurred. There was timely input from all of the sources (advertisers, chapters, HQ, reunion posts, and the various committees) for our last issue. The articles had been edited well in advance; and Kay did a great job of assembling all of the content without delay. It appeared that an on time mailing was assured and there was the possibility of an earlier date. Then... the commercial shipper lost the magazines for over a week!

On the other hand, there is some very good news concerning the Aviator. Shortly after Bob Hesselbein asked for volunteers to assist with the various VHPA functions, Tom Hirschler offered his services. I answered his email in less than two minutes and assured him the Aviator was the activity for him. This was the administrative equivalent of calling "shotgun!" I hope the other folks find some volunteers.

Tom is a retired CW4 with twenty-three years of service, including two tours in Vietnam. He flew Chinooks, and became a Chinook IP as well as an IFE. He is retired from his civilian career with Boeing -and I could not have scripted this - was the Editor for the Boeing 747 flight manual! Tom is eminently qualified to join the team. Accordingly, the masthead now lists Tom as the Associate Editor. I have included a short article by Tom in this issue. It describes an interesting event... and it serves as proof that many editors can also write.

Years from now we may be down to an editor and one member (probably Mike Law). The cover will say "Sorry Mike no Reunion this year" and "Taps pages 2 to 47". Before then, we have many stories to print. The Aviator contains many areas of interest, but the stories of both shared and diverse experiences are what truly connect us. It has been a while (certainly not in my recall) since we have discussed the process of submitting stories and their disposition. Incidentally, for a number of reasons, the publishing date is not always predicated on the submission date.

One may submit a story in almost any format short of an 'Etch a Sketch'. Short poems, jokes and brief narratives may be part of an email. Longer pieces are best suited for a MS Word document or even a Mac/Windows plain text format. Adobe files look nice, yet they must be 'deconstructed' for the layout, creating additional work. Pictures are important. They need captions and should not be placed into the text; because they must be removed, again, creating additional work.

The editing process obviously checks the spelling and corrects grammatical errors; it is also designed to condense articles for the purpose of saving space. One additional consideration is the fact wives, and children/grandchildren may not appreciate the 'O Club' version. It also provides, as needed, some ghost writing to polish the story. The author is afforded the opportunity

to inspect the edited version to verify accuracy and inclusion of all essential elements. No one knows if your story had a single typo or was completely reworked. The author's name is the only credit used.

It is inevitable some readers will have a different recall of a certain event(s), particularly as the writer attempts to reconstruct a day from fifty years ago. The editors are not fact checkers in the strictest sense. We are unable to verify the activities of a small unit or a single aircraft. The fact that Fire Base X was actually twenty miles from the airfield instead of fifteen is typically not crucial to the narrative. Of course, if someone wrote that Jane Fonda organized the Donut Dolly program, we would disagree.

When asked, we will gladly suggest a title if the author hasn't decided on one. There are times when a title doesn't create an attraction to a story. Consider these options: "Our Combat Assault Met With Enemy Resistance" or, "We Approached Through a Hail Storm of Automatic Weapon Fire"

We welcome your questions about the above process and will assist you to the best of our ability. Please note contact email information on the masthead and my additional information in the online Membership Directory.

Tom Kirk

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UPCOMING REUNIONS

26th Annual Reunion of the OV-1 Mohawk Association

Oct. 1st – 3rd, Crowne Plaza Hotel

2270 Circle Dr. N, San Diego, CA, 92108
(619) 297-1101

POC: John Bosch,
25302 Northrup Drive, Laguna Hills CA 92653
jbcrete@cox.net
H (949) 859-3560, C (949) 290-2748

Combat helicopter Pilots Association

Sep. 24th – 27th

Indianapolis, IN

To register: log on to www.chpa-us.org and follow links

Contact for question s/details Jay Brown
(800) -832-5144 HQ@chpa-us.org

132nd 'Hercules' and 178th 'Boxcars' reunion

Sep. 9th – 13th Wyndam Garden Riverwalk
103 9th Street

San Antonio, TX (210) 515-4555 -reserve by Aug 26th
Room rate: \$110.00 + tax – Mention Boxcar , Hercules reunion

www.wyndham.com/hotels/texas/san-antonio/wyndham-garden-san-antonio/hotel-overview

Address questions to Bill McCrae (Hercules 18 70-71)

www.132ASHC.org
Cell (770) -843-3973

Company "C" of the 158th Aviation Battalion, 101st Airborne Division, callsign-"Phoenix" and the 273rd TC Detachment will be holding a reunion on **August 7-9, 2015** in Omaha, Nebraska. All former unit members and friends are invited to this event. Full details at www.phoenix158.org. POC is Pat McKeany (mckeany@gmail.com)

US Air Force Air Rescue Association reunion

Oct. 18th – 20th, San Diego, CA

Group website: <http://airrescueassn.org>

POC: Al Gailey ARA Dir. Public Relations

1591 Pine Lakes Ranch Drive
Cascade, Idaho 83611

Tel. (208)382-6395 (208)-630-3509

Email: cagailey@yahoo.com

Addnl. Contacts: Ken Pribyla, ARA Pres, (703)328-2835
or Debbie Floyd, (206)-715-6636

US Army Black Aviation Association

Convocating with the VHPA Nation Reunion

Marriot Wardman Park

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Register at www.usabaa.info

Call (888) 606-3700

Register at www.usabaa.info Call: 888.606.3700

2660 Woodley Road, N.W., Washington, DC 20008

US Army Reunion

7th Squadron 1st Air Cavalry Regiment Blackhawks

August 26-30, 2015

Sacramento, Ca.

Fred Young

(530) 674-8091

wyfly99s@comcast.net



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OV-1 MOHAWK ASSOCIATION

For More Information:

Contact

John Bosch
25302 Northrup Drive
Laguna Hills, CA 92653
Jbcrete2@cox.net
H (949) 859-3560
C (949) 290-2748

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San Diego, CA

Location:

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(619) 297-1101

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57TH ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

12th Biennial Reunion



57th AHC

August 28-30, 2015

Cliffs Resort, Possum Kingdom Lake, TX

Detailed Reunion information go to

www.57thahc.com

and click on Reunion Tab
in upper right hand corner.

Jim McKenzie ~ Reunion Chairman

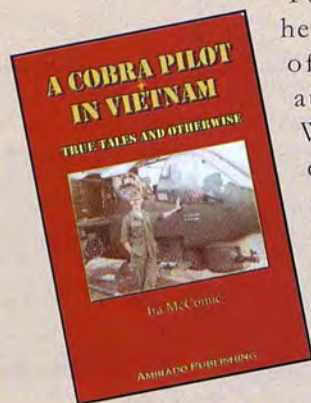
817-821-4070

Want to see your Reunion listed here? *Send details to: Aviator@VHPA.org*

MEMBERS - HAVE A BOOK FOR JOHN TO REVIEW?
CONTACT HIM AT: BOOKREVIEWS@VHPA.ORG

A COBRA PILOT IN VIETNAM by Ira McComie is a memoir of his time as a Cobra pilot in RVN with the 235th AWC, in 68-69. A farm boy from Climax, Texas, McComie often looked to the sky and read books like *Eight Hours to Solo*. Four years at Texas Tech had not yet resulted in a degree. The Navy almost got him but on a whim he visited an Army recruiting office. The savvy recruiter took quick note of his flying interest and artfully set the bait.

McComie was soon on his way to what he refers to as "Fort Polk Purgatory" where he learned the essential skills of high stepping through automobile tires. At Ft. Wolters, TAC officers rendered the WOCs their usual tender love and care and flight instructors introduced them to the mysteries of helicopter flight. "Mother Rucker" was next, where upon gradua-



tion and a wedding, he headed for Cobra Hall – next stop Vietnam.

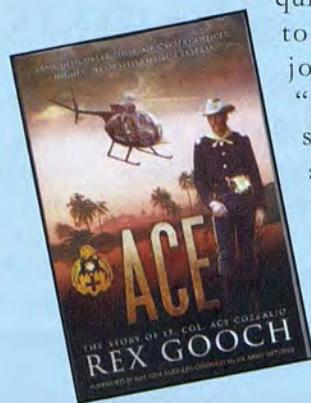
Bien Hoa in August 1968 was his first stop in-country followed by a rough ride in an Air Force Caribou to join up with the Delta Devils of the 235th AWC, at Can Tho. He needed to learn a lot, quickly. The AO of the 235th covered the Mekong Delta providing day and night gunship support for the "Brown Water Navy," SEAL team operations, VNAF helicopters, ARVN, RF-PFs, medivac and resupply ops, and instant reaction fire teams.

McComie has done a fabulous job narrating his journey from farm boy, WOC, FNG, bullet catcher, to skilled Cobra Fire Team Leader in Vietnam interspersed with ample dry humor, for a wonderful read.

A Cobra Pilot in Vietnam: True Tales and Otherwise (296 pages, \$14.95 paperback) by Ira McComie, ISBN 978-0988757448, is available by order from your local book store, Amazon, or other book suppliers

ACE, by VHPA Member Rex Gooch, is a biography of Ace Cozzalio who served in RVN with D/3/5 CAV (Lighthorse) in 67-69, call sign Warwagon 10/Crusader 36. Cozzalio was a confident and fearless OH-6 and Cobra pilot who led by example in the fight against the Viet Cong in the Mekong Delta during his 18 months of service in Vietnam.

Raised on his family's ranch on the California/Oregon border, he enlisted in the Army in 1966. At Basic Training he was offered and accepted an OCS slot at Ft. Knox. Flight school was next and quickly followed by a journey to Bear Cat, RVN where he joined D/3/5 CAV aka the "Bastard Cav" due to its standalone status. To call it an exciting tour of duty is a significant understatement.



First of all, Cozzalio didn't join D Troop – D Troop joined him. He brought back the traditions of the

5th Cavalry in the 1860s including the distinctive yellow scarf and white Cav hat. With his bold and charismatic personality he inspired confidence and trust; qualities a helicopter unit in combat requires in a leader. He was often in the thick of the fight, flying low-level scout missions or covering the scouts and ground forces in a Cobra. All in all, he was shot down six times and received every award for valor except the MOH.

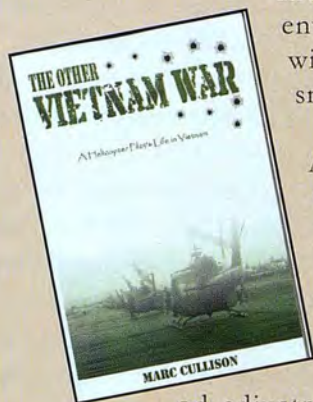
Sadly, Cozzalio passed away in 1993 after a full career of service to his country. Rex Gooch who served with C/3/17 CAV did meticulous research and interviewed many who knew and served with Cozzalio in order to bring us this story of extraordinary service from one of our departed VHPA members to print. It is a remarkable story.

ACE: The Story of Lt. Col. Ace Cozzalio (292 pages, \$15.95 paperback, \$8.99 Kindle) by Rex Gooch, ISBN 978-1508642466 is available by order from your local book store, Amazon, or other book suppliers.

By VHPA Life Member: JOHN PENNY



The Other Vietnam War by Marc Cullison is a very intense and personal memoir of his service in 1971 with the 129th AHC. Cullison received an Architectural Engineering degree from Oklahoma State University, a commission in the Army Corps of Engineers, and headed for Vietnam after completing flight school with Class 70-40. He and several other FNG's soon flew from Travis AFB to Tan Son Nhut entering the new and strange environment of RVN replete with heat, humidity, and new smells.



Assigned to the 129th AHC, Cullison was packed into a C-130 to Tuy Hoa and then a Huey ride to Lane AHB – his new home. Like all new members of a unit in Vietnam there was a period adjustment; an initiation into the routines of an aviation unit in combat. Flying skills were judged, critiqued, and corrected as need be.

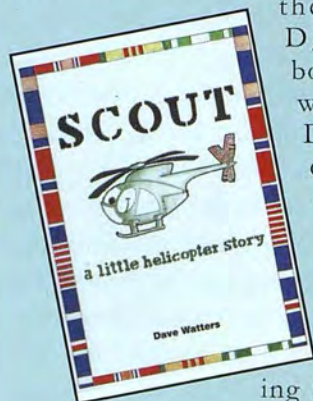
Unit attention fell heavily on FNGs like Cullison, to see if they would screw up.

Many of the missions Cullison flew for the 129th were supplying the ROK troops of the Tiger Division at outposts in the mountainous terrain to the west of Lane AHB with their much needed replacements especially, food, and ammo. The mountains were not Vietnam's highest, but unpredictable winds often made for treacherous landings.

Cullison shares descriptions of his missions, the extra duties that fell to him as a junior RLO in a helicopter unit, and his personal fears in a strange land and a war that seemed destined to go on indefinitely. Coming home did not erase the memory of those fears. Cullison has done an excellent job of writing this very insightful and personal story.

