

Phan Rang AB Newsletter

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.
“Keeping the memories alive” Newsletter 203

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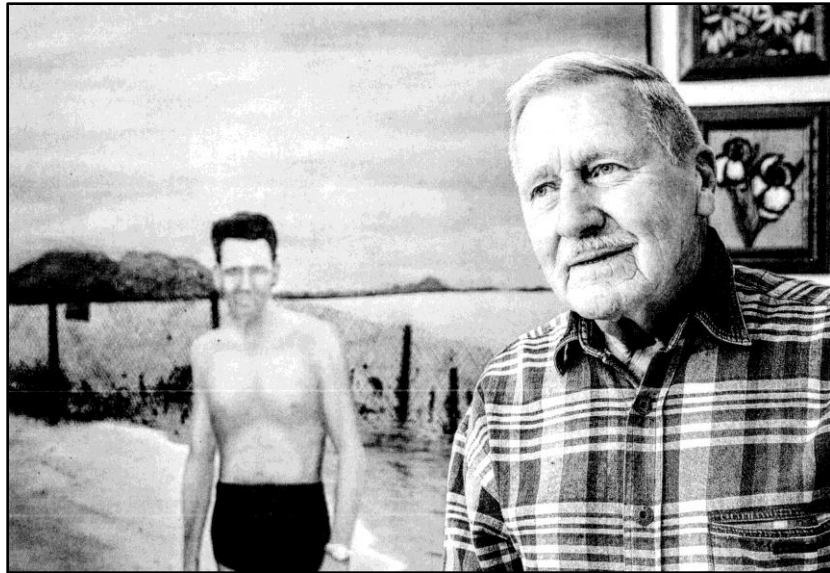
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Honor Flight Recipient Kept Planes Flying



Franklin “Frank” Longfellow relaxes at his home in rural Champaign while sharing his experience serving in the U.S. Navy and U.S. Air Force, the latter during the Vietnam War. Longfellow’s son, William, painted the large canvas behind him, which depicts the senior Longfellow at Phan Rang Air Base in Vietnam.

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CHAMPAIGN — When Franklin “Frank” Longfellow returned from Vietnam, his entire welcoming party was two students from Centennial, and his daughters holding a banner.

This year, he’s cheered by hundreds at airports in Peoria and Washington as an Honor Flight participant.

Longfellow was in the Army National Guard, Navy and Air Force, and served during Korean and Vietnam War eras, in a career that lasted more than 22 years.

Longfellow grew up in Dearborn, Michigan, and had a first job delivering newspapers from shortly after World War II to the dawn of the Korea War. The newspaper he was selling then was the sports-oriented Detroit Free Press.

Newsboys were supposed to shout the main headline.

“I dropped the sports headline and called out about the U.S. intervening in Korea,” he recalled. “I sold more papers than anybody that day.”

Longfellow was looking at his career options.

“Back in 1951, I was still in high school, and my buddies decided to join the Michigan National Guard,” he said.

Besides, there was a military tradition in the Longfellow family. “My dad was in World War I, my brother was in World War II and my sister served in Korea in the WACs,” the Women’s Army Corps, Longfellow said.

One of the Guard’s tasks in the paranoid Cold War era was to defend against air attacks on Detroit’s car factories, he said.

Then “I got wanderlust,” he said.

“I enlisted in the Navy in February 1953, and spent five years in the Navy,” he said.

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He studied aircraft electronics and took a break to marry his wife Charlotte back in Dearborn.

Then he was ordered to board the aircraft carrier USS Hancock, built during World War II and decommissioned shortly after the end of the war, then modernized and recommissioned in the early 1950s as an attack carrier with a different catapult system that Longfellow worked on.

He spent two-and-a-half years on the carrier, deployed to the Far East.

Then he got another assignment: another carrier.

That was too much water for Longfellow. By extending his enlistment, he was able to get his choice of bases, and ended up in helicopter training in Pensacola, Fla.

Out of the Navy, he returned to a Dearborn that was in a recession. He was able to get his old job back via veterans preference.

Then he met with an Air Force recruiter. Longfellow was able to maintain an equivalent rank to what he had in the Navy, and was stationed in Michigan.

He later worked on F-102 fighters.

But the Air Force needed instructors, so he made his first trip to Chanute Air Force Base, now closed, near Rantoul and bought a home in Champaign to get better schools for his children.

“Don’t shoot ‘em, Chanute ‘em” was a phrase about being sent to what was not considered a top assignment, he said.

