



## PEDRO RESCUE HELICOPTER ASSOCIATION 2008 REUNION, April 17-19 Montgomery, AL.

This was the first time I had the opportunity to attend the Pedro Rescue Helicopter Association reunion and had an enjoyable time meeting, visiting with and sharing memories and stories of our shared service in the Kaman HH-43B/F helicopter.

The reunion was held at the Drury Hotels in Montgomery, AL, where we had a hospitality room for gathering and meetings. The event was hosted by fellow Pedro Rescue Helicopter Association member Len Shults and Wife. On Friday, April 18<sup>th</sup> Len had arranged a Trolley Tour of Montgomery, AL and Maxwell AFB,



AL. During the Montgomery tour we stopped at the beautiful and historic St. Johns Church, built in 1894, in downtown Montgomery. Next was a stop at Union Station, which is now a visitor information center, where we even had a train come through while we were there. We departed Union Station and stopped next at a scenic overlook of the Alabama River for a short time to stretch our legs.



After boarding the trolley at the scenic overlook one of the members related a story that had just happened to a couple of the members. While we were standing at the overlook railing a man and woman (not with our group) came walking by on the sidewalk and noticed the Pedro hats that they had on. He came up to them and asks if they were associated with the Air Force HH-43 helicopters. They told him that we were and then the man told them that an Air Force HH-43 had rescued him in Vietnam. I thought this was quite a coincident that someone who had been rescued in Vietnam by an HH-43 in Vietnam would happen to be walking by our group that day. By the time I heard the story, the couple had already departed...wished I'd been able to meet them and get a little story from them.

We next took a tour of Maxwell AFB, stopping at the Air Park to view the aircraft on display (no helicopters!!) and take a group photo a few photos of the aircraft on display. We then went on to the Officer Club for lunch and then returned to the hotel for an afternoon association business meeting.





The business meeting was called to order by President John Christianson and was attended by board members, VP James Tayler, Treasure Chris Taylor, Secretary (and fellow RotorHead) Ed Cartwright & Member at Large (and fellow RotorHead) John Flournoy as well as the members present.

Saturday morning we went the Gunter Annex of Maxwell AFB for a tour of the Enlisted Heritage Museum, <http://afehri.maxwell.af.mil/> located near the Senior NCO



Academy. I had never visited this museum and found it to be very interesting and a real tribute to the contributions of enlistee's to the heritage of the USAF. The museum has a wealth of artifacts and displays donated by service men and women and their families. There is a nice display dedicated to Medal of Honor recipient A1C William H. Pitsenbarger and there is a monument display next to the entrance honoring each enlisted Air Force Cross recipients. I would highly

recommend a visit to this museum if you should have the chance to be in Montgomery.

Our banquet was held on Saturday evening at the Maxwell AFB, Officers Club. The banquet was opened



with the POW/MIA table ceremony and our guest speaker was CMSgt Malcolm W. McVicar Jr. Director, AFEHRI (heritage museum). Chief McVicar gave a very impassioned speech about the heritage we all share as members of the United States Air Force and the part all play in the history of our Air Force.



A very enjoyable experience and I would encourage all RotorHeads to take the opportunity to take a little vacation and attend the reunions of the different associations that reflect our service careers.

Later,

SMSgt Jim Burns, RotorHead