

VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION (VLOA)

VINH LONG OUTLAWS NEWS

October - December
4th Issue 2004

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MEMORIAL DEDICATED TO VINH LONG OUTLAWS

Everyone who attended the reunion in Fort Rucker agreed that the most emotional, poignant and memorable event of the four days was the dedication of the VLOA memorial on October 1, 2004. The memorial stone itself is beautifully done. Frank Estes designed the monument, had it engraved and was instrumental in securing its permanent placement in a highly visible location in Fort Rucker's Veteran's Park.

Ernie Isbell, VLOA Director, Frank Estes, reunion coordinator and I shared the podium during the dedication ceremony where I was privileged to give the dedication talk.

As the memorial was unveiled, Al Moist represented all enlisted members of the VLOA, Tim Bisch stood in for the Roadrunners, Bob Costner represented the 25th Infantry Division door gunners, Jeannette Sanford Smith represented all those members of the VLOA who have passed on and could not be with us and I represented all VLOA officers and warrant officers.

Approximately 140 VLOA members, families, guests and Fort Rucker representatives attended the ceremony on a bright, clear morning. The dedication ceremony featured music provided by the US Army Band at Fort Rucker and a sharp-looking honor guard of ROTC cadets from Ozark's Carroll High School who posted the colors and rendered appropriate honors.

The monument was sponsored by, and is dedicated to, the unique group of men who now comprise the Vinh Long Outlaws Association. Because 40 years have now passed since the Outlaws departed the United States for their new assignment in Vinh Long, Vietnam, the monument has, and will continue to have, a special meaning to every member of all units within the Outlaw organization.

My dedication remarks reminded us that the monument memorializes a time in our lives when, as young men, our country called. We all well remember that year during which we shared the frenzied pace of wartime experiences. We entrusted our lives to each other and, in doing so, formed a bond that cannot be duplicated in any other endeavor in which men participate. And, we established a lasting camaraderie that brought many of those who served during that year together again - 40 years later - to dedicate our memorial.

(continued on page 2)

MEMORIAL DEDICATED TO VINH LONG OUTLAWS (continued from page 1)

The ceremony dramatically reminded us that we were very young men 40 years ago. We have now grown older, raised our families, made successes of our lives, and watched another generation of young men take up the business of war. With the passage of those years we can take deep satisfaction from the legacy we established as young soldiers.

Our Vinh Long Outlaw memorial is dedicated to two distinct groups of Outlaw veterans:

First, it is dedicated to our Outlaw friends and comrades who did not return. They have our lasting respect and our appreciation for their dedication and sacrifice. They shall be forever young!

Second, it reflects the service of each and every one of the Outlaws who stood prepared to make the same sacrifice, but were allowed to return to our families and friends through the grace of an almighty God.

We now watch, and admire, a new generation of young men who are deeply engaged in combat in another land half-way around the world. We understand their dedication because we felt it ourselves. We empathize with their family separations because we endured them ourselves. We sympathize with the pain they feel when they lose one of their own because we have lived with the same hurt.

As we shared in the dedication of our Vinh Long Outlaw memorial, we also remembered, and honored, all those soldiers, past and present, whose dedication and sacrifice preserved the privileges we now enjoy, foremost of which is living in a country considered to be the bright and shining hope for the world.

It is our hope that, over the years, as people pause in front of our memorial, they will reflect on the devotion to duty it represents from a small group of soldiers who know that they helped make a difference in the future of our country. May God continue to bless the Vinh Long Outlaws and the United States of America.

Tom Anderson



Polo Shirts from the Ft.

Rucker Reunion may be ordered at \$35.00 each plus shipping and handling of \$7.50.

Contact Al Iller - QM

The web site of the "Current Outlaw" unit based in Iraq can be accessed through the Maverick web site:

<http://175thmavericks.com>

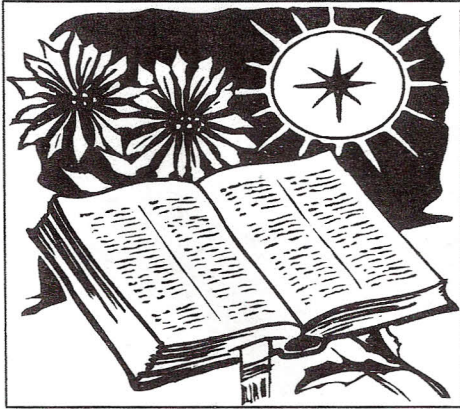
submitted by Doug Wilson

The Back Pew by VLOA Chaplain John Doyle

A minister passing through his church in the middle of the day, decided to pause by the altar and see who had come to pray. Just then the back door opened, a man came down the aisle. The minister frowned as he saw the man hadn't shaved in a while. His shirt was kind of shabby and his coat was worn and frayed. The man knelt, bowed his head, then rose and walked away. In the days that followed, each noon time he returned. He knelt just for a moment, a lunch pail in his lap.

