

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang News No. 51

“Stories worth telling”

In this issue:

Back to the Mid 60s’

U.S. Troops Set Up Delta Base Camp

Series of Raids Batter Secondary Airstrips In North

GIs Huge Haul of VC Gear

1st Inf. Overruns 2 Red Hospitals In Iron Triangle

Artillery Mishap Kills 8 GIs

Viets Mark Year of Goat

Phan Rang Dedicates Facility in Honor of Pilot

Map of Phan Rang

Serving Our Country

Phan Rang Memories by Larry Theurer: Underwater Bomb Loading

Last Days of Vietnam (link)

A Trip to the Beach (Link)

Previous Issues of the Phan Rang News



Back to the Early 60s’

Note: I obtained several issues of the Pacific Stars and Stripes from Howard Taylor from 1966 and 1967 and because I thought that period of time was pretty significant to the Vietnam War I’m going to include in this issue and future issues all the Vietnam related articles from these issues. I hope you enjoy them as much as I have. The fold on both of these issues reads “Not for Sale” and the banner across the front reads “Share This Paper”.

**THE FOLLOWING ARTICLES ARE FROM THE PACIFIC STARS AND STRIPES, SUNDAY, JANUARY
15, 1967 EDITION**

U.S. Troops Set Up Delta Base Camp

SAIGON (UPI)—The advance element of the first American troops to be stationed in the Mekong Delta have moved into new base near My Tho, an American military spokesman announced Friday.

The spokesman said engineers, signal elements and security forces have moved to the camp at Dong Tan on the My Tho River about 5 miles southwest of My Tho.

The number of new troops now in the base was not announced. The spokesman said they were continuing preparation of the base for additional troops in the near future.

It was a week ago that U.S. Marines swept ashore from Seventh fleet landing craft for the first American assault in the delta. That was about 55 miles southwest of Saigon and about 25 miles southeast of My Tho.

The first elements actually got into the new base camp several days ago, but their arrival was not immediately announced for security reasons.

Series of Raids Batter Secondary Airstrips In North

WASHINGTON (AP)--U.S. warplanes knocked out north Vietnam's secondary airfields with a little-known series of bombing raids, sources said Friday. The raids apparently were halted sometime last year.

The United States has ruled only four major jet capable bases in the Hanoi-Haiphong area off limits, the sources said.

In 1965 and 1966, American strikes devastated five all-weather air strips which the communists could have used in a pinch for the operation of their small fleet of Soviet-made MIG fighters.

Twenty-nine bombing raids unleashed hundreds of tons of explosives in 1965 against bases at the former French stronghold of Dien Bien Phu, 180 miles west of Hanoi; at the coastal city of Vinh, about 200 miles north of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ); at Na San, 100 miles west of Hanoi; and at Dong Hoi, another coastal town only 40 miles north of the DMZ.

Last year, U.S. jets clobbered Dien Bien Phu again after communist construction teams had almost completed repairs; another strip at Phu Tho, 50 miles northwest of Hanoi in the heavily defended Red River Valley was attacked.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang News No. 51

“Stories worth telling”

The Phu Tho strip was a new base. U.S. planes waited until construction was almost finished, then streaked in with a destructive bombing sweep.

The communists sought to fix up the bases for possible use, especially at Dong Hoi, closest to the Republic of Vietnam, and Dien Bien Phu, which had been an important logistics transfer point.

Back came U.S. fighter-bombers.

Finally they gave up trying to repair them," a Pentagon spokesman said Friday.

At last report the secondary fields, with 1,121-yard runways able to accommodate the supersonic MIG fighters, were still largely useless.

Exactly when the raids against the bases ceased is unclear. The last strikes reported in military communiques occurred in February, 1966, at Dien Bien Phu and on Nov. 19 at Dong Hoi.

Officially, the Pentagon said the fields were neutralized because they could have handled military flights bringing in military personnel and equipment.

