

Video Presentation #1 – Lam Son 719 – Clyde Romero

Lam Son 719 Feb-Apr 1971

Was a joint operation between the US Armed forces and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam

The US Army's Largest helicopter operation in the Vietnam War

Over 600 helicopters were damaged and over 100 destroyed in 45 days of sustained combat operations in Laos.

Video Presentation #2 – Library of Vietnam Project, Inc. – Chuck Theusch

When Steve House, a Charter Member of the Board of the Library of Vietnam Project, Inc., first contacted EZELL WARE in 2007, the retired Brigadier General having just published his book *BY DUTY BOUND* in 2005, House explained the Library of Vietnam Project and invited EZ to join us in building a Library where Ezell had served with the 61st Assault Helicopter Company at LZ English in Bong Son, Binh Dinh, Vietnam. Ware immediately signed on to support the Mission. House set up a "committee" of us in the project, all of 3 people, to go forward. Sadly, Ezell Ware died June 30, 2009---not seeing the result of his immediate commitment to reconciliation.

But other elements of the 61st went forward including Captain Ken Embers, Warrant Officer Mike Zogleman, later Warrant office Gary Counihan, and the 61st's Reunion Veterans, Family and Friends. Zogleman, Embers and fellow Vietnam Veteran Larry Cooperider got on a plane in December 2009 and met the Veterans that had founded the Library Project in Cau Duc, Vietnam. The idea of building a Library by the 61st was completed on December 9, 2011. The Bong Son School Library was handed over to the teachers in a celebration of hope between past enemies, now friends. Now 15 years later the Library continues bringing the hopes and dreams of the children of Bong Son to life, with computers, books and more. The Library Project's friends continue to visit with annual scholarships, English Language support, and most importantly, outstretched hands of friendship as "WE ALWAYS COME BACK!"

The initial relationship between Steve House and Ezell Ware found its roots in the inspiring story of a black soldier who left the segregated South---only to land in a struggle for survival along side a racist captain in the jungles of Vietnam. The bridge they built in 1968 found its reincarnation in the 2009 bridge built by the 61st with the Library. This is the legacy of Vietnam Veterans, joined by the Helicopter pilots and crewmen in what will forever be known as the "HELICOPTER WAR." Their story inspires, we hope, another Library at Phu Cat, Hue or Quang Tri, Vietnam as a treasured Legacy, known to all the locals for having "Always Come Back." This is our story and an invitation to join our legacy, very American.

Video Presentation #3 – Pennies from Vietnam – Tracy Mathis Smith

After a career in commercial real estate development, Tracy Smith became a freelance columnist, author, and public speaker. She completed broadcasting school and worked as an Associate Producer with Naka Productions on the Telly Award-winning documentary "Moving America's Lighthouse" with Walter Cronkite. Decades later, Mr. Cronkite plays a pivotal role in Tracy's debut book, *Pennies from Vietnam. A Sister at Home, a Brother at War*, published by McFarland Books in 2024. Several Helicopter pilots were located in her extensive search that served with her brother Larry, some that were shot down with Larry and others that rescued him! Through storytelling, Tracy has seen much healing, both in herself and in her readers. She shares family stories and personal experiences with grief and PTSD, to promote healthy discussion about generational trauma.

Video Presentation #4 – "The Legacy of Fort Wolters, U.S. Army Primary Helicopter School, Mineral Wells, Texas, 1956-1973" – Wes Sheffield

Wes J. Sheffield is the author of the book, "Helicopter Training at Fort Wolters, Mineral Wells and the Vietnam War" published in July 2024, Arcadia Publishing and an aviation/aerospace professional and historian. He has taught history at Dallas Baptist University and is an active member of the West Texas Historical Association, serving as the organization's social media editor. His interest in Fort Wolters began while employed with Bell Helicopter, where he met and later interviewed former Vietnam War helicopter pilots while writing a narrative history of Fort Wolters, US Army Helicopter School.

The presentation will cover the beginning of the U.S. Army Primary Flight School in 1956, until its closure and deactivation of Fort Wolters in 1973.

Originally a World War II infantry training center, followed by a brief stint as a US Air Force base, Camp Wolters was redesignated a US Army installation in July 1956, and its primary mission was to train helicopter pilots.

Mineral Wells offered an ideal climate and terrain for flight training with predominately clear skies, rolling open ranch land, high bluffs, and the Brazos River valley. An integral part of Mineral Wells' economy, the flight school expanded in the 1960s due to escalation of the Vietnam War. During the war, with the exception of the US Navy, all helicopter pilots receiving primary flight training passed through Fort Wolters. During its 17 years of operation, over 40,000 pilots were trained, which included international students from 33 countries. The last Fort Wolters pilots graduated in 1973, and it was formally closed in 1975 and was converted into an industrial center.

Video Presentation #5 – Remembering CPT Scott Alwin – Pamela Fullerton

Honor in the Air is a documentary for all who love Aviation, the Military, and the Heroes who have flown in service to our nation. The film focuses on the life of Captain Scott R. Alwin, a helicopter pilot who served five tours during the Vietnam War with the 68th AHC (1967-1972). Scott, a Wisconsin native and one of 16 siblings (all preacher's kids), was awarded more Combat Air Medals than any aviator in military history from any branch of service. He was also awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Silver Star, multiple Bronze Stars, Purple Hearts and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry. The story also reflects the true valor and determination of those with whom Scott fought and serves as an example to be shared with our children and grand-children and as a touchstone for all of us who want to honor the unsung heroes in our own lives. The story is told thru interviews with fellow veterans, siblings, archival film, and personal letters.

The in-person introduction by HIA Co-producer, Pamela Fullerton and contributor, Penny Alwin Kleinhans, reveals the behind-the-scenes story of Scott's life, his accomplishments, and the making of the documentary. It's an interesting glimpse into the creation of a flyer's passion. There will be a Q & A after the film.

Video Presentation #6 – Truths & Myths About the Vietnam War – Georgia Chapter

The 46-minute Vietnam documentary film entitled "Truths and Myths about the Vietnam War", (with an introduction for actor Sam Elliott), is about what we did. It focuses on information, lessons learned that those who served want Americans to know.

It examines the treatment of returning veterans, media influence and humanitarian acts by U.S. troops - and challenges the predominant view that the war was unwinnable.

It presents a different narrative, something you don't hear or read about in school.

It tries to tell that there was a purpose to our service -that it was for an important cause.

Finally, this documentary argues that the Vietnam War could have been won at several points using sensible strategies, saving thousands of lives.

Background: This documentary film was created and produced by the Atlanta Vietnam Veterans Business Association Foundation. There is no cost to viewers or their organizations.