

In this issue

A Melancholy Evening

Three Squadrons Share F-100 Sabre Honors

IN THE RED

AIR FORCE PILOT FLIES 700TH COMBAT SORTIE

615th TFS Sets Wing Record

Home Towners

Ladder to Heaven (jpg)

Weather Detachment Uses New Item To Predict Behavior of Hidden Clouds

Phan Rang Self-Help Project Results in ‘Tower of Babel’

Pilots Receive Praise

Phan Rang Boasts Perfect Shot Record

Airmen Turn Instructors

ANG Man Wins 1st In Contest

Crew Chief Settles Questions Of Real Hercules Ownership

This Is My Airplane (jpg)

Red Horse Helps Build Church

Telephone Section Keeps You Talking At Phan Rang AB

Clouds Aid Pilots In Surprise Attack

Jack Anderson wrote on Facebook: 45 years ago tonight (25 November) was also a Monday. Dennis Hawley, Ray Hudek and myself were enjoying a Thanksgiving Dinner provided by my mom in Seattle. Tomorrow we boarded a plane at McChord for a place we had little knowledge of, Phan Rang. With the turning of midnight along the way and crossing the International Dateline, we arrived at our destination on Thanksgiving Day, 1968. RIP Ray, a casualty of agent orange. Be well Denny. This is a melancholy evening. (SSgt Jack Anderson eventually wrote about his experiences on the flight line at Phan Rang and those ‘Remembrances’ are available in a book on [Amazon](#) titled “Vietnam Remembrances Tales of the Flight Line”.)

Three Squadrons Share F-100 Sabre Honors

(Phan Fare, December 13, 1967)

For more than a decade, the F-100 Super Sabre has been known to be a durable aircraft, but durability never before reached the point that it recently did here at Phan Rang.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN
...keeping the memories alive
Phan Rang AB News No. 8 “Stories worth telling”

For the first time in the history of the Super Saber and possibly any other single engine jet in combat, three F-100 aircraft each amassed more than 100 hours of flying time in a single month. All three fighter squadrons of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing turned the trick almost simultaneously.

This accomplishment gave birth to a new, exclusive club - the 100 Hour Club. As nearly as can be determined, there are only three crew chiefs in the Air Force with the necessary qualifications for membership. They are Sergeant Donald Schlomer, 21, of Stover, Mo., 615th TFS; A1C William G. Medford, 20, Georgetown, Ky., 614th TFS; and A1C Lee W. Wallace, 19, of Perham, Minn., 352nd TFS.

The average flying hours for the F-100 in a combat zone is approximately 55 hours. The fact that the normal time was almost doubled was attributed to the skill of the crew chiefs plus a lot of pampering, petting and hard work.



F-100D 55-3591 VM 352 TFS pilots last mission
Kirk & Paul Minert 1968/69
Added by Kirk Minert

The pilot of one of the record breaking aircraft, Major Gerold O. Buster, 36, of Happy, Tex., stressed the importance of the record: “This is a tribute to the enthusiasm and dedication of maintenance men in the wing, particularly to the crewchiefs and supervisors that made this record possible. A record such as this is particularly important in a combat zone where each

additional hour means an increase in combat capabilities.”

The three crew chiefs have been named the top crew chief of the month in each squadron.

IN THE RED

(Phan Fare, December 13, 1967)

Recently the bi-monthly rotation of the 8th and 13th Tactical Bomb Squadrons took place and the hue of several areas changed from yellow to red.



The arrival of the 13th was marked by the sudden appearance of “Oscar” the skeleton insignia of the “Grim Reapers.” The 13th emblem is displayed in several places, including the operations building and the Officers’ Club Bar.

So until the next rotation, yellow is out, red is in, and “Oscar” is showing up everywhere.



AIR FORCE PILOT FLIES 700TH COMBAT SORTIE

PHAN RANG (7AF) - Air Force Major John W. Postgate Jr., 33, Scottsdale, Ariz., a former forward air controller (FAC) who now flies F-100 Supersabres of the 614th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Phan Rang Air Base, recently completed his 700th combat sortie in Vietnam.

