

Phan Rang AB Newsletter

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.
"Keeping the memories alive" Newsletter 197

Chronological Order of Phan Rang AB Air Losses

Doug's Comments

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF PHAN RANG AB AIR LOSSES

(U.S. Air Force (USAF) and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF))



Super Sabre 56-3185 of the 614th TFS is seen here flying over Phan Rang, home of the 35th TFW. On 21 January 1969 this aircraft was damaged by ground fire during a strike near Katum and Capt. Milo George Maahs of the 615th TFS was killed when he attempted to make an emergency landing at Bien Hoa.

*(Note: A companion Newsletter to this one is **Phan Rang Newsletter 155**, a casualty list for all Phan Rang AB assigned personnel, including those casualties occurring in Ninh Thuan Province)*

DATE	AIRCRAFT	ORG/AIRCREW	DESCRIPTION
11 Dec 1965	C-123B 56-4376	309 th Air Commando Sqdn. Maj Horsky, Robert Milvoy (KIA) Cap Mc Knight, George Parker	The scattered wreckage of an Air Force C-123 carrying the Vietnamese air borne troops and US crew was discovered on a mountainside 40 miles north of Nha Trang. There appeared to be no survivors the spokesmen said. The plane was en route from Pleiku to Tuy Hoa on Dec. 11 when it sliced into heavy forest at the 3,000 foot level of the mountain and burned. If

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		(KIA) SSgt Salinas, Mercedes Perez (KIA) SSgt Stewart, Donald David (KIA) 81 ARVN troops	there are no survivors, it will be the worst single crash in cost of human lives in the Vietnamese war. Accident occurred in Phu Yen Province. The flight should have taken less than an hour and no navigator was carried but the aircraft crashed into high ground that was shrouded in low cloud about 20 miles west of Tuy Hoa killing all on board. The aircraft apparently hit a tree on a mountain ridge as it was descending and then spun down a thousand feet in a flat spin. The wreckage was not found for two weeks and even then a ground party was unable to reach the site due to heavy Viet Cong resistance. This was the worst accidental air crash in terms of loss of life to take place during the war in Southeast Asia. However, on 4 April 1975, two years after the American withdrawal, a C-5A Galaxy crashed near Saigon as it was evacuating civilians and 155 people were killed, many of them orphaned children. Maj Horsky had previously flown B-52s with Strategic Air Command's 70th Bomb Wing. The crew's remains were repatriated from Vietnam in 1974 and formally identified in 1979 to be interred in a group burial in Arlington National Cemetery.
25 Jul 1966	F-100D 55-3739	615 TFS, 366 TFW Capt GJ Farrell (survived)	The 615 th TFS arrived at Phan Rang on 16 July as the first of the 366 th TFW's three squadrons. One of the squadron's early missions was a strike on VC structures in the Mekong Delta near Ba Tri, 45 miles south of Saigon. As Capt Farrell was making his second strafing run his aircraft was hit in the fuselage by small arms fire. He headed towards Bien Hoa but was forced to eject near Long Thanh, 10 miles southeast of the airfield, from where he was recovered by helicopter.
29 Jul 1966	F-100D 56-2956	615 TFS, 366 TFW Capt William Ray Gower (KIA)	The 615 th TFS lost its second aircraft within the space of five days but this time the pilot was also lost. Capt Gower was making his fifth strafing run against a Viet Cong target 25 miles west of Saigon when his aircraft was either hit by small arms

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			fire or simply flew into the ground.
11 Sep 1966	F-100D 56-3071	615 TFS, 366, TFW 1Lt John Peter Skoro (KIA)	The 615 th TFS lost its third Super Sabre during a strike on an automatic weapon position near Phu Xuan, 20 miles north of Phu Cat. The aircraft was hit by ground fire as it pulled up to 4,000 feet and the pilot may have been hit as he apparently made no attempt to eject.
14 Sep 1966	F-4C 64-0657	389 TFS, 366 TFW 1Lt Harold Eugene Knudsen (KIA) ¹ 1 crew, name unknown (survived)	A Phantom crashed in Ninh Thuan province, South Vietnam due to a flight control failure. One crewman ejected but 1Lt Knudsen was killed.
26 Oct 1966	F-100D 56-3167	614 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Glenn Raymond Morrison (KIA) ²	The 614 th TFW lost its first aircraft of the war during a bombing mission near Minh Thuah, 40 miles north of Saigon. The aircraft was hit by ground fire and crashed. Capt Morrison was not seen to eject and may have been hit and wounded.
16 Nov 1966	F-100D 56-3431	614 TFS 35 TFW Capt D B Moose (survived)	A flight of F-100s was tasked with attacking targets in a region known as Paul Revere IV, close to the South Vietnamese border with Cambodia, 40 miles west of Pleiku. One aircraft was hit by ground by ground fire as it came down to 300 feet for a napalm run. Capt Moose ejected as soon as he cleared the immediate area and was picked up by an Army helicopter.
13 Jan 1967	F-100D 56-3448	352 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Morvan Darrell Turley (KIA)	A VC supply area on the coast 25 miles northwest of Vung Tau was the target for a flight of F-100s from Phan Rang on the 13 th . Capt Turley dropped his load of napalm just as his aircraft was hit by small arms fire. The aircraft caught fire and crashed a few miles from the target killing Capt Turley.
21 Jan 1967	B-57B 52-1557	13 TBS, 405 FW attached to 35 TFW Capt George Grady Cooper (KIA)	The risk involved in making multiple passes on the same target were once more illustrated on the 21 st when a B-57 was lost while attacking a bridge 11 miles west of Kontum. Capt Cooper was on his fifth pass dropping napalm on the target when his aircraft was hit by ground fire in the port wing.

¹ See firsthand report in Phan Rang Newsletter 196 titled “Crash of a Phantom - I Saw it Happen”.

² Glenn graduated from the Naval Academy in 1958 and elected to have an Air Force Commission.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		Maj George Lowe (KIA)	Neither of the crew was observed to escape from the aircraft before it hit the ground.
26 Jan 1967	F-100D 55-2911	612 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Thomas Raymond Morgan (KIA)	Capt Morgan was taking part in an attack on VC buildings in the hills 30 miles west of Nha Trang when his aircraft was seen to be trailing smoke as it pulled off the target. The aircraft then burst into flames and broke in half before the pilot could escape. Attempts to find Capt Morgan’s remains in 1967 and 1968 were unsuccessful but in 1994 a joint US/Vietnamese recovery team excavated the crash site and discovered human remains and recovered personal effects that had been scavenged by a local villager. Microcrondrial testing of the remains was performed at the US Army Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii and on 28 July 1997 it was announced that the mortal remains of Thomas Morgan had at last been found and identified. The serial number of this F-100D is also quoted for an aircraft that was shot down on 6 April 1968.
19 Feb 1967	F-100D 56-2927	614 TFS, 35 TFW Capt D B Couch (survived)	Yet another F-100 was lost as it attacked a VC base camp in South Vietnam. A flight of aircraft took off from Phan Rang to attack the target near Xom Moi, which was just 10 miles south of the airfield. Capt Couch’s F-100 was hit by small arms fire as he was leaving the target. He turned out to sea and ejected just off the coast from where he was picked up by an HH-43 from Tuy Hoa.
19 Mar 1967	F-100D 55-2912	614 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Barry Ronald Delphin (KIA)	A Super Sabre was shot down during a close air support mission near Lai Khe north of Saigon. Capt Delphin was making his first pass over the target when his aircraft was struck by automatic weapons fire and crashed in flames before he could eject.
22 Apr 1967	B-57B 53-3859	13 TBS, 405 FW attached to 35 TFW Maj James Edward Oxley (KIA) Capt W E	A Canberra was lost during a close air support mission 15 miles southwest of Tan Son Nhut. Maj Oxley’s aircraft was on its fourth run strafing the target in support of friendly troops when it was hit by small arms fire in the port wing and crashed less than a mile from the target. Both crew ejected but only the navigator survived.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		Estabrooks (survived)	
2 May 1967	F-100F 56-3980	352 TFS, 35 TFW Maj F D Howard (survived) SSgt Thomas P Kulick (survived)	Maj Howard was taking part in a close air support mission near Cam Ranh Bay and was carrying SSgt Kulick who was going to take photographs of a napalm delivery. The mission turned out to be even more spectacular than planned as the two-seat Super Sabre was hit by ground fire as it approached the target at 750 feet. Maj Howard turned the aircraft out over the coast and the two airmen ejected over the sea. They were both picked up safely by an Army helicopter.
3 Jun 1967	B-57B 53-3862	8 TBS, 405 FW attached to 35 TFW Maj Theodore Springston (KIA) Capt Joseph Thomas Kearns (KIA)	A B-57 disappeared on an armed reconnaissance mission over the southern provinces of North Vietnam. To this day nothing appears to be known of the circumstances of this loss. B-57B 53-3862 originally served with the 3 rd TFB at Johnson AB in Japan.
8 Jun 1967	B-57B 53-3908	8 TBS, 405 FW attached to 35 TFW Capt Elwin Harry Busch (KIA) 1Lt Peter Whitcomb Morrison (KIA)	In another bizarre coincidence two airmen with the same surname ³ were lost on the same day when Capt Busch and his navigator, 1Lt Morrison were shot down. They were on a night armed reconnaissance mission when their Canberra was hit by small arms fire near the 4,761 feet Hao Chu Hi mountain which lay just 10 miles north of their own airfield.
1 July 1967	F-100F 56-4002	615 TFS, 35 TFW Capt T R Olsen (survived) A2C Robert Arthur Saucier (KIA) ⁴	A two-seat F-100F was accompanying a close air support mission with an enlisted man on board either to take photographs of the strike or simply as air experience. It was not unusual for hard working ground crew to be taken on a mission and many were eager for the opportunity. Capt

