

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

In this issue:

Welcome back to Happy Valley (jpg)

Sergeant to Marry Girl He Hasn't Seen

19 Vietnamese Employees Finish English Training at Phan Rang AB

Phan Rang 1st Sergeant Gets Air-Dropped ‘Stripes’

Phan Rang Memories by Larry Theurer: A Fast Walk to the Beach

Col. Blood Assumes Command Tactical Airlift Wing

Legion Of Merit Presented Colonel At Parade

AF Crewman Assist In Viet Mercy Mission

Psychologist Uses Mini-Gun To Convince VC He's Wrong

SPs Receive New Armor, Weapons

Crewmen In ‘Flare’ Of Fight

This Is Spooky?

Pilots' Mission A ‘Beaut’

Four Pilots Fly Wing's Longest Mission

Grand Opening

Serving Our Country

Christopher Boles Most Famous Photo

2015 Reunion Information

Phan Rang Staff Members



Welcome back to Happy Valley

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
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Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

(Photo by Bruce Dobson)

Sergeant to Marry Girl He Hasn't Seen (*Seventh Air Force News, March 19, 1969*)

By TSgt. John B. Mahony

PRAN RANG-He is serving Vietnam and she is a secretary in Chicago. They have never met but plan to marry this summer.

"I must admit, our relationship must appear weird to people," said Sgt. Larry E. Barton, Artesia, N.M. "But Shari and I love each other, and we feel we have established a solid relationship through the mail."

But it was his MARS (Military Affiliate Radio Station) telephone call from Phan Rang AB, where Sergeant Barton is stationed, to Sharon Lee Dahlstrom, Bensenville, Ill., a Chicago suburb that made the engagement formal.

I'd been building my courage for this phone call for quite awhile," said Barton who prepares meals for fighter pilots on alert status in adjacent house trailers. "Then this morning I got a call from the MARS station saying they got my call to Chicago through. Then I began shaking."

Sergeant Barton made the call from his 10 by 50-foot air conditioned trailer half of which is a dining room and the other half is a kitchen complete with built-in range and oven, upright freezer and refrigerator. The trailer is located between the main runway and parked F-100 Supersabre jet aircraft of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing.

"Hello,' I said, 'This is Larry from Vietnam. Over."

"Yes, Hi! Over,' she said."

Then I said, 'Is this Shari? Over.'"

She said, 'Yes, this is she . Over.'"

"I have one question to ask you,' I said. 'It is very important and I want you to think about it? Over,' "I couldn't tell she was not expecting the question," Sergeant Barton said.

"Yes, what is it? Over,' she said."

"Will you marry me? Over, I nervously asked.

"After about a five-second delay," he said, "she answered, 'Yes, sir! Over.' She put great emphasis on both words, 'Yes, sir!'"

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
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Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

"Then I replied, 'You have made me the happiest man in the world.'"

"After that my mind went blank. Proposing is really all I wanted to accomplish." Sergeant Barton recalled. "I asked her how the rest of the family was. Her brother is stationed In Thailand with the Air Force. Then we closed out."

"Sharon and I 'met' when I was TDY (temporary duty) to Da Nang in December, 1967," Sergeant Barton explained. "I was up there helping out in the air freight room sorting Christmas mail.

"The USO had posted some Christmas cards that people from all over the States had sent to us," he continued. "I thought it was great that people we had never met would take time out to write to us. I wrote back to a few that were particularly nice to thank them.. One of the cards was from Sharon. That started it.

"We have sent at least 300 letters in each direction. In them we gained a great amount of respect and admiration for each other. We really communicate!" Sergeant Barton exclaimed.

The trim airman reenlisted New Year's Day. He has been in Vietnam for the past 19 months as he volunteered for a consecutive one-year tour at Phan Rang.

He works 6 days a week, 12 to 23 hours a day in his one-man kitchen.

"When Shari learned of my cooking ability," Sergeant Barton explained, "she wrote back

'I know you will be real handy around the house.' She underlined the word 'you.' I wonder what she meant by that?" he said with a grin.

Sergeant Barton leaves here in July for his next assignment, Clark AB in the Philippines.

19 Vietnamese Employees Finish English Training at Phan Rang AB

PRAN RANG - Nineteen Vietnamese employees here recently joined the growing number of local nationals who have completed English language training conducted through the base education office.

