

281ST ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

"INTRUDERS"

Company Newsletter No. 5

November 15, 1999

The 281st AHC Association Rotors On!

From the President Fred Mentzer

It's now five months since our association was formed in Nashville. We continue to grow and your officers are working hard on the various affairs of the organization. Following are some of the things that have been happening since July:

Bob Mitchell, your Reunion Committee Chairman has been devoting a lot of time and effort to the 281st Reunion 2000 and has been doing a fantastic job.

The first membership cards have been mailed out and include Honorary Membership to widows and a mother of deceased Intruders. Membership in the association hasn't kept up with the enthusiasm that we've seen in getting things up and going. Come on guy's, fill out the application that accompanies this newsletter, write a check and mail to Joe Bilitzke. AND, get the word out! The roster is at 145- now and we know there's many, many more out there who are unaware of our new Assn. A final word on membership is to let you know that the card reflects a calendar year of membership. That means that membership expires on 31 December.

On the Internet Web side of our activities, the email site, 281AHC@onelist.com, has been a great success and we owe that primarily to Brent Gourley who set it up and is the manager. There is a tremendous amount to daily activity on the site. I encourage everyone with a computer to sign up. Great job Brent. Steve Matthews, Webmaster of the 281st AHC Web Site, has done and continues to do an incredible job. Steve will be moving our site to a new location in the near future which will be bigger, better, and, advertisement free.

^ It' my sad duty to inform you of the passing of an Intruder. Bob Edgley, Rat Pack & Wolf Pack '68-69, was taken from us by a heart attack on Tuesday, 26 October 1999. Our deep and heartfelt condolences to Paula. ^ We Rotor On!

In closing I would like to comment on many recent email's posted on 281ONElist.com, subject "Veterans Day". I was overwhelmed emotionally by the eloquence, patriotism, camaraderie, and love shown in the letters from 281st veterans. For example, Kevin Farrington wrote:

"Here's to us, one and all, for we too are the veterans worthy of note on not just the 'special' days, but each and every day we are privileged to exist. I thank you all for our shared bond and experience. I treasure your simple memories, and wish us all a good day. Let's resolve to

defeat the gray cobwebs of fading memory and take courage in our strength together."

That was typical of the messages. Damn, I'm proud of you guys! We Rotor On!

A Word From the VP Jack Green

Let's just go ahead and start taking orders for tee shirts and hats. The hats will be black with army gold letters saying 281AHC on the front and cost \$6.00 each. The tee shirts will be ash in color with the 281st Intruder logo on back in outline form. The platoons will be in color on front using as close to the original colors as possible. The people in the attached units and the 281st headquarters will have the 281st Intruder logo on the front in color. Members who wish to order will need to email me or drop a note to my home address. Include the number of shirts ordering by size and platoon. For example 2ea/ XL/bandit, 1ea/S/wolfpack. 2ea hats. All shirts and hats will be delivered to DC. The order will be ready and cannot be added to after June15. If you want your order mailed out after the convention, include \$5.00 S&H. The cost of shirts will be \$15.00 for sizes small thru extra large. For XXLlarge and XXXLarge they will be \$20.00. I will print and include 5 each XL shirts in the 3 platoon series and bring to DC. After my initial cost for setup and postage is recooped, the overage will be sent to the Association flower fund. I need to start from now on keeping track of orders. If you have sent a note before, do it again with the appropriate info and when you expect to get your shirt, i.e., at DC etc. If you send a check, I will deposit it and count that as an order.

EXAMPLE.....	# ITEMS	SIZE	PLATOON	UNIT COST	
TOTAL	2	XL	Bandits	15.00	30.00
	1		Hat	6.00	6.00
S&H					5.00
Total					41.00

OK, that's it. Any questions, snail-mail or email me. See you at the reunion.