The Other Vietnam War: A Helicopter Pilot's Life in Vietnam (288 pages, \$11.99 paperback, \$3.99 Kindle) by Marc Cullison, ISBN 978-0990846536, is available by order from your local book store, Amazon, or other book suppliers.

SCOUT is a delightful story for young children by VHPA Life Member Dave Watters, who served with the 199th LIB in 68-69 and D/1/1 CAV in 71-72. The



book came about after Watters was asked to give a Veterans Day talk to a kindergarten class. Well, kindergarteners can be a tough audience and a thorough search for appropriate materials, even with his library assistant wife's help turned up very little. So, Watters set about writing his own story characterizing the service and cooperation of the helicopter

pilots in Vietnam in terms young children can understand: working together.

The back of the book contains pages depicting the Army helicopters flown in Vietnam which may be copied and colored by children, young and old. These pages also provide members a way to personalize the book for family with pictures of their helicopters or themselves. I trust you will all enjoy this story.

Scout: a little helicopter story by Dave Watters (23 pages with drawings and pages for coloring, \$16.00, hardcover) ISBN 978-1570878398 - Limited copies of Scout are available directly from the author – email Dave at: rotorblueh2o@aol.com

November 27, 1968, is my Day of Infamy©

Revised: 11/20/2014

The following is an extract from a statement that I wrote in 2003 with additional clarifying information from Tom Tesmar, flight lead, and Ron Hopkins, aircraft commander/check pilot, and Jim Gaffney, Crusader Six, company commander for the 187th Assault Helicopter Company and air mission commander.

November 27, 1968, is my Day of Infamy. It was the day before Thanksgiving, 1968. On that day, I flew 15 hours and 45 minutes. I was being checked out as a new Fire Team leader for the Rat Pack, our gun platoon for the 187th Assault Helicopter Company based in Tay Ninh, Vietnam. I was recently assigned as the assistant platoon leader (Rat Pack 5), but as most know, you have to earn your position. Rank has no privilege in the air. In a gun platoon, the Fire Team leader directs his team, and helps direct the slick platoon flight. Our experienced Fire Team leaders were getting ready to rotate back to the states and I was being "expedited." I had been flying flight lead for many months, so getting the hang of Fire Team leader was not too difficult. It was just a different aircraft with a different view.

That day, as a Fire Team leader flying a C-model gunship, I flew out to meet the flight of nine troop-carrying slicks and led them into the landing zone (LZ). I was approximately half a mile in front of the flight, laying smoke grenades to mark the flight's touchdown position in the LZ. After my crew tossed the yellow marker smokes, I made a hard break to the left to take up my race-track position with the other two gunships of a heavy Fire Team. We would provide suppressive fire during the flight's landing and debarking. The LZ was heavily prepped with artillery and six 500 pound high explosive bombs before I led the flight in. I was less than a quarter mile out on my approach when the last 8-inch artillery rounds impacted. I received no hostile fire.

Rotating duties, I turned the aircraft over to my co-pilot/check-pilot, CW2 Jim Souders, to get prepared for our first rocket run. I had been in the gun platoon for only a few weeks and my attention was out my right door watching the flight - particularly the last group of aircraft. It was the 1st platoon.

I had been 1st platoon's section leader, and then platoon leader for the last seven months. After months of flying together, the 1st platoon Aircraft Commanders had grown close. As a flight team, we prided ourselves on flying tight formations that moved as one. Bob Trezona was the Aircraft Commander on the trail ship. I was watching

him especially. I loved flying with Bob. He was an outstanding "pilot's pilot." He was training a new lieutenant and section leader, Tom Pienta, in formation flight. This put them at the rear of the formation. Their aircraft was not as close to the formation as it should have been. They were in an extremely vulnerable position: a sitting duck. I remember thinking "Tuck it up, Bob."

While the flight was on short final, all hell broke loose. The LZ was hot with automatic and machine gun fire. Just as Souders was ready to nose over and start his rocket run, the radios erupted from formation pilots announcing "receiving fire!" The fire was from all directions. Approximately 100 feet off the ground, "trail" was hit in the fuel cell by a RPG (rocket propelled grenade). The aircraft looked completely engulfed in an orange ball of flame and was falling out of the sky.

As reported later from unclassified after-action reports, we had landed in the middle of a meticulously planned ambush of North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Regulars.

A common adage, but religiously adhered to by the 187th is "nobody is left behind." Someone had to extract our survivors.

While under intense enemy fire, both severely burned pilots and the Gunner were recovered by CW2 Ron Timberlake, my partner since flight school. The Crew Chief, James Brady, was killed in the explosion. Timberlake was shot down on the recovery take-off, but landed in a field far enough away from the action for others to complete their safe extraction.

Ron received the Silver Star for his heroism. Trezona and Pienta's day was over; my and the rest of the crew's day had just begun. By mid-afternoon, CW2 Souders had to return to base for non-combat related medical reasons and was replaced by CW2 Ron Hopkins, also a "short-timer". For maintenance reasons, we would go through two more gunships before we called it a day. Flying in three aircraft, we never took an enemy hit.

For the rest of the day, we continued to provide covering fire for additional troop reinforcement landings and suppressive fire for the troops already on the ground. Each insertion was "hot." Late in the evening one of our ships was loaded with thirty parachute flares to provide night illumination for the reinforcing ground troops. Due to combat injuries, the 187th was short on crews; and the most experienced flare ship pilot, Tom Tesmar, was flying flight lead that day. Allen Duneman, Tesmar's roommate, would be the flare ship commander; his co-pilot, Lt. August Ritzau, returned to fly after being treated for

shrapnel wounds to the hand during the initial insertion. In a combat situation, though everyone says they would not want to be there, when the bell rang it was usually a dog fight to see who got to fly. This day maybe changed that desire forever.

As I was taking off after refueling and rearming, I heard a desperation call from the flare ship. A flare had gone off at the bottom of the stack. At two million candle power each, it is completely impossible to see anything including your instruments. It would be like trying to fly through the sun. Flares are magnesium-based and generate their own oxygen; they cannot be extinguished once lit.

Allen was screaming over the radio for help. As I broke out of refueling and reestablished radio contact I heard Allen call out, "Someone give me my altitude!" The flares were stored directly above the fuel cell and Allen was nose diving his helicopter to the ground before the flares burned though the floor board (a magnesium aluminum composite) and exploded the fuel. Duneman needed audible flight direction, altitude, air speed or anything that could be of help.

There was nothing anyone could do. Diving at 145 knots from 3500 feet, it would be over in a matter of seconds. The other flares started going off. Climbing in the air through 500 feet, I could see their glow, like a huge shooting star, from fifteen kilometers away. Finally, someone yelled over the radio "400 feet! ...pull up ... PULL UP!" They impacted at a 45 degree angle, killing all on board. The radio silence afterward was surreal. Finally someone uttered, "F**k this s**t!" and all radios remained eerily silent. Everyone was in a state of shock. Life as we knew it was sucked out of all of us that day.

A few minutes later, the lifeless radio silence was broken by Hawk Six, the 1st Aviation Brigade commander. The general had flown up from Long Binh when told of what was happening. Breaking protocol, Hawk Six called the flight lead directly, "Crusader lead, take them home; you are done for tonight." Of the two key players that day, Tesmar had just seen his roommate killed; Timberlake saw his roommate burned beyond recognition. Everyone was ready to go home ... all the way home.

At midnight, the beginning of Thanksgiving, Crusader Six, Major Jim Gaffney, our company commander called me while we were shutting down. He had been directing the company flight operations all day. Though I can't remember the exact words, it was something like this, "Those were the worst 16 hours in my life." I acknowledged with, "And 15:45 for me." I had gone through three aircraft and two co-pilots. Virtually every ship in the unit was damaged or flown beyond its limits. Six crewmembers were killed; more than twenty were wounded. Our company commander

lost the effectiveness of his aviation unit. There were only three aircraft certified flyable for the next day, not to mention the lack of crew availability. Our unit did not fly for three days. Worse yet, the modification work order giving instructions on how to affix a container of flares to the outside of the helicopter was still unread in the maintenance office inbox. This would have allowed the jettison of all flares.

The infantry unit we inserted was decimated. According to the unclassified after-action report, they sustained 27 KIA and almost 60 wounded. All day we flew cover for our own aircraft which were providing insertions and medical extractions, as unarmed Medevacs were not allowed to land in a hot LZ. "No one left behind" - someone had to do it.

On Thanksgiving Day the company commander, Timberlake, platoon sergeants and I flew one of the remaining helicopters to the evacuation hospital in Saigon. We went to check on the two burned pilots and gunner. [Gaffney to this day does not remember the trip, and he flew the helicopter] By the time we got there, the post-burn edema for the three had already started.

The swelling was so severe their throats were closing and they were on respirators. It was getting grotesque. Bob, who was always thin as a rail had swollen to three times his normal size. He looked like a darkened watermelon at harvest. Both pilots had 3rd degree burns over 50% of their bodies and would suffer greatly over the ensuing months and years. Neither was expected to live. Both did survive, however, though each was tremendously scarred both physically and emotionally.

Their story can be found listed as a link at the end of this story, Trial By Fire, by Tom Pienta. His story was the feature article and cover story in the December 1996 issue of Vietnam Magazine. Everybody that I knew in Vietnam, some that I loved as my brothers, and many that I had personally trained were either wounded or killed that day. Though I flew all day long and covered virtually every insertion, extraction, and medical recovery, my aircraft was never hit by hostile fire. The NVA were so fortified, we never saw them.

To be completely incapable of assisting while watching friends and troops die is one of the most helpless, frustrating, and anger inducing feelings that one can experience. It might have been easier to deal with had the enemy been focused on the gun teams as they usually did. Their intent that day was to execute mayhem on the ground troops. It was as we were never there.

After forty six years, I am still learning to deal with this day and subsequent operations from two years and 2,000 combat hours. Novembers are particularly hard, especially when Thanksgiving falls in the last week of the month.

A person is never really gone until no one remembers them anymore; I will never forget.

Below are some supporting links and a book giving other people's perspectives from this day. Everyone remembers things differently, especially in crisis situations. No one is lying; it is a matter of perspective and maybe what they want to remember or the way they wanted it to be.

At a reunion in 1997, three of us from the gun team were sitting around a table with my wife as an innocent bystander. To my wife, what was discussed at that table sounded like three different stories from three different events leaving us all thinking, "Was I even there?"

Pat Dougan, Crusader 16

E-Mail: [REDACTED]

Jim Gaffney, Crusader 6

<http://www.187thahc.net/Stories/blackwednesday.htm>

John Broome, my crew chief that day

<http://www.187thahc.net/Stories/thanksgiving1968.htm>

Shannon Tilton (son of a Manchu) third party account

http://www.187thahc.net/Stories/Manchu_thanks_68.htm

Tom Tesmar, flight lead, his book on the day and follow up

Crusader 23, I'd Rather Be Lucky Than Good"

at www.blurb.com

Tom Pienta, co-pilot

<http://www.187thahc.net/stories/trialbyfirestory.htm>

By Joseph P Dougan, Crusader 16



The Cub Inn is a 5,000-square-foot log cabin that offers unique charm that blends our love of aviation with the great outdoors. Located in California's Sierra Nevada mountains just 25 miles from Yosemite National Park, our five guest rooms sleep either two or four people, and they all feature a private bath.

Our guests start each day with a hearty country breakfast and are also invited to join us in the living room each evening to enjoy a glass of wine and a light snack. The Cub Inn is the life-long dream of husband and wife team, Piper Cub owner and pilot Charleen Beam and VHPA Life Member Joe Riley.

Full details and booking information are available on our website:
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Or call us at: 209-962-0403
(land line) to book.

Book Now for Summer



Last scramble of the 57th, Continued from page 31

This is my long-winded way of saying thanks to all the people responsible on that day for my extra forty-two years of life. I think I also speak for Gary Onofry, Lt. Charlie, Major Sullivan and the unknown Ruff Puff. I can say the same for Smitty, except for the number of years. Smitty passed away in 2001. He never really recovered from that day. He changed immediately, drank a lot, refused to fly anymore and became hostile easily. I was in touch with his mother after he died. She told me he would sit outside at a picnic table drinking and reliving his Vietnam experiences. One night he just died at that table. Jeff Smith is one of the many 57th casualties that you will not see on The Wall.

The real reason for sitting down and writing this is because I'm happy for Ben Hek. A man I am very lucky to know and proud to call a friend (and still be in touch with), was finally recognized for his part in our successful rescue that day. It should also be noted Lt Dugger was Ben's roommate which made that day even more difficult for him. After forty-two years, he received the Distinguished Flying Cross at a reunion in Batavia NY. It was presented by retired Lt. General Bob Wilson, who was also a pilot in the 57th. I was later told Ben was in one of the Cobras that flew right down the throat of that .51, in what was essentially a duel. It was banging away at them as they were running on it which made them pretty good targets-luckily Cobras: 1, .51 Cal: 0. He was also lurking around waiting for us to board the Huey; making himself a great target. This was in addition to the exposure during the entire time on station. Our extraction wasn't the end of the day for them either. They bounced back and forth between rearm and refuel and the St. George area until well after dark. We later found out that tiny firebase was surrounded by a regiment of NVA. Congrats Ben and it's about time... and thanks again.

