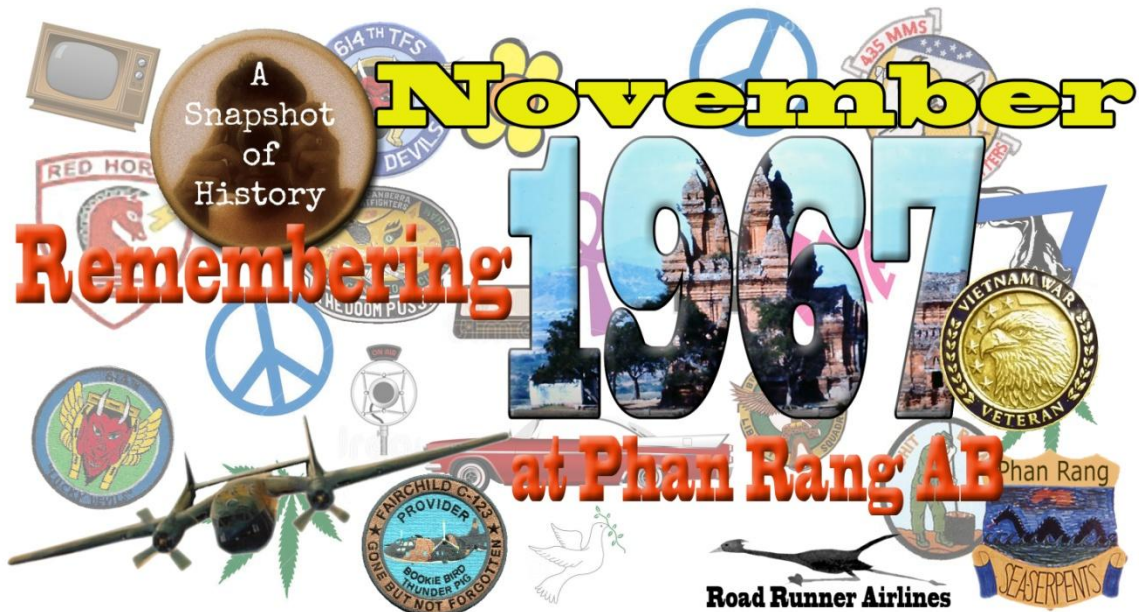


Phan Rang AB Newsletter

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.
"Keeping the memories alive" Newsletter 229

Back In The Day



A SNAPSHOT IN TIME - NOVEMBER 1967

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1 NOV - HELLO, DOLLY! MARTHA RAYE WOWS LARGE AUDIENCE

Despite a whirling dust storm at the beginning of the evening, **Martha Raye** and a cast of 19 singers and dancers in the USO sponsored show, Hello, Dolly!, entertained nearly 3,000 enlisted men and officers last Wednesday.

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Miss Raye and her extremely professional group transported the crowd of Air Force and Army personnel through the streets of ‘Ole New York’ in a very lyrical and melodious hour and a half.

Her deviation from the script and cavorting with the cast and audience alike brought the audience closer to the warmth that the ‘Sweetheart of Vietnam’ has for the G.I.

At the close of the program, Martha walked to the front of the stage for a heart to heart talk with the audience.

“It makes an American woman like me, proud indeed to see such fine young men.” she continued, “Fellows ask me, Maggie, that is my real name...what is going on back home? All those demonstrators and card burners...what is it all about?...All I can say about those demonstrators and card burners is...that they are a small minority of people that do not matter anyhow...There are millions of people back home other than your friends and loved ones, that do love you and do respect you, and know why you are over here. They believe in what you are doing...just remember, guys, the demonstrators and card burners couldn’t even shine your boots...and don’t you forget it.”

Colonel **James A. Wilson**, 35th Tactical Fighter Wing Commander, presented her a plaque from the base.

After the show, in an interview, Martha commented on the base. “It has certainly changed since I was here in 1965. I arrived four days after the 101st Screaming Eagles, and all we had were tents. I might add, there were no latrines for ladies.

One of the cast members commented on the audience as being one of the best that they had played before,” We just couldn’t help but be ‘up’ in our performance, the feeling of the audience was just great. It was really a thrill to perform for them.”

The cast and Martha were treated at refreshments at the NCO Open Mess after the show, where they just sat and listened to one of our local combos, and talked with people.

The cast of Hello, Dolly will soon disband and head back to the states. But Martha Raye is staying till February, “Because there are still troops here.”

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1 NOV - ROCKY AND STONY GUARD THE LINE

A pair of workers known as Rocky and Stony are spearheading a campaign against FOD (Foreign Object Damage).

Col. **Michael Pashkevich**, 46, from Tucson, Ariz., is the man behind the project, which is designed to keep stray rocks and other foreign objects off the flightline.

The two Vietnamese workers are stationed at brightly-painted stations on the two main roadways to the flightline. When a vehicle drives up, they inspect the tires to make sure no rocks are embedded in the tread.

Their fight against foreign objects is dramatized by their colorful uniforms, which include yellow helmets and orange jackets with their campaign nicknames printed on them.

“It makes people conscious that the flightline is to be in a constant state of readiness,” said the colonel, a veteran of 27 years’ military service.

“I get comments (on Rocky and Stony) from every visiting dignitary that comes through here,” he said.

A stray rock or piece of metal on the flightline can spell disaster for jet engines if it gets sucked into the intake scoops.

“Engine foreign object damage here is practically nil,” said Colonel Paskevich. For six of the first nine months of ‘67, the 35th TFW has achieved a zero rate on such damage.

An FOD program created by the officer at Davis-Monthan AFB, Ariz. was picked as one of the eight best in the Air Force last year.

1 NOV - WHAT IS A CREW CHIEF?

By Capt. Don L. F. Bice, 614th TFS Maintenance Supervisor

A pair of combat boots are firmly planted on the concrete ramp in front of an F-100 aircraft. The ‘Red Devil’ on the nose-gear door denotes the 14th TFS ‘Lucky

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Devils’.

Who is filling the boots” Probably a young sergeant with a man-sized job. He is a crew chief. Heretofore the job has been done by a technical sergeant or at least by a staff sergeant with considerable F-100 experience.

Things have changed. Now it is a sergeant with little experience on any aircraft, let alone the F-100.

The aircraft is staring back at him, seemingly in defiance of his efforts to keep it clean, in proper operational order, and safe to perform its mission.

His job is to bring together all of the resources provided...sometimes less than he would like to have...and produce an effective weapons system, capable of making a combat strike, all systems ‘go’.

To him the aircraft is a big, complicated piece of machinery that thrives on manhours, parts, ordnance, a lot of sweat, and, at times, a few tears.

He wonders, “How did I get in this position?”

Just a few years ago he was in high school, worrying about the angles, literature, and girl friends.

The war seems a little unreal to him. True enough he hears the gunfire and mortars at night in the surrounding hills, but where is the war? Where is the action? What is all of the commotion about? It isn’t to be seen.

There are no Viet Cong hiding behind the revetments and taking sneaky shots at him or his buddies. Sometimes it’s hard to believe that his aircraft is taxing out, loaded with virtually everything that the conventional weapons inventory has to offer.

