

Phan Rang AB Newsletter

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.
"Keeping the memories alive" Newsletter 278

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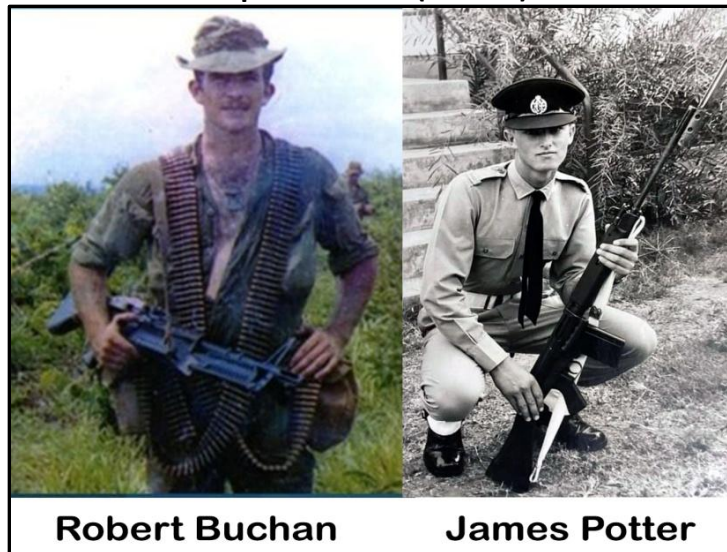
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Doug's Comments

Two Aussies that Shared Parallel Paths in Vietnam

Vietnam War victim who came home to Dundee

Lance Corporal Robert (Robbie) Buchan



Robert Buchan

James Potter

Lance corporal **Robert Buchan**, known as Robbie, was gunned down by the Viet Cong while serving with the Australian Army in the Nui May Tau Mountains in the Phuoc Tuy province of Vietnam, on December 11 1969. He was only 22.

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Although born in Dundee in 1947, Robert moved to Australia with his family when he was four.

The Buchan’s returned to Scotland to live in the Carse of Gowrie and Robert studied agriculture before finding a job in dairy in Errol. However, in 1966 he decided to return to Australia and worked for two years on a farm in Gidgegannup, Western Australia.

In 1968 he enlisted in the Australian Regular Army and was sent to Vietnam after basic training in May the following year. He had been leading his platoon when a scout signaled an enemy bunker 15 meters ahead. L/Cpl Buchan stopped his platoon and sent a second scout to investigate. The enemy opened fire and he was hit with small arms fire in the chest.



Historians say his decision to halt his platoon saved the lives of his men.

L/Cpl Robert Buchan’s body was shipped to RAAF Butterworth in Malaysia, where he was cremated.

James Potter says Robbie and I shared parallel paths

James Potter revealed Lance Corporal Robert (Robbie) Buchan and he led parallel lives without ever meeting. But, while his countryman and comrade died in the war in Vietnam, Potter, who now lives in Leslie, Fife, with his wife Maggie, went on to become a professional entertainer travelling the world, before settling back in Scotland and working in marketing and sales.



Now retired, the 73-year-old told The Sunday Post: “I am originally from West Lothian and, like young Robbie, I immigrated to Australia in 1966. I was 17 when I joined up at the recruiting centre in Perth, Australia, in January 1968 - the same time as Robbie. Back in those days it was more about what the forces needed than what you wanted or were better suited for. So he might have ended up in the Air Force and I in the Army. We were both going through various forms of army and air force training at the same time at Wagga Wagga in

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New South Wales and went to Vietnam at the same time, although not in the same place. **We never met.”**

We did our training on opposite sides of a place called Wagga Wagga in 1968. Myself at RAAF School Wagga and Robbie at the Army Camp at Kapuka. It was fun and games on the weekends when the Army would come in from one side of town and the Air Force from the other. Who knows we could have made encouraging signals and exchanged motivational words from across the street.

Potter, who was in an administrative support role at the maintenance centre for No. 2 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force, said he was lucky not to be involved in hand-to-hand fighting but did see action as he was attached to the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at the Phan Rang Air Base in Ninh Thuan Province. He said: “I was a scared-stiff 18-year-old. We were shelled and took rocket fire. The base was attacked on a frequent basis but our job was to keep aircraft serviceable (Canberra Bombers) and ready for operations at all times.”

When his year-long tour was over, he was posted to Malaysia and later left the Australian forces. In later life I settling back permanently in Scotland.

He said: “Robbie and I shared parallel paths, and I organized the vigil that is described below, which was all the more poignant and emotional for me.”

More info.....

Robert and James were not the only expatriates, there were many more, and I will list many of them, but certainly not all of them, because probably no one really knows the true number. Just an example there was a British army officer, Derek Napier, Scottish born, who resigned from the British Army and went to Australia and joined the 7RAR. He served in Vietnam and then returned to the British army and retired as Colonel and is now living back in Scotland. Of the Sixty thousand Australian forces who served in Vietnam, 5,000 listed their place of birth as Scotland.

There are even a few other Scottish born who emigrated to America and joined the U.S. forces and eventually served in Vietnam. One of them returned to Scotland and retired there.

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Another one was awarded the highest honor a civilian can receive from President Obama for his work with veterans. He never returned to Scotland and now lives in Las Vegas.