³ 1Lt Jon Thomas Busch (KIA) flying in a F-4C attached to the 389 TFS at Da Nang crashed on the same day as the F-100.

⁴ Combat photographer assigned to 600th Photo Squadron killed during a landing accident to Bien Hoa Air Base.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			Olsen’s flight was attacking a VC target 12 miles north of Vinh Long in the Mekong Delta, but his aircraft was hit by ground fire and started to burn. The aircraft headed north to Bien Hoa, the nearest airfield capable of taking the Super Sabre, but two miles short of the runway Capt Olsen had to make a forced landing in which A2C Saucier was fatally injured.
19 Aug 1967	B-57B 52-1550	13 TBS, 405 FW attached to 35 TFW Maj Richard Michael Secanti (KIA) Maj Martin Weigner Andersen (KIA)	A Canberra was shot down with the loss of both crew during a close air support mission 25 miles north of Saigon. The aircraft was orbiting near its target, a VC storage area five miles west of Lai Khe, when it was hit by ground fire and crashed immediately before either of the crew could escape. Like many of the early B-57Bs and Cs, 52-1550 was originally used by the 3510 th OCTW at Randolph AFB, Texas to convert pilots and navigators to the Canberra before posting to operational units.
4 Sep 1967	C-123K 54-0621	19 ACS, 315 ACW, 315 ACW LtCol Merle Deane Turner (KIA) Capt Edward Louis Goucher (KIA) A1C James Russell Mayo (KIA) 8 passengers (KIA)	A Provider captained by the CO of the 19 ACS, disappeared in South Vietnam during a flight from Bien Hoa to Nha Trang with the loss of all aboard. The wreckage of the aircraft was found two days later near Bao Loc, its first scheduled stop. The cause of the accident was attributed to pilot error. Four of the passengers, Capt W B Mahone, Capt V K Kelly, TSgt J M Boatwright and MSgt H C Cook were a Ranch Hand crew on their way to Nha Trang to collect one of their aircraft that had been under repair for battle damage.
10 Sep 1967	B-57B 52-1510	8 TBS, 405 FW attached to 35 TFW Maj Norris M Overly (POW) Capt Gaylord Dean Petersen (KIA)	The elderly B-57 were still being used over North Vietnam at night, especially in the less well-defended southern provinces although even here the defenses were becoming more and more efficient. Maj Overly was on a night armed reconnaissance mission when he spotted an oil tanker on a road about eight miles northwest of Dong Hoi. He put the aircraft into a dive but it was hit in the starboard engine by AAA. Both crew ejected but only Maj Overly survived to reach captivity. While in the Plantation prison in Hanoi, Maj Overly nursed fellow POW’s ‘Bud’ Day and John McCain back from

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			<p>the brink of death. On 16 February 1968 Norris Overly was one of three POWs who were released into the hands of peach activists in order to obtain useful propaganda for the North Vietnamese cause. This early release caused a great deal of consternation amongst the remaining POWs but Overly and the other two men were able to give useful information on other prisoners and the location, layout and occupants of the camps they had been in.</p>
25 Oct 1967	C-123K 54-0667	<p>315 ACW Capt Jack M Dole (Survived) SSgt Curtis Edward Stieferman (KWF) 2 other crew, names unknown (Survived)</p>	<p>A Provider from Phan Rang landed at Tan Son Nhut as its penultimate port of call during a long day shuttling around South Vietnam airfields. As the aircraft was about to take off for its return flight to Phan Rang, the pilot saw a huge thunderstorm directly in its path and decided to abort the flight. He was ordered to taxi along the runway to return to the parking area and had covered about 2,000 feet when the tower warned him to clear the runway immediately as an F-105 had been inadvertently cleared to land. However, before the Provider could turn off the runway it was hit by the Thunderchief as it landed in poor visibility. The F-105's starboard wing sliced through the port side of the C-123's fuselage and the jet's fuselage tore off the Provider's engine from its port wing. The Thunderchief pilot died in the collision and the burning aircraft tumbled down the runway for another 5,000 feet. All the C-123 crew escaped with burns, although SSgt Stieferman died from his injuries on 4 November. Apparently, Maj Britt had been ordered to Tan Son Nhut to take part in a special ceremony to celebrate his 100th mission. F-105D 59-1737 was painted as 'Cherry Boy' during its time with the 469th.</p>
8 Dec 1967	C-123J 54-0582	<p>310 ACS, 315 ACW 5 crew, names unknown (survived)</p>	<p>A Provider crashed in South Vietnam and was destroyed. The accident was attributed to pilot error.</p>
14 Feb 1968	AC-47D 43-	<p>14 ACS, 14 ACW,</p>	<p>On the night of the 14th a Spooky gunship from Phan Rang</p>

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

	49859	attached to Phan Rang Lt Col Karl Merritt Waldron (KIA) Capt Thomas Joseph Margle (KIA) SSgt Warren Mitchell Dixon (KIA) SSgt Robert Kiyoshi Kawamura (KIA) SSgt Roger Gail Lee (KIA) Sgt James Harvey Bennett (KIA) Sgt Brent Tosh (KIA) Cpl Russell J. Fauser Jr. (KIA) ⁵	was shot down just five miles south of the air base during a close air support mission. All eight crewmembers were killed when the aircraft crashed in flames. This was the only confirmed loss suffered by the short-lived 14th ACS. The Squadron was activated on 25 October 1967 but did not become operational until 15 January 1968 and was redesignated as the 3rd ACS on 1 May 1968. During World War Two Lt Col Waldron had flown the P-51 Mustang with the 487th Fighter Squadron of the 352nd Fighter Group and was credited with shooting down a Me262 jet and two FW190s.
17 Feb 1968	F-100F 56-3959	614 TFS, 35 TFW LtCol B M Fields (survived) Capt William David Canup (Survived)	The Mekong Delta area was always regarded as a Viet Cong stronghold and fighting was particularly heavy in the region during the Tet Offensive. All the F-100 uits were very busy providing close air support during the offensive. LtCol Fields and Capt Canup were flying a mission in a two-seat F-100F to bomb enemy troops five miles southwest of Can Tho in the Delta. On their second pass their aircraft was hit by small arms fire forcing the pair to eject. LtCol Fields was rescued by VNAF aricraft and Capt Canup by a US Army aircraft or helicopter. Capt Canup was killed in an F-100 a few weeks later on 6 April.
1 Mar 1968	C-123K 54-0694	311 ACS, 315 ACW detached to Da	A Provider was hit by fragments from the explosion of a mortar shell just as it was lifting off from Khe Sanh following a

