

VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION (VLOA)

VINH LONG OUTLAWS NEWS

January - March
1st Issue 2005

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"TWO WAYS TO COMMUNICATE"

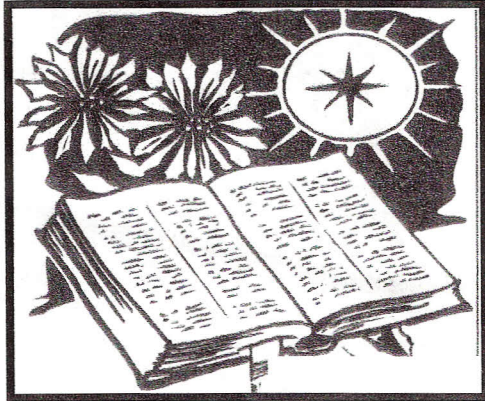
VLOA uses two primary means to communicate with it's members located throughout the mainland and Alaska. Yes, we use telephones, cards, letters, and e-mail messages. For general informational purposes we must use our Vinh Long Outlaws News and our Vinh Long Outlaws Association web site at: www.vinhlongoutlaws.com. Speaking of the Outlaws News, like other issues proceeding it, Al and Nell Moist's first issue, October - December, 2004 was a great read. It was interesting, informative and well organized. Thanks also to it's contributors who provided articles, pictures, and cartoon. Didn't realize another of Bob Koonce's many talents was that of a Federal Soldier. Thank you Al and Marguerite for pointing it out so well. Pictures of our VLOA monument, plaque and word history of their dedication at Ft. Rucker by Tom Anderson were excellent. The News is a valuable reservoir of what VLOA has been doing to include activities currently in progress. Good work Al and Nell !

Another valuable source of information is our Outlaws web site. Thanks to Bud Allie it is again back on line. Yes, one needs a computer with an Internet connection but it contains a gold mine of information. Logging on to: www.vinhlongoutlaws.com brings up an attractive colorful cover page that lists VLOA organizations above unit insignias of Outlaws, Mavericks and Roadrunners. Below them is an index of fifteen Sections, similar to chapters of a book. They are: Home; Membership; Honor Roll; History - 62nd; History - 150th; Reunion; AOP; By-Laws; Gallery; Then & Now; Newsletter; Chaplain; Guest Book; Links; Feedback.

Why do I feel so positive about our web site? It is a valuable source of history and provides a current flow of information to our members. Travis Wilson helped develop and get our web site established. After his loss, Bud Allie stepped up and got it back on line and operating. There is a wealth of information available for us to learn and to use. Yes, one needs a computer and Internet connection but it is a key tool for our organization. Former Outlaw 15 CE (Crew Chief) Bud Allie was an outstanding crew chief. Like he said, he "can usually figure out how to fix stuff so I'll do my best to keep the damn thing (web site) in the air, but the driving is up to you guys." Bud, you are absolutely right. It is up to the rest of us to use the site by logging on to read and provide data to on a regular basis. This also applies to input from our members to the Outlaws News. Don't be bashful or hesitant. Send your article in. Al and Nell will accept it. They accepted mine.

Tim Bisch

Director



THE BACK PEW

Billy Graham's New Suit

In January 2000, leaders in Charlotte, North Carolina, invited their favorite son, Billy Graham, to a luncheon in his honor. Billy initially hesitated to accept the invitation because he struggles with Parkinson's disease. But the Charlotte leaders said, "We don't expect a major address. Just come and let us honor you." So he agreed.

After wonderful things were said about him, Dr. Graham stepped to the rostrum, looked at the crowd, and said, "I'm reminded today of Albert

Einstein, the great physicist who this month has been honored by Time magazine as the Man of the Century.

Einstein was once traveling from Princeton on a train when the conductor came down the aisle, punching the tickets of each passenger. When he came to Einstein, Einstein reached in his vest pocket. He couldn't find his ticket, so he reached in his other pocket. It wasn't there, so he looked in his briefcase but couldn't find it. Then he looked in the seat by him. He couldn't find it. The conductor said, "Dr. Einstein, I know who you are. We all know who you are. I'm sure you bought a ticket. Don't worry about it." Einstein nodded appreciatively.

The conductor continued down the aisle punching tickets. As he was ready to move to the next car, he turned around and saw the great physicist down on his hands and knees looking under his seat for his ticket. The conductor rushed back and said, "Dr. Einstein, don't worry. I know who you are. No problem. You don't need a ticket. I'm sure you bought one."

Einstein looked at him and said, "Young man, I too know who I am. What I don't know is where I'm going."

Having said that Billy Graham continued, "See the suit I'm wearing? It's a brand new suit. My wife, my children, and my grandchildren are telling me I've gotten a little slovenly in my old age. I used to be a bit more fastidious. So I went out and bought a new suit for this luncheon and one more occasion.