Over the years Scotland has honored those individuals and more recently in August of 2023 many gathered from several continents including the Australian Defence Force, Legion Scotland, New Zealand Honorary Council, Kiwis in Kilts, Royal Marine Commando Association, RAF Association, Scott Sutherland Project and media reporters for a Dusk Service, Stand Down, at the Birkhill Cemetery, Dundee Scotland at the grave site of Robbie Buchan who was killed in action on 11th December, 1969, aged 22.

The dawn service started in Canberra Australia, with various services throughout Australia, and other Countries, with a dusk service concluding at 21.15 hrs at Birkhill Cemetery near Dundee at the grave of Lance Corporal Robert (Robbie) Buchan, who lost his life at 22 years of age with D company, 6 Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) on 11 December 1969. Twenty wooden crosses were placed at the gravestone to commemorate the names of the 20 Scottish soldiers who were killed in action during the Vietnam War.

Many branches of the military attended the poignant service which was organised by James Potter of the Royal Australian Air Force. Amongst those giving readings were Rev. Graham Taylor (Former Padre with the Royal Navy) now minister at Inchtute Church - Major Steve Nicoll RM - Lt. Col. Colin Morrison CSC Australian Defence Force - Erity Mitchell (President New Zealand Society Scotland). An Australian Flag was also presented by Lt. Col. Morrison to Brian Ward (Events Manager Royal British Legion Scotland).



The East of Scotland Royal Marines Association next to the grave of Robert ‘Robbie’ Buchan’s

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parents and where Robbie’s ashes are interred in the grave with his parents. With Australian servicemen. (left to right) Lt Col Colin Morrison CSC - James Potter (Khaki uniform) RAAF - Derek Napier 7 Royal Australian Regiment.



A few of the Australian servicemen who attended with Erity Mitchell who is The President of The New Zealand Society Scotland. James Potter in the khaki uniform who also gave the Moderators Address and the Farewell address.

A Listing of all known Expatriates

Name	Rank	Served	BIRTHPLACE	KIA
ANDREWS , John Harker	Temp WO2	Australian Army Training Team Vietnam	Dunfermline Fife	21 Feb 1966
Bain , John	Sgt	Army Catering Corps	Dunfermline Fife	4 Feb 1970
BUCHAN , Robert	L Cpl	6 th Battalion, RAR	Dundee Angus	11 Dec 1969
BURNS , Robert	L Cpl	4 th Battalion, RAR	Stirling	13 Sep 1968
CLARK , Raymond Duncan	Private	6 th Battalion , RAR	Ayshire	8 Mar 1970
DAVISON , Walter Johnston	Private	8 th Field Ambulance	Dumbarton Shire	27 Jan 1968
DUFF , James	Private	4 th Battalion, RAR	Perth	21 Sep 1971
FOTHERINGHAM , Alexander Henry		1 st st Battalion RAR	Scotland	17 Dec 1965
GRAHAM , Samuel	Private	4 th th Battalion, RAR	Scotland	31 Jan 1969

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HEWITT , Ronald David	LAC	No. 2 Sqn RAAF	Edinburgh	21 Jun 1972
KERR , James Kelly	Trooper	B Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment	Motherwell	13 May 1969
MACDONALD , James Alexander	Temp WO2	Australian Army Training Team Vietnam	Glasbow	7 Feb 1966
MCGOLDRICK , William	Private	1 Australian Reinforcement Unit	Johnstone, Renfrewshire	5 Aug 1968
MITCHELL , David	Private	1 Australian Reinforcement Unit	Kilwinning Ayrshire	23 Jul 1968
RAMSAY , Joseph Steven	Private	4th Battalion, RAR	Catrine	31 Jan 1969
RENNIE , Brian		9 th Battalion RAR	Scotland	7 Sep 1969
ROSS , Thomas	Private	1 st Battalion RAR	Dumbries	12 Oct 1965
WATT , Gordon Sutherland	Sgt	RNZAF	Edinburgh	1 Mar 1970
WHITTON , John Hunter	Cpl	1 and 6 Battalions RAR	Bellshill	13 May 1968
WILSON , Robert Barclay	Sapper	104 Signal Squadron/ First Field Sqn	Banff	16 Jul 1971

(A causality list of all [Australians](#) killed in Vietnam)

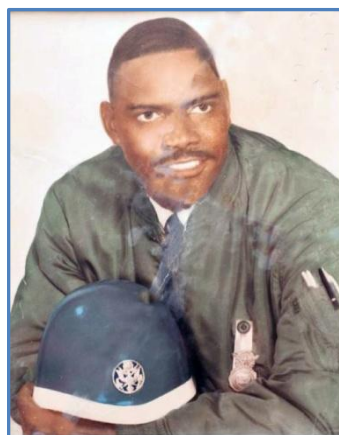
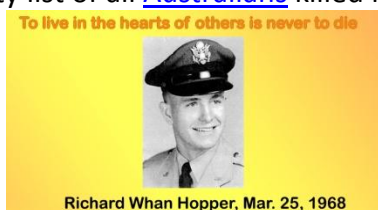


Photo from around 1964 of Winston-Salem native Isaac Sims when he was stationed Greece. Sims was later sent to Vietnam.

