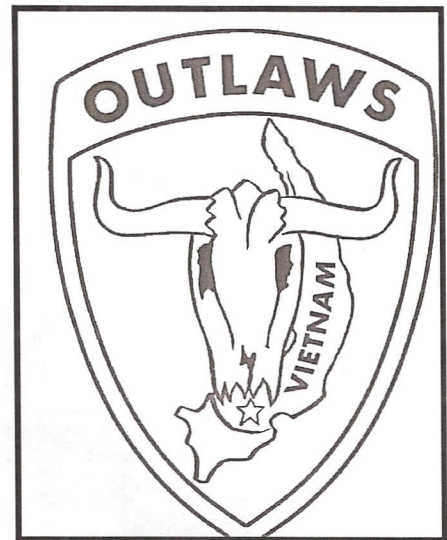


# VINH LONG OUTLAWS NEWSLETTER

VINH LONG OUTLAWS ASSOCIATION  
(VLOA)



April — June 2nd Quarter 2009

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## NATIONAL DIRECTOR'S CORNER

By Frank Estes

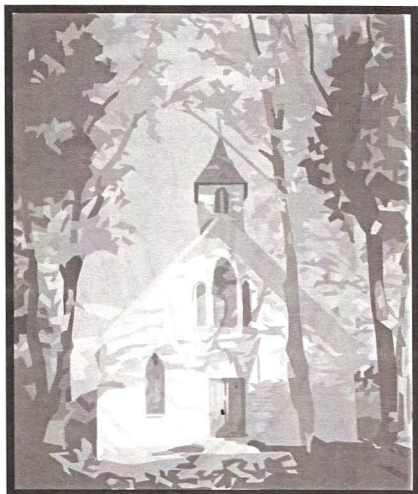
Here are a few updates for you on some projects we have been working. First, we selected Harlow Media to remake our website. An initial package of information, pictures, articles, and guidelines were provided to Harlow Media for its use in bringing our website up to today's standards. We have a few more working sessions with Harlow Media before making the final decision on bringing the VLOA website online. We are shooting to have the updated website on line by mid-July, barring any difficulties or lack of information/input on needed items.

Second, Roundup 2010 is still a work in progress. Guidelines were provided to three potential reunion coordinators, and they are currently evaluating these. Each was given until the end of June to provide their proposal for our reunion, along with a preferred location and four other potential locations that might be considered. I have received one proposal in response to our request, and the other two companies are still in the process of finalizing their proposals for our evaluation. Hopefully, all will meet the deadline, and we will select a winning reunion coordinator by the end of July.

Third, Dave Logan continues working the membership area. We have found a number of individuals who left messages or inquiries on our website. We traced them down via the email addresses they left on the website, and sent membership application forms to them. Some have responded positively, and joined the VLOA. Dave and I will continue working this area, but could use your assistance by reviewing the roster and encouraging lost listed thereon who are not dues-paying VLOA members to join. It takes money to continue publishing the newsletter and running our website.

Fourth, I found three carousels boxes full of 35mm slides (without the carousels) I took in Vietnam. I have been working with Jim Donnelly, and will be sending some of these to him so he can scan them into digital format. Afterwards, I will screen them, select those applicable to our tour together in Vietnam, and provide that information to Jim so he can finalize the pictures and place them on the next issue of his DVD. Jim has taken on this project to help institutionalize the history of the Outlaws in Vietnam. If you have any photos or slides you want to contribute to the process, please get in touch with Jim Donnelly at [jcdonnelly1@cox.net](mailto:jcdonnelly1@cox.net).