A Veteran of 475 sorties as a FAC and 225 as an F-100 pilot, he made this comment after completing his milestone 700th mission, “It is the best flying in the world for a professional fighter pilot. This is our job, and this is where we should be.”

His 700th sortie took him 20 miles east of Pleiku. First he flew escort for three C-123 Provider crews of the 315th Air Commando Wing as they carried out a defoliation mission to deny jungle sanctuaries to enemy soldiers. Then he bombed enemy fortifications in the area.

During his combat career in Vietnam, he has had a number of close calls. As a FAC, he made two emergency landings in his O-1E Bird Dog observation craft when its engine was damaged by enemy ground fire.

During an air strike 20 miles southwest of Saigon, in support of friendly forces under enemy attack an enemy bullet lodged in his F-100.

"I felt a thud hit the forward portion of the aircraft," he recalled. The bullet severed two hydraulic lines, resulting in the loss of utility hydraulic pressure, but Postgate continue his attack on the Viet Cong position and made a successful landing back at Phan Rang.

A Veteran of combat sorties in major battles at Loc Ninh, Ke Sanh

and Kontum he participated in an air strike during the enemy Tet offensive which resulted in the death of 40 enemy troops in the area of Ban Me Thuot.

NOTE: This item has been cleared for release by MACV.



John Postgate Jr., unknown, Pinski, Hendrickson and unknown

615th TFS Sets Wing Record

(Phan Fare, December 13, 1967)

From October 29 until December, 933 sorties were flown by personnel of the 615th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 'Black Panthers', without a single abort of any aircraft either in the air or on the ground.

During this 38 day period, the planes of the squadron underwent 32 double phase inspections and there were 11 scheduled engine changes.

Weapons personnel worked extremely careful and there were no aborts due to weapons handling.

The average turnaround time for the squadron is a speedy 30 minutes.

In 38 days the pilots flew 1,423 hours and dropped nearly 900 tons of bombs.

Lt. Col. Julian D. Sawyer, 38, from Denver, Colo., squadron commander stated, “Effectiveness of maintenance is what helped reduce our aborts for the month. It also was



achieved by an increased coordination between our maintenance and operations personnel.”

“Munitions played their part as well, by insuring that their work and causing no aborts due to munitions failure. We have been told that 38 days is a wing record.”

Home Towners

(Phan Fare, December 13, 1967)

Have you been promoted, received an award or taken part in a newsworthy project recently?

If so, the best way to let the folks at home know about it is to fill out a form 175 through your squadron orderly room or the Office of Information. Only a few minutes of your time will get the news back to your hometown newspapers.

Being in Vietnam makes any news item all the more interesting - why not let your friends and relatives know about it?



Ladder to Heaven...only in Vietnam! My apologies to Bruce Dobson, the photographer, because I need to level with everyone, I photoshopped the power line out that the ladder was leaning on.

Weather Detachment Uses New Item To Predict Behavior of Hidden Clouds

(Seventh Air Force News, Oct 23, 1968)

By SGT. JIM WEST

PHAN RANG - Predicting what the weather is going to do is vital to the operation of any Air Force installation.

Detachment 22, 30th Weather Squadron, responsible for weather observations in the Phan Rang AB area, has a new piece of equipment to help keep track of thunderstorms and rainy

areas - WTT-1E Weather Radar system, capable of spotting rain-filled clouds at distances up to 150 miles.

"The radar sends out a signal and it is reflected off the water in the cloud," explained Capt. Charles L. Richardson, Mobile, Ala., a Phan Rang weather forecaster. "The reflected signal is picked up and displayed on the radar screen."

Before the far-reaching radar system was installed, the detachment had to rely on visual observations to plot Storm areas. "Observations are sometimes restricted by low-level clouds," Captain Richardson said. "The observer can only see the low clouds and will often miss thunderstorms building in the distance. The new radar system can penetrate those low level clouds and locate rainclouds that can't be seen by an observer on the ground."

The radar system is also used for tracking weather paths. "After the radar spots a cloud we can keep track of its movement and get a good idea of where it is going and what effect it will have on Phan Rang flying activities," Captain Richardson said.