As the bird leaps into the air, he observes orange flames trailing. The jet is in a hell of a hurry to get somewhere to do something to contribute to the war effort. Full realization of what is on the receiving end is hard to grasp. Even so, there is a

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feeling of pride as his aircraft disappears into the distance.

It takes a lot of people behind the crew chief to produce a combat sortie. There isn't anyone on base who doesn't contribute his bit part..from those who supply the food, supplies, and stores, to the technicians who rally to the crew chief's aid when expert, specialized assistance is needed.

The crew chief's job is very demanding. Jets develop many problems. Work must be done immediately. The jets must be operational at all times.

A good share of the crew chief's work is manual labor. These are men, not lads, and their boots are sometimes filled with sweat. Their boots are made for working!

One of the many crew chiefs is Sgt. **Peter (Buddy) Bommarite**, 23, from St. Louis, Mo. I've been in the maintenance field for 19 years, and I take my hat off to this sergeant and all the others like him.

They come from different worlds, but they all have a lot of guts. These young men are fresh from school. They never give 'No' for an answer. These young men are doing a fine job. The American military is pleased and the public can be justly proud of them.

(Editor's note: So should we all!)

1 NOV - PLANE LOST OVER NUI DAT

The engine burst into life. The plane reared to the end of the runway and soared into the expanse of sky. Higher and higher the sleek-winged craft winged. Suddenly strong updrafts caught the craft. The pilot and crew fought the controls to keep the winged monitor in flight.

Still stronger currents arose, carrying the plane toward the peaks of the mountains. As last-ditch attempts were made to save the plane, it disappeared from sight, never to be seen again at its beloved base.

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The lone engine’s drone grew more and more faint....If anyone sees LAC **Brian Grebert’s** radio-controlled model plane, which soared over the microwave tower on Sunday please call Kangaroo Switch.

1 NOV - YOUNG CAPTAINS NOW ‘OLD’ HEADS’

Over a year ago, Captains **Gary L. Dana** and **Michael E. Sexton**, both 26, deployed with the 352nd Tactical Fighter Squadron from Myrtle Beach AFB S.C., to begin combat operations in South Vietnam. The squadron’s F-100 fighters landed on the aluminum runway at Phan Rang on the 17 of August 1967. Today the two captains are the only original “Yellow Jackets” left.

Though among the youngest in rank and age they are really the oldest heads of the squadron. Between them, they have amassed close to 700 combat time.

Both pilots extended their tours for six months to gain even more experience.

The two pilots have had identical combat careers. Both volunteered for Forward Air Controller duty and applied for and were granted duty in the same area.

Captain Sexton was attached to the 1st Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division, Army. While Captain Dana was attached to the second. Both were stationed at the same base.

As Forward Air Controllers they directed many of their old squadron mates on enemy positions.

Both men hold Distinguished Flying Cross medals. Captain Sexton was awarded his for duty as an F-100 pilot, and Captain Dana received his for duty as a FAC.

Both pilots are hoping for further assignments together.

1 NOV - NAMED CREW CHIEF OF THE MONTH, SEPTEMBER

The 352nd Tactical Fighter Squadron selected the Crew Chief of the Month for the month of September recently.

Named to the position was Sergeant **David A. Grandstaff**.

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Sergeant Grandstaff has been at Phan Rang since May of 1967.

Along with the honor goes a \$25 United States Savings Bond.

1 NOV - TWO SUCCESSFUL MISSIONS CAP TOUR OF PILOT

Back-to-back B-57 bomber missions which destroyed a total of 48 military structures, including five concrete ones, and caused three secondary explosions 10 miles south of Da Nang recently capped the Vietnam tour of Lieutenant Colonel **Horace W. Lehman**, 46, from Albuquerque, N.M.

The strikes occurred less than 24 hours apart, and the targets consisted of two Viet Cong Supply areas a mile apart.

Colonel Lehman is currently wrapping up his hour as chief of the tactical unit operations center of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing. He has played a key role in launching thousands of F-100 Super Sabre and B-57 combat missions.

In the two strikes south of Da Nang, the colonel recalled that it was ‘a monstrous job’ coping with adverse weather and the proximity of the ‘terrific amount of (air) traffic’ around the base.

A veteran of over 25 years of military service, the colonel flew bombers in the European theater during World War II.

As he prepared to depart for the United States, the veteran flier commented, “this is without question the very best station we have in Vietnam....If I ever had to come back, this would be the base I’d want to come back to.”

Two of the Colonel’s sons are in service. One of them, Hal, is in Vietnam, and was stationed with an Army unit at Phan Rang for five months before being assigned to a new location 60 miles north of the base.

1 NOV - 310TH ACS CIRCLES WORLD 8 TIMES IN SEPT.

The 310th Air Commando Squadron logged over 213,000 nautical miles during the month of September, according to Lieutenant Colonel **Raymond N. Whitaker**, 310th operations officer.

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Flying the C-123 Provider aircraft, the 310th ACS hauled 6116 tons of cargo and flew 1775 hours. The squadron carried 20,757 passengers and flew 2324 sorties during the month.

Averaging ten aircraft airborne per day, the 310th missions carried them to all four corps areas in South Vietnam.

The C-123 can carry over 10 thousand pounds per sortie. These planes are used to supply forward and remote camps with all the supplies that they require to remain combat effective. This list can be everything from ammunition to a live cow and chickens.

1 NOV - CLASSIC RE-ENLISTMENT

Sergeant **Jerry A. Dillon**, 23, from Lawrence, Kansas, re-enlisted recently, for the first of many times, in the Air Force.

He transferred from the Marine Corps after 22 months of active service, to become a member of the Air Force.

Capt. **George A. Ward**, an F-100 pilot in the 352nd Tactical Fighter Sq., administered the re-enlistment oath at the sergeant's request.

These two individuals plan to meet every four years, no matter what part of the world they may be stationed in, so that Capt. Ward can perform these ceremonies regularly.

Who knows, in 20 years, Captain Ward may be a general, and Sergeant Dillon may be Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force.

As a personal equipment technician in the 352nd TFS the sergeant 'gives his best no matter what he is doing' a fellow worked commented.

The re-enlistee has been an inspiration to others.

1 NOV - MOTION-PIC CAMERAMAN CLOSING OUT EXCITING TOUR

For sheer excitement, it is hard to beat the tour now ending for jump-qualified cameraman

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Staff Sergeant **Thomas P. Kulick** of the 600th Photo Squadron.

Since his arrival here last December, he has flown on 120 combat missions, bailed out into the South China Sea, jumped in the first combat jump to be made by the Army since the Korean War....and shot 12,000 feet of combat film along the way.

Sergeant Kulick heads the combat documentation team of the photo lab, and is a familiar figure aboard the F-100's of the 35th TFW.

“We're here primarily to document the air war and the Air Force role in Vietnam,” said the 28-year-old native of Waltham, Mass.

He spent nine years in the Army, and earned his jump wings at Fort Campbell, Ky. in 1956.

Earlier this year, during Operation Junction City, he jumped, camera in hand, with members of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, stationed near Bien Hoa, in the first U.S. paratrooper combat jump since the Korean Conflict.

In April he made an un-scheduled jump when the F-100 in which he was flying developed engine trouble believed to have been caused by enemy ground fire.

