

Phan Rang AB Newsletter

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.
"Keeping the memories alive" Newsletter 248

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AUSTRALIAN PUBLIC HEARS ABOUT NO. 2 SQUADRON'S VIETNAM EXPLOITS

by Bob Howe

The Australian War Memorial recently opened the doors of its extensive annex in the Canberra suburb of Mitchell, allowing the Australian public to view a large array of different aircraft used by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) over the years. Some of the exhibits were in full shape while others featured major components, such as fuselage of the Canberra jet bomber A84-

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“The public were very interested in hearing of their Vietnam experiences in the Canberra bomber and many thanked them for their service on behalf of the nation.”

The RAAF supplied its aviators to stand beside these aircraft and explain their capabilities and history. The Air Force Association also offered RAAF veterans Bob Howe and Lance Halvorson to take up duty beside Canberra A84-247 in which they had flown while serving with No. 2 Squadron at Phan Rang, Vietnam. Bob took the morning shift while Lance replaced him for the afternoon session.

The public were very interested in hearing of their Vietnam experiences in the Canberra bomber and many thanked them for their service on behalf of the nation.

The veterans pointed to the nose of the bomber stating that this was their “office” while serving in Vietnam, explaining that as navigator/bomb-aimers their role was to unstrap from the safety of their ejection seat, crawl down a narrow passage-way past the pilot and lie flat on their stomachs to peer through the bomb-sight located in the nose.

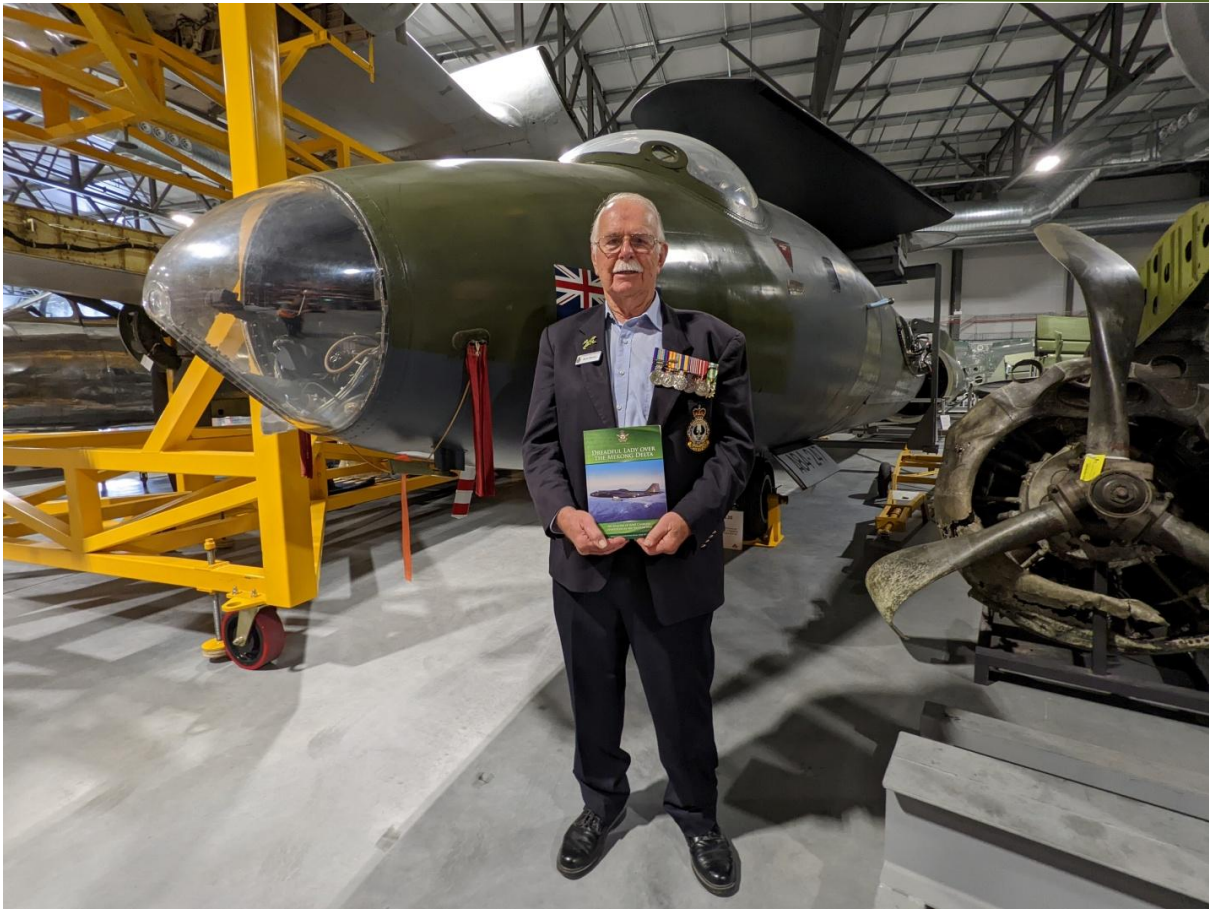
“...flying the plane, towards their target on the ground and pressed the bomb release button when the illuminated cross-hairs of the bomb-sight were squarely over the target.”

