

# Phan Rang AB Newsletter

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.  
"Keeping the memories alive" Newsletter 287

## PREVIOUSLY UNPUBLISHED STORIES in the Phan Rang Newsletter

from the  
P A C I F I C  
**STARS AND STRIPES**

### VOLUME 2

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### Viets to Fly Gunships

**SAIGON (Special)**—The U.S. 7th Air Force Monday started training South Vietnamese aircrews on the AC119 shadow 'gunship at Phan Rang AB, Air Force spokesmen announced Monday.

The gunship is the first aircraft both designed for close support missions and large enough to carry all the equipment, including sensors, necessary to locate enemy trucks, storage areas or troops, spokesmen said. It has been used in Southeast Asia since 1967, they said.

Instructors will teach the Vietnamese basic flying and combat tactics on actual missions, spokesmen said.

The training is a part of the continuing Vietnamese Air Force improvement and modernization program, spokesmen said.

Also, the Air Force maintenance men Monday started training Vietnamese with C123 Provider, tactical airlift transport, at Tan Son Nhut, spokesmen said.

The aircraft has better airlift capability than C47 Sky-train and the C119 Flying Boxcar now flown by the Vietnamese, Air Force, according to spokesmen. (*Stars & Strips Thursday, Feb. 4, 1971*)

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### Transpacific Wedding for GI in Vietnam

**ARLINGTON, Tex.** (UPI)—The telephone on a table near the altar rang and the pastor picked it up and said: "This is the Rev. James Weir. We are in North side Baptist Church in Arlington, Tex."

At his side, **Barbara Shelton**, 34, wearing a blue dress and a corsage of white chrysanthemums, held the receiver of an extension phone to her ear.

The operator at the other end of the line at **Phan Rang** on the Vietnamese coast put Sgt. **Jimmy Woods**, 34, of Wichita Falls, Tex., on the line.

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"Will you take this woman, Barbara Shelton, to be your lawful wedded wife, Jimmy Woods? over and answer," intoned the pastor.

"I will," crackled Woods' voice over the transpacific telephone.

The Rev. Weir had to signal Barbara to say her "I will."

"I was a little nervous," she said later.

After he pronounced them man and wife the pastor let the couple talk to each other.

"I guess you had to get up awfully early this morning to get to the church and all," said Woods to his bride.

"Oh no," she said, "it's not morning, it's 7 o'clock at night."

"Well, its 9 a.m. here," Woods said.

"Well, honey, take care of yourself." the new Mrs. Woods said.

"I'll be home in July," said her husband, "if I'm lucky."

The couple met 18 months ago while Woods was in Wichita Falls. They met again in Hawaii over the Christmas holidays but could not get a marriage license.

"He wrote me about two weeks ago," Barbara said, "suggesting I look into the possibility of a wedding over the phone. I did and the state of Texas recognizes it and so does the Air Force. So we did it." (*Pacific Stars And Stripes, February 06, 1967*)

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### **ROKs Seize TNT Cache**

*S&S Vietnam Bureau*

**SAIGON** — South Korean infantrymen uncovered a sizable cache of explosives as they

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scoured Communist hideouts Wednesday on a mountain overlooking the South China Sea near Phan Rang AB, along the central coast of South Vietnam.

Spokesmen reported the Koreans found more than 100 pounds of TNT and several thousand yards of communications wire. The ROKs, of the 9<sup>th</sup> (White Horse) Div. reported killing 11 Reds during the sweep.

Other troopers killed two enemy soldiers in an ambush nearby. They took one rifle and eight grenades from the bodies, officials said. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes Saturday, April 5, 1969*)

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**Scouts, Troops Build Playground**

**PHAN RANG, Vietnam** (10) —Vietnamese Boy Scouts joined with American servicemen stationed near here to build an outdoor playground for children of this coastal city, 175 miles north of Saigon.

