



the swash plate

MONTHLY
CHPA
NEWSLETTER

Combat Helicopter Pilots Association, Inc.

800-832-5144 hq@chpa-us.org PO Box 2585, Peachtree City, GA 30269

July 2016

Every month we try to bring you articles and notices that interest members. We need more war stories from post-Vietnam pilots and crew. We'll even help you write them if you will contact us.

We also want more of you from the Iraq and Afghanistan conflict era involved in CHPA leadership, so let us know your interest.

We hope we're meeting your needs and would like to hear from you at hq@chpa-us.org or give us a call at 800-832-5144 to let us know.



Rich Miller

president@chpa-us.org

In This Issue

- The President's Corner
- CHPA Annual Conference
- Pucker Factor Moments; a story by Bill McRae
- Student's search for MIA
- Book release
- Reunions and gatherings
- Museum needs a new home
- Patches
- Member apps/renewal forms

The President's Corner

The 4th of July. I hope you all enjoyed the holiday that honors the birth of our great nation. I know that you share with me a profound pride in being an American service member. Our Marines, Soldiers, Sailors, Coast Guardsmen, and Airmen are working all over the world to support the vision of independence and individual rights that became a reality 240 years ago. They are willing to spend the 4th of July, and other holidays, away from their families so that we can be with ours. So I hope between the parades, the picnics, and the fireworks each of you took a few moments to send a prayer of thanks.

New Projects. There are several projects that are in the breach or are rounds fired down range. CHPA has a crew that represents us at the VHPA reunion in Nevada. We are working to finalize the logistics of the upcoming Oct 13-16 CHPA reunion in Dothan, AL near Fort Rucker and

we are working to establish a close relationship with the Fort Rucker Museum. We have a new member volunteer to manage and producing the CHPA Newsletter. The Goldie Fund Scholarship program has received applications and that committee will be making a final decision in the next few weeks. The Board of Directors is considering some vital changes to the CHPA By-Laws. Those changes are intended to provide more flexibility in managing administrative functions for the current and future leadership. These recommended changes will be presented to the membership for approval. There are more projects on our to-do list that we think that will enhance our legacy organization. Achieving our short term goals will benefit our long-term commitment to making CHPA a premier veteran aviation organization. I thank all members for their continued support.

CHPA Annual Conference

Mark your calendar for the CHPA annual conference, this year near Ft. Rucker, hotel in Dothan AL, October 13-16, 2016. Details to follow.

Pucker Factor Moments

Every one of you have pucker-factor stories. Please share with your fellow combat vets.
(We'll help you write it)

A Truly Unique Experience

(Door Gunner and Pilot Heroes)

by: Bill McRae

(Editor's note. This story illustrates a point. While we are young and busy, we tend to overlook the importance of our combat experience as a formative ingredient in who we are. Many of us came to that realization as we became older and had more time to reflect on our life's experience. If you will pardon the advice to younger members, keep journals or notes, preserve your photos, and keep contact with your combat fellows. Later in life it may become more important to you than you now realize.)

The Army Aviation Association of America (AAAA) 2016 Summit was held at the World Congress Center in Atlanta at the end of April. All the Movers and Shakers that have anything to do with Army Aviation were at the Summit. The Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA) had a booth at the exhibit. Mike Sheuerman and I manned the booth to help greet visitors, answer questions about the VHPA, and obtain update information for the VHPA Directory. Except for the thirty minute walks to and from the parking deck, it was really a great experience. Plus, I met Alex and Edna Horony, who had the Combat Helicopter Pilots Association (CHPA) booth next door. Edna helped us with our Wi-Fi connection, and I gave her one of the original "Hercules" patches, from the 132nd Assault Helicopter Company (AHC) in Vietnam 1968-1971.