GIs Huge Haul of VC Gear

S&S Vietnam Bureau

SAIGON—U.S. forces on Operation Cedar Falls in the Iron Triangle have netted one of the biggest hauls of communist equipment and supplies in the history of the Vietnam war.

American military officials released a list of captured material Friday ranging from outboard motors to salt.

Topping the list are 2,100 tons of rice, 3,150 pounds of peanuts and 7,600 VC uniforms.

Other items found during the 5-day-old operation include:

- 1,000 pounds of salt.
- 100 rolls of poncho material.
- 1,500 pounds of rolled tin.
- 55 rolls of sheet metal.
- Two printing presses.
- Three sewing machines.
- 173 Chinese communists gas masks

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang News No. 51

“Stories worth telling”

American troops also captured 800 grenades, several outboard motors, 237 individual weapons, 10 crew-served weapons, 10 recoilless weapons and three U.S. M-79 grenade launcher launchers.

Officials said U.S. forces have destroyed 916 bunkers, 192 structures, 87 tunnels and 101 sampans during Cedar Falls.

1st Inf. Overruns 2 Red Hospitals In Iron Triangle

S&S Vietnam Bureau

SAIGON—U.S. infantrymen sweeping through communist strongholds in the Iron Triangle Thursday discovered two VC hospitals.

A 100-bed hospital and a three-story medical facility were found in dense forest northwest of Ben Suc. Two stories of the second hospital were underground.

Rice caches uncovered Thursday in the 60-square-mile Iron Triangle raised the total captured to 2,100 tons since Operation Cedar Falls began Jan. 8.

The huge rice haul—averaging 500 tons a day—is only 280 tons short of the record amount taken during Operation Attleboro a month ago.

Enemy casualties rose to 237 during scattered fights with small VC units. U.S. troops have taken 51 prisoners in the last five days.

Units of the 1st and 25th Inf. divisions also found several small Viet Cong base camps.

A large concrete bunker and concrete-lined tunnels were found by 25th Div. troops. Another bunker—booby-trapped by fleeing Viet Cong—was discovered by a 1st Inf. Div. unit. The soldiers detonated the trap, setting off a secondary explosion which collapsed the bunker.

Friendly casualties remain light.

In the Mekong Delta Thursday, a 9th Marines squad took moderate casualties in a battle with an enemy force 63 miles south of Saigon. Enemy casualties were unknown.

The Marines, joining Vietnamese units in the seven-day-old Deckhouse V operation, have killed eight VC, captured five and detained 39.

Friendly casualties are light.

(U.S. Marines killed 17 Viet Cong and captured seven after an attack on their artillery position early Friday near Chu Lai, AP reported.)

"Happy Valley" Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang News No. 51

"Stories worth telling"

The Marines said their casualties were light.)

Artillery Mishap Kills 8 GIs

S&S Vietnam Bureau

SAIGON — Supporting artillery fire landed on a 1st Inf. Div. position Friday afternoon, killing eight and wounding 34 American soldiers, U.S. military spokesmen announced.

The spokesmen said the mishap occurred during Operation Cedar Falls in the Iron Triangle, 20 miles north of Saigon.

The rounds fell on a unit of the 3d Brigade, 1st Inf. Div.

The spokesman said a preliminary investigation indicated the mishap was caused by an error in plotting of firing data. The investigation is continuing, he added.

A 1st Inf. Div. spokesman said the unit was hit by 16 rounds of 155mm howitzer fire as it cleared a landing zone.

Viets Mark Year of Goat

By TRAN NGUYEN NGOC
S&S Special Correspondent

SAIGON—The year 1967, according to the Vietnamese calendar, is the year of the goat.

Persons born in the year of the goat, symbolized by the number 35, are supposed to have a strong love of freedom and are generally easy going but at times inclined to be stubborn.

To be termed "No. 35" could be either complimentary or derogatory, depending on interpretation.

