



The VHHPA AVIATOR

The Newsletter of The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association



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VHPA SCHOLARSHIP INCREASED

Once again, the VHPA awarded scholarships have increased. This year (2019) the number of recipients has been increased to eight out of the 57 VHPA qualified applicants. Most of these are grand-children of our VHPA members in good standing because their grandfathers were dues current members when they died, or if they are still alive and are dues current VHPA members. This is about the number from last year to apply for our VHPA scholarships. What is a real bonus is, if our VHPA applicants do not get one of the eight VHPA scholarships, they are eligible to receive a AAAA scholarship...and historically about 30-35 of our VHPA applicants do receive one of the other scholarships.

The VHPA endowed funds in the AAAA Scholarship Foundation, the foundation that handles the funds and conducts the evaluation and selection process, is now over \$300K. That makes the VHPA the third largest endowed group listed in the AAAA Foundation. That amount of endowed funds is not enough, however, to fully cover all the VHPA scholarships awarded. But, it goes a long way toward that need.

The VHPA Executive Council, for the last four to five years has voted to supplement those endowed funds to award even more scholarships than our endowed funds would cover. This year the EC voted to award our kids eight - \$2,500 scholarships for a total of \$20K. That made about \$12K added to supplement the eight. Quite a wonderful move and one that is highly regarded by the AAAA Scholarship Foundation. Last year, the number awarded was seven- \$3,000 scholarships.

More great news about the evaluation and selection

process is this year there were 16 VHPA members and wives who volunteered to help evaluate the 600+ applicants in total received by AAAA. Last year there were 12 VHPA folks who volunteered. This is a BIG help to the AAAA Scholarship Foundation. All evaluations are now accomplished entirely on the internet. A big special Thank You to all this who volunteered this year. If you would like to be an evaluator, please contact our VHPA Scholarship Committee and get your name on the list for next year.

Final results for the recipients of the eight VHPA scholarship winners is expected to be announced about mid-August. Watch our Aviator in the future for a list and hopefully photos of our eight kids.

Any questions about the VHPA Scholarship Program, contact either Mike Sheuerman or me, Tom Payne. Our contact info is in the Aviator.

Tom Payne, Mike Sheuerman
Scholarship Committee

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FROM THE STAFF AT HQ!

Be sure to mark your calendars for the 37th Annual VHPA Reunion in Denver, CO, May 21 thru May 25, 2020! Hope we see you there!

HQ has several R2019 t-shirts of each size available so if you forgot to order one, give us a call.

Reminder – Directories purchased beginning September 1, 2019 will be for the 2020 directory that will be delivered in October 2020. The deadline for ordering the 2020 directory is August 31, 2019. The price for a copy of the paper directory has increased to \$25. The price of a CD copy remains \$10. The on line directory is free at <https://directory.vhpa.org>.

Dues can be paid and directory can be ordered on line via the On Line Directory at <https://directory.vhpa.org>!

HQ still 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 a photo of the monument on them are also available online at <https://gear.vhpa.org>.

Be sure to check out the 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 are being added.

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 if you haven't already. 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 who 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

Your VHPA Battalion

As a regular “reunion-attending-primarily-focused” member before I became involved on the Executive Council, I knew that we elected officers at the Annual Business Meeting. I was aware that there was some kind of planning committee and local volunteers that organized our annual reunions. I realized that we had some kind of office or facility near Dallas that we called our Headquarters. I was familiar with the name Sherry Rodgers who diligently managed that office. I recalled the ever-present names Mike Law, Tom Payne, Mike Sloniker, and Gary Roush – men who year after year seemed to be tirelessly collecting, documenting, tracking, chronicling, tracing, and preserving our history – our story – and that story would be housed at Texas Tech University (and, no one can forget the ever-present and exceedingly shy Mike Sheuerman). More recently, I had the good fortune to observe a guy named Bob Hesselbein and his Legacy Committee who had insightfully and deftly maneuvered almost four years through multiple bureaucracies in Washington, DC to have a monument in Arlington National Cemetery dedicated to the helicopter pilots and crewmembers who flew in Vietnam – a monument, by the way, conspicuously located within yards of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Yes, I sort of knew that “lots of stuff” must be happening behind the scenes to keep the Association going. And, like you, whenever a shiny new Aviator Magazine would arrive I would occasionally glance at the names listed on the inside cover before quickly moving on to the stories and pictures. I ran for office after decades of merely being a “reunion beneficiary.” At first, I felt a sense of duty in contributing to our truly unique Association. In the fifth year of my tenure on the Executive Council however, I now marvel at the privilege I have been afforded in seeing how this machine is organized, but more importantly, how it is carefully tended to keep it oiled and improved upon. The names listed on the inside cover of The Aviator provide only one-angled glimpse at your VHPA. That's why I have constructed the “org chart” on page 5 to illustrate how this “Battalion” with all its moving parts is really arranged and maintained. Gentlemen, fellow members, on behalf of the Executive Council and the entire team, we have three messages:

1. Thank you for the honor of serving the VHPA; 2. Your Association is organized to serve its members in the best way possible; 3. We invite you to serve - run for office or become a volunteer – it is something you will never regret.

Art Jacobs – President

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Sweet Dreams and Nightmares

All veterans have some particular memories that stay with them their entire lives. Sometimes these are sweet dreams of memorable events, and sometimes they are nightmares of what happened or could have happened. Flying in combat has elements of both.

The 498th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), more commonly known as a Dustoff unit, was based at Lane AHP, just west of Qui Nhon, and provided medevac support to all units in NE II Corps. To provide more responsive support, the 498th field-sited aircraft at Phu Hiep/Tuy Hoa, LZ English, LZ Uplift, An Khe, and other sites to support specific operations of the US, Korean and indigenous forces. An Khe was one of the most sought after rotations, as the Dustoff crews there were billeted with the 17th Field Hospital: good beds, air conditioned ready room, and NURSES! This situation often generated stories more appropriate for the bar, and best left undocumented...however acknowledged in this saga as "sweet dreams."

There were costs of these sweet dreams, the most relevant being the nightmares of night medevac missions to north and south of An Khe. An Khe is a village in the central highlands of Vietnam with a long war history, including the French military abandonment of the village in 1954, and the 1966 establishment of the initial base camp of the 1st Cavalry Division, the first application of airmobile concepts. One aspect that has not and will not change with time is the terrain. The village is on a somewhat level plain, with mountains to the northwest, north, northeast and south. These are rugged mountains, and during the Vietnam War they had few friendly villages. Most activity there was from the NVA who had infiltrated from the North, and US patrols attempting to locate NVA infrastructure. Consequently, once one departed the highway, there were generally no lights in these mountains to navigate by at night. This was particularly challenging during the monsoon season and other times with overcast moonless nights, which generated frequent nightmare situations.

One such nightmare was a medevac mission I flew in late 1969. Scrambled at night and informed it was a hoist mission for a gunshot soldier, I requested gunship cover and a flare ship, knowing that a night hoist in this mountainous terrain was going to be a challenge even without the possibility of continued enemy contact. My crew included a pilot who was new in country, and I had not flown with him before this field rotation. I'll just call him PP (Peter Pilot) for this story. Upon takeoff, I told him to climb to 3,500 and make a slow orbit to give

the flare ship and gunships time to catch up. When we turned away from the airfield and the village of An Khe, there was no visible horizon, so I reminded the PP to watch the instruments to maintain his turn rate, air-speed and altitude. After contacting the flare ship and gunships, we formed a loose daisy chain, all at the same altitude: dustoff, flare ship, lead gun, and gun trail.

Radioing the ground unit, I reviewed the mission information, gave them a 20-minute ETA, and requested they shoot a marker flare. I had a rough azimuth from the map I had glanced at before takeoff, and saw a distant marker flare confirming our general heading. It was a dark night, overcast with no visible moon. We flew into the darkness for 15 minutes or so, PP flying basically on instruments, a straight and level flight. Then I requested the ground unit to fire another marker flare. They replied that one was already in the air over their position. As I couldn't see the flare and we hadn't changed our heading since we saw their initial flare, I concluded we must be in the clouds. This was verified when the flare ship radioed he couldn't see my navigation lights anymore, and further verified by the gunships, which were losing sight of the flare ship and each other. I thought: well that's just great – now we have four aircraft in the clouds, all in close proximity!

I quickly developed a plan and gave direction over the VHF radio: Dustoff will turn left 180, flare ship turn right 180, guns descend 500 feet. Lead gunship turn left 180, trail gun turn right 180, all contact An Khe approach to get radar vectors for separation until underneath the clouds. Not sure of my new PP's instrument capabilities, I took the controls from the left seat and banked into a left turn. Although its instruments were not as large or well positioned as the right seat panel, the left seat was adequate for instrument flight and I had a fair amount of instrument experience from that position. Finishing the radio call to the other aircraft on VHF, I told the PP to bring up the approach control UHF preset radio frequency and move my transmit selector to the UHF position.

I was about to contact approach control for radar separation and vectors to descend out of the clouds, when my PP blurted over the intercom, "there's an aircraft directly in front of us." I quickly looked up from the instrument panel and could see the nav lights on the roof of a Huey directly in front of us, banking to the left, and very close! I pulled back on the cyclic, our aircraft abruptly climbed, and we cleared the Huey in front of us. He was in such an attitude that he probably never

saw us, unless he was looking through his overhead panel, also known as the greenhouse.

So, about to key the mike to call approach control, rapidly transition from instruments to visual, cyclic climb to avoid other aircraft, then back on instruments to get the nose back down – you guessed it – I got vertigo. I was in a bank to the left, but my butt said I was straight and level. My eyes on the instruments said bank right to level out, but my butt said don't do it. Fortunately eyes, instruments and butt all agreed that the nose pitch was level. But I couldn't get rid of that mental argument about the bank. Fortunately, the turn rate was only about standard rate, but I couldn't work it out.

Over the intercom, I told the PP I had vertigo, to get on the controls, that I was going to give him the aircraft and he should return us to straight and level flight. He said, "I'm ready." But was he really? He was new in country, I had flown with him very little, and I didn't know his instrument capabilities. However, he had done OK before we flew into the clouds. We were still in a bank and turning. My thoughts were interrupted by his second reply: "I said I'm ready." Cautiously, I said, "you have the controls," and I monitored his flight as he rolled out of the bank. A few seconds of straight and level and my butt started agreeing with the instruments, and the PP was doing fine. I heard radio chatter, which was the flare ship and gunships talking to An Khe approach. I joined the conversation, approach control got us all safely separated, and we descended out of the clouds.

So what happened? In retrospect, I made an error in executing my plan to separate the aircraft. That error was in not communicating a signal for us to all simultaneously begin to maneuver. As I radioed the plan, I was already starting my turn. Weather and night flying had forced me to frequently fly on instruments, and I had immediately rolled into a standard rate turn. The other aircraft pilots had to understand the plan and then prepare and execute the turns, which most likely caused a delay in beginning their turns and descents, and possibly use of less than a standard rate turn. This may have brought the lead gunship (also making a left turn, but just starting to descend), close to me. If his turn was less than standard rate and he hadn't yet started his descent, his slowly banking aircraft would have appeared directly in front of our nose (an image in my mind to this day). I should have made sure everyone understood the plan, and then given an execution cue.

But the nightmare was not over. Once below the clouds we formed up again, 500 feet lower than before, and headed once more for the pickup site. We arrived at the site with no further enroute issues, only to find a

major challenge at the destination. Arriving over the location, marked by a ground-fired star cluster, I told the flare ship to climb as high as he could without losing sight of our navigation lights (none of us wanted him in the clouds again), and to drop a parachute flare so I could get a look at the terrain.

The mission request had already specified a hoist mission, always hairy at night, and what I saw in the light of the flare made the nightmare worse. The pickup point was on a saddle between two high points on a ridge. One of the high points made an approach from that direction too steep, and the enemy contact was from the direction of the other high point – I certainly didn't want to overfly that area. So my only option was to come in perpendicular to the ridge.

The gunships set up a racetrack on my flank closest to the enemy, but we decided to not have them fire unless I started to take fire. Prior to starting the approach, I told the PP to put the landing light in full retraction, and to turn it on only when we came to a hover. This would point it straight down, where it would provide light for the medic to see the trees through which he would have to guide the jungle penetrator of the hoist. On short final to the pickup area, my search light showed that the ridge was very narrow, and I would have to hover with my nose slightly over the edge of the ridge to get the hoist in the right position. This meant that I would have no ground reference, and the medic would have to direct me for a steady hover.

Once we terminated our approach and hovered the nose out over the edge of the ridge, I told the PP to turn the search light off – there was nothing for it to illuminate that could serve as a hover reference, and we didn't need a target for the bad guys to shoot at. Then ensued a litany of direction from the medic: "you're drifting forward, bring it back. You're now sliding right, come left. Too far back now, hold it right there. Hoist going down. Stop drifting forward, come back. Hoist on ground. Come left slightly, ...". Then after what seemed like an eternity: "hoist coming up. Hold it steady." Finally he called "hoist clear of the trees", then "patient in." We flew off the ridge saddle, turned away from the contact direction, and climbed to a safe altitude. Fortunately no bad guys shot at us – possibly they were as scared as we were.

So how many sweet dreams does it take to offset a major nightmare? Looking back to 50 years ago, I remember this nightmare much more vividly than any sweet dreams. But it was well worth it, to rescue another soldier from his personal hell. Dustoff – so others may live.

By Jim Siverd

23 May 1969, Republic of South Vietnam (22 May CONUS based upon the International Date Line)

by Martin Kleiner

50 years ago today I was a young Army Aviator/UH-1C gunship pilot, slightly over five months into my first tour in Vietnam. As I got up that morning, I did not go to the mess hall and then out to the flight-line to preflight my aircraft. Instead, I rolled out of a hammock strung in a bunker that served as the TOC for A/2/12th Inf of the 25th Inf Div, and opened a C ration for breakfast. You might wonder why I was doing this; the answer is quite simple. I was assigned to the 116th Assault Helicopter Company (Hornets) and after serving my first three months in one of the lift platoons I was reassigned to the gunship platoon (Stingers) at my request. At that time, the Army had no separate Aviation Branch for commissioned officers and each of us maintained a basic branch, which for me was Infantry. Since the Hornets habitu-



ally supported the Infantry units with air assault operations, which included flying gun cover during the operation, we had a policy that the Stinger platoon leader would be an Infantry-qualified officer. Additionally, it was policy, unwritten I am sure, that he would go out and spend some time attached to one of our supported Infantry companies. At the time, I was not the platoon leader but through normal rotation I was expected to fill that position later in my tour.

A week or so earlier, I contacted the A Company CO (1LT Troy ????) and arranged to join him in the field for a week.

Afterward, I went to the Hornets CO, MAJ John Tragesser, to obtain his approval. He consented and, as was his style, he said, "show them you're tough, stay out there two weeks." So orders were duly cut attaching me to A Company for two weeks. I joined them in the field at their laager site, a company set of sandbagged bunkers arranged in a circular pattern surrounding an area with the mortars, the TOC, aid station and feeding area. This was all enclosed with concertina wire, Claymore mines, flares and other standard perimeter defense items.

Our daily routine was to form up and either air assault to a somewhat distant area to conduct ground operations, or more often we would form up and conduct ground operations in the local area. These consisted of searching for Viet Cong positions, indications of VC military operations during the past few days and general observation of the local villages, roads and infrastructure. As a rule we would also send one platoon out at dusk to conduct night ambush operations along suspected VC routes (this was my least favorite type of operation). Fortunately, this was the local dry season.

