

Phan Rang News No. 28

In this issue

Lorain airman is killed in attack on U.S. base

Phan Rang Aviators and their Flying Machines

Terry Brodt Remembers Early Days at Fighter Base

Men in Service

Rotary Speaker Defends U.S. Involvement in Vietnam War

Oceana Man Gets Air Medal

Tales of Phan Rang (part 3)

A Wing, a Prayer and a Good Maintenance Man

The 2014 "Happy Valley" Phan Rang AB Reunion

Got Photos or Stories?

Doug's Notes

Lorain airman is killed in attack on U.S. base (*The Chronicle-Telegram, Elyria, Ohio, Thursday, July 23, 1970*)

LORAIN - A 32-year-old U. S. Air Force sergeant who was due to return here from Vietnam this week died July 21 during a rocket attack on the air base at which he was stationed.

Sgt. Richard Pearl, the only child of Mr. and Mrs. Pincus Pearl, 2308 South Jefferson Blvd., was killed as he walked in a base exchange parking lot at Phan Rang Air Base.

Military sources said an enemy rocket struck about 25 feet from Pearl, spraying him with shrapnel.

Pearl enlisted in the Air Force in 1960, according to his parents. He left the service in 1964 and worked for General Telephone Co. in California, then reenlisted in the Air Force in 1966.

His parents said he wanted to make a career of the service. The sergeant was in charge of the alert system at Phan Rang. It was his first year in Vietnam.

A graduate of Lorain High School, he is survived by his parents and his wife. Lisa, of Sacramento, California.

Funeral arrangements are incomplete.

Messages from Richard Max Pearls' Memorial Page

<p>That morning, we were shaving together in the latrine. I was kidding him about how short he was as he only had a few more days left in-country. A few hours later, I was in my office at the Red Rocket when I heard and felt the incredible blast that took Pearl's life. Shrapnel from the rocket penetrated into the revetments surrounding the Red Rocket as well as the BX. Later, I was amazed by how small the crater actually was. It was only about the size of half a soccer ball in breath and depth. That was some hard dirt. It took months for the crater to fill in again. I and many other guys working at the comm. center walked by it everyday and thought of him. - Ronald Dupre</p>	<p>I went to school with Richard. He was perhaps the most positive person I have ever known. We lost touch after HS graduation. He lived right across the street from Irving, Jr. High School and we would sometimes eat lunch at his home. A damn shame a person has to die when, undoubtedly, his hopes were high. - Jerry Beingesser</p>
<p>Sgt Pearl was our only antenna specialist and a good one too. I'm told he was killed in July 1970 near the BX on his way to the Comm Bldg clearing the base to come home. A damn shame. - Chief Bill Bethea</p>	<p>Sgt Pearl was leaving the BX with his new suitcase, a day or two before rotating and took a direct hit from a rocket or mortar. The explosion blew out one side of the BX wall. - John McCormack</p>
<p>After finishing my 12 hour shift at the Red Rocket Express myself and John Gaston had walked up to the BX Restaurant and were sitting on the patio when we heard (what we thought) was a slow moving helicopter pass overhead. A fraction of a second later the explosion almost blew us out of our seats. Moments later did we realize what it was. We did not know until later that the 1882CS has suffered a tragic loss. I remember this as if it happened yesterday. - Alan T. Winters</p>	<p>I was a young SP on duty that day, and remember it well as I arrived just after SGT Pearl was evacuated. I thought of him everytime I walked by that area from then to DEROS, and have thought about the tragedy ever since..being so "short", the loss of a good man, and the unpredictability of life. His death, even though I didn't know him personally, actually was one factor that guided my life over the years in that I found the inspiration to live life fully, do my best, and make sure that my loved ones always heard me say, "I love you" when I left for any reason. Imagine my surprise to see his tribute on your website, which I was just browsing through. You have a terrific website and I'm glad I stopped by. Neal H. Trent III, PhD, ABPP, FACCP Colonel (R), US Army</p>
<p>I was at Phan Rang the day Sgt Pearl was killed, we were leaving the chow hall on the way to check our mail. We heard a sound of a rocket and ran into bunkers. I looked up over my head and saw the rocket in the air maybe 50 feet over my head. - Charlie Randall Boston MA.</p>	<p>I was eating breakfast in the snack bar the morning Richard Pearl was taken from us. Heard the rocket go over and saw it land just a few feet from him. Most terrible day of the year. - Don Winfrey</p>
<p>I remember this date like it was yesterday. In fact every July 21, I say a prayer for Sergeant Pearl. I was assigned to the 14th Special Operations Wing. I had just been dropped off some secret messages at your office for you guys to send out to our FOL. I had a dental appointment at about 13:00 hours so I had a</p>	