Finally, I am open to suggestions on how to improve our newsletter with new type information and articles. Once our reworked website comes on line, I would sincerely appreciate your comments on how you would like to improve on what Harlow Media and I have been able to do to update the site. Additionally, Dave Logan and I would sincerely appreciate anything you can do to help increase our membership rolls. Ann and I hope all



## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

### "The Back Pew"

*From our VLOA Chaplain: John Doyle*

*I will predict that most of you have said at one time or another, "If I had known how much work I would have to do, I would never have retired!" For the life of me, I have no idea what happened to all the bike, camping, and canoe trips, etc. I had planned for when I retired. It seems like there is always something that requires my attention around the house or in the yard. I had hoped that by the time I retired, the Japanese would have perfected their personal robot. You know, the one that cuts grass, paints houses, cooks meals, etc., etc..*

*I know, that's a bit far-fetched. However, there is much to do in life, even if you are retired. And, if you are like me, there are times when you end up plum worn out, spiritually as well as physically.*

*But I know the answer to the problem of being worn out. In Matthew chapter 11: 28, Jesus tells us to "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Forget the Ben Gay, back rub, and soaking in the tub. OK, just how does He intend to do this? He goes on, in verse 29, to say, "Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls." What I believe He wants us to know, is what he says in verse 30, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."*

*Sore muscles will loosen up in a few hours, aches will be forgotten, and life will go on. But a soul that labors for peace, or is burdened by cares of the world, cannot find relief apart from Jesus. Turn to Jesus for rest from your heavy soul, take His yoke upon you and leave yours with him. Seek to live for and like him, for His is an easy yoke, light and easy to bear. (All Scripture is from King James Version of the bible.)*

Hope you and Jean had a good flight home. We got to the house about 1:45. Great flight. when they were taking drink orders right after take-off, the flight attendant saw my hat and asked me if I was a military veteran? I said yes, and she offered me a free mixed drink in honor of "your service". When I declined the drink, she thanked me for my service to our country. What a difference from the first time I flew home from Vietnam.

After landing and taxiing to the unloading dock, she came on the intercom, and asked all military personnel, active and veterans, to pres their overhead call light. She announced that there were X number of us onboard, about six of us . She then asked for a round of applause, and the plane went wild. What a flight. Thank you Southwest Airline.

( We think this was and email to John's brother but thought it very interesting!)

## What Have I Done Since the War

by Dave Logan

My last eight months with the Outlaws was in the Mavericks. But it was when I got back and I was assigned to Fort Rucker that I had a terrifying experience - I became an IP for rotary wing student instrument training. Horrifying!!! Then I went to Cobra school and back to Vietnam where, at 28, I was declared "too senior" to fly guns and stayed with the 335th Cowboys at Phu Hiep as Operations Officer and Executive Officer. On one occasion I had to go out with the Maintenance Officer to bring back a gunship that made a precautionary landing. The Maintenance Officer wasn't checked out in B models. The aircraft was my old tail number from the Mavericks, 63-8707.

After the second tour I became interested in Research and Development and finished my military career as the Project Manager developing the low impulse 30 mm round that became the ammunition for the nose cannon on the AH-64 Apache helicopter.

After retirement, I got into college level procurement, and became certified as a Public Procurement Officer. Afterwards, I became director at several Maryland Community College and University purchasing shops. Then after 45 years of drawing a paycheck I retired.

## Outlaw History DVD Series Project Update

By Jim Donnelly

First I would like to thank everyone for taking me in as part of the group and I am proud to be a Life Member of the VLOA. As the baby of the group and as one of the very last Outlaws in Vietnam I am also proud to be able to attempt to capture the history of the Outlaws in Vietnam.

The History Project is still moving forward be it ever so slow at times. The Project has gathered over 39 gigabytes of video, pictures, articles, orders and more at a reduced size for the distribution DVDs. By far the greatest amount of material is from the 64-66 time periods. It looks like this period will continue to be the fastest growing segment for a while to come thanks to those like your own Frank Estes who is mailing me his slides this week so I can scan them and add them to the project. Besides the materials sent to me, I do searches on the web weekly to see if anything new Outlaw related comes up for inclusion or for possible contacts that might have additional materials for the project. I also get a lot of help from Doug Wilson who has been gathering Outlaw related data for many years and always shares what he finds with the Project.

