

# Phan Rang AB Newsletter

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.  
“Keeping the memories alive” Newsletter 282

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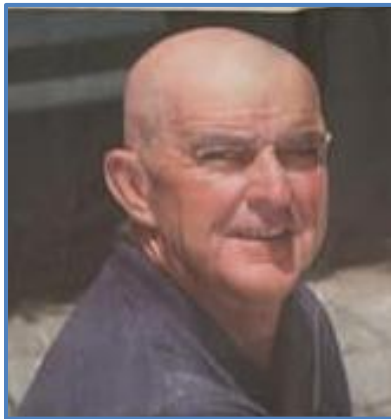
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**Dear Abby**

**Doug’s Comments**

## **Goodbye, Jack** **Coast salutes air ace**

*by Ken Robinson*



**Jack Robert Boast**, a decorated Royal Australian Air Force officer who “only ever wanted to be a surf bum”, died at his home in Buderim yesterday. He was 96.

Air Commander Boast (retired) a surfing champion and gifted sportsman was the son of the first Burleigh lifeguard, Tom Boast, an Olympic swimmer.

His father imbued Jack Boast with a love for the ocean that lasted his entire life.

A grammar school captain, he won several state swimming titles and was a champion Burleigh lifesaver, touring New Zealand with the Australian surf team in 1950, the same year he won the prestigious South Coast Belt Title.

Rugby union was another passion and he represented both Queensland and Australia against

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the 1961 All Blacks.

Air Commandore Boast joined the RAAF in 1952 and served as a flight instructor in England from 1960 to 1963.

A Canberra bomber pilot in his early days with the air force, he rose to command No. 2 Squadron during the Vietnam War at Phan Rang Air Base.

He flew 963 sorties over Vietnam and received the Air Force Cross and a Distinguished Service Order which, since 1918 has been awarded for service in action only.

He became assistant air attache at the Australian Embassy in Washington DC from 1971 to 1973 and when he was promoted to Air Commodore in 1976, he was the youngest Australian to have held that rank.

Air Commodore Boast moved to the Sunshine Coast with his family after a holiday in France to mark his retirement.

It was then that he brought his wealth of organizational talent to surfing, becoming a long-time member of the Sunshine Coast Surfrider Association.

He loved the sport and became Australian Over 50 Longboard champion in 1985-86-91 and 1992.

Air Commodore Boast prided himself on his fitness and was still hitting the waves a couple of months before his death. News of his illness came as a shock to his surfing mates.

Son John said his father often told people he was **“proud of finally becoming a surf bum”**.

However, his talents were not confined to surfing and he was instrumental in setting up the Sunshine Coast Sportsman’s Association.

The Jack Boast Junior Sports Star of the Year award was named in his honour last year.

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Air Commodore Boast twice ran unsuccessfully for Maroochy Shire Council and was a past president of the Community Council for the Aging. He completed a university degree well past his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Air Commodore Boast’s family was with him when he died after a six-month battle with cancer.



### Marietta officer is decorated



Major **William T. Bradford** the son of Mr. and Mrs. George Bradford of Marietta, has been decorated with 10 military medals at Moody Air Force Base at Valdosta, Ga.

He received nine awards of the Air Medal and the Air Force Commendation Medal for action in Southeast Asia.

Major Bradford was awarded the Air Medals for meritorious achievement as a combat crew member during aerial flights. He was cited for his outstanding airmanship and courage on successful and important missions under extremely hazardous conditions.

He now holds 13 Air Medals. Major Bradford won the Commendation Medal for meritorious service as an F-100 Super Sabre pilot at Phan Rang Air Base in Vietnam. He is now assigned to a unit of the Air Training Command at Moody as a flight instructor.

A graduate of Atlanta High School, he received a BS degree in vocational agriculture from East Texas State College. He was commissioned in 1953 through the aviation cadet program.

His wife, Carolyn, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Rufus Phillips of Colquitt, Ga.