"You know what that occasion is? This is the suit in which I'll be buried. But when you hear I'm dead, I don't want you to immediately remember the suit I'm wearing. I want you to remember this: I not only know who I am, I also know where I'm going."

Copied.

I pray that each of us can honestly say on the day we die: "I know where I am going."

John

Outlaw Navy (Cruise)

Because of lack of responses, the proposed Outlaw Cruise has been cancelled.

John Doyle

PRAYER REQUEST

May be sent to the Outlaw Chaplain, John Doyle, at jaydee@xtalwind.net. They will be posted to the Chaplain's page at the VLOA website. Please include person's name, request and other information.

John E. Doyle
Maverick 36
Vinh Long Outlaws 1964-1965

John Reynolds: A three-tour guy!

You're in the Army now!

John Phillips Reynolds, the son of a career Army NCO, was born in Newport, RI (a Navy town) in 1944. The oldest of 10 children (6 boys and 4 girls), John lived in several locations as his father was transferred to new duty assignments. John's father retired as an 1SG E8, after being in WW II, the Korean War, and Vietnam.

After graduating from high school in Coventry, RI, John spent a short time at Providence College. He left college to join his family in Germany where his father was stationed. It was while in Germany, in September of 1963, that John made the decision to join the Army. He would later attend UH-1 Crew Chief School at Ft. Rucker. After graduation, he was assigned to the 11th Air Assault Division, Ft. Benning, GA. When he heard that an Assault Helicopter Company was being formed to go to Vietnam, he volunteered. It was here that he became good friends with SP5 Michael "Mike" Moritz. John and Mike were "roomies" in Vietnam.

Vietnam: A Maverick is born

John says, "When we arrived in Vietnam, I was part of the maintenance line crew." He knew his job was important, but, his heart wasn't in it. John wanted to be a crew chief. He mentioned this to Mike, who had by this time picked up the nickname "Rigor" (as in rigor-mortis), who was a crew chief on Maverick 33. John said, "A couple of weeks after arrival in Vinh Long, SSG E6 Louie Klinetob (aka "K.T."), Maverick Plt. Sgt., came up to me and said, 'I've got a Huey just for you, Maverick 38'. I ran to the flight line to see my first Huey. I didn't know how to find the rotor tie down, I was so excited."

John's AC was CWO 2 Don Newman. "Learning to shoot the M 60 was fun at first, then the reality of why we came and what we were trying to do set in!" John said. "Learning how to live every day you left the ground was a challenge." he adds. The reality of combat started to sink in for John as it did for most of us flying in armed helicopters. John recalls, "I remember Don Newman teaching me to try and separate the 'bad guys' from the 'good guys'. I thought we really tried."

Feelings of remorse for taking other people's lives was not uncommon in combat. John Reynolds had his battle with these feelings: "I remember trying to quit the Mavericks after a month, because I just didn't want to kill anyone. I asked to be transferred to the 'slicks'. 'Captain Jack' (Jack Sanford, Maverick Plt. Ldr.), pulled me aside and convinced me to stay, or should I say, scared the hell out of me to stay. After that, I worked really hard to kill the right people."

When Capt. Jack and Mike Moritz were killed in action, it hit John really hard. He had the task of going through Mike's belongings and getting them ready to send home. Speaking of Mike, John said, "He was my roommate! I think that is when I really closed up. I didn't want to get to know anybody too well after that." However, John was able to finish his tour and leave Vinh Long with the feeling that, "I served my Country, and the Mavericks did everything they could to help Vietnam."

As John left Vietnam, his Dad was on his way over with the Big Red One.

Back to Vietnam

John said, "After being back in the States for a year, I knew I needed to go back to Nam." Back in Vietnam, he was assigned to the 128th ASH at Phu Loi. He was assigned to the "Gunslinger" armed helicopter platoon. The 128th area of operation was III Corps. A crew chief again, John longed to get back to the Delta. Before long, he was promoted to SSG E6. Along with the promotion came a transfer to the 173rd ASH at Lia Khe, where he was a platoon sergeant of a slick platoon. Commenting on his 2nd tour, John said, "It never had the same togetherness as the first tour." He added, "Before I forget, at Phu Loi, I met 'Mr. Doyle Pole' himself. It was great to see John again."

From Platoon Sergeant to WO

Back from his second tour, John was assigned to Ft. Carson. It was here that he applied for, and after a year was accepted into, WO Flight Training and sent to Ft. Wolters, TX, where he ran into Don Newman. Don was his Best Man when he got married. Then it was on to Ft. Rucker. While there, he ran into Maj. Tony Clemente. He credits Tony with being instrumental with his graduation. After graduation from Flight School, John was sent to Mannheim, Germany, where he was assigned to the 8th Inf. Div. (Mechanized). After one year in Germany, "I got my 'Kellogg's Box Top' Commission to 2nd Lt. and returned to the States enroute to my third tour in Vietnam."

