

Phan Rang AB Newsletter

The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.
“Keeping the memories alive” Newsletter 292

In this issue:

The Colonel 'Wears' Two Hats

Black Studies - Taught Men in Vietnam

Vietnamese Needy Thankful

Arms Uncovered

Red Cross Is Proud To Receive Wonderful Letters of Thanks

Volunteers Teach

New Boss for 309th

Roar of Air Strike Starts in Quiet Room

Together We Served



Doing paperwork at a desk at Phan Rang



The Colonel ‘Wears’ Two Hats

By Capt. Peter J. Anderson

(Editor’s Note: Christmas days are the days when a man wants to be home with his family. They are days when a wife wants her husband to be around and when the children want their daddy. ..

For thousands of men, “home” will instead be someplace in Vietnam where there is no peace.)

Col. **Noble Greenhill Jr.** of Montgomery is one of those men, and his days of activities described in this story will be typical of many military companions who will not get home as they try to establish peace.

Col. Noble F. Greenhill Jr. of Montgomery—vice commander of the 315th Special Operations

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

Wing at Phan Rang Air Base in Vietnam—is just one of many native Alabamians stationed at Phan Rang Air Base.



In the pilot's seat of a C-123.

The colonel—a veteran of more than 29-years of military life and a 1944 graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.—wears two hats at the busy base. One is that of vice commander and the second, as a C123 Provider pilot. The twin engine plane is the transport aircraft flown by members of the 315th.

Purpose of Col. Greenhill's command in Vietnam is to fly re-supply, troop movement and defoliation missions in support of the Free World forces.

“The wing has never once failed to perform its mission in a highly creditable and satisfactory manner,” Col. Greenhill stated in a recent interview at the base. “And today, it is establishing airlift records that will stand for years to come.

One of the many locations where C-123s of the 315th SOWG have performed with distinction was Khe Sanh.

The colonel personally participated in this massive re-supply effort and landed at the battered Marine Corps base during the height of the battle.

“Our involvement began on January 21, 1968.” said Col. Greenhill. “The North Vietnamese had hit and destroyed one of the ammunition dumps adjacent to the runway. We were called on to take a combat essential re-supply late that afternoon.

“There was only 1,800 feet of runway at Khe Sanh that was useable - he recalled, “and that was not lighted. It was becoming dark and the cloud cover was extremely low. On top of that, there

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

was intense .30 caliber and .50 caliber ground fire directed against the C-123s from the high ridges surrounding the area. As the planes landed, enemy mortar fire followed them down the runway.



Col. Noble F. Greenhill Jr., along with those number of Alabama components serving in Vietnam. Talking here are Maj. **Ira F Allen**, Northport, Al., a pilot instructor with the 311th Special Operations Sqd., 1st Lt. **James E. Smith**, Florence, a pilot assigned to the 310th Special Operations Sqd., Col. Greenhill, MSgt. **Charles R. Coker**, Dothan, an search maintenance technician assigned to the 310th Special Operations Sqd., and Capt. **Charles R. Cain**, Weeded, a navigator on the 310th Sqd. They all fly the C-123 Provider in Vietnam

“In spite of these conditions.- Col. Greenhill continued. “We landed six loads of ammunition that night. The next day we carried 80 tons more into Khe Sanh. And the crews of the 315th continued this until the siege was broken and the enemy retreated back into the mountains.”

Observers reported that enemy fire increased when the Providers neared the Marine camp. Mortar fire became no intense that Marines named the C-123s “Mortar Magnets” and “Mortar Bait.”

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

“Something like this is above average,” the colonel observed, but our crews perform routine missions with the same dedication.

A routine mission with the 315th SOWG usually involves seven to 10 sorties and will last 10 to 12 hours.

A recent mission flown by Col. Greenhill began with the airlift of perishable food from Phan Rang to the mountain city of Dalat. Fresh fruit and vegetables were then carried from Dalat to Pleiku. The aircraft also carried an Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) first lieutenant, returning to his unit from a brief leave in the Central Highlands.

At Pleiku 3,000 pounds of lumber and clothing were picked up for Ban Me Thuot Bast, a Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) camp in Darlac Province. There a load of batteries was also loaded on for return to Pleiku.

Again, at Pleiku, the crew took a quick break for lunch—on C-rations—while the aircraft was being loaded with three large pallets of barbed wire for another CIDG camp, this one named Plateau GI and located on the flattened top of a 3,900 foot mountain.