During the first week, I accompanied the CO on all of the daily ops, which occurred with a minimum of enemy action. On one patrol, a command-detonated mine was fired, but it was set up parallel to our route of march and no one was injured. We immediately turned to our flank and assaulted into the wood line, but other than the blast area found no other indication of the enemy.

On another day, after having conducted our patrols we returned to the laager site and shortly thereafter were called out to support a combat engineer unit that was taking harassing fire from a tree line while they conducted engineer operations. As we approached the tree line, we took fire, so we took cover behind the wall of a cemetery and Troy called in 81mm mortar fire on the tree line. We then began approaching the tree line and again took fire and repeated the process, this time calling in 4.2-inch mortars, with following iterations working up through 105mm howitzers, 155mm howitzers, and finally an 8-inch howitzer. On our final approach to the tree line, we received no fire and swept through the area with no further contact. An interesting aspect was that during our repeated periods of taking cover behind the low cemetery wall a small contingent of Vietnamese boys showed up on bicycles with insulated cans tied to the back filled with cold beer, sodas and ice pops. They first came up and 'souveniered' "

(i.e. gave) a soda to the CO and then proceeded up and down the line of troops selling their wares and carefully collecting the empty bottles (those who have been there understand this).

One evening during that week a Stinger gunship made a low pass over the laager site and dispatched a cardboard box attached to a flare parachute and addressed to me, nicknamed "Roach" for my loathing of the huge cockroaches that were endemic to the area. The box was insulated with Styrofoam and contained a chilled bottle of Rufino Chianti. I offered some to Troy but, knowing better, he declined. I took one swig of it and being totally dehydrated could barely get it down and then regretted it, although I did truly appreciate the thoughtfulness of my fellow Stingers.

The eighth day, the first day of my "show them you're tough" week, started out normally and we went out on a local area patrol, moving in a staggered column of twos with Troy, me, and the RTO in the center. At about 0930, we were moving through a series of dry rice paddies a little way from a local village in the vicinity of Dau Tiem. About half-way through one of the paddies I scanned to the right and rear and observed what looked like a pile of rusty 50 cal/12.5 mm ammo. As I started to call out to Troy, I noticed a cloud of black smoke and dirt where he was and then saw him fall forward. The next thing I knew I was lying on my back looking up at the sky and wondering what the hell had happened, never having heard a sound. Very rapidly the medics were tending to us and the unit took up a hasty defensive perimeter. Luckily, there were no VC in the area engaging us, and the medics could work quickly while the RTO called for a Dust Off. Apparently, Troy had tripped a "booby trap" (an IED in today's parlance) and thankfully it was a small one, probably a ChiCom grenade.

Though we were both incapacitated, neither of us was seriously wounded, but we were peppered with shell fragments mostly in our legs. I had one that had hit and fractured my right collarbone, again, no serious damage. As I lay there looking up at the sky with the medics working on my wounds, I didn't really feel any pain, but I did have a sharp stinging/burning sensation in my

right foot, much like when a fire cracker would go off in my hand as a kid. I also had a clear picture in my mind of a blown booby-trap that we had come across a few days earlier, along with the remains of a boot and some rotting flesh. It occurred to me then that it would be pretty hard to work the right pedal of a helicopter if I didn't have a foot, but I was unable to sit up and judge for myself. I asked the medic who replied that it was bloody, but intact. That was a sure relief.

In short order, the Dust Off bird arrived and we were loaded in on stretchers for the short flight back to the 12th Evac Hospital, which was adjacent to the Hornets' area on the 25th Div base camp at Cu Chi. During the flight back, I noticed it was getting a little bit difficult to breathe, but I attributed that to a rush of air coming into the cabin (maybe they were flying out of trim trying to cool us down). When we landed at the 12th Evac helipad it was just like MASH, but with a Huey instead of an H-13. The orderlies came running out and took the stretchers into the triage area and set them on sawhorses. Seeing that neither of us had incurred serious damage, such as a missing limb or a head wound, the medics immediately began cutting off our field dressings and evaluating and treating the wounds while the attending surgeon stood back and looked on (in my mind I clearly remember him leaning against a low wall with somewhat long hair, wearing an OD Tee shirt and smoking a cigarette, but perhaps that is a false impression).

While the medics were at work, there was an admin specialist standing at the head of the stretcher asking us our name rank and serial number, unit of assignment, etc. (just imagine Radar O' Reilly). It was at that point I realized that



my difficulty in breathing was getting worse and I made that known as best I could. The surgeon immediately began barking orders and the medics cut off my jungle fatigue jacket and Tee shirt and lo-and-behold a shell fragment had penetrated between two of my ribs and lodged itself in my left lung. There I was with the proverbial "sucking chest wound", which we were all taught how to treat in basic training, and nobody, including myself, even knew I had it (go figure). The surgeon then swabbed me down with betadine, took a scalpel and made an incision above the entry wound and proceeded to insert a pointed edge plastic tube into me. Now that HURT, but they sealed the entry wound and hooked me up to a suction machine. I then began to breathe life in instead of breathing it out. There was much more to follow, and it would be another four months before I climbed back into a cockpit again, this time at Ft Bragg, NC with the 6th Special Forces Grp.



Anyway, that's my "day in history" 50 years ago, and as the saying goes, "that's my story and I'm stick'n to it". Its been a great 18,263 days since then, but hey, who's counting. Thanks for listening.

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1968-71 NSA Ft. Meade, Md.

1971-74 Osan AB, ROK

1974-83 Vandenberg AFB, Ca

1.509.523.4213

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**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

Letters to the Editor

Dear VHPA Members,

In my very first Presidents Corner message, I included a brief outline of my Army service, one aspect of which was taking a direct commission from W-2 to O-2, I then thought I was making a joking comment in sharing, "I tell people it was an increase in pay and a drop in prestige." I truly meant it as a humorous aside, a recall of the good-natured banter and teasing that went on and still does between Warrants and "RLO's" – aviators both. We were and are family members – brothers who understand that the banter is a sign of affection. I did receive an email from one VHPA member however, a retired commissioned officer, who was offended at what he interpreted as a disrespectful, disparaging, and unprofessional remark. I immediately sent him an email stating that I recognized his valid point, offered a sincere apology if it came across as ill-considered, and explained that it was not intended to be anything else except a good-natured missive. This open letter to the VHPA is to apologize to anyone else who may have felt my remark was inappropriate. I shall certainly more carefully weigh my words going forward. Now, does anyone want to offer a hymn?

Art Jacobs, VHPA President

Tom,

I have some comments of interest to First of the Ninth members of the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association: Take a close look at the May/June 2019 issue.

The cover photo is a UH-1B belonging to D Company, 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, and the caption says it was taken by Al DeMailo, who was Smiling Tiger 21 at the time (67-68). His tour in Charlie Troop came later, in 1970-71 if I remember right.

A regular feature in The Aviator is called "Selections from Past Newsletters." The article featured in the May/June issue first appeared in December 1992 under the title "NVA Spoils Last Flight in Loach." The author was the late Lou "Rocket" Roachat, who served in Apache Troop and then joined the late Bert Chole and others to form the provisional Echo Troop. Those fortunate enough to know Lou know he was a heck of a story-teller; this article describes his last Scout mission, the one that cost him a leg.

The last line of Lou's story says, "I only wish I knew the name of the Loach pilot who came and got me and my crew out. I don't know if he ever found out, but if someone knows I hope you'll send word to me so I can share it with others.

Jim Kurtz, Apache 03, 1970-71

To the Editor,

I noted in the current issue the question about configurations with the grenade launcher.

I was a pilot/ops officer in Delta Company 227th in 1966 and 1967. I'm also now 83 years old and memory is fuzzy. I located an equally fuzzy photo taken in 1967 some better eyes and photo interpretation skills might find helpful. We called the grenade launchers "Thumper" and "Frog." Those terms were in use when I joined the unit.

The photo was taken when I was on a mission and the launcher jammed, or stopped for some reason at a pretty critical time, like someone was trying to kill us. As the crew worked on it, someone snapped the attached photo. Not a good one, but the best I can do. The Frog and the rockets are clear. A friend and VHPA member Sam Prestipino from sister unit, Delta 229th was also on that mission. He might know more about those configurations.

Thanks for the memories

Dave Canfield, Cobra 3, Life Member



**THIS COULD BE
WHERE
YOUR STORY
STARTS!**

It was a dark and stormy night, and there I was, guarding the aircraft revetments. I had my three-candle-power flashlight, my .38 revolver, and 20 rounds of ball ammunition. The communist hoards were all about me...

LOOKING FOR

Note: Sometime in the preparation of this issue, I believe at least one (possibly more) requests for this section was lost. If you do not see your submission, please re-send it. I apologize for the error on my part.

Tom Kirk

Dear sir,

I'm Peter Usher, son of Jimmy Usher Marine helicopter pilot 63-65. Dad was a quiet man about his life then, do you have or know of any surviving people who would tell me about him at that time?

These are pictures of his patches:

Pete Usher danousher@gmail.com Tel. 843 253 6030



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Vietnam Games

by Andrew Belmont

A/159 ASHB 101 ABN, C/159 ASHB 101 ABN & A/228 ASHB 1 CAV

Neither I nor Lowell were more than three years beyond high school but here we were opposite each other at a two-seat game table in the Pachyderm O' Club (CH-47s for you tree trimming types), with a Chessboard between us. I, feeling confident about my chances even if my technique was more like checkers than chess, but it often worked on my brother back home.

Now as I wisely made my opening move, Lowell countered. I quickly grabbed a piece and boldly moved it forward, and again Lowell countered. Still confident as the sixteen pieces were barely moved about. Now my turn again. Ahh the Knight with its left/right turns seemed to be my smart choice, grab and go -HA! Lowell blandly asked, "do you know the least amount of moves for a CHECKMATE? Me, "huh?" Lowell, "three - CHECKMATE."

Two nights later: "Lowell get over here! Do you know how to play CRIBBAGE?" "Yeah," says he. "Ok, penny a point -dime a box- twenty-five cents a game my old high-school rules." Win/lose \$1.75, big stakes for H.S. "Uhm. Say Lowell, how 'bout ten cents a point- fifty cents a box - a Buck a game?" No problem as I'm a man of means these days, a WO1 peter pilot, no longer making bucks with snow shoveling and weed pulling. "Yeah, OK." I figure hey with my H.S. win/loss record maybe five buck loss at most, bring it on. Seven hands of cards in one game and I O U \$17.25. WHAT?

Lowell convinced me NOT to play poker as after my losses to him there was barely enough to cover my bar bill, you know 15¢ a beer and 25¢ a shot. Lowell was gracious enough to buy me a beer with my money. Blood Sweat n Tears, Credence Clearwater Revival, Three Dog Night and the Stones on the club speakers with 8" woofers was almost enough to sate my gambling needs. Almost!

"Lowell get over here, I don't have any more money and do not know how to bet on this game, but do you know how to play Stratego?" Lowell: "Sorta." "OK, I'll go easy

on you and I'll let you see how it is played." The FLAG is the goal but there are bombs and a spy and Marshals and soldiers. Sixteen pieces each side with physical barriers on the board. Real army maneuvers from Napoleon's war, none of this jungle stuff.

Ta Da, I finally found Lowell's Achilles Heel. Not only my nemesis Lowell, but I dispatched all comers. 99 wins out of 100 games until Bill. Bill would win two out of three Stratego, but lose cribbage and chess no contest. To get my Stratego fix I had to suffer the indignity of a majority of losses to Bill as by now no one else would play me. "Whaaa, take my board and go home!"

There were darts, but that was a draw as 'peter pilots' have good hand-to-eye coordination, and the game seemed to digress as the evening and the beer flowed.

Like most units there were some 9 to 5 workers who always seemed eager for Volleyball. Combat rules applied unless the C.O. was playing. He being a LARGE child had that advantage and the fact that he was C.O. Amazing how a point was argued to the millimeter, but when the CO played IN/OUT end of discussion. As soon as he left, haggle and squabble ensued.

Like a star baseball third baseman, I and some of the Stratego victims were traded to other Divisions. My new digs had chess, but No cribbage and alas, NO Stratego. But they did have a ping pong table and usually played doubles. As a newbie on the block I watched the scene. Kinda like a basketball two on two pickup game. Another pilot and I from the old unit never having played a game of ping pong together were in short order owners of the table. Bah new guys. Oh YEAH we're bad DELUXE. NEXT.

Yeah, there was a real war in progress, but combat volleyball and bar games still stand out in my good ole days' recollections. Nowadays chess and cribbage are computer games, but no one to buy a beer, even with my own money.

PROPOSED VHPA AUTHORS CHAPTER

With a first ever
"BYOB" (Bring your
Own Book) VHPA



Authors Reunion under our belts, it was suggested by Mr. Gary Roush that we apply to form an Authors Chapter that would be open for membership to all VHPA members, regardless of geographical location. This option fits us well as our potential membership not only crisscrosses these United States, but reaches across the oceans to Thailand.

The chapter goals include not only the social aspects available through annual mini-reunions but opportunities for networking, potential greater publishing avenues, exposure in the many communities the VHPA visits each year, etc. where a rich American historical tradition exists. We see this chapter being, in many ways, in direct support and camaraderie with the VHPA / Texas Tech University Archives partnership.

So, if you are interested in joining this newly forming chapter and at least passed first grade writing class, "We Want You!" You do not need to be a published author to be a member of the chapter - just interested in the VHPA stories, many yet untold.

Contact: Tom Morrissey (Warlord 23, 117th AHC)
email: tomartist2004@yahoo.com



John Reeder, author of: *Through the Valley: My Captivity in Vietnam* (on left) with Dick Ziegler.



Authors BYOB Reunion in KC: Left to right: Tom Morrissey, Gary Roush, John Rob.

The Idle Musings of an Old H-19 or H-34 Pilot

We need to get rid of turbines and go back to old fashioned, big, round engines because turbines are ruining aviation. Anyone can start a turbine. All you do is move a switch to the "START" position and then release it after a while. My PC is harder to start than most turbines. Cranking a big, round engine required skill, finesse, style, and a lot of manual dexterity.

Turbines start by whining for a while and then they give off a soft, lady-like "poot" before whining louder. Big, round engines began with a satisfying rattle-rattle, click-click, bang-bang, more rattles, another bang or two, a loud macho "fart", more clicks, and a huge belch of blue smoke that finally ended in a serious, low pitched, roar.

Men liked that kind of noise. It might be a guy thing, but when you started a big, round engine, your mind was instantly engaged and you began concentrating on the flight ahead. Starting a turbine engine is like turning on a ceiling fan; useful, but hardly exciting. Besides, turbines

don't break often enough and that leads to aircrew boredom, complacency, and inattention. A big, round engine sounded like it was going to blow-up at any moment. That made a pilot concentrate on the business at hand.

Another problem is that turbines don't have enough control levers to keep a pilot busy. There's nothing to fiddle around with during flight, so they are likely to start dicking around with things that should be left alone, like screwing with the radio frequency the co-pilot just entered or pulling inverter switches to see which instruments are affected. Those kinds of distractions can get you into trouble and get you killed.

Lastly, turbine engines smell like a Boy Scout camp full of Coleman lanterns. Big, round engines made flying machines smell like God intended for them to smell.

I think I hear the nurse coming down the hall, so I'd better close.

Author Unknown

ANOTHER FIRST

(And We Hope the Last)

Occasionally a near miracle occurs, however, it is most often attributed to a lot of forethought and labor. The impossible is made possible by Army aviation. It will be recorded in the annals of history, but hopefully will never need repeating.

