

Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)

Vinh Long Outlaws Fall Newsletter

July-September-2014

The VLOA is a 501(c)(19) nonprofit, tax exempt war veterans' organization.

3rd. Quarter 2014

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National Director's Corner

By—Larry Jackson

Greetings to all Outlaws, Mavericks, Roadrunners and Bushwhackers,

The 2014 roundup, celebrating the “50th” anniversary of the arrival of the Outlaws in Vinh Long, was a great success with 130 attendees gathered in Tysons Corner, Virginia 18-22 September. It was a very memorable reunion with attendees from 31 states including Hawaii and Alaska and Denmark.

We began the festivities with a welcome dinner at the hotel on Thursday evening. Friday morning, we boarded buses to take us to the Vietnam Wall where we had a ceremonial wreath laying and naming of the 64 individuals whom made the Ultimate Sacrifice for our country. We had free time to visit the Vietnam Memorial and the Women in Vietnam Memorial. We enjoyed a lunch at an Italian restaurant before heading to Arlington National Cemetery. We had a guided tour including President, John Kennedy's gravesite, and several other notable burial sites. We then went to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers to observe the changing of the guard. We had to wait for that ceremony, as there was a visit of the NATO Air Commander and his staff to lay a wreath at the Tomb.

We held our bi-annual business meeting Saturday morning. The nominations and election of members of the Steering Committee was held and the results are listed later in the newsletter. The most important decision from our meeting was the approval of the members to continue the Association and to hold the next reunion in Branson, Missouri in 2016. Also, the decision was made to continue to send newsletters to all members who are listed in the roster. The afternoon was spent at the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum. What a great display of aircraft from the Wright Brothers flyer to the space shuttle and a SR-71 Blackbird.

Sunday morning began with a devotional led by John Doyle. We completed the reunion with our final banquet at the hotel. The food was outstanding and the US Army Band Brass Quintet from Fort Meyers, Virginia while enjoying our meal, entertained us. Following the meal, a magician entertained us. He was excellent and really involved members from the audience. Following the entertainment, Ernie Isbell and Frank Estes presented the Outstanding Outlaws' Awards to Angelo Spelios, Charles Bouton, Chester Voisin, Bob and Gloria Sharp, Jack and Fran Konopka and Tom and Pat Anderson. We completed the evening with our Missing Man ceremony recognizing those members who are no longer with us. We had a very special desert, which consisted of a layer cake decorated as a rice paddy with a Huey landing in the paddy. What a way to end our celebration.

Monday morning saw us saying our goodbyes until we meet again in Branson, Missouri in 2016.

We want to give a great big THANK YOU to Tom and Pat Anderson for the hundreds of hours they put in to making this such a special 50th Anniversary celebration. They were assisted in their many endeavors' by the outgoing National Director (Angelo Spelios), the

VLOA

1964—2016

Branson, Mo.

Cont.-pg.1 Steering Committee members and the SLM Events reunion planners. Many thanks to those who contributed their time at the reunion to make everything go smoothly. They included the Anderson's who put the welcome bags together, Emmadell Voisin and Patty Theriot for working the 50/50 raffle, Frank Estes for running the hospitality suite, Jack and Fran Konopka for putting on a spectacular silent auction with 100 item for bidding, Ernie Isbell for conducting a spirited auction of the banners and posters and Chester Voisin for collecting the proceeds for our treasury. And last but not least, thanks to all of you who attended the 50th Anniversary reunion. The VLOA Association could not continue to exist without you and your support.

As you're newly elected Director, I want to thank all of you for your confidence and vote. What a great honor to be asked to lead this wonderful organization of Outlaws, Mavericks, Roadrunners, and Bushwhackers including the families of the members. I can assure you that the Steering Committee and I will work hard to make the next reunion in Branson as great as the last one. We are in the early stages of planning and we will keep you informed of the progress in upcoming newsletters.

God Bless America and each and every one of you.

Larry Jackson.

I decided to write about our wonderful trip to DC and the great time we had there, visiting with friends we have not seen for a while as everyone cannot be at every reunion for a variety of reason's. It was great seeing all our old friends and met new friend's (new member's), Patty and Neil Schmit, who volunteered to haul our auction purchases back home so we got to see them again when we met in Iowa for lunch. Was so nice of them as we would have had to ship them otherwise. It was a great time due to all the extra effort's put forward by Tom and Pat Anderson and the people that helped him. Thanks so very much!!!

We missed the ones that were unable to attend and as the years go by the chances seem to dwindle away so we need to take every opportunity we get to call, write, e-mail, tweet, twitter, face-book or whatever it takes to stay in contact. As you all know lot's of lives slip away every year in spite of all we do. There are no do-over's so we need to get it right! So we went on a ride, Gloria and I, last week and went to see our dear friend, Jan Truman in southern Missouri and her mother Elma, a dear lady that turned 90 and her health is failing. We also called and made arrangement's to see someone who was saddened when they learned they would be unable to go to DC, Al and Marguerite Iller and Steffie. I am pleased to tell you that they all look quite well now and Marguerite is on the mend. We met in Branson, Tues. Veteran's Day for dinner and had a wonderful time visiting and catching up on old times. Al said he thought that they could make it to Branson, (45mins.), for the next reunion—God willing.

Thanks to everyone and God Bless!

From the editor: Bob Sharp.



Janice Truman and
Mother, Elma.
Happy 90th!! Mom.



Al and Marguerite Iller.
Having a warm cup of
coffee, and Happy!!!

The ladies trying to stay warm. It was 73 on Mon., 39 on Tues., 29 on Weds., and 21 on Thurs. Time to head back to Minnesota. L-R. Jan, Marguerite, Steffie, & Gloria.



L-R.

Gloria and Bob Sharp, Al and Marguerite Iller. At The Cracker Barrel in Branson, Mo.