Having calculated the correct bombing angle based on the Canberra’s speed and height, and taking account of the wind, they steered the pilot, who was manually flying the plane, towards their target on the ground and pressed the bomb release button when the illuminated cross-hairs of the bomb-sight were squarely over the target. Bob and Lance would then clamber back to their seats to strap in and return to Phan Rang base, mission completed.

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Bob Howe, with his book, in front of Canberra A84-247 in which he flew 18 operational missions in Vietnam, including a wheels-down bombing flight. Photo by Bob Howe



Lance Halvorson is accompanied by a RAAF member - as well as flying 15 missions in 247 in Vietnam, Lance also flew 18 when the squadron was based at Butterworth, Malaysia in the earlier days of the Malaysian Emergency and Indonesian Confrontation experienced by Australia. Photo by Bob Howe

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Some of the aircraft that were on show. Photo by Bob Howe

Risks Life to Save Jet

(Pacific Stars and Stripes, July 3, 1968)

PHAN RANG, Vietnam (Special)—Air Force Capt, **Richard W. Dabney**, 27, Cavalier, N.D., risked his life to save his battle damaged F100 Supersabre.

An F100 pilot with the 35th Tactical Fighter Sq., Dabney was flying an alert mission in support of troops in contact 30 miles southwest of Bien Hoa AB when his plane was hit by ground fire.

As he pulled away from the target, the 'fire warning' light came on, and there was a severe explosion in the aft section of the F100. Realizing that he was only 20 miles from Bien Hoa AB, Dabney notified the base lower that he had an emergency and would be coming in for a landing, on a direct heading. When the tower advised him that, that runway had no crash

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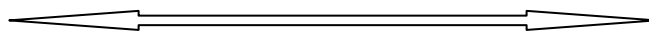
barrier and that he should circle the field, Dabney momentarily thought of ejecting from the stricken Supersabre. Then, with controls failing and smoke filling the cockpit, he decided to continue on his direct approach.

As he touched down, Dabney deployed the drag chute but it failed. Keeping cool, he slowed down to 80 m.p.h. using his brakes and then, with only 3,000 feet of runway left, he locked the brakes and blew the tires. The friction of the wheels on the runway slowed the aircraft to 34 m.p.h. With the end of the runway in sight, Dabney tried to steer onto a taxi ramp. The aircraft spun to a stop.

Dabney attempted to jettison the canopy but this failed. With the aircraft burning around him he raised the canopy mechanically and escaped.

An inspection of the Supersabre, after the Bien Hoa fire department had put out the fire, revealed the plane had been hit four times.

Note: This story also appeared in Phan Rang Newsletter 125.



Old Wreckage Discovered

(Jennings Daily News, December 24, 1965, Jennings, Louisiana)

SAIGON (UPI) - Search planes have found the wreckage of two U.S. Air Force transport planes missing since earlier this month. American military spokesmen reported today. One plane carried 81 Vietnamese paratroopers and a four man American crew.

The spokemen said the scattered wreckage of an Air Force C-123 carrying the Vietnamese air borne troops and US crew was discovered on a mountainside 40 miles north of Nha Trang. There appeared to be no survivors the spokesmen said.

The plane was en route from Pleiku to Tuy Hoa on Dec. 11 when it sliced into heavy forest at the 3,000 foot level of the mountain and burned. If there are no survivors, it will be the worst

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single crash in cost of human lives in the Vietnamese war.

Search planes also located the wreckage of a C47 transport plane which disappeared Dec. 17 on a flight from Bien Hoa to Phan Rang with nine U.S. Air Force personnel aboard. A U.S. Army doctor airlifted to the crash site reported all nine Americans dead.