It was a hot, sultry Sunday afternoon in the Mekong Delta in the Republic of Vietnam. The rainy season was drawing to a close, yet the canals, rivers and rice paddies were still swollen.

A CH-47B Chinook from the 271st Assault Support Helicopter Company was performing a series of resupply sorties to a South Vietnamese infantry unit located on Nui Dai Mountain at the northwest corner of Military Region IV. One sortie in particular generated great anxiety among the crews. As the Chinook turned toward the mountain on its final approach with 35 troops aboard and a 5,000-pound external load of concertina wire and fence pickets, a .30 caliber round tore into it just aft of the right forward cabin window. It continued through the roof where it cut 14 wires of an electric wire bundle.

The number 2 engine lost power and number 1 went to full power. A right turn down the mountain slope to friendlier territory was made. The external load was released after it was apparent that the aircraft could not maintain altitude.

With the number 1 engine operating at full power, the aircraft could not be slowed below 110 knots in straight and level flight. Either a running landing or an autorotation would be required. The former was chosen because of the number of passengers aboard and the fact that the crew was not certain what other damage may have been caused by the hostile fire. Then the aircraft commander noted an abnormal increase in the vibration level of the aircraft and decided to land at a near-

by asphalt airstrip.

On short final, just over the runway overrun, the number 1 engine was brought to idle and the aircraft touched down on the runway with a ground speed of approximately 125 knots. Rolling only on the aft gear to effect aerodynamic braking, the crew experienced a feeling of success. Rotor rpm diminished and the forward gear touched down. But, the aircraft skidded off the short asphalt airstrip, through the dirt overrun and into water at the end of the airfield.

At about 50 meters from the airfield the aircraft came to a turning halt. While it shipped water rapidly through the open cargo hook hatch and the broken chin bubbles, the crew and passengers made a hasty evacuation. The aircraft, with its rotor systems turning slowly, listed to the left, and then sank on its side in 10 feet of water.

Here was a challenge for a recovery crew. According to official records this recovery would be the first for a Chinook which was in a rolled-over, submerged position. The challenge was to effect a recovery without causing further damage. To complicate matters a

significant hazard existed from the large amount of JP-4 fuel which was seeping from the aircraft's nearly full fuel tanks. On the plus side the airfield and its environs were tactically secure, aviation fuel was available at the field and there was not a pressing deadline to complete the recovery.

After viewing the crash scene in the afternoon, the assault support helicopter company commander, his operations and maintenance officers, the resident Boeing engineer and the Lycoming representative met in the evening to plan what was to become a very successful endeavor. Simply stated, the plan



The aircraft in its initial post-crash position.



The Chinook was upright and nose high enabling the water to drain.

called for a two-day recovery operation. On the first day the goal was to bring the aircraft to an upright position and move it to shore; on the second day it would be stripped of its heavy components and lifted by a CH-54 helicopter to a repair depot.

The first day's operation began when two U. S. Navy frogmen dived through the JP-4 fuel slick, removed the submerged rotor head covers, installed lifting eyes into the masts and attached recovery slings to the lifting eyes. The recovery slings were made using 20,000-pound load cargo slings and 40,000- pound load endless slings. These were fashioned 37 feet to the forward rotor head, and 43 feet to the aft rotor head and with a 10-foot riser. This would assure a nose-high airframe attitude once the aircraft was upright. Another CH-47B from the 271st was used for the recovery. It was stripped of its cabin equipment and its fuel load was kept at less than 1,500 pounds.

The recovery Chinook was flown by the operations and maintenance officers who were in radio contact with the ground crew which controlled the entire operation with portable radios. A frogman hooked the recovery sling to the helicopter. The recovery pilots were instructed to maintain a direct vertical pull on the slings and to increase power slowly. Because of their smooth technique, the submerged helicopter rolled to the upright position.

The configuration of the slings made the aircraft rise nose-high. With the helicopter in this position, a large amount of water was drained. The next and final phase for the day was the movement to shore. The aircraft, though still partially submerged and resting on the muddy bottom, was "towed" to within 10 feet of the shore-line by the recovery aircraft. It was there that the forward landing gear became mired in the mud.

The dead weight of the helicopter, now in shallow water and partially drained of water, was calculated to be approximately 30,000 pounds - too much for a direct vertical lift by any recovery aircraft. With a few hours of daylight remaining, the rotor blades and heads were removed using the recovery aircraft and standard slings.

That evening a progress session was held. The recovery

goals were being achieved on schedule. Coordination effected with a heavy helicopter company for the next day's evacuation of the aircraft to depot maintenance. Safety measures and precautions were again stressed. With the partially submerged helicopter still too heavy for a vertical lift, a two-point force would be the answer.

The morning of the second day a heavy wrecker (tow truck) was obtained. A bridle was fabricated using three 20,000-pound load cargo slings configured into three 40-foot legs centered on a 40,000-pound load endless sling. One leg was attached to the wrecker; the other two to the forward landing gear of the mired helicopter. Recovery slings used on the first day were

once again attached to the masts of

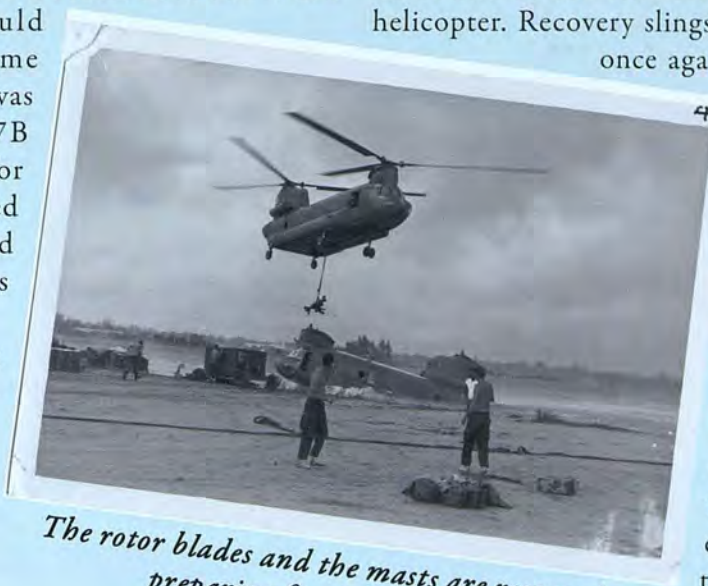
the downed aircraft. With the recovery aircraft exerting a vertical pull and the wrecker a horizontal pull the downed aircraft was moved up onto the airfield.

Success! All drain holes in the bottom of the helicopter were opened, releasing much water. The engines and combining transmission were removed using the wrecker. The aircraft was next rigged for movement by a CH-54 helicopter.

There's always a bit of humor that will come to light. That afternoon when the CH-54 lifted the rigged aircraft, the CH-54 pilot told the ground crew that his instruments showed the rigged aircraft to be 17,500 pounds. Computations made at the planning session indicated figure of 14,700. Where was all this extra weight? Seems someone forgot to drain water from the structural compartments designed for the aircraft's auxiliary fuel tanks. This was quickly remedied! Exactly 48 hours after the crash the Chinook was on its way to depot.

This recovery was a total success – the result of careful, unrushed planning. An assessment of the damage indicated that only the rotor blades and heads were unrepairable. No damage was incurred during the recovery. Another first – we hope the last.

by Major John L. Wood



The rotor blades and the masts are removed preparing for the final lift.

Guilt is a Monster

We rode as angels of death in the sky,
Our flinging wings flinging, held us high
Our ship, a weapon that we drew neigh
When we angels of death dove, people die.

Rockets of 2.75 lived in tubes to left and right
Minnies per minute spit 6000 rounds to smite
And to cover our turn 40 mike-mike fell tight
Death and death was our name this flight

Pass after pass we roared round and round
Ship covering ship in a cacophony of sound
Death we left all over the ground
Till the Sneaky Pete called, "they are all down"

Away we flew home to the Lane heliport
Formation of two staggered trail of a sort
Lane tower two cobras in the pass for home port
Another good day of fine killing sport

Up the hill to the hooch stowing our gear
Then off to the club to be drowned in beer
Scotch and wine were also our sphere
And weed made us happy and hid our fear

This sport continued day after day
Back to slicks I went which was my main stay
Resupply and combat assault came our way
One year this continued to the very day
One hundred twenty-five flight hours this month
Off to the flight surgeon, the order was blunt
How do you feel, just fine I would grunt
Cleared to fly another 25 hours this month

Into hot LZs our blades cutting cord wood
Into palisades with 30 knot tail winds we stood
Dropping troops as rounds punched holes in the hood
Our skills were beyond what most wish they could

The mistake I made has cost me much life
Giving me demons that created me strife
I killed good guys and my life will forever be rife
With visions of monsters with a big shiny knife

Returning home was a challenge for me to bear
One day a hero if you kill, the next you don't dare
Baby killer screamed a beautiful girl then spit in my hair
She was so lovely standing there

Home, I came nutty as a fruitcake, or no, nuttier
I asked mother to pass the me f..king butter
A new XKE with one beautiful woman or another
How could a young man recognize this gutter?

The strain that was there but I could not see
I built businesses and then crashed them to the sea
I hurt everyone with whom I could be
The reason for this totally escaped me

I wished to die and came very near
I crawled to the VA and begged out of fear
They helped me to see my guilt was my atmosphere
In my eyes I shammed heaven and earth with fear

Slowly but slowly they helped me see truth
I had done bad, but no answer in vermouth
There is only one fix for the sins of my youth
Help others, help others, and forsooth

by Ray Lewis

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 5 New Members and covers the period 07-02-19 to 07-31-19

Leonard Peter L **

Port Townsend Washington
Army

68-501 67-25

571 MED DET in 68-69; 236 MED DET in 71

Mott Alan E.

Prescott Arizona

Army

69-40

134 AHC in 70-71

Robin David **

East Syracuse New York
Army

69-35

56 TC CO in 65-66; HHC 3 BDE 1 CAV in 70-71

Santay Tom **

Aiken South Carolina
Navy

62-38

HC-2 in 65

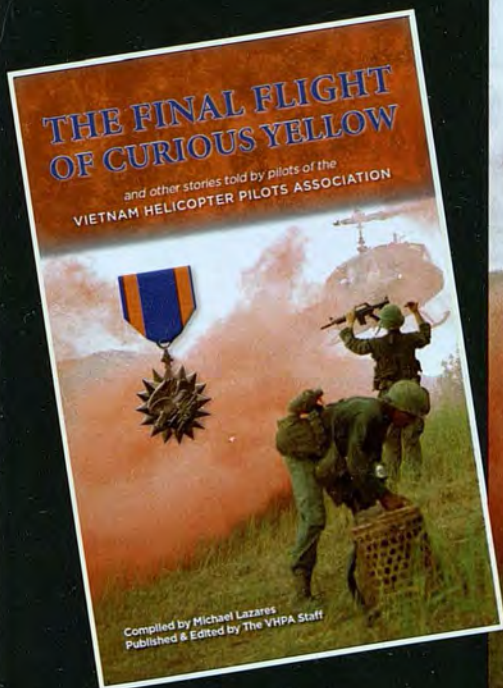
Walls Osborne K **

Manassas Virginia

Army

72-42

5/27 ARTY in 70-71; 62 CAC in 72-73



Sales to date of the
Final Flight of Curious Yellow
have generated \$6224 for the
VHPA Scholarship Fund!

*We thank those who contributed to the book,
and those who purchased it!*

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TODAY**

Quilters Show and Tell

Quilters, if you are planning on sending blocks for next year's quilts, the deadline is set for September 15th. I want to thank those who had donated their blocks at the Reunion in Kansas City.

THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE BLOCKS ARE:

1. Fabric is to be quilt quality fabric.
2. Prewashed to prevent the fabrics from bleeding.
3. Colors of fabric in Red, White or cream and Blue.
4. Blocks are to be 12 and one half inches square. Use one quarter inch seams.
5. The blocks are of your choice. There are many to choose from: Rail Fence, Ohio Star, 9-patch, applique blocks. These are just a few of your choices.
6. You can make as many blocks as you would like.

Please mail your blocks to:

Kathleen Sherfey
12420 W 53rd Terr
Shawnee, KS 66216

If you have any questions, contact Kathleen at
klskms@aol.com or call 913-631-6811.



1LT Kinnie.



CW2 Gilbert Foote.

VHPA 2020 CALENDAR

Available for Immediate Shipment!

The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association and Acclaim Press are pleased to present the new VHPA 2020 Calendar, hot off the press and available for immediate shipment. This is the 27th calendar produced by the VHPA.

The goal of the VHPA calendar project is to refresh the memories of all those who flew and worked on helicopters in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War era, and to record, preserve and display the events and activities that were important to veterans of that period.

Each month features photographs depicting the machines and people that flew over Vietnam, plus detailed captions about what is pictured. This VHPA Calendar also commemorates the 2,166 helicopter pilots who died or whose bodies were not returned (BNR) from Southeast Asia during the Vietnam Era (1961-1975).

Printed in full-color, this 17x11-inch (BIG) wall calendar is the perfect gift for all VHPA members and their families. **Only \$14.95 - plus shipping (\$5 first calendar; \$1.50 each add'l copy; Missouri residents add 6.225% sales tax).** To order, call the publisher toll-free at 1-877-427-2665, visit online at www.acclaimpress.com, or send your check/money order to the address below.

On the cover: VHPA Member Wes Sims took this photo about July 1967 at the Duc Pho airfield during his tour with the 3rd Brigade, 25th Inf. Div. This Brigade deployed to Vietnam from Hawaii, where it enjoyed a great relationship with Aloha Airlines.



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UPCOMING REUNIONS

Distinguished Flying Cross Society

When: 15-19 September 2019

Where: Dayton/Fairborn, OH.

Contact: Warren Eastman: 760-985-2810.

email - weastman@dfcsociety.org

The 116th AHC Hornets

will be in Branson, MO **23 to 27 September 2019.**

Contact Dave McAdams at

hornetreunion@gmail.com for information.

The 132 Hercules / 178 ASHC Boxcars 2019 reunion

When: Late September in Ohio

(still plenty of time to make plans to attend).

Bob Sines is our host. He's has done a great job with the planning.

It should be our Best Reunion so far.

A "Reminder Email" will be sent soon, with all the info.

Please advise if you already plan to attend,

so we can plan accordingly.

Contact: Bill McRae 132 ASHC 70-71 Cell: 770-843-3973

173rd Assault Helicopter Company

(Robin Hood/Cross Bows) Reunion

When: 25-29 September 2019

Where: The Westin Hotel, Huntsville, AL

Contact: Rich Johnson - rich.johnson9837@gmail.com or Jim

Roop - jim.roop@aol.com

281 AHC 50-Years Reunion

When: October 2-5, 2019

Where: Menger Hotel, San Antonio TX

Information: 281st.com

92nd AHC: Stallions and Sidekicks Reunion

When: October 3-6, 2019

Where: Oklahoma City, OK, "Bricktown"

Hampton Inn & Suites

Contact: website, www.92ahc.org/Reunion2019.html

Or Haydn Decker: uh1hd@aol.com

The 192 AHC 2019 Reunion

When: November 7-10, 2019

Where: Radisson Suites Hotel, 6555 Speedway Blvd, Tucson, AZ

85710 Tel. 520-721-7100

Contact Dennis Javens (Polecat 19)

dennisjavens43@gmail.com 805-903-3967

E Battery 82nd Artillery 1 CAV

(All former unit members and their guests)

When: Nov 8th to 13th

Where: San Antonio TX

Contacts: Patrick McIntyre: pat@mcintyre.com

Gordon Eatley: geatley@cox.net

See also: <https://ebtry.myfreesites.net>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1687347068170409/>

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Robert Potvin's Untold Story

COVER STORY

From the Managing Editor

The story that follows was written by the late Robert Potvin. We listed his obituary in the July/August Aviator Taps section.

