



# BAN ME THUOT BARB

Remembering the 155 Assault Helicopter Company - Sortie 23 - Jan 03

\*\*\*\*\*

## AWARD OF THE AIR MEDAL FOR HEROISM

Date Action: 18 August 1968

Theater: Republic of Vietnam

Reason: For heroism while engaged in aerial flight in connection with military operations against a hostile force. These men distinguished themselves by exceptionally valorous actions while piloting UH-1 helicopters in support of a besieged friendly unit west of Tieu Atar. Arriving at the scene of action, they found the enemy troops aggressively assaulting the small friendly force. They quickly maneuvered their ships into position for a "Daisy Chain" flight pattern, and began a series of firing runs over the advancing enemy forces. In spite of continual ground fire from enemy automatic weapons, they continued attacking until their devastating fire finally routed the attacking forces. Their courage and tenacity in the face of continuous enemy fire aided directly in breaking the enemy attack. Their actions were in keeping with the highest traditions of the military service and reflect great credit upon themselves, their unit, and the United States Army.

Following individuals are hereby awarded the Air Medal with "V" Device:

- LANGENFELD, JOSEPH J. FIRST LIEUTENANT, US Army, 155th Aslt Hel Co
- MCGINNITY, ALLAN E. WARRANT OFFICER, W1, US Army, 155th Aslt Hel Co
- OWEN, ALVA A. WARRANT OFFICER, W1, US Army, 155th Aslt Hel Co
- REYHER, SHELDON R. WARRANT OFFICER, W1, US Army, 155th Aslt Hel Co
- ULAKOVIC, JAMES J. WARRANT OFFICER, W1, US Army, 155th Aslt Hel Co

*The following is a recent e-mail exchange between two of the guys involved in the action described above; one in the air, one on the ground.. Participants are 1st Lt. Tom Garvey, call sign "BAT GUANO", who was the CO of A-234, 5th Special Forces Group, and Al Owen, "STAGECOACH 20".*

**StageCoach 20** - I saw your post on the 155th AHC website, looking for a few slicks drivers that might have given you a hand. My name is Al Owen, way back then I was a WO-1 Aircraft Commander and the flight lead of a flight of 5 UH-1Hs from the 155th AHC based at Ban Me Thuot that did lend a hand to a group of good guys that was having a little problem with the bad guys. By my records and sometimes shaky memory, the date was Aug 18, 1968. However, there were several days around Tieu Atar from the 17th thru the 19th that were very active. I was leading the group of 5 with my "new-in-country" Platoon leader as my co-pilot. I do not remember all of the details as to where we were going, or how we were put in touch with the group on the ground, but your description of the FAC "Pterodactyl 35", who was based at Ban Me Thuot with us, is probably right on. My Platoon leader was a Captain (Infantry, of course) and devised and directed our course of action. As I remember, we fell into a trail formation, placed all door guns on the left side of the aircraft and circled the area you guys had marked with smoke for us, laying down as much lead from our M-60s as we could. I'm extremely happy to know that we helped. I'm interested in getting your response to see if this might be the action you were inquiring about.

**Bat Guano** - Thank you for taking the time to pass the information to me. At the time of the contact on what I remember as close to noon on the 17th of August, 1968, (and God knows I could be wrong about the date but hope I am not since it has been my "personal National Holiday ever since") I was using the radio call sign "Bat Guano" and running border ops out of Tieu Atar, A-234 located between the "Y" where the Ya Hleo river (a small river ) branched as it flowed south east coming in from the Cambodian border. The camp was about 23 klicks from the red line and about 75 klicks NNW of Ban Me Thuot. My name is Tom Garvey and I was a 1LT and the CO of the camp, which I think was "Select Canoe," operating under the B team, B-23, "Plum Wages," with LTC Raymond Reed as the CO. The incident took place about 12 klicks SW of Tieu Atar and Pterodactyl 35 (Jan Shyroek) said there were about two battalions encircling me, one other USSF, SFC Fred Henry, and about 80 Montagnards. There had been a storm front between us and Ban Me Thuot and the slicks in question had been caught behind it and set down at some camp north of us, so since A-231 was the northern-most of the 4 border camps out of B-23 (Bu Prang, Duc Lap, Ban Don, and Tieu Atar, south to north) I assumed the slicks were out of Pleiku - but I am pretty sure they were heading back in from being stuck out on the border overnight when they overheard half of my conversation with Pterodactyl 35, (his half) and rode to the rescue. I do know that, had they not come in to help us we never could have held off what we tangled with that day. We started it. Talk about throwing a punch at the biggest sombitch in a bar. If you are getting me in touch with those guys and if you are one of them then please accept my deepest and most heartfelt thanks and understand that