My thanks to all who have contributed so far and to those who will get around to it one day soon, RIGHT! The latest possible addition that would be of interest to everyone is the syncing/marriage of Al Iller's audio of Bob Hope Christmas 1964 show at Vinh Long with the video now in the hands of the 114<sup>th</sup> Association. If Al can pull off getting the use of the video I am sure everyone will want a copy of that DVD. I have been trying to get use of their copy for over a year now so if you know any 114<sup>th</sup> guys contact them and ask them to put in a good word for Al and the project.

Remember copies of the Outlaw History DVD's are free for the asking and will never be sold. I mail out several each month and am happy to be able to do it. I look forward to continuing the History Project for years to come.

You can contact me with questions or requests at [jcdonnelly1@cox.net](mailto:jcdonnelly1@cox.net) or by phone at my home in the evenings, 757-481-6196.

Stay safe and well.

### **(THE ECONOMY IS SO BAD:**

CEO's are now playing miniature golf.

Even people who have nothing to do with the Obama Administration aren't paying their taxes.

Hotwheels and Matchbox stocks are trading higher than GM.

Obama met with small businesses to discuss the Stimulus Package: GE, Pfizer and Citigroup.

McDonalds is selling the 1/4 ounce.

Parents in Beverly Hills fired their nannies and learned their children's names.

A truckload of Americans got caught sneaking into Mexico.

The most highly-paid job is now jury duty.

People in Africa are donating money to Americans.

The Mafia is laying off judges.

And finally, Congress says they are looking into this Bernard Madoff scandal. Hey, neat- the guy who made \$50 billion disappear is being investigated by the people who made \$750 billion disappear.

(from Wiregrass Seniors Magazine)

## **Fort Benning: Building a**

### **Field of Dreams**

By Frank Estes

Many VLOA members will remember our times in the 11<sup>th</sup> Air Assault Division before the orders came to form two assault helicopter companies out of the Division's assets. Of course, the 62<sup>nd</sup> Aviation Company was the first to be formed and deployed to Viet Nam, doing so in August and September, respectively. The Harmony Church area was home base for just about the entire 11<sup>th</sup> AAD, and as a result, gave many of us memories for a lifetime. The Harmony Church area and surrounding operational areas became our "field of dreams" as young, fearless sky soldiers.

Jump forward to today. The Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Committee recently made decisions that drastically affected both Fort Benning and Fort Rucker, drastically increase their missions. For this article, think back to what Fort Benning looked like in September 1964, and the following will give you an idea of what is happening to our old stomping and flying grounds at Fort Benning, GA.

The BRAC ordered the movement of the Armor School from Fort Knox, KY to Fort Benning, GA. The new name for the Infantry Center will be the Maneuver Center of Excellence. Fort Benning is trying to replicate in six years what it took Fort Knox over 60 years to build there. The Maneuver Center of Excellence will train 52 percent of all new soldiers and train all armor and infantry second lieutenant, captain, and noncommissioned officers.