Despite more than 100 years of contact with the West, the Vietnamese stick mostly to the lunar calendar.

Tim month, of 29 or 30 days, is measured by the moon's revolutions around the earth. The 355-day Vietnamese calendar year is adjusted every three years by adding a thirteenth month.

The Vietnamese "century," divided into five cycles of 12 years or six cycles of 10 years, totals

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang News No. 51

“Stories worth telling”

60 years. A cycle of 10 years is depicted by 10 celestial stems representing the five elements of nature: wood, fire, earth, metal and water.

A cycle of 112 years is indicated by 12 terrestrial branches, each of which is symbolized by one of the 12 animals of the zodiac—rat, buffalo, tiger, cat, dragon, serpent, horse, goat, ape, cock, dog and hog.

All five elements of nature figure in casting horoscopes. Individuals planning marriage usually have their horoscopes made to find out if they are compatible.

It is believed that for a marriage to be successful the bride and groom must each have a preponderance of elements that stick together. Earth and metal, fire and earth, and wood and fire are considered cohesive. Otherwise—no go.

By the same token, it would be fortunate for a girl born under the sign of a tiger to become the wife of a man born under the sign of a hog.

Woe be to the man born under the sign of the rat if he marries a woman represented by the zodiacal cat.

Phan Rang Dedicates Facility in Honor of Pilot

By Sgt. Ralph H. Saenz

PHAN RANG - In a corner of the base flight line here stand nine concrete-covered revetments where eight F-100 Supersabre jet fighters and Andrews Hall are housed. This area is the base's new alert facility.



The facility was recently dedicated in memory of Capt. George R. Andrews, a Phan Rang - based pilot who was killed last year on a combat mission. Making the dedication address was Col. Walter T. Galligan, 35th Tactical Fighter Wing commander.

U.S. Air Force Photos by Sgt. Robert W. Inganni

Official Opening

Key Base Personnel Bow Heads During Dedication Ceremony

"Happy Valley" Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang News No. 51

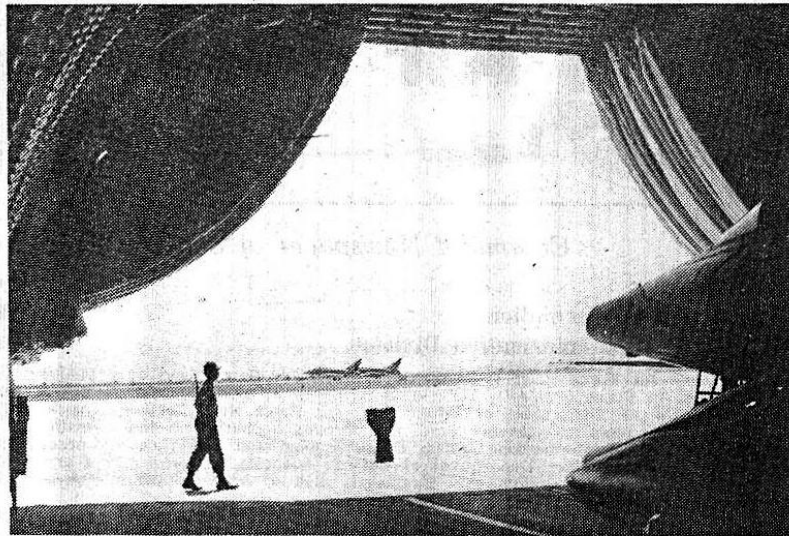
"Stories worth telling"

Captain Andrews, then a member of the 615th Tactical Fighter Squadron, scrambled from the alert facility for a mission while on night alert duty. During the mission his wing man reported the captain's plane appeared to pull up from a pass over the target and then rolled into the ground.

Constructed by the 554th Civil Engineering Squadron (RED HORSE), Andrews Hall is situated inside one of the covered revetments. The facility contains a small but adequate kitchen, which is staffed by three cooks who prepare for more than 20 persons at each meal.