Paratroopers of Support Bn., 101st Airborne; B Co. of the 87<sup>th</sup> Engineer Bn., and representatives of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) assisted the scouts of Ninh Thuan Province in construction of a 50-foot circular sidewalk, which surrounds a playground equipped with swings, slides, teeter-boards, and other equipment built by the Americans. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Tuesday, Aug. 15, 1967*)

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**Pilot Bombed With Letters**

**PHAN RANG, Vietnam** (01) —A B-57 jet bomber pilot assigned to the 8th Tactical Bombardment Sq. has been deluged with letters from 35 youngsters attending the Indian Valley School in Enon, Ohio.

"I think it is wonderful," said Lt. Col **Donald D. Klein**, 40, Pompano Beach, Fla., "These are really very sincere letters," He explained that the letters are from the classmates of his youngest daughter, and added that the husband of the teacher of the class is now serving in Vietnam. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Friday, Dec. 1, 1967*)

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### ‘Our wives Deserve the Credit’

**PIQUA, Ohio** (UPI)—A veteran Air Force sergeant in the Republic of Vietnam believes "the wives at home are the ones to be commended."

SSgt. **Robert D. Holderby** wrote to the Piqua Daily Call that after several weeks of looking for an appropriate gift or card for his wife on their 14th wedding anniversary, he decided to buy advertising space for a message to his wife and four children.

"I personally feel the wives at home are the ones to be commended," the 20-year Air Force veteran wrote from Phan Rang Vietnam. "They have taken over the full responsibilities of a family and a household, in addition to the eternal tasks that always seem to face a mother," he said.

Paul Murray, general manager of the newspaper, said he was happy, to publish the anniversary greeting without charge in behalf of all servicemen separated from their families. (*Pacific Stars And Stripes, December 10, 1966*)

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### Squadron Wins Award

**PHAN RANG AB, Vietnam (Special)**—A resources conservation (RECON) award was presented recently to the 1882<sup>nd</sup> Comn. Sq. for its outstanding management of the RECON program during the last four months of fiscal 1971. The award was presented by Brig. Gen. **Donald L. Werbeck**, vice commander of the Air Force Communications Service, during a tour of Southeast Asia communication facilities. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Tuesday, Dec. 14, 1971*)

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Vol. 30, No. 54

Sunday, Feb. 24, 1974

### Galligan Slated to Head USFJ

*S&S Washington Bureau*

**WASHINGTON** — Maj. Gen.

**Walter T. Galligan**, 48, commander of the Air Force Security Service at

Kelly AFB, San Antonio, Tex., has been picked for promotion to three-star rank and assignment as the next commander of U.S. Forces Japan and the 5th Air Force.

Defense Secretary **James R. Schlesinger**, in making the announcement Friday, said Galligan's

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transfer will take place on March 1.

A 1945 graduate of West Point, Galligan became a B17 and B25 pilot soon after he left the military academy. During the Berlin Airlift he flew C47 transports between Wiesbaden AB and Tempelhof Airport, Germany. Later, after duty tours with a fighter wing and as an instructor, he was assigned to B47s as an aircraft commander.

Galligan was transferred to Vietnam in 1969 where he commanded the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang Air Base.

On his return from Vietnam, the general was commandant of cadets at the Air Force Academy before taking over his present assignment.

Galligan is married to the former Irene M. **Gilmurray**. Both he and Mrs. Galligan are originally from New York City.

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### **On the Job Training Halts a Red Attack**

**PHAN RANG AB, Vietnam (Special)** — The Vietnam war saw another first as a "schoolroom" went into combat.

Republic of Vietnam Air Force (VNAF) personnel training with U.S. advisors here in the AC119 gunship program, recently responded to an emergency call by Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) ground forces who were in combat with Communist troops five miles southwest of Dakto. The ARVN unit had lost its interpreter and the U.S. Air Force crews supporting them could not understand Vietnamese. An emergency call was placed to the 14th Special Operations Wing Headquarters here, where the decision was made to divert the VNAF crew and their American instructors, complete with their AC119 classroom.

