

The Ugly Angel Memorial Foundation Newsletter

Volume 9, No.3, September, 2004



Colonel Clapp ~ Laid to Rest



Photos by Dave Hugel, SHUFLY@aol.com

President's Message

Fellow Angels

This year so far has been one of trying and sad moments as well as memorable and enjoyable occasions. My sense is that they have, in their own and unique way, brought us closer together, if that is possible. This year we have seen the passing of a number of our members. Some well known, some not so well known, albeit Angels all the same. I trust that these men will be in our thoughts from time to time.

We had arguably the best reunion since the inception of Popasmoke. No wonder when you saw who was at the controls! In speaking with J.D., at the reunion, he had nothing but praise for Tom Hewes. As I understand it, other than the entertainment, Tom planned, organized, counseled, instructed and did any and all other functions that produced such outstanding results. As our squadron coordinator I can personally attest to the attention to detail that Tom put into this effort. Tom from all of us, thanks!

Those of you who attended the squadron dinner had in a way participated in a once in a lifetime event. The dinner's theme was honoring the original "Angel" Col. Archie Clapp. Whimpy Whimler did an outstanding job as MC as did Ken Logue & Tim Wilson at handling the auction. (Whimpy, I need more practice on the beer-drinking thing. It's getting all over the carpet, could you give me a call?) It should be noted that the auction netted over \$2,000. Besides the very generous folks who bid on these items it wouldn't have come off with out items to auction. For this, the credit goes to Tim Wilson, for donating his NCO sword and to Mike Zaker & Ken Logue for the sea bag full all of the other items. Many thanks to all of you!

We will be continuing through out the year establishing our platform for furthering the mission of the U.A.M.F. We are nearing completion of the first phase of the process, that of the strategic plan, and will be shortly moving toward implementation. When this document has been refined and adopted by the board of directors it will be disseminated to the squadron at large. This is going to be, to say the least, a substantial effort requiring involvement from many folks spanning all geographic regions and incorporating a wide range of personal capabilities. More to follow. As a foot note we have been able to acquire a UH-34 that, once restored, can be used as a tool at accomplishing the objectives outlined in our mission statement. At present it is located at the Marine Corps 6th Engineer Btl. Facility in Portland, Or. Any one who resides in the vicinity and who would like to help with the restoration, please contact me.

Lastly, a team of Marines from the Marine Corps recruiting station in Portland Or. participated in a regional event "The Hood to the Coast relay" which is a run that starts at the 9,000ft level of Mt Hood and ends 193 miles later at Seaside, Or. The team was named "The Devil Dog Dashers" and sported, on their shirts the **Ugly Angel Patch**. The organizer of this effort was Capt. Faye Hutchinson. Participants included Maj. Jason Morris, Msgt. Mike Tramel, Maj. Omar Sanchez, Capt. Andy Bishop, Gysgt. Mike Dukes, Sgt. Mike Freeman, Gysgt. Dave Slatter, Sgt. Don Farmer, Sgt. Jeremy Shorten, SSgt. Gable Mountain and

Capt. Chad Humphries. Their support vehicle was driven by Ssgt. Carla Perez. Thanks goes to all of them for representing the Marine Corps and the Ugly Angeles!

I trust that as we move into the fall and holiday season that we all keep, ever present, in our thoughts the Marines and other service members that are putting their lives on the line for the principles and freedom of our great nation. May God keep them safe and allow them to return and fulfill their dreams.

Semper Fidelis,

Lew

Archie's Funeral

"Gentlemen:

I returned home a few hours ago after attending Archie Clapp's interment at Arlington. Although the day began with threatening weather, the sun broke out at 1100 and smiled down on an impressive farewell that included the full USMC ceremony, i.e., USMC Band, caisson and riderless horse, firing squad, taps, Chaplain remarks, and a helo fly-over (performed by HMX at the request of former DCS(Air) Gen Fred McCorkle [Ret] and at the direction of CMC). At graveside there was one crimson and gold flower spray. I made a point of checking out the attached message after the ceremony. It said, simply "In memory of Colonel Archie Clapp from the United States Marine Corps". Doesn't matter which individual/office/org was responsible -- it was the right thing!! Widow Shirley and the entire Clapp family are deeply appreciative for Archie's "send-off".

