

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive
Phan Rang AB News No. 135 **“Stories worth telling”**

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Phan Rang AB Timeline (Compiled from the Phan Rang Newsletters)

DATE (y/m/d)			EVENT
1965	10		6258 th Combat Support group arrives at Phan Rang along with a few Air Police also assigned to the 6258 th .
1965	11	1	1882 nd Communication Squadron activated and proceeded by the 1 st MOB Team 56-65. (Bruce Dobson)
1966			Runway at Phan Rang AB was constructed of reinforced aluminum planks measuring 2 feet wide, 121 feet long and 2 inches thick. The sections are held together by fitted grooves on the side and secured by aluminum locking bars.
1966	3	17	389 th Tactical Fighter Squadron with F-4C Phantom equipped aircraft arrive at Phan Rang Air Base
1966	3	20	The 366 th Tactical Fighter Wing is the first permanent USAF organization to be

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			stationed at Phan Rang AB arriving from Holloman Air For Base, New Mexico.
1966	4		C Co. of the U.S. Army’s 62d Eng. Bn. (construction) has begun building a 5,000 man cantonment area to accommodate elements of the 101 st Airborne Div.
1966	7	16	615 th Tactical Fighter Squadron from England AFB, La., landed their F-100 Supersabre at Phan Rang AB. The 615 th Tactical Fighter Squadron is assigned to the 366 th Tactical Fighter Wing.
1966	7		612 th Tactical Fighter Squadron from Misawa Air Base, Japan arrived earlier in July and is assigned to the 366 th Tactical Fighter Wing.
1966	10	10	The 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing became operational at Phan Rang Air Base being transferred from Da Nang Air Base, South Vietnam.
1966	10		The 8 th and 13 th Tactical Bomb Squadrons moved to Phan Rang Air Base.
1966	10		The 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing transfers to Phan Rang AB to become the parent wing and replace the 366 th TFW.
1966	8		352 nd Tactical Fighter Squadron arrives Phan Rang Air Base.
1966	10	10	614 th Tactical Fighter Squadron arrives Phan Rang Air Base.
1966	10	10	615 th Tactical Fighter Squadron arrives Phan Rang Air Base.
1966	10	10	612 th Tactical Fighter Squadron arrives Phan Rang Air Base.
1966	10		A new aircraft control tower put into operation by the 1882 nd Commutations Squadron, the tower replaces a mobile van, designed for a bare-base facility.
1966	11		A 10,000-foot concrete runway opened.
1966	11		Col. George S. Weart, 46, of Chicago, the 35 th Wing Commander was the first to fly a Phantom off the new concrete runway.
1966	11		A B57 Canberra Bomber Squadron transferred to Phan Rang
1966	11		A squadron of F4C Phantom Jet tactical fighters transferred to Da Nang from Phan Rang.
1967	1	8	612 th Tactical Fighter Squadron inactivated at Phan Rang Air Base.
1967	1		A 70 members of Det. B of the RAAF’s No. 5 Airfield Construction Squadron, assisted by the USAF’s (“Red Horse”) Civil Construction Squadron, started creating a small Aussie village on Phan Rang
1967	2		101 st Airborne Div,’s “Sreaming Eagles” transferred to Phan Rang AB from Kontum.
1967	4		No. 2 Squadron arrives at Phan Rang AB and becomes a part of the 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing
1967	8	17	The 352 nd Tactical Fighter Squadron from Myrtle Beach AFB, S. C. begins combat

