



The VHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



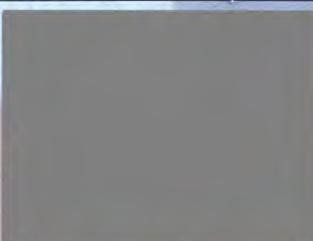
In Memory of LTC Charles Kettles

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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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From the President of the VHPA

For those of us who flew with D Troop (Air) 3/5 Cav during 1970, we lost one of our best friends and brothers when Bill King, War Wagon 16, passed away in the early morning hours of January 8th. I am sure that each and every one of us has experienced such a loss, so why do I even mention it? I do so because each year, at our annual reunion, a Memorial Service is held where we specifically remember those that have made that flight to their final LZ since our last reunion. The sad fact is we lose about one VHPA member each day, approximately 300 between each reunion, so come to the reunion, attend the memorial Service, and share with us a story about your departed brother. You'll be glad you did, as it is not only a sobering remembrance, but it helps the memory of your departed brother live on among us that might not have known him as well as you did.

The Kansas City reunion promises to be a good one, in keeping with the traditions of past reunions. The



events will offer something for everyone, so I hope your plans for the year include the reunion.

Our HQ staff and National Reunion Committee have worked diligently, for many long hours, to insure our success. Be sure to thank them and let them know how much you appreciate their efforts when you see them throughout the hotel.

Two others that are deserving of our thanks are Tom Kirk, Managing Editor, and Tom Hirschler, Editor, of our magazine, The VHPA Aviator. If it is not the absolute best of all veterans' magazines, then I don't know what is!

As an organization, we are very fortunate to have both employees and volunteers that have our best interests in mind when they carry out their responsibilities. On behalf of all our members, as your President, I offer a heartfelt "Thank You" and our sincere appreciation.

See you in Kansas City,

John Sorensen, President

FROM THE STAFF AT HQ!

R2019 Info – ON LINE REGISTRATION IS OPEN! A great reunion is planned this year, packed with lots of tours and events. Most tours are capacity controlled and some have sold out already. If there are tours that you are interested in that are sold out, please call HQ to be placed on a wait list. When cancellations come thru, we will contact the first person in line on the wait list. Mini Reunion space is filling up quickly, there are only 3 rooms available for the entire reunion and 2 rooms have several time slots available. Please check the reunion page on vhpa.org for the most up to date info.

Reminder – Directories purchased beginning September 1, 2018 will be for the 2019 directory that will be delivered in October 2019. The deadline for ordering the 2019 directory is August 31, 2019. A copy of the paper directory is \$15 and a CD copy is \$10. The on line directory is free at <https://directory.vhpa.org>.

You can pay your dues and pre-order your CD or Paper Directory on line thru the On Line Directory at <https://directory.vhpa.org>!

HQ now has copies of the Vietnam Helicopter & Crew Members Monument Dedication Ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery DVD for purchase. The price is \$15 which includes shipping cost. A copy of the program will be included with each order, while supplies last. Call HQ at 800-505-8472 to place your order. T-

shirts with the monument on them can also be purchased online at <https://gear.vhpa.org>.

Be sure to check out the new VHPA Gear store on line. Visit <https://gear.vhpa.org> or <https://www.vhpa.org> and click on the "VHPA Gear" link to view the shirts available now. New items will be coming soon

PLEASE HELP US REDUCE THE COSTS OF REMAILING ITEMS! If you move, PLEASE go on line to <https://directory.vhpa.org> and log in with your member number, then set up a password or use your social security number. Then on the left side will be a box with red lettering that says "Other Services". Under "Other Services" will be a box that says "Update My Information". Click on this button and you can make updates directly to your information. You can also call HQ with an update to your contact 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 check to see if they are in our database. We would love to send them membership information and a copy of the newsletter for their review. And of course, 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!

Sherry Rodgers, VHPA Office Manager

A TRULY UNIQUE EXPERIENCE

(Door Gunner and Pilot Heroes)

by: Bill McRae

The Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA) 2016 Summit was held at the World Congress Center in Atlanta at the end of April. All the Movers and Shakers who have anything to do with Army Aviation were at the Summit. Mike Sheuerman and I manned the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA) booth at the exhibit to help greet visitors, answer questions about the VHPA, and obtain update information for the VHPA Directory. Except for the thirty-minute walks to and from the parking deck, it was really a great experience. Plus, I met Alex and Edna Horony, who had the Combat Helicopter Pilots Association (CHPA) booth next door. Edna helped us with our Wi-Fi connection, and I gave her one of the original "Hercules" patches, from the 132nd Assault Helicopter Company (AHC) in Vietnam 1968-1971.

During my time at AAAA, I got to meet a Vietnam helicopter pilot named Bill Reeder. Reeder served two tours in Vietnam. On his first tour he flew the OV-1 Mohawk, a twin-engine fixed-wing aircraft used primarily for reconnaissance type missions. Before his second tour Bill went through a rotary wing transition and got a qualification course into the Cobra attack helicopter. When he returned to Vietnam in late 1971, he was assigned to the 361st Aerial Weapons Company (Pink Panthers) at Pleiku in the Central Highlands.

It was there he met Mike Sheuerman, an experienced Cobra pilot and Aircraft Commander. Reeder was a second tour aviator, but he had just arrived in country, and he was at Panther Operations for his in-country check ride. That's when a call came in to launch an additional Cobra gunship to join other aircraft already engaged, for an emergency extraction of a special operations team across the border in Laos. Reeder had all his gear with him, so Mike grabbed him to fly front seat. His check ride would have to wait. The flight was a success, and they were able to help save the lone survivor of the team. That fact alone helped to save Mike from another firm response from his CO, for breaking Army regulations and flying a guy who had not been checked out and approved to fly by a unit Instructor Pilot.

Reeder was a senior Captain at the time and had reached the ripe old age of 25, and Mike was a younger 1st Lieutenant. Mike figured Reeder could shoot the weapons up front and fly the aircraft if necessary. Mike would take care of all the other stuff required, in get-

ting them to the target and back to Pleiku. So, when Reeder walked up to the VHPA booth, it was a joy to see those guys together and hear about their exploits, but Reeder had one experience I did not expect.

During the Easter Offensive of 1972, Bill Reeder was flying support for the besieged base at Ben Het near the Laotian border in II Corps. The NVA had launched their attack on the base, using everything they had including tanks. Bill's mission was to engage the attacking enemy forces and to provide over watch for a TOW missile firing UH-1B, "Hawks Claw". They were also to provide covering fire for a Huey to land at Ben Het with much needed emergency ammo resupply. The mission was a success, but in the process, Reeder was shot down, and his life changed forever. The impact of the crash broke Bill's back, and the aircraft immediately caught fire and burned. Bill's co-pilot/gunner, Tim Conry, got out and was rescued the next day, but he was severely injured and died in the rescue helicopter, on the way to the hospital. Bill managed to drag himself away from the burning wreckage. On the third day he was captured by the NVA, and Bill became a POW. Bill was held in bamboo cages in the South, until he and 25 other POWs were force marched, up the Ho Chi Minh Trail to Hanoi. The trip was long, grueling, and extremely difficult to endure. It took three months, and seven of his fellow POWs died along the way. Bill has just published a book about his Vietnam experience entitled *Through the Valley: My Captivity in Vietnam*. It's a reference to the valley of death in the 23rd Psalm, and the agony he endured to survive his captivity.

When I heard Reeder was to be at the authors' table over at the Army Aviation Museum Gift Shop, I headed over that way to buy his book and to get him to sign it for me. The table was set up with three authors sitting side by side along an eight-foot table. Reeder was on the right end. We chatted as he signed my book. As he was signing, I noticed a guy in an orange shirt had walked up on my left, and he was talking with the author in the middle. When Bill handed my book back to me, the guy in orange had already caught his attention. The guy had stated that he had done 6 1/2 years in Vietnam, which was hard to believe for even the most gung-ho warriors in the military. Then he said he was in a helicopter that was shot down in 1968 and held as a POW, until he was released in 1973.

Reeder jumped up from his chair and leaned across

the table, as if to challenge the guy next to me. I think Bill was actually trying to get a closer look at the guy's AAAA access badge. It showed his name to be Jim Pfister. Bill shouted at the guy, "Jim??? . . . It's me, Bill Reeder!"

The two of them immediately ran to the far end of the table and caught each other in a huge bear hug that went on and on. I knew something special was happening, but I did not know what it was. I soon learned they were cell-mates in the Hanoi Hilton, and they had not seen each other since Pfister walked out of their cell on 5 March 1973, to be released in the first group of POWs captured in the South, to be returned. That was 46 years ago.

Back in January 1968, PFC Jim Pfister was assigned to the 71st Assault Helicopter Company in the southern part of I Corps. On 5 January 1968 he was the Door Gunner on a Charlie Model Huey gunship that was shot down in Happy Valley, southwest of Da Nang. Like Reeder, Pfister was captured and held in the South, but for a much longer time. He too was taken on a forced march up the Trail to Hanoi. Jim joined the Army and was trained as a supply clerk. He served a full tour (Nov 66 – Nov 67) with the 94th Supply and Service Battalion. He volunteered to serve a second tour, if he could be a Door Gunner in a helicopter unit. The Army jumped on his offer and assigned him to the 71st AHC in the newly formed Americal Division. A month later, Pfister's aircraft was shot down, and he became a POW for the next five years.

Reeder said he first met Pfister in Hanoi at the Plantation Gardens prison. They were later moved together to the famed Hanoi Hilton, where they shared a prison cell. Bill was released three weeks after Pfister. They each went home and continued with their lives. Both stayed in the Army as their career vocation. They had no contact with each other, until fate brought them together again, at the AAAA 2016 Summit in Atlanta. It was a moving experience for all of us who got to witness a very special reunion of two men, who are united forever by their experience, in a war long ago that still impacts their lives today.

About the Author: Bill McCrae joined CHPA at the 2016 AAAA event after a bit of recruiting torment by Terry Garlock. Bill is past President of the GA chapter of VHPA, where he and Terry became friends. This moving story of Door Gunner Jim Pfister and Pilot Bill Reeder is another example of the great bond and love aircrews and soldiers have for each other. CHPA is dedicated to promoting this bond and the stories of combat helicopter crew members.



Full color. 20" x 28" limited edition print of Huey SOG / LRRP ladder extraction. Standard version as shown, \$80.00 ea. **Customized** version with markings of your choice, \$125.00 including postage. Satisfaction Guaranteed.

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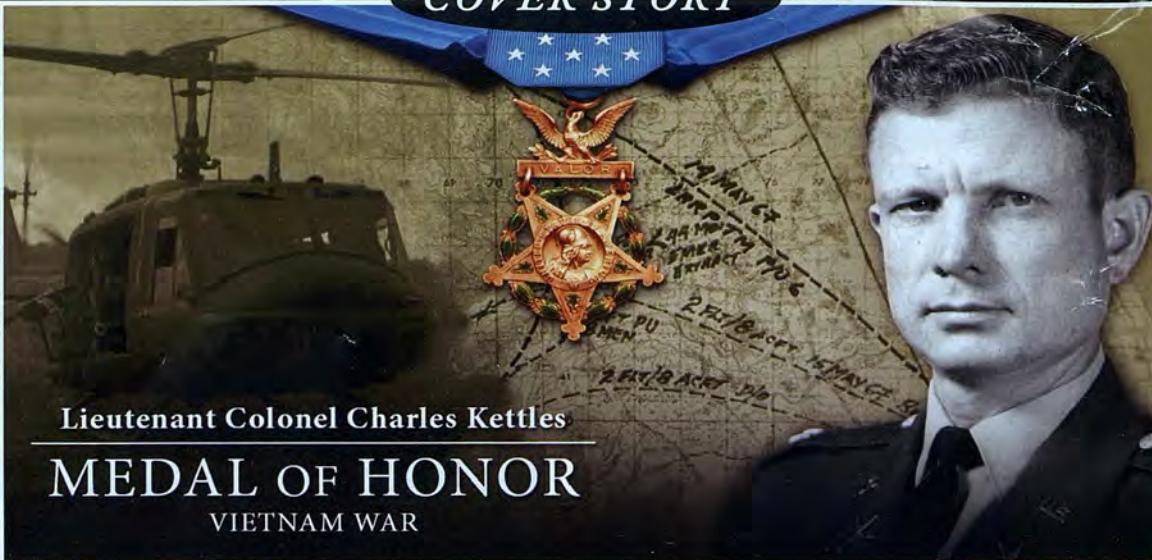
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Lieutenant Colonel Charles Kettles
MEDAL OF HONOR
VIETNAM WAR

Foreword: Late in his life Charles S. Kettles was awarded the Medal of Honor after a review of the actions that were originally recognized with the Distinguished Service Cross. Based on the number of friends/colleagues and fellow American Huey VHPA chapter members who submitted photos and links to articles and his obituary, it was apparent Charles was well respected for reasons beyond his award. An award he had the honor of wearing for a short three years. His legacy was established long before then.

Kettles, Charles S., USA LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 54CL; RVN: 67 176 AHC, 67 HHC 1 BDE 101 ABN, 69-70 121 AHC; Callsign Tiger 6.

Charles S. Kettles passed away peacefully at his home in Ypsilanti, MI on January 21, 2019, surrounded by his loving family. Charlie was born on January 9, 1930 in Ypsilanti, MI to Cora and Grant Kettles (a pilot in World Wars I and II). In 1949, Charlie received his high school diploma from Edison Institute at Greenfield Village in Dearborn, MI. It was there that he honed his love of flying in the school's flight simulator. Following high-school, he began his higher education at Michigan State Normal College (now Eastern Michigan University) where he studied engineering. He later received his Bachelor of Science degree in business management in 1978 from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio, TX and his Master of Science in Industrial Technology from Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti, MI in 1979.

In 1951, during the Korean War, Charlie was drafted into the United States Army. He completed Officer Candidate School at Ft. Knox, KY and was commissioned on February 28, 1953. He attended Army Aviation School before serving active tours of duty in Japan and Thailand. In 1956, he retired from active duty and established a Ford dealership with his brother, Dick Kettles. With the Army in great need of helicopter pilots, Charlie volunteered for active duty in 1963. He

Many helicopter pilots from all branches performed bravely under difficult to near impossible conditions. That very fact likely limited recognition for many of them, because they made these challenges appear to be "business as usual." LTC Kettles was doing his job as he believed necessary for his fellow soldiers. In so doing, however, he took extraordinary risks due to the conditions created by the enemy situation. No one would fault any pilot for assessing the chances of success as extremely unlikely- but not this pilot.

~Tom Kirk

attended helicopter transition training at Ft. Wolters, TX. During a tour of duty in France in 1965, he trained to pilot the famous UH-1D "Huey". In 1966, at Ft. Benning, GA, he was assigned to the 176th Aviation Company and deployed to Vietnam (Feb-Nov 1967).

During this tour he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his heroic actions on 15 May 1967. This was upgraded to the Medal of Honor in July 2016. He served a second tour in Vietnam from Oct 1969 – Oct 1970. He was then stationed at Ft. Sam Houston, TX, serving as the Aviation Team Chief & Readiness Coordinator supporting the Army Reserve and remained in San Antonio until his retirement in 1978. LTC Kettles' awards and decorations include the Medal of Honor in 2016 for his actions in Vietnam on 15 May 1967, as well as the Legion of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, twenty-seven Air Medals, along with various other awards and citations. Following his retirement from the Army, Charlie moved back to Ypsilanti, MI. He was an active member of the Ypsilanti community – he served on the city council and developed the aviation program at Eastern Michigan University College of Technology. He was active in the local Kiwanis, as well as the Capt. C. Robert Arvin Educational Fund of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 2408. Charlie is survived by his loving wife of over 40 years, Catherine "Ann" (Cleary) (Heck) Kettles.

The Career of Eugene Frank Jones

Foreword: The obituary for Eugene Frank Jones was published in the Sep/Oct issue.

As a matter of policy, his non-member status relegated the notice to a one-line entry.

His contribution to Army Aviation, however, deserves to be recognized.

~Tom Kirk

The late Eugene Frank Jones, known to all as "Frank" was born in Dayton Ohio in 1926.

He was drafted into the US Army upon graduation from high school in 1944. After an injury sustained in a parachute jump in the Pacific he was assigned to General Douglas MacArthur's staff. He was a witness to the signing of the Japanese surrender on the USS Missouri and served an extended tour in Japan as a result of MacArthur's decision to keep his staff intact as he ruled Japan, returning to the United States in 1946. Frank returned to Ohio and attended Wilmington College. It was there that he met Edna Streeter whom he married in 1948.

Frank worked as a self-employed painter, drummer and race car driver. Ultimately, however, he and Edna decided in 1952 that a return to the US Army was in order. Initially, he returned to Japan where he served in the intelligence service, on assignment, sometimes for days or weeks, without contact with his family. He never discussed his classified missions but was willing to tell that the most scared he was in his life was the time he spent as a "deserter" in China during the Korean conflict. He described his intelligence service as a great job, just not for a married man. Given the long periods of time out of contact with his family, he requested reassignment.

In 1956, as a Master Sergeant, he wrangled an appointment to



One of the XH-40 prototypes, flown by Frank, restored. Photo William Ready



WOC Jones next to the OH-23. Photo William Ready

flight school despite the fact that he was too old and wore glasses, emerging as a Warrant Officer in 1957. His initial assignment took him to Ft. Sill, and a second to Ft Rucker where he was assigned to the Transportation Aircraft Test and Support Activity (TATSA).

Frank took delivery of the first UH-1 (Huey) helicopter from Bell Helicopter and was part of a team of test pilots who flew two Hueys one thousand hours each in eighty-two days, one of his proudest achievements. "Fly, sleep, eat breakfast, fly, sleep, eat breakfast was my life and I loved it." In addition to the Huey, he was qualified to fly thirteen other helicopters, among them the French Djinn and the CH-54.

In 1964, at Ft. Sill with the 1st Aerial Artillery Group (Provisional) he was involved in testing the concept of CH-34s armed with rocket pods. He deployed to Vietnam as a member of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) in 1965, serving as a maintenance test pilot and as one of a handful of carrier qualified US Army pilots. He returned to Ft. Sill, OK in 1966 where he served as personal pilot for BG Charles Brown. He returned to Vietnam in 1968, again serving as a maintenance officer and test pilot. Upon his return to Ft. Sill in 1969 he again served as MG Brown's pilot. In 1972, faced with a third tour of duty to Vietnam Frank analyzed his life: Paratrooper in World War II, intelligence assignments, one in China, during the Korean conflict and two tours in Vietnam. He decided that another tour to a war zone was unacceptable and retired as a CW4 in 1972. Among his awards were the Air Medal with six oak leaf clusters and one V device and the Bronze Star.

Frank was past president of the Washington chapter of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, a trustee of the Montesano, WA Elks, a founding member of the Montesano AmVets, member of the Eagles, Combat Helicopter Pilots Association, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Military Order of the Cootie, American Legion, La Societe des Quarante Hommes et Huit Chevaux (The Forty and Eight), Military Officers Association of America and Disabled American Veterans.

Story edited from information supplied by Frank's son-in-law William Ready.