That became irrelevant. He didn’t get to stick around, sent to North Dakota and then to Okinawa for more than two years, and then back to Chanute — only to find he was headed to Vietnam in 1971.

Most of his time was in Phan Rang, an air base used by the South Vietnamese Air Force and the U.S. Air Force. He worked in aircraft maintenance and largely was restricted to base.

The base was wedged between jungle and the South China Sea. His artist son made a huge

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painting from an old slide of him by the sea, but Longfellow notes he looks grim in the painting, unlike in the photo.

The war was winding down, and he was tasked to turn over equipment to the South Vietnamese.

Still, Phan Rang was harassed by enemy rockets. “They weren’t sophisticated rockets,” Longfellow said. “They might land on an airstrip, or every once in a while a barracks, and we had to go into a bunker.”

Then he was told: “Tricky Dick (Nixon) is bringing you home,” he said, and eventually he did.

That’s when his daughters celebrated his arrival, the only ones in Champaign to do so. At a block party, he was welcomed, Longfellow said, but nobody mentioned Vietnam.

“It’s been almost 45 years since I came home from Vietnam in 1972, and now this Honor Flight,” Longfellow said. **“I don’t feel like I did anything special.”**

(Jacksonville Journal Courier, Jacksonville, Illinois, October 9, 2017)

M/Sgt Gettle Writes From Da Nang Base

A letter was received by Mr. and Mrs. Paul Gettle from their son, MSgt **George K. Gettle** who had been serving in Phan Rang but was recently sent to Da Nang. The letter was written on Friday, October 14, and portions of it read as follows:

Dear Mom and Dad,

We arrived at Da Nang at 4:30 a.m. on the 11th of October, dropped our bags in the barracks, checked in, and then went right to work the same day. I got to bed last night for the first time in three and one half days, and got about four hours sleep all together. I intended to write last night when I got off work but by the time I wrote Molly and the boys I fell asleep so didn’t get yours written.

We are working 12 hour shifts. Boy! That sure is different than the eight hour shifts we were

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working at Phan Rang. The Air Base here is much nicer and larger than the one at Phan Rang. The difference is that this base is built up a lot more and closer together. We have only one mile to go to work where at Phan Rang we had six. There are cement ramps for the aircraft and plenty of room for them. We have three squadrons of F-4C aircraft. The Marines have a couple of aircraft squadrons and the Army and Navy each have several squadrons. There is also a lot of Air Force aircraft here. Even the Vietnamese have aircraft here. There are two main runways and they are packed day and night. The estimate that a plane lands and takes off every 32 seconds during the day. We also have a bunch of helicopters and the civilian air lines which come in. This is the main landing point for the wounded and they come in and out of here all day and all night. We have real good protection here much better than at Phan Rang. The Viet Nam army are living just across the fence from our base. The town here is off limits to us, the Army and Navy can go in but we can't. Why, I don't know. I will find out more about it later. And guess what, no dust here. That really is nice, although it is a lot hotter and the humidity is much higher. We are only 2 miles from the coast line. I'd better close now as I have a meeting to go to at 8:30 and it's almost that now.

Love,

George

(Sterling Daily Gazette, Sterling, Illinois, October 28, 1966)

Air Police Help Build Infant Home

PHAN RANG, S. Vietnam — Courtesy of Air Force Technical Sergeant **Robert V. Tomaselli**, .37, of North Adams, Mass., and his unit, the, 35th Air Police Squadron, 20 infants at the Tan Tai Orphanage in Phan Rang city have recently been moved out of their cramped quarters and into more modern and spacious facilities.

The children were sleeping two and sometimes three to a crib in a 12 foot by 12 foot room. There were no facilities for isolating the infants who became Sick with a communicable disease.

With the completion of the new building, sick children are placed in an eight-crib ward. Two of the orphanage's Catholic nuns have sleeping quarters within the building with one awake at all times to care for the infants.

The project began in January when one of the Air Force doctors assigned to Phan Rang air base

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visited the orphanage. He suggested that the air policemen build the structure for isolation purposes. Shortly before this, the 35th AP Sq. had “adopted” the orphanage, assuming the responsibility for continuing aid to the small children.

Reacting to the doctor’s suggestion squadron personnel, led by Sergeant Tomaselli, quickly erected the basic framework while coordinating closely with the nun’s needs and the doctors recommendations.

After the basic 16 foot by 32 foot structure containing the children's ward , isolation ward and formula room were completed, the sleeping quarters for the two nuns and a treatment room was built in an L shaped addition.