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			operations at Phan Rang AB with F-100 Supersabre fighters.
1967	8	26	The American Red Cross opened it new \$24,000 recreation facility at Phan Rang Air Base
1967	8		Colonel Bill M. Richardson became commander of the 315 th Air Commando Wing.
1967	8	11	The grand opening of the new Phan Rang Airmen’s Open Mess.
1967	8		A \$300,000 dial telephone system became operational.
1967	9		General Westmoreland tours base, visits with 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing and elements of the 101 st Airborne Division of the Army.
1967	9		The 315 th Air Commando Wing, commanded by Col Bill M. Richardson, moved three of its airlift (C-123 Provider) squadrons, it chief of maintenance section, and its headquarters to Phan Rang
1968	1		The 13 th Tactical Bomb Squadron was deactivated and the 8 th Tactical Bomb Squadron was permanently assigned to the 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing, ending a rotational tour from Clark AB. PI.
1968	3	7	At 0105 hours Vietcong attacked the base firing 10 rounds.
1968	4	30	120 th Tactical Fighter Squadron arrives Phan Rang Air Base.
1968	5		The 120 th Tactical Fighter Squadron arrives at Phan Rang AB from Colorado being the first Air National Guard unit deployed to a war zone as a unit since World War II.
1968	5	5	17 82mm mortars, of the M30 type made in Communist China, landed adjacent to the 2 Squadron domestic quarters.
1968	6		Bledsoe-Orr Dining Hall opens in the fire station.
1968	6	23	At 0005 hours Vietcong sappers attacked the base damaging 5 aircraft and 3 US servicemen wounded in action.
1968	7		Maj. Charles R. O’Briant, of Fairborne, Ohio, director of medical services at Phan Rang AB, was selected by the Society of U.S. Air Force Flight surgeons as the Pacific Air Forces’ Flight Surgeon of the Year for 1967.
1968	8	21	At 0003 hours Vietcong attacked the base damaging 2 aircraft and wounding 2 airmen.
1968	9	23	Colonel Herdon F. Williams completed his tour of duty in Vietnam as commander of the 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing.
1968	9	23	Colonel Frank L . Gailer Jr. assumed command of the 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing
1968	9	25	Two F-100 pilots of the 614 th Tactical Fighter Squadron and 355 Tactical Fighter Wing (Lucky Devils) kill 20 VC, five fortifications destroyed and five damaged in a recent airstrike in the IV Corps tactical zone.

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1968	9		Two security policemen, James Perry and Robert Spence were wounded while defending the base’s water pumping station one mile south of the base.
1968	9		Mortar rounds exploded peppering a C-123 aircraft with shrapnel and security police flight leader TSgt James W. Jeffress Jr. saved the aircraft by tearing out smoldering items from the aircraft.
1968	9		New air passenger and freight terminal, operated by Det. 8, 14 th Aerial Port Squadron, constructed by 554 th Civil Engineering Squadron opens.
1968	9		554 th Civil Engineering Squadron completes a 600-by-375 foot parking area for Air Force C-47 Dragonships of Flight B of the 14 th Air Commando Squadron.
1968	9		Det. 1, 504 th Tactical Air Support Group (TASG) recently completed a move from Binh Thuy to Phan Rang AB. The detachment operates the Theater Indoctrination School for forward air controllers.
1968	10	10	The 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing recently completed it 75,000 combat sortie since it began operations at Phan Rang Air Base in October 1966.
1968	11		Col. Frank L. Gailer, Jr. assumed command of the 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing
1968	11		Col. Herndon F. Williams, steps down as commander of 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing
1968	11		The Yanks overpowered the Aussies in a recent international volleyball competition at Phan Rang AB all-star teams from the 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing and the Royal Australian Air Force Number 2 Squadron.
1968	12		Colonel Bruno M. Larson has assumed the position of vice commander, 314 th Special Operations Wing at Phan Rang AB.
1968	12		A1C Kirk Minert downed 34 hard boiled eggs in one hour to pt the Air Force on top in the recent unofficial inter-service egg eating contest.
1968	9	16	The 116 th Combat Engineer Bn. At Phan Rang. The unit is the first battalion-size National Guard unit to serve in South Vietnam and will be responsible for the upkeep of Highway QL120 a key route from Da Lat to Bau Lat.
1968	11		315 th Special Operations Wins for the fifth time the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.
1968	12	7	Three 120 th F-100 Supersabres hit enemy a devastating blow, with eight bunkers destroyed and six damaged, ten fighting postions destroyed with another 15 uncovered, 110 meters of trench destroyed and a 2 ½ ton truck destroyed.
1969	1	8	New base fire station, combination structural and crash fire-fighting stations, opened by Col. Frank L. Gailer, Jr.
1969	1	10	554 th Civil Engineering Squadron “RED HORSE” phaseout complete which started on 5