Frank with the Washington State VHPA (front row third from left). Photo Washington VHPA

Out of the Darkness, Into the Fire

The Untold Story of Night Hawk

Helicopter Team at Firebase Mary Ann

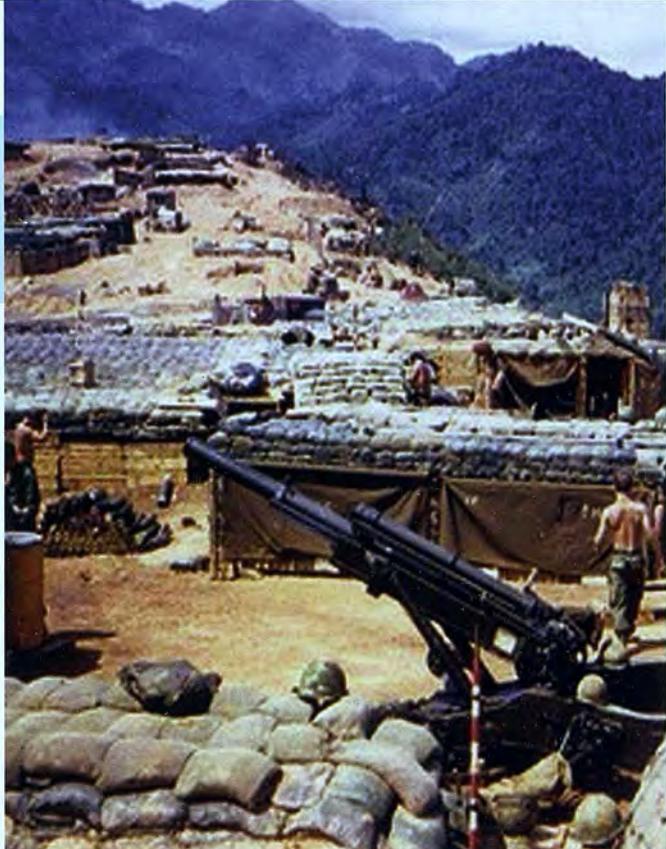
"The soldier, above all other people, prays for peace, for he must suffer and bear the deepest wounds and scars of war."

~ Douglas MacArthur

It's been 48 years since the battle and consequent tragedy at Firebase Mary Ann. The events of that night, March 27th into March 28th, 1971, are forever embedded in my memory. As the night began, I had no way of knowing that within hours, I'd be part of a mission that would extract more than thirty wounded soldiers and the bodies of a dozen dead from what remained of Firebase Mary Ann. The following is an abbreviated narrative of that mission.

Late on the night of March 27, 1971, Firebase Mary Ann, Quang Tin Province, I Corps South Vietnam, came under an intense mortar, rifle fire and tear gas attack. Viet Cong sappers had penetrated the wire perimeter and begun throwing satchel charges into the bunkers of American soldiers. All too quickly, 30 of our soldiers were dead and more than 80 wounded.

Loren Leonberger and I, both Warrant Officer 1 in rank, were on



LZ Mary Ann 1970.

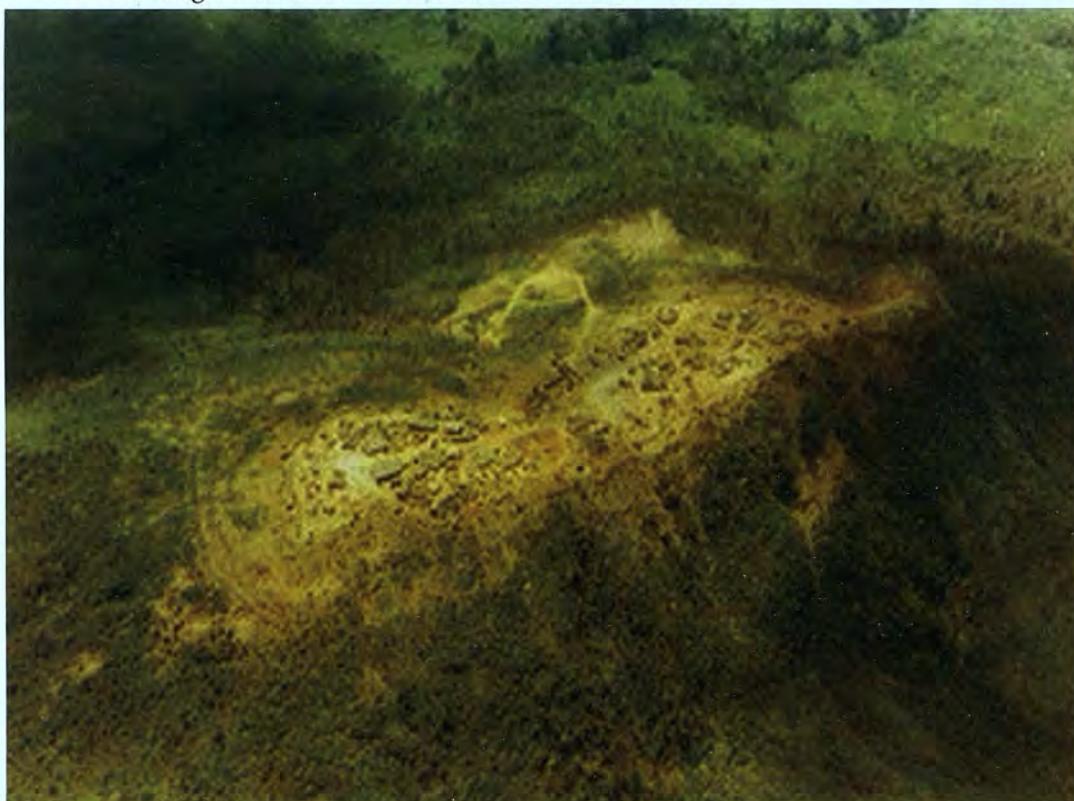
standby at Firebase Hawk Hill located 22.5 nautical miles northwest of Chu Lai. Our usual Night Hawk mission was on hold because of fog that had settled in early that evening. The restricted visibility kept from navigating the mountainous region that was our designated area of operation. Captain Norman Hayes, Aircraft Commander and Night Hawk Mission Commander, would routinely fly the gun helicopter (low bird). Loren and I would fly the chase, command, control and flare helicopter (high bird).

I can still hear the first frantic cries for help from the TOC (Tactical Operations Center) at Firebase Mary

Ann. Captain Hayes and I couldn't believe what the radio operator on the base was telling us. The soldiers at Firebase Mary Ann were being overrun and fighting for their lives.

We immediately rallied our crews. I buckled into the right pilot seat, cranked our helicopter and within minutes we were both airborne, Captain Hayes in the lead. We lifted off into fog that quickly went from bad to worse. Hayes turned eastbound towards the ocean to gain altitude and we climbed until we were on top of the fog. The sky was overcast. I remember seeing only a few stars and no moon.

I followed Captain Hayes in close formation, making sure to keep his aircraft in sight. We turned to the southwest and leveled off at about 2,500 feet above sea level. We knew Firebase Mary Ann sat at around 850 feet above sea level. It was surrounded by mountains that reached up to 2,000 feet.



LZ Mary Ann Aerial View.

I was on the controls while Loren was working radios and coordinating artillery fire and illumination rounds from LZ Mildred. At 15 miles out, I could see the illumination rounds igniting over Mary Ann. This let us adjust our heading and fly direct toward the fight on the ground. As we closed the distance, we could see an increasing glow through the clouds and fog. This glow was from the flames at the fire base below.

Captain Hayes called for artillery to cease fire. I closed the distance between our aircraft as we descended into the fog and clouds of smoke. Making right turns in close formation, we spiraled down into obscuration.

We broke out of the fog at about 100 feet above Mary Ann. The 40 million candle power metal arc search light, mounted next to the minigun on Captain Hayes' ship, clearly revealed numerous sappers, now scurrying to the trenches. Their efforts to fall back through the wire and into the tree lines now paramount. I'm convinced they were shocked to see our two ships descending out of the darkness and into the fire.

Mary Ann was burning. We were flying through smoke and tear gas, making it difficult to see or breathe. In a slow orbit, Hayes immediately engaged the enemy. The intense fire power of the minigun, M60 machine gun and .50 cal on the Captain's bird forced the sappers to retreat. They scrambled to escape. Some of the enemy were caught and killed inside the concertina wire.

On the third or fourth orbit, Hayes's mini-gatling gun malfunctioned. We later learned the bullet feed tray connecting the gun to the ammunition box holding 6000, 7.62 mm rounds spilt into two pieces. The minigun was now useless.

We watched as Hayes kicked his helicopter out of trim to fly sideways so his crew could fire at the enemy with the ship's M60 and .50 caliber machine guns. One of the other crew members was pitching hand grenades out the right side of the aircraft. All the while we were flying in and out of caustic clouds of smoke and tear gas.

I closed the distance between our ships to provide additional M60 machine gun fire. Both ships were orbiting Mary Ann in a low and slow, almost hovering maneuver. At times we found ourselves dodging extinguished parachute flares. Loren had ordered artillery fire from Firebase Mildred to move illumination flares farther out from

Mary Ann to keep the burned-out flares from crashing onto our rotor blades. We continued to orbit the firebase, alert for falling debris.

My crew maintained suppressive fire with M-60 machine guns, while pitching hand grenades at the sappers. After several low-level orbits, there was a break in enemy fire. We could see our soldiers rallying the wounded near a PSP (perforated steel planking) helicopter pad. Next to the pad was a burning bunker that used to be the TOC. I made a sharp right pedal turn and abruptly landed the helicopter on the pad. Loren immediately directed our crew chief and door gunner to unload the M24 parachute flares to make room for the wounded. Without hesitation they rushed to help load the injured soldiers. Some were conscious. Most were not.

Enemy tracer rounds from an automatic rifle whizzed by our right flank. An explosion went off ten yards at our 3 o'clock position. A wave of smoke and dust from the explosion engulfed our helicopter,

filling the cockpit. I gasped as I inhaled toxins that burned my nose and throat. Loren was choking and wiping his eyes. Our crew chief and door gunner, who were loading wounded, were knocked to their knees by the force of the blast. Debris slammed into the right side of our helicopter.

Maintaining focus, and with the ship fully loaded with eight to ten wounded, I pulled pitch. The machine jumped off the pad. With Firebase Mary Ann surrounded by higher ground, I

knew we had to clear the terrain quickly. I nosed the aircraft in a dive over the river to gain airspeed. This maneuver gave the aircraft the power it needed to increase our speed and gain altitude as quickly as possible.

As we lifted above the fog, I turned toward the 91st Evac Hospital, Chu Lai, which was 35 nautical miles due east. Enroute, Loren called for additional helicopters to aid with mass casualty evacuation. It was disappointing, to say the least, when we later learned that largely because of the adverse weather and the dark of night, there wouldn't be any immediate helicopter support. Hayes wouldn't get gunship support. We wouldn't get medevac support. It was up to us.

Working alone, we made two more lifts to evacuate the wounded, extracting eight to ten injured soldiers on each trip. The second evacuation almost proved to be catastrophic. As I lifted off the pad, a 50-



Hayes and Silva 1970.



Memorial.

pound M24 parachute flare popped the parachute. The flare ignited to the right front, underneath our Huey. The flash of light temporarily blinded both Loren and me. I held the controls steady as the parachute ballooned up then fell under the ship. Loren hadn't been looking directly forward and was able to shake off the blindness first. He took the controls and flew our aircraft out of a steep dive. It was divine providence that the aircraft was over a river surrounded by high ground. Loren saved our lives. I regained my vision a short time later.

Just before sunrise, we returned to Mary Ann for the fourth and final time. We were advised to land and shut down near the resupply pad on the west side of the firebase. Loren, the crew, and I watched in quiet anguish as 10 to 13 dead soldiers were loaded onto our aircraft. Some were in body bags, but most were not.

Loren took the controls and we departed Firebase Mary Ann for the final time. Once again, we flew the 35 nautical miles to Chu Lai. Four soldiers from Grave Registration were waiting at the Ky Ha pad to gather our dead from the helicopter. Loren, crew chief, door gunner and I sat on a small berm with tears in our eyes watching as soldiers from Grave Registration carefully and gently removed each of the dead from our aircraft.

A runner came to us while on the pad and advised us that our A Company Commander, 123rd Aviation Battalion, wanted us to stand down and return to our ramp. Back at base, as the aircraft rotor blades

came to a stop, our Company Commander and several A Company personnel gathered around our Huey. All were guardedly curious to learn about the firefight and evacuation at Mary Ann.

Maintenance personnel were concerned about fluid dripping from the belly of our helicopter. The fluid turned out to be blood left behind by those who had given their all. The flooring in the helicopter had to be removed and flushed with solvent to clean the aircraft.

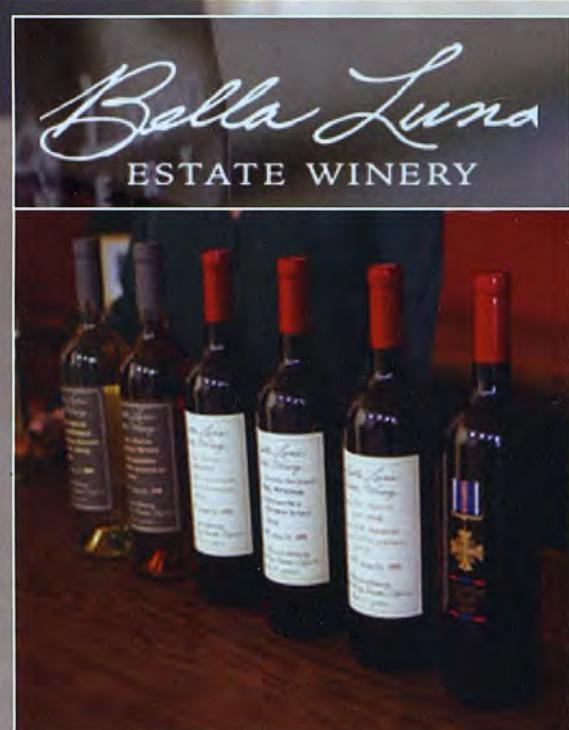
An inspection of the helicopter also revealed pieces of shrapnel in the right door and tail boom, as well as extensive scars and dents on the underside of the main rotor blades.

I have no reservation stating that without Captain Hayes and crew, his skill as an aviator, his leadership, initiative, dedication and superior fire power at Mary Ann, we would not have survived our mission that night. We would not have lived through our struggle to evacuate so many wounded. Many more American soldiers would have died.

*This is my story and my testimony.
I will always remain, Above the Best*

CW4 Michael A. Silva Ret.

For a "boots-on-the-ground" perspective, see "Sappers in the Wire" by Keith W. Nolan



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“What were You Thinking?”

By Tom Kirk

My intention to avoid entering the service by means of the draft was vindicated on the day I was sworn in at Richmond VA.

All those who were in the drafted category were arranged in a long row and given these instructions: “I want you men to count off from one to ten. When the man next to you ‘says ten’ begin the count over from one and continue to do so until everyone has responded.”

At the conclusion of this exercise, everyone who was the tenth in line was directed to step forward.

Once assembled, a Marine NCO appeared and said in a slightly raised but pleasant voice ~“Gentlemen, welcome to the United States Marine Corps”.

In the late spring of 1968, I received some good news and bad news. The United States government had conducted a thorough medical examination and determined I was healthy, free of defects, and had 20/10 eyesight. The bad news, of course, was the very strong likelihood of being drafted and probably sent to Vietnam. The performance of military service did not bother me, nor did the possible destination. My late father, four uncles and an aunt had all enlisted during WW II. The big question was “what will I be doing in Vietnam?”

Task one was avoid the draft, by enlisting. At the time, I was a meat cutter in a local supermarket chain. I thought that was a sure ticket to an assignment as a cook. When I understood how the Army worked, I realized my prediction was unlikely. An experienced auto mechanic could end up as a medic, because he can “fix things.”

That same year, my family had moved to Virginia Beach, VA. I had arranged for a delayed enlistment after acceptance to Warrant Officer Flight Training. That gave me an opportunity to return to Somerville, MA, where I spent my first 19 years, to see friends and share my excitement about becoming a helicopter pilot. My former home was a blue-collar city that bordered Boston and Cambridge, yet was relatively free of anti-war sentiment. Of all the reactions to my decision, two stood out. The first was: “I heard a helicopter pilot would be killed or injured in seven minutes of combat.” I recently read a book titled *Nineteen Minutes to Live* rendering the seven-minute figure wildly pessimistic. The second was: “What were you thinking?”

Actually, it was a decision made after much consideration. Before I visited a recruiter, I narrowed my service of choice to the Army. I had no desire to live aboard a ship; my image of the Marine Corps was one general and about 250,000 riflemen; as for the Air Force, I had no college degree and would not fly. I didn’t see myself in oversized ear protectors waving orange wands at airplanes. When I met with the Army recruiter, I noted all of the patriotic posters, and the impeccably groomed NCO with multiple ribbons. But...I reminded myself, remove all the trappings and I’m dealing with a salesman.

I was informed after finishing the aptitude test I had a very high score and “any specialty you wish is available on that basis.” At that point, he produced a three-ring binder with full page glossies depicting soldiers in various settings. After viewing several options without any reaction from me, he said: “Well here are some that might suit you.” The communications MOS was depicted by a trio

of soldiers (one female) in dress greens standing in front of an IBM mainframe with tape drives the size of man-hole covers in a spotless room. Anyone from my generation had at that point seen many war movies and I played a scene in my head relating to “communications”. It was that of a dirt covered GI trailing a spool of commo wire as he ran amidst exploding mortar rounds – pass. Next up was the Armor Branch, represented by a platoon of tanks racing across a grassy field with colored flags flying and tank commanders standing in the turret with a determined visage. My image – a tank half buried in mud with three guys trying to work on a tread in the pouring rain – pass.

Then...out came the trump card: “How about becoming a helicopter pilot”? I replied I possessed only a high-school education. “No problem, you simply pass a specific aptitude test, take a flight physical and you’re on your way.” I had never met anyone who wanted to be a helicopter pilot when “they grew up” and my total knowledge of the field was gleaned from watching *Whirlybirds*, featuring the adventures of Chuck and PT and Mickey Rooney with his green top hat in the *Bridges of Toko Ri*. There was, however, a recollection of a state-side painted UH-1 thundering along Virginia Beach, just offshore at about 300 feet. The crew in their green visors looked focused as if they were on some important mission. I later realized they were taking in the sights of the beach full of bikini-clad women. In any case, I could see myself in one of those cockpits and needed no further encouragement. As I noted, the recruiter arranged delayed entry. I had until the day following Thanksgiving to report. Although not a factor in my choice, I began to calculate the total time between that point and the completion of flight school. It was over a year! I fantasized about the possibility of having the war in Vietnam concluded by then. Of course, even as late as 1970 we were still involved in a colossal “goat rope” and I was off to Asia.

Sometime in the early 80s the CO of our Army Reserve Medevac Detachment decided Navy underwater cockpit egress training would be beneficial when we deployed (one crew at a time) for annual training in Honduras; where the only advanced medical facility was a hospital ship offshore.

At the end of the day spent in Norfolk, VA I asked my crew and our pilot passengers if they would indulge me while I made a slight detour. The tower at NAS Oceana approved my flight from south to north along Virginia Beach, altitude at my discretion. Hey you never know...

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, current city and state. Line 3, branch of service. Lines 4 to 6, flight class and Vietnam units and served with, if that info is available.