Arriving on the scene of the fighting, the VNAF crew found the ARVN unit surrounded by Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army forces. With the enemy about 800 meters away from the camp and closing in, the VNAF crew positioned their gunship and opened fire on the enemy, keeping them off guard long enough for their ARVN counterparts to regroup.

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Maj. **Donald D. Fraker**, a USAF instructor flying on the gunship, stated, "Even though the VNAF crew members were only half-way through their training, they did an A plus job. They also had an opportunity to see what goes on during an actual mission which should help them greatly."

The VNAF crew, one of those that compose the first class training in the AC119, was commanded by Maj. **Dang Van Due**. Due acted as interpreter for the crew during the mission over the base camp and aided greatly in insuring his crew worked smoothly. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Thursday April 1, 1971*)

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### Shift Set For 4 AF Officers

*S&S Washington Bureau*

**WASHINGTON** — New assignments for four senior Air Force officers, all in Vietnam, were announced by the Air Force. The officers are Brig. Gens. **Wendell L. Bevan, Jr.**, **John W. Roberts** and **Paul F. Patch**, and Col. (Brig. Gen. selectee) **Walter T. Galligan**.

Bevan, director of combat operations for the 7th Air Force at Tan Son Nhut AB, will join the joint chiefs of staff here in early June. Roberts, director of the 7th Air Force Tactical Control Center at Tan Son Nhut, is being transferred to the air staff in mid-August.

Patch, who is deputy chief of staff for 7th Air Force Materiel at Tan Son Nhut, is going to the same staff position at PACAF, Hickam AFB, Hawaii, on June 1. He will be replaced by Brig. Gen. **Peter R. Delonga**, now on the air staff.

Galligan, commander of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang, will take over the Tactical Control Center of the 7th Air Force at Tan Son Nhut in mid-June. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Monday, April 27, 1970*)

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### 2,000<sup>th</sup> Sortie Logged

**PHAN RANG, Vietnam (7thAF)** — The 352d Tactical Fighter Sq. here has flown its 2,000<sup>th</sup> combat sortie in Vietnam, accruing 3,238 flying hours since arriving here three months ago from Myrtle Beach AFB, S.C.

The mission marking the 2,000<sup>th</sup> sortie was led by Maj. **Harold E. Macumber**, 35, of Butte,

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Mont. Flying wing positions were Capt. **Bernard E. Flanagan**, 32, of Holyoke, Colo., and **Jay C. Langhurst**, 27, of Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

The flight was in support of Operation Paul Revere IV in the central highlands west of Pleiku.

The squadron has compiled a perfect safety record, having lost no aircraft to accidents or enemy action.

They are credited with destroying 939 enemy structures and damaging 814 others. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes*, Thursday, Jan. 5, 1967)

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### Air Force Takes Over Caribous

*S&S Vietnam Bureau*

**SAIGON**—The Army's fleet of cargo planes in Vietnam became part of the Air Force Jan. 1. Lt. Gen. **William W. Momyer**, commander, U.S. Seventh Air Force, attended the New Year's day ceremony at Cam Ranh Bay.

The change gives the Seventh Air Force operational control of all fixed-wing cargo planes in Vietnam, while the Army will operate all but a few helicopters.

Included in the switchover are 140 CV-2 Caribou transports, the Army's largest fixed-wing aircraft. Most of the planes are used for resupplying outposts.

Six Caribou squadrons, each with 16 planes, are in Vietnam. The remaining 44 Caribou are used for training and short cargo lifts in the United States.

Caribou squadrons in Vietnam are assigned to the 483d Troop Carrier Wing at Cam Ranh Bay. The wing is commanded by Col. **Paul J. Mascot**. The wing is part of the 834<sup>th</sup> Air Div., which has operational control of the C-123 and C-130 aircraft that share the airlift mission.