The incident occurred in the middle of an air strike, “right between the time we dropped our heavy ordnance and thye time we were lining up to strafe.”

“We started to get smoke and fume and rumbles,” said the sergeant, “and the lead (pilot) pulled up and said we were on fire.”

In a few minutes, Sergeant Kulick and the pilot were plucked from the sea by an Army helicopter.

A veteran of 11 years of military service, the sergeant has made 71 jumps, including four in Vietnam, and has earned two Air Medals.

Once, during a mission in an F-100 of the 352nd TFS the target turned out to be a rice paddy, but

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“we got a good secondary explosion out of it!”

The combat cameraman is now eager to get home to his wife.



8 NOV - RED HORSE WELCOME FIRST PHASE ARRIVALS

In the early hours of last Sunday morning, two large C-141 Starlifters rolled to a stop on the ramps of Phan Rang AB. Inside was the first increment of replacement personnel for the 554th ‘Red Horse’ Civil Engineering Squadron.

Newly arrived Colonel **William T. Meredith**, 48, of Waynesboro, VA., Commander of the famed squadron, met the planes and welcomed the men to Phan Rang.

From the time that they arrived until late in the evening the new arrivals had a very busy day.

First they were fed, and then a preplanned program for processing-in began.

The Consolidated Base Personnel Office worked many long days in advance getting the forms and paper work for the 90 enlisted men and 30 officers ready for a speedy completion of in-processing.

The men brought with them a ‘slight’ reminder of Eglin AFB, Fla. It was a statue of a Red Horse that stood near the NCO Open Mess there; It is now at the Red Horse lounge in the 554th area.

The new arrivals started to work on time Monday morning.

:They were doing a few things, double-time,” commented SMSgt **Robert F. Foy**, from Erwin N.C., the Red Horse First Sergeant.

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8 NOV - GROUND BROKEN FOR NEW OFFICER DORMITORIES

Following brief ground-breaking ceremonies by top officials of the base, members of the 554th Civil Engineering Squadron ‘Red Horse’ began work on a \$293,000 construction project which will provide officers of this base with permanent housing.

The new bachelor officer’s quarters will consist of 15 steel framed wooden buildings each building will accommodate 27 men. The project is scheduled for completion in March.

Twelve pieces of heavy earth moving machinery were lined behind a ribbon at the construction site at the start of the ground-breaking ceremonies.

After the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing commander, Col. **James A. Wilson**, snipped the ribbon, the equipment rumbled onto the site and started to level the area.

Project engineer for the BOQ is 1st Lt. **Gary L. Bruehler**, who drew the plans for the base chapel. Responsibility for the sewage layout and water distribution are Capt. **David O. Swint**, and 1st Lt. **Robert C. Holt**.

Vertical construction supervision will be by TSgt. **Richard Johnson**, who also worked on the chapel.

8 NOV - PILOT INVOLVED IN LOC NINH BATTLE

“It looked like a string of Christmas lights coming out of each automatic weapon from five different positions stated 1st Lieutenant **Louis V. Distelzweig Jr.**, 25, from Springfield, ILL.

Assigned to the 614th TFS the young pilot was describing the ground fire that greeted a pair of F-100 Super Sabres as they attacked an enemy rocket position backed by five automatic weapons during a furious battle near the Loc Ninh Special Forces camp, 70 miles north of Saigon.

Scrambled from Phan Rang in the early a.m. answering an urgent call for air support, the F-100’s encountered what he called was the heaviest automatic weapons fire he has observed in the course of 190 combat missions in South Vietnam.

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“I’m happy to say that when we were through hitting the position, the automatic weapons were silenced,” he stated.

The lieutenant noted that for every tracer bullet he could see, there were four bullets coming that he couldn’t spot, since only one out of every five rounds from the automatic weapon is a tracer.

When the F-100’s reached the target, he noted “we could see right away that the enemy was heavily fortified with automatic weapons.” The Super Sabres made three passes apiece, delivering heavy ordnance from approximately 1000 feet.

There also carried out strafing passes at the target.

Lieutenant Distenzweig has carried out four combat missions in support of friendly forces at Loc Ninh, and he feels that the battle ground has been the scene of one of the greatest displays of tactical air power since the start of the Vietnam conflict.

Enemy gunners “were just arbitrarily throwing up a sheet of lead,” he said, “trying to get the right timing, and hoping that we would fly through it.”

(Editors’ Note: At the time of this printing, it has been estimated that the enemy have suffered over 2000 losses due to air, ground attacks and artillery.)

8 NOV - NEW REFUELING RIG GETS WORKOUT

Recently the 35th Supply Squadron received 12 new refueling rigs for servicing the ‘thirsty’ F-100 Super Sabres, B-57 Canberra jet bombers and C-123 provider transports on base.

“They’re the best refueling units the Air Force has put out,” commented fuel specialist Sergeant **Lee C. Morris**, 21, from Talladega, Ala., who uysed one of the new 5,000 gallon rigs to fuel F-100’s.

The gearshift on the streamlined truck is on the left hand side, so the drivers can start pumping operations from the outside, instead of having to climb back into the cab.

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The trucks are painted a bright yellow, so that they can be seen at night.

8 NOV - ARMY COMMENDS F-100 FLIERS

Two F-100 pilots of the 352nd TFS received a letter of appreciation from the Army Commander at the scene of an air strike 20 miles north of Phu Cat which left 13 Viet Cong dead.

One of the pilots, Captain **John L. Martin**, said he appreciated the letter “more than anything else out of the mission,” which took place in mountainous terrain amidst overcast skies.

The other pilot, Captain **James R. McNeil**, recalled that the FAC could hardly find the target because of the bad weather. A veteran of 115 combat missions in Vietnam, he said that because of low cloud ceiling they couldn’t “get any dive angle or anything.”

Nevertheless, after the FAC marked the target with smoke, they managed to catch the VC in the open and hit them with 750-pound bombs and 20mm cannon.

Commenting on the death of the 13 VC, Capt. Martin, who was the flight leader, said, “I had no idea that the concentration was that heavy.”

He recalled that the two 352nd pilots could find only one little hole in the clouds through which to dive on the target, which lay only 500 feet below the clouds.

“As the mission wore on,” said Capt. Martin, “the hole got smaller and smaller, and finally disappeared, and we had to quit at that time.”

The strike was called in after the forward air controller reported ground fire in the area.

The weather got so bad, Capt. Martin observed, that the “forward air controller was boxed in his little canyon there as the mission ended...We had to tell him where there were some holes, so he could get out.”

Also a 115 mission veteran, he has been at Phan Rang AB since June.

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8 NOV - THE VOICE...IN DARKNESS

What is an Air Force Communicator?

An Air Force member who talks?! Possibly, but not completely true. An Air Force communicator is a highly trained competent and dedicated individual who is proud of the fact that he belongs to the Air Force Communications Service.

He is a man that knows not duty day, as ‘duty day’ is normally defined. He works at noon, midnight, and all the hours in between. He has children who see him when his shift permits, a wife who loves him and works even harder than he, trying to keep two daily schedules-one for her housework, and one for his duty day.

If he is a radio operator, he is the voice of all who use his system. As a telephone cable maintenance man, he keeps your voice intact. As a tower operator, he is the voice of authority and an insurance policy for our pilots.