Detachment 22 serves 12 flying units at Phan Rang.

Phan Rang Self-Help Project Results in 'Tower of Babel'

(Seventh Air Force News, Oct 23, 1968)

PRANG RANG - Self help projects are not new to Phan Rang AB, but the 35th Security Police Squadron's Law Enforcement Section recently completed a project with a new slant on self-help. The project is Security Police Tower, Delta 7.

The tower, which rises far above the 16-foot height of the other posts on the perimeter, was built in 15 days with volunteer labor from men of the three Law Enforcement Flights on base.

"Only one person involved in the project, AIC Dennis L. McLaughlin, South Peking, Ill., an advisor from 35th Civil Engineering Squadron, had any prior construction experience," commented SSgt. Robert L. Holmes, Prichard, Ala., "but the men worked hard together and we made up for it."

"When we say it's the sturdiest tower in Vietnam, we are not kidding," stated AI C James B. Hahn, Youngstown, Ohio, "Two of the supporting posts could be knocked out and it would still stand."

Another worker on the project, A1C James W. Talley, Rienzi, Miss., said, "At night a .50 caliber machine gun is mounted in the tower, completely neutralizing the threat of "sapper" teams on this perimeter."

Other workers on the "Tower of Babel" as they call it, include Airmen First Class William H. Nichols, Bedford, Va., Robert W. Hampton, Jacksonville, Fla., and Russell E. Baker, Jr., Indiana, Penn. and Sgt. Edward H. Phillips, Jr., 22, Springfield, Ill.

Pilots Receive Praise

(Seventh Air Force News, Oct 23, 1968)

PHU CAT - Two F-100 Supersabre pilots of the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing here were recently praised by Capt. John T. Stitzel, air liaison officer for the 11th Light Infantry Brigade, for their "skill, courage and timeliness displayed in the face of heavy ground fire."

The pilots, Lt. Col. Robert J. Massoni, Napa, Calif., and Maj. Richard V. Jamieson, Drumright, Okla., were dispatched to support elements of the 11th Brigade pinned down in a rice paddy five miles northwest of Quang Ngai City.

The ground forces were under heavy automatic weapons fire originating from three enemy positions. "Their situation was dismal, no marking devices and approaching darkness," stated Captain Stitzel in his letter of commendation to Col. LeRoy J. Manor, Morrisonville, N.Y., 37th TFW commander.

Colonel Massoni and Major Jamieson were the third set of fighters directed against the position, and were directed to hit two .50-caliber automatic weapons positions that had been firing at the preceding flights.

"They delivered their ordnance against the positions, and were credited with the destruction of both gun position," continued Captain Stitzel. "The relief that they gave to the friendly ground troops and the following fighters cannot be estimated."

"Their complete disregard for their own safety was witnessed as they rigidly adhered to the run-in headings required due to the closeness of the friendlies," stated Captain Stitzel.

Phan Rang Boasts Perfect Shot Record

(Seventh Air Force News, Oct 23, 1968)

PHAN RANG - For the twelfth consecutive month, men assigned to Phan Rang AB units have received all scheduled immunizations.

At a base located in a combat zone with large number of men away from the area for extended periods, this record was not easy to achieve.

The two men most responsible for this accomplishment are MSgt. Irwin G. Couch Jr., Aurora, Colo. of the 35th Combat Support Group and Sgt. Daniel J. Vajdos, Wichita Falls, Tex., 35th USAF Dispensary.

Sergeant Couch, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the Central Base Personnel Office, Airman Records section, initiates the process of notifying personnel who are due immunizations. "We start the process almost two months before immunizations are due," Sergeant Couch said. "We break the roster down according to the individual's unit, and then provide the units with the names of the personnel assigned who are scheduled for immunization."

After the units notify the individuals of immunization dates, Sergeant Vajdos takes over and gives the immunizations. Because of base size and the higher number of immunizations required in Southeast Asia, Sergeant Vajdos puts in eight to 10 hours a day, six days a week, and gives between 4,500 and 5,500 immunizations a month.

