

# 281<sup>ST</sup> ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY

## "INTRUDERS"

Company Newsletter No 3

May 1999

### It's Reunion Time!

#### We're Getting There

**T**hrough e-mail, letters, telephone and word of mouth, interest and enthusiasm in forming a 281st Association is growing by leaps and bounds. The organizing committee will have an agenda ready for the 281st meeting at the VHPA Nashville Reunion. The roster continues to grow and is for the most part correct. Everyone please keep me updated and send address details of any 281st folks you know of that can be added to the list so I can get newsletters to them. I emphasize again that our association is for **ALL** former 281st and attached element veterans!

^ I am saddened to report the passing of Jim Brown, Wolf Pack, interred at Arlington National Cemetery, on February 10, 1999. Two weeks later, we lost Bob George, to cancer. ^ We Rotor On.

#### The Meeting

**T**he 281st mini-reunion and organizing meeting will be on 4 July 1999 at 1100 hrs, Renaissance Hotel. Check the bulletin board in the VHPA Reunion registration area for further details. At that time, during the usual back slapping, grab-ass and war stories, we'll formalize our association. Officers will be elected and the Constitution and By-Laws approved or amended by those present. For those not attending, if you desire to nominate or vote for an officer, send a proxy with someone you know who will be there, or let a committee member know. Organizing committee members are: Fred Mentzer, John (Jack) Green, Jerry Montoya, John (Jack) Mayhew, Corky Corcoran, Steve Matthews, Joe Bilitzke, Brent Gourley, Bob Mitchell, Jerry Montoya and Robert L. Williams.

#### The VHPA Reunion (BNA)

**T**he following is for those who have questions about what to expect at the Nashville reunion: When you arrive you'll inprocess at the Renaissance Hotel in an area set up for and by the VHPA. You'll receive a reunion packet, confirm all sorts of reservations, make table

reservations for the events where you need to do so, and whatnot. As soon as you get to the inprocess area check for a bulletin board (usually somewhere prominent) and look for 281st announcements There will be some. We plan on having get togethers from day one. Check the bulletin board for where and when. Many units try to get tables together and Steve Mitchell, our R&R Officer is arranging this for us, so let him know ASAP if you're coming to BNA. For you golfers, there will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board so you can pair up. Dress for the banquet is "appropriate", but I've seen everything from "dress blues to tennis shoes", I kid you not! Coat and tie does the trick and besides, it gives the lady a chance strut her stuff a bit without the ol' man looking like he was the last guy out of the LZ!

#### Financial Report

**N**ow for the MPC sitrep to date. I will have a detailed report at the meeting.

|             |            |         |                 |
|-------------|------------|---------|-----------------|
| 28 Jan 1999 | Balance    |         | \$ 34.66        |
| 29 Jan 1999 | Extraction | - 33.00 | 1.66            |
| Feb 1999    | Insertions | 185.00  | 186.66          |
| Mar 1999    | Insertions | 30.00   | 216.66          |
| Apr 1999    | Extraction | - 4.29  | 212.37          |
| May 1999    | Insertion  | 100.00  | 312.77          |
| 15 May 1999 | Balance    |         | <u>\$312.37</u> |

#### Closing Thoughts

**O**ur association is off to a grand start, but, we need to make every effort to get the word out to those who not yet "in the net". Spread the word and get address's to me so that I can send newsletters. At this point in time we have relatively few non-pilots on board, so the name of the game is "GET THE WORD OUT"! Finally, for those of you not going to BNA, stay in touch, for those who are, see you there. "We Rotor On"

Fred Mentzer  
"Wolf Pack 36"  
Interim President

## 281<sup>st</sup> Assault Helicopter Company Association

**Interim President**  
Fred Mentzer  
**Interim Vice President**  
John (Jack) Green  
**Newsletter Editor/Publisher**  
Fred Mentzer

**Historian**  
Jerry Montoya - Steve Matthews  
**Web Master**  
Steve Matthews  
**R&R Officer**  
Bob Mitchell

### Notes & Memo's

**2/04/99** - Bad News! Email from Jim Minoque about the passing of Jim Brown.

**3/00/99** - Lots of email in March about platoon's, call signs, and unit structure. Many confessing to be suffering from CRS (Can't Remember Shit!).

**3/09/99** - Trubee Krothe (Wolf Pack gunner 67-68) signs on with great material that should help some of those with severe CRS.

**3/17/99** - Email from Joe Bilitzke "Wolf Pack 34" (68-69) with background info about association. Joe did a lot of work in the initial efforts to establish a 281<sup>st</sup> Association. Over 10 years ago he hosted a unit reunion in San Francisco. He was also present at the ceremony deactivating the 281<sup>st</sup> AHC at St Louis many moons ago.

**3/20/99** - Email from Jack Mayhew as he continues searching for info on Michael Coleman, not on "The Wall", who was KIA in Jan of 69 during a Delta operation.

**3/21/99** - Association Board/Organizing Committee formed. See attached "How we started" email letter.

**3/21/99** - Frenchy Boisseau tracks down the infamous Bob Moberg gadding about Thailand, China, Azerbaijan and other such climes. Lives in Thailand. Jack Mayhew gets long email from Bob. Many stories at BNA I'm sure.

**3/23/99** - Steve Matthews wants "in-country" dates, pilots call signs, gunners & crew chiefs tail numbers, what folks job was, for data base.

**3/24/99** - Email from Ken Smith. He and Paul Morsen to meet with ex-Special Forces Doctor (Capt.) Surry Roberts (Surry for your ailments) in Oakland. Dr. Surry always had (has) an Albert Schweitzer yearning & left the safety of Nha Trang to take up his mission w/the Montagnards in Pleiku at CTeam & in the Ia Drang Valley to Dak To.