During my time at AAAA, I got to meet a Vietnam helicopter pilot named Bill Reeder. Reeder served two tours in Vietnam. On his first tour he flew the OV-1 Mohawk, a twin engine fixed wing aircraft used primarily for reconnaissance type missions. Before his second tour Bill went through a rotary wing transition and got a qualification course into the Cobra attack helicopter. When he returned to Vietnam in late 1971, he was assigned to the 361st Aerial Weapons Company (Pink Panthers) at Pleiku in the Central Highlands.

It was there that he met Mike Sheuerman, an experienced Cobra pilot and Aircraft Commander. Reeder was a second tour aviator, but he had just arrived in country, and he was at Panther Operations for his in-country check ride. That's when a call came in to launch an additional Cobra gunship to join other aircraft already engaged, for an emergency extraction of a special operations team across the border in Laos. Reeder had all his gear with him, so Mike grabbed him to fly front seat. His check ride would have to wait. The flight was a success, and they were able to help save the lone survivor of the team. That fact alone helped to save Mike from another firm response from his CO, for breaking Army regulations and flying a guy that had not been checked out and approved to fly by a unit Instructor Pilot.

Reeder was a senior Captain at the time and had reached the ripe old age of 25, and Mike was a younger

1st Lieutenant. Mike figured Reeder could shoot the weapons up front and fly the aircraft if necessary. Mike would take care of all the other stuff required, in getting them to the target and back to Pleiku. So, when Reeder walked up to the VHPA booth, it was a joy to see those guys together and hear about their exploits, but Reeder had one experience I did not expect.

During the Easter Offensive of 1972, Bill Reeder was flying support for the besieged base at Ben Het near the Laotian border in II Corps. The NVA had launched their attack on the base, using everything they had including tanks. Bill's mission was to engage the attacking enemy forces and to provide over watch for a TOW missile firing UH-1B, "Hawks Claw". They were also to provide covering fire for a Huey to land at Ben Het with much needed emergency ammo resupply. The mission was a success, but in the process Reeder was shot down, and his life changed forever. The impact of the crash broke Bill's back, and the aircraft immediately caught fire and burned. Bill's co-pilot/gunner, Tim Conry, got out and was rescued the next day, but he was severely injured and died in the rescue helicopter, on the way to the hospital. Bill managed to drag himself away from the burning wreckage. On the third day he was captured by the NVA, and Bill became a POW. Bill was held in bamboo cages in the South, until he and 25 other POW's were force marched, up the Ho Chi Minh Trail to Hanoi. The trip was long, grueling, and extremely difficult to endure. It took three months, and seven of his fellow POW's died along the way. Bill has just published a book about his Vietnam experience entitled *Through The Valley: My Captivity In Vietnam*. It's a reference to the valley of death in the 23rd Psalm, and the agony he endured to survive his captivity.

When I heard that Reeder was to be at the authors table over at the Army Aviation Museum Gift Shop, I headed over that way to buy his book and to get him to sign it for me. The table was set up with three authors sitting side by side along an eight foot table. Reeder was on the right end. We chatted as he signed my book. As he was signing, I noticed a guy in an orange shirt had walked up on my left, and he was talking with the author in the middle. When Bill handed my book back to me, the

guy in orange had already caught his attention. The guy had stated that he had done 6 ½ years in Vietnam, which was hard to believe for even the most gung-ho warriors in the military. Then he said he was in a helicopter that was shot down in 1968 and held as a POW, until he was released in 1973.

Reeder jumped up from his chair and leaned across the table, as if to challenge the guy next to me. I think Bill was actually trying to get a closer look at the guy's AAAA access badge. It showed his name to be Jim Pfister. Bill shouted at the guy, "Jim??? . . . It's me, Bill Reeder!" The two of them immediately ran to the far end of the table and caught each other in a huge bear hug that went on and on. I knew something special was happening, but I did not know what it was. I soon learned that they were cellmates in the Hanoi Hilton, and that they had not seen each other since Pfister walked out of their cell on 5 March 1973, to be released in the first group of POW's, captured in the South, to be returned. That was 43 years ago.