Phan Rang News No. 28

little time to spend. I remember leaving the tailor shop and was walking up that little incline path that lead up to the the main road. I was at the exact spot moments before Sergeant Pearl met his fate. It could not has been five minutes walking distance when I heard that all to familiar sound of the incoming 82mm mortar round. Such a huge explosion to have left such a little hole in the ground. In fact I looked up and saw it hit near Sergeant Pearl. I was too stunned to do anything but take cover. I was debriefed by base Intel and have recurring nightmares to this date over this incident. Because 5 minutes earlier and you would be writing my memorial as well. My sincerest condolences to his family and friends.

Sergeant Gary B Barrows
14th Special Operations Squadron
Phan Rang AFB, South Viet Nam

PHAN RANG AVIATORS AND THEIR FLYING MACHINES



Phan Rang News No. 28

Terry Brodt Remembers Early Days at Fighter Base (*The News, Van Nuys, Calif., Thursday, November 9, 1967*)

Airman first Class Terry V. Brodt, son of Mr. and Mrs. Vincent R. Brodt. 8530 Cedros Ave., Panorama City, was one of the few veterans around when his unit, the 614th Tactical Fighter Squadron, celebrated its first anniversary of combat operations in South Vietnam at Phan Rang Air Base.

Base Was Rugged

Airman Brodt was with the squadron when it first went to Southeast Asia from England AFB, La. All of the original pilots have departed for new assignments, with only a few enlisted men left.

The young operations clerk recalls that ". . . it has been a most interesting and fruitful year. I have-learned quite a bit about Air Force operations in Southeast Asia."

"The men just coming to Phan Rang cannot appreciate how good it is," said Airman Brodt "We lived in tents, walked in ankle deep mud and choked on dust. There were no paved roads. It was an adventure that all who were deployed with the squadron will never forget."

The squadron, originally a bomber unit in World War II averaged 1000 hours of fighter time each month during the past month during the past year and flew 8000 sorties during the same time.

The past year also has seen the squadron fighting the Vietnam war in one other way - that of humanitarianism.

Help With Schools

Airman Brodt and the other men of the 614th have donated more than \$1700 in the past year to schools in Phan Rang and Thap Cham for scholarships and improvements. Presently they are giving special support to one school, the An Phuoc High School in Thap Cham.

The airman was graduated from Thousand Oaks High School in 1964. He entered the Air Force in March 1966.

Men in Service (*The Press-Courier, Wednesday, August 13, 1969*)

Airman First Class **Robert L. Landis**, whose father is Kenneth F. Landis of 3028 N. Springfield in Santa Susana, is on duty at Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam.

Phan Rang News No. 28

Landis, a weapons mechanic, is in a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Southeast Asia, he was assigned to the 4515th Munitions Maintenance Squadron at Luke Air Force Base, Ariz.



Rotary Speaker Defends U.S. Involvement in Vietnam War (*Evening Observer, Dunkirk-Fredonia, N. Y., Wednesday, November 12, 1968*)

The U.S. involvement in the Vietnam war was defended Tuesday in remarks presented by Lt. Col. John P. Rollston at the Dunkirk Rotary club meeting at Rusch's restaurant.

"If we believe in the democratic way of life, we have to believe in it not only for ourselves, but for others who want it." said Col. Rollston, who flew over 170 combat missions for the U.S. Air Force in Vietnam. "You either believe in freedom or you don't. Freedom must be preserved for all and it must be defended from time to time."