I am also very lucky to still be in touch with and call friends, Gary Onofry, Rich Clover and Fulton Holmes among quite a few others from our time in the 57th.

Authors note: My bird, -841 was the last helicopter to be lost to hostile fire in the 57th Assault Helicopter Company. LT Dugger the last man killed in that unit, and the 57th was the last Assault Helicopter Co. to stand down in Vietnam. Ironically, Firebase St. George was not too far from LZ X-Ray, the site of the first major battle of the Vietnam War chronicled in the book (also made into a movie) *They Were Soldiers once, And Young* by Gen Hal Moore and Joe Galloway.

Specialist 4 John Ross CE 70-15841

Postscript: Specialist 4s John Ross and Jeff Smith both received Silver Stars for their actions on the ground that day.

TAPS

Biggs, Richard USA
Flight Class: 58-2
Callsign: Flipper
RVN: 67 196 ASHC

Richard Biggs (Ret. No rank noted)) passed away peacefully the morning of June 3, 2015.



He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Regina (Goffinet); one daughter, three sons, eleven grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. He retired after 23 years in the Army. He served as part of the German Occupation, was wounded in Korea and flew helicopters in Vietnam. He was awarded the Purple Heart, Legion of Merit and Distinguished Flying Cross, and was a past commander of the VFW. The family asks that anyone wishing to donate in memoriam do so with a gift to the Wounded Warrior Project.

Bradford, Don C. Jr. USA
Flight Class: 66-17
RVN: 67-68 189 AHC,
70 25 INF, 70-71 BDE 5
MECH INF
Callsigns-Ghostrider, Batman



Don C. Bradford Jr., passed away on Feb. 24, 2015, at his home in Anchorage, Alaska, exactly one year after being diagnosed with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease). Don was born in Ft. Jackson, S.C., on Nov. 2, 1944, to Don and Beatrice Bradford. As a teenager, while his father was stationed in Alaska, Don joined the Army. He became an instructor pilot and flew helicopters in Vietnam and with the Alaska Army National Guard. After Vietnam, he returned to Alaska with his young family, where he taught them to share his love of hunting, fishing and camping. Working as a life insurance agent, he eventually opened his own business traveling throughout the bush areas of Alaska helping educators and non-profit employees with retirement planning. Don made it a point to have and enjoy a full life. He loved reading, golf and spending time with his grandkids, frequently taking them with him as he traveled the world over. He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Judy Bradford; his 3 children; 12 grandchildren; 1 great-grandson and 3 siblings. The family asks that if you wish to, please donate to the ALS Association, preferably the Evergreen Chapter.

Burton, Lawrence, E. USMC
Flight Class: 39-54
RVN: 62-63 HMM-162

Lawrence E. Burton, and Brenda A. Burton, went to be with their Lord and Savior on May 8, 2015, as a result of a tragic automobile accident which occurred in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania.

Lawrence was born in Bath, Pa on May 2, 1934. He graduated from Haverling High School in 1952 and from Alfred State University in 1954. He entered the Naval Air Cadet program in 1954. In 1955, he received his naval wings and officers' commission. He was a Marine helicopter pilot who flew an astounding 634 missions in Vietnam and was shot down twice during his service to his country. Larry earned countless service medals, among them the Medal of Valor and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with the Silver Star. Afterwards, he spent two years instructing helicopter pilots. With an honorable discharge, he returned to Bath in 1970. He then worked for Steuben County as the Supervisor of the Support Collections Unit and retired in 1995. Larry was a lifelong member of the Bath American Legion, and of the First Presbyterian Church of Bath and loved taking care of his church and church family, serving in many leadership positions throughout the years. Brenda was born in Bath on May 23, 1941. She graduated from Haverling High School in 1959. Brenda and Larry were happily married on April 8, 1972.

They are lovingly survived; by Larry's brother, Brenda's sister, four daughters, two sons and, many grandchildren and great grandchildren. Donations can be made to the First Presbyterian Church of Bath, the Bath American Legion, or to the St. Labre Indian School in Montana.

Cesar, James M. USA
Flight Class: 70-34
RVN: 71 57 AHC
Callsign: Cougar 36

James Michael Caesar, LCOL (Ret.) 68, of Mill Creek, Washington passed peacefully in his sleep on the night of February 13, 2014 while on vacation in Kauai, Hawaii.



He was born on December 11, 1945. Jim grew up in Lakewood, Washington and graduated from Arlington High School in 1964, and married Betsy the following

year. After high school he enlisted in the United States Army and was recommended for Armor Officer Candidate School shortly thereafter. He accepted a commission with the U.S. Army in 1967 and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in 1989, completing nearly 24 years of honorable and exceptional performance.

He served two tours in Vietnam and was recognized for his service with numerous decorations including the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star Medal, and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry (unit citation). He also earned the Combat Infantryman Badge and the Senior Army Aviator Badge.

Following his military retirement, he worked for the Boeing Company as a senior personnel manager, later retiring from that position as well.

Jim was an extraordinary leader who touched many lives. He dedicated his life to his family and friends and relished every moment he spent with them. Jim is survived by his wife and best friend Elizabeth (Betsy); his three children and their spouses, six grandchildren two brothers and his parents

Cogdill, Jerry L. USA
Flight Class: 67-1/66-23
RVN: 67-68 A/1/9 CAV 1 CAV
70-71 B/228 AVN 1 CAV
Callsign: Apache 18

Jerry L Cogdill, MAJ (Ret.) born August 5, 1943 in Fort Worth, Texas, to Raymond Burton and Lula Lee Cogdill, died on September 27, 2014. Jerry was raised in Granbury and graduated from Granbury High School in 1961.

Before joining the United States Army in 1966, Jerry worked for Southwestern Bell Telephone Company in Dallas, Texas. Jerry graduated from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University in 1979, with a degree in Professional Aeronautics. In 1966 Jerry joined the U.S. Army as a Private, was promoted to Warrant Officer and retired as a Major from the U.S. Army Reserves in 1989, having served his country 23 years. During his military career Jerry served as a helicopter pilot instructor at Fort Wolters in Mineral Wells, Texas. He then served two tours of duty in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot: 1967-1968. Jerry flew the OH 13, as well as the UH1C Gunship with A Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, and 1st Cavalry Division. In 1970-1971 Jerry flew

the Chinook CH 47 with B Company, 228th Aviation Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division. Jerry received numerous Citations for his leadership capabilities. Jerry worked for General Dynamics/Lockheed Martin and BAE Systems, a career which spanned 25 years, where his knowledge of the F16 Fighting Falcon Jet was invaluable.

He was laid to rest in Georges Creek Cemetery in Somervell County. Jerry was preceded in death by an infant brother, mother, father and sister. Jerry is survived by his wife, Barbara Lee Cogdill of 23 years; one son, three daughters, eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, his brother and sister.

Cope, Alfred L. USN
RVN: 65 HS-4, 66-67 HA(L)-3
70-72 HC-7

Callsign: Seawolf/Seadevil

Alfred Cope, LCDR USN (ret.) died on March 24, 2015. He served in the Navy for 24 years, beginning as an enlisted man. In addition to his submarine service, he spent 3 tours in Vietnam. He retired in 1982 and performed substitute teaching at his children's High School. He is survived by his wife Cherry; 4 children, 7 grandchildren, a sister and a brother.

Doty, Neil C. USA
Flight Class: 70-8
RVN: 70-71
C/158 AVN 101 ABN
Callsign: Phoenix 26



Neil C. "Chuck" Doty, 68, of Aberdeen, MD, formerly of Endwell, passed away on May 30, 2015. Chuck is survived by his wife, Dianne Taylor Doty; a son, 4 stepsons; 9 grandchildren, and two sisters. A 1965 graduate of Maine Endwell High School and a veteran of the Vietnam War, he served as a helicopter pilot and was a recipient of the Silver Star. He was buried with full military honors in South Owego Cemetery.

Ferrante, Raymond P. USA
Flight Class (Hunter)
68-251
RVN:
69 B/101 AVN 101 ABN
70 A/101 AVN 101 ABN
72-74 Air America



Call Signs-Kingsman 27, Comanchero 12
Raymond Ferrante was nothing if not a

generous and selfless man; always looking to help others and stand up for the common good. The accomplished military officer, father, and husband died recently in a car crash. He will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

Ray was born in the Bronx, NYC and joined the Army following two years of college. Ray flew 2,100 combat hours and received 48 Air Medals and a Bronze Star. That taste of flying led to his lifelong passion and career. He amassed more than 25,000 flight hours.

During his three years with Air America he met his wife Sherry in Saigon. He also worked in Iran, Mexico, the Arctic, Morocco, the Bahamas, and Saudi Arabia. He joined Trump Airlines in 1984 and later worked as Donald Trump's personal pilot.

He retired from the New Jersey National Guard in 2006 as a CW5 completing more than 20 years of service.

In his down time, Ferrante was a skilled carpenter, builder, and loved all things mechanical, including classic cars. It was in the meticulously restored 1961 Chevrolet Corvette his fatal accident occurred.

He is survived by his wife, Sherry, a daughter and two sons. In his memory, the family suggests donations to the Army Aviation Association of America, the NJARNG Yellow Ribbon Program, or any National Veterans charity.

Goodson, Charles W. USA
Flight Class: 67-11
RVN: 67 48 AHC,
67-68 A/4 AVN 4 INF
71 326 MED 101 ABN,
71 163 GS 101 ABN
Callsign: Charlie Golf

Charles "Billy" Goodson LCOL (Ret), 77, of Umatilla passed away June 3rd 2015. He was born in Branford, FL (Suwannee County) in 1937, and moved to Umatilla, from Bunnell in 1942. He attended elementary and high school in Umatilla, before attending The Citadel in Charleston, SC. Billy was a retired Army aviator (Master Aviator), having served over 30 years in both the U.S. Army and Marines. He served two tours in Vietnam as a UH-1 helicopter pilot, flying both gunship and medivac missions. After retirement from the military, he was hired as the General Manager of Frupor, a Norwegian-owned agricultural firm in Portu-

gal. After seven years overseas employment, he returned home to serve his community. He was a former mayor and city council president for Umatilla, served on the Board of Directors (past President) for Sunrise Arc, a member of Umatilla Masonic Lodge No. 65, Umatilla Kiwanis Club, associate with Beyers Funeral Home, and attended the First Baptist Church of Umatilla. Survivors include his wife; Martha D. Goodson, one daughter, and a granddaughter. Please direct any donations to The Arc Sunrise of Central Florida (35201 Radio Road, Leesburg, FL 34788). Billy was a tireless advocate for Sunrise Arc and it was an organization dear to his heart.

Gilleland, Richard A. USA
Flight Class: 69-39
(Hunter) 69-39
RVN: 70-71 155 AHC
Callsign: Stagecoach 25



Richard Allyn "Rick" Gilleland, 69, peacefully passed away with family and friends with him in Hospice care at the Salisbury VA Medical Facility on June 13, 2015. Born in Atlanta, GA, on March 22, 1944, he was raised in Charlotte, NC. Rick graduated from Garinger HS in 1964. For three years he lettered in tennis and attended East Carolina U. Rick was an accomplished guitar player and singer. During the Vietnam War, Rick served in the US Army Combat Aviation Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division (assault helicopters). He flew in Vietnam from 1969 to 1971 and was promoted to the rank of CW2. After the Army, he flew helicopters in Sept-Iles, Quebec, Canada, and for several private contractors. Returning to Charlotte in 1992, he flew the WSOC-TV Chopper Nine. Rick completed his flying career with over 13,000 hours of safe flight time. He then sold homes with McGary & Assoc. Rick was an avid golfer and tennis player. In 2002, Rick retired after being diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Rick was preceded in death by his parents, Elmer Eugene Gilleland, II, and Tillie Lillie Amanda Williams of Charlotte, and Atlanta. Surviving him are; his daughter, and three brothers, Rick was an incredibly loyal person and will always be cherished by everyone that knew him and will be missed by all. Donations, in his name, to the National Parkinson Foundation, Gift Processing Center at <http://www.parkinson.org/>, would be appreciated.

Griminger, Charles O. USA
Flight Class: 59-11
RVN: 65-66 3 RRU,
66 138 AVN
69-70 23 ARTY GRP
Callsigns: Boxer/Redwings



Charles O. Griminger, LCOL (Ret.) passed away on March 29, 201. During his military career, Charles graduated flight school and was subsequently qualified as both a fixed and rotary winged pilot. He flew each type during his two tours in Vietnam. His military decorations/qualifications include: Bronze Star Medal w/2 OLC's, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal w/"V" Device, Air Medal w/36 OLC's, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry w/Palm, Vietnam Civil Actions Medal, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Master Army Aviator Badge, Senior Parachutist Badge and Ranger Tab.

