

# Phan Rang AB Newsletter

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.  
"Keeping the memories alive" Newsletter 201

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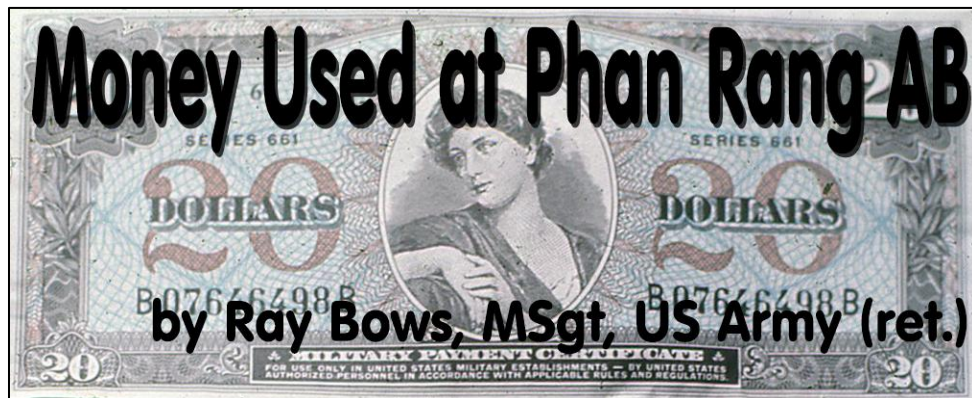
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This story actually has two facets: First, the facilities named at Phan Rang for airmen and officers who served their units and their nation with distinction during the war in Vietnam, and secondly about the little known tokens and chits that were used in slot-machines and at clubs because the monetary standard in Vietnam, as all Vietnam veterans know, were Military Payment Certificates (MPC).

Needless to say MPC couldn't activate slot machines, thus slugs were needed. MACV regulations required that each club had to have their own different tokens, whether they were marked with location, unit, or club name, they could not be the same as another clubs.

Phan Rang Air Base was set in a valley surrounded by scrub brush covered hills and thick jungle river channels. The climate was wet, hot and humid with an average rainfall of thirty-five inches

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per year. In late 1965, and early 1966, US Army Engineers built an interim airfield of AM-2 matting, developed a camp, a quarry and a rock crusher site at Phan Rang. “Project Gray Eagle”, the construction of the actual air base by Red Horse soon followed. Phan Rang Air Base was operated by the 35th Combat Support Group. It had two runways, the longest being 10,000 feet.

In 1966, the first dining facility was constructed at Phan Rang to ease the plight of the base's residents. Prior to Batson Hall Dining Facility being built, Air Force personnel had been eating out of their mess kits in a make shift tent area. A1C Batson (first name unknown), a member of Red Horse, worked tirelessly to build a dining facility for his fellow airmen, and they felt it appropriate that the dining hall be named for him. In addition to Batson Dining Hall, Weightman<sup>1</sup> Memorial Dining Hall, in the Gray Eagle Cantonment Area, and the Richard A. Brown<sup>2</sup> Dining Hall were also built, the R. A. Brown Hall was finished in 1968.

LTC. Colonel Richard A. Brown a member of the 311<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Wing was killed on 17 December 1968 when his C-123B Provider crashed upon initial climb when the aircraft was taking off from Chu Lai Airfield on a routine flight. A1C Kenneth G. Weightman, a member of the 366<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, was killed on 10 June 1966, there at Phan Rang when he was struck by lightning as he departed the flight line dining facility after he had finished his evening meal. Both of the memorial dining facilities were commemorated in formal ceremonies.

Officers at Phan Rang lived in air conditioned and landscaped quarters, while enlisted men were billeted in two-story barracks. Block A,B,C, and D airmen's quarters were all in the domestic area as were the medical officer's quarters, the junior and senior officers quarters and NCO quarters. Detachment 1 NCO Billets housed NCOs of Detachment 1, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, while the "Pilots quarters" and the "352 Officers Quarters" housed officers of the 352<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing.

In 1966, Phan Rang had some smaller squadron clubs of which the air police squadron club was known as "The Black Beret Club". The NCO and officers clubs were built in 1966. Reportedly, the Officers Club was built first. It was constructed by pilots of the 389<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron.

