

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 68

"Stories worth telling"

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Huskie Crew Saves Downed Sabre Pilot (Seventh Air Force News, August 7, 1968)

PHAN RANG—Two HH-43B Huskie helicopter crews assigned to Detachment 1, 38th Rescue and Recovery Squadron here recently saved a downed F-100 Supersabre pilot.

Maj. Gregory J. Butler, Phoenix, Ariz., an F-100 pilot assigned to the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing, had just taken off from Phan Rang enroute to a target in III Corps area.

"We had just taken off," the pilot said, in an interview later, "and made our turn in the pattern to head south. After about six minutes in the air, my wingman called to say that fuel was streaming from my airplane just, behind the canopy. Then he told me that I was on fire and to get out!"

The Supersabre pilot did not hesitate.

"I immediately blew the canopy and was ejected out," he said. "I started tumbling until the

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parachute opened and then had a normal descent."

Several Army helicopter gunships, operating north of the base, quickly diverted to fly cover for the downed pilot.

While Major Butler was ejecting, the two Huskie helicopters at Phan Rang were being scrambled for the rescue.

One helicopter was airborne in seconds with Maj. William C. Emrie, Florissant, Mo. and Maj. Donald R. Brooks, Colorado Springs, Colo., *in the cockpit*. Sgt. Richard L. McNeese, Slidell, La., was the flight engineer. "As we arrived at the scene, the pilot on the ground fired a flare," said Major Emrie. "We just went into his exact location and made the pick-up."

"When we got over the man on the ground," Major Emrie continued, "Sergeant McNeese threaded the forest penetrator hoist through the jungle canopy and made the pick-up."

On the ground Major Butler became concerned when at first he couldn't locate the three-pronged anchor-like penetrator in the dense jungle. Then, it landed right at his feet.

SSgt. Angel Luna, Midwest City, Okla., was the medical technician on board the helicopter. Sergeant Luna said, "I gave him a quick check when we got him into the elicopter, and, except for a slight cut on his nose and forehead, he seemed to be in fine shape."

During their return to Phan Rang, red streaks from enemy tracer rounds went flying past the plexiglass of the canopy. An AC-47 Dragonship, assigned to Flight B, 3rd Air Commando Squadron, located at Phan Rang used its rapid-firing mini-guns to suppress the ground fire.

When the rescue helicopter landed at Phan Rang it was met by medical personnel who immediately checked Major Butler and pronounced him in good shape.



HOME SAFELY—Maj. Gregory J. Butler, Phoenix, Ariz., is escorted to an ambulance by Phan Rang AB medical personnel after ejecting from a burning F-100 Supersabre over enemy territory. Major Butler was rescued by an HH-43 Huskie helicopter assigned to Detachment 1, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron.



Snoopy 'Psy Ops' Milk Run

On a clear cool night we started our Snoopy Psy Ops milk run.

We took off around 9:00 PM and headed out to the NW to fly our normal 4 hour mission to play our standard "Wandering Soul" Psy Ops tape over the loud speaker system.

As many of you know, the old Goonie Birds a very quiet and stable platform for the task. Being a calm comfortable night, we entered our orbit at 1500' AGL and began to circle a reported VC encampment. Round and round we went, occasionally flying into our own wake turbulence which would gently bounce us a little, nothing unusual.

Because of the location of the speaker amplifiers, I found a comfortable reclining position near the entrance door that had been removed and replaced with a weather rotted webbing. This open door allowed for a nice breeze to help make the ride rather more comfortable one.

We had about 2 more targets to hit that night with the tapes provided by intel. The Wandering Soul tape was basically about a VC that had been killed and his voice was coming out of the night to convince his comrades to lay down their weapons and give up becoming Hoi Chauns.

I played it once in the barracks to the house girls, scared them to death. Anyway, as we departed our first target and headed to the second I was well relaxed in the back when I heard the co-pilot shout on the intercom "WHAT THE HELL !!!!!!!!".

I opened my eyes (No, I was just resting, not sleeping) to see the right side of the plane lit up bright with several orange flashes. Being the flight engineer I ran forward to see if we had an engine fire, but that was not the case! The bright flashes and explosions continued on a ground track in front of us!

We were in the middle of an ARC Light, a B-52 bombing run. The flashes had a pattern, 2 smaller bombs then a larger. We figured it was a line of 500-750 pound dumb bombs. What was amazing was the first bombs started going off UNDER US!

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The aircraft commander, Capt Ostrozney used to fly the Buffs fortunately and knew they normally flew a 3 ship abreast formation. If we turned left or right we could have turned directly into a wing mans bomb run. No more bombs after the first string. Assumed the single ship was hitting an alternate target. The same target we were to hit!

About 5 minutes after we cleaned out our shorts, Water Boy, the controlling agency came up on Guard (Commonly called Vietnamese common chatter frequency) and announced "Heavy Artillery 0 to 50,000 feet."

Thanks a lot Axx Hole!