Bob performed a crucial service for the VHPA for nearly 20 years, beginning in the early 2000s. The then president, Bob Smith, was managing our investments conservatively to preserve capital. Bob Potvin volunteered his time and expertise as an investment professional (with his own firm) to modify the type of investments to not only preserve capital, but to accumulate steady gains with little or no risk.

Bob's efforts were not in the spotlight and were likely considered routine. His contribution was anything but routine. The VHPA treasury realized significant growth under his stewardship. Our ability to promulgate our legacy and provide scholarships among many other activities is a direct result of the organization's financial health – and that status is a legacy for Robert Potvin 1947 – 2019.

I've never told this story to anyone and I don't know who I'm telling it to now. Maybe myself.

Wayne was a friend of mine. I first met him when he showed up at my unit one day in early 1968. I'm not certain, but I think Wayne was assigned as a liaison officer to the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry from his own unit which was one of the lift companies of the 229th Aviation Battalion. It's possible he was temporarily assigned to us as a "Peter Pilot" for the Command and Control section. In any event, it doesn't matter. I met him and we became friends.

The 1st Brigade Aviation Section was a small unit as 1st Air Cavalry Division units went. It was divided into two sections - Command and Control (C&C, or more commonly Charlie-Charlie) with four UH-1H Hueys, and Aeroscouts with eight OH-13S models. I was the section leader for the Aeroscouts.

The C&C section provided support to the brigade and its three maneuver battalions. Stuffed with radios, the Charlie-Charlie Hueys were used by commanders to maintain contact with their units in the field. They provided an aerial communications platform when troops were maneuvering or when they were in contact with the enemy. They were also called on to perform all types of other missions ranging from Medevac to emergency resupply.

The Aeroscout Section was a modern version of the mounted cavalry scouts: light, fast, maneuverable observers of the battlefield - The eyes and ears of the Commander, as it were. Scheduled to be replaced by the OH-6A 'Loach' in the near-future, the OH-13S was a Bell design predating the Korean War. It had a turbocharged reciprocating engine, a manual throttle, and pilots who loved it. It was a

stable and stodgy performer, limited in airspeed and useful load, but its ability to hover made it an ideal scout platform.

The aircraft was flown from the left seat. The controls had been removed from the right side of the cockpit to make room for an ammunition box that sat on the floor between the observer's feet. The box contained 1000 rounds of linked 7.62 ammunition for the M-60 machine gun manned by the observer. There was an ammo can filled with fragmentation grenades between the pilot and observer's seats, and hand grenades of all types hung from safety wire which had been strung clothesline-like throughout the cockpit. We carried smoke grenades (all colors except white), white phosphorus (Willie Pete was ideal for starting fires or marking targets for the Air Force), concussion grenades (worked great on bunkers), CS (tear gas) grenades and whatever else we thought would be useful or entertaining. The bottom and back of the bench-style seats had sheets of armor plating lying on them that would protect the crew from small arms fire. The shock of the round hitting the armor would leave you stiff and sore, but that was much preferred to the alternative. I can't think of a crew that didn't have at least one round stopped by the armor plating.

The Aeroscout mission was simple: find the enemy. We worked ahead of the troops maneuvering on the ground, checked out LZs before the troops went in and PZs before they left. We were responsible for first and last light recons of the Brigade AO (area of operation) and reconned areas of contact before the troops attacked. If we ran across a small enemy force, we would engage them ourselves. If there were more than we could handle, and there usually were, we'd call in artillery, airstrikes, and the Cavalry.

The pilots were all volunteers. More than that, they had to be accepted by the small fraternity of pilots they sought to join. If one of the scout pilots did not feel a candidate was someone he wanted to fly with, the selection process was stopped then and there with a blackball. No questions were asked, no explanation was required. The nature of the job was such that we put ourselves in harm's way on a regular basis and did not feel the need to have second thoughts about the competency of our wingman.

As a group, we were younger than most, independent as hell, secure in ourselves and our ability to the point of being real pains-in-the ass when on the ground. We were probably viewed as crazy by others (including the enemy), and typically had nothing to lose. The latter characteristic was probably the most important since one of the primary techniques we employed to accomplish our mission of finding the enemy was to invent new and more adventuresome ways to get shot at, and we got shot at a lot. Fortunately, they missed most of the time. However, a scout pilot's definition of 'missed' was different than that of most others. When a Lift pilot tells you he was shot

at and missed, he means no rounds hit his aircraft. When a scout pilot tells you he was shot at and missed, he means they missed him. We drove our maintenance officer crazy.

Wayne met the criteria for a good scout pilot. He was self-assured to the point of cockiness, had a devil-may-care attitude, told good stories, drank well (happy, not sullen or violent), and was one of those persons you like instinctively. Wayne had a few drawbacks. He was older than most of us and had a wife and baby back in the World. Wayne's likeability and desire to become a scout pilot may have clouded my judgement a little, but he was in, no blackball.

Wayne's OH-13 transition training was mixed with some right seat (observer) time to help him learn what the mission was all about while an experienced pilot handled the controls. Transitions in Vietnam did not proceed at the leisurely stateside pace. Since a transitioning pilot had nothing else to do and an aircraft at his disposal, he was expected to live with the helicopter and fly as many hours as he felt were productive every day. It was not unusual for four or more hours of flight time to be burned off in a single day. Most transitions took less than a week, depending on aircraft and Instructor Pilot availability. We tried to tailor the training to the mission, so special emphasis was placed on hovering and low, slow flight.

Once Wayne had passed his check ride, he started flying Ash and Trash missions - carrying people, mail, and reports - until he built up about 50 to 100 hours in the aircraft. When a pilot was deemed proficient by his peers, he began flying wing on easy missions, or at least missions I thought would be easy. This, however, was damned hard to predict. Missions that appeared easy had a habit of getting complicated quickly.

1968 was not an easy year to be in Vietnam, let alone in the 1st Air Cavalry Division. We had moved from Binh Dinh Province in Northern II Corps to Northern I Corps and were pretty much responsible for everything from the old Imperial City of Hue, north to Quang Tri. After brief stays at Hue-Phu Bai, Camp Evans, LZ Nancy, and Dong Ha, the 1st Bde finally settled at LZ Betty. In late January, one of the most publicized and controversial battles of the war began at a Marine base in northwest Quang Tri province named Khe Sanh. Except for rumors of heavy fighting, the battle had little immediate effect on us. This would not last long.

The 1st Cav had been involved in Operation Lancaster II since it moved to I Corps. The primary activity of the 1st Bde during this time involved sweeps of the area south of the Quang Tri river from the sea to the mountains. The area, except for a large strip of low-lying sand dunes, perhaps two miles wide and parallel to the coast, consisted of rice paddy fields liberally sprinkled with small villages. The rice paddies continued until Route 1, the major north-south highway in Vietnam. Once west of Route 1, the terrain changed to rolling hills, then mountains within about ten miles.

Many small actions and a few large ones were fought during the first couple of weeks until the NVA realized they were dealing with the Cav. Once they got the message that massive and immediate retaliation was our response, NVA-initiated attacks diminished, and we had to rely on sweeps and scout activity to find the enemy. There were a

couple of medium-sized contacts, but nothing serious. It seemed the NVA had simply decided to not challenge us, at least that's what we thought.

On 30 January 1968, at dawn of the first day of the Lunar New Year or Tet, the Vietcong and NVA launched the largest, most coordinated offensive of the war. They attacked South Vietnam's seven largest cities and thirty provincial capitals ranging from the Delta to the DMZ. At LZ Betty, the day started with an hour-long, pre-dawn rocket and mortar attack. The NVA had taken downtown Quang Tri and the City of Hue. Since the 1st Brigade was stationed just outside of Quang Tri, the next few days were spent in intense battles driving the NVA forces from the city and surrounding areas. Despite the magnitude of the attacks, our casualties were relatively light. This was not true of the NVA; their forces were devastated. By the third day, the battle at Quang Tri was largely over. This was not the case at Hue.

The attack on the old Imperial Capital had been in force and the NVA had taken the lightly defended Citadel and moved large numbers of troops in the old fortress. The battle there took almost a month and consisted largely of house-to-house fighting. The 1st Cav together with significant assistance from the South Vietnamese Army and the Marines ultimately retook the Citadel on 24 February. The battle of Hue officially ended about a week later. The NVA and Viet Cong suffered massive losses everywhere during Tet. They were simply no match for our ability to fire and maneuver. The Tet Offensive was a military disaster for the enemy, and while we had been itching for just such an opportunity to fight the NVA in a pitched battle, history ultimately showed Tet to be a psychological and political defeat.

During this time period, the siege at Khe Sanh continued. On 7 February, nine NVA PT-76 light tanks crossed the river which constituted the Laotian Border and, together with infantry, attacked the Special Forces camp at Lang Vei, southwest of Khe Sanh. The battle lasted about eighteen hours and resulted in the loss of over 300 allied troops, including eight Americans. Weather and the enemy prevented any aid from reaching the outpost from Khe Sanh.

The base at Khe Sanh was in trouble and the monsoon season was not making things any easier. Our preoccupation with the events surrounding Tet prevented any significant relief from reaching Khe Sanh for the time being. NVA artillery located in the DMZ and Laos kept up an incessant barrage of the base and sapper units tried the perimeter repeatedly. The troops were penned in their trenches and bunkers by the barrage and news reports reaching us painted a picture of ultimate defeat and was beginning to draw parallels between Khe Sanh and Dien Bien Phu. Due to the difficulty in supplying the base by air, the decision was made not to reinforce but to use massive artillery barrages and air strikes during the siege.

In late March, the weather started to improve and on 1 April, Operation Pegasus, the 1st Cav's relief of Khe Sanh began. The Quang Tri River flows east out of the Khe Sahn valley, turns south at a hamlet named Ca Lu, continues through the Ba Tang valley then turns northeast to Quang Tri. The 1st Cav followed the river upstream from its staging areas south of Quang Tri and flew into the valley from the east. My scout team was sitting on the ground at Ca Lu as the



ON THE COVER:

A 2nd Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division OH-13-early 1967. These photos were taken by VHPA member DAT WO Steve Rockett at LZ English. Initially the Army believed the brigade observation helicopters would be used primarily for courier missions or to carry a Forward Observer that adjusted artillery fire.

Quickly, however, the Infantry started asking the OH-13 pilots to "look down the trail" (their direction of travel) and "tell us what you see."

To no one's surprise, they started receiving fire! The machine guns and an armed observer were added to give a little back in return. Scouting became their primary mission and Silver was the radio call sign for the 2nd Brigade's Scouts.

assault began. The necessary artillery preps and air strikes had gone in and the LZs were ready to accept the troops. The lift companies of the 227th and 229th, as well as the Chinooks of the 228th were all airborne at the same time. Since the Cav had over 400 helicopters, it was an awesome sight. We sat on the ground waiting for our signal to depart for Khe Sanh and watched flights of six helicopters spaced about two miles apart turn west onto the final leg into the valley for over an hour. It was a bit like the little clown car at the circus; It never ended or even slowed. Part of it was an illusion because the outbound route was different from the inbound, but this never-ending stream of helicopters could not help but impress on us the incredible striking power of the Cav. The ability to lift and move an entire division and all its supporting artillery 50 miles in a matter of a few hours made it clear a new manner of fighting had been developed.

Tucked into the northwest corner of South Vietnam, Khe Sanh was an incredible place. Flying into that valley hard up against the Laotian border and into artillery range of NVA guns was frightening enough, but the landscape made it seem as if you'd landed on the moon. During the siege, the Air Force

dropped over 5000 bombs a day on the area surrounding the base. The Arc Lights (B-52 raids) had turned the surface inside out. It was as if some giant had taken a spade and simply turned over the soil in his garden. The Cav took considerable pride in relieving the Marines and was not shy about letting people know about it. The trail ship on the first lift into Khe Sanh dropped off a detail which painted a huge Cav patch on the end of the runway while another ship scattered leaflets around the base bearing a Cav patch with the message, "You can come out now." On 6 April, the siege was officially lifted when we linked up with the Marines just south of the Khe Sahn airstrip.

Over a three-day period, starting on 10 April, we retook the Special Forces camp at Lang Vei. Seeing the PT-76 tanks setting on top of what had once been the command bunker was an eerie sight. It was the first enemy armor I had seen and the prospect of running into more in an OH-13 was a little disconcerting.

The relief of Khe Sanh was over within two weeks. We returned to Quang Tri and almost immediately left for the Ashau Valley.

The Ashau is a long, narrow, verdant valley located deep in the mountains, approximately

40 miles southwest of Hue. The valley parallels the Laotian border and runs northwest from the small village of A Shau for about twenty-five miles, to a point about five miles north of the village of A Luoi. None of the villages in the valley were populated, and in the case of A Luoi, there was no sign of habitation other than the ruins of an old French outpost located just southeast of a mountain with a bowl-shaped southern face. The 101st Airborne would make the mountain infamous as 'Hamburger Hill' a year or so later. No allied troops had been in the valley in over two years and the NVA had taken full advantage of their absence.

The valley had been the main supply and staging area for attacks throughout I Corps during Tet; despite the massive losses the NVA had suffered, the A Shau continued to function as a major resupply area. The floor of the valley was filled with small and large supply dumps and was serviced by an excellent network of roads. The place didn't have just roads, it had highways. There were Russian-supplied bulldozers and 2 1/2-ton trucks stationed along the valley floor to repair the handiwork of the Air Force as soon as the bombs had stopped falling. Entire road networks and warehousing areas were protected from aerial observation by trellises hung with foliage. Intelligence had indicated that at night the valley was alive with truck convoys. In fact, once we were in the valley, some of our units had NVA convoys drive up on them in broad daylight.

The NVA had the most extensive anti-aircraft installations we had yet faced. There were radar-guided 37mm cannons and quad 12.7mm machine guns in addition to optically-aimed cannons and numerous 12.7mm gun installations, particularly in the area near the 'hourglass' just north of the A Luoi runway.

It was a scary place to fly. The valley floor was around 3000 feet above sea level and the surrounding mountains ran up to 7000 feet or more. The high temperature and humidity made it a very difficult place to operate our OH-13s. The restricted engine power and reduced effectiveness of our rotor systems caused by high density altitudes we were operating at made our scout operations much more difficult. Most of our ships would not hover out of ground effect and the lack of reserve power made it very dangerous since we gave up much of our ability to maneuver out of bad situations.

Consequently, we found ourselves hanging our butts out that much further to get the mission done. The division lost something like 43 aircraft the first day out. Unfortunately, I managed to contribute to the total. Frank Vanetta and I were the two scout team leaders in the section; we had decided to fly the initial two-aircraft mission so each of us would have experience in the valley on subsequent missions. We were to supply scout coverage for the initial assault on the runway at A Luoi and provide the ground troops with assistance as they moved to their initial objective. We arrived on station about twenty minutes prior to the arrival of the lift aircraft carrying the troops and began to scour the LZ. On the third pass, a 12.7mm opened up on us. It was imperative that we take out that gun. It was located on final approach to the LZ and would raise holy hell with the loaded inbound Hueys. We didn't have access to

artillery since the fire support bases had not yet been established, but the Air Force was providing air strikes on-call. Frank got on the radio with some F-4s that were on station and when he gave the word, I made a low pass over the gun position and marked it with a Willie Pete.