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<sup>1</sup> See Phan Rang Newsletter 155 for details.

<sup>2</sup> See Phan Rang Newsletter 155 for details.

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There were also two bars located in the domestic area at Phan Rang - an officers bar at the officers quarters at telephone number 966-2931, and a sergeant's bar, located at the sergeant's quarters at phone number 966-2950.

### 35<sup>TH</sup> TACTICAL FIGHTER GROUP - AIR HOUSE

The 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter group was initially assigned to Da Nang in July 1966. The fighter group moved to Phan Rang in January 1967 and was co-located with the 35<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Group. The Air House Club was the Officers' Open Mess for fighter pilots, many of whom flew missions over North Vietnam. The 35<sup>th</sup> remained in Vietnam until September 1971. During the time the 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing was at Phan Rang it issued 5 cent chrome plated slot machine tokens bearing the legend "35<sup>th</sup> TAC GROUP AIR HOUSE". A later set of chrome tokens marked "35 C.S. GP/ NCO MESS" where also issued. Just to make sure you're paying attention the phone number of the "Air House" was 966-2348, later changed to 966-2502.



A five cent nickel-size slug from the Air House  
Officers Club



A paper Bamboo Viper drink coaster from the  
NCO Club

### BAMBOO VIPER OPEN MESS

The NCO Club was built in the summer of 1966 and was in operation by November. It was named the "Bamboo Viper Open Mess", deriving its name from a small but deadly snake found all over Vietnam. An article appearing in the Vietnam published newspaper, *The Army Reporter*, best summed up this snake: "*The bamboo viper is a nervous, often vicious snake that will strike with very little provocation. It is common in Vietnam at all altitudes. It is especially*

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*numerous around Bien Hoa, Nha Trang, Qui Nhon, Da Nang, Pleiku, Phan Rang and Vung Tau. Its bite is painful and generally requires several days of hospitalization. About one or two percent of bites received by the bamboo viper result in death. If, however, you are a healthy adult, your chances of recovery are good. But take no chances! Most dispensaries and all field hospitals have anti-venom for this snake. Avoid the bamboo viper if possible. If not, see a medic immediately!"*

Tokens used in slot-machines marked "Bamboo Viper" came in several varieties of 3 denominations 5 cent, 10 cent and 25 cents. All six pieces were struck in brass by SEGA Japan in 1966. The tokens were ordered by the Phan Rang NCO Open Mess in early 1966 through Colin Cook, the Sarl/SEGA representatives for the Nha Trang/Cam Ranh Bay area in January/February 1966.



**This particular series of chrome plated brass Phan Rang NCO club tokens did not display the "Bamboo Viper" designation.**

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**TSgt Mike Fodale, US Air Force, stands inside the Phan Rang Bamboo Viper NCO Club, with a token accepting juke box behind him. (Photo courtesy of Mike Fodale)**



**A brass 25 cent brass slot-machine slug used at the Gower Airmen's Club - both heads and tails looked alike and were marked  
A.O.M./35<sup>th</sup> C.S. G.**

## "Club Gower Airmen's Club"

The illustrated chits pictured below were issued, in 1968/1969, as part of Phan Rang Airman Club Annexes' membership cards. Cards, were a single sheet, measuring 170mm by 60mm, with a 5 chits attached, each chit was 15mm wide. The chit count was two 20s, one 10, and two 5 cent pieces. The cards were printed by a local company in South Vietnam. Each card bears the words CLUB GOWER around a 7th Air Force insignia// PRAB// ANNEXES/ and D. KARCZSKI, TSGT

