

The Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation Newsletter

Volume 10, No.2, April, 2005



UAMF at the Crossroads

All Hands Message from Tom Hewes

Believe it or not there was a time when there was no organized Ugly Angel presence at Pop A Smoke reunions, or an Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation, or anything else but a few distant memories of Vietnam. That of course was back in 1994 when only 13 Angels attended the Pop A Smoke reunion in Pensacola. Pretty shabby considering some squadrons had 50 or 60 guys, a ready room tent, and the whole shitteree. Well, we solved that problem just before the 1996 reunion when we got organized, and we've been a leading presence attendance-wise – and otherwise – at every reunion since then.

Then lets not forget 1998 when we talked the National Museum of Naval Aviation into letting us paint their ratty old pink UH-34 in Vietnam colors, stick on the Ugly Angel, and mark it YL 42 in memory of Mike Carley. That was a museum first. In 1998 we also incorporated as the Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation, a non-profit entity founded to support and create educational programs and events focusing on our involvement in Vietnam, to insure that the sacrifices made by thirty-three Ugly Angels we left there were not forgotten. That was a Pop A Smoke first. And who can forget the dedication of the beautiful Ugly Angel Memorial on July 8, 2000 at MCB Quantico. That was a Vietnam era Marine first. The Inola mini reunion in 2003, courtesy of Gerald & Lily Hail, wasn't too shabby either.

All of these endeavors, and more, were the result of Ugly Angels like you who volunteered their labor, their hard earned money, and their devotion to those we left behind in Vietnam. While we can be proud of our achievements, the question arises, where do we go from here? Does the Ugly Angel organization die as so many of our brothers have done in recent years? Are we just going to hang around so one of us can be the last man standing? Or, do we continue to press on in our efforts to build an enduring legacy?

I'd bet my hat, ass, and overcoat your vote would be to press on.

Well guys, we have already developed a sound strategic plan for the future, which includes a \$25,000 Ugly Angel scholarship for starters. All we need now is a dependable, consistent flow of funds. Don't cringe. Some of you know what money is and how to spend it as that expensive toy sitting in your driveway or big screen TV in the den attests. Other Angels know only too well what is because they're living a lot closer to the bone. Each of you knows how you get your money – the question is how does the Ugly Angel organization get theirs?

Remembering that we can't do anything without the long green, the problem admits to two solutions: (1) we can either initiate an annual dues system or (2) rely on voluntary contributions. Those who argue for a business like approach favor the former. Those who believe they paid their dues in Vietnam the latter.

Personally, I favor a voluntary pledge system for everyone because it's both fairer and less of a burden to our brothers with limited means. And to put my money where my mouth is, I hereby pledge \$500 a year for as long as I'm solvent, or until I go tits up. Still, we can't depend on the generosity of a few Angels and won't know whether a voluntary system will work until we hear from each one of you. Hopefully, enough of you care about the Ugly Angels so that it will work. If it doesn't, I'm afraid we will be forced to implement a dues system.

It's your organization and your choice Uglys, so it's time to suck it up and tell us where you stand. All you need do is indicate a preference for one of the following options:

- #1. I vote for a pledge system and hereby pledge _____ per year.
- #2. I vote for a dues system set at no more than \$25 per year.
- #3. I vote to do neither cause I really don't give a shit (If we don't hear from you we will assume this is your choice).

So please put down that can of Old Gargle and take a minute to snail mail or e-mail your preference to Bob Skinder. We need your answer no later than _____. Bob's addresses are: 20 Claytor Rd. Hopkins, SC 29061 or <rskinder@att.net>.

Ugly Angels, Semper Fidelis
Tom Hewes, *President Emeritus*

Editor's Note:

For those of you who may have missed the Special Communication sent out about two weeks ago, or found it too unexciting to read, it was a proposed Strategic Plan outlining a long term plan to initiate a series of activities designed to continue the Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation and its message past the time when the last one of us is still standing. The crux of the matter, of course, is who will pay for it. If you haven't done so, I strongly urge you to read the document over carefully and then cast your vote.

