



~FIRST IN ~ LAST OUT WITH THE H-34~  
Editor Bob Skinder, assisted by Romy and Bill

September—2009

Volume 14, Number 2

# The Ugly Angel

## Memorial Foundation Newsletter

UAMF, Inc. goals:

1. Publication of a periodic newsletter.
2. Preparation of a written and oral history of the Ugly Angels.
3. Organize periodic meetings/reunions of members of the UAMF.



### Coin Man Does It Again!



Bill McNair reports that last year's Ugly Angel coins sold out fast but that requests kept coming in, so he cranked up the 2009 coin project which was featured in the previous newsletter.

Up front funding was provided by our members and in just a few days we had enough orders to get the 500 piece price break. No expenses, no advance, no cost of any kind to UAMF, Inc.

Bill heard the question, "What kind of helicopter did you fly in?" so many times that he figured why not use a H-34 image. With some assistance from Sgt. Grit, we ended up with a great coin and sold 550 without breaking a sweat.

Lt. Col. "Piglet" Pecina ordered a batch last year and he came in on this order, too. He is in Hawaii now as the next Ugly CO! Capt. Nick Turner put together a group order of 60 coins from the HMM-362 troops but before I could give him a payment address, WW Houston (San Miguel Beer supplier at the DC reunion) and Mark Stanton ponied up \$300 so the cost to our troops was NADA, Zilch, Zero. Kudos to Mark and Top Houston!

We ended up with a "donation" of \$623 to the UAMF. If you missed out or run out of coins, post an email to the general population and one of us guys who ordered extra may be able to help you out. We already have a request for 25 more coins. Thanks to all the generous supporters who bankrolled the project.

If anyone has any suggestions for another project that might benefit the Fund, sound off. You will recall that the 2008 project allowed us to skip the Friday auction at the DC reunion in Quantico. Last year, Sachs & Cascio bought extra coins in DC to pass out among the HMX1 troops.

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## Personnel Updates

### RTB Snee , Tom

Tom and I were in the same outfits at the same time from 1963 to 1967. After that I only saw him a few times but did keep in touch. Tom graduated from the University of Notre Dame. I'm not sure when he went to OCS. We both started Basic School at Quantico, Va. in September of 1963. He finished Basic School in March of 1964 and started flight school in Pensacola, Fl. (we were both in the same basic school class and flight school class).

After receiving his wings in August or September of 1965, he joined HMH-462 in Santa Ana. In May or June of 1966 (I'm not sure when he left-he was already in 362 when I arrived in late June of 66.) he joined HMM 362 in RVN. While with 362 he received a purple heart. When he returned to the States in June or July of 1967, he was assigned to the training command in Pensacola, Fl where he instructed in helicopters for several years.

Upon leaving active duty, he returned to New York City where he worked for Pfizer chemical company as a chemical engineer until his retirement. He passed on April 23, 2009 after a long struggle with cancer. He is survived by his wife Midge and a son (I'm sure about his wife's name and that he had a son, but I don't know if he had any other children.)

Tom was a great guy with a wonderful wit. He served his country, the Corps, and his fellow Marines with honor. Information sent by Dave Kemna

### **Darrell Tygart Motorcycle Ride in Colorado**

**There will be a Darrell Tygart Memorial Ride on Sunday, September 20th in Colorado. This ride is for cycles and vehicles. Bill Johnson, very dear friend of Darrell's, is one of the key planners and would be glad to answer any questions about the ride. Meet at the El Jebel Shrine at 0900. Ride, shirt & lunch is \$40.00 per person. All net proceeds from the day will go to the Shriners Hospitals for Children, Salt Lake City in Darrell's name. RSVP to Bill Johnson, 303-420-5882 or the Shrine office, 303-455-3470 by September 6th, 2009.**



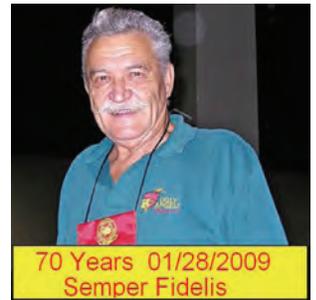
## Reporting for Duty, Sir!

**Al West** HMM-362 pilot for 13 months in Viet Nam (1968-69). Started at Phu Bai with the Tet Offensive in Jan 68. Served at Marble Mountain and on the Iwo Jima and Princeton. Says he has a great photo collection from that time span.

**Bill Benny Benson** Benny and I started together, along with George Zamora, Bill Greenman, and Frank Duda back in Mech Fun. class at NAS Memphis. We were stationed together at Santa Ana, volunteered together for Nam, were Ugliers together in-country, and ended up at NAS Dallas babysitting the reserves to finish our hitches. Any time I think of my time in the Marine Corps, three names come to mind: Bill Benson, George Zamora and Bill Greenman, all three were Ugly Crew Chiefs. Benny and George are as close as I ever came to having brothers. Submitted by VP Bill McNair

## Sick Call

**Archie Fleming**—Chas reports (via Del York) that Arch is much better and is getting his wind back now that he has quit smoking. More active now than during the early recovery phase. Family support from daughters and son really helping out.