Back to Vinh Long and the "Outlaws"

Now 1st Lt. Reynolds arrived back in Vinh Long to find that his beloved "Mavericks" had been deactivated and replaced by Cobra gunships. They were now named the "Bushwhackers". John commented, "That broke my heart. I had not realized how much I loved the 'Mavericks' on my first tour." He continued, "So I became Outlaw 10. Because they thought I was a little bit crazy, they made me one of the Air Mission Commanders as a 1st Lt.. I was not very patient! Take no chances and pay attention all the time!"

(continued on page 4)

Back to the States and civilian life

Returning from Vinh Long, John was assigned to Ft. Dix and was promoted to Captain. But then he was caught up in the RIF. "I had a choice," he said. "Either go back to SSG E6, or get out! I was not a well balanced person, so I got out." As a side note, John added, " While I was at Ft. Dix, I ran into 'KT' (Louie Klinetob). He was selling insurance for John Hancock Insurance Company." Then he added, "I wish I had spent more time with him."

From a broken spirit to filled with the Spirit

Vietnam took its toll on John as it has so many others. John says of his last tour, "In 1971 - 72, the attitude was totally different. It was very sad. I really didn't know why we were there. I was very mad, hurt, angry and just wondered why! I don't think I ever got over the guilt of killing people, justified or not."

By the time he left the service, his marriage was in trouble. His wife wanted him to go to counseling, but John felt they didn't have an answer to his problem. His marriage ended in divorce.

Although he didn't know it, God had a plan to heal John. The healing would come through personal sorrow. In 1975, one of John's younger brothers died of natural causes. John picks up the story from here. "At the funeral, I met the Lord in such a way that I knew where my brother really was and that the Lord wasn't holding my guilt and shame against me. He offered me another Life! I accepted. That day began my new life. Deliverances were needed, healing, hope, and mercy. Since then, the Lord has given me my primary employment, a Ministry of the Spirit, to help those who have given up hope. I remember at my brother's funeral telling this Spirit-filled priest (of which I had never met one before) that I had real problems, 'So don't give me any pious platitudes.' He looked at me like Jesus did when He walked among the sinners and said, 'Let him who is without sin cast the first stone.' I really felt like there was a chance to get my life back together. So there I was, driving my BMW motorcycle back to Colorado after the funeral in July, drinking my rum, smoking my cigarette, and singing Christmas songs. I wasn't long in Colorado before I left to return to my family in California to get my life back."

John now resides in Oceanside, CA, where he and his mother, Dottie, have an active ministry to prisoners.

(submitted by John Doyle)