AVIATOR REPORT completed for 20 New Members and covers the period 11-25-18 to 01-31-19

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Blien Jack W. Fairmont Minnesota Army 176 AHC in 67-68 | Grable Bruce W. Pawleys Island South Carolina Army 71-26 147 ASHC in 71-72; 18 CAC in 72 | Peddicord Steve L. ** Hugoton Kansas Army 69-43 116 AHC in 70-71 |
| Carter Tommy T. 'Terry' Pelham Alabama Army 68-19 68-31 54 FAG in 69 | Hoadley David C Canonsburg Pennsylvania Army 68-523 68-43 C/229 AVN 1 CAV in 69-70 | Phelps Gerald E. 'Jerry' Macon North Carolina Army 69-7 C/101 AVN 101 ABN in 69; HHC 3 BDE 101 ABN in 69-70 |
| Dyer Herbert David ** Castroville Texas Army 67-24 190 AHC in 68-69; 388 TC CO in 72-73 | Johns Thomas C ** Avondale Pennsylvania Army 67-24 E/82 ARTY 1 CAV in 68-69 | Reid Eric P. Petaluma California Army 69-14 178 ASHC in 69-70 |
| Fesler William R. Lampasas Texas Army 71-30 114 AHC in 72; 18 CAC in 72; H/17 CAV in 72 | Joiner Jack D 'Jack' ** Roswell Georgia Army 55-FW 60QC HHC/227 AVN 1 CAV in 65-66; 132 ASHC in 67-68; III MAF in 68 | Rudolfs Edward D. ** Lompoc California Marine Corps HMM-365 in 64-65; AIR AMERICA LAOS in 66-74 |
| France Henry S. 'Chip' Orlando Florida Army 70-23 70-21 A/7/17 CAV in 70-71 | Moreno Charles A. 'Tony' Spotsylvania Virginia Army 70-19 70-21 114 AHC in 70-71; 336 AHC in 73- 75 | Scruggs Richard H. 'Rick' Linneus Missouri Army 66-23 66-21 48 AHC in 67-68; A/4/77 ARA 101 ABN in 70-71 |
| Frank Robert A Leavenworth Kansas Army 69-44 69-40 F/1/9 CAV in 71-72 | Nguyen Thung ** Arlington Texas Vietnamese Air Force 70-26V 213 SQDN VNAF in 70-72; 233 SQDN VNAF in 70-72; 213 SQDN VNAF in 73-75; 245 SQDN VNAF in 73-75 | Snyder Jack M. San Antonio Texas Army 71-11 71-9 A/101 AVN 101 ABN in 71 |
| | | Spahr David M. ** Alexandria Virginia Army 68-513 68-23 HHC 11 BDE 23 INF in 68-69; 174 AHC in 69 |
| | | White Dennis W. ** Frisco Texas Army 67-24 DIV ARTY 25 INF in 68-69 |

Letters to the Editor

Let me Tell You about K.C.

I got out in '71, but was reluctant to join any service organization, even the VHPA. In 1995, one of only two men that I had stayed in touch with from my time in the Army, Bill Medske, invited me to the reunion in Kansas City. Back then, local members were "volunteered" to organize the reunions and Bill was on one of the committees. As a result, I joined the VHPA and made plans to attend.

Because I had not been in the air since 1971 air travel was unfamiliar to me in 1995. Travelling through Denver, I overlooked the time zone change. I ran along the horizontal escalators to barely make my connection to K.C.

After arriving in Kansas City, Kansas, (who knew?), I caught a shuttle to the hotel (in Missouri). What made that interesting is that I came from the West Coast where six-lane freeways were common. I was on a two-lane interstate highway with no traffic. There were signs welcoming the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots to Kansas City. Along the route the driver asked, "Are any of you the Vietnam helicopter pilots?" A guy in the front of the van said, "Yeah." I spoke up and said "me too." He introduced himself and said he was going to check in and head for the bar. I told him I'd meet him there. We sat in the hotel bar until way past closing (maybe 3 am) and retired to our rooms only to be awakened by some knucklehead in a Chinook doing multiple turns around the hotel around 5 AM! They brought in some helicopters for us to touch and feel. I am sure the pilots knew what they were doing.

I remember travelling by bus to Parkland and participating in a Fourth of July parade. The streets in this small-town America were lined with people waving the American flag, wearing American flag clothing and cheering us on. We were way past our glory days but they were cheering us! I had never experienced anything like this before.

That reunion produced fond memories of great concerts and events. One of the most vivid is of a meeting with hotel security and my friend, Bill. The sheriff said, "Bill, we've never had as many men come to our town and drink so much without a single problem." There was a bit of silence before Bill responded, "Well, we're too old to fight." These days most of us are in bed by 10 PM.

That event renewed my appreciation of belonging to a common group. There was no crying over spilt milk, that I expected. I found instead: comradeship, old friends and new friends. Although we all had different experiences in Vietnam, we each shared a common bond. No one had to speak about it and there was an inherent respect.

Three or four months after that reunion, I received my very first directory. I was a brand-new member. For a first timer, the directory was totally engrossing. Two hours later I was still standing at the counter, perusing the volume when the phone rang. When I answered, a voice said, "Randy?" I was instantly taken back 26 years

for I knew who it was; Wally, my A/C who saved my life! He got me out of a crashed Cobra before the dang thing blew up! Wally had been a member of VHPA for a long time but I had just joined and was listed in the directory for the first time. Wally found me! We met at the following reunion and have been in touch ever since.

That's what these reunions are really about. Meeting old friends, making new friends and being among a group of men who did extraordinary things with helicopters. I am looking forward to Kansas City 2019.

Life member Randy Duncan

Randy, you have captured and related the very essence of our reunions. There is no other venue, I can imagine where the presence of old "young" men is more enjoyable. ~ Tom Kirk

FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

You may or may not have noted changes in the masthead for my email and the change of my telephone listing for my signature block... I no longer have a land-line, the cell is unchanged. I will be switching my Internet provider resulting in a new email. In order to make it simple, please contact me using aviator@vhpa.org

Regardless of when I switch and what my new email becomes, this will preclude any problems. The VHPA email will automatically be passed through to me. Tom Hirschler's contact information remains unchanged.

Approximately a year ago, Tom Hirschler and I discussed the number of articles available to us at the time. It seemed as if we would run "dry" if the submissions did not increase. Happily, they did and in fact at a rate that surprised us. I am not naïve enough to attribute the increase to my written and personal (during reunions) outreach. I think all of us realize, the needs of the Aviator aside, these memories are likely to lose the clarity of detail and emotion present even many years afterwards. Now, however, is not just a number of years – it is a really long time. It certainly prompted me to select a few of those within my grasp and write them down.

Both Tom and I appreciate all of those who have contributed their input over the years and especially now, when we know it is increasingly difficult to recall those days. Many have contributed more than once. My hope is all who are able will continue to make the effort to relate their past experiences until we all reach the age when we say "what war?"

Tom Kirk

LOOKING FOR

Anyone who served with David McClure McElliott.

I was given your information to help me and my family with gathering more information on my uncle's time in service. I have his DD 214 and he was with 1/9 CAV and it has him in HHT. I know that is most likely not the unit he was assigned since he was a 67A1F. I understand it was common for the 90th Replacement Depot "repple depple" to cut orders sending replacements to the squadron, and then the squadron S-1 shop would further assign individuals on unit orders down to one of the troops. I remember my uncle mentioning that he'd worked on Cobras at some point, but he was a door gunner during Vietnam, sometime during the period of his enlistment (December 1968 to March 1973).

My uncle recently passed (18 January) and we are trying to gather as many facts as possible. He was not one to talk too much about his time there, unless it was the kind of talk you don't have around children. Anything you can provide would be great. If there is anything else you need, please do not hesitate to ask.

Thank You, Paula Bair, USA, SFC Ret.

If you served with David McElliott, or if you recognize his name and can supply what troop he was in and the approximate times he was in country, please email Paula direct

[REDACTED] or reply to Jim Kurtz,
[REDACTED] and I will put her in touch with you.

James Kurtz, Apache 03, 1970-71

The door gunner on Greyhound 22, UH-1 '630 on August 18, 1968.

On the above date, near Hiep Hoa RVN, James D. Eisenhour was the Aircraft Commander of a "Greyhound" ship. James was fatally wounded during his attempt to rescue what everyone thought was one of ours. When he came to a hover in the LZ the aircraft encountered heavy automatic weapons fire. Warrant Officer Eisenhour sustained a single head wound resulting his death. Dwight Olson, Crew Chief on that mission, sustained multiple severe wounds while attempting to protect the aircraft from hostile fire. The Co-Pilot, Garry H. Farmer Major, Infantry and the unit XO sustained minor wounds.

By now many of the players from that mission are gone. My interest rests solely on the shoulders of then Major Garry H. Farmer who was the Co-Pilot. Mr. Farmer remains elusive beyond understanding. Dwight Olson was the Crew-Chief. I have heard many versions of the events that resulted in my Brother's death that day and a plethora of blended accounts. I am also hoping the door-gunner (who

was not injured) may be able to supply some information. If anyone can recall or knows the name of the door-gunner, I would appreciate your making that info available, so I may interview him.

At present I cannot find rank, serial number or unit affiliation for this individual.

Mark A. Eisenhour, GoldStar Brother, [REDACTED]

EMU patches, badges etc.

John Conway the organizer and curator of Helicopter Mememobilia from the Vietnam War (see ad in the issue) is looking for the above items related to the 135 AHC. He does this work on a non-profit basis. Any assistance would be greatly appreciated.

John Conway [REDACTED]

OH-6 Pilot

My name is Mark Benjamin. I am a VHPA life member and I'm writing on behalf of my friend Kurt Grockau. Kurt served with the 1st Brigade, 5th Inf. Div. (Mech). He is looking for the OH-6 LOH pilot that crashed near the Laos/South Vietnam border on February 11th of 1971.

Kurt's platoon, led by CPT Barry Buckley had discovered an NVA weapons cache near the Laotian border, when they were asked to provide a ground party to secure a downed OH-6. The aircraft took fire in Laos and crashed over the border in Vietnam. The assumption was the pilot had not survived.

The team of four: SP4s Gary Beeson, 21, and Kurt Grockau, 20, and a medic SP5 Robert Wood led by their CO, found the pilot alive and extracted him from the wreckage. He was rescued with a jungle penetrator from Dustoff 502. Other aircraft involved were identified as Callsigns: Awards 28, 38, 32, and another aircraft with call sign Songs (number unknown).

If you have information on this OH-6 pilot or know someone who does, contact Kurt Grockau at [REDACTED] or on his cell at [REDACTED] Kurt believes this person has lived in the Arlington, VA area.

Mark Benjamin; 128 AHC, Tomahawk 23

Note: Richard Deer Michigan Chapter VHPA president adds: "Kurt Grockau, has attended a VHPA Michigan Chapter lunch gathering several times and told of this event and has been trying to find the pilot for some time. We have tried to assist him with no luck so far, thus we hope this outreach will succeed".

LOOKING FOR

Pilots who have flown Cobra tail # 67-15469.

Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 467, in Fort Smith AR has the Cobra pictured here, on display at our museum since 2004. We are gathering information to further our ability to tell this "bird's" story. I recently spoke with John Walker at American Huey 367 and he suggested we contact the VHPA.



VHPA archives reflect that this aircraft was delivered in

January, 1968. The record of assignments (based on accident/Incident/battle damage reports) show: August, 1971 A/2/17 CAV 101, Quang Tri; August, 1971 Phu Bai. Known pilots at various times were: CPT HP Hood and WO1 C. Lake.

Sincerely,
Richard Meers; President, VVA Chapter 467

P.S. I was a Radarman on the USS Genesee (a small tanker) in country 1966. Your members burned a lot of our fuel... and they saved our butts several times. It takes two to tango.

UPCOMING REUNIONS

A/2/17 Reunion
A Troop, 2nd Squadron, 17th Cavalry, 101st Airborne Division
Alumni Association

When: May 29-June 2, 2019

Where: El Tropicano hotel 110 Lexington Ave.,
San Antonio, TX. Mention "Alpha Troop" to get discount
(\$109/night). Details and registration are available on the website
at www.alphattroopalumni.com.

Contact: Glen Veno at [REDACTED]
for additional details.

Bravo Troop 7/17th Air Cav
When: 20-23 May 2019

Where: Grand Plaza Hotel, Branson, MO.
All 7/17th Air Cav Personnel Welcome
Contact: Buddy Harp, [REDACTED]
email: [REDACTED] for further information

145th Combat Aviation Battalion
When: 9-13 April 2019

Where: Fort Rucker AL. Hotel arrangements are in progress
Contact: Jim Bodkin, Cell, [REDACTED]
email: [REDACTED]

Please contact Jim for the complete schedule of events/activities.
In addition, he asks 145 CAB veterans to contact any former
"Thunderbirds" for whom you have email addresses.

Distinguished Flying Cross Society
When: 15-19 September 2019
Where: Dayton/Fairborn, OH.

Contact: Warren Eastman: [REDACTED]
email - [REDACTED]

61 AHC - Lucky Stars/Starblazers
When: 7-8 September, 2019

Where: The Zogelman's, College Springs, IA.
Contact/Information: website - www.61ahc.org
Kansas City Mini-Reunion 1300-1700 May 31

ONLINE MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

We are in the process of updating the VHPA web sites. In preparation for switching over to the updated online membership directory at <https://directory.vhpa.org> we need for members to stop relying on their social security numbers for a password. The next time you log on please follow these steps to establish a regular password if you have not already done so. After entering your member number, select the "Use/create password to login" option then click the LOGIN button. If you already have a password, it will ask you to enter it. If you have forgotten your password, click on the link below the entry box. If you have not already established a password, it will ask you to enter your date of birth or city/state to confirm your identity. After entering the requested information click on CONTINUE to then establish a password. Please establish a password by the end of June as social security numbers will no longer be available for use as a password after July 1st.

Gary Roush
webmaster@vhpa.org

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email: [\[REDACTED\]](mailto:)



Ned Crimmin

TSgt, USAF, Ret

USAFSS Intelligence Analyst 1964-74

USAF Admin Supervisor 1974-83

Tours of Duty:

1963-64 Basic Lackland AFB, Tx

1964-68 RAF Chicksands, England

1968-71 NSA Ft. Meade, Md.

1971-74 Osan AB, ROK

1974-83 Vandenberg AFB, Ca

VIETNAM HELICOPTER PILOTS ASSOCIATION SATISFIED CLIENTS

| | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| - Dan Fox | - Bruce Brattain |
| - John Shafer | - James Tinney |
| - John Penny | - Bill Medsker |
| - Lenny Julian | - Pete Rzeminski |
| - Terry Opdahl | - James Oden |
| | - William C. Brooks |

KOREAN WAR VET SATISFIED CLIENT

| |
|--------------------------------------|
| - Kenny Hames Photos of War Tour |
| 1952-53 Heartbreak Ridge & Sugarloaf |

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Unit specific items: Patches, Uniforms,
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WANTED

Helicopter Memorabilia from the Vietnam War

Contact: John Conway

www.vhpamuseum.org

ARMY ~ NAVY ~ AIR FORCE ~ MARINE CORPS
Assault - Cavalry - Trans - Medical Rescue etc.

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References available.

Friends of Vinh Son Orphanage – Kontum, Vietnam – Since 2004

Patrick Leary, FVSO President and VHPA Life Member



FVSO supports about 850 Montagnard children living in seven orphanages in the Kontum/Pleiku area. Founded in 2005 by former servicemen who served in Vietnam's Central Highlands, we are a small group, proud that 100% of all donations go directly to the children and their caregivers. FVSO provides food, medicine, dental care, shelter and higher education. Please feel free to visit our web site for more information.

As a non-profit, all donations are tax deductible (501©3)

To donate, you can reach us at:

Mail: FVSO, P.O. Box 9322-C, Auburn, California 95604-9322

Web: FriendsofVSO.org Email: [\[REDACTED\]](mailto:)

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SPECIAL SECTION



36th REUNION
KANSAS CITY - 28 MAY - 1 JUNE 2019

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

KANSAS CITY ~ 28 MAY-1 JUNE 2019

Updated 06 FEB 2019

**Due to publication lead times, the status of tour availability may have changed in the interim
Please consult our website at: www.VHPA.org for the latest details and to register for the reunion.**

| Time | Event |
|--------------------------|---|
| MONDAY, MAY 27 | |
| 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm | Pre-Registered Packet Pickup |
| 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm | HQ Registration Desk |
| 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm | Welcome Desk |
| 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm | O' Club Open |
| 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm | Vendor Room Open |
| TUESDAY, MAY 28 | |
| 8:00 am - 12:00 pm | HQ Registration Desk |
| 8:00 am - 8:00 pm | Pre-Registered Packet Pickup |
| 8:00 am - 8:00 pm | Welcome Desk |
| 8:00 am - 8:00 pm | Pre-Ordered T-shirt Pick Up |
| 8:30 am - 4:00 pm | Fort Leavenworth & Carousel Museum Tour #1 |
| 9:00 am - 8:00 pm | Vendor Room Open |
| 9:00 am - 10:00 pm | Mini-Reunions/TOCs |
| 9:40 am - 11:45 am | Arabia Steamboat Museum #1 |
| 11:00 am - 11:00 pm | O' Club Open |
| 12:10 pm - 2:45 pm | American Jazz & Negro Leagues Baseball Museum #1 |
| 12:20 pm - 5:00 pm | Wagon Tour of Historic Independence #1 |
| 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm | KC Brewery, Distillery, and Wine Tour #1 |
| 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm | HQ Registration Desk |
| 4:00 pm - 5:30 pm | Kansas City Gangster Tour #1 |
| 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm | HQ Registration Desk |
| 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm | Early Bird Gathering |
| CANCELLED | |
| WEDNESDAY, MAY 29 | |
| 7:00 am - 4:00 pm | Golf |
| 7:30 am - 9:00 am | Breakfast w/speaker - John Clark |
| 8:00 am - 11:30 am | HQ Registration Desk |
| 8:00 am - 8:00 pm | Pre-Registered Packet Pickup |
| 8:00 am - 8:00 pm | Welcome Desk |
| 8:00 am - 8:00 pm | Pre-Ordered T-shirt Pick Up |
| 8:30 am - 4:00 pm | Fort Leavenworth & Carousel Museum Tour #2 |
| 9:00 am - 10:30 am | Kansas City Trolley Tour #1 |
| 9:00 am - 4:00 pm | Quilters' Hamilton Outing |
| 9:00 am - 8:00 pm | Vendor Room Open |
| 9:00 am - 10:00 pm | Mini Reunions / TOCs |
| 9:40 am - 1:15 pm | WWI Museum & Memorial Tour #1 |
| 11:00 am - 11:00 pm | O' Club Open |
| 11:10 am - 2:45 pm | WWI Museum & Memorial Tour #2 |
| 12:30 pm - 5:00 pm | HQ Registration Desk |
| 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm | KC Brewery, Distillery, and Wine Tour #3 |
| 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm | Kansas City Trolley Tour #2 |
| 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm | Banquet Seating |
| 4:50 pm - 10:30 pm | Kansas Belle Dinner Train (Select Meal Choice) |
| 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm | HQ Registration Desk |
| SOLD OUT | |

Updated 06 FEB 2019

Due to publication lead times, the status of tour availability may have changed in the interim

*Please consult our website at: **WWW.VHPA.org** for the latest details and to register for the reunion.*

| Time | Event |
|-------------------------|---|
| THURSDAY, MAY 30 | |
| 7:30 am - 9:00 am | KIA/MIA Gold Star Breakfast |
| 8:00 am - 11:00 am | HQ Registration Desk |
| 8:00 am - 5:00 pm | Pre-Registered Packet Pickup |
| 8:00 am - 5:00 pm | Welcome Desk |
| 8:00 am - 5:00 pm | Pre-Ordered T-shirt Pick Up |
| 9:00 am - 5:00 pm | Vendor Room Open |
| 9:00 am - 10:00 pm | Mini-Reunions/TOCs |
| 9:30 am - 11:00 am | SOLD OUT Kansas City Trolley Tour #3 |
| 9:30 am - 11:00 am | SOLD OUT Kansas City Gangster Tour #2 |
| 11:00 am - 11:00 pm | O' Club Open |
| 11:30 am - 1:30 pm | Kansas City BBQ - College of the Ozarks Chorale |
| 12:00 pm - 5:00 pm | HQ Registration Desk |
| 12:20 pm - 5:00 pm | SOLD OUT Wagon Tour of Historic Independence #2 |
| 1:25 pm - 5:00 pm | SOLD OUT WWI Museum & Memorial Tour #3 |
| 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm | Quilters Show & Tell |
| 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm | KC Brewery, Distillery, and Wine Tour #2 |
| 2:10 pm - 4:15 pm | Arabia Steamboat Museum #3 |
| 2:30 pm - 4:00 pm | Kansas City Trolley Tour #4 |
| 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm | Banquet Seating |
| 3:10 pm - 5:45 pm | American Jazz & Negro Leagues Baseball Museum #2 |
| 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm | VHPA/Texas Tech Legacy Presentation |
| 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm | 1st Time Attendee Reception |
| 7:30 pm - 10:00 pm | Welcome Reception |
| FRIDAY, MAY 31 | |
| 7:30 am - 8:45 am | Pre-Memorial Breakfast |
| 8:00 am - 11:00 am | Consolidated HQ Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts |
| 8:00 am - 1:00 pm | Welcome Desk |
| 9:00 am - 9:30 am | Memorial Service |
| 9:45 am - 12:45 pm | Spouse Event - BBQ Sauce Competition |
| 10:00 am - 12:30 pm | Annual Business Meeting |
| 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm | Consolidated Reg, Pre-Reg & T-Shirts |
| 12:30 pm - 11:00 pm | O' Club Open |
| 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm | Mini-Reunions / TOCs |
| 1:10 pm - 3:15 pm | SOLD OUT Arabia Steamboat Museum #2 |
| 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm | Banquet Seating |
| 5:45 pm - 10:30 pm | Closing Banquet w/Entertainment - TBD |

QUILTERS' SHOW AND TELL

There is a "little extra" going on this year at the Reunion in Kansas City. There will be the usual display of quilts in the vendors room; the quilters' Show and Tell; and the presentation of quilts to the pre-selected veterans of the VHPA. The little extra is the day trip to Missouri Star Quilt Shop in Hamilton, MO.