So much for a milk run! 100% true mission flown out of Happy Valley 1970



Parachutes From a post by Larry Miller



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Tom McKeown Were they loadmasters?	Larry Miller I think so Tom.
Charles Hough Tom, normal crew on the 9th gonnies were 2 pilots, 1 Navigator, 1 Flight Engineer and 1 Load master. Exceptions would be when somebody was getting a check ride or being trained.	David Knighton Here is a question: I noticed in the pictures that no one is wearing parachutes. Were they available or was it a given that if the plane was going down it didn't matter? This would also apply to you guys who flew on Spooky and Shadow. Thanks
Charles Hough David Knighton, We had cutes on the plane for everyone. We brought our harnesses and vests with us when we stepped to the plane. On the forward cabin bulkhead we had a gun rack for M 16s and then carried a 38 pistol. We rarely wore all that gear while flying, just kept it handy if needed. My usual equipment was a flight suit and my 38 belt holster like the guy in the picture. Too hot for all the other stuff. The only time I thought I needed a chute was when i was FE on an EC 121 flying up north, we got jumped by a MIG off of Hyphong Christmas eve 1967 But that's another story..... We were out of Koratt Thailand back then, not Phan Rang	Marjorie T Hansen David Knighton, I am so glad you asked that question. What about parachutes for the C-123's? I received a heart stopping letter from Charlie 12 May 71 and in his letter he wrote "...It's all and all quite a bit of junk to be wearing especially since we don't carry parachutes." I can't find his answer. Can you help me out on this? Did C-123s on troop transport, missions into fire bases, and parachute drops have chutes for the crew?
David Knighton I only flew on C-123's twice. Going from Cam Rahn Bay to Phan Rang at the beginning of my tour and then the other way at the end of my tour. We certainly weren't given a parachute for those trips. I never received one on any of the other cargo planes I flew on either (C-124 and C-47 back in the States). There are quite a few guys on here that would know the answer though. Come on guys, help us out. Thanks!	Marjorie T Hansen Thank you, David. Don't know why but this has been on my mind for several weeks. Just doesn't seem right if paratroopers jumped out of the planes and the crews didn't carry parachutes. Yes, guys, help us out on this. Did you C-123 guys on crews carry parachutes?
Tom Strait I was crew chief for the 309th Bookie Birds and on flying status for 9 months. Nope, never saw a parachute.	Charles Hough On our C-47s during combat missions we had parachute harnesses as personal equipment, On board the plane we had chest pack chutes. When flying passenger missions we never brought chutes for crew or passengers.
Marjorie T Hansen I think I have my answer from Tom Strait and Charles Hough about no parachutes. Thanks, Larry Miller for the pictures you posted that ultimately led to a 44	Charles Hough When we did paratroop drops from C124s the loadmaster wore a chute.

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year old question--that now has an answer.	
Marjorie T Hansen Thanks, Charles Hough. Charlie also mentioned in his letter to me that he carried a loaded .38 and 24 rounds of extra ammo. I've learned so much from all of you and I really thank you for the answers!!	Kirk Minert What is in the boxes? psyh war leaflets?
Larry Miller Good guess Kirk Minert. The boxes are full of leaflets. Kirk Minert Very interesting. You learn something new every day.	Robert Chapplear Answer Parachutes for C-123 crews - - - When I first got to Phan Rang (4 Oct 68) we normally did not carry chutes. The only missions for which we carried chutes were cargo drops. We carried one for each crew member and they hung on hooks in the cargo bay. The loadmaster wore a harness tethered to the static line in case he fell out. Later in my tour (probably about June 69, we started to carry chutes all the time, but as I said they hung on hooks in the cargo bay. Now as to why they weren't used - we had two engines plus the jets. The airplane is supposed to fly on one. I landed single engine after losing a jug on number one engine, after having a fire on number two and a couple of other times for various reasons. As for when we carried passengers, if we lost an engine and were overweight we would just start jettisoning passengers starting with the lowest ranking Army guy. (Just kidding of course!)
Tom Strait Remember Robert, the plane was originally a glider. Challenge for the pilot was to find a large enough open area which was VERY important to the pilot as he sat in the front and would be the first to feel the impact. LOL. Robert Chapplear You're right! Originally designed as the first all metal assault glider, then somebody got a smart idea, "Hey let's hang some engines on it." And look what happened!	
Tom Strait Yes, and then came jets. Makes you wonder how short of a take-off if they put JATO bottles on it.	Robert Chapplear Didn't need JATO. As part of demonstrations at Hurlburt Field (when the RTU was in Florida) a C-123 used to approach the runway at 7500 feet above the ground, pull the power back to idle, drop the gear, lower assault flaps, and dive at the runway (you'd swear it came straight down), swap ends and land on the runway, reverse the props and come to a stop, open the door, lower the ramp, a jeep and trailer containing a mobile control tower and crew would drive out the back , the airplane would restart the jets, close the door and ramp then take off in

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	what was left of the runway, Oh yea --- did you realize the airplane runway was dirt and totaled 2500 feet in length. Landing and take off only used about 1875 of the whole length. You did realize the airplane did not back up don't you, just landed, stopped offloaded, and took off!!
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So many picture postings and subsequent comments add to the history and experience painting a vivid portrait of Phan Rang AB and I wish I could capture all of them, but I can't. For this issue of Phan Rang News I've captured some of those most recent stories most of them initiated by Steve Russ. The first person accounts remind me of the award winning documentaries by Ken Burns. *Douglas Severt*

F-100 Load Configuration from a post by Steve



Here's a 352nd bird, 955, tail code VM. I can't make out the full serial number and haven't had a whole lot of luck researching it. Note the napalm hanging on the inboard starboard rack without its nose cone. You can see the Willie Peter canister with the fuse installed. Can't remember it's (fuse) designation number. Also loaded with Mk 82's on outboard racks.