**4/05/99** - Email from Steve Matthews. Steve to be our Association Historian and WebMaster. He has set up a fantastic website for the 281<sup>st</sup> AHC Association, **Home Page Address: <http://www.angelfire.com/ks/281stAHC/>**.

**4/05/99** - More on email from Steve. Those who would like to have their personal stories on the 281<sup>st</sup> Web Site should bring them to BNA either in print form, or if your computer sav'y, on disk. For photo's have them on disk in .jif or .jpg format. Steve prefers everything in electronic form, but if your ignorant in that area, talk to him at BNA or, drop him a line, or call.

**4/07/99** - Email Jerry Montoya. Jerry, a SOA member, say's that anyone on Delta Ops from 17Apr66 to 17Jun67 and 15Jul to 16Aug67 are authorized to wear the "Navy Unit Commendation". Get ahold of Jerry for details.

**4/09/99** - Email from Wendell Allen and Dick Ziegler, both signed up for golf. Check the bulletin board at BNA.

**4/14/99** - Email from Jerry Stanfield (Mardigras 632) out Honolulu way. Wishes happy BD. Thanks.

**4/21/99** - Email from Bob Mitchell with more info on Navy Unit Citation. He was in the 281st when the formal ceremony was held in Nha Trang recognizing the 281st for their part in that operation. The Ribbon was painted on the side of all the aircraft. For those on the Net you can view a copy of the Citation at:<http://www.angelfire.com/tn/mitchellrw/navy.html>

**5/01/99** - Letter from Robert Reynolds (67-68) with generous contribution. Won't be at reunion but wants to be involved.

**5/13/99** - Email from Ken Boling, Bandits Gunner (6-11/70), plans on coming to BNA.

### **5/15/99 - Last Minute Thoughts**

1. Everyone enjoy any historical data, documents, crests, patches, plaques, that sort of thing to BNA. (No R&R or mama-san momento's, but, you probably burned all that stuff anyway! Except for Mo, whose probably got a footlocker full!! Just joking!)

2. The time, date and place of the 281<sup>st</sup> mini-reunion are: 4 July, 1100-1400, Room 3 at the Renaissance Hotel. Keep an eye on the Renaissance and various hotel bulletin boards for info about LZ recon's, prestrikes and insertions (extractions might be a problem!) prior to the meeting on the 4th.

3. Anyone want to volunteer to be the "Official Photographer" at BNA? We want to have a record of our do'ings at the reunion for Steve Matthews to chronicle in our Association history. Let me or Steve know.

## 281<sup>st</sup> Assault Helicopter Company Association

### How We Started

(This is a e-mail letter I wrote earlier this year to clarify the what, when and where questions concerning the forming of the 281<sup>st</sup> Assault Helicopter Company Association.)

Intruders,

The formation of a 281st Association has caught fire, to the point where there appears to be more and more folks that are unaware of the initial efforts and intent I'd like to take this opportunity to give a little history of how the most recent effort came about.

At the Ft Worth annual reunion of the Viet Nam Helicopter Pilots Association (VHPA) about 18 former 281st pilots got together for a little mini reunion At that gathering we decided to attempt to put together an association There were volunteers for temp positions and the hat was passed for initial operating costs. I ended up the "Secretary Pro-Tem" and also "Editor" of the newsletter It was emphasized from the very first that the association would be "FOR ALL FORMER PERSONNEL OF THE 281ST ASSAULT HELICOPTER COMPANY AND SUPPORT ELEMENTS" and thats the way it will be. It was the general consensus that the initial organizing would be at VHPA gatherings as the most convenient and appropriate way to get things started (I don't think any of us anticipated how quickly and with what enthusiasm the project would "take-off", I mean Zoooom! Just take a look at our email list, and that's not considering what's likely happening in snail mail land) And we decided that the VHPA 1998 Reunion at Nashville would be the time and the place to constitute the association, vote for officers, charter and what-all. Although the reunion at Nashville is a pilot affair, nothing that I know of precludes ANYONE from coming to the mini-reunion or to the reunion in general Of course the program events and functions are VHPA only.

So, the 281st Mini-Reunion at the Renaissance Hotel, at 1100hrs on the 4th of July, is OPEN TO ALL 281st!

In order to try to harness the enthusiasm and keep a modicum of control we've formed a Organizing Committee, the purpose of which is to put together a program for the Nashville meeting where we'll formally organize and constitute the 281st Association The committee follows

Fred Mentzer <mentzerf@open.org>  
Joe Bilitzke <bilitzke@juno.com>  
Jack Green <JWG3RD@aol.com>  
Brent H. Gourley <bgrly@ala.net>  
Jack Mayhew <JMayhew050@aol.com>  
Bob Mitchell <Mitchellrw@aol.com>  
Jerry Montoya <Jerlisa@aol.com>  
Robert L. Williams <joanwill@snowhill.com>  
Corky Corcoran <dkcorky@juno.com>

I don't want anyone to feel left out of the organizing of our association If you want to nominate some one for a officer position, suggest by-laws, offer constructive (or otherwise) suggestions, let one of the committee guys know, or better yet, come to Nashville (One thought I've had is write-in votes for those who won't be there) I'll be putting more on the above in the next newsletter.

So guys, that's it for now. Spread the word about the association and send info about any new found 281st'ers to myself and Steve Matthews.

Fred Mentzer  
"Wolf Pack 36"  
Sec'y Pro-Tem