should we ever meet the dinner is on me. I send you all my best and hope only that your life is full and beautiful. I honor you if you are or even if you are not one of the men who saved a couple of guys tiptoeing through the tulips with their Montagnards who were too young and full of themselves to comprehend that there are some dragons you just don't poke sticks at. Thank you, thank you. Tom Garvey All my very best.

**StageCoach 20** - Tom...Good reading and a lot of memories are coming back....I guess it was our flight that you described. We did go into a trail formation and both the crew chiefs and gunners were told to set up on the left side of the aircraft, and we circled to the left. That's 10 M60's doing their thing!! The attachment I sent was a set of orders for the Air Medal with "V" that our platoon leader had recommended the 5 Aircraft Commanders for. The Pterodactyls were actually the 185th (RAC) Recon Airplane Company based at Ban Me Thuot with us.

**Bat Guano** - I'm really curious about the material you have. I gather its not an "after action report" but some sort of op order. I went down to the National Archives in Silver Spring, MD about 5 years ago and had actual MOPSUM's that had my name signed to them, God knows who wrote them, I didn't, from that summer - but some were missing and I didn't have access to August. MOPSUMs were the Monthly Operations Summaries every A-team had to fill out and send in. They drove us crazy, the air strip was washing away and even Caribou couldn't land for awhile, the team house had been built by bull dozing into high water table ground in the fork of a river and had 8 inches of water on the floor most of the rainy season - and those monthly reports stalked us better than a "hunter killer" team. Here are a couple of more things to jar your long term memory. Most of it you couldn't have known anything about, but a few details you might. Pterodactyl 35 was a small observation plane out of what we called 155 aviation. Within the unit it may have been broken down more than that but to us it was all 155 over by the road out to East Field past the ESSO station with all the air holes in it from TET. 35 was very low on fuel because he had flown south of Duc Lap (A-239) to cross the border and fly illegally up the wrong side of the red line to get to us. He'd seen that Bat Guano was a call sign on an operation behind the storm front and he wanted to help us if he could. He used up a lot of fuel getting to us and arrived around 0700. He headed northeast to have some "grease" with the team and save fuel if we needed him. Between our location and the camp, about 12 klicks SSW of the camp, he saw major fresh trails in the elephant grass and tipped us to a stream junction where there might be activity. He flew on to the camp and we headed up there arriving before 1100. It was a big base camp, a stopover place and was empty, there wasn't even a distant rifle shot from a trailwatcher. We settled in. About noon or maybe 1130 the Yards got visuals from our ambushes and 35 got into the air. He was dangerously low on fuel. He confirmed about two battalions encircling us and we told him to mark them after telling us he had Willy-Peter on his wings. I remember the words "Let it happen" - and the world blew up. He marked them about 75 meters from us, and they shot the bark off the tree I was near, and the long antenna off one of our PRC-25's. Then they shot out the 25. It went on awhile and stopped. I got into a fight with the leader of the Yards over an M-16 I'd given him that he was very proud of and had jammed. We switched rifles, I had to get him back to work, he said thank you in French, I gave him the finger, he flashed a big smile and ran away laughing. His 16 was useless. Henry was very very pissed at me. There was a maybe ten or fifteen minute respite and 35 was telling me some slicks heard him talking to us and were heading back in after being stuck out on the border overnight. They were coming to us. He had to leave or crash and I had an orange panel out in the clearing near my tree. He was going to target it if he ran dry, trying to stay until the slicks had us visual, I could hear them. One detoured to Tieu Atar to pick up ammo for the Yards, we were low after the first dance. Then there was this wonderful sound in the distance. To this day I stop my car and open my sunroof or let a sentence trail off and watch a Huey in the sky 'til it is out of sight and hearing.... I couldn't recall the name and used "Thundering Herd" in a story I wrote. 35 left and made it on fumes back to Tieu Atar. The slick leader asked me to mark and I had Henry throw smoke. I had two and he gave me two more. We were all over the hill, more of a slight rise, and I wanted my Yards inside of the ring before starting that "King on the Mountain" game that kicks off when you mark with smoke. Everybody wants the real estate inside the circle of smoke. I ran across the hill and threw smoke. I took fire and ran in another direction and threw more. I ran past two NVA, that I thought were Yards, and they were beside themselves and couldn't get off a shot. I was yelling, they were facing in the wrong direction, and maybe I was the first American they'd seen after coming across the red line only about a few hours earlier and I'm giving them hell in a language they don't comprehend. I wouldn't have gone near them had I known who they were. I ran back up the rise and tossed a third grenade and that was all I could get off. Thundering Herd was laughing at me. The NVA started this incredible loud war-style battle yell and it was time. Herd was laughing because in my haste and lack of style I'd thrown three different colors of smoke. There was (I think) purple and red and yellow. I told him my mother dressed me funny as a kid and to shoot it. They did. In the middle of it, I remember getting kicked by Dolly who now had my rifle, I had no weapon. He was trying to tell me the slicks were shooting at us. It was the finest and hairiest flying and shooting I'd ever seen. It looked like an amusement ride on the boardwalk with every slick flying in a too-tight-for-regs circle, nose to tail and steeply banked, with the down side gunner firing right at us. I tackled Dolly. No one could hear anything. I couldn't have told you to do anything differently if I'd wanted to. It was like mud wrestling and he slithered out of my grasp and ran back to the ambush site. And then it stopped. Not one Yard was scratched. A