Dan Poormon I think the Fuze

Jim Mattison FMU-7/B

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was a FZU-7/B.	
George Carrie I never saw napalm mounted like that. They always sat on the racks fully enclosed. I never launched a Hun down in the 352nd row and that thrust-remover was never in the 614th perpendicular to the 352nd covered revetments near the ATC tower, and us, the 615th. Now that's a great idea! They weren't on the EOR alert pad but I guess we were so far away from the crowd to bother anyone with a blast! Great pic!	Jim Mattison Interesting load configuration 2 BLU-1s and 2 Mk82s. Not particularly safe condition of having the fuzed WP canister out in the open like that. Steve Russ Once those munitions were fused, it was time to REALLY mind what you were doing. I always treated those nose and tail fuses like hand grenades when loading arming kits. Didn't care that the vane had to spin, what? 1000 revs to arm them? Also kept an iron grip on those WP canisters when handling them too, remembering how hot and fast that stuff burned in chemistry class when air hit it. One of the few things I DO remember from chemistry, for that matter.
Jim Mattison Never had to combat load the nape oops incendigel Had to train in the fine art of their handling on F-4D in Misawa, Taegu & Kunsan. Amazing the stupid stuff I remember from 45 years ago. I guess we were trained well, eh? As a Weapons Load Chief, always had to ensure we had the water bucket handy. Weeping and smoking WP canisters were dangerous as hell.	Steve Russ Yep, amen to that Jim. We kept a 50 gal drum of stagnant, smelly water beside the storage container next to the components shack. Problem was, who the hell would want to pick up one of those things if it cracked open to throw it in the barrel? It was probably there more for you to hop in if any WP got stuck on you. If the fourth-degree burn didn't get you, the infection from that stanky water probably would.
Jim Mattison Kind of wondering if this plane was being setup for base defense alert? Seems like a puny loadout, almost not even worth launching.	Steve Russ This was probably taken early in 1970, Paul. I was still on day shift from Jan to March, I think, they went to nights working Red 6. Unless it was taken when I first came on shift at 6pm and still daylight.

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George Carrie I also wondered who made these ordinance configurations. Maybe not enough room for 2 naps on a TER? Maybe short of bombs that day? But like this picture, you'd think the extra 500 on a TER would be beneficial on a mission - might just need those 2 to finish off Charlie!

Steve Russ Now that I look closer, I see it is, in fact, a D Model, not an F. Thought it could have been 56-3955, but that is an F model number. I'll have to send it to the database.



C-47 Conversation posted by Steve Russ: Last one for the night. This appears to be a C-47 since it has its side cargo door and the fact the AC versions had been replaced by the AC-119s and AC-130s by 1970. I don't recall seeing any AC-47s at Phan Rang AB while I was there. Notice Pedro doing a photo bomb up top. At first I thought it was a speck of dirt because there was a white line from dust running through it from the negative scan.



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Joseph Luther Had to look hard for Pedro. AC-47 was Puff in 1967.	Steve Russ Right-o, Joe. I'm thinking this is a cargo version because the side cargo door is intact. Plus the fact the ACs were no longer used in 70, yes? Either this was always a cargo hauler or converted back most likely.
Joseph Luther We had a base C-47 for the routine administrative circuit riding and contraband smuggling.	Joseph Luther My last hop on a C-47 the left engine cowling fell off during run up. Crew chief got out picked it up and tossed it into the back of the bird. A little why later, the nab tossed his cigar out the window and it went into that engine. Cough cough.
Steve Russ I caught a ride in one of these birds when I was stationed in England on a hop from Upper Heyford to Lakenheath. Glad it was a short ride, is all I have to say. Those slings aren't the best seat for traveling. I couldn't help but wonder if any airborne troops jumped from it during WW II.	Steve Russ That's partly why they're still flying today.
Phil Burford I crewed the first C-47 at Phan Rang as a 1 & 2 Engine Jet man, until they finely got a Reciprocating man in '66. Wish I knew the tail no.	Kirk Minert This is an EC-47 from one of the TEWS units. You can tell it is an EC because of the longer nose. Thanks for sharing.
Steve Russ Thanks, Kirk! Didn't think of that!!	



Charles F Hendry This looks like another photo of the same aircraft above. What is that long vertical antenna wire right behind the cockpit?

John T. Weigelt I believe that's the HF antenna.

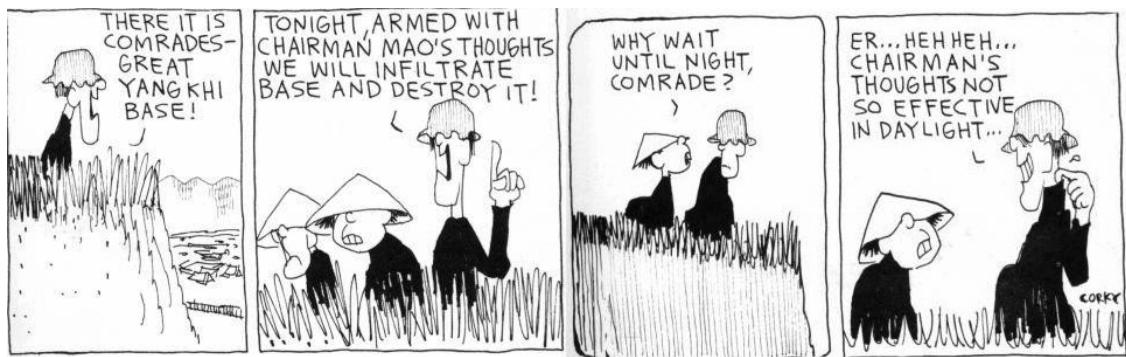
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Joseph Burkhart I believe the antenna. wire running from near ADF /cockpit to top edge of the tail was HF the other was I think FM for ground troop contact . This appears to be a Psy-Ops A/C aka Bull-Shit Bomber.	
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Nguyen Charlie



Robert MacAvoy posted this picture along with his comments:



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If I'm not mistaken this is the Phan Rang taxi. C-47 #48941 at PR in '67-'68. In 1977 it was registered as N87880 and still flying in the USA. At some time since then it was decertified and sitting at an airport somewhere in Virginia. I flew on her several times going on TDY's.



Robert MacAvoy This is a photo I took of the interior of C-47 #48941 when I was on my way to Binh Thuy to repair an F-100 with a bullet hole in its lower fuel cell. I still have the bullet that I removed from the fuel cell. Anyone recognize the crew chief and his assistant?