Well, the ministers suspicions grew, with robbery a main fear. He decided to stop the man and ask him. "What are you doing here?"

The old man said he worked down the road, lunch was half an hour. Lunchtime was his prayer time, for finding strength and power. "I stay only moments, because the factory is so far away; as I knell here talking to the Lord, this is kind of what I say;



"I JUST CAME AGAIN TO TELL YOU, LORD, HOW HAPPY I HAVE BEEN, SINCE WE FOUND EACH OTHER'S FRIENDSHIP AND YOU TOOK AWAY MY SIN. DON'T KNOW MUCH OF HOW TO PRAY, BUT I THINK ABOUT YOU EVERY DAY. SO, JESUS, THIS IS JIM CHECKING IN."

Past noon one day, the minister noticed that old Jim hadn't come. As more days passed without Jim, he began to worry. At the factory, he asked about him, learning he was ill. The hospital staff was worried, but he had given them a thrill. The week that Jim was with them had brought changes in the ward. His smiles, a joy contagious. Changed people, were his reward. The head nurse couldn't understand why Jim was so

glad, when no flowers, calls, or cards came, and not a visitor he had.

The minister stayed by his bed, he voiced the nurses concern: No friends came to show they cared. He had nowhere to turn.

Looking surprised, old Jim spoke up and with a winsome smile; "The nurse is wrong, she couldn't know, that in here all the while, everyday at noon He's here, a dear friend of mine, you see, He sits right down, takes my hand, leans over and says to me: "I JUST CAME AGAIN TO TELL YOU, JIM, HOW HAPPY I HAVE BEEN, SINCE WE FOUND THIS FRIENDSHIP, AND I TOOK AWAY YOUR SIN. I ALWAYS LOVE TO HEAR YOU PRAY, I THINK ABOUT YOU EACH DAY, AND SO JIM, THIS IS JESUS CHECKING IN."

My daughter shared this with me back in early 1999. It really blessed me, and I pray it will bless you.

In HIS love, John.

A Note From Al and Nell

We would like to thank Frank and Anne Estes for all their hard work towards making the VLOA Reunion at Ozark/Ft. Rucker such a great success.

We are happy to take the position of Communications Directors. We hope as the Newsletters are published in the next two years they will be satisfactory to everyone. This first one is later than we had anticipated but as we learn the software and the ins and outs of doing this they will only get better.

We are already thinking of New Orleans and how much fun we will have. Hope everyone will join us.

Hi Everyone—

It was a grand reunion! I think that all will agree that Ft Rucker and Ozark provided a great setting for our 3rd VLOA reunion. I was impressed, but not surprised by the results of Frank and Ann Estes's hard work and attention to detail. Having known them both over these past 40 years I know for sure that once they take on a job that it will be done well. Linda has finished editing the hundred plus photos that we took and a couple of you have sent copies of your pictures so we will be sharing our memories in future editions of the newsletter and at the next reunion in New Orleans.

Al and Nell Moist have taken on the newsletter challenge and I urge all who belong to the VLOA to take some time to send them items of personal interest about your life and family. For instance, Linda and I will spend eleven days at sea starting Thanksgiving Day with a cruise from Galveston to Panama and back. I'm taking plenty of work from the office but even so I'm sure the trip will give me time to relax and enjoy the cruise. I don't plan to retire for another seven years and right now we and our partners are in the midst of building a new office building and expanding our financial planning practice. Linda tells me that I can't retire until I'm 82 because that's how long her father was in this business. We'll see. I'm not sure about working another 19 years. For now Linda is staying very busy as the Lt Governor of our Kiwanis Division. Boy, after all these years I have to stand at attention when she comes in the room – She says "It's about time."