All-rooms have shutters, fluorescent lights and tile floors. New cribs were purchased in Saigon to replace the wooden cribs, which contained only a wood panel for a mattress. From a post above each crib dangles a toy donated by relatives of squadron personnel.

‘I’ve never worked with kids before, except my own,” Sergeant Tomaselli says. “But I’ve found that it's been one of the most satisfying things I’ve ever done in my life.”



TAKE A BREAK — Air Force T.Sgt. Robert V. Tomaselli, 37, of North Adams, Mass., pauses during his work day at the Tan Tai Orphanage in nearby Phan Rang City to hold one of the Vietnamese infants. Sergeant Tomaselli recently headed a project of the 35th Air Police Squadron to build new quarters and an isolation ward for the infants. (Air Force Photo)

(Abilene Reporter News, Abilene, Texas, June 15, 1967.)

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A Welcome ‘Birthday Present’

By SPEC. 5 STEPHEN KROFT

S&S Staff Correspondent

PHAN RANG, Vietnam — The men of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) here celebrated their 50th anniversary -with a colorful parade Wednesday, on the heels of an announcement by the Australian Prime Minister that they are to be withdrawn from Vietnam.

Sleek Canberra bombers streaked overhead as the No. 2 Sq. paraded before Air Commodore **C. H. Spurgeon**, commander of the RAAF, Vietnam, and other high-ranking Australian and American commanders.

Standing amidst a static display of vintage Australian aircraft, Spurgeon told the squadron, "I'm not going to stand here under the bright sun and tell you about going home, because I don't know, It's not going to happen tomorrow," he said, "but I would be guessing in about three months."

Australian Prime Minister William McMahon announced Tuesday in Sydney that the No. 2 Sq. of the RAAF, based here, and elements of the No. 35 Sq. would be part of the second Australian Vietnam cutback, Australian forces, including Army, Air Force and Navy, will be trimmed by 1,000 men by September, McMahon said.

Although most of the squadron will be returning to Australia, Spurgeon warned the troops not to get their families all excited about homecomings. "There is a possibility that some of you will be staying in Vietnam," he said, "and be reassigned with other Australian units,"

In light of the withdrawal announcement, Spurgeon asked his men to maintain the high standards of the past 50 years.

"There is still a war going on and we have our part to play," he said.

(Pacific Stars And Stripes, Tokyo, April 3, 1971)

Academy Grads Donate To Vietnam Orphanage

The Air Force Academy's Association of Graduates donated \$100 to the Tan Tai Catholic Orphanage (The same orphanage as in the previous story “Air Police Help Build Infant Home”)

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near Phan Rang City, Vietnam , recently on behalf of the family of the late Maj. James R. Weaver, 1959 USAF Academy graduate. The money was presented to the orphanage by three Academy graduates stationed at Phan Rang Air Base.

The donation came from the Major James R. Weaver Memorial Fund, administered by the Association of Graduates, and in memory of Maj. Weaver, who was killed in an aircraft crash off the Coast of England in May 1970.

In a letter accompanying the donation, Capt. Frederic L. Metcalf, executive secretary of the Association, said that Maj. Weaver actively supported the Tan Tai Orphanage through the base’s civic action program while he was stationed at Phan Rang Air Base.

The orphanage cares for 68 Vietnamese children and is run by four Roman Catholic nuns. The gifts was presented to Sister Marie Aimee De Jesus at the orphanage by Capts. **Gilbert D. Mook**, Charleston, R. I., and **Craig L. McKinney**, Falls Church, Va., and 1st Lt. **William W. Taylor**, Glastonbury, Con.: All three are flying F-100s'was with the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing Phan Rang Air Base.

(Colorado Springs Gazette, Colorado Springs, Colorado, January 19, 1971)



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Whitetree Receives Medal for Heroism

Phan Rang, Vietnam - Sgt. Terry L. Whitetree 23, whose mother, Mrs. Clara J. Whitetree, lives in Wyandotte, Oklahoma, was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for heroism from Brig Gen. Willard Pearson, commanding general of the 101st Airborne Division's 1st Brigade, during ceremonies at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.



SGT, Whitetree, receiving medal for heroism from Gen. Willard Pearson in Vietnam.

Sgt. Whitetree was cited for bravery in action near Dak To when his company was trying to relieve another company that had become pinned down last June 9.

After encountering heavy Viet Cong fire, Whitetree's unit set up a defensive perimeter and held it against a numerically superior force for 24 hours until help arrived.

During this time the then private First Class maintained accurate fire against the enemy and several times exposed himself to pull wounded comrades to safety.