Christopher Boles ...can someone answer the age old question) what (exactly) is WETSU Airlines?

Joseph Burkhardt We Eat This Shit Up ...as it was explained to me.

Mike Oliver Joe your right on!

Bill Petrie Joe is right.....We used to yell WETSU all the time going through jungle & survival school.

Uncle Row Munitions from a post by Steve Russ

Steve Russ Found a few more negatives. I'm excited. This one reminds me of the Beggin' Strips

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commercial with the dog's nose chasing after the bacon smell. In this case, it's the nose of my components tractor chasing the smell of Tritonal. Any fellow stackers or gun plumbers recognize some of the CBU's here? I see 2 Katie High Drags and one possible low drag, but for the life of me, don't remember the other specialty munitions here. Quite a variety. Didn't haul these that often, which is why I don't recall their designations. One or two are rocket pods, I think, yes? Also, what squadron area are we looking at here on Uniform Row?



Steve Russ Make that 'Uncle Row". Forgot. We didn't use NATO Codes, did we?	David Knighton Uncle Row for trailers with Uncles.
Ronald S. Zulkiewski loaded a few in 68 had one of the detents go off at the end of runway what a mess.	Steve Russ Remember any of the designation info on any of these, Ron? Ronald S. Zulkiewski they were cbus i think can't remember the numbers little round balls with antenas on them came rolling out of those holes in the back the detent wwas to hold them, in until airborne and over target anti personnel bomlets
Steve Russ The one on the middle trailer looks like a CBU-24. The one with the tennis ball sized bomblets that spread when the dispenser split open after deploying. The dark cigar shaped dispensers should be the ones that deployed the munitions from the bottom, if memory serves.	
Ronald S. Zulkiewski the one at the end of the runway didn't split open about 10 to 20 of those suckers came out hit the apron and the aircraft crew chief and the pilot's eyes got as big as golf balls and they shut the aircraft down in a hurry and i never saw a pilot get out of the cock pit so fast EOD was called but I	Steve Russ I was just doing some research and the cigar shaped ones may be either CBU-19a/b's or CBU-30s. Both those numbers ring a bell and I believe they are both downward ejection type munitions.

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think 461's from the bomb dump finally cleaned up the mess. Wow the memory is jogged again that's 47 years ago lol.	
Ronald S. Zulkiewski ya the ones with the long tubes were when the aircraft landed T THE END OF THE RUNWAY us gun plumbers had to go and look up each tube to ensure the detent was still intact or the tube was empty hell of a job but someone had to do it.	Steve Russ they were reusable too, yes? The CBU-24s were dropped, so one and done.
Steve Russ I bet. Like my old boss used to say, "You know, it could be worse, Steve. I could have to do it!"	

When It Rains It Pours *from a post by Steve Russ*



Steve Russ How about a little Texas Flood, Vietnam style? Never noticed this before, but there are two guys standing under the second floor landing of barracks 447 or 441. Hard to tell, but looks like 447. It took me zooming in to clean up the dust spots to notice them after all these years. I lost a flipflop heading to the latrine during one of these monsoons. Got sucked right off my foot and took off downstream. Wasn't about to try to catch it in all that mud and one bare foot.

Christopher Boles When it rained at PR, it poured. It also had a very distinct smell afterwards of being clean and washed. Only a

Steve Russ I seem to remember a couple guys stripped down to a pair of shorts, grabbed a dolly or two and used their ponchos for sails

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<p>couple of times since coming back have I had that experience and it takes me right back there.</p> <p>George Carrie It even poured there when the sun was out!</p>	<p>out on the flight line in that downpour and went half wind sailing, half swimming. Probably more so on the ramp areas. Was a safe bet because no planes were going anywhere, for sure. Not much of anything going on outside. Think about the guys on the perimeter and ground troops, what they had to deal with while we were having fun.</p>
<p>Steve Russ I remember going up the road on Nui Dat one day and you could see the pockets of heavy rain travelling across the countryside. This might have been one of those times where part of the base was sunny, and raining on another part.</p>	<p>Bobby Flack Love the rain pictures. I'd ALMOST forgotten about walking around in ponchos, the latrines flooding and the rain coming in through the screened sides of the room. For days.</p>
<p>Steve Russ With the wind, the ponchos were almost useless. You'd still get soaked from the waist down if you were out in it for more than a minute or two</p>	<p>Bobby Flack We're sounding a bit like Forrest Gump, but that (and steaks grilling with plenty of beer) were a couple of things the movie got right on.</p>
<p>Steve Russ Right-O, Bobby, and I have the proof of those steaks and beer right here. Sorry the photo is dirty. I cleaned it up around the guys in a hurry so I could post it. I forgot about this particular frame, because my roommate, Bill Baty must have taken it for me. That's me all the way to the right, holding a can of Schlitz. And, I can honestly say, that time over there was the last time I ever held one.</p>	<p>Christopher Boles There was a day when it was raining like you said about being wet here and dry over there. I went out in a torrential down pour. The SPS building across the street was in a deluge and I was standing in dry sunshine. Weirdest thing I have ever seen.</p>

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Agent Orange from a posting by Christopher Boles

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SEVENTH AIR FORCE NEWS

May 14, 1969



Back to the Corral

UC-123 Provider defoliation aircraft of the 12th Special Operations Squadron fly low over Bien Hoa AB as they return from daily missions in the Republic of Vietnam. The UC-123 crews, using a commercial herbicide solu-

tion used by millions of Americans, temporarily defoliate thick jungle areas which provide cover for the enemy. The aerial spray used has a lasting effect from

two to three weeks and has been successful in uncovering and exposing enemy concentration areas, storage area, base camps and resupply trails.

