

June 1, 2009

TO: AAHF MEMBERS, PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS, DONORS ETC.

SUBJECT: SKY SOLDIERS/ARMY AVIATION HERITAGE FOUNDATION (AAHF) NEWS BRIEF VOL 09-06

PURPOSE: To Periodically Inform the Membership of the Activities of the Organization

REMINDER: US ARMY 234TH BIRTHDAY IS JUNE 14, 2009

I. NEAR TERM EVENT SCHEDULE (June):

DATE	LOCATION	PURPOSE
13 June 2009 0930	Tara Field	Monthly Meeting
June 28	Griffin, GA	Huey Rides
June 27	Ft. Benning	Demonstration

II. AAHF COORDINATING EVENTS (Not Listed Above):

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	PURPOSE
25 July 2009	0930	Tara Field	Monthly Meeting (Note Change in Date)
8 August 2009	0930	Tara Field	Monthly Meeting
12 September 2009	0930	Tara Field	Monthly Meeting
17 October 2009	0930	Tara Field	Monthly Meeting (Note Change in Date)
21 November 2009	0930	Tara Field	Monthly Meeting (Note Change in Date)
12 December 2009	TBD		Christmas Party (Note Change in Date)

III. ADDITIONS/DELETIONS:

June 6 & 7	Indianapolis, IN	Huey Ride CANCELED
October 17 & 18	Augusta, GA	Huey Ride CANCELED

IV. RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

May 2 & 3	Robins AFB, GA	Cobra Demo
May 9	Tara Field	Monthly Meeting
May 15 & 16	MCAS Beaufort, SC	Huey Ride
May 15	Auburn	Huey Ride
May 16 - 18	Jackson, MS	Huey Ride
May 24	Stockbridge, GA	Cobra Fly Over

V. ADMINISTRATIVE MESSAGES:

Back in April I wrote an article on the Ft. Benning Sacred Soil Parade Field dedication in which we participated. After our performance, I met the father of the honor graduate of graduating company who was a retired Army Officer and was very impressed with our performance. I decided to order a copy of the DVD that the Infantry Center produced of the graduation. I thought we might just get a passing note of interest in the DVD, but they filmed the entire graduation, from our first arrival by John Woodward to the star burst maneuver of the Cobra Demo Team. After watching John's performance, it is clear why everyone who came up to the rest of us in a flight suit and asked if we were the one who was flying the little helicopter. Shanda was super in her narration and all of the aircraft looked great. I'll bring the DVD to the hangar the next time I'm down there and we can watch it. Shanda is contacting Fort Benning for additional copies of the video.

(1) Notes of interest:

A. May Activities By Shanda Elkins:

What a great month, starting with Robins AFB and ending with the First Baptist Church in Stockbridge! Robins went well for the Cobra Demo Team, no problems, weather was nice, and the guys flew well. Then two weeks later something happened that has never happened before, three events all going at the same time, volunteers were everywhere. A Huey, Cobra, and Loach in Jackson, MS - A Huey in Beaufort, SC - A Huey in Auburn with the Wiregrass Crew. Then we finished up the month with a static display at The First Baptist Church.

- (1) Now you know each has a story - Jackson, MS. This is our third time going to Jackson, MS and Earl Rodman is one of the nicest people to know and work with. Curt and I arrived in Jackson before the aircraft and folks were greeting us and asking how they could help. We got the aircraft in, went back to the ride site, and set-up our tent. Off to the hotel where they had a reception for all the folks participating in the event, this was humbling 3 or 4 Medal of Honor Recipients, 2 or 3 Tuskegee Airmen, and 2 or 3 U.S. Marine Code Talkers so much history in one place at one time. It was wonderful! John Woodward and Jerry Sanders flew the Loach and Cobra all three days and were great. Ken Gilliam, Ron Disney, and Jim Brennan had the Huey going every time the skies were clear. The motorcycle riders came in on Monday, 650 motorcycles, what a great event. We worked all weekend fighting the rain and low clouds but in the end we rode over 400 riders. Think of what we could have done if the weather was better! Ok, the short story - the very last lift on Monday, a gentleman came by and wanted to fly with 5 of his friends, we can do this. He said he wanted to make a donation and he handed me two one hundred dollar bills. He went to get his friends, by the time he returned, they were the last six riders we were taking for the day, you see they were all reenactors on the Trail of Honor, and so it took awhile to gather everyone up. This gentleman handed me another three one hundred dollar bills and said keep them. They went for their ride and when they returned, the gentleman had tears in his eyes, he hugged me, and in a quivering voice he said "I did not think I would ever get to ride in a Huey again", the last time he rode in a Huey they were taking him out of battle in Vietnam.
- (2) Remember we had three events going at the same time. Onward to Marine Corps Air Station, Beaufort, SC they were also fighting the rain. Carol and Leon Hobbs got there early before the Huey. They were also greeting and offered assistance. Mike Holland was heading up the Huey, ok I had to send the Marine Pilot back to a Marine Air Station, it was only right and Mike was the first to volunteer when he heard we were going! They did great, riding over 370