Humble hero - Ike Sims is humble about his time in Vietnam, but he was honored for his rescue efforts under enemy fire
(November 14, 2021 | *Winston-Salem Journal (NC)*)

Isaac H. "Ike" Sims is humble about his military service, including the time he spent in South Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

"It's not something that I ever talked about," Sims said.

Sims, who is 75, said he was 18 when he volunteered to join the Air Force in July 1964.

During the war, he was decorated after he was wounded as he

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helped rescue the crew of a reconnaissance plane that had been shot down. "That's part of combat," Sims said.

A native of Winston-Salem, Sims grew up in what city residents called the "Pond," in a home on Clark Avenue near Kimberly Park. Winston-Salem was a segregated city at the time, and Sims attended all-Black Kimberly Park Elementary School and then Paisley High School on Grant Avenue. "I grew up in racism," Sims said. "It was a different time."

As a high-school graduate, Sims had four career paths that he could follow, he said. Sims could apply for a job at R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co., a major city employer in the 1960s, or apply for a job at Hanes Hosiery, or attend college or join the military. Sims said he didn't want to work at R.J. Reynolds or Hanes Hosiery.

Sims talked to Clarence "Bighouse" Gaines, the legendary men's basketball coach at Winston-Salem State University who also was the school's football coach in 1964. "Bighouse Gaines talked to me about attending Winston-Salem State on a football scholarship," Sims said. "But my high school grades were not good enough at the time." Sims had played football at Paisley High as a center and a linebacker.

Sims decided to join the Air Force the day he turned 18, following his brothers who were in the U.S. Army, the Navy and the Marine Corps, he said. Sims saw that as a way to further his education.

There was a military draft in the country during the 1960s. "The draft was not a big to do," Sims said. "Everyone when you turned 18, you had to register for Selective Service." Sims registered for the Selective Service at the old U.S. Post Office on West Fifth Street, and then joined the Air Force. Military recruiters were in the post office.

After he completed basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas, Sims was sent to Randolph Air Force Base at nearby Universal City, Texas. Sims was initially trained as a military police officer. He was later trained as a special investigations' security specialist. As an airman third class, Sims was deployed in January 1965 to the Greek island of Crete in the Mediterranean Sea. The U.S. military was working with Greece, a member of NATO, with its

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military operations, Sims said.

Sims was one of 20 U.S. Air Force security people who guarded nuclear bombs supplied to Greek planes on Crete, he said. In total, 100 U.S. military personnel were assigned to Crete during Sims' one-year stay on that island.

Sims has vivid memories of his time on Crete, including traveling to Hania, Crete, which was about 20 miles away from where he was stationed. Sims and his fellow airman would visit the town, walking the streets and "do things that GIs would do" while wearing civilian clothes, Sims said. "It was a nice place," Sims said. "The food was great." Sims developed a taste for Greek food and ouzo, a Greek liqueur, "which would put you under the table," he said.

After he left Crete, Sims was assigned to Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Va., where he received intelligence and investigations' training, he said. Later in 1965, Sims returned to Randolph Air Force Base in Texas, where he was trained in jungle warfare, and he was then assigned to serve in South Vietnam during the war.

Sims and other members in his unit didn't know where Vietnam was and didn't know much about the war taking place there. "Most of us hadn't even heard of Vietnam," Sims said. "Most of us never talked about it. We found it on a map and a globe that it is in Southeast Asia."

After a 17-hour trip on a C-141 military jet, Sims and his unit landed at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Saigon, the capital of South Vietnam. Sims said he realized that he was in trouble as soon as he stepped off the plane. Sims and the members of his unit could smell the remnants of combat - cordite, gunpowder and blood. "As a 19-year-old, you learn real quick - the dos and the don'ts," Sims said. "I will never forget the way it smelled."

In the war, U.S. forces fought against the Viet Cong insurgents or guerillas in South Vietnam. The U.S. military also supported the Army of the Republic of Vietnam.

Sims later was assigned to Phan Rang Air Base, which was about a four-hour flight from Saigon, Sims said. His unit was assigned various duties, including assisting high-ranking Air Force officers and an international intelligence team.

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The U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division as well as Australian forces and South Korean marines were assigned to Phan Rang Air Base during Sims' time there, he said. Sims was an airman second class in 1966.

"There was a lot of stuff going on," Sims said. "Every day and every night, you constantly heard the mortars and the artillery. You learned to sleep through noise." Sims remembers when his unit killed six infiltrators who gained access to the base, and three of those infiltrators were Vietnamese civilians who had worked at the base.

"You did what you had to do to survive," Sims said.

Sims got emotional when he talked about a reconnaissance plane that was shot down. He and other airmen were on a helicopter that was part of the rescue mission to save the plane's crew. "We had no idea that it was in a hot area until we got there," Sims said as he folded his hands and breathed deeply.

Sims said he was wounded in that action, but he didn't provide other details about what happened. He later received a Purple Heart and the Bronze Star for valor for his actions.

After spending 15 months in South Vietnam, Sims was assigned temporary security duty at the U.S. embassy in Oslo, Norway, for 45 days.