We are planning now to attend the New Orleans reunion that the Theriot's and Voisin's are planning. Tim Bisch and the 150th have taken on the challenge of staging reunion number 4 in 2006. Put it on your calendar. We'll have a ball. After all, isn't that what New Orleans is known for?

Happy holidays,

Ernie & Linda Isbell
Deputy Director

Aae – Eeeee

Hello out there in la la land! Greetings from Cajun Country!

The reunion at Fort Rucker was great and it will be a hard act to follow, but we will give our best effort for number 4. We need your input, New Orleans is a melting pot for various interests. We would like to get a consensus of what everyone would be interested in – history, gaming, culture, shopping, PARTYING. We will certainly recommend that the accommodations be downtown with easy access to whatever you desire. Plans are to begin the planning process after the first of the year and we look forward to an exciting and enjoyable experience. One of our main concerns is what category hurricane the majority would like – Category 3, 4 or 5 (or one from Pat O'Briens). We will also need some seed money to plan, so if everyone would each send us a check for \$10,000 we can get started (Ha).

Pat & Patty Theriot

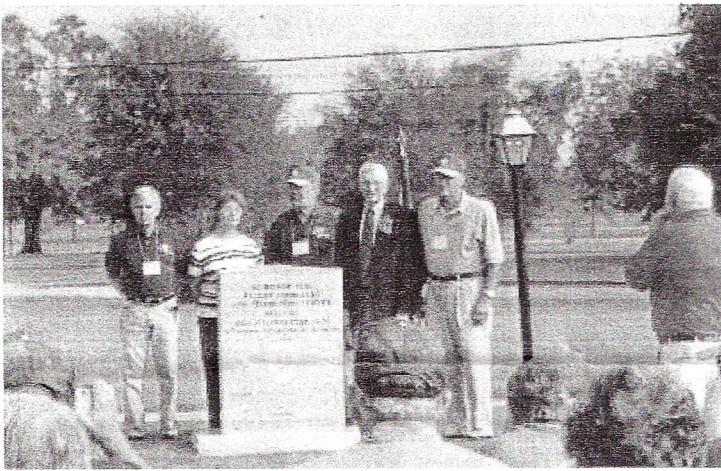
Chester & Emmadel Voisin (cvoisin@whitneybank.com)

Pat says that he does not have e-mail because he has trouble handling his Fea-mail.

FROM THE TREASURERS CORNER

As of 31 December 2004 the VLOA checking account balance was \$17,061.44, a sizable increase over the balance of \$10,639.94 on 31 December 03. The 2004 Reunion expenses were \$31,860.63 which was covered by those attending the Ft. Rucker Reunion. The increase of \$6,421.50 over the year is mainly a result of donations, membership dues, sales at the Reunion and the most gracious donation by Tom Anderson of the 50/50 pot in the amount of \$661.

REMINDER: VLOA Annual Membership dues should be paid in January. Please remit your payment in the amount of \$20 to VLOA, %Charles Wren, 20 Rozbern Dr., Eatontown, NJ 07724



The unveiling of the VLOA Monument at Veterans Park
L - R: Bob Costner, Jeanette (Sanford) Smith, Al Moist,
Tom Anderson & Tim Bisch



Paul Martin and Louie Seagers & his wife
Iheko, behind him

WATCH FOR MORE PICTURES
OF THE GREAT TIME
WE HAD AT THE
LAST REUNION IN
FUTURE ISSUES

JUST FOR LAUGHS

A couple of dog owners are arguing about whose dog is smarter.

"My dog is so smart," says the first owner, "that every morning he waits for the paper boy to come around. He tips the kid and then brings the newspaper to me, along with my morning coffee."

"I know," says the second owner.

"How do you know?"

"My dog told me."

FEDERAL SOLDIER

Who is this guy? Reared in Fresno, CA, 22 years of age, one plus years of college under his belt, single and foot loose with the Selective Service draft barking at his heels, he enlisted in the US Army in 1963. Basic at Ft Ord, AIT at Ft Eustis, soon he was a single engine rotary wing aircraft mechanic. A short stint at Ft Hood, and then back to Ft Eustis and assigned to the 150th Cargo Helicopter Maintenance Detachment. Sound familiar? A quick KC135 flight to Tan Son Nhut VN, shuttled on to a C123 and off to parts unknown landing him with his unit at Vinh Long where history was to be written of the Roadrunners exploits.