⁵ Russell J. Frauser Jr. was a Cpl (Marine Corp) observer.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		Nang 4 crew, names unknown (survived) 6 passengers (survived)	resupply flight. One engine was put out of action and the pilot quickly forced the aircraft back on the ground. The aircraft veered off the runway and caught fire. All the occupants escaped six of them with injuries and enemy mortar fire then hit the aircraft again.
6 Mar 1968	C-123K 54-0590	311 ACS, 315 ACW detached to Da Nang LtCol Frederick Jordan Hampton (KIA) 1lt Ellis Eugene Helgeson (KIA) SSgt William Frank Anselmo (PAX-KIA) SSgt Noel Luis Rios (PAX-KIA) 52 passengers (KIA)	A provider was hit by ground fire as it approached Khe Sanh. The aircraft was delivering troops and spare parts from Hue Phu Bai to Khe Sanh. The aircraft was forced to go around from its first approach to the airfield as a VNAF light aircraft was obstructing the runway. The Provider circled at low altitude to make another approach but it was hit by ground fire in the port jet engine. The pilot radioed that he was turning back to Da Nang but the aircraft spiraled into the ground minutes later. All 49 on board, including the five crew, 44 US Marines ⁶ and a civilian photographer, were killed in the crash. The aircraft crashed about a mile south east of the runway. Sgts Anselmo and Rios were from the 15 th Aerial Port Squadron.
7 Mar 1968	C-123K 54-0594	311 ACS, 315 ACW detached to Da Nang	Shortly after LtCol Hampton’s aircraft was shot down at Khe Sanh on the 6 th , another Provider had its tail damaged by mortar fire as it was taxiing on the airfield. The aircraft was reparable but further mortar fire on the 7 th completed its destruction. Following the loss of three 311 th ACS Providers at Khe Sanh within the last seven days, the 315 th ACW started to rotate aircraft from their squadrons into Da Nang to share the burden of resupplying Khe Sanh
24 Mar 1968	F-100D 56-3152	614 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Eugene Phillip McKinney (KIA) ⁷	A flight of F-100s was making an attack on Viet Cong buildings near An Nhon, eight miles southeast of the airfield at Phu Cat, when one of the aircraft was lost. Capt McKinney was pulling

⁶ Cpl Stanley Grant Strong was one of those 44 nameless Marines. He was a good friend of Donald Luke (USAF) and he had been wounded at Khe Sahn and was on his way back to rejoin his group. He attended school at Charter Oak High School in Covina, Ca during 1963-64.

⁷ See Phan Rang Newsletter 195 “Three Terrible Days in March”.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			up from his fourth attack when his aircraft was hit by ground fire and crashed. An Army helicopter quickly arrived at the scene and confirmed that Capt McKinney had died in the aircraft.
25 Mar 1968	B-57B 52-1592	8 TBS, 35 TFW Capt Richard Whan ⁸ Hopper (KIA) ⁹ Maj Donald Lyle McHugo (KIA) ¹⁰	A Canberra on an armed reconnaissance mission was damaged by small arms fire as it was making its second bombing run on a ford at Ban Te Bang in southern Laos, about 20 miles southwest of the A Shau Valley. The aircraft’s port engine was damaged but Capt Hopper managed to fly the crippled aircraft back to Da Nang. Unfortunately the aircraft became uncontrollable during the single engined landing at Da Nang and crashed with the loss of both crew. This B-57 had originally flown with the 38 th TBG at Laon AB in France.
3 Apr 1968	B-57B 52-1586	8 TBS 35 TFW Maj Richard Zock (survived) A1C T L Tillotson (survived)	A Canberra was damaged by 37mm ground fire as it pulled up from its second pass over a ford at Ban Te Bang in southern Laos, about 20 miles southwest of the A Shau Valley. Although the left wing was damaged the pilot managed to fly the Canberra back to Phan Rang to make an emergency landing. Unfortunately the aircraft was damaged beyond repair during the landing. Like 52-1592 that crashed on 25 March, 51-1586 and ex-38 th TBG aircraft.
6 Apr 1968	F-100D 55-2911	615 TFS, 35 TFW Capt William David Canup (KIA)	The third Super Sabre to be lost in April was shot down while attacking enemy troops 10 miles northwest of An Khe and about 35 miles west of Phu Cat. Capt Canup was making his second run on his target when his aircraft was hit by automatic weapons fire and crashed before he could eject. A few weeks earlier Capt Canup had survived an ejection from an F-100F on 17 February. The serial number of this F-100D is also quoted for an aircraft that was shot down on 26 January 1967.
23 Apr 1968	F-100D 55-	615 TFS, 35 TFW	An F-100 crashed into a ridge of high ground near Phan Rang

⁸ See Phan Rang Newsletter 195 “Three Terrible Days in March”.

⁹ See Phan Rang Newsletter 180 “Hero Tribute - Capt Richard Whan Hopper”.

¹⁰ See Phan Rang Newsletter 195 “Three Terrible Days in March”.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

	2923	Maj Amos Oliver Fox (KIA)	when it was forced to make a missed approach as it was returning from a close air support mission.
18 Jun 1968	F-100D 55-2914	615 TFS, 35 TFW Maj G J Butler (Survived)	The vulnerability of the US air bases in South Vietnam was illustrated once more on the 18 th . A Super Sabre was hit by small arms fire just moments after taking off from Phan Rang. With his aircraft burning fiercely, Maj Butler ejected 10 miles southwest of the air base and was soon recovered.
25 Jun 1968	C-123K 54-0595	310 ACS, 315 ACW 4 crew names unknown (survived)	A provider was landing at an airfield in South Vietnam when it veered off the runway and hit a parked helicopter.
26 Jun 1968	HH-43F 59-1590	Detachment 1, 38 ARRS, 3 ARRG Maj Jimmy D Gammon (Survived) SSgt Henry L Jones (Survived) A1C D R Pomerpleu (Survived)	An F-100 was damaged by ground fire during a close air support mission in South Vietnam. Capt Casper flew his burning aircraft out over the coast near Phan Rang and ejected about five miles out to sea. During the rescue attempt one of Phan Rang’s local base rescue HH-43s (call sign Pedro 92) crashed, quite probably shot down by ground fire. None of the crew suffered any major injuries and they and Capt Casper were then rescued by another of Phan Rang’s Huskies.
30 Jun 1968	F-100D 56-3372	352 TFW, 35 TFW Capt Fred E. Davis (Survived)	The fourth F-100 to be lost in combat during June was shot down on a close air support mission near Tan An, 18 Miles southwest of Tan Son Nhut. Capt Davis was pulling up from an attack on enemy bunkers when his aircraft was hit by ground fire. The port wing caught fire and Capt Davis ejected two miles to the north and was picked up by an Army helicopter.
4 Jul 1968	F-100D 55-2900	352 TFS, 35 TFW Maj J S Ellard (survived)	As a Super Sabre was climbing away from Phan Rang on a night mission it was hit by small arms fire. However, it seems that Maj Ellard was unaware of this fact as he continued with his mission. Later he noticed a rapid loss of fuel and tried to make an emergency landing at Binh Thuy in the Mekong Delta. The aircraft crashed during the landing and Maj Ellard was badly injured.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