Col. Rollston, special guest at the Veterans Day meeting of Rotary, said he is proud President Richard Nixon will not "go for the unilateral withdrawal" of troops from Vietnam. He added: "A military solution might have been better. We might have come out of there (Vietnam) with 4,000 lost instead of 40,000. But we like to think our people (the government) made the right judgment."

Col. Rollston said the soldiers who have lost their lives in Vietnam would "rest better" if they could see the "silent majority" in the nation. "We're (the military) doing what we're told to do." Col. Rollston said. "We hope history will treat us more kindly."

Col. Rollston was referring to the war critics who want the U.S. to withdraw all troops immediately.

Phan Rang News No. 28

In discussing the nationwide war protests by the country's young people. Col. Rollston said "they have taken a lot out of it (the country), but haven't put enough in it yet. They haven't yet made the transition that we all have had to make."

Have Sincere Doubt

Col. Rollston said he believes the young people are "honestly motivated". "They have a sincere doubt about our (the government's) logic," Col. Rollston said. "I don't agree with them, but I am sworn to defend their right to the end."

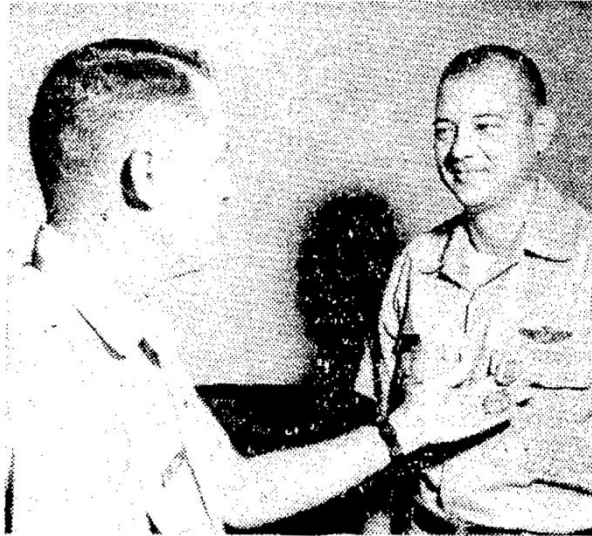
Col. Rollston, who entered the service when he was 17, was asked if the reports of the "black markets" and other vice in South Vietnam are true. "What you see and hear about Vietnam is what you see and hear about your own society," Col. Rollston said. "Whatever's bad about our society you can read in the newspapers. The 'silent majority' doesn't make good print."

Col. Rollston, who is stationed at the Pentagon in Washington D.C., said the majority of the South Vietnamese are "sick, tired, hungry people". "They are ever so much in need of our help." Col. Rollston added. ""Don't be misled by what you see and read. They (the South Vietnamese) want us there. They want to get ahead and they have selfdetermination."

A recipient of several military awards, Col. Rollston said the professional soldier, more than any other, wants the Vietnam war to end. "I want the war to end because of my family, because my sons will fight there unless it ends, and because I find fighting repugnant," Col. Rollston continued. "I chose a military career because freedom is worth having." Col. Rollston said. "If it is worth having, then it is worth fighting for. We are fighting the Communists. Make no mistake about that."

Col. Rollston presented a U.S. Air Force film entitled "Air Power in Action." The three-year-old film depicted the role of the U.S. Air Force in the Vietnam war, including bombing missions, combat missions and rescues.

(Note, Lt. Col. John P. Rollston addressing the Rotary meeting was listed as number 12 of the outstanding events during 1969 in Dunkirk & Fredonia per the Evening Observer, Dunkirk-Fredonia N. Y., Wednesday, December 31, 1969.)



Charles B. Haskins, son of Mrs. Louise Smith, Oceana, Maj. receives the Air Medal at Phan Rang

AB, Vietnam, from Lt. Col. Len C. Russell, commander of the 352nd Tactical Fighter Squadron.

Oceana Man Gets Air Medal

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

Maj. Haskins, an F-100 Super Sabre pilot, was cited for his outstanding airmanship and courage on successful and important missions under hazar-

dous conditions. He is assigned at Phan Rang in a unit of the Pacific Air Forces.