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			November 1968.
1969	9		Col. Walter T. Galligan has assumed command of the 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing.
1969	3		The Viking theatre opens which was constructed by Red Horse in only 69 days.
1969	1	26	The base experienced a Sapper attack at 0015 hours with 74 rounds, 2 aircraft destroyed, 11 aircraft damaged, 15 US forces wounded in action and VC/NVA losses were 16 killed and one wounded in action.
1969	2	22	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0128 hours, receiving 86 rounds 20 aircraft damaged and 6 US forces wounded in action.
1969	2	24	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0132 hours receiving 10 rounds.
1969	2		Col. Amin George Jr., a native of Port Arthur, Texas, assumes duties of vice commander, 35 th TFW.
1969	3	15	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0117 hours receiving 34 rounds and 2 US forces wounded in action.
1969	3	15	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0554 hours receiving 7 rounds.
1969	3	16	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1904 hours receiving 5 rounds and wounding one US military.
1969	3	19	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0235 hours receiving 36 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1969	3	21	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2254 hours receiving 25 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1969	3	24	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0234 hours receiving 41 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1969	4	13	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0128 hours receiving 13 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1969	4	21	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2358 hours receiving 5 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1969	5	12	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0047 hours receiving 30 rounds damaging one aircraft and one personnel was injured.
1969	5	12	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0530 hours receiving 9 rounds damaging one aircraft and one personnel was injured.
1969	5	16	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0021 hours receiving 22 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1969	5	22	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0003 hours receiving 18 rounds without any

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			damage or injuries.
1969	5	22	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2108 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1969	6	6	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0303 hours receiving 15 rounds one aircraft damaged, three US personnel injured and 8 RVN wounded in action.
1969	6	7	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1620 hours receiving 3 rounds with two US casualties and 8 US wounded in action.
1969	6	11	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0001 hours receiving 17 rounds without and damage or injuries.
1969	6	18	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2359 hours receiving 14 rounds with one US forces wounded in action and no damages.
1969	6	20	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1924 hours receiving 4 rounds damaging one aircraft and no personnel injuries.
1969	6		Major Reed L. Stone, 35, (Provider C-123 pilot) Laredo, Texas, received the Silver Star Medal at a ceremony held at Phan Rang.
1969	6		First Lieutenant James L. Russell, 26, (Supersabre F-100 Pilot) Benton Harbor, Mich., received the Silver Star Medal at a ceremony held at Phan Rang.
1969	6		Staff Sergeant Lawrence S. Kirk, 33, (Security Policeman) Tye, Texas, received the Silver Star Medal at a ceremony held at Phan Rang
1969	7	23	Lt. Col. Allan E. Aaronson, San Antonio, assumed command of the 615 th Tactical Fighter Wing.
1969	7	15	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1543 hours receiving 3 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1969	7	19	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2325 hours receiving 11 rounds without and damage or injuries.
1969	7	20	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0649 hours receiving 3 rounds without and damage or injuries.
1969	8		Sgt. John M. Ramult III, Baltimore, received the Bronze Star Medal with “V” Device, Lt. Gen. James V. Edmondson, Pacific Air Forces vice commander-in-chief presented the award
1969	9	4	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2347 hours receiving 18 rounds with three aircraft damaged and 11 US forces wounded in action.
1969	9	13	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0007 hours receiving 5 rounds without any

