

281st AHC Association
2003 Reunion
Missing Man Table Ceremony

MODERATOR: Scott Arthur

As you entered to take your seats this evening you may have noticed a small table in the front of the room. It is sitting in the place of honor and is set for one. Please let me explain. This table... is your small symbolic way of remembering the 45 members of the 281st Assault Helicopter Company that were lost or left behind in South East Asia. They are commonly referred to as your K.I.A. and M.I.A s but you now, and will forever, call them "YOUR BROTHERS". They are unable to be with you this evening so you have chosen to honor them in this manner.

This table set for one is small, symbolizing the frailty of one individual alone against his aggressors. *REMEMBER!!*

The roundness of the table stands for our everlasting concern for the missing. *REMEMBER!!*

The tablecloth is white, symbolizing the purity of their intentions to respond to their country's call to arms. *REMEMBER!!*

REMEMBER, the single rose displayed in a vase reminds us of the families and loved ones of your comrades-in-arms who keep the faith.

REMEMBER, the red ribbon tied so prominently to the vase is reminiscent of the red ribbon worn on the lapel and breast of those who bear witness to their unyielding determination to demand a proper accounting of the missing.

REMEMBER, a slice of lemon is on the bread plate to remind us of their bitter fate.

There is salt upon the bread plate, symbolic of the tears shed by us and their loved ones. *REMEMBER!!*

The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain those lost from our country. *REMEMBER!!*

The glass is inverted—they cannot toast with you tonight. *REMEMBER!!*

REMEMBER...Each of you who served with them and called them comrades.... You who depended upon their might and aid, and relied upon them, ...for surely, **they** have not forsaken **you**. They are with you tonight.

REMEMBER...
A MAN IS NOT DEAD...UNTIL HE IS FORGOTTEN