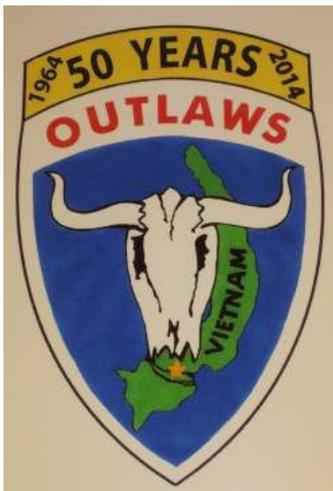


50th Golden Anniversary Reunion Photo Gallery

The VLOA's 50th Golden Anniversary Reunion in Washington D.C. was a wonderful experience, with opportunities to renew old acquaintances, meet new VLOA members, visit important venues around the area, and eat fabulous meals in great locations. We had 131 members, widows, and family members attend this Reunion, making it the best attend of all our seven biennial reunions. Many members took loads of photos, some of which will be shown in the following four pages. These photos are representative of the events, venues, and Outlaws/Mavericks /Bushwhackers/Roadrunners who attended our celebration. A huge thanks goes to Tom and Pat Anderson for all the prior planning, great work behind the scenes, efforts long before and leading up to the event, and during the event. We will never be able to thank you enough.



50th Anniversary Reunion group photo taken during our visit to the Air and Space Museum at Dulles International Airport.



50th. Anniversary Logo.



Outlaw Skull and Logo.



Isbell's, Anderson's, Voisin's, Theriot's at Reg. Desk.

Old friends visiting around the table at the Arrival Dinner, Thursday evening at Tyson's Corner Marriott Hotel in Washington, DC.



More of the 50th. Anniversary Reunion in Washington, DC.



Saturday Business Meeting



Newly elected VLOA Officers/Directors
(see Newsletter article)



Huge Silent Auction



Free MacDonald's lunch at A&S Museum



Toured A&S Museum @ Dulles



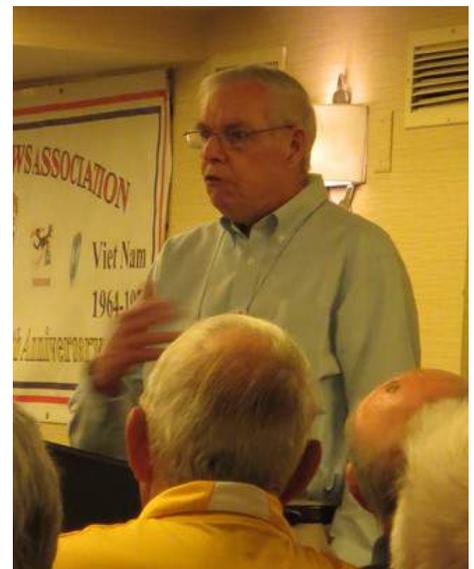
More touring A&S Museum @ Dulles



Visiting other monuments –
Washington Monument &
Reflecting Pool



Visiting other monuments -
Lincoln Memorial



Sunday's Nondenominational Religious
Service by VLOA Chaplain John Doyle

The Back Pew

By: John Doyle



The Back Pew

Fall 2014

HOW MANY DOES IT TAKE?



The other day, I did something I try hard to avoid. I caught myself thinking. Nothing spectacular; I was just thinking how many doctors I am making rich. I have a General Practice doctor, I have an Oncology doctor, I have an eye doctor, I have an Ear, Nose and Throat doctor, I have one that I go see once a year at VA. I tell her I'm feeling great, and she says, "Fine. I'll see you next year."

Ruth also is helping to build the retirement fund of several other doctors. I won't even go into what would happen if we had a dog.

But hey! Cheer UP! I have some great news for you! I know someone who can heal all ills, bring great joy and hope into your life, and if that is not enough, He will will look after you in good times and bad times. He will make life joyful, and death something you need not fear. He will be your all seasons' friend, comforter in times of sorrow and sickness! He will be the best friend you will ever have. His Name is Jesus. Now get this! He will never bill you.

I can remember how loud the congregational singing would get when we would sing, "What a Friend We Have In Jesus." It's true. He is the Best Friend you will ever have. Good times and bad He will stand by you. He is waiting for you to invite him into your life. Like the old hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus", says, "...all our sins and grief to bear." Others may "feel your pain", but they can not ease it or take it away. He stands at the door and knocks. The choice is yours, You can say, "Come in!" or you can send Him away! He will not force you to open the door. If you don't answer his knock, He will leave. I believe there will be tears on His cheeks.

Can you really not invite him into your life?

God Bless

John Doyle



Treasurers Report by Chester Voisin



Vinh Long Outlaws Association
(VLOA)

	Balance \$		Balance \$
Cash Balance - 01/01/2014	16,114.28	Annual Dues:	
		Robert Tidd	25.00
		Donald Palmer	25.00
		John Doyle	25.00
		Eddie McGuire	25.00
		Kenneth Bemowski	25.00
		Richard Little	25.00
		Dale Roland	25.00
		Joseph Clelan (2 years)	50.00
		John Diamond	25.00
		Cullis Holub (2 years)	50.00
		Donald Kreshtool	25.00
		William Fryant	25.00
		Robert O'Brien	25.00
		Jay Miles	25.00
		Fred Jacobs	25.00
		Eddie McGuire	25.00
		Lyle Perry	25.00
		Total	475.00
		Life Time Memberships (LTM):	
		Gregg Biggins	100.00
		Glen Nelson	100.00
		Anthony Villaruel	100.00
		Lanny Fudela	100.00
		Michael Kanna	100.00
		Total	500.00
		Life Time Associate Membership (ALTM):	
		None	-
		Total	-
		Total Revenues	9,924.00
		Expenses	
		Robert Sharp - 4th Quarter 2013 Newsletter	555.07
		Robert Sharp - 1st Quarter 2014 Newsletter	326.61
		Robert Sharp - 2nd Quarter 2014 Newsletter	557.58
		Administration	38.97
		Inventory Expense	2,802.64
		Tom Anderson - 2014 Reunion Expense	1,304.56
		50/50 Drawing Winners	1,385.00
		Frank Estes - Callender Floral Spray	128.62
		Total	7,099.05
		Total Expenses	7,099.05
		Income 9 month period ending 09/30/2014	2,824.95
Revenues:			
Dues - Annual	475.00		
Dues - Lifetime	500.00		
Dues - Associates Lifetime	-		
Sale of Inventory Items (Majority - Shirts)	2,929.00		
Silent Auction Proceeds	3,112.00		
Ticket Sales - 50/50 Raffle	1,590.00		
Miscellaneous	2,293.00		
Total Revenues:	10,899.00	10,899.00	
Expenditures:			
Newsletter Costs	1,439.26		
Inventory purchases & costs	2,802.64		
2012 Reunion Costs	-		
2014 Reunion Costs	1,304.56		
Prizes - 50/50 Raffle	1,385.00		
Administration	38.97		
Miscellaneous	128.62		
Total Expenditures:	7,099.05	7,099.05	
Net Income - 9 months 2014	3,799.95	3,799.95	
Cash Balance - 09/30/2014	19,914.23		
Details: 9 month period - 1/1/2014 thru 9/30/2014			
Revenues			
Inventory Sales - (Majority Reunion Shirts)	2,929.00	2,929.00	
Silent Auction Proceeds	3,112.00	3,112.00	
50/50 drawing revenues	1,590.00	1,590.00	
Miscellaneous - Donations			
Ilir (Lee) Morava	300.00		
Jerry Wade	50.00		
Pete Fredrickson	50.00		
Bert Rice	50.00		
Barney Trucking	500.00		
Robert Sharp	200.00		
Mathiowetz Construction Company	500.00		
P.W. Quinn	500.00		
Grandstaff	100.00		
Black Box	43.00		
Total	2,293.00	2,293.00	