riders in two days, with a small crew. The weather was so bad on Sunday they could not fly the Huey home, so Mike drove folks back to Georgia, then Mike and Cliff McKeithan went back on Tuesday to bring our Huey home. OK, here we go again short story - there was a gentleman from Vietnam watching the Huey Rides, he finally took a ride, after his ride he told Mike that a Huey rescued him from Vietnam and that was his first step to his finally destination, the United States.

- (3) **Wiregrass Chapter Huey Rides by Judd Lewis:** Wiregrass Chapter flew Huey 104 to Auburn in poor weather and flew about six lifts. WG had ten volunteers including one PIC one SIC and one CE, and one LZ guy, one trucker and one tent leader. We are thankful that the Red Cross sponsored this event, since it had been cancelled because of snow and rain in the previous two years, and we wanted to show our support by at least arriving to support their efforts. The Red Cross provided five or six volunteers. We hope that they made some money. Saw two veterans. Again, we decided to strike camp at just the right moment to narrowly avoid thunderstorms and two tornados. All home safe.
- (4) Last but not least this past Sunday, Jeff Moss took 197 (Dustbunny) to the First Baptist Church in Stockbridge for a Memorial Day service. They truly wanted a Blackhawk due to their guest speaker Captain Jeff Struecker who was in the battle in Mogadishu, Somalia in October 1993. The cobra was a big hit, we meet many people, and the event went well.

Bottom line - This is what the foundation is about, taking the history to the people, listening to the stories, and giving closure. I thank everyone who was involved in all the events in May, it was a great month!

B. MCAS Beaufort Air Show by Mike Holland:

Even the Air Show officials were surprised by record attendance at the biennial MCAS Beaufort air show. Over 100,000 people came on Saturday, and over 65,000 people came on Sunday, even though the weather forced the Blue Angels to cancel their show on Sunday. Being a Marine sponsored event, the flight schedule both days was conducted to the minute, as was expected. Of course I am slightly prejudiced.....but that enabled us to handle our passengers quite efficiently during the whole ride process. Our Marine hosts could not have been more cooperative at every level.

Upon arrival on Friday the 15th, we gave a ride to local media and quickly set up for rides for Saturday. We had a small but very hard-working crew: Carol and Leon Hobbs, Laura and Bruce Timms, Don Conaway, Tim Adamson, Laura Dangle, Mike Breunig, Jake Allen, Mac Macborski, Cliff McKeithan, and myself, along with a few good young Marine volunteers. We did not anticipate the huge number of folks who wanted to ride with us, and we flew every minute we could, until thunderstorms forced us to stop Sunday afternoon. The weather stayed below minimums, and it was Tuesday before we could return 426 HF to Tara.

Frequently we heard from people after their rides that it had been "the experience of a lifetime" and "thank you for what your Foundation does". One anecdote to pass on: At the edge of the LZ while we were refueling, I noticed a Vietnamese man taking lots of pictures of 426, and we struck up a conversation. He told me he had worked for the Americans at Bien Hoa, was from Saigon, and had been evacuated from Vietnam in 1975, which was the last time he had been on a Huey. I pointed out that his flight crew was all Vietnam veterans, as were a couple of other Foundation members working in the LZ. During the ride I looked back and he had a very big grin on his face, as

well as some tears, and he gave me a big thumbs up. After we landed he went up to Cliff's door and said "thank you for the ride, and thank you all for what you did for my country". I was strangely humbled by that comment, and I think it serves in some part to illustrate the importance of the mission of AAHF, and how much it means not just to us as members, but to so many others as well.