The F-4 must have been inbound to the target, because I was no more than 500 meters away when the first load of 500 pounders hit. The F-4s were with the Gunfighters out of Da Nang and had consistently delivered bombs on time and on target, and they did the same this time. The 12.7mm was turned into a smoking hole and the lift proceeded relatively uneventfully. One of the Hueys took a hit in the tail boom, but the round didn't hit anything important and they were able to complete the flight. Years later, I learned my twin brother had been flying Chalk 2 in the lift flight that made the initial assault on A Luoi.

Once the troops were on the ground, they formed up on-line and moved off to the north. Their objective was a small hill less than one kilometer north of the airfield. It wasn't large, but it commanded the surrounding terrain and it was important that we control it. We would be bringing in a battalion of infantry to A Luoi in the next hour, and we didn't need any interference. We moved out ahead of the troops to check for enemy positions. The area the troops had to move through was covered in relatively short vegetation and the first likely spot for difficulty was a small stream and the forward face of the hill they were trying to take. I flew over to and around the base of the hill so I would approach the forward slope from behind. As we swept past the forward slope my observer started yelling at me that there were all kinds of NVA dug in below us. I looked out his side of the aircraft and sure enough, there was at least a platoon of NVA set in ambush for the ground troops.

Leading elements were only about 500 meters away by this time; something needed to be done fast. There was no place to land near the troops; unable to reach the troops by radio, we had no effective way to warn them of what was ahead. I called Frank, told him what we had and that I was going to make one more pass firing on the dug-in NVA positions to see if we could draw their fire to get the message to the ground troops.

I flew around the hill one more time and as soon as we came up on the NVA positions on the forward face, my observer opened fire with his M-60. The response was immediate and overwhelming. The entire platoon must have opened up on us because the gunfire sounded like popcorn going off. I could feel the rounds striking the aircraft, but it didn't feel as it had in the past when we had taken one or two rounds. This time it was as if we were being hit by hail.

I immediately broke away from the contact and headed for the runway at A Luoi. On the way in, I noticed the troops had hit the ground, so at least we got our message across. The aircraft handled okay and nothing seemed to be broken, but I made a run-on landing anyway and shut down the aircraft. While I was inspecting my aircraft, Frank contacted the Air Force and our own gunships and ruined the rest of the day for the NVA who had opened up on me.

We took hits in both fuel tanks and fuel spurted out of them in streams. The rotor head, both blades, and numerous locations on the tail boom had taken hits. There were twenty-three hits in the tail boom alone, which is remarkable considering the OH-13 tail boom is truss construction (tubular) and there isn't much to hit. I sat on the runway for a while and was ultimately picked up by one of our Charlie-Charlies on its way back to Camp Evans. Remarkably, the damaged aircraft was flown out of the valley two days later after repairs had been made. We took the hill, nobody except the enemy was hurt, and my aircraft was repairable. What more could a guy want?

Losses of aircraft continued the entire time we were in the valley, including F-4s and at least one C-130 that wouldn't listen to our pleas to break right instead of left as he para-dropped supplies to us at Aloï. In any event, the Ashau Valley was no place for Wayne to learn how to fly scouts, so we didn't let him come.

We had been operating in the valley for about three weeks when I received orders to go to the OH-6A transition at Vung Tau. I was to pick up our first Loach on the way back. Located on the Vietnamese 'Riviera,' Vung Tau was the in-country R&R center for Vietnam. I jumped at the chance to leave.

I wish I had thought out the repercussions of my decision to leave. Unfortunately, I hadn't, and since I was no longer there, Wayne mounted his OH-13 and flew into the valley, a little like the Light Brigade.

Returning to LZ Betty with our new Loach, I found out Wayne had been killed within two days of my leaving. Wayne had been fly-

ing wing on Frank on a morning mission one ridgeline north of A Luoi when they began to draw heavy ground fire. They broke away from the contact, circled and flew back to mark the target for 'fast movers.' No one knew whether Wayne had been hit or if the flight controls had been damaged, but Wayne's ship rolled inverted, blew up and crashed in flames. Wayne and his observer were killed instantly.

Wayne was the first pilot in my section to die during my tour. Pretty much everyone had been wounded at one time or another, and there had been several crashes after suffering battle damage, but we had been very lucky and not lost anyone until now.

The few missions I had with Wayne as my wingman went very well. He had the ability so many pilots lacked to keep his head about him when things were going to hell by the second and rounds were flying everywhere you turned. Wayne never flinched. He was cool, competent, and lucid. He never abandoned his lead no matter what, which is the highest compliment you can give a wingman.

We had a short ceremony after Wayne's death. Standing in formation, staring at the inverted M-16s stuck into the ground with their bayonets, helmets resting on their stocks and empty boots standing at attention in front of them, we all felt the loss deeply. This was the only tangible reminder we had of him. Otherwise, it was as if he had simply flown off and never came back.

Robert Potvin's Story printed with the permission of his son, Adam Potvin.

Dayton Wayne Lanier, KIA May 09, 1968

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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 918-813-5132 (cell) or 918-298-5132 (home) or via E-mail at ka5hzd@att.net. 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

The Alamo Chapter ladies did not meet for lunch in June. On July 23rd they dined at Sweet Paris Creperie and Café, located in the popular Shops at La Cantera Shopping Mall. Our pilots met for lunch on June 12th at Jerusalem Grill restaurant, and on July 9th at Tiago Cabo Grille in The Rim Shopping Center, all in San Antonio.

Our directors met at The Barn Door on August 30, but publication deadlines did not permit a report of the meeting items in this issue. Our general membership meeting was also scheduled at the Barn Door Restaurant on Friday, September 20th, and election of 2020 directors was to be conducted, but deadlines likewise precluded listing of the new directors here. Election results will be in the November-December Aviator.



Our annual Christmas dinner and dance party will be held on Saturday, December 7th, in the Army Residence Community in San Antonio, beginning at 6:00 p.m. The very popular Dukes of Cool Variety Band will return to perform for us again.

Alamo Chapter member Harry (Bud) Holzman has invited all our members to attend a Veterans Mixer held on the 2nd Saturday of each month from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. These mixers are open to all veterans, not just our Chapter members, and they meet in the Tavern Room of the Fair Oaks Country Club. Veterans need not be members of this club to attend.

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

ALASKA CHAPTER

Just because we sent some cold to the lower 48 doesn't mean you have to send the heat back up here! There have been six weeks with no rain and we broke all-time highs eight times! (95 degrees in Anchorage Alaska???) Thanks, fellow Chapters! The Alaska Chapter will be getting palm trees planted and the beach resort up and running!



Meanwhile, our annual Halibut fishing trip was really great this year! Not only did we take home lots of filets, but the group was so big it took two boats! It was a weekend of fishing and eating and of course story telling. First time in four years John Ulsher did not win biggest fish! As usual, the stories seem to get better with age!

We have our annual picnic coming on August 10th and our fall dinner November 16th. Our effort to have a bridge named in honor of Vietnam Helicopter Pilots and Crews is progressing, but slowly. Seems our legislature is busy with State challenges. Anyway, great times ahead as usual and thanks to all the chapters for posting each quarter, great reading about all the wonderful events. A Big thank you to Tom for keeping all the Chapters up to date with our conference calls.



There is pride in knowing WE FLEW!

Lynn Kile
www.VHPA-Alaska.org

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



View from the broadcast booth.



View from behind the singer of The National Anthem.

AMERICAN HUEY CHAPTER

As this report is written - late July, we are nearing the first anniversary of our organizational meeting, held August 10, 2018, in our temporary hangar/museum in Peru, IN. Ten people were at that meeting.

Following the meeting: bylaws were drafted; an EIN obtained; a checking account opened; membership application form developed; flyer developed; flyers and applications mailed to known prospective members; chapter facebook page created; and an email roster developed.

Dues current membership now numbers 149 - and still growing, thanks to exposure through the Aviator, our Facebook page, and group emails. Also, traveling with one to three flying Hueys to veterans and patriotic events in a five-state area is a great way to spread the Huey gospel.

Recently Completed Events – June July

1. St. Joseph, Michigan: "Lest We Forget - St. Joe River Basin"
2. Cincinnati Reds Ball Park: "150th Anniversary of Baseball & Honoring our Military"
3. Andrews, Indiana: "Honoring Our Heroes - Triple LLL Truck Repair"
4. Peru, Indiana: "Fly In / Drive In - Peru Municipal Airport"

The most prominent event (July 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7), "Reds Rockin' 150", was the culmination of two years of planning and coordination with the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, MLB,

and the FAA. Over the last several years, Jack Maas and his family's JTM Food Group (Harrison, OH) have been great supporters of our organization. Thanks to his business ties with the owners of the Reds (the Castellini family), Jack "masterfully" led them to the idea of bringing all three Hueys to the Reds' 150th anniversary celebration during the week of the 4th of July.

The Castellini family (and their family of 800 Reds employees) honor veterans like no one else in Major League Baseball. And being the oldest team in Major League Baseball, the Cincinnati Reds put on a huge 150th anniversary celebration. We were their honored guests.

On Wednesday, July 3, Gunship 049 and Slicks 803 and 369 arrived at Lunken Airport (near downtown Cincinnati), our staging area. An enroute stop was made at JTM Foods, for lunch and to thank Jack and his family, while giving their employees an opportunity to both see and sit in the Hueys. Lodging for four nights was at the Summit A Dolce Hotel.

Two National Anthem flyovers were performed at two afternoon Reds games - against the Milwaukee Brewers (Thursday, the 4th, 2 pm) and the Cleveland Indians (Saturday, the 6th, 4 pm).

On the afternoon of Friday, the 5th, the Reds hosted a "Day Honoring Our Veterans and Reds Fans", free and open to the public, with bands, base running and lots of fun for all. Prior to that, at noon, with the stands empty, all three Hueys landed on special pads in the outfield and set up (sandwich boards for



View from 369, approaching the outfield.



All-Star Outfield.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



803 Ron Paye; Glen Veno, 369 Ron "Crash" Clark; Phil Marshall 049 John Walker; Chuck Canfield. Others on board: Tom Shields, Gary Moline, Mark Hopkins, Arthur Gray, Don Nelson, Ron Baber, and Mel Lutgring.

each aircraft) for static display, beginning at 1:30 pm. The aircraft remained in the outfield overnight.

Saturday, July 6, began early with a 6 a.m. departure, so the Reds could get the field back in shape for the afternoon ballgame. At Lunken Airport, the trailer was set up, and the aircraft readied for honor flights and static display. After lunch, preparations were made for departure in advance of the National Anthem flyover at 3:59 pm for the Reds' game with the Indians. On Sunday, July 7, everyone was back at Lunken Airport at 8 am for setup and readying the aircraft for static display and member flights until 3 pm. After packing up,



Center Stage, in the foot lights
- Gunship 049.

departure for home was around 4 pm.

It was a tremendous five-day event. It involved much coordination from start to finish. While the flight crews obviously enjoy the flying, a lot of support was provided by all 38 volunteers, performing myriad tasks.

Special thanks go to Jack Maas and his family (JTM Food Group), and to Phil Castellini, his family, and their

family of 800 Cincinnati Reds employees. Their hospitality was over-the-top. Go Reds!

In the Aviator, it's not uncommon to read a war story written by a pilot. But in the Jul/Aug issue is a story about a pilot, written by a CE who flew with D/1/1 CAV, Americal Division, out of Chu Lai. The story, "The Day WO1 Guy Alan Reed Saved My Life", begins on page six. Check it out. Its author, Gary Moline, is one of our energetic chapter members.

Robert Fureigh, Chapter Secretary



In center field - Gunship 049 and a few of her lovers.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

ARIZONA CHAPTER

Greetings from sunny and a very warm Arizona. To everyone who attended the National Reunion, I hope you had a fun and enjoyable time.

We will be planning some events in October of this year. There is a 50th Commemoration of the Vietnam War Dinner October 19th. I will be sending these out through the mailing list I have. If you do not receive one, please email me and I will get one to you.

There will be some events with the Arizona Chapter of the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation in October. There will be other organizations involved like AAAA. I will get information to all of you as I receive the information.

If anyone would like to get some "Hands On" work helping restore some old Hueys and maybe an OH-6 in the future you can contact Dave Sale with the AAHF AZ Chapter at 480-747-5111 or email at davesale64@gmail.com for further information. They have a building at Intercoastal Electronics (ICE) which is located over by Falcon Field. They usually work early now in the summer on Saturday and Tuesday to avoid the heat. There's a lot of



All-Star Outfield.

good people working on these projects. Go out and meet them. Their Cobra should also return from Southern California in September or October.

There have been some changes to our Arizona VHPA Chapter. We have removed our "Tax Exempt" status with the State of Arizona which only means we will no longer be a "Tax Exempt Organization." I am also in the process of getting our Tad ID removed through the IRS. The only thing this does for us is it eliminates the requirement for doing an annual report to Arizona and you will not be able to use our organization for any tax exemptions. We will remain strictly as a "Social Organization."

If anyone has any ideas for an event, a good place to meet for lunch or dinner, etc., please email me.

Again, I hope everyone has a Cool Summer!! I hope to see you at the events starting in October.

Bill Sorenson

CALIFORNIA NORTH CHAPTER

If you read the last issue, you know our UH-1C 66-00563 was donated to the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation in Mesa, AZ. They have had it since April and it is in the process of a major restoration. It will have a new C model tail boom and finally get its C model rotor system restored. The old B model parts are being used on a B model restore. It is now in the process of



being repainted and the interior is about 90% done. It will look like a new helicopter when done in October of this year.

On 20 June, a few members took a tour of the Travis AFB Museum, located in Fairfield, CA. More than a few of you probably remember passing through Travis on the way to Vietnam! VHPA member Richard Terps, Flight School class 70-35 was our tour guide. Thanks Rich!



563 Instrument Panel Now and Before (left and right).

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



Lunch (Who needs pics of old Air Force Planes!)

Good tour with lots of old Air Force planes. Of course, no helicopters! There was a retired C-7 Caribou, which brought back memories of flying in a C-7 from Ft. Rucker to Lake Hurst Naval Air Station in New Jersey in the winter. Somehow the Aviation Test Board still owned a C-7. Our pilots (NOT ME) managed to use all 10,000 ft of slick ice runway before planting us in a snow bank! Jay Goodrich, looked at a C-141, and joked about all the leg room he had coming back from Vietnam on a stretcher!

Jim Cunningham organized this event. Thanks Jim.

Al Doucette, Jim Cunningham, Ed Morris, Ken Fritz, Jay Goodrich, Ken Lake, and Dave Anderson had lunch after-



Fine looking group!

wards at Amici's East Coast Pizzeria, located in the Nutree center in Vacaville.

No helicopters at Travis, so after lunch Al, Ed, Dave, and Jim stopped by the Nut Tree Airport Museum to take a look at their UH-1H, among many other interesting old aircraft in their hangar.

We hope to plan our next event in late August or early September. To our members - please keep the ideas coming!

Please check our website www.vhpacn.org for more info.

Dave Anderson

VHPA-CCN Secretary

GEORGIA CHAPTER

To celebrate our Nation's Independence, the Georgia VHPA Chapter held its bi-monthly breakfast at our gathering place, the Del Ray Diner in Marietta, GA on July 20th. Attendance was good, and we welcomed two new members to the Chapter. Our own DJ, Bill McRae surrounded us with songs from the Vietnam era, and videos of various helicopter operations from Vietnam. The meeting started at 0900 and those wishing to enjoy



the hearty breakfast served at the Diner arrived a little early. After the invocation, and the Pledge to our Flag, the meeting started with the Secretary/Treasurer report by Gary Earls, who graciously accepted the dues from the new members.