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			damage or injuries.
1969	9	20	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1840 hours receiving 3 rounds with 3 US forces wounded in action.
1969	11	4	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0810 hours receiving 3 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1969	11	4	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1208 hours receiving 2 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1969	11	9	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1545 hours receiving 2 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1969	11	16	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0815 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1969	11	21	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0915 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1969	11		The Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with “V” device for valor was presented to the 14 th Special Operations Wing by Maj. Gen. Robert J. Dixon, Seventh Air Force vice commander.
1969	11		Sgt. Arnold J. Williams was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with “V” device for valor while assigned as a C-123 flight engineer.
1969	12	3	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0755 receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1969	12	14	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0940 hours receiving 3 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	9		14 load crews PCS from Tuy Hoa to Phan Rang, joining the 435th MMS. This was when the 31st TFW was shutting down at Tuy Hoa.
1970	10		U.S. Army’s 192 nd Aviation Co. (Assault Helicopter) along with all personnel and essential operational equipment arrived at Phan Rang AB from Phan Thiet.
1970	1	5	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0635 hours receiving 3 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	1	20	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1905 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1970	1	25	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1555 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1970	2	11	The base experienced a sapper attack at 0005 hours with three VC/NVA killed in action

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			and one VC/NVA wounded in action.
1970	2	16	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2350 hours receiving 8 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	2	21	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2235 hours receiving 5 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	3	4	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1528 hours receiving 1 round with one US forces killed in action and 6 US forces wounded in action and one RVN killed in action and two RVN wounded in action.
1970	3	14	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2125 hours receiving 7 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	4	1	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0024 hours receiving 12 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	4	1	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0935 hours receiving 2 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	4	5	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1513 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1970	4	7	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2325 hours receiving 6 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	4	9	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1021 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1970	4	20	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0657 hours receiving 1 round with one US forces being wounded in action.
1970	5	3	The base experienced a sapper attack at 0045 hours receiving 12 rounds with one US forces wounded in action.
1970	5	6	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2105 hours receiving 6 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	5	7	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1104 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1970	5	16	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2130 hours receiving 12 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	5	30	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0749 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1970	6	6	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1004 hours receiving 2 rounds without any

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			damage or injuries.
1970	6	10	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1003 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1970	7	2	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1020 hours receiving 2 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	7	9	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0916 hours receiving 2 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	7	20	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0747 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1970	8	8	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1941 hours receiving 1 round with one US forces killed in action.
1970	8	22	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0929 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1970	8	31	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1434 hours receiving 1 round with injuries to one US forces personnel.
1970	10	4	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1019 hours receiving 2 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1970	11	8	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1014 hours receiving 1 round without any damage or injuries.
1970	11	29	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1058 hours receiving 2 rounds with injuries to one US forces personnel.
1971	5	29	The 35 th Tactical Fighter Wing received the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm for its contributions to the military forces and local citizenry of the country.
1971	6		15 Security Policemen wounded from two M26 fragmentation grenades thrown into a party at the air police club.
1971	7	6	The last F-100 Combat mission flown in Southeast Asia by Capt. William “Chip” Taylor.
1971	7	31	The 35 th TFW inactivated in Southeast Asia and resources passed to the 315 th Tactical Airlift Wing.
1971	7	31	315 th Tactical Fighter Squadron inactivated at Phan Rang Air Base.
1971	7	31	614 th Tactical Fighter Squadron inactivated at Phan Rang Air Base.
1971	7	28	Colonel Cregg P. Nolen Jr. of Port Arthur, received the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit and the Distinguished Flying Cross for his achievements as an F-100 Supersabre pilot and tactical fighter wing commander in Vietnam.

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DATE (y/m/d)			EVENT
1971	7	31	615 th Tactical Fighter Squadron inactivated at Phan Rang Air Base.
1971	9	30	315 th Tactical Airlift Wing inactivated in place at Phan Rang Air Base.
1971	7	27	The base experienced a standoff attack at 2325 hours receiving 7 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1971	9	25	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0854 hours receiving 3 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1971	11	9	The base experienced a standoff attack at 1308 hours receiving 2 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1972	3		Lt. Col. Carl W. Brage, 17 th Special Operations Squadron received the Bronze Star.
1972	3	28	The U.S. Air Force turns over the sprawling \$60 million air base at Phan Rang to the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF)
1972	2	5	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0758 hours receiving 2 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1972	2	21	The base experienced a standoff attack at 0825 hours receiving 2 rounds without any damage or injuries.
1975	4		South Vietnamese rangers evacuate Phan Rang by ship. A total of about 2,500 Vietnamese troops had been stationed at Phan Rang.