5 Jul 1968	F-100F 58-1226	614 TFS, 35 TFW Col P B Hardy (survived) Capt D W Jenny (survived)	The destruction of a SAM on its transporter on the 1 st confirmed that the SAM sites just north of the DMZ were active. A misty FAC led a strike mission against a SAM battery near Thach Ban, 10 miles north of the DMZ. Col Hardy was flying over the target at 4,000 feet when his aircraft was hit in the tail by 37mm flak. He coaxed the crippled aircraft back across the DMZ before he and Capt Jenny had to abandon the F-100. Col Hardy was rescued by a USAF helicopter while Capt Jenny was picked up by a Marine Corps helicopter.
29 Aug 1968	AC-47D 43-49499	14 SOW	A Spooky gunship was destroyed during a VC rocket attack on Phan Rang Air Base. The aircraft had originally been delivered to the USAAF as a C-47B in November 1944.
12 Sep 1968	C-123K 54-0714	19 SOS, 315 SOW 3 crew, names unknown (survived)	As a Provider was landing at an airfield in South Vietnam one of the propellers went into reverse due to a malfunction. The aircraft veered off the runway and was damaged beyond repair.
21 Sep 1968	B-57B 52-1498	8 TBS, 35 TFW LtCol D D Klein (survived) 1Lt R P Erickson (survived)	A Canberra on a night strike on a truck park near Ban Loumpoum in southern Laos was making its fifth dive on the target when it was hit by 37mm flak. The aircraft's port engine was put out of action but LtCol Klein managed to fly almost 100 miles towards a Navy SAR destroyer off Hue. The crew ejected and were quickly picked up by the vessel. Built in August 1954, 52-1498 was the sixth B-57B and had been used as a development aircraft by the manufacturers and at Edwards AFB, California.
2 Oct 1968	F-100D 55-3661	352 TFS, 35 TFW Maj D R Barron (Survived)	On the night of the 2nd flight of F-100s was scrambled from Phan Rang to bomb enemy troops and bunkers near That Son in the extreme southwestern corner of South Vietnam. Maj Barron's aircraft was damaged by small arms fire but it must have appeared not to have been serious as, instead of landing at Bien Hoa or Tan Son Nhut, he flew over 250 miles across South Vietnam, by-passed Phan Rang and attempted to land at Cam Ranh Bay. However, he had to eject over the sea close to the airfield and was rescued by a Navy boat.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

5 Oct 1968	B-57B 52-1570	8 TBS, 35 TFW Maj Miller (survived) Maj R Dyer (survived)	One of Phan Rang’s Canberras crashed during a combat mission due to an accidental engine failure. This B-57 was yet another of its type that had served with the 38 th TBG at Laon AB in France but it had also been flown by the Nevada ANG before transfer to Southeast Asia.
10 Oct 1968	HH-43B 58-1845	38 th ARRS, 35 TFW Maj Donald Ray Brooks Pilot (KIA) Capt Von Miles Liebernecht (KIA) TSgt Angel Luna, 35 th USAF Disp (KIA) TSgt Emmett Somers Orr, 35 th CES (KIA) SSgt Milard Luther Bledsoe, 35 th CES (KIA)	Pedro 44 (Callsign) was scrambled to meet an Aussie Canberra and a USAF F-100, on approach with an issues. Pedro was in the air about 5-10 minutes when it malfunctioned and crashed, killing all five crew members aboard.
17 Oct 1968	F-100D 55-2929 ¹¹	615 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt Mark Constant Chenis (KIA)	A Super Sabre pilot dies when he aborted his take off from Phan Rang and overran the runway and crashed.
9 Nov 1968	F-100D 56-3446	615 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Roger Edward Wichman (KIA)	A flight of F-100s was returning to Phan Rang from a close air support mission when one of the aircraft was hit by ground fire near the village of Thon Vu Bon, 10 miles southwest of the airfield. Capt Wichman tried to reach Phan Rang but the aircraft caught fire and although he appears to have ejected north of the airfield, he was killed during the incident.
16 Nov 1968	F-100D 55-3653	615 TFS, 35 TFW Maj Robert Charles Wiechert (KIA)	A Super Sabre crashed off the coast during a mission in South Vietnam. It was concluded that the pilot had probably suffered from spatial disorientation during a maneuver and lost control of the aircraft.

¹¹ See Phan Rang Newsletter 5 for more details on this incident.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

16 Nov 1968	F-100D 56-2935	615 TFS, 35 TFW Maj C R Hollis (survived)	A night-time close air support mission near the town of Vi Thanh in the southwestern tip of South Vietnam was badly affected by poor weather. Maj Hollis was dropping napalm on his second pass when his Super Sabre was struck by automatic weapons fire. The aircraft burst into flames and the pilot ejected safely to be picked up later by an Army helicopter.
29 Nov 1968	F-100D 56-3237	352 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt W L Cook (survived)	A Super Sabre was lost during a close air support mission near Phu Hiep, 45 miles west of Phan Rang. A flight of F-100s was attacking enemy troops in a mountainous region that overlooked Phu Hiep and Dalat. 1Lt Cook’s aircraft was hit by small arms fire during the attack causing him to eject. He was rescued by a USAF helicopter before the enemy troops could find him.
13 Dec 1968	B-57E 55-4284	8 TBS, 35 TFW Maj Thomas Wayne Dugan (KIA) Maj Francis Jay McGouldrick (KIA)	The tactical fighter-bombers that worked over the Ho Chi Minh Trail at night often relied on the light of flares provided by Candlestick C-123s from the 606th SOSs. These aircraft would patrol the trail all night often working in conjunction with the B-57s from Phan Rang as well as A-1s, A-26s, F-4s and T-28s from Thailand. The Candlestick C-123 was both a FAC and a flareship combined. Using Starlight Scopes the C-123s did much to find and mark targets in the northern sector of the Steel Tiger area, while the Blind Bat C-130s concentrated on the southern sector. However, the mission had its dangers, not just from the enemy but from the operational hazards of flying at night with few precision navigational aids over mountainous terrain. At 3:30 in the morning of the 13th a C-123K (call sign Candlestick 44) spotted a target near Ban Nampakhon, 20 miles southwest of the Ban Karai Pass in southern Laos. A pair of B-57s was called in to hit the target but during the bomb run one of the Canberras collided with the C-123. The Canberra crashed immediately, killing both the crew, and the Provider started a slow spin towards the ground. The Provider’s pilot, Lt Turner, was temporarily knocked unconscious, and when he came to he saw that the

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			<p>other flight deck crew had already gone. Lt Turner bailed out and landed in a tree where he stayed until he was rescued at dawn by a HH-3E flown by Capt Harwood and his crew of the 40th ARRS from Nakhon Phanom. As Lt Turner floated down he saw at least one other parachute below him, but no more men were rescued from the aircraft. Information received since the war lends credence to claims that the navigator, 1Lt Donahue, may have survived the crash and been captured. As late as 1987 1Lt Donahue’s family received seemingly credible information that indicated he was still being held captive in Laos. However, there have been no new developments since then and, officially at least, he remains listed as killed in action.</p>
17 Dec 1968	C-123K 54-0708	<p>309 SOS, 315 SOW Capt Kenneth Roy Crist (KIA) 1Lt Roger Henry Strout (KIA) SSgt Jesse John Bradshaw (KIA) 1 crew, name unknown (survived)</p>	<p>During a ferry flight a C-123K crashed due to a fuel transfer problem that eventually led to engine failure. Three of the four crewmen were killed in the accident. The names of the crew are assumed from the Vietnam Wall database as being the only USAF personnel killed while flying in Military Region 1 on this day.</p>
29 Dec 1968	F-100C 54-1973	<p>120 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Joseph E O’Neill (survived)¹²</p>	<p>The last aircraft to be lost during 1968 was another F-100 that was shot down during a close air support mission over South Vietnam. Capt O’Neill was making his third pass on a target near Vi Thanh in the extreme southwest of the country when his aircraft was damaged by ground fire. Capt O’Neill attempted to fly back to Phan Rang but was forced to eject when the aircraft became uncontrollable. An Army helicopter quickly picked him up.</p>
13 Jan 1969	B-57B 52-1561	<p>8 TBS, 35 TFW Lt Col Norman Dale</p>	<p>A B-57B failed to return from a Steel Tiger night interdiction mission over southern Laos. The target area was illuminated</p>