After the Tet offensive in 1968, Sims had a decision to make about continuing his military career. At that time, he was an airman first class. His commanders had promised Sims if he re-enlisted, Sims would be promoted to the rank of staff sergeant and he would get to choose his assignment, he said. When the re-enlistment papers were ready for his signature, a colleague urged him not to re-enlist because his friend knew that Sims would be sent back to South Vietnam, Sims said.

Sims took that advice, and told his first sergeant that he would not be re-enlisting, he said. Sims then faced a backlash from the officers in his unit. They threatened to take away his Purple Heart and extend his tour of duty. "That's when they turned real ugly," Sims said. "I caught all

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kind of hell." The Air Force was experiencing a shortage of people in certain career fields at the time, Sims said.

Race relations in the U.S. military, including the Air Force, grew increasingly tense in the aftermath of the assassination of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. on April 4, 1968, Sims said. Officers didn't allow Black airmen or soldiers to congregate in groups with more than three people after King's death, he said. "They were afraid that we were going to do something," Sims said.

Among his last duties, Sims was assigned to President Lyndon Johnson's honor guard at Randolph Air Force Base in Texas, he said.

Sims was jailed briefly and questioned by the U.S. Secret Service after he jokingly threatened to shoot off Johnson's knee cap, he said. When Johnson traveled to his ranch in central Texas, Air Force One would land at Randolph Air Force Base. At that time, opposition to the Vietnam War was volatile in many U.S. cities. The federal government was lowering the criteria for young men to be drafted, a measure that further divided people about the war.

"We couldn't wear our uniforms off base," Sims said. "When I came from Vietnam, I had to wear civilian clothes."

During his time Randolph Air Force Base, Sims and black airmen faced racism from officers and some enlisted men, he said. A group of white airmen forcefully cut the afro of a black airman who refused to cut his hair, Sims said. He recalled that an Air Force captain repeatedly called him the "N" word. After Sims helped a drunken Air Force general avoid charges for having a prostitute in his car, that general got the racist captain assigned to duty in South Vietnam during the war, Sims said. Sims doesn't know if that captain survived the war.

After he was discharged from the Air Force, Sims returned to Winston-Salem. He eventually enrolled at Wake Forest University and became, he believes, the first Black Vietnam veteran to attend that school, Sims said. A prominent white Winston-Salem resident, whom Sims didn't know, helped him get into Wake Forest, he said. He graduated in 1975 as he majored in sociology and communications at Wake Forest, Sims said.

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After working briefly at Clairol Products and McLean Trucking Co., Sims landed a job as veterans' services officer in the Ward Federal Building in Winston-Salem. For 30 years, he helped veterans get their benefits until he retired in 2001. "I knew I could help a child if I could help their mother or father get their benefits," Sims said.

Sims, who lives in the city's southern section, said he has seen much improvement in race relations in the Twin City during his life. However, Black and brown people who publicly express themselves get pushback from some prejudiced white residents, Sims said. He went on to say that "There have been some changes for the good".



James Otis Taylor, Mar. 6, 1968

James Bruce Young, Nov. 29, 1970



Lt. Col. Cranes assumes command from Lt. Col Robert K. Wright.

LOCKRIDGE - U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel **Emery J. Crane**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Emery R. Crane, Lockridge, has assumed command of the 210th Tactical Airlift Squadron at Phan Rang Air Force Base, Vietnam.

Colonel Crane served at Andrews Air Force Base, Md., as Military Airlift Command Liaison officer at Headquarters, Air Force Systems Command prior to his appointment at Phan Rang.

Col. Crane, who holds the aeronautical rating of command pilot, was commissioned in 1950 through the aviation cadet program. The 1946 Lockridge High School graduate received his BA degree in 1952 from Iowa Wesleyan College. His wife is the former Janet L. Smith.

(Fairfield IA. Ledger, December 14, 1970)

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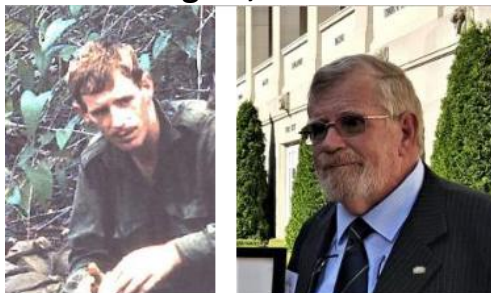
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Roger’s Vow to his Troops

- reimagined

““Unbeknown to 'my boys'”, Roger said, "I made a vow to take them to Vietnam and to bring them home again; I almost achieved that aim.””



2Lt Roger Lambert
Platoon Commander
9 Platoon, C Company
2nd Tour

Forward by Doug: *This article was originally published in Phan Rang Newsletter 266 and at the time I was taken by Rogers vow to his troops or ‘my boys’ as he would say. Roger was an exemplary leader who helped his boys do their very best work, but most importantly, he helped them become a better person. He held themselves to high standards, and didn’t hesitate to take a pause if results come at the cost of people's wellbeing. He is the kind of leader that anyone would be proud to serve under.*

*Roger considers himself more fortunate than many as his casualties were relatively light compared with others. Unbeknown to 'my boys', Roger said he "**Unbeknown to 'my boys'**", **Roger said, "I made a vow to take them to Vietnam and to bring them home again; I almost achieved that aim."***

You probably are wondering what does a Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) have to do with Phan Rang Air Base? Actually, Phan Rang and the other air bases were there to provide air support for the RAR and all the other ground forces in country. That was the reason for Phan Rang’s existence. A few years ago, through some excellent 2 Squadron record keeping, the ground forces met up with the very Canberra air crews that provided crucial air support when the regiment was under attack. That meeting forged a strong bond between those individuals. I’ve often wondered if similar occurrences have ever occurred.