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

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

Post-Herald and Reister, Beckley W. Va., Sunday August 3, 1969

TALES OF PHAN RANG



BY ROBERT CHAPPELEAR

Tales of Phan Rang (Part 3) by Robert Chappelear

Tales of Phan Rang
Published by Robert L. Chappelear at Smashwords
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An account of the author's one year tour of duty flying C-123 cargo aircraft in Viet Nam. Provides descriptions of life in country and the missions that were flown.

Phan Rang News No. 28

This book is a description of that year providing an insight into what it was like to live and fly in that conflict and during that time of the war.



About Robert Chappelear

Retired from two careers, the first was as a fighter pilot for the USAF; the second as a system engineer for a defense contractor. Accumulated 6000 hours of flying time in 7 different operational assignments including three tours to Asia and one to Europe.

Chapter 3 – The Job

My first tour in Viet Nam, as a C-123 co-pilot and later as an aircraft commander, involved the in-theater airlift of troops, equipment, and supplies anyplace in the country. We used to call ourselves garbage men or trash haulers, for we carried everything imaginable. We transported troops, both live and dead, ammunition, ice, mail, ice cream, jeeps, trucks, cows, chickens, pigs, goats, and so on or so forth. We delivered all of this stuff by both landing and offloading or sometimes by air dropping. The air drops may or may not involve the use of parachutes. No, we never air dropped people without parachutes, but we did "air deliver" cows, chickens, pigs, and goats without parachutes (on occasion).



A smokey start. (This photo does not appear in the book.)



(Some typical load configuration for a C-123 mission...Palletized with either 3 - 463L pallets or wooden skids or combinations of both, humans in the canvas jump seat lining the cabin and others sitting on the cargo floor holding on to cargo straps strung across pallets or any combination of the above. These pictures do not appear in the book.)

Overall the tour was much like a civilian "airline/cargo pilot" type of job, except that somebody was often shooting at you. Each "mission" or a day's flight consisted of several sorties. I think the average was 9 sorties for each mission. The fewest number of sorties that I flew on a mission was 2 and the most was 16. Generally we flew 11 hours a day and were limited to a maximum of 12 hours unless we received a "crew duty day extension" from 7th Air Force. These were pretty easy to get just for the asking but we had to be careful taking a crew duty day extension for this would likely cause you to be removed from the next day's flying schedule because then you would not have sufficient "crew rest". There were a couple of other "restrictions" such as; we were not supposed to fly more than 110 hours per month except that too could be "waived" by 7th Air Force to 125 hours but, we were not allowed to fly more than 330 hours in any calendar year quarter. When I put it all together at the end of the year I had an even 100 combat "missions", 1000 combat "sorties", 1000 combat hours, 1 Distinguished Flying Cross, and 4 Air Medals. I have no idea how this worked out so evenly.

News From many sources from "Happy Valley" Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang News No. 28



Using a 10K Hyster forklift to load a pallet.



Getting ready to fire up the engines. The airman stands by the fire extinguisher for a 'fire watch' during start-up.



Offloading the cargo on the ground at an unimproved special forces airstrip. The cargo consisted of two fuel bladders for mogas or JP4 fuel on a 463L pallet. This was the only way for remote locations to get fuel.



Taking off on a dirt airstrip at a special forces base.

Many of those missions were so non-eventful that they have blurred together but, some missions among those 100 will never be forgotten. These include transporting KIA casualties, both American and Vietnamese, re-supplying Special Forces camps and fire support bases close to the Cambodian or Laotian borders, landing at selected bases, air drops, some in-flight emergencies, some other special missions, and the loss of comrades.

Phan Rang News No. 28



A C-123 returns home to Phan Rang, after flying to bases in Dalat, Cam Rahn Bay, Tan Son Nhut (Saigon), Pleiku, Phu Cat and Bien Hoa to name just a few. The C-123's were parked in revetments which would help contain a blast if hit by rockets or mortars. Upon arrival at the base the aircraft would taxi to the MAC ramp to be off loaded by aerial port personnel, most off-loading was accomplished with engines running, and then the aircraft would return empty to the revetment parking spot. The aerial port recovered an average of twenty-four C-123 aircraft along with handling approximately twenty transient aircraft all within a three hour period every day, seven days a week. For the outbound loads for the next day's mission, the aerial port would transport the cargo to the parked aircrafts and load them with the supervision of a duty loadmaster. The 'launch' loading occurred at night in coordination with the Airlift Control Element (ALCE) and Aerial Port personnel. When the crew showed, the aircraft was already loaded and fueled. This picture does not appear in the book.