Sgt. Whitetree, who is with Headquarters Company of the 1st Brigade, entered the Army in September 1964 and was last assigned at Ft. Bragg, N.C.

He is a 1963 graduate of Haskell Institute, Lawrence, Kan.
(*Miami News Record, Miami, Oklahoma, March 9, 1967*)

Flying Officer Awarded Air Medal At Phan Rang AB

U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. Barr D. Younker, son of Mrs. Charles Younker of Seneca RD I, has received the Air Medal at Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam, for outstanding airmanship and courage as a C-123 Provider pilot on successful and important mission's under hazardous conditions.

Younker has flown 600 combat sorties since arriving in Vietnam, some in support of the Marine outpost at Khe Sanh.

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A 1943 graduate of Cranberry Area High School, he holds bachelor's degree from the University of Pittsburgh and a master of arts degree from George Washington University in Washington, D. C. He was commissioned in 1943 through the Aviation Cadet Program and served in World War II.

His wife, Sarah, is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R. Bruce Graham of Seneca.

(Oil City Derrick, Oil City, Pennsylvania, July 17, 1968)

Rimersburg Man Heads Squadron, Receives Commendation in Vietnam

Lt. Col. Craig C. McCall, son of Mrs. Mae McCall of Rimersburg, is commander of a tactical fighter squadron in Vietnam which has been commended for its part in providing outstanding air support to U.S. Army units during recent military operations south of Saigon.

McCall commands the 615th Tactical Fighter Squadron which, along with two other squadrons of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing, Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, were praised by Maj. Gen. Julian J. Ewell, commander of the U.S. 9th Infantry Division.

In a letter to Gen. William W. Momyer, Seventh Air Force commander, Ewell commended the U.S. and Australian aircrews for “. . . a superb job in identifying targets for air strikes, and for accuracy and timeliness with which the ordnance was delivered.”

The pilots were credited with breaking the Viet Cong resistance enabling Ewell's infantrymen to decisively defeat the enemy.

McCall, a veteran of World War II, was commissioned in 1943 through the aviation cadet program. He also served during the Korean War.

A graduate of Sligo High School, he is married to the former Nancy J. Hinkle.

(Oil City Derrick, Oil City, Pennsylvania, July 17, 1968)

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HIT PARADE “Top Ten” Records

SAIGON (Special) - The newest listing of the “Top Ten” record hits have been listed by an unknown poll-taker stationed here. The following are those selected:

1. “We Gotta Get Out of This Place: performed by the 41st Signal Bn. Choir,
2. “Catch Us If You Can” sung by the Viet Cong to the 1st Cav. Div.
3. “Run Baby Run: sung by the 173rd Airborne escaping a Viet Cong ambush.
4. “Singing In The Rain” by a long range recon squad on night patrol.
5. “Strangers In the Night” by the combined Viet Cong U.S. Army Choirs
6. “Listed to the Rhythm of the Falling Rain” performed by the U.S. Army during the monsoon season.
7. “Wipe Out” by the 1st Cav. to a trapped Viet Cong Battalion.
8. “No Milk Today” sung by the cooks at the Battson mess hall.
9. “Dear John” by the unfaithful sweethearts.
10. “Ring of Fire” by the ROKs to Charlie during Ted in Qui Nhon.



Utah Servicemen In Vietnam

PHAN RANG, Vietnam - Private First Class **Larry R. Hendricks**, an Army radio operator, son of Mr. and Mrs. D. Russell Hendricks, Lewiston, arrived in Phan Rang, Vietnam, Sept. 13, with other members of the 116th Engineer Battalion, a former Idaho National Guard unit. His wife, Myra, lives at 1048 E. Claremont, Bountiful, Utah. The battalion was called to active duty early

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this year as part of President Johnson’s program to increase manpower strength and arrived at Ft. Lewis, Wash. on May 13 to begin training. During the following months it underwent an intensive Vietnam orientated program designed to develop the skills from the individual through battalion levels. (Logan Herald Journal, Logan, Utah, October 3, 1968)

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PHAN RANG, Vietnam — Specialist Four **Gerald P. Winn**, an Army truck driver, son of Mr. and Mrs. Spencer T. Winn, 26 North Lust East. Presto n, arrived in Phan Rang. Vietnam, Sept. 13 with other members of the 116th Engineer Battalion, a former Idaho National Guard unit. His wife, Carol, lives at 211 South Fourth East. Kaysville, Utah. The battalion arrived at Ft. Lewis. Wash., on May 13 to begin training. During the following months it underwent an intensive Vietnam orientated program designed to develop the skills from the individual through battalion levels. (Logan Herald Journal, Logan, Utah, October 3, 1968)