U.S. Casualties on C-123B 56-4376					
Rank	Name	Org.	Birth	Death	Incident
Maj.	HORSKY, Robert Milvoy	309 th Air Commando Sqdn, 315 Air Commando Group, 13 th AF.	01/07/1927	12/11/1965	C-123B 56-4376 - Hit Mountain Top 31 KM SW of Tuy Hoa Field in bad weather, 4 US and 81 ARVN Killed.
Cpt.	MC KNIGHT, George Parker	Same	02/22/1936	12/11/1965	Same
SSgt	SALINAS, Mercedes Perez	Same	09/24/1928	12/11/1965	Same
SSgt	STEWART, Donald David	Same	01/22/1937	12/11/1965	Same

Note: These casualties on the C-123 were previously unbeknownst to me as it occurred in 1965 and my previous searches were from 1966 onward after the establishment of Phan Rang AB. Phan Rang Newsletters 155 and 197 will be updated to show these casualties and aircraft accident. The flight should have taken less than an hour and no navigator was carried but the aircraft crashed into high ground that was shrouded in low cloud about 20 miles west of Tuy Hoa killing all on board. The aircraft apparently hit a tree on a mountain ridge as it was descending and then spun down a thousand feet in a flat spin. The wreckage was not found for two weeks and even then a ground party was unable to reach the site due to heavy Viet Cong resistance. This was the worst accidental air crash in terms of loss of life to take place during

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the war in Southeast Asia. However, on 4 April 1975, two years after the American withdrawal, a C-5A Galaxy crashed near Saigon as it was evacuating civilians and 155 people were killed, many of them orphaned children. Maj Horsky had previously flown B-52s with Strategic Air Command’s 70th Bomb Wing. The crew’s remains were repatriated from Vietnam in 1974 and formally identified in 1979 to be interred in a group burial in Arlington National Cemetery.



Horsky
Robert Milvoy
Maj.



Mc Knight
George Parker
Capt.



Salinas
Mercedes Perez
SSgt



Stewart
Donald David
SSgt

U.S. Casualties on AC-47D 43-49492					
Grd	Name	Org.	Birth	Death	Incident
Maj.	ABBOTT , Robert Williams	4 th Air Commando Sqdn, 6250 th CBT Spt Group	10/19/1920	12/17/1965	C-47D Hit mountain 16-1/2 miles Southwest of Phan Rang in Ninh Thuan Prov.
Maj.	ABERNATHY , Robert Lloyd	Same	09/03/1928	12/17/1965	Same
1Lt.	BUCKLEY , Francis Richard	Same	02/21/1939	12/17/1965	Same
MSgt	CESTARIC , Joseph Anthony	12 th CE Sqdn, 12 th TAC Ftr	11/15/1918	12/17/1965	Same

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		Wing			
TSgt	CHAPPELL , John Monroe	Same	11/02/1929	12/17/1965	Same
SSgt	HINSON , Ralph Leon	12 th Supply Sqdn, 12 th Tac Ftr Wing	12/31/1934	12/17/1965	Same
A1C	MATHEWS , Claude Wesley	4 th Air Commando Sqdn, 6250 th CBT Spt Group	05/31/1940	12/17/1965	Same
A1C	MEADE , Johnson Ashley	12th CE Sqdn, 12th TAC Ftr Wing	06/02/1941 06/02/1941	12/17/1965	Same
TSgt	SLOAN , Thomas Newton	Same	08/13/1937	12/17/1965	Same



The Traveling Tea Cup or the Great “Tea Cup Heist”

by Douglas Severt

This is the first chapter in the saga of No. 2 Squadron’s (RAAF) tiny tea cup. The journey from Australia’s best known China ware maker that traveled from Australia then on to Vietnam, with a stopover in Portland, Oregon before ending up in Oklahoma has finally been repatriated to its home in Australia.

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The cups origin or family tree.

Let's begin by looking into the origin of the tea cup from not only the land down under, but the land at the western end of Roberts Road where it meets Hay Street. This is the location; some might say the birth place, of the cup which is the site of one of Australia's best known china ware manufacturers.

From 1921, when it opened as Calyx Porcelain and Paint Company, it went on to making specialty designs – Wembley Ware, Bristile, Australian Fine China, Franklin Mint, Redback Pottery, McGregor and Collections.

Calyx used raw materials from around the State – clay from Goomalling, Silica (or very fine white river sand) from Wanneroo, Felspar (or white rock) from Coolgardie and local Alumina, which was sent to Japan to be refined before returning to Perth in a usable form. The bones for the 'fine bone china' came from Fremantle Abattoirs, by the truckload. Motifs were painted on by hand.

Over the Calyx period from 1921-1941 and in addition to the utilitarian wares, the factory produced fine and uniquely beautiful pieces that are highly valued, highly collectable and highly priced today. In fact, all Calyx Ware is desirable to the collector or investor.

The company struggled during the war years and HL Brisbane and Wunderlich Ltd (co-owned by Sir Lance Brisbane) first leased, then purchased the Calyx Porcelain Works in 1945, changing the name of the Subiaco based porcelain division to Bristile China.