Although not stated by Tom, you are welcome to submit any comments, pro or con and I will forward them to the Board of Directors.

Bob

Ferguson Airport Turns 50

On 4 JUN 05, Ferguson Airport, off Blue Angel Parkway, Pensacola, will be celebrating it's 50th Anniversary. Ferguson Airport is a big EAA field. At least two, large EAA Chapters, based here, will be participating in the event.

Don (Ugly! 68-69) & Dee Ferguson have been making great strides in improvement and development of this family owned airport.

They're hoping you can make the trip down for the celebration. Ferguson Airport is an all American, Veteran friendly field.

Inquiry received; Please check your log books.

Dear Bob

I know this is a longshot , I found you on Popa Smoke. I was a 46 pilot out of Pu Bai in spring and summer of '68. One of my closest friends is Clebe Mc Clary author of "Living Proof"from Pawleys Island. On March 3, 1968, he and his Recon team were on Hill 146 south west of An Hoa when they were over run. He told me it was H-34's that pulled them out. I've looked on squadron sites, and know it was either HMM-361 out of Marble Mountain or HMM-362 out of Phu Bai that med evac'd him.

Is there any way to find out the pilots and crew that flew that mission?

Semper Fi,

Ike Bullard
529 Beechcraft Street
Charleston,S.C. 29407

bullards@knology.net

If you contact Ike, kindly copy your editor. Thanks

Exactly what South Carolina Needs

In another week or so, I will be re -locating (from New Hampshire) to Holly Hill, SC and taking over the position of Chief of Police there. Consequently, my email address and home address will be changing. Once settled in, I'll update them with you. In the meantime, could you use: nhpdchief@aol.com as my email address.

Semper Fi and stay safe.

Bob Wunderlich, Avionics, 66-67

Lost troops – if you can supply me with a correct address for any of the following please do so.

davepirnie@pe.net

densue56@cox.net

fitzrayp@worldnet.att.net (Raymond Fitzpatrick),

biosystems1@attbi.com (Ron Ice

wgriffin@aiinc.com William Griffin

Richard Harwood” <phatrick@uswest.net

largeone@ipa.net Al Krause

mellamar@aol.com Melvin Lamar

tinkertoy@midway.net (Jerry Puder

dankalas@earthlink.net Dan Kalas

weewillyjr@juno.com Bill Linebaugh

william.wiedower@ngc.com(William Wiedower)

**Remember, your wife don't need your e-mail address, the government don't and the recruiter don't.
WE DO!!!**

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RTBs

Subject: Edward Joseph Chenkus

Recall has been sounded for S/Sgt. Edward Joseph Chenkus. After more than eighteen months of mortal combat, he is at last free of the body that turned so savagely on him during the summer of 2003. For the rest of time he will find peace at Lake Wishone (his favorite fishing hole) in the High Sierras. If any of you pass by in body or in spirit, hoist one in memory and wish Ed well.

Born in Trenton, NJ. On 1 May 1932, Ed joined the Corps at 17 (just). He served in Korea (on the ground). His most vivid memories were of time spent at the Chosin Reservoir. It was probably some of those memories that encouraged Ed to transfer to the Air Wing upon his return. As the crew chief of YL – 38 he flew with the Ugly Angels (HMM – 362) as a member of the class of ‘ 65 (‘ 65 – ‘ 66). Ed had a second tour in Viet Nam with HMM – 163 before retiring in April of 1970.

In retirement, Ed settled back into his Southern California home where he has lived since. There he earned his pilot's wings in helicopters under the GI Bill. He had his own helicopter based company for a time and also flew for The Company in Africa for a while.

Ed is survived by his devoted (& patient) wife, Freda Maxinea, daughter, Cathy, a son, Michael, two step daughters, Heidi Leah & Katie, as well as too many grandchildren to count. One new GREAT granddaughter has arrived since Ed left.

Ed was a damn good Marine, Father & Friend. He is missed !
Pete King

Homer P. Jones,

Notification received via the Retired Marine Newsletter that the former XO had passed away. He served under Lt. Col. Walt Shauer. He was 75 years of age.