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County Serviceman Arrives in Vietnam PHAN RANG, Vietnam — Army Pfc **George M. Duke**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Duke, Coalport, Pa., arrived in Phan Rang, Vietnam, last month with his unit, the 529th Transportation Company. The company previously located at Ft. Eustis, Va. will provide Transportation for Headquarters, Phan Rang Sub Area Command. Pfc. Duke, a truck driver in the company, entered the Army m November 1965 and completed basic training at Ft. Jackson, S. C. (Clearfield Progress, Clearfield, Pennsylvania, February 11, 1967)

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Winburne Serviceman Arrives in Vietnam PHAN RANG. Vietnam - Army Spec. 4 C. **Gary L. Rockey** son of Mrs. Emma Rockey, Winburne, Pa. arrived in Phan Rang, Vietnam, last month with his unit the 529th Transportation Company. The company, previously located at Ft. Eustis Va. will provide transportation for Headquarters. Phan Rang Sub Area Command. Spec. Rockey, a truck driver in the company, entered the Army in November 1965 and completed basic training at Ft. Jackson, S C. The 20-year-old soldier was graduated from West Branch Area High School, Airport, in 1964. (Clearfield Progress, Clearfield, Pennsylvania, February 11, 1967)

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Sgt. Larry J . Proffitt, son of Mr. and Mrs. Paul N. Proffitt of Midway, is on duty at Phan Rang AB,

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Vietnam. Sergeant Proffitt, a jet engine mechanic, is a member of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Vietnam, he was assigned to Chanute AFB, Ill. The sergeant, a 1964 graduate of Sophia High School, attended the University of Illinois. His wife is the former Linda L. Shaw. (Beckly Post Herald, Beckley, West Virginia, June 6, 1968)

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Gary D. Eutis, 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. Herman Eutis. Rte. Marseilles, recently was promoted to Army Specialist Five at Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam. His wife, Sue, lives 119 N. Cash. St., Seneca. (Morris Daily Herald, Morris, Illinois, October 5, 1971)

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Robert Mateer Promoted In Army - Robert F. Mateer III, whose parents live at 209 Lafayette St., New Bethlehem, was promoted to Army captain June 19 in Vietnam, where he is serving with the Phan Rang Logistical Support Activity. Mateer, executive officer of the activity's 21st Supply and Service Company, entered the Army in February, 1966, and arrived overseas the following September. The 25-year-old officer was graduated from Redbank Valley Joint High School in 1961. He received his commission through the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania where he received a B.S. degree in 1965. He holds the Bronze Star Medal. (*Oil City Derrick, Oil City, Pennsylvania, July 17, 1968*)

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Capt. William K. Turpin, son of Mrs. Mary Turpin, 200 Bayshore St., Fort Walton Beach, has received the Meritorious Service Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Capt. Turpin distinguished himself as staff security officer and chief of the installations security division at Ent AFB, Colo. He is now at Phan Rang as a security police officer. A 1956 graduate of Bay High School, Panama City, he received a B.S. degree criminology in 1962 from Florida State University. His wife is the former Sharon M. Demarest. The captain's father, Gordon K. Turpin, resides at 1118 Magnolia Ave., Panama City. (*Fort Walton Beach Playground Daily News, Fort Walton Beach, Florida, December 16, 1971*)

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MSgt. **James R. Kirkland**, son of Mrs. Mary Kirkland, 409 North St., Crestview, has received the Air Medal for aerial achievement in Vietnam. Sgt Kirkland, an airborne aircraft maintenance technician at Phan Rang Air Base, was decorated for his outstanding airmanship and courage on

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successful and important missions completed under hazardous conditions. The Korean War veteran is a 1950 graduate of Baker High School. His wife, Vera, is the daughter of Mrs. Sarah I. Helms, Rt. 1, Niceville, Mrs. Kirland's father, Sam E. Helms, resides in Crestview. (*Fort Walton Beach Playground Daily News, Fort Walton Beach, Florida, December 16, 1971*)

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Gunn Assigned Near Phan Rang PHAN RANG, Vietnam - Army Pfc. **Roy S. Gunn**, 25, son of Floyd S. Gunn, 1020 N. Aransas, Alice, Tex., was assigned to the 589th Engineer Battalion near Phan Rang, Vietnam, Jan. 6 as a finance clerk. His wife, Carol, lives at 4008 Douglas, Farmington, N.M. (*Farmington Daily Times, Farmington, New Mexico, January 26, 1969*)