Between 1945 and 1950 the factory underwent modernization and expansion and by 1953 was in full production. At a time of recovery from WW2, a buoyant economy and happy consumers, a new product line was introduced.

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THE TEA CUP BOTTOM

The bottom of the tea Cup

**Bristile
HOTEL CHINA
VITRIFIED*
made in
AUSTRALIA**

***Vitrified: To convert into glass or a glassy substance by heat and fusion.**

1992 saw ownership of the parent company **Bristile Ltd** changed to Futuris Ltd and a change of name to ‘Australian Fine China’.

After 85 years, it was all over, the kilns and factories were demolished in 2006, making way for new residential and commercial buildings. Wow, what a history, while not all that unusual, but just like a family tree, I’ve included more details so you can see how the china family has evolved and if you are into china you might see other brands and know how they are connected to this tea cup.

Now for the rest of the story.

Sometime in the early 60’s the Australians procured china for their armed forces and Bristile China made its way from Australia to Butterworth, Seberang Malaysia and then on to Phan Rang AB, and the Ninh Thuan Province where it was used in the mess from 1967 to closure.

Sometime during the period of 1968 or ’69, David Landis, who was very fond of his Aussie friends and he frequently associated with them, both in their facilities but he also invited them to join him at his club and for other events. During one of these visits to the Aussie side, David became attached to this little tea cup and pocketed it, thinking it would make a great war treasure, and this eventually became known as the great “**Tea Cup Heist**”.

Some may be thinking how I know all of this...did David tell me the story of the “**Tea Cup**

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Heist”? Actually, he didn’t and everything about the heist is pure conjecture. I’m sure that David is a very honorable man and the tea cup just magically appeared in his personal belongings and ended up in Portland, Oregon when he returned home from Vietnam.

Many years later David’s consciences might have been bothering him or he was just tired of fighting off treasure hunters...also just pure conjecture, he sent the cup to me (Douglas Severt) in Oklahoma thinking that he would throw the treasure hunters off track as they would never look where the wind comes sweepin’ down the plains.

The treasured cup was in my possession for many years and was proudly displayed in our curio cabinet in the corner of our living room, only occasionally taken out to show it off. I was never afraid of war treasure hunters that might have been searching for the legendary tea cup, but I was concerned about what would happen to the little cup if it’s protector wasn’t around to defend it, so in 2020 the cup was safely packed away for the long journey back to its place of origin, but the pandemic changed all of those plans, so back to the curio cabinet it went.

Now this is really almost the end of the story.

May 4, 2022, probably 54 years since the great heist at Phan Rang, the tea cup was carefully packed and brought down to the post office, custom forms filled out and postage paid. I had the feeling like I was sending off one of my kids (I only have one) but I had the same feeling that I would have had if I was sending one of my kids off, probably never to be seen again, but hopeful for a save journey.



THE TEA CUP

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I followed its progress when it went to Chicago and then on to Los Angeles and I waited anxiously until it safely arrived in Sydney and then another long wait because it was probably clearing custom. Then finally it showed that it had gone out to its final destination. I checked that tracking so many times I knew that long tracking number by heart.

Finally on 18 May I got the comforting message that

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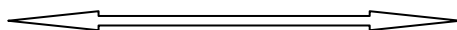
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the cup had arrived at its destination and in perfect shape. **What a journey!**

My only regret is that it is all alone...no saucer to go with it or to be accompanied by a tea pot, but I finally can take comfort in knowing that it is back home again. I have to thank David for his kind generosity for sharing the cup with me and allowing me to admire it for many years and for Bob Howe to be its protector forever more. In the famous words of Bob Howe “**IT STANDS ALONE**”.



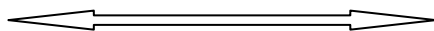
South Vietnamese Children to Get Toys from Cooney

OCONOMOWOC — A number of South Vietnamese children will be cuddling fuzzy teddy playing with blocks, dolls and trucks in a short time thanks to the generosity of some Oconomowoc youths.

About 25 members of the Oconomowoc High school Future Homemakers of America club have shipped 17 cartons, containing 427 pounds of new and used toys to Vietnam. Linda Koloski, an Oconomowoc High senior, got the idea for the project, and the Red Cross agreed to pay the postage to send the toys.

American soldiers at Phan Rang air force base will distribute the toys to Vietnamese youngsters.

The Homemakers club, whose advisor is Mrs. Margaret Faludi, gathered the toys reverently in ten days from students from Greenland, Parklawn and the junior and senior high schools. (*Waukesha Freeman, November 17, 1967, Waukesha, Wisconsin*)



Interpreting the News Phan Rang AB

(Findlay Republican Courier, September 20, 1966, Findlay, Ohio)

By Horst Faas

PHAN RANG, Viet Nam (AP) - At the foot of an ancient crumbling temple on the central Vietnamese coast six giant airstrips stretch into one of the most powerful jet fighter bomber bases of the U.S. Air Force in Southeast Asia.