C. Face Book Entry on 5/24/09 by Jeff Moss:

Cool Mission today.....Flew Cobra N197LE in for the Memorial Day service at Eagles Landing Baptist Church. Landed in front of the entrance. The guest speaker was (now) Army Chaplain Major Jeff Streuger. You knew him best as the Sergeant from Black Hawk Down. He was the convoy commander. Outstanding service and outstanding soldier! Ranger's lead the Way!

D. Good Press From The Jackson, MS Event by Peyton Dehart:

<http://www.clarionledger.com/apps/pbcs.dll/gallery?Avis=D0&Dato=20090516&Kategori=NEWS&Lo penr=905160809&Ref=PH>

<http://www.clarionledger.com/article/20090517/NEWS/905170354/1001/news/Trail+of+Honor+de picts+American+war+scenes>

E. Welcome center flies state's first POW flag:

By Debbie Ingram/Published: May 27, 2009

OZARK - Some veterans worry that children today are not growing up with the concept of what it is to be a Prisoner of War or Missing in Action.

Young people are not being educated on the plight of American soldiers on foreign soil, said Max Roberts, and don't even know what POW or MIA stand for.

"Mine know," said former POW Hank Nix of Ozark. Nix spent 34 months in North Korean prison camps, including Camp 5 where 1,602 American prisoners died of starvation, disease and exposure in filthy conditions. Nix was captured in September 1950.

To Nix, the black flag with a silhouette of a soldier with his eyes downward, represents remembrance. The flag itself bears the words: "You are not forgotten."

"It identifies the people," he said. "It identifies those of us who are still here." New legislation passed by the state on May 15 allows the POW MIA flag to be flown at government buildings for the first time, along with the American and Alabama flags.

On Wednesday, the first POW MIA flag to fly at a state facility was hoisted at the Alabama State Rest Area just south of Ozark on U.S. 231. A member of the Carroll High School JROTC carefully took the flag from Nix, who stood next to A.L. Benefield Jr., a member of the Air Corp and a POW during World War II.

As the POW flag was raised skyward, a helicopter from the Army Aviation Heritage Foundation flew over.

Benefield, who is 89 years old, was a B-17G pilot shot down over Germany in July 1944. He was liberated in April 1945.

The welcome center, near Fort Rucker, is home territory for the bill's sponsors, Sen. Harri Anne Smith and Rep. Steve Clouse, who got behind the project at the urging of the Lower Alabama Veterans' Alliance.

The idea originated with a group of veterans who are motorcycle riders and hold an annual Veterans Day poker run and the Vietnam Veterans #373 based in Clayhatchee.

According to U.S. government Web sites, approximately 89,000 servicemen remain missing from all American wars since World War II. Officials said there remain 1,800 MIAs from the Vietnam War.

F. Wiregrass Hangar Namesake:

LTC William A. Howell, namesake of the Wiregrass Hangar, died recently. Colonel Howell was able to visit the Wiregrass facility upon the dedication, and a few times afterward and observe their operations. I don't believe that the article regarding that dedication was ever published in this News Brief, so here it is:

AAHF Wiregrass Chapter Dedicates New Hangar to LTC William A. Howell

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., July 3 /PRNewswire/ -- Army Aviation Heritage Foundation's (AAHF) hangar in Ozark, Alabama, bears the name of a local resident and giant of Army Aviation whose life exemplifies the characteristics of the organization. So said James W. Williams, Ph.D., aviation historian, in a new article, "What's in a Name?"

According to Williams, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) William A. Howell at age 87 is not widely known among recent-graduate Army Aviators. Howell dismisses comments about his astounding record of "firsts" by saying it's easy to be first when technology is new. A Montgomery native, his military career began at Fort Benning in 1938. His experiences made him an early Air Assault pioneer. He graduated from the first class for Sikorsky's new H-34 helicopter and commanded the first company to have this aircraft, allowing key experiments. He was the first Army Presidential helicopter pilot and formed the unit that served Presidents Eisenhower through Ford. A VH-34 helicopter bearing his name as pilot is displayed at the US Army Aviation Museum at Fort Rucker.

As with Bill Howell, the AAHF and particularly the Wiregrass Chapter strongly reflect creative adaptations in pursuit of large goals. The AAHF arose in 1997 largely as the creation of a father and son. Major General (retired) Morris J. Brady, himself, was an Air Assault pioneer. The non-profit organization preserves and uses vintage Army aircraft, flown by Army veterans, to educate the nation about the Army. In 2000 Brady asked Brigadier General (ret) David Allen -- Vietnam veteran of the First Cavalry Division and living in Ozark -- to form a second chapter, later named Wiregrass.