Del Dupont,

One of the original Archie's Angels has gone to muster with the Boss. Del had only recently been located in time to get one of the 40th Anniversary plaques at Pensacola. He passed away close to Thanksgiving.

Tony Davitt

We were recently informed by his widow that former Ugly Angel pilot and embark officer Tony Davitt died on August 9, 1983. His premature death was the result of PTSD. He was forty years of age at the time of his death and left three small children, John Tyler, Piper Elizabeth, and David Daniel Davitt and his widow Deborah. He is sorely missed.

His wife described him as follows: "He loved to entertain, throw parties, and loved people. He was a master carpenter, one of his avocations, and I often thought he would have been happiest doing that as it suited his exacting nature when working. He was usually very optimistic and upbeat and taught me about the 6 "p's", which I passed on to my son, packing and moving efficiently and quickly. He loved to laugh."

He served in the Corps from 1/66 through 8/71 and as an Ugly from 12/67 through 12/68. Upon returning from Vietnam he pursued an MBA from the University of West Florida. At the time of his death he was the owner of a costume business in Baton Rouge, LA. He is buried in his hometown of Des Moines, Iowa.

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YL-37 will be in Branson June 14–18 for Veterans events.

Check out their new pages. Awesome
<http://marine73110.tripod.com/>

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The New History Project

As you long time readers know, Tom Hewes invented the History Project and made me the Historian on October 8th 1999 with an official e-mail that is still hanging on the door of my writing shop. Not too much happened for a couple of years but when we dedicated our memorial, **THE WING**, at MCB Quantico the project took on a new life.

Our first task was to figure out how all of the guys died which we did. Each of us knew how the guys on our watch died but not the others. Then we learned a few things about how the squadron came together and operated. At various times a few brave souls came forward or responded to my groveling and wrote some gripping accounts of their days in hell. Gary Doss, Bill Willey, Dick Houghton, Dick Moser, Alan Cain, Al Nitchman, Bill Newton, KD Logue and Orm Hall are a few names that come to mind. However, as time has shown, we ain't gonna get anywhere hoping and wishing that the stories that make up the HMM-362 History will keep floating on in. We need to kick start this operation.

A long time ago I wrote to the History Museum up at the DC Navy Yard and they sent me a good hunk of the Command Chronologies. By coincidence, Curt Gray stopped by there and found another completely different carton of Command Chronologies which he handed to me out in Reno. Now we had about 2/3 of the complete set. A few months ago, Jim Richmond, one of the pilots dropped me a note saying that Texas Tech had a Vietnam Project where tons of these documents were on line and sure enough, there were almost all of the missing ones -except a small batch from the August 31, 65 landing up until about when I arrived like May or June 66. In fact, I think the first one speaks of Kenny MacBeth's death to give you a reference. I am sure that there are enough of you in that first class who can fill me in on specific events and deaths. For those of you who were at the dinner in Reno, you might recall me expressing profound regret for not pushing Jim Aldworth for all of his papers. I, of course, thought I had all of the time in the world. Wrong again, Bobby!!

At any rate, as you know, the Command Chronologies give only a skeleton view of what happened. Not too much personal narrative in there. Our project will be to fill these documents in. Periodically, I will publish a section and then you folks will have to ELABORATE on what actually happened, much as those above mentioned named folks did in their stories but if we hang with this we can really put together the first real history told by the real guys who did the deeds.

What we need are illuminating comments. They might not be 5 pages of award winning prose but maybe a

comment on how someone really hung it out or someone made an H-34 do things that were never advertised, or something funny or tragic. It's been up in your brain for years and years. Now is the time to put it down on paper.

If it is not attached, you will very shortly receive the Command Chronologies of the Archie's Angels from 15 April, 1962 right through the following July.

To get you in the mood for such an endeavor, I have asked our major raconteur, Wimpy to write out those words he used so effectively to describe the first trip into Vietnam. If you were in Reno, you heard it. If not you are in for a treat. Now it is up to you Archie's Angels to fill in the blanks much like Wimpy has. Tell us what you saw, did and felt—and the rest of you get ready to tell your story.