Nearly 1,500 Vietnamese have received English training in the two years this program has been in effect. Students in the three levels -beginners, intermediate and advance - attend one-hour classes six days a week for four weeks.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

Class makeup varies from secretaries and open mess waitresses to civil engineering supervisors -each striving to improve their ability to communicate with Air Force co-workers and supervisors.

The big payoff, base education officials say, comes in the form of better working relations between members of the two nations and a better job done for Phan AB.

Currently teaching the English classes are Captains Claude D. Mitchell, Waco, Tex.; John T. Todd, San Marino, Calif.; and Garth A. Wright, San Leandro, Calif.; and 1st Lt. Albert C. Rock III, Longmeadow, Mass.

Commenting on the programs, Captain Mitchell said, “Their incentive to take the course is the opportunity it presents for advancement within their section. The Vietnamese, however, aren’t the only ones who have gained from the course. Through teaching the classes, I’ve gained an insight into the culture of this country.

Phan Rang 1st Sergeant Gets Air-Dropped ‘Stripes’

By Sgt. Steve Monk

PHAN RANG - Like most Air Force sergeants, MSgt. James J. Rooney, Camp Springs, Md., likes prompt daily delivery of his Stars and Stripes to his office here.

Things got a little out of hand recently, though, when two bundles of the newspaper were airdropped from an altitude of several hundred feet onto the doorstep of his orderly room in the 3 5th Avionics Maintenance Squadron.

Witnessing the unorthodox air delivery was A1C Gary N. Gillett, Vernon, Colo., who commented, "I had just driven up in the first sergeant's truck when I heard a thump behind me. I turned around and there were two wired bundles of newspapers lying where I'd been standing just seconds before.

"I looked up, saw an Army chopper, and when the pilot waved, I waved back."

Nguyen Charlie



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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”



A FAST WALK TO THE BEACH

A2C Hammond, A2C Scardino and I had the day off and decided to go to the beach.



The Air Force ran a taxi to and from the beach, a tractor trailer truck with a slotted wood sided cattle trailer attached. The men would just climb in the back and off you go, door to door service.

However we got a late start and missed the truck departure. So we

The "Strayhound". Photo by David McGaughey.

start hitch hiking. A big green Army six-by-six

truck comes along and the driver says “where you headed?” Hammond says “the beach”, the driver says “hop in the back”. We are in the open back sitting on sand bags placed in the bed to deflect road bomb blasts. Bouncing along in the open air was much more fun than being inside the cattle trailer peeking out through the slats.

However when the truck arrives at an intersection about half a mile from the ocean, the driver unexpectedly stops and informs us that he is going left and we are to walk the rest of the way straight to the beach.

We get out and the truck drives away. And it’s silence. We are standing there unarmed in our Air Force fatigues, looking at beautiful rice paddies with no one around. Off in the distance we can smell the ocean. So we start walking. Nobody said it but I could feel the same concern in the other guys that I was feeling as I’m thinking about the rumor we had heard of the VC having a \$20,000 bounty for bagging an Air Force bomb loading person.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

Suddenly like magic out of nowhere two pretty teenaged Vietnamese girls appeared behind us. Most guys would think Yay, but they startled us and we were so scared we started walking faster.

They were carrying shopping bags and I was imagining them pulling out guns and grenades any second. They were cheerfully jabbering away in Vietnamese and walked faster to catch up to us. So we sped up more and they sped up and we sped up even more scooting all the way to the beach pursued by these girls.

We get to the beach and the two girls follow us in and go over to a changing room and I’m embarrassed as hell to think I practically ran down the road fleeing from them. The girls come out and I felt sorry for them. They were so poor that they had only one bathing suit to share between the two of them. They solved the problem by one girl wearing the bathing suit top and her panties and the other had on the bathing suit bottom and her bra.

I would have liked to talk to them but I was too embarrassed so we just stayed away from them.

Col. Blood Assumes Command Tactical Airlift Wing (*Assabet Valley Beacon -Thursday, March 18, 1971*)

WITH U.S. COMBAT AIR FORCES, Vietnam — Colonel Kenneth T. Blood Jr., has assumed command of the U.S. Air Force’s 315th Tactical Airlift Wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

Colonel Blood, son of retired Major General K. T. Blood Sr., 55 Great Road, Acton, Mass., will command the unit through August, when he is scheduled to complete an 18-month tour of duty at Phan Rang. Since March 1970, he has been vice commander of the wing.