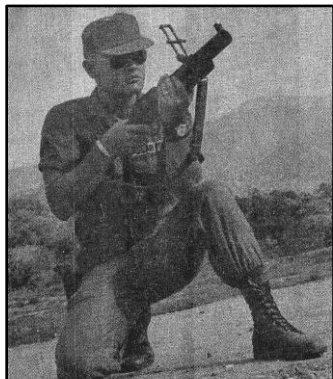
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### Security Police Training Yields Confidence, Dividends



**Sighting in...Range NCOIC Sgt. Thomas J. Metzen sights in an M-79 for student.**

**PHAN RANG** - “Our pupils couldn’t out-shoot Charlie every time,” says Sgt. **Thomas J. Metzen**, Anaheim, Cal.

Sergeant Metzen, Non Commissioned Officer-in-charge of the 35<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron firing range, is charged with making certain that the sentries know the weapon they are handling like the back of their hand.

“When we get new men in the squadron,” Sergeant Metzen continued, “They go through classroom and range familiarization. They may have handled the same weapons for two or three years - but not in a combat situation. That can make quite a difference.”

After the initial familiarization with a multitude of weapons, the policemen are called back twice a month for re-fire.

“Though these people carry the weapons daily, they may not fire them once between training sessions,” commented St. Roger T. Williams, Romney, W. Va.

Aside from the familiar M-16 rifle, the course also includes firing the M-148 and M-79 grenade launchers, the M-12 riot gun and the M-60 and .50 caliber machine guns, plus basic instructions on hand grenades and flares.

“Part of our initial training consists of instructions on how to spot explosive devices and “booby traps,” said Sgt. Larry D. Paul, Decatur, Ill.

“There is no way,” concluded Sergeant Williams, “To tell how much the people gain from our instructions, or how many lives it has saved, but we are confident that our work has paid big dividends.”

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### CAPT. BRADFORD GETS A “WELL DONE”

Captain Bradford was scheduled for a practice bombing mission at El Uotia (El Uotia Practice Bombing Range, Wheeler Air Base, Libya) on February 1961. Initial checks for an over-the-shoulder delivery with the mode selector on IABS normal and the damper engaged were made. Following entry into the maneuver as the aircraft approached vertical climb, the control stick snapped forward and locked. Still climbing, the aircraft started a vertical spiral. When the airspeed reached zero, full rudder was used to bring the nose down. The autopilot emergency disconnect was actuated, the autopilot switches

checked off, and the autopilot circuit breaker was pulled. (How he reached that one in this case is a “Well done” in itself!!) There was no immediate effect, captain Bradford walked the nose down with rudder until the aircraft entered a steep dive. The stick began to loosen and gradually normal control returned. A recovery was made at 3000 feet. The aircraft was taken to 10,000 feet and flown in landing configuration. Control response was normal and an uneventful landing followed. Subsequent aircraft inspection gave no definite information.

**Moral - you’ve got to be quick. Pilot reaction - fabulous.**



**Captain William T. Bradford**



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### WELL DONE



Flight Lieutenant **George Foskett** (center), No. 2 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force, receives congratulations and a letter of commendation from Col. **Frank L. Gailer Jr.**, commander 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing. At left is Wing Commander **John Whitehead**, commander No. 2 Squadron. Lieutenant Foskett was cited for his role in planning, directing, and personally leading RAAF security patrols at Phan Rang AB on several occasions when the base was under attack.

### *The 'Maine' Gift* - **GIs to Get Girls 'Fir' Yule**

**Augusta, Me. (UPI)** - Ask a serviceman what he really wants most for Christmas and chances are he'll reply - "Girls" After all, there's nothing like a girl.

One lucky unit in Vietnam is going to get, for three days, not one but three girls to go under its Christmas tree.

The girls are pert brunette airline stewardesses and the tree is coming from the state of Maine.

In a brief ceremony at the State House, Forestry Commissioner Austin Wilkens presented Northeast Airlines with a 8-foot fir grown in the town of Warren.