"We couldn't have set this record without the help of many people," Sergeant Vajdos said. "It took the combined effort of the base personnel office, the units, the dispensary and the individuals."

Airmen Turn Instructors

(Seventh Air Force News, Oct 23, 1968)

PHAN RANG - Fourteen airmen are taking part in a new civic action concept here.

The program, designed to teach correct English pronunciation to local high school students is under the direction of the Base Civic Action office.

"The students are taught the fundamentals of the language by regular school faculty." Said 1st Lt. Brian A. Wolter, Civic Action Officer. "This way we hope to teach them to speak the language more fluently."

ANG Man Wins 1st In Contest

(Seventh Air Force News, Oct 23, 1968)

PHAN RANG -Ten Air National Guardsmen, including a, Phan Rang AB Sergeant, were among winners in the fourth annual National Guard Bureau Photo Contest.

SMSgt. Howard W. Belles, a member of Colorado's 140th Tactical Fighter Wing at Buckley Field, Denver, before his activation in January, earned \$150 as top winner in color competition. Sergeant Belles accompanied the wing to Phan Rang.

Runner-up in the color category, worth \$75, was MSgt. Christopher B. McPherson, 146th Support Squadron, Van Nuys, Calif.

The winning color photo is a dramatic picture of fire fighters extinguishing flames from a burning aircraft. The runnerup entry by Sergeant McPherson is a serene picture of a C-97 aircraft flying over water.

Capt. Edward C. Lee, 187th Tactical Reconnaissance Group, Dannelly Field, Montgomery, Ala., was declared winner in two color categories, aerial refueling and air defense.

Other Air Guard color category winners were Capt. James L. Delaney, 118th Military Airlift Group, Nashville, Tenn., air commando; Maj. William L. Bundy, 145th Military Airlift Group, Charlotte, N.C., airlift; and Sgt. Ronald Sevagian, 163rd Combat Support Group, Ontario, Calif., support.

Black and white category winners were MSgt. John J. McHugh, 103rd Fighter Group, Bradley Field, Windsor Locks, Conn., tactical fighters; TSgt. Kenneth W. Scheider, 153rd Military Airlift Group, Cheyenne, Wyo., airlift; TSgt. Edward Fernez, 105th Military Airlift Group, White Plains, N.Y., miscellaneous; and A1C David H. Port, Warwick, R.I., support.

Crew Chief Settles Questions Of Real Hercules Ownership

(Seventh Air Force News, Oct 23, 1968)

By SGT. JACK SWIFT

TAN SON NHUT - After Uncle Sam has paid Mr. Lockheed and associates more than \$2.5 million for a C-130 Hercules troop-cargo transport aircraft, question arises: "Who owns it?"

Does it belong to the Government, the Air Force, or to the major air command that uses it? Does the turboprop "workhorse" belong to the nation's taxpayers? Or perhaps to the base where it is stationed?

A little time spent around a flightline provides a quick and definite answer.

There is one man who constantly refers to "my airplane" with a pride of ownership one might expect from a new car owner. One man lives with his" transport constantly, welcomes it back from missions, and knows its personality better than anyone.



This is My Airplane

Sgt. Clifford H. Roberts Jr., South Point, Ohio, makes adjustments on a C-130 Hercules turboprop during a preflight check. This aircraft, the 86th consecutive on-time "blocked" transport for Detachment 1, 834th Air Division, broke the all-time Vietnam record for on-time scheduled takeoffs. Sgt. Roberts, assigned to the 772nd Tactical Airlift Squadron is on his first Vietnam tour of duty.

Who owns the airplane? The crew chief; the man most responsible for keeping the C-130 operation around the clock.

Naturally, then, the head man almost always a veteran NCO with years of experience on each system within the operation, and

well versed in the skills associated with airlifting supplies and fighting men.

But there are notable exceptions, like Sgt. Clifford H. Pete" Roberts, South Point, Ohio, E-4.

Sergeant Roberts, a quiet, courteous NCO with the 772nd Tactical Airlift Squadron, has already earned the "Mornin' chief!" salutation from his fellows in spite of his young years.