Col. Greenhill, flying as aircraft commander, executed a fast-descent assault landing into the remote camp with its small, dirt runway.

“To avoid the possibility of ground fire,” he explained. “we make a steep dive toward the air strip and at the last moment level off to land.

It almost looks like we are trying to dive into the runway, he added.

A second flight into Plateau GI was made with a load of metal fence posts, blankets and cement. With darkness near, the load was quickly offloaded and in 10 minutes the Provider was airborne again—for home.

It was eight o’clock in the evening before the C-123 arrived back at Phan Rang and the crew could think of dinner.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

“Sure, the days are long,” the colonel admitted, but the job is an important one and the men do it well, They are completely mission oriented and receive great self-satisfaction from the best job they have had in their military careers.”

The 315th SOWG is composed of five squadrons of C123s and one maintenance squadron, Located at Phan Rang are the 309th, 310th and 311th Special Operations Squadrons and the 315th Consolidated Aircraft Maintenance Squadron. The 19th SOS is located at Tan Son Nhut Air Base at Saigon.

A final squadron is the 12th SOS, located at Bien Hoa Air Base. It is a defoliation unit that provides support for all Free World ground forces in Vietnam. Its “spray birds” have helped many Army and Marine Corps units by removing the protective jungle covering where the enemy hides.

When he completes his tour of duty in Vietnam, Col. Greenhill will report to the 374th Tactical Airlift Wing at Naha Air Base in Okinawa to become vice commander there. (Source: *The Montgomery Advertiser (Montgomery, Alabama) Sun, Dec 15, 1968*)

Black Studies - Taught Men in Vietnam

M.Sgt **Arthur G. Miles Jr.**, of Los Angeles, instructs a pioneer black studies course introduced at Phan Rang Air Base, Republic of Vietnam, to “seek a new ‘life style’ of our own making, one that conforms to military regulations and just traditions,” said Miles.

Course was established with the approval and cooperation of the former Phan Rang AB commander, Col. **Frank Martely**, of San Bernardino.

The course is in two parts and is scheduled to run consecutively over the next four months.

Part one is for 11 weeks and is entitled “American Minority Politics”. This segment of the course, which began six weeks ago, has more than doubled its initial enrollment to its present 64 students.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

Utilizing Chuck Stone’s book, “Black Political Power in America” the primary objective of the first segment is a study of black American political system, how it relates to the black American, and how it may be influenced by ethnic, fraternal, economic and religious interest groups.

A secondary objective is the establishment of a forum in which the rapidly changing American civilian and military social system can be intelligently discussed at the grass roots level, Sergeant Miles indicated.

Part two of the course is five weeks long and is entitled “An introduction to Blackness.” The works of Eric Hoffer, Harold Cruse, Nathan Hare, and Malcolm X will be used to “instill a sense of ethnic pride and reinforce a sense of dignity and self-respect in the individual by examining black military goals and accomplishments.”

Guest speakers have included Thomas Kleinfelter, a University of Maryland English instructor who addressed the class on the black man and the English language and Colonel Martel whose topic was the importance of presenting a good image. (*Central News, Los Angeles, California, Thursday, January 7, 1971*)



ATTENDS BLACK STUDIES

COURSE: Airman 1.C. James Johnson, USAF, Camden, New Jersey, listens to a lecture during a black studies course at

Phan Rang. First class of its kind there, it is designed to relate the military system to a life style which allows black airmen to retain their sense of dignity and self-respect.



INSTRUCTS COURSE:

M.Sgt. Arthur G. Miles Jr. a black studies course instructor explains how the government responds when a group votes in a

block. The 4-month, 2-part class is designed to relate the military system to a life style which allows black airmen to retain their sense of dignity and self-respect.



“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

S. C. Clothes Donations - Vietnamese Needy Thankful

Phan Rang may be just another Vietnamese base to South Carolinians, but to orphans and other needy children at Phan Rang, Myrtle Beach and Sumter in North Carolina are compassionate.

Some 6,000 pounds of new and used clothing, donated by military personnel and their families at Myrtle Beach Air Force Base, have been distributed to Vietnamese kids near the Phan Rang Air Base.