My originally selected speaker for our meeting decided to go to Oshkosh where all the Aviation Activity was going to happen, so in a scramble, finding a speaker fell in my lap. I got a call from one of the 'soon to be' members that he would be



Tom McFarland C Company 227th 1st Cav '65.



Tom McFarland Soc Trang '66.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

at the meeting. In our initial conversation, I discovered he was one of the first Cobra IPs. He was also a Super Senior at Ft. Rucker when I arrived there for my training in 65'... Yes, I caught some sh..!

Tom McFarland tells us:

1966: The Cobra Program was created at Fort Rucker AL. They interviewed 250 pilots and selected 12 to go to Hunter Army Airfield to start the Cobra School. The 12 pilots selected were trained as IPs in the A, B, C, D, H Model Huey and all gun systems mounted on them. In addition, they were all made Platform Instructors. Following that they were transferred to Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah GA. When flight training started for those 12, it was conducted in Bell Ship number 2 at the Globe Swift Plant in Fort Worth TX. Bell Ship number 1 had retractable skids and was used to promote and sell the Cobra worldwide: Bell Ship number 2 was used to transition the new IPs from Hunter and the Cobra NET Team IPs going to start the Cobra School in Vietnam. Bell Ships 3 and 4 were used to qualify the weapons systems at Fort Hood TX.

When the first Cobras were delivered, they had the tail rotor on the same side as the Huey, which made sense to all concerned in the new Cobra Program. After beginning the training of the new instructors at Hunter Army Airfield we quickly realized there was a problem with the tail rotor system. When the Cobra was at a hover depending on the direction of the wind you might not be able to hold the nose where you wanted it and the aircraft would come around on you and you didn't have enough pedal to stop it. As you tried to stop it, a very heavy load would be put on the tail rotor system, which resulted in many caution lights and many precautionary landings, because of chip detector lights. They changed the tail rotor heads to a heavier tail rotor hub. We were told that vortex coming

off the main rotor system onto the retreating side of the tail rotor blades was the reason. The first accident at the Cobra School involving the tail rotor was on January 15, 1968, the initial findings of the Accident Investigation Team was that the IP had left a cowling door unlatched and it had come off and impacted the tail rotor; however, we disagreed with the findings and appealed to the Safety Board at Ft. Rucker. They reopened the investigation and determined the tail rotor had come off and came forward and lodged in the cowling door. Another tail rotor failure occurred in Vietnam, which confirmed that there was a problem with the tail rotor. The answer that Bell came up with was to move the tail rotor over to the other side, they called it the tractor tail rotor. As a result of that change, the main rotor vortex was now coming down on the advancing blade increasing the efficiency and solving the problem.

The newly instituted raffle was a great success for the first Chapter drawing. We had a total pot of \$75.00 which was to be a 50/50 split for the winning number. Our first winner was our own March speaker, Ralph Staunton, who generously donated his winnings to the Charity. Our very own member, Steve Masak convinced us the Charity he works with in our area was a worthy recipient of our donation: <https://vva.org>

Chapter 1030 Names Scholarship Recipients:

Vietnam Veterans of America Cumming Chapter 1030 awarded scholarships to three recent graduates of Forsyth County GA high schools last month. The \$1,000 scholarships recognize students for achievement and school and community activities, and are awarded in the name of a Georgian killed in action during the Vietnam War.

Eliza Gazaway of North Forsyth High School accepted a scholarship presented in honor of Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Emory Franklin Johnson, killed in action on Feb. 24,



The AH-1A Cobra photos are of the Georgia "Army Aviation Heritage Foundation", Hampton, GA - <https://armyav.org/>

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

1967. Victoria Salo of West Forsyth High School accepted a scholarship presented in honor of the memory of Army SP5 Bobby Jene Fields, killed in action on March 14, 1971. And Matthew Dees of Forsyth Central High School accepted a scholarship presented to honor the memory of PFC William Burgess, killed in action on June 4, 1969. Burgess' sisters, Evelyn Morace and Elizabeth Mooney, attended the ceremony.

"Once again, all of the applicants demonstrated excellence in their academics, school activities and volunteering in the communities in which they live," chapter President



GA AAHF.org

Gary Goyette said at the ceremony. Chapter 1030 is already working on next year's scholarships, he reported.

Chuck Stoudt, President, chuckgavhpa@gmail.com

MICHIGAN CHAPTER

The Michigan Chapter continued with activities through the summer months. We were represented at Lest We Forget at the St. Joe River Basin (Benton Harbor vicinity) on June 22 & 23 by Dave James as OIC, with Mark Benjamin and Glenn Youngstedt. They were co-located with the American Huey 369 Group so had front row seats to their flight activities during the event. The VHPA canopy was provided by Mark Benjamin. All three reported details which follow below in slightly edited versions. If you read through them all, you'll see a very interesting side story.

From Dave James: Even though only three of us were there, it was rewarding to meet Glenn and see two guys from the same unit reminisce. Being there with Huey 369 and all the pilots is always a great experience.

From Mark Benjamin: I just got back from a very successful Lest We Forget event down in Benton Harbor, MI. Chapter Vice President Dave James was on-scene Commander with an assist from flunky yours truly. Huey 369 was there and flew all day Saturday and Sunday. Nice turn out with great weather. An extra added attraction was Glenn Youngstedt. I served with Glenn in the 128th AHC at Phu Loi in 1970. It was great see-



ing him and sharing stories.

And on a side note, I presented Glenn with a helmet bag he had apparently lost at some point in his tour. I carried this thing around in the bottom of a cardboard box in all my moves over the course of the next 50 years or so. Anyway, the helmet bag has Glenn's name written on it in felt tip, so he owns it once again. Inside the bag was an old beat up WHITE flight helmet; an old one, really old. Huey 369 was there and flew all day Saturday and Sunday. Nice turn out with great weather.

Interesting story about the helmet bag: I learned of Glenn's whereabouts last year and emailed him, but didn't tell him the rest of the story as I wanted to surprise him with it at some point. Then Dave mentioned he knew Glenn and would get him to the Benton Harbor event this year. So, I just waited and met up with him on Saturday, helmet bag in hand. He says he has no memory of it at all, but it does have his name on it. We overlapped by about six months, but we don't remember each other. I guess 50 years does that.

From Glenn Youngstedt: The restored American Huey 369 was in St. Joe/Benton Harbor this weekend for a Lest We Forget veterans' program. The Michigan VHPA had a booth next to the Huey landing pad. I volunteered to help man the booth.



Dave James protecting canopy against rotor wash.



Mark Benjamin and Glenn Youngstedt 128th AHC reunion.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



Michigan Chapter canopy at Lest We Forget.



June 28 Ramp Night L-R Mark Benjamin, Sandy McLeod, Ed Canright, Don Pond, Stephen Retherford, Walter Topp, Peter Fabien.



MiG 17



F22 Raptor with some cheap car. Lamborghini, I believe.



Thunderbirds, of course.

From Glenn Youngstedt: The restored American Huey 369 was in St. Joe/Benton Harbor this weekend for a Lest We Forget veterans' program. The Michigan VHPA had a booth next to the Huey landing pad. I volunteered to help man the booth. To my surprise, Mark Benjamin from the 128 AHC was there too. We estimate our tours with the 128th overlapped by four-five months.

What is really strange is when Vick Bremmer was repainting his hootch, a flight helmet bag fell from the ceiling. The bag had my name on it. Vic gave it to Mark who kept it for these 40+ years and returned it to me Saturday. The crazy thing is I do not remember that bag. It had to have been mine with my name on it. Mark and I spent much of our time talking about our time with the 128th. What a great experience.

Many thanks go to Dave, Mark, and Glenn for participating in this event. It's very common that our members can immediately bond and share stories. The extras in this case include that two of them served in the same unit at the same time, and a long-lost helmet found its owner.

Mark Benjamin also headed up our participation again at the USCG Ramp Night in Traverse City on June 28th and filed a brief AAR with several photos:

"We had another successful open Ramp at the Coast Guard Air Station in Traverse City. Many Michigan Chapter members and wives were in attendance. Aircraft on display are always a great hit. Seven, yes seven, USMC Harrier jets on the ramp and no one got a picture. We also missed getting a group photo with a USCG HH-60. We'll just have to try again next year."

By the time this is published, the monthly noon lunch gatherings at Brady's in Traverse City will have continued with the change being held on the first Thursday of each month. Vice President Dave James will have completed our participation at Mason Aviation Days on August 17th, and we will be about to participate in the Maple Grove Fly-In on September 8th. AARs on those events will be in the next issue of the Aviator.

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 richdeer@att.net. 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 vhpa-mi.wordpress.com and on Facebook at Michigan

Chapter of the VHPA.
Submitted by Rich Deer, President

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

NORTH ALABAMA CHAPTER

The summer at the North Alabama Chapter is usually dedicated to vacations with family and accomplishing large scale projects. We did not meet in July. But activity continued unabated.

We do not take a vacation from serving the less fortunate in our community. On July 18th the folks who served dinner at the Downtown Rescue Mission were NAVHPA members Don Bisson, Bob Utecht, Sam Maki and his lovely wife Ruth. As always, it was such a rewarding evening.

They served the male population for dinner, serving about 150. It is always enjoyable to talk to these folks as they come through the line and joke with them. It is amazing when you look at the crowd and you wonder how their lives got turned upside down and they ended up in the mission. As veterans ourselves, we always like to hear from the ones who served this country. We had a young man working with us who had served in Iraq and took some shrapnel and caused him to have epileptic seizures which in turn made him turn to pain pills. So here we are as old Vietnam vets with our aging aches and pains, but life is still good compared to the vets living a life that none of us can even comprehend. If you are NAVHPA member and haven't taken the time to go serve down at the Huntsville Downtown Rescue Mission, you might want to try it. It's a very humbling experience.

Our chapter has been in the fund-raising and planning stages for construction of an adequate structure to house our



UH-1C/M Gunship, BUC-3, for the last two years. Our members were concerned that the weather, sun, wind, etc. was deteriorating the paint and plexiglass. We have searched for a location, looked at building options and raised funds to pay for the structure. A 24' wide, 61' long building was finally erected on 15/16 July 2019 on Huntsville City property dedicated for use by the U.S. Veterans Memorial Museum. BUC-3 was moved in immediately to get her out of the weather. Much work remains to construct storage areas and move our support trailer, our support equipment and parts into the building. After this is completed and the weather cools off, we will have a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Even when our NAVHPA members are thousands of miles from North Alabama, they seem to find other Vietnam veterans and try to recognize their service to the country. For a week in early July, two NAVHPA members attended the Calgary Stampede in Calgary, CA, with an RV group from across the U.S. During one of the several evening get togethers, military veteran RV'ers were recognized. When NAVHPA President, Marshall Eubanks, and member, Rick Davis, asked about Vietnam veterans, five veterans spoke up. An impromptu ceremony was organized, and the five Vietnam era veterans were presented with the Vietnam Veteran Lapel Pin. All were very appreciative of the recognition and thanks for their Vietnam service and, surprisingly, said they had never before been publicly thanked for their VN service. Many photos were taken by their family members. It is amazing how many Vietnam veterans



Ruth and Sam Maki prepare to serve dinner at the Downtown Rescue Mission.



A resident of the Downtown Rescue Mission receives service from NAVHPA member Bob Utecht.



A professional crew builds the new storage building for Buc-3 during a day and a half in July.



Buc-3 out of the weather, in its new home.



Vietnam veterans presented with lapel pins, left to right, Charlie Pugh (USMC), Art Hastings (USN), Curtis Bieman (USMC), Rick Davis, Marshall Eubanks, Vern Beadle (Army), and Gary Hester (Army).

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

have not participated in any kind of thank-you event.

Two weeks later, while in Spring Green, WI, Rick and Marshall talked to another Vietnam Vet who had not been thanked. So, another impromptu ceremony was held, and Russ Harper was presented with a lapel pin. Russ was a MEDEVAC pilot with the 45th Dustoff on his first tour and then the 57th and 82nd Medical Detachments on his second tour. Both tours ended after a few months due to injuries when he was shot down. Russ had never talked to anyone about Vietnam. He was happy to talk to other pilots and very much appreciated our little bit of recognition and thanks.

The North Alabama 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!! If you aren't a member of a chapter, we know all those war stories need to get out of your system. We have each heard all of ours. Come join us for comradery, support and some fun too.

Ralph Weber

THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN CHAPTER AND THE HELICOPTER WAR MUSEUM (HWM)

We have lost two members since last writing, Brian Foote and Wendell Jesmer. They have taken The Last Flight Home. Their Obituaries are in the Taps section.

We had our chapter meeting at the American Legion Post 32 in Longmont, CO. in June in hopes of seeing some of our brothers who lived further north, in the High Plains area of Colorado. Member Lyle Borders conducted a search to invite them. Eight potential new members attended. As a result three joined us; Ken Hamburger, Stan Clair, and Jim Allen with more expected. We plan to hold another meeting in the High Plains in October.

In July we held our executive board elections. Incumbents Dale

House-President, Doug Neil-Vice President, and Jim McNamee-Trea-

surer, were reelected, but the secretary position remains open at this writing. The By-laws were approved and are available for viewing on our Web site: www.RMCVHPA.com

Golden 4th of July 2019:

On the 4th of July at Golden Lions Park, we put our docents to work with George Mayl providing helicopter lessons to all the children; Dale House, Carl Cavalluzzi and Gregg Mann, brought their wives, Candy, Barbara, and Deborah respectively, to help out at the merchandise pavilion. Trish Flaherty, who works with Dale, also came to help out. Cliff Lawson provided photography, also providing docent duty was Doug Neil, Richard Overstake, Phil Lanphier, Gary Hurelle, Bill Bates and Rick Beaver, and Bill Robie who helped set up the event with the Golden Lions Club. Due to a technical issue, the air conditioner wasn't working. That's Doug Neil on top of the ladder with Dale House and Phil Lanphier offering moral support

It was a festive atmosphere with different bands playing all day long. We had about 350 visitors. Not as many visitors as in



Water cooler repairs in Golden.



Bill Robie greeting guests in Golden.



Bill Robie answering questions in the Museum.



Festive 4th visitors at the Merchandise Pavillion.



A Day at the Space Port.



Doug Neil Huey instructor.

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES



Jerry Marshall and his Vintage Electric Truck.



Army Helicopter Medic talking to her daughter about helicopter flying.



Rick Overstake greeting to visitors at the Space Port.



Classic cars with our Vintage Museum at the Space Port.

the past, because Clear Creek, which runs through the park, was closed to swimmers due to high water. In my opinion, anytime we have the opportunity to tell our story and educate the public, it is a resounding success.

Colorado Air and Space Port:

The event was held at the Colorado Air and Space Port otherwise known as the Front Range Airport, Watkins, CO. As you can see by the pictures we were prominently displayed along with over 200 Classic Automobile's and Airplanes. My estimate is we had over 400 visitors. Once again it was fun, and Yes, therapeutic to talk about our memorabilia and our time in Vietnam. Everyone was very appreciative of our service. There was laughter and tears along with smiles and hugs. Another awesome day. Terry Olson did an awesome job arranging this event. He along with Dick Thompson, Doug Neil, Richard Overstake, Carl Cavalluzzi, and Dale House provided docent duty. Trish Flaherty and her fearless companion Pooh Bear along with Barbara Cavalluzzi attended to our merchandise pavilion.