He was at Tan Son Nhut on his first Vietnam trip late last month, when the responsibility fell to him to service the 86th consecutive "on time" aircraft for Detachment 1, 834th Air Division. The chief serviced his "Herky Bird" and got it rolling down the flightline to break the all time Vietnam record for consecutive on-time, or blocked," transports. Cam Ranh Bay AB held the previous high with 85.

Sergeant Roberts said the one system he has to watch closest is the landing gear. The tires, he noted, get rough wear from landing on unimproved landing strips; since many are short-field assault landings, the brakes get heavy use and must be checked extra carefully.

He also told of an odd business arrangement carried on when a crew chief "buys and sells" his aircraft.

He explained that a squadron Phase Inspection Team is like a business firm with a product to sell. When a C-130 passes a certain number of hours flying time the team is required to go over it with a magnifying glass to catch any functional discrepancies.

"After the discrepancies are taken care of the team then offers to "sell" the Hercules to a prospective crew chief," he said, "The chief must whip out his own glass and go over it from end to end, much in the same manner that a used car dealer would scrutinize an automobile."

If all systems are "go," the crew chief "buys" the aircraft — he voices satisfaction that the Phase Inspection Team is offering him a vehicle totally ready for flight, and accepts responsibility for it.

"But the transaction is not over yet," he continued. "From here, the chief has to distribute his wares to the consumer his flight crew. The flight engineer has the crew give the airplane a final check: power systems o.k., hydraulic equipment all sealed tight, electrical apparatus checks, and so on until every system. has been verified.

"The final 'sale' is to the aircraft commander, and this is the big one. By now everyone is certain that the bird is ready to fly, but Lady Luck still gets her fingers in once in a while. Any little thing can get in the way and cause a malfunction.

Sergeant Roberts paused and grinned. "But that's why I gotta know my airplane like a baby," he concluded.

Red Horse Helps Build Church

(Seventh Air Force News, Oct 23, 1968)

PHAN RANG - The 554th Civil Engineering Squadron (RED HORSE) recently took part in a new kind of civic action project.

The squadron, in cooperation with Chap. (Lt. Co.) John E. Pickering Jr., Crowley, La., base chaplain, and Keith E. Kayser of the United Christian Missionary Alliance donated wood for construction of the first Montagnard church in the Phan Rang area. It will be built at Vu Bon Hamlet.

Chaplain Pickering commented, "We supply the wood and give whatever technical advice is necessary, but the actual construction of the church is left to the people themselves. In this way, it gives them a feeling of pride in what they have built."

Mr. Kayser, a veteran of two years Vietnam missionary service, said, "The Montagnards are fiercely independent people. Once they decide to do something, they do it themselves."

Telephone Section Keeps You Talking At Phan Rang AB

(Seventh Air Force News, Oct 23, 1968)