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It is operated solely by the United States and is strictly for fighting. No supply missions are flown from Phan Rang.

More than 6,000 combat sorties have been launched from Phan Rang since March. The number of bombs dropped on the enemy is classified - but fuel consumption averages 300,000 gallons a day.

The six landing strips are 200 feet wide and 10,000 feet long. They are cut into reddish rocks and sand 10 miles inland from the South China Sea. The base is 160 miles northeast of Saigon in the almost exact center of the South the Vietnamese coastline.

About 100 U.S. Air Force jets — a squadron of F4C Phantoms and four squadrons of F100 Supersabres — are stationed here. They strike anywhere in Viet Nam.

THE AIR FORCE calls it a "bare base". There are no permanent buildings, no warehouses and no harbor. Tanks receive fuel from pipelines from tankers in the South China Sea. Bombs are delivered by landing craft, truck convoys and cargo planes.

Security is provided by about 1,000 soldiers of the Korean Tiger Division and a battalion of Vietnamese Army troops. They are supported by the largest team of scout dogs in Viet Nam — 100 dogs with American handlers.

The headquarters of the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division is only one mile away. But paratroopers cannot do much for the air force . Except for a small base guard they have been away on operations most of the time since they arrived.

"Viet Cong activity was virtually nonexistent in the Phan Rang area until the Americans arrived In early 1965 and started building air strips. It has steadily increased since then recently the guerrillas attacked the fuel pipeline several times. In the worst attack 10,000 gallons were destroyed.

THE PREDOMINANT NATIVES in the immediate vicinity are peaceful. They are the Chams, a

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steadily diminishing people that 2,000 years ago ruled Viet Nam. The Chams' reddish temple stands above the airstrips on a rocky hillside where it was built 1,200 years ago.

Most of the Viet Cong operate from a coastal salt flat some five miles south of the U.S. base. U.S. officers also say the VC maintain a training camp for about 500 guerrillas in the Je Mountains 12 miles to the northwest. The bombers of Phan Rang Base have not struck these nearby targets since the province chief has not asked for bombings. He is the only authority that can approve them in Ninh Thuan Province.

Phan Rang is a link in a complex of U.S. bases along the coast. Thirty miles north is the vast logistic center at Cam Ranh Bay. This supply harbor and depot is also under sole control of the U.S. Armed Forces. Cam Ranh still serves partly as a fighter air base but Phan Rang is expected to take over all this activity soon.

Thirty miles farther north is Nha Trang, headquarters, of the U.S. 2nd Field Force, which is similar to an army command.

National Highway 1 and a railway connect Phan Rang, Cam Ranh and Nha Trang. The road is traveled by well protected American convoys. The train does not carry U.S. military supplies because there are still too many Viet Cong incidents — but it is hoped that the track can soon be secured. Armored boxcars roll in front, and U.S. Air Force spotter planes fly overhead when the daily train trundles up past the six big airstrips, stops at the giant harbor supply base and rolls into Nha Trang in the late afternoon.

Did you know - Lt. Col. **Howard F. Dick**, assistant staff judge advocate at headquarters, Air Training Command at Randolph AFB has been presented the Bronze Star for services in Vietnam. Dick was cited for identifying and solving problems as staff Judge advocate at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. (*San Antonio Light, May 13, 1970, San Antonio, Texas*)

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They come from near and far too
And they all soon forget who they are
The cares of today are soon washed away as they greet one another
They might have been anxious not knowing anyone
That fear soon washes away
As everyone shares in the stories and laughter
Everyone there is so happy to be there
So pull up a chair and forget about life
It's a good thing to do now and then
And if you enjoyed it, I have an idea
Tomorrow let's all meet again at the
Phan Rang Reunion



Jamestown - Saturday, Aug. 23, Mr. and Mrs. H. Bowman attended the wedding of their grandson, **Thomas Bolt**, and Patricia Smith, which was solemnized at the Richmond Reformed in Grand Rapids, with Rev. C. Wissink officiating. Tom arrived home from Vietnam Aug. 15 having been stationed at the Phan Rang Air Force Base for about 19 months. He will report at March Air Force Base in Riverside, Calif., in a couple weeks for the remainder of his term of military service. (*Holland City News, September 4, 1969, Holland Michigan*)

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Captial Citian dies in action - The family of Capt. **Eugene Phillip McKinney** has been notified that he was killed in action in Vietnam Sunday. Capt. McKinney was an F-100 fighter-bomber pilot stationed at Phan Rang. The Air Force reported he had finished his third bombing run over a target area and was making a strafing pass when his plane exploded and crashed.



