



## Going to Vietnam to Face my Father's Ghost.

By Hugh Wilson



They say babies can hear in the womb. If so, then I have heard my father's voice. Deep and resonant. I have photos of him and my mother from that time, together for one last week in Los Angeles. They laughed and played in the pool, squinted from beach chairs holding hands, stood arm in arm. Some of the photos are torn in places, clipped at odd angles. Army personnel are instructed to remove all signs of combat before a soldier's belongings are sent home. If I heard my father's voice at that time, then I heard more clearly my mother's laugh, full and carefree. I never heard her laugh like that again.

My father and I share the same name: Hugh. He died five days before I was born. It's not easy to be born to a woman in mourning – you have a job to do. I believe I did it well. We were two against the world and I grew to know her adoring gaze as both a son and all that was left of my father. It would take 48 years for me to learn I couldn't undo anyone's past; nobody told me I didn't have to.

My mom remarried just before my fourth birthday. I had a new father. Soon I had a new brother and sister. I lived a happy childhood. But underneath the perfect family of five, white dog and half-acre plot on Millwood Lane laid a secret only my mom and I shared. I'd know it when I walked up the short walkway of my grandmother's home, the house of my birth, the same walk Hugh had strolled as a teen, the same walk the two men in their finest military dress had strode somberly, at whom my mother had screamed, sobbing, to go away.



Bull, Hugh's dad, who died when I was ten, was a grizzled ex-logger and machinist with massive forearms, who favored his corner armchair and white undershirts. Hugh's mom, Maebelle, was a tough daughter of a farmer who spent her years as the wife of a drinking man. Their life was simple and small and hard. What I ended up in was entirely different.

We stayed in touch for a while with Hugh's family but lost contact once my teen years hit. I adapted to a new life, and over time my past faded into a far-off story about a hometown hero lost, the adored son with the half-cocked grin, beloved athlete and student of Plymouth High. The youth I would come to know was affluent and pressured. I attended prep school, Duke University, went to Wall Street for my 20s, finally quitting it all to study art. The prevailing feeling I had at that point was one of not belonging. To any place.

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### Angry Skipper Association, Inc.® Board of Governors

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## Going to Vietnam to Face my Father's Ghost.

Maebelle died when I was 31, and I was given two old suitcases of Hugh's. They were a matching set, worn maroon leather and monogrammed with his initials: H.S. He was the first in the family to go to college and the suitcases had been a gift from his parents to commemorate what a big deal that was.

Now they contained memories of his life. Military orders, old checkbooks, his letters home, a cracked Roy Smeck ukulele, funeral arrangements, stacks of newspaper spreads on the weekly local football results, and more carefully preserved clippings related to his death: "PHS Star Athlete Killed in Vietnam" and "Son Born to Slain Athlete." I'd open them from time to time but couldn't make sense of the contents. Somewhere along the line I realized my dad smelled like old paper.

The suitcases stayed in basements and attics, untouched for years, sometimes moved from place to place with my other belongings. The older I got, the stranger it all seemed. The story of my birth, the small-town romance between the homecoming queen and captain of the football team, was like a fairy tale. The place I had come from and the place I knew growing up were so at odds that they almost negated each other's existence.

By my mid-40s I was newly married, raising my own stepchildren. We moved three times in four years, and as I boxed and unboxed the spare belongings of my life and scrawled "Hugh – Books" or "Hugh – Art," I started to question who the name referenced. Hugh. Was it his, or mine? I could feel a chain to an invisible past but couldn't grasp hold of it, nor understand exactly what it was hooked onto.

A couple of Hugh's old buddies died. Then his older sister. The blind spot within me grew and I felt pressure for resolution. I began searching out people who knew him, hoping somebody would recognize something in me I couldn't see for myself. Time was running out.