Semper Fi, Marines!

Jim Perryman (an Archie's Angel)"

"Gentlemen:

I attended Col Clapp's burial today, weather was perfect. There was a fly over of two CH-46's at 1100 when they were loading the casket on the horse drawn caisson. There were two platoons of Marines dressed in their Blue /White Uniform, the USMC Band, the color guard + the firing squad detail. Must have been over 100 friends there for the ceremony. As the bugler played taps after the 21 volley salute, a VH-60 flew over the ceremony. Yes, there was a flower wreath by the casket at the gravesite. I was not able to get close enough to see who it was from, but it was very nice.

Mrs Clapp hosted a nice reception in the Fort Meyers Officers Club. afterwards, her family was present as was Col Clapp's first wife and family. All spoke very highly of the Col to Mrs Clapp and Wimpy for entertainment did his stand on his head trick and drank a glass of beer upside down. We all thought the ceremony was very nice and as usual the USMC detail was outstanding.

Semper Fi

Muddy H2Os

Robert "Deak" Warner, the obituary

Robert "Deak" Warner, affectionately known to his family as "Grampa Geek," went to be with his savior, Jesus Christ, early Thursday, August 12, 2004, after a long and valiant battle with cancer. He was 63 years young.

A 24-year resident of Fallbrook, Bob was born in Oak Park, Illinois, on June 6, 1941, to Walter and Helen Warner. Those who knew Bob, whether longtime friends or new acquaintances, would describe him as the life of any and all parties. He had an infectious sense of humor and loved to laugh - especially at himself (I guess you'd have to with a nickname like "Grampa Geek"). Bob lived life to the fullest, experiencing all he could and not leaving anything for tomorrow.

Nowhere was this more evident than in his colorful career. After two years of college, Bob enlisted in the Marine Corps looking for a challenge. Attacking every task with zeal, Private Warner graduated boot camp as the Honor Recruit and jumped at the chance to join the 1st Force Reconnaissance at Camp Pendleton, where he continued to distinguish himself. Following two years as a Recon Marine, Corporal Warner was accepted into the MARCAD (Marine Aviator Cadet) program where he earned his Naval Aviator wings as well as a commission to Second Lieutenant. Lt. Warner then served 13 months in Vietnam as a helicopter pilot flying UH-34s with HMM-362, The Ugly Angels. After a short time back home as a flight instructor at NAS Whitting Field, he returned to Vietnam for another 12 months as a C-130 Hercules pilot. While serving his beloved country in Vietnam, Captain Warner flew over 888 combat missions and earned numerous medals and ribbons for valor and courage including the Distinguished Flying Cross and the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry. Although his illness is believed to be a result of exposure to chemicals during the war, he said he had no regrets and is proud of his service. He left the Marine Corps as a major and embarked on a career in the airline industry as a pilot for Western and later Delta Airlines. Bob became known as "the kazoo playing pilot;" taking service to the next level by joining the passengers in the plane's cabin and leading all aboard in Christmas carols over the intercom during the holiday season

and awarding complimentary gifts for passengers that participated in his "in-flight trivia games." Bob logged over 20,000 flight hours in 10 different aircraft types where he delighted crew and passengers alike until his retirement on his 60th birthday in 2001.

True to form, in his spare time he built a 4200-square-foot home so he had a good excuse for throwing parties. Guess he figured if he built it, they would come - and did they ever!

Bob was an open book for all to read. He always listed his priorities as God, family, country, Corps and anyone who needed a friend. He leaves behind his wife of 39 years, Marsha; his two sons, Jeff and Jamie; daughter-in-law Kathy; two grandsons Jake and Hayden; granddaughters Bailey and Allie; brother Dennis and wife Candy Warner; sister Janet and husband Gene Boys; and father and mother-in-law Maury and Debbie Otterbacher. He will be missed by his family and all who knew him. But if he was here he would be the first to point out "this isn't good-bye, it's see you later."

Services were held at Christ the King Church at 1620 S. Stage Coach Lane in Fallbrook on Wednesday, August 18, at 11 a.m.