The 28-year-old flier was born Jan. 12, 1940 the son of G. T. and Mary Blume McKinney. He was a graduate of Helias High School and attended Lincoln University.

He entered the Air Force in 1959 at Lackland Air Force Base, Tex., and was commissioned on graduation from, navigator school at Harlingen, Tex. in 1960.

He was promoted to captain in March, 1965 and graduated from pilot training with honors in fighter-bomber tactics in May, 1967.

He had been overseas since February 8.

He is survived by his wife, the former Miss Susie Jordan, and four children, Cindy, Shari, Jimmy and Craig, who reside on Henwick Lane. Mrs. McKinney is expecting their fifth child.

Also surviving are: his mother, of 708 Stadium Drive; three brothers, G. T. (Tom) McKinney, Gary P. McKinney and Dennis M. McKinney, all of Jefferson City; his maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert E. Blume, Jefferson City; and his paternal grandmother, of the State of California.

Memorial services are pending word from Whiteman Air Force Base.

(Additional information can be found about Eugene Phillip McKinney in Phan Rang Newsletters 114, 155 and 197)

Airman Honored - Airman 1st **C. James T. Devendorf**, is a member of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang Air Force Base in Vietnam. The wing has been honored by the Vietnamese Armed Forces, receiving the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm for its contribution to the

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military forces and citizenry of that country. Airman Devendorf is the son of Mr. and Mrs. James Devendorf 49 Wooster street, Bethel, Connecticut. A fuel specialist, he is a 1969 graduate of Bethel high school. His wife is the former Susan Schofield of Bethel. (Bridgeport Post, June 10, 1971, Bridgeport, Connecticut)

W.F. SHASHACK RETURNS FROM OVERSEAS SERVICE - Sgt. **Willard F. Shashack**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank M. Shashack, 1226 Lindenwood Ave., returned Aug. 5 from a year's tour of duty in South Vietnam. He was assigned to Phan Rang Air Force Base. After a 30-day leave, Sgt. Shashack will report to Chanute AFB at Bantoul where he will be an aircraft equipment maintenance instructor. Sgt. Shashack and his wife, the former Patricia Schnader, will reside at 336 S. Garrard, Apt. 2, in Bantoul. Mrs. Shashack will receive her degree in elementary education Sept. 4 from Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville. (*Edwardsville Intelligencer*, August 18, 1970, Edwardsville, Illinois)

ENGAGED — Mr. and Mrs. William McMahan, Mt. Horeb, have announced the engagement of their daughter, Catherine A., 218 N. Broom St., Madison, to A-1C **Michael J. Leonard**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Leonard, Hollandale. Miss McMahan is bulletin editor for the Madison Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Leonard recently completed technical training at Sheppard Air Force Base, Tex., and is stationed at Phan Rang Air Force Base in Vietnam. A winter wedding is being planned. (*Monroe Evening Times*, January 31, 1968, Monroe, Wisconsin)

Sgt **William Whitaker**, R.R. 2 Mt. Carmel, Ill., is home from a year of active duty at Phan Rang Air Force Base in Vietnam. He arrived Sunday morning and is now separated from active duty. (*Mount Carmel Daily Republican Register*, November 8, 1968, Mount Carmel, Illinois)

Urich Sees Family - Mrs. Richard Urich, the former Ann Hargrove, and son Ricky have just returned from one week's stay in Honolulu, Hawaii, with her husband SSgt. **Richard Urich**. Urich was on a six day rest and recuperation leave. He is currently stationed with 554 Civil Engineer Squadron at Phan Rang Air Force Base in Vietnam (*Stamford American*, June 1, 1967, Stamford, Texas)

Sgt, **Paul Gibbs**, son of Mr. and Mrs. LeRoy Gibbs, has been transferred from Tuy Hoa Air Force Base to Phan Rang Air Force Base in Vietnam. (*Atchison Sunday Globe*, October 18, 1970,

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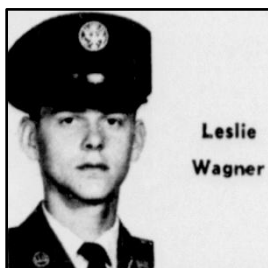
Atchison, Kansas)



SGT. **DENNIS A. SMITH** of 1557 Fenimore Street, son of Mr. and Mrs. Arwin W. Smith, is home on leave after serving 26 months at Phan Rang Air Force Base, Viet Nam. His new assignment is at Otis AFB, Massachusetts. Dennis graduated from Calhoun High School in 1964 and attended Nassau Community College before enlisting in the USAF in 1966. (*Bellmore Life*, July 2, 1969, *Bellmore, New York*)