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BRONZE STAR PHAN RANG, VIETNAM Army Sp. 4 **Gerald L. Honaker**, 20, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lacy L. Honaker, Montcalm, received the Bronze Star Medal near Phan Rang, Vietnam. Spec. Honaker was presented the award for meritorious service in grounds operations against hostile forces in Vietnam. At the time of the presentation he was a rifleman with Company D. 1st Battalion. 327th Infantry of the 101st Airborne Division's (Airmobile) 1st Brigade. His wife, Shirley, lives in Matoaka. (*Bluefield Daily Telegraph, Bluefield, West Virginia, May 18, 1969*)

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POLICEMAN VIETNAM — Airman 1-C **Walter D. Parks**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Everett Parks of Pembroke. Va., is on duty at Phan Rang AB. Vietnam. Airman Parks, a security policeman. is a member of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Vietnam he was assigned to Malmstrom AFB . Mont. The airman is a graduate of Giles High School, Pearisburg, Va. (*Bluefield Daily Telegraph, Bluefield, West Virginia, May 18, 1969*)

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Sgt. **Clifford R. Bates**, whose wife Mary is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roy M. Cox of 2019 41st St., has received the U.S. Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. He was decorated for meritorious service as an aircraft mechanic at Phan Rang. (*Lubbock Avalanche Journal, Lubbock, Texas, August 29, 1968*)

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Airman 1.C **Rafael Velasquez Jr.**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ralph M. Velasquez of Wilson, is on duty

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at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. He is a security policeman. (*Lubbock Avalanche Journal, Lubbock, Texas, August 29, 1968*)

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Sergeant **Ronald J. Overly**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Isaac Overly of Donegal, is a member of a unit that has earned the U.S. Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with "V" device for valor in Southeast Asia. Sergeant Overly, a carpenter in the 554th Civil Engineering, at Cam Ranh Bay AB, Vietnam will wear a distinctive service ribbon to mark his affliction with the unit. The squadron, which moved to Cam Ranh Bay in January earned the award while stationed at Phan Rang AB. It was the third such award for the construction unit, but the first with the “V” device. The sergeant’s squadron was cited for exceptionally meritorious service while participating in airfield and facilities construction and in the perimeter defense of Phan Rang from Jan. 1 through Dec 31. 1969. He is a 1957 graduate Mount Pleasant High School His wife. Magdalena. is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alex Degenstan of 3112 S. Main, Minot N.D. (*Connellsville Daily Courier, Connellsville, Pennsylvania, November 6, 1970*)

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US Air Force Staff Sergeant **Gary I. Gemas**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Douglas M. Gemas of 512 Race St. Connellsville, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Sergeant Gemas is a weapons technician in a unit of the Pacific Air Forces Before his arrival in Southeast Asia, he served at Eglin AFB. Fla. The sergeant is a 1966 graduate of Connellsville Joint Senior High School. (*Connellsville Daily Courier, Connellsville, Pennsylvania, November 6, 1970*)

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COL . NELSON IS DECORATED With U.S. Combat Air Forces, Vietnam U.S. Air force Colonel **Allen S. Nelson** of McAllen, Tex., has been decorated with the Meritorious Service Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Colonel Nelson distinguished himself by his outstanding duty performance while assigned to the Global Plans and Policy Division Deputy Chief of Staff for Plans, Headquarters, USAF. He is now at Phan Rang where he serves as deputy commander for operations for the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing, a unit of the Pacific Air Forces, headquarters for air operations in Southeast Asia , the Far East and the Pacific area. The colonel, a veteran of World War II, was commissioned in 1944 through the aviation cadet program and holds aeronautical rating of command pilot. He has also served in the in the Republic of Korea. A 1941 graduate of McAllen High School, he attended the University of Texas. He is a graduate of the Air Force Air Command and Staff College and the Air War College, both located at Maxwell

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AFB, Ala. Colonel Nelson's wife , Margie is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. Matlock of 1211 Willow S t., Austin , Texas. (*Bandera Bulletin, Bandera, Texas, October 16, 1970*)

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Promoted - LIBERTY Former Airman **Richard H. Yaun Jr.**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. Yaun, 29 Yaun Ave.. Liberty, has been promoted to airman first class. The airman



is stationed at Phan Rang Air Base in Vietnam. He is a graduate of Liberty Central School and attended Clarkson College of Technology at Potsdam before entering the Air Force in 1965. **Note:** *Richard is a member of the Phan Rang Facebook Group. (Middletown Times Herald Record, Middletown, New York, November 10, 1967)*