VINH LONG OUTLAW ASSOCIATION (VLOA)
Business Meeting
20 September 2014

The VLOA Business Meeting was held at the Marriott Hotel in Tysons Corner, Virginia in conjunction with the VLOA 50th ^{Golden} Anniversary Roundup 2014 on September 20, 2014.

Director Tim Tetz from the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund gave a brief presentation on the status of the Memorial and plans for building a depository for items left at the Wall.

The meeting was opened by Angelo Spelios, the National Director, who again welcomed all participants to the Roundup. Copies of the 8 September 2012 minutes had been made available to the participants.

There was no old business.

Bert Rice made a motion to approve the 2012 Minutes and it was seconded by Jim Donnelly and approved by unanimous vote.

Chester Voisin, Treasurer reported that the current financial status was in good shape and he expected the balance to be close to \$20,000 by the end of the reunion. A motion was made by Ernie Isbell and seconded by Pat Theriot to approve the report and it was unanimously approved.

A number of new business topics were discussed and voted on by attendees:

Election of Officers/Directors:

Ernie Isbell nominated Larry Jackson to be the National Director and it was seconded by John Brown and approved by unanimous vote.

Jim Donnelly was nominated by Tom Anderson to be the Deputy Director and it was seconded by Bert Rice and approved by unanimous vote.

Ernie Isbell nominated Chuck Wren to be the Secretary and it was seconded by Bill Hensinger and approved by unanimous vote.

Pat Theriot nominated Chester Voisin to continue as the Treasurer and it was seconded by Ernie Isbell and approved by unanimous vote.

Ernie Isbell nominated Mike Madigan to be a Member-at-Large and it was seconded by Charles Bouton and approved by unanimous vote.

Ernie Isbell nominated Pat Phil Van Alst to be a Member-at-Large and it was seconded by Jim Donnelly and approved by unanimous vote.

Charles Bouton nominated Bob Sharp to continue as the Director of Communications-Newsletter and it was seconded by Ernie Isbell and approved by unanimous vote.

Ernie Isbell nominated Frank Estes to continue as the Director of Communications-Website and it was seconded by Bob Sharp and approved by unanimous vote.

Ernie Isbell nominated Jim Donnelly to continue as the Historian and it was seconded by Phil Van Alst and approved by unanimous vote.

Tom Anderson (permanently appointed) will continue as Permanent Advisor and John Doyle (permanently appointed) will continue as Chaplain.

Frank Estes discussed the Policy Files updates as mostly administrative changes, to include information on the Bushwhackers.

Frank Estes discussed the changes to the Constitution and By Laws as being administrative in nature. Ernie Isbell made a motion to approve the changes to the Constitution and By Laws, it was seconded by Bert Rice, and unanimously approved by the membership.

Jim Donnelly discussed the Outlaw History project that he has been working on. The Outlaw History DVD Series Guide consists of 65 GB of data including 12,952 pictures, 1,556+ document pages, 82 Audio files & 22 videos

Cont. from pg.7 as of 10/17/2014.

Bob Sharp gave an update on the Newsletters. The digital newsletters are in color.

Frank Estes gave a presentation on the status of the website. He recommended that the site be upgraded to accommodate seamless access from smart phones. This upgrade will cost approximately \$1,500 to \$2,000. Ernie Isbell volunteered to fund this project through his firm.

Tom Anderson and Frank Estes led a discussion concerning the future of the VLOA Outlaw Association. It was agreed that the VLOA Outlaw Association would continue at least for another 2 years and that we would hold a reunion in 2016. A discussion was held about where the reunion should be held. We had attendees from 31 states including Hawaii & Alaska & Denmark. The consensus was that we should hold the reunion in a more centrally located site. Ernie Isbell made a motion that we hold the reunion in Branson, Missouri and it was seconded by Paul Martin. It was unanimously approved by the membership.

A discussion was held about who should receive a copy of the newsletter. The question was, should all known members from the roster receive the newsletter or should it be restricted to current dues paid members. Ernie Isbell made a motion that all members should receive the newsletter and that if some members would like to only get a digital copy via email, they notify the Director of Communications-Newsletter and the Secretary. It was seconded by John Brown and unanimously approved by the members.

A discussion was held concerning the possibility of having a woman as an advisor (non-voting) to the Steering Committee. Ernie Isbell made a motion that this be approved and that the appropriate changes to the Constitution and By Laws be made. It was seconded by Andy Anderman and was unanimously approved by the membership.