In short, an Air Force communicator is a conglomeration of support necessities.

When a telephone cable is damaged, through no fault of his own he is criticized. Once it has been restored to its original condition, he is blessed. He is a man who keeps you waiting until three A.M. for that all-important call to your home. He is the person who tolerates your impatience for eight hours while you wait your turn in the MARS Station, knowing full well that your pent-up anger will vanish completely when he tells you, “Your wife is on the line, speak to her.”

Hated one minute, loved the next. A fool at eight A.M., a master-mind an hour later, the Air Force Communications Service (AFCS) personnel lead their on-again, off-again, up/down life, day-in, day-out, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Why? To serve you, the officer, airman, and NCO. He is, during periods of inclement weather, the eyes of the pilot; the command nervous system; the fingers of a thirsty bomber searching for a refueling tanker at midnight; the ears of all who use his system.

He gives us AFRTS, MARS, and radio service, rapid precise teletype communications; efficient telephone service; RAPCON, CGA, Tower and many more untold services, regardless of existing

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conditions.

The communicator is a person who can leave the office after a grueling twelve hour midnight shift and climbs in to a bus heading for an orphanage with packages of toys for forgotten children.

He is also the man that can stubbornly refuse you a radio part for you transistorized portable, when he has fifty in stock. Now that you know what the “blue suit” communicator is, think of him from time-to-time. Remember him when you flick on your radio and hear music from home, or when the “I love you, honey, over,” reaches you from thousands of miles away. With him we are a team, without him we are simply ‘people talking to one another....if we are within hearing range. by Sgt. **Bill Gaiter**, AFCS



15 NOV - NEW BASE COMMANDER ARRIVES AT PHAN RANG

Colonel **John M. Crowley**, 44, from Chicago, Ill., has arrived from Westover AFB, Mass., to become the new commander of Phan Rang AB.

Colonel Crowley entered the military in 1942 and in 1944 was commissioned a second lieutenant after completing the Aviation Cadet Program.

He is no stranger to Southeast Asia, since he served in the China-Burma-India theater during World War II.

The 25-year veteran of military service succeeds Colonel **Lewis R. Riley** as commander.

The Colonel expressed surprise at the looks of the base and the improvements.

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He stated that it was a “Hundred percent different than he had anticipated.”

Colonel Crowley was the base commander at Westover before his assignment here.

Phan fare joins many others in extending to Colonel Crowley a hearty welcome to ‘Happy Valley’.

15 NOV - “FREDEA” PAYS LOCAL AREA MILD VISIT

The typhoon, Freda, passed by Phan Rang Air Base causing very little damage to the local area.

At 9:00 a.m. last Wednesday, Det. 22, 30th Weather Squadron issued the first of five weather warnings informing personnel of the approaching storm.

At first it was projected that Freda would pass directly over Phan Rang, causing serious wind and flood damage.

Every six hours new warnings were issued giving the latest progress of the storm.

By Thursday, November 9th, it was determined that the main brunt of the storm would pass to the north of the base and would not pose the serious threat as first predicted.

Freda came ashore just south of Tuy Hoa on Friday, just after midnight. The strongest winds recorded were 65 knots, five miles south of Tuy Hoa. The closes point of approach to Phan Rang AB, was 80 nautical miles.

Precipitation and winds associated with the storm were as follows: Phan Rang AB, 21 knots and 2 in. rain; Cam Ranh Bay, 41 knots and 2.58 in. rain; Nha Tran, 38 knots and 2.01 in. rain; Tuy Hoa, 55 knots and 2.4 in. rain; 5 mi. south of Tuy Hoa, 65 knots wind max.

15 NOV - 15,000 VIETNAMESE ATTEND OPENING OF ‘CIVIC ACTION’ STADIUM

An estimated crowd of 15,000 Vietnamese adults and children were on hand recently for the opening of a \$100,000 regionla sports stadium built with the aid of the base Civic Action Program.

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“it’s been the major Civic Action project for the base and for the province,” said 1st Lt. **Arthur J. Querido**, 25, from Hartford, Conn. base Civic Action officer, noting that the opening ceremonies were “the most impressive I’ve ever seen.

Runners bearing Olympic torches ran on the new track past the grandstand, at least 100 balloons were sent aloft, Cham dancers dressed in their native costumes performed to the music of flutes and drums, and for a few minutes the entire stadium was enveloped in red, yellow and other colors of smoke from torches.

Eight-hundred Vietnamese youngsters from 14 provinces gathered at the stadium for a five-day sports meet encompassing soccer, volleyball, tennis, badminton, basketball, track and field games, swimming target-shooting, boxing and table tennis.

Because of a typhoon a day before the opening ceremonies, only eight of the 14 teams in the sports meet arrived in time. Other teams were expected to arrive in the immediate future.

Following the flag-raising ceremonies enhanced by a Vietnamese military band, the province chief went out to the field to shake hands with the leaders of each team of athletes. He then presented certificates and plaques to the American military and civilian officials who played key roles in the construction of the stadium.

First of its kind in Vietnam, the new stadium has a 440-yard oval track, a soccer field, basketball courts, four bleachers, and housing and dining facilities for 800 athletes.

Among the guests of honor from Phan Rang AB was Col. **James A. Wilson**, 35th TFW commander, Col. **Edward P. McNeff** deputy wing commander.

Much of the material from which the stadium and its sports facilities were constructed was donated by the 554th ‘Red Horse’ Civil Engineering Squadron, the 35th Civil Engineering Squadron, and the 35th Services Squadron.

Mr. **Felix Barcena**, over-all coordinator for the year-long project, noted that it incorporated the efforts of people from the base, the United States Agency for International Development,

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Vietnames Public Works, the First Brigade of the Army’s 101st Airborne Division, the local sub ara command of the Army, and the province of Ninh Thuan.

Mr. Barcena, who is assigned to the Civil Operations For Revolutionary Development Support, estimated that youngsters from the province contributed 8,000 mandays of work to the massive project.

Phan Rang Air Base provided roofing, screens, plywood, 400 truckloads of sand, 220 truckloads of gravel, a grader, 18 truckloads of fine soil and 220 mattresses.

The Army’s First Brigade (101st Airborne Division) provided 20 rolls of barbed wire and stakes for the top of the wall surrounding the stadium.

An army helicopter patrolled the perimeter of the area around the stadium during the ceremonies.

Personnel from the base did the initial grading of the stadium ground.

15 NOV - BASE FIRE DEPARTMENT RECEIVED AWARD

In a letter to base command, the Fire Department here at Phan Rang was selected as the ‘Most Improved Fire Department in Vietnam’ by 7th Air Force Headquarters.

The letter stated, “Your Fire Department has been selected as the Most Improved Fire Department in Vietnam for the period 1 July through 30 September 1967. This selection is based on the results of Staff Visits conducted by fire protection personnel from this Headquarters and timely and correct submission of required reports.”

The letter continued, “I wish to take this opportunity to commend the Phan Rang AB Fire Department for their exemplary performance of duty...The professionalism displayed by members of this department is an essential element in the operation of an efficient organization.” The letter is over the signature of Lt. General **William W. Momyer**, 7AF Commander.

