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Seattle 2017
2017 Reunion Recap



The 2017 “Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB reunion was by all account a great success. Phan Rang Alumni began arriving at the Hilton Doubletree Hotel as early as 9 October and the number of arrivals increased every day. Jack Anderson had the beautiful hospitality suite open all week where members could gather for refreshments and conversation.

Alumni were kept busy all week with trips to Mt. Rainer, the Boeing Museum of Flight, Victoria Clipper Ferry to Victoria, British Columbia, downtown Seattle and of course Pike’s Place Market and the Space Needle. For the most part the weather in Seattle was beautiful, but I can’t say the same for Mt. Rainer and Snoqualmie Pass.

So many members generously donated their crafts and other items of interest to be raffled this year. Joe Kaupa, the Minnesota artist, crafted at least a dozen cardinal wall hangings commemorating the reunion, picture frames, and other articles featuring either the reunion or veterans. Dave Runnells gave two beautiful Vietnam Veterans rings, Christopher Boles donated some of his spectacular pictures, Kirk Minert supplied two Vietnam era maps in two sizes, and Jeannie Holtz donated hand crafted jewelry and spa soaps, and not to be left out was a

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Phan Rang AB News No. 138 **“Stories worth telling”**

beautiful cross-stitch made by Betsy Ross that was highly sought after.



On 15 October 2017 we had a general meeting in the hospitality room and the following are the minutes of that meeting.

October 19, 2017

The sixth annual business meeting of the Phan Rang/ Happy Valley group was called to order at 4 pm, on October 15, 2017 in Seattle, Washington.

Doug Severt and John (Jack) Anderson hosted the meeting.

A comment was made thanking the organizers for an outstanding reunion. The organizers were John (Jack) Anderson, Michael Granese, Robert Hoffman, and Arthur Braden.

Robert (Bob) Tucker, our Data Base person, spoke about maintaining the Roll Call and asked the rank and file to send in complete information i.e. name, rank, yrs. at Phan Rang, and area where assigned. If a person is deceased the sender should indicate date of death.

Joe Kaupa spoke about our Memorial Boards. He wanted name, rank, unit and date of death. When he receives such he will put that information on our Memorial Board.

Doug Severt gave an update on our dinner arrangements for Sunday, 10/16/17.

Doug Severt spoke about our Ambassador Program. It is a program where one or more members of the Phan Rang group would reach out to brothers who served at Phan Rang in their respective states. He indicated that we do have a program in place but very loosely

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organized. He felt it needed to be more structured and is a work in progress.

John (Jack) Anderson held a lengthy discussion about the need to transition from a loosely organized group to a non-profit organization. He stated that he was getting requests from the bank about reporting information about our revenue and expenses. He has been in informal discussion with financial experts and attorneys about why we need to move in that direction. At this point the rank and file of the Phan Rang/Happy Valley group must decide on officers to represent them in our non-profit organization. By unanimous vote it was decided that Doug Severt would be President, Louis Ruggiero, Vice President, John Anderson, Treasurer and James Kucipeck, Secretary.

John (Jack) Anderson said now that we have a slate of officers and approval of the group that he would proceed to license the group in the State of Washington and that he, John Anderson and Doug Severt, would be signatories to the licenses and legal documents.

Lou Ruggiero discussed that he was contacted by an individual who could set up a trip to Vietnam at a cost of \$2300 per person. Anyone that is interested should contact him.

Next year’s reunion location was discussed. As a matter of policy the rotation will take us to the East. Many locations were discussed: Grand Forks, ND, Tampa, FL, Nashville, TN, Washington, DC, Savannah, GA, Virginia Beach, VA, Baltimore, MD and Pennsylvania. After much discussion of the pros and cons it was decided to let our new board make the location decision. After a brief discussion the board decided that Nashville, TN was most suitable for the group in terms of number of hotels available, a central geographic location, highway and air transportation and entertainment available. Time is of the essence in lining up a hotel for Columbus weekend in 2018. The board will start working immediately to find a suitable hotel for our gathering.