Rick Overstake met each visitor outside the Museum and started a conversation with them and then escorted the visitor into the museum and introduced them to the rest of us. He was quite engaging and the visitors responded with many endearing comments about our service during that tumultuous time and were generous with donations to support our Museum.

Our very own "Doc Brown", Chapter Member Jerry Marshall, was at the event to show off his Vintage "General

Motors All Electric Truck". Jerry was one of our founding members who is rarely seen. Jerry was instrumental with his design and fabricating expertise that brought our Museum to life. Many believe that he is an enigma, that he doesn't really exist, but I saw him there at the Space Port, I did!

Other Chapter and Upcoming Activities:

In August, we will be at the Rocky Mountain Metropolitan Airport, the new fancy name for JeffCo Airport in Broomfield, CO., for more Classic Cars and War Birds. High Plains Honor Flight will have their first flight scheduled for Sept 15 - 16, 2019, which will be comprised mostly with Vietnam Veteran's, some Korean Veterans, and hopefully a few WWII Veterans. Our Chapter will provide refreshments as well as a traditional "Welcome Home" to the returning veterans from Washington D.C. to Denver International Airport.

Other chapter activities will continue to be announced on our Web site: www.RMCVHPA.com

We are excited that the 2020 reunion will be held here in Denver. We are so looking forward to seeing you May 21-24, 2020. Now that the Kansas City Reunion is behind us, planning for Denver is underway.

Meeting Schedule and other Information:

We normally hold meetings once a month, on the third Wednesday of the month, at 10:00 hours at the American Legion Post #1, I-25 and Yale Avenue. We occasionally change venues as noted above, so contact us at the address below to verify dates, times and location. We do not meet in December but have our annual Xmas party. The Museum committee will meet periodically to continue categorizing inventory, developing additional displays, and conducting Museum maintenance. Visit our Web site at www.RMCVHPA.com

We continue to look for artifacts for the Museum. Please contact our Chapter President and Museum Curator, Dale House with anything you'd like to donate or loan to the museum. We can be contacted through our mailbox at: RMC.mailbox@yahoo.com

Dale House

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

SOUTH MISSOURI CHAPTER

The 2nd Quarterly Chapter Meeting was held June 29 in Independence, MO, a suburb of Kansas City. The President passed on the favorable comments from the National HQ for the volunteer support the Chapter provided at the national reunion.

Following Chapter business and lunch, the guest speaker Steven Woelk was introduced. Having joined the Navy for a 4-year enlistment in 1966, the seaman reported to San Diego for naval boot camp. Upon completion in early 1967, Seaman Woelk was assigned to Naval Ship AKL-44, a light cargo ship that was in the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard undergoing basic refitting after transfer from the Army Reserve Fleet to the Navy in 1966. Due to budget constraints, the retrofit was delayed until May 1967. The ship was designated AGER-2 USS Pueblo. After testing and deficiency rework the USS Pueblo sailed to San Diego for shake-down training, then on to Japan. Pueblo left the U.S. Naval Base Sasebo in Japan on 11 January 1968, headed northward into the Sea of Japan. She left with specific orders to intercept and conduct surveillance of Soviet Navy activity in the area, and to gather signal and electronic intelligence from North Korea (NK). The patrol area was to transit down the NK coast and back, with the objective of not getting closer than 13 nautical miles to the coast, and at night moving out to a distance of 18 to 20 nautical miles. This proved to be a challenge because only two sailors aboard had previous navigational experience.

On 23 January, the USS Pueblo was pursued by two NK sub chasers, three armed NK torpedo patrol boats, and two NK Mig 21 fighter jets while approximately 16 nautical miles from NK coast. The USS Pueblo radioed a sitrep followed by a distress signal and began destroying classified materials; burning and shredding documents and smashing equipment with hammers and axes. Realizing that classified material was being destroyed, the NK sub chaser fired 57MM rounds broadside of the Pueblo, severely



wounding Woelk and killing Petty Officer Hodges. NK troops boarded the Pueblo blindfolding and tying the crew on the fantail and forward decks. Woelk and the other wounded were secured in the officer's wardroom. Woelk sustained major injuries as one piece of shrapnel passed through his front and taking out half of his tailbone. Another piece entered the lower part of buttocks exiting out the top and he sustained a major wound to his groin area. The commandeered ship was taken to Wonson port and the crew transferred to a train, arriving the next day in Pyongyang where they were housed in four-man rooms as interrogations began. Woelk did not receive any medical attention for ten days as his body tissue died and began to rot. He was eventually moved to a "hospital" where dead flesh was cut away without any form of anesthetic. His wounds were sutured by what he described as kite string and he spent the next 44 days in isolation at the hospital before rejoining the crew.

The crew was moved to a second location which was dubbed the "Farm" and remained there until released on December 23, 1967 after eleven months of captivity. Woelk had bouts with throat infection and his tonsils were removed with barbaric tools and sutured again with kite string. He talked about the arbitrary beatings, terror, and torture inflicted on the crew while incarcerated. During captivity, Woelk lost 55 pounds and was medically discharged in 1969.

The meeting was adjourned, and September 7 was announced as the next meeting in Columbia, MO.

Ken Sherfey



Steve Woelk Today



North Korean Propaganda Photo



2d Quarterly South Missouri Chapter Meeting, June 29

VHPA CHAPTER ACTIVITIES

UPPER MIDWEST CHAPTER

On July 14, a bridge over U.S. Highway 52 in Rosemount, MN was named after a local Army helicopter pilot killed while serving in Vietnam. The County Road 42 bridge officially memorializes U.S. Army Warrant Officer Dennis A. Groth. The 21-year-old from Rosemount was killed in 1968 when his Medevac helicopter crashed after dropping off a wounded soldier at the 29th Evac field hospital, Can Tho. Signs have been erected on either end of the bridge to commemorate WO Groth. A dedication ceremony was held at St. John's Lutheran Church in Rosemount and some of our chapter members were able to attend. Minnesota Gov. Tim Walz proclaimed that Sunday as Warrant Officer Dennis Groth Memorial Bridge Day. "It is always appropriate to recognize the achievements and service of our courageous veterans and their sacrifice for our country," the state proclamation said.

Upper Midwest Chapter members have had a busy spring and summer attending community veterans' events in Minnesota and Wisconsin to explain the role of the helicopter in Vietnam. Our display of detailed pictures of the Huey and poster boards with operating specifications prompted a myriad of questions from attendees. Veterans along with their families and friends quickly gathered around to share stories of their experiences in Vietnam. Some were crewmembers, others were service personnel being transported into or out of battle or getting that last ride as their respective year was up. Thanks to the VFWs, Legions, and other civic groups and their many members who support these veterans' appreciation events and ask us to come and be part of the experience.

Our chapter is also working with The Helicopter Conservancy, Ltd., based in Wisconsin, to record and preserve an oral history of helicopter pilots' experiences in Vietnam. It is hoped

these experiences can be shared with the public through the Wisconsin Veterans Memorial (WVM) via interactive kiosks, at a future helicopter museum, and at additional venues as interest dictates. Several of our members have agreed to participate in this program and a representative from the Conservancy will be at the August 10th family gathering at China Beach to explain the program in more detail.

Dave Larson



WO Groth Memorial Bridge.



WO Groth Photo.



WO Groth Burial Site.

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Vietnam
67 - 68 & 70 - 71
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TAPS

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.

Bell, William D. USA, CW3 Ret.; Flight Class: 65-18; RVN: 66-67 116 AHC, 69-70 25 AVN; Callsigns: Beekeeper 8/Hornet 8. (Military data only published in Jul/Aug Aviator. Obituary supplied by colleague after press.)

I was saddened to hear of my stick mate's passing on November 8, 2018, having kept in contact with him for many years until recently. Bill served as an enlisted tail gunner in a B-25 in the USAF during the Korean War and remained in SAC after it was created during the Cold War.

Tired of the demands of SAC, he left the USAF and managed a small airfield in Alabama. While there he witnessed a couple of young WOs arrive at his airfield on a cross-country flight, and from them he learned about the WOC program and subsequently that as a former Air Force enlisted person, he could join the Army as a WO-1 and train as a helicopter pilot, which he did.

After retiring from the Army, Bill flew for the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire) until a heart attack years ago terminated his flying career.

Bennett, Donald E. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Classes: 66-7/66-9W; RVN: 66-67 334 AHC, 66-67 197 AHC; DFC, BS, PH; Callsign: Gangbuster 49.



Donald Edward Bennett passed away unexpectedly in his home on May 22, 2019. He was born May 3, 1945 in Pasco, WA. He started school in Clatskanie, later moved to Kennewick and finally graduated from Marysville, WA (1963).

Just days after graduating, Don joined the army. During his second tour in Viet-

nam in 1969, Don flew fixed wing aircraft. In 1972, Donald left the Army and joined the National Guard. He had a two year span between Army life and working for the FAA. He put this time to good use, going to William Carey College earning his bachelor's degree.

In 1975, Don went to work for the FAA, this meant traveling a bit. The family jumped around the south mostly, while being sent to Seattle, WA and then Helena, MT for about three years. In 1994, it was time to retire from the FAA, but he continued until 1997 in the National Guard.

Don is survived by his wife, Marlys.

Case, Conrad F. Jr. USA, CW4 Ret.; Flight Class: 65-4W; RVN: 65 A/227 AVN 1 CAV, 66 145 AVN BN, 68-69 334 AHC.



Conrad (Connie) Franklin Case Jr. passed away May 25, 2019 at The Hospice of East Texas in Tyler. He was born November 12, 1940 in Philadelphia, PA.

After retiring from the military, he received his Doctorate in Philosophy of Business Administration at Century University in New Mexico. He flew helicopters for different companies especially Saudi Aramco.

Cinotto, Richard M. USA; Flight Class: 70-16; RVN: 70-71 116 AHC; Callsign: Hornet 30.

Richard Cinotto of Ft. Myers, FL passed away on April 3, 2016.

Richard is survived by his wife, Therese.

Conrad, David J. USA; Flight Class: 67-18; RVN: 67-68 D/3/5 CAV, 71-72 478

HHC; SS, DFC, BS (2), PH; Callsign: Longknife 26.

David John Conrad, 72, a resident of Prattville, AL, went home to be with the Lord on May 20, 2019. Dave was a pilot at heart and dedicated his career to flying in the U.S. Army, the Alabama and Tennessee National Guards, and the Alabama State Troopers. During his service in the State Troopers, Dave was awarded the Lifesaving Award, the Distinguished Service Award, and the Meritorious Service Award.

David is survived by his wife, Mary Jane.

Davis, James L. USA; Flight Classes: 69-49/69-45.

James was born on July 12, 1949 and passed away on June 5, 2019. Jim graduated in 1967 from Alton Senior High School in Alton, IL. He was a resident of Warrensburg, MO at the time of passing.

Dotterer, Jack H. USA; Flight Class: 69-33; RVN: 69-70 174 AHC, 73 COMMAND AVN CO; Callsigns: Dolphin 21/Witch Doctor 3.

Harold Dotterer of Williamsburg, VA passed away on June 22, 2019. No other details were provided.

Ferlito, Fred D. USA; Flight Class: 66-7; RVN: 66-67 119 AHC; Callsign: Alligator.



Fred Domenic Ferlito, age 79, passed away on July 12, 2019, at the VA Medical Center, with his family by his side. Fred was formerly of Methuen, MA. He was a veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army and the U.S. National Guard, and reached the rank of CW3. He was an aviation safety

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inspector for the Federal Aviation Administration and retired in 2007 after 40 years in aviation. Fred was the first chief pilot for Mercy Flight Central in Canandaigua. He was a member of the American Legion Post 256, VFW Post 1323, Marine Corps League, Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association and Canandaigua Corvette Club.

Fred is survived by his wife of 52 years, Roberta.

Mr. Fish's obituary was inadvertently omitted from the Jul. /Aug. issue ~Ed

Fish, Ray M. USA; Flight Classes: 68-514/68-24; RVN: 69 A/3/17 CAV; Callsign: Spur 30.



Ray M. Fish of Belleville, IL, born August 4, 1947, in Decatur, IL, died May 16, 2019, at Memorial Hospital, Belleville, IL, surrounded by his beloved family.

Ray was a highly decorated combat Vietnam Veteran and Cobra Pilot, serving in the United States Army in Vietnam, the Illinois National Guard Reserves, and served a short stint in the Marines. He was retired from the National Geo-Spatial Intelligence Agency, St. Louis, MO. Ray also volunteered for various veterans' groups in the St. Louis Metro area, was a member of the American Legion, Waynesville, IL, and the St. Louis Area Veteran's Consortium.

Ray is survived by his wife of 31 years, Teresa.

Foote, Brian G. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 59-7; RVN: 66-67 179 ASHC, 70-71 178 ASHC; DSM, MSM, BS w/2olc, ACM; Callsigns: Shrimpboat, Boxcar 6.



Brian G. Foote was born July 7, 1936 in San Antonio, TX and passed away on July 13, 2019 in Gilbert, AZ. Brian graduated from St. Mary's University in San Antonio, TX in 1958 and received an ROTC commission. He served on active duty as an air defense artillery office and

rotary wing aviator for over 22 years, serving two tours in the Republic of Vietnam and tours in Germany and Korea.

He also served with the VIP Flight Detachment in Minneapolis - St. Paul, MN flying Vice President Hubert Humphrey in the "Army 2" CH 34. After retirement, he worked for Martin Marietta in Denver, CO for 17 years. He was a VHPA Life Member and a founding member and past president of the Rocky Mountain Chapter, VHPA.

Brian is survived by his wife of 60+ years, Christine.

Graves, Ralph C. USA; Flight Class: 71-7; RVN: 71-72 A/7/17 CAV, 72 129 AHC; Callsigns: Maintenance/Cobra 35.



Ralph Graves passed away on July 12, 2019 at his home in Sierra Vista, AZ. He suffered from health complications due to Agent Orange. He was born in Zanesville, OH in February 1941.

Ralph enlisted in the Air Force in 1961 and was trained as a helicopter mechanic. He deployed to Vietnam with the 20th Special Operations Squadron in 1966. Upon his release from the USAF, Ralph re-enlisted in the U.S. Army under the Warrant Officer Flight Program. He retired in 1983 after 22 years of USAF and USA service. He worked in Tacoma, WA as a Jeweler until 2000. He then spent 15 years traveling with his wife in their RV.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Sally.

Gibson, Glen D. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Classes: 55-LFW/59-Q; RVN: 67-68 174 AHC; DFC, BS, LM, ACM; Callsign: Dolphin 6.



On 14 May 2019, Glen D. Gibson passed away in Paso Robles, CA. He was born on 16 May 1933 in Rattan, OK. In the early 1940s the family briefly moved to Bend, OR, then relocated to San Miguel, CA. The family eventually moved to Paso Robles, where Glen com-

pleted his schooling at Paso Robles High School.

Glen is survived by his wife of 64 years, Marian Joy.

Green, Gerald C. USA, COL Ret.; Flight Class: 67-24; RVN: 68-69 175 AHC; LM, BS, PH, MSM; Callsign: Roadrunner/Outlaw.



Gerald C. "Jerry" Green of Park Rapids, MN, peacefully passed into eternal life on June 15, 2019, at the Crystal Brook Care Center in Park Rapids, MN surrounded by his loved ones. Jerry was born on December 16, 1937, in Des Moines, IA. Shortly thereafter, his family moved to Minnesota. Jerry received a full scholarship to Bemidji State College for his high endurance sporting endeavors.