Back in January 1968 PFC Jim Pfister was assigned to the 71st Assault Helicopter Company in the southern part of I Corps. On 5 January 1968 he was the Door Gunner on a Charlie Model Huey gunship that was shot down in Happy Valley, southwest of Da Nang. Like Reeder, Pfister was captured and held in the South, but for a much longer time. He too was taken on a forced march up the Trail to Hanoi. Jim joined the Army and was trained as a supply clerk. He served a full tour (Nov 66 –

Nov 67) with the 94th Supply and Service Battalion. He volunteered to serve a second tour, if he could be a Door Gunner in a helicopter unit. The Army jumped on his offer and assigned him to the 71st AHC in the newly formed Americal Division. A month later Pfister's aircraft was shot down, and he became a POW for the next five years.

Reeder said that he first met Pfister in Hanoi at the Plantation Gardens prison. They were later moved together to the famed Hanoi Hilton, where they shared a prison cell. Bill was released three weeks after Pfister. They each went home and continued with their lives. Both stayed in the Army as their career vocation. They had no contact with each other, until fate brought them together again, at the AAAA 2016 Summit in Atlanta. It was a moving experience for all of us, who got to witness a very special reunion of two men, who are united forever by their experience, in a war long ago that still impacts their lives today.

About the Author Bill McRrae joined CHPA at the 2016 AAAA event after a bit of recruiting torment by Terry Garlock and Alex Horony, which was piling on to Andy Burleigh's long-term torment. Bill is past President of the GA chapter of VHPA, where he and Terry and Andy became friends. This moving story of Door Gunner Jim Pfister and Pilot Bill Reeder is another example of the great bond and love aircrews and soldiers have for each other. CHPA is dedicated to promoting this bond and the stories of combat helicopter crew members.

Student seeks info on MIA-BNR WO Albert Trudeau, 68th ASHC

From: Erin Miller [<mailto:eem1919@gmail.com>]

Sent: Friday, July 8, 2016 2:12 PM

To: hq@chpa-us.org

Subject: Warrant Officer Albert Trudeau

To: Whom it May Concern:

My name is Erin Miller, and I am a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. About two years ago, I began volunteering at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum and conducting interviews with local Vietnam veterans.

While I was doing research for this, I came across the 37 servicemen from Wisconsin who are, or were previously, listed as missing in action from the Vietnam War. I tried to follow up on the accounts of several of the servicemen, including Warrant Officer Albert Trudeau, but was not able to find out much beyond federal reports.

Honoring our veterans and soldiers is something I feel very strongly about and I was hoping to be able to do this for the Vietnam War MIAs. I've been working on a small book about these servicemen, and putting together short

biographies about their lives before and during their service. To do this, I have been reaching out to friends, families, and others who served with these men.

Warrant Officer Albert Trudeau was a member of the 68th Assault Support Helicopter Company starting in February 1971. On October 26th of that year, he was the co-pilot of a CH-47B cargo helicopter, which crashed off the coast of South Vietnam. He was then classified as MIA-BNR.

I found your website for combat helicopter pilots and was wondering if any of your members might have known WO Trudeau and would be willing to speak with me about him. If you think this is possible and could forward this message along, I would greatly appreciate your help.

Anyone could contact me at this address or my cell phone, [\(608\) 438-8178](tel:6084388178).

Thank you for your time.