Farewell To An Old Friend by Olen Thornton

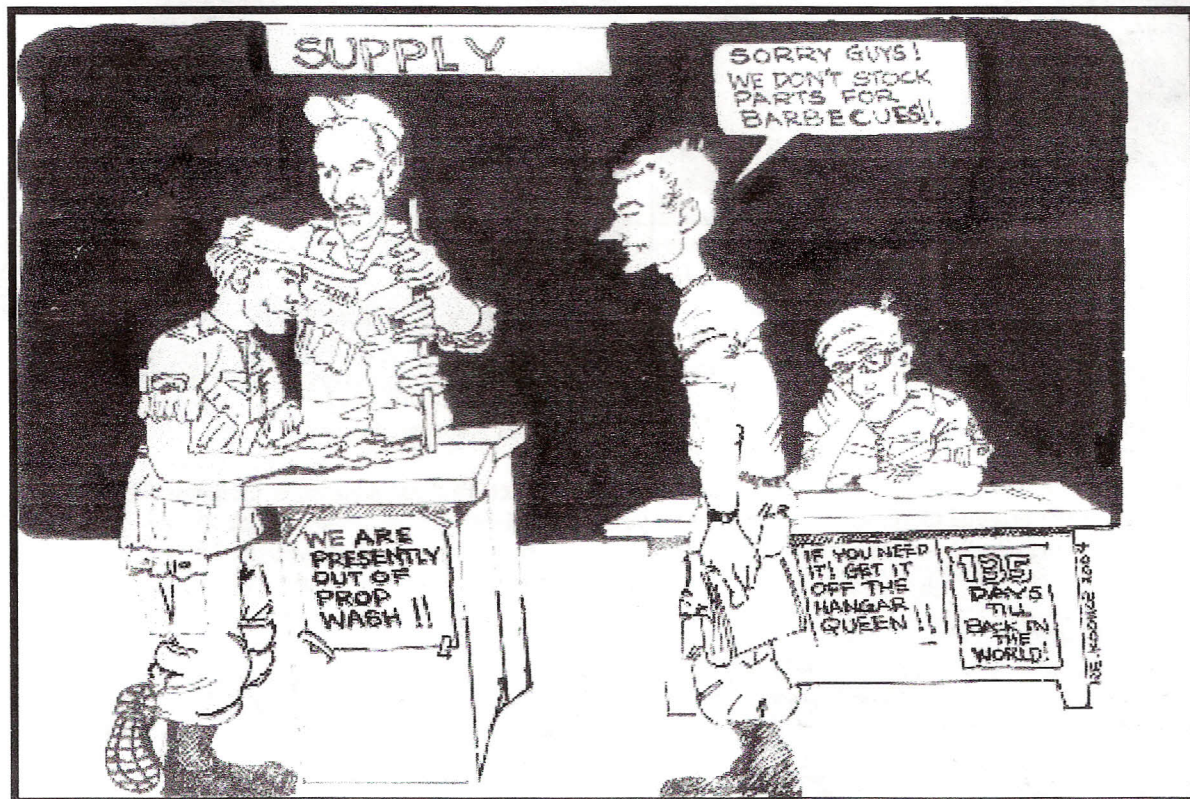
In mid December, I was called by Joe Clelan from Mechanicsburg, PA to inform me of the death of one of our Outlaw comrades and friends, LTC Tom Hester, that he had read in one of his local newspapers. Tom was in my Outlaw second flight platoon at Vinh Long. I called Tom's widow, Jan, introduced myself and learned that Tom was to be buried in Arlington National Cemetery on December 22 with full military honors. Jan was delighted when I told her that Tom Anderson (Outlaw 6) and I would like to attend and pay our respects to Tom and to meet her and her family. Tom Anderson and I attended the ceremony as planned and met the family. He had a copy of an amusing anecdote regarding Tom Hester's first day at Vinh Long that had been sent to him by Al Iller (Outlaw 5). As we were waiting in the administration building and visiting with the family, Outlaw 6 found an appropriate time to share the story with them. They, too, thought it was humorous and appreciated the fact that he was remembered in such a personal and meaningful way. I remember him as an energetic, thoughtful, hard working and handsome fellow with a sense of humor and one who always had a smile for everyone. As always, the military honor guard was impressive in its performance. Jan and her family expressed their appreciation to Outlaw 6 and me for attending. May God comfort the Hester family in their sorrow. After we said goodbye to them, we dropped by and paid our respects to another dear Outlaw friend, Jack Sanford.

A NOTE CONCERNING THE NEW ORLEANS REUNION

Things are progressing as planned for the 2006 Reunion. We have been busy visiting various hotels in the City of New Orleans and just those visits have us excited. That place has something to please everyone's fancy. We currently are leaning toward a couple of downtown hotels which have a panoramic view of the Mississippi River, a view of the French Quarter (Bourbon Street, etc.), next to the largest land based Casino in the South and a view of the Warehouse District (Aquarium, antique shops and Convention Center). The D-Day Museum and the Superdome are only a few blocks away. Patrick and I have had our hands full gathering information regarding the planning of the Reunion and at the same time trying to keep our spouses, Patty and Emmadel, out of the casino and shops. Some of the things we are considering recommending would include a tour of the D-Day Museum during the day Friday and possibly a river boat cruise on Friday night. Saturday would be a day for our Organization's meeting, the rest of the day would be do as you please with the Farewell dinner in the hotel that night. We are trying our best to keep the costs at an affordable level for everyone but like we said at Rucker it will cost more to be downtown in the middle of everything. We realize that not everyone is a retired Colonel drawing humongous retirement checks. Any comments or suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

Pat & Patty Theriot and Chester & Emmadel Voisin

KOMICS BY KOONCE



NOTES FROM THE QM STORE

The QM store is finally getting cranked up with ideas and a few selected items that will soon be offered for sale. AND, all at reasonable prices for all you Outlaws, Mavericks and Roadrunners out there.

Here's a little glimpse at the soon available VLOA products. Since we have our own in-house designer, Bob Koonce he has come up with some classy window decals for the Outlaws, Mavericks and Roadrunners. These decals will be in full color and approximately 5" (H) X 4" (W) in size. Many of you will want all three!

The decals ain't all! How about Outlaws belt buckles? Yep, 3 inch diameter bronze belt buckles with the outline of the Outlaws patch. For the spit and polish types, these can be blitized to shine that will dazzle the eye. What's more, all buckles will be serially numbered and initially will be in a limited quantity. To accompany the buckles, the Outlaws patch lapel pins 1 1/4" high in full color will be available.

Now don't jump the gun and flood us with orders as these items are now being manufactured. The decals are expected to be in stock in approximately 4 weeks. The buckles and pins in about 3 months. Keep checking the Outlaws web page, www.vinhlongoutlaws.com for the latest update on the availability of these QM items and details for ordering.