really big NVA with a Russian pistol was 25 feet from me. I'd never seen him there. He was very very dead and bigger than either Henry or myself, which is huge for a Vietnamese. Hank swore he was Chinese but nothing ever came of it. I was told to duck, and a crate of grenades and ammo came crashing down on us. Your aim was perfect, you took out our last Prick-25. We didn't care. About an hour later Colonel Reed in a C&C Huey coming back from Pleiku, set down after picking up some things from Tieu Atar and gave us a case of hot beer and some shoe-leather tough steaks wrapped in tin foil and another radio and an M-16 for me. An awesome treasure. Jan Shyroch was aboard the Huey, hitching a ride back to Ban Me Thuot. Dolly gave me a yard bracelet off his wrist and a hug and we had a beer that shot all over us in a shower. We laughed until we cried. I sat down with my back to the tree that had no bark and began to make another C-ration tin can cup of terrible gray instant coffee because I had kicked an earlier one over when the Yards came running up from the ambush, trying to tell us about numbers of "VC" larger than they could count. It was a very good cup of coffee. Gotta run, I am now very late for work but I thought you deserved hearing about some good you once did. There is another angle to this story but it takes more time....

**More from Bat Guano** - Did you ever have any experience with Montagnards, specifically, did you ever gain any insight to their belief in dreams? This is specious of my referring to the story I told you having another angle. I am pleased that the flying circus I saw on the 17th (?) were recommended for Air Medals. You deserved them. I hope they came through. If not, I award you all one - because I was an eyewitness. Had "higher" seen what you did that day they would have courtmartialed you for endangering government property. Life is good. I'm happy to be here.

**StageCoach 20** - I transcribed the orders and sent it...hope it worked...I'll put you a copy of the orders in the mail.

**Bat Guano** - I read you five by. Thanks for the continued effort. I can't believe I've had the date wrong all these years, but it's more than possible. I do remember sitting up late one night in the team house at Tieu Atar and typing a long letter home in which I hit the wrong key and not having a way of erasing it just left it as it was. It may be that is what happened. I have a friend who said she has copies of old letters and I'll take a look at that. It was a hallowed pleasure to read the names of the men who flew cover that day. No doubt about it, it was you guys who came in and saved us that day. It may be too much to ask you to recall if the smoke was three colors or if one of your Hueys diverted to the A-site to pick up ammunition for us. The ship that did it, probably wasn't over me when the enemy charged. I'd still like to thank you for getting in touch with me. If your organization, has a way I can thank the other crews I would like to do it. I am here today because of what they did. No doubt about it...