The three stewardesses - Joyce, Kelly, 19 of Charlottesville, VA., Sue Cardinale, 20, of Braintree, Mass., and Sally Hall, 22 of Miami - will take the tree to the 8<sup>th</sup> Tactical Bombardment Sq., at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Mrs. Jean Kersey, a public relations official of the airline, accepted the tree from Wilkens. Miss Kelly could not make it to Augusta because she came down with the flu, but still expects to make the trip to Vietnam.



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The origin of the special gift came about this way; the airline heard the squadron was using the code name “Yellow Bird,” the line’s slogan for its own planes and asked the Pentagon for permission to adopt the unit.

Permission was granted and last week 1,599 pounds of toothpaste, razor blades and other useful items were sent to Vietnam for the squadron.

The Florida Citrus Commission contributed 1,500 oranges, tangerines and grapefruits but what the 70 officers and 183 enlisted men are looking forward to is the arrival of the girls on Sunday.

The men are getting prepared. Just recently, Col. **Elbert M. Stringer**, commander of the 8<sup>th</sup>, wrote for advance intelligence-measurements.

## **FAC Sees Other Side of War**

**PHAN RANG** - A forward air controller recently had the opportunity to see the other side of the air war in South Vietnam.

Capt. **Harry E. Garrison**, Scottsdale, Ariz., is a FAC attached to the Army’s 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division. In his job he has the responsibility of directing many of the close air support missions that assist the troops of the 25<sup>th</sup> Division.

He recently had the opportunity to see the fighter pilot’s view of a close air support mission.

Captain Garrison participated in a mission with members of the 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing’s 352<sup>nd</sup> Tactical Fighter Squadron. He flew in the back seat of an F-100 Super Sabre with Lt. Col. **Robert D. Hook**, Dayton, Ohio, the 352<sup>nd</sup> TFS’s Operations officer, Capt. **Henry J. Pirkkala**, New Castle, Pa., was the wing man.

The mission was against an enemy base camp and bunker complex, 55 miles northwest of Bien Hoa.

“The fighter pilots are real professionals,” Captain Garrison said, “and I can really see how important the cooperation between the FAC and the fighters is. I had flown the Super Sabre in

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a training situation in the states,” he continued, “but there is no comparison between training and combat.”

### Sydney Morning Herald

1967

RAAF Canberra jets made their first bomb strikes of the Vietnam War by bombing the Vietcong concentrations south-west of Phan Rang. The jets, which arrived from Butterworth base in Malaysia only a week earlier, pounded the Vietcong with 16.5-tonne bombs.

## 35<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron “Heavy Weapons Unit” 1970 and their 2023 Reunion



Heavy Weapons veterans gather on the Gettysburg battlefield for a group photo during their September 13, 2023 reunion; left to right, Larry Woosley, Dennis Denniston, Sam Maggard, Rick Fancher, Louis Coca, John Graham, Ron Knaus and John Wheeler.