After retiring from the Army, Chuck opened his Antique Clock business, where he continued to work (with some assistance) until his death. He is a past president of Chapter 34 of the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors (NAWCC) and was an avid supporter. In civilian life, his love of flying continued at the Langley Air Force Base (LAFB) Aero Club, where he was often accompanied by friends and family. Chuck joined the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) in 1997. He helped restore vintage WW II aircraft and flew them at airshows across the country. He continued to maintain membership in several aviation-oriented organizations such as the Daedalians, the Silver Wing Fraternity, the International Liaison Pilot & Aircraft Association (ILPA), the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA), and the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association (AOPA).

He continued to fly until his health declined in his last years. He is credited with a series of award-winning articles for The Army Aviation Digest, entitled the "The Armed Helicopter Story". Chuck is preceded in death by his parents, Charles and Ethel Griminger and sister Joan Rallya. Chuck is survived by his son, a brother and two sisters.

Interment will be held at a later date in Arlington National Cemetery.

Grotenhuis, Fred T. USA
Flight Class: 67-7
RVN: 67-68 175 AHC



Fred Thomas Grotenhuis, life-long resident of Harmony New Jersey and member of Calvary Community Church, passed away in his second home in Barrancas, Costa Rica, on March 9, 2015, with his wife Giulia and friends at his side. Born May 30, 1944 to the late Ruth and Lewis Grotenhuis, Fred graduated from Belvidere high school in 1962, volunteered for the U.S. army in 1966, served as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam and was awarded a Bronze Star and Purple Heart. Upon his return from military service, Fred had two daughters with his first wife and grew his father's Book & Supply House into Harmony Press. Fred was an avid aviator whose other interests included playing games, hunting, sailing and skiing. Fred is survived by his wife, Giulia Iannitelli Grotenhuis; two daughters, two grandchildren, three brothers, and three sisters. Interment will be held at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. Suggested donation is: Middle East Reform Fellowship. Please make checks payable to John Grotenhuis, designate check for Eritrea, and mail to Judy Cabrera, 26900 South West, 187th Ave., Homestead FL, 33031.

Hurt, Hoyt, B USAF
Flight Class: 55N
RVN: 62 MAAG Cambodia
63-64 WARC DET 9
Callsign: Pedro 1



Major Hoyt B. Hurt, USAF (Ret.), 81, of Lake Park died Wednesday, April 1, 2015 after a lengthy period of declining health. He was born April 11, 1933 in Chicago, Illinois but lived in Lowndes County for the better part of his life after retiring from a distinguished career in the United States Air Force. A Command Pilot, Major Hurt was a decorated Rescue helicopter pilot who participated in life saving missions both at peacetime at home in the United States and abroad. He also flew over fifty combat missions in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Conflict. He was an Elder in the Twin Lakes Presbyterian Church. His parents were the late Hoyt B. Hurt, Sr. and Gertrude Ester Hurt. He was preceded in death by his

wife, Cynthia Ann Hurley Hurt.

Major Hurt was a member of several organizations which included: The Valdosta Yacht Club (Past Commodore), member and certified Senior Race Officer in the United States Sailing Association, The Retired Officers Association, Gator Flight #58-Order of Daedalians, P. O.E.T.S., the Air Force Association, USAF Helicopter Pilots Association, the Pedro Rescue Helicopter Association, the Air Rescue Association, the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, The Thailand-Laos-Cambodia Brotherhood, Veteran of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, The Silver Wings Fraternity and The Golden Strummers. Survivors include one son; a daughter and three grandchildren.

Memorials may be made to the Twin Lakes Presbyterian Church or to the Presbyterian Home in Quitman, Georgia.

Jackson, Harold C. USA
Flight Class: 68-29/
68-517



Callsign: Rattler 71

Harold Collins "Jack" Jackson, 76, joined his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, on Thursday, June 4, 2015..

He was born in Robstown on June 14, 1938. Jack Graduated from Robstown High School in 1956 and then from Texas A&M University in 1960. He married Jean Reeder on August 6, 1959. As a member of Texas A&M Corps of Cadets, he went into the U.S. Army as a 2nd Lieutenant. Jack completed U.S. Army helicopter training school at Ft. Wolters and was assigned Vietnam duty from 1964 to 1965. During his service he received the Army Aviator Badge, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Air Medal with Sixteen Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, one overseas Bar, and a Valorous Unit Award. After Vietnam, Jack returned to Ft. Wolters and when discharged, as a U.S. Army Captain, made Mineral Wells his home. He was an insurance broker in Mineral Wells for many years. He is survived by his devoted wife, Jean; one daughter, two sons, four grandchildren, and a brother.

Larkin, Thomas W. USA
Flight Class: 68-10/ (Hunter) 68-14
RVN: 68-69 174 AHC
Callsign: Dolphin 16

Thomas William Larkin, COL (Ret.) 70, of Gulf Breeze, Florida and formerly of Towanda, died Wednesday, March 19, 2014 at Atlanta Medical Center South Campus, East Point, Georgia after a long illness.

Tom graduated from the University of Illinois, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in 1966, and later earned two Masters degrees from Georgia State University. Tom proudly served his country in the Vietnam War, and was the recipient of the Bronze Star and Purple Heart. He continued to serve in the U.S. Army and the Army National Guard, retiring as a Colonel.

Tom was an accomplished pilot and boatman, and a lifelong member of the 174th Assault Helicopter Company Association.

Tom was born January 30, 1944 at St. Joseph's Hospital in Bloomington, to William Thomas and Maria Rita Owens Larkin. Tom is survived by his wife, Gale Boyd Larkin; one son and one daughter. He has two other daughters and a son from a prior marriage to Kathleen Daly. He is also survived by five grandchildren and nine siblings. Tom is buried in the Holy Cross Cemetery, Merna IL. Donations, if planned, may be made to St. Patrick Church of Merna, IL.

Madrano, Joseph P. USA
Flight Class: 54-H
RVN: 66 498 MED CO
Callsign: DUSTOFF 6

Colonel Joseph P. Madrano, (Ret.), born April 20, 1922, in Reading, PA, to Dan and Agnes Madrano, filed his final flight plan May 8, 2015. A proud veteran of three wars and over 39 years of total service, he started his military career at the age of 17 while still in high school, by joining the Oklahoma National Guard. Inducted into active federal service in 1940, he trained as infantry squad leader before transferring to the Army Air Corps, training as Aviation Cadet at Randolph and Ellington Fields, where he received his commission as 2nd Lt. and rating of Pilot. Following training in Florida as a pilot of a Martin B-26, commonly called "The Widow Maker," the "Flying Coffin," or the dubious name of "Prostitute" (because it had no visible means of support), he com-

pleted 46 combat missions in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations. After completing his tour, he returned to the States and served as a pilot instructor until his separation from the service in 1945. After graduation from University of Tulsa in 1949, he worked as a school teacher until he was called back into active service, this time as Medical Service Corps officer. He was then assigned to Japan, where he "sat out" the Korean conflict by training troops and providing services to returning troops. In 1953 he returned to the States and undertook helicopter training at Ft. Sill, OK, and Ft. Rucker, AL, where he was retained as an instructor for two years. Over the following 20-plus years he served at a number of posts as a commander and staff officer, including two tours of Germany and one in Vietnam. While in Vietnam he commanded a medical evacuation unit. He also attended a number of schools, including the Army Command and General Staff College and the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. The recipient of numerous awards and decorations from the U.S. and foreign governments, he was most proud of the Army Good Conduct Medal, which he claimed to have earned the old-fashioned way-by being a good soldier. Joe retired in 1979 at Ft. Lewis, WA, and since that time has been a volunteer in a number of activities in Washington and Texas. He is survived by his loving wife and partner for nearly 69 years, Jacqueline (Jacquie) Elledge; two sons, a daughter, three grandchildren, and two great-grandsons. Interment is in the Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery. The family has requested donations be made to the Honor Flight.

Martinez, Jose L.
Flight Class: 68-503/68-1
RVN: 68-69 A/7/17 CAV

Jose Luis Martinez passed away on May 20, 2015, on the Mediterranean Sea, while on the trip of a lifetime. Jose was devoted to his family and friends and especially to his wife, children and grandchildren. Jose Luis was born on June 20, 1946 in Mission, Texas, the fifth of eleven children. He graduated from Brackenridge High School in 1966 and volunteered for service in the Army to go to Vietnam, where he was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. While his children loved to tease him about the



many jobs he held through the years, the one of which he was most proud, and did best, was father.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Sara and Eloy; siblings, Eloy, Sara, Elda Ana, Alonzo and Maria Eugenia. He is survived by his loving wife of 45 years, Patricia; a daughter, three sons, seven grandchildren, and four siblings. He is also survived by the Ruthless Riders, his devoted brothers of A Troop, 7th Squadron 17th Air Cavalry.

The family requests that any donations be sent to The Trooper Fund, with checks payable to 7/17th Cav Association, c/o Donald Schoenemann, 3517 Harvey Lake Road, Highland, MI 48356. The trooper fund allows Jose's fellow Ruthless Rider veterans to attend their annual association reunion, a cause close to his heart. Jose will be interred at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery at a later date.

Mast, Jacob W. USA
Flight Class: 64-3
RVN: 67-68 HHC 15
MED 1 CAV



Jacob William Mast Jr., 75, of Chesterfield, died peacefully Tuesday, May 12, 2015, after a five-year, courageous struggle with Agent Orange exposure sarcoma. He was predeceased by his parents, The Rev. Jacob W. Mast and Bertie Lee Long Mast; and his sister, Barbara Mast Brookes. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Kay Cross Mast; two sons, three grandchildren, and a sister.

Jake served as a Major in the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps, where he was involved in the operation of military hospitals and medical evacuation detachments. He piloted medivac helicopter rescue missions in the Republic of Korea and Vietnam, earning the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, Combat Medic Badge, Bronze Star, Distinguished Flying Cross and the Korean Prime Minister's Citation for civilian disaster rescues. A graduate of Randolph-Macon College and master's degree recipient from the VCU School of Rehabilitation Counseling, Jake pursued a career dedicated to public service, concentrating in long-term geriatric care administration. Jake retired as CEO of the non-profit Lucy Corr Village of the Health Center Commission for Chesterfield County. In his almost three-decade career

TAPS

there he demonstrated foresight in his understanding of the health care industry by inspiring development and construction of an expanded nursing home, the first special care unit for dementia residents in the Commonwealth of Virginia, a licensed assisted living adult day care center, a state of the art health care center, and a full service continuing care retirement community, "Springdale."

Jake served on numerous boards of directors of health care commissions and foundations including being a Fellow of the American College of Healthcare Administrators, the Virginia Health Care Association, the Central Virginia Health Planning Agency, the Virginia Association of Nonprofit Homes for the Aging, Covenant Woods and the Lucy Corr Foundation. He was a Preceptor, Virginia Administrator-in-Training Program, President Virginia Chapter ACHCA, member Virginia Career Education Advisory Committee, member Education Committee Alzheimer's Commission, Capital Area Health Advisory Council, and 1979 Virginia Health Care Association Administrator of the Year.

Entombment will be at Arlington National Cemetery at a later date. If you would like to honor Jake, please consider The Lucy Corr Foundation by contacting Debra Marlow, Director of Development and Community Relations, 804-706-5706, dmarlow@lucycorrvillage.com.

Parr, Richard USA
Flight Class: 67-9/67-7
RVN: 67-68 71 AHC,
70 25 CAC
71 334 AWC,
71 3/17 CAV



Richard Parr, 76, CW3 (Ret.), a native and resident of Lockport, passed away Wednesday, March 18, 2015. He is survived by his beloved wife, Christiane Lerbier Parr; two daughters, three grandchildren, two great grandchildren three sisters and three brothers. He was preceded in death by his parents, Dewey Parr Sr. and Gladys Guidry Parr.

Richard served his country for 23 years in the U.S. Army as a Chief Warrant Officer CW3. He was a helicopter pilot and instructor who completed two tours in Vietnam.

He donated his body to Tulane Medical Center. The suggested donation recipient, in Richard's name, is the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

Renschen, Paul, S. USA
Flight Class:
69-38
RVN: 68
HHT/1/11/ACR,
69 HHT 11 ACR
71 B/3/17/CAV, 71 A/3/17 CAV
Callsigns: Stogie 36/Spur5/Bacon
8/Bobcat 6



Lt. Col. (Ret.) Paul S. Renschen had a big heart. It carried him through a lot, working hard past all the ills that came his way. He often expressed his own surprise he was still alive, delighted to be riding a snow machine into his 70s. He loved life and he loved living it in Alaska. He took part in every activity he could cram into his day, and when the day was done, he sat down before bed and wrote a story of the day's adventure to share with everyone who wasn't lucky enough to have his life. Paul Renschen simply could not be slowed down. It was that large heart, not Paul that finally gave up Sunday morning, April 26, 2015.