(Photo by AIC Johnnie Gurley)

<p>Archie T Pinkley I like the words "has a two to three week Effect"" Little did they Know ...!!!</p> <p>Floyd Brown I feel that the Chem E's that developed this agent knew full well what the lasting effect would be on the land and it's people..</p>	<p>Steve Russ Agree Archie. That caption should now read "lasting at least 2 to 3 generations, if not more and has been successful in uncovering and exposing serious health issues for all who came in contact with it."</p>
<p>Jim Kucipeck Floyd Brown they did know full well what AO was all about. Google Agent Orange and you will find a wealth of information on the subject.</p> <p>Jim Kucipeck The engineers and the generals knew the risks but were willing to take the risk and we suffer for it 'til we die!</p>	<p>Floyd Brown I don't understand it, knowing what they knew why did they still deploy this agent in such mass quantities.. Or were they willing to just accept the calculated risk based upon taking cover away from the enemy.. Surly they could have either used less or they could have made the agent safer.</p>
<p>Floyd Brown Well, these is one thing for sure GI's have learned to die very well.. Hope more is done to help those that are suffering now and in the future.. But I doubt it..</p> <p>Jim Kucipeck Floyd Brown the generals were more concerned with denying the VC their cover and food than they were about us.</p>	<p>Marjorie T Hansen Christopher Boles, you cannot image the kick in the gut when I saw the article you posted from 7th AF News. The Department of Defense contracted with 9 chemical companies, primarily Monsanto Corp and Dow Chemical to produce Agent Orange. Both companies under oath have stated that the government specified the chemical composition of Agent Orange, and when, where, and how the material was to be used. In 1965 the chemical companies were aware that Agent Orange had harmful effects for humans. Yes, Jim Kucipeck, you are correct.</p>
<p>Jim Kucipeck Ms. Marjorie I knew that you were out there in the cyber world taking note of this discussion and we always welcome your input. You are most knowledgeable on</p>	

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the subject and certainly well read.	They knew but were willing to take the risk. To read the article from May 14, 1969, is very disturbing.
Floyd Brown Marjorie is surly a very knowledgeable person and friend.. Very glad she takes the time to help keep us informed.. Thank you.	George Carrie It was a great idea but sure didn't work out well, later.
Floyd Brown The project must have been schedule driven with little regard for any long term problems.	Jim Kucipeck Floyd Brown were we all exposed whether you worked inside or out. Flight crew, flight line, office or where ever we all breathed it exposed our skin to it. I have a good friend who was a clerk in Long Binh who is about to die from AO.
Marjorie T Hansen No, Jim, I am struggling to keep up on this conversation. We all have a voice and we know the truth now. I am so privileged to be a part of your conversation but I am not an authority on this. I promise you I will keep studying and keep poking at the DoD for answers! We need to have a fresh new dialogue on Agent Orange. It is why I wrote my book!	<p>Jim Kucipeck It bares repeating, if you are not in the VA Health Care system, get moving! AO is taking its toll on us!</p> <p>Jim Kucipeck Ms. Marjorie and a good book it is. A must read for all.</p>
Joseph Burkhart The thing I have mentioned several times is the "yellow rain" that would occure when a A/C would have a in-flight , abort the mission , circle PR to dump their load to come in on an emergency. All that oily foul smelling shit would get on troops who were outdoors and we were told "Its OK and Safe ".	<p>Jim Kucipeck AO, malathion, "yellow rain", burn pits and who knows what else all contribute to our "condition".</p> <p>Joseph Burkhart For many years I was on the AO registry and received the VA's AO newsletter , one thing they had in it was a RANCH-HAND air and ground crew on-going study .They quit sending the Newsletters out (to save money ?) and I was wondering if anyone knows what became of that study ? In the Newsletter they made it sound like those folks were healthy & happy and their exposures didn't harm them in the slightest.</p>
Joseph Burkhart 10-4 Steve and what Marjorie is saying is correct, we all need to be Pro-active in bringing these facts to our elected officials attention and keeping them front & center to make them deal with this problem instead of the usual "head-in-the-sand " avoidance.	
Marjorie T Hansen What we are all struggling with right now knows that when 7th Air Force published the 14 May 1969 article that Chris posted they knew that Agent Orange was a lethal herbicide but were willing to take the	Christopher Boles The photo I posted with the date was for a "time marker." The comments are from whoever wrote the caption at the base where this originated. Most likely it was from some higher up the food chain as we say

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<p>risk. Some of us became expendable in their reasoning. This is unacceptable and each of us has a voice. I am also a victim of Agent Orange as a result of my time with Charlie at NKP in 1972. I have TRICARE for Life as a result of Charlie's service so I will be taken care of. That is not the point. Our country is exceptional and we do exceptional things. We took risks that had consequences, and we (our country) need to be accountable for the consequences. That is not happening and that is why I continue to say that each of us has a voice. The dialogue that you have started tonight is great. Let your US representatives and senators know about tonight's conversation. I am blessed to be a part of this group. Thank you, Christopher Boles for your part in this.</p>	<p>what he was to write. Taken in context of being 1969, most likely the guys who were exposed were only being told what everyone else was saying as that is what came down the pipe. I was all over that base, out in the jungle near the base as well as in the planes where ever they went for the day. My extent of exposure isn't known until I get to the AO exam on Tuesday. It isn't about the money, I just want to have my medical covered for the rest of my time here on earth. If there is AO compensation for the exposure, then that is extra I am not counting on. The VA took great care of my father who had asbestosis from being a machinist in the engine rooms of destroyers in WWII. I can be happy for medical care. Using this date, they knew what the AO/AB/AP (orange, blue purple) could do. It all had to be from lab rat tests before it was listed as a chemical agent for weeds. I used it in the orchards before I joined the AF. I never knew what it could do. Ok, I am out of breath..</p>
<p>Marjorie T Hansen Our conversation about the 7th AF News, 14 May, 1969, that Christopher Boles posted was very informative for all of us. Stirring the pot with this kind of positive, honest conversation can move mountains. I've seen it happen. And Chris is correct. In 1969 the message in the news article was strictly the "company line" coming out of the Department of Defense about Agent Orange. According to Adm. Elmo R. Zumwalt Jr, both the DoD and Dow knew in 1964 that dioxin exposure was deadly. In 2013, I received a letter from the Assistant Secretary of Defense, Heath Affairs, that I published in my book because it contained the same "company line" of denial that we read in the 7th AF News, 14May 1969. All we want is truth and accountability and care for those who have been harmed. Ok, just like Chris, I am out of breath...</p>	