A RECAP OF ARCHIE'S ANGELS – HMM-362 As Remembered by Wimpy Wimpler

The squadron was reformed in June of 1962 at MCAS, Santa Ana, California. LtCol Archie Clapp took command. We trained at Santa Ana and also made quarterly deployments to MCAS, Yuma. Yuma was especially helpful for instrument and night flying, plus the added benefit of Mexican liberty for what its worth.

We had carrier practice aboard the Princeton and the Thetis Bay. The Thetis Bay was a WW II jeep carrier with a starboard list. Where as, the Princeton had 16 launch pads, the TB had four. Quite a change. Interesting note, while operating aboard TB the squadron was to evaluate the external lifting of a Mighty Mite, a small four wheeled vehicle that was "innovative", ship to shore. The Skipper lifted off with one of the Mites and got about a mile away from the ship. Suddenly the hook failed and the prototype Mighty Mite became a "cush" maker as it hit the water – "cush". The XO, LtCol Jim Riffle, picked up the second Mighty Mite and as history repeats itself his Mite dropped into the Pacific about the same place as the Skipper's. So much for evaluating the MM, attention turned to the hooks.

There were times when the Skipper would lead all 24 aircraft to Camp Pendleton. We would eat, and sleep in the helos. These trips would last two or three days. On one occasion the squadron was involved in a dog and pony show where over a hundred helos from MAG-36 flew into a zone in Pendleton.

Colonel Clapp was a fighter pilot in WW II and was credited with 2 and ½ Japanese Zeros. He shot down these aircraft early in his deployment. I asked him, one day, why he didn't get any more Zeros. He said that when he discovered that they didn't mind dying by making head on runs and he did, he wasn't that lucky anymore. He was also a pioneer in the helicopter arena by being one of the early pilots to fly helos in Korea.

We finally deployed to Okinawa in July of 1962. We had over 50 Officers and 250 Troops.. By August we were all aboard and training continued.

Young Lieutenants do a lot of things that sometimes tick off the Boss. It started with motorcycles and then sky diving. We had several injuries in both areas. Officers and enlisted both. The Skipper's goal was to keep us ready for any contingent and got upset if personnel were doing themselves in. One of our sky divers was, "One Punch" Jerry Dooley. As he floated down he was oscillating, and as he got near to touch down he saw a local building a brick wall, which was about four feet high. Jerry scored a perfect bull's eye with both feet going through the wall, spraining both ankles.

It was while on Okinawa that we started an impromptu band. When we arrive at a club and the band would take a break we would ask if we could take over and play a song. If memory served correct, I played the drums, Jimmy Shelton, trumpet, Rusty Hanson, piano, Dave Leighton, Sac, Bob Whaley, guitar. Our song was, "Cherry Pink and Apple Blossom White, It was the only song Shelton knew.

We boarded Princeton in October and for the next six months it was our home. The ship was ported at Cubi Point in Subic Bay, PI. The squadron would move into the barracks and quarters when ever the ship was going to stay in

port for a week or two, Many a good times were had in port. Besides drinking San Miguel, we probably ate our share of monkey meat served as steak or something on liberty. All those who wanted to keep their motorcycles could load them aboard. Officers had to load their own cycles.

One of the events that I remember was that there was a Hollywood Movie picture company making a movie about the Navy Chief who remained on Guam after the Japanese capture the island. "No Man's An Island" was the title.. The star was Jeff Hunter and a supporting actor was Marsh Thompson of Daktari fame. They stayed in the BOQS, so we got to know them fairly well. We were tasked to support them. We flew into the mountains with food, water and any other gear they needed. A note, that in 1967 while in the Club at Marble Mountain a driver showed up from III MAF, asking for Jim Shelton, Jerry Dooley and Wimpy Wimmeler. We all got aboard and ended up a MAF headquarters drinking beer with Marsh Thompson who was on a hand shake tour in Nam and a guest of the CG.