15 NOV - BOMBING ACCURACY VIVIDLY DISPLAYED

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The pinpoint accuracy with which Air Force pilots drop their bombs was dramatized for a front line Army commander recently by an F-100 Super Sabre pilot of the 615th TFS.

The incident occurred west of Pleiku, as Army troops engaged in battle with the Viet Cong.

“We were dropping bombs about 50 meters from the friendly positions,” said Major **James L. Anthony**, 33, from Dahlonaga, Ga.,” and the ground commander called back and said that limbs from trees were falling on his head!”

A veteran of 83 combat missions in Vietnam, the Major added, “they were real happy with our bombing that day, and we were able to neutralize the area so they could move in safely.”

15 NOV - 352ND COMES “OUT OF CLOUDS” AT THE ENEMY

Despite low cloud ceilings a flight of F-100 Super Sabres from the 352nd TFS, ‘Yellow Jackets’ zeroed in on a Viet Cong position 10 miles west of Quang Ngai recently and left 10 enemy troops dead.

One of the pilots, Captain **Larry A. Woodcock**, 28, from Downers Grove, Ill., said the jet fighters were also credited with destroying nine military structures, and damaging four others. They also ignited three large secondary fires.

“It was difficult for the flight members to keep each other, the target, and the forward air controller in sight during the strike,” the captain stated.

15 NOV - ON POST WITH SECURITY POLICE

“Guard Post”...These two words officially begin the duty day for a Security Policeman there at Phan Rang. He then jumps into the back of a truck with the rest of the sentries, and heads for his post. In the back of his mind he wonders what dangers and events lay before him in the next eight hours.

He arrives at his assigned post and relieves the sentry there, who passes on any information regarding his area.

As the sentry sits on post he observes heavy rain clouds moving in from the south-east and

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decides that he will eat while it is still dry. He gets out his C-rations and starts to eat. Just as he finished his last bite the rain begins, first sprinkles begin to pellet the ground.

A large lizard darts across his sand-bag bunker, a bird lets out a loud shrill and suddenly lands in a generous clump of weeds, seeking shelter from the coming shower. Red ants laboriously scurry from the remnants of an empty can of jam, to the lurid darkness of the underground, and nearby a long slithering snake heads for a bush.

Suddenly a startling roar of thunder and the beginning of torrential downpours, the wind begins to howl and soon the sentry is soaked. The rain ends, leaving slippery filth and muck of clay roads and large deep puddles.

Day fades into night, and the time for extra watchfulness begins.

Let’s take an imaginary situation.

A1C **John W. Coley**, 21 of Winterhaven, Fla., is out on his post. Suddenly his attentions is drawn out toward the perimeter, because of an unusually high pitch sound a bird is making, and the sudden eerie silence of the frogs and crickets.

Airman Coley observes movement along the perimeter fence line, and call the Security Control (CSC) and gives all the information he can. “I have spotted three unidentified persons about two hundred fifty meters out, directly in front of my post. They are dressed in dark clothing and are about 25 years inside the base perimeter at this time.”

CSC., then dispatches a Security Alert Team (SAT) to the scene. The SAT member are Leader, SGT. **Richard H. McEvoy**, 22, Mass,; and back-up man, A1C **Ron Chandler** 21, New York, N.Y. Upon receiving the information the SAT leader decides from where he is going to approach the sentry’s post. He approaches from the rear and the sentry points out the exact location of the individuals and gives any information that may be vital to the team.

Airman McEvoy briefs the team then they deploy through the rough terrain. As they near the individuals, the team learn that they are unarmed, so upon apprehending they proceed to the location of the flight chief, Sgt. **Jack Suter**, from Ill.

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The team is instructed to turn over their captives to the base police for questioning.

When the incident was called in by Airman Coley, every post on the base was notified that there was something going on and to be keep eyed in case that “Charlie” might try something from several directions at the same time.

Upon sending the SAT to the scene, another team was put on stand-by in case assistance was needed.

Members of the team include Sgt **Russell Mason**, 25, Stillwater, Me.; A1C **Lanny H. Olson**, 23, New Lisbon, Wisc.; and A1C **Robert E. Grover**, 20 Miami, Fla. Many of the other posts were notified and these men also were alerted, Sgt. **Jerry R. Pritt**, 21, from Buffalo, W.Va.; A1C **Dwane Case**, 20, Nova, Ohio; A1C **Fred Clinkscales**, 23,, Ware Shoals, S.C., A1C **Leslie C. Dubbs**, 21, Altoona, Pa.; A1C **Carey F. Sunkle**, 21, Newark, Ohio; A1C **Darrell Cooper**, 22. Ohley W.Va.; A1C **Lionel Williams**, 21, Washington D.C.; A1C **Jerome F. Jung**, 20, San Antonio; Sgt **Everett McGlowe**, 27, Portsmouth, Ohio; Sgt **James P. Boland**, 22, Cincinnati; and A1C **Roy Lovering**, 22, Lowell, Mass.

The area is now reported as secure and Airman Coley once again begins to scan his area looking to see if anymore unauthorized personnel are in the area.

Soon a vehicle approaches the sentry, after a challenge and answer; Airman Coley’s replacement takes over the long watch that looks into the morning.

Day after day, night after night, rain or shine, eyes watch the perimeter, as sentinels have done for thousands of years. - A1C **Gary Crawford**

15 NOV - DOCTOR PALMA LEAVES MANY FRIENDS

“Very honestly, I leave with very mixed emotions,” said Doctor (Capt.) **William E. Palma**, 29, from Upper Marlboro, Md. who has earned the love and respect and gratitude of hundreds of Vietnamese adults and children.

There were his patients, as he carried out 150 medical civic action missions in seven villages and

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hamlets during the 12 months with the 35th United States Air Force Dispensary at this base.

Gifts of embroidered dresses and handkerchiefs for his five children were presed upon the doctor before his departure for a new assignment in the United States.

“I have made a lot of friends over here in Vietnam, and treated a lot of people.”

“I like the Vietnamese people very much.” said the soft spoken doctor.

The doctor’s special love is for children.

“The Vietnamese children get to you,” he stated, “They are awfully cute.”

He has adopted a pair of ten-month-old twin girls from the Tan Tai orphanage.

Doctor Palma received his medical degree from Georgetown University Medical School in Washington D.C., five years ago.

He came to Vietnam after a three-year tour in France.

He is particularly pleased at the medical progress which has taken place at the schools and orphanages since he came here a year ago.



22 NOV - GENERAL MOMYER IMPRESSED BY VISIT

During a recent two hour visit to this base, the commander of 7AF, Lt. General **William Momyer**, commented that he was amazed by the progress that has taken place here between each trip he has made to the base.

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The general told Colonel **James A. Wilson**, commander of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing, that he was particularly impressed with the recent paving of roads and parking areas. This work was carried out by members of the 554th 'Red Horse' Civil Engineering Squadron.

General Momyer shook hands repeatedly with officers and enlisted men as he toured the fighter squadron operations area, field maintenance facilities, the maintenance control area and other newly completed projects on base.

The general also toured the ramps and revetment area for C-123 Providers of the 315th Air Commando Wing, and took a look at the airmen's barracks commenting that the barracks are improved greatly since his last visit to Phan Rang.