Chaplains Laud Troops' Morale

(The Stars and Stripes, Monday, December 11, 1967)

PHAN RANG, Vietnam (Special) — Two recently assigned chaplains are impressed by the high morale they have encountered among the thousands of Air Force personnel at Phan Rang Air Base.

"I think the morale is tremendous," said Chaplain (Capt.) William H. Mattox.

"I'm very much impressed with the spirit of these men," said Chaplain (Capt.) Charles R. Hutsler. "They feel they're all united in one purpose to accomplish our mission here in Vietnam."

The base houses a wing of F100 Super Sabre jet fighters and B57 Canberra bombers, and a wing of C123 Provider transports. The F100s and B57s carry out combat missions in support of Allied ground forces. The C123s deliver supplies to Army Special Forces camps and other installations throughout South Vietnam.

Mattox said his duties include both preaching at regular services and counseling men, in between services, along the flight line and throughout the rest of the base. Hutsler, a former enlisted man, said, "It's a real joy, to go on the flightline to talk with the pilots and enlisted support personnel. 'These men work long and tedious hours.' He said his duties included counseling men suffering from loneliness and men upset by problems at home.

Hutsler believes his experiences as an enlisted man were valuable in helping him to understand the men's problems.

CAMS Unit Set Mark for Test Stand

(The Stars and Stripes, Monday, December 11, 1967)

PHAN RANG, Vietnam (Special) — Working 12 hours a day, the men of the 315th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Sq (CAMS) at this base assembled the first C123 Provider engine testing platform in Vietnam in record time.

"It normally takes 25 men 30 days to put one together," said S. Sgt. Ralph S. Young, an engine mechanic with the 6200th Field Maintenance Sq at Clark Air Base P.I. "Twenty guys from CAMS pitched in and did it in ten."

On temporary duty with the 315th, Young accompanied the test stand from Clark and supervised the construction at Phan Rang.

"This stand was modified to test C123 engines," Clark said. "It had to be strengthened and a firewall added. When it arrived here, hardly any of it was together. All the supports and the top of the control housing had to be welded back on."

First Lt. Steven E. Fritts, OIC of the CAMS propulsion branch, was in charge of the project. "Phan Rang will be the sole facility in Southeast Asia for testing the R-2800 engine," he said.

The R2800 is the 2,350-horsepower unit used on all models.



Largest 'AOM' in Vietnam Opens with Crowd of 2,500 On Hand

(Phan Fare, The Phan Rang Weekly, August 13, 1967)

2,500 Airmen were on hand for the grand opening of the new Phan Rang Airmen's Open Mess. Colonel James A. Wilson, 35th Wing Commander cut the blue ribbon on August 11th at 7:PM officially opening the new facility.

Prior to last Fridays dedication, Phan Rang airmen were using a temporary facility which was constructed when the base was in its first stages of development.

The new AOM facility, formerly Phan Rang's first mess hall had been turned over to club officials in July for conversion into a modern AOM facility.

Master Sergeant Bobby B. Wolfe, the club manager said "that the \$25,000 conversion job which was completed in 41 days now gives Phan Rang Air Base the largest Airman's Open Mess in Vietnam. Hee went on to say that the new club can accommodate 3,500 airmen as opposed to 700 before the new clujb was opened."

Facilities in the new club include a modern tow chair barbershop, a complete snack bar and dining room, game room and a 140 sq. ft. patio equipped with a large stage. The new stage was designed with large musical and stage shows in mind and will allow for all types of entertainment.

Future plans for the new club, include: the installation of air conditioning and the construction

of a large swimming pool.

The club's old facility will be turned into a game room and reading lounge for the enjoyment of members and their guest.

Two musical groups were on hand to entertain and a good time was had by all.