A R/W mechanic he doubled as the crew chief for Roadrunner 6. His duties were performed with excellence, as were his other fellow Roadrunners in their dedicated support of the Outlaws keeping them in the air and not on the ground. He may be remembered for his artistic talents. Logos, aircraft nose art, patches, you name it and he came up with ideas and crafted designs. A wry sense of humor was evidenced in his cartoons of the daily life around the compound, the VN environment as well as in the combat area. Those fortunate who retained some of his originals from that era prize them to this day. As time progressed with arrivals infusing in and others infusing out, June 65 found him, still in the Mekong Delta, assigned to the 167th Maintenance Detachment at Soc Trang where he finished his VN tour returning to CONUS in October 1965.

While assigned to an aviation maintenance unit at Ft Lewis, he finished out his enlistment ETS'ing in December 1966. While there, bachelorhood began to seriously evade him. One night, mutual friends introduced him to an auburn haired and green eyed beauty on the dance floor. Recognizing a good thing when he saw it, he waltzed her for a year and they wed in 1967. The wiles of this woman convinced him that Tacoma was to be their home. After working at Boeing as an expeditor on the 747, he picked up a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Pacific Lutheran University via the GI Bill in 1971 and entered the teaching profession. In 1986, he completed work for his Masters Degree in Art and Special Education at PLU. For 31 years he taught graphic arts, fine arts, crafts and pottery and coached basketball and cross country track at the junior and senior high school levels.

His wife, Laurie was as busy as he as she continued to work for the telephone company until her retirement in 1995. Along with her

Along with her active career, she had two children; a son in 1968 and a daughter in 1972. Raising two kids, managing a household and building a career at the same time was a handful and notable accomplishment. Michelle, their daughter, has blessed them with four grandchildren and son, Sean and his wife Alyssa with one child are expecting another in April 2005. Interestingly, Sean carries on the family military tradition as a member of the USAF Reserve now serving at Dover AFB supporting operations in Iraq. Previous activations while in the US Army Reserve found Sean serving in Desert Storm and supporting operations in Bosnia from Frankfort AFB, Germany. Michelle's husband, Marty serves in the military on active duty with the U.S. Coast Guard.

Retiring from teaching in 2003, he entered a new phase of his life, but busy as before with hobbies, traveling and grandkids. Still active in arts and crafts, principally pottery making, he manages to be involved in many other endeavors. Blackpowder competition shooting; pistol and skeet shooting; coaching junior high track are just a few of his interests. One particular hobby he has participated in since 1988 is a Civil War re-enactor complete with uniform, weapons and all the accouterments of that period. His role is First Sergeant of F Company, 20th Maine Regiment Volunteer Infantry, a YANKEE! Five times a year his unit performs in a variety of Civil War Battle scenarios in Washington and Oregon.

Who is this guy? By now you have guessed this Roadrunner of many talents is none other than Bob Koonce. Bob and Laurie have attended all three VLOA reunions and are staunch supporters of our organization. He is a regular contributor to our newsletters with his "Koonce's Komix" keeping us entertained with cartoons of then and now. His artwork of the various units patches and logos (Outlaws, Mavericks, Roadrunners and 28th Signal) have made possible the facsimile designs on reunion caps, shirts, tote bags and coffee mugs. Those who attended the Ft Rucker Reunion 2004 may have recognized the patches and logos inscribed on the VLOA monument and plaque as reproductions of his original artwork. Those depictions emblazoned on the monument and plaque stand as testament to Bob's artistic talent and dedication to Army Aviation and VLOA. (continued on page 7)

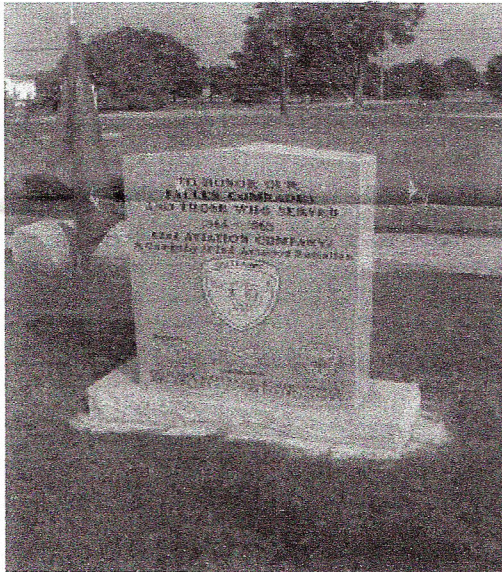
(FEDERAL SOLDIER continued from page 6)

In the words of Frank Estes, "If it had not been for those pictures and Bob's artwork, neither the monument nor the plaque would have turned out as good as they did."