The bottom line on your cost of these items, or the "VSP" (that's short for VLOA Suggested Price) will be as follows:

Decals: \$3.00/ea, or Any 3 for \$7.00
 Buckles \$36.50/ea
 Lapel Pins \$6.00/ea

Prices include shipping and handling. All VSP prices may be subject to change.

Reunion type polo shirts with the Outlaws patch and Maverick and Roadrunner logos may be ordered anytime individually. More information regarding men's and women's sizes and colors will be available later on the VLOA web page.

Once supplies are received for QM stock all orders and remittances will be made to:

VLOA - QM
 % Chuck Wren
 20 Rozbern Drive
 Eatontown, NJ 07724

April 6, 2005

Captain Sean Huggins
Commanding Officer
B Troop, 1-158th Avn Regt (Outlaws)
Fort Hood, Texas

Dear Captain Huggins,

I deeply regret that the move-in date into my new home coincides with the dates on which members of our group, representing the original Outlaws, will attend your change of command at Fort Hood on April 8th, 2005. However, as one of those original Outlaws I want to express the pride we feel in being able to share in the honorable and successful completion of your combat tour in Iraq. By your accomplishments you have earned the deep pride and self respect that comes with the title of "soldiers"!

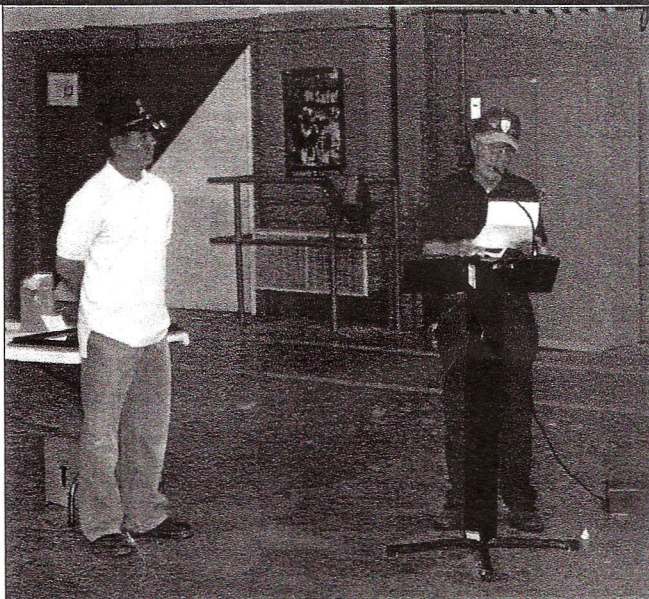
Your unit has just spent a year together, away from your families, in a foreign culture, under great stress, while contributing to the cause of freedom from tyranny and terrorism. The bonds you have formed with each other are forever fashioned and will be remembered by each of you for the rest of your lives.

The euphoria of your return is now at its peak. Soon, the members of your unit will disperse to other assignments, careers and interests, just as those of us in the original Outlaws did more than 40 years ago. I ask you to do two things: First, take a good look at those soldiers from our original Outlaws who are with you during these few days. They are with you because of the great pride they still feel for each other, for our Viet Nam unit and for the bonds that were created back then. These old soldiers will be YOU forty years from now.

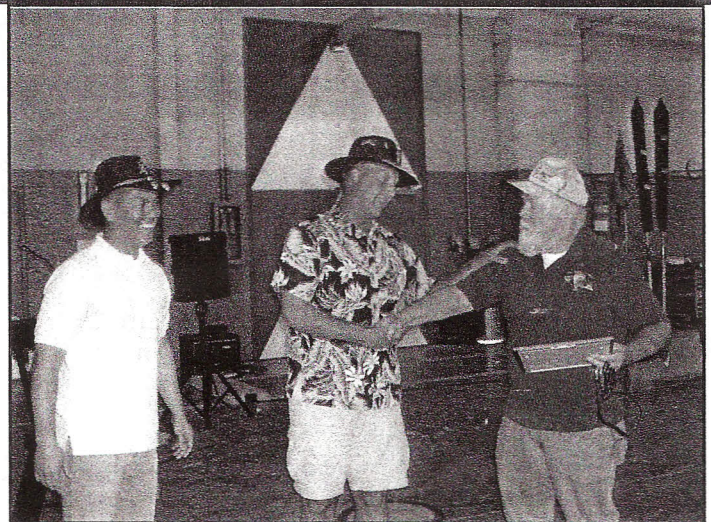
Secondly, your combat tour together has already established the bond that will tie each of you to each other for the rest of your lives. With this in mind, I urge you to establish, now, some framework that will allow you to again link with each other at the end of your careers. In the intervening years you will have too many other career interests to maintain close ties. However, with the passage of years, and at the closing of your working careers, I will guarantee that the urge to reconnect with each other will become fervent and obsessive. The Vinh Long Outlaws are living proof of that.

Please accept my personal, heartfelt congratulations and thanks to you and all the members of the Outlaws for your mission completed and my best wishes for a successful career no matter what course your lives may take.