The quilts will be on display in the vendors room Monday and Tuesday of the reunion. If you are curious or have any questions, I would love to talk to you and answer those questions.

Wednesday, May 29 the "little extra" is the trip to Missouri Star Quilt Co. The bus will depart the hotel at 9:00 a.m. and arrive in Hamilton about 10:15. If there is a project you are wanting to make, you have 13 shops of which to make your selection. For non-quilters you will be able to enjoy the Man Cave with lounge chairs to watch TV or play pool. Lunch will be at your leisure and own expense. The bus will need to depart Hamilton at 2:30 and arrive back at the hotel early enough for anyone interested in attending

the evening excursion on the Kansas Belle Dinner Train.

Thursday, May 30, will be the presentation of five quilts to pre-selected veterans. Everyone is invited and welcome to attend and talk to the recipients of the quilts as well as the quilters themselves. Show and Tell will follow the presentation, many will have projects they have completed as well as blocks for next year's quilts.

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

1. Color scheme: red, white and blue.
2. The blocks must be 12 1/2" x 12 1/2" unfinished. Please use 1/4" seams in your assembly.
3. Block design is your choice, there are many to choose from, Rail Fence, 9-patch, Grandmother's Flower Garden, Appliquéd 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.
4. 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.
5. Please bring your block(s) to the 2019 VHPA Reunion. If you are unable to attend you may send the block(s) to me, Kathleen Sherfey, [REDACTED] Shawnee, KS 66216

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Despite the advice of the oft used military phrase: "never volunteer for anything." Our Annual Reunion needs volunteers. Assistance is required for member check in, handing out t-shirts, and staffing the help desk.

It is actually a great way to contact old friends and make new ones. We all have some connection with each other in that we served together, trained together, or have another "small world" story that ties us together.

The volunteer schedule can be found on line with other registration information on the VHPA website. You can pick dates and times that fit with your schedule. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

If you can't locate the schedule on the website, you can contact me at [REDACTED] or by email at [REDACTED]

Thanks again and have a great reunion!
From Gary Jones, Volunteer Coordinator



Oral History Interviews

During the KC Reunion

Tuesday May 28 ~ Thursday May 30

As we've done for seven + years, Martin Madert will be digitally recording Interviews. In Atlanta all 25 90-minute slots were taken. FYI: You need to prepare yourself for your Interview. Please request the release and guideline forms ahead of time. Contact VHPA member Mike Law to schedule your slot and obtain the papers.

**Mike Law: calendar@vhpa.org or
830-730-0950**

*Are you coming to
the KC Reunion?*

*Do you have
slides or photos
you want scanned?*



Find Bennie Koon in the Vendor Room!

Bennie is a member of the VHPA Calendar Committee.

*A note to all
VHPA members
attending the
Reunion*

Bennie Koon, a member of the VHPA Calendar Committee, will be in the Vendor Room with his slide conversion equipment. Be sure to bring any slides / photos you wish digitized, to the reunion. For more information about his services contact him at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

VHPA Scholarship Eligibility

It's time to start getting your descendants working on their VHPA Scholarship applications. Our Association has seven \$3,000 scholarships that will be awarded in late July. Since Quad-A manages the VHPA funds, our applicants are eligible for their awards. Below is the list of the requirements to apply and receive one of our scholarships.

The applicant must be the descendant of:

- 1) A Pilot who flew helicopters in Vietnam/Southeast Asia and is a dues current member of VHPA at the time of application.
- 2) A Pilot who flew helicopters in Vietnam/Southeast Asia, has passed away after 1984 and was a dues current member of VHPA at the time of his passing.
- 3) A Pilot who died flying helicopters in Vietnam/Southeast Asia from 1961-1975.
- 4) A Pilot who flew helicopters in Vietnam/Southeast Asia from 1961-1975, returned and died after his tour and before VHPA was formed in 1984.
- 5) The dues current VHPA member or applicant must be a member of Quad-A at the time of application. The applicant can be an associate member.

Recently the Executive Council was approached by a lady whose brother had flown helicopters in Vietnam,

returned home and died prior to the formation of VHPA in 1984. She asked if his descendants were eligible to apply. It was decided they were. This year we were contacted by the widow of a Marine Pilot that flew helicopters in Vietnam in 1968, returned to the states and died in a crash in 1970. She asked if her grandson was eligible to apply. We were pleased to inform her he qualified. If you know a family with the same situation, please make them aware of this policy.

Applications are due on or before April 30. There are no exceptions. Feel free to call Tom Payne or Mike Sheuerman with any questions.

Quad-A receives approximately 1500 applications each year and can use all the help it can get to review applications. Last year nine VHPA members assisted with the process. Each volunteer is asked to review and rate at least 50 applications, some volunteers do more. It is hoped each application will be reviewed by three to five different volunteers. If you would like to help please contact Sue Stokes at Quad-A, [REDACTED] or Mike Sheuerman at VHPA Scholarship, [REDACTED]

Thanks in advance for helping.

Mike Sheuerman, Scholarship Committee

THE BEST ABOVE THE BEST

This story is about a heroic sortie flown during our Cambodian Incursion of 1970. It is a story of a Wobbly 1 Ace who performed magnificently in the most trying of circumstances.

For those non-Vietnam Aviators who might be reading this, a Tactical Emergency or "Tac E" is an unscheduled mission that takes priority over all aerial missions. In the First Air Cavalry Division, a Tac E would only be made if the declarer was under attack and resupply was necessary to repress the attacker. We received an inordinate number of Tac E missions during the Cambodian Incursion. The favorite time for an NVA attack was just before midnight. The attack typically began with a rocket and/or mortar barrage, followed by an infantry or sapper assault on the fire base perimeter. Our operations generally got the Tac E sometime between midnight to one o'clock in the morning, and we always scheduled standby pilots to eliminate confusion in the middle of the night. As commanding officer of Charlie Company, 228th, I was notified of all Tac E missions.

Around midnight on June 24, 1970, our operations received a call from the Division TOC stating a Tac E had been declared at Fire Base Bronco in Cambodia, and beehive artillery rounds, already rigged in a sling load, were to be carried to our flight line to expedite delivery. Subsequent sorties, if required, would be picked up and delivered from Song Be which was in closer proximity to LZ Bronco. The designated aircraft commander for this mission was WO Larry Covey. Larry was a WO1, but well experienced. He along with other WOs, namely Steve Lindholm and John Deering, were considered among the best aircraft commanders in our Chinook company. The weather that night was abysmal. It was, in fact, zero-zero weather – as in a ceiling almost down to the deck and zilch for visibility. I watched WO Covey during his briefing in operations and he appeared as calm as if he were receiving a mission for a routine ash and trash milk run on a clear day. We talked about use of the transponder and getting a radar vector, but finding FSB Bronco was going to be the challenge. If the weather there was as bad as it was at our home base, Phuoc Vinh, then it would be difficult at best.

The transmission of the Tac E did use words like "breaching the perimeter" and "expending last available" so this was a true Tac E and our effort could save lives. Our takeoff was, in fact, delayed because the truck delivering the sling load of ammunition got sidetracked and missed a turn because of poor visibility. I went with the flight crew to the flight line and waited for the delivery of the ammo. The ammo was off-loaded right in front of the aircraft's revetment so that WO Covey could just taxi forward, lift to a hover, hook up, and go. I will never forget that takeoff. The grimes light disappeared in the overcast and fog almost immediately.

Our Tac E mission was underway, and it would be about thirty-minute flight to LZ Bronco. We monitored his flight northbound from our radios in operations. WO Covey had gotten a radar vector from Saigon's ATC, Paris Control. That would get him and his crew to the grid square. Getting down to terra-firma would be the problem. The terrain around LZ Bronco was not flat like most of III Corps. There were plateaus and hills, and that would present a problem when an approach, most likely under IMC conditions, was attempted into the fire support base. Then too, besides the weather, if Bronco was under attack, he could expect enemy fire upon his approach.

He arrived in the vicinity of LZ Bronco, but was still flying totally on instruments with no visual contact with anything but the instruments in his cockpit. We could not pick up the ground FM radio traffic at Bronco but could hear some of Covey's radio transmissions as he was attempting to find the fire support base. It was evident Bronco was still under attack, and they were using flares to illuminate the perimeter. WO Covey could not see the flares, so resorted to using a FM homing instrument technique in the Chinook's array of navigational equipment. The vertical indicator would deviate right or left in the direction of a keyed FM mike on the ground. We knew he was using this navigational method because we heard him continually directing the ground radio operator to key his mike. We called it a poor man's ILS, but it found a lot of LZs during periods of low visibility when popped smoke was useless. It worked this night for WO Covey. We heard him transmit he had flares in sight and was descending toward Bronco. We cheered in our operations for his success, skill, and intestinal fortitude.

What we did not know was that he successfully delivered his load under fire and received some battle damage, although the bullet holes in the aircraft would not be detected until the aircraft returned to Phuoc Vinh. On the way to Song Be to pick up another load of artillery ammo, WO Covey heard a distress call from an AH-1G Cobra pilot who was above the overcast, hopelessly lost, and running low on fuel. WO Covey located the AH-1G, flew to it, then led the Cobra safely to Song Be. When he returned to Bronco, the attack had been repelled, and after releasing his load, he returned to Phuoc Vinh.

What WO Covey had accomplished was phenomenal. He had delivered needed ammunition to a fire support base under attack and in the absolute worst weather imaginable. He may have saved the day for Bronco; he certainly saved the day for a Cobra pilot. For his heroism while participating in aerial flight, WO Lawrence E. Covey was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross.

Tragically, Larry Covey would be killed in a civilian helicopter accident in Medford, OR, almost eighteen years later. But, in Vietnam, on that June night in 1970, Larry Covey was the best among the best, flying above and supporting the best.

*Bob Lanzotti
Crimson Tide 6*



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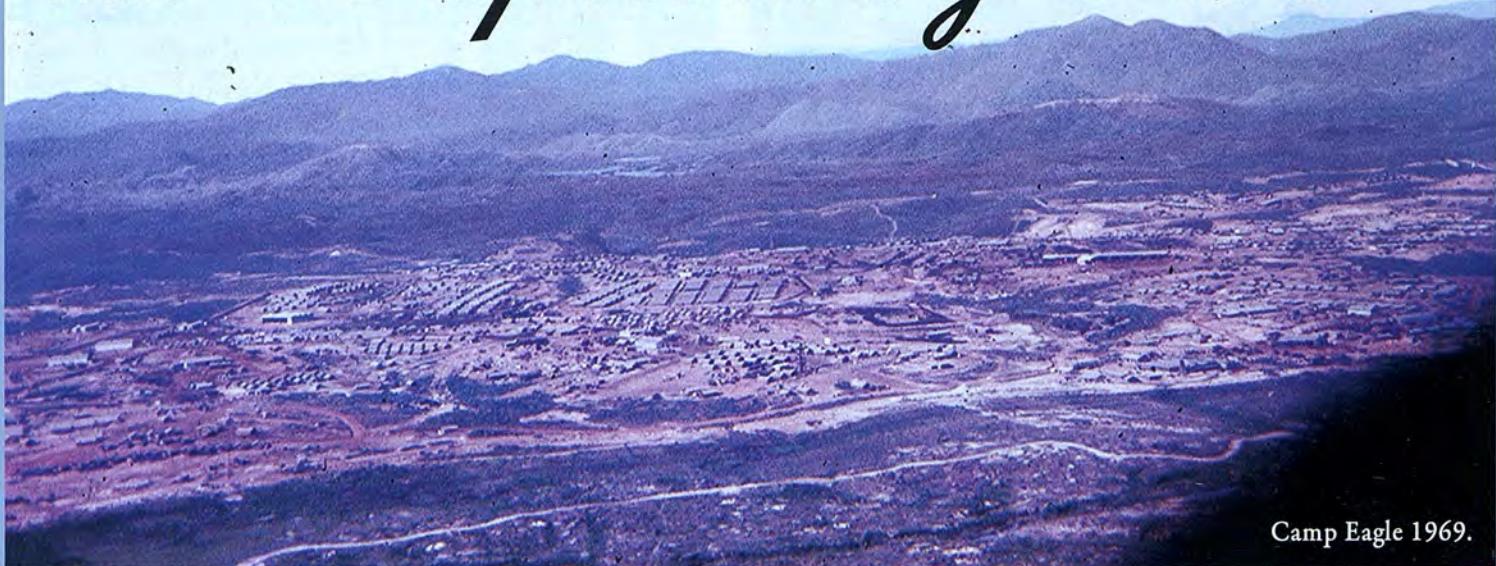
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Camp Eagle 1969.

I arrived in Vietnam in early May 1969 and was immediately sent to the 101st Airborne Division “Rear” located adjacent to Bien Hoa Airfield. The 101st had its Replacement Training School there and even though I was a pilot and heading for a flight assignment, as a “combat arms” commissioned officer, I had to attend their “Combat Leaders Course.” The training was part indoctrination and part acclimatization to living and surviving in Vietnam. Up early every morning, PT before breakfast and full days of learning about “patrolling”, punji stakes, trip-flares, claymore mines, and firing the AR-16. We slept on the ground, inside what looked like clay-covered huts that resembled dirt colored igloos. I have no recollection of what and where we ate, but I do remember a young, brand-new Infantry captain fresh out of Ranger School was my “hooch” mate for a few days. He left without saying goodbye and so did my folding survival knife I had carried in my flight suits (grey cotton) all the way through flight school. I couldn’t wait to get out of there and on to my unit.

I was put on a C-130 from Bien Hoa to Phu Bai / Hue and arrived at the 159th Aviation Battalion (Assault Support) 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile) in Northern I Corps, Republic of Vietnam, around May 10th. A Company, Pachyderms, and C Company, Playtex, were collocated with the battalion headquarters at Phu Bai. From there, I was driven to B Company, Varsity, located with the Division “main” at Camp Eagle, a sprawling complex of tents, “tin” roofed buildings, helicopter revetments and helicopters, a few miles west of Phu Bai. Immediately processed into the unit, I was issued two pair of too-small, used nomex flight suits, and a .45 1911, along with a pistol belt and holster.

May 15, 1969 was my second flight in country, my final check ride, before being declared “operational.” CW2 Veryl Reeder was the left seat, SIP (Standardization Instructor Pilot.) We had flown together one time two days before, when I received my initial Area of Operations (AO) orientation flight as we flew normal missions, such as sling loads of water buffaloes, artillery, and ammunition, all the while conducting reviews and practices of emergency procedures. This second flight was supposed to have been no more than about two hours to finish off going over emergency procedures and to conduct running landings and running take offs. Veryl had told our crew members during the pre-flight mission brief they did not have to have their chicken plates on, nor load any extra food, drink or ammo etc. as we would be in the local area only, and back within a couple of hours.

We hovered out of our Varsity Valley revetment at Camp Eagle and headed off north to Camp Evans to conduct our running landings and take offs using their PSP (Pierced Steel Planking) runway.

About an hour later and well into having had a couple of running landings and take offs completed, as well as additional emergency procedures at Camp Evans, we received a call from our company operations (Ops) that we were being diverted; we had now become “combat support.” A tactical emergency / essential (Tac E) had been declared in our AO and they needed every available helicopter in the air to support the effort. We were sent further north to support the Marines flying CH-46s out of Quang Tri. They, in turn, were supporting their Marines in and around Khe Sanh.

Our first sortie out of Quang Tri was a sling load of ammunition. I was on the controls as we hovered over the

load and the Flight Engineer (FE) said we're hooked up and clear to begin our take off. My first "real" mission flight. As we approached Khe Sahn from the east along a river and sometimes a road, we could see clouds of dust and debris burst out from the ground on the horizon. As we turned a little farther to the north and getting closer to Khe Sahn we were coming out of partial clouds, but the visibility was becoming smoky. Suddenly, an A-4 flew past us from behind and to our right dropping some bombs, and then an F-104(?) flew right past us to our left dropping napalm, no more than a half mile in front of us. I can still feel the jet blast go past us and the shaking of the Chinook as well as oscillation of the sling load. Then the effects of the bomb blasts. Everywhere we looked we saw either artillery or mortar craters, or bombs and napalm from fighters exploding. It was a surreal feeling and view, similar to what I had previously experienced only in the movies. I thought to myself, *What the Hell am I doing here?*

As we made our approach to the east side of the runway at Khe Sahn, mortars and artillery rounds were being shot out by the Marines and mortar and rocket rounds were coming in toward us from the NVA. The Marines at Khe Sanh were under attack.

We dropped off our load and made it back to Quang Tri accompanied by a couple of Marine CH-46s that had flown in and dropped off their loads just ahead of us. After the second or third run, one of the CH-46s reported a chip detector light had come on, so they both flew back to Quang Tri. We never saw or heard from them the rest of the day. The rest of our sorties were internal loads: replacements and food, etc. Our return loads from Khe Sahn were also internal, consisting primarily of wounded and other casualties. Hours later, we had been released from Quang Tri and were on our way back to Camp Eagle for what we thought a cold beer and some dinner. But, about half way back to Varsity Valley, company operations called and said there was a Tac E declared throughout our entire AO. Fire Support Base (FSB) Rifle was close to being overrun. Only a few combat troops and Pathfinders remained on the LZ and most of the ammunition had already been flown out. We were to pick up the last, a sling load of small arms ammunition and fly it to FSB



Eagles Nest, as they too were under attack and Division didn't want them running out of ammo for the night.

As we got closer to FSB Rifle it was very dark out. We had identified pretty much where FSB Rifle was and were in radio contact with the Pathfinders there. Veryl was making calls and changing frequencies on the radios while I was on the controls. The closer we got, the night sky got periodically brighter from flares and tracer fire. To my "novice" (and FNG) interest, I noticed all the GREEN flashes flying every which way, whereupon I said something like, "oh there's some green lights flashing down there, I wonder what that's all about?" Whereupon Veryl clicked on the floor intercom button and said, "Those are green TRACERS, you dumb shit, and they're coming at us!" He then took the controls, as we confirmed the Pathfinders were still expecting us in and followed their directions to the sling load. Green as well as red tracers were flying all over the night sky. Everything was now happening so fast and I felt as if I were trying to "catch up." I



was glad Veryl was on the controls, and again, I thought to myself, *What the Hell am I doing here?*

We picked up the load, pulled pitch and proceeded to make a high climbing right turn, toward the mountains to the west. Only the Pathfinders and a few more grunts remained, waiting to be picked up by Hueys. We had been directed to drop off our sling load at FSB Eagles Nest, a sliver of a flat spot that sat high overlooking the A Shau Valley at about some 4,500–5,000 feet of elevation. The sky was pitch black, mountainous, no horizon to get your bearings, and being in the mountains, a low cloud ceiling.