¹² See Phan Rang Newsletter 165 “Pilot Tells of Bailout”.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		Eaton (KIA) Capt Paul Everett Getchell (KIA)	by flares dropped by a C-130 flare ship. After the last flare had dimmed the B-57B began its third bombing run and reported having cleared the target but was then seen to explode as it hit the ground about 10 miles south of the A Shau Valley. Although no ejection or parachutes were seen, a faint emergency beeper was heard briefly by a FAC pilot in the area. However, a search the next day revealed no sign of the two crew members, who were presumed to have perished in the incident. The crash site was located in 1995 and an excavation in 2003 recovered Lt Col Eaton’s ID tag. Five more excavations over the next two years recovered Capt Getchell’s ID tag as well as human remains which were confirmed as being those of the crew and were subsequently buried in Arlington National Cemetery.
20 Jan 1969	F-100D 55-3704	615 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt James D James (Survived)	Five USAF F-100s were lost in separate incidents within three days from 20 January. 1Lt James was dropping napalm on a target five miles south of Vinh Long in the Mekong Delta when he was shot down by ground fire. The Super Sabre’s wing caught fire and the pilot ejected near his target but was later rescued by a HH-43F of Detachment 10, 38th ARRS from Binh Thuy.
21 Jan 1969	F-100D 56-3113	352 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Fred E. Davis (Survived)	A Super Sabre was damaged by ground fire during a close air support mission in South Vietnam. Capt Davis ejected just off the coast 10 miles south of Phan Thiet and was rescued by a Navy vessel. This pilot was the same guy who was who shot down with the 352nd TFS on 30 June 1968.
21 Jan 1969	F-100D 56-3158	615 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Milo George Maahs (DOW)	A Super Sabre pilot was killed during a close air support mission 10 miles southeast of Katum near the Cambodian border. His aircraft was damaged by ground fire during a napalm run. Capt Maahs then flew south and reached Bien Hoa but he was badly injured when his aircraft crashed on the approach to the airfield. Although rescued by a HH-43F from the base Capt Maahs died from his injuries.
24 Jan 1969	F-100F 56-	614 TFS, 35 TFW	One of Phan Rang’s two-seat Super Sabres was taking part in a

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

	3731	1Lt J D Muller (Survived) Capt G G Potter (Survived)	close air support mission near Truc Giang in the Mekong Delta, 40 miles southwest of Saigon. 1Lt Muller was diving at a target when his aircraft was hit by ground fire. The crew ejected a few miles to the south and 1Lt Muller was rescued by an Army helicopter while Capt Potter was picked up by a USAF HH-43.
26 Jan 1969	F-100C 54-1956	120 TFS, 35 TFW no aircrew involved	Two Super Sabres, including one from the Colorado ANG squadron, were destroyed during an attack by the NVA's H-13 Sapper Company on the night of the 25/26th at Phan Rang. A total of 74 rounds of 82mm mortars and 107mm rockets were fired at the base and 11 other aircraft were damaged and 15 men wounded. Fourteen of the enemy soldiers were killed and one captured during the raid. The damage might have been even worse had a sapper attack, using satchel charges and grenades, not been discovered and turned back by base security police.
26 Jan 1969	F-100D 56-3301	120 TFS, 35 TFW No aircrew involved	Two Super Sabres, including one from the Colorado ANG squadron, were destroyed during an attack by the NVA's H-13 Sapper Company on the night of the 25/26th at Phan Rang. A total of 74 rounds of 82mm mortars and 107mm rockets were fired at the base and 11 other aircraft were damaged and 15 men wounded. Fourteen of the enemy soldiers were killed and one captured during the raid. The damage might have been even worse had a sapper attack, using satchel charges and grenades, not been discovered and turned back by base security police.
22 Feb 1969	B-57B 52-1532	8 TBS, 35 TFW Lt Col Donald Elmer Paxton (KIA) ¹³ Maj Charles Macko (KIA)	Although the Canberras from Phan Rang were operating over the Trail primarily at night by this date, the aircraft did make occasional daylight raids as well. Lt Col Paxton and Maj Macko were bombing trucks on a road seven miles southeast of Ban Kate when their aircraft was shot down by ground fire. Neither of the crew were thought to have ejected from the aircraft before it crashed on a slope close to the road. The remains of

¹³ See Phan Rang Newsletter 103 “Remembering Col Donald Paxton and Maj. Charles Macko of the 8th Tactical Bomb Squadron”.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			the crew were recovered from the crash site in Laos in November 1996 and positively identified in August 2000.
15 Mar 1969	B-57B 52-1567	8 TBS, 35 TFW Lt Col E Tiddy (Survived) Maj Michael A De Sousa (Survived)	A Canberra was hit by ground fire and damaged during an attack on a North Vietnamese rocket launching position near the A Shau Valley. Lt Col Tiddy flew all the way back to Phan Rang but had to crash-land the aircraft close to the airfield when both engines flamed out. Both men were recovered by one of the base’s HH-43B Huskies. B-57B 52-1567 had seen service with the 38th TBG at Laon AB in France, the Nevada ANG, the Kentucky ANG and the 405th FW before transfer to the 35th TFW.
25 Mar 1969	F-100D 56-2960	615 TFS, 35 TFW Maj W O Chaffer (survived)	While flying F-100D (#562960) out of Phan Rang, Major W.R. Chaffer “Blade O” was part of a flight scrambled to provide night close air support for troops in contact with the enemy 20 miles northeast of Bien Hoa. His Super Sabre was hit by automatic weapons fire on the second napalm run and he ejected from the doomed aircraft. An Army helo was able to outrace the Vietcong to MAJOR CHAFFER’s position and rescue him. Chaffer suffers minor injuries.
27 Mar 1969	B-57B 52-1508	8 TBS, 35 TFW Lt Col Richard W Burkholder (Survived) Lt Col Harold V Wright (Survived)	A Canberra (call sign Yellowbird 40) was damaged by AAA during a dawn strike on a river ford near the town of Tavouac in southern Laos, 20 miles southwest of the A Shau Valley. As the aircraft was pulling up from its second pass, it was struck by 37mm flak causing a fire in the fuselage. Lt Col Burkholder nursed the crippled aircraft for as long as he could but he and his navigator were forced to eject near Phu Cat where they were rescued by two HH-43s from the 38th ARRS. This aircraft was the last B-57B lost in Southeast Asia. A total of 54 B-57Bs, two B-57Es and a B-57C had been lost in Southeast Asia since the first aircraft arrived at Bien Hoa in August 1964. By June 1969 there were only six B-57s left at Phan Rang and these were operating almost exclusively at night by then. The 8th TBS started to run down in September and left Phan Rang at the end of October 1969 after five years in Southeast Asia.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			However, this was not the end of the Canberra’s contribution to the war in Southeast Asia.
27 Mar 1969	F-100C 54-1897	120 TFS, 35 TFW Maj Clyde Seiler (KIA)	Although the 120th TFS had lost an aircraft on 29 December, it had not lost a pilot since its deployment from Colorado in April 1968. However, on 27 March the Squadron’s run of good fortune came to an end when Maj Seiler was killed when he was shot down during a close air support mission near Song Be City. The Squadron flew its last combat mission on 8 April before returning to Buckley ANG Base at Denver. The 120th had flown 6,127 sorties in the year spent at Phan Rang. It had dropped 14.3 million pounds of bombs, 5.6 million pounds of napalm, 227,070 pounds of cluster munitions, and had fired 423,000 rockets and 1.8 million rounds of 20mm ammunition. The Squadron had lost only two aircraft and one pilot on operations and had another aircraft destroyed during a VC attack on Phan Rang.
18 May 1969	C-123K 54-0639	310 SOS, 315 SOW 1Lt Neil William Hayden (KIA) 1Lt Douglas McArthur Evans (KIA) MSgt Duane Leland Hartenhoff (KIA) TSgt Kermit Bruce Roberts (KIA) SSgt Carl Joseph Wanner (KIA) Sgt Milton Jackson Bush (KIA)	A Provider on an airlift sortie had its port engine damaged by 12.7mm ground fire near Tanh Linh, 50 miles east of Bien Hoa. The crew struggled to keep the burning aircraft airborne and headed for Bien Hoa to try to make an emergency landing. Tragically, the aircraft crashed just six miles northeast of the airfield killing all on board.
25 May 1969	F-100D 56-3119	352 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt D G Stanford (Survived)	The last of four F-100s shot down during May was lost during a close air support mission in South Vietnam. The target was VC troops in the open near the Saigon River, about 10 miles southwest of Lai Khe. 1Lt Stanford had completed his attack