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Rememberance of my Friend, Deak by Rusty Sachs

Robert Walter Warner was a piece of work. And I don't say that merely because he was the descendant of Polish royalty.

It's hard to know where to start when you talk about this man – he was one of those dazzling personalities, with no dark side to him. I guess the best place to start is when we first met, in the summer of 1966. Bob and I lived in the same tent in Vietnam. We tried to fool ourselves into believing we lived more comfortably than we did, by calling it a hooch, but it was a big tent. About eight of us, lieutenants all, shared quarters in the gritty reddish dust of Ky Ha, where we represented the highest form of human life: US Marine Corps helicopter pilots.

What a piece of work he was: a combat hero who nonetheless broke down sobbing when a Marine was killed.

Amid all the chaos and sorrow of a war, he managed to bring richness and humor. One afternoon we found him sweating and straining as he lugged up the hill an inner tube from one of the giant tractors used to move helicopters around on the ramp. He concocted a ramshackle wooden frame to hold it eight or nine feet above the ground, hooked up some hosing to fill it with water, then more hose to feed the water into an ammo box punched full of holes. Thanks to his efforts and imagination, we were the only tent in Vietnam with a hot shower!

But that wasn't all. The monsoon rain surrounded us with mud. Gritty reddish mud. And it would get tracked into the tent, and dirty up our bedding, and just wasn't at all pleasant. So one afternoon Deak – he went by Deak in those days – put together a working party of three lieutenants, with all rank insignia removed. He took a clipboard, and we climbed into the back of a pickup truck that the Navy had somehow misplaced for a few hours. He led us over to the jet base at Chu Lai, to the end of the seldom-used crosswind runway.

Now, this runway was made of sheet steel – we called it Marston matting – that fit together in a sort of shiplap/tongue-and-groove fashion. Under his direction, we assiduously loaded the last three feet of runway into the pickup, to transport back to Ky Ha and transform it into our resplendent, mud-free porch. Except we got caught. Some jet jock officer saw what we were doing and tore out to accost us. [Let me interject here that helicopter pilots and jet pilots have never gotten along all that well. Will Rogers never met a jet pilot.] Well, this captain started yelling and hollering that we were destroying the runway, that this was his property and his responsibility, and we'd better beat it before he did something. Deak let him sputter for a while, and then explained "Captain, all I know is that the colonel and Sergeant Major Daly told me to do this, and I am not going to make them wait just because some lance corporal at Group didn't get the word. You can call the colonel if you want, but I have my orders." As soon as the captain was out of sight, he made the quick judgment that we had enough runway to serve our purposes, and we high-tailed it.

What a piece of work he was. He wasn't the most widely read guy, but there were times he could blow you away with unexpected sophistication.

One of the few times we flew together in the same cockpit, we were fragged to evacuate two severely wounded Marines, both certain to die unless we managed to transport them to Delta Med immediately. The bad guys were shooting as if there were no tomorrow, and just as he lowered the collective to descend and take us into the cauldron of hell, Deak turned his head toward me and grinned, and softly said "*Introibo ad altare dei.*"

Our friendship continued when we returned to the United States and served as flight instructors in Pensacola. I babysat for Jeff Warner the night Jamie was born. And that was the night that Deak quit smoking. Talk about will power! We had both agreed that tobacco was a terrible health risk, and we should quit smoking. We also decided that the risk was really such that we had to quit while we were in Vietnam. So as soon as Jamie emerged into the light of day, he threw out his last pack of Winstons. Marsha finally noticed a week later, when it occurred to her that she hadn't needed to empty any ashtrays for an inordinately long time.

He joined the airlines and moved to the west coast and I left the Marine Corps and returned to Vermont. Our contact tapered; but some of the most enjoyable weekends I can remember were spent as unskilled labor – you can't measure how unskilled! – working on the Olive Road house, installing irrigation, building the deck, and listening to Bob try to communicate in his broken Spanish with immigrant day laborers. It seems every sentence he spoke ended with the words *con queso?* and a big grin.

Shortly after the first warning of cancer, we spent a long weekend together on Pensacola Beach. Marlene and I still harbor the memory of sitting for hours on the balcony looking out over the snowy sands of the Gulf of Mexico, as she and Bob talked out the course of various therapies and scenarios. He never expressed the slightest regret or resentment; all he wanted was the best result for Marsha and the boys. His noble acceptance of his fate set an example for us all.