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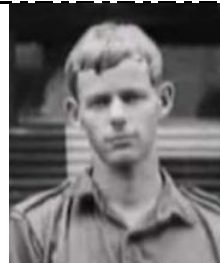
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When I saw that Dave Wilkins, the former RAR Adjutant and later Charlie Company Commander, had compiled a 'then and now' pictorial of the Company members, I immediately knew that I had to match up the faces to those that Roger talked about. Seeing a face rather than just a name is something that one can associate with.

Roger explains: My first 'loss' was Lance Corporal **Mick Appleby** (no photo available). Mick was a non-battle casualty in April 1969 when he was struck in the eye by a bamboo spike while riding on top of a M113 during a Tactical Area Of Responsibility (TAOR) patrol. He was medically evacuated back to Australia for treatment. To his credit, Mick returned to Vietnam as a CPL as a member of the Civil Affairs Unit.

PTE **David Stone** was wounded in action on 19 May 1969 during a fire fight. Ironically, 'Stoney' returned to the Platoon to become my Platoon Medic. (*Wounded in action)



Lcpl Dave STONE *



RIP

16 November 1969 was the blackest day for my platoon. The following casualties occurred during a heavy bunker contact on the morning of that day.

KIA- Temporary Corporal Ted Suttor - Section Commander, killed in action when shot by an enemy sniper. No later picture available. (Killed in action)



Cpl Henry 'Ted'
'Eyes' SUTTOR
KIA 16.11.1969

RIP

WIA - Sergeant **Peter Knight** - Platoon Sergeant, wounded in action when shot through the leg; medevaced to Australia. (*Wounded in action)



Sgt Peter KNIGHT *



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WIA - Private **John Hunter** - Platoon Medic, wounded in action when shot while tending Peter Knight; medevaced to Australia. (*Twice Wounded in action)



Pte John HUNTER **

During our 13-month tour of duty, approximately one third of the platoon who were National Servicemen were returned home to Australia as their two-year National Service commitment had come to an end. Replacements came from the 1st Australian Reinforcement Unit based in Nui Dat.

The ranks are slowly thinning though as the years begin to take their toll. Since our return to Australia in March 1970, the following Platoon members have attended their last parade:

Lest they forget

1988 - Corporal **Mick Appleby** - Rifleman then Civil Affairs Unit post 5RAR

No pictures available

1991 - Private **Harry Kallergis** - Rifleman. No later picture available.



Pte Harry KALLERGIS

RIP

2010 - Lance Corporal **Reg Smith** - Rifleman and Forward Scout. No later picture available.



Lcpl Reg SMITH

RIP

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2012 - Sergeant **Stan Arnold** - my first Platoon Sergeant. No later picture available.



Sgt Stan ARNOLD

RIP

2012 - Private **Eustice Swann** - Machine Gunner



Pte Euston 'Swanny' SWAN

RIP

2013 - Private **Eddie Moon** - Machine Gunner



Lcpl Eddie 'Suave' MOON

RIP

2017 - Private **Don Tiechelman** - Rifleman



Pte Don TEICHELMAN

RIP

2017 - Private **John Winter** - Rifleman. No later picture available.



Pte John WINTER

RIP

2020 - Private **Colin Summerfield** - Rifleman



Pte Col 'Summers' SUMMERFIELD

RIP

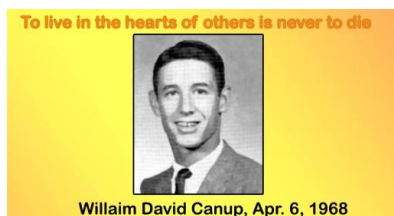
Here is the link to all the “[Then and Now](#)” photos of 5RAR.

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(**Roger Lambert**, Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Platoon Commander, 9 Platoon, C Company, 5th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment 1969-70 with the 5th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment who was originally introduced in Phan Rang Newsletter 186 and continued with more stories in issues 191, 192, 195, 200, 206, 207, 211, 214, 216, 219,221, 240, 249, 250, 257 and 266.)



George Garey shares his military experiences

George Garey of Greensboro served in the U.S. Air Force for 25 years including during the Vietnam War. Garey, whose hometown at the time of service was North East, Maryland, left military service with the rank of lieutenant colonel. **Here's his story:**

Graduated from West Point 1953. Twenty-five percent of class went into Air Force as there was no Air Force Academy at that time. After flying school, attended F- 86 gunnery school at Nellis AFB, near Las Vegas, then assigned to Air Force Academy as Air Training Officer to help supervise first two cadet classes which started at Denver while Colorado Springs site was under construction.

"Next, flew F-100 at Seymour Johnson AFB near Goldsboro and RAF Lakenheath in England. F-104 Starfighter Instructor Pilot training German students at Luke AFB, AZ. Attended Air Force Institute of Technology to get Master's Degree in Aeronautical Engineering. Flew 133 F-100 ground support combat missions at **Phan Rang AB, Vietnam** in 1968 and worked at 7th Air Force HQ War Plans 1969 (Saigon) Vietnam.