Colonel Wilson said, "We've come a long way, and were going to go a lot further." The colonel also stated that General Momyer expressed pleasure over the "working spirit and harmony which the men have"

Colonel Wilson commended base personnel.

22 NOV - LETTER PRAISES AIRMANSHIP IN 'BATTLE OF LOC NINH'

In a letter penned over the signature of General **William W. Momyer**, commander of 7th Air Force, Phan Rang personnel received congratulations for the outstanding support rendered by our aircraft in the Loc Ninh Operation.

The letter stated: "I am extremely pleased and proud of the significant contribution made by the Air Force personnel toward the overall success achieved during the recent series of enemy engagements at Loc Ninh. This was not a preplanned operation; however, the KBA testifies to your versatility, quick-reaction capabilities and dedicated professionalism.

Senior Army commanders have expressed praise of the Air Force support. The airmanship you displayed demonstrated our capabilities beyond any doubt and further contributed to the unprecedented rapport we enjoy with the Army in SEA.

Please forward my congratulations to all personnel involved...."

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Colonel **James A. Wilson**, 35th Tactical Fighter Wing Commander, stated “The letter from General Momyer should be a cause for pride in every man at Phan Rang. I have stated repeatedly that our sole purpose for developing this base has been to provide air support to Army units. This letter testifies that we are providing this support not only in planned operations, but in our capability to react speedily to an emergency situation.

The Battle of Loc Ninh was a complete victory for Free World Forces. Heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy mostly through outstanding application of air power.

“Be proud of your contribution in this battle. Every man on base participated in some measure to the needs of getting the airplanes and ordnance ready and airborne. I congratulate all of you and ask that you continue working so well at your assigned jobs.”

22 NOV - AIRMEN PREVENT FUEL TRUCK EXPLOSION

“The guys didn’t take time to think what could happen, they just did it,” said SSgt. **Donald C. Briere**, 28, of Ogdensburg, N.Y., a freight specialist with Det. 8, 14th Aerial Port Sq. at Phan Rang.

He was talking about four airmen who extinguished a blaze on a 5,000-gallon fuel truck, saving the truck and the lives of men who were nearby.

Briere, SSgt. **Joseph G. Mallette**, also of Ogdensburg, and A1C **Terry Streater**, of Troy, N.C., and **Ronald R. Schenck**, 20, of Edna, Okla., were returning to work after their lunch period.

“We were following the fuel truck, “said Mallette, “and could see sparks coming from the universal on the truck. When it started burning, we pulled our truck around in front of the fuel truck and told the driver his truck was on fire.”

A1C **Dennis R. Flippo**, 20, of Manila, Ark., the fuel truck driver said, “The truck was full. I was on my way to fuel two F-4C’s when a truck pulled up beside me and someone yelled that my truck was on fire. I pulled off the road as fast as I could.”

Schenck, driving the aerial port vehicle, pulled it across the road to block traffic and told a security policeman who arrived on the scene to notify the fire department.

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While Schenck and Briere remained with their truck, Streater and Mallette ran to the burning truck to aid the driver. The three of them tried to remove a fire extinguisher located on the left side of the tanker, but the holding pins were bent.

Then Flippo ran to the right side of the truck where another was located. He held the bottle and operated it while Mallette took the nozzle and crawled under the truck.

“The flames had covered the universal,” said Mallette. “I sprayed the whole bottle on it, and when Streater got the other one loose, I emptied the second bottle on it, too. The was out before I emptied the second bottle, but I wanted to cool the metal down.”

“The fire was so hot that it burned all the paint off the universal,” said Streater, “It took about five minutes to put it out.”

The cause of the fire was an emergency brake system which stuck.

“It all happened so fast that we didn’t have time to think about it.” said Mallette.

(Note: This story also appeared in Phan Rang Newsletter 107 copied from a Pacific Stars and Stripes story titled “Airmen Team Up To Save Fuel Truck”.)

22 NOV - THEY SHOOT THE SCENE

Automatic gun cameras and ‘pod’ camera mounted on the F-100 Super Sabres of this base record 15,000 feet of film on bombing passes and 5,000 feet on strafing passes each month.

The purpose of all this color film, according to TSgt. **Paul A. McDaniel**, 35, from Willow Creek, Calif., NCOIC of the airborne photo maintenance section of the 600th Photo Squadron, is “to show just what the pilots are doing, and to give them some idea of what they have accomplished.”

The name of the game is combat documentation. The 14-man shop headed by Sergeant McDaniel is responsible for loading film into the F-100 camera just before the jets take off on air strikes, unloading the film when the jets land, canning the film for processing at Tan Son Nhut AB and critiquing the finished product “to see whether we have anything that’s

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outstanding,” and keeping the camera in top shape at all times.

Pilots are able to view films of their air strikes 24 hours after their jets land and “what they see, they like,” Sergeant McDaniel stated.

The films show what happens when the bombs and 20mm shells hit the enemy base camps, weapons positions and other targets.

Gun camera film, shot at 64 frames per second, not only depicts shells hitting the target, but also shows what happens after the shells hit, thanks to an overrun mechanism enabling the film to keep running for several seconds after the pilot releases the gun trigger.

The film in the pod camera is shot at 200 frames per second, in order to provide slow motion viewing of bombing passes.

Three gun camera crews and a pod camera crew whose efforts are coordinated via a radio network, rush out to the flightline in two trucks many times each day to load and unload the camera magazines.

22 NOV - SAFE LANDING FOR DAMAGED F-100

“My first thought was having to punch out and spend the night in the weeds,” said F-100 Super Sabre Pilot 1st Lt. **Christian A. Crooker** of the 615th Tactical Fighter sq.

He was referring to the moment, following an airstrike against a suspected Viet Cong antenna site 20 miles southeast of Pleiku, when a fellow F-100 pilot informed him over the intercom that fuel was streaming from his aircraft.

A veteran of 115 combat missions, the 25-year-old native of Flourtown, Pa., stared at his forward fuel gauge and say that it registered ‘empty’.

The young pilot decided to head for Pleiku Air Base, but “I didn’t think I was going to make it.

As the battle-damaged Super Sabre streaked toward Pleiku, “I thought I’d just hang with the aircraft till she quit.”

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Instead of attempting a normal landing approach, the 614th TFS flier came in ‘one-third of the way down the runway’, maintaining as steep an approach as possible, so that if the plane’s engine quit he could squeeze the maximum glide out of the F-100.

“I was just thankful that Pleiku was so close,” the combat veteran observed.

22 NOV - PR’S DAVIS CUP NOW IN YANK’S HANDS

The 8th Bomb Squadron defeated Number 2 squadron in the Davis Cup Challenge, round. Playing inspired tennis the 17 member of the 8th Bomb Sq. team won the best of 21 matches (16 singles and five doubles) 12 to 9. The round was not decided until the final day of play when the 8th Bomb Sq., leading 10 to 9 topped the last two double matches.

Major Schultz, the 8th Bomb Sq. team captain and **Major Carter** beat **Flt. Lt. Deveraux** and **LAC. Window** 9-2 and **Lt. Col. Consta** and **Major Carlton** put the icing on the cake with a 9-6 win over **Flt/Lt. O’Hawlon** and **Cpl. Welch**.

It took 279 games to decide the challenge round with the 8th winning 149 to 130 for number 2 Sq. Most games were close and decided by scant points.