WE would be in port for a week or so and then sail. We pulled liberty in Hong Kong. One of our Lieutenants showed up late for a flight brief about a week before we were to get to Hong Kong. Well the result was that he had binocular liberty. In other word, he was restricted to the ship. This impressed a hell of lot people. Imagine, the first time anyone gets to Hong Kong and cannot go ashore. Unbeknownst to us we were due back in Hong Kong in another month, so the Lt did get ashore eventually.

On one of our sailing periods we received a call to go to an island named Cato Dai. A ship had run aground and the crew needed to be rescued. When we arrived, there two ships aground. We rescued all of them. One was a Greek ship and our Operations Officer Major Kapetan who spoke, Greek became a translator. We found out that the ship had 10,000 cases of Heinekens beer on it plus several new automobiles. We had a bunch of volunteers to rescue the beer, but were not allowed to...

In February on 1962 we brought aboard an Army Helo Company of H-21s. They were banana shaped. They had the same engine as the H-34 but did not have the reliability. We put them ashore in DaNang.

After a training operation on the island of Mindoro, we were told that we were headed to Viet Nam. We back loaded and proceeded to Okinawa to get additional men and equipment and then on to Viet Nam. We landed 15 April 62. Our base was an old Japanese air base in Soc Trang, Viet Nam. It is located about 75 miles south of Saigon.

Within 48 hours we received our first frag order. We were operational.

A note here; as of this time we have been together for over a year and nine months. We knew each other. This is a great advantage in flying that wasn't always the case. In 67 and 71, I joined squadrons where many people were unknown and flying with them sometimes was a surprise. Every pilot was designated a Helicopter Aircraft Commander.

We then flew by seniority, the junior being the co-pilot. Most of the pilots had over 500 plus hours in the H-34 upon arrival in Nam. The Skipper being the senior Aviator almost always flew with the junior ranked Aviator, WO Blakesee Smith. On one mission the Skippers cockpit filled with Styrofoam when Gunner Smith took a round through his helmet just above the padding in the top of the helmet.

It was not unusual to have all 24 helos airborne at one time for a mission. We were augmented with O-1s, observation aircraft. Often times when we landed in a zone to put in a blocking force and/or a driving force but we would not have any contact. Then one day the Skipper "missed" the LZ and landed about a kilometer down the canal and all hell broke loose. We think he didn't miss the LZ, he just picked a different one without telling the Vietnamese.

Most of our flying was done on the deck. Bringing tree branches back in the gear was not unusual. Because it is difficult to navigate at extreme low levels our O-1s would fly behind us and high enough to see the terrain. The pilot of the O-1, would direct the different divisions to different zones. This worked very well. We discovered that when a blocking force was set in and a driving force was in, that the Cong would depart to the sides.

The Eagle Flight was devised by the Skipper. This was a division of four H-34 with a reserve force in them. They would follow the main flight by about 5-10 minutes. As the main flight departed either to go home or get more troops the Eagle Flight arrived and circled the battlefield looking for people running away. They would then land

near those running and the troops would police the “enemy”.

Somehow, we had terrific chow at Soc Trang. We had so much steak that it became something of, “What’s for chow?” “Steak”, “oh no not again.”. We had C-130s arrive several times a week. Parts, Ammo and food. Interesting, although, the C-130 came and went, when we were do to rotate, all of us had to have a Pass Port and exit visas. No one ever knew why we just could not get on the C-130 and fly to Okinawa.

We had no armor on the helos. Our weapons were the old grease gun. A 45 caliber machine gun that was not very accurate. The co-pilot had one and the crew chief had one. We did mount a 30 cal on one of the helos later on.

One day in a village south of Ca Mau was being evacuated. Dirty Jack Bartlett was the last aircraft out of the Vill and he had 52 souls aboard the LH-34. Most of them children, not only were they back in the avionics compartment but all the way back into the tail pylon. I believe he had extreme low full upon landing in a safe zone.

We had one of the first night assaults and one of the first night MedEvacs.

If we had a slow week end, we were allowed to take two to four helos to Saigon for two hours liberty. It was a good break.