I found two of his best friends from high school. One, a former track star, still lived in Michigan. I visited him and heard stories of the glory days, about drinking beer and racing cars out on Shelton Drive, fights behind the drive-thru. How my dad was "the greatest guy," the hard-hitting fullback, the strongest kid he'd ever seen, loved by all. It was an impossible standard to live up to. Hugh's other buddy was retired in Alabama, and his stories had less glory, more humanity, though he too revered my father. He and Hugh had worked odd jobs together; they cleaned chicken coops, built rock walls, took turns riding on the fender of the family car collecting bottles for gas money to go out cruising on the weekend.

Neither man gave me what I was looking for, though I wasn't quite sure what that was. I must have wanted them to say, "Hey Hugh, you're just like your old man," but they didn't say it. It was defeating, trying to connect with the myth of a man. I wondered what would he have thought of me. I attempted to rationalize the misconnection – Hugh was just a kid, really, these were high school stories and I was now twice his age. But deep down I feared there was little of him in me and he had become an irrelevant detail of my past.

The suitcases were all that were left to turn to. Most of the contents were related to the Army. I never thought of Hugh as a soldier – he didn't want to go to war, worried he wouldn't be a proper hero, and doubted privately that he would make it home – but I sat down anyway to carefully catalog each item in the suitcases.

There were a lot of references to his platoon. I tracked down a list of surviving members of D Company, who called themselves the Angry Skipper Association. I began contacting guys who would have served with Hugh during 1969, but didn't expect to find much – he had only been in-country for seven weeks when he died. Most men didn't return my calls. Finally, someone directed me to the man who'd been in charge when Hugh was killed.

When I went to Lytle, Texas, to meet Clyde "Sgt. B." Bonnelycke, I was more excited than anxious. By now, I had given up hope someone was going to give me any great insight into Hugh as a man, or myself. I was content just to pass through the lives of men who had known him, as if I could catch some residual energy like an old stone from a campfire might still be warm to the touch. Sgt. B.'s home was on a quiet roundabout suburb in the flats not far from San Antonio. He greeted me with a loose handshake. His wife was chatty and brought me in. We sat at the small kitchen table and I brought out incidence reports, letters, news clippings, anything that could trigger his memory.

*Continued on page 3*

## Going to Vietnam to Face my Father's Ghost.

He'd snatch things out of my hands, "Let me see that," and tilt his chin back, peering through his reading glasses. But Sgt. B. couldn't remember anything specific about Hugh. This bothered him. He was a man who fought to save his men, and now I showed up to find out about a father I never knew, and he couldn't come up with details. He paced the kitchen, hallways, bedrooms and back, returning with gift after gift: Army pen, Marines pen, a Turkish rug he'd gotten while stationed in Germany, wall calendars from his native Hawaii, and one with cuddly pets, "For the kids, you know."

I didn't know what he had to tell me, if anything. He relayed war story after war story and I was happy listening; he earned two silver stars with the Marines before joining the Army. But all the while there seemed to be an answer he was looking for that was just out of reach.

Dusk set in. Finally, Sgt. B. pushed away from the kitchen table and snatched a small, framed map off the wall. A thick border snaked through it, "CAMBODIA" written above. The map was faded green and hard to read. He waved it in front of me and pointed to a small black line.

"Here, here, you see this little line here?"

I peered close to the frame.

"Right here," he rapped the glass, "this bend in the river. See it? That's where it happened. That's where the RPG hit that goddamn tree."

The official incidence report had said Hugh was injured by a claymore mine. But Sgt. B. was certain it was an RPG. I didn't argue. When I left Lytle, he gave me a copy of the map. I stuffed it in my bag along with everything else he'd given me, but didn't think I'd do anything with it.