The colonel helped establish the C-123 Provider aircraft training program for Republic of Vietnam Air Force (WNAF) aircrews initiated in January at Phan Rang. The VNAF crew members are being prepared to assume responsibility for flying C-123 cargo troop transport missions.

Colonel Blood, who holds the aeronautical rating of command pilot, served in the Pentagon before he began his Southeast Asia assignment. He was nuclear weapons chief in the strategic operations division, Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.



Col. Kenneth T. Blood, Jr.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

A 1940 graduate of Fishburne Military Academy in Waynesboro, Va., he was commissioned in 1945 upon graduation from the U.S. Military Academy where he earned a B.S. degree in engineering.

His wife, the former Susan Hashagen, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. E. Hashagen, 1532 Queens Road, Charlotte, N.C.

Colonel and Mrs. Blood have one child, Kenneth T. III, 16 years old.

This is an interesting little tidbit about his father

Co-Pilot Kenneth Blood and his crew have been shot down over Switzerland and will be interned until the war is over. (*The Evening Tribune, Albert Lea, Minn., Monday, July 10, 1944*)

Legion Of Merit Presented Colonel At Parade (*Wichita Falls Times, Wichita Falls, Texas, Sunday Morning, July 9, 1967*)

By PORTER OAKES

The Legion of Merit, one of this nation's top military decorations, was awarded Col. Frank Gailer jr., commander of 3630th Flying Training Wing, (FTW) at a colorful command parade and review in his honor at Sheppard Air Force Base Saturday morning.

Maj. Gen. Edward H. Nigro, commander of Sheppard Technical Training Center, on whose Col. Gailer has been a key officer for the past 18 months, pinned the Legion of Merit upon colonel in the presence of 44 military masses numbering more than 6,000 Sheppard officers and airmen lined up in impressive array. Some 3,000 other members of the Sheppard "family," including military and civilian personnel and their very own, particularly those of the 3630th FTW, jammed parade ground seating facilities for the event signaling tribute to Col. Gailer.

Gen. Nigro presented the top decoration to Col. Gailer "for his exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service to the United States as commander, 3630th Flying Training Wing at Sheppard AFB, Tex. from Jan. 16, 1966, to May 5, 1967."

Combat Ace

Col. Gailer, a World War II USAF combat ace, leaves Thursday for another important assignment in a productive Air Force career as instructor in the National War College at Washington, D.C.

Seats of honor on the reviewing stand Saturday morning next to Gen. Nigro and his staff were occupied by Mrs. Gailer, wife of the honored colonel, and their daughter, Cathy, 15. Two other daughters, Carol Ann, 22, and Tina, 19, were out of the city.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

Other distinguished guests on the reviewing stand were Mrs. Nigro, wife of Sheppard’s commander, and her parents. Mr. and Mrs. Michael Maiorano, of Worcester, Mass., who are visiting their daughter and son-in-law.

Among Wichitans present were Col. (Ret.) Floyd Taylor, founder of the Sheppard-Wichita Falls Squadron Adoption Program, and Mrs. Taylor.

Also present for the scintillating salute to Col. Gailer was his successor as commander of 3630th FTW, Col. A. K. Koeck, who comes to Sheppard from the key post of director of operations Services, Air Training Command (ATC), on the staff of Lt. Gen. Sam Maddux Jr., ATC commander, at Randolph AFB, Tex.

Citation

Col. Gailer’s citation for the Legion of Merit declared; "In this important assignment, the leadership, exemplary foresight and ceaseless efforts consistently demonstrated by Col. Gailer resulted in significant contributions to the effectiveness and success of the United States Air Force Helicopter and German Air Force undergraduate Training Programs. The superior initiative, outstanding leadership and personal endeavor displayed by Col. Gailer reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force."

Col. Gailer, who has been prominently identified with a continuing series of exemplary activities pointing up the cooperative relationships of the Military and civilian communities here since coming to Sheppard in January, 1966, has guided the German Air Force (CAF) undergraduate pilot training (UPT) program to its current peak programmed strength of 212 student pilots.

