ISSUE 20 VW-1 TRACKER JANUARY 2005

WHY A REUNION??

This question is often asked by those who have not experienced a reunion – by those who don't understand why "strangers" to one another would choose to participate. The following article has been making the rounds of web sites recently. It helps to explain the phenomena in a poignant way.

THE REUNION BY RACHEL FIRTH

Together to the appointed place, the old warriors come. Where they meet is not important anymore. They meet and that's enough for now. Greetings echo across a lobby. Hands reach out and arms draw buddies close. Embraces, that as young men they were too uncomfortable to give, too shy to accept so lovingly. But now they have reached a greater understanding of life and love. The shells holding their souls are weaker now, but hearts and minds grow vigorous remembering. On a table someone spreads old photographs, a test of recollection. Friendly laughter echoes at shocks of hair gone gray or white, or merely gone. The rugged, slender bodies lost forever. Yet they no longer need to prove their strength. Some are now sustained by one of "medicines miracles" and even in this fact they manage to find humor. The women, all those that waited, all those who love them, have watched the changes take place. Now they observe and listen, and smile at each other, as glad to be together as the men.

Talk turns to war and planes and foreign lands. Stories are told and told again, reweaving the threadbare fabric of the past, amending one more time the banner of their youth. They hear the vibrations, feel the shudder of metal as engines whine and whirl, and planes come to life. These birds with fractured wings can be seen beyond the mist of clouds, and they are in the air again, chasing the wind, feeling the exhilaration of flight, close to the heavens. Dead comrades, hearing their names spoken, wanting to share in this time, if only in spirit, move silently among them. Their presence is felt and smiles appear beneath misty eyes. Each in his own way, may wonder who will be absent another year. The room grows quiet for a time. Suddenly an ember flames to life. Another memory burns. The talk may turn to other wars and other men. So, this is how it goes. The past is so much present. In their ceremonies, the allegiances, the speeches and the prayers, one cannot help but hear the deep eternal love of country they will forever share.

Finally, it is time to leave. Much too soon to set aside this little piece of yesterday, but the past cannot be held too long for it is fragile. They say, "Farewell ... see you next year, God willing." Each keeps a little of the others with him forever.

Reunion Registration Form Enclosed

Fill it out and return it early. Full refunds will be made through April 18, 2005 should you be unable to attend. Some of the events are limited in capacity, so register early and get your choice of the activities. Join the fun at Myrtle Beach, SC – May 2 to 6 (four nights).

News from Cyberspace, Etc.

Email Removed VW-1 Web Page: http://vw1assoc.tripod.com/

Pete Wasmund (10/15) "At the next golf outing in Myrtle Beach I hope we can have several digital cameras available for pictures. I haven't received any of those pictures taken by John Stevenson at the Reno tournament. He moved from Las Vegas to Florida and may have lost them. I would like to make sure we don't miss out on getting pictures this time around."

(Note: John, if you get a chance and are settled in enough to find things, do you think there is any possibility you could get those pictures for Pete??)

Foster Hoover (10/29) Email Removed "Once upon a time in a land far, far away, known 'mongst the folks as Duva, there appeared two kids who were sent to serve in the VW's. One was very lucky and got to serve in VW-1, while the other became a member of VW-3. Many adventures were had, and then the falling of the sands of time sent them their separate ways. After the passage of 45 years, they were able to reconnect on the internet ... and I was wonderin', because VW-3 doesn't have a Sally and Ed to give them back the ages, would it be okay to invite someone from VW-3 to our reunion?"

(Note: Yes, yes, yes. You, as a member, can invite anyone you so desire. They would pay the reunion fees like any other attendee, but would not be required to join the association.)

Vic Callison 10/24 Email Removed "We are planning to go to Myrtle Beach if my and mine's heath holds up!! But no golf. I would also appreciate your prayers as I am having some serious back problems and may have to have spinal surgery."

Pete Wasmund (11/01) "Do you have the picture of the connie that has the missing tip tank? I think I would like to get that one on our web site, along with LeRoy White's story to go along with it."

(Note: No, Pete, we do not have it, but some one of our members just might. Anyone? If so, give Pete a holler.)

Harry & Vicki Gowenlock New address: Address Removed
Address Removed Phone Removed

Leo & Isabel Grenier 11/12 Email Removed New e-mail address.

Jim Geiger 11/17 Email Removed "Just a quick note to say thank you for the information I requested for Bob Orsini and Dale Gladden. I have made contact with both of them. Bob indicated that he plans to attend the next reunion and Dale didn't make a comment about it. As I indicated before, we plan to attend as long as I can make the trip. Stiff fighting cancer and now heart problems, but I don't give up real easy. Looking forward to the final information about the reunion."