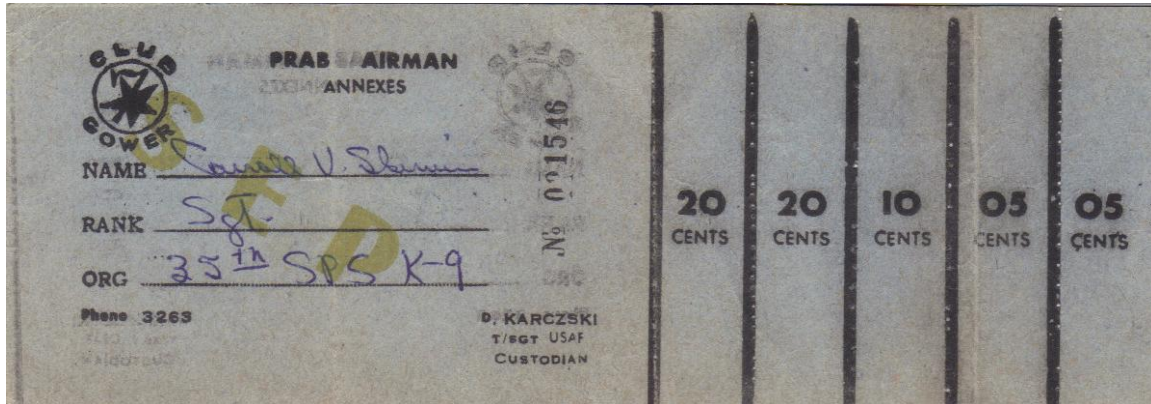
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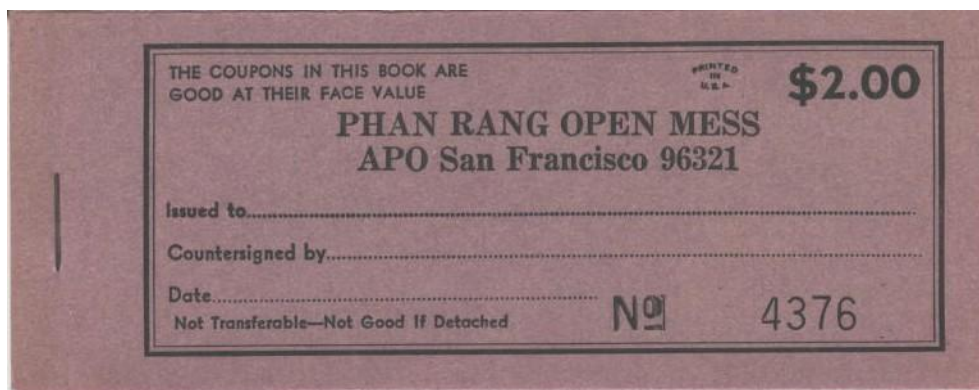
USAF, CUSTODIAN . The reverse of the card lays out "RULES OF CONDUCT GOVERNING MEMBER(S) OF THE OAM".



Rules included: No. "Throwing Cans", "Pouring beer on one another", or "Urinating on club property". The purpose of the club cards with attached chits was to encourage airmen to join the club, while returning part of the cost of the card (sold at a dollar) in merchandise, food and drink to the airman who joined. The 35 cents not returned by the club through chits was to cover administrative fees.

## KELSEY COUPON SAMPLES

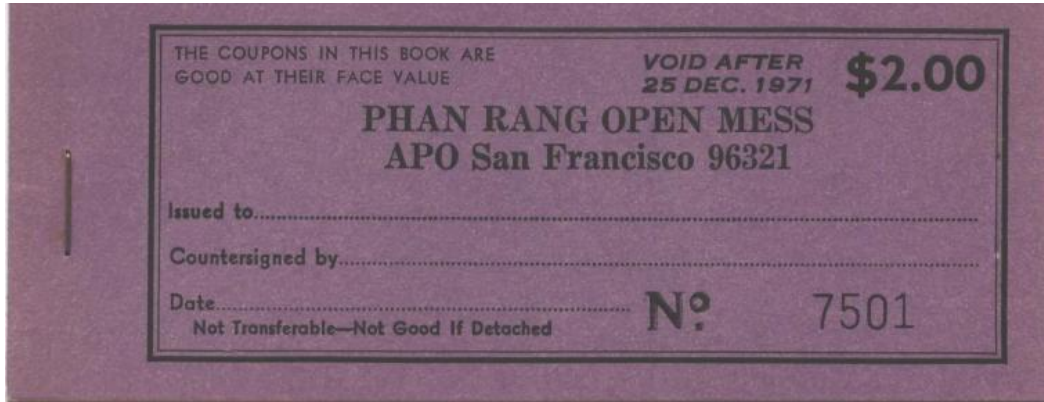
There were also chits printed up in chits books issued by the Kelsey Coupon Company, in the United States, however, the known pieces all seem to be salesmen's samples, and it is not known if such chits were ever actually used at the air base.