The Davis Cup originated with the 8th sister Squadron the 13th TBS, during their last tour at Phan Rang when their operations officer Lt.Col., **Duke Davis** donated the cup and inaugurated the first. That round was won plausibly by No. 2 Sq., lead by **Flt/Lt. Red Beau**. The 8th TBS., challenged No. 2 Sq. when the 8th returned to Phan Rang from Clark Air Base in September. The 8th had 17 member participating in the challenge round and was lead by Major **Ernest Schultz**; the Clark AB. Champion. Number 2 Squadron has already challenged the 8th TBS., for the cup but the matches will have to be postponed awhile as the 8th returns to Clark this week and not to return until January.

22 NOV - FINANCE RELOCATED

The finance and accounting office recently was relocated in a building christened the ‘space needle’ by some and ‘the mile-long finance office’ by others.

It is over 152 feet long but only about 17 feet wide.

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According to Master Sergeant **Clark E. Colvin**, 33, from Alexandria, La., non-commissioned officer in charge of paying and collecting, the elongated structure was created by linking three smaller structures, including the former office of the base commander and an administrative office.

In a project carried out by the 35th Civil Engineering squadron, walls and roofing were built between the smaller buildings, and the result is an air-conditioned six-room completeB which represents a dramatic improvement over the old facilities of the finance and accounting office....two hooches and a Jamesway tent.

“We didn’t even close when we moved,” Sgt. Colvin proudly pointed out. He stated that the office is currently functioning as a disbursing agency for its parent office at Cam Ranh Bay, but will win its ‘independence’ as an accounting and finance office in its own right on January 1. The space needle, which has six doors, houses the administrative office of finance and accounting, the accounts control section, military pay, civilian pay, travel, and paying and collecting. There are two cashiers’ cages in the building.

22 NOV - “YANK’ HOLDS PLACE ON “AUSSIE” SOCCER TEAM

Sergeant **Eugene E. Khyle**, 39, from San Antonio, recently proved his worth as the only American member of the soccer team of the Number 2 Squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force.

When the underdog Aussie team tangled recently with a team of Vietnamese all-stars at the new regional sports stadium outside Phan Rang City, Sergeant Khyle made ‘save’ after ‘save’ as he tender the goal. The result was a scoreless tie.

Raised in Ireland, the sergeant has played soccer all his life. In 1955, ’56, ’61 and ’65, he played for the American All-Stars, a soccer team composed of players from all branches of service. This team plays against teams from other countries.

A veteran of 15 years military service, the Aussies’ goalkeeper is a member of the 35th Services Squadron, and works as a baker in te newer of the two Airmen’s dining halls.

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He said that the game with the Vietnamese All-Stars occurred on American Sports Day at the huge stadium.

“That place was packed!” said Sergeant Khyle as he described the game with the All-Stars. “It was out of this world.”

The Irish-born baker said the Aussies “surprised this all-star team very much.”

He commented that the crowd began rooting for the Aussies 10 minutes after the 30 minute game began.

At one point the referee had to stop the game because spectators had wandered onto the playing field, in an attempt to get a better look at the action.

The Aussies practice three times a week. He recommends soccer to everyone as good physical training, and insists that people of all ages can play it.



29 NOV - PILOT ABANDONS BOOK IN TRY TO SAVE WOUNDED

“In an emergency, you can’t always follow the book,” said 1st Lt. **William T. Little**, 25, of Beaumont, Tex., a pilot with the 311th Air Commando Squadron.

Lieutenant Little abandoned the book in an attempt to save two Marines’ lives.

The 311th flies daily supply missions out of DaNang, the northern most air base in South Vietnam. Lieutenant Little was flying routine missions throughout I Corps from DaNang when he received an emergency request for a medical evacuation of 34 Marines from Dong Ha.

Piloting a C-123K, the jet equipped version of the Provider aircraft flown by the air commandos, he flew to Dong Ha where he was informed that two of the Marines had serious head and chest

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wounds.

They would have to be flown to the Marine hospital at Phu Bai, the nearest medical facility available.

Because of the seriously wounded Leathernecks the flight had to be made at low altitude.

Little began the flight down the South Vietnamese coast to Phu Bai, flying at 500 feet. Accepted procedure is to fly several thousand feet above the water to avoid passing over the enemy concentrations.

Shortly after becoming airborne, the medics told Little that they would have to get to Phu Bai immediately because one of the men with head wounds was going into convulsions.

The normal approach to fly around a point of land which would put them south of Phuu Bai, then up a bay to minimize the chances of being hit by ground fire.

Lieutenant Little turned the aircraft towards land in a direct course to Phu Bai.

“Before heading over land, I turned the jets on, just in case we should take ground fire and lose an engine,” he recalled.

The new approach took them over known Viet Cong territory. Nine miles from Phuy Bai, the VC fired approximately 30 rounds of automatic weapons fire at the Provider. No one on board was hit, but three rounds ripped through the C-123, severing the actuating rod to the left aileron.

Then the lieutenant had his hands full. “I couldn’t run left to make the final approach,” he said, “The only thing I could do was to try to skid the plane into a turn with the rudder. A couple of times it felt like I was losing complete control.”

“I wouldn’t say for sure, but I think those jets saved us.

“We had to fight the controls all the way, but we made it in. Nobody except the crew was aware of what was going on,” the Lieutenant concluded.

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Despite the air commando's efforts, the Marine died shortly after being taken off the plane. But the other marine with the head wounds was saved because a pilot didn't follow the book. (**Note:** This is story from Pacific Stars and Stripes, December 13, 1967 was originally published in Phan Rang Newsletter 48 with the title of *“Rescue Route Goes 500 Feet Over VC.”*)

29 NOV - A.F. CHIEF OF CHAPLAINS LEADS CHAPEL DEDICATION

Major General **Edwin R. Chess**, Air Force Chief of Chaplains, and a host of other dignitaries including Vietnamese clergymen, PACAF and 7AF religious leaders were on hand last Sunday for the formal dedication of the \$50,000 chapel completed.

“This, without any doubt in my mind, is the finest of all the chapels which have been built in Vietnam up to the present time,” Chaplain Chess commented.

Top officials of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing and Base Command, along with 554th ‘Red Horse’ Civil Engineering Squadron officials also attended the elaborate services.

Singled out for special recognition were the designer-engineer of the chapel and chapel complex, 1st Lt. **Gary L. Bruehler**, 26, from New Smyrna Beach, Fla., and TSgt **Richard E. Johnson**, 35, from Waco, Texas, construction foreman. Both are members of the 554th CES.

Chaplain Chess made a moving speech during the dedication ceremonies, calling on all Air Force personnel to “come to this house when you are happy and share your happiness with God...come to this house when in sorrow and gain strength.”

The chapel complex was presented for dedication by Col. **John M. Crowley**, base commander. Chaplain (Lt. Col) **Theodore J. Kleinhans**, installation chaplain gave the speech of acceptance.

The congregation, led by Chaplain (Capt) **Guy Morgan**, the new Catholic chaplain, offered the Dedicatory Prayer.

Music for the dedication was presented by the Chapel Choir, Mr. **Joe Burns** directing.