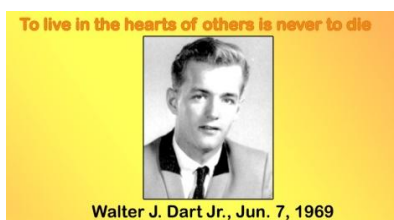
"Wind Tunnel Test Director at Arnold Engineering Development Center, Tullahoma, TN. Student at Defense Language Institute. Advisor, Military Group, Guatemala. Deputy Director, Structures

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Division, Air Force Flight Dynamics Laboratory, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH. Retired 1978.”



MISSOULA — Lt. Colonel Felix R. Csorosz, always known as 'Phil' to his friends and family, took his final flight at St. Patrick Hospital, Missoula, with wheels up at 8:42 am on August 21, 2020.



Phil was born in Lisbon Falls, Maine on April 3, 1928 to John and Anna Csorosz.

During his youth in Maine, he was an avid snow and water skier, played ice hockey and was an excellent ski jumper. He remained athletic even later in life. As a teenager, he was employed at the Worumbo Textile Mill. He graduated from Lisbon Falls High School in June of 1946.

Phil chose to follow in their footsteps and enlist in the military. What came next is an incredible story of service to his country.

He left home on his own and enlisted in the Air Force at Fort Preble, Maine in October of 1948. He traveled by train and bus to finally arrive at Waco Field in Texas for aviation cadet pilot training in the AT- 6 and B -25 aircraft. It was a long way from home in unfamiliar country but Phil pressed on. He told of many weeks drilling on the parade grounds, studying volumes of information on aerodynamics and marching in formation in the hot Texas sun.

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Near the end of training, he was chosen to become a drill instructor. This unit was also assigned to Vance Air Force Base in Enid, Oklahoma. Phil graduated with an excellent record in September of 1949 as a second Lieutenant.

The next stop in Phil's journey was Malmstrom Air Force Base in Great Falls. From 1949 to 1951, he was a pilot of the C-54 transport aircraft with the Alaska and Northern Pacific Operations. This involved many round-the-clock missions to Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage, across the Aleutian Islands and a southern course to Japan, Guam and the Phillipines in some of the worst flying conditions possible.

Phil had many accounts of wrestling with the controls as the plane iced up in sub - zero weather and bucking typhoon headwinds with nothing visible through the windshield. Despite the danger, Phil always returned his plane and crew safely. God was surely his Co-pilot.

At Great Falls, Phil met Betty L. Johnson, a school teacher from Sandpoint, Idaho and recent graduate of Eastern Washington University. After several visits to her hometown, meeting her large family and riding an unfriendly horse, they were married in Sandpoint in June of 1951. Betty mentioned this was the time she also "enlisted" and they accepted the coming challenges together.

It was not long before the military had new plans for Phil. From 1951-52, during the height of the Korean War, he was assigned to Tachikawa Air Force Base in Japan as a C-54 pilot with Korea Airlift Operations. The primary mission was flying into Seoul in support of ground forces who had made an amphibious landing at Inchon. Capt. Csorosz returned stateside and was then stationed at McChord Air Force Base in Tacoma, Washington. Phil now flew the C -124 Douglas Globemaster for Pacific Operations. During his vacations, he would drive across the country to Lisbon Falls or Sandpoint to visit relatives in his Pontiac and Chevrolet station wagon.

In 1958, Phil and his wife Betty, crossed the Atlantic Ocean by ship with their daughter Kristine and son Paul. He was assigned to South Ruislip, England as an operations officer at the Military Air Transport Center for the North Atlantic region. Phil and Betty made many lifelong friends along the way. Their next stop was Rhein Main Air Force Base in Frankfurt, Germany from 1959

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-61 as a transport control officer for "MATS" where his second daughter Carolyn was born. The historic base is closed now but for decades it was the major command center for air operations in Europe.

Following Germany, Capt. Csorosz was sent to Andrews Air Force Base near Washington D.C. with the 89th Special Air Missions Squadron as pilot for the Lockheed Constellation, Boeing 707, and KC-135, transporting members of Congress, diplomats and foreign dignitaries. He was also the pilot for Air Force Two. He resided in Annandale and King's Park in North Springfield, Virginia. It was during this time that Major Csorosz was given the duty of flying to Cape Kennedy in January 1967 to retrieve the three Apollo One astronauts who died in a launch rehearsal for landing on the Moon.

Departing from Travis Air Force Base in California, the family's next destination was Yokota Air Force Base near Tokyo, Japan. Lt. Col. Csorosz was chief pilot of the Boeing WC -135 and Commander for the 56th Weather Recon Squadron. He was stationed for 2 years at Johnson Air Force Base in Iruma, Japan. Lt. Col. Csorosz departed Japan in June of 1971.

Phil was in the states for only a few weeks when the next set of orders arrived. First, he was sent to Jungle Survival School at Fairchild Air Force Base in Spokane, Washington. This was soon followed by assignment to Phan Rang Air Force Base in Vietnam as Commander of the 9th Special Operations Squadron, also known as the "Night Wings", with a primary mission of ground forces support, interdiction, visual and armed recon, escort and rapid reaction alerts.