A motion was made by Ernie Isbell to nominate Emmadell Voisin to be the Distaff Advisor (without vote) to the Steering Committee, and it was seconded by Tom Anderson. It was unanimously approved by the membership.

In accordance with the Constitution and Bylaws, the following were made officers of the VLOA:

National Director-Larry Jackson
 Permanent Advisor-Tom Anderson
 Deputy Director-Jim Donnelley
 Secretary-Chuck Wren
 Treasurer-Chester Voisin
 Members at Large-Phil Van Alst & Mike Madigan
 Chaplain-John Doyle
 Unit Historian-Jim Donnelly
 Communications Director/Newsletter-Bob Sharp
 Communications Director/Website-Frank Estes
 Quartermaster-No one.
 Distaff Advisor (without vote)-Emmadell Voisin

There being no further business, Angelo Spelios made a motion that the meeting be adjourned. It was seconded by Larry Jackson and unanimously approved by the membership present. The membership will meet again at the call of the National Director in 2016 during the R2K + 16 VLOA Roundup to be held in Branson, Missouri.

Larry L. Jackson
 Secretary
 Vinh Long Outlaw Association (VLOA)

Attention All VLOA Members!!!!

As discussed at the 50th. Reunion, anyone that would like to get your VLOA Newsletter via e-mail in a PDF file which would be an all color newsletter can do so by contacting me, handybobsharp@gmail.com, with your e-mail address.



DIRECTORS AWARD RECIPIENTS

By Frank Estes

The most prestigious award given by the VLOA is the Directors Award. This award goes to the individual or couple who have given more of their time and energy than anyone else to make the VLOA a successfully operating, tax-exempt, non-profit veteran's organization. For the last 10 years, Larry Jackson has been the VLOA Secretary. He and Polly have adeptly kept and timely published the minutes of all the business meetings held during biennial reunions, maintained the VLOA roster of more than 415 active and former VLOA members, and kept the VLOA Steering Committee informed quarterly of additions to, deletions from, and changes to the. Larry now assumes the duties as the VLOA National Director for the next two years. We look forward to the same commitment during the coming two years that Larry and Polly have given to the VLOA during the last 10 years. The photo below shows Ernie Isbell (right—a Past National Director) awarding the Directors Award to Larry and Polly.



VLOA Website Update

By Frank Estes

About a year ago, the VLOA Steering Committee approved upgrading our www.vinhlongoutlaws.com website with new DotNetNuke software that makes the website operate better and respond quicker for visitors. Additionally, it provides a broader range of tools the webmaster can use to keep the website updated.

Also, the VLOA was advised that it should protect its website by locking in the use of **.net** and **.org** domain names, in case another entity wanted to replicate the VLOA's website, making others believe it is the VLOAs. Therefore, we have obtained the domain names of www.vinhlongoutlaws.org and www.vinhlongoutlaws.net in addition to our **.com** to protect the VLOA.

Finally and during the 50th Golden Anniversary Reunion, the VLOA Steering Committee approved the webmaster's recommendation to upgrade the VLOA website to make it compatible with current editions of smart phones. During the discussion of this recommendation, Ernie Isbell volunteered his company to pay for all expenses to make the stated upgrades, not to exceed \$2000. Thanks go to Ernie and his company for making this donation. The VLOA Steering Committee approved the recommendation and funding for the upgrade. Upgrade is expected to be completed in the near future.

Outstanding Outlaws Award Recipients

By Frank Estes

During each Reunion, the VLOA selects individuals or couples who have given efforts above and beyond the call to support and promote the VLOA and its programs for recognition awards. During the 50th Golden Anniversary Reunion, the Outstanding Outlaw Award was presented to two couples and five individuals for their contributions.



Bob and Gloria Sharp (*left*) have performed admirably as the Newsletter Editor and produced a quality, timely newsletter each quarter to keep the VLOA membership informed on many VLOA activities. They will continue performing in that capacity as the Outlaw Newsletter editor.



Jack and Fran Konopka (*right*) assumed the responsibility for the Reunion's Silent Auction, conducted the advanced planning, made announcements in each newsletter, and managed the Silent Auction during the 50th Golden Anniversary Reunion to

raise more funds than during any other Silent Auction. They have volunteered to continue performing this task for the VLOA.



Charles Bouton (*left*) performed as the VLOA Treasurer for four years, and during the time when the VLOA was formulating documentation to obtain IRS approval of the VLOA as a 501(c)(19) war veterans organization. His documentation of the VLOA financial dealings was instrumental in receiving the IRS's approval.

Chester Voisin (*right*) has performed as the VLOA Treasurer for the last four years and continues performing in that capacity in an exemplary manner.



Angelo Spelios (*left*) served the last two years as the VLOA National Director in an admirable manner, providing solid leadership for all VLOA activities, while experiencing personal medical situations that could potentially sideline him and limit his ability to perform as the National Director.

Frank Estes (*right*) has performed as the Vinh Long Outlaws website manager since 2008, guiding it through the transfer to the current webhost, updating to new software, and keeping the information accurate and current. Additionally, he developed and keeps updated all the VLOA Policy Files which guides all VLOA activities.



Tom Anderson (*left*) assumed the responsibility for planning, coordinating, and conducting the VLOA's 50th Golden Anniversary Reunion, a process which took nearly two years, multiple coordination meetings to ensure support in the Washington D.C. area. And, what a great reunion it was. We were able to tour venues we probably would never get to see unless we came on our own and spent lots of time and money to get to each of the venues we were able to enjoy.

So, you can readily see that it takes quite a number of dedicated VLOA members to keep the VLOA alive, vibrant, and properly operating. We owe these individuals a great "Thank You" for what they have done and continue doing for the benefit of all our VLOA members.



Another Arrival Dinner table



Outlaw wreath laid at apex of VVMW



Reading names of lost Outlaws at VVMW



Three Soldiers Memorial at VVMW



Women's Memorial at VVMW



Outlaws visiting the VVMW



Lunch at famous Italian restaurant



Ceremony at Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers



Touring Arlington National Cemetery



Farewell Banquet Dinner



Entertainment by US Army Brass Quintet



Entertainment by one crazy magician!