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### IF THE CLUBS CAN ISSUE MONEY WHY COULDN'T THE CHAPEL?

In the beginning, no air base chapel was in the original RMK-BRJ contract to build facilities on Phan Rang Air Base. Rather, it was constructed by local Air Force construction personnel and a "self help" project using off-duty airmen. The chapel was completed in early 1967, and was commemorated by the issuance of the below listed wooden nickels. Wooden nickels were first issued in Tenino, Washington, in the 1930's to alleviate a coin shortage. Phan Rang Chapel wooden nickels on the other hand were issued to remind airmen to show up to church on Sundays. Military chapels are non-denominational and therefore the one marked with Genesis 28.17 was distributed among Catholics and Protestants; while the Indian head type was designed to be given to other denominations who used the chapel facilities for their worship services.

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Front and back view of the chapel coins. The first row shows the one designated for Catholics and Protestants with Genesis 28:17 engraved on it.

The Indian head type was designed to be given to other denominations who used the chapel facilities for their worship service.

Thanks to Ray Bows for sharing this information. MSgt Ray Bows, US Army, retired, is the author of "*IN HONOR AND MEMORY: Installations and Facilities of the Vietnam War*," an 800-page hardbound volume chronicling over 3,600 fire bases and other military locations, and paying tribute to fallen servicemen who died during the war who had facilities in Vietnam named in their honor. The book is available at [here](#), or by calling Ray directly at (386) 566 2089. There will be much more information about facilities and the money used specifically at Phan Rang in my upcoming book *US AND ALLIED MILITARY MONEY OF THE VIETNAM WAR*.

My sincere thanks to Kevin Maloy, a collector of currency and club tokens used by the U.S. military in South Vietnam, and his neighbor, **Christopher Boles**, for giving me the opportunity to share information about Phan Rang. Indeed, there's nothing I enjoy more than writing about military currency from the Siege coinage of the Napoleonic Wars to the AFEES POGS of Iraq and Afghanistan.



**Canberra bombers of the Royal Australian Air Force now in Vietnam could soon be involved in what has become one of the Major controversies of the Vietnam war—napalm bombings.**

## NAPALM Dirty Word in Vietnam War

NAPALM has become a symbol of the dirtiness of the Vietnam War.



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Rightly or wrongly burning people to death is regarded with more horror than shooting them or killing them with conventional bombs.

Bombing errors, which have killed or horribly burned defenceless civilians, have contributed to this attitude.

The arrival last week of a squadron of RAAF Canberra bombers at Phan Rang base, 165 miles north of Saigon, placed Australia beside the United States and South Vietnam in the air war in the South.

Underlining this, an RAAF spokesman at Phan Rang said on April 20 that the Canberras would carry napalm if operations required this.

Napalm bombing is not new to the Vietnamese. The French used it 15 years ago in the Indo China war. The Americans have been using it in South Vietnam for more than two years.

It is not new to the RAAF either. Air forces of the United Nations, including Australia, made considerable use of napalm bombing during the Korean War.

### **Increased temperature**

Napalm, chemically, is a soap. Mixed with petrol in proportions up to one part napalm to 10 parts petrol, a jelly-like substance is formed. Napalm slows down the rate and greatly increases the temperature of combustion of the petrol. Jellied petrol spreads more widely than the liquid, and it sticks to what it touches, including skin, and continues to burn.

The effects of blazing petrol, stuck to the body until it bums away and the flames die, can be readily imagined.

Dr. Alister Brass, who recently returned to Australia after studying medical conditions in Vietnam, described in an article in the Medical Journal of Australia an old man who had been burnt in a napalm bombing, "His legs which had been scared by napalm 18 days before, were the colour of raw beef, and were fixed in flexion at the knees. A thick slice of black skin was peeling away from one foot".

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Napalm was developed by American scientists at Harvard University in 1942. It was used extensively in bombs and flame throwers against the Japanese in World War II. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, incendiary bombs containing napalm had burnt out 40 per cent of the area of Japanese industrial cities by the end of the war.

Napalm bombs consist of the jellied petrol in light metal containers. They are usually cigar-shaped, and come in various sizes. An average bomb would be about five feet long and 18 inches in diameter.