Returning from Vietnam in 1972, Phil ended his military career at Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma after serving as Commander of the 443rd Headquarters Squadron for 5years. After 29 years, Phil had accumulated nearly 16,000 hours of flying time around the world and maintained a safety record of the highest standards. He had multiple aircraft ratings including certification for sea planes. He worked closely with his staff and teamwork was always top priority in the air or on the ground.

The following is a list of his awards and citations: The Bronze Star, United States Air Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Korean Service Medal, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship

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Ribbon, Vietnam Service Medal, Korean Presidential Unit Citation, United Nations Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, National Defense Service Medal and Air Force Outstanding Unit Award.

Phil received his college degree in Business Administration from Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois.

After his honorable discharge and retirement in 1978, Phil began a new chapter as a civilian pilot flying Lear jets and Cessna Citations. He was employed as a flight instructor at Cessna Citation Jet Aircraft, Flight Safety International in Wichita, Kansas. Before moving to Missoula in 1984, Phil was chief pilot for the IBW Corporation in Laredo, Texas and then the Washington Corporation in Missoula.

Phil had many hobbies and skills. He played golf, tennis, chess and hiked the "M" trail at the University of Montana often continuing to the top of Mount Sentinel. Phil enjoyed music and played his guitar, ukulele and harmonica. He was an expert marksman and won many championships in trap and skeet. He kept records on family vehicles and maintained them in top condition. In the winter, he took pride in operating his snowblower. You could count on Dad to do the job right. If there was a problem, he would solve it. If there was a part that didn't exist, he would invent it. He approached everything with precision.



lieutenant General Bruce N. Brown

Lieutenant General Bruce K. Brown USAF Ret. 88. passed away peacefully on August 23, 2019 in Potomac Falls, VA after a brief and courageous fight with cancer.

He was born on November 16, 1930 in St. Paul, MN. where he grew up until the age of 14 when his family moved to Albuquerque. NM. and then to Lubbock. TX. He was the eldest of seven sons born to Louis and Dorothy Brown.

Bruce and his wife of 67 years. Claudyne met as sophomores at Lubbock High School and were

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married in 1952 after his graduation from the United States Naval Academy. Bruce entered the Naval Academy to serve aboard submarines but was seduced by the N3N, a training biplane, into a commission into the U.S. Air Force and 33 years of military aviation.

He began his military career as a fighter pilot having received his wings in August 1953 and flew F-86's out of McGuire AFB, NJ and F-102's out of Hahn AFB, Germany. From there he was assigned to the Air Defense Command in Colorado Springs, CO and afterward attended the Armed Forces Staff College in Norfolk VA.

After assignments at the Pentagon in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, Plans and Operations, he earned a master's degree in international relations from the George Washington University while attending the National War College.

He subsequently served a tour of duty in Vietnam as the deputy commander of operations of the Special Operations Wing at Phan Rang Air Base and flying 400+ special ops combat missions in "The Shadow" and "Puff the Magic Dragon/Spooky".

Bruce was then assigned as vice-commander and then commander of the 97th Bombardment Wing, Blytheville Air Force Base AR., and then commander of the 416th Bombardment Wing, Griffiss Air Force Base NY. He thereafter returned to the Pentagon as deputy assistant chief of staff for studies and analysis and then deputy director for operations, Joint Chiefs of Staff.

He served as commander of the 14th Aerospace Force: assistant deputy chief of staff for operations, North American Air Defense Command and deputy chief of staff for operations. Aerospace Defense Command: deputy chief of staff for operations North American Air Defense Command, Aerospace Defense Command and Air Defense Center; vice commander in chief, North American Aerospace Center; and the first vice commander of the then newly established created Space Command.

His last assignment was as Commander of the Alaskan Air Command which at the time was one of the Air Force's major commands. KAL 007 was shot down his first day on the job and an intercept and first recorded video of a Soviet Bear H Bomber occurred on his last.

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He was a command pilot and decorated aerial combatant with more than 5,000 flying hours. He also wore the Master Space Badge.

After his Air Force retirement, Bruce continued to serve his country through his work on the Strategic Defense Initiative, his work with the Institute for Defense Analysis, his employment by the Department of Defense, as Deputy Chief Information Officer, his participation in various scientific boards and as a member of the Warlord Loop. By the time of Bruce's retirement from fulltime work in 2015 at the age of 85 he had completed over sixty years in the service of his country.

Henry Gordon Fields, Jr., 70

(June 14, 2019 | Petoskey News-Review (MI))

Henry Gordon Fields, Jr. walked on peacefully to his Lord & Savior Jesus' side in the twilight hours of January 30, 2019, at his home in Petoskey.

Henry, known to many as Hank, was born August 23, 1948, to the late Henry Gordon Sr., and Anna Priscilla (Kesick) in Petoskey. He was a proud member of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa-Chippewa Indians.

Hank graduated from Petoskey High School in 1966 and worked for Michigan Bakeries until he enlisted in the United States Air Force in 1968. He proudly served his country as a Fuel System Specialist and was stationed for one year with the 315 CAMS unit at Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam from Jan.4th, 1969 through Jan. 4th, 1970. He later crossed-trained as an Electronic Technician at Chanute Air Force Base, Rantoul, Illinois.