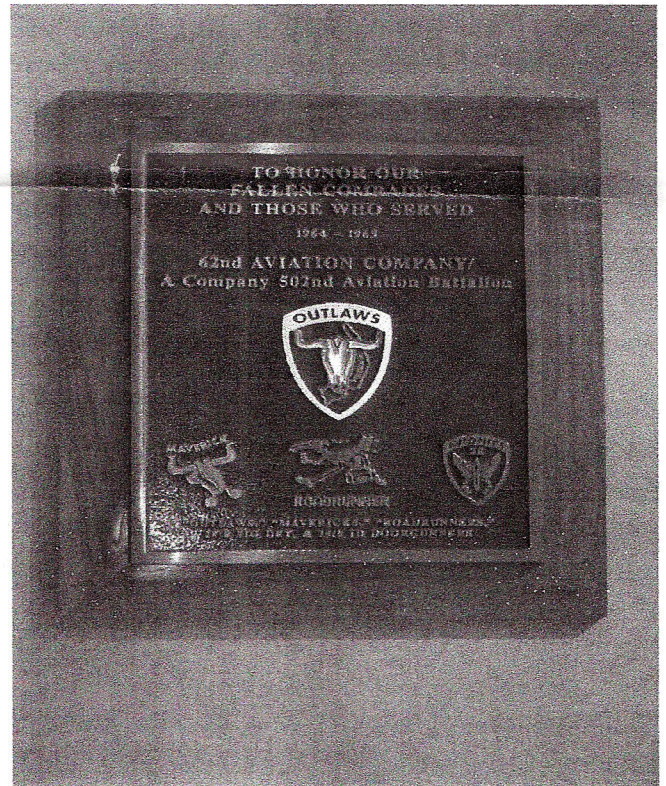
THANK YOU, BOB.

(Contributed by: Al and Edited by: Marguerite)

Picture at left shows Bob as the "Character" of Hezekiah Long 1st Sgt. of Co. "F" of the 20th Maine Volunteer Infantry.



Monument
Veterans Park, Ft Rucker, AL



Plaque
placed in the Army Aviation Museum
Ft Rucker, AL

Please help keep our roster up to date. If you have an address change, telephone number change or email address change please advise Larry Jackson or Chuck Wren

VLOA - Yesterday and Today!

Many Outlaws and family members, about 120 in number, enjoyed our recent roundup during 30 September - 3 October at Ozark, Alabama. It was our 40th Anniversary Reunion known as R2K+4 planned and coordinated together with their committee by super hosts Frank and Ann Estes. Our reunions continue to improve. A primary VLOA objective includes renewal and preservation of camaraderie and esprit de corps among our members. Reunions afford us the opportunity to see and visit each other again. For this occasion we were honored by the presence of Honor Roll members Jeannette Sanford Smith, Hilde Wilson, Lois Hampton and respective guests Mary Gatipon, Jan Smith, and Vicki Stewart. We are pleased members attend accompanied by their offspring who add so much to our gathering. Reunions also provide an opportunity to enjoy stage shows, good music, view historic sites, monuments and visit former military training locations. Highlights of Friday, October 1, 2004, at Ft. Rucker included dedication of a tasteful inscribed granite monument at Veterans Park to honor our fallen comrades. We toured the huge Army Aviation Museum to view and hear briefings about aircraft we, and others before us, used to fly. Saw the prime wall location, in plain sight of all who enter the Museum, where our VLOA dedication plaque will be placed. The attractive monument and plaque for commemoration of our veterans was the result of contributions received from VLOA members and friends. Both the monument and plaque, soon to be unveiled at the Army Aviation Museum, were paid from funds we have contributed since 2002. Thank you for your generosity. With Jeannette Sanford Smith and her sister Mary Gatipon, we commemorated Jeannette's husband and our Maverick Lead, Jack Sanford, during a brief ceremony in Sanford Hall located on Outlaw Street, noting photographs of Jack, newspaper articles and other mementos relating to his memory.