We contacted the Eagles Nest Pathfinder radio operator, told him our approximate location and the heading we were flying. He acknowledged us and that he was expecting us. He gave us a short-count so we could home in on him via our FM needle and got a pretty strong signal. He advised he said, their location was currently under constant probe (by NVA) and that the FSB was practicing complete light discipline. We agreed we'd call him back when we thought we were getting close and then he'd flash a pen light. I told Veryl by my calculation we were close and called the Pathfinder. He began a short count "5, 4, 3, 2, 1" over his radio and then clicked his pen light on and off. In that completely dark night, that light jumped out brightly, right in front of us. I responded we have the light, and he then said he could hear us.

We made the approach to a pen light with Veryl on the controls. As we pulled up into a high hover to stabilize and set down our load, our rotor wash set off a number of trip flares. Veryl immediately lost his night vision and the Flight Engineer hollered over the intercom that we were drifting and in danger of either snagging the load on the ground or injuring some of our troops. I grabbed the controls and announced, "I have the controls," without waiting for Veryl to acknowledge the transfer. We were hovering at the very edge of a 5,000-foot high mountain and through my chin bubble all I saw were flickering (NVA) shadows down the steep side of that mountain side that had been created by the flares. Yup, the Pathfinder was right, they were under attack.

I somehow managed to get control of our impending "crash" down the side of the mountain, stabilized the Chinook (somewhat) all the while pulling pitch. At about the same time, I began inching the aircraft forward gaining airspeed over altitude for I had quickly realized I had plenty of room below and then began a slow right-hand climb, back to and above the mountain ridge. I stopped the turn after we were heading toward "home" in an easterly heading. We were in the clouds with a dark night, no horizon and no instruments except needle, ball / artificial horizon, altimeter and compass. And no radar to help us navigate.

A long period of silence followed. I was concentrating on keeping the Chinook straight and level, climbing and keeping the instruments in the green. Veryl was a wreck. He was physically exhausted and having a hard time re-focusing his

eyes and getting his night vision back. I really didn't know where we were, and I didn't really know how to get us back home. I couldn't even call company operations for help because the frequency codes were in a booklet tied around Veryl's neck and even if I had or knew the correct frequency, I couldn't take my hands off the flight controls to tune the radio (s).

For the third time that day I began thinking to myself, *What the Hell am I doing here?* My basic flight training skills began to take hold, and I calmed down a bit. I was navigating by the compass and flying via artificial horizon, airspeed and altimeter. As we were now above the clouds, some of the local area terrain features Veryl had pointed out earlier began appearing through the clouds. Finally, I spotted three red lights; the "Three Sisters". These lights were the tops of three commercial radio antennae located between Phu Bai and Hue. I began heading right for them.

By then, Veryl had begun regaining his night vision and having had a cigarette or two, switched radio frequencies, called our company ops and gave them a quick rundown on where we were and what had happened. We passed the Three Sisters and turned a little more to the east (and to the coast), then punched the clock to record how far out from the antennas we were heading. After five minutes, we surmised we were far enough out to not hit anything and began a descent through the clouds, finally breaking out over the South China Sea.

We began a turn heading back to shore and looking for familiar land marks and lights to help guide us back. We called our company operations and told them where we were and that we still had a sling load of ammo we had to drop off before we could refuel and get back home and park our AC in its revetment. "What, you still have that GD #&@! load on!?" was the response. We dropped off the sling load of ammunition at the ammo dump and hovered over to the refuel depot to fill up. Finally, we headed back into Varsity Valley, parked in the revetment, pulled a quick post flight and checked into "ops".

All was quiet as Veryl and I made our way back to the officer's quarter's area. "I think we need to have a drink." Veryl said, but the door to our little company "O" club was locked. With a little bit of gentle persuasion, the door cooperated, and we found a bottle of Jack Black behind the bar. To get myself in better shape, I had stopped smoking cigarettes early on in flight school and also had pretty much kept my alcohol consumption to beer. But not that night, Veryl and I had plenty of both.

John Hendrickson
LTC, Aviation
U.S. Army Ret.
Life member

DOCTOR NO

By Ben Van Etten, Air America Pilot

The Air America clinic at the Udorn base was definitely only for minor ills. The chief doctor was an older Chinese gentleman named Doctor Cau (Cow). Most of us referred to him as "Doctor No." I'm sure that in his day he was probably a medical whiz, but old age and the language barrier had reduced him to a laughing stock. There wasn't a whole lot to talk about around the Air America club bar (except the war), so you could always count on somebody's rendition of a Doctor No story. There was the time he prescribed nose drops for a pilot's hemorrhoids, or the typical Doctor No comment: "Have you ever had this problem before?" "Yes, Doc." "Well, ha ha, you have it again." Then he would invariably ask, "Did

you see a doctor? What did he prescribe?"

One of the all-time best stories involved my friend John Ford. He was in getting his annual flight physical, standing in front of the Doc, naked. The Doc was listening with his stethoscope and then placed it on himself. He then put it back on John, then again on himself. Suddenly Doctor No grabbed his bag and ran from the room saying. "I go see doctor, I think I have heart attack!" John was left standing in the middle of the room. I think he signed off his own physical.

There was a shelf on the back wall of his office that contained an assortment of Chinese remedies. I supposed he reserved those cure-alls for his Chinese or Thai customers. One large jar contained several snakes. When I questioned him about that one time, he only laughed and mentioned something about powerful medicine. In retrospect, I think he probably had as much fun with his "round eye" patients as we had with him.

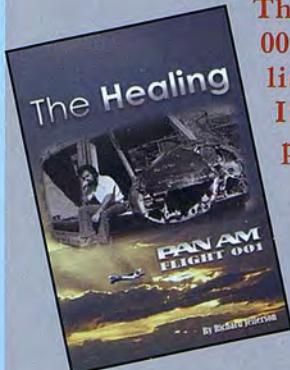


*Marc Liebman,
a VHPA Life Member, is a retired Navy Captain and Naval Aviator
who flew combat search and rescue missions during the Vietnam War.
He is also the author of five published novels with more coming.*

E-mail - [\[REDACTED\]](#)
Telephone - [\[REDACTED\]](#)
Website - www.marcliebman.com

~ BOOK REVIEWS ~

Book Review by Author & Life Member Marc Liebman



The Healing – Pan Am Flight 001 by Richard Jellerson, published by Outskirts Press, ISBN: 978-1-9772-0024-2, price \$15.26.

One day, most of us were at an outpost or a firebase or an airfield in South Vietnam and the next day, we were in an out processing center. After being flown

across the Pacific, many Vietnam vets were at an Army post or civilians three to four days from being in-country. Jellerson, with the wisdom of a twenty-something Warrant Officer Aviator, decided to do something different,

i.e. have the army buy an around the world ticket and use the 30 days leave and fly around the world on Pan Am Flight 001. This book is about that odyssey that helped Jellerson decompress from flying helicopters on air assault and Medevac missions. The book has Richard's thoughts, emotions and questions. Most of the book is written in the first person and at times, it is raw and uncomfortable to read because Jellerson is baring his soul. His experiences from spending days in cities on the way home, PanAm Flight 001 was his vehicle to begin the transition from being a helo driver in a war to being a civilian. It gave him time to reflect on his tours in Vietnam. All of us who were there can relate to Richard's story. Those who weren't should find it informative to help them understand what we endured in Vietnam and when we returned home.



BY BRITT TAYLOR COLLINS

Nowhere To Run

THE VETERANS' ARTIST

A Museum Quality Print Honoring Those Who Made Serving A Fine Art.

It is difficult to exaggerate the emotional bond that endures between the Vietnam Veteran and the Huey helicopter. The UH-1 has largely escaped classification as a "war machine," approaching instead that of a living being in possession of a soul. Even eclipsing its status as an icon, the Huey is justly revered as a fellow veteran. It is understandable if we find ourselves thinking this way knowing the men who endowed her with life.

"Nowhere To Run" is therefore a tribute to these men. Huey door gunners and crew chiefs are the stuff of legends, young men shouldered with responsibilities beyond their years. We remember the sleepless nights of ground crew and mechanics, unseen hands and hearts that made flight look effortless. And then the pilots were their own class, perfect blends of precision and daring, literally exemplifying that rarest of qualities—balance.

"Nowhere To Run" was created from the shadows and echoes of the Vietnam War that fill the heart and mind of military artist, Britt Taylor Collins. Here the drama of airmobile combat is distilled to a single moment, heroes rescuing heroes, brave lives being risked to save other brave lives. The halls of museums are fine for civilian art. But no place gives greater honor to military art than the walls of Veterans' homes who served our country.

This archival print is reproduced from the original 32" X 54" oil painting, signed and numbered by the artist Britt Taylor Collins.

Standard Edition, 14"X20" s/n unframed \$95.00, framed \$165.00
Patriots Edition, 17"X24" s/n unframed \$175.00, framed \$245.00
Elite Executive Canvas Edition, 20"X32" s/n framed only, \$895.00

Patriots Edition may be customized, incorporating unit patches, engraved brass plaque, and unit nose art, hand-painted by the artist on vintage Huey skins.

CALL US AT [REDACTED] FOR IMMEDIATE SERVICE

The Military Art & Products of Britt Taylor Collins, The Veteran's Artist



Shipping Charges Apply

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

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Michael Clark

ALASKA CHAPTER
Lynn Kile, President

AMERICAN HUEY CHAPTER
Chuck Canfield, President

Email: muskets176@gmail.com

ARIZONA CHAPTER
Bill Sorenson, President

CALIFORNIA NORTH CHAPTER
Ken Fritz

CENTRAL NEW YORK CHAPTER
Tom Mc Millen, President

FLORIDA CHAPTER
Don Welch

FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER
Richard Gaurkee, President

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GEORGIA CHAPTER
Chuck Stoudt, President

HAWAII CHAPTER – Provisional
Ken DeHoff - POC

LOUISIANA GULF COAST CHAPTER
Victor Lent, President

Email: VHPA-NewOrleans@earthlink.net

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Richard Deer, President

UPPER MIDWEST CHAPTER
Bruce Hunter, President

MONTANA CHAPTER
Todd Brandoff, President

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER
Marshall Eubanks, President

NEW JERSEY CHAPTER
(currently inactive, seeking members)

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Gerald Phelps, President

OHIO RIVER LZ CHAPTER
Keith Allegre

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Dale E House, President

EMAIL: RMC.mailbox@yahoo.com

SOUTH DAKOTA CHAPTER
Jim Miles, President

Email: DustOff1525@Yahoo.com

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER
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SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER
(Celebrate Freedom) Chapter
Larry Russell, President

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER
Jim Davidson, President

UTAH CHAPTER
Thomas Melville

WASHINGTON STATE CHAPTER
Mel Latham, President

Notice to all Members of the VHPA

The liaison between the national HQ of the VHPA and the independent Chapters has reverted to Tom Payne of the Chapter Liaison National Committee. Tom can be reached at [REDACTED] (cell) or [REDACTED] (home) or via E-mail at [REDACTED]. Feel free to contact Tom 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 pilots met for lunch on December 11th at the Lion and Rose Pub in The Rim Shopping Center in San Antonio. They met again on January 9th at the Longhorn Steakhouse. Their ladies did not meet in December, but lunched at Max and Louie's New York Diner, albeit located in San Antonio, on January 15th.

Our new officers took up their duties on January 1st. Mike Clark is now our president. Mike Law is our vice president. Senior member-at-large is Chuck Oualline, Fred Lyssey is intermediate member-at-large, and Jim Talley is junior member-at-large. Al Flory remains our secretary, and John Deer remains our treasurer. John doubles as our unofficial photographer.

From time to time, Alamo member Dave Whitney organizes group visits to the private warbird collection of Mr. Rodney Lewis, maintained in private hangars at San Antonio International Airport. Included in the collection is Glacier Girl, a P-38 which was deep under a glacier in Iceland for 50 years, and which now flies. Dave hosted another of these tours for some of us on January 10th. Thanks, Dave.

Members are still talking about the fun enjoyed at our Christmas party. John Deer provided the photos which accompany this article.

Registration for the national VHPA Reunion in May in Kansas City can be completed on the VHPA website, www.vhpa.org.

As always, members should watch for e-mails and check our Chapter website www.vhpa-alamo.org for scheduled events and details.



Outgoing President Chic Carter prepares to chow down at the Christmas party.



Our Missing Man Table.



The Browns enjoy the Christmas party.



John Deer Boot-Scootin' with the Dukes of Cool.

AMERICAN HUEY CHAPTER

Since chapter events and meetings are held between April and October, activities are limited during the winter. But some fun was had on Sunday, December 30, as 24 volunteers met at the hangar and helped clean the aircraft (including M/R blades); moved them out of the hangar; swept the hangar floor; flew/exercised 369 and 803; ground-run Gunship 049; and, finally, moved the birds back inside.

Real fun begins in two months, as 17 events are scheduled - from the middle of April through the middle of October.

We begin and end the season at Knob Creek Gun Range, West Point, KY, at the Spring and Fall Machine Gun Shoots, as an adjunct activity, conducting membership flights.

One of our better-known chapter members is LTC (Ret) Charles "Chuck" Kettles. He flew in Korea and in Vietnam with the 176th Assault Helicopter Company. He was with the unit at Ft. Benning when it deployed to Vietnam in February 1967.

Less than three months in-country, on 15 May, amid punishing fire from the NVA, Chuck flew his helicopter in once, twice, a third time and then a fourth to deliver reinforcements and to evacuate WIAs and KIAs, soon followed by an emergency extraction of a large element of the 101st Airborne Division.



Several thousand patriots attend the huge three-day event, with many of them visiting us at our beautiful LZ.



Our two slicks, 369 and 803, with Gunship 049 close behind.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

He made the final trip alone after learning eight men remained behind, having been unable to board helicopters on the previous flight.

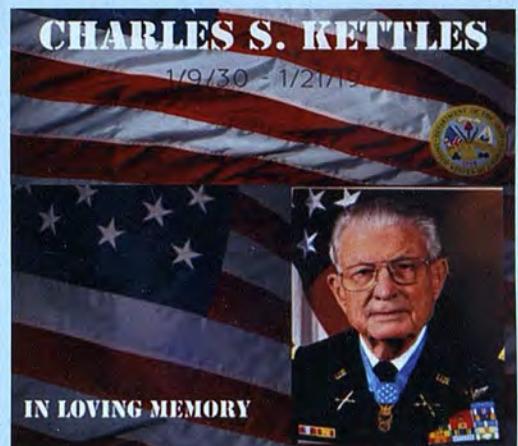
Kettles was credited with saving the lives of 44 men and received the Distinguished Service Cross. Forty-nine years after his heroic actions, Kettles' DSC was upgraded, and on 18 July 2016, he received the Medal of Honor.

Knowing of the pending MOH ceremony, American Huey 369 honored him on May 21, 2016, at an event in Findlay, OH, where Chuck piloted 803 (Warrior 11). Several members of the 176th traveled to Findlay, OH, to witness the event. After his honor flight in 803, folks gathered with Chuck in front of it.

We lost LTC (Ret) Kettles on January 21. He was 89. Several chapter members attended his funeral service in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Rest in peace, Chuck.



Chuck is standing just off the nose of 803 - flight helmet still on.



CALIFORNIA NORTH CHAPTER

California North Chapter held our annual Christmas party on 3 DEC at the Alamar Marina Restaurant and Bar on the Sacramento River. The restaurant is on a floating barge. A good turnout of 27 members and significant others attended. We feasted on a special salmon dinner, while a few members decided on a delicious hot crab plate. Of course, we also had plenty of liquid refreshments! Since Curt Knapp missed our last event, Debi Sterling (Ed Morris's wife) presented Curt with a Quilt of Valor.



On a more solemn note, California was hit by the most destructive wildfire ever recorded in California on 8 NOV 2018. The Camp Fire destroyed most of the town of Paradise and heavily damaged the surrounding communities. In all, over 19,000 structures were lost and 86 people perished. Three of our

VHPA-CCN members lived in Paradise and survived the fire, but lost their homes and most everything else. Our chapter officers voted to donate \$1,500 from our chapter treasury to our displaced members. We also started a fund raiser from our members to add to that amount. In total, thanks to our members, we raised an additional \$2,100 (much of it during our Christmas dinner) and were able to offer donations to our three affected members of \$1,200 each to help them and their families. Our hearts go out to all victims of the Camp Fire.

We still plan to have a few Huey maintenance days this



Quilt of Valor presented to Curt Knapp by Debi Sterling.



Ken Fritz on top deck of the barge

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

winter as the weather permits. The synch elevators are dented and corroded badly. Both greenhouses are cracked and leaking. Lacking the proper C model elevators, we have two H model elevators that we will modify and paint. We have a source for the greenhouses.

We are also still trying to restore our infamous MOC and arrange for it to be transported to the next few reunions. At this writing, we have several voluntary donations that highly likely will make this happen for Kansas City this year. The MOC was water damaged several years ago. This is a costly, time-consuming operation and we need help, especially from those of you who have donated to our group in the past, but who live too far from our base of operations in Sacramento, CA, to be active participants. Any help is appreciated. Please contact our President - Ken Fritz or contact us through our website.

Also, a note to all of our chapter members. It is dues time



We pretty much took over the restaurant for the evening.



One of our members home after the Camp fire.

for 2019. Please send your \$20 annual dues to our treasurer, Al Doucette. His contact info is on our website.

We're looking forward to our first event of 2019, celebrating Presidents Day (18 FEB) at Mt Vernon Memorial Park.

Please check our website www.vhpaccn.org for more info and to volunteer for the free workday lunches and a chance to educate more folks about the Huey and our history.

Dave Anderson
VHPA-CCN Secretary

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHAPTER

The latest from Southern California Chapter:
Jim Davidson



Sevn Akesson - SoCal VHPA Past President was presented with the military salute/ honor during the Anaheim Ducks vs. the Las Vegas Knights game at the Honda Center on January 4th 2019.

With Sevn are his two grandchildren, Sandy, at top are Ron and Connie Warner, our son, Kris and Steve Gedestad.

SoCal VHPA members Jim Davidson, John Harris and Michael Ripley at breakfast meeting in Garden Grove, CA - January 2019 with Vietnam helicopter pilots who flew some of the last helicopters out of Vietnam to Naval ships off shore with their families.



Unclaimed Veterans Services ~ Riverside National Cemetery. SoCal VHPA members; Jim Davidson and Steve Lund attending the monthly military services honoring unclaimed veterans. Riverside National Cemetery interned 204 unclaimed servicemen and servicewomen in 2018. The Honor Guard consists of United States Marines

Memorial Honor Detail 15 Semper Fi #2 and the United States Air Force Honor Guard personnel. These services are conducted on third Wednesday of every month at 09:00.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

FORT WOLTERS CHAPTER

The legacy project of the Fort Wolters Chapter, The National Vietnam War Museum, is continuing to make progress. The exterior of the building is complete, the building is "dried-in", and bids are being solicited for the completion of the interior. On February 1st, the first shipment of display cases arrived at the museum, and will be stored until the interior is completed. The remainder of the cases are scheduled to arrive later in the month. Once the interior work is complete, the displays will be installed, and an opening date will be scheduled.