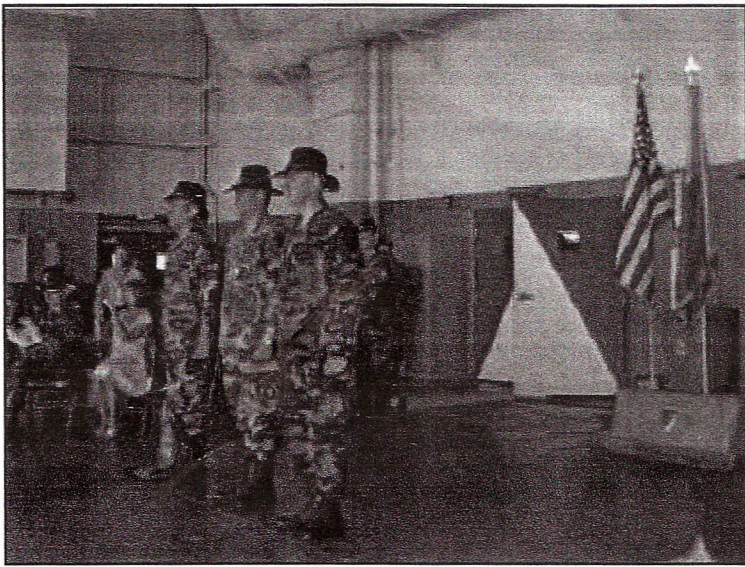
Tom Anderson
Outlaw 6
Vinh Long, Vietnam 1964-65
(7880 Rolling Woods Ct. #308 - Springfield, VA 22152)



CPT Sean Huggins listening to Al Iller reading the message from Tom Anderson.



CPT Sean Huggins and Top SGT presenting Byron Miksch certificate and spurs.



Waiting for call to orders for the Change of Command for Bravo Troop, 1-158th Aviation Regiment, 21st Cavalry Brigade (Air Combat). L-R: CPT Huggins, Outgoing Commander; LTC Beltson, Deputy Brigade Commander; CPT Wilsher, Incoming Commander



Three Warrant Officers and Al Iller wearing their spurs.



CPT Sean Huggins wearing the VLOA cap the group gave to him.



Mitzi Bisch, CW3 Jackie Koonce (same last name as Bob Koonce) and Tim Bisch



Picture on right: → → → → → → → → →
 L - R: Byron Miksch, Linda & Ernie Isbell, Skip and Beverly Frontera, Pete & Carolyn Fredriksson, Mitzi & Tim Bisch And Al Iller.
 Taken by of the four Hueys used by B-Troop 1-158th Aviation Regiment (Outlaws).

Thanks for your service Original Outlaws - from Iraq Outlaws

Thank you B Troop, 1/158th Aviation Regiment for your warm welcome and gracious treatment during our Ft. Hood visit, 7 & 8 April. As one of the ten (6 men and 4 spouses) "Original Outlaws" group, we stayed at the comfortable Plaza Hotel coordinated by Al Iller. Thursday evening B Troop Commander and our host, CPT Sean Huggins, came to greet and accompany us to the Ft. Hood hangar where his B Troop Orderly Room, Admin area and aircraft are located. It was the site of B Troop's Hail & Farewell party Thursday night and Change of Command ceremony Friday morning. There we were met and welcomed by B Troop soldiers who thanked us for our service in Vietnam forty years ago. During the Hail & Farewell CPT Huggins honored each original Outlaw, presenting to us a framed Order of the Spur Certificate to include a set of spurs earned through our patriotism and soldierly skills demonstrated on the fields of battle in Vinh Long Province of Vietnam. We were also given a 21st Cavalry Brigade (Air Combat) coin awarded to B Troop for excellence and a B Troop tee shirt.

Met B Troop soldiers including CW3 Jackie Koonce, a Senior Aviator and 16 year Army veteran. She hails from Tacoma WA where our Bob Koonce, no relation, now lives. Another woman aviator was CW2 Lori Gaff, a Kansas State University graduate, who had always wanted to fly. She took advantage of the Army Warrant Officer flight training program. CW2 Gaff enjoyed her flying experiences and duty in Iraq. Would not be surprised to see CWs Gaff and Koonce at our R2K+6 reunion in New Orleans. CW4 Wayne Durasko was B Troop maintenance officer. Like most maintenance officer/test pilots he worked uncommonly long hours to ensure B Troop could support all assigned missions with safe well maintained aircraft. They did. Will send crew chief Sp4 Shane Durbin information concerning desired information VLOA Associate Membership. Comments of appreciation were received for both the VLOA plaque I presented as Director, VLOA to CPT Huggins and a letter Tom Anderson wrote to CPT Huggins and B Troop which was read by Al Iller during the Hail & Farewell party. After the Change of Command ceremonies and reception and prior to our departure from Killeen Friday, VLOA members were treated to an Oriental Buffet luncheon, compliments of Ernie and Linda Isbell.