Plush Week for Dubuquer Back From Vietnam - “ It’s great. We’re overwhelmed. Really overwhelmed.” That’s the reaction of Airman 1 C. **Leslie H. Wagner**, 23, of Dubuque, to the holiday that he and a group of combat-weary servicemen just back from Vietnam are spending at the posh Camelback Inn at Scottsdale, Arizona, wealthy Phoenix suburb. Wagner, the son of Mrs. Dorothy Wagner, 1361 Gilliam St., was one of 59 soldiers, marines airmen and sailors who arrived at the desert resort Sunday night for the annual “Christmas out of the foxhole,” a free one-week vacation begun by the former owner of the Camelback Inn and continued by the new management.



“I figured it was just a hotel in downtown Phoenix,” said Wagner, who served a year as a firefighter and rescue squad worker at Phan Rang Air Force Base, Vietnam. “I never expected this.

“You read in ‘Stars and Stripes’ every day about the demonstrations in the United States and you start wondering if you are better off in Vietnam,” he added. “Well, this has convinced me that this is the greatest country in the world.”

The veterans, flown in from San Francisco, were greeted at the airport by a large official

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delegation, complete with a bevy of pretty college coeds. The warmth of the welcoming crowd was a surprise for most of the men, as was the luxury of the hotel, Wagner said. While here, the men will be treated to a host of activities, including a community-sponsored banquet. And they'll receive presents and spending money.

As for the famous Arizona climate, “Its cold,” the airman said. But the sun was shining he added in a telephone interview Tuesday morning.

He'll be in Dubuque around Dec. 22, in time to spend Christmas with his mother and 16-year-old brother. “He called from Phoenix,” Mrs. Wagner said. “He sounded wonderful. It was so great to hear his voice.

“He wasn't home last Christmas, so it was kind of sad, but this Christmas everything will be all right. I'm glad he's finally back in the States.”

Wagner will go to McGuire Air Force Base in January. He will be sent to England in August, where he will finish his four-year tour of duty. (*Dubuque Telegraph Herald, December 19, 1967, Dubuque, Iowa*)

Betrothals Are Told - Announcement is made of the engagement and approaching marriage of Miss Mary Jo Schurr, daughter of Mrs. Joseph Schurr, Sherrard, and the late Mr. Schurr, to **Dennis C. Dochterman**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Carl Dochterman, Milan. Marriage vows will be spoken at 7 the evening of Dec. 30 in Community Presbyterian Church, Sherrard. All relatives and friends are invited to the ceremony and to a reception immediately afterward in the church parlors. Miss Schurr was graduated from Sherrard High School and is employed as a secretary at First National Bank of Rock Island. Mr. Dockterman also graduate of Sherrard High School is serving with the Air Force as a power production specialist. He has just returned from a tour of duty at Phan Rang Air Force Base, Vietnam. He attended Black Hawk College and was employed by the George Evans Corp., Moline, before entering the service. (*Moline Daily Dispatch, December 19, 1967, Moline, Illinois*)

Unit Honored - LIBERTY - Sgt. **Clifford L. Reinshagen**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Carl Reinshagen, Loomis Road, Liberty, is a member of the 35th Tactical Fighter wing at Phan Rang Air Force Base,

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Vietnam that has been honored by the Vietnamese Armed Forces. The 35th has received the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm for its contribution to the military forces and local citizenry of that country. The wing, which-operates F100 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 was also recognized for its community service programs which included establishing a medical dispensary for treatment of villagers and orphans in the area. Sergeant Reinshagen, a personnel specialist, will wear a distinctive service ribbon to mark his affiliation with the unit. He is a 1966 graduate of Liberty Central High School. (*Middletown Times Herald Record, September 2, 1971, Middletown, New York*)

ON LEAVE — Airman 1C. **Claude S. Rossell**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Clyde Rossell of Perryopolis R. D. 2, is presently on leave and visiting his parents. He has returned from a one-year tour of duty in Vietnam where he was stationed at Phan Rang Air Force Base. Airman Rossell will return to Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla. to complete a four-year enlistment. (*Uniontown Morning Herald, June 13, 1969, Uniontown, Pennsylvania*)

TSgt. **Dallas E. Devine**, formerly of Clearmont, is on duty at Phan Rang Air Force Base, Vietnam. Sergeant Devine, an aircraft maintenance technician, is a member of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Southeast Asia, he was assigned to Stewart AFB. N. Y. He is a 1952 graduate of Clearmont High School. (*Maryville Daily Forum, July 8, 1968, Maryville, Missouri*)