(Continued to Page 4)

SHIPMATE REQUESTS HELP

(Note: The following e-mail was sent to us by Jim Geiger on 12/29. If you can be of assistance to him, it would be much appreciated.)

"As you may know, I have been battling several health issues the past few years. It all started in November '99 when my doctors discovered I had a tumor that turned out to be non-Hodgkins Lymphoma cancer. It seems that I may have won that battle. Then in July '03, it was determined that I had throat cancer. This was strange because I have never been a smoker. Put this all together with the fact that I have been diabetic for over twenty years aroused suspicion of what has caused all these problems.

A veterans group that I attend meetings with suggested that I look into my exposure to Agent Orange during our duty in Viet Nam. I had not realized that all these problems are the top symptoms of Agent Orange. I have applied for benefits with the VA and have been examined by the VA doctors. They have concluded that it is highly probable that Agent Orange poisoning has been the cause of most, if not all, of my medical problems. Now for the real issue that I need to deal with. The VA has denied benefits because my records do not show "in country" status.

I served with VW-1 during 1967 and 1968. I was qualified aircrew and flew with Crew 3 as ADR4 and ADR5. Like most all the crews we cycled in and out of Chu Li and Danang during our deployments. At Chu Li, on several occasions, the C-130's were being reloaded with Agent Orange using the "hot load" method. This activity was being done right next to our butler building. I have a few pictures of the facilities at Chu Li that include TE-3 and several other VW-1 aircraft, but none of them show the C-130's.

Now, after all that leading up to what I need help with. I would like to find out if anyone has a picture of the Agent Orange reloading operation. Also, I sure could use a few "buddy letters" verifying the fact that VW-1 actually had operations in Viet Nam during the period of time that I was there. I have attempted to locate some of my old crew, but have been unsuccessful. If you have any ideas how I can verify that I, or at least VW-1, actually operated in Viet Nam, it would be very helpful.

You can e-mail me at Email Removed
or contact me at Address Removed
Address Removed or call Phone Removed

Thanks in advance for any help you may be able to provide.

New Members

Cooper, Michael W. **LTJG**
Address Removed 6/70 –'71
Phone Removed
Wife: Cindy Email Removed
Flew with Cr

Geppelt, James **LTJG**
Address Removed 6/60–3/61
Corpus Christi, Address Removed
Wife:Sharon Phone Removed
Email Removed

CICO/A1C on TE7. Prior assignment Was with VW-3 – 9/58 to5/60.

Harvey, Jim **IS1**
Address Removed
Address Removed 9/64-10/67
Hong Kong Phone Removed
Wife: Bette Email Removed

Classified materials control yeoman. Admin for TACAMO assigned unit.

Starr, William H. **ADR3**
Address Removed 7/69-5/71
Slaterville Springs, Address Removed
Wife: Ginny Phone Removed
Email Removed
Crew 2 Flight Mecnanic.
Nickname: Harvey

News from Cyberspace (Continued from Page 2)

Vaughn & Suzanne Callison 12/5 (Snail mail) New address: Address Removed Address Removed Lake Forest, Address Removed Ph: Phone Removed "On November 17th Vaughn had successful back surgery and we are looking forward to him returning to work in early January, and being a lot more active. He is still counseling and with Cornerstone. I'm still with Community Associations Institute – over 5 years now, and doing Administrative work / Member services. We found a new church called Unity. Vaughn is one of the Chaplains there and I am with Helping Hands. Last, but certainly not least, we have two adopted grandchildren. A boy, Ryan, who will be 3 in March and Katrina, who was just 1 in August. They are delightful and we are having a great time with them."

Al & Joanne Madsen (12/13) Al has been working on a '59 Ford convertible and it is road ready and very noticeable. It is bright red with white and we get such stares that I worry someone will have an accident while watching us instead of the road. I spend a lot of time in my gardens and love that. Have a real love affair with hostas and/or any other flowers."



My! Ain't she a beauty??

Unfortunately, you have to imagine the red bottom and upholstery, contrasting with the white hood and strip down the side, contrasting with all that chrome! Wish we had color!