Respectfully submitted

James H Kucipeck

Secretary

Phan Rang/ Happy Valley Group

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Our banquet started with the Drill and Ceremonies team Ed Downey and Barbara Brandt posting the flag and leading the group in the Pledge of Allegiance. Ed then read the following:

LANGUAGE OF THE AIR FORCE

All branches of the service have their own acronyms and nicknames that are specific to that branch and difficult for an outsider to interpret. I offer this brief explanation of some of the terms in my travels for the ladies to better understand the language of the Air Force.

In the first few days of basic training, while all the yelling and screaming was just starting, we trainees were called “Rainbows” because of the many colors of our civilian clothes. One of the marching songs we sang, while not popular with the training instructors, goes like this”
“Rainbow, Rainbow don’t be blue, my recruiter screwed me too – SOUND OFF! On the day we received our uniforms, we were taken to a room, stripped down naked and told we were the lowest form of life on the planet. After getting our uniforms, we were now “slick sleeves” with no stripes on our shirts.

Upon completion of basic, we were issued our first stripe and I was off to Keesler AFB – Biloxi, Mississippi, where I was promptly assigned to PATS. “Personnel Awaiting Training Status”. At this time, we were known as “Pingers” by the airmen who had more time on base. Due to our short hair, fresh out of basic, our heads looked like ping pong balls and we were met with a high pitched “PING” by passing airmen. I was most embarrassed by this when I passed a formation of airmen marching to school one evening and got “pinged” by 50 guys at once.

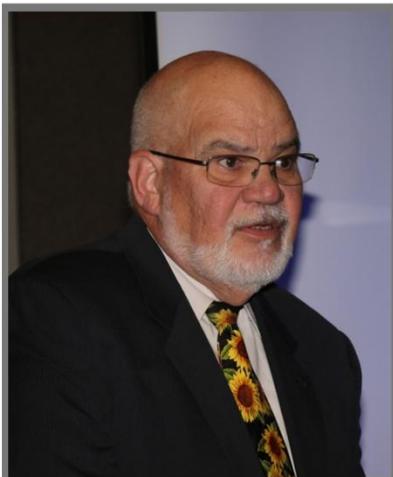
I was in PATS for seven weeks, five of those doing “KP” or “Kitchen Patrol”, while waiting for a class to begin in my career field of NAV AIDS. Eventually school began in BED – “Basic Electronics Division”, which lasted four months. With that completed, I went on boot leave for a week, got promoted to Airman First Class or “Deuce” as we called it, and went on to SETS – “Specialized Electronic Training School”. Near the end of the four month course, I received orders for my next assignment which read “35th Combat Support Group PACAF” or “Pacific Air Force APO San Francisco 96321”. APO stands for “Army Post Office”. I had to go to a special office to find out that I was going to Phan Rang AB, RVN. It was customary to put a copy of orders on your door with FIGMO written on it. And that could stand for “Forget IT! Got my orders”. But it didn’t.

Once “in country” I had a “DEROS”, my “Date Estimated Return from Over Seas” which was 365 days from departure of CONUS or “Continental US”. Now I was known as a “Newby” or “FNG” which could stand for Friendly New Guy, but it didn’t.

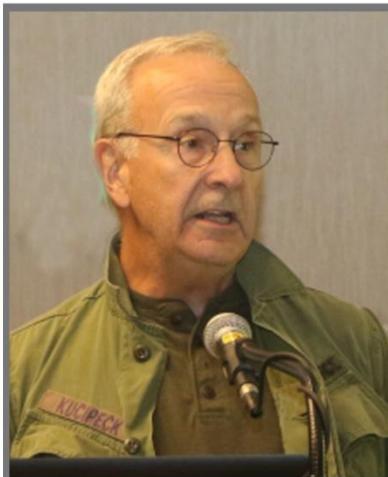
I was assigned to the Nav Shop of the 35th Avionics Maintenance Squadron servicing the F-100 Super Sabre. Pilots called it the HUN, maintenance people knew it as the Lead Sled.

The months went by and I checked off each day on my short calendar. With 30 days to go, you become a short timer and pronounce yourself as “Short”. Nine days to go and you were a “single-digit midget”. One day to go and its one wake up and a duffle bag drag to the Freedom Bird back to the world. And that copy of Orders with FIGMO written on it could stand for – Finally, I got my Orders.