\*\*\*\*\*

## TO THE STAGECOACH GUYS

My birthday flowers were such a wonderful surprise; that was so very thoughtful of you. Thank you so very much. Take care, and God bless. Sincerely, **Wilma Grotjan**

*(Ms. Grotjan is the mother of Stagecoach pilot Marlin Johnson, lost on 20 Apr 70 -ed.)*

\*\*\*\*\*

## A QUICK (AND TRUE) WAR STORY

The Falcons always had one team on night stand-by at BMT, so the crews rotated the stand-by duty. One night when I was one of the alert crews, we were hit by mortars about 1 AM. I grabbed my gear and ran toward the aircraft. Rounds were still incoming. I was past the O-Club and just into the company street, when I heard something "clink, clink, clink" on the pavement about ten feet behind me. Curious, I turned and went back. It was hard to see in the dark, so I bent over to take a closer look. There, in front of me in the dim light, was an unexploded mortar shell - just laying there, at my feet, smoking in the dark. My hands still perspire thinking about this some thirty years later. Some things you never forget!

*Jeff Schrader, Falcon 7 ('68-'69)*

\*\*\*\*\*

## MAIL CALL - Sharing commo among friends

**Pat Avery** - Merry Xmas to all the men of the 155 and support units. Some of me will always be there with the brothers and friends.

**Sam Schwartz** - Happy New Year from Pterodactyl 36, circa 1969-70.

**Ken Lombardi** - Why am I looking UP at the 14K bridge? Whoops! Wrong dream.

**Al Fitzgerald, Jr.** - I am the father of a 155th gunship pilot, who entered your group barely 20 years old. He communicated with his parents almost daily; photos of his fellow pilots and the sorties he flew were a big part of the community gatherings "back home." He flew with a great group of men. The 155th will never be forgotten in our household.

**Jerry Henderson** - Thanks Pam & Dan Lauer for putting me in touch with another long lost buddy - Nick Lujan. We served in Maintenance together during '68-'69. I hadn't heard from him in 33 years, and didn't know how to contact him. This website is a great tool for locating ol' buddies. Keep up the good work, Mary.

.....

**Geoff Jones** - I've been on the move for a while, and haven't kept up with the Barb or good people. Never quit thinking about us and what we did; doubt that you all do either. Cannot express the appreciation this stray feels for this Home Page.

**John Houston** - It's hard to believe that it's been 33 years since we were flying hot meals to guys on Thanksgiving '69. I'm thankful for having known and served with you.

**Jim Brainard** - Hi all, I'm just popping in to the Home Page for a visit. This website has so much support to offer.

**Grant Bobitt** - I was a med-evac pilot with the 254th Med Detachment (HA) in 1967-68, and pulled many field standbys at Stagecoach Operations. A great bunch of guys that always treated us as if we were part of the group. Thanks to you all.

**Gene Lindsay** - Thanks to the Baldwins for all their work on the Home Page. May God bless all who were warriors and their families.

**Craig McAvoy** - Son of SP5 George F. McAvoy; 155th during '67-'68. I just wanted to get a current e-mail address in here. Best to you all!

**Ken Lombardi** - '69 - DBT-Nha Trang-BMT; sandbags, 2nd Flight Plt, tail numbers 235, 276, 318, then BUSTED. Maintenance - 235, sandbags, BMT; Nha Trang; DBT; Cam Ranh; DEROS & ETS '70. There it is!

**Steve Large** - I was at Cheo Reo. This is a great site, I've been looking for it for quite a while - but didn't know the unit number. I witnessed the (mid-air) crash on 19 Apr 68; really bad. I see it everyday, without fail.

**John Casagrande** - Assigned to the 185th Recon Avn (Pterodactyls) in Ban Me Thuot from Jan '69 thru Jan '70. Just wanted to say you guys were great.

**Paul Smithey** - I was Dragon 6 (*Battalion CO - ed.*) from Dec '66 - Aug '67. The 155th was one of my favorite units. I enjoyed dropping in unannounced and rousting Charlie Fleming, your CO, at odd hours. The Stagecoach bunch were good!