Per the minutes of our 2 October 2004 meeting, I was nominated and elected to serve as National Director. I am honored to accept the position. Our talented former Directors, Tom Anderson and Ernie Isbell, remain available for guidance and assistance. Tom will serve as Permanent Advisor and Ernie as Deputy Director. There were other outstanding nominees elected to serve in other VLOA offices, especially Chuck Wren, Treasurer, and Larry Jackson, Secretary, who agreed to continue serving in these key positions. Al Iller was elected to serve as Quartermaster. Byron Miksch and Fred Jacobs will serve as Members at Large. The significant position of Communications Director was accepted by Al and Nell Moist. Chester/Emmadel Voisin and Pat/Patty Theriot consented to serve as Co-Chairs, 2006 Reunion at New Orleans, LA. We are fortunate we have talented gifted members step up and accept key responsible positions. Any information concerning the reunion in 2006 will come from the Voisins or Theriots however it isn't too early to consider the opportunity. For those who have been unable to attend our reunions, our next one in New Orleans will be a good start. Most attendees at our reunions are repeats for good reason. Come join us.

Another important item of discussion was our VLOA web page. Membership fully supported its continuation despite recent problems due to the passing (12 Apr 04) of VLOA Web Master Travis Wilson. His technical assistant Steve Roper, a non VLOA member did agree to continue on temporarily. Fortunately, Bud Allie, an R2K+4 attendee, volunteered to be the interim Web Master. Bud is an action kind of guy. He worked the problem sending out a welcome message dated 14 Nov 04 on our Web page. I logged in <http://www.vinhlongoutlaws.com/> to search for our VLOA home page. It was there. What a great sight. Pleased the web site included an item of interest for all of us, an article submitted by Tom Anderson regarding a message dated 11 November 2004, Veterans Day, from an aviation company commander currently in Iraq. As Tom said in his comments, "It is a wonderful tribute to the people who were in the helicopter units in Vietnam and expresses deep appreciation and thanks from today's aviation soldiers to those of us 'old soldiers' who served in another war 40 years ago." Catfish 6, Commander, Task Force 185th Aviation cited improvements in Army aviation equipment, procedures, aircrew training being used in Iraq as the result of what was learned during our Vietnam experience. Go to our VLOA web page under "Then & Now" to read his letter. As always, the web page brings up current information reference home page, membership/officers, honor roll, histories, area of operations, By-laws and Constitution, galleries, Then & Now, newsletter, Chaplain, Guest Book, links and feedback. Whatever our needs, it is great VLOA has a communication vehicle available to address these topics. Attaway to go Bud! On behalf of us all, thank you very much. **(continued on page 9)**

Join the Outlaw Navy!

Would you be interested in a 7 day V.L.O.A. cruise?

At this time I am exploring putting together a seven day Caribbean cruise for V.L.O.A members.

If you would be interested, please contact me. If we have enough interest,

I will get the details together and get back to you.

John E. Doyle

868 Carnegie Drive

Inverness, Florida 34450

352-341-1390 jaydee@xtalwind.net

(VLOA Yesterday and Today continued from page 8)

Another VLOA objective is to locate personnel who served with us during August 1964 through September 1965 and encourage them to become members of VLOA. Pickings have been slim of late but was pleased to receive copies of email messages from Al Iller in contact with a Ronald G. Smith who said he knew John Doyle. To his credit as usual, Al followed up with a personal note to Ronald with information about our units, an update on John, and added Ronald to our newsletter mailing list including information concerning VLOA membership application and annual membership dues. In addition, Tom Anderson also forwarded a note with more information to Ronald. I am confident Ronald and his wife will join our VLOA. Thank you Al and Tom. For the rest of us, keep the faith,stay alert and keep on the lookout for eligible members.

Subsequent to R2K+2, VLOA members have suffered the loss of C.V. Mills who passed away November 29, 2002, Billy J. Hampton - May 19, 2003, Shirley Hall - September 15, 2003, and Travis Wilson - April 12, 2004. God bless their souls.

Tim Bisch

Director

P.S. Remember January is dues payment month. Send your \$20 annual membership renewal for 2005 to our treasurer Chuck Wren. Thank you.