Air Force crewmen prepared for the Caribou with a four-week flight orientation course at Lawson Army Air Field, Fort Benning, Ga. Since August, 1966, Air Force air and ground crews assigned to fly and maintain the Caribou have worked with Army counterparts in Vietnam.



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The Air Force redesignated the twin-engine, propeller-driven aircraft the C-7A Caribou. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes Thursday, Jan. 5, 1967*)]

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### Troopers Learn Latest Tricks of the Trade

By JIM SHAW

*S&S Vietnam Bureau Chief*

**PHAN RANG, Vietnam** — Pop, nobody's saying you didn't do a great job at Normandy and Pork Chop Hill, but maybe you could learn a few things from your boys here in Vietnam.

Don't get the idea that G.I. ingenuity went out with "ruptured ducks."

Take that old 60mm mortar you lugged half way across Belgium and all over "frozen Chosun," for instance. Remember some of the fond names you had for the heavy base plate of that little goodie?

Well, your boy Junior over here has done just what you always wanted to do: he's chucked it away. And the bipod, too. When he goes out in the "tulies" (what you old-time grunts used to call the boondocks), he's likely to be carrying only the mortar tube.

And here's what he does with it:

He takes his steel helmet (same one that you wore), fills it with sand or dirt, sticks the butt end of the mortar tube in the helmet and braces it with his foot. Then he holds the tube with one hand and loads it with the other. Result: He's instant mortar, a oneman team. Every man in the platoon carries two mortar rounds besides their own weapon and ammunition. How's that for firepower?



First Lt. Lane McNitt demonstrates how a 60mm mortar can be handled by one man without using the weapon's heavy base plate. A steel helmet filled with dirt or sand serves as the base plate. The tube is held by hand and a foot braces the base. (S&S)

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"We find it extremely effective against snipers at a thousand meters," said 1st Lt. **Lane W. McNitt**. "With just a little practice you can get pretty good using it without the base plate."

McNitt is training officer of the Replacement Training Co. of the 101st Airborne's 1st Brigade. He and his instructors spend a week passing along tips they've learned about jungle fighting to every new man assigned to the 101st. Every instructor has had four to six months of jungle campaigns and each wears the Combat Infantryman's Badge.

Here are some other tricks they pass along that Joe Jr. has learned out here in Vietnam:



First Lt. Lane McNitt shows how to use a C ration can as a field stove. Holes are cut in top for flame and in the bottom for draft. (S&S)

He can make a "stove" out of a C-ration can, using peanut butter "primed" with mosquito repellent as fuel. (C-4 plastic explosive is the best, however! Break off a little piece of it, strike a match to it and it will boil a canteen cup full of rice in eight minutes or less. Another surprise, Pop. They vary their diet by mixing rice, which is plentiful, with the C-rations.)

A lot of them know to sleep with their heads toward the north. That way, if the Viet Cong attack in the middle of the night, they don't waste even seconds looking at a compass to call in artillery. They're already direction oriented.

He knows, better than to pull off leeches that he's picked up in swamps. He just takes a spray bottle of mosquito repellent and applies a little to each leech and they fall off instantly—no muss, no, fuss.

He's learned how to adapt the M-14 cartridge pouches to the M-16 clips and still be able to pull them out quickly. (He folds a twig and puts it under the center of the three clips, so it sticks up. Sometimes he fastens a "drawstring" on the clips, so he can pull them out in a hurry.)

He's found, that a canteen pouch is good for carrying four or five grenades and that the plastic container for the PRC-25 radio battery serves as a map case or to keep anything else dry.

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He discovered that he can make a pretty good meal for as many as 25 men with just a quart can of dehydrated soup concentrate and rice.

He's learned to bathe himself and wash his clothes at every stream when he has the chance. That way he greatly reduces chances of getting any of the various jungle rots that abound here. (A lot of GIs have given up wearing underwear and even socks because they retain sweat and make them more susceptible to fungus.)