Instituted last August, the first class of GAF students, 26 in number, will receive their wings Sept. 13. The USAF jet precious flying team’, the Thunderbirds, will be at Sheppard for that occasion.

Review

Gen. Nigro, in gracious recognition of the occasion, designated Col. Gailer to "take the review" following his decoration of the colonel. The departing Col. Gailer returned the salutes of the 44 masses of airmen who snappily executed "eyes right" in the stirring martial marching demonstration.

With Sheppard's 761st "Band of the West" currently on leave, Lackland’s "Band of the West" provided musical tempo for the cadence = counting troops.

Appropriately enough, Col. Paul M. Yeager, deputy commander for operations (GAF) of the 3630th FTW, who has worked closely with Col. Gailer during his entire tenure here, was Commander of Troops for the review. The parade adjutant was Maj. Leon Ross, whose staccato orders motivated the masses of airmen.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

Col. Gailer was provided a climax that probably will remain indelible in his memory of his Sheppard service when the band followed the “Air Force Song” with “Auld Lang Syne” heralding a “hail and farewell” to the colonel as the musical unit moved off of the parade ground.

AF Crewman Assist In Viet Mercy Mission (*The Tribune, Sunday, November 22, 1970*)

U.S. Air Force Technical Sergeant John E. Schmidt, son of Paul L. Schmidt, 14639 Grant street, Dolton, is one of five C-123 Provider crewmen who are credited with saving the life of an 18-month-old Vietnamese baby girl.

Sergeant Schmidt, a C-123 Provider flight engineer, and fellow crew members recently airlifted the critically ill baby to Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. She was examined, given emergency medical treatment and then flown to a USAF specialist at Cam Ranh Bay Air Base.

The baby’s father, a Vietnamese Popular Forces noncommissioned officer at Nhon Co Popular Forces camp requested Air Force assistance when she became lethargic and unresponsive to antibiotics following a two-day respiratory illness.

The five-man Provider crew had completed their last cargo delivery of the day and were returning to Phan Rang when they received the emergency call, relayed by a U.S. Army Special Forces adviser at Nhon Co. He informed them of the child’s condition, explaining that the camp doctor wasn’t equipped to handle the case and requested her immediate air evacuation.

The Provider was diverted to the camp where the crew took the child and her parents aboard. Within 25 minutes after the initial radio contact, they landed at Phan Rang and the child was sped by ambulance to the dispensary. Examinations revealed that draining fluids caused by the respiratory infection had perforated the bone under her nose in the oral cavity.

The abscess was in an area that bordered on the brain. Unsuccessful spinal taps were attempted since the child also had symptoms typical of meningitis.

The Phan Rang medical staff located a USAF doctor at Cam Ranh Bay who had considerable background in pediatrics and the child again was air evacuated, this time a distance of 30 miles by helicopter. Medical personnel agreed that she would have died in another day unless the abscess, had been drained and special care provided.

Sergeant Schmidt regularly flies aerial resupply missions in support of allied ground forces in Vietnam. He is assigned at Phan Rang to a tactical air support unit of the Pacific Air Forces, head quarters for air operations in Southeast Asia, the Far East and the Pacific area.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

His wife Betty, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Givens of Sheridan, Ark.

Psychologist Uses Mini-Gun To Convince VC He’s Wrong (*Seventh Air Force News, December 4, 1968*)

DA NANG — It has often been said that psychology can lead a man to the mending of his ways, but a young psychologist with the AC-47 "Spooky" Flight at Da Nang uses a hail of 7.62mm mini-gun fire to convince the enemy that he is on the wrong trail.

Whether or not the LeMoyné College graduate, 1st Lt. Kenneth J. Snyder, Syracuse, N.Y. has practiced any real psychology is not known but he's spent over 1,150 hours flying 285 combat missions with the 4th Special Operations Squadron.

Lieutenant Snyder is an AC-47 navigator, a title which doesn't begin to cover the duties involved. "My first job is to get the aircraft to our target. Once we have the target in sight, I coordinate with the ground force, determine where the friendlies' lines are and where the enemy positions are," he said. "I then convert this information into aerial terms so the pilot knows the exact locations.

"Then I become a forward air navigator, directing the pilot's aim of fire so we stay on the precise target."

At times navigators aboard AC-47s are also called on to direct friendly artillery fire onto enemy positions.