He was a piece of work. So much so that it almost seems that Shakespeare had him in mind, 400 years ago, when he wrote

*What a piece of work is man, how noble in reason!
How infinite in faculties! In form and moving,
how express and admirable! In action how like an angel,
in apprehension, how like a God!
The beauty of the world, the paragon of animals.*

*This goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory.
This most excellent canopy, the sky . . . this brave o'erhanging firmament,
this majestical roof, fretted with golden fire,
appears no other thing to me
than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours.
But what a piece of work is man, how noble.*

Bob Warner was noble. We love him, and he lives forever in our hearts.

Dickey Chapelle Movie by Mark Stanton

Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston are producing a movie, in partnership with Warner Brothers Studios, about the life of Dickey Chapelle and her relationship with the Marine Corps. The screenwriter, Margaret Nagle, is finishing up some last touches on two other movies, one about FDR's time in Warm Springs Georgia and the other about the lost boys of the Sudan. The screenplay on the Dickey Chapelle movie (as yet untitled) will be started in earnest sometime over the next two weeks or so and Mrs. Nagle believes it can be completed by January 2005. Filming of the movie is scheduled to begin in the spring or summer of 2005 with a location to be determined but likely to be either in Mexico or the Carolinas with the possibility of Arkansas where there are many rice paddies similar to Vietnam. Jennifer Aniston is slated to play Dickey Chapelle.

The story line is about Ms. Chapelle and her coverage of the WWII battles in Iwo Jima and Okinawa which she covered very closely. Further, her coverage of HMM 362 Archies Angels in 1962, for National Geographic and her subsequent death in November, 1965 near Chu Lai with a Marine infantry outfit. After she was mortally wounded by a land mine she was evacuated to Ky Ha Med on an Ugly Angel helicopter piloted by Greg Lee. She was pronounced dead on arrival although there are photographs of her grievously wounded at the scene of her pick up area, making her the first American woman combat photo journalist to be killed in any war. As Mrs. Nagle, the screenwriter suggests, the movie will begin with Dickey in a fighting hole with a Lance Corporal the night before her death. The Marine asks her what she is doing so far away from home and she proceeds to tell him her life story. The centerpiece of the story is her relationship with "her Marines" and her salvation gained by being where the action was with her Marines through two major wars and some smaller "police actions". Ms. Chapelle had said that she would prefer to die on patrol with her Marines and that is exactly how she did die.

The screenwriter and producers have expressed their interest in using the restored helicopters that are currently located in Oklahoma (3), Oregon (1) that are in our squadron colors. Al Weiss, of HMM 361 has expressed a strong interest in having their helicopter in the movie as well. We therefore have 5 aircraft ready for action and the producers and screenwriter wish to use HMM 362 Marines as technical advisors since we have so much history and first hand eye witnesses to events involving Ms. Chapelle.

Tom Hammack was Archie's intelligence officer and had extended contact and numerous stories to tell about his relationship with Dickey, among others. Greg Lee actually piloted her body back to Ky Ha and recalls that incident vividly. Numerous other Marines I have spoken to have much to give towards making this movie a realistic story about an outsider who loved the Marine Corps and became an "insider" in telling the story of Marines in a very powerful and potent way.

Since we may not have enough pilots to fly our birds in the movie we have contacted Lt. Colonel L'Heroux, the CO of HMH 362 in Kaneohe about getting permission for 1st Lt. Nick Turner to fly in the movie. The Colonel is going through channels at JAG for permission. There will be commercial insurance considerations impacting exactly who flies the aircraft in the movie as well as possible union issues to be navigated.

We look forward to having Dickey Chapelles story told and ours with it through a medium that normally would not be available to us and to have these stories told quite literally on an international scale. I think our 33 brothers who gave their lives for freedom would approve of a project like this and our participation in it.