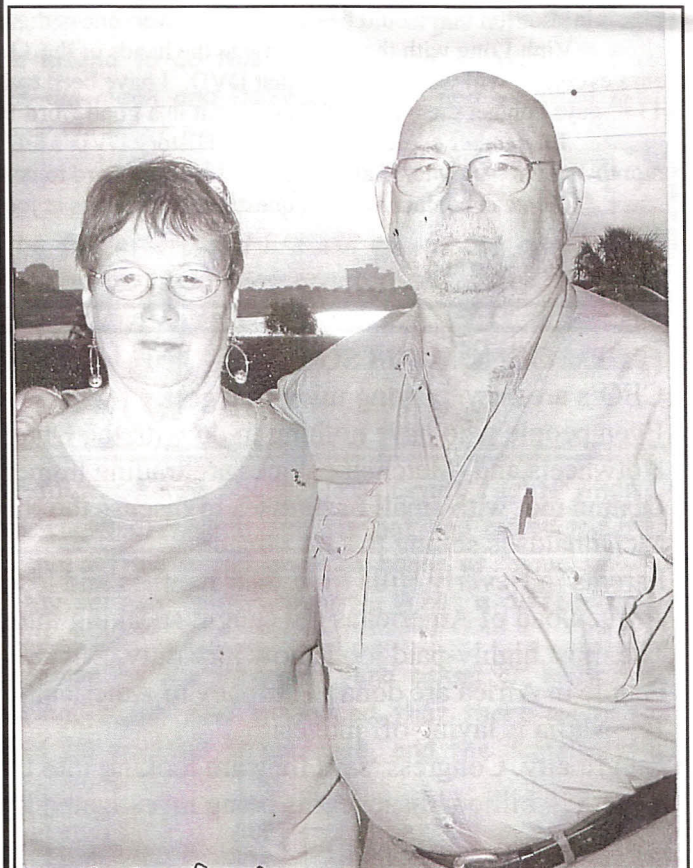
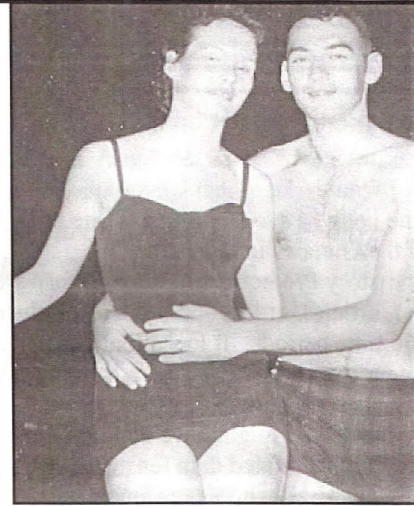
This means 25 new barracks for initial entry training, new tank ranges, hardening of tank trails, new bridges on those trails because the school hauls its tanks, special maneuver areas, small arms ranges, lots of simulation and administrative facilities, and they have to be built before training begins. All this calls for reshaping about 20,000 acres, much of it rolling and timbered, of the 183,000-acre post. It also means existing facilities will be brought up to modern standards.

The Sand Hill area recently experienced a ground breaking for a new reception center to allow for more efficient processing of an expected 42,000 soldiers annually. Most of the work is being accomplished in the Harmony Church area (armor and cavalry barracks complex) and Sand Hill area (basic training barracks complex) for the past 18 months. I guess the Depart of Defense once again realized that the Harmony Church portion of Fort Benning was a good place after all. After lying virtually dormant for many years, it is now coming back to life with a loud roar and bang (excuse the puns).

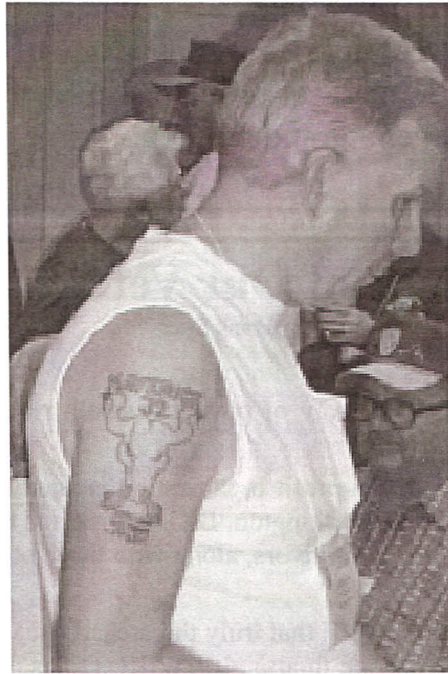
Personally, I had written off the Harmony Church area as being a thing of the past, just a place that existed only in many sky soldiers' memories. How wrong I was; now the Infantry and Armor branches will be using that area to build their future soldiers' memories and Field of Dreams.

**Al and Nell Moist** celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on May 2nd. Our daughters set us up with a wonderful trip to Panama City Beach, (where we spent our honeymoon 50 years ago). We had a wonderful room with a huge basket of "goodies" waiting for us upon arrival. We went on a dinner cruise on the "Lady Anderson" with lots of surprises there, including a beautiful bouquet of a dozen yellow roses and a cake. We even did a little dancing. We had dinner at the "Hofbrauhaus" with an "Oompah" band and even tried the "chicken dance". We had a very relaxing and wonderful 3 days!