B Troop will be added to our VLOA Newsletter mailing list. Our visit was a memorable occasion for each of us. Their soldiers were sharp, enthusiastic and dedicated. It was obvious B Troop benefited from the decisive but compassionate strong leadership of CPT Sean Huggins and 1st Sgt Bruce Robertson. They received strong support from their senior headquarters, 21st Cavalry Brigade (Air Combat). The U.S. Army is in good hands as demonstrated by our soldiers and their supportive families from B Troop, 1/158th Aviation Regiment.
s/Tim Bisch, VLOA guest of B Troop

"MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING" 2005

Budd Allie, Dave Amason, Tom Anderson, Berkley Badgett, John Bellochio, Fredrick Bisch, Charles Bouton, James Boyer, Jim Burroughs, Joseph Clelan, Anthony Clemente, James Coleman, Robert Costner, Richard Donahue, John Doyle, Jack Dunaway, Roger Franke, James Grandstaff, James Hardbeck, Robert Hlubin, Phillip Horne, Charlie Humphries, Al Iller, Ernest Isbell, Larry Jackson, Fred Jacobs, Jimmie King, Jim Kirkley, George Kokendoffer, Robert Koonce, Bryce Kramer, Jack Lane, David Logan, Mike Madigan, Paul Martin (AR), Dennis Mason, Charles Matlock, Robert Michalic, Byron Miksch, Joesph Moffett, Al Moist, Leon Osterland, Don Palmer, Charles Poulton, George Prescott, Harold Quattlebaum, John Reynolds, Ronald Alcott, Louie Seagers, John Sedam, Robert Sharp, Dale Sherrod, Harold Simpson, Janette Smith, Angelo Spelios, Clayton Stolte, Patrick Theriot, Olen Thornton, Robert Tidd, Duane Truman, Chester Voisin, John White, Robert Williams, Douglas Wilson, Charles Wren

Backspinner Status - Jack Northridge

Needing information regarding the Backspin fixed wing organization and missions at Vinh Long, I contacted Jack Northridge, a fixed wing aviator listed on my VLOA roster. Jack came right back stating he was a 74th Avn Co Bird Dog pilot who flew out of Vinh Long while attached to A Co, 502d Aviation Bn during 1965. Their missions in support of the ARVN (Army of the Republic of Vietnam) included flying Artillery officers to adjust/register artillery fire and fly recon missions. They also carried Naval officers to perform naval gunfire missions near Vung Tau and do radio relay for riverine forces. Special Forces troops were flown on recon missions along the Cambodian border. Many nights they were in the air providing radio relay for outposts throughout the delta area. Jack said "prior to the stacking of commanders above a RE we provided recon and observation for the 502d and 114th for insertions and extraction's." He said he was never hit or wounded although many times he could see muzzle fire from VC firing at his O-1F Bird Dog. Pilots from Vinh Long that were transferred to the 221st Avn Co (SAL) at Soc Trang in July '65 were CPT MacKenzie, Plt Ldr, Greg Colliton, Billy Tabb, Jack Moscrip, Robert Thornton, Daryl Cagle, Charles Werner, Wayne Fleming and William Craven.

Something else I learned from Jack. He is currently 100% disabled, Agent Orange related, and survives through a feeding tube and traech. He hopes surgery in late April - May will result in some improvement that will allow him to eat and breathe and maybe talk by some means. Told him via e-mail that I would pray for improvements in each of them. His response was "Thank you for your prayers. He stated that, "it appears that so far they have knocked out the cancer I had on my larynx - that's the good news. Prayers do work and we, my wife Judy and I, are determined to beat this thing. So add me to your prayer list."

Told Jack the information I was looking for from him is nothing compared to what I had learned concerning the sacrifices he was now paying as a result of his service in RVN. Said our membership totaling over 200 would be interested in learning of his situation, especially our VLOA Chaplain John Doyle who has personally experienced an affliction with throat cancer and would offer his guidance and assistance. We want to help. If additional prayers are sought I feel positive our members will offer them. Our best wishes for a successful operation.

Tim Bisch

TREASURES CORNER

As of 31 March 2005 the VLOA account balance is \$17,693. All would think that the VLOA financial picture is in good stead. In fact it is, but not by good fortune, but by good deeds as a result of good sales at the Reunions, Membership contributions, the Ft Rucker Memorial fund, Reunion Chinese auction, and what about Tom Andersons 50/50 donation, etc. These are a major means of why the VLOA budget is where it is. The Annual Membership dues do not cover the cost of the Newsletter that is published on a quarterly basis to all paid members as well as non-members. Although the services rendered are by volunteers, dollars are needed to support the various activities that support the VLOA. Supplies, postage, hardware, software are just a small list of items used by the Publisher, Quarter Master and Treasurer that are normal expenses required to meet the daily needs. Membership dues in the amount of \$20 are to be paid each January. Have you joined??? Have you renewed??? Now is the time. We are a small organization, but very dependent upon your support. Please join or renew your membership. I believe the New Orleans Reunion will be the best, but if you have not attended the previous reunions you don't know what you missed.