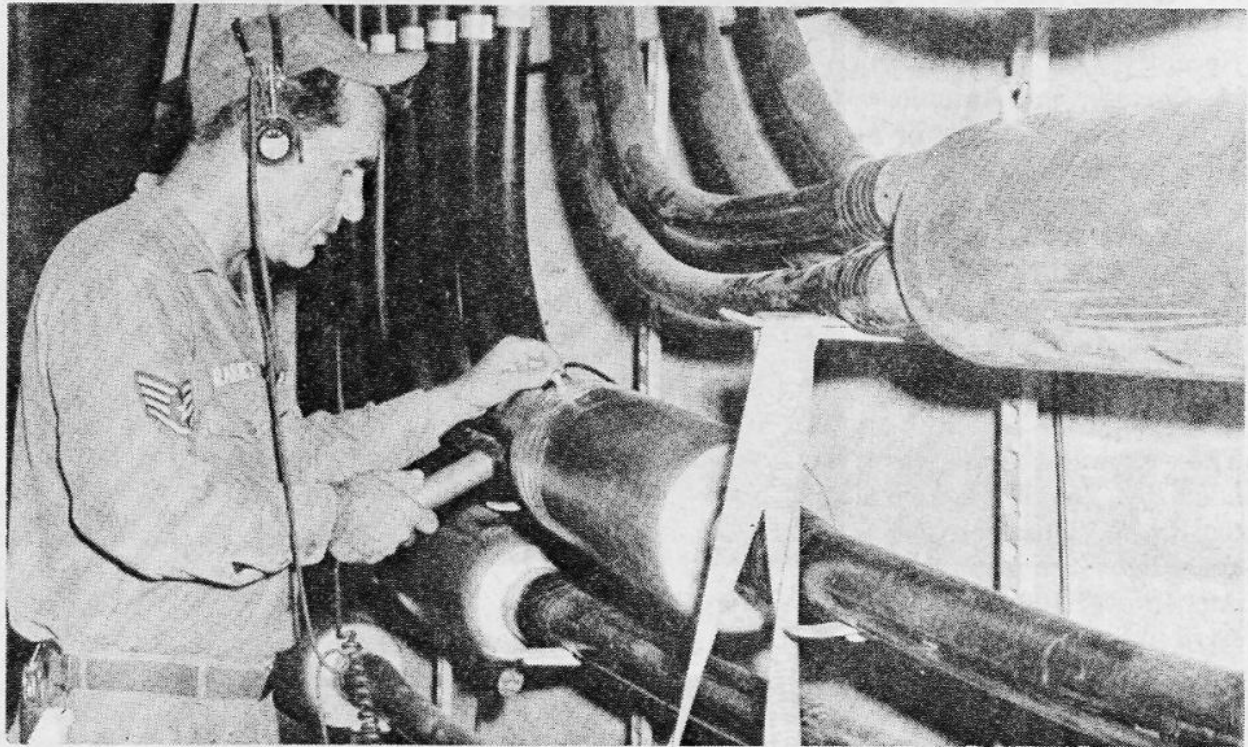
BY SGT. SID BLANTON

PHAN RANG - The telephone on your desk is hardly ever noticed until you want to use it and it doesn't work. That's when the Telephone Maintenance Section of the 1882nd Communications Squadron at Phan Rang AB becomes very important people.

Under the leadership of Capt. Charles R. Riggs, Poteau, Okla., and MSgt. Raymond Gauthier, South Hadley, Mass., the 14 men of the Telephone Maintenance Section are responsible for the installation and maintenance of the more than 5,000 telephones located on base.

One section, the Outside Plant is responsible for removing, relocating, installing and repairing all telephone instruments and key systems on the base.

In addition, the men in the Outside Plant are also responsible for maintenance and repair of approximately 25,000 cable pair miles of telephone cable.