He keeps the bolt of his M-16 rifle well oiled, even though it was designed to be used without oil. This prevents jamming caused by dirt and sand. He also tapes a cleaning rod to his M-16 to unjam it when a cartridge sticks in the chamber. He knows, too, not to leave a cartridge in the chamber overnight because it "sweats" and jams.

But maybe the most important lesson of all that he's learned is to "travel- light." (You learned this one, too.) He won't take anything into the field anymore that can't be eaten, worn or fired.

And of the three, ammunition is the most important.

The basic load for the M-16 is seven clips, but everyone carries at least double and usually triple that. Some carry as many as 30 or even 50 clips.

He's learned to keep his ammunition as clean as his weapon, too, taking the rounds from the clips, cleaning and replacing them every day.

He's a sharp soldier, Pop., and a good fighter. Maybe you'd say he's not the man old GI Joe was, but deep down inside, I wonder if maybe you're just not a little bit envious? (*Pacific Stars & Stripes*, Tuesday, Dec. 13, 1966)

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### **Gift of Rice Helps To Start a New Life**

**PHAN RANG, Vietnam** (01)—Personnel of the 310th Air Commando Sq. recently donated 1,500 pounds of rice to the people of Hoai Truong, a small village southwest of Phan Rang AB.

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Capt. **Norman G. Barfoot**, squadron civic action officer, and his assistant, Sgt. **Roy D. Thompson**, presented the rice to the hamlet chief for distribution to the 240U families of Hoai Truong. The families of Hoai Truong are Montagnards who were moved from their mountain homes to Phan Rang Valley to protect them from Viet Cong terrorist attacks.

Although they are not lowland farmers, it is the livelihood to which they must turn in order to survive.

The Hoai Truong Montagnards have been given a plot of land to raise food and money crops. Cleared with the help of the Civil Organization for Revolutionary Development Support Agency (CORDS), the land is being divided among the hamlet families. Until the Montagnards begin harvesting their crops, they must be adequately fed.

The air commandos donated the money to buy the rice, which was purchased through CORDS and coordinated by the Phan Rang Civic Action office. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Saturday, January 06, 1968*)

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### **Viet Chaplain Spurns TV to Write**

PHAN RANG (7AF) — "Not watching television for 15 minutes a day will write one book a year," said Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) **Theodore J. Kieinhans**, 43, from South Bend, Ind., who has had nine books published during the last 11 years.

He joined the Air Force 14 years ago, and since that time has written two novels, two biographies, and five books of a religious nature. Some of these books have been published in German and Swedish as well as English.

The chaplain's favorites among his own books are the two novels, 'Time of Testing' and 'The Music Master'. The latter is about the famous musician, Johann Sebastian Bach.

Assigned as installation chaplain, the author directs the work of three other chaplains at Phan Rang and counsels pilots and maintenance specialists on the flightline before and after combat missions carried out by F-100 Supersabre pilots and B-57 Canberra crews of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing.

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Chaplain Kleinhans has had three books published this year. One of them is a devotional guide for Girl and Boy Scouts. Another, called 'Letters to John', offers spiritual guidance for men entering military service.

An author of magazine and newspaper articles as well as books, Chaplain Kleinhans said that writing books is fine as a leisure activity, but cautioned that anyone who wants to do it to make money would be better off digging ditches!

Currently rounding out his busy schedule by teaching a freshman English class, the chaplain said that the richer a person's experiences are, the better he'll be as a writer. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes*, Tuesday, Jan. 9, 1968)

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### Couple Seeking to Share C-Rations

**DANVERS, Mass.** (AP) Admitting to being out of step with many others in the military, two Air Force members want to go to Vietnam.

That is, provided that they are assigned to the same base. They happen to be married.

Sgt. **Laurence Brown**, 23, is under orders to report to McChord Air Force Base, Wash., Jan 17 for transportation to an air base at Phan Rang, Lt, **Mary Brown**, 23, an Air Force nurse, is under orders to report to Travis Air Force Base Calif., Jan. 14 for transportation to a base at Tan Son Nhut—160 miles from Phan Rang.