### **Innocent suffer**

"The Australian forces and their US and Vietnamese allies try to avoid the need to engage the Viet cong in situations where innocent persons are likely to suffer", the pamphlet said.

"The big difficulty is that the Vietcong frequently conducts military operations from areas largely populated by non-combatants in the hope that, by doing so, it will be free from counter attack. In other words, it has used local villages as shield, and it is inevitable in these circumstances that non-combatants will suffer when it is necessary to flush the Vietcong from these areas of attempted sanctuary.

### **Propaganda purpose**

"US and Vietnamese air craft are under specific instructions not to attack non-military targets such as villages and populated areas even if they receive light fire from these places. The Viet Cong on occasions has fired from such areas in an attempt to provoke bombing attacks which, if they cause civilian casualties, can be exploited by it for propaganda purposes.

"Inevitably, some mistakes have been made in air operations as a result of human errors, and civilian casualties have resulted. When this has happened, compensation has been promptly offered. Definite measures have been taken to ensure that the bombing of civilians is eliminated as far as is humanly possible

.

"Voice aircraft and helicopters are normally sent to warn the civilian population to take cover before attacks are launched on Viet Cong targets in order to reduce the risk of civilian casualties.

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### **Clearance needed**

"Further, when air strikes are requested by the ground forces, clearances must be given by the Vietnamese authorities, after which the strikes are carefully observed and usually directed from light aircraft by forward air controllers who know the area. The targets are clearly defined by smoke or similar means".

The effects of a napalm attack on people for whom was intended were described by a Vietminh officer in a diary quoted by Dr. Bernard Fall, an American observer and historian of the Indo-China and Vietnamese wars who was killed in Vietnam this year.

"Hell comes in the form of large, egg-shaped containers, dropping from the first plane, followed by eggs from second and third planes, Immense sheets of flames, extending over hundreds of metres, it seems, strike terror in the ranks of my soldiers. This is napalm, the fire which falls from the sky.

### **Torrent of fire**

"There is no way of holding out under this torrent of fire which flows in all directions and burns everything on its passage".

The frequently photo graphed "napalm babies" are tragic symbols of what happens when accident misdirects this hell.

Perhaps napalm has a positive value, besides its military usefulness, in shocking people, who have become immune to the destruction of bullets and exploding bombs, into recognition of the horror and tragedy of war.

*(Source: Canberra Times, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, April 26, 1967)*

## **What was the “Wallaby Airline”?**

**(Answer in the Next issue of the Phan Rang Newsletter)**

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**Sgt. John Shockley and Sgt. Butch in the cockpit of a Provider.**

of his armor-plated "landing seat." His one regret is the fast turnover of flying buddies. They only stay around for a year or so. Right now he is sticking close to Sgt. John P. Shockley. They have struck up a solid friendship. But even when Shockley leaves, Sergeant Butch will never have to worry where his next dog biscuit is coming from, because he is known and loved by every member of the squadron.

## SERGEANT BUTCH LOGS 5,000 HOURS

...Five thousand combat flying hours in C-123 Provider transports and more exposure to combat and danger than any other member of the 309<sup>th</sup> Air Commando Squadron at Phan Rang is a distinction to be proud of. He is working on his sixth year of duty in Vietnam, and has flown to almost every airbase and airstrip in the country. He has only been wounded once when he got caught by .50 caliber machine gun fire while making a delivery. It was a medic at the Army Special Forces Camp that saved his life, but his fellow crew members said the pain was almost unbearable. But he learned

his lesson. Now whenever a Provider comes in for a landing he scoots to the protection

## Without them, our Job Couldn't be Done Says Pilot of Munitions Men

**PHAN RANG** - "Every time I step into that cockpit, my life depends on those people. Without them, our job couldn't be done," exclaimed Maj. Donald O. Neary, Aurora, Colo., a pilot with the 120<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron.