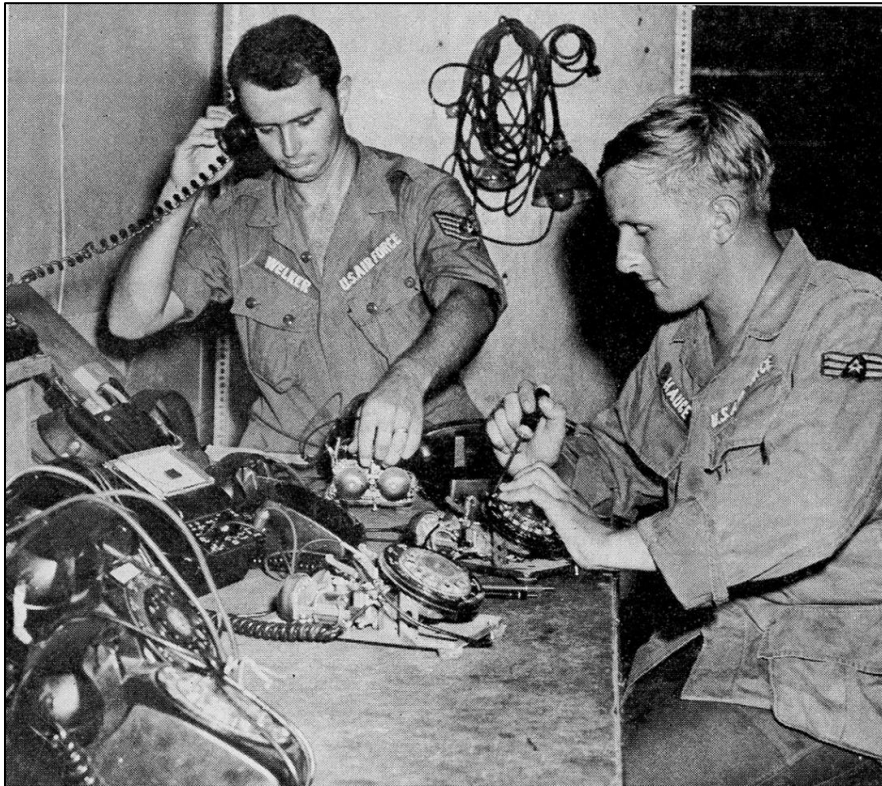
Looking for Leaks

Sgt. Victor J. Rasky, Miami, Fla., a cable splicer with the 1882nd Communications Squadron, uses a sensitive listening device to detect cracks in pressure cables used at Phan Rang AB.

The Inside Plant section is under the supervision of SSgt. Charles N. Rose. Dyersburg, Tenn., and makes up the other half of the Telephone Maintenance Section.

The four men who work the Inside Plant are responsible for more than 1,500 pieces of telephone switching equipment making up the Dial Central Office. In addition, these men are also responsible for maintaining approximately \$500,000 worth of maintenance switches.

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Telephone Repair

SSgt. Norman T. Welker, (left), Alameda, Calif., and Sgt. Gary L. Hauge, Red Owl, S.D., members of the 1882nd Communications Squadron at Phan Rang AB, repair and test broken telephones.



Cable Checking

Sgt. Michael L. Phillips, Rancho Cordova, Calif., a cable splicer for the 1882nd Communications Squadron, checks a cable for proper assignment.



Monitoring a Call

SSgt. Charles N. Rose, Dyersburg, Tenn., NCOIC, Inside Plant Telephone Exchange, monitors a call to make sure the line is working properly.

Clouds Aid Pilots In Surprise Attack

(Seventh Air Force News, Oct 23, 1968)

PHAN RANG - A low cloud cover is usually the last thing that an Air Force fighter pilot wants to see when he is tasked with pinpointing his ordnance on an enemy base camp.

The low clouds make it difficult for the forward air controller (FAC) to spot enemy activity, and the enemy often takes advantage of this situation by increasing his activity.

That is how the situation appeared to Maj. Jack E. Wilhite, Lakewood, Colo., and Capt. Galen J. Smith, Littleton, Colo., both members of the Phan Rang based 120th Tactical Fighter Squadron, when they flew their F-100 Supersabres against an enemy base camp nine miles southwest of Vinh Long City.

"The weather was so bad that I didn't see how we could get in there," commented Major Wilhite, recalling his first look at the target.

A well-versed FAC and a few strategically located openings in the clouds made a difference though. "The FAC did a helluva good job," said Major Wilhite. "He spotted some enemy troops in the open and apparently they weren't aware of any aircraft in the area because of the low cloud cover."

"The FAC marked the target with smoke rockets and Captain Smith was able to hit the target within five seconds after the marker went in," reported the major. "He came through an opening in the clouds and got them completely by surprise."

"The element of surprise enabled us to cause a considerable amount of damage," Major Wilhite said. "We ended up killing 8 enemy soldiers and destroyed 8 fortifications, 5 sampans, 6 large bunkers and damaged 5 more fortifications."

Note: I know not all of these stores have a dateline of Phan Rang, but we have a lot of members and readers that have an interest in stores dealing with the F-100, C-119, C-47 and C-123 aircrafts. Some may have friends or may have even been stationed at one time at these other bases.

Also if you are new to the Phan Ranger mailing list and you would like copies of previous issues of the Phan Rang News, just send [me](#) a note and I'll will send one your way. If you know of a Phan Rangers that would be interested in receiving news about Phan Rang AB, please let [me](#) know and I will add them to the mailing list.