By Richard Gaurkee, President



East Facade



Unloading display cases

GEORGIA CHAPTER



On January 19, 2019, the Georgia VHPA Chapter mustered its first bi-monthly breakfast meeting of the New Year at our tactical CP, the Del Ray Diner (LZ Delta Romeo Delta). To kick off the New Year, our first meeting took on a slightly different agenda. Patterned after another local veteran organization, we had two of our chapter members, stand up, and give a five-minute shout out of one of their favorite Vietnam stories (tales). We thought this might be downright interesting as we gotta lotta long-winded Vietnam Veteran story tellers in our GA Chapter. A designated Sergeant of Arms time-keeper was assigned to ensure our speakers didn't exceed their five-minute allowance. Note: We most assuredly will continue to have guest speakers during our 2019 meetings, but we decided to try this new meeting agenda periodically throughout year 2019.

As usual, we all enjoyed our GI DJ, Bill McRae (a.k.a. Robin Williams, who always entertains us throughout our meetings with Vietnam-era music as well as other action film clips of those war machines we used to fly). Without fail, Bill always manages to "Get our Motors Runnin" at every meeting.

This meeting was Bob Lanzotti's DROS as the GA Chapter HMFIC. Our new president is Chuck Stoudt who flew with the 335th Assault Helicopter Company during our war days. Chuck continued to fly long after most of us finished "Slipping the surly bonds of earth." Chuck "Danced on laughter-silvered wings" for more than a half a century as a commercial pilot where he logged



Chuck Stoudt



Dick Butler

right at 30,000 flying hours.

Chuck is also a recent recipient of the coveted FAA Master Pilot awarded for 50 years of flying with neither an accident nor a flight violation. He will do us proud as our GA Chapter VHPA president.

Former Vietnam helicopter pilots who miss the fun and fellowship we all enjoyed when "We Were Pilots Once...And Young," please visit our website (www.ga.vhpa.org) for the schedule of future chapter meeting dates. For questions regarding our organization and/or directions to our meeting location, please contact Chuck Stoudt at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

By Bob Lanzotti, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

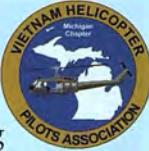
Member At Large Mark Benjamin posted his AAR for the December lunch gathering at Brady's in Traverse City, but added a lot more. A LOT more:

Monthly lunch meeting was held on Tuesday the 13th of December. No group picture, but in attendance were Mark Benjamin, Curt Grockau, Bob Potvin, Ed Canright, Walter Topp, Jim Wagener, Ron Hofmeister, Bart Halliday, Bob Matlis, Pat Mullen, and Scott LaBarre.

The photos are of the Traverse City Vietnam Veterans Welcome Home Monument. This monument, including the flag pole, was erected in 1988 thru the hard work and coordinated efforts of the Traverse City Chapter of the Vietnam Veterans Association. The local chapter is now nonexistent. It was very active during the late 80s and 90s; however, over the years its members have passed on or moved away or lost interest. The grounds around the stone once had beautiful flower gardens maintained by the members and their families. Since the mid-90s, the monument has suffered from serious neglect.

It was agreed at this meeting that we would take the lead and attempt to resurrect this monument. At one time flowers were planted to the right of the monument and across the bike path in the same configuration and colors of the Vietnam Service ribbon. We plan to clean and generally restore this monument to its former condition.

Jim Wagener was Vice President of the local Traverse City Chapter of Vietnam Veterans and provided a great deal of information about the original configuration of the monument. Ron Hofmeister is a member of the Northwest Michigan Veterans Coalition and will seek the support of that group. The local Coast Guard Aviation Association has also made this project its goal as well. Additionally, the Traverse City Chapter of the Chief Petty Officers Association and the Marine Corps League want in, and we will also attempt to gain support from the local MOAA as well.



Vietnam Veterans Memorial.



Walkway to Vietnam Veterans Memorial Traverse City.



Vietnam Veterans Memorial Plaque.

Ed Canright has volunteered to run the garden resurrection program and Curt Grockau and others have offered support. Eventually, I'd like to raise enough money to put some landscape tiles and flats around the flag pole base and the stone itself and maybe add a couple of park benches. Park benches were in the original plan but never materialized.

This group needs a goal and I think this is it for a while. All we need is someone to organize all this. Guess that's me.

First step is a meeting with Mary Colburn, City Manager of Traverse City. None of this can be done without the approval of the city officials. I'll keep you posted.

Mark

My hat is off to Mark and his comrades for taking on this very worthy project. Any chapter members or associates who are willing and able to support this effort through volunteering, fundraising, or other resources are encouraged to contact Mark.

On January 10th Mark hosted another lunch gathering at Brady's in Traverse City. Ten folks attended including Michigan chapter members, a spouse, and guests. They included Bob and Pixie Matlis, Bart Halliday, Walter Topp, Ed Canright, Bob Potvin, Mark Benjamin, Fritz Barrett. Also there were Ron Hofmeister & John Lefler. John Lefler is President of the Grand Traverse Area Veterans Coalition. Both John and Ron are Vietnam Veterans who want to help with the Vietnam vets memorial here in Traverse City.

Saturday, May 3, 2019 is the tentative date for the next annual spring meeting of the Michigan Chapter at the Log Jam in Grand Ledge. Chapter members and associates should watch their email for updates.

For any VHPA members in or near Michigan who would like to be added to our email list for updates on our activities, contact me at [REDACTED]. We have several non-Michigan residents on our roster, so don't let that stop you from joining us.

More information on our chapter can be found online at vhpmi.wordpress.com and on Facebook at Michigan Chapter of the VHPA.

Submitted by Rich Deer, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

This report contains both the coverage for Jan/Feb as well as this issue. This was a result of a misplaced file in our preparation of the prior issue – apologies to the chapter.

~Tom Kirk

NORTH CAROLINA CHAPTER

JAN/FEB: Hurricane Florence threw a wrench into our plans for the September trip to Wise Virginia. Even though Florence was a category one storm when it hit North Carolina it did a tremendous amount of damage. In the Tri-County area we have over 6,000 homes damaged, it will be many years before we are fully recovered.

The Mum Fest committee decided to go ahead with this year's festival even though everyone was still in shock after Hurricane Florence. It was a great decision, turned out everyone needed a break to try to forget the hurricane for a day. Terry Lanier (now deceased) brought the OH-5 from Lumberton, Gerald Phelps brought the UH-1H "Medivac" from Lake Gaston, Brock Nicholson brought the UH-1H "Bluestar" from Clayton, and Ed Hughes brought the OH-6. It was a great weekend, keeping us very busy both Saturday and Sunday.

Veteran's Day at the National Archives in Washington DC was cold and wet but that did not deter the crowd. On Sunday, November 11th we were averaging over 400 visitors per hour. We had three Pilots from the 176th "Minutemen" (Kevin Bagley, George Chapman and Matthew McIntire) visit and all three of them had flown our 176th Gunship. The members participating in the National Archives trip were: Joe Armstrong, George Chapman, Joe Dalfonzo, Pete Gotch, Brock Nicholson, Gerald Phelps, Larry Pigg, Jerry Seago, Phil Keith and Ed Hughes.

Be Safe. Keep Your Rotor in the green and always have a place to land safely picked out.



H-1M, tail #060605 at the National Archives Veterans Day 2018.



Mum Fest 2018, we had to move eight porta potties that were set much too close to our helicopters.



Pilots ride in luxury from the National Archives to their motel. From left to right: Jerry Seago, Larry Earles, Joe Armstrong, Lynn Stephens, Gerald Phelps, driving is Brock Nicholson, Pete Gotch, Ed Hughes and Larry Pigg. Plan is for the bus to be in Kansas in 2019.



(Mar/Apr) Ed and Claudia Hughes support the New Bern Military Alliance and the New Bern NC Christmas Parade



Pictured are the NCVHPA members who supported Mum Fest. From left to right: Gerald Phelps, Terry Lanier (now deceased), Phil Keith, Larry Pigg, Ed Hughes, and Brock Nicholson.

MAR/APR: Jerry Seago, Brock Nicholson and Gerald Phelps took the "Bluestar" UH-1H and the "Minuteman" UH-1M to Gettysburg for the 15th 48 "Bluestar" reunion in early November.

The NCVHPA supported two Christmas Parades in December, Jerry and Barbara Seago and the UH-1M Gunship supported the Parade in Hillsboro, NC and Ed and Claudia Hughes and the OH-6 Scout supported the Parade in New Bern, NC.

We are looking forward to our Annual Meeting in Raleigh, NC. We will start at the NC State Capital with the Ceremony Honoring the NC MIA's from Vietnam. We will then go to the Gravy Restaurant for lunch and our Annual Business meeting.

Changes/additions to our schedule will be posted on our Facebook Page and online. We are also planning on a group going to the Annual Convention in Kansas.

By the time this is published I will be the PAST President, my two-year term comes to an end on Feb 2nd. Claudia and I look forward to many more trips with our fellow members.

Ed Hughes, Hornet 24, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

North Alabama Chapter

On 10 December we held our annual Christmas Party and monthly business meeting at the Best Western in Madison, AL. There were 30 members, spouses and nine guests present, about 70 total attendees. Sandy and Carol Weand worked hard in setting up this party.



Honoring Veterans with the Wreaths for Veterans in a local Cemetery.

After dinner, it was time to hear from our guest speaker, Jeffery Still, a retired Navy SEAL and CEO of Trident Solutions, LLC. As a 22-year Naval veteran and member of SEAL Team 6, Jeff gave a very enlightening presentation. He used his insights and firsthand accounts of SEAL training, combat missions, the rescue of Captain Richard Phillips, and his business experience to tie his presentation together.

Joining us for Jeff's presentation were seven members of the 160th Combat Aviation Brigade (Air Mobile) out of Ft Campbell, KY. They were at Redstone for training on new Blackhawk systems. They heard we were having a party and asked if they could mingle with us after our program. Chapter Secretary Sam Maki went in the bar, bought them a drink and invited them to join us for Jeff's presentation, which they enthusiastically did. They had a great time and appreciated us 'old' aviators.

At the Christmas meeting we held Board of Director elections for the term 2019-2020 as required by our bylaws. The Nominating Committee for the next Board consisted of: Jim White – Chairman, Rick Davis – Member, Phil Freeze – Member. The proposed slate that was presented to the NAVHPA membership was: President – Marshall Eubanks; Secretary – Sam Maki; Treasurer – Sandy Weand; Director, Publicity – Ralph Weber; Director, Activities – Bob Monette. Additionally, Les Haas agreed to serve another term as Immediate Past President. This slate was unanimously approved by membership.

The final evening activity was door prizes. Linda Pflanczer donated 33 Christmas baskets that she made, and ten other members provided 15 prizes of baskets, wine packages and gift certificates. Each member or member couple and guest received at least one prize. A great time was had by all.

On 15 December we gathered at Huntsville's Maple Hill Ceremony at 1100 hours for the laying of seven ceremonial wreaths. This coincides with the Wreaths Across America ceremonies held at cemeteries worldwide. Wreaths were laid by the Young Marines in memory of service men and women from all services.

On 8 and 9 January 2019 we assisted the Wreaths for Veterans organization retrieve 3700 wreaths from two Huntsville cemeteries. Wreaths were removed from veterans' graves, boxed,



Our better halves. The ladies of the NVHPA at the Christmas party.



Christmas visitors from the 160th SOAR.



Marshall Eubanks thanks Jeff Still for his remarks.



The Christmas party featured many door prizes. Organized by Linda Pflanczer.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

loaded on trucks, transported and stored in a warehouse until October, when they will be prepared to be laid again. Supporting the Huntsville Wreaths for Veterans organization is our big community service activity each year. We provide a large group of volunteers each year, organized and led by Sharron Eubanks, who is also a member of Wreaths for Veterans.

Summary of 2018

- We added five new members in 2018; our total is now 84 with seven out of state.
- Galen Rosher and Sandy Weand were inducted into the Madison County Hall of Heroes. We now have 14 of our members on the Hall of Heroes Honor Roll.
- We received a DoD Vietnam War Commemoration Certificate of Appreciation for conducting at least 6 events in 2017 that honored and thanked Vietnam veterans and their families.
- We completed nine BUC-3 Helicopter Events.
- Eleven members and spouses attend the July VHPA Reunion in Atlanta. As always, Julie Kink organized her Gold Star breakfast.
- We served meals at the Downtown Rescue Mission 10 times.
- We donated winter clothing for Huntsville area homeless veterans.
- We worked eight days for our community service project, Wreaths for Veterans, by preparing, laying and retrieving wreaths on 3700 veterans' graves at two Huntsville cemeteries.
- We laid our ceremonial wreath on Memorial Day at the Huntsville Veterans Memorial.
- In April, we had 19 members & spouses attend the dedication of the Vietnam Pilot & Crewmember Monument in Arlington National Cemetery. We were asked by the VHPA Legacy Committee to help with pre-ceremony tasks, which we all did with pleasure. Our Honorary member, Julie Kink, a Gold Star Sister, was on the program representing all Gold Star families, and gave very moving remarks. We donated \$250 to VHPA to help with the expenses.
- The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund's In Memory program honors those who returned home from Vietnam and later died due to causes related to their VN service. There are over 3600 VN Veterans who have been inducted into this program. In



The Christmas party featured many door prizes. Organized by Linda Pflancer.

June, Clair Parr traveled to Wash DC to participate in the annual IN MEMORY weekend, where Bernie Parr and 344 other VN veterans were inducted into the In Memory Honor Roll.

- Our big event of the year, The Wall That Heals (TWTH), was 1-4 Nov. The annual 50th Anniversary of the VN War commemoration was also held at the same time. We were a Silver sponsor for the TWTH and donated \$2500; 16 members and spouses attended the MOH lunch and listened to three MOH awardees, including our Mike Sprayberry, tell stories of their Vietnam experiences; We filled some 75 four-hour volunteer slots at both TWTH and the 50th Anniversary of VN War – 473 hours of time; Six of our spouses gave away green, yellow and red poppies at our 50th Anniversary display table, resulting in \$700 in donations; Bob Stewart was a keynote speaker at the 50th Anniversary lecture series; Rob Glasier and Ralph Weber were interviewed by Joe Galloway as part of the Library of Congress' Veterans History Project; We laid our NAVHPA ceremonial wreath at TWTH on the evening of 1 Nov; All who worked as a volunteer at the TWTH agree that this was a very rewarding experience.

The Chapter meets in Huntsville, on the 2nd Monday of most months at 6:00 PM (1800). Stop in when you get a chance. If you live in the North Alabama and Middle Tennessee areas, we want you to join our chapter. You can contact us at navhpa@gmail.com. Our web site is <http://www.na-vhpa.org>. Come on out!! We'll give you a chance to get all those war stories out of your system. We have each heard all of ours. We need new war stories and comrades! "There I was..."

Ralph Weber

Old Dominion Virginia Chapter

We had our Christmas Gala event with the Richmond Chapter MOAA at Meadowbrook Country Club on Friday Dec 7th. General Atkins, former Thunderbird pilot and current CEO of MOAA National spoke.

Our January meeting was 12 January at Legend Brewing Co, we had about 16 members and guests present.



Since it is pretty quiet here now, I wanted to relate my recent trip back to Vietnam. My flight school friend Robert Frost called me in August to invite us to join him on a "Warrior Buddies" trip back to Vietnam. Angelia and I were both excited to go as Robert has been working for the last three years with Vietnamese investors and the EB5 Visa program and visiting Vietnam four times a year.

We flew out on 17 January thru JFK and Seoul on Korean Air

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

to Saigon and returned home on 4 January. I cannot describe it any other way than to say it was "The trip of a lifetime," and I encourage all you Aviators to do this trip before it is too late for you. We visited my base at Dong Tam, near My Tho, the Dong Tam Base is under communist control and we did not try to enter, but beside it is now a snake farm where cobra anti-venom and other medicines are made. We took a ride on the Saigon River to an old Viet Cong jungle camp, Vam Sat, which is now a restaurant. We really enjoyed all the Vietnamese food.

Being a horticulturist, I was amazed at the different crops being grown now. Dragon fruit farms, corn, bananas everywhere, cocoa, coffee, orchids, and of course rice.

Christmas is a season celebrated by the Vietnamese in a big way. Decorations are everywhere. The large hotels put up huge Christmas trees and gingerbread houses. We see families of four all dressed in Santa Claus suits.

We visited Saigon, Dong Tam, My Tho, Vung Tau, Long Son, Da Nang, Ba Na Hills Golden Hands of God Bridge, Hoi An, Lang Co, Hue, Phu Bai, Lao Cai, Hanoi, Sa Pa.

What an amazing trip, make it back before it's too late.

Don Agren, President



At the Pho Thin restaurant in Hanoi, L to R are Vy Vu, Diane Donadini, Jim Donadini, Angelia Agren, Don Agren, Robert Frost, Steve Markle, Tu Ngo, Hung Vu.



At the Iron Gate at the Hanoi Hilton, L to R are Don Agren, Angelia Agren, Ahn Vu, Diane Donadini, Robert Frost, Jim Donadini, Steve Markle.

ATTENTION: 3rd/17th Air Cav

B Troop 3rd/17th Air Cav would like to invite all pilots who flew with the squadron regardless of year or duration to join with the rest of us in a mini-reunion room as assigned by the reunion officials. Please check during registration for the room location, dates and time.

At this time there are 20 plus B Troops pilots and their spouses planning to attend. Most of these men flew in Vietnam during 1967, 68, & 69, but all years are invited to join us.

If you have any questions contact:
Harley Goff at [redacted]

Want to start
a Chapter of the VHPA
in your area?

Contact Tom Payne
for full details
and lots of help!

(or)

61st AHC "Lucky Stars" Call Sign and Unit Crest Adopted by Fort Rucker Aviation Center Pilot Training Unit

The 61st AHC was honored in December of 2018 at a ceremony held in the Army Aviation Museum at Ft. Rucker when A Co., 1- 212th Avn. Regt., 110th Avn. Bde, adopted their "Lucky Star" call sign and unit crest.

After an extensive survey of Vietnam-era helicopter units' call signs and unit crests, the pilots at Ft. Rucker's Army Aviation School chose the Lucky Star call sign and unit crest. It consists of a gold star on a blue background with the words Lucky Star emblazoned across the escutcheon featuring a pair of dice with the numbers 6 and 1 displayed.

An excerpt from the program of the ceremony reads, "1-212th Aviation Regiment, 110th Aviation Brigade honors the service, patriotism, and sacrifice of the Soldiers from the 61st Assault Helicopter Company by taking their namesake into the 21st century. From this day forward, all future United States Army UH-60 aviators are a part of the 61st AHC heritage, tradition of excellence, and professionalism. The Soldiers of 1-212th Aviation Regiment are honored to carry on the legacy and prestige of the "Lucky Star" call sign and will do so with pride."

The "new" Lucky Stars train future Army aviators, including other military branches and international pilots in the UH-60 Blackhawk and newer model rotary wing aircraft. Their mission is to provide the necessary pilots to fly and carry out missions in the best interest of our country. In face of the huge demand for trained pilots by the aviation industry this has become a tremendous challenge.

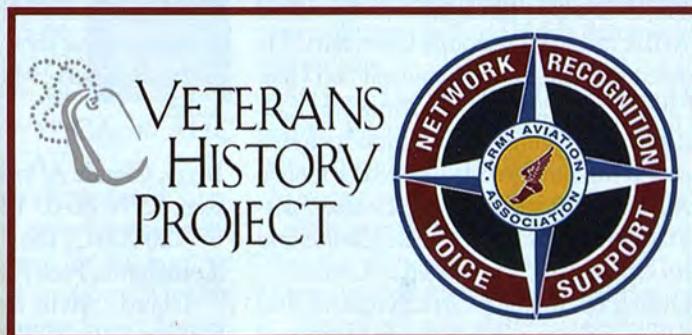
The "original" Lucky Stars were treated to "stick time" in the high-tech flight trainers now used to train aspiring pilots in weather variations, emergency conditions and navigation in today's multi-faceted flight and warfare environment. It's much different than the "Link" trainer of our days. What a rush to "fly" the latest Army helicopters. Too bad about the age restrictions they have on pilots now days!