Outlaws Golden Anniversary celebration cake



Tom Anderson giving Reunion recap



Larry & Polly Jackson receiving the VLOA Directors Award



Missing Comrade Ceremony table



Outstanding Outlaw Award statues; presented to seven couples/individuals (see Newsletter article)



New VLOA National Director, Larry Jackson giving farewell comments.

Visit <http://www.vinhloutlaws.com> Gallery Page for more 50th Golden Anniversary Reunion photos.

September 18th Talk About Coincidences !!

The 62d Aviation Company Advance Party, headed by Captain Al Iller, departed Fort Benning, GA in mid-September of 1964. The Advanced Party the party arrived in Vinh Long, Viet Nam on **September 18th 1964** and almost immediately took on the call sign "Outlaw".

Thirty four years later, several of those original Outlaws met in Branson, MO to renew old friendships and reestablish the bonds formed so many years ago. At that meeting, the small group agreed to establish the Vinh Long Outlaws Association. The Founders Day meeting was held on **September 18th, 1998.** A picture showing the original group, and date, was displayed at the reunion.

At the VLOA reunion in 2012 in Savannah, VLOA members decided to hold the next reunion in the Washington D.C. area. Within weeks, the date was selected for the Outlaw 50th Anniversary reunion. The date set was **September 18th, 2014.**

By sheer coincidence, all three significant events in the history of the Vinh Long Outlaws Association occurred on the very same date. None of the participants in either the Founders meeting, or the 50th Anniversary reunion, were initially cognizant of the fact that the three dates would be significantly simultaneous. How serendipitous can that be???

Did You Lose a Bag?

During the clean-up of the hospitality suite at the Marriott hotel, a carrying bag with a number of men's articles inside was found. It had to have been left by someone attending the reunion. If it was yours, please contact Tom Anderson, with a brief description of the articles inside, and arrangements will be made to return it to its rightful owner.



50th Anniversary Reunion Patch to be Retired

When the 50th Anniversary reunion came about, it was felt that a tab should be added to the top of the original Outlaw patch to emphasize, and draw attention, to the two dates – 1964 and 2014 as well as the 50 years in between those dates.

The now-famous Outlaw patch was designed in 1964 by Lt. Bob Bergquist shortly after the 62d Aviation Company arrived in Vinh Long. Bob combined an outline of the map of South Viet Nam, showing a trace of the Mekong river, with a gold star marking the location of Vinh Long. The prominent longhorn skull may have been designed to draw a parallel to an old-time outlaw gunslinger, roaming the prairies and having to fight for his existence in a barren, hostile environment, not unlike what the Outlaws encountered in Viet Nam. Whatever Bob's reason might have been, over the years the Outlaw skull, and the Outlaw patch, have continued to be unique, colorful and traditional.

Over the years, some patch-makers occasionally have distorted the shape of the skull and the horns, but the original 1964 patch has stood the test of time over the past 50 years.

For the past two years, the revised 50-YEAR patch has been used in all VLOA correspondence, pictures, advertising, promotions and such. It has served its purpose, to emphasize the half-century of service provided by the many hundreds of men who have been part of the Outlaws, in any fashion.

Now that the reunion is history, the 50-YEAR patch will, of course, be retired. But the colorful, unique and historic original patch will forever continue to be a source of pride for all those who have ever been affiliated with the Outlaws.



Mr. Byron Miksch at the VLOA farewell Dinner in DC.

Byron attended the 50th. Reunion and shortly after he returned home he was hospitalized with some severe heart problems and is in a re-hab unit now and recovering as we understand it. Remember him in your prayers and you can send a get well and best wishes card to him C/O: Mr. Byron Miksch 1136 W. Robin Dr., Visalia, CA. 93291.

God Bless and get Well Soon!!!!

Commemorative Coin

Every man who attended the reunion found a beautiful and unique Outlaw commemorative coin in his Welcome Bag. The coin was struck solely for the Outlaw 50th reunion, not only to memorialize the Outlaw Anniversary, but also to provide a lasting keepsake for everyone who received one of the coins.

Only a limited number of the coins were cast, enough for those attending the reunion and a few others for sale after the reunion. The manufacturer says that the die, from which the coins were struck, will be destroyed in two years. Many of those at the reunion felt that these coins could quickly become collector's items.

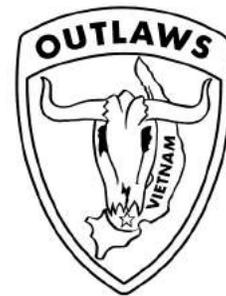
Moreover, some of those who received the coin felt that it will also become an heirloom keepsake, to be passed to others in the family as a treasured inheritance.

A number of people have asked if they can get additional copies of the coin. The answer is "yes". The manufacturer indicates that additional coins can be struck, but a minimum order of 50 coins would be required to make additional copies. There is no requirement, of course, on anyone's part, to have attended the reunion in order to obtain one of the Commemorative coins. They are a lasting recognition of the Outlaw's service in Viet Nam. Any Outlaw, from any year, is eligible to have one of the coins.

If there is enough demand, I can order additional coins. The price would be \$15 per coin, plus shipping. Please let me know, by phone call (703-451-4015) or email teander@cox.net if you are interested in having one or more coins. I'll collect the names of those who show an interest in purchasing the coins. If 50 or more coins will be ordered, I'll then contact each of those who have submitted their name (and phone or email) and will then ask for payment. I can't order without sufficient numbers, and without payment, for your coins.

If you were an Outlaw, or affiliated with the Outlaws in any way, you should know that the Outlaw unit was unique. Over the 8 years in which the Outlaws served in Viet Nam, the unit established an enviable record of combat service. The Outlaw unit was ultimately awarded the U.S. Army Meritorious Unit Commendation, the Army Valorous Unit Award, the Presidential Unit Citation and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry unit award. Everyone who ever served with the unit should be rightfully proud of their part in the unit having been recognized with those awards.