A dining room, lounge, sleeping quarters, washing and shaving facilities, and movie theater room are available for the pilots and

crew chiefs from each of the base's four jet fighter squadrons, who pull alert duty for 12-hour shifts.



Alert Sentry
Security Policeman Guards Aircraft While F-100s Take Off

The concrete domes over the F-100s and Andrews Hall are 24 inches thick. The aircraft are additionally protected from enemy ordnance by three-ply, nylon blast curtains which can be drawn across the revetment openings.

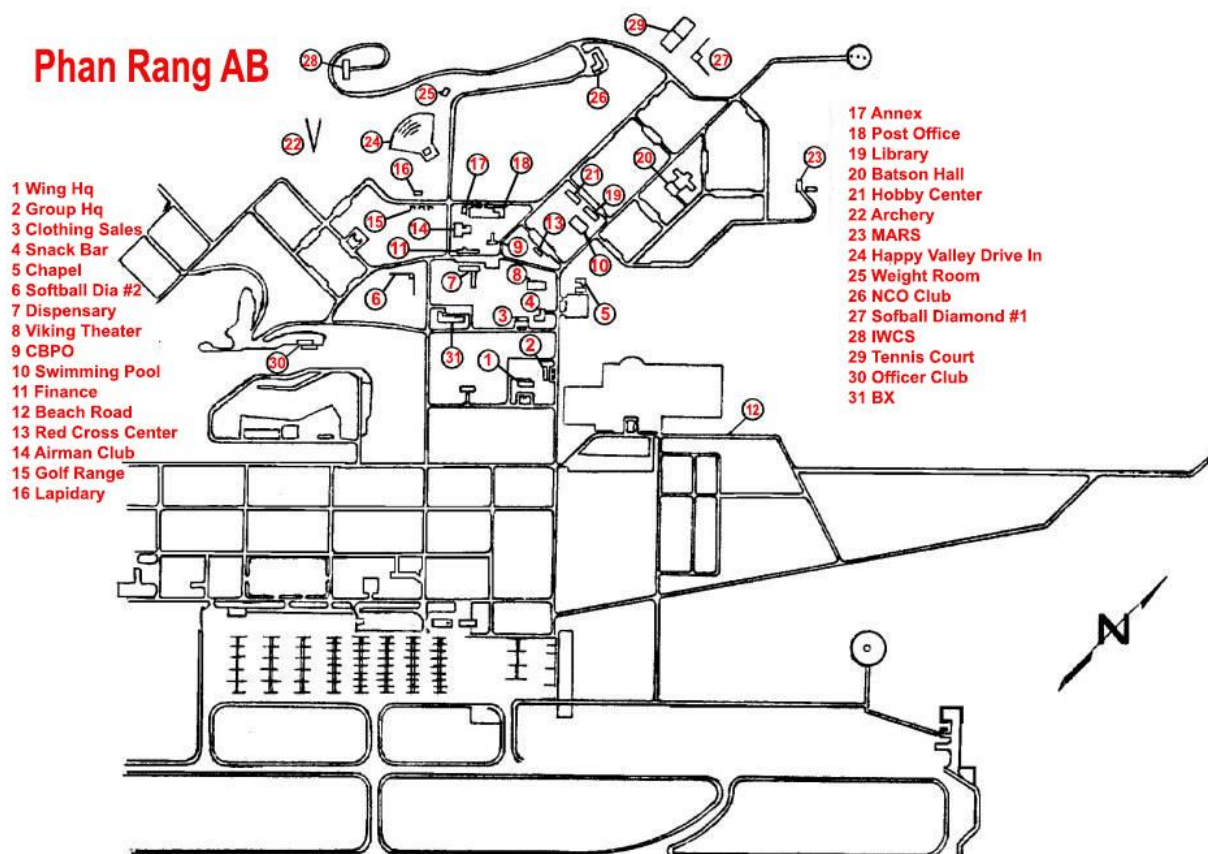
The blast curtains are a recent addition to aircraft protection in Southeast Asia.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang News No. 51