Below are pictures "then" and "now".



## **A MAVERICK DOORGUNNER'S LAST FIGHT**



### **Robert "Bob" Doyle Costner** **September 24, 1949 - May 27, 2009**

Bob passed away May 27, 2009 after a two year battle fighting esophageal cancer which spread to his liver and other internal parts of his body. Despite frequent multiple chemo treatments at the VA Hospital Asheville, NC his positive and cheerful attitude prevailed while maintaining normal activities as his physical condition would allow until a short time before his death.

Enlisting in 1963, he served three years on active duty, then four years in the U.S. Army Reserve. In 1964, Bob volunteered for Viet Nam as a member of a 24<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Doorgunner Platoon and served with the Mavericks from February 1965 until June 1965. Returning to civilian life after his three year enlistment, he spent twenty-four years working for the same Guilford Mills in Greensboro, NC until hospitalization for a quadruple bypass forced his early retirement.

Bob epitomized the Maverick team spirit and treasured the camaraderie of the platoon. The best evidence of this is the accompanying photograph taken at the 2004 VLOA Reunion at Fort Rucker in attendance with his wife, Ann and his son and his wife. As easily noted in the photo is the distinctive Maverick logo tattooed and emblazoned on his right arm which he proudly wore with honor and pride. He and his son also attended the 2006 VLOA Reunion at Pigeon Forge; after which he was diagnosed with cancer.

Bob was laid to rest with full military honors and buried in a cemetery close to his home in Pleasant Garden, North Carolina.

VLOA sincerely regrets Bob's loss from our ranks. Our condolences to his wife Ann of fourteen years, their son Tyler, Bob's son Robert and his daughter and Ann's daughters, Margie and Leslie and all their families.

## IN MEMORIAM

Nell Humphries, widow of Charlie Humphries who was one of the original Outlaws, passed away earlier this year from multiple medical problems in Sherwood, Arkansas. She is survived by their three children and several grandchildren.

## In Honor of Our Veterans

By Frank Estes

The HONOR FLIGHT NETWORK is our way of paying a small tribute to those who gave so much—a memorable, safe, and rewarding TOUR of HONOR!!!

Honor Flight Network is a nation-wide non-profit organization created solely to honor America's veterans for all their sacrifices. We transport our heroes to Washington, D.C. to visit and reflect at their memorials. Top priority is given to the senior veterans – World War II survivors, along with those other veterans who may be terminally ill.

Of all the wars in recent memory, it was WWII that truly threatened our very existence as a nation – and as a culturally diverse, free, society. Now, with over one thousand WWII veterans dying each day, our time to express our thanks to these brave men and women is running out.

I recently became involved with the Wiregrass Honor Flight Hub for southeast Alabama, and now serve as the Secretary for that organization. We conducted our first Honor Flight from Dothan, Alabama to Washington D.C. on May 9, 2009 and have our second flight full of participants. This second flight is scheduled for September 26, 2009. As of last week, we have received enough applicants to fill up our third flight, and have scheduled it for April 24, 2010. Each flight transports at least 90 WWII and terminally ill veterans, along with necessary guardians and medical staff personnel. Normally, one guardian will assist two veterans, unless the veteran lacks mobility and requires assistance with a wheel chair.

The schedule for each flight includes the flight from Dothan to D.C., bus transportation to visit the WWII memorial, Tomb of the Unknowns, and Arlington National Cemetery, and flight home. A substantial box lunch is served. The local communities and Fort Rucker have been generous in getting residents to give a grand send-off and welcome back to the flight, including music by the 98<sup>th</sup> Army Band from Fort Rucker. The WWII veterans fly for free; the guardians, medical personnel, and staff pay their own way. Donations are solicited from various community, state, corporate, and individual sources. Currently, we have sufficient funds to make the second flight, and still have a need for funds for the third flight. If you would like to make a donation become involved in your area, please visit the website for information

If you have any WWII veterans in your area, please visit the national Honor Flight's website for information on Honor Flight Hubs in your local area. Please note that the veteran does not have to live in the town where the flight originates. We had WWII veterans on our first flight that lived in Tennessee, Texas, and Florida. They had friends or relatives in the local area that informed them of the Wiregrass Honor Flight Hub, and they submitted their applications in time to get on the flight manifest.