The coin is a unique keepsake. Let me know if you want one. Tom Anderson



Behind the Scenes at the Reunion

Well, the Outlaw 50th Anniversary Reunion is history. The reunion drew the largest number of attendees of any previous Outlaw reunion. 132 Outlaws, family members and guests registered from 31 states and one foreign country – Denmark. One couple came from Alaska, another couple from Hawaii. Everyone seemed to agree that the reunion was a poignant, memorable and rewarding experience.

Behind the scenes, of course, literally hundreds of issues, large and small, were involved in the run-up to the Reunion. So, I thought it might be of interest to know how some of the key issues were resolved.

There was never any doubt that the focus of the 2014 reunion would center on the fifty years since the arrival of the Outlaws in Viet Nam... the **GOLDEN** Anniversary! Everything possible would incorporate the “gold” theme of the reunion.

The first essential step was to engage an Event Planner who would negotiate contracts and manage the registration process. After interviewing several potentials, one stood out among the others. Sherrie Moore, of SLM Events, proved to be the right choice for many reasons.

The next order of business was to select a hotel to serve as Reunion headquarters. The location needed to be in the Northern Virginia suburbs of Washington D.C. The hotel had to be up to the standard that previous Outlaw reunions had come to expect. It had to provide specific amenities and agreements. It would have to provide very favorable room rates. Eleven hotels responded to our initial request for proposals. Meetings were arranged with customer reps from 7 of these hotels. The Tyson’s Corner Marriott gave us the most favorable response. Marriott offered us their regularly priced \$187/night rate for \$114, and even included breakfast with that price! A no-brainer! We could then begin the real planning.

One of the most difficult exercises was to establish a price per attendee. We long ago learned that cost is the primary factor in many peoples decision to come or not. Attempting to predict what things would cost, 1 ½ years ahead of time, was an exercise in “guesstimates” and hope. We first had to lay out a tentative schedule of events for a 4-night, 5-day reunion. We then began listing literally everything we could think of, within that schedule, which would cost \$\$\$\$\$. A lengthy list of probable items was developed, potential costs were estimated for each item, and a total cost was derived. (Buses proved to be the most expensive item on the list, followed closely by banquet meals.)

Costs were the underlying factor in everything we did. If we exceeded our initial budget, we might have to tap the VLOA treasury to underwrite some costs. We were deeply gratified to receive a number of unsolicited sponsorship donations from several individuals and companies. These donations were deeply appreciated, particularly since we continued to have second thoughts about the total cost of the reunion.

Before we could estimate per-person costs, an estimated attendance figure had to be developed for an event still 18-20 months away. Before starting, we had lots of questions with no firm answers. We considered previous reunion attendances. The aging of our membership. Distance from Washington D.C. for potential attendees. The probability that Outlaws from all years the Outlaws were in Viet Nam would attend. Some people would probably come just because the reunion was to be in Washington, DC. Would the cost we arrived at be too high and prevent some from coming? Would it be too low to meet our hotel room-night commitment. We finally guesstimated the attendance would be somewhere between 90 and 100, so, to safe-side the number, we agreed on 90 to derive the cost-per-person. We then took the anticipated costs, divided those by 90 to calculate the cost per-person. As it turned out, our safe-sided attendance estimate turned out to be underestimated by over 33%, but that was a GOOD thing. More on that later on.

Then came the fun parts. Sign the contract with the hotel and guarantee a minimum number of “room nights”. Create the Registration Form. Interview bus transportation companies and select one for our transportation needs. Determine what type of gift-favors would be provided both to men and ladies, and could we afford them? Design name badges and lanyards. Should we order coffee mugs, from where, and what should they cost? Could we locate, and afford to purchase, “gold” mugs, with the Outlaw logo? Select a “gold” shirt as the official reunion shirt. Select a men’s “gold” cap to complement the shirts. Obtain (gold) Welcome Bags for each attendee. Prepare and print information booklets and handouts for the attendees. Arrange for menus and decorations for the two evening dinners. Determine what kind and how many signs and banners would be needed. Each one of those items required contact with a potential source, and performance contracts, and order and delivery dates.

We liked the idea of creating a unique Commemorative coin to celebrate the 50th Anniversary theme. The coin would have to be exceptional! After contacting several sources, a company in Fredericksburg, Virginia was selected and they provided a fantastic coin at a reasonable price.

After months of planning, opening day arrived! The registration table and the nearby hospitality room opened early Thursday afternoon. By late afternoon, 90% of attendees were registered and finding old friends in the hospitality room. Welcome bags were handed out to everyone with some unique surprises in the bags. In searching for a source for the Welcome bags, we made contact

Cont. from pg.15 with the VP of a promotional products company. She offered to donate 125 bags to us, with our logo and text on the side, at no cost. We saved an additional few hundred dollars with her contribution.

The Viet Nam memorial is “our” memorial. All of us know one or more names on the Wall. We wanted our Friday morning ceremony at the Viet Nam Veteran’s Memorial to be the most poignant, and memorable, event of the reunion. Our ceremony would involve reading aloud the names of all 64 Outlaws who were killed in action during the 8 years the Outlaws were in Viet Nam followed by laying a wreath at the Memorial Wall. But, we first had to obtain a permit from the National Park Service to have a ceremony. Having to work through a federal government bureaucracy was a lesson in pure frustration but we finally obtained the permit. A florist in Alexandria agreed to give us a reduced price for creating an outstandingly beautiful wreath. The ceremony was a major highlight of the reunion.

For Friday lunch, getting 132 people fed in just a little over an hour was a major challenge. Several visits with the manager of an Italian restaurant in Arlington, VA resulted in a great buffet lunch, again at a very favorable price. All 132 attendees were served and back on the bus in a little more than an hour and en-route to Arlington National Cemetery..

Because Arlington Cemetery would not allow our tour buses to drive through the grounds, SLM Events negotiated a reduced group rate fee for the Outlaws to board smaller tram cars for a narrated tour of the cemetery. The trams stopped at the Lee Mansion, the Kennedy grave sites and the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, where we watched the stirring changing of the military guard at the memorial.