With encouragement of Mayor/Colonel (ret) Bob Bunting, also a Vietnam- veteran Army Aviator, the Wiregrass Chapter built a hangar on airport land belonging to the City of Ozark. The chapter's initial mission was restoring aircraft and supporting the parent chapter at air shows. One recent and valuable spin-off is the Cobra Army Sky Soldiers Demonstration Team, which has produced a leap in Army recruiting contacts.

Thus, the lives of both Bill Howell and the AAHF reflect recurrent, powerful threads improving both the Army and the nation. So, too, does naming the hangar -- indeed, the existence of any hangar. Read the story by Dr. Williams on AlabamaAviator.com.

F: 50 Years of Service to Army Aviation Association of America (Quad A) by Jerry Mellick:

Glenn Carr was awarded and presented a gold pin representing his 50 years membership in Quad A. He was honored at a "by invitation only" lunch on the second day of the recently completed Quad A Convention held in Nashville, TN on May 3 - 6. On the evening of the final banquet, Glenn was also acknowledged, and I had the honor of pinning the award on his Tux lapel during the ceremony. As you might expect, there are not many members of this rather exclusive club. I guess it must be because of all those birthdays Glenn has while we are on the road.

G: Curt Knapp Elected:

AAHF Legacy Chapter member Curt Knapp has been elected Junior Vice Commander of VFW Post 5448 in Griffin, Georgia, and promises to mention The Sky Soldiers whenever appropriate.

H: VA Notice by Lee Stuart:

Here is a website for ALL Veterans to go to and possibly get a minimum \$75 settlement for their info being stolen from VA. <http://www.veteransclass.com/>

I. Order of Saint Michael Award by Curt Knapp:

The legend of St. Michael defeating the dragon exemplifies the bravery and gallantry associated with the aviation soldier and the boldness and swiftness of aviation on the battlefield. As a brave warrior and protector, St. Michael is the embodiment of courage and justice and is an appropriate symbol of excellence in Army Aviation.

The Order of St. Michael recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to the promotion of Army Aviation in ways that stand out in the eyes of the recipient's seniors, subordinates, and peers. These individuals must also demonstrate the highest standards of integrity and moral character, display an outstanding degree of professional competence, and serve the United States Army Aviation or civilian aviation community with distinction.

One of the latest recipients of the Army Aviation Association of America's Order of St. Michael Bronze Award for "a conspicuous contribution to Army Aviation and support of the Branch" is our own Jerry Mellick. Congratulations, Jerry!

(2) Membership News:

If you have made changes to your contact information, email address, or simply have news or questions, send to our new email address: membership@armyav.org. Don't forget those membership applications, as well as a link to our new email address, are available online at www.armyav.org.

(3) Changes

If you have constructive criticism or suggestions for improvement to the news brief, you can respond to the email from which you received this News Brief and you can also contact membership@armyav.org.

(4) Photo Location:

For the Foundation's Photobucket site, go to this link:

<http://photobucket.com/albums/v202/armyav/>. If this direct link will not work, you can access the site at www.photobucket.com and the Foundation album is "armyav". There are many new pictures on the web page.

2009 AIR SHOW SCHEDULE

DATE	LOCATION	EVENT	
July 11 & 12	Peoria, IL	Huey Ride	
July 18 & 19	Dayton, OH	Huey Ride	
August 15	Ft. Campbell, KY	Cobra Demo	
		Rescue at Dawn	
	Rockford, IL	Huey Ride	<i>Unconfirmed</i>
		Rescue at Dawn	<i>Unconfirmed</i>
August 29	Hampton, GA	Huey Ride	<i>Unconfirmed</i>
		Rescue at Dawn	<i>Unconfirmed</i>
September 3 - 5	Hampton, GA	Huey Ride	
October 10 & 11	McEntire AFB, SC	Cobra Demo	
		Rescue at Dawn	
October 17 & 18	Augusta, GA	Huey Ride	CANCELED
November 7 & 8	Homestead AFB, FL	Rescue at Dawn	
November 14 & 15	Stuart, FL	Huey Ride	<i>Unconfirmed</i>
		Rescue at Dawn	<i>Unconfirmed</i>