"Sometime ago, I was on a mission near Hoi An, south of Da Nang where Viet Cong troops were trying to take the city," he started. "It was a major assault during the Tet Offensive and there were at least two companies trying to penetrate the city. Our AC-47 was the only air support aircraft available since other enemy actions were going on during that period.

"We arrived over the target and began dropping flares and firing at the advancing enemy. After we stemmed their advances, we dropped flares over the city itself to help the friendlies fighting off snipers and infiltrators," he added.

When the enemy found his path to the city protected by the slow flying but fast firing Spooky, he launched a large scale rocket attack to cover his retreat.

"We found his launching pads and immediately started firing on these," said Lieutenant Snyder. "Once we had silenced the rocket positions, we dropped flares and flushed the enemy companies out into an open rice paddy where ground forces combined with Spooky's deadly fire were credited with over 200 enemy troops killed.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

"We took some ground fire that night, but only one round hit us. It came up into the cockpit, bounced around and fell spent on the floor," he continued.

The mission terminated with over five hours of defensive air support for the city.

"It was after day break before we could leave the area, knowing that it was secure," he noted. "And it was one of the only times I know that Spooky was airborne during daylight hours."

Undoubtedly he'll use some of the 'case studies' made during his hours flying Spooky missions, while assigned to 'A' Flight of the 4th SOS at Da Nang, when he begins his new duties as a navigator instructor for AC-47s at England AFB, La.



This Is Spooky??

Miss. Gail Burnett, Sydney, Australia, recently became “Miss Spooky: at Nha Trang AB. The pert-singer-comedienne was chosen to be the most “bewitching” young lady on the entertainment circuit by the 4th Special Operations Squadron.

SPs Receive New Armor, Weapons (*Seventh Air Force News, December 4, 1968*)

By Sgt. Jack Swift

TAN SON NHUT—In a general build-up of heavy weapons in its defense arsenal, the 377th Security Police Squadron here announced recently the addition of a new bunker and six armored vehicles which are expected to “definitely enhance the defense posture” in particular areas, according to squadron commander Lt. Col. Canty P. Chambers Jr.

A fully-armored bunker in the western sector of the base and the V-100 "Commando Cars" are both innovations for the Air Force in Vietnam, security police said.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

The "Echo Bunker Three" was designed by TSgt. Curtis W. McNitt, Fresno, Calif., and dedicated to the memory of the four security policemen who died defending the base perimeter during Tet. Sergeant McNitt raised five one-and-a-quarter-inch armor plates in a pentagonal configuration on the site, and welded them into place.

"The beauty of the bunker," Sergeant McNitt pointed out, "lies in its maintenance as well as its strength. Since there are no sandbags around the sides, and no exterior moving parts, there is virtually no maintenance whatever to do on the structure."

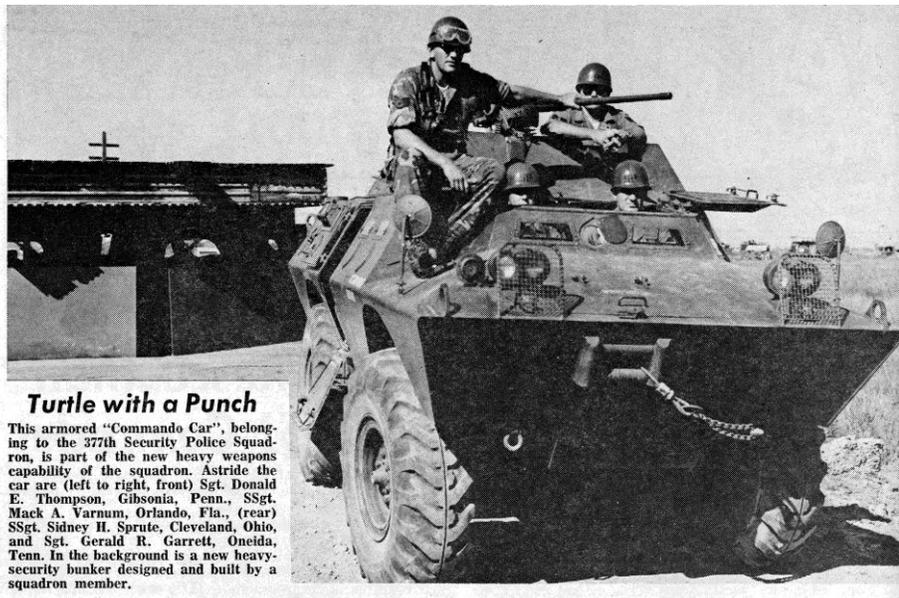
Four feet by 16 inches of solid sand are capped by sandbags on top of the bunker. The structure weighs more than 16 tons.