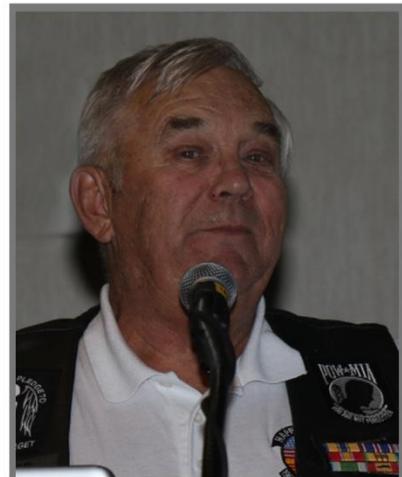
By Ed Downey



Jim Erixson
Chaplain



Jim Kucipeck
Presenter



Bruce Muller
Presenter

Presenters

Chaplain Jim Erixson opened with a prayer, followed by Jim Kucipeck, who donned his original fatigue shirt, gave us a good perspective of what it was like to be a munitions handler. He also talked about his crew that consisted of

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Vietnamese and Chams who were experts in their jobs and of course he never could be certain of their allegiance, but they consistently did a good job for him. The munitions crews worked all day preparing the bombs and at night they were moved out to the flightline and the process started all over again the next day.

Bruce Muller started his briefing describing the evolution of the Phan Rang AB patch design by his granddaughters and before his gunship briefing he took time to describe an incident when the group was on a fishing trip where Bob Hoffman caught a bird and he had a plaque commemorating that event to present to Bob, but because of illness Bob wasn't able to make it. Bruce then proceeded to his main briefing which was a history of the gunships and specifics about the AC-119 which was very interesting and enjoyed by all. The following is a brief transcript of Bruce's presentation:

Gunships of Vietnam

Starting in 1926 the military starts discussing a side firing platform.

It was all developed by a ingenious mailman in the early 1900 who discovered he could do a pylon turn and deliver mail and supplies on the end of a rope to remote village without landing.

A pylon turn is a fixed point, on the ground that a plane uses as a reference to circle. They use that same point in plane racing around 2 fix points called a pylon turn.

This concept was rejected for many years by upper brass. Not until a Capt. Ron Terry got permission to try the concept of a side firing gunship “Gunship 1” He took a C-131 mounted gun 7.62 Gatling guns in the side, after removing the windows.

They used a grease pencil to draw the reticles sight on the pilot's window. This was the first gun sight. For the first test firing, they placed a target in the water as a test platform. After two passes they were amazed how easy it was to stay on target, hitting the platform 70% with the round fired.

Success was achieved but was shoot down again Senior Brass again.

When Capt. Simon’s return from Vietnam, he heard about the new concept and worked with Terry to set up the first test of the Gunship theory.

As a fighter pilot he had noticed there was a problem to see a target with the fast movers in the heavy jungle canopy. With Capt. Terry’s enthusiasm and Capt. Simon combat experience. The GUNSHIP moved forward quickly.

In 1963 the concept was brought before Gen. Curtiss Le May who gave the go ahead. Project “Tail chaser” was born. A search of the aircraft inventory brought about the choice of the dependable C-47. There was some thought about the combat survivability, but they pushed ahead with the idea.

In September 1963 the 1st FC-43 was assembled and put into testing. Thing moved very rapidly from there.

In December 1964 Capt. Terry arrived in Vietnam with an equipped FC-43, 3 gun pods 7.62 and flare support. A converted 16mm movie view finder with crosshair reticle became the Gunsight.

All gunships would fire from a altitude of 3500, 2500, 1500 Feet. We could fire from altitude to within 50 meters from there “MARK” = 150ft. We would move in closer from there with ground contact permission. “Mark” was usually a light, fire or smoke to mark friendly troop position. Usually a light in a mortar tube was the mark so the VC could not see it.

Twenty-six FC-43 were originally sent into combat in Vietnam in 1964. Six aircraft were based at Phan Rang AB. They left Phan Rang December 1968 and were deactivated on December 1969 with the arrival of the AC-119k models.