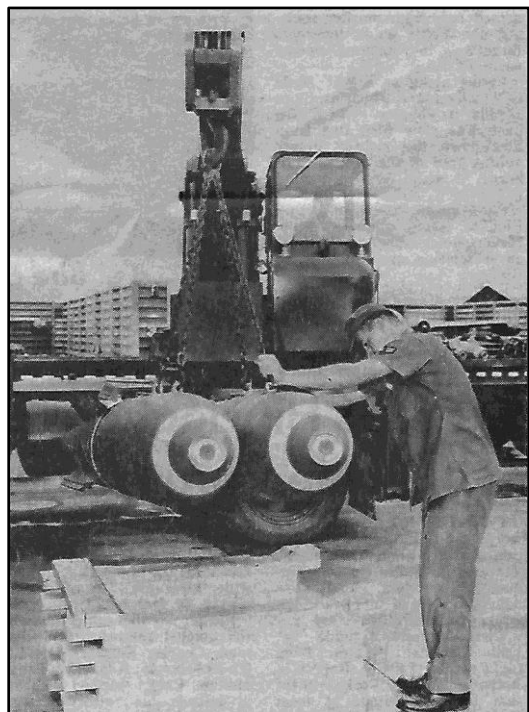
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He is speaking of the 435<sup>th</sup> Munitions Maintenance Squadron.



### **750 Pounders for Charlie**

A1C David N. Barksdale, Holdenville, Okla., gives the signal to lower two giant 750-pound bombs onto a platform. From the platform the bombs will be loaded onto F-100 Supersabres.

The men of this squadron are the vital link between the crated ordinance that arrive at Phan Rang AB and the bombs on the wings of Phan Rang’s F-100 Supersabres and B-57 Canberras.

From crate to wing, the operation has three phases, the ammunition storage operation of uncrating and handling the transport to an isolated staging area where bombs and ammunition await the final process, and then the delivery.

In the first operation, bombs and fuses are uncrated, 20mm, 7.82mm, and .50 caliber cannon shells are “broken down” into ammo cans, and all are

inspected.

In the second operation, the bombs are trucked to a staging point. At this isolated spot about two miles from the flight line, the ordinance is held awaiting use. In this reveted area, the cargo is safe from attack and far enough from vital areas to create no hazard.

When the ammos is needed for the daily missions of 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing aircraft, the trucks move to the flight line. There the final step of unloading takes place. The bombs, 250 to 759 pounds in weight, are picked off the truck bed by heavy cranes and placed on wooden platforms, awaiting up-loading by the fighter squadron load crews.

The 20mm, .50 caliber and 7.62 cannon shells are taken from their crates and all cardboard required for safety in shipping is pulled out, then the huge belts or “chains” of ammo are linked and fed into magazines, waiting to be uploaded onto the F-100s and B-57s of the sprawling 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing.

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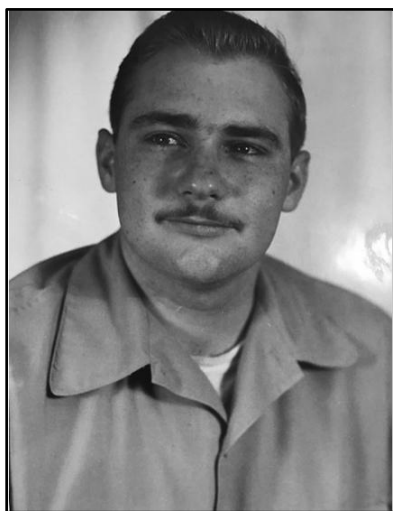
A simple process? Hardly! It is a vital, precision job. The way in which it is performed stands as a tribute to the officers and men of the 435<sup>th</sup> Munitions Maintenance Squadron.

*(This article and many others were submitted by C. Dan Brownell who was with the 352<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron in 1968-69)*



# It Happened at Phan Rang

## A Real Night To Remember



**Allan Campbell**

It was on July 4th of 1971 that we had all hit the bunks and were nodding off when the sirens went off. We all scrambled out of bed, quickly threw on uniforms and flak vests, grabbed our helmets and lit out for the bunkers. As we crouched in the bunkers, we watched the sky light up. We had spooky, shadow, and the helicopters from the Army camp next door filling the skies over Phan Rang and dropping all kinds of flares. This went on for a couple of hours before the alarm was called off and we were allowed to go back to bed.

When we awoke the next morning, rumors started spreading about the previous night's "invasion". It turned out that a COW had gotten loose in the mine field and tripped several alarm wires. Then, we could appreciate the 4th of July light show. July 4th 1971, a real night to remember. I will never forget it!