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Rusty old Beer Cans from a post by Michael Reed

<p>Michael Reed At lunch waiting to go back to work. This was taken by the squadron "patio" - wish I had a photo of the patio with the blackjack games going on in the evenings. Also photo of the beer sold there. Steel top punch open cans that you had to scrape off the rust before opening.</p>		
<p>Dan Poormon Sure do remember the rusty beer cans and the Blackjack games on the patio. Fun times but when there was money on the line a few guys took the fun out of.</p>	<p>When the beer starts talking everything goes to shit</p>	<p>Jim Kucipeck Actually about '62 - '65. The military shipped all those rusty old punch beer cans to us in Vietnam. They must of got a deal!</p>
<p>Bobby Flack For some reason, I'd forgotten all about punching open beer can tops. Not even sure when pop-tops came out. Anyone remember?</p>	<p>Archie T Pinkley There is a photo in the Phan Rang Archives of the Machine that opened those Cans...forget who and when !!!!</p>	
<p>Michael Reed And the beer was flat. Must have had them stored form Korean war.</p>	<p>Michael Reed We just didn't realize how young we were. Hard to believe that's me. Invincible at 19.</p>	

C-123 'J' or 'B' Model from a post by Joseph Burkhart

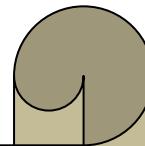


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Joseph Burkhardt NOT a "K" model ???	Kirk Minert C-123B 54-0593 WM 315 SOW 310 SOS
Charles Hough Did you mean explain the C123 J ? If so, the J was built with small jets way out on the wing tips. They were in Alaska and Korea. Not very popular, I would think they would have a hell of a yaw problem if one quit on TO. I don't have a picture of one, but they are available on internet, Google C 123 J no joke !	Robert Chappellear Actually the jets were not exactly small, The C-123J jets were J-33s. the same engine that was in the F080 and T-33. And yes you are quite correct - it was a real scary situation if one of the engines quit. Being at the wingtip the yaw problem was a bear. If the problem happened on takeoff or landing while still airborne I understand the pilot could not save the airplane. I hear that it happened once in Alaska while landing on snow with skis and the airplane actually did an uncontrolled 360 before coming to a stop.
Joseph Burkhardt Thanks Charles & Robert for the clarification, very interesting . Was the "J" used for very long ? With such a potential for a problem I would think not	Charles Hough Joe, my last Team spirit in 1988 I saw the C 123 J still operating from Kunsan Korea. Probably long gone by now
Charles Hough With my experience on C 123s I was selected to go from Clark to Mactan AB Philippines to evaluate the potential for transfer of 8 C123Bs for FMS sales. The Filipinos had destroyed them so I recommended the axe Salvage ! The PAF mechanics would use a fire axe to gain access to a component needed for cannibalization. They butchered the planes to the point they could never be repaired.	

...and finally the most poignant comments of them all!

The therapy of the Phan Rang Facebook Group



Rich Luckhaupt wrote: I've been on here (Facebook) all day. This must be the night things are coming out. I remember perimeter duty as a security policeman, remember friendly fire hurting some Aussies that maybe I could have prevented. I remember calling in fire to spooky, remember January 26, remember snakes, lizards, silence, flares, mortars, rockets, sirens, k-rations, radio confusion, fear, jumping out of a tower, good times, bad times, the wells, ROKs at the strip gate, k9 calling in an alert, how dark it was on the perimeter with no moon, being in a tower alone, how it was on top of nui dat when the clouds rolled in and all you saw was white, getting to call home and say over, why did it take so long for the sun to come up, getting orders to go home 4 months before your time was up, that letter from home, that short time calendar getting filled, the VO ribbon, the heat, the smell, seeing a C-141 fly out of Phan Rang at night knowing it was going to the world, seeing the USS New Jersey fire from the south china sea, people calling in they have movement, people saying "get me out of here", smelling a rocket that exploded next to you and you run to a bunker and you say mama. I'm just venting...

Bobby Flack Each of us carries our own version of this, Rich. It helped to shape us into who we are. I for one am glad it happened to me. Didn't say it was easy. But I'm better for it.

Bobby Flack Especially good to have friends to talk with who understand.

Jack Anderson Somehow Rich, its good therapy to bring these memories to life. I wrote a book about my memories. (Vietnam Remembrances). Many times in the writing, I pushed away from my computer and bawled like a baby. Things I had pushed from my thoughts came back into my conscience. I'm much more at peace with them now.

James Sullivan Charlie The Rock Ape, Rice Starch the laundry used in your fatigues (was that the

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smell you remember, Rich), The Pit that lulled all of us Panther Flight guys to sleep, waking up in the middle of the afternoon covered in dust and sweat, Col. Reeves being spread eagle on a perimeter check by a K9, pressed fatigues and shined boots at guard mount, being the last person to get through the empty armory after 1/26/69, Heavy Weapons with Mini's and Pink Eye, packages with homemade goodies. Seems like yesterday!