During his high school, college, and teaching years, he served in the Army and Air National Guard. Influenced by his three brothers, all of them career military, Jerry applied for and received a direct commission as an officer in the U.S. Army in 1967. He pursued aviation as a helicopter pilot. Following his Officer Basic Course in Ft. Eustis, VA, and his entry into the Army Aviation Program for fixed-wing, rotary-wing, and multi-engine qualification courses. He served in Vietnam as a unit pilot, Maintenance Officer, and test pilot. As an Army Colonel, he served in several positions at the Aviation Systems Command in St. Louis, MO, primarily in the Apache Helicopter Program Management Office and culminating in his last assignment as the worldwide Project Manager for the Blackhawk Helicopter Program.

He studied at Washington University in St. Louis, MO, and then completed his Master's Degree in Business Management from Webster University. He graduated from the Command and General Staff College, the Army War College, and received training in numerous advanced courses relevant to aviation and leadership.

Gerald is survived by and lovingly remembered by his wife of 61 years, Shirley.

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Helm, Floyd I. USA; Flight Classes: 69-41/69-39; RVN: 70-71 120 AHC; BS (2); Callsign: Razorback 41.



Floyd I. Helm passed away June 9, 2019 at his home. He was born in Santa Monica, CA on February 14, 1947. He was raised in Boulder City, NV and St. George, and attended Dixie high school.

After his discharge in 1971, he attained an A & P license from Northrup University in Inglewood, CA. After which he flew surveyors on the Alyeska pipeline in Alaska. Later, he worked for Rocky Mountain Helicopters flying "Flight for Life" in Denver, CO. He then transferred to Houston, TX to begin a trial air ambulance program at the University of Texas Medical School/Hermann Hospital. As vice president of marketing, he later implemented 24 air ambulance programs throughout the US for Rocky Mountain Helicopters and Evergreen Helicopters.

In 1987 he moved to St. George selling real estate from 1989 to 2009 with Property Shopper and Century 21.

Floyd is survived by his wife, Mary.

Hudgins, Grover W. USA, MAJ Ret.; Flight Class: 66-7; RVN: 66-67 173 ABN BDE, 70 195 AHC; Callsign: Casper.

Grover W Hudgins passed away on May 25, 2019 after a long illness. He was born on February 6, 1946. He graduated from Cedartown High School, Troy State University, Troy AL and Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA.

After retiring from the Army, he was a prosecutor for 20 years and retired in 2008 from The Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit.

Jesmer, Wendell L. USA; Flight Classes: 68-517/68-31; RVN: 68-69 173 AHC; DFC, PH; Callsign: Robinhood 24.



On June 17, 2019, Wendell Lee Jesmer, passed away at the Colorado State Veterans Home of Fitzsimmons

in Aurora, CO. Wendell was born in Denver, CO on July 20, 1947.

Wendell was a world traveler, and forever in his heart...a helicopter pilot, with a life-long career, first flying in Burma and Indonesia where he met his wife. Wendell remained in Denver raising his family and flying helicopters.

He was a member of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of Vietnam Helicopter Pilot Association. He spent his last few years of life making new friends in the association and remembering his time as a Vietnam Veteran

Wendell is survived by his wife of 40 years, Lily.

Kreshtool, Donald J. USA; Flight Classes: 67-21/67-19; RVN: 68-69 175 AHC; PH; Callsign: Outlaw 11.



Donald Jay Kreshtool died May 13, 2019 at his home in Denton. He was born on June 4, 1945 in Wilmington, DE.

After his military service, he worked for Bell Helicopters in Tehran, Iran, assisting the Shah to build an air force by refitting American military aircraft. Following the fall of that regime, he moved with Bell Helicopters to the Dallas/Fort Worth area where he met and married his wife Paula. Don continued to refit F-14 aircraft for many other nations. He retired from Northrop-Grumman.

LeQuieu, Vernon D. USA; Flight Class: 62-4; RVN: 69-70 B/2/17 CAV 101 ABN; Callsign: Banshee 10.



Vernon was born on April 21, 1938 and passed away on April 7, 2019. Vernon was a resident of Nampa, ID at the time of passing.

Miller, Retsae H. USA, Ret. (unk); Flight Class: 59-7; RVN: 67 A/1/9 CAV 1 CAV, 67 HHT/1/9 CAV 1 CAV, 70 HHC/158 AVN 101 ABN, 70 B/101 AVN 101 ABN; Call-



signs: Apache Red/Lighting 3/Kingsman 6.

Rex is survived by his wife, Mary.

Montgomery, Dennis J. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 68-2; RVN: 68-69 162 AHC; BS; Callsign: Vulture 10163.



Dennis Montgomery passed away on May 13th, 2019.

Dennis is survived by his wife of 32 years, Mia.

Ostler, Robert H. USA; Flight Class: 67-26; RVN: 67-68 187 AHC.



Robert Howard Ostler of Bastrop, TX, passed away October 17, 2015.

Robert was born on July 13, 1936 in Provo, UT. Robert joined the military after high school, and would eventually become an exceptional pilot. He loved the ocean and the mountains of Hawaii, and was very passionate about taking flights to visit the islands as often as possible. He was a skilled helicopter pilot, and would also fly Sedona, AZ, or through the Grand Canyon, enjoying the sights and canvas of nature's landscapes below him. Once, Robert even flew his helicopter in Antarctica off a Russian Ice Breaker to scout safe travel routes. He had many adventures in the pilot seat.

Robert is survived by his beloved wife of 57 years, Barbara.

Pierce, Francis D. USA, MAJ Ret.; Flight Class: 63-9; RVN: 65-66 219 AVN, 67-68 61 AHC; Callsigns: Headhunter 14/Star Blazer 6.



Francis D. "Frank" Pierce Jr. of Clarksville passed away September 13, 2017. Pierce was born July 2, 1938 in Somerville, MD.

He was a member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, Clarksville, Civitan, Knights of Columbus, Twin State Athletic Assoc., Kentucky High School Athletic Officials, Pennryle

TAPS

Umpire Assoc., TN Secondary School Athletic Assoc., and North Middle TN Football Officials Association.

Frank is survived by his wife, Patricia.

Powell, Raymond F. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 68-4; RVN: 68-69 C/228 ASHB 1 CAV, 71-72 159 ENG GRP; Callsigns: Crimson Tide/Castle.



Raymond Francis Powell passed away at home June 23, 2019 in Woodstock, VA. He was born February 27, 1943 in Stapleton, NY. He graduated from Newton High School, Newton NJ.

Following Army ROTC at Rutgers, Ray was commissioned into the U.S. Army. After his tours, he earned an MS in Engineering Management from the University of Missouri-Rolla.

He was Chief of Doctrinal Literature Management at the U.S. Army Command & General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, KS. He instructed Officer Education (ROTC) & was guest Professor of Engineering at Princeton Univ. He was Director of Engineering & Housing in Ansbach, W. Germany and an Assistant Commander in the Europe Division of the Corps of Engineers in Frankfurt, W. Germany. He received the individual Federal Energy Management Award in 1985 from the U.S. Dept. of Energy, awarded by the Secretary of the Army. He completed his career as Chief of Engineer Facility Plans at Army Materiel Command in Alexandria, VA and retired as a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army Corps of Engineers.

After 23 years of active duty, Ray first worked at NASA Goddard Space Center as a Project Manager and Senior Facilities Engineering Consultant and authored the NASA Facilities Maintenance and Energy Management Handbook. He then joined MAI as a Senior Engineer and Project Manager, providing contracting & facilities management support for the Army, Navy, and Air Force at Cape Canaveral Air Force Sta-

tion, FL. He provided Technical & Cost Source Selection consultation for the Air Force, Navy, USGS, USDI, and provided facilities consulting to the University of VA, District of Columbia and Knox County, TN.

After MAI, he established his own private engineering & contracting consultant business and served as president of the Fairfax Chapter of the Virginia Society of Professional Engineers before retiring to Woodstock, VA in 2005.

Raymond is survived by his wife of 48 years, Judith.

Presley William R. USA, CW3 Ret.; Flight Class: 70-41; RVN: 71-72 C/2/20 ARA 1 CAV; DFC, BS; Callsign: Spooky.



William Ronald "Mad Dog" Presley of Belton passed away peacefully at home on July 14, 2019. Bill was born on November 9, 1942 in Zelda, KY. He grew up near Zelda and graduated from Lawrence County High School. In 1961 after graduation, Bill enlisted in the US Air Force where he served honorably before being discharged in 1968, he then enlisted in the US Army. Mr. Presley began a long and highly decorated military career in the Army where he served as an attack helicopter pilot and pilot instructor, known by his call sign and later nickname "Mad Dog", retiring in 1982.

While still in the Army, Mr. Presley became a reserve police officer with the Harker Heights Police Department. Upon his retirement in 1982, he became a full-time police officer in Harker Heights, first as a patrolman, corporal, detective, and finally as a Patrol Sergeant. Bill married Betty Ann Hardison on June 29, 1965 in Indiana and they were married for 41 years before she passed away in 2006. He later married Dianna Rhoden on March 4, 2017 in Nolanville. Mr. Presley was active in various veterans' groups including the Patriot Guard Riders and the In Country MC.

Rackstraw, Robert W. USA; Flight Class: 69-11; RVN: 69-70 11 GS 1 CAV; SS; Callsign: Jaguar Yellow.



Robert Rackstraw died July 9, 2019. In lieu of an obituary, a link is provided regarding Robert's unusual history as covered by news outlets. The reader can decide for himself regarding the validity.

www.vhpa.org/DAT/datR/D09210.HTM

Refior, Robert G. USA; Flight Class: 63-2; RVN: 63 8 TC CO, 63-64 117 AHC, 67-68 A/228 ASHB 1 CAV; Callsigns: Unk/Unk/Razorback 56.

Robert (Bob) G. Refior died on June 27, 2019.

Swartz, George R. USA; Flight Class: 69-42; RVN: 70-71 134 AHC; DFC; Callsign: Demon 20.



Richard Swartz died on July 28, 2019 in Tavares, FL. He graduated from Leesburg High School and Stetson University. After his Vietnam service he became a business owner in Tavares. He was a member of the City Council and a three-term member of the Lake County Commission. He was admired for his dedication and honesty in all endeavors.

George is survived by his wife of 50 years, Gena.

Walker, Alton R. USA; Flight Class: 64; RVN: 65 A/82 AVN, 65 173 ABN BDE.



Alton R. "Captain" Walker of Orrtanna, PA passed away suddenly on July 6, 2019 at The Gettysburg Hospital. He was born on March 31, 1938 in Punxsutawney, PA. Al was a 1956 graduate of Punxsutawney High School and earned a degree in Business Education from Indiana University of Pennsylvania in 1961.

Following his honorable discharge in 1967, Al worked in Punxsutawney at

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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.

Arnold, John E.; Flight Class: 66-20; RVN: 191 AHC; BS; died June 22, 2019.

Barry, Jon B. USA; Flight Class: 69-7; RVN: (unk) 191 AHC; BS; died May 21, 2019.

Burke, Michael J. USA; Flight Class: 69-25; died May 25, 2019.

Corrected notice: Choura, Donald; Flight Classes: 70-9, 70-7; RVN: 70-72 (2 tours) 11 ACR; died on January 5, 2019.

Daugherty, Donald R. USMC/USA; Flight Class 71-13; BS, PH; died May 14, 2019.

Estes, Billy G. USA, LTC Ret.; died July 5, 2019.

Griffith, Kenneth USA, Ret.; Flight Class: 68-4; SS, DFC (2); died July 5, 2019.

Harlamert, Larry B. USA; Flight Class: 66-21; RVN: 635th AVN CO; DFC, BS; died June 23, 2019.

Hester, Joe C. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 55-I; died April 20, 2019.

Holmes, Raymond T. USA; Flight Class: 63-6; RVN: 114 AHC; died June 25, 2019.

Kraus, George F. USA, COL Ret.; BS (2), PH, LM, ACM (2); died May 17, 2019.

LeGare, Maurice T. USN; RVN: 66-67 HC-1 DET 6; died July 1, 2019.

Lafrance, Leo P. USA, MAJ Ret.; Flight Class: 66-21; RVN: 336 AHC; DFC, BS (V), PH, MSM (2), ACM (3); died June 9, 2019.

Little, James R. USA; Flight Classes: 69-31/69-27; died in March 2018.

Parratt, Stephen USA; Flight Class: 69-18; died May 18, 2019.

Peppers, Jerry L. USA, MAJ Ret.; Flight Classes: 66-11/66-9; died May 3, 2019.

Pinkston, Steven B. USA; Flight Classes: 68-513/68-21; RVN: 68-69 128 AHC; died July 01, 2019.

Walkers Service Center and for the Punxsutawney Police Department. In 1970, he accepted a position with the enforcement department of the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board where he worked until his retirement in 1994. Al enjoyed flying and was an active pilot with the Air National Guard from 1971-1998.

Alton is survived by his wife of 47 years, Donna.

Williams, Herman J. USA, MAJ Ret.; RVN: 66-67 117 AHC, 70-71 240 AHC; Call-signs: Beachbum 16 / Greyhound 6.



Herman J. Williams passed away on May 17, 2019 at his home. He loved his family, his soldiers, and flying. He served the United States Army a combined forty years, first as an Army aviator and, secondly as a civil servant providing contracting support to customers including the Old Guard.

Herman is survived by his wife, Patricia.

Pylawka, George S. USA; RVN: 1 CAV DIV; died July 15, 2019.

Proctor, Stephen M. USA, LTC Ret.; Flight Class: 67-8; DFC (OLC), BS (OLC), MSM (OLC), ACM (V); died June 14, 2019.

Riepma, Roger L. USA; Flight Class: 69-33; died June 20, 2019.

Reeves, Carl Jr. USA; Flight Class: 69-9; DFC, BS; died June 9, 2019.

Self, Mark J. USA; Flight Class: 67-11; died May 27, 2019.

Smith, David G. USA; Flight Class: 67-7; died June 4, 2019.

Stokes, Clay R. USA; Flight Classes: 68-11/68-15; died May 26, 2019.

Taylor, Randy J. USA, MAJ Ret.; Flight Classes: 70-9/70-7; RVN: 229 /C ASHB I CAV; DFC, BS; died April 12, 2019.

Washam, Frank W. USMC; died May 30, 2019.

Webster, Ernest R. USMC/USAF, BG Ret.; died June 2, 2019.

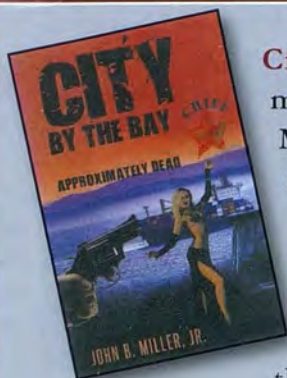
Workman, James R. USA; Flight Class: 70-29; died July 17, 2019.



~ BOOK REVIEWS ~

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.

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City by the Bay, Approximately Dead by John B. Miller, ISBN 978-1-64214-555-7, Page Publishing, New York, NY, 275 pages, \$17.95

If you like mysteries that mix the mafia, police corruption, infidelity and a private eye, then you'll love *City by the Bay*. Rex Bonner is a brand new private investigator who stumbles on a mob hit on a bookie. In the

beginning, something about the murder doesn't add up because the police are more interested in what was on Joseph Antonio Scalise's body than finding his killer. As the plot evolves, Scalise whose nickname is Sonny, is more than a local bookie with a notebook containing more than just point spreads. With the help of his friend Vinny, a retired police detective, Bonner turns over one rock after another in the search of the killer. *City by the Bay* is an easy read with plenty of twists and turns that keeps you reading.

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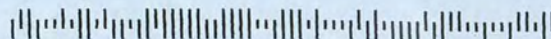
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