At a dinner that evening the "original" Lucky Stars gave a bottle of Lucky Star wine and a book, "Return to Bong Son: Lucky Stars Library Learning Center" to the "new" Lucky Stars. The book describes the 61st building



and supporting a school library with an ESL (English as a Second Language) computer equipped classroom in Bong Son, VN. The village is near LZ English where the 61st was stationed in support of the 173rd Airborne Bde and other units '68-'69.

The 61st AHC "Lucky Star" slicks and the "Starblazer" gunships will have a mini-reunion at the 2019 Kansas City VHPA reunion on Friday, May 31, 1-5pm. More info on the 61st's ongoing activities and Vietnam history can be found at the web site, <http://www.61ahc.org/>.



2019 AAAA Summit April 14 - 16 Gaylord Opryland Hotel Nashville, TN

- ★ Are you planning on attending the Summit?
- ★ Do you live near Nashville?
- ★ Are you interested in an Oral History Interview?

The Veterans History Project will be teaching people how to do Interviews and conducting Interviews with Veterans.

As with the VHPA Reunion Interviews conducted by Witness to War (WTW), these digital results are saved in the Library of Congress.

Contact Andrew Huber, Liaison Specialist
or

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AWARDS LEGEND

MOH = Medal of Honor; **DSC** = Army Distinguished Service Cross; **NC** = Navy Cross; **AFC** = Air Force Cross;
DSM = Distinguished Service Medal; **SS** = Silver Star; **DSSM** = Defense Superior Service Medal; **LM** = Legion of Merit;
DFC = Distinguished Flying Cross; **SM** = Soldier's Medal; **NMC** = Navy and Marine Corps Medal; **CGM** = Coast Guard Medal;
BS = Bronze Star Medal; **PH** = Purple Heart; **MSM** = Meritorious Service Medal; **AM** = Air Medal; **CM** = respective service Commendation Medal

Due to limitations of space, most of the obituaries in Taps have been reduced in size; some slightly, some considerably. Often there are extensive details of more interest to a neighbor or other acquaintance. If you wish to obtain more information it is available on vhpa.org.

Beal, Wesley A. USA, MG Ret.; Flight Class 65-12; RVN: 66-67 1 AVN 1 INF, 70-71 165 CAG; LM, DFC, BS, MSM (4 OLC); Callsign: Bulldog.

Wesley A. Beal of Belvidere, NJ, passed away on November 5, 2016 in the Karen Ann Quinlan Home for Hospice in Fredon, NJ. General Beal was born in Framingham, MA on January 3, 1942. He attended Clarkson College on an ROTC scholarship and graduated in 1963 with a BS degree. He also earned an MBA from Monmouth University. He attended the US Army Command and General Staff School and the US Army War College. His other military education included Rotary Wing and Fixed Wing Aviator Courses, Air Traffic Control Officer Course, Aviation Command and Staff Officer Course, and Signal Officer Basic and Advanced Courses.

During his military career, General Beal served in a variety of US Army active and reserve components, in command and staff assignments. He also worked as a civilian for the US Department of Agriculture in Robbinsville, NJ, and the US Department of the Army at Picatinny Arsenal NJ for many years.

He is survived by his wife, Linda.



Becker, Miles S. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Class: 57-9; RVN: 65-66 C/228 AVN 1 CAV, 68-69 C/159 AVN 101 ABN; Callsign: Happy Tiger.

Miles Samuel Becker died peacefully on January 3, 2019. Miles was born in Fleetwood, PA on January 26, 1930. Following high school, he enlisted in the Army and served overseas in Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

During a 30-year military career, he logged more hours in a Chinook helicopter than any other pilot at the time; flew US Vice President Lyndon Johnson; saw the world with his wife and two daughters, with postings in Munich,

Germany, Camp Zama, Japan, and finally, Fort Lewis.

After retiring from the Army, Miles continued to work as a pilot. He flew over Death Valley doing uranium testing for the US Government, helped drain Spirit Lake after the eruption of Mt. Saint Helens, and ran the Papillon helicopter operations at the Grand Canyon. After his second retirement, he worked as an usher for the Seattle Mariners in the Level 2 Clubhouse until finally retiring at 84.

Miles always took great pride in his family and wife, Chieko, who had died just ten weeks earlier.

Berry, Claude A. USA, LTC Ret.; RVN: 66-67 128 AHC, 67 120 AHC; BS; Callsigns: Tomahawk, Pack Rat 6.



Claude Alvin Berry was born in Belton, TX on December 24, 1922. He died June 4, 2016.

He received the nickname of "Chuckles" from his band of US Army Air Corp brothers during WWII for his always positive attitude even in the worst of situations.

Chuck grew up in southern Texas and graduated from Breckenridge High School in San Antonio in 1940. Little did he know that responding to a WWII US Army recruiting call to "Learn to Fly" would set the course for the rest of his life. Chuck flew combat gliders in two major campaigns in Europe in WWII, The Battle of the Bulge in December 1944 and Crossing the Rhine in March 1945.

Chuck graduated from Northeastern State University with a degree in chemistry that provided him the opportunity to have long careers with Halliburton Oil Company and Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation. In parallel with his civilian career and raising his family, Chuck remained active in the US Army Reserves.

In the early 1950s, he was called up to the

Korean War where he flew as a US Army Liaison Pilot. In the mid 1960s he learned to fly helicopters and volunteered for the Vietnam War.

Beaulieu, Gary P. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Classes: 64-5, 64-8; RVN: 67-68 603 TC 188 AHC; DFC, BS; Callsign: Widow Mender 6.

Gary Beaulieu passed away peacefully in his sleep on September 4, 2018, at his residence at Bedford Falls in Bedford, NH. Gary was born in Presque Isle, ME on September 27, 1933. He graduated from Presque Isle High School in 1952 and the University of Maine, Orono, in 1956.

One of his career highlights was serving as the Project Manager for Logistics Development of the Army's Apache Helicopter Gunship in St. Louis, MO.

As a young pilot in the 1950s he was chosen to participate in the fledgling NASA space organization as a candidate to fly in the Mercury space program, but he did not have enough experience flying jets to make the final cut.

Like many veterans, he did not like to talk about his combat experiences and was always humble in describing his actions. He described one of the highlights of his career as meeting one of the Marines he saved (his DFC mission) almost 45 years later.

After retiring from the Army, Gary worked in the Florida health care industry as Vice President for several nursing home chains. Gary's accomplishments in the field of senior health care were recognized by his nomination to Secretary of the Florida Health Care Association and later to his appointment on the Board of Directors. He supported many local charitable organizations, but he was most proud of his service as the Director of the United Way of Orlando.

Gary spent a good amount of time and resources supporting his fellow veterans

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whenever he could. He was one of the veterans featured in William F. Brown's book "Our Vietnam Wars: as told by 100 veterans who served."

Booth, James W. USA, COL Ret.; RVN: 65 197 AHC, 69 HHT/1/9 CAV 1 CAV; SS, DFC, BS (2), PH (2); Callsign: Saber 6, Longknife.

James Welton "Pete" Booth, born in Hartwell, GA on September 9, 1929, died on August 22, 2018. He graduated from Hart County High School in 1946 and attended North Georgia College before transferring to the University of Georgia where he graduated in 1951 with a BS degree. He then entered the military where he began a distinguished career.

James was instrumental in the development and deployment of armed helicopters for the Army. In retirement, Colonel Booth wrote a book, "Returning Fire" that chronicled his time in Vietnam. After retiring from the Army in Seoul, South Korea he went to work for McDonnel Douglas, a defense contractor. He later became the President of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in Seoul where he performed many diplomatic duties.

He retired from his work in Seoul and moved back to Sparta, where his wife had grown up. They also enjoyed a home in Clearwater, FL at this time. They eventually moved to Sandersville, GA.

Ciley, Colin D. Jr. USA, COL Ret.; Flight Classes: 49-B, 49-L; RVN: 66-67 120 AHC, 68 MACV; LM (2), DFC, BS (V), MSM, PH, ACM (3).

Colin D. "Doug" Ciley, Jr. of Niceville, FL, passed away December 21, 2018. Born on February 11, 1927 in Edmonton, Canada, Doug graduated from high school and junior college, in Calgary, Alberta. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of Nebraska, and an MBA from Pepperdine University.

After joining the US Army, Doug was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in 1946 at Fort Sill, OK, and was immediately assigned to the First Cavalry Division in the Occupation of Japan. In August of 1948, he returned to the US for duty in Washington, DC and was detailed as a White House Social Aide during the presidency of Harry S. Truman. While stationed in Washington, DC, he received his US citizenship.

By 1975 nearing 30-year retirement, Doug was asked if he would remain on active duty to advise and help with his earlier work in the use of Synthetic Flight Simulators in Army Aviator flight training. He is largely responsible for the present use of computer-generated Imagery in the AH-60 flight and weapons training simulators. He retired from the US Army in September 1977.

As a civilian, Doug managed a Behavioral Science Research Company involved in the development of innovative pilot training programs. He was president of an international relocation company and the owner-broker of a large and successful real estate company. In 1988, he sold those interests to reside in Blue-water Bay, near Eglin AFB.

Doug Ciley served in both the Korean and Vietnam wars.

Dantzler, William D. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Classes: 59-6, 60-10Q; RVN: 65-66 170 AHC, 66 HHT/1/9 CAV 1 CAV, 67-68 B/7/17 CAV, 68 A/7/17 CA, 48 AHC 192 AHC, 72-73 F/8 CAV.

William Daniel "Dan" Dantzler of Elizabethtown, KY, passed away on December 29, 2018 peacefully in his sleep. He was born on December 6, 1935 in Winnsboro, SC. Dan was career military graduating from Clemson University, SC ROTC program, serving three tours as a helicopter pilot in the Vietnam Conflict.

Dan is survived by his wife of 59 years, Shelly.

Dietz, Stephen P. USA; Flight Class: 67-6; RVN: 67-68 192 AHC; PH; Callsign: Tiger Shark.

Stephen P. Dietz went home to the Lord on December 29, 2018. He was born with his twin Michael on October 15, 1942 in Dallas, TX. Steve grew up in Dallas, played football for Paris High School, and graduated from W.W. Samuell HS.

After marrying and leaving the service, he moved to Texas where he completed his degree in business and then graduated from St. Mary's Law School.

After serving as a briefing attorney on the Thirteenth Court of Appeal, in Corpus Christi, he moved his family to McAllen, TX.

Over four decades he practiced personal injury trial law in the Rio Grande Valley, as a partner at Ewers & Toothaker, in private practice, and then with Fred Loya Insurance before retiring. In July 2017, he and Beth moved to Springfield, VA.

Stephen is survived by his wife of 50 years, Beth.

Dufour, Michael USA; Flight Classes: 66-13, 66-11; RVN: 66-67 119 AHC; Callsign: Alligator 73.

Michael Dufour died on November 24, 2018. No obituary is currently available.

Eason, Emory A. III USA; Flight Classes: 67-9, 67-7; RVN: 67-68 3 BDE 1 CAV; SS, DFC (3); Callsign: Snoopy 941.



Early Christmas morning 2018, Emory Allen "Big Al" Eason III took his final flight. Big Al was a retired military veteran and was a distinguished and highly decorated helicopter pilot.

Al was a Life Member of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and MOAA. He was a member of the Pinellas Daylight 385 Masons Lodge, a member of the American Legion, post 0008 in Winter Haven where he served as a service officer, and a member of the Army Aviation Association of America.

Emory is survived by his grieving widow, JoAnn.

Glaspell, Brian M. USA; Flight Class: 66-7; RVN: 66 52 CAB, 66-67 D/1/10 CAV 4 INF; Callsign: Shamrock 13.



Brian Malcolm Glaspell passed away January 6, 2019, surrounded by the love of his family and friends.

He was born in Los Angeles, CA, June 13, 1945. Brian grew up in Pasadena, graduating from Pasadena High School in 1963. After attending Pasadena City College, he joined the Army in 1965, and trained as a helicopter pilot.

Brian studied Southeast Asian history at Humboldt State University, graduating in 1971. He attended a graduate semester in Swedish history and culture at the University of Stockholm, served in the Peace Corps in Thailand in 1972, and then completed a Masters in Education at Oregon State University in 1974. After several years of teaching and

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school administration in Klamath Falls, Grants Pass, and Clatskanie, OR, Glaspell returned to study School Administration at the University of Oregon in 1981. He also served as a middle school principal in Bend, OR and Centralia, WA. In 1991, Brian, Jeanie and their children found a true home in Port Townsend, where he served as school counselor to Quilcene and then Chimacum High School until his retirement in 2003.

Brian is survived by his wife, Jeanie.

Hadley, Peter E. USA; Flight Class: 69-31; RVN: 70-71 128 AHC, 71 HHC 11 CAB.

Peter Evan Hadley was born on July 2, 1945 in Pasadena, CA, and died on October 24, 2018. He flew as a medevac pilot for Sky Life.

He loved the VHPA and attended the events when possible.

Peter is survived and sorely missed by his wife, Lydia.

Hannon, Harold M. USA, COL Ret.; Flight Class: 63; RVN: 66-67 D/227 AVN 1 CAV, 68-69 B/4 AVN 4 INF; DFC, BS (OLC), MSM, ACM; Callsigns: Fang 16, Gambler 6.

Harold M "Ron" Hannon was born in Scranton, PA. He graduated from St. Mary's Assumption High School and attended the University of Scranton before enlisting in the United States Army in January of 1955. During his initial enlistment, Ron distinguished himself and was selected to attend the United States Military Academy Preparatory School in Ft. Belvoir, VA. He then received an appointment to the United States Military Academy. He was the highest-ranking cadet his senior year, as well as being the president of his class.

In addition to a distinguished military career, Colonel Hannon was selected to return to his alma mater as a professor in the Department of History. He received his M.A. Degree in History from Duke University in 1972 and his PhD in Military History from the University of Michigan in 1979.

Ron rejoined his wife on September 21st.

Hearn, Forrest O. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 59; RVN: 65-66 E/82 ART 1 CAV, 69-70 CMD AVN CO; Callsign: Longtrip 5.

Forrest Hearn died on December 11, 2018. No obituary is currently available.

Kacerguis, Peter A. USA, COL Ret.; Flight Class: 69-20; RVN: 69-70 C/7/17 CAV, 70-71 HHT/7/17 CAV; SS, LM, DFC, BS, MSM, ACM, AAM; Callsigns: Yellow Scarf, Lima 6.

Peter A. Kacerguis, entered into the blessed hope of life eternal on July 1, 2018, surrounded by his family and beloved dog Pork Chop. Peter was born on June 20, 1944, in Waterbury, CT.

He attended St. John the Evangelist School in Watertown, CT, Watertown High School and graduated Providence College in 1966. While at Providence, Peter was a member of the ROTC Unit. Upon graduation, Peter entered the United States Army beginning a career that spanned 26 years. He also served his country working at the Federal Aviation Administration in their Research and Development Division.

Peter is survived by his wife of 41 years, Julia.



Ketzler, Kenneth L. USA; Flight Class: 55-F; RVN: 66-67 117 AHC, 69-70 14 CAB; Callsigns: Beachbum 6, Arab 6.

Kenneth Ketzler passed away on August 20, 2018. He attended flight school at Gary AFB, and advanced training at Ft. Rucker in the L-19 and L-21, returning to Gary AFB for helicopter transition. He went to Italy and finally Vietnam.

He retired in 1976 and worked for a subsidiary of the Hearst Corporation, first in Des Moines, IA for 15 years and then in New York City for another 6 years. He completely retired in 1997 to Gulf Shores, AL.

Kenneth is survived by his wife of 61 years, Sandy.

Lacey, Michael J. USA; Flight Class: 67-22; RVN: 68-69 B/1 AVN 1 INF; DFC (2), PH; Callsign: Rebel 36.

Michael Jack Lacey of Holtville, AL passed away October 14, 2018. Mike was born November 25, 1942 in Bay City, TX and spent his early years in Golden, CO. He graduated from Colorado State University in 1965 as a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity.

From 1974 to 2000, Michael proudly served in the Alabama National Guard with various units.

After leaving the U.S. Army, Michael went to work for Montgomery Beverage Company. First, as a delivery driver then rising to head of warehouse operations and eventually Western Regional Vice President.

Mike leaves behind his wife, Nancy.

Maloney, Kevin T. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Classes: 68-505, 68-3; RVN: 68-69 118 AHC; PH, ACM; Callsign: T-Bird 5W.

Kevin T. Maloney, a Vietnam War Army helicopter pilot who later became Vermont state commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, passed away suddenly on December 5, 2018. He was 74 and lived in Winooski, VT.

Kevin grew up in Radburn, NJ and was a graduate of Fair Lawn High School and Rutgers University.

Upon discharge from the Army, he joined the Vermont National Guard where he served until his retirement in 2004. In civilian life, Kevin became a Master Electrician and owner of Maloney Electrical in Montgomery, VT.

Kevin was an active member of the VFW in Essex Junction, VT where he served as post commander 1991-1994. He went on to become commander of VFW state districts 2 and 4, and Vermont State Commander. Kevin was very dedicated to finding housing for Vermont's homeless Vets. He worked tirelessly for this cause for many years.

Maxwell, John R. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 65-2; RVN: 65-66 119 AHC; Callsign: Alligator.

John Maxwell was born in the coal mining town of Wombwell, Yorkshire, England. He passed on November 22, 2018.

John is survived by his wife, Gwen.

McHenry, Joseph H. USA; Flight Class: 65-8W; PH.

Joseph Horace McHenry departed this life surrounded by love on January 2, 2019. Joseph was born in Phoenix, AZ on September 24, 1943. He was enrolled in St. Matthews where he excelled in sports and academics. He was the first African American to attend and graduate from Brophy College Preparatory. Joseph went on to start his college education at Phoenix College and later earned his BS degree from Portland State University.

Joseph retired from his 22 years of service

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completing his career with the Oregon Army National Guard. Joseph lived in Portland, OR for many years and was a founding member of the Portland Chapter of The National Association for Black Veterans, Inc. (NABVETS).

Not many people can say they are the Jack of all trades, but Joseph came pretty close. He taught at POIC Rosemary Anderson School and served as the Director of Diverse and Technical Programs. He also hosted radio and television shows, was a small business owner, an activist, a chef, an exceptional dancer, a published poet, and the list goes on and on.

Joseph is survived by his wife, Michele.

Moore, Sean A. USA; Flight Classes: 70-45, 70-43; RVN: 71 C/158 AVN 101 ABN; BS; Callsign: Phoenix 28.

Sean Moore passed away December 4, 2018 in the Houston VAMC due to advanced prostate cancer with his wife at his bedside.

He participated in the massive helicopter operations of Lam Son 719. Sean served at Ft. Rucker AL. as a flight instructor after Vietnam. He was a kind, gentle, humble, intelligent man who loved his family and his fellow Phoenix brothers whom he served with in Vietnam.

Sean went back to college after his military career and earned his Law degree, he was well respected in his community.

Sean is survived by his wife, Judy.

Muckle, Carl E. Jr. USA; Flight Class: 67-13; RVN: 67-68 A/25 AVN 25 INF; Callsign: Little Bear 256.

Carl Muckle, 74, passed away, December 25, 2018.

Carl always had a love for flying and achieved his pilot license at the age of 16. After Vietnam, he continued to fly planes as a corporate pilot his entire life. Carl was the past Police Commissioner of the City of Bridgeton and a past member of the Board of Directors for the Robertson Fire District where he served at times as a volunteer firefighter. He also participated in the Patriot Guard Riders.