(Note: All the pictures that do not appear in the book were shared by the members of the 'Happy Valley' Phan Rang AB Facebook group.)

To be continued.

A Wing, a Prayer and a Good Maintenance Man (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Tuesday, June 22, 1971*)

PHAN RANG AB, Vietnam (Special) — Some people might consider bringing the pilot home safely to be the primary concern of the aircraft mechanic; but his job is much more than that.

Through the skills of these highly-trained technicians, dependable aircraft are available to move vital supplies, people and machinery, and to give support to friendly ground forces in combat with the enemy.

There are more than 2,000 maintenance personnel at Phan Rang AB, divided into three full combat wings: the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW), flying F100 Supersabres; the 14th Special Operations Wing (SOW), using AC119 Shadow and Stinger gunships, the C47 and O2 Super Skymaster psychological operations aircraft; and the 315th Tactical Airlift Wing (TAW), tasked with aerial resupply throughout Southeast Asia using jet-assisted C123 Providers.

Professional aircraft mechanics and munitions men assigned to the four flying squadrons and three maintenance support squadrons of the 35th TFW can load their aircraft with ordnance and have them ready to fly again in less than two and one half hours after they return from a combat mission.

The mechanics of the 35th TFW spend about 26 man-hours per hour of flying time repairing and inspecting the wing's Supersabres.

The 35th Field Maint. Sq. (FMS), one of the units of the 35th TFW, broke all wing records in March when it completely rebuilt 43 J57 jet engines for the F100s.

Working in shifts around the clock, seven days a week, the men of the 35th FMS were aided by 23 temporarily assigned personnel from Tinker AFB, Okla., Cam Ranh Bay, Bien Hoa and Tan Son Nhut Air Bases in the Republic of Vietnam, and Naha AB, Okinawa. "They did a lot of hard work," commented M. Sgt. Fred Williams, non-commissioned officer-in-charge of the propulsion branch. "There was no slack. These are a very dedicated and professional group of people."

"Everybody pushes as best they can," remarked a phase dock mechanic. "We get a couple of new guys in who aren't familiar with the F100 and they may turn up defects in the aircraft that even the most experienced maintenance technician has missed.

"We work as a team and check each other's work. When I'm finished with my job, my buddy checks it, and when he's finished, he has someone else check it before the quality control people give it the final okay."

Phan Rang News No. 28

How do the fighter pilots feel about all the attention given to them by the mechanics?
"They're a great bunch of guys," exclaimed a young first lieutenant. "Sometimes I go down and see what I can do to help."

"After spending a couple of hours with us," broke in the mechanic, "some of the pilots would invite us up to their lounge area or come up to ours, and we would rap about our jobs."

The gunships are the responsibility of the 14th SOW. "We fly primarily night missions," Chief M.Sgt. Joe B. Davidson, NCOIC of maintenance control explained, "but our, repairs are done 24 hours a day, whether it be routine line maintenance or major phase work."

The average maintenance performed on these reborn workhorses requires 17 man-hour, per flying hour on the Shadow, and 40 man-hours per flying hour on the more sophisticated Stinger. Each gunship goes through phase maintenance after every 100 hours of flying time.

Routine maintenance and battle damage repair is conducted at the wing's forward operating locations at Tan Son Nhut, Da Nang, and Phu Cat Air Base in the Republic, and Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base, Thailand.

"The work is constant— always push, push, push, push," remarked a Stinger maintenance technician. "We get one bird in, then out again, and then we have another one to work on right away. Sometimes we have as many as four aircraft waiting for phase work."