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			and was leaving the target area at low level when his aircraft was damaged by small arms fire. The aircraft must have been too badly damaged to permit a safe landing so 1Lt Stanford flew southeast and crossed the coast to eject over the sea about 30 miles east of the city of Vung Tau. He was rescued by a US Navy ship that had been notified to look out for the pilot.
3 Jun 1969	F-100D 55-3790	614 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt Donald Francis Ginart (KIA) ¹⁴	A Super Sabre was lost during a close air support mission 10 miles southwest of Quan Long in the extreme southern tip of South Vietnam. 1Lt Ginart was making his second strafing pass against VC structures when his F-100 was hit by automatic weapons fire. He may have been wounded as he was unable to eject before the aircraft crashed close to the target. An Army helicopter later visited the crash site and recovered his body.
26 Jun 1969	F-100D 55-3516	614 TFS, 35 TFW Capt John H Casper (Survived)	An F-100 was damaged by ground fire during a close air support mission in South Vietnam. Capt Casper flew his burning aircraft out over the coast near Phan Rang and ejected about five miles out to sea. During the rescue attempt one of Phan Rang’s local base rescue HH-43s (call sign Pedro 92) crashed, quite probably shot down by ground fire. None of the crew suffered any major injuries and they and Capt Casper were then rescued by another of Phan Rang’s Huskies.
8 Aug 1969	F-100D 56-3581	614 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt Edward L Daniel (Survived)	Another Super Sabre was lost during an attack on a Viet Cong weapons cache that was thought to include rockets and mortars. 1Lt Daniel had just finished making his fourth run over the target when his aircraft was hit by ground fire about 15 miles southeast of Song Be City. He flew all the way back to Phan Rang but was forced to eject about five miles from the airfield and was picked up by a HH-43B helicopter of Detachment 1 of the 38th ARRS from the airfield.
23 Aug 1969	F-100D 55-2895	612 TFS, 35 TFW Capt D M Wanless (Survived)	A pair of F-100s was dropping napalm in an effort to burn Viet Cong food crops about 55 miles southwest of Phan Rang when one of the aircraft was lost. Capt Wanless was making his

¹⁴ See Phan Rang Newsletter 119 “1st Lt Donald F. Ginart”.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			second pass when his aircraft was badly damaged by the blast from one of his napalm canisters. He ejected a few miles to the north of the target and was rescued by an Army helicopter.
12 Sep 1969	F-100D 55-3512	612 TFS, 35 TFW Maj A W Steinhauss (Survived)	A flight of F-100s was dispatched to bomb a bunker complex that had been discovered just three miles northeast of Bien Hoa. These bunkers were probably being used by the VC to store supplies for their frequent night attacks on the airbase. Maj Steinhauss was pulling up from his attack on the target when his aircraft was hit by ground fire. He ejected almost immediately from his burning aircraft but was soon rescued without a scratch by a US Army helicopter.
24 Sep 1969	F-100D 55-3737	614 TFS, 35 TFW Capt H A Hornbarger (Survived)	A Super Sabre crashed near Phan Rang through pilot error while on an attack mission. The pilot was picked up by a HH-43 Huskie from Phan Rang’s Detachment 1 of the 38th ARRS. This particular F-100 had been flown by the Thunderbirds aerobatic team in the mid-1960s before the aircraft was transferred to Southeast Asia.
10 Oct 1969	C-123K 54-0642	19 SOS, 315 SOW Capt William F Unckrich (KWF) 1Lt Charles Franklin Burrell (KWF) TSgt Harry Clifton Shepard (KWF) SSgt Lavoyne Augustus Jones (KWF) A1C Leland Craig Johnson (KWF)	As a Provider was taking off from Rach Ghia airfield in Kien Giang province of South Vietnam it suddenly banked sharply to the left and crashed. All five crew were killed in the accident. It has been suggested that the cause of the accident was fuel starvation to one of the engines.
11 Oct 1969	AC-119G Gunship III 52-5907	Det.1, 17 SOS, 14 SOW Lt Col Bernard	An AC-119 52-5907 gunship, radio call sign Shadow 76, crashed as it was taking off from Tan Son Nhut when an engine failed and caught fire. With all its armament and

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		<p>Richard Knapic (KWF)</p> <p>Maj Moses Lopes Alves (KWF)</p> <p>Maj Jerome James Rice (KWF)</p> <p>Capt John Hooper Hathaway (KWF)</p> <p>SSgt Abraham Lincoln Moore (KWF)</p> <p>SSgt Ellsworth Smith Bradford (KWF)</p> <p>Gale Jones, Gunner (Survived)</p> <p>John Lelle, Gunner (Survived)</p> <p>Bill Slater, Head Gunner (Survived)</p> <p>1 other crew, name unknown (Survived)</p>	<p>ammunition together with a full fuel load the single-engined performance of the AC-119G was insufficient to enable it to stay airborne. Six of the 10 crew were killed in the accident. SSgt Bradford was a photographer with the 600th Photo Squadron.</p>
14 Oct 1969	F-100D 56-3069	<p>615 TFS, 35 TFW</p> <p>Capt George Robert Andrews (KIA)¹⁵</p>	<p>During a close air support mission a flight of F-100s attacked an enemy sampan near Thuy Dong, about 30 miles west of Saigon. Capt Andrews came in low to drop his ordnance but his aircraft was hit by ground fire and crashed. He may have been wounded by the enemy fire as he did not eject.</p>
17 Dec 1969	C-123K 55-4562	<p>310 SOS, 315 SOW</p> <p>SSgt Gary Vaughn Clark (KWF)</p> <p>4 crew, names</p>	<p>A Provider undershot the runway at Gia Nghia, a Special Forces camp 90 miles northeast of Saigon, during a combat resupply mission, and crashed killing one of the five men on board. SSgt Clark was serving with the 14th Field Maintenance</p>

¹⁵ Phan Rang Newsletter 53 has the story of the dedication of a dining facility in honor of Capt. Andrews and Phan Rang Newsletter 172 “Facility Named for Hero, Widow Given His Medals”

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		unknown (Survived)	Squadron, 14th SOW at the time of his death. The aircraft broke up and was destroyed by fire.
3 Jan 1970	C-123K 54-0688	19 TAS, 315 TAW 5 crew, names unknown (Survived)	A Provider was damaged beyond repair at Binh Thuy when it hit part of the runway arresting gear and veered off into a rice paddy. On 1 January the 315th SOS was redesignated as the 315th TAW, reflecting its primary role of in-theatre tactical airlift.
13 Jan 1970	F-100D 55-3777	35 TFW 1 pilot, name unknown (Survived)	An F-100 had to be abandoned when it lost engine oil pressure causing complete engine failure during a close air support mission.
26 Jan 1970	F-100D 55-3574	615 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt Stephen J Shook (Survived)	A Super Sabre pilot lost control of his aircraft as he was making a low-level pass to drop napalm on a target in South Vietnam. The aircraft hit several trees and the pilot ejected before the aircraft crashed. He was rescued by one of Phan Rang’s HH-43B helicopters shortly afterwards.
10 Feb 1970	F-100D 55-3585	612 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt James Vance Phillips (Survived)	An F-100 was damaged during a mission near Katum. 1Lt Phillips was attacking enemy bunkers when his aircraft was hit by small arms fire on his fourth pass. He flew across South Vietnam, crossed the coast and ejected about 10 miles from Phan Ly Cham. He was rescued from the sea by a HH-43B helicopter. Lt Phillips was shot down again on 16 September 1970 and survived.
17 Feb 1970	F-100D 56-3147	614 TFS, 35 TFW 1 pilot, name unknown (Survived)	During a close air support mission an F-100 lost oil pressure resulting an engine failure. The pilot ejected and was subsequently rescued.
19 Feb 1970	AC-119K Gunship III 53-3156	18 SOS, 14 SOW detached to Da Nang 10 crew, names unknown (Survived)	An AC-119K Stinger returning from a night-time armed reconnaissance mission over the Trail landed short at Da Nang and was damaged beyond repair. About two miles from touchdown the engines on the port wing suddenly lost power due to fuel starvation and the pilot was unable to maintain control. The crew escaped with minor injuries.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