The 352nd Tactical Fighter Squadron, which had made the switch from the coast of the Palmetto State at Myrtle Beach to the coastal base of Phan Rang, South Vietnam, handled the distribution.

Meanwhile 1st Lt. **Donald Terrell**, 27, of Sumter, was giving another Palmetto helping hand to a children’s hospital and a Buddhist orphanage near Phan Rang.

As part of the civic action program of 1882nd Communications Squadron at Phan Rang, Terrell coordinated efforts to salvage and repair mattresses for the two children’s institutions. “The mattress gave comfort to hospitalized and orphaned Vietnamese children, victims of Viet Cong terrorism,” Terrell said.

The clothing donated by Myrtle Beach Air Base personnel was presented to Nguyen Xuam Ky, province commissioner of social welfare, but Lt. Col Rocco Palumbo of Durham, N. M. commander of the 352nd.

Maj. **Charles M Zeitner**, 37, of Mission, S. D. the squadron’s civic action officer, said the clothing was “in very good usable condition. There is no sign of the clothes being moldy or mildewed.”

Some 5,000 pounds of clothing was distributed to orphanages and to families in need, with the other 1,000 pounds going to dependents of the Vietnamese 44th Regiment.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 “...keeping the memories alive”



Vietnamese Get Myrtle Beach Clothing

Lt. Col Rocco Palumbo, commander of the 352nd Tactical Fighter Squadron at Phan Rang air base in Vietnam, shows a young Vietnamese how some of 6,000 pounds of clothing donated by residents of Myrtle Beach Air Force Base will look on her and other needy Vietnamese children.

(The State (Columbia, South Carolina, Monday, July 17, 1967)

Arms Uncovered - Phan Rang AB civil engineers assisted local Vietnamese farmers in dredging 1,000 feet of irrigation canal near the base and, in the process, uncovered an ammunition cache.

Province official asked the Air Force to assist in removing heavy debris from the canal bottom. The trash was impeding the flow of water so essential to agriculture in his semiarid region of Vietnam.

Since the base also uses the non-potable canal water for varied purposes, base officials were glad to cooperate in the joint effort.

The canal was inspected by members of the 35th Civil Engineering Squadron. Since most of the area was inaccessible to a crane with dredging bucket, MSgt. **Earlie D. Vickery** decided to tackle the task with a bulldozer.

While removing about two feet of debris from one section of the canal, he uncovered the ammunition. The base Explosive Ordnance Disposal team was called and found 44 mortar rounds of varied types, five claymore mines, three 57mm recoilless rifle rounds, a hand grenade, an M-72 shoulder-fired rocket warhead and launcher, about 1,500 rounds of 7.62mm

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

ammunition and nearly 200 rounds of .50 caliber ammunition. (*The Hill Top Times (Hill Air Force Base, Utah) Friday, June 13, 1969*)



Red Cross Is Proud To Receive Wonderful Letters of Thanks

<p>December 23, 1967 Phan Rang A.B. Viet Nam</p> <p>Dear Friends,</p> <p>I want to take time out to thank the Red Cross in your town for the wonderful bag of gifts I received today.</p> <p>It really meant a lot to me and all of the other guys that received them were very happy. I wanted to personally thank you because I want you to know how much I really appreciate it.</p> <p>It is something which I will never forget the rest of my life. You don't know how much</p>	<p>December 1967 Phan Rang A.B. Viet Nam</p> <p>To all the members of your wonderful chapter: I want to thank you so very much for the Christmas gifts. I can't think of anything that has ever meant more to me.</p> <p>Knowing the people back in our homeland think enough to spend their time and money on us. I wish there was something I could do for you.</p> <p>The Red Cross means a lot to all of us. Your help in all situations can never be repaid. Again I thank you for everything from myself and all the other men stationed in Viet Nam.</p>
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“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

it means to know that people will take a little time from their work to remember us over here.

On behalf of myself and all the other servicemen over here I want to say thank you for remembering us.

A1C Dale F. Larson

A. F. 1698017

405 FW De 2

Box 541

APO San Francisco,

Calif. 96321

I am stationed at Phan Rang A.B. about 40 miles from Cam Ranh Bay. A member of the 13th TAC. Bomb Squadron. Our plane is the B-57 Bomber and we play a big role in our mission here.