For more information, visit the [www.honorflight.org](http://www.honorflight.org) and our southeast Alabama website [www.wiregrasshonorflight.org](http://www.wiregrasshonorflight.org). It is important to point out that Honorflight.com and Honorflights.com *ARE NOT* associated with the Honor Flight Network, Inc. (honorflight.org). The aforementioned sites are for companies that charge a fee for flights to visit the World War II Memorial. The flights and tours that Honor Flight Network provides WWII and terminally ill veterans are **absolutely FREE** to the WWII and terminally ill veterans.

## DESERVED RECOGNITION

You're a 19 year old kid. You're critically wounded, and dying in the jungle in the Ia Drang Valley, 11-14-1965, LZ X-ray, Vietnam. Your infantry unit is outnumbered 8-1, and the enemy gunfire is so intense that your own Infantry Commander has ordered the Medevac helicopters to stop coming in.

You're lying there, listening to the enemy machine guns, and you know you're not getting out. Your family is half way around the world . . . 12,000 miles away . . . and you'll never see them again. As the world starts to fade in and out, you know this is the day. Then, over the machine guns, you faintly hear that sound of a helicopter, and you look up to see an un-armed Huey, but it doesn't seem real, because no Medevac markings are on it.

Ed Freeman is not Medevac so it's not his job, but he's flying his Huey down into the heavy gunfire. After the Medevac's were ordered not to come, he's coming anyway. He drops it in and sits there in the gunfire as they load 2 or 3 of you on board. Then he flies you up and out through the gunfire, to the doctors and nurses.

And, he keeps coming back . . . 13 more times . . . and takes about 30 of your buddies out, men who would never have gotten out without him.

Medal of Honor Recipient, Ed Freeman, died Wednesday, March 25th, 2009 at the age of 80, in Boise, ID . . . May God rest his soul.



*"Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."*



Hello,  
Pics from visit in Wooster, Ohio 06-15-09 by 4 old V.L Outlaw crew-members. From left to right on picture Bob Tidd-Door gunner, Tim Campbell-Crewchief, Phil Kirk-Crewchief, and Walter Rozanski-Door gunner. Campbell drove up from Fla. to visit his parents who reside in Ohio, Rozanski drove in from New York, Kirk and Tidd both reside in Ohio. This was the first time Rozanski has seen any of his old Outlaw members in 43-years. We had a great visit and hope to do it again. Bob Tidd

## Bob Hope Christmas 1964 Vinh Long Visit Still Has a Place in History

In early May 2009, Chuck Wren picked up a notice placed on the VLOA website by a writer for the Smithsonian magazine, Air & Space. Rebecca Maksel indicated she was doing research for a story on military aviation support provided to Bob Hope over all the years he traveled to entertain troops from WWII until just a few years before he died at 100. In some of her research, she picked up the fact that Bob Hope made his very first Vietnam performance in Vinh Long. She had found our VLOA website and placed a note on the Guest Book asking if anyone could help her with details for her story about the Vinh Long visit.

Chuck forwarded the notice to Al Iller and me because we were both deeply involved with planning for the Bob Hope visit on Christmas day, 1964. Both Al and I began an email exchange with her which resulted in telephone interviews with us. Following up after our personal interviews, Al mentioned to her that he had the complete tape of the Bob Hope show that day and asked if she'd be interested in having a copy, on CD. She was delighted, of course, so Al made a copy of the CD and sent it along to her.

In one of her emails to us, Ms. Maksel mentioned that a large exhibit of Bob Hope's historic life is currently being featured at the National Library of Congress in downtown Washington D.C. As part of her background research, she was planning a visit to the exhibit in the next week. Since I live just across the Potomac River from Washington, I asked if I could accompany her to the exhibit. She readily extended an invitation.