Paul was born an Army brat in Little Rock, Arkansas, on Aug. 3, 1942, but Minnesota became home. He set his sights on a military career at an early age and paid his own way through a private military high school with the goal of attending West Point. He graduated from West Point, class of 1965, and began his military career in Germany.

There he met his future bride, Neva. They were married in May 1966. Their son was born in January 1968, four weeks premature, giving Paul precious time with his newborn son before he shipped off to Vietnam, exactly four weeks later.

After his first tour, Paul attended flight school, and was rewarded with another tour in Vietnam, flying Cobra helicopters. His love for flight never waned. The family was reunited in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where they welcomed their daughter from Seoul, Korea, in 1973. Paul earned his master's in history at the University of Michigan. After graduation, the military took the family to Fort Hood, Fort Leavenworth, and back to West Point, where Paul taught military history. It was there he had his first heart attack. He was grounded from flying and sent to Bad Hersfeld, assigned to East German border patrol. After assignments in Heidelberg and Kaiserslautern, Germany, and Belgium, the family returned to the United States and Paul retired at Fort Lewis in 1990.

He continued to teach military history at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. He was regarded as a firm, but fair mentor who expected the best from his students. He loved

his church, sang in the Latin Mass choir and never missed a service unless he was ill, even braving the ice on Chena Ridge to attend. Paul will be laid to rest at Fort Snelling Cemetery, St. Paul, Minnesota, near his parents. His wish was to be "buried with soldiers."

Paul is survived by his wife, Neva; a son a daughter 1 grandchild and, a sister.

Donations can be made in Paul's memory to the Wounded Warrior Project.

Rao, Biagio USA
Flight Class: 67-9

Biagio "Bud" Rao is now encircled in the arms of God's love. He passed from this life to Eternal Life surrounded by family at his home on April 15th, 2015; at 11:15 p.m.

Bud was born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on May 4th, 1943. He was a loving husband to his wife of fifty years, a tremendous father to his three boys, and a matchless friend to countless people with whom he interacted throughout his storied life. He was also a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, a Policeman, and a Special Agent for the U.S. Department of State, as well as an Investigator for the Office of Personnel Management, and an Elder in the RLDS church.

Bud is survived by his wife Diane; two sons, one daughter, three grandchildren, and one brother. He was preceded in death by his son Rick and parents Mary and Rocky.



Roddy, Francis J. Jr. USA
Flight Class: 63-3T
RVN: 65 129 AHC, 65-66
117 AHC, 67 135 AHC,
67-68 HHC/12 CAG
Callsign: Beachbum

RODDY, Jr., Francis "Frank" Joseph Frank passed away on March 9, 2015 at his home in Sacramento, Calif., at the age of 78. Born February 1, 1937 in Philadelphia, PA., the only son and eldest child of Agnes Bernadette (Curran) and Francis Joseph Roddy, Sr. Frank married Joanne Lois Arseneau, on August 6, 1960. Frank was a helicopter pilot in the US Army and served two tours in Vietnam where he was awarded the Purple Heart and the Distinguished Flying Cross. Frank was preceded in death by his parents. Frank is survived by his wife Joanne of 55 years; three sons, two daughters, six grandchildren, two great grandchildren and two sisters.



Rodriguez, Charles F. USA
Flight Class: 66-19/66-17
RVN: 67-68 C/229 AVN 1
CAV
69-70 1 AVN BDE
Callsigns: Wagon
Wheel/School Boy



Charles "Chuck" Ferrill (Ret. Rank not provided) Rodriguez, born May 29, 1938 in Biloxi, MS passed away on Thursday, March 5, 2015 in Moss Point, MS. Chuck was a decorated veteran of service with the U. S. Army, having served two tours of duty in Viet Nam as a Chief Warrant Officer 3. As a helicopter pilot he flew many missions that placed his life in peril. He retired from the Army after 21 years of dedicated service to his country. He continued to use his flight skills as a pilot for Petroleum Helicopters, Inc. Closing out his career, he served in Safety Management for Ingalls Shipbuilding. He was preceded in death by his parents, a brother and a sister. He is survived by; his three sons, two daughters, nineteen grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Scroggins, Donald R. USA
Flight Class: 67-16
RVN: 67-68 189 AHC, 71-
72 CMD AVN CO
Callsign: Avenger 6/Pig 6



Donald R. Scroggins MAJ (Ret.) died on or about May 21, 2015. Donald was a self-made man, born in Columbus, GA to Bennie and Bettie Scroggins. He graduated from Bossier High school in 1957 where he was an all-state athlete. He served 4 years in the Marine Corp, then 17 years in the Army. During his military career he qualified as a master parachutist and served two tours in RVN as a helicopter gunship pilot in the 101st. He earned the Distinguished Flying cross and many other honors, retiring as a Major. He graduated from William Carey University in Hattiesburg, MS with a BA in business.

He was a proficient horseman who loved training and showing horses. He seemingly could build or fix anything with his hands. He was a man of strong convictions and great faith. He was a loving husband, father, grandfather and friend who will be dearly missed.

Donald was preceded in death by his parents, his brother Bennie Randell Scroggins and his sister Mary Dale Hutches. He is survived by his wife Kyle Ann Scroggins; two sons, three grandchildren, and seven great

grandchildren, two sisters and two brothers. Donations requested to be directed to Alzheimer's Association.

Shelton, Dewey J. USA
Flight Class: 59-1
RVN: 62-63 93 TC CO, 63
121 AHC
68-69 118 AHC, 68-69 573
TC 118 AHC
Callsign: Birdwatcher 6



Dewey Jack Shelton, MAJ (Ret.) 79, peacefully went to be with the Lord on Saturday, June 6, 2015, at his home in Arlington. Jack, as he was referred to, was born in McAlester, Okla. He entered the Army at the young age of 18 and became an officer, retiring as a major. He served in Korea, two tours in Vietnam as a pilot, as well as in Panama. Upon his retirement from the Army after 20 years, he was employed by Dallas Love Field Airport as an assistant director, retiring after 20 years of service. He was preceded in death by a son, Dewey Jack Shelton Jr.; and grandson, Terrance Fickett. He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Barbara Shelton in addition there are eight children of Jack's Barbara's and those born during their marriage as well as many grand and great grand-children. He was interned in the Dallas Fort Worth National Cemetery with military honors on June 16th. Donations may be made to the American Cancer Society

Thiry, Gary E. USMC
Flight Class: 11-61
RVN: 65-66 HMM-363,
69-70 VMO-2
70-HMA-369
Callsign: Scarface 1



Colonel Gary "Gar" Edward Thiry, USMC (Ret.) was called to join our Lord on April 25, 2015. He was born as the first son of Delores Mae (Flynn) Thiry and Raymond Eric Thiry in Green Bay, WI on August 14, 1942. Gar entered the Marine Corps in 1960 at age 16 and was selected for the Aviation Cadet (MARCAD) program in Pensacola, from which he earned his commission and Naval Aviator wings at age 19 in 1963. He also met his bride of 52+ years there, Sharon Theresa (Werner) Thiry, whom he married on June 1, 1962.

He flew UH-34 transport Helicopters on the east coast, completing cruises to Europe, Latin America, and Norway before his first Viet Nam tour in 1965 - 13 months with HMM-363 (Red Lions). Gar returned to

Pensacola as a flight instructor and helped to gather pilots for the first Marine Cobra squadron. He then returned to Viet Nam for 12 more months. Gar then worked as an operations officer in the U.S. Taiwan Defense Command where he led the planning group for the withdrawal of U.S. forces after the normalization of relations with China. In Hawaii, he commanded a composite CH-46 squadron with Harriers, Cobras, CH-53s and Hueys attached for an Indian Ocean cruise. He also earned his master's degree there at Chaminade University. Gar spent his Washington, D.C tour on the Op Dep staff, working joint aviation matters. He also helped to create the Marine Corps Doctrine Center at Quantico, VA, serving as Head of the Joint Warfare department.

As Deputy J-3 and Senior Marine in Latin America at Southern Command (South-Com) in Panama, he headed the planning efforts to remove the Noriega regime. Gar completed his 31 years of active service as the Senior Marine at the Air War College and retired to Pensacola in 1991. There he designed and built an award-winning home and then was a successful real estate broker and business owner for 15+ years. Gar also actively participated in several philanthropic organizations including Kiwanis, Avant Garde, MOAA and the Daedalions.

He is survived by his forever-loving wife; Sharon T. Thiry, two daughters, five grandchildren, two sisters and, a brother. A military honors ceremony was conducted at the Barrancas National Cemetery. In Memorial donations are encouraged to support the Wounded Warriors Project (www.woundedwarriorproject.org).

Small, Harold I. USA
Flight Class: 55
RVN:
66-67 116 AHC, 70 -71
101 CAG101 ABN,
71 HHC/1 AVN BDE
Callsigns:



Hornet 6 /Hawkwhip 5A

Major General Harold I. (Ret.) 'Hank' Small Former Commanding General of Ft. Eustis passed away peacefully at his home in Poquoson, Virginia, on May 5, 2015. He settled here 1992, after his retirement in 1986.

Hank was born March 11, 1932, in an apartment above the General Store in Plymouth, Maine which is still open for business

today. Hank lived his teenage years in Malden, Woburn and Burlington, Massachusetts. Hank had an early desire to join the Army. Prior to his High School graduation he enlisted in the Massachusetts Army National Guard. Hank graduated from Burlington High School in Burlington, Massachusetts and immediately enlisted in the regular active Army.

Upon entering active duty he began a 37 year career rising through the ranks from Private (E-1) to Sergeant (E-5), and after attending Officer's Candidate School, he was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant (O-1) rising through the commissioned officer ranks to Major General (O-8). Throughout his military career he remained a "soldier's soldier". He never lost sight of his time as an enlisted soldier or as a Non-Commissioned Officer. Hank knew soldiers and Non-Commissioned Officers were and are the backbone of the U. S. Military. While stationed with the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, in Fayetteville, North Carolina, in 1952 he met Shirley R. Jernigan and married on July 9, 1952

The United States Army was Hank's first love. He served in the infantry, was a paratrooper, a ranger, an aviator and a logistician.

During his enlisted, Non-Commissioned and Commissioned Officer service he assumed ever increasing responsibility. He commanded at every level in his career and held staff assignments at all levels. His military career culminated in positions as Commanding General of the U.S. Army Transportation Center and Fort Eustis, Virginia; Commandant of the U.S. Army Transportation School; Chief of United States Army Transportation and Commanding General of the Military Traffic Management Command (now known as the Surface Deployment and Distribution Command). While serving on the Department of Army Staff he worked on development of combat tactics for helicopters and the requirements for the Army's heavy lift helicopters.

He served three combat tours; one in Korea and two in Vietnam. His military decorations for valor and exceptional performance of duty include: Three Silver Star Medals, the Distinguished Service Medal, the Defense Superior Service Medal, two Legions of Merit, five Distinguished Flying Cross Medals, Bronze Star Medal with Valor, three Bronze Star Medals, the Purple Heart, three Meritorious Service Medals, twenty-four Air Medals, the Joint Service Commendation Medal, three Army Commendation Medals, two Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm, and the Good Conduct Medal.

His decorations for service include: The United Nations Service Medal, Korean Service Medal, Five Vietnam Service Medals, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Republic of Vietnam Civil Actions Medal First Class, Humanitarian Service Medal, Five Overseas Service Bars, American Campaign Medal, two National Defense Service Medals, United States Air Force Crewmember Badge.

His Unit Citations include: Presidential Unit Citation Army, two Valorous Unit Awards, Five Meritorious Unit Commendation, Republic of Korea Presidential Unit Citation, and Republic of Vietnam Fourragere. He was also awarded the Senior Parachutist Badge, Master Aviator Badge, and Army Staff Identification Badge.

The Chief of Army Transportation awarded The Ancient Order of Saint Christopher to Hank, for exemplary service and devotion to the United States Army Transportation Corps. This is the highest award the Transportation Corps can award to any member of the Regiment. Hank was honored in 2005 with membership in the U. S. Army Transportation Corps Hall of Fame.

Hank is survived by his wife of 63 years, Shirley R. Small of Poquoson, Virginia; three sons, a daughter, two grandchildren and two sisters. Hank's interment will be at Arlington National Cemetery at a date and time to be determined by Arlington. We will update with the Arlington information as soon as it is available.

Please make any memorial donations in Hank's honor to the following organizations or to any other charity that is close to your heart: The U.S. Army Transportation Museum Foundation, P. O. Drawer D, Fort Eustis, VA 23604 or The American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 22718, Oklahoma City, OK 73123-1718.

Swarts, John L. USA
Flight Class: 70-41
72 HHC 1 AVN BDE, 72 48 AHC
72-73 D/17 CAV, 73 ICCS
Callsigns: Penetrator 4/Blue Star/Sabreblue

John L. Swarts, III, age 74 (Ret.) resident of Fort Scott, Kansas, died Monday, March 23, 2015, as the result of a traffic accident near Deerfield, Missouri. He was born February 23, 1941, in Kansas City, Kansas, the son of John L. Swarts, Jr. and Marjorie M. Miller Swarts. He married Hazel N. Denton on November 23, 1963, in Manhattan, Kansas. John retired from the United States Army and later served as Bourbon County Attorney.