An interesting note is that as pilots we had a 50 dollar bounty on our heads. The Army advisor to the province chief was worth 150 dollars.

We had our own Tokyo Rose, her name was Hanoi Hannah. We knew we were going to be relieved sometime around August first but we did not for sure. The day LtCol Rathburn arrived, Hanoi Hannah welcomed him. The oriental telegraph was still active.

There was nothing that Archie’s Angels could not do. We were family. We worked, sweat, flew and played hard. What was even more cherishing was that the Skipper took us in and brought all of us out.

LtCol Clapp was put up for the Marine Corps Aviator of the Year but was beaten out by John Glenn. Our thought as, Archie’s Angels, was that since Glenn did his thing with NASA, NASA should give him an award and since Archie did his thing in the Corps as a Marine he should have gotten the Aviator of the Year Award.

Archie was buried in Arlington. At the ceremony there were a Company of Marines in Dress Blues and the Marine Corps Band, Firing Squad and a Bugler.. The pallbearers were Marines. The caissons and rider less horse were provided by the Army... The Band played some field music and as we stood honoring the Skipper there was a small fly over of two H-46s provided by HMX – 1. It was a fitting salute to a great Marine.

Last Note:

Those of you who served with me on either or both of my two tours in RVN are quite aware of what an incredibly dull existence I led. I guess you could say that I was a competent tin bender but that would be about as kind as you could ever expect anyone to be. Where I actually began to be useful was the day that Tom Hewes started putting me to work in the UAMF. There I found great satisfaction in trying to tell the story of a great squadron and some incredibly brave people. I also got to be a part of a great veterans organization and be useful. The best part was that there was no pay or payback. It was just something I could do and be useful. Useful ain’t bad!

Until this past Christmas, my life had two surprises in it. One was making Gunny as a reservist. Beyond my wildest dreams. The other was when Madilyn said she’d marry me. Way beyond my wildest dreams.

Christmas night we’re having dinner and she says, I’ve got a surprise for you—and brings me out the most gorgeous 1960’s leather flight jacket you ever saw with the Ugly patch and my leather name tag with both tours on it.

It was from Steve Luhrsen, the son of our own Dave. For those of you who haven’t met Steve, 10 years ago he was a Sergeant with a wife and four kids. As you may know, that don’t compute all that well so he came to the University of South Carolina where I now work as part of the NROTC program and got a degree in two years. Now he is back here as a Major and the OIC of the Marine part of the battalion. We’d have lunch now and then and drop

in on one another but somehow he decided that writing the Newsletter and the history of the Archie's and the Ugly Angels deserved a little recognition. After pondering this for a long time I finally figured out that as a lifelong O3 he appreciated me writing for and about the guys who did so much for the grunts who did the fighting. I sure hope he knows how much I appreciate the jacket and the thought. You need to see how pretty I look in it. Think of it as a Thank you for all of us.

Things to think about:

Up front, you are asked how to pay for things. Here, I am going to list some things that we do as an organization and some others that we could. Some others are just things that could happen. They might help us all focus on where we want to go.

What out of the following would be important or of interest to you. Put the important ones in some sort of order and send them to me and I'll forward them to the Board of Directors.

- The Pop A Smoke Reunions every two years
- Squadron only reunions, like the YL 37 to dos
- Completeing the squadron history
- Getting it published
- Forming regional sub-groups for parties, funerals, good deeds, etc
- Restoring more UH-34 aircraft
- Spending a week or more working on the one we have
- Flying / crewing UH-34 aircraft
- Raising money for the above
- Representing 362 at airshows with or without an aircraft
- Sponsoring projects beyond scholarships
- Any other ideas not mentioned

The next few are questions

- How many newsletters are enough per year?
- Will you be contributing to the Command Chronology / History project?
- Are you willing to co-star in HMM-362 movies with???
- What would you really like to do for the UAMF?
- What do you like about the reunions?
- Why won't you come to reunions?
- What would make you want to come to a reunion?

That's all, Folks!!

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