Erin Miller

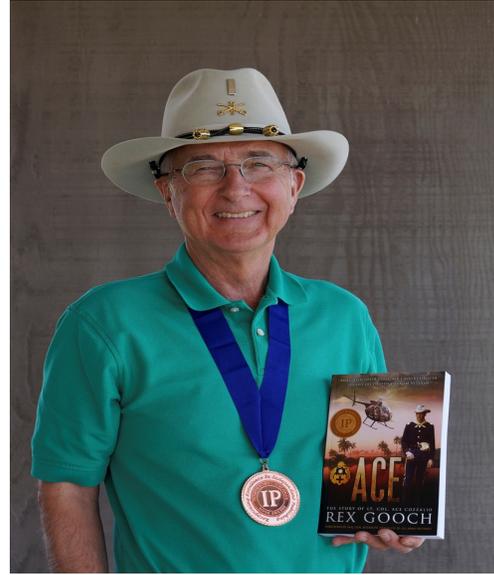
Book Release

New CHPA member Rex Gooch has a new book titled *ACE, The Story of Lt. Col. Ace Cozzalio*. The book is available through Lighthouse Publishing Company, 3916 N. Potsdam Ave, PMB 365727, Sioux Falls, SD 57104. Rex Gooch is a Bronze Medal Award winner in the 2016 Independent Publisher Book Awards (IPPY). Rex's book describes Ace's exploits while flying Army helicopters with Light Horse Air Cavalry in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam. The annual IPPY Awards, with over 5,000 entrants, is the "World's Largest Book Awards Contest" honoring independent authors and publishers worldwide. Picture provided by Rex Gooch.

303-549-5810

LK23@mac.com

www.fifthcavalry.com



Reunions and Gatherings



Vietnam Dustoff Association

"So Others May Live"

Gathering of Rusty Eagles--Reunion

OCTOBER 13 – 15, 2016
Pensacola, FL

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<http://www.vietnamdustoff.com/2016reunion.html>



USMC/Combat Helicopter & Tiltrotor Association

Pop- A- Smoke Reunion

AUGUST 24 – 28, 2016
Jacksonville, FL

FOR MORE INFORMATION

800-562-7226 / (757) 625-6401

skatz@popasmoke.com or lzzok@popasmoke.com



Vinh Long Outlaws Association Reunion

The VLOA - Vinh Long Outlaws Association, will be holding its biennial reunion in Branson, Missouri September 15-19, 2016.

The reunion is open to all former Outlaws, Mavericks, Bushwhackers, legacy units and support elements. Complete details can be found on the VLOA

website www.vinhloungoutlaws.com (Click: "Reunions") or contact Jim Donnelly, jcdonnelly1@cox.net 757-481-6196 for details and forms.

Charleston military museum needs a new home



The American Military Museum of Charleston, SC is in need of a new home. Anyone wishing to donate or assist in finding a new home for this beautiful and important part of US military history can contact MG (Retired) Nate Robb at Robn2@aol.com or by writing him at PO Box 80282, Charleston, S.C. 29416. Check out the museum's web site at <http://www.americanmilitarymuseum.org/>.

Do you have Patches?



3 patches on left sent by Jack R McCown LTC USA Ret

Several of you have graciously donated patches or pictures of them to CHPA. Please dig through your old patches and consider donating or taking a picture of it and sending to us for inclusion in the newsletter. Email to hq@chpa-us.org Mail to CHPA, PO Box 2585, Peachtree, GA 30269

Share this Swash Plate newsletter

Note the member app and renewal forms below - send to those qualified to be members
CHPA – 800-832-5144 hq@chpa-us.org PO Box 2585, Peachtree City, GA 30269



Combat Helicopter Pilots Association



Combat Helicopter Pilots Association

Membership Application

Mail or eMail application with supporting documents
(please print clearly)

www.chpa-us.org
800-832-5144
hq@chpa-us.org
PO Box 2585
Peachtree City, GA 30269

Contact Information Profile:

Name (Rank/Mr./Ms.) _____ Date of Birth _____
Name you prefer to go by _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Primary eMail _____ Home Phn _____
Secondary eMail _____ Cell Phn _____

Military Aviation Information:

Branch of Service _____ Flight School Class/# _____ Total Flight Hrs _____ Combat Flight Hrs _____
Combat Tour Date(s) With Units _____
Location or Theater _____ Call Sign(s) _____
Combat Acft (List All) _____ Combat Medals/Awards _____

Please attach documentation of qualifications such as DD214, unit orders, award orders, combat flight records, or other documentation of combat helicopter experience. If the documents you need are inaccessible, please call us to discuss.