Inside, seats built to swivel with the gun position are mounted on the wall behind M-60 and .50 caliber machine guns. There is also a rack for mines and other weapons. Three men can hold the position.

The fortress, said Sergeant McNitt, is a "secondary line of defense which commands an excellent view of the whole west end of the perimeter." He said four more are planned to be built immediately at strategic points, and officials hope to erect a dozen in all in the near future.

The mobile "Commando Cars" will, according to Technical Representative Ted Henke, "cover more ground more quickly and get into areas that weren't previously easily accessible by jeep."

The amphibious, mile-a-minute armored vehicle can scale a 36-inch vertical wall, brush off small mines, and shun small-arms fire.



Turtle with a Punch
This armored "Commando Car", belonging to the 377th Security Police Squadron, is part of the new heavy weapons capability of the squadron. Astride the car are (left to right, front) Sgt. Donald E. Thompson, Gibsonia, Penn., SSgt. Mack A. Varnum, Orlando, Fla., (rear) SSgt. Sidney H. Sprute, Cleveland, Ohio, and Sgt. Gerald R. Garrett, Oneida, Tenn. In the background is a new heavy-security bunker designed and built by a squadron member.

The armored car will mount—via turret—up to a 90 millimeter recoilless rifle and carry 11 men. Colonel Chambers said, "We are testing it to find out its most beneficial uses. We think it will be best capable of evacuating wounded and providing protection for ammunition resupply."

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

Mr. Henke said this marked the first time the Air Force has used this type of armored personnel carriers in Vietnam. Bien Hoa also has a fleet of the vehicles, and all other Air Force bases in Vietnam will be equipped with the cars in the near future.

According to Colonel Chambers, the security police weapons build-up has followed the feelings of base defense officials that, since Tet, the men defending this Seventh Air Force Headquarters base need a more powerful punch and solid defense positions.

Among the other new weapons inventoried by the 377th SPS are .50 caliber machine guns, 72 millimeter light anti-armor weapons and 90 millimeter recoilless rifles. These latter are also mounted in quadrilateral formation atop heavy weapons carriers.

Crewmen In ‘Flare’ Of Fight *(Seventh Air Force News, December 4, 1968)*

PLEIKU — AC-47 Dragonship crew men, assigned to the 4th Special Operations Squadron here, recently provided flare support for friendly troops in contact with enemy forces 12 miles southeast of Pleiku AB.

They also destroyed rocket sites two miles northeast of Pleiku while flying the night airborne alert patrol over Pleiku.

The Dragonship provided illumination with its two-million candlepower flares for an element of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) in contact with enemy forces, suppressing possible enemy attack.

On return to Pleiku, the aircraft commander, Capt. William L. Ivy, Stockton, Calif., saw rocket flashes two miles northeast of Pleiku.

"I immediately rolled the Dragonship into position, zeroed in on the sites, and hosed the area down with the 7.62 millimeter miniguns, destroying the sites along with every possible escape route," he said.

Other members of the crew were 1st Lt. Thomas H. Hoffman, Bass River, Mass., co-pilot; 1st Lt. Rex A. Tallent, Jr., Sand Springs, Okla., navigator; Sgt. Kenneth W. Brown, Haskell, Okla., loadmaster; and SSgt. Robert W. Conley, Eufaula, Okla., and Sgt. Harry R. Lewis, Willards, Md., gunners.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

Pilots’ Mission A ‘Beaut’ (*Seventh Air Force News, December 4, 1968*)

PHAN RANG—“The forward air controller was ecstatic down there,” were the words of 1st Lt. David T. Wolcott, Arlington, Va., as he described a mission he and Lt. Col. Robert D. Hook, Dayton Ohio, both of the 352nd Tactical Fighter Squadron here flew recently.