There was a big group of fighter pilots and squadrons complaining of the designation because a cargo plane did fit in their idea of a fighter. It was change to AC meaning (attack cargo) plane.

Eventually 52 AC-43 “Spooky” ended up in the Vietnam theater. 19 were lost, 14 shoot down. 5 to mechanical failure or destroyed on the ground.

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To make a better platform for a gunship the Air Force went looking for a better platform. Their choice was the C 130. “Gunship 2”. Started: with 4 7.62 Gatling guns @6000 rounds. Per min. & 4 20mm cannons 2500 rdspm, Mk24 flare launcher, 2.5 Kw candle power carbon arc illuminator capable of (white or infrared) mode.

The platform performed beyond their expectation. They return home to be disappointed by the lack of other command to give up their C-130 to be made into gunships.

The search was set out for available airframe to start “Gunship 3 Project”. C-123, C-7 C-119, C-118, C-97, C-54 were considered. With the demand for short take off cargo aircraft pretty much eliminated the C-123 and C-7 leaving only the C-119 because of the viability.

Fifty-two C-119 were gathered from the Air National Guard inventory and the bone yard in Tucson, AZ. The demand for a new gunship was growing very quickly from the ground troops in country.

The jets were ok (Flash & dash) but the troops want the gunships because they could linger on target for approx, 6 hours and provide instant fire power when needed. I will say this “there was never a Base camp, hill top, fire base or air base over run while we were on target.”

I will have to thank the fighter for their contribution to the gunship. The VC had learned to dive to the ground and cover their heads. With the gunship it only made our target bigger. To give you a idea of our lethality, If our target area was 100 yards square and we did a full rotation firing, we would have a round every 7 ½ inches on the ground.

26 AC-119G Models “Shadow”

The first C-119 left Lockbourne AFB, Ohio in October 1968. Removing all the guns and installing a large fuel cell inside the cargo compartment, to ferry them across the pacific arriving at Nha Trang in, December of 1968. Distributed throughout Vietnam to Bien Hoe, Phan Rang AB, and Tan Son Nhut.

New Gun sight, fire control system, NOS, 4- 7.62 Gatling guns LAU-7 flare launcher for MK-24 & illuminator were converted to gunships, sent to Vietnam in December of 1968 with the 71st

people joining us this year.



News members of the Phan Rang Family.

Christopher Boles who supplied many of the beautiful Phan Rang AB prints that was on display in the hospitality room that were either sold or eventually used in the raffle. If you would like to purchase a print like you saw or any other pictures, please visit his [web site](#) and you will be blown away by all of the spectacular prints that he has available.

NEXT STOP NASHVILLE!

Carol Clarke did it in 1970!



RC Assigns Viet Project To Austinite. Miss Carol Clarke, daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Bill Clark, of

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1612 Sunnyvale, has been appointed to the American Red Cross Supplemental Recreation Activities overseas in Vietnam.

Carol will be assigned to Vietnam for a 12-month tour of duty where she will be responsible for arranging and developing a variety of recreational opportunities for active soldier participation.

Carol is a graduate from Howard Payne College where she received a BA degree in French and English and later received an MA degree in French from Texas Tech University in Lubbock.

She is listed in Who Who’s in American Colleges and Universities, 1968, and was a teaching assistant in Lubbock at Texas Tech University from 1968 to 1970. Currently Carol works for the Defense Language Institute at Joint Base Lackland, Tx., teaching foreign nationals English.

From the Phan Fare, The Phan Rang AB Weekly, November 22, 1970.

Hi! I’m Carol Clarke from Austin Texas, the capitol of the Lone Star State. I went to Howard Payne College a small liberal arts school in Brownwood, Ut., and Texas Tech in Lubbock. My majors were French and English.

Since this is my first assignment in Vietnam, there are many things here which are strange and new to me, but I am most impressed with the locals and the inhabitants of Happy Valley.



Three regulars with the two ‘newbee’s’ on the right. Pat Guise, from Mechanicsburg, Penn., and Carol Clarke on the very right.



Carol Clarke, right, with friend. From a slide in her photo album titled “Getting Short”.

WATER SKI??