**Herb Hess** - Just reading up on everyone. Wish I could have made the FL reunion. I was one of the aircraft armament repairmen at the 155th from Jun '69 to Jun '70. Thanks to all involved who make this possible.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **LRRP MISSION**

In the early months of 1969, I was a gunner on stagecoach 332, doing a LRRP insertion with 4th Inf. George Barnhardt was the crew chief, and WO1 Dickinson was the co-pilot. I don't remember the A/C. On a little grassy hilltop LZ, the team exited the aircraft, and Mr. Dickinson was at the controls, we started to take off but didn't have enough lift to clear the tree line so we went into a nose high attitude and drifted backward into the trees at the other side of the LZ. The tail rotor was knocked out, and we spun into LZ. The recon team lost the maps, the rest of the crew set up a perimeter around the aircraft. It seemed like about an hour that we were in the LZ. Our gun ships made a couple of passes on the side of the hill before a couple of slicks came in and got us out. Any information or verification of these events is of great importance. I can be reached at 360-423-1784, or by mail at 3707 Sunset Way #7, Longview, WA 98632. Thanks to you all.

*Dennis Current, Stagecoach door gunner*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **CHARLES W. MILLARD**

(Company A and 155th during '65-'66) was shot down flying a CH-54A "Skycrane" (478th Heavy Helo Company) in the A Shau Valley on 19 Apr 68. Because his body was not recovered, he had been listed as MIA. But finally, his remains were found and identified last year. A memorial service was held in Wilson, NC last September. Welcome home, brother. Fly high.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **CCS SNATCH MISSION**

Here's an update to the fall 69 POW photos I sent you last 6 Mar 2001 for the 155th web site. I just returned from the 20-22 Sept 02 Kokomo, IN All-Vets Reunion where the USAF 20<sup>th</sup> SOS Green Hornets and their Hornet FACs joined some 22,000 Nam other vets as the Hornets shared the 30th anniversary of the deactivation of our Nam mission. This was our first Hornet/FAC reunion since Nam. Some 135 folks showed up including several of the widows and children of the Hornets we lost in Nam. I only managed to get five of the FAC guys (Major Bill Huber, FAC/ALO Sept 68-69, myself, FAC/ALO Apr 69-Mar70, Capt. George Schmidle, FAC Apr69-Jan70, FAC Lt. Bob Kirkwood, Oct69-Apr70 and FAC/RO Bob Garrett, Jan69-Mar70) there - but hope to do better in the future once I locate more of them. We were lucky enough to have four of the BMTE CCS SF team leaders at the reunion also, and one of them was on the mission in the photos, Sgt. Rob Graham. He gave me the names of the SF guys in the photos. Here are their names in the photo below, with the team and full helo close-up. L to R, Sgt Rob Graham, (asst. team leader), two local maint guys, the POW, Lt. Dave Paul, (team leader) with the POW, and Lt. Troy Gilly (CCS intell) in black beret and one of the yard team guys on the right. I believe the guy behind Gilly reaching to shake the 155th slick driver's hand is our 20thSOS gunship pilot Capt. Phil Stinson. When you get a chance, see if you can touch base with your guys and see if you can ID the 155th slick crews that flew this mission. The CCS records were ordered destroyed in 1975 so there is no record of it except our memories. As the story goes, the POW was snatched off a trail "west" of Duc Lap and kicked off his shoes to alert his buddies that he did not go willingly. I believe it took place

in Oct-Nov 69, and I was the FAC on the exfil. Hope to make a 155th or VHPA reunion some day in hopes of meeting my 155th brothers in arms. Keep in touch.  
*Karol (Karl) Franzyszen, USAF*



Hey out there. Does this look familiar? Can anyone ID the ship or crew? (Note the shutterbug crew chief.) Does anyone remember being on this mission? PLEASE contact the 155 AHCA, we'd love to know more.

PS – If you're looking at a paper version of the *Barb*, this photo probably won't be very sharp. Check the Home Page version for a better view.

\*\*\*\*\*  
**ATTENTION ON THE COMPOUND**

Guys, the treasury is WAY down; dues checks just haven't been coming in like they used to. Our balance is at an all time low of 465 piasters. Troops are urged to reinvest in their organization for future events. The purchase of 155 AHC shirts will also pay back the kitty. (*These are great T's, with the Stagecoach and Falcon patches prominently displayed – ed.*) This fund is mostly used for newsletter expenses (copying and postage) and to help with reunion expenses and to cover such items as mentioned above, an inventory of T-shirts to have on hand for interested parties. Without your participation, none of these would be financially possible. Dues are \$30 per year. They're not mandatory (or anything military like that), but if you could send us something, it would be most appreciated. Make your checks or money orders payable to the 155th AHCA and mail them to me at the address listed below. Thanks for helping.