We will keep you informed of progress as it happens. *Mark Stanton*



My takeoffs were brilliant, my landing need work by Robbie

Robertson(NATOPS OFFICER), Captain "Robbie" Robertson (Natops Officer), Lt. Art Nash, my co-pilot, Cpl Gaines, my crew chief and Cpl Briggs, my gunner, launched in YL 8 from USS Princeton on a sunny morning on July 1st, 1968. Aboard were the CO of the Special Landing Force, the Sgt Maj of the SLF, and the pay officer for the Battalion. The first thing that happened was that we were directed to proceed to an auxiliary ship for some (forgotten) administrative mission. I had my wingman land on this ship for this supposedly "quick" mission. When he landed, he was promptly tied down. We were circling above, asking what was going on, and being told nothing. I was calmly (you can believe that, right) inquiring about the situation. When I established that this ship had my wingman hostage and wouldn't un-chain him, I turned to Art and said, "This is going to be one of those 'expletive deleted' days". At this, a completely strange voice said, "pilot, how many days do you have like this?". Turns out, the Colonel had commandeered Brigg's helmet and was on the intercom. Time goes on: we finally get our wingman back from the Navy and head in to the beach. The LZ we were headed for was just to the north of Hwy 9, going to Khe Sanh,

about halfway between there and Ca Lu. It was a brand new zone, and was in an "amphitheater" type terrain. The open end of this, "amphitheater" was to the west and we were approaching from the east. For months, the prevailing winds had been from the west, but, as we approached, and the guys in the zone popped a smoke, the wind was blowing from the east. No sweat; you just keep that in mind and carry a little extra turns and power to compensate for the early loss of translational lift. We landed and discharged the CO and his SgtMaj. Our next task was to take the pay officer to the various outposts so he could pay the troops. I lifted off, turned into what I thought was the prevailing wind (east) and moved off this LZ carved out of the side of this "amphitheater". We immediately began descending due to the inability to gain translational lift. The terrain fell away to the left; I couldn't use left rudder to turn that direction because that would degrade RPM, but I could gently nudge the cyclic to the left to get the A/C over the lowest part of the terrain. At the same time, I was frantically "milking" the collective, trying to get more RPM's and, therefore, more power. Unfortunately, we had reached the lowest part of the "amphitheater" and, I ran out of airspeed, altitude, and ideas, all at the same time. Turns out, the wind shift when we were coming in initially, was a fluke. When we took off to the east, we were downwind and didn't know it. Anyway, the inevitable happened; when I saw that we were crashing, I initiated, "battery, Mags and gas OFF". As I looked down to my left to turn off the gas, I distinctly remember seeing a tree come up through the belly and hit the battery compartment, setting off a shower of sparks, and starting the fire. After the rotor blades came off, we free-fell 70+/- feet to the ground. We came to rest nose down, tipped +/- 45% to the left. The flames were coming up from the front of the aircraft. I looked to my right, and it was free of flames. I reached to my left to grab Art and tell him to come this way; at the same time I turned my head to look at him, and to my amazement, he wasn't there! When he undid his belts, because of the attitude of the fuselage, and his compact stature, he simply fell out of the cockpit. Due to the whole scenario of terrain and aircraft location, he found himself on his back, looking up at the flames licking up the side of YL 8, about 2 feet in front of his face. As you can imagine, he quickly scrambled out from under the helicopter to safety. Meanwhile, recovering from my shock, I looked back to my right, and beheld a wall of flame. Because of the tilt of the fuselage, it wasn't right at the window, but it was above the height of the window. I undid my seat belts and started to get out. I remember that I put my left foot on the instrument panel. As I started to push myself out of the cockpit, the back of my,