He enlisted 10 July, 1959 and retired 1 July, 1980. His experience included assignments as: a Tanker, Scout, Infantryman, and Helicopter pilot (TH-55, OH-23, UH-1A,B,C,D,H, and M, TH1G and AH1G and OH6A). His 32 months in country were divided among: 3rd PLT, B TRP., 3 Quarter Cav, as a Scout Section Leader: A CO, 25th AVN. (Little Bears) as door gunner, and PLT SGT. of 3rd PLT. A CO., 1st BN., 5th MECH. INF. REGT (all 25th INF. DIV. on his first trip) During his second deployment, he served with C CO., 52 INF, and was later attached to the 716th MP BN., 18th MP BDE, as Gun PLT SGT. On his third trip, He performed as a pilot, test pilot, in addition to his duties as maintenance and supply officer with Antitank PLT, HQ CO., 1st AVN BDE. (Call Sign - Penetrator, Motto-Death by Wire, flying UH1M armed with 6 French SS-11 wire guided antitank missiles). He flew as a lift pilot with the 48th AHC (Blue Stars); a scout, lift, and gun pilot and Aero Rifle Plt. Leader., with D Trp., 17th Air Cav. (Call Sign - Saber Blue); and after it ended as Pilot In Command for White Ships the ICCS until late April, 1973, when Air America took over. He drew combat pay through April, 73, even though he couldn't wear the Army uniform.

Survivors include his wife Hazel; one son, one daughter, and two sisters. He is buried in the U. S. National Cemetery, Fort Scott.

Tessier, Robert J.
Flight Class: 68-2
(Hunter) 68-2
RVN: 68-69 A/4/77 ARA
101 ABN
69 HHB/4/77 ARA 101
ABN, 69 331 TC DET
Callsign: Dragon 28



Robert Jay Tessier, born May 2, 1938 in Tacoma, left us unexpectedly on April 8, 2015. Bob grew up in Lakewood, WA, graduating from Clover Park HS. Bob served in the military as a Helicopter Pilot while serving in Vietnam. He loved the Pacific Northwest and had a passion for the outdoors. He was the happiest on the water be it on the ocean, the bay or with his friends trading

TAPS

fishing stories. He will be dearly missed by his wife, Donna; his daughter, his son, two grandchildren, and sister. Donations may be directed to the Bladder Cancer Advocacy Network or a charity of your choice.

Trebby, Thomas J. USA
Flight Class: 68-513/68-21
RVN: 68-69 119 AHC
Call sign: Obnoxious



Thomas John Trebby, CPT (Ret.) aged 69, died unexpectedly April 15, 2015, after a 10 month battle with gastric cancer. He was born in Lafayette, Indiana, to Claudine Chelmaniak and Francis 'Jack' Trebby. Tom attended Cogdillaga Preparatory High School, Spokane, Seattle University, Seattle, and Embry Riddle University, Daytona, Fla.

While at Seattle University he learned to fly at Boeing Field. He enlisted in the US Army during the Vietnam War where he learned to fly helicopters. He was assigned to the 119th Assault Helicopter Company in 1968-69. He

rose to the rank of Chief Warrant Officer 3 during his service to the Virginia Army National Guard, Richmond, VA. He was awarded The Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart and The Air Medal for actions in Vietnam.

After military service he flew for Puerto Rican International Airways, San Juan, PR, IRAN AIR, Tehran, Iran, Piedmont Airlines and USAIRWAYS from which he retired in 2004 as Capt. B767-200 ER. He relocated to New Delhi, India, to fly B737-700 for SPICE JET. After returning to the US he joined the Commemorative Air Force and became Executive Officer of the Old Dominion Squadron in Franklin, Va.

Capt. Trebby earned aircraft type ratings on UH-1 Huey helicopter, De Havilland Heron, B-727, B-737, B-757, B-767, Learjet and the Stearman.

He is survived by his loving wife of 33 years, Freddie Wyckoff Trebby, and a brother. He was buried in Arlington National Cemetery on September 16th. His wife request that any memorial donations be directed to cancer research.

Woods, Donald E.
Flight Class: 69-27
RVN: 71-72 F/9/CAV 1 CAV
Call sign: Blazer 15

Donald E. Woods, a much loved husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, son and brother aged 72 of Sebastopol, passed away at the VA hospital in Fresno on May 12, 2015. He had been a resident of Sonoma County since 1999. Don served in the military for 21 years and was a helicopter pilot in Vietnam from 1969-1971. He later retired from the U.S Postal Service. Don was an outdoorsman who loved fishing and hunting. He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Mini Woods of Sebastopol; two sons, a daughter, four grandchildren, one great-granddaughter his mother and three sisters. He is preceded in death by his father, Louis Woods; and sister, Barbara Woods. Donations in his memory may be made to the Wounded Warrior Project.

We welcome members to forward obituaries to the VHPA. Send them to Gary Roush (groush@earthlink.net). If you wish, providing the link to the listing is acceptable. We print the obituary, with photo, of dues current members. We provide a condensed notice for non-members. The number of entries will continue to grow for obvious reasons. With that in mind, space limitations require us to edit the size of many submissions.

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Records of the recent deaths of the following thirty two potential members of the VHPA were gleaned from internet searches within these last two months. All information that the VHPA has for these men may be found at VHPA.org or by calling 1-800-505-VHPA. If any of our members have more information please report it to: HQ@VHPA.org or call 1-800-505-VHPA (8472).

Capozzi, Henry P. USA LCOL (Ret.)
died on Feb. 28, 2015 (no other data).

Cook, Charles T USA
died on April 22, 2015 (no other data).

Damoth, William, R. USAF RVN:
service 20 SOS, 39 ARRS died on April 4, 2015.

Delaney, Kevin F. USN RAM (Ret.)
died on April 7, 2015 (no other data).

Egger, Charles H. USMC died on April 4, 2015 (no other data)

Frye, William H. USA, RVN:
Service 66-67, 71 AHC died on May 5, 2015.

Fuggit (Billy) William, W. USA, Flight Class
67-4, RVN: service 1967, B/7/17 CAV died May 10, 2015.

Gibbs, Walter M. USMC RVN:
service 67-68, VMO-2 died on May 31, 2015.

Gualtier, Joseph M. USA
Flight CLASS 67-11, Died on April 15, 2015.

Guenther, Dean P. USA Flight Class 69-16, RVN: service
1969, B/227 AHB 1 CAV died on April 22, 2015 4/22/2015.

Hough, Arthur A. USMC RVN:
service 1970, HML-367 died on April 14, 2015.

Jividen, Larry B. USMC
died on March 15, 2015 (no other data).

Kaiser, Stanley Eugene USA
Flight Class 67-10 died on April 16, 2015.

Kaul, Lloyd K USA
died on May 5, 2015 (no other data).

Masencup, James USA
Flight Class 69-29/69-27 died on May 26, 2015.

Mayer, Henry A. USA RVN service 69-70, 498
MED CO Call Sign: Dustoff died on May 5, 2015.

Merritt, Jerry W. USA Flight Class 68-3 died on May 30, 2015.

Moore, John H. USA
Flight Class 70-8 died on December 28, 2015.

Neary, Patrick H. USA Flight Class 67-12, RVN service 67-68,
C/7/1 CAV died on April 14, 2015.

Neece, John P. III USA Flight Class 69-42 (Hunter) 69-42
died on April 1, 2015.

Parnell, James I. USA Flight Class: 63-1W, RVN:
service 65-66 B/1/9CAV I CAV died on February 28, 2015.

Perkins, James W. USN, Call Sign Tomahawk 28,
died on March 9, 2015 (no other data).

Phillips, Stuart H. USMC died on April 9, 2015
(no other data).

Schmidt Phillip M. USMC died on May 44, 2015
(no other data).

Shea, William P. USAF died June 6, 2015 (no other data).

Skinner, Barry F. USMC died on July 7, 2012 (no other data).

Stoessner, Richard L. RVN service 1 AVN DET (ARMED)
Call Sign: Guns a Go-Go died on March 1, 2015.

Tingler, William USA COL (Ret.) RVN service 66-67 71
AHC died on March 10, 2015.

Turner, James Thomas USMC died on June 11, 2015 (no other data).

Waldeck, Ralph S. USAF Flight Class 71-30AF Ft. Wolters 71-
30 died on May 5, 2015.

Wellman, David J. USA Flight Class 68-16 Hunter 68-510
died on April 18, 2015.

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VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

ALASKA CHAPTER

Lynn Kile, President

[REDACTED]

ARIZONA CHAPTER

Bill Sorenson, President

[REDACTED]

CALIFORNIA CHAPTER NORTH

Ken Fritz, President

[REDACTED]

CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER

Tom Mc Millen, President

[REDACTED]

FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER

Adam Steczko, President

6828 Pentridge Drive

Plano, Texas 75024

972-618-5364

asteczko@verizon.net

GEORGIA CHAPTER

President: Bob Lanzotti

[REDACTED]

LOUISIANA GULF COAST CHAPTER

Victor Lent, President

[REDACTED]

VHPA-NewOrleans@earthlink.net

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

Richard Deer, President

[REDACTED]

UPPER MIDWEST CHAPTER

Bert Leach, President

[REDACTED]

MONTANA CHAPTER

Todd Brandoff, President

[REDACTED]

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

Les Haas, President

[REDACTED]

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER

Pete Purnell, President

[REDACTED]

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

Larry Pigg, President

[REDACTED]

OHIO RIVER LZ CHAPTER

Bob Hamilton, President

170 Jackson Rd.

New Castle, KY 40050-6731

Home: (502) 845-2914

E-Mail: CAPTBOB757@aol.com

www.ohrivlz.org

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

Wayne S. Guffy, Jr., President

[REDACTED]

www.okvhpa.org

OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

President: Don Agren

[REDACTED]

SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER

Jim Miles

[REDACTED]

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

Bill Thompson, President

[REDACTED]

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER

John P. Hargleroad

[REDACTED]

THE ALAMO CHAPTER

Dave Whitney, President

[REDACTED]

SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

(Celebrate Freedom) Chapter

Larry Russell, President

[REDACTED]

larry@esad.net

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

Sven Akesson, President

26601 Brandon

Mission Viejo, CA 92692

(948) 348-9509 (home)

(949) 689-7061 (cell)

svenakesson@yahoo.com

VHPA OF FLORIDA

Frank Hoover, President

[REDACTED]

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER

J.C. Combs, President

[REDACTED]

HAWAII CHAPTER – Provisional

Ken DeHoff - POC

[REDACTED]

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

ALAMO CHAPTER

Our members enjoyed another weekend in Fredericksburg, Texas, on May 29th and 30th. As always, we stayed at the picturesque Hangar Hotel at the nearby county airport. And as usual, we took over the hotel bar, which they call the Officers Club, on two nights. Our old friends, the piano player and his guide dog, were there for us on Saturday night.

Prior to that party, we all attended a musical show at the popular Rockbox Theater, downtown. The show, "Stars in the Hills," included tributes to George Strait, Marilyn Monroe, Barry White, Nat King Cole, Gloria Estefan, Aretha Franklin, Rod Stewart, and others. The live performers delivered great imitations. The Chapter members who were not there really missed some good fun and camaraderie.

We do not plan to meet in August so as not to conflict with the national reunion. We will meet in September or October and hold elections for officers to serve in 2016. Our Christmas party will be on the evening of December 18th, so save the date.

Members should watch for e-mails and check our Chapter website www.vhpa-alamo.org for scheduled events.

By Chuck Oualline

ARIZONA CHAPTER

There is some new and exciting information for our members. An Arizona Chapter of the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation is being formed here. It will be based at Falcon Field next to the CAF hangar. The chapter is just beginning, but it looks like they will receive both a Cobra and Huey that can be made flyable.

I hope this will be a mutually beneficial situation that will also generate some interest in the Arizona VHPA. I am acting as liaison between the AZ VHPA and the newly forming AAHF. I have informed our members of the progress. The AAHF is looking for any Vietnam Vets; pilots, mechanics, etc. that will donate time and effort.

Anyone interested in the AAHF can contact me or contact David Sale, President, at [REDACTED] or Brad Lewis, Membership at [REDACTED]

By Bill Sorenson

CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER

The Central New York chapter of the VHPA will hold its annual barbecue at 11:00 on September 12, 2015 at Roger Baker's home at [REDACTED]. Please call Tom McMillen at [REDACTED] for directions and more detail. Wives and family members are welcome. Please bring a covered dish to pass. Thanks.