THE WHOLE WORLD WILL MOVE "next door" to Holly Hall as Mrs. Kenneth Muck, Lorain County Chapter, American Red Cross, records free messages to servicemen overseas at the YWCA World Fellowship Fair Friday, Nov. 15, from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Mrs. Henry Minert tapes a greeting to her twin sons, Airmen **Paul and Kirk Minert**, both stationed at Phan Rang Air Force Base in South Vietnam. (*Elyria Chronicle Telegram, November 5, 1968, Elyria, Ohio*)

PHAN RANG AFB, Vietnam — Air Force Major **Mike F. Connolly**, who is married to the former Rose Kathryn Mason of Greenville, recently took part in air strikes over North Vietnam which resulted in the destruction of eight enemy fortifications and seven motorized sampans. (*Greenville Delta Democrat Times, February 8, 1968, Greenville, Mississippi*)

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Phan Rang AB - U.S. Air Force Staff Sergeant **James E. Smith**, son of Mrs. Eva S. Houston of 660 E. 84th St., Los Angeles, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Sergeant Smith, an aircraft propeller technician, is assigned to a unit of the Pacific Air Forces, headquarters for air operations in Southeast Asia, the Far East and Pacific area. Before his arrival in Vietnam, he served at McClellan AFB Calif. The sergeant, whose father, Fred C. Smith, lives on Bt. 2, Ferris, Tex, graduated in 1958 from Pierce High School, Dallas. Sergeant Smith’s wife, Alemta, is the daughter of Mrs. Irva Lanum of 1118 W. 16th St., Little Rock, Ark. (*Ennis Daily News, August 5, 1971, Ennis, Texas*)

JAMES CLAYTON - Sp/4 James Clayton, 18, son of Mrs. Sue Green of Monahans, is stationed at Phan Rang Air Force Base with the 192nd Assault Helicopter Company (Tiger Sharks). He is a door gunner. On March 24 he attended medal ceremony at the hospital in Cam Rhan Bay. There he was awarded these medals: The Distinguished Flying Cross for his part in the air attack on enemy position at Phun Nhan Republic of Vietnam; The Air Medal for participating in the aerial flight over the Republic of Vietnam during the period Sept. 13 - Oct. 3, 1970; and the Army Commendation Medal for distinguished meritorious service in support of military operations against Communist aggression in the Republic of Vietnam. The commendations were signed by his Commanding Officer Major Arthur Griffin, the President and Stanley R. Resor. (*Monahan News, April 26, 1971, Monahans, Texas*)



GETS MEDAL - Maj. **Neilson S. Wickliffe**, right, whose wife Genevieve is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Adam Patrick of 226 W. Funderburg Rd., Fairborn, receives the Bronze Star Medal at Keesler AF Base, Biloxi, Miss., from Col. Emery D. Taylor, commander of the 3380th Maintenance and Supply Group. The medal is for meritorious service while engaged in military operations against the Viet Cong forces. Maj. Wickliffe, who is now with a unit of the Air Training Command, distinguished himself as base operations officer, 35th Combat Support Group, Phan Rang AB, Vietnam — (Air Force Photo).

ARRIVES IN VIETNAM - Mr. and Mrs. Robert Conover have received word that their son, Airman 1-C **William E. Conover**, arrived in Vietnam December 22. He is stationed at Phan Rang Air

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Force Base near Cam Ranh Bay. His address is A1C William Conover, AF 16886644, Box 7924, 35 Combat, Spt. G.P., A.P.O. San Francisco 96321. (*Wyoming Post Herald, January 3, 1968, Wyoming, Illinois*)



Is Promoted To Sergeant - William E. Conover (same as above), age 21, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Conover, has been promoted from A 1/C to Sergeant in the United States Air Force in Vietnam. Sgt. Conover enlisted in May of 1966 and received his training at Lackland Air Force base, San Antonio, Tex. He was transferred to Tyndall Air Force base Panama City, Fla., and for eighteen months received training as a fuel specialist. He has been stationed Phan Rang Air Force base in Cam Rhan Bay, Vietnam , since December 22, 1967. (*Wyoming Post Herald, August 14, 1968, Wyoming, Illinois*)

Doug's Comments:



I hope that you enjoyed this newsletter. Sometimes I wonder if all the stories from Phan Rang have already been told, but I don't really think so because years ago I thought they were, but they just kept on coming. Every week we add new members to the Phan Rang Facebook site and everyone one of those new members might have a story that is unique to them, even if the story has been told before, it still could be told

differently from your perspective, so let me hear from you. This newsletter was composed by Douglas Severt and all graphics by Douglas Severt. To see a list of all previous newsletters click [here](#). To unsubscribe to Phan Rang News, dougsevert@cox.net and put 'unsubscribe' in subject line.