## Other memorable moments from that tour in Happy Valley

- The “**Mud Bowl**” which was playing a flag football championship in a pouring rain.
- The **Christmas rollback** that allowed me to go home almost one month early (my original DEROS was early January 1972 but I left around December 12, 1971).

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- The **mortar round** that hit the White Horse asphalt plant next door to the Civil Engineering compound resulting in our Lieutenant getting scratched on the lower leg by a piece of flying gravel. (The Viet Cong were notoriously inaccurate with their mortars. They would set them up at night and they would go off in the morning, rarely hitting anything significant.) The mortar round that landed between the sandbags and the hooch of the OIC of Special Services. He wasn't hurt, having been at the O club at the time.
- The **flight to Saigon** on December 12th – by the time we landed we were told that Charlie had finally figured out how to sight the mortars and had walked them down the flight line right after we took off. If we had been still sitting on the ground, we would probably still be there, planted in the ground.
- The best part of that year was that Viet Nam was my **ticket to Germany**. After leaving Nam, I spent a total of 13 ½ years in Germany, 4 ½ in Berlin and 9 years in Kaiserslautern (Ramstein 4, Sembach 3, and Ramstein 2) with only a 3 year hitch at March AFB in between.
- I finally **got an assignment I liked** and returned to Mather AFB in California to supervise the supply support for the B-52 wing. As soon as I arrived, the AF announced that it was closing the B-52 wing so I put in my papers to retire.

Allan V. Campbell, SMSgt, USAF (Retired)

### **Gallantry Cross with Palm for the men of the 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing and its subordinate units**

On 14 July 1971 by order of General Cao Van Vien, Chief of the Joint General Staff, Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Nguyen Van La Assistant Chief of the Joint General Staff for Pacification and Development, and Acting Chief of the Joint General Staff, Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces.

#### **THE CITATION READS AS FOLLOWS:**

During the period from 24 February 1971 to 30 March 1971, the 35<sup>th</sup> United States Tactical

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Fighter Wing carried out more than 1,000 air sorties in effective support of Operation 'Lam Son 719' conducted by the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces in Lower Laos in order to disrupt the entire North Vietnamese Communists' ammunition and manpower supply system for their subordinate forces in South Vietnam via the Ho Chi Minh trail.

In particular, on 22 March 1971, although faced with bad weather conditions and rugged terrain, two F-100 jet fighter aircraft made maximum use of firepower to effectively frustrate the enemy's T-54 tank groups attempt to destroy 1,300 soldiers of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces on National highway 9 (lower Laos).

Among 14,000 enemy troops killed during Operation 'Lam Son 719', a large number were contributed to the outstanding feat of arms of the 35th United States Tactical Fighter Wing which provided effective support for the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces.

With the above outstanding achievements, the 35th United States Tactical Fighter Wing has made enthusiastic contributions to the protection of freedom in the Republic of Vietnam and at the same time has upheld the heroic traditions of the United States Armed Forces.

### **THIS MERITORIOUS CITATION INCLUDES:**

THE UNIT CITATION STREAMER of the Gallantry Cross with Palm for the Colors of the 35<sup>th</sup> United States Tactical Fighter Wing and its subordinate units including:

- Headquarters, 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing
- Headquarters, 35<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Group
- The 8<sup>th</sup> Special Operations Squadron
- The 352<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Squadron
- The 612<sup>th</sup> Tactical Squadron
- The 614<sup>th</sup> Tactical Squadron
- The 615<sup>th</sup> Tactical Squadron
- The 35<sup>th</sup> Air Radio Maintenance Group
- The 35<sup>th</sup> Construction Group
- The 35<sup>th</sup> Field Maintenance Squadron
- The 35<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron
- The 35<sup>th</sup> Service Group



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- The 35<sup>th</sup> Supply Group
- The 35<sup>th</sup> Transportation Group
- The United States Air Force Dispensary
- The 435<sup>th</sup> Munitions and Maintenance Group

### **Official Order #384-D/TTM/CL, dated 9 October 1970 from the Joint General Staff.**



During a total of 53,370 combat and support missions, the F-100 squadrons of the 35<sup>th</sup> United States Tactical Fighter Wing killed 2,865 Communists in action and destroyed 9,537 enemy installations, 28,916 bunkers, 1,658 boats, 532 crew-served weapons emplacements and 69,497 meters of communications trenches.