9 Mar 1970	F-100D 55-2890	352 TFS, 35 TFW Capt R F Clay (Survived)	A Super Sabre was lost during a landing zone preparation mission near Duc Phong, 20 miles west of Song Be City. Capt Clay was pulling up from his second pass when his aircraft was hit by ground fire causing the engine to fail. He ejected immediately and was soon picked up by an Army helicopter.
9 Mar 1970	F-100D 56-3384	615 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Richard John Cowell (DOW)	Another Super Sabre was lost later the same day during a Steel Tiger strike on the border between South Vietnam and Laos, about 21 miles west of Kham Duc. Capt Cowell (call sign Bobcat 72) was making his second dive bombing attack on an intersection point when his aircraft was hit by AAA and burst into flames. He ejected and was recovered by a HH-3E from the 37th ARRS but he died of his injuries the following day.
29 May 1970	F-100D 55-3803	614 TFS, 35 TFW Capt W H Rutherford (Survived)	Another aircraft was lost on a raid in Cambodia. A flight of Super Sabres was sent to attack an enemy position near Phum Chiphu, 35 miles west of Saigon and just within Cambodia. Capt Rutherford came down to 500 feet as he strafed the target on his fourth pass. His aircraft was damaged by small arms fire and he ejected a few miles away and was later rescued by an Army helicopter.
6 Jun 1970	AC-119K 52-5935	18 SOS, 14 SOW detached to Da Nang TSgt Clyde Douglas Alloway (KWF) 9 crew, names unknown (Survived)	As an AC-119K Stinger (call sign Lemon 7) took off from Da Nang for a night gunship mission it suffered a runaway propeller on the Number 1 engine. The pilot tried to return to the airfield to make an emergency landing but could not control the aircraft. The crew abandoned the aircraft over the sea just to the east of Da Nang and all but one man was rescued by SAR helicopters. The aircraft continued flying out to sea and caused a brief panic when it seemed to be heading for Chinese airspace around Hainan Island. However, the aircraft crashed into the South China Sea well before it reached Hainan.
8 Jul 1970	F-100D 55-2943	615 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt David P Egelston (Survived)	A Super Sabre (call sign Blade 1) was shot down during an attack on an enemy position 10 miles northeast of Phan Thiet. The aircraft was on its third pass over the target when it was hit by ground fire. 1Lt Egelston headed back to base but was

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			forced to eject over the sea about 35 miles south of Phan Rang and was picked up by a HH-43B helicopter from the 38th ARRS.
17 Jul 1970	C-47A 43-15583	14 th SOW Maj. Lloyd Arthur Mc Grew (KWF) 3 Crew survived but MSgt Edward Dewey Johnson died 8 days later from smoke and fire inhalation.	A C-47 transport crashed during a training flight when it suffered an engine failure. The eventual fate of the aircraft is in doubt as at least one source claims that 43-15583 later flew with Air Laos as XW-PFY. (Source Vietnam Air Losses by Chris Hobson.
10 Aug 1970	C-123K 55-4527	315 TAW Maj Grant Reed Waugh (KWF) Capt Dwaine Elbyrne Mattox (KWF) TSgt Bernard Francis Morrill (KWF) Sgt Robert Agrifoglio ¹⁶ (Survived)	During a practice assault landing at Cam Ranh Bay a Provider crashed on the approach when a flap hinge broke causing the aircraft to roll uncontrollably. The aircraft fell into the sea just short of Cam Ranh Bay’s runway and only the loadmaster survived the accident.
21 Aug 1970	F-100D 56-3435	612 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt Charles Edward McLeish (KIA) ¹⁷	1Lt McLeish had recently arrived at Phan Rang and was flying an orientation flight in company with another aircraft in order to familiarize himself with the Wing’s operational area. As the aircraft approached Ben Het 1Lt McLeish’s aircraft was shot down by ground fire and he was killed.
16 Sep 1970	F-100D 55-3806	612 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt James Vance	The Cambodian incursion continued and a Super Sabre was lost in that country on the 16th. 1Lt Phillips (call sign Blade 5)

¹⁶ See Phan Rang Newsletter 143 “AF Plane Crashes at Cam Ranh AB” and Phan Rang Newsletter 151 for a biography.

¹⁷ See Phan Rang Newsletter 176 “1st Lt. Charles Edward McLeish, Monona, Killed in Viet War”

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		Phillips (Survived)	was bombing boats and a storage area five miles southeast of the town of Kratie when he was shot down as he pulled up from his seventh pass. He ejected safely and was picked up by a HH-3E helicopter from the 37th ARRS. Lt Phillips had been shot down earlier in the year on 10 February.
25 Oct 1970	F-100D 56-3383	614 TFS, 35 TFW 1 pilot, Fred Tomlins (Survived)	An F-100 was returning from a strike mission when it crashed short of Phan Rang’s runway and was destroyed. The pilot survived the accident.
3 Nov 1970	Canberra A84-231	No. 2 Squadron RAAF PLTOFF (Bombaimer) Robert Charles Carver, (KIA) FLGOFF Michael Patrick John Herbert (KIA)	Canberra A84-231 (MAGPIE 91) disappeared on 3 November 1970 on a night bombing mission in the northern 1st Corps Tactical Zone region of South Vietnam after dropping its bombs near Da Nang. Pilot Officer Robert Charles Carver and Flying Officer Michael Patrick John Herbert, were both MIA until 30 July 2009 when their remains were positively identified. ¹⁸
27 Nov 1970	C-123K 55-4574 ¹⁹	315 TAW 1Lt Marvin S Arthington (KWF) Maj Robert Lee Baker (KWF) 1Lt Frederick Merchant Rader (KWF) TSgt William Brandon O’Kieff (KWF) Sgt Allen James Bodin (KWF) A1C Frederick	A Provider on a flight from Tan Son Nhut to Nha Trang crashed into a mountain in Khanh Hoa province while in thick low cloud about 15 miles southwest of its destination. The aircraft (call sign Bookie 102) crashed at an elevation of 4,600 feet, some 500 feet below the top of a ridge. All six crew and 73 ARVN troops on board died in the accident. The aircraft’s burnt out wreckage was not found until nine days later.

¹⁸ See Phan Rang Newsletter 147 “MAGPIES DOWN”

¹⁹ See Phan Rang Newsletter 150 “The Crash of C-123 55-4575, Bookie 102, 27 Nov 1970”

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		Richard Neff (KWF) 73 ARVN troops, names unknown (KWF)	
29 Nov 1970	C-123K 54-0649 ²⁰	310 TAS, 315 TAW Capt Cecil Gerald Moyer (KWF) Capt Norbert Albert Podhajsky (KWF) 1Lt James Francis Saxby (KWF) SSgt Grayson Henry Newberry (KWF) SSgt Harry Allen Watson (KWF) Sgt Vincent Fairbrother (Survived) Sgt Gary Aldredge (Survived) About 39 US and ARVN troops, names unknown (KWF)	In a repeat of the incident just two days previous, a Provider (call sign Bookie 540) disappeared on a trooping flight. The aircraft crashed about 15 miles southwest of Cam Ranh Bay while on a troop deployment flight from Phan Rang. The aircraft took off from Phan Rang in low cloud, high winds and poor visibility and was last seen flying through a valley with high ridges on both sides. The aircraft crashed into high ground at 2,700 feet while in thick cloud. The wreckage was found five days later with only two men still alive who were rescued by a helicopter from the 37th ARRS on 4 December. Eleven USAF personnel are recorded as being killed in the accident along with about 10 ARVN troops.
12 Dec 1970	F-100D 56-3132	352 TFS, 35 TFW 1 pilot, name unknown (Survived)	A Super Sabre was lost near Kampong Cham, 40 miles north of Phnom Penh, during a strike on a target in Cambodia. The pilot ejected and was later rescued.
11 Feb 1971	UC-123K 56-4373	310 TAS, 315 TAW detached to Tan Son Nhut 1Lt Charles Milton	The Ranch Hand defoliation programme was drawing to a close and the last herbicide mission had been flown in South Vietnam on 7 January. The 12th ACS had been inactivated on 31 July 1970 and the Ranch Hand crews had been posted to A

²⁰ See Phan Rang Newsletter 150 “The Crash of C-123, 55-0649, Bookie 540, 29 Nov 1970”