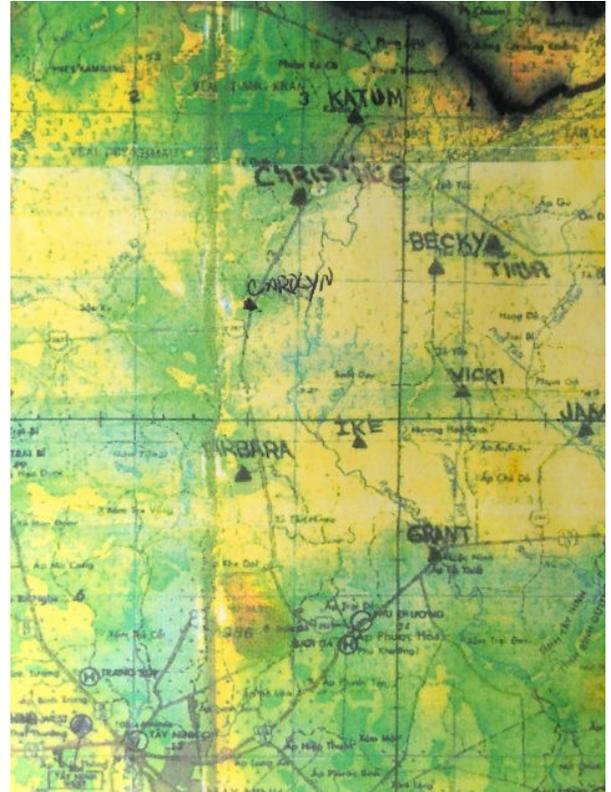
Several months later I attended the annual reunion of the Angry Skipper guys in Herndon, Virginia. Former cops, truckers, real estate brokers, salesmen, and lawyers gathered at a windowless conference room at the Marriott Courtyard, and I heard stories of lost buddies and warm beer, weeks in the jungle, nine-inch centipedes, firefights and rain. None of them remembered Hugh but one man remembered the incident. It wasn't Hugh's injury he remembered, it was the call the platoon received announcing my birth: a boy born to a dead man. Joe Villa, second platoon sergeant, covered his face and cried.

Up to that point there had always been a part of the story I couldn't accept. I hadn't been sure if I fully believed Sgt. B., or the stacks of official military correspondence in the suitcases, the banal lists of personal effects, the browned telegrams, the letters from Nixon, the Army Chief of Staff, even a state senator from Pennsylvania, who clearly bore such a moral burden of the war that he hand-wrote condolence letters to the family of every fallen service member. But the way the Skipper guys at the reunion accepted me, some with hope, others with sorrow, confirmed indeed that it all had in fact happened.

I decided then I would go to the bend in the river, not knowing exactly why. I made light of the trip to people who asked.

"Yeah, it will probably all be Nike factories now."

But a piece of me worried I might peel back a bandage that had been laid over old wounds, possibly tinkering with the building blocks of who I understood myself to be. Still, I felt I needed to go. I arrived at the Tan Son Nhat International Airport on July 15, 2017, three days before Hugh had, 48 years prior. It was early in the monsoon season and I went to the Cu Chi region between Saigon and Tây Ninh where the Angry Skipper guys had humped through the jungle. Like most of my generation, I had grown up with the American mythology of the Vietnam War: napalm, burning bodies, fucked-up kids with M 16s, "Apocalypse Now."



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What I found instead was peaceful and beatific. Bright rice paddies, the plowing farmer, stoic water buffalo – the only hint of danger was the grind of the daytime insects that dropped suddenly in the quiet.

Each day, I read Hugh's letters and then biked out into the countryside. His words described much of what I saw. The letters were familiar territory – I admired his penmanship, imagined listening to his words, tried to identify with this stranger who occupied some place within me – but here I felt close to him for the first time. I began to separate the looming father from a young man who didn't know much of the world beyond his small town. I was far more savvy now than he could have been then and I had a sudden urge to look out for him, a feeling I might have been able to protect him. I even came to the misjudged conclusion that if I had the opportunity to go back and serve with Hugh I would have taken it, to spend nights up pulling watch together and talking about life and back home, my mom, telling jokes, hearing to the croak of the frogs at dusk. Most importantly, to watch out for that RPG or tripwire that I might have been able to see coming.

A few days later, I found a ride north to the bend in the river, tucked deep in the Tây Ninh Province. During the war, Ho Chi Minh sent arms and supplies down through Laos and Cambodia and across the porous jungle around Tây Ninh, not far from Saigon. The Province became a hotspot for the Army. Helicopters ferried the platoons above the thick canopy, dropping the men into clearings to spend months living in the bush.