If I may I would like very much to be a pen pal if there is anyone in Morgan that would like to write. If so my address is:

A1C Mike Barnes 12783786

13th TBS Box 461

APO San Francisco 96321

I am from Georgia, Smyrna. It is about 14 miles north of Atlanta. I have blond hair, blue eyes and am 19 years old and stand an even 6 foot.

I hope to hear from someone in Morgan. I enjoy writing and would like to learn more about your city and state.

Once again thanks so very much and may God bless you all.

Wishing to all the Best of Christmas and a very Happy New Year.

Sincerely yours,

Mike Barnes.

Morgan County News, Morgan, Utah, Friday, December 29, 1967.

Volunteers Teach - An all-volunteer program for providing English language instruction for Vietnamese high school students in Ninh Thuan Province is one of the most

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

successful long-range civic action projects at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam.

The program began in 1967 with a handful of students. This year student enrollment is 967. Students age from 11 to 17 years, and there are about an equal number of boys and girls attending.

Classes are taught in Phan Rang City and Thap Cham Village. Volunteer U.S. Air Force officers and airmen from Phan Rang AB teach three evenings a week. Two-man teaching teams instruct 11 1/2-hour sessions in classrooms provided by the Republic of Vietnam regional forces.

"Extremely high standards are demanded of our teachers because of the impressionable age of the students and the instructor's status as an international representative of the United States," said 1st Lt. **James V. Cooley Jr.**, Phan Rang AB civic action officer.

New Boss for 309th PHAN RANG AB (Special)— Lt. Col. **Harvey H. Hogue**, 43, of San Antonio, recently took command of the 309th Special Operations Sq. here. He replaces Lt. Col. Paul E. Rova, who has been reassigned to Headquarters, Pacific Air Forces, at Hickam AFB in Hawaii. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Sunday, Sept. 28, 1969*)

Roar of Air Strike Starts in Quiet Room

By SPEC. 5 CHARLES C. SELF

S&S Staff Correspondent

SAIGON — Inside a maze of buildings at Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Saigon is a darkened room with high, black walls covered, with glowing letters and a giant map of Vietnam.

Huddled behind four stepped rows of modern desktops facing the walls are about 25 men with telephones, charts, pencils and a mass of paper. The men speak quietly of bombing in Quang Tri, gunships near Pleiku and tactical strikes, north of Saigon near Cambodia.

High above the desks at the back of the room Brig. Gen. **Walter T. Gilligan** looked over the scene through windows in his office as he explained that the room was the "heartbeat of. 7th Air Force tactical operations."

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

"This is really the heart and soul of the South Vietnam air operations," said Gilligan.

Gilligan is deputy director of the Tactical Air Control Center. The men in the room below his office monitor all air operations in South Vietnam and control all tactical air strikes. The center plans operations throughout Vietnam a day in advance, but Gilligan said immediate requests from commanders in the field also are handled by the TACC.

When a ground commander in the field spots enemy movement and needs air assistance, he notifies the air liaison officer through the Army communications system. The air officer contacts one of four Direct Air Support Centers (DASC) and asks for close support.

One officer pointed out that the field commander makes his request on an open "hot net" monitored by each of these people, "Unless the Army says no, we act on the request," he said, "There is no delay. The DASC gets the request immediately and relays it to the TACC.

"The four Direct Support Centers are extensions of the TACC," Gilligan explained, The DASC forwards the request to the TACC which can scramble fighters on the ground or divert a flight already in the air, whichever is faster.

"All we need is 15 minutes on the ground to scramble the aircraft — and that's under adverse conditions — plus, flight time to the target," said Gilligan. "Usually it's about" 35 to 40 minutes total. When I was a wing-commander in Phan Rang, we were once off the ground in seven minutes," he said.

"We have other immediate missions that only take 10 minutes or even less," added Col. Henry W. Brown, assistant, deputy director of the TACC, explaining that aircraft are in flight all the time and said, if the mission has priority the aircraft can be diverted by the TACC.

Tactical aircraft fly out of Da Nang, Phu Cat, Phan Rang and Bien Hoa. They are guided to target areas by the DASC and then sometimes directly on target by one of more than 300 forward air control ships (FACs).

Gilligan said one, of the four Direct Air Support Centers has been turned over to the

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

Vietnamese Air Force and the others are training Vietnamese, so that they can take over as the level of, U.S. forces is reduced.