Colonel Hook went in and made his first pass, getting a large secondary explosion with a 200-foot fireball. “I had to make a dry pass,” continued Lieutenant Wolcott, “because of the debris caused by Colonel Hook’s first bomb. He told me not to go in, as I might run into some of the debris.”

“I wanted to see the fortification I was after,” commented Colonel Hook, “and the FAC said in order to see it I would have to get right over the top of it.”

Colonel Hook then made his second pass and got another secondary and Lieutenant Wolcott made a pass right behind him and also got a secondary.

“The debris from my secondary was still falling as I came around for my next run,” continued Lieutenant Wolcott, “which is a pretty long time for it to stay in the air. It was falling as far away as 1,000 meters from the actual impact point of the bomb.”

The final bomb damage assessment given by the FAC was four structures destroyed, 400 square meters of encampment destroyed, and the three large secondary explosions with the 200-foot fire balls.

Four Pilots Fly Wing’s Longest Mission (*Seventh Air Force News, September 25, 1968*)

SOUTHEAST ASIA — The longest combat mission ever flown by the 8th Tactical Fighter Wing ended recently when four Air Force pilots of the 25th Tactical Fighter Squadron logged seven hours and 15 minutes during a search and rescue mission.

The two-ship flight required five airborne refuelings while flying cover for rescue planes and helicopters.

Flying the mission were Maj. Jerry L. Isbell, Hillsboro, Tex., and Captains Ronald R.J. Aicale, Dunsmoke, Pa.; and John W.M. Davis, Los Angeles, and 1st Lt. Wayne R. Yarolem, Maquoketa, Iowa.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

These fliers flew cover for H11-3 Jolly Green Giant helicopters and A-1 Skyraiders on a search and rescue mission for two F-4 Phantom pilots from Udorn RTAFB.

The downed pilots were in an area considered one of the most heavily defended areas in the southern Panhandle. Weather around the search and rescue scene was extremely bad.

The flight flew a high cover until low on fuel. Then they rendezvoused with a tanker to refuel.

The planes flew cover and went back to refuel two more times with the tankers before expending any of their ordnance.

On the return back to the search and rescue scene, after their third refueling, the planes made a couple of dive bomb passes delivering bombs and 2.-75-inch rockets on enemy anti-aircraft artillery (AAA) positions to silence the guns so that Jolly Greens could pick up one of the downed fliers.

In returning to the search area after their fifth rendezvous with the tanker they found the aircraft commander was just being picked up.

The 25th TFS fliers then asked for and received clearance to conduct armed reconnaissance to seek lucrative targets in the southern Panhandle to expend their remaining ordnance and continue electronic searching for the other downed crewman.

The area in which the pilots were down is considered to be one of the most heavily defended, saturated with surface to air missiles (SAMs) and AAA. SAM radar indications were received by both F-4s while in the target area, warning that the SAM sites were looking for them.



Four pilots of the 25th Tactical Fighter Squadron flew the longest combat mission recently when they logged seven hours and 15 minutes during a search and rescue mission. The four are (left to right) Capt. John W. M. Davis, 1st Lt. Wayne R. Yarolem, Capt. Ronald R. J. Aicale, and Maj. Jerry L. Isbell. The mission was conducted over a heavily defended area in the southern Panhandle of North Vietnam.

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”



Grand Opening

Smiles and delicious cake were evident during the recent opening of Phan Rang's Base Cafeteria. Mrs. Trinh Ai Minh, Base Exchange employee, serves Base Commander, Col. Stanley J. Obarski, a slice of cake as L. J. Hammercik, (middle) cafeteria manager, looks on.



VIETNAM - SSgt **Clinton J. Eckenrode**, son of Mrs. Grace Eckenrode of Ebensburg RD 1, has received the Air Force Commendation Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Sgt. Eckenrode, an aircraft engine maintenance technician, was cited for meritorious service at Eglin AFB, Fla. He is now assigned at Phan Rang with a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. The sergeant is a 1954 graduate of Edensburg Cambria High School. His wife, Joyce, is the daughter of Mrs. Catherine Brown of Conemaugh Rd. 1. (*The Altoona Mirror, Altoona, Pa., Friday, March 12, 1971*)

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

Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

Christopher Boles Most Famous Photo



“Capt. Rowland D. Stanley’s playful grimace adds a challenge to a “touch the moustache” game at Phan Rang and his fellow pilots of the 352nd Tactical Fighter Sq. at Phan Rang AB were in the city to help on some construction projects in the units’ civic action program.”