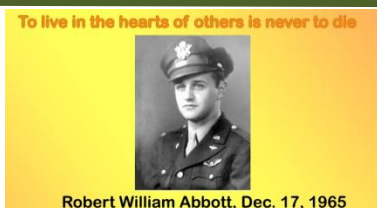
He began his career with the FAA in 1976 at the Pellston Regional Airport, later transferring to the Chippewa County Airport in Sault Ste. Marie, MI and returned to Pellston until his retirement in 2003 after 36 years of Federal service.

Hank will be best remembered for his love of music. He was a talented musician and singer who could play any instrument he picked up, notably the acoustic and electric guitars and piano/keyboard.

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Col. Richard K. Chisholm USAF (Ret.)

July 14, 1931 - December 8, 2022

Merced, California - "... slipping the surly bonds of earth..."
one last time.

After a full and exceptional life, Colonel Rick Chisholm passed away peacefully, at home, under Hospice care, December 8, 2022, with his loving family beside him.

Col. Chisholm was an inspiring man of honor and character who loved his country deeply. He came to the Merced area, stationed at Castle AFB in 1976. Rick Chisholm was born in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1931, the son of Chester and Helen Chisholm. His boyhood dream was to become a pilot. After graduating from Boston College High School, he attended Georgetown University, 1949-1951.



He entered the Air Force under the Aviation Cadet Program in August 1951-53. Rick and Anita married in Newton Center, Massachusetts in 1953. He completed F-86 pilot training at Nellis AFB, Nevada, 1954. Col. Chisholm had a distinguished career. He flew F-86's in Korea from 1954- 1955. Served in the Air Training Command in Selma, Alabama, 1955-1960 as an instructor pilot in the T-33. He flew KC-97s and KC-135s, at Barksdale, Louisiana and Randolph AFB, San Antonio, Texas, and trained in F-100s at Luke AFB, AZ, where, in 1967 he earned Top Gun Award. He served in Phan Rang, Vietnam, 1967-1968.

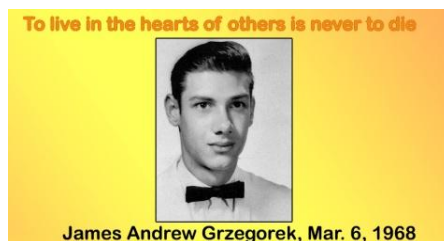
Rick was a Command Pilot, Instructor Pilot, and Chief Pilot for the Commander- in-Chief USAF Europe at Rhein Main AFB, Germany, from 1968-1972. Then assigned to Readiness Command at MacDill AFB, Tampa, Florida, from 1972-1976.

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Col. Chisholm's final assignment was to Castle AFB in Atwater, CA, as Deputy Commander for Resources, until retiring from his 31 year career, April, 1983.



John D. Ellestad Jr.



John D. Ellestad Jr., 71, passed away Monday, Aug. 19, 2019 after brief but courageous battle with cancer at St. Lukes Hospital. Born July 6th, 1948 to John Sr. and Mabel Stavig Ellestad in Two Harbors, Minnesota, John grew up in Knife River, MN and graduated from Two Harbors High School in 1968. After graduation he enlisted in the US Air Force.

He was part of the 315th Tactical Airlift Wing/Combat Support Wing. In 1971 they were deployed to Vietnam, where he was stationed at Phan Rang Air Force Base with a title of Sgt/Food Service Supervisor/Cook, he also managed a Flight Kitchen on the Fire Depts Flight Line over looking 5000 meals served daily.

Home from Vietnam, John married Lori Nelson on July 8th, 1972, they were then stationed at Minot, ND Air Force base until his discharge in 1975. John and Lori then settled in Duluth, MN where they raised their children and remain today.

Charles "Rusty" Gibbs



"Rusty" Gibbs, 72, passed away on Monday, February 15, 2021 in his residence. He was born on July 9, 1948 in Portsmouth to the late Carroll and Dollie Everton Gibbs. He was a 1967 graduate of Cradock High School; and was actively involved in many alumni activities over the years.

Rusty was a proud U.S. Air Force Vietnam Veteran, and served as a fuel system mechanic at the

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base in Phan Rang, Vietnam. He retired as a mechanic and shop foreman for the City of Chesapeake Public Schools; and was a member of the Beach Comber Corvette Club. Rusty had many hobbies including playing the trumpet in many bands in his younger years and also enjoyed restoring antique cars.

(The Virginian Pilot, Norfolk, Va., February 18, 2021)



Doug’s Comments: As always I’m grateful to the readers who supply me with so many good stories. James Potter had alluded years ago that he had a story, but I just recently received it after I found the story of Robert Buchan, and he shared the rest of the story with me. When I say story, he also shared so many photographs, but I couldn’t include all of them in the article. There was one inconsistency about his nickname; one story had it as “Jock” and another “Robbie”, so I settled on Robbie. I hope that you have enjoyed this newsletter. To see a list of all previous newsletters click [here](#). To unsubscribe to Phan Rang News, dougsevert@gmail.com and put ‘unsubscribe’ in subject line.