The psychological operations portion of the 14th is assigned one of the oldest, the C47 Skytrain, and one of the youngest, the O2 Super Skymaster, aircraft in the Air Force inventory. Maintenance averages about 10 man-hours per hour of flying time on the C47 and about, five man-hours per hour of flying time on the O2.

The 315th TAW and its four squadrons have a different mission, that of resupply throughout Southeast Asia. Assigned C123 Providers, their maintenance requirements differ from the combat-oriented requirements of the 14th SOW and the 35th TFW.

M.Sgt. William R. Scudder, 315th TAW maintenance control NCOIC explained, "The FIOOs have a specific mission. They go out and drop bombs, shoot cannons, and then come back and recover here. Cargo aircraft differ considerably. We fly several sorties out here, but they may go from here to Cam Ranh, Bay AB, and from there to Da Nang Airfield; We may not see the same aircraft for a couple of days."

About 85 to 90 per cent of C123 maintenance is done during the night, so the planes are ready for the next day's launch.

Phan Rang News No. 28

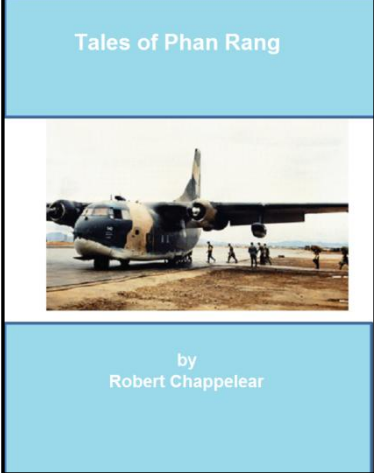
The 315th TAW engine shop handles all C123 Provider reciprocating engines in Southeast Asia. "We get them in, rework and repair them, and then get them back out to the owning unit as soon as possible," Scudder explained.

The wing's maintenance personnel also provide minor maintenance for the General Electric J85 jet engines which augment the C123s', piston engines.

Sometimes a C123 will suffer battle damage at one of the many isolated airstrips in Vietnam. When this happens, maintenance personnel are immediately airlifted to the site to provide on-the-spot maintenance and get the Provider back to Phan Rang for any extensive repairs that may be needed.

Even with the great diversity of missions performed by the three wings assigned to this central coastal air base, the job of the maintenance airman is the same — **"to keep 'em flying, safe and sure."**

Authors in our Midst

		
<p>Steve Janke...click to buy book</p>	<p>Robert Chappelle...click to buy</p>	<p>Jack Anderson...click to buy book</p>

Phan Rang News No. 28

The 2014 "Happy Valley" Phan Rang AB Reunion

The 2014 "Happy Valley" Phan Rang AB Reunion

Where: DoubleTree by Hilton, Reid Park, 445 S. Alvernon Way, Tucson AZ

When: October 9-11

Single/Double rate \$99

Banquet 11 October in the Bonsai Room



You may now make your hotel reservations for the reunion. Click on the Double Tree logo above and it will take you to the Phan Rang AB Reunion Web Site. Please make your reservations early which will help us greatly in the planning process and also to insure that everyone that wants to attend gets the reunion rate. This is a smaller hotel than the previous year, so we have to watch it very carefully. Remember if circumstances prevent you from attending you can always cancel within 24 hours of your check-in date. If you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact [me](#).

Got Photos or Stories that you would like to share with Phan Rangers and other interested Vietnam veterans? If you do, send those treasured pictures and stories to me and I'll include in this newsletter, that reaches out to over 200, or post on Facebook where we have over 550 former Phan Rangers, their families and friends. You can contact [me](#) and I will provide further instructions. Share the Phan Rang story and keep the memories alive.

Doug's note: I know not all of these stores have a dateline of Phan Rang, but we have a lot of members and readers that have an interest in stores dealing with the B-57, F-100, C-119, C-47 and C-123 aircrafts. Some may have friends or may have even been stationed at one time at these other bases.

Also if you are new to the Phan Ranger mailing list and you would like copies of previous issues of the Phan Rang News, they are all available here for downloading. If you have any difficulties, just send me a note and I'll will send one your way. If you know of a Phan Rangers that would be interested in receiving news about Phan Rang AB, please let me know and I will add them to the mailing list.