Gilligan pointed out that in the TACC itself, half the room now is used by the South Vietnamese Air Force. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, Sunday, September 27, 1970*)

3 Squadrons Moved - PHAN RANG, Vietnam (7AF) —The 315th Air Commando Wing has moved three of its airlift squadrons, its chief of maintenance section, and its headquarters to Phan Rang AB. Commanded by Col. **Bill M. Richardson**, the C-123 Provider transport unit airlifts cargo, personnel, and animals to installations throughout South Vietnam. (*Pacific Stars & Stripes, September 26, 1967*)



In Vietnam - First Lieutenant **Robert Dean DeLongchamp**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence DeLongchamp of 637 Carr St. Negaunee, Mich., is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Lieutenant DeLongchamp is a navigator in a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Southeast Asia, he was assigned to Kelly AFB, Tex. The lieutenant, a 1962 graduate of Negaunee High School, earned his B. S. degree at Wisconsin State University in 1966 where he was commissioned through the Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps program. He is a member of Tau Kappa Epsilon. (*Las Cruces Sun-News, New Mexico, Tuesday September 9, 1969*)

Service Personnel U.S. Air Force M.Sgt. **Eugene R. Iwanski** of Route 1, Junction City, was decorated with the Air Medal at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam by Col. Gregg P. Nolan Jr., commander

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing. Sgt. Iwanski, son of Mr. and Mrs. B.W. Iwanski, distinguished himself at Phan Rang as an aircraft maintenance superintendent while participating in aerial flight and was cited for his outstanding airmanship and courage on successful and important missions completed under hazardous conditions. (*Stevens Point Journal, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, Thursday, Aug. 5, 1971*)

Servicemen’s News - AIRMAN 1.C. **Charles W. Clifford Cudah**, whose wife, Linda, is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Siburt, 307 N. 10th St., is now on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, as a jet engine mechanic with a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. He was formerly stationed at Luke AFB, Ariz., with the 4510th Field Maintenance Squadron. (*Wausau Daily Herald, Wausau, Wisconsin, Sept. 4, 1968*)

Servicemen’s News - AIR FORCE SGT. **David J. Rowell**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Rowell, Schofield, is serving as a computer repairman in a unit of the 1964th Communications Group at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam which recently earned the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award for the third consecutive year. The group is responsible for communications and air traffic control in the combat zone. (*Wausau Daily Herald, Wausau, Wisconsin, Mar. 4, 1968*)

Airman F. C. **Richard J. Hennes**, brother of George C. Hennes, 2607 Pike ST., Stevens Point, has received the U.S. Air Force Commendation Medal at Duluth International Airport, Minn. Airman Hennes, an aircraft engine mechanic, was decorated for meritorious service at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. He was cited for his outstanding professional skill and initiative. He is now at Duluth in a unit of the Aerospace Defense Command. (*Stevens Point Journal, Stevens Point, Wisconsin, March 3, 1969*)

FREDERIC - Airman 1. C. **Robert W. Erickson**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Carl C. Erickson, Rt. 1, is a member of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, that has been honored by the Vietnamese Armed Forces. Airman Erickson is an aircraft maintenance specialist. (*Leader Telegram, 1971*)

Serves in Vietnam - Airman 1. C. **Robert D. Paulick**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert F. Paulick of 1216 Faust Ave., Oshkosh, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Paulick, a security policeman is in a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. Before his arrival in Southeast Asia, he was assigned to the

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

379th Bomb Wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. (This has to have been a typo. ed.) The airman is a graduate of Oshkosh High School. (*The Oshkosh Northwestern, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, 1969*)

IN SERVICE - Staff Sgt. **Donald Brannon**, son of Daniel Brannon of Route 2, has been graduated at Sheppard AFB, Tex., from the training course for Air Force veterinary technicians. He is being transferred to Malmstrom AFB, Mont., for duty with the Strategic Air Command. He has completed a tour of duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. (*The Circleville Herald (Circleville, Ohio) Tuesday, January 29, 1969*)



FOUR MORE YEARS - Sgt. **David C. Kaminski** (right) son of Mr. and Mrs. C. S. Kaminski, 1407 Peach Ave., Marshfield, receives his U.S. Air Force discharge certificate before re-enlisting in the Air Force for another four years. Capt. Edward S. Pitman, food services officer, Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, officiates. Sgt. Kaminski is a supply services specialist at Phan Rang, with a unit of the Pacific Air Forces. He is a 1968 graduate of P. J. Jacobs Senior High School, Stevens Point. (*Marshfield News-Herald, Marshfield, Wisconsin, Monday April 19, 1971*)