The sergeant and the lieutenant have served in the Air Force together at various bases in the last two years. Sgt. Brown has a year and a half remaining of his enlistment.

Lt. Brown completed her two year duty, then signed for another, after she said she was assured she could be assigned to the same base with her husband in Vietnam.

Appeals to Sen. **Edward W. Brooke**, R-Mass., and Rep. **Michael J. Harrington**, D-Mass., in whose district they live, have so far won them only a 10 day stay in their orders. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes* Sunday, Jan. 10, 1971)

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### New Laurels For Old Unit

**PHAN RANG, Vietnam** (7thAF) —The 8th Tactical Bomb Sq., the oldest Air Force squadron on continuous active duty since May, 1917, achieved three records in less than a week recently.

The "Liberty Bell" squadron, while on temporary duty with the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang AB, flew its 1,000<sup>th</sup> combat mission, logged its 2,000<sup>th</sup> combat flying hour and completed 500 combat sorties without an air or ground abort. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes Sunday, Jan. 22, 1967*)

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### Sailors Repair Vietnamese School, Hospital



**AGANA, Guam**— The LST Sutter County glided to its beaching site in Phan Rang, Vietnam, and it was only a few hours before the commanding officer, Lt. **L. L. Massa**, learned that the town's only school and hospital needed repair work.

The school's roof leached during the heavy rains and high winds of the monsoon season, it threatened to tear away and expose the three classrooms.

Next door, the hospital's only water was supplied by an outdoor well with a broken pump. A pail had to be lowered by line, filled, and then retrieved.

The next morning, volunteers from the ship began to work. Damage Controlman 1C **Charles W. Miles** and Shipfitter 2C **Robert W. Warren** went to work on the roof, and, with the help of Shipfitter 2C **Jack L. Harms**, securely fastened the mid-section of the roof.

To make sure the roof stayed put, ten Sutter County sailors, aided by 25 Vietnamese school children, filled over 100 sandbags, and stacked them on top of the building.

In the meantime, work was in progress at the hospital. Storekeeper 2C **Bennie L. Hardin** poured cement around the approach to the well, which had been badly torn up.

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With, Seamen **Samuel M. Mangiapane** and Electrician's Mate 3C **Dennis W. Caverly**, Hardin then began to haul sandbags to the roof.

Far down the road at the Phan Rang Air Base, Hospital Corpsmen 1C **Billy D. Harber** held sick call for the townspeople.

Harber provided medical care for five straight hours without let-up and stopped at 7 p.m. only because his supplies ran out.

The men of the Sutter County were rewarded for their efforts in full by the elders thanks and the smiles of the children. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes Friday, Jan. 20, 1967*)

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### Oscar Just a Skeleton of Old Self

**PHAN RANG**—On Jan. 15, a character named Oscar retired from active duty after 50 years of flying and fighting in aircraft ranging from Spads to Canberras.

Oscar is the scythe-wielding skeleton which appeared on the insignia of "The Devil's Own Grim Reapers, of the 13th Tactical Bomb Sq. His retirement coincided with deactivation of the 13th TBS and its merger into the 8th TBS which is now a permanent part of the 35<sup>th</sup> Tactical Fighter Wing, Phan Rang AB.



Since 1966, the 8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> have rotated temporary duty personnel for three-month periods in country.

The "Grim Reapers" had a history which dated back to June 14, 1917, when the 13<sup>th</sup> Aero Squadron was activated at Kelly Field, Texas. A year later they entered World War I, and since then have compiled a colorful battle record in World War 11, the Korean conflict and in Vietnam.

When they became a part of the 8<sup>th</sup> Tactical Bomb Wing, the "Grim Reapers" joined a unit equally colorful. The two units were activated within days of each other in 1917 and since

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World War 11 have worked hand-in-hand.