Do you water ski? Would you like to learn?
If the answer is yes, then we have the answer for you, Phan Rang’s newest water sports club. This club is just getting organized, so come now. Meetings will be announced in the Daily Bulletin. When you see it, come on out!!

(Source: Phan Fare, The Happy Valley Weekly, November 7, 1968)

UNITED STATES FIXED WING AIRCRAFT LOSSES

OF THE VIETNAM WAR
1962-1973



**United States Fixed Wing Aircraft Losses of the
Vietnam War 1962-1973**

During the Vietnam War, thousands of U.S. aircraft were lost to antiaircraft artillery (AAA), surface-to-air missiles (SAMs), and fighter interceptors (MiG)s. The great majority of U. S. combat losses in all of Southeast Asia were to AAA. Among fixed-wing aircraft, more F-4 Phantoms were lost than any other type in service with any nation. In total, the United States military lost in Vietnam almost 10,000 aircraft and helicopters.

- **F-4 Phantom** (USAF, USN, USMC) - 533 combat, 156 non-combat
- **O-1 Bird Dog** (USAF, ARMY, USMC) - 426 combat, 50 non-combat
- **F-105 Thunderchief** - 330 combat, 62 non-combat
- **A-4 Skyhawk** (USN, USMC) - 276 combat, 87 non-combat
- **F-100 Super Sabre** - 198 combat, 45 non-combat
- **A-1 Skyraider** (USAF, USN) - 198 combat, 58 non-combat
- **O-2 Skymaster** (USAF) - 82 combat, 22 non-combat
- **A-6 Intruder** (USN, USMC) - 78 combat, 11 non-combat
- **F-8 Crusader** (USN, USMC) - 76 combat, 71 non-combat
- **OV-1 Mohawk** (ARMY) - 65 Lost
- **A-7D Corsair** (USAF, USN) - 59 combat, 47 non-combat

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- **C-130 Hercules** (USAF, USMC) - 38 combat, 21 non-combat
- **B-57 Canberra** (USAF) - 38 combat, 16 non-combat
- **RF-101 Voodoo** (USAF) - 33 combat, 6 non-combat
- **T-28 Trojan** (USAF) - 23 lost
- **A-26 Invader** (USAF) - 22 combat
- **A-37 Dragonfly** (USAF, ARVN) - 22 combat
- **C-123 Provider** - 21 combat, 32 non-combat
- **C-47 Skytrain** - 21 lost
- **RA-5 Vigilante** (USN) - 18 combat, 9 non-combat
- **B-52 Stratofortress** (USAF) - 17 combat, 14 non-combat
- **E/RB-66** (USAF) Destroyer - 14 lost
- **AC-47 Spooky** (USAF) - 12 combat, 7 non-combat
- **OV-10 Bronco** (USMC) - 10 lost
- **F-104 Starfighter** - 9 combat, 5 non-combat
- **F-5 Freedom Fighter** - 9 lost
- **C-7 Caribou** (USAF) - 9 combat, 10 non-combat
- **C-7 Caribou** (RAAF) - 3 lost, Number 35 Squadron
- **F-102 Delta Dagger** - 7 combat, 7 non-combat
- **F-111A Aardvark** (USAF) - 6 combat, 5 non-combat
- **QU-22 Pave Eagle** - 7 combat, 1 non-combat
- **AC-130 Spectre** (USAF) - 6 combat
- **EF-10 Skyknight** (USMC) - 5 lost
- **S-2 Tracker** (NAVY) - 3 combat, 2 non-combat
- **A-3 Skywarrior** - 2 combat, 5 non-combat
- **HU-16 Albatross** - 2 combat, 2 non-combat
- **AC-119 Shadow** (USAF) - 2 combat, 4 non-combat
- **U-10D** (USAF) Courier - 1 combat
- **Canberras, English Electric** (RAAF) - 2 lost, Number 2 Squadron