On Duty In Vietnam - PATERSON - Airman 1C **Albert B. Warren** of 132 N. Third St., is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Airman Warren is a medical specialist. Before his arrival in Vietnam, he was assigned to Eglin AFB, Fla. The airman, son of Mr. and Mrs. David Warren, is a 1966 graduate of Passaic County Technical and Vocational High School. (*The Morning Call (Paterson, New Jersey) Friday, October 18, 1968*)

At Phan Rang AB - PATERSON - Airman 1.C **Thomas E. Glinka**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Glinka of 85 Tuella Ave., is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Airman Glinka is an aircraft mechanic. Before his arrival in Vietnam, he was assigned to Dover AFB, Del. The airman is a 1964 graduate of Don Bosco Tech. High School. (*The Morning Call (Paterson, New Jersey) Friday, October 18, 1968*)

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

WILLIAM THOMAS - S.Sgt. **William D. Thomas**, son of Mr. and Mrs., C. F. Thomas, 31 S. Main St., Blountstown, is a member of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, that has been honored by the Vietnamese Armed Forces (*Tallahassee Democrat, Tallahassee, Florida, Wednesday, June 2, 1971*)

OWEN - Technical Sergeant **William R. Krach**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Mike J. Krach, is a member of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, that has been honored by the Vietnamese Armed Forces. Sergeant Krach is an aircraft maintenance technician. (*Leader-Telegram Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Tuesday June 1, 1971*)

News of Servicemen - Air Force Maj. **JOHN O. HANFORD**, has been decorated with the Silver Star and 15 Air Medals for air action in Southeast Asia. He received the Silver Star for gallantry while flying an F-100 Super Sabre on a mission against an enemy artillery position which had been shelling the U.S. Marine outpost at Khe Sanh in Vietnam. Despite unfavorable conditions, he pressed the attack with complete disregard to his own safety and destroyed the position. During his tour of duty, Hanford served at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Now an instructor pilot at Nellis AFB, Las Vegas, Nevada. Hanford is the son of Col. and Mrs. George O. Hanford of 6310 NE 20th Terr., Ft. Lauderdale. (*Fort Lauderdale News, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Wednesday, September 18m 1968*)

News of Servicemen - Airman First Class **GERARDUS J. FERNANDEZ**, is on duty at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. An aircraft mechanic, Fernandez is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Gerardus H. Fernandez of 3300 SW 56th Ave., Hollywood and a graduate of South Broward Senior High School. (*Fort Lauderdale News, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Wednesday, September 18m 1968*)

Day’s Unit Gets Top AF Unit Award - Vietnam - T.Sgt. **Clarence E. Day**, son of C. J. Day, Stewart, is a member of an organization in Vietnam which has earned the U.S. Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. Day, assigned to a unit of the 1964th Communications Group at Phan Rang AB, will wear a distinctive service ribbon to mark his affiliation with the organization. As the Air Force Communications Service’s major unit in Vietnam, the 1964th, with headquarters at Tan Son Nhut AB, is responsible for communications and air traffic control in the combat zone. It earned the award for achieving an exceptionally meritorious rating in support of the

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

U.S. mission in Vietnam. This is the third consecutive one-year period for which the 1964th was so honored. (*The Leaf-Chronicle, Clarksville, Tennessee, Sunday, March 10, 1968*)

St. Mary Graduate Wins Commendation - MENASHA - A 1945 graduate of St. Mary High School, Lt. Col. **Roger J. Grassl**, has received the U.S. Air Force Commendation Medal. The award, earned while flight facilities officer and commander of communications squadron at Alconbury RAF Station in England was presented recently at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. Col. Grassl now is serving at Phan Rang as a training officer for the 14th Special Operations Wing, a part of the Pacific Air Forces. Grassl is the son of Mr. and Mrs. William C. Grassl, 18 W. Foster St., Appleton. The airman received a degree in business in 1967 from New Hampshire College of Accounting and Commerce and also has received a degree in military science from the University of Maryland, European Division. (*The Oshkosh Northwestern, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, April 1971*)