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		Deas (KWF) 1Lt Richard William O’Keefe (KWF) Lt Col Daniel Harrison Tate (KWF) MSgt Donald Louis Dunn (KWF) TSgt Clyde Wendell Hanson (KWF)	Flight of the 310th TAS. On 28 January the six Providers and the crews of A Flight were absorbed into the rest of the Squadron to take up conventional transport duties. However two aircraft were retained for insecticide spraying in an attempt to combat the malaria-carrying mosquitoes that thrived in the swampy regions of South Vietnam. On 10 February one of the two insecticide sprayers crashed at Phan Rang killing all five crew on board. The flight was 1Lt Deas’s last mission before returning to the USA and he had asked several squadron members to take photographs of his aircraft as he made low passes over the airfield. No evidence of damage from enemy action was found and the crash was determined to have been caused by pilot error. Insecticide spraying continued for another year until the last Ranch Hand aircraft left Vietnam in February 1972.
11 Mar 1971	F-100D 56-3181	35 TFW 1 pilot, name unknown (Survived)	The engine of a Super Sabre caught fire during a combat mission and the pilot was forced to abandon the aircraft. The cause of the engine problem was thought to have been a mechanical failure rather than combat damage.
12 Mar 1971	F-100D 56-3415	614 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt Clive Garth Jeffs (KIA) ²¹	A flight of Super Sabres was dispatched from Phan Rang to attack an enemy position in Khang Hoa Province of South Vietnam. One of the aircraft was shot down in flames about 40 miles northwest of Nha Trang and its pilot was seen to eject over a thick layer of cloud. Other aircraft nearby heard a good beeper signal after 1Lt Jeffs ejected but could not make voice contact with him. A 10-day search failed to find any trace of the pilot. The crash site of an F-100 was discovered in 1974 and investigated by the JTF-FA in 1990 but so far there is no new information on the fate of 1Lt Jeffs. 56-3415 also saw service with the 31st TFW at Tuy Hoa during its time in Vietnam.
14 Mar 1971	Canberra	No. 2 Squadron	Canberra A84-228 shot down by two SA-2 SAM missiles on 14

²¹ See Phan Rang Newsletter 157 “A Sad day for the 614th TFS “Lucky Devils” - Clive Garth Jeffs and Phan Rang Newsletter 194 “Remembering 1Lt Clive Garth Jeffs”.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

	A84-228	RAAF 2 Crew (Survived)	March 1971; Wing Commander F. J. L. Downing and Flight Lieutenant A.J. Pinches were both rescued. Both airmen safely ejected from their stricken aircraft after it was hit by a ground-launched SA-2 surface-to-air missile, while also flying a Combat Sky Spot bombing mission in daylight conditions over the Quang Tri region of South Vietnam on 14 March 1971. ²²
19 Mar 1971	C-123K 54-0650	19 TAS, 315 TAW 4 crew, names unknown (Survived)	A Provider caught fire after the nose gear oleo strut collapsed on landing at an airstrip at Thein Ngon in South Vietnam. All the crew escaped without injury. This was the last of 54 C-123 Providers to be lost by the USAF in Southeast Asia, 20 of them due to enemy action. In June 1972 the last Air Force Providers in Southeast Asia were handed over to the VNAF, which operated three squadrons until their replacement by C-130s in 1973. The rugged and reliable C-123, along with the smaller C-7, performed much of the resupply of Special Forces camps and other units at remote locations throughout South Vietnam. Its rough field capability enabled it to operate from the uneven runway surfaces often found at the up-country strips. Despite its age, the aircraft was one of the mainstays of the ground war in Southeast Asia.
22 Mar 1971	F-100D 56-3180	614 TFS, 35 TFW Capt Peter Gibney Moriarty (KIA) ²³	Sightings of tanks in southern Laos were becoming a more regular occurrence as the NVA became bolder. However, when caught in the open tanks became priority targets and every effort was made to destroy them wherever they were found. A flight of F-100s was sent on a raid to attack a group of four tanks that had been seen just inside Laos, about 10 miles

²² See Phan Rang Newsletter 147 “Magpie 41”.

- ²³ I (Ron Deyhle) knew Pete Moriarty well. He was fairly new to the 615th and was a quiet guy. He was a captain but a newly trained pilot. I was on the same set missions for the destruction of the tanks. It was during Lam Song 719 when the ARVN invaded Laos to show that Nixons Vietnamization would work. The lead of the flight was Hal Cohran. He destroyed the tank that shot Petedown. They had High drag ordinance which we were not supposed to use in high risk areas. So they tried to court Marshall Hal for letting Pete roll in with ordinance that had to be dropped at low altitude. They ended up not court Marshall him. He was put in for the medal honor and it was downgraded to a DFC. It hurt his career. He got out and went with the Colorado guard and was killed in an A-7 on the night range. Pete has a memorial headstone at Arlington. As a new guy Pete was out of his element on this mission. It was a bitch in there. We could not send in American troops because of the congress new rules but we could provide air support. The helicopters took a terrible loss rate trying to get the out classed ARVN troops .

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

			to the west of Khe Sanh. Capt Moriarty was making his first pass when his aircraft was hit by 12.5mm ground fire and burst into flames. The aircraft crashed before the pilot could eject.
4 Apr 1971	F-100D 56-3120	352 TFS, 35 TFW ²⁴ 1Lt ²⁵ Joseph Stanley Smith (KIA)	Another aircraft was lost in Cambodia when a flight of two Super Sabres attacked a storage area about 30 miles north of Kampong Cham. 1Lt Smith, the flight leader, was strafing the target on his fifth pass when ground fire was seen to hit the aircraft’s port wing. The aircraft crashed half a mile from the target before the pilot could eject. Between 1996 and 2016 joint US/Cambodian teams recovered wreckage and human remains from the crash site. The remains were identified as being those of 1Lt Smith in 2017.
11 Apr 1971	F-100D 56-2937	614 TFS, 35 TFW Capt William Carl Buerk (KIA)	A flight of F-100s was flying a close air support mission a few miles to the southwest of Dak To when one of the aircraft was shot down. Capt Buerk was making his first pass on a target when he was shot down and killed before he could escape from his aircraft.
13 Apr 1971	F-100D 55-3749	614 TFS, 35 TFW 1 pilot, name unknown (Survived)	Another 614th TFS aircraft from Phan Rang was lost during a raid in Cambodia. The aircraft was hit by 37mm AAA as it was pulling up from an attack and crashed just inside Cambodia, about 25 miles west of Katum, after the pilot ejected.
15 Apr 1971	F-100 D 56-2955	352 TFS, 35 TFW Capt J C Hauck (Survived)	The 35th TFW was going through a rough patch during April 1971. The Wing lost its fourth aircraft of the month during a strike on suspected enemy positions four miles southwest of Ben Het, near Dak To. Capt Hauck’s aircraft was pulling up from its second pass when it was hit by small arms fire at 1,000 feet. Capt Hauck headed southeast and ejected close to Kontum and was recovered by an Army unit.
28 Apr 1971	F-100D 55-3550	615 TFS, 35 TFW 1Lt Benjamin	A flight of F-100s was scrambled from Phan Rang to bomb a VC position in South Vietnam on the night of the 28th. As the

²⁴ The Cofflet Database of Vietnam casualties lists his organization as 612th Tactical Fighter Squadron, 35th Tactical Fighter Wing.

²⁵ Promoted while MIA

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 197 “...keeping the memories alive”

		Gaines Lang (KIA)	aircraft were returning to the airfield, one of the Super Sabres was hit by ground fire near Ap Vinh Hoa on the coast about 20 miles southwest of Phan Rang. 1Lt Lang was killed when the aircraft crashed. This aircraft was the last of 242 F-100 Super Sabres to be lost during the wars in Southeast Asia. The F-100 had been the workhorse of the air war in South Vietnam since the escalation of the conflict in 1965 and had also flown missions over North Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. The peak years for losses were 1968 and 1969 with a total of 116 aircraft lost. According to USAF figures the F-100 had flown 360,283 combat sorties during the war.
--	--	-------------------	--

Source Vietnam Air Losses, United States Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps fixed-wing Aircraft Losses in Southeast Asia 1961-1973 by Chris Hobson

Companion Newsletters

“casualty list for Ninh Thuan Province (Phan Rang AB)” organization and all casualties that occurred in Ninh Thuan Province see Phan Rang Newsletter 155 and Phan Rang Newsletter 227 “Aircraft of Phan Rang AB, RVN”.

See Phan Rang Newsletter 162 “Some interesting facts about the C-123’s stationed at Phan Rang AB”.

Doug’s Comments: I hope that you enjoyed this newsletter and if you have a story to tell, please write it down and send to me so that your unique experiences can be saved for posterity. This newsletter was composed and all graphics by Douglas Severt unless otherwise stated. To see a list of all previous newsletters click [here](#). To unsubscribe to Phan Rang News, mailto:mailto:dougsevert@cox.net and put ‘unsubscribe’ in subject line.