**ROTARY WING AIRCRAFT LOSSES
OF THE VIETNAM WAR
1962-1973**



**Rotary Wing Aircraft Losses of the Vietnam War
1962-1973**

- **HU-1 Huey** (ARMY, USMC) - 3254 lost
- **OH-6 Cayuse** (ARMY) - 842 lost
- **AH-1 Cobra** (ARMY, USMC) - 277 lost
- **OH-13 Sioux** (ARMY) - 150 lost
- **CH-47 Chinook** (army) - 132 lost
- **CH-46D Sea Knight** (USMC) - 109 lost
- **OH-23 Raven** (ARMY) - 93 lost
- **OH-58 Kiowa** (ARMY) - 45 lost
- **CH/HH-3 Jolly Green Giant** (USAF) - 25 combat, 9 non-combat
- **CH/HH-53 Super Jolly** (USAF) - 17 combat, 10 non-combat
- **CH-21C Shawnee** (ARMY) - 14 lost
- **CH-54 Skycrane** (ARMY) - 9 LOST
- **CH-53** (USMC) **Sea Stallion** - 9 lost
- **SH-3 Sea King** - 8 combat, 12 non-combat
- **HH-43B Pedro** - 8 combat, 5 non-combat
- **H-37 Mojave** (ARMY, USMC) - 4 lost
- **UH-1 Iroquois** (RAAF) - 7 lost, Number 9 Squadron

**NORTH VIETNAMESE AIRCRAFT LOSSES
OF THE VIETNAM WAR
1962-1973**



**North Vietnamese Aircraft Losses of the
Vietnam War, 1962-1973**

- **MiG-21** - 60 lost
- **MiG-17** - 63 lost
- **MiG-19** - 8 lost

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*(Special thanks to **Jim Greenleaf** for supplying this document.)*

Update “Firemen’s Monkey has a pet Cat!”

The story of Lieutenant Tom, the small six pound Vietnamese Spider monkey first was revealed in Phan Rang Newsletter 136 in the article titled the same as above. In the article I included a stock photo of a Vietnamese Spider monkey and said “**once you've seen one Vietnamese spider monkey you've seen them all**” which apparently isn’t true because Dennis Collins, 35th CES, Fire Department gave me this picture of him and Lieutenant Tom.



Dennis Collins and Lieutenant Tom.

Stickers - Patches - Pins - Coins

	<p>This design is available in a sticker, patch or pin. The following is the price break down for each.</p> <p>Sticker: \$3 ea.* Patches: \$7 ea. for an order of two (2).* Patches: \$8 ea. for an order of three or more.* Pins: \$5 ea. For an order of 1 to 3 pins.* Pins: \$6 ea. For an order of 3 or more.*</p>
	<p>The Phan Rang AB Challenge coin.</p> <p>Challenge Coin: \$9 ea. including the cost of postage.</p>

Note: Send check to Jack Anderson, 826 72nd St. SE, Auburn, WA 98092 specifying exactly what you want. Make check payable to Phan Rang AB Reunion. Order for the coins are fulfilled by Doug Severt and all the others by Bruce Muller.

*Price includes the cost of postage.

Doug’s Comments

Another reunion has been relegated to the history books and now the work starts on the next reunion. I think one of the things that I’ve taken away from this reunion is that we didn’t take the time to spend more time with everyone and get to know the new people better. What I mean by that is that so many of us spent our free days running here and there and then in the evening usually went to dinner with a few couples. Naturally we couldn’t all go to dinner together or spend our free time gallivanting around together for obvious reasons. I’m sure we all had fun doing all of these things, but now I feel a little emptiness knowing that I didn’t get to socialize with all of the wonderful attendees. Oh, sure we ran into each other in the lobby or the hospitably suite, but that really doesn’t count.

Taking a cue from another reunion that I had the privilege of attending, they had activities, mainly meals, where they were at least together as a group every evening to enjoy a meal and conversation. What they did is for two evenings they had popular restaurants in the area cater

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their meals and that way they could still enjoy each other’s company without everyone having to scatter everywhere to get a meal. Doing this, of course, depends on whether or not the hotel that we choose could accommodate us. Let me know what you think.

On last thing, I’m still planning on doing a newsletters with just bio’s of the members, it will be titled “Know Your Airmen” so if you haven’t already sent yours in, please do so now...and thank you very much for doing that. Next issue will be “Know Your Commander”.

This newsletter was compiled and published by [Douglas Severt](#). Previous issues of the Phan Rang Newsletter are available [here](#) for download.