The congregation stood, at the beginning, as the colors were brought forth. The entire

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assembly then sang “God of Our Fathers” accompanied on organ by Sergeant **John Engle**.

Colonel **James A. Wilson**, commander of the 35th Tactical Fighter Squadron, stated during the ceremonies, “The chapel center symbolizes the moral and religious foundations of our people.

We at Phan Rang are proud to have so attractive and useful a chapel center, which so many of you have labored to complete...May it long represent our dedication to God and the moral and spiritual well-being of the Air Force family.”

It was a particularly satisfying event for the out-going Catholic chaplain of the base, Father (Major) **Edward B. Hemkens**, who was the driving force behind the plans and construction of the handsome new facility, and devoted much of his one-year tour toward its completion.

A reception was held after the dedication. Chaplain Chess cut a cake the shape of the chapel front, baked by members of the 35th Services Squadron for the occasion.

29 NOV - AUSSIE COMMANDER BIDS FAREWELL

“Before leaving Vietnam on November 30, I wish to say that my time here at Phan Rang AB has been one of the best experiences of my life.

It gave me great pleasure to work (and play) alongside personnel of the tremendous USAF and U.S. Army. In particular, I have been very proud indeed, to be part of your famous 35th Tactical Fighter Wing.

I am truly impressed with all I see at Phan Rang. There is no doubt that this base has the stamp of professionalism. It is progressive, objective, effective and happy. One cannot wish for much more in Vietnam.

From a service view point, I leave here with genuine reluctance, but naturally I am looking forward to the return to my family in Malaysia.

Thank you all for your comradeship, kindness and cooperation. I shall never forget Phan Rang and its personnel from the United States and Allied forces.

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Good-bye, good hunting, and good luck.”

Rolf B. Aronsen, Wg Cdr, RAAF Commander No. 2 Squadron

29 NOV - F-100 PILOTS SAVE SPECIAL FORCES CAMP

Jet fighters of this base and Cam Ranh Bay were credited with saving an Army Special Forces camp 50 miles north of Saigon with a series of air strikes which killed 134 North Vietnamese, troops and led to the capture of a wide variety of weapons.

First Lt. **Alva R. Cox**, an F-100 Super Sabre pilot assigned to the 614th Tactical Fighter Squadron, said he and another pilot of the squadron were alerted at 2 A.M. Scrambled from the alert pad at Phan Rang, their Super Sabres reached the scene at a time when the flare-ship over the target was down to only two flares and the forward air controller had only one rocket left for marking the target.

The 25-year-old native of Marion, S.C. said that once the flares burned out the F-100 Pilots used the light of fires set off by their bombs to continue their attack on the enemy forces. After the F-100s completed their strike, several flights of F-4C Phantoms from Cam Ranh Bay struck the target.

A week after the air strikes took place, the 614th TFS fliers were informed by the forward air controller that on the morning after the air action Army Troops found 134 bodies at the scene and wounded enemy soldiers who were taken then as prisoners.

Captured also were large amounts of rockets, rocket-launchers, grenades, grenade-launchers, mortars, mortar tubes, machine-guns, rifles, pistols, and flame throwers.

The forward air controller said the Air Force pilots prevented the Special Forces camp from being overrun, and saved many American lives, Lieutenant Cox, reported.

29 NOV - FAREWELL DEMPSEY DUMPSTER

The staff of Phanfare has said good-bye to a very dear friend.

Dempsey Dumpster has left us for places far away. We of the staff are sorry to see him leave.

“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. 229 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

He has brought much laughter and cheer to our humdrum days.

The staff of Phanfare also, wish a farewell to Dempsy’s creator Sgt. **Bill Gaither**.

Many tasks have been handed to Bill by this office and he has always responded cheerfully.

So to ‘Gaith’ from the staff of Phanfare, a very hearty Thank-you.

29 NOV - 315 CAMS BUILD TEST PLATFORM IN RECORD TIME

Working 12 hours a day, the men of the 315th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (CAMS) here assembled the first C-123 Provider engine testing platform in Vietnam. And they did it in record time.

“It normally takes 25 men 30 days to put one together,” said SSgt. **Ralph S. Young**, 30, from Chesapeake, VA., and engine mechanic with the 6200th Field Maintenance Squadron at Clark AB, P.I. “Twenty guys from CAMS pitched in and did it in 10 days.”

On temporary duty with the 315th, Sergeant Young accompanied the test stand from Clark and supervised the construction here.

“This stand was converted from a C-118 stand to test C-123 engines,” Young continued. “It had to be strengthened and a fire wall added. When it arrived here, hardly any of it was together. All the supports and the top of the control housing had to be welded back on.”

1st Lt. **Steven E. Fritts**, 25, of Sand Springs, Okla., OIC of the CAMS Propulsion Branch, was the superintendent for the project. “Phan Rang will be the sole facility in Southeast Asia for testing the R-2800 engine,” he said.

The R-2800 engine is the 2,350- horsepower unit used on all models of the Providers flown by the 315th Air Commando Wing and other units in SEA.

Utilizing the testing platform, the C-123 engines can be put through all the stresses that would be encountered in flight.

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Sergeant Young will remain with the 315th for a month to train CAMS personnel in the operation of the test stand.

29 NOV - 614TH TFS HAVE “COMMANDER’S CALL”

The high morale of the 614 the ‘Lucky Devils’ Tactical Fighter Squadron and the tight teamwork of its F-100 Super Sabre pilots and the support personnel are strengthened by monthly ‘commander’s call’ sessions in which the pilots describe their most exciting missions for the benefit of the enlisted men.

“It gives the men a better chance to understand the war over here,” said **Terry V. Brodt**, 21, from Panorama City, Calif., operations clerk for the F-100 unit.

Comprehensive briefings on the latest developments in the war and films depicting air strikes of F-100’s and other combat aircraft are also offered at the lively ‘commander calls’, which are attended by F-100 crew-chiefs, weapons mechanics, and other support personnel of the squadron.

29 NOV - PHOTOGRAPHER TURNS ‘GUNMAN’

An Air Force combat photographer, riding in the back seat of an O-1E Bird Dog observation craft, found himself right in the middle of the action during a forward air controller (FAC) mission as he fired 120 rounds of M-16 ammunition at the source of ground fire aimed at the aircraft.

Sergeant **Glenn C. Cooley**, 24, from Highland Springs, VA., assigned to Det. 5, 600th Photo Squadron here, was very much surprised by the whole thing. He said afterward that it was the first time he had ever fired a shot at anybody.

A veteran of 40 combat missions in F-100 Super Sabres, B-57 Canberra bombers, and)-1Es, Colley said he fired four clips of ammunition at the enemy at the request of the pilot when ground fire erupted.

“After that, we didn’t receive any ground fire,” said the young photographer, “I hit the man or not.”

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Commenting on his switch from cameraman to gunfighter, Colley stated: It was exciting....and different.”



Doug’s Comments: Another ‘snapshot of history’ from Phan Rang Air Base, this time featuring all of the news from November 1967 from the four Phan Fares published that month.

Reading these stories one might think a lot of it was just hyperbole or propaganda put out by the wing’s information office to enhance the image of the air base, but for those of us that were there, we know better. Phan Rang Air Base might have been the best air base in Vietnam.

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. 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.