A young man named Minh drove me up. He had a boxy haircut and surprised eyes and didn't look much older than fifteen. We had crouched by my bed and zoomed in on my computer, tracing the route on the map Sgt. B. had given me. My anticipation built around what I might find. The old map matched up quite well with the current road system. There were new roads, but the structure was there. One of the new roads ran directly to the bend in the river.

When we got in the car he said, "You father, *bambambam*?"

He nearly shouted certain words for emphasis.

"Yes."

"You, *bambambam*?"

"No."

My stomach gave a turn. The story had always been mine alone. When other people referenced it, I felt like a kid who had fallen and didn't know he was hurt until he noticed the worried expressions on other people's faces. Had something horrible happened to me? But Minh hadn't meant anything by it and we didn't talk about the war again.

We pulled out onto the road north and he flipped through Vietnamese club songs on the radio. I leafed through "A Pocket Guide to Vietnam," also from the suitcases. It had been published by the Department of Defense in 1966 and was crinkled with water damage. I was now nervous about what I could discover in the jungle.

After an hour, we passed under a decorated archway. "Tây Ninh!" Minh said and gave me a thumbs up. I took a photo. We skirted Black Lady Mountain and continued toward Cambodia. Forty-five minutes later the river appeared on our right and we crossed at a low dam. Huge nets were slung between tall poles like dinosaurs wading in the shallows and the water was muddy and even. *Cont. on page 10*

The bend wasn't far now. We crossed and headed back down river. The sky was stormy and we rode in silence. In just a few turns we were on the new dirt road headed to the water, just north of Landing Zone Ike, the dirt base where my father had slept the night before the ambush, just a few clicks from the place where Sgt. B. had knocked on the glass and said, "Here. Right here. That's where it happened." We stopped where the dirt became soft. Cassava grew at the water's edge. Behind it the jungle stretched anonymously. I passed through a rubber grove and found a worn path into the jungle and felt the uncertain space I had known my whole life.

I walked deeper into the foliage and noticed the shape of the trees, the gaps of tall grass. A thin snake sped across the path and wind rustled the leaves. I heard the putt-putt of an old engine and the faint bass of a local pop song. It was a peaceful place. Still, it seemed almost gimmicky to be here, to be searching for such a big answer on this random spit of land. I'd had a good life, a good man who raised me. Maybe this was self-indulgent.

*Continued on page 10*



## 2019 Reunion Info

Our reunion will be held at the **Double Tree by Hilton DFW Airport North (4441 W. John Carpenter Freeway, Irving TX 75063)** from **May 15th thru May 18, 2019**. You must call the Hotel and make your own reservations or go to the ASA website and use the hyperlink to reserve your room online. Their number is **972.929-8181**, use group code "ASA." The hotel will honor the discounted group rates for 3 days prior to May 15th and 3 days after May 18th, for those early arrivals and stay-overs, based on availability. If you are arriving early, please make your reservation early. These **rates are good until April 26, 2019**, so please register before April 26th. Hotel room rates will revert to market after that date. The hotel rates are as follows:

Run of the House:                      \$ 99.00 plus tax

**You must tell the Hotel you are with the Angry Skipper Association for these preferred rates. They will not change the rate if you forget to tell them you are with the Angry Skipper Association group.** The hyperlink for online hotel room reservation can be found on our home page at [angryskipperassociation.org](http://angryskipperassociation.org).

The Hotel is about 1.5 miles from the entrance of the airport. The hotel offers shuttle service to and from the airport. There are many options for transportation at the airport. The phone# for the shuttle is 972-929-8181. You need to call and give the operator your exact location, and then the operator will tell you where to go for the nearest pickup location. Alternatively, a cab would cost approx. \$25 and Uber is about \$12 -\$15, one way.