“Stories worth telling”

Map of Phan Rang AB courtesy of Charles F. Hendry



**"Happy Valley" Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang News No. 51

"Stories worth telling"



Pacific Air Forces sergeant sees duty at Phan Rang base (*The Mountain Democrat-Times, Placerville, Calif., Thursday, January 23, 1969*)

Staff Sergeant Vernon Lichtenberg, son of Halt Lichtenberg of Shingle Springs, on duty at Phan Rang Air base, Vietnam.

Sergeant Lichtenberg, an aircraft instrument technician is a member of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Southeast Asia, he was assigned to Nellis Air Force base, Nevada.

Sergeant McCabe on duty at Phan Rang (*The Mountain Democrat-Times, Placerville, Calif., Thursday, April 24, 1969*)

Sergeant William D. McCabe, son, of Mr. and Mrs. William C. McCabe, Rt. 1, Shingle Springs, is on duty at Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam.

Sergeant McCabe, a weapons mechanic, is in a unit of the Pacific air forces. Before his arrival in southeast Asia, he was assigned to Nellis AFB, Nevada.

A graduate of Ponderosa high school, the sergeant attended Sacramento city college. He is married to the former Linda J. Earles.

Vietnam Roll (*The Abilene Reporter-news, Abilene, Texas, Monday Evening, December 21, 1970*)

Joe A. Jordan, son of Mrs. Ruby Jordan of 1217-A Jeanette, has received the Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang, AB, Vietnam, from Col. Walter C. Turnler, 35th Tactical Fighter Wing Commander.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang News No. 51

“Stories worth telling”

Sgt. Jordan distinguished himself by meritorious service as an electrical power production technician at Phan Rang.

With District Men in the Military Forces (*Leader-Times, Kittanning, Pa., Wednesday, Feb. 28, 1968*)

PHAN RANG, Vietnam Army **First Lieutenant Robert F. Mateer III**, 24, whose parents live at 209 Lafayette Bethlehem, Pa., received the Bronze Star Medal near Phan Rang, Vietnam.

Lt. Mateer earned for outstanding meritorious service as executive officer of the 21st Supply and Service Company.

The lieutenant received a bachelor of science degree in 1965 from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and his commission through the Officers' Training Corps at the university.

With the Military Service (*Delaware County (PA.) Daily Times, Wednesday, October 8, 1968*)

Airman 1. C. Wayne R. Smith, whose parents live at 2717 Forwood St., Chester, has received the Air Medal at Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam.

Airman 3. C. William N. Westerberg, son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter R. Westerberg of 31 S. Wells Ave., Glenolden is on duty at Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam. A 1962 graduate of Interboro High School, he arrived in Viet Nam eight months ago.

WITH U. S. COMBAT AIR FORCES (*Leader-Times, Kittanning, Pa. Thursday, April 24, 1969*)

Vietnam — **Sergeant George D. Lowers**, son of Mr. and Mrs. George J. Lowers, Freeport RD. is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Sergeant Lowers, an aircraft mechanic, is assigned to a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Vietnam, he served at Stewart AFB, N.Y.

The sergeant is a 1965 graduate of Kiski Area Senior High School, Leechburg.

WITH U.S. COMBAT AIR FORCES (*Leader-Times, Kittanning, Pa. Tuesday, Aug. 8, 1967*)

Vietnam — **Airman Second Class Earl R. Rupert**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Roy G. Rupert Sr. of 692 Main St., Ford City, Pa., is serving on temporary duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

The airman, a weapons mechanic, was permanently assigned at Clark AB. Philippines, before arriving in Vietnam. The airman is a 1964 graduate of Ford City Union High School.