**Bob Skinder**—Light duty for now but out of the hospital and feeling perky enough to contribute to this newsletter. Short story is that the leukemia cells are taking a chemo beating and Bob is booking a ticket for Reno. Bob has completed two planned sessions of chemo. First segment was 5 weeks with second week being chemo, 24-7. Then 3 weeks at home and the second hospital segment the past 8 days with mini 3 hour chemo sessions 12 hours apart, then 24 hours and do it again for 3 cycles. Now it is just transfusions, shots, various antibiotics, and antifungal medicine and hope that the bone marrow kicks in.

Gunny Editor Bob started a walking club on the oncology ward but got sent home before he earned his motto shirt: "No walk, No escape".

**Dan Dain**—Dan is recovering from back surgery on July 24th. He has thrown away his walker and now uses just a cane. Update provided by Dan on August 25th. Contact Tinbender Dan at dan.dain@verizon.net for the latest news.

**Betsy Paetznick**—Jim has been busy with Betsy. She is hospitalized with serious heart problems and has very little mobility. She faces a long road of re-hab. Jim could use some encouragement and Betsy would love to have a card and/or letter from you. Elizabeth Paetznick c/o St Cloud Hospital, 1406 6th Ave North St Cloud, MN 56303 or home at 1023 Bromo Ave, St Cloud, MN 56303.

**Summer, 2010—Standby to standby. PopASmoke in Reno, Nevada**  
**Start putting a little something in your piggy bank now. A dollar a day, every day.**

**Update from Afghanistan**—Message from Nick Turner to Ben Casio dated Aug 3rd  
 Lt Col ‘Piglet’ Pecina will be taking the Squadron from Lt Col Hagan in Sept, **2009**.

Please keep Lt Col Oliver in the Loop he is a great man and is currently the Operations Officer at MAWTS-1 in Yuma. He will be taking command of HMH-362 in April of **2011**.

A side note—Kim just had Baby #4 on the 28<sup>th</sup> of July. Tyler James Turner was born at 1308 on the 28<sup>th</sup>, he was 8lbs, 7 oz and 21 inches long. Baby and mom are at home doing great and adjusting to things very well.

Note: HMH-362 moved from Iraq since the last newsletter and is currently returning from Afghanistan to Hawaii—probably already there. Larry and Judy Turner are on hand to greet Nick and the rest of the returning Ugliers. The current day Ugly Angels should be unpacked and settled back in Hawaii by the time you read this.

**<http://www.hmm-362.us/>**

Make sure you are on the roster and your info is correct.

Check out the Texas Tech website link for Vietnam documents/information

Former HMH-362/HMX-1 CO Frenchy L'Heureux, our host during the Popasmoke Reunion 2008, has been transferred from HMX-1 to MARFORPAC effective 19 June.

**Our very own Captain Nick Turner is headed to HMX later this year.**

**Where were you on August 18, 1969? Phu Bai?**



## Col. Archie Clapp Featured in Leatherneck Article By David H. Hugel

I first heard Archie Clapp's name when I arrived in Da Nang as part of Operation Shufly, in April 1963. Anyone stationed there during those early days of the Vietnam War knew that he led the first Marine operational unit, HMM-362, into Soc Trang down in the Mekong Delta, just one year earlier.

It would be many years before I heard his name again. I was riding a commuter train from Northern Virginia into DC every day when a fellow rider showed me an article in June 1999 from the Quantico Sentry featuring Col. Archie J. Clapp, USMC Ret. receiving Sikorsky Aircraft's Life Time Achievement Award.

I knew I had to meet this Marine Corps aviation legend, and through my network of Marine friends arranged meeting him for lunch at a local restaurant in Arlington, Virginia. When we met on the restaurant's parking lot two months later, we shook hands, and as he looked down at my license plate he said, "So you're the one that got the Shufly license plate." Knowing that he was the one responsible for orchestrating Operation Shufly, and who would forever be associated with that word, my first inclination was to apologize to him, but it was a good-natured comment and I resisted the temptation.

We were soon swapping sea stories over lunch about what it was like when I was providing photo coverage of Marine Corps operation in "I" Corps compared with what Archie and his squadron experienced when they were flying missions out of Soc Trang.

Having already written a few articles for Leatherneck magazine, and knowing that the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that historic operation was coming up in a few years, I decided to write an article commemorating the event. In preparation for the article I interviewed Archie while attending the 2000 Pop A Smoke Reunion in San Diego, but because of commitments at work, I was unable to actually write the article. Instead, I talked with my friend, Leatherneck editor, Walt Ford who agreed to assign one of his writers to do an article, which appeared as planned in Leatherneck's April 2002 issue.

Earlier this year, after I left the US Department of Transportation, Walt and I discussed ideas for stories I might write for Leatherneck over the next several months. Among other ideas, I proposed doing an article on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Operation Shufly in 2012; Walt countered by asking me do an article on Archie Clapp's distinguished career as a Marine Corps Aviator.





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**Bob Skinder**

**20 Claytor Rd., Hopkins, SC 29061**

Phone:803-783-3019

E-mail: [bobskinder@bellsouth.net](mailto:bobskinder@bellsouth.net)

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**Ugly  
Angel  
Combat  
History  
Continues**

## **Afghanistan, July 2009**