### Banquet meal description:

- 1: Fresh Garden Salad, Ranch or Balsamic, Herb Roasted Chicken Breast with Lemon Thyme Sauce, Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes and Seasonal Vegetables, Cheese Cake;
- 2: Fresh Garden Salad, Roasted Carved Beef in Red Wine Reduction, Roasted Garlic Mashed Potatoes and Seasonal Vegetables, Cheese Cake;
- 3: Fresh Garden Salad, Ranch or Balsamic, Roasted Vegetable Pasta with Creamy Alfredo Sauce, Cheese Cake.

Our hospitality suites will be located in the Earhart Room, located on the ground floor, off the Lobby. The hours for the Hospitality suite is from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. The Hospitality suite will open Wednesday, May 15th at 8:00a.m. and close at 12:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 19th. When you arrive, please pick up your welcome package in the Hospitality Suite. The package will contain your meal tickets, name tags, agenda, shirts & caps, etc. **Registration table will be open on Wed, May 15 and Thur, May 18th from 9am to 8pm.** Make sure you pick up your stuff by then.

Golfer's, please register on or before April 25, 2019. See Registration Sheet for details. Green Fees & Cart pricing as well as Rental Clubs reservation number's.

The registration process will be handled by **Register with Ease**. We met Stacey in Orlando, 2006. She has taken amazing care of us since! VISA and MasterCard will be accepted, as well. Register With Ease has set-up a website for online registrations. Go to <http://www.angryskipperassociation.org> for a direct link, or you can mail the registration, with check or credit card information, to the address in the registration form. You may also fax the form with credit card info directly to the Stacey. Or, register on-line, then send the check, payable to Angry Skipper Association, Inc., to Stacey.

## Angry Skipper Association, Inc. ("ASA")

### May, 15th thru 18th, 2019 Reunion Registration Form Dallas Fort Worth, Texas (City of Irving)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (AKA) \_\_\_\_\_ Platoon: \_\_\_\_\_ Yr(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Ph: \_\_\_\_\_  
 How many will be in your group? \_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
 List First and Last names of all in your group: \_\_\_\_\_

Date/Time	Activity	Cost/Person	No. of	Total
<b>May 15, 2019</b> - 8:00AM, Wed.	Golf at <u>Bear Creek, West Course</u> (register by Apr 25) <i>Green Fees &amp; Cart \$50, Rental Clubs available call 972.426-3275 to reserve</i>	\$50	_____	_____
<b>May 16, 2019</b> - Thurs	Trip to Ft Hood (first 105 persons) Transportation Depart Hotel @ 7:00am., Tour Ft Hood (see next page for details); Dinner @ 6:15pm at <u>Hard Eight BBQ</u> , back to the Hotel by 8:00pm.	\$35	_____	_____
<b>May 17, 2019</b> — Fri.	Ride a Huey. Reservation Only. (see next page for details) # of Vets <i>Pay on-site</i> # of family members		_____	_____
— 10:00AM, Fri.	<u>Coyote Ridge Golf Club</u> (register by Apr 25) <i>Green Fees &amp; Cart \$45, Rental Clubs available call 972.395-0786 to reserve.</i>	\$45	_____	_____
<b>May 18, 2018</b> - Saturday	4:30pm Group Photograph (Members Only & Everyone) 5:30pm-10:00pm Reunion Banquet (check meal selection below) # of Herb roasted chicken: _____ # of Carved Beef: _____ # of Pasta _____ <i>*see meal description on previous page.</i>	\$45.00	_____	_____
Shirts & Caps	Number of Reunion Shirts: (Grey. <b>Order by March 31st</b> ) Sizes: Small: _____ Medium: _____ Large: _____ XL: _____ XXL: _____ XXXL: _____	\$30.00	_____	_____
	Number of ASA Caps (Charcoal)	\$20.00	_____	_____
<b>TOTAL EVENTS REGISTRATION</b>			\$	_____

Registration Fee: 35.00  
 Contribution/donation: .00  
 Total Events Registration from above: \_\_\_\_\_ .00  
**TOTAL PAYMENT:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .00

\_\_\_\_\_ Check here if you are not attending and want shirts & caps mailed to you. Add \$13.00 for postage and handling.