*Jeff Schrader, 155 AHCA Treasurer*

\*\*\*\*\*  
**JUST FOUND THE HOME PAGE**

It's been funny how much I've thought about BMT since finding the Home Page. The contacts and Mary's loving work on the site are incredible, and reading up on some of the historical data have filled in blanks as to what happened in the later years. You see I was a young 18, hated school and went into the service right after graduating as "RA". It was funny I enlisted to go Special Forces and was halfway into AIT when I read about helicopter flight school. I dropped SF and began the procedure to apply, scored great on the tests and flight physical, took the orientation ride and was waiting for the officers board as the final step when I came down on orders for Korea. Unfortunately the orders took priority and I went to Korea and served a year in the 1st Cav - uniquely in an infantry platoon assigned to an Honest John missile battalion. I did my year and was sent to Ft Hood in the 2nd Armored where I promptly volunteered for VN but wasn't taken. I finally settled down there and was president of the FH Sports car club when Ia Drang happened. Since I was a Heavy Weapons squad leader they grabbed me and I was gone in 3 days. As you might have read I was lucky enough to volunteer for Door Gunner work when I got there, and grateful to the big man for getting me to BMT. After three days at Pleiku before going to BMT it seemed unreal to be there. The compound was new, tall flowers were growing on the main street and around the sandbagged tents. Mamasans and papasans were working around the compound, choppers coming and going, and fixed wings in and out on the other side of the field. Major Joe Parlas was the CO and I didn't know it at the time but his flight knowledge as well as the seasoning of the other captains and WO3's flying made sure we all left and came back together. I was a gunner on slicks with Captain Frost and others I'm trying to remember - but I remember Frost the most 'cause once I went on leave and caught a ride to Pleiku with him and he let me ride in the co-pilots seat as we treetopped the highway to Holloway. My second mission I remember was about three weeks after I got to BMT and the whole company was called to Saigon. I remember it being incredible flying in V's of three to Bien Hoa. The next morning we loaded up Aussies and were part of a big push to the Iron Triangle. Again it was incredible flying in formation with about three other companies with overcast clouds above us and this incredible flat tabletop of rice paddies, rivers, and little towns below us. We watched the Air Force prepping the LZ in front of us and listened to their chatter on our radios. On the

main road below us was an incredible long line of tanks and trucks; it was a ground force of the newly arrived Big Red One moving up. I was amazed as we went down to the LZ like going down an escalator. I heard MAJ Parlas tell the Falcons to go hot, and as we got closer he ordered the door gunners "Go Hot!" It was funny there was no time to do anything but the "job" - we got the guys in and pulled out for the next load. I remember we took fire on the second run but our pilots got us all home in one piece and I'll never forget all my other flights and the spirit and skill of the guys in the front seats.

Ouch. Sorry, you caught me at a time when I was thinking of other times and I didn't mean to go on so long. There are so many memories of Hooch mates, the time Charleton Heston came to visit, flying to Dalat, when we found the moped rental shop in town and were chewing up the town until the Major put a stop to it, the night (I think it was around New Years eve) when someone thought we were being probed and everyone ran to the berm and shot the hell out of the plantation. Thank you - and Mary, again - for the memories.

*Jim Kohler, early guy*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **LZ ORLANDO REUNION**

A BIG thank you to Laurie and Fran Tiner for all the work they did in organizing the Orlando reunion. They both spent countless hours to ensure that the 155 reunion was a big success for all those that attended and their families. Their attention to detail was evident - from the spacious hospitality suite to the catered DJ Dance Party on Sat. night. Many 155'ers and their families took advantage of the amenities at the hotel and the nearby activities; transportation to Disney World, pools, restaurants, and golf. Many showed off their dancing and singing "skills" at the party on Sat. night. Laurie and Fran worked tirelessly to ensure a wonderful reunion - and it couldn't have been better. A GREAT time was had by all! Ya shudda been dere.

\*\*\*\*\*

## **FROM THE PREZZ**

Well it's time for an issue of the *Barb*. I'd like to talk about some of our talented and dedicated people. The first of these are Earl & Mary. They have continued their super-human effort to maintain the Homepage at a special level. (I HOPE that none of you are taking our Home Page for granted.) If you take a look at other unit pages, you will discover that our page is unsurpassed. Even the active army unit pages pale in comparison. The artwork alone is phenomenal - and the content is exceptional.