Vic & Charlotte Zarich (12/18) We are changing our internet provider. I will be Email Removed

Ralph & Jane Link (12/30) Email Removed "Really looking forward to Myrtle Beach, clubs are cleaned up and have a good supply of balls. Planning on arriving early and staying late. Ann Gagnon will be joining Jane and I and attending the reunion. I will try one more time in March for re-instatement of my FAA medical. If I am fortunate to get it back, I'll probably work for another year, otherwise move over. I'll be taking up the good life full time. The 2005 WV2/EC121 reunion will be held in neighboring Rantoul, IL September 16 – 18. Hope we can stir up some enthusiasm from our shipmates at Myrtle Beach to attend. I went in 2003 and met several old shipmates from both coasts."

(Continued to Page 7)

Myrtle Beach Reunion Registration Form

May 2 – 6, 2005

Deadline March 1, 2005

Please note that your registration money is 100% refundable through April 18, 2005. We ask for early registration to facilitate finalizing contracts and arrangements for the proper number of people who plan to attend.

TOTAL PKG: COUPLES: **$ 562.00** SINGLE: **$ 444.00**

Name(s): _____

_____

Included above: Four nights at the Sand Dunes in an oceanfront room with full breakfast buffet Tuesday through Friday morning. Buffet Monday during Registration (12 to 6). Buffet dinner Wednesday night following business meeting. Thursday evening dinner at Hooks, followed by the Carolina Opry Show. Meeting room for entire four days w/soft drinks, beer and snacks. All tips and taxes are also included.

EVENTS ONLY (for RV'ers and Locals) **$ 140.00 Per Person**
Includes the **above** TRIPS & MEALS; **DOES NOT INCLUDE** four nights at Hotel & Breakfasts

Name(s): _____

_____

OPTIONAL EVENTS: Please note additional cost to above prices for these optional trips)

Patriots Point, Charleston Harbor, Tuesday, May 3 **Cost $ 32.00** per person
Visit the USS Yorktown, the Congressional Medal of Honor Society's Museum, see more than two dozen historic military aircraft; then dine at the CPO Mess for an additional $7.29. Price includes bus and Museum fees. Depart 7:30; return by 4 p.m.

Name(s) _____

Alabama Theatre, Tuesday, May 3 **Cost: $ 40.00** per person
Own transportation required. Dinner at the "Crab House" at Barefoot Landing at 5 p.m. Choice of four entrees, includes salad, dessert and coffee or tea. Arrive at Alabama Theatre by 7:15 for Variety show. Return to hotel about 10:30.

Name(s) _____

Old Historic Charleston Tour, Wednesday, May 4 Cost: **$ 78.00** per person
Bus to Charleston w/guide: tour of city w/guide; lunch at SNOBS, tour of the Aiken-Rhett Mansion, Moderate walking. Depart 7 a.m.; return 5 p.m. All taxes and tips included.

Name(s): _____

_____

Chartered Deep Sea Fishing Trip, Wednesday, May 4 **Cost: $ 85.00** per person
Half day – 7 to 12 noon on 40' private charger. All rods and bait provided. Participants must bring own food, but coolers are provided on board.

Golf Tournament, Thursday, May 5 **Cost:** To be announced

Name(s):_____
Green fees for this event will be payable at Registration on 5/2 to Pete Wasmund or Joe Vilsack

Please circle the cost of what you are planning to do and return with your check in the correct amount, payable to:

Sally Metzger, Treasurer, Address Removed **Inverness,** Address Removed

If you have signed up for the reunion above, you need not look at the information below. It is only for those members unable to participate in the entire reunion, but who wish to spend some time with their shipmates.

If your availability is limited, but you would like to visit the VW-1 Reunion, we recommend you visit at one (or both) of the two times listed below, since that is when most attendees should be in the meeting room.

Drop-Ins:

Monday, May 2nd – 1 to 11 p.m.: **$ 30.00** per person
(Buffet from 1 to 6 p.m. included)

Wed., May 4th - 4 to 11 p.m. **$ 30.00** per person
(Dinner buffet included – 6 to 7 p.m.)

Name(s): _____

_____

OPTIONAL EVENTS:

You may include selected optional events, if you so desire.