**Please register by May 8, 2019. Please complete form and mail with check (payable to Angry Skipper Association, Inc.) or with credit card info to:**

Stacey Smith Wall  
 Register with Ease  
 3037 Golfview Drive  
 Vero Beach, FL 32960  
 Ph: 863.325-0077  
 Fax: 863.325-0051

**PAYMENT METHOD:** \_\_\_ Check Charge to (check one): \_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_ VISA  
 Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Month/Year

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Do not send this form if you registered online at : <http://www.angrystickipperassociation.org>

### Hotel Reservations, Phone 800.449-1619

*Tell them you are with the Angry Skipper Association group. Group Code "ASA"*

**You must arrange your own Hotel room. It is not included in this registration.**

**Your Welcome Package will be available in the Hospitality Suite. Please pick up your package when you arrive.**

## 2019 Angry Skipper Reunion Activities

There's a heap of fun going on in Dallas - Fort Worth! Plan to come early & stay late!

We've rounded up the best of DFW just for you - military-related, historical, cultural, sports, and entertainment sites - they're all here in our home town. Head east and experience the glitzy Dallas culture or "Go west young man" and find yourself in Cowtown - "Where the West Begins". Each city is unique and very different from the other. We're certain that with a group or as a family, you'll find all kinds of fun in Dallas - Fort Worth! Below, find info for 2 great group excursions followed by lots of individual or small group activities. Go to <https://www.jimgarvin.org/> to find more activities and all the details for your planning purposes - descriptions, details, locations, hours, admission, etc. Questions? Use the Email Me link at the top of the website page. As questions are asked, these pages will be updated. If you're wondering about something, it's likely others are too so we look forward to your questions! *Jim Garvin (Range, 70-71), Reunion Host*

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### Fort Hood Tour—Thur, May 16, 2019

LTC (ret) Don McConnaughay (Skull6, XO 71-72) who retired out of Ft. Hood, arranged our tour of Ft. Hood. The 2/8th Cav is currently deployed but will return before our Visit/Tour of Fort Hood. We've rented 56-seat upscale luxury coaches with restroom onboard. Seats limited to 105 persons. Complimentary Coolers with ice and water provided.

- **Depart Hotel 7:00am;**
- 1st Cav Horse Detachment Demonstration;
- Tour 1st Cav Museum;
- Tour 1st Cav Memorial Chapel;
- Lunch on base;
- Briefing by 2/8th Cav HQ;
- Dinner at Hard Eight BBQ;
- **Return to hotel by 8:00pm**

Cost of trip:

Lunch at the Mess Hall - approx \$5.50 on site;  
Transportation per person: \$35.00 round-trip  
BBQ Dinner \$12—\$20



### Ride a Huey - Doors Open! Friday, May 17, 2019

Includes 30 min pre-flight training followed by 10-12 min flight for groups of 6-8. Get your platoon buddies together for your group flight or we'll arrange small group flights for you. Ladies & family members welcome to fly! NOTE: due to time and number of passenger limitations, first priority will be reserved for Angry Skipper veterans, with wives/families as standbys. The Huey is reserved for us all day so we expect to be able to meet everyone's request for flights/groups.

Tour Cavanaugh Flight Museum on site. (optional) Info: <https://www.cavflight.org/>

Plan for 3-4 hours round trip for flight, museum, transport..

Cost of trip:

- \* Huey flight per person: \$90;
- \* Cavanaugh Flight Museum: \$6 (Optional);
- \* Transportation by Van per person: \$8 round-trip.

Pay cash/check at the hotel in the Hospitality Suite. See Jim Garvin for this trip.