The Scoop From the Sec/Treas

Joe Bilitzke

The Assn financial report.
 Operating Account = \$549.12
 Savings Account (Life memberships) = \$2100.37
 Total = \$2649.49

1999 Paid Memberships

a. Annual Members (* = Need application form)
 Bailey, James W., *Bittle, Joseph, Boisseau, Francis G.,
 *Boling, Ken, Cook, Michael, *Corcoran, Don, Corney,
 Joseph R., Crowe, Dennis W., Dosker, David C. (\$50.00
 toward Life Membership), *Duke, Ed, Evangelho, Daryl,
 Gourley, Brent H., *Green, Jack, Ham, Lance, Hinspater,
 Tom, Holt, James R., Hyatt, John J., *Ikerd, Jim, Jackson,
 James A., *James, Bill, *Kaufman, Norman C., Korsbeck,
 John, Laya, Robert E., Langevin, Jim, *Lubic, Dick,
 *Lohmann, Ron (incl year 2000), *Lut, Richard, *Mentzer,
 Fred, Mitchell, David H., Montoya, Jerry, *Murray, Jeff,
 Purdy, Bill, Serig, Jack W., *Rose, Vic, Sorem, Robert
 "Buck", Torbert, James R., *Torrini, Don, Yancey, Leon H.
 "Buck"

b. Life Members (* = Need application form)
 Baker, James W., Bilitzke, Joe, Canfield, Dennis,
 Matthews, Stephen A., *Mayhew, COL John W., *Mitchell,
 Bob, Paine, Brian W.

Membership Cards are being sent to all individuals who have paid annual (or life) dues. These are 1999 "original member" cards. Along with the card will also be a membership application for 2000. Please fill it in and return with your dues for the new year (\$25.00). If I already have your application on file, you don't have to fill in the biography portion. Simply check "renewal" and sign and date. Life members, please send me a completed application if you haven't already done so.

Life Memberships may be purchased in installments of \$100.00. Payments must be completed by end of calendar year.

Donations were made by a number of INTRUDERS in the early start up of the organization. Space doesn't permit an individual listing. But on behalf of the entire Association, thanks for your unsung contribution. Contact me for any corrections or questions.

The Committees Corner

Webmaster/Historian

Steve Matthews

Thanks to the efforts of MANY Intruders, the HOMEpage website is growing by leaps and bounds with more material than anyone probably expected at this time. In fact, there are about 20+ megabytes of information, stories, unit history,

pictures, and much more. This has all necessitated a change to the HOMEpage web hosting, which opened up the opportunity to acquire our own domain name. In the not too distant future the Association will begin paying for web service, and the Intruder HOMEpage will be accessible around the world at "www.281stAHC.org" This universal resource locator (URL) is presently active, but until a permanent host server home can be decided upon visitors will automatically roll over to the present website. When the HOMEpage finds its new home it will also have a new look, because ALL organizational Intruder website's (platoons and attachments/detachments, etc.) will be located at that address. We will be one big happy family again, all residing in a "virtual" Nha Trang. In fact, as of this writing there are about 95 Intruders online with Internet email.

There is still a major need for "official" documentation of 281st AHC actions/awards, AARs, unit orders, operations reports, maintenance reports, history reports, and ANYTHING official. While recollections fade, and memories suffer from CRS, (hopefully) documents written at the time contain the official record of 281st AHC actions. Together, the documents and the recollections will provide a "true" historical portrait of the "Hell From Above." Please begin the search through your foot lockers and duffel bags to find those orders and documents, and then send me a copy (Steve Matthews, Intruder Historian).

However, be sure to share your discoveries and recollections with others you remember (or maybe not) who can help fill in the blank spots. Much of the Internet email traffic is guys sharing their memories and helping each other fill in the gaps. It's a real blast from the past!

Reunion 2000 Chairman

Bob Mitchell

The first annual 281st AHC Association reunion will be held in Washington, DC 1 July through 4 July 2000. It will run concurrent with the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association reunion. The VHPA has many events schedule during this period and we will schedule our events around those for the convenience of the members who want to participate. You must be a member of VHPA to participate in their scheduled events and activities. Anyone who is not a member and is eligible for membership is encouraged to join. Members of the 281st AHC Assn. who are not eligible for membership in the VHPA can participate in the events and activities with the sponsorship of a VHPA member. This will not be a problem. Your Reunion Committee will act as a clearinghouse for requests for sponsorship.

We are planning to maintain a Hospitality Room at the Renaissance Hotel for the duration of the VHPA reunion. This room will serve as a RP for the activities and events planned for the 281st. Cash bars will be readily available and we also plan to have other refreshments available on a limited basis. 281st Reunion attendees may register at the Hospitality Room starting on 1 July at 1000 (1000 AM). The registration desk will be open through 4 July. We will

maintain a limited stock of 281st related Caps, Shirts and misc. other items in the Hospitality Room. These items will be for sale by the Association.