WITH U.S. COMBAT AIR FORCES (*Leader-Times, Kittanning, Pa. Tuesday, Aug. 8, 1967*)

Vietnam — **Airman First Class Francis P. Welnetz Jr.**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Francis P. Welnetz Sr. of 1117 Fourth Ave., Antigo, Wis., is serving on temporary duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang News No. 51

“Stories worth telling”

Airman Welnetz, an air armament mechanic , was permanently assigned at Clark AB, Philippines, before arriving in Vietnam.

The airman is a 1963 graduate of Antigo Senior High School.

His wife, Harriet, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Earl Blose of Craigsville, Pa.

HUSBAND OF JANESVILLE WOMAN AT PHAN RANG (*Janesville Daily Gazette, Wednesday, March 6, 1968*)

Sgt. Wesley Kincaid, husband of the former Leslea McGinniss, 1611 Anthony Ave., is on duty at Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam serving as an administrative specialist. He was assigned to Charleston AFB, S.C, before going to Vietnam as a member of the Pacific Air Forces.

News of Men and Women in Military Service (*News-Herald, Panama City, Fla., Thursday, Dec. 30, 1971*)

Capt. William K. Turpin, son of Gordon K. Turpin, 1118 Magnolia Ave. has received the Meritorious Service Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Capt. Turpin, who distinguished himself as staff security officer and chief of the installations security division at Ent AFB, Colo., now is at Phan Rang as a security police officer.

He was commissioned in 1962 through Officer Training School, Lackland AFB, Tex. A 1956 graduate of Bay High School, he received a B.S. degree in criminology in 1962 from Florida State University.

His wife is the former Sharon M. Demarest.

In Vietnam (*Monroe News Star, Friday, January 13, 1967*)

Phan Rang, Vietnam (Special) - Army **Specialist Fifth Class Billie J. Griffin**, 30, son of Mrs. Annie Lumpkin, Route 1, arrived in Phan Rang, Vietnam, December 13 with his unit, the 21st Supply and Service Company.

The company was previously located at Ft. Campbell, Ky.,

Spec. Griffin entered the Army in February 1959 and completed basic training at Fort Chaffee, Ark.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

Phan Rang News No. 51

“Stories worth telling”



UNDERWATER BOMB LOADING

I’m in one of the new steel revetments on the concrete ramp on the West side of the runway.

I’m sitting on a small low board mounted on 4 rolling wheels, sliding in and out of the B-57 bomb bay, configuring bomb racks to fit the next scheduled load. Jim Avery is up top on the wing working on the guns. It is just the two of us working there.

It was a 90 degrees bright sunny sky, but lots of big storm clouds rapidly rolling through. There would be hot burning sun for 25 minutes and then incredible downpour rain the next 20 minutes.

The old perforated steel plate ramp on the East side of the runway had holes in it. The new concrete had no holes for the water to drain out of. It just would just drain downhill.

A really big cloud drifted over and opened up. There was no wind, lightning, or thunder, just a tremendous volume of very warm water coming straight down like 10 fire hoses. Avery just hunkered under a rain poncho and sat on top of the wing waiting it out. I’m under the protection of the wing so I kept on working.

As I’m working, the water, confined inside three sides of the revetment, is getting deeper and deeper. Avery looked down and asked if I’m OK. I said yes and kept working. Eventually the water is over a foot deep and I look down and it is completely over my lap, up to my belly. Just the upper part of my body and my knees are sticking out of the water. After 15 minutes the cloud passed by, the rain stopped and drained away. My boots and wallet were totally soaked. I had to dry everything out later and got a plastic bag to carry my wallet in for the next flood.

(A2C Lawrence (Larry) Theurer was with the 8th Tactical Bomb Squadron, loading munitions aboard the B-57 Canberras. I was fortunate to have meet Larry at the B-57 Bummers reunion in Branson, Missouri and after I had seen what he had written I asked if I could share his stories with the Phan Rang community. Of course he agreed and this is just the first of many more stories to come.)