2005

ANNUAL DUES REMINDER

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES
READ THE TREASURES REPORT

REMIT/JOIN NOW

VLOA
CHARLES WREN
20 ROZBERN DR
EATONTOWN, NJ 07724
Email: cwren@ix.netcom.com

A LITTLE HUMOR

It was Palm Sunday and because of a sore throat, five year old Johnny stayed home from church with a sitter. When the family returned home they were carrying several Palm branches. The boy asked what they were for.

"People held them over Jesus' head as he walked by".

"Wouldn't you know it," the little boy fumed, "The one Sunday I don't go, he shows up!"

(author unknown)

VLOA Visit to B Troop Outlaws

B Troop, 1/158th Aviation Regiment (Outlaws) returned to Ft. Hood, TX after serving 12 months in Iraq. The unit deployed to Iraq during February, 2004. While in Iraq, B Troop operated from LSA Anaconda near Balag (45 miles North of Bagdad). They supported Commanding General (Casey) and Deputy Commander Iraq with B Troop's 21 aviators, 28 enlisted soldiers, 8 Blackhawk (UH-60) helicopter aircraft. Upon their return to Ft. Hood, the Outlaws were welcomed home by 1st Air Cav and unit's family members.

Since their return Outlaw soldiers have enjoyed ordinary leave to relax and become re-acquainted with their families and other loved ones. The commander of B Troop, CPT Sean Huggins led B Troop Outlaws before deploying to Iraq. They returned to Ft. Hood with no combat or other losses. CPT Huggins relinquished his command at a formal Change of Command ceremony 1000 hours, 8 April 2005 at Hood Army Airfield. VLOA members were honored to attend the ceremony conducted by LTC Steven Beltson, Deputy Bde Cdr, 21st Cavalry Brigade. CPT Huggins has been awarded a Bronze Star medal and Air Medals (Meritorious Service). Other recommendations for Bronze Star medal and the Order of St. Michael are pending.

CPT Huggins invited VLOA members, other B Troop member families/guests to a BBQ dinner Thursday evening at B Troop facilities, Ft. Hood Army Airfield. During informal post meal ceremonies VLOA members thanked CPT Huggins for his kind invitation to enjoy delicious food and meet with his B Troop compatriots and family members. Also took the opportunity for Al Iller to read a letter from Tom Anderson to CPT Huggins. The purpose of his excellent letter was twofold - 1) to show our appreciation and thanks for their Outlaws service and - 2) to encourage CPT Huggins to think about how to build some sort of foundation now that would make it easier to find his people in later years assuming these "newby" Outlaws might actually get together again (like someone else we know). Subsequent to reading the warmly received letter, Tim Bisch, VLOA Director representing VLOA members, presented a wooden framed bronze plaque with insignias of the Original Outlaws, 1964 and Iraq Outlaws, 2004 placed at the upper corners. Wording on the plaque included :To the *** soldiers of the *** Outlaws *** B Troop, 1-158th Avn Regt *** with thanks and gratitude *** for your service in Iraq *** 2004 - 2005 **** from*** the Vinh Long Outlaws Association *** the Original Outlaws *** 62nd Aviation Company *** Vietnam *** 1964 - 1965 *** Four decades*** of *** Army Aviation Excellence."

VLOA attendees included Tim and Mitzi Bisch, Pete and Carolyn Fredriksson, Skip and Beverly Frontera, Al Iller, Ernie and Linda Isbell and Byron Miksch. VLOA appreciates the efforts of Al Iller, who planned and coordinated the design and purchase of the plaque, social/ceremonial preparations with CPT Huggins, logistical arrangements with the Plaza Hotel, Killeen, TX. Thank you Al.

Many B Troop Outlaws are being reassigned to other stateside units. CPT Huggins next assignment will be Observer/Controller, Aviation Lift Units, National Training Center, Ft. Irwin, CA.

To the Iraq Outlaws, thank you for your warm friendship and generous hospitality. The BBQ Thursday night and reception subsequent to the Change of Command Friday was excellent. Your unit and other family members were gracious and excellent hosts. We had fun and were pleased to be a part of it. Thank you!

A Note From Al and Nell:

I know we promised more pictures of the reunion at Fort Rucker in this issue but as you can see a lot of the space this time was used for the welcoming home of the Outlaws of B Troop 1 - 158th Aviation Regiment (Iraq Outlaws). We thought this would be a special issue for them. There will be more pictures of the reunion in future issues.