USAF Photo by Airman 1. C. Christopher Boles

We had gone into town that day to do some civic action with the squadron. My job was to get some press release photos and captions would be added later. Capt. Stanley was in a classroom, and out in the area around the school. (not sure of all the details this late in the game). The kids were huddling around him while he played the guitar. I was just snapping pictures of the kids as they were so cute and looked like great photo material. I had used up all my film and was down to the last roll. I looked at my camera to see there was only one frame left before I was done for the day. The kids were starting to reach out and touch his moustache. I asked him to let the kids to that just one more time if he would be so kind to do so. He agreed and the kids reached in and pulled his moustache just as I squeezed off the shot. The expressions and grimace were perfect! I just prayed that the film was going to come out on this

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
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Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

one without any mistakes in processing. TSgt. Mahoney came down from the press office and wanted 25 prints as soon as possible in 5x7 to get his press release out on this. He knew it was a great shot. The printing in the newspapers just backed up what I knew when I saw the shot it, was going to have all the elements of a great picture.

As a foot note to this story...I had come back to the states before Christmas but I had to report in to Vandenberg as part of my 30 day leave. I went up to the base and reported in and got my room assignment. Later I went to the BX to shop for some personal items. As I was standing in line there was a rack of the AF Times. I looked over and I couldn't believe my eyes...there was the photo of the Capt's MoustOuch on the front cover! What are the chances of getting a front page?

Another time I was reading the Ventura Star Free Press and turned the page where they had a half page spread on civic action programs in Vietnam. There was my photo as part of that story.

(This photo was from the Stars & Stripes, Saturday November 22, 1969, page 7 and on the cover of the December 1969 issue of the Air Force Times and later published in the Seventh Air Force News.)



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

Here's what you need to know about the reunion

Cost: \$124.00 per room, per day. Includes 2 full breakfast buffets. Rooms will be available at the group rate three days prior to event and three days following event based upon

Cancellation policy: You may cancel any time prior to 24 hours prior to 4 p.m. arrival without any penalties. If you cancel less than 24 hours prior to 4 p.m. arrival, the individual

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
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Phan Rang AB News No. 69

“Stories worth telling”

availability.	may be subject to pay the hotel a cancellation fee equal to the first nights room and tax.
Internet: Complimentary high speed internet in lobby, meeting areas and sleeping rooms.	Guarantee & Billing: Guests are responsible for paying all reserved accommodations and incidentals.
Check-in time: 4:00 p.m.	Check-out time: 11:00 a.m.
Rooms: <i>The hotel will offer a mix of king, double queen and handicap accessible rooms based upon availability.</i>	Parking: Complimentary parking and airport shuttle.
Banquet: \$55 for 3 entrees	Tours: JB Charleston, lasting approximately 6 hours with lunch at the Charleston Club.

[Click here to make your reservations](#)

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

Breakdown of the days

8 Oct. Travel/Arrive Charleston	9 Oct. Base/City Tours	10 Oct. Tour - Evening Banquet
11 Oct. Check-out/Travel		

HERE'S THE COST BREAKDOWN

Banquet \$55

Bus to JB Charleston \$20

Lunch at the Charleston Club \$21

Reunion fee \$10

-The cost for attending the reunion, going to the banquet and taking the bus to JB Charleston and having a sit-down lunch at the Charleston Club is **\$106** per person.

-The cost of attending the reunion and just going to the banquet is **\$65** per person.

PLEASE SEND A CHECK PAYABLE TO JACK ANDERSON, 826 72ND St. SE, Auburn, WA 98092

Note for the JB Charleston Tour: We will count the number of passengers for that tour as money is received, so please send your money in early. We have to monitor the bus situation very carefully because one bus cost over \$1,000 and we can't run a bus unless it is full or nearly full.

**“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, Vietnam
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Reunion T-Shirts should be available for on-line ordering by 10 April 2015.

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

Bob Tucker: Keeper of the Rolls

Mike Maleski: Chaplain

FACEBOOK GROUP ADMINISTRATORS

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

...and the 812 members (and counting) of the “Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB

This newsletter was compiled by Douglas Severt.