About a year ahead of the reunion, we had made contact with officials at the Smithsonian Air & Space museum near Dulles airport to discuss our planned visit to the museum. The huge museum would prove to be an eye opener for dozens of our people who had never been there. The museum staff was very helpful in planning our visit. The staff suggested that we split our people into smaller groups so they could assign several museum docents to guide and narrate the tour. We had incorporated money in the budget for lunch at the museum. SLM Events was delighted when museum officials offered to provide free lunches for our entire group at the museum restaurant. Another cost saving we hadn’t anticipated.

The Sunday evening Farewell Dinner is always the major event of our reunions. This one had to be SPECIAL. To start with, we submitted a formal request for support to the U.S. Army band at Fort Myer, VA, without much hope that it would be approved. To our surprise, we were delighted, and honored, when the Army Band agreed to send their unique **Brass Quintet** to open our evening activities. Great musicians, handsome uniforms and a thrill for us all. Dinner, of course on gold table cloths with floral decorations, was enhanced with two delightful ladies, playing a flute and violin, who strolled among the dinner tables playing familiar music.

We planned a major surprise for immediately after dinner dishes were cleared. We contracted with a prominent bakery in Arlington to construct a large, flat cake, topped with yet another slightly smaller flat cake. The frosting on the small cake would be made to give the appearance of Mekong Delta rice paddies, flanked by matching Outlaw logos on the larger cake. Then, flying above the rice paddies was a scale model UH-1B, the ubiquitous aircraft of our early years in Viet Nam. The banquet chef, in his chef’s hat and white jacket, wheeled the huge cake into the center of the dining room with the blades of the Huey turning as the cake was rolled out. The cake proved to be a hit, with lots of photos taken before it was cut and served to the diners.

After dessert, we had engaged a magician who entertained us by including a number of our people from the audience into his performance. Ernie Isbell, serving in his traditional role of Master of Ceremonies, presented Outstanding Outlaw awards to several Outlaws and capped the ceremony off by presenting the Director’s Award to Larry and Polly Jackson.

At the beginning of this article, I said “more on (costs) later”. Here’s what happened. We based our per-person costs on the possibility that 90 people would attend. Actual attendance exceeded our initial estimates for attendees. Many of our costs were “firm” costs which would not necessarily increase with a larger number of participants. Therefore, more attendees contributed to the same “fixed” cost items, creating an unplanned bonus. Additionally, unanticipated donations (both financial as well as in-kind) by individuals and corporations significantly helped underwrite the costs of the reunion. Plus, the unanticipated donations of welcome bags, free lunches at the A&S museum and a number of negotiated lower costs by SLM Events, all contributed to an excess which would accrue to the VLOA treasury.

Hopefully this article has provided a little background in how some of the activities came about to make the Outlaw 50th Anniversary reunion a smashing success. To avoid missing anyone, I have deliberately not mentioned the names of literally dozens of people who devoted their time and talent to make the reunion memorable for all who attended. To all of those people, I thank you immensely, and sincerely, from the bottom of my heart. As you might expect, I also had much advice and help from my wife, Pat, throughout the months of preparations.

See you in Branson 2016 !

Tom Anderson

HERO OF THE GAME

Clemson University, Clemson, SC

On September 27, 2014, Col. (Ret) Joseph R Clelan, was honored as Hero of the Game, in front of approximately 70,000 Clemson Tiger fans, at the Clemson vs. UNC football game. In attendance were his daughters Wendy and Carrie, their husbands Louie and Troy, and two of Joe's grandchildren, Kevin and Sarah. Sarah is currently a senior at Clemson and escorted her grandfather onto the field for the presentation. Joe was presented with a plaque, from the official Clemson Tiger, as the entire stadium erupted with applause and stood as the announcer read a short biography.



New for 2014, each Clemson Football home game will feature a Hero of the Game to honor an active duty or veteran member of the military in front of the crowd at Memorial Stadium. Clemson has strong ties to the military and a proud tradition of honoring service men and women at athletic events. Fans were encouraged to nominate a service member or veteran whom they felt deserved to be the Hero of the Game.

Qualifications

1. The nominee must be an active duty or veteran of the United States Military
2. The nominee must be able to attend a 2014 Clemson Football home game
3. The nominee must be willing to be recognized in front of a large crowd in

Memorial Stadium

Joe's daughter, Wendy, wrote the nomination, in hopes he would receive recognition from his alma mater. The entire family was elated when word came the week before; Joe had been selected as Hero of the Game! "Words can not express how excited I was for my dad! As he was on his way to Washington, to the Outlaws reunion, I couldn't catch my breath, trying to explain the honor he would be receiving in just a week, from Clemson University. Surprise!"

Along with the plaque and recognition on the football field, Joe received four tickets, closer to the field, and a parking pass, close to the stadium. Joe and his family had a most memorable weekend filled with family, many new friends, and lots of smiles.

The following is the nomination, which was read during the recognition ceremony:

Joseph R Clelan

Hero of the Game

As a 1955 graduate of Clemson University, Joseph Clelan, graduated in Textile Engineering and was honored to be a member of the Tiger Brotherhood and IPTAY. He served 28 ½ years in the Army, and retired as Colonel. August 9 of this year marked the 50th anniversary of the first of two tours, as a helicopter pilot, in Vietnam. Besides Vietnam, he was stationed in Fort Benning, GA, Germany, the Army War College in Carlisle, PA, and the Pentagon. Colonel Clelan was also commander of over 1,000 soldiers, of the 426th Signal Battalion of Fort Bragg, NC. Later, he was commander of Recruiting of Central Pennsylvania.

During his military career, Joe received two Legions of Merit, two Bronze Stars, two Meritorious and two Accommodation medals. After he retired from the Army, he was appointed the Deputy Adjutant General for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and was the President of the National Association of State Directors of Veterans' Affairs for over two years. At almost 82 years of age, Joe presently resides in his home state of Pennsylvania. He is married to Erlene, has three proud children and eight very proud grandchildren.