Staff Sgt. **Gary W. Patton**, son of Mr. and Mrs. Garland B. Patton of Winchester, is on duty as a law enforcement specialist at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam. (*Lexington Herald-Leader, Lexington, Kentucky, Sunday, May 30, 1971*)

WITH U.S. COMBAT AIR FORCES, Vietnam — Airman First Class **Charles L. Estes** is among communications personnel who share honors with the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at Phan Rang AB, Vietnam, in earning the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm. Airman Estes, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lemuel A. Estes of Route 2 Humboldt, is a communications equipment repairman and provides essential support for wing F-100 Super Sabre fighter-bomber operations at the coastal installation. The 35th was cited by the Republic of Vietnam for flying more than 53,000 missions. (*The Jackson Sun, Jackson, Tennessee, Sunday, May 30, 1971*)

City Man in Honored Air Force Wing - Air force Sgt. **RICHARD T. ROBINSON**, son of Mrs. Rosa L. Robinson, 2543 Machine Street, Winston-Salem, is a member of the 14th Special Operations Wing in Southeast Asia that has earned the Presidential Unit Citation. Robinson, assigned to Phan Rang Air Base, Vietnam, is an aircraft mechanic with the wing which has received the highest U.S. organizational award for its performance as the only Air Force unit of its kind in the combat theater.

“Happy Valley” Phan Rang AB, RVN The History of Phan Rang AB and the stories of those who served there.

Phan Rang AB News No. 292 **“...keeping the memories alive”**

The 14th is headquarters at Phan Rang and operates from nine major locations in Southeast Asia. Wing aircrews fly seven types of aircraft-including fixed-wing gunships and the Air Force’s only armed helicopters - on such special missions as leaflet drops, defense of allied outposts and escort for search and rescue missions. The 14th was charged with the defense of more than 3,600 allied positions, hundreds of ground teams and patrols and the surrender of more than 33,000 enemy troops.

In February, the 14th also implemented Vietnamese Air Force combat crew training on AC-119 gunships into its mission to support the Vietnamese improvement and modernization program. Robinson will wear a distinctive service ribbon to mark his affiliation with the wing. He was graduated from Anderson Senior High School in 1965 and attended Winston-Salem State University.

His father, Curtis E. Robinson, lives at 2828 Greenway Avenue, Winston-Salem. (*The Sentinel, Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Saturday, June 26, 1971*)

Stationed in Vietnam Pineville Man Commands Fighter Wing - Phan Rang AB,

Republic of Vietnam - U.S. Air Force Col. **Cregg P. Nolen Jr.** of Pineville La., assumed command of the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing here recently from Col. Walter C. Tunier of Eatontown, N.J.

Col. Nolen moved up from post of 35th TFW vice commander, which he assumed last Oct. 11. A command pilot and wearer of the parachutists’ badge, he is a 37-year Air Force veteran.

Col. Nolen is a 1964 graduate of the University of Nebraska with a Bachelor of Arts degree in economics. He also holds a masters degree from George Washington University in foreign affairs. Born in Texas, he was commissioned through the Aviation Cadets program in 1944, served in the European Theater during World War II, in the Far East during the Korean Conflict, and now heads up the 25th F-100 Super Sabre fighter wing at Phan Rang aB for his third combat tour.

The 35th TFW consists of four F-100 fighter squadrons and the Royal Australian Air Force Number 2 Squadron, which flies Canberra twin-engine bombers, at Phan Rang AB. The 8th Special Operations Squadron, flying A-37 Dragonfly fighters out of Bien Hoa AB, near Saigon,

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also comes under the operational control of the 35th TFW. The 25th is Phan Rang’s host wing and shares the large coastal Vietnam complex with the 14th Special Operations Wing, the 315th Tactical Arlift Wing, and several tenant organizations.

Col. Nolen came to Happy Valley from the Pentagon, Washington, D.C., where he was assigned to the Directorate of Operations, Headquarters, U.S. Air Force.

He is married to the former Roberta Jo Rodgue, and they have four children, Mrs. Christine James, Mrs. Betty Knight, Cregg P. III and Michael. (*The Town Talk, Alexandria, Louisiana, Sunday, February 21, 1971.*)



Doug’s Comments: This newsletter was researched and composed by Douglas Severt. To see a list of all previous newsletters click [here](#). To unsubscribe to Phan Rang News, dougsevert@gmail.com and put ‘unsubscribe’ in subject line.