In addition to its military efforts, the 35<sup>th</sup> United States Tactical Fighter Wing has established a dispensary to support a public health and civic action program in the villages of Thap Cham, Hai Chu, Dong Giang, An Xuan and the Phan Rang Orphanage, where thousands of people have been given medical treatment every month. Furthermore, the 35<sup>th</sup> United States Tactical Fighter Wing has constructed schools and water systems in Phan Rang City and has provided assistance for 8 secondary schools within the II Corps Tactical Zone.

With the above outstanding achievements, the 35<sup>th</sup> United States Tactical Fighter Wing has made a substantial contribution to the struggle against the communists in the Republic of Vietnam and has upheld the indomitable will and heroic traditions of the United States Armed Forces.

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### Oceana Man Gets Air Medal

Air Force Maj. **Charles B. Haskins**, son of Mrs. Louise Smith, Oceana, has received the Air Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Maj. Haskins, an F-100 Super Sabre pilot, was cited for his outstanding airmanship and courage on successful and important missions under hazardous conditions. He is assigned at Phan Rang AB to the 352<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron a unit of the Pacific Air Forces.

The major, a 1954 graduate of Oceana High School, received his commission in 1957 through the aviation cadet program.

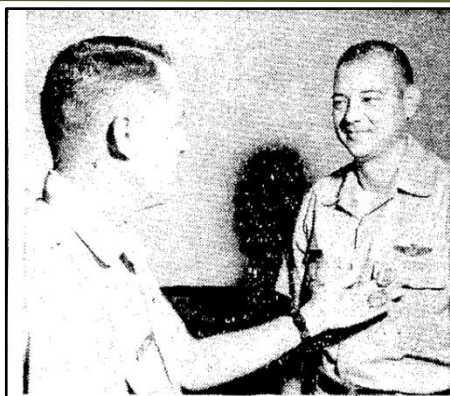
His wife Eleanor is the daughter of Earl Cook of Oceana.

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**Charles B. Haskins, son of Mrs. Louise Smith, Oceana, Maj. receives the Air Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, from Lt. Col. Len C. Russell, commander of the 352<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron.**

*(Post Herald and Register, Beckley, West Virginia, August 3, 1969)*

## 'Spookies' Rout Reds

*(Pacific Stars And Stripes, January 18, 1969)*

**SAIGON** - An Air Force "Spooky" gunship fired its miniguns directly into a Vietnamese Army post early Thursday to drive off a company of Communist soldiers that had all but overrun the camp.

On Signal, the defending ARVN troopers ducked into bunkers as the AC47 Dragonship swept in with guns blazing. The enemy force broke and ran, only to be chased and riddled by another Dragonship.

The enemy body count, and Allied losses were unknown. Lt. Col. **Rodney J. Wood** 47, of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Special Operations Sq. at **Phan Rang AB**, landed his AC47 and told how it happened.

The outpost was about 38 miles northwest of the air base nearly 100 miles above Saigon in the rugged foothills leading from the coast into the central mountain range. The action was in pre dawn darkness.

"We were just relieving another Spooky over the area when mortars began hitting the ARVN outpost." Wood said. "We went right in with flare and rocket support.

"They asked us to fire into the hills where the enemy was coming from. When we went back, the enemy was moving down a road from other directions."

The Reds were almost to the ARVN perimeter when they were spotted from the outpost: then the perimeter was breached.

## **“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN**

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

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“The ground controller asked us to fire right at the perimeter.” Wood continued.

“Then the ARVNs went into their bunkers and we fired right into the camp. We finally drove them back, and another Spooky picked them up and fired on them as they retreated.

**Doug’s Comments:** I hope that you enjoyed this newsletter. This newsletter was composed and all graphics by Douglas Severt unless otherwise stated. I would like to thank everyone who sends me information for inclusion in the newsletter because without them the stories wouldn’t be told. To see a list of all previous newsletters click [here](#). To unsubscribe to Phan Rang News, mailto:mailto:[dougsevert@cox.net](mailto:dougsevert@cox.net) and put ‘unsubscribe’ in subject line.