Optional Information:

Hobbies _____ Current Employer/Position _____
Related Associations to Which You Belong _____
How Did You Learn About CHPA? _____
Name/eMail of others you would recommend as qualified for CHPA Membership _____

Membership Type and Dues:

Annual:	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot	<input type="checkbox"/> Flight Crew	<input type="checkbox"/> One Year-\$30	<input type="checkbox"/> Two Year-\$55	<input type="checkbox"/> Three Year-\$80	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend of CHPA, Individual- \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend of CHPA, Corporate-\$50				
Lifetime:	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot	<input type="checkbox"/> Flight Crew	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 50-\$585	<input type="checkbox"/> 50-59-\$475	<input type="checkbox"/> 60-69-\$350	<input type="checkbox"/> 70 & over-\$175
If you wish to pay \$100 now and the balance of Lifetime dues in equal installments over 3 months, initial here _____						
Legacy:	Complimentary membership for immediate family member of deceased who would have qualified.					
	Deceased Name _____	Relationship _____	Service _____	Aircraft _____		

Payment Method:

Cash Check (Payable to CHPA, mail to address above)
Credit Card: AMEX MC VISA Discover

To avoid expiration, I hereby authorize CHPA to renew my annual membership with this credit card - Initials: _____
Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____ Security Code _____

If this is a gift membership, or paid by business credit card, you must provide billing name and address tied to your credit card or the credit card payment authorization will fail:

Signature _____

I certify that the above information is true and correct. I understand that my membership application will be reviewed by the CHPA Board and that, upon approval, my membership will be accepted. If membership is denied, my payment will be refunded. I acknowledge that information provided on this application may be used by CHPA for publishing an online and/or printed directory or for eMail communications to and from the membership.



Combat Helicopter Pilots Association

Membership **Renewal**

DO NOT USE FOR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Mail or eMail application with supporting documents
(please print clearly)

www.chpa-us.org
800-832-5144
hq@chpa-us.org
PO Box 2585
Peachtree City, GA 30269

You may either renew by completing and mailing or emailing the form below, or renew online by logging in to www.chpa-us.org and selecting My Profile on the Menu. At the top you will see a reminder to pay dues and to check your expiration date. If you get stuck call us and we'll figure it out.

Contact information/Profile:

Name (Rank/Mr./Ms.) _____ Date of Birth _____
Name you prefer to go by _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Primary eMail _____ Home Phn _____
Secondary eMail _____ Cell Phn _____
Name/eMail of others you would recommend as qualified for CHPA Membership _____

Membership Type and Dues:

Annual:	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot	<input type="checkbox"/> Flight Crew	<input type="checkbox"/> One Year-\$30	<input type="checkbox"/> Two Year-\$55	<input type="checkbox"/> Three Year-\$80	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend of CHPA, Individual- \$30	<input type="checkbox"/> Friend of CHPA, Corporate-\$50				
Lifetime:	<input type="checkbox"/> Pilot	<input type="checkbox"/> Flight Crew	<input type="checkbox"/> Under 50-\$585	<input type="checkbox"/> 50-59-\$475	<input type="checkbox"/> 60-69-\$350	<input type="checkbox"/> 70 & over-\$175
If you wish to pay \$100 now and the balance of Lifetime dues in equal installments over 3 months, initial here _____						

Payment Method:

Cash Check (Payable to CHPA, mail to address above)
Credit Card: AMEX MC VISA Discover

To avoid expiration, I hereby authorize CHPA to renew my annual membership with this credit card - Initials: _____
Card Number _____ Expiration Date _____ Security Code _____
If this is a gift membership, or paid by business credit card, **you must provide billing name and address tied to your credit card** or the credit card payment authorization will fail:

Signature _____

I certify that the above information is true and correct. I understand that my membership application will be reviewed by the CHPA Board and that, upon approval, my membership will be accepted. If membership is denied, my payment will be refunded. I acknowledge that information provided on this application may be used by CHPA for publishing an online and/or printed directory or for eMail communications to and from the membership.