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In Vietnam - SUSSEX, N.J. SUSSEX, N.J. Airman/1C **Gene R. Elliott**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Harvey A. Elliott of R. D. 3, Sussex, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Elliott, an aircraft mechanic, is a member of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Southeast Asia, he was assigned to Williams AFB, Ariz. The airman is a graduate of Sussex High School. (*Middletown Times Herald Record, Middletown, New York, November 10, 1967*)

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At Phan Rang - MIDDLETOWN Airman/1c **Arthur C. Nielson**, whose mother is Mrs. Rita Benforte of Middletown, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Nielson, an aircraft loadmaster is a member of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Southeast Asia, he was assigned to Travis AFB, Calif. The airman attended Middletown High School and completed requirements for his diploma after entering the service.

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Air Force Maj. **Raymond A. Malacarne**, son of Victor Malacarne, 1625 Eighth St., has been decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross for aerial achievement in Vietnam, Malacarne, an F-100 Super Sabre fighter bomber pilot at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, provided close air support for friendly forces at Dak Seang, Vietnam, which were being attacked. (*Sarasota Herald Tribune, Sarasota, Florida, December 20, 1970*)

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Staff Sgt. **Walter A. Roche**, son of Mrs. Rose Roche, 3113 Cortez Road, W, Bradenton, has received the Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Roche was decorated for meritorious service as a fire protection supervisor with the 35th Civil Engineering Squadron at Phan Rang Air Base. (*Sarasota Herald Tribune, Sarasota, Florida, December 20, 1970*)

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PHAN RANG Viet Nam — Senior Master Sergeant **William S. Ingles**, son of Mrs. W. K. Ingles, 211 College Ave., Oxford, Ohio, has been decorated with the U. S. Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Viet Nam. Sgt. Ingles, a maintenance supervisor, was awarded the medal for meritorious service. The sergeant, a graduate of Ironton (Ohio) High School, is a veteran of the Korean War. His wife, Anne, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. A. Nigels of 2020 Nigels Drive, Dunedin, Fla. Sgt. Ingles received his medal from Lieutenant Colonel **Francis J. Burkhardt** his commander at Phan Rang AB. Viet Nam. (*Hamilton Daily News Journal, Hamilton, Ohio, November 2, 1966*)

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Staff Sgt. **James D. Bulen** son of Mr. and Mrs. James L. Bulen Mass. of 4312 22nd Ave, Lubbock, is a member of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang AB. Vietnam that has been honored by the Vietnamese A r m e d Forces. The 35th has received the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm for its contribution to the military forces and local citizenry of the country. The wing, which operates F- 100 Super Sabre fighter bombers, was cited for flying more than 53,000 missions during a two-year period in support of U.S. and Vietnamese ground operations. The 35th wing also recognized for its community service programs which included establishing a medical dispensary for treatment of villagers and orphans in the area. The sergeant is a 1965 graduate of Lubbock High School. (*Avalanche Journal, Lubbock, Texas, May 26, 1971*)

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Monroe Man Gets Air Medal WITH U.S. COMBAT AIR FORCES, Vietnam — U. S. Air Force Major **David S. Litten** son of Mrs. Martha V. Litten, Clarington, Ohio, has received the Air Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Major Litten, a troop carrier pilot, distinguished himself by meritorious service, displaying skill outstanding professional and devotion to duty which contributed materially to the success of the Air Force mission in Southeast Asia. The major, who holds the aeronautical rating of command pilot, is assigned at Phan Rang with the 310th Special Operations Squadron, a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. A 1947 graduate of Clarington High

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School, he received his B.S. Degree in physics from Ohio University and was commissioned there in 1952 through the Reserve Officers Training Corps program. Major Litten's wife, Anita, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Yacobozzi, 2810 Sherwood Drive, Lorain, Ohio.

(Cambridge Daily Jeffersonian, Cambridge, Ohio, October 7, 1969)

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Karr On Duty At Phan Rang - Master Sergeant **Gerald A. Karr** son of Mr. and Mrs. Ramsey R. Karr of Rt. 1, Keavy, is on duty in Phan Rang AB Vietnam. Sergeant Karr, a helicopter flight engineer, is assigned to unit of the Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service. Before his arrival in Southeast Asia, he served at Sheppard AFB, Tex. A graduate of Lily High School, the sergeant attended Black Hills College in Rapid City, S. D. His wife, Barbara, is the daughter of Mrs. Edna M. Pearce of 105 Yeager Court, San Antonio. *(Corbin Daily Tribune, Corbin, Kentucky, April 18, 1969)*



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Important 2020 Reunion Information



THE 2020 PHAN RANG REUNION IS **CANCELLED**

Because of the continuing Covid-19 threat and the uncertainty of what to expect in the short term, the Phan Rang Alumni Board has decided to **Cancel** the reunion for 2020 in Albuquerque.