By Tom McMillen

FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER

The September chapter meeting will be held at Logan's Road House restaurant, on Saturday, Sept 12th, 2015. Please note that this is the second Saturday of the month. This change is necessary, since Labor Day occurs on the first weekend. The address is 948 N.E. Loop 820. The EC will meet at 11:30, followed by the general membership meeting beginning at 12:00. The flat rate for the meal is \$20/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.

By Adam Steckzo

OKLAHOMA CHAPTER

At the last bi-monthly meeting on Saturday, April 18th, 2015 in Bethany, OK, new officers were elected by majority vote. They are:

OKVHPA Chapter President
Wayne S. Guffy, Jr.

Lawton OK 73507-1970

Mobile: [REDACTED]

OKVHPA Chapter Vice-President
Thomas "Tom" Payne

Home: [REDACTED]

OKVHPA Chapter Secretary/Treasurer
Rocklin "Rock" Lyons

Home: [REDACTED]

Rock Lyons has created a chapter web page (<http://www.okvhpa.org/>) and a Facebook page (OKVHPA) which he invited everyone to view and critique. He requested our members to submit photos, war stories, iconic music, obituaries or anything else that would add to the web site. He stated he would gladly accept appropriate material from other donors.

Our next meeting is scheduled to start at Noon on Saturday, 20 June 2015 at Gary Elliott's home east of Edmond, OK. The meeting will include a cookout. Wives/girlfriends are invited. Food (meat) and drinks (soft drinks and beer) will be provided. Members were informed they could bring a covered dish/dessert, which would be appreciated. If something stronger than beer was desired, the member will have to bring his choice of beverage.

By Wayne Guffy

UPPER MIDWEST CHAPTER

On May 20th our chapter met with ten members attending. We were informed by our president, Burt Leach, that we have been incorporated as a 501c19 Veteran's Organization and are currently seeking IRS recognition.

Following up on our efforts to assist other vets in our area, one of our members gave a report on his efforts in mentoring through Ramsey County Veteran's Court. He was very impressed and excited about the process and his mentoree. Anyone wishing more information on this project should contact Jud Hilton at [REDACTED]

We have also decided that our next meeting will be a social gathering involving spouses or significant others. This will be a paddle boat cruise with dinner on Wednesday July 15th.

We have sought and received twelve plus volunteers to man a "show and tell" UH1 static display at the Anoka County Air Show on May 30 and 31st. This is an effort by our organization to both tell our story and gain new members. The VVA of Wisconsin is providing the static UH1 as a part of our partnership with them.

We are still seeking other members in our area. Anyone interested in visiting or joining the organization should contact Burt Leach at [REDACTED] or Richard Anderson at [REDACTED]

Several of the Upper Midwest Chapter members are looking forward to seeing a lot of you VHPAers this August at the Washington, D.C. Reunion.

By Richard Anderson

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

ALASKA CHAPTER



As we get further along in our years, it

is rewarding to spend time with others who share a common bond. The Alaska Chapter had a wonderful event which started with a nice breakfast; followed by one-hundred thirty mile drive to a rather remote Memorial location. With Mount McKinley in the background, about three-hundred Veterans gathered to observe Memorial Day. Our State Senator, Lisa Murkowski, began the ceremony as she arrived in a Harley carrying the American Flag! The quiet fanfare and pomp of this beautiful family campground, with the Alaska Veterans Memorial on a hilltop adjacent to the lake, was both special and touching. In our group, Vic Micol, Bill Merkley, and David Buirge shared the privilege for all of us by placing a wreath in honor of the aircrews who gave their all.

Following the event, a BBQ and fellowship took place as we recognized another new member, which grew us to forty eight members...yahoo Welcome Earnest Newton!

We also had the opportunity to chat with our Senator Lisa Murkowski, Subcommittee on Military Construction and Veterans Affairs, and Related Agencies. We informed her of the Memorial request for Arlington Cemetery. She requested all of the information. She has been a very positive advo-



L to R David Buirge, Vic Micol, Bill Merkley



L to R John Brown, Myron Schweigert, Vic Micol, Terry Vraniak, Chuck Moore, Lisa Mukowsski, David Buirge



Mini-BBQ after the service



Facing away, Myron Schweigert, Facing L to R John Brown, Tim Kavanaugh



Waiting for breakfast

help others, and this is a good place for our Chapter to start. Helping them provide peace to other Veterans.

We are still looking for an OH6 (non-flyable) to fix up for static displays. The search continues!

So until we meet in DC... Because we flew

**Lynn Kile
Nomad 23**

VHPA-ALASKA President

FLORIDA CHAPTER

The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association of Florida (VHPAF) supported the Moving Wall event in Jupiter Florida from April 8th to 13th, 2015. The event was held on the beautiful Jupiter Campus of Florida Atlantic University. Tom Rountree, Gary Harrell, Frank Hoover, Joe Ponds, John Hawn and Tom Tomlinson supported our efforts. We had the LOACH, Little bird mall kiddy ride, and sales tent. The crowd appreciated our support at the event. There were many instances of "thanks for your service" comments as well as generous donations.

On the next day, we went to Lakeland Florida to prepare for Sun-N-Fun. Eighteen members and wives helped set up the GP Medium museum tent, the sales tent, the LOACH and the Little Loach. After the work was accomplished, a cookout fed the hungry workers with hot dogs,



Florida Chapter display at Sun N Fun



Members enjoy a picnic after Sun N Fun setup

hamburgers. A few days after we set up, we supported Sun-N-Fun from April 21 - 27. This is the second largest 'fly in' air show in the country. Nearly every plane produced is on display, from wooden tri-wing to giant military planes; as well as many ultralights. We appreciate the great support our members provided for Sun-N-Fun.

The VHPAF supported the Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans, 50th anniversary event in Inverness Florida April 30th to May 3rd. The event had a parade with a total of sixty-two bands/floats, a twenty minute fireworks show, the Moving Wall, numerous ceremonies, five great bands and DJ Doc Holiday.

There were two lines of vendors selling food and items. We took the LOACH, Little Bird and the sales tent.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

We greatly appreciated the outstanding support from our members. Some of those include: Tom and Sharon Rountree, Frank Hoover, Tom Tomlinson, Stan and Reba McGlamery, Gary Spooner, Joe Ponds, Gary and Diane Harrell, Bob and Mary Anne Lazzell, Barry and Georgette Grimm, and Gary Harrell's preacher with his wife and two girls. A truly great time was had by all. It was one of the more enjoyable events in which I have participated. The weather was perfect; and with so much help it was a joy to support.

The twenty-third VHPAF Annual Reunion will be held from September 17th to 20th, 2015. It will be held at the beautifully remodeled International Palm Resort, 1300 North Atlantic Avenue (A1A), Cocoa Beach, FL 32931. The hotel has over 500

rooms with 13,000 sq. ft. of inside meeting space and an additional 5,000 sq. ft. of outside meeting space. The hotel is located on the Atlantic Ocean and features four on site restaurants. The annual banquet will be held on Saturday, September 19th, 2015. Paul Hiott will be our guest speaker. Paul is a retired Navy veteran who served twenty years in nuclear submarines and currently works for the Florida Department of Veterans Affairs. His talk will be a comprehensive explanation of current VA services; such as - what is available, services not widely known or used, and the procedure(s) to obtain the support one deserves. He will also provide literature.

By Frank Hoover

GEORGIA CHAPTER

On May 23rd, 2015 the Georgia VHPA Chapter again assembled at its base camp, LZ 'Romeo Romeo' (The Rib Ranch in Marietta, GA) for its bi-monthly breakfast meeting to enjoy good food, good fun, and good fellowship.

Our guest speaker was Mr. Joe Kirby, editor of the Marietta Daily Journal. For those living out of our grid square, the Marietta Daily Journal is the newspaper equivalent of Fox News. It is fair and balanced, with a slight leaning to the right. This year marks the seventieth anniversary of the end of the War with Japan. It ended after atomic bombs were used on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The delivery system was the B-29, which was manufactured here in Marietta GA - about ten clicks northeast of LZ Romeo Romeo. The B-29 was manufactured by the Bell Aircraft Company. They also manufactured the OH-13 Sioux and the UH-1 Iroquois. Joe's power-point presentation also included his experiences in escorting groups from the Atlanta area to Normandy, France. Both topics were befitting for Memorial Day as we took time to remember those thousands of service men and women who gave their tomorrows so that we might enjoy our todays, living in free nation.

The Governor of Georgia and the Georgia Department of Veterans Service has dedicated this fiftieth year since



Group photo is leaders of various Georgia Veteran Organizations who were presented their Vietnam Veterans Certificates of Honor by Governor Nathan Deal at the Georgia Capitol Building on 30 March 2015.

The below photo shows me receiving the COH from Governor Deal (on left) and LTG Kicklighter on the right.



the end of the Vietnam War to 'Welcome Home' 234,000 Georgia Vietnam Veterans with a Certificate of Honor (COH) and a Vietnam Service Lapel Pin. These presentations are currently being given at countless veteran organizations throughout Georgia. Eighteen members of our Georgia VHPA Chapter received their tribute at our May 32nd meeting. Other Georgia Chapter VHPA members were informed regarding the process required to apply for and receive their COH and Lapel Pins by individual initiative.

Our next meeting will be on July 18 at LZ Romeo Romeo. Our July meeting speaker will be Georgia Senator Hunter Hill. Hunter was elected as a Georgia Senator in 2012. He is a homegrown boy who graduated from West Point, played football for the Army's Black Knights, and served as a Ranger Infantryman in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He currently serves as Chairman of the Veterans, Military and Homeland Security Committee.

For those former Vietnam Helicopter Pilots in the Atlanta area who are interested in joining our Chapter, please view our website at www.ga-vhpa.org for the schedule of future meeting dates; or contact me at [REDACTED].

By Bob Lanzotti, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

CALIFORNIA NORTH CHAPTER

Meet the Machines, sponsored by the Rancho Cordova Recreation District at Mather Sports Complex in Rancho Cordova, was a great success again this year. We were visited by an estimated five hundred kids at this event. Thanks to Ken Lake, Al Doucette, Greg Hutson, Curt Knapp, and Dave Anderson for supporting this event. Special thanks to Frank Kulhavy for helping our first time driver back the Huey into the hanger at the end of the day!

We had another good day for CCN (California Chapter North) at the Armed Forces Day event sponsored by American Legion Post 264 in Lincoln, CA. It was an interesting crowd and featured many kids. There was a birthday celebration for a ninety year old WWII veteran and a Post 264

member. The Huey was the center of attraction. Thanks go out to Ken Fritz, Greg Hutson, Ken Lake, Curt Knapp, and as always Frank Kulhavy at the Hangar.

We also supported the "Vettes for Vets" in Old Sacramento on Memorial Day. This has become an annual event sponsored by the California Auto Museum. The Huey had patriotic Americans sitting inside all day; and this time it was evenly split between children and adults. Two local TV stations did segments on our

Huey maintenance continues at CCN. The rotor head renovation is complete and the repaired crew seat has been installed



Pirates blasting their cannons to start the American Legion motorcycle run in Rio Linda.



Meet the Machines sponsored by the Rancho Cordova Recreation District at Mather Sports Complex in Rancho Cordova



Huey was the centerpiece attraction. Thanks go out to Ken Fritz, Greg Hutson, Ken Lake, Curt Knapp, and as always Frank Kulhavy at the Hangar.



Huey at the Vettes for Vets event



Huey parked next to the Travelling Wall

presentation.

Chapter President Ken Fritz chaired a meeting beforehand and explained how needed maintenance was performed on the pickup truck and a new sound system was installed.

Thanks to the California Automobile Museum for sponsoring our participation and to help from members Ken Fritz, Ken Lake, Ken Smith, Jim Stein, Mike Whitten, Al Doucette, Greg Vitaich, and Curt Knapp.

One week after Memorial Day, we placed our Huey next to the Vietnam Veterans

Memorial Wall in Roseville, CA. Hundreds of families viewed and had the opportunity to sit inside this icon of the Vietnam War. They had the additional opportunity to speak with veteran pilots who flew it. This was a powerful presentation. A big thank you is due our volunteers: Ken Fritz, Ken Lake, Jim Stein, Mike Whitten, Jim Clark, Greg Hutson, Al Doucette, Ed Morris, my son Cory, and of course Frank Kulhavy.

By Dave Anderson

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER



This spring has predictably been hectic for the North Alabama Chapter. We have taken our UH-1C/M, affectionately known as Buc 3, to as many schools and veterans events as possible. Our chapter views these displays as prime opportunities to educate the public and the next generations about the story of Vietnam, "The Helicopter War," and the men who crewed them.

We began the period with a display at the Birmingham Jefferson County Civic Center on March 21st. While there, our members had the opportunity to reminisce with several survivors of the 7th Calvary who fought in the Ia Drang Valley in 1965. This was the campaign popularized



Members of the NAVHPA and 7th Calvary veterans pose with Buc 3

in the movie "We were soldiers..."