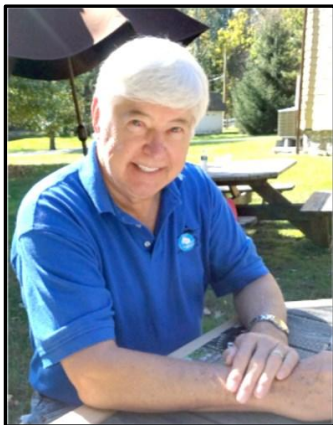
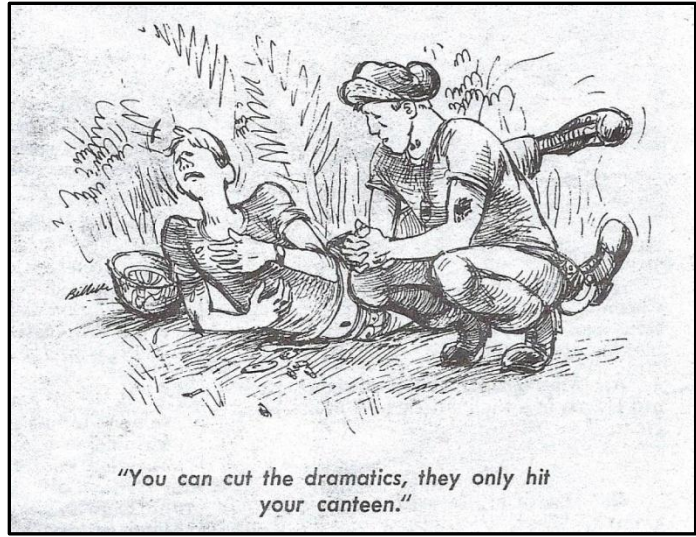
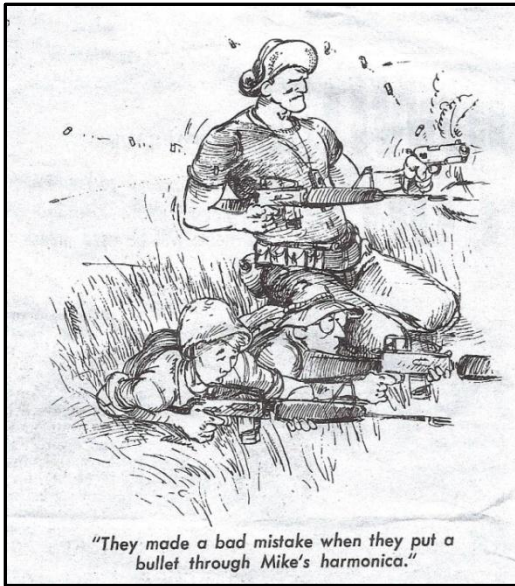


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**Thomas Herbert Clark**

March 13, 1945 - December 31, 2023

**Benbrook, Texas** - Thomas Herbert Clark of Benbrook, Texas died 12-31-2023. He was born in Jackson, Mississippi of William Thomas Clark and Mollie Mae White of Nashville. Interment will be at Dallas Fort Worth National Cemetery on April 9, 2024 at 10:30 am.

The Facts: Tom attended public elementary in Baltimore followed by St. Paul's School for Boys in Brooklandville, Maryland. At the University of North Carolina from 63-67, Tom worked for the daily student newspaper, his senior year as Business Manager. In Air Force ROTC he earned a private pilot's license and was Commander of the Cadet Corp.

A Distinguished Military Graduate, a week after graduation he began USAF Pilot Training School

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at Williams AFB in Phoenix, in T-37 and T-38's then got a sought-after assignment to single-seat fighters, the F-100 Super Sabre, at Luke AFB across town. As expected, on completion he was sent to Southeast Asia, to the **614th Tactical Fighter Squadron at Phan Rang, RVN. He flew 218 combat sorties including perhaps the only combat mission on Christmas morning 1969 to support US troops under attack.** After conversion to the F-4 Phantom and a year at MacDill AFB, Tampa, Tom was trained at Nellis AFB in suppression of enemy air defenses and joined the specialized 81st Weasel Squadron at Zweibrucken, Germany. After two years, Tom was reassigned to the 615th TFS in Madrid, Spain. The squadrons sat nuclear alert duties with extensive deployments to Italy and Turkey. After 8 years, he departed the Air Force.

After General Dynamics won the development contract for the F-16, Tom joined in September, 1975. As the first current fighter pilot in the Engineering Department, Tom had many exciting opportunities including being a project manager under famed chief designer, Harry Hillaker, and F-16 Marketing Manager for Australia. The highlight of his career was to head a multi-discipline team to design, test and produce conformal fuel tanks for the F-16, adding 50% mission range while preserving the F-16's dual mission roles. As the largest change ever to the F-16's shape, a near-complete requalification was required. Guiding a partner team in Israel led to 30 trips to Israel in five years. His last assignment was Greece.

Tom was thrice married; first, to his college sweetheart, Maryann Hutchison, then in Texas to Lill Reksel, with whom he had one son, Daniel Thomas, and finally his current wife, Jean Moulder, whom he has been with for 32 wonderful years.