Les has once again leaped into the breach and agreed to publish at least one issue of our newsletter. He is an exceptional talent in this area and answered my call when all other options proved fruitless. Many of you will receive your issue via e-mail this time. It is a much more efficient way to distribute the document and much less strain on the publisher.

Jeff is the only treasurer the association has ever had. His tireless efforts and undying enthusiasm for the membership has been inspiring. He does his job without fanfare, but without him we would be totally ineffective. He pays the bills, collects the dues, keeps the books, and keeps the officers and members updated on the financial status of the organization.

Bob Alberts (alias "History Bob", or just "HB") is unflinching in his devotion to you, the current members, and is equally unflinching in his efforts to locate other members of the unit, and bring them into the association. If Bob contacts you and tells you there is a new find in your area, please make an effort to contact them. They are somebody's long lost buddy. His volumes of historical prose and memorabilia are inspiring and ongoing. He never passes up an opportunity to question someone about their experiences as relates to the unit or Camp Coryell. He still needs and wants your pictures and copies of your orders relating to the unit.

There can be presidents and vice presidents, but those mentioned above labor unselfishly, and endlessly for the association. I just thought I might give them a long overdue and very public **THANKS TO ALL OF YOU!**

That's enough for now. Be happy and healthy.

*Chuck Markham, President, 155 AHCA*

\*\*\*\*\*

## **A MAN NAMED PAUL**

Dennis Painter, George Montgomery, Tomas Gonzales;

Known to my father as friends because they share the face of black granite next to his name on a wall.

Do their children, brothers or mothers have their names captured in a frame on the living room mantel?

Do the people these men left behind also know my father's name because they followed each other in death by some coincidence or fate?

Somewhere else I'm sure a little boy asks his father about his grandfather who died in that war.

And while looking at a picture that reflects a portion of the wall where his grandfather's name is held, he wonders about a man named Paul.

*By Cris Larson*

(Cris is the son of Stagecoach pilot **Paul Larson**, who was lost in the Apr '68 mid-air collision)

## NEWS FROM THE HOME (PAGE) FRONT

I've been asked by the 155 Association Officers to write a few words about the Home Page. Located at: [www.geocities.com/pentagon/quarters/1517](http://www.geocities.com/pentagon/quarters/1517), the 155th AHC Home Page has been in operation for 6 years. It quite simply owes its existence to you, the 155 members. Many have contributed personal stories, photos, memorabilia and general info and that is the essence of the page. I thank all that have offered your help and encouragement, because your contributions to the page have made it the success it is. The website also shows notices of reunion details, post-reunion info and photos, and any time-sensitive information that may crop up. I don't have an original word on the page except "click here" - but I tried to write that with a rakish flair.

Of note – visitors have filled 2 Guest Books, and the third now contains over 80 pages of messages. (The guest book is particularly useful in helping many of you resume contact with long, lost friends so please let others know you are there or post your change of e-mail address.) The 155 Home Page is now linked to over 540 other web pages; it is listed in most major search engines (Google, Yahoo, etc), and has been designated as a "Recommended Site" by the History Channel! The page has been visited by people in 54 countries, and that includes a visit from the South Pole- of all places! Since adding a "visitor counter" two years after the page was started, we're approaching 30,000 visitors. The "155 Photo Page" now contains over 800 pictures and is the most visited page on the entire 155 website. The graphics are of my own design and the page has received 25 awards for content and graphic presentation. You know, I'm thinking that this Internet thing just may catch on after all!

I thank all of you that have supported the Home Page with your stories, your photos, your kind notes, and your guest book comments. (And thank you, too, for answering my endless questions). I don't want to drag this out, so I'll close by saying . . . PLEASE SEND MORE.

*Mary Baldwin, Volunteer Webmaster, 155<sup>th</sup> Home Page*

## WARRIOR TRADITION

*John Stark*, son of former Falcon *Mike Stark*, was a Special Forces guy for a number of years – but flying is in his blood. John was recently accepted into flight school, and is now learning to fly Army helicopters at Fort Rucker. Mike tells me he'll probably solo in the next few days.

*Bryan Schrader*, son of former Falcon *Jeff Schrader*, is on active duty as an Army Ranger. Bryan saw action early in the Afghanistan campaign, and Jeff reports that his Ranger team made the first combat HALO jump since Vietnam.