With the additional strength provided by the personnel and aircraft of the Grim Reapers, the 8<sup>th</sup> TBS pilots in their B57 Canberras will continue to provide support by flying strikes against enemy interdiction routes. But as one former Grim Reaper said, "*It just won't seem right without Oscar.*" (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Monday, Jan. 22, 1968*)

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### MPs in Jeeps Play Cowboy

**PHAN RANG, Vietnam** - In the true spirit of the Old West, 1st Lt. **Richard Dean** of Miami and his band of romping, stomping cowboys of the 1st Platoon, 101st Military Police Co. assigned to the 1st Brigade 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Div., had a roundup the Brigade area

With the use of two M-151 jeeps, blowing horns and waving staffs, the MP's herded 500 stray sheep and cattle that wandered inside the fence and returned the animals to their owners. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes Wednesday, January 26, 1966*)

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### Here's a Lucky GI - For Most The 3d Strike Means 'Out'

**PHAN RANG, Vietnam** —The crack of rifle fire was heard, and a large tree branch overhead snapped in two. The bullet that clipped the tree deflected down and smashed against the chest of PFC **Andrew Wright IV**, a 21-year old paratrooper from Rochester, N.Y. serving with the Army's 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne Div. in Vietnam.

The spent bullet bruised his chest but did not penetrate. Wright reached down, nonchalantly picked up the slug that had struck him, and remarked, “Well, that's two out of three.”

He was referring to the supposed three strikes allotted to each line trooper in this life. Wright had just used up his second.

His first strike was almost his last. A few months earlier, he had parachuted with B Co., 502d Inf. (Airborne) of the Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade, 101st Airborne Div., onto the machine gun range of a Viet Cong battalion training camp, and fought the enemy at close quarters for most of the day.

In the course of the battle, a VC grenade landed in a ditch that Wright was in. The grenade



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went off, but, mud absorbed most of the shrapnel; the explosion, however, blew him out of the ditch, through the air and slammed him to the earth giving him a concussion and superficial flesh wounds.

Laughing about his most recent bout with fate, he kidded his fellow troopers about getting "zapped" as he called it. One buddy of his was wearing an expensive watch and in jest Wright chided, "Max, if you get zapped, I'll have that watch off your arm before you hit ground."

It was Wright, not Max, who would be hitting the ground before the night was out, torn by rifle fire and grenade fragments.

Wright was on an outpost guarding the perimeter. A vicious fire fight broke out filling the night with bright orange tracers, brilliant illumination flares and shattering explosions. When the firing stopped, Wright was carried to the rear and airlifted out by a meuevac helicopter.

Max watched silently as a stretcher passed by bearing his wounded friend.

"Max," Andrew said with difficulty, "looks like you keep the watch. . .it's three out'a three now."

The copter lifted and disappeared over the treeline. Wright did riot die. But, for him the war was over. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Saturday, Jan. 29, 1966*)

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### **Quick Sea Rescue - Courtesy Copter**

**PHAN RANG AB, Vietnam (Special)** — An Air Force HH43 Huskie (Pedro) rescue helicopter from Det. 1, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Sq. here, plucked a downed pilot from the South China Sea minutes after he hit the water.

The F100 Super Sabre pilot from the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing here said he lost a generator and his oil pressure dropped to zero shortly after completing a bombing run. He immediately headed out to sea and got off a "May Day" before ejecting from his aircraft about 30 miles south of Phan Rang.

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The pilot's wing man and several other U.S. aircraft in the vicinity orbited the downed airman until the Pedro rescue helicopter arrived.

Capt. **Wayne R. Crowther**, Pedro aircraft commander, said "We made one pass over the pilot's raft and picked him up without a hitch. He appeared to be in fine shape, and we headed home."

Capt. **John J. Growther**, of York, Pa., the HH43 pilot, added, "The downed pilot knew his rescue procedures real well, and it took minimum time to hoist him up." (*Pacific Stars & Stripes*, Friday, July 17, 1970)

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### NCO 1 Of Top 12 In AF

**PHAN RANG AB**, Vietnam (Special)—A versatile noncommissioned officer assigned to the 1882<sup>nd</sup> Comm. Sq. here is one of the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airmen for 1971.