An Eagle Scout, Tom was a Scout leader for nearly two decades, including as Advisor to an Engineering Explorer Post. He was also on the City of Benbrook Planning and Zoning Commission and a long-time member of Al Anon. He was an active participant in the TCU Silver Frogs program.

What He Believed: "I have lived a blessed life in perhaps the best years of the American Republic. Losing my Dad at a young age, I learned early the value of honesty and hard work, and to treat others with dignity and respect. My mother's dedication to education saved me as it had her. There were many men and women who helped raise me and I have tried to pay it forward especially by helping kids and others facing hardships. St. Paul's taught me critical

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thinking, UNC expanded the world, and flying taught aggressiveness and self-reliance. These lessons created rare opportunities in life for which I am most grateful. I continued to take classes, learning more every day.

Education is the way out and I regret so many never get this and live in ignorance, without curiosity, without challenging what they hear. I fought the good fight and I depart with hope in my grandkids for a better future.

Survivors: Beloved wife Jean, son Danny and his dear wife Christina, and three very precious grandchildren. Also, two brothers, William Roy Clark and Gary Lewis and two fine step kids, nephews, nieces and cousins and a wealth of dear friends.



### **John W. Pauly**

Air Force general

John W. Pauly, an Air Force aviator and veteran of two wars who retired in 1980 as commander of Allied Air Forces in Central Europe and commander in chief of U.S. Air Forces in Europe, died Aug. 7 at a hospice center in Colorado Springs. He was 90.

The cause was Alzheimer's disease, said a daughter, Joanne Bolt.

Gen. Pauly, a command pilot with 6,000 flying hours to his credit, participated in the Berlin airlift after World War II and flew 55 nighttime combat missions during the Korean War. In the early 1960s, he was assistant executive officer to Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, then the Air Force chief of staff. In 1968, Gen. Pauly commanded the 315th Air Commando Wing at Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam.

In 1969, he was assigned to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, where his duties included briefing White House officials on the Vietnam War, and then held command positions of increasing responsibility. His final active-duty assignment was at Ramstein Air Base, Germany. Gen. Pauly later was chief executive of Systems Control Technology, a software development company in Palo Alto, Calif.

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John William Pauly was a native of Albany, N.Y., and a 1945 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y. He received a master's degree in international relations from George Washington University in 1965. He also was a graduate of the National War College in Washington.

His military decorations included two awards of the Distinguished Service Medal, three awards of the Legion of Merit; two awards of the Distinguished Flying Cross; and five awards of the Air Medal. He was a member of the Army Science Board.

Gen. Pauly had a home in McLean for much of his military career and again in the late 1990s and 2000s.

His first wife, Mary Frances "Bobby" Chatt, whom he married in 1949, died in 1994. His second wife, Lois Rutledge, whom he married in 1998, died in 2007.

Survivors include five children from his first marriage, John Pauly Jr. of Hawaii, retired Air Force Reserve Lt. Col. Richard Pauly of Mandeville, La., Kathleen Donley of Chugiak, Alaska, Joanne Bolt of Colorado Springs and Karen Cooper of Firestone, Colo.; and four grandchildren.



*Dear Abby*  
by Abigail Van Buren

**Dear Abby: U.S. Navy Lt. John Calvin Crawford, stationed in Saigon with the Coastal Surveillance Force, was killed on March 10, 1967. Although there**



**were conflicting reports of the circumstances surrounding his death, officially he was one of 24 passengers killed in a plane crash over Ninh Thuan, two miles north of Phan Rang Air Base. Lt. Crawford was my father - he died two days after my third birthday.**

Like thousands of other sons and daughters of the more than 58,000 Americans lost in the Vietnam War, I never really knew my father - but I was

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always proud of him and, as a young child, I thought of my dad as a hero.