**The 155 AHC proudly salutes all our men and women in uniform.**

## RETURN OF THE BARB

At LZ Orlando, we thought we had someone to take over as editor of the *Ban Me Thuot Barb* – but it hasn't worked out. So Chuck called me, and I said I'd help out – and here's another issue. Hopefully, some of you will find it worth reading. But there's a couple of things about the *Barb* that need to be discussed. First, it's expensive. Copying and postage costs were running about \$200 per issue two years ago. For this issue, we're trying something different. We'll send copies via e-mail to as many guys as we can; that will be a big cost savings. We'll see how that goes. The other issue; it's a lot of work to put the *Barb* together. It's fun – but it does take time. Is there anyone out there who could help us put out the newsletter? I can't do 4 issues per year – but maybe if someone could help, we could share the workload. How about it? PLEASE???????????? So here's *Ban Me Thuot Barb*, Sortie #23. If you enjoy reading it, contact an officer to let them know, or leave a note on the Home Page guest book. If you want to see more *Barbs*, we need YOU to help. You can send in your dues, you can send in a story or a memory, you can leave a note on the Home Page – and maybe you can help with future issues. Thanks guys.

*Les Davison, editor (temporary)*

### 155 AHCA officers are:

Chuck Markham, Pres.  
11000 Col. Rd. 200

Fran Tiner, VP  
1251 Florida Street

Dan Gwaltney, Mem-at-Large  
187 Hampshire Rd

Jeff Schrader, Treasurer  
4815 Middlebranch Ave NE

[markham@cflaah.net](mailto:markham@cflaah.net)

[tiner@proving.net](mailto:tiner@proving.net)

[staggcoach@worldnet.att.net](mailto:staggcoach@worldnet.att.net)

[jschrade@worldnet.att.net](mailto:jschrade@worldnet.att.net)

Al Owen, Sgt-at-Arms  
51 Allen Street

Bob Alberts, Historian  
PO Box 201

Earl & Mary Baldwin, Home Page  
155th AHC

Les Davison, Editor  
100 N. Alameda St

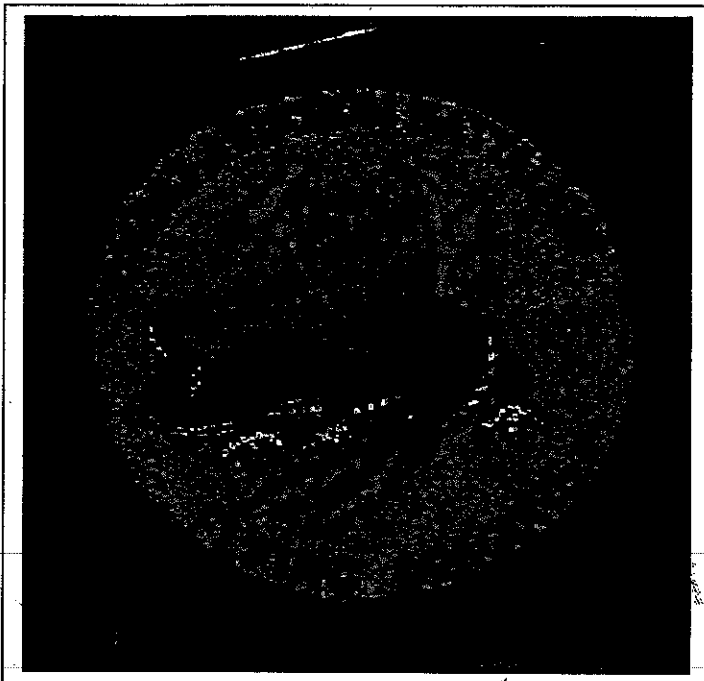
[owenaa@aol.com](mailto:owenaa@aol.com)

[balberts@kyndu.net](mailto:balberts@kyndu.net)

[balrwm@mercape.com](mailto:balrwm@mercape.com)

[ladavison@starpower.net](mailto:ladavison@starpower.net)

155 AHC Ass'n



During our time in Vietnam, the 155 AHC was first assigned to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Battalion at Pleiku; the "Flying Dragons" patch is on the left. Later, the 155 AHC was transferred to the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion at Dong Ba Thin; the "Sky Soldiers" patch is on the right.