Following the Birmingham event, we supported the Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home Display at the Huntsville Veteran's Park on April 4th. As in past years, many Vietnam veterans were drawn to Buc 3. Several remarked to their children or grandchildren,

usually through unshed tears; things like "The last time I sat in a Huey was the day they medevaced me from..." and "Gunships saved my life when I thought it was over. I'll never forget that day".

It was also in April that we showed Buc 3 to Collins Elementary and Scottsboro Junior High School on April

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

14th. This was followed by a visit to Owens Crossroads Elementary School on April 28th. At these events, school kids are free to climb in and on Buc 3 for as long as they wish. They sit in the pilot's seat and pretend to fly or sit in the gunner's seat to handle a replica M-60 door gun. They usually send us cards and letters stating we have had an impact on their lives. We need to remember that Vietnam is as far in the past to these children as WWI was to us!

With the approach of Memorial Day, the NAVHPA focused on service to veterans.

On May 16th we displayed Buc 3 at the Priceville Veterans Park. Many members of this small community, thirty-five miles southeast of Huntsville, had the opportunity to see, smell and feel a helicopter like many of their relatives who flew or rode in while in Vietnam.

On May 25th, while most of the NAVHPA members were displaying Buc 3 at the Madison Veterans Park for a Memorial Day remembrance, two of our members presented a wreath commemorating those who perished in Vietnam. They were in full regalia. Many in the crowd were awed by their ribbons and medals. Many chapter members were similarly awed by the fact that they fit into



Children from Owens Crossroads School enjoy Buc 3.



NAVHPA wife Diane Weber thanks the pilot for her Cobra ride.



NAVHPA members Don Bisson (L) and Rick Davis present the wreath from our Chapter

form Ozark AL. Several members' wives, children and grandchildren had the chance to fly in the Cobra's front seat or the Huey's gunner's well ;sharing the sensations experienced in Vietnam by husbands, fathers and grandfathers. Some of our wives had waited more than forty years to fly!

their blue uniforms – few of us can!

For our final activity of the period, we provided a display at the first Military Heritage Fly-in at the Huntsville Executive Airport in Meridianville, AL, located about twenty miles north of the city.

Several military and civilian fixed wing aircraft were present. Buc 3 drew its usual crowd of adults and children eager to experience this piece of living history. More than a thousand spectators wandered through the displays and booths. Perhaps the highlight for many of our members and their families was the opportunity to fly in a UH-1H Huey or an AH-1 Cobra. These aircraft are the property of the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation – Wiregrass chapter

OLD DOMINION CHAPTER

On May 11th, I and several members of our chapter attended the Tree Dedication at The Arlington National Cemetery (see article, photos in this issue). The following prayer was read at the ceremony:

VHPA Dedication Prayer:

Almighty God, for nearly 150 years our nation has laid its honored dead to rest here at Arlington National Cemetery. We are surrounded with the names and the memories of men and women, down through our nation's history who have heard this country's call to arms; they have answered that call and, because of their courage, their sacrifice and their dedication, they have defended our freedom and our way of life.

We are gathered together this morning on these hallowed grounds to honor and pay homage to the helicopter pilots and crew members who paid the ultimate sacrifice and perished during the Vietnam War. It is our desire to remember their lives and their sacrifice by the planting of this Red Sunset Red Maple tree in their memory. This tree is especially noteworthy because in the Spring reddish seeds called samaras develop, or as they are commonly referred to as "helicopters." May those who pass by be reminded of the significant role helicopters played in the Vietnam War and continue to play today.



We ask Your blessing upon this tree. May its beauty augment the surrounding landscape as it honors those who so faithfully served our nation. Amen

UPCOMING EVENTS

A meeting will be held at 13:00 at Legends Brewing 321 West 7th St. Richmond, VA on July 11th, at which we will discuss planning Volunteer Coordination for the National Reunion (Aug 25-30).

The August 25-30, National VHPA Reunion at the Wardman Park Marriot, Washington DC Please go to www.vhpa.org to register if you have not already done so.

There will be Cruise on the Rappahannock River on September 12th to view our native eagles nesting, enjoy wine-tasting and have lunch at Ingleside Plantation Winery.

The fee is \$40.00 per person (Includes lunch, cruise and wine-tasting).

Meet at Hoskins Creek Tappahannock, VA at 09:30 to board the Captain Thomas www.tangiercruise.com

In October, 2015, (the dates/times have not yet been decided) we are planning a Friday night gathering at the Peaks of Otter lodge www.peaksofotter.com, luncheon meeting at Olde Liberty Station, Bedford VA www.oldlibertystation.com and tour of the D Day Memorial www.dday.org

The Christmas Banquet with MOAA is scheduled for 18:00 on December 5th at the Meadowbrook Country Club, Richmond VA 23234.

By Don Agren

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER VHPA AND THE HELICOPTER WAR MUSEUM:

On a dark and stormy night, here in Colorado, on May 4, 2015, Carl Cavalluzzi along with Terry Olson on behalf of the VHPA hosted the return of WWII, Korean, and Vietnam Veterans from "Honor Flight" ceremonies held in Washington, DC. On May 18, 2015 several members including Dale House, Phil Lanphier, Terry Sullivan, and Donny O'Conner along with many other Vietnam Veterans struck the Huey from the "1968 Exhibit" displayed at the History Colorado Center, in downtown Denver (see photos). Anyone viewing this exhibit will be impressed by the presentation. It will be next shown at the Bower's Museum in Santa Ana, CA. from June 13 thru September 13, 2015. On Saturday May 23rd, we transported our Helicopter War Museum to the WarBird and Auto Show held at Front Range Airport, near Denver International Airport. Terry Olson (Event OIC), Steve Swaim, Bill Bates, Kevin Maynard, Dale House and Rick Beaver were there to greet visitors and relate our experiences. We had about seven hundred visitors. There were many hugs, tears, and plenty of laughter. We planned a work party on May 30, 2015 to install a new air conditioner and conducted other needed maintenance on the Museum before our June 14th event at Ft. Carson, Colorado Springs, CO. The theme is: Honor the Vietnam Veterans, Welcome Home Ceremony. The other exhibits featured are: the Traveling Wall and Col. Bill McPhersons 'Mike' model 'Huey'.

Other Chapter and Upcoming Activities:

We are joining the City of Golden Colorado for a Celebration on the Fourth of July; sponsored by the Golden Lions Club. On August 18th, we are attending the Antique Airshow at the Erie Airport, Erie Colorado.

I hope the fact we are all becoming "antiques" was not the rea-



Phil Lanphier, Terry Sullivan, Dale House and Donny O'conner, along with other Vietnam Vets and Museum personnel 'Striking the Huey' at the History Colorado Museum.



The Helicopter War Museum at the WarBird and Auto Show held at the Front Range Airport, in Denver, CO



The "Huey" as it is displayed in the "1968 Exhibit" at the History Colorado Museum.

son they invited us. We have a full year of activities ahead and we are excited.

Typically, we meet on the third Saturday of the month, at 10:00 at American Legion Post #1 (located at I-25 and Yale Avenue). Occasionally, we change the venues. Please contact us at the address below to verify dates, times and location. Normally, we do not meet in December or July. The VHPA Annual Reunion occurs in August, requiring a meeting on July 18th, 2015. We do, however, get together in December for our Holiday Party.

The museum committee will meet periodically to continue categorizing inventory and developing additional displays. We are seeking artifacts for the museum. A 'chicken plate' with its cloth holder and C rations are

two of our most desired acquisitions. Wearing a 'chicken plate' would be a unique experience for our visitors. If you have a donation(s) for the museum, contact Chapter President John Hargleroad or the Museum Curator, Dale House. Our email is: RMC.mailbox@yahoo.com

By Dale House

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

On April 22, 2015, the College of the Ozarks hosted the dedication of the State of Missouri Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The afternoon dedication ceremony was attended by thousands, including dignitaries, distinguished guests, families and friends of the Missouri fallen, hundreds of Vietnam veterans, staff, faculty, and students of the C of O.

The morning rain showers gave way to clear skies and sunshine. Following opening remarks by College of the Ozarks President Dr. Jerry Davis, Missouri Lt. Governor Peter Kinder, and former USMC Assistant Commandant Gen. Terrance Dake, a C of O alumnus, the keynote speech was given by LTC. Oliver North, USMC (Ret.)

At the center of the memorial stands a statue of three armed soldiers,



flanked by black granite walls listing the names of 1,410 sons of Missouri that gave everything they had in the war effort. In front of the wall is the state of Missouri, containing the letter "V", consisting of red flowers, and the emblems of the five branches of service. The memorial is symbolic in many ways. The walls are divided because our country was divided during the years of conflict. The "V" honors the valor of those who served, and the red flowers symbolizes the blood shed by those memorialized on the wall and the thousands of others injured during their service.

Designed by a C of O student, the Missouri Vietnam Veterans Memorial was built by C of O staff and students and will be maintained by students for generations to come. Located at the entrance of the campus, just south of Branson, Missouri, the memorial is beautiful, heart-warming, and should be visited by everyone going to Branson. You will be glad you did.

By John Sorensen

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

The May 2nd, 2015 Michigan Chapter Meeting was held at the Log Jam Restaurant in Grand Ledge. Nineteen people attended the meeting, including five wives. This compared to ten members, including one wife who attended the previous year's meeting. In addition, nine more members had responded as unable to attend this year. At least one participant claimed to be a non-member but came with his wife and he was promptly drafted into the chapter - welcome Dave Sauter and wife Becky.

Bob Keller brought his wife Jeanne and arrived in style... in his Bell 47. The other husband and wife couples were Lee & Carol Luck, Jim & Susie Hunt, and guest speaker Leo Flory and wife Ann. It was great to have the ladies join us and all chapter members are encouraged to bring their significant others along to future chapter functions.

Conversations started as soon as participants recognized past acquaintances. They discovered many instances of shared unit assignments in Vietnam and elsewhere.

The business meeting followed the meal. It was decided to participate in at least two events this year. They are: Lest We Forget, June 19-21 in Benton Harbor. This is sponsored by a non-profit organization as a weekend of military appreciation. They have done this for several years and this year's event will be dedicated to the Vietnam War. Our booth staffing will be coordinated by Chapter Vice President Dave James. More volunteers were recruited to assist. The other event is a visit of the Vietnam Traveling Wall, July 22-26 in Oscoda. It will be located next to the Wurtsmith Aviation Museum located at the Oscoda-Wurtsmith Airport (formerly Wurtsmith Air Force Base). Some additional information is on their Facebook page Oscoda Traveling Wall and Vietnam Memorial. Lee Luck will display our Michigan Chapter banner on a UH-1 Huey at the museum, assisted by Randy Maltby.

Rich noted the recent 40th anniversary of the fall of Saigon at the end of the war. He felt the historical significance of that date should at least be mentioned.

Another business item discussed, concerned the VHPA Chapter Presidents Conference Calls. Vice President Dave James described the discussion that was previously emailed to the chapter members in March. He noted that many chapters have similar challenges as ours in getting



May 2, 2015 Michigan Chapter Meeting Attendees
Front row l-r: Ann Flory, Carol Luck, Jeanne Keller, Susie Hunt, Becky Sauter
2nd row: Rich Deer, Denny O'Brien, Bob Rich, Bob Keller, Dave James, Tim DeLong, Dave Sauter
3rd row: Guest speaker Leo Flory, Lee Luck, Jim Hunt, Randy Maltby, Noah South, Rod Offhaus, Rod Fleck

shelter for our booth have been the greatest recent expenses. Dues payments have been voluntary. We accept donations as contributions to the chapter. At the end of the meeting, several made contributions - Thank You.

Lee Luck asked who would be attending the National VHPA Reunion and six to eight members so indicated.

Guest speaker Leo Flory shared some of his experiences while serving in Vietnam. He referred to his book "Transition to Duty, A Combat Medic's Tour in Vietnam with the 101st Airborne Screaming Eagles" and had copies available. Leo gave special praise to the helicopter pilots and aircrews he encountered during his tour.

By Rich Deer, President

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

Pictured, is the future site for the Fisher House, collocated



with the Long Beach CA. VA facility. The new Fisher House will consist of twenty - one units for use of families visiting veterans receiving care. Think of it as a Ronald McDonald House for veterans.

Our SoCal VHPA Chapter is very proud to have been able to help with our fund raisers. Adding the matching funds, our Chapter was able to contribute over \$7000 in the past two years. Ground breaking will begin this July.

Sven Akesson

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S14410
Vietnam Center And Archive
Texas Tech University
PO Box 41045
Lubbock, TX 79409-1045



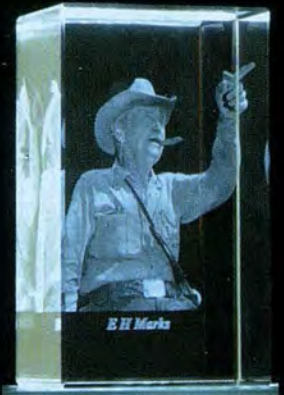
Brian and Marilyn Paine

bpaine@magphotos.com

281-693-3210 off... 713-899-2511 cell

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