Larry Martino Rich, I can't speak for everyone on here, but I feel the same way. I also feel some guilt that I could have done more, but we should be proud of what we did do. Enjoy each other!!

Tom Mullen Rich, I'm glad you feel comfortable on this site. I feel like that, as well, and ditto what Larry Martino said earlier. With exception to one thing, I can't call Phan Rang "Happy Valley". It didn't have that name in '66.

James Sullivan Rich, you're so right. Memories and Relationships, no matter how short they may have been, were birthed in a time of day to day uncertainty and have made lifelong imprints on our lives. Names and faces may not always be so clear but the commonality we all have keeps us connected to each other many times stronger and more emotional than blood family. When Joe Kaupa got out of his car in my driveway after 45+ years it was like we had just slept the night and were reporting for CSC duty the next night. Love U Buddy! Hope to see you this year.

Rich Luckhaupt James Sullivan, I feel so connected to the people i remember and also to those who were where I was and also to all Vietnam vets, regardless of branch of service. I also met up with Joe Kaupa on his trip to see you. My roomy, Dave Hardenburgh and I are gonna try and meet up this year. I sure you know him. He also worked alternate CSC. We were together in the states and nam. Hope we can all get connected this year.

Jim Kucipeck Wow, you guys have expressed what I feel about this Facebook site. I mentioned to Joseph Burkhart a while back about this same subject. For 48 yrs. I have thought about my time at Phan Rang, what is was like coming home in June of '68, the wasted lives left on the battlefield, the crash sites and the mortared bases. For many years. I looked at my 35mm slides of Phan Rang and couldn't get the place and time out of my mind. I could talk to my wife about it and that was terrific. At my workplace there were a couple of guys who were there but th rest didn't know about it or didn't care or made comments about the war. Many boasted about dodging the draft and commented on 'baby killers". I had a hard time going to Veterans Day or Memorial Day and still do to some extent. My heart gets big when I think about Phan Rang and read your stories and viewed your pictures. This is truly a place to "let it all hang out" as we used to say during that time. I believe that all really have come home again, and we all are welcome!

Rich Luckhaupt dam forgot about the col. lol. got a care package from my sister full of canned fried onions which were great and these little round balls that tasted kinda like fudge. I wrote a letter trying to find out what they were. My sister says they were rum balls. The gang loved them and James Sullivan the monsoon, getting mortars thrown at my position because of pinkeye, body bags at csc on display, flies, people taking pics, where those bodies go, hock my watch for you know what, lose of class ring at strip, getting run over by Lambretta that my friend from Detroit area saved me. All of this shit rides in my mind which is nothing compared to what went on with those in the bush.

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Robert Barry Thanks for being in that tower; I was one of those K-9 handlers.	Rich Luckhaupt Thanks Robert Barry for being on the fence and welcome home.
<p>PeeWee Clevinger I was an army truck driver based at Phan Rang during '67 and while we were at base one of our jobs was to pull perimeter guard every 4th night over in the 1st Log. area. Usually this was on the fence, in a bunker, or a time or two in the fuel dump area. However, one night I pulled a shift in a tower. Our shift was 2 hours on, 4 off, 2 on and then 4 off and then released. Anyway, I got in the tower on the early shift and pretty soon a jeep pulled up with two k-9 handlers and their dogs. One got out, tied his dog to the bottom of the tower and climbed on up and said hello. We talked for awhile and he said we can go to sleep if we want. Hey Man, no way!!! No, he said it's fine. If I wake up and the dog is snarling and growling he probably saw an animal. If he wakes us up and he's pulling so hard the tower is leaning he's sees somebody. I know that when both dogs were in the jeep they had a hard time keeping them apart. He said his dog wasn't much on commands unless you wanted him to tear somebody a new ass then he was perfect. I wish I knew the guys name now.</p>	
Rich Luckhaupt Hey Pee Wee don't feel bad. I was an sp also in the states at a SAC base and had k-9 on the perimeter just like Phan Rang. I was scared to death of them in the U.S. and the nam. Sometimes they would come up to my tower and say come on down and lets chat awhile. Sorry, I stay here, you stay there. I have the greatest respect for those guys. If I could do my tour over, I would be K-9. And to tell the truth, K-9 knew they were bad. They had an advantage. Fangs! Love the k-9 troops and will always respect them.	
Bob Mays Rich this is one place we can talk and those who read will understand Welcome Home.	Bob Hoffman LOL Rich no need to fear the K-9 Handler.....The Dog, that's a whole different thing. We were a friendly bunch, our puppies...Not so much.

Update on story from PR News 67: Winds Force C-123 Provider into Supersabre's Nest

I received this interesting letter from Bill Utterback about this story.

Because of the winds, the plane's wings had to be anchored to the tow tug to prevent sudden gust from upending the aircraft.

C-123 aircraft were not authorized to taxi at any time the surface winds were 25 knots or greater without an aircraft tug attached to the upwind wing to prevent the wind from lifting it. That was a concern for ALCE controllers.

I designed, built, and test flew the first two seat ultralight trainer in existence (the "Raven") for Custom Aircraft Conversions in San Antonio in 1981. On my first taxi test, before I ever flew it, a crosswind got under my wing and flipped me upside down. Later I was an ultralight dealer and flight instructor (CFI) for three years 1982-1985, Blue Max Ultraflight. It was after I got out of the USAF in 1970 that I learned to fly in 1975 and became a flight instructor in 1977.

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I couldn't be a USAF pilot because I wore glasses. After Blue Max I got a job at Hondo, Texas with Doss Aviation. There in 1985-1987 I was a civilian contract Instructor Pilot and taught USAF students how to fly in T-41A aircraft. I left Hondo to start my own bookstore business which I still have today.