M. Sgt. **Arthur G. Miles Jr.**, the Air Force Communications Service nominee, will be an honored guest at the Air Force Association convention in Washington Sept. 20-22.

Noncommissioned officer-in-charge (NCOIC) of the squadron's communications-electronics (C-E) program, Miles is also a boxing, track and field champion, and a leader of black activities.

While assigned to the 95<sup>th</sup> Strategic Wing at Goose AB, Labrador, in 1967, Miles was recognized for his job knowledge and leadership and selected for retraining into the C-E programs management career field. In addition, he was named "PRIDE" Man of the Quarter for exemplary performance as the wing NCOIC of C-E plans and programs, cited for compiling the highest "error-free" Communications - Electronics Support Program rate over a 10-month period within the 16 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force bases.

Following these achievements, Miles attended the SAC NCO Academy and the C-E programs management supervisor courses, graduating in the top 15 per cent of his class.

At Phan Rang the sergeant was assigned the additional duties of unit manpower representative, resources adviser and resources conservation' (RE-CON) administrator. In the latter capacity, he submitted the first RECON savings item within AFCS to be validated for more than \$1 million.

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The San Francisco area Golden Gloves champion and Pacific AAU Junior boxing champion in 1952, Miles continued his interest in sports, while in the Air Force, competing in 1956 in the Air Force World-Wide Boxing Tournament and later turning his talents to track and field.

In 1960, working with the Turkish Olympic Track and Field Team, he became the first American airman ever invited to compete in the Turkish National Track and Field Championships. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes Saturday, July 24, 1971*)

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### Gets His Big Chance In Vietnam

**PHAN RANG**, Vietnam (7AF) — "It's like a ballet dancer who trains and trains, and never gets a chance."

That's the way Lt. **Col. Kenneth Miles** described his 18-year Air Force career until two months ago, when he came to Vietnam.

Since that time, he has flown his first combat mission, more than 80 of them, and has taken command of the 614th Tactical Fighter Sq., whose F-100 Super Sabre pilots call themselves the "Lucky Devils".

Hardly more than a month after taking over the squadron, the colonel was able to share in two "Lucky Devil" triumphs.

The air crews celebrated the unit's 5,000th combat mission in Vietnam, and the 614th was selected as the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing's top squadron of the month.

"These missions have been flown throughout South Vietnam and some into North Vietnam. We've flown from one end of the country to the other in support of major Army ground operations," Miles said.

The most recent operation, he pointed out, was Junction City. The role of the F-100 he said, has been to come to the assistance of Army units pinned down by the enemy, and also to destroy such targets as enemy bunkers, fortifications, and booby-trapped areas lying in the

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path of Army units.

In regard to his own new role in flying combat missions, he said, "It's gratifying to be able to help out."

His most successful mission, he said, occurred 95 miles southwest of Saigon, when a South Vietnamese unit was pinned down by the enemy along canal. "We were credited with destroying 35 per cent of the target complex," he recalled, and the enemy suffered seven deaths, the destruction of nine military fortifications, and the damaging of seven other fortifications. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes Tuesday, June 20, 1967*)



**Doug's Comments:** After nearly 12 years and almost 6,000 pages of the Phan Rang Newsletter I thought I pretty much covered the entire history of Phan Rang AB, but then I thought of all the stories that I've seen over the years that I've missed or looked over because they didn't seem to be relevant to what I was looking for at the time. So with that in mind I thought of looking at all the Stars & Stripes publications since 1966 and found hundreds of articles that some ways pertained to Phan Rang AB, even if they didn't have a dateline of Phan Rang. This issue is Part 2 of that effort. To see a list of all previous newsletters click [here](#). To unsubscribe to Phan Rang News, [dougsevert@gmail.com](mailto:dougsevert@gmail.com) and put 'unsubscribe' in subject line.