8th Names Top Guns

(Phan Fare, The Happy Valley Weekly, April 24, 1969)

The 8th Tactical Bombardment Squadron "Yellowbirds" recently selected its "Top Guns" for the January-through-March quarter and also for March.

Maj. Auguste J. Planchon garnered both the quarterly and monthly awards as navigator in the Yellowbird's two-seat B-57 Canberra. Maj. Glen M. Personius, wing flying safety officer, earned the top quarterly award as pilot, and Lt. Col. Kenneth F. Liddle won the pilot award for the month.

The "Top Guns" are pilots and navigators responsible for the highest bomb damage assessment (BDA) during the cited periods. Both crew members receive equal credit for each mission together, but sometimes they switch crew combinations; thus each compiles different BDA totals.

The nightflying Yellowbirds are truck hunters. The FAC acts as the Canberra's eyes, and spots,

marks and directs the bombers to the target, either by relating its predicted location to the mark or other visual reference. The Yellowbirds drop one bomb at a time, make corrections as directed by the FAC, and continue. The FAC assesses bomb damage.

During March, Personius and Liddle flew most of their missions together. Personius recalled one of those missions.

“The FAC spotted and marked a lone truck, which we quickly destroyed,” Personius said. “During our passes on the truck, several anti-aircraft guns opened up on us.”

“We then successfully attacked the guns, destroying two and silencing two others. The FAC marked the last gun,” he said, “Then we hit it, and the gun’s ammunition supplies made a tremendous secondary explosion.”

Major Personius also discussed one of his highly successful missions. “The FAC had spotted some trucks moving along a road towards a small, circular fire,” he said. “He figured they’d pass the fire in about four minutes, so we arched around to time a rendezvous there the fire being our visual reference.”

“But the FAC saw that the trucks stopped, about half-way between the fire and a smaller fire up the road,” he said. “We layer our ordnance right on top of them, and the whole area started burning,” Major Personius stated “Besides three trucks we got a storage area as a bonus.”

Soap Box Derby



The 2nd Sqn (RAAF) holds a “Soap Box Derby” to celebrate Australia Day, 26, January 1971. The derby was held on the road leading down from the Officers Mess. In true Derby fashion they

were not powered and the smoke you see in the second photo is a green flare. Reported by Howard Moffatt.



As Seen on Facebook (AKA Facebook Gems)

Revisting Saigon - Robert L. Mangold

Robert L. Mangold wrote: I retired from JAL flying the DC-10. On my first flight into SGN (Saigon, Ho Chi Minh City) I was a bit apprehensive since the last time I flew into Ton Son Nhut there was still some shooting going on.

Taxiing to the gate we passed the same revetments where the C-123's were parked. Going into town for the first time since the war where we stayed at the Omni Hotel was an eye opener for me - no sandbagged machine gun outposts, no armored vehicles, jus a clean modern city with scooters and motorbikes everywhere and the best seafood restaurants along the river.

As we had a three-day layover, the first day the Japanese pilots and some flt attendants would go play golf and since I played golf, I'd go with the rest of the crew downtown for lunch and do some shopping at this popular "mall" where crystal was the main shopping attraction for the girls.

The next day, someone suggested a tour to see the Cuchi tunnels and I thought Why not! When we arrived we had to endure a film starring Uncle Ho and the B-52's, then a briefing on the tunnels and what to expect. The tour guide gave us the option of choosing either the short or long tunnel route - obviously the young Japanese females shouted for the long one. What I

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didn't expect was how cramped the tunnels were for me requiring to crawl on my stomach whereas the smaller stature Japanese could almost scamper on their hands and knees. Trouble started about ten minutes in when our party of eight came an abrupt halt and I was tail end charlie (pun not intended). Picture us ninety feet below ground inside a three to four diameter tube, and to make matters worse, another tour group of Chinese was right behind me. I was flat on my stomach and unable to move forward or back. Never before was I ever claustrophobic, heck I could go to sleep during survival school confinement, but being stuck in that dark tunnel and barely able to breathe, I had to close my eyes and pretend I was a buddhist monk in a zen like trance to overcome the urge to panic.