Carl always had a good story to tell either about his experiences in Vietnam, with the fire department, or daily life.



Nevling, Harry R. USA; Flight Classes: 67-25, 68-501; RVN: 66-67 A/124 SIG 4 INF, 68-69 C/159 AVN 101 ABN, 69 A/159 AVN 101 ABN, 69 242 ASHC; DFC, BS (2), ACM; Callsigns: Muleskinner 3, Pachyderm 2.

Harry R. Nevling of Rochester passed away on December 12, 2018 due to heart failure. Harry was born on September 15, 1946 at St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester. He attended Holmes Elementary and Central Junior High Schools. For high school, he went to the Southern School of Agriculture in Waseca. Harry enlisted in the U.S. Army in November of 1965.

Following his active duty service, he returned to Minnesota and obtained an Associate degree in Business from Rochester Community College and BS degrees in Business Administration and Economics (dual major) cum laude from the University of Winona. He later obtained an MBA from the University of Colorado.

Harry spent most of his post-Army career in health care human resources with more than 22 years of service as the chief human resources officer with Longmont, Colorado United Hospital. Harry's career ended as vice president for human resources in 2000, when health forced his retirement. During this career, Harry, along with other positions, was president of both his State and National professional organizations. He also attained a life designation as Senior Professional in Human Resources.

Harry became quite involved with volunteer activities with many different organizations working with the disabled, especially brain injury survivors. These organizations included The Minnesota Brain Injury Alliance (recipient of the Elinor D. Hands award), Minnesota Department of Human Services Traumatic Brain Injury Advisory Committee, Olmsted County Community Services Advisory Board, and the Rochester Area Brain Injury Community Committee.

Harry is survived by his wife, Joanne.

Pagan, Joseph USA; Flight Class: 67-7; RVN: 155 AHC, 57 AHC, 68 MED DET; Callsign: Witchdoctor.

Joe Pagan passed away at age 79, on November 29, 2018. Joe had 27 years military service, 2 tours in Viet-



nam enlisted and pilot in Assault Helicopter Operations and Dustoff Medical Evac.

He later joined the California Army National Guard as well as starting his own business, Riverside Air Service.

Paul, James H. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 53-L; RVN: 66-67 13 CAB; Callsign: Delta 4.

James Howard Paul passed away peacefully on January 9, 2019 in Colorado Springs, CO. He was born on May 12, 1926 in Decatur, OH. He attended school in Ripley prior to joining the Merchant Marines in 1943. At the age of 18, he was inducted into the United States Army and served in the Pacific and Europe rising to the rank of Sergeant, serving as a member of the military police and honor guard units. He graduated from Officer's Candidate School at Fort Benning, GA in 1952.

He served for two years as Senior Advisor for the US Army Reserve in the State of Idaho. He retired from Army service to Colorado Springs in June 1972. He was a founding member of the US Army Otter/Caribou Association. After retirement, he worked for Gilpatrick Construction Co. in the State of Wyoming, retiring again in 1981.

Rich, Aaron L. USA, CW2 Ret.; Flight Class: 67-9; RVN: 67-68 281 AHC; PH; Callsign: Intruder, Rat Pack 13.

Aaron was born on July 24, 1946 in Ord, NE. When Aaron was eight years old, his family moved to Sifton, WA where he later graduated from Evergreen High School in 1964. He enlisted in the US Army in June of 1966.

He was severely wounded in combat on March 16, 1968. He medically retired from the US Army in February 1970. Aaron was devoted to his service in the Army and saddened when it was cut short due to being injured in combat. He stated many times that he would do it all over again and had no regrets. Aaron was a very reserved and quiet man. He was meticulous and loved everything done to perfection. He was extremely knowledgeable about history and very intelligent in general. He was a life member of the 281st AHC (Assault Helicopter Company) and the VHPA (Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association). He was a legacy life member of the VFW, through VFW Post 4278. He worked for Horizon Air from March 1984 until he retired in August of 2015.

Aaron is survived by his wife, Georgia.



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Roggenkamp, Robert J.
USA; Flight Class: 69-23.



Robert "Bob" Roggenkamp, Sr, 68, of Louisville, passed away April 4, 2018 at Baptist Health.

Bob was born in Highland, IL. He was a retired manager with UPS where he had 34 years of service; a member of Rocky Mountain Elks Foundation; and a Kentucky Colonel. Bob was a proud U. S. Army veteran of the Vietnam War.

Bob is survived by his wife of 46 years, Helen.

Rooney, Timothy W. USA, CPT Ret., Flight Class: 70-30; RVN: 70-71 162 AHC, 71 48 AHC, 72 B/7/1 CAV, 72-73 C/16 CAV; BS, PH; Callsign: Dark Horse 26.

Timothy "Ranger" Rooney, 73, of Phoenix, AZ passed away at his home unexpectedly on December 21, 2018. A 1968 Northern Arizona University graduate with a degree in Police Science, Tim enlisted in the U.S. Army and graduated from Infantry OCS, airborne training, Ranger School, and ORWAC. Tim served two combat tours in Vietnam, both concluding with medical evacuation due to injuries.

He was severely injured during his second tour in December 1972 while serving as a UH-1H Aircraft Commander performing "nighthawk" missions in the Mekong Delta. His aircraft experienced a nighttime catastrophic engine failure and crashed in Vinh Long Province.

Tim's injuries restricted him to a wheel chair, but they did not alter his zeal for life. Tim's athletic enthusiasm remained unrestrained while he undertook a lifetime of study at Arizona State University. He was a traveler, a VHPA Life Member, and an active participant in the American Legion.

Tim took pride in his family's tradition of military service. His two brothers are Vietnam Veterans, one also having served as a helicopter pilot (VHPA Life Member Mike Rooney); his brother-in-law, Jack Cox, also operated helicopters in Vietnam.

A Ranger School instructor, AH-1G SIP, UH-1 AC, the C/16 CAV "Four Horseman" Lift Platoon Leader, a tactician, doer and mentor, he is warmly remembered by many.

Soares, John F. USA, (Unk) Ret.; Flight Class: 67-14; RVN: 67-68 B/101 AVN 101 ABN, 68 188 AHC, 68 D/101 AVN 10; DFC (OLC), BS, DSM, ACM; Callsign: Spider 65.



John F. Soares, age 75, passed away on January 9, 2018 with his wife and children by his side.

John grew up in Springfield, MA and graduated from Cathedral High School in 1962. He graduated from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst with a BS degree.

Once discharged from the Army, John began raising his family. John also furthered his education obtaining his MBA in Accounting from Western New England University. He designed financial computer systems for Mass Mutual Life Insurance Co., Casual Corner, Ames Corp., and Aetna Life Insurance Company. He also continued his military career as a pilot serving in the Connecticut Army National Guard at Bradley International Airport in Windsor Locks, CT. He retired from the National Guard in 1994.

John is survived by his loving wife, Lois.

Straw, Wade C. USA, USMC COL Ret.; Flight Class: 69-23; RVN: 69-70 B/2/20 ARA 1 CAV; SS (2), LM, DFC (2), BS (V), ACM; Callsign: Blue Max.

Wade Straw of Vero Beach passed away on May 27, 2018, with his loving and devoted family by his side. He was born on October 2, 1947 in Des Moines, IA. After his military career, Wade continued to work for the US Treasury Department in Washington D.C. until 2013.

Wade was a veteran of the Vietnam War - flying Cobra Gunships for the US Army and the First Gulf War - flying Harrier Jump Jets for the US Marine Corps.

Wade was a Marine's Marine, highly respected by subordinates, peers, and superiors alike, truly fitting of Ronald Reagan's famous quote: "Some people spend an entire lifetime wondering If they made a difference In the world, but the Marines don't have that problem."

Wade is survived by his wife, Elaine.

Taylor, Daniel L. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Class: 66-13; RVN: 61-63 93 TC CO, 66-69 335 TC CO; LM, BS, PH, MSM; Callsign: Fix It 16.



Daniel Leslie Wyman "Danny" Taylor died with his family by his side on November 19, 2018, in Kansas City, KS, from complications of Parkinson's Disease. Danny was born February 14, 1937 in Guilford, ME.

He graduated from Monson Academy as the Class Historian. Immediately after graduation, Danny enlisted in the United States Army where he would serve his country for the next 30+ years.

Life changed profoundly for Dan and his family on September 10, 1967 while he was on a downed aircraft recovery mission near Duc Pho, RVN and received wounds from armor piercing rounds. Dan's lifelong focus on quality and process improvement may have been jump-started that day, as the incident resulted in his unit immediately being equipped with the armored piercing breast plate type vests to protect others who had to continue with the recovery missions.

Dan was evacuated out of Vietnam and returned to active duty after 25 months of hospitalization and therapy, with part of the time in a body cast. Dan wore a brace on his right leg ("Sixteen Tons") for the remainder of his life as he no longer had a hamstring.

Dan earned a BS degree in Aeronautical Science from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in 1976. After his military retirement, Dan worked for several defense contractors including Lockheed Martin, COBRO, INNOLOG, and finally as a Senior Analyst with AEPCO at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, AL. He was always concerned with quality control and to ensure those serving our nation had the best and safest equipment. He resigned from AEPCO in 2009 due to his hearing loss and his wife, Mary Lou's, health.

Dan was key in starting a Veteran's program in Ardmore. Most recently he was a member of Ardmore No. 22 in Ardmore, TN. He was a member of the Red Cross of Constantine, Royal Order of Scotland, Royal Arch, York Rite College, 33rd Scottish Rite, Tall Cedars, Grand Order of the Sword of Bunker Hill, Order of the Eastern Star, Amaranth holding high honors in many of these organizations. He was active in the Disabled American Veterans, 2nd Cavalry Assoc., Army Aviation Assoc., Retired Officers Assoc., and the Military Order of the Purple Heart.

TAPS

Thompson, Vester L. USA, CW3 Ret.; Flight Classes: 68-523, 68-43; RVN: 69-70 E/82 ART 1 CAV; Callsign: Woodpecker.

Vester "Sonny" Thompson of McGehee, AR passed away January 21, 2019 in Pine Bluff. He was born January 28, 1939 in Watson, AR.

Sonny retired after 20 years as a helicopter pilot; he served in Thailand, Indochina, Korea, and Vietnam.

He is survived by his wife, Betty.

Turman, Willard G. USA: Flight Class: 62-2W; RVN: 65-66 162 AHC, 68-69 15 TC 1 CAV, 69 A/228 AVN 1 CAV; Callsigns: Vulture, Copperhead.

Willard Gene Turman was born on May 15, 1934 in Lamar, MO. His family moved to Orland, CA when he was young. He went to Orland High School, graduating in 1952. He then joined the armed forces and began a long and illustrious career in the Army.

Upon his retirement, they settled in Tucson, AZ where Willard worked for Evergreen Air Center. They moved to Phoenix several years later when he took a job for America West Airlines.

Willard is survived by his wife, Carol.

Tymeson, John A. USA, BG Ret.; Flight Classes: 68-9, 68-11; RVN: 68-69 247 MED DET; LM (2), DFC, PH; Callsign: Dustoff 55.

BG (Ret) John A. Tymeson of Ogden, went to the arms of his Lord at home surrounded by family on January 2, 2019. John was born September 19, 1945 in Storm Lake, IA. He graduated from Storm Lake High School in 1964 and Buena Vista University in 1972.

General Tymeson joined the Iowa Army National Guard in 1971 and later began working full-time for the Guard as an instructor pilot. He served as a Company Commander, Battalion Commander, Flight Facility Commander, State Aviation Officer, Chief of Staff, and Deputy Adjutant General.

John, fondly known as JT by his family and friends, was a member of many veteran service organizations, to include the Distinguished Flying Cross Society, Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association, DAV, VFW, American Legion, and served as the Iowa Depart-

ment Commander for the Military Order of the Purple Heart. He was a member of the Elks, First Presbyterian Church, served on the Board of Directors for the Iowa Gold Star Military Museum, and served 16 years on the Board of Directors for the Food Bank of Iowa, serving as Chair for several years.

Left to cherish his memory is his wife of 37 years, Jodi.

Voth, William F. USA; Flight Class: 69-16; RVN: 69-70 HHC 1 BDE 1 INF, 70 DIV ART 25 INF; DFC; Callsigns: Owl 6, Blaster 81.

William F. "Bill" Voth of Enterprise, AL, passed away October 10, 2018 after a long, courageous battle with cancer. Bill was born November 3, 1944 in Fargo, ND. Bill retired from the United States Army after 27 years of service.

Bill's military career started in the ROTC program at the University of North Dakota in Grand Forks, ND. It caught him by surprise that he loved military life, and this admiration for the military led him to a long, notable military career with numerous accolades.

After military life, he pursued his original career path as a biology teacher teaching in both Enterprise City Schools and Daleville City Schools for ten years. Following retirement after two successful careers, Bill dedicated his time and passion supporting organizations such as the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), American Legion, Patriot Guard, and VFW with countless hours of volunteering. He was also a member of the Lions Club of Enterprise, AL and the Knights of Columbus of St. John Evangelist Catholic Church.

Bill is survived by his loving and faithful wife of almost 48 years, Phyllis Lou.

Wilson, Carl A. Jr USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 56-13; RVN: 66 B/1 AVN 1 INF, 66-67 156 AVN, 70 HHC USARV, 70-71 212 CAB; Callsigns: Longhorn 77, Lonely Ringer 61, Roadrunner 6. No obituary recorded.

Yost, Howard T. II USA; Flight Class: 69-50; RVN: 70 121 AHC, 71 HHC 13 CAB; BS; Callsigns: Tiger 20, Guardian 6A.

Howard Thomas "Tom" Yost II departed

this world for heaven on December 9, 2018, from his home in Canal Winchester, OH after a long fight against the ravages of cancer. Tom was born in Columbus on April 10, 1946.

Tom was a 1964 graduate of Worthington High School where he was an outstanding swimmer. As a student at Ohio State University, he was an active member of Beta Theta Pi fraternity and a distinguished cadet in the Army ROTC program. He graduated from OSU in 1969 as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army with a degree in Business Administration. Tom's commendable service to his country is illustrative of how he lived his life. His commitment to helping others was reflected in every one of his life's endeavors, from his sales work at Mason Supply Company and Favret Heating and Cooling, the offices he held with the local chapter of the Refrigeration Services Engineers Society, his participation in the good works of VFW Post 10523.

As a long-time member and current elder of his church, Tom offered friendship and Bible-based counsel to his fellow parishioners. His deep connection with kids made him an effective and popular teacher of the youth Bible class at Grace Bible Church for over ten years. Howard Thomas "Tom" Yost II will be remembered as a kind and generous man of God who worked in his own humble way to bless others and make the world a brighter place.

He is survived by his devoted wife of 31 years, Ginger.



TAPS

Records of the recent deaths of the following potential members of the VHPA were gleaned from internet searches within the last two months. All the information VHPA has for these pilots may be found at VHPA.org or by calling 1-800-505-VHPA. If you knew any of the pilots listed, please help VHPA by sending any information you know about the person to HQ@VHPA.org or call 1-800-505-VHPA (8472) so it can be added to our database.

Booth, Timothy C. USA; Flight Classes: 68-515, 68-27; died January 1, 2019.

Bousksa, John E. USA; Flight Classes: 66-19, 66-17; RVN: 65-66 227 AVN 1 CAV; died September 15, 2014.

Butler, James T. USMC; RVN: 67 HMM-362, 68 HMM-164; SS, DFC (2); died December 23, 2018.

Campbell, Raymond P. USA, COL Ret.; RVN: 66 HHC 12 CAG; LM (2), DFC, BS (V) (OLC); died December 27, 2018.

Collins, Robert D. USA; Flight Classes: 68-509, 68-13; DFC, BS (2); died December 3, 2018.

Dawson, Elliot P. USA; Flight Class: 71-14; BS; died August 2, 2018.

DeLong, Michael P. USMC, LTG Ret.; died July 27, 2018.

Grave, Arthur B. USA, MAJ Ret.; Flight Class: 67-22; died December 8, 2018.

Hunt, Carl V. Jr. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 70-10; RVN: A/158 AHB 101 ABN; SS, DFC, BS (V), PH, MSM, ACM; died January 6, 2016.

Jutz, Donald G. USA, MAJ Ret.; DFC, BS (V); died July 25, 2018.

MacLennan, Robert J. USA, LTC Ret.; died December 2, 2018.

Murphy, George E. USA, LTC Ret.; RVN: 68 A/377 ARTY 101 ABN, 68-69 52 CAB; LM (OLC), BS, MSM, ACM; Callsigns: Pathfinder 1, Pathfinder 8; died December 17, 2018.

Nelson, Paul E. USA; Flight Classes: 67-19, 67-13; RVN: 68-69 187 AHC, 68-69 602 TC, 70-71 USS CC Bay; Callsigns: Lancelot 5, Crusader 8C.

Parker, William L. USMC; died December 8, 2018.

Smith, Jack M. USA, (Unk) Ret.; Flight Class: 69-15; RVN: 70-71 61 AHC; DFC; Callsigns: Lucky 15, Star BLAZER 26; died

December 22, 2018.

Snyder, Sherman R. USN, CDR Ret.; RVN: 68-69 HA(L)-3 DET 3; Callsign: Seawolf; died January 6, 2019.

Summers, William L. USA, Flight Class: 65-11; died December 6, 2018.

Wehr, John R. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 67-16; RVN: 67-68 281 AHC; DFC (3 OLC), BS (OLC), MSM, ACM (3 OLC); Callsign: Bandit; died December 4, 2018.

Wenning, Jack H. USAF, LTC Ret.; RVN: 69-70 20 SOS; DFC; Callsign: Green Hornet; died December 25, 2018.

Walker, Samuel P. USA, COL Ret.; LM, DFC, MSM, BS, ACM; died December 20, 2018.

Willis, Bruce L. Sr. USA; Flight Class: 68-7; BS; died January 9, 2019.

Wylie, Dale G. USA; Flight Class: 65-8; RVN: 65-66 174 AHC; died December 4, 2018.

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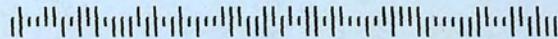
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Information about you: Helicopters flown, medals/awards, talents, hobbies, and anything else:

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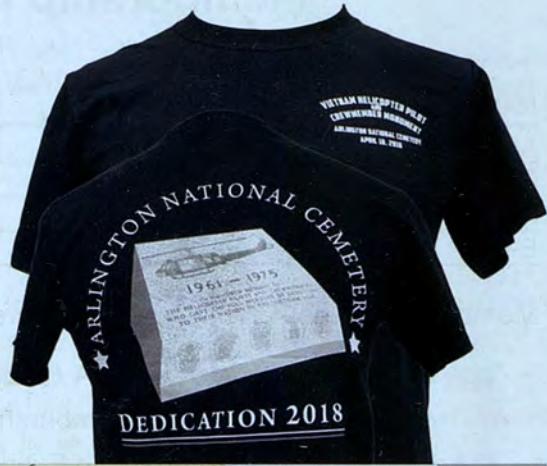
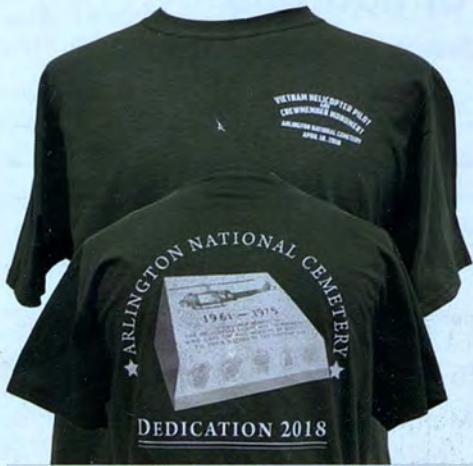


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