Please circle the dollar values of those things you choose and make a check out for the correct amount payable to Sally Metzger, VW-1 Treasurer and send to::

Sally Metzger, Treasurer, Address Removed **Inverness,** Address Removed

If you have any question, e-mail us – Ed and Sally Metzger –
at Email Removed or phone Phone Removed

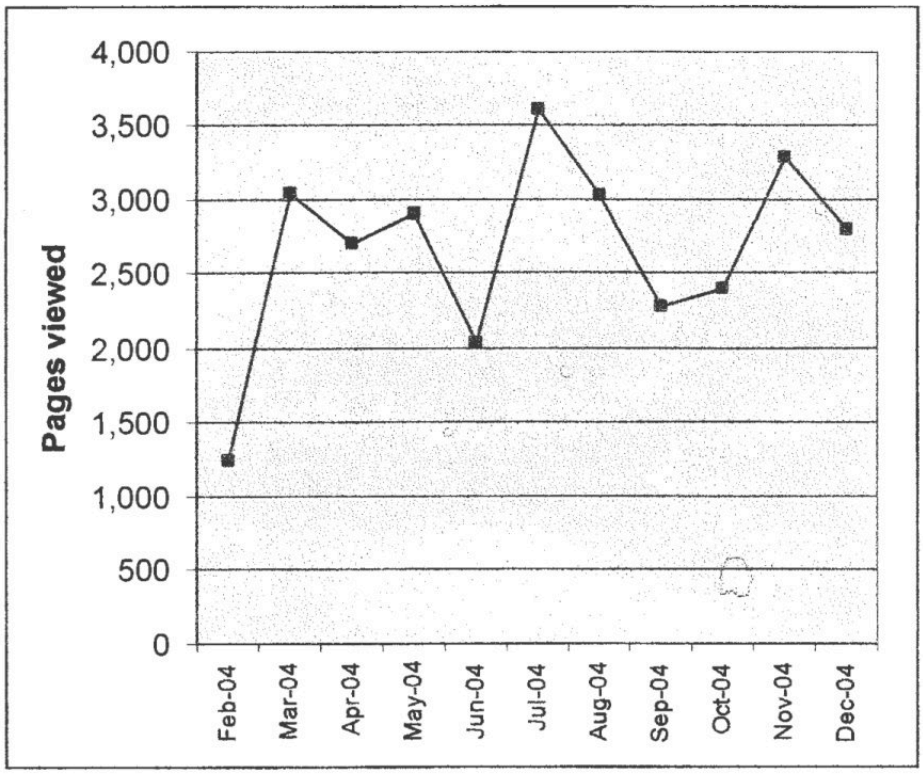
VW-1 Web Site Sees Plenty of Action

It obviously is not only VW-1 All-Hands members checking out our website.

This chart shows the number of hits over the past 11 months, February thru December, '04.

A few of the thousands taking a look also fill out the membership form and join our group.

This web site is definitely our best source of soliciting new members.



News from Cyberspace (Continued from Page 4)

Jim Geppelt (12/29) Email Removed "The pictures on the VW-1 web site made me a hero with my sons and daughter. Hope we get some feedback from Crew Seven. The Association may keep the pictures. Do not need to return them. I will contact you in about ten days to make any suggestions on wording. Appreciate the work you did to add these pictures to the web site. Actually a great Christmas present for me. The family was quite excited to view this history and brought up questions as to what Dad did some 40 odd years ago."

(Note: Jim sent along some great pictures with his membership and Pete Wasmund now has them on the web site. Take a look and if you can contribute any names of persons, times or places, let Pete know. Thank you, Jim, for the contribution.)

Happy New Year

Christmas Tree Attacks VW-1 Association Member

(Note: In all honesty, this factual account of a Christmas tree attack did not happen this past Christmas. But it did happen and this seemed the ideal time to report on this unusual event.)

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It seems that Judy Stotts needed to get her 8 ft. artificial tree close to the wall, so she cut off the branches in the back and saved herself some space. She proceeded to decorate it with reckless abandon ... lavishly (and beautifully) with various and sundry decorations. Enjoying the festive tree, Mack settled back in his comfortable recliner to enjoy a little television – and maybe an afternoon nap.

However, the Christmas tree had other plans. The heavy side of the tree won out. Tree and all toppled onto Mack's chair while he lay snoozing.

Now we all know that such a trauma could, in fact, scar him forever and prevent his enjoying a Christmas tree ever again! Fortunately, his injuries were minimal and the tree also survived the attack.

We all know that Navy folks are masters of improvisation, and Judy illustrated the best attributes of a Navy wife when she solved the problem of the "unbalanced" Christmas tree. Ed and I saw the solution with our own eyes and, yes, there really were two 20-lb. bar bells hanging on the side of the tree with no limbs.

Congratulations, Judy, for your problem-solving capabilities.

We are also happy to report that – in spite of this age of lawsuits – Mack is not going to press charges. He has dealt with the attack in a courageous manner and is willing to forgive and forget.



VW-1 Association
c/o Ed & Sally Metzger
Address Removed
Address Removed





Mailing Code Removed