Finally, after some fifteen minutes the tour guides figured out that no one's come out went in from the opposite side to coax the lead girl who'd panicked and soon as it got dark, out and the rest of us followed. After that incident claustrophobia definitely got a hold of me. After the tunnel tour we were offered the chance to shoot all the weapons on display at their range for about a hundred bucks. I declined but the Japanese, being Japanese, went all out for it, shooting AK's to .45 automatics, some even tried the 50 cal. So, that was my post war Vietnam adventure. The tunnels were quite impressive reaching out hundreds of miles and incorporating command centers, hospitals, sleeping and eating quarters. I have my deepest respect for our GI Tunnel Rats!

Transfer from Bien Hoa to Phan Rang - Daniel Acosta

Daniel Acosta wrote: Flying from Bien Hoa to Phan Rang. I was transferred after just four months at Bien Hoa. Phan Rang AB was much cooler as it was on the beach. The town was open to us too. Here is my photo of that trip, September, 1968. (**Daniel Acosta** Airman First Class, September 1968 to May 1968, Phan Rang AB, aircraft instrument specialist and security police augmentee.)



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Delivering to NKP Nakhon Phanom - Harry F. Brash

Harry F. Brash wrote on Facebook: When I was first delivered to NKP (*Nakhon Phanom "The City of Hills" was affectionately known as "Naked Fanny" or NKP by the Americans and referred to as the "End of the line at the edge of the world."*) I thought I was in a time warp...PSP runway and aprons and every plane was a recip. C-123s, Bird dogs, A1Es and Jolly Greens and Huey's.

Later in the year we flew to Udorn and a tall lanky guy with a long ladder and a can of black paint came out and painted over all the markings on the aircraft. Then another C-123 pulled up beside us and helped us load bombs. We found out they were Air America and those guys knew what they were doing. They were in Levis and short sleeve shirts. and we flew in tandem to a base I still cannot name but in a country north of Vietnam and it was under attack. We combat off loaded the bombs and got the hell out of there.



Harry F. Brash continued on Facebook: I left NKP before they put jets on the C-123. Heard some funny stories about the first experiences with the jets. About 1971 they put a halt to the missions I flew of flare support for fighters over Laos and North Vietnam because it became too dangerous. I figure I left just in time or too early...can't figure it out yet.

My most interesting experience was after a night run of flare support we lost an engine over Laos. Awful quiet in that cockpit until we crossed the Mekong River and saw the runway on NKP. We were slowly losing altitude but made it...was not our time yet. We carried Green

Berets on a night jump missions and those fearless guys were scared to death flying with us as they thought we were sitting ducks.

My Air Force Career - Allan Campbell

Allan Campbell wrote: I worked in Civil Engineering Material Control. I obtained supplies for the Civil Engineers. I played on the flag football team in the fall of 1971 and I also was detailed to dismantle revetments left over when the base converted from a fighter wing to a military airlift wing in the middle of 1971.

I filled in as the cost accountant when Sgt. Ostrander left near the end of 1971 without an immediate replacement. He left Phan Rang in December of 1971 on the day Charlie walked mortars down the flight line about 1/2 hour after the freedom bird, took off.

I was in his bunker for the great 4th of July fireworks event (a cow got loose in the minefield, triggering many alarms). My year at Phan Rang was my ticket to Germany sending me COT to Berlin (Tempelhof Central Airport) where, once again, I took over CE Material Control.

Then, after about 3 years at March AFB, CA, I returned to Kaiserslautern, Germany (Ramstein, Sembach, and Ramstein) for 9 years. After being dumped by my first wife for another MSgt. in Supply, I met a wonderful widow, who was born in Hanoi and raised in Saigon, and spent the last 6 years of my tours with her. I adopted her 3 daughters and took the whole family back to California (Mather AFB), where I retired as a SMSgt after a 23.5 year career.