Even though I have lived in the Washington D.C. area for over 43 years I have never taken the time to visit that absolutely fantastic building. Of course it's more than a mere "library" where people can go to conduct research. I met Ms. Maksel at the Library of Congress the next week and, before looking into the Bob Hope exhibit, we toured some of the other features in the Library. Two exhibits were particularly inspiring to me. One was Thomas Jefferson's original library of literally thousands of books he collected, and read, throughout his life. Some dated back to the 1500's! Then, being an old Journalism graduate myself, I was more than moved by viewing one of only three copies in existence of the original Gutenberg Bible! To think how the printing of that book changed the world was awesome. (If you visit Washington D.C. this is a MUST visit!)

Then we visited the Hope exhibit. The displays began with his birth in England, his parents move to the U.S., his boyhood, his entry into vaudeville and his ultimate successes throughout his career. The displays that featured his trips around the world to entertain U.S. troops were not as extensive as I would have hoped, but they were very interesting. Nothing from Vinh Long. We were informed that over 335,000 articles of Bob Hope memorabilia are currently in uncatalogued storage in a warehouse in Northern Virginia, having been donated to the Smithsonian by the Hope estate. I'm sure that the plaque that George Derrick and I presented to Hope on that hot, dusty Christmas day in 1964 in Vinh Long, is part of that huge collection.

You'll remember, I'm sure, the fact that Bob Hope would be coming to Vinh Long to perform the very first of dozens of shows in VN over the years, was highly classified until the day of the show. Many of you will also remember that the flight crews of every Outlaw aircraft spent Christmas Eve staging at Bien Hoa preparing for a maximum-effort combat assault mission on Christmas morning in the "Golden Triangle" north of Saigon. You'll also remember we had to hand-pump JP-4 from 55 gallon drums to refuel all aircraft in the jungle of the Michelin plantation before we could get back to Vinh Long. The last aircraft got back to Vinh Long just as Hope and his troupe had deplaned and were standing on the ramp at Vinh Long.

Hundreds of pictures were taken that afternoon by many of the 400-500 of us who were privileged to be part of that first Bob Hope show in VN. I have a collection of about 10-12 of those pictures which I took with me to meet Ms. Maksel. She selected three of the pictures that she thought the photo-editor of Air & Space magazine would like to consider for the article.

The article Ms. Maksel is writing is scheduled to appear in the December 2009 issue of Air & Space magazine. Our Christmas day show in Vinh Long would be particularly timely for that issue. However, the story will cover nearly 60 years of Hopes travels with military aviation support. The Vinh Long episode is a minor blip on the total radar therefore I have no idea how much, if any, of the information, CD and pictures she obtained from Al Iller and me, will make it into the story. But, isn't it interesting that, after 45 years, people are still asking about the events of that day. It was certainly a meaningful event to those of us who were there!

The complete story of the Bob Hope Christmas Day show is on the VLOA website. Go to our website [www.vinhlongoutlaws.com](http://www.vinhlongoutlaws.com) click on History of the 62d, then select the Bob Hope Show.



## Treasurer's Quarterly Report – 2Q - 2009

Account value at start of 2Q (checking account)	\$ 11,514.33
Income from dues (annual & lifetime)	\$ 460.00
<u>Total prior to expenses</u>	\$ 11,974.33
<u>Expenses</u>	
Quarterly Newsletter (N. Moist)	\$ 358.41
<u>Checking account value as of 6/30/09</u>	\$ 11,615.92
<u>Total VLOA funds</u>	\$ 11,615.92

CD returns and options are still unfavorable. Additionally, I've opted to not put any of our funds into a Money Market account. The current rate of return for the amount involved along with the monthly maintenance fee, that the bank insists on charging for this new account, result in a net monthly loss for the account.

Charles F. Bouton  
Treasurer, VLOA

### NOTICE

It is with deep regret that we note the recent passing of Olen Thornton on Sunday, July 5th in Annandale, VA. The sad news arrived too late to provide full details in this issue but a more complete memorial will be printed in the next VLOA Newsletter.