"bullet bouncer" caught on the window armor plate. I remember thinking, briefly, 'Expletive deleted', I'm stuck". I then just gave a thrust with my legs, and was standing on the side of the helicopter. (At this point, historically, I should have just stood there and gone down with my ship.) Anyway, coward that I am, I jumped! As I was flying thru the wall of flame, the thought occurred to me, "you don't know how far down it is or what's down there". Thankfully, I landed unscathed. I moved away from the fire and started calling out for other survivors. We were quickly re-united, and everyone was accounted for. Thankfully, my crew listened to my pre-flight briefs; Briggs was wearing his gunners belt, as I insisted upon, and when we crashed, he was thrown to the extent of his belt. This resulted in his helmet just contacting the engine compartment bulkhead and giving him a little cut under his left eye from the plastic eye shield. (I thought it made him look debonair). In the meantime, since YL 8 had been using a little oil, we were carrying some extra oil in the A/C, and when we crashed, it spilled on the floor. Due to the attitude of the Helo, the trip to the door in the, "belly of the beast", was up-hill. And, since the floor of the helicopter was covered with the afore-mentioned oil, it made egress from this burning mass of magnesium most difficult. Everyone made it out safely! When I finally made it up to the LZ, as documented by the attached photo which I and my family treasure, the SLF Commander came running up to me, (having witnessed the whole incident), and said, (I am not making this up), "Pilot, are you all right?. And my reply to him was, "Colonel, I said this was going to be one of those 'expletive deleted' days".

One year after this incident, everyone aboard YL 8 that day was stationed at Jacksonville, NC. I, Nash, Gaines and Briggs were all at New River, and the Battalion pay officer (Who lost \$30,000 in script in the crash) was at Camp Lejune. Gaines (no beer ->) was in the Brig for some infraction, but I convinced the convening authority to let him out to my custody for a reunion. When I called the Lt who had been the pay officer to invite him to our little get-together, his reply was, "Go 'expletive deleted' yourself, Sir; I am still filling out paperwork over that \$30,000"



Here's a picture of the other 4 of us at my house at the 1 year re-union. Neat.

I understand that if you chose to use this story, in any capacity, you will have to clean it up. No problem, you have my permission. *Robbie* roberro@charter.net

Personnel Issues

A note from Mrs. Clapp replying to my inquiry if she would like to remain on our mailing list:

Dear Bob,

Yes I remember meeting you both at the airport in Pensacola, It was the beginning of many reunions or so I thought, I was so proud of being the wife of Archie Clapp; we had found our sole-mates so late in life. It will never be the same for me without his presence. He always called it Kismet.

Please keep me on the mailing list for the Pop A Smoke and the HMM-362 newsletters. They will help me feel close to his memory. I am very new at this e-mail so bear with me. Archie bought this computer for my Christmas gift and my lessons have been limited.

Thank you all for your kind words and wishes. My e-mail is SCLJ19@aol.com
Semper Fi Shirley Clapp

Huey Movie

IN THE SHADOW OF THE BLADE: The independent documentary "In the Shadow of the Blade" is slated for worldwide television premier on the Discovery Wings Channel on November 11, 2004, This documentary chronicles the central role of the Huey helicopter in the Vietnam War.

Nephew of KIA

My name is LCPL Stephenson. My uncle was LCPL John Dee Harington. He flew with the Ugly Angels and was killed in action on 690204. I had heard that the incident was the worst in squadron history. But I didn't know that so many people knew about it. I was wondering if anyone flew with him or had any info about him. I'm about to deploy to Iraq in November. This is my unit's second time over and my first. Thank you all for everything you did.

Semper Fi

LCPL Jack Stephenson, stephensonja@FUJI.USMC.MIL

Son Seeks Dad

Can you put out a message and ask if anyone knows the whereabouts of Pete Boroday? His son is a Gunnery Sergeant, stationed at MCAS Cherry Point. He has not seen or heard from his father since 1993.

I work with his daughter in law, and told her I would putout an APB. The Gunny just wants his dad back.

Thanks, K.D. Logue

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Richard Castelanno

I was at my ex wife's funeral on Saturday. I saw Richard there. He looks good. I haven't seen him in about 20 yrs. I couldn't find him after the service but talked to his sister who said he was doing a lot better but seeing me brought back too many memories and he left before I got to talk to him.

Semper Fi

Tom Schaney

Speaking of KD

You know, you start to think you know someone and then you discover a whole new side you never imagined. During the Reno extravaganza, Ben remarked about hearing this terrific story involving the Tehran Raid. It turns out that two of our crewchiefs were involved, K.D. Logue and B.J. Sigman. They were both crew chiefs on the Heavies and were assigned this secret duty. Hopefully in the next issue We will have enough from them to tell a good story.

First Gunner?