Our main reunion will be held at the Renaissance Hotel at 1400 (200 PM) on Sunday 2 July in a larger meeting room that will be provided by the Hotel. It will be on the same floor as other unit reunions held at the same time. We will have the meeting room until we are ready to leave. There will be an Association Business meeting held in the same room at 1300 (1:00 PM) for the voting members of the 281st AHC Association.

No Greater Love, will conduct a Wreath Laying Ceremony for the members of the 281st who were KIA and MIA during their tour of duty. Remembrance for those who have passed since their tour will also be conducted. The date and time for this event are TBA. After the ceremony the Hospitality Room will be open.

The Reunion Committee, Jack Mayhew, Dennis Crowe, Brian Paine and Bob Mitchell is at your service. Please call or email with comments, suggestions or request. Our contact information is on the attached roster. We want to hear from you.

Notes & Memo's

8/14/99 - Email from Ron Lohman saying how proud he is to have been in the 281st and now back in contact.

8/15/99 - Jim Langevin, one of the 281st "prisoners" of the USS Gordon from Oakland to Nha Trang harbor, checks in.

10/5/99 - Letter from Ken Boling with completed application. Ken paid his dues at the 4th of July reunion.

11/03/99 - Email from Bob Moberg in which we learn he never was Rotary Wing qualified! Must have been the only aviator in the Army with 3000+ hours helicopter time and no qualification in his 759. Hey, no problem. We'll pin on his wings and present the appropriate certificate at the 2000 Reunion. P.S. Bob was a rated stiff wing aviator.

11/03/99 - Bob Mitchell needs input from everyone concerning our KIA and WIA. Also information regarding any post Viet Nam deceased 281st personnel. We want this info for the Reunion and for the Assn records.

11/05/99 - Email from Barc Boyd, Wolf Pack 36 until he got shot in Aug '67. Need's a membership application. Hasn't figured out email attachments yet. "You ain't alone, Barc!"

11/06/99 - Letter from Dave Bitte with Wolf Pack photo's for the Pack web site. I gotta get off my duff and get the thing out from "Under Construction"!

11/07/99 - Email from Bob Moberg with details about Ted Untalan, 281st '68-'69. Passed away after long fight against stomach cancer at Guam in December 1998. Contact Bob for an incredible story he wrote of duty with Ted in Laos and Thailand in the late 60's and early '70's. We Rotor On!

11/11/99 - Email by Brent Gourley on the 281st ONElist commemorating Walter Wroblewski, MIA, a flight school classmate. We Rotor On!

11/11/99 - More Veterans Day on ONElist, from Steve Mathews. Also encourages the roster to JOIN the Assn.

11/15/99 - Following is an email letter to Bob Mitchell concerning John A Ware, 281st MIA.

Mr. Mitchell

I hope I am not disturbing you. I got your email address from John's mom. My name is Rebecca Wilbur. When I was a sophomore in High School I received a Pow/MIA bracelet with John's name on it. I still have the bracelet and I have carried John's picture around for the last 24 years.

The traveling copy of the wall was here this weekend and I took my son's to see it. When I came across John's name I was so overcome with emotion that it took awhile for me to be able to trace it. I think it was more powerful for me because I have never given up hope for his family.

I hope that you are able to write to me sometime and furnish the address of your web site. John's mom said there were some pictures of John and a little bit about him on there.

Take care of yourself. Thank you for serving our country.

Rebecca Wilbur

11/17/99 - Message on ONElist from John Galkiewicz in response to request for Viet Nam Christmas stories. Told of X'mas in Kontum, '67. Grub and magnum's of champagne. Biggest bottles he'd ever seen!

11/21/99 - Some final thoughts.

Send in your application and encourage others to join the Association. Participate through letters and email. Spread the word. Those who have been holding back on buying a computer, do so, if only for email. You won't regret it.

This will be the last Newsletter in 1999 or for that matter, the last for this century. We've got a great association going. Thus far it has resulted in; friends, comrades, and classmates, after many, many years, finding and reuniting; reestablishing bonds forged long ago and in a land far away; bringing back memories that have long lain dormant and in many instances not wanted or suppressed; starkly illuminating thoughts that were always there; resurrecting memories of pride, sadness, determination, jubilation, joy and horror; and love.

We owe it to those who didn't come back, and to those who have since taken the final journey, to continue to rekindle proud memories and do our best to maintain as well as establish traditions that honor ourselves, our comrades, and our country. God Bless America.

Fred Mentzer
"Wolf Pack 36"
President
281st Assault Helicopter
Company Association

"WE ROTOR ON!"