Doom Pussy Facts, Legend & Myths

- The title is a combination acronym for Danang Officer's Open Mess and the cat on the Doom Pussy patch. Encircling the emblem are the words: TRONG MIENG CUA CON MEO CUA THAM PHAN which translates: "I have flown at night into the mouth of the tiger." The airmen's blood-thumping sorties officially were called Doom Pussy Missions.
- Air Force pilots who have flown into North Vietnam at night. They and they alone, are the only U.S. fliers entitled to wear the DOOM PUSSY emblem.
- The Doom Pussy emblem features an evil-looking feline with a black patch over one eye and greedily devouring one of the planes.
- Encircling the insignia TRONG MIENG CUA CON MEO CUA THAM PHAN, Translated

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literally from Vietnamese reads: “I have flown into the jaws of the cat of death.” With American abandon the guys usually simply say: “I have seen the Doom Pussy.”

- Legend has it that the “Doom Pussy” which was a stuffed black cat entombed in a glass case on the 8th Tactical Bombardment Squadron back bar. The myth was that should anyone steal the “Doom Pussy” from its place of honor, that unit will lose an aircraft within a short period of time.
- It proported that one of the reserve F-100s out of Phan Rang during 68-69 was lost and within a couple of days after someone from the F-100 squadron stole the “Doom Pussy” from the bar, it mysteriously showed up within a day of the loss and never to be stolen again.



Menu

All dishes come with Rolls & Butter, Signature Heart of Romaine Salad, Seasonable Vegetables, New York Cheesecake with Mixed Berry Compote, Starbucks Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee and Tazo Tea.

Poultry: Garlic Roasted Breast of Chicken. Wild Mushroom Risotto, Crisp Fried Garlic Cloves, Marsala Demi-Glacé.

Beef: 6 oz. Filet of Beef. Yukon Gold Potato Hash, Button Mushrooms, Smoked Bacon, Baby Spinach, RedWine-Gorgonzola Demi-Glacé.

Salmon: Basil Pesto Seared Salmon. Balsamic Teardrop Potato and Fennel Chutney, Citrus Cream Reduction Lemongrass Jasmine Rice.

Vegetarian: In House Grilled Vegetable Lasagne. Grilled Zucchini, yellow Squash, Eggplant and Portabella Mushrooms, layered with Spinach, Ricotta, Pasta and Mozzarella Cheese.

COSTS

Banquet (plated): Beef \$55 per person all others menu items \$50.

Reunion Fee: \$10 per person

Museum of Flight tour: \$50 per person which includes transportation museum admission and

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lunch at the museum.

Hotel provides a free shuttle to and from the airport.

You can send your checks at any time from now until September 20th. Send them and make them payable to:

Happy Valley Reunion

Send to:

Jack Anderson

826 72nd St SE

Auburn, Wa 98092

See you in Seattle! October 11th thru the 15th

Don't call! Use the link to make your hotel reservation.

<http://doubletree.hilton.com/.../SEASPD-T-PHA-2017.../index.jhtml>

Doug's Comments

That does it for this newsletter. I've lessened the frequency of the newsletters mainly because of vacations and other commitments and I don't want to jeopardize the quality of the content by rushing to get one out. There always seems to be an abundance of Phan Rang stories, so that certainly isn't a factor. We've had a lot of new people join our Facebook group and with that they usually post pictures and tell their stories and I like to capture those stories before they are lost. The reunion is progressing nicely. Once again Bob Kellington will be the master of ceremonies and Jim Kucipeck and Bruce Muller are going to be presenters this year. Joe Kaupa, Minnesota Folk Artist, has been working hard on many pieces of art, when he isn't on vacation fishing. Some of Joe's treasure will end up as door prizes and others may be used for a silent auction. Several people are already enroute to the reunion, but most of us won't start out until early October. The Time Line in this issue is a work in progress and more events will be added when they are known. If you have any stories or even a picture, please share them with me so that I can combine them with the others. This newsletter was compiled and published by [Douglas Severt](#). Previous issues of the Phan Rang Newsletter are available [here](#) for download.