**NOTE: tennis shoes required for flight.**



## Orlando, Florida Group Pictures May, 2018

hyperlink: [http://angryskipperassociation.org/Reunion\\_Orlando\\_2018/Orlando%20Reunion.html](http://angryskipperassociation.org/Reunion_Orlando_2018/Orlando%20Reunion.html)



### Individual Activities—Explore with your family or small groups of friends.

By Jim Garvin (Range, 70-71) Reunion Host

All details at [JimGarvin.org](http://JimGarvin.org)



Jim and Susan Garvin

On the way back from the tour at Ft. Hood, we will stop and have dinner at the [Hard Eight BBQ](#), 10-15 minutes past the Hotel. Hard Eight BBQ is



a family owned and operated business that offer a fun atmosphere, delicious food, and some good 'ol southern hospitality. Hard Eight is an authentic eating experience where you will be served "Texas style" straight from the pit by the Pit Master who prepared your food.

### Dallas Area

The "Oil Bidness" & J.R.Ewing call Dallas home but round these parts, she's just known as "Big D". Dallas is a sprawling, diverse city with lots to offer all around, but most folks head downtown for a first stop at the site of the JFK assassination, brushing up on new conspiracy theories, peering out of "the assassins window" in the Sixth Floor Museum, and then head on up to the top of The Ball - Reunion Tower - where, on a clear day, you'll see purt-near to Fort Worth. Head up north to the Bush Presidential Library for an interactive experience with the history we all lived - 9-11, the war on terror, and the Decision Points Theater. Art, music, history, and aviation come alive at multiple sites all over Dallas and it's all yours for the taking.

### Fort Worth Area

Git yer spurs on and head on over to "Where the West Begins"! Known locally as "Cowtown", Fort Worth is filled with history, high-quality museums of all varieties & all kinds of Texas fun. Roam the streets where Butch Cassidy made history and hang out at Sundance Square, home of the 3-story Chisholm Trail Mural. Mosey on down to the historic Stockyards for an up-close & personal visit with our local herd of Texas Longhorns during the twice-daily cattle drive down Exchange Ave. Saddle up for the championship rodeo every Fri & Sat nights, "scoot yer boots" at the "The World's Largest Honky-Tonk" and chow down on a Texas-sized steak at the Lonesome Dove. Find your "Fort Worth state of mind" and you'll go home with a new western swagger and can honestly claim: "This ain't my first rodeo!"

### Grapevine Area

Just a hoot n' a holler from our hotel, historic Grapevine is a visitor's paradise. Take the shuttle to ride Grapevine vintage railroad and explore Main Street shops, restaurants, museums, theatres, wineries & more. Shuffle on down to nearby Bass Pro Outdoor World, Grapevine lake, Gaylord Texas Resort, Grapevine Mills Outlet mall & more. All aboard for fun in Grapevine!

## Angry Skipper Association, Inc.® Treasurers Report

Angry Skipper Association, Inc.®  
 Profit & Loss (unaudited)  
 January 1 through December 31, 2018

Angry Skipper Association, Inc.®  
 Balance Sheet (unaudited)  
 December 31, 2018

**Ordinary Income & Expense  
 Income**

Banquet/s	\$ 5,221.00
Donations	3,611.00
Registration Fees	2,391.00
Shirts, Hats, Patches	<u>3,323.00</u>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 14,546.00</b>

**Expenses:**

ASA Website	\$ 309.26
Legal	666.00 (1)
Banquet	4,986.65
Hospitality Room	750.00
Insurance	343.00
Merchant Account	632.70
Photographer	100.00
Postage & Delivery	374.35
Printing & Reproduction	734.00
Professional Services	4,004.15
Shirts, Hats & Patches	<u>3,093.23</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 15,993.34</b>

**Net Income (Loss) (\$ 1,447.34)**

**ASSETS**

**Current Assets:**

Checking	\$ 2,586.02
Deposits	600.00 (1)
Accounts Receivable	<u>00.00</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u>\$ 3,186.02</u></b>

**LIABILITIES & EQUITY**

**Liabilities**

**Current Liabilities:**

Accounts Payable	<u>00.00</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b><u>\$ 00.00</u></b>

**Equity**

Opening Bal Equity	\$ 3,316.97
Retained Earnings	1,316.39
Net Income	<u>( 1,447.34)</u>

**Total Equity** \$ 3,186.02

**TOTAL LIAB. & EQUITY \$ 3,186.02**

(1) \$100 deposit held by DJ for 2019 Reunion.  
 \$500 deposit held by Dbl Tree by Hilton DFW

Thank you Robert Burke, CPA (Skull, 70-71) for preparing the Association Tax returns since 2006.