Here's what you need to know:

- All monies sent in for registration, banquet and other activities will be refunded
- The refund process will commence as soon as our new interim treasure has an account and funds are transferred to him. (See more info in next article)
- Instructions as to how to obtain your refund will be announced in a future issue of this newsletter...all previous email requests will be ignored and will have to be initiated again when an announcement is made in approximately three-weeks with instructions as to how to obtain your refund.
- It will be **YOUR RESPONSIBILITY** to cancel your own hotel reservations and any other commitment that you might have made.

*Special thanks to **Dennis Hawley**, our man on the ground, and **Jack Anderson** who worked so hard to secure a hotel and who worked out all of the details for us to have a successful and memorable reunion. We were not able to enjoy the fruits of their labor, but the Phan Rang community really appreciates what you did for us.*

Thanks.

LET’S ALL HOPE FOR A BETTER YEAR IN 2021

Phan Rang Alumni Board Update

Minutes of the conference call between President Douglas Severt, Vice President Lou Ruggiero, Treasure Jack Anderson and Interim Treasure, Elizandro De Los Santos and Secretary James Kucipeck.

June 18, 2020

A conference call was held this date to discuss the following:

Resignation of Jack Anderson as treasurer

Appointing Elizandro De Los Santos as interim treasurer until the next annual meeting

Cancel the Albuquerque, NM reunion

Most recently our treasurer Jack Anderson has been experiencing some health issues and decided in consultation with the board Doug Severt, Lou Ruggiero and myself that in the best interest of the Happy Valley veteran’s organization that it would be best that he step down. With that fact in mind Doug, Lou and I put our heads together and discussed several names and then through consensus decided that Elizandro would be good fit for our organization. It must be understood that this is an interim position and must be voted on at the next annual meeting at the next reunion.

Elizandro as interim treasurer will open a bank account and our money will be transferred from our account in the state of WA to our new account in Texas. Jack and Elizandro will work together to facilitate a smooth transfer of all records and information. Many tedious details were discussed which are too numerous to discuss here.

In addition to the above Doug Severt, Lou Ruggiero, Elizandro De Los Santos, Jack Anderson and myself decided that it would be in the best interest of our organization to cancel the Albuquerque, NM reunion scheduled for October because of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Respectfully submitted

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James Kucipeck, Happy Valley secretary.

PHAN RANG STAFF MEMBERS

**LIKE ANY GREAT COMMUNITY, IT'S THE DEDICATED VOLUNTEERS THAT MAKE OUR
COMMUNITY GREAT!**

PHAN RANG STAFF MEMBERS

Douglas Severt: President

Lou Ruggiero: Vice-President

James Kucipeck: Secretary

Elizandro De Los Santos: Treasure

Ed Downey, Barbara Brandt & John Ploof: Drill & Ceremonies

Christopher Boles: Photographer

Kirk Minert: Aircraft Historian

Bob Tucker: Keeper of the Rolls

Joe Kaupa: In Memoriam Board

Bruce Muller: Badge Board

Jim Erixson, Charles Simmons & Tony Schommer: Chaplains

Bob Howe: Australian Ambassador

Kristina Ho: Vietnamese Ambassador

Doug Severt: Facebook Administrator

Kirk Minert: Facebook Administrator

Bob Tucker: Facebook Moderator

Joe Schwarzer: Facebook Moderator

Kristina Ho: Facebook Moderator

Skip Ruedeman: Place Reunion info in VFW Mag.

Lou Ruggiero: Place reunion info in AFA Mag. & VVofA Newspaper

Doug's Comments: I hope that you enjoyed this newsletter. 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.

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Having to cancel our annual reunion was a very difficult decision because it's an event we all look forward to every year and of course we all know that this is not an average year. We wrestled with the decision to delay the announcement until our treasurer was “open for business”, so that the refund process could begin immediately or do it now so members could take appropriate actions and then delay issuing the refunds. One of the key events that we were watching and using as a barometer was the Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta which was scheduled a week before our reunion; if that were canceled and it has been, then we would also have to cancel our reunion. 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.