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive**

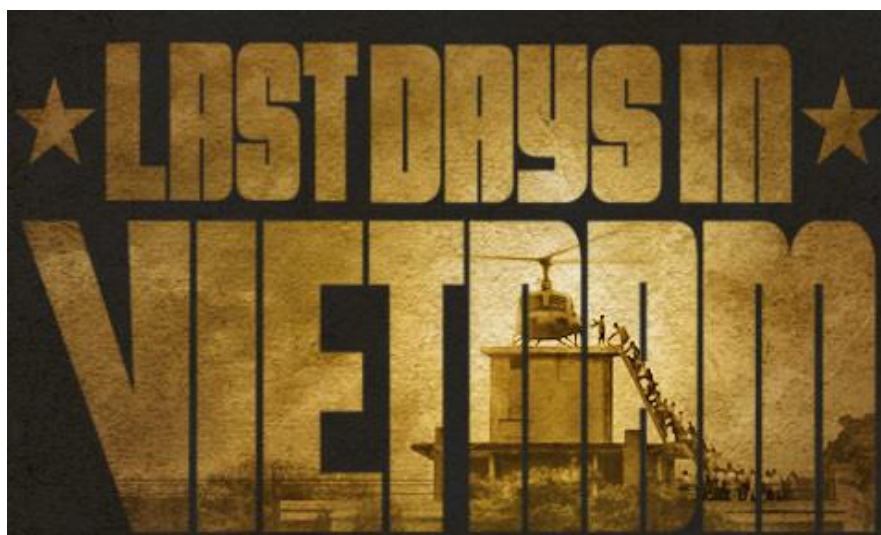
Phan Rang News No. 51

“Stories worth telling”



Larry in 1967 sitting on the engine of the B-57 working on the guns. The B-57 had two options for their guns, .50 cal machine guns or 20mm cannons. The parts laying on the wing are for 20mm cannon. The part on the right is the feed chute for the ammo. The part on the left is the mechanism that fed the ammo in and removed the spent shells.

The cannons only had one barrel but had a 5 round cylinder like a giant revolver pistol. They fired 3000 rounds a minute. The ammo can only held about 1600+ rounds. The rounds were fired by electricity instead of mechanical firing pins. Each wing had two cannons. I believe they were first invented by the Germans in WWII I.



[Last Days in Vietnam Trailer](#)

[A Trip to the Beach](#) posted to Facebook by Tony Lehtola

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
...keeping the memories alive

Phan Rang News No. 51

“Stories worth telling”

Previous Issues of the Phan Rang News

To download any of the previous issues of the Phan Rang News, just click the hyperlink of the desired issue.

Phan Rang News 1	Phan Rang News 2	Phan Rang News 3	Phan Rang News 4
Phan Rang News 5	Phan Rang News 6	Phan Rang News 7	Phan Rang News 8
Phan Rang News 9	Phan Rang News 10	Phan Rang News 11	Phan Rang News 12
Phan Rang News 13	Phan Rang News 14	Phan Rang News 15	Phan Rang News 16
Phan Rang News 17	Phan Rang News 18	Phan Rang News 19	Phan Rang News 20
Phan Rang News 21	Phan Rang News 22	Phan Rang News 23	Phan Rang News 24
Phan Rang News 25	Phan Rang News 26	Phan Rang News 27	Phan Rang News 28
Phan Rang News 29	Phan Rang News 30	Phan Rang News 31	Phan Rang News 32
Phan Rang News 33	Phan Rang News 34	Phan Rang News 35	Phan Rang News 36
Phan Rang News 37	Phan Rang News 38	Phan Rang News 39	Phan Rang News 40
Phan Rang News 41	Phan Rang News 42	Phan Rang News 43	Phan Rang News 44
Phan Rang News 45	Phan Rang News 46	Phan Rang News 47	Phan Rang News 48
Phan Rang News 49	Phan Rang News 50		