For those in attendance at the squadron dinner, you might have noticed the ever present combat photographer. Joe Eke. During a break, Joe told me that he worked in S-1, I think. The admin O, invited him to go on a mission with the normal 3 man crew. The c/c set Joe in the window with his weapon and since a crew normally consisted of the two pilots and the crew chief, Joe thinks he might very well have been the first genuine, port-side gunner. Any other claimants are invited to challenge Joe's memory

Admin Chief Deceased

Just received copy of retired newsletter ie "Taps Column" Garnett A. Hyter 1st Sgt. passed in Feb. 04, He was the Admin Chief in 66 and 67 as I recall..a GySgt then called himself "nite fighter.""He flew a lot as gunner... SF Burt Palmer

If anyone knows anymore about the Gunny and his passing, please let me know and I'll get it in print. *EDITOR*

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Editorial

When Tom invented this newsletter, this one was supposed to come out right after the reunion. Unfortunatley, I was on crutches for the 3 months before the reunion and an awful lot of work had piled up. I had to do something about that pole barn I told you I knocked down. Then there was a new bed for the truck, then new siding on the back of the house; I know alibis are like belly buttons, everyones got one. Anyway, we are running a few months behind but here are a few observations about the reunion.

As Lew remarked on page 1, this one was awesome. Our attendance was down somewhat but there were many new faces and lots of the old familiar ones. We just need a way to have the perfect reunion with old and new faces. I think the next one could be the one. It will be in Dallas-Ft. Worth in August of 06, as far as I know. I think we have a lot of folks who don't live too far away so maybe they can do some scouting and make some suggestions. I heard a few good ones, one of which involved a shopping trip for the ladies.

One thing I had wanted to do in Oklahoma but postponed till Reno was to get everyone who served in their spective years to stand up as a group. If I recollect correctly, it was the Archies from 62 and the guys from 68 that appeared the largest. Incidentally, this was the largest number of Archies ever to attend one of the squadron dinners. I hope they enjoyed it as much as us newer guys enjoyed their incredibly talented guest speaker, Wimpy Wimmler. I get dizzy, just thinking of him in a high school biology classroom.

The one thing I hope we can really work on for the next trip is more time to get to meet our counterparts from those years when we weren't there. Maybe some sort of squadron picnic could be arranged. I learned a lot just chatting with different folks as you might have noted above. I expect we all could learn and share lots.

Now would not be too early to start thinking about how do we get those folks who have yet to come to a reunion to do so, and maybe more importantly, how do we get the folks who we don't even know where they are, to get on the mailing list. Track someone down and get me there address. It won't hurt any of us.

Tom's Speech

I guess I was about 6 when I saw my first helicopter at the Brockton, MA fair. I wish I could find the picture. It was a squarish plexiglass box kinda thing. This, I think, was when I heard the first rudimentary version of Tom's speech when someone told the fair goers that this weird thing would have military applications. I know I heard more bits of the story at mech fund in Memphis but it only really began to come together when I first saw a copy of it that Tom Hewes gave at the 96 reunion. By 98 this speech had been polished to be a thing of beauty and elegance when Tom delivered it at the dedication of the YL 42 Memorial at the Naval Aviation Museum at PNS. Not long after, the whole speech, more polished than anyone could imagine was filmed when we dedicated "The Wing" Memorial at Quantico. Never a week goes by when we at home don't all sit and watch it a few times. I understand that it has even been lent out a few times to others as they tell the story of HMM-362.

However, all of this pales compared to Tom giving it at the Reno-Hilton Ball Room with about 6,000 attendees and 7 of the largest video screens you can ever imagine. It was truly the most spectacular thing you could ever imagine and it had been pared down and polished to perfection and to look in any direction and see our leader, leading.

I certainly was glad that I was not that dog or pony or anyone else who had to follow Tom on that stage. I just wonder if there is some way we can get it into the upcoming movie.

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Hurricane Marines,

Drop us a line and let us know how you made out and if there is anything we can help you with.

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Lastly, if anyone wants photos from Archie's internment let me know and I will e-mail them to you. Dave has graciously offered them but I have to warn you that they are large files.

As always, if you are getting this by mail, please send us a good e-mail address.

Gotta run –we will try to get the next issue to you when we have something to say .

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