Submitted by: Wendy Clelan Koering

To the brave and well remembered Outlaws of Vinh Long

We send **CONGRATULATIONS** on **50** years of memories. Those memories are shared by the 'Vinh Long nuns', who daily accompanied by prayer, the many dangerous missions carried out by a long line of heroic seekers of justice and peace. We shared hopes and tears for the many who did not return but for whom the greatest reward was promised in the words; "Greater love has no man than this, than to lay his life down for his friends."

Those happy ones will celebrate the reunion in the best place, we are sure. Their prayers join ours to remind God to continue to bless and protect 'VLOA'.

These following verses are theirs:

The Soldier's Prayer

Look God, I have never spoken to you,
 But now I want to say "how do you do"
 You see God, they told me you didn't exist,
 and like a fool, I believed all this.
 Last night from the jungle, I saw your sky,
 I figured right then they had told me a lie.
 Had I taken the time to see things you made,
 I'd have known they weren't calling a spade a spade.
 I wonder God, if you'd shake my hand,
 Somehow I feel that you will understand.
 Funny, I had to come to this hellish place,
 Before I had time to see your face.
 Well, I guess there isn't much more to say,
 But I'm sure glad God, I met you today.
 I guess the "zero-hour " will soon be here,
 But I'm not afraid since I know you're here.
 The signal; well God, I'll have to go,
 I like you lots, this I want you to know.
 Look now, this will be a horrible fight,
 Who knows, I may come to your house tonight.
 Though I wasn't friendly to you before,
 I wonder God, If you'll wait at your door.
 Look, I'm crying. Me shedding tears,
 I wish I had known you these many years.
 Well, I have to go now, God, good-bye,
 Strange, since I met you, I'm not afraid to die.

Author Unknown

**With prayers and with the grateful love from - Sr.
 Mary Hayden and the Vinh Long Nuns**



National Commemorative Coin for Vietnam War Recognition and Vinh Long Outlaws Association 50th Anniversary of Deployment Commemorative Coin

By Frank Estes

The 2008 National Defense Authorization Act authorized the Secretary of Defense to conduct a program to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Vietnam War and "in conducting the commemorative program, the Secretary shall coordinate, support, and facilitate other programs and activities of the Federal Government, State and local governments, and other persons and organizations in commemoration of the Vietnam War." Tom Anderson applied for recognition of the VLOA as a partner in the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the United States' build-up and involvement in the Vietnam War. This partnership was approved.

The Federal government's commemorative program includes activities and ceremonies to achieve the following objectives:

1. To thank and honor veterans of the Vietnam War, including personnel who were held as prisoners of war (POW), or listed as missing in action (MIA), for their service and sacrifice on behalf of the United States and to thank and honor the families of these veterans.
2. To highlight the service of the Armed Forces during the Vietnam War and the contributions of Federal agencies and governmental and non-governmental organizations that served with, or in support of, the Armed Forces.
3. To pay tribute to the contributions made on the home front by the people of the United States during the Vietnam War.
4. To highlight the advances in technology, science, and medicine related to military research conducted during the Vietnam War.

To recognize the contributions and sacrifices made by the allies of the United States during the Vietnam War.

While Tom was coordinating all aspects of our recent 50th Golden Anniversary Reunion, he developed the design for a one time striking of a special Outlaws coin that would be presented to each VLOA member during our Reunion in Washington D.C. Ernie Isbell, unknown to us at the time, acquired seven of the National Commemorative coins and placed them on the Silent Auction table during our Reunion. Both these coins are keepsakes and special to any comrade who served in the Vietnam War and with the Outlaws of any year-group. The coins are shown in the following pictures.



Front of National Coin (left) & Outlaws Coin (right)



Reverse side of Coins

VLOA Prayer List. ———Please keep Diane and Cullis Holub in your prayers as she recovers from recent surgery at the UAB Hospital in Birmingham, Al. Cards and Best Wishes can be sent to—Mrs. Diane Holub, 9975 Briarcliff Drive No. Mobile Al. 36608-8501.

God Bless.

Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)
 c/o Robert J. Sharp, Editor.
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 handybobsharp@gmail.com



ROADRUNNER



Fall-2014

Vinh Long Outlaws Association (VLOA)
Membership Application/Renewal Form

Memberships in the VLOA is open to any person of any rank who served with any lineage unit known as the “Outlaws” (and “Mavericks” armed platoon) or any affiliated unit at any time between August 1964 and the present. These units include the 62nd Aviation Company, A Company 502nd Aviation Battalion, 175th Aviation Company, B Troop 1-158th Aviation Regiment (Iraq), 150th Transportation Detachment (“Roadrunners”), 28th Signal Detachment, and 25th Infantry Division’s “door gunners.”

Active (with vote) or Associate (without vote) Membership is \$25.00 annually, payable each January. A Lifetime Membership (with vote) is a \$100.00 one-time fee. A Lifetime Associate Membership (without vote) for spouses is available for a \$100 one-time fee. Higher levels of Lifetime Memberships are available; contact the National Director at: angelo_spelios@yahoo.com. To pay initial or renewal membership dues for this calendar year, please complete and forward this form, with dues payment, to:

VLOA; c/o Chester Voisin, 1657 Dr. Beatrous Road, Theriot, LA 70397.

First Name _____ MI _____ Nickname _____ Last Name _____

Telephone # (home) _____ (work) _____ Spouse's Name _____

Address: _____ City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Rank (while assigned to unit) _____ E-Mail address _____

Dates assigned in Outlaws/attachments (Mo/Yr to Mo/Yr) _____ to _____

Unit/plt/sect/position _____ Radio Call sign _____

• Please initiate _____ or renew _____ my Active _____ Associate _____ VLOA membership. **Make \$25.00 check payable to VLOA.**

• Please initiate my Lifetime _____ Lifetime Associate _____ VLOA membership. **Make \$100.00 check payable to VLOA.**

_____ Please do not renew my VLOA membership, but keep my name on the VLOA roster.

_____ I know a former Outlaw/Maverick/Roadrunner or other affiliated unit member and have indicated his/her name, address, and phone number on this form.

Comments: _____