But when I was old enough to be exposed to society's attitudes about Vietnam, I began to feel isolated and rejected. In fourth grade, the teacher asked each of us to describe our parents. When I said my father was killed in Vietnam, I was slapped in the face with silence - it was as if I had a disease or something. I felt an immediate distance between myself and everyone else.

Through Sons and Daughters in Touch, a program of the Friends of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, I have met others who understand the pain because they, too, have experienced a similar rejection.

Abby, thousands of your readers have lost their loved ones in the Vietnam War. Please let them know its "*Proud to Remember*".

**Patty (Patricia) Crawford**

### FINAL MISSION OF LT JOHN C. CRAWFORD

On March 10, 1967, a U.S. Navy VC-47J (#99844) from Tan Son Nhut Air Base Detachment, Naval Support Activity (NAVSUPACT) Saigon, USNAVFORV, suffered a wing failure and crashed into a hillside 5 miles from Phan Rang while on an administrative Navy flight between Cam Ranh Air Base and Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Saigon, RVN. The aircraft had previously been used for VIP duties by the air attaches in Paris and London. There were no survivors. The crew included pilot LCDR Robert G. Kerr Sr., co-pilot LCDR Leo C. Hester Sr., and crewmen ADR1 Cecil L. Chapman and AE3 Francis R. Ferron Jr. There are varying accounts<sup>1</sup> as to the number of passengers that were on this flight. with as many as 21 quoted on some websites. However, a reliable Vietnam War casualty database (coffeltdatabase.org) suggests there were 10 passengers. Their website provides the following names: LT James M. Albright, LCDR Donald G. Brown, LT John C. Crawford, JO1 William C. Eckes, SP4 John H. Flynn, SFC Byron D. Hamlett, CAPT James J. L. Johnson, 2LT Roger W. Rabey, and CAPT Jacob F. Stepan.



<sup>1</sup> There are many different accounts of the number of passengers killed. Vietnam Air Losses by Chris Hobson list 25 passengers however that same source lists a crewmember by the name of Cecil Leroy Chapman and his death is not shown in the Coffelt Database for that date, which is considered a very reliable source. The Coffelt only lists the 10 passengers as indicated by the author.



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### Oswego SUC Grad Dies In Vietnam War Action

**OSWEGO** - The Middletown Times-Herald Record has reported Navy Lt. John Crawford, Monticello, a 1966 graduate of the State University College here and president of the student body at the college when a senior, has been killed in action in Vietnam.

Details of the death of Lt. Crawford, son of a Monticello Presbyterian pastor and his wife, Dr. and Mrs. William A. Crawford, were not immediately know, but he had been assigned to harbor patrol in Vietnam and was a Navy DC-47 Pilot.

Mrs. Crawford was notified of the death of her son March 12. Her husband is on cruise around Africa. Dr. and Mrs. Crawford are friends of an Oswego couple, Dr. and Mrs. Anthony Annunziata. Dr. Annunziata is assistant professor of English at the college.

The 30-year-old Navy flier was a graduate of Monticello High School. Surviving are his wife, the former Mary Pidel of Yonkers, also a College at Oswego graduate; a daughter, Patricia (Pat); a brother, William Crawford, New York City and two sisters.



**Doug's Comments:** I'm pleased to announce that we will have the 35<sup>th</sup> Security Police Squadron “Heavy Weapons” veterans join us at our Phan Rang Veterans Reunion this year and hopefully every year after because they will realize what a great bunch of people we are. We are still on the lookout for speakers/presenters for the reunion. Our key-note speaker is lined up for the Saturday banquet and its going to be an encore performance because he spoke at the Oklahoma City reunion and he enthralled the audience with his story and I'm sure he will do it again. If you have an idea or would like to speak, please let me know. I'm reminded of our first reunion there when we didn't have any specific speaker lined up, but we just took turns getting up and telling our stories and I truly believe that I can tell you, at least the main part, of most of those stories. Maybe we could do something like that again. What a wonderful memory to have of those first participants. This truly will be a nostalgic reunion. 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](mailto:dougsevert@gmail.com) and put 'unsubscribe' in subject line.