Best Friend Bites the Dust for GI (*Pacific Stars and Stripes February 7, 1969*)

By T.SGT. JOHN B. MAHONY

PHAN RANG (Special) — Sgt. Thomas J. Caputo of the Bronx, N.Y., departed from Vietnam Monday, but he left a little of himself back here in this war torn country.

The security policeman left behind a close friend — a friend who, during a recent attack, saved his life, a friend whom he got to know better than anyone else in the 35th Security Police Sq. during his one-year tour.

Fritzie — a sentry dog — was that friend. Caputo and the German Shepherd walked the perimeter of Phan Rang Air Base night after night for nearly a year.

To the handler, the 85 pounds of muscle and teeth was as playful as Peanuts, a mongrel dog which the airman had for a pet back home in the Bronx.

Caputo did had pulled his sentry duty Sunday, he was scheduled to work around the K-9 kennels, helping to care for Fritzie and 68 other Shepherds. But his thoughts were of his wife, Veronica, and how they would soon celebrate their second wedding anniversary together Tuesday.

On that day he would arrive in New York to spend a 30-day leave before going on to Andrews AFB, Md.

About 1 a.m., Sunday the SP flight leader came through the barracks, turned on lights, and told the airmen of a suspected attack in "Juliet" area. All off-duty men hurriedly put on their jungle boots, green camouflaged fatigues, and web gear. Shortly afterward, a truck sped them to the kennels where they picked up their dogs and weapons.

Caputo did not have to go. Fritzie had already been reassigned to a new handler. But Caputo knew he was inexperienced. So he grabbed a leash and a weapon and jumped on the truck.

They leaped off the truck at the "Juliet" area and were told that four suspects were thought to be trapped in the nearby brush. The dog handlers spread out in a line to make a sweep: they combed back and forth without uncovering anyone.

Cracking sounds of small arms fire sporadically filled the air. The pace of shadowy figures picked up.

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Caputo led Fritzie along a dirt road and stopped at a sandbag bunker. A lone SP inside reported he just saw several unidentified men about 30 yards from the bunker.

Just then an enemy B40 rocket exploded nearby.

Caputo led Fritzie toward the spot from where he thought the rocket had been fired. Caputo did not know that three North Vietnamese Army soldiers were crouched in thickets, waiting to ambush him.

Fritzie whined and tugged at his leash. The german shepherd picked up the strange scents, alerted his master and led him toward the three enemy soldiers.

Suddenly, in the eerie light of flare illumination, an enemy soldier jumped out of the bush and opened fire at Caputo.

Dog and handler immediately dropped to the ground. Caputo returned the fire. Explosives, strapped to the enemy soldier, exploded as rounds from Caputo's machine-gun whipped into his body. Caputo was hit by the blast and took shrapnel in his arms and right leg.

Stunned and bleeding, Caputo began receiving more rifle fire from the surrounding thickets. Fritzie at Caputo's side, was killed by one of the bullets.

Caputo dared not raise his head up to fire back. He lay still. Then, during a moment of darkness, Caputo got the break he desperately needed.

He raised his weapon to the left, over Fritzie's lifeless body, in the direction from where he thought the rifle fire came that killed his dog.

When the next flare popped overhead, the airman saw two North Vietnamese Army soldiers crouched in the brush. Caputo opened up and blasted the two off their feet.

In shock, but conscious, Caputo lay still. Three other sentry dog handlers and two medical technicians searching for him, called out. He did not answer.

"One of them put his band on my shoulder as he found me," Caputo said later from his bed at the base dispensary. "They thought I was dead. Then I stood up as they started to walk away. When they saw how bad I was bleeding from my arms and leg, they made me get on a stretcher. I didn't even know I was hit until they told me."

Air Force doctors who treated Caputo said he was in fine condition with no permanent injuries.

Here's another take on that same story from **The Cedar Rapids Gazette**: Wednesday, February 5, 1969.

Sergeant Alive, Thanks to Guard Dog in Vietnam

NEW YORK (AP)- Air Force Sgt. Thomas Caputo is celebrating his second wedding anniversary at his Bronx home with his wife, Veronica, thanks to Fritzie, his guard dog, who died in South Vietnam so his master might live.

Caputo, 21, with shrapnel wounds of both arms and his right leg, told Monday how he and Fritzie were on their last mission together in a jungle near Phan Rang.

Fritzie had been reassigned to a new handler when communist raiders attacked and the air force security unit was ordered into action. Knowing the new dog handler was still green, Caputo said, he volunteered.

As dog and man passed a bunker, Fritzie caught the scent of intruders and both hit the dirt as a flare went up and four enemy soldiers opened fire. Caputo returned the fire with a submachine gun, a bullet striking one red soldier who had explosives strapped to his body.

Caputo fell bleeding and Fritzie shielded his master, taking slugs which killed the 100-pound dog.



This is the latest (7 March 2015) idea for a reunion t-shirt design.

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Crowne Plaza Charleston Airport - conv. Ctr., 4831 Tanger Outlet Boulevard North Charleston,
South Carolina 29418.

[Click here to make your reservations](#)

Make plans now to join us in Charleston, 8-11 October 2015.

Who's Who at Phan Rang

PHAN RANG STAFF MEMBERS

Joseph Burkhart: Master of Ceremonies

Robert Kellington: Tour Coordinator

Jack Anderson: Treasure

Lou Ruggerio: Site coordinator/Contract negotiator

Douglas Severt: Reunion Coordinator

Ed Downey/Barbara Brandt: Ceremonies

Christopher Boles: Photographer

Mike Maleski: Chaplain

FACEBOOK GROUP ADMINISTRATORS

Douglas Severt, Kenneth Rowsey, David McGaughey, Vincent Joseph Miller (Susan Anderson-Miller) and Kirk Minert

...and the 808 members (and counting) of the "Happy Valley" Phan Rang AB Facebook group.

