

Kirby Lawson
227th Assault Helicopter Battalion Reunion
Welcome Dinner Remarks
April 2019

There are three basic reasons that bring people together...Other than the main reasons that bring two people together.

In larger groups, such as we have here tonight, the three reasons that bring people together are:

- (1) To take note of something that has already happened....to either celebrate it or to deplore it.
- (2) To take note of something that hasn't happened, or prevented from happening.... and
- (3) to salute those we hold responsible for any of the above mentioned reasons.....and that is the nicest kind of reunion.

It is why this occasion is so special.

I have recently reviewed General Hal Moore and Joe Galloway's latest sequel to the book, "We were soldiers once, and young."

It is entitled "We are soldiers still". It is the story of their journeys back to the battlefields of Vietnam.

When the movie about the 7th Cavalry came out, we were all proud to tell everyone that I was there or it was an example of the type of flying we were all involved, even in the later years.

We all loved the talks Joe Galloway made at many reunions around the country as he described Army helicopter pilots and crews and ground troop's heroic efforts during the war.

Bottom Line: Moore and Galloway's sequel does provide gritty and vivid detail with reverence and respect for their comrades, while capturing man's sense of heroism and brotherhood and love for their men and former enemies.

Soldiers are obligated to obey orders, go places and do things which are often hard and dangerous.....and do these without debating, questioning, or voting.

Soldiers are obligated to face up to separation and privation....soldiers face very cold days, very steamy dark nights....and the real possibility of never returning....

The valor and sacrifices made by our crews were honorable and worth the forfeitures made by our fallen comrades.

Notwithstanding, in Vietnam we did what our country asked us to do and we savor the memories and friendships we have.

Thus today, to us, every veteran's day is also very special.

Michael Normal, a noted author, wrote;

“We now know why men who have been to war yearn to reunite....not only to tell stories or look at old pictures....not just to laugh or weep....comrades gather because they long to be with the men who once acted their best.....men who suffered and sacrificed.

We did not pick these men. They were delivered by fate and the military...

But we know them in a way we know no other men....we never gave anyone such trust...

They were willing to guard something more precious than our lives...

They would have carried our reputations, the memory of us....it was the part of the margin we all made....the reasons we were willing to die for one another.

We cannot say where we are headed from here on out...

Ours are not perfect friendships; Those are the province of legends and myths...

A few of our comrades drift from us now, sending back only occasional word....we know that already even these fall into silence....some of the men will stay close....a couple, always at hand.

As long as we have memory, we will think of them, every day....

We are sure, when we leave this world, our lasts thoughts will be of our families and our comrades...such good men.”

I am proud to have served with the likes of each and every one of you...and I don't think of our 227th fallen crew members, that we will name in memorials later, as died in vain....

They flew and fought not so much for our country, but they did to protect their fellow soldiers and accomplishment of our mission and duty.

For the sake of the sacrifices they made, our own honorable dedication must be steadfast...

So I cherish this time together....and hope we will be able to meet again before our time on earth is gone.

I salute you warriors and your families all !!

Pouvoir “Able To”

Air Assault !!

Kirby Lawson, COL, retired

Ghost Rider 6

Led first flight into Cambodia, 1 May 1970