(1) renew Service Mark (trademark)

### Business Meeting, 5/19/18 Hilton Garden Inn, Orlando, Florida

1. Membership decided to go to Dallas/Ft Worth in 2019; 2. Ed Regan gave the Treasurer's Report which was accepted by the membership; 3. Membership voted for Phoenix, Arizona for 2020; 4. Members voted to increase pricing of shirts to \$30 for S-XL, and \$35 for 2XL-3XL, and caps to \$20; 5. Members voted to add Bronze Star, Air Medal and Gallantry Cross to the back of the cap; 6. Members voted to add reunion Location and Year to the right sleeve of our shirts; 7. Meeting Adjourned. **\*If you did not earn these medals, then please do not buy the cap.**



**New Member/s:**

Glen Brumbelow, Cat 71-72  
 Walter D. Douglas, 1967  
 Paul R Curtis, Cat 69-70

**Deceased Member/s: (Date of Death)**

Robert M. Caldwell; Skull, 70-71 (29June17)  
 Terry Shoopman; Cat, 68-69 (12May18)  
 Harold L. Thomas; Range, 70-71 (2015)  
 Gordon Pitts, Range, 70-71 (Dec18)

**Membership count:**

**Active Members: 670**  
**Members Online: 295**



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Remember the good times forever”***

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### **Going to Vietnam to Face my Father's Ghost.** *(cont from page 4)*

I'd always had the feeling I had let Hugh down somehow. Maybe by not having my own children, or by not being able to easily settle down, always searching. But I didn't have those thoughts now and the past was far away. As I followed along a path he might have walked, I could almost imagine him as a young man alongside me. I eyed the trees halfheartedly for signs of battle, tripwires, but of course found nothing after so much time. I walked a little further, then it started to rain. It was a fine rain that doesn't really make you wet. The real rain was not far behind, so I stopped.

I knew I was supposed to feel something, but the moment was almost too grand. Should I say a prayer? Apologize for his life cut short? I'd cried for him before, for my mom, even for myself, though I couldn't be sure why. But standing there now, no emotion came. I was neutral and present. I saw Hugh from afar – not as a part of me, but as separate and distinct, and from that distance I could see that he was both my father and not my father, a hero to some and a forgettable man to others. I took a long look around. A woman who knew nothing about me had once told me Hugh's spirit has stuck around to watch over me. I pictured it there with me now, his spirit spread out like an invisible vast horizon. I was much further into life than he could have imagined.

The real rain started and I ran back to the car. Rubber sap was collecting in the red dirt in places, milky white. Minh was sleeping with his feet up; a Vietnamese crooner sang on the radio. Minh sat up blearily and turned his hands up. I shrugged. The rain pelted the roof and blurred the windows. I rested for a moment, seeing if it would stop. Minh waited patiently. It was late in the day and we were hungry; I signaled that we should eat. Minh started the car and we rolled forward.

I watched the jungle slip by in the rain. I didn't want to forget this place, like I didn't want to forget Hugh. But part of me knew in order to find myself I would have to let him go.

Hugh and I share the same name. That used to burden me, the pressure to live for two, and maybe that is something I will never be fully rid of. But in glimpsing the jungle from afar as we drove away, the clearest sense I had of him was that he was a young man who never had a chance to fulfill his dreams. I didn't see my father. And in that separation, I began to finally see the part of him that is in me. For now, I have left him back at the bend in the river. I haven't abandoned him, we will know each other again. But I am traveling a little lighter. I must keep moving forward. As myself.

Internet link to story: <http://narrative.ly/going-vietnam-face-fathers-ghost/>