

C-7A Caribou Association

Volume 30, Issue 1

Critical Ben Het Airdrops June 1969

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U.S. troop strength in Vietnam declined as the U.S. implemented programs to have South Vietnamese forces assume a greater combat role. Originally called “de-Americanization,” the policy officially became known as “Vietnamization.”

In March 1969 the U.S. began a sustained B-52 bombing campaign against North Vietnamese supplies and bases in Cambodia that lasted 14 months. The North Vietnamese Army (NVA) responded by increasing their attacks against the U.S. Special Forces/Civilian Irregular Defense Group camps close to the Cambodian border: Bu Prang, Duc Lap, Duc Co, Dak Pek, Dak Seang, and Ben Het.

Ben Het was the westernmost of the camps, located less than ten miles from where Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam come together. In early March the enemy advanced on Ben Het with ten Soviet-designed PT-76 amphibious light tanks, but the attack was a probe more than a serious attack.

In May, North Vietnamese forces massed near Ben Het with the intent of overwhelming the camp. The NVA took control of the ridges that overlooked Ben Het and enemy antiaircraft crews set up their weapons to cover the approaches to the airstrip. Resupply by road became impossible and by early June C-7A’s could no longer land at Ben Het due to enemy action.

Aerial delivery of supplies critical to Ben Het’s survival began on June 3. It soon became necessary for fighter-bombers to suppress the intense enemy fire so the Caribous could make their airdrops. Despite the hostile environment, Caribou airdrop sorties delivered more than 200 tons of essential cargo including ammunition, POL, rations, water, and medical supplies. The siege was not lifted until July 2, 1969.

For their heroic actions in support of Ben Het, C-7A crewmembers were awarded two Silver Stars (Maj. Delbert D. Lockwood and Maj. William A. Evalenko), 25 DFCs, three Purple Hearts, and seven single mission Air Medals.

Vietnamization had begun, but C-7A airlift was needed more than ever.



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Chairman of the Board's Corner



What's in a number? Well, in the case of 2019, the number is 30 and it represents both the year of our 30th Annual Reunion to be held in Golden, Colorado on the 4th through the 8th of September and the 30th Anniversary of our Association Newsletter.

The preliminary information on Colorado is posted on the web site and more will be available as the details are worked out. One of the highlights will be a trip to the Air Force Academy and the dedication of a plaque to honor our members who are graduates. Colorado did its best to make negotiations difficult, but they were no match for our reunion team and the contract is now signed with the hotel. Reservations may be made now. Quite in contrast to Colorado, the hotel contract for the 2020 reunion in Orlando, Florida is already signed! As always, we must thank the volunteers amongst us who do all the work to bring us these reunions and produce the newsletter.

According to my calendar, it should be spring in my corner of the world, but all I see is white looking out the window. I suppose that eventually some of that global warming with catch up with me. I have to admit that even for a cranky old life-long New Englander, winter has been long this year. On the other hand, that just makes summer all the more welcome and I'm looking forward to my annual trip to Eastport, Maine for their very traditional Independence Day celebration. I hope all of you also have plans for a great summer in advance of our 30th Reunion.

Speaking of numbers, they are all in for the Dayton reunion, but numbers do little to tell the story. We sure don't party like we did in the old days and I never thought I would see the War Room empty at 11:00 PM, but I think everyone had a good time, connected with old friends, and met new ones. One of these years, we might even get the NMUSAF to paint Caribou S/N 62-4193 properly!

Meanwhile, keep your eyes open as more information becomes available on the web site for Reunion 2019 and go right ahead and get those reservations made early!

One last item is that some of you may have noticed a slightly different appearance to all the links on the web site. With my aging eyes, I was having a problem seeing the links clearly and at least one other person brought this to my attention. I made a change to the appearance of the links to make them easier to read and hope I have achieved my goal. As always, I stand ready to try to accommodate requests such as this one.

30th Annual C-7A Caribou Association Reunion
September 4 – 8, 2019
Golden, Colorado
Denver Marriott West Hotel
(303) 279-9100 for reservations

Special Mission to LZ Baldy

by Fred Hafer [537, 67]

The 537th Tactical Airlift Squadron had 15 C-7A Caribou transport aircraft stationed at Phu Cat Air Base. Every morning we sent ten aircraft to the 1st Air Cavalry Division Headquarters airfield at An Khe where we received our first mission assignments. New assignments were given at each destination. A typical day consisted of about eight hours of flying time and eight to ten landings of various degrees of difficulty. One mission we especially disliked was nicknamed the “Bong Song Bounce.” It took only six hours of flying time, but required 20 landings.

We operated missions under three priority levels: **Routine**. Standard flight conditions. Fly by the book and operate under stateside Air Traffic Control (ATC) procedures. **Combat Essential**. We are fighting and winning. Procedures and rules can be bent slightly in order to complete the mission. **Emergency [Resupply]**. We are fighting and losing. The rules are out – complete your mission the best way you can.

On this “special” morning I arrived at An Khe and was given an Emergency [Resupply] mission to take a helicopter refueling rig and its five-man crew to Landing Zone (LZ) Baldy, about an hour’s flight away. Baldy had received a very heavy mortar attack the previous night that had damaged their helicopter refueling equipment. At dawn, Charlie (Viet Cong) launched several simultaneous large-scale ground attacks and the troops in the front positions were in a bad way.

The weather was vile! Fifty foot or lower ceiling, intermittent heavy rain, and minimum forward visibility.

We took off under standard instrument flight procedures and headed north under control of the radar called *Panama*. When we arrived in the vicinity of Baldy, we lost radar coverage from *Panama* because we were too low.

We turned east and headed out over the South China Sea. When we were sure we were clear of the land, we set up a very slow spiral letdown, hoping to maintain our location to assist our Copilot’s dead reckoning navigation. When our altimeter indicated about eighty feet above the water, we reduced our rate of descent to a minimum, but continued very slowly downward.

Finally, we saw the waves below us. We leveled off and turned to the westerly heading that should take us to Baldy. We slowed our speed to give us more time to react to anything unforeseen. After an eternity, the Copilot called out that we should be there, but all we could see was murk. We were especially skittish because there is a 3,000-foot high ridge of mountains about three miles to the west of Baldy. Suddenly, there was break in the rain and we saw Baldy off our left wing.

It was impossible to set up a landing pattern as we were already flying at almost ground level. We landed on the rain-slicked runway, threw the engines into reverse, and then taxied to the unloading area. We shut down the right engine, but kept the left engine running so we could make a fast departure, if needed.

The Army quickly unloaded the refueling rig and we took off immediately. We followed the reverse of our inbound procedure – pick up the reverse easterly heading, stay down in the rice paddies until we were over the ocean, and then climb to radar contact altitude. The rest of the flight was uneventful and about an hour later we landed back at An Khe.

The Transportation Officer told us that Baldy reported the first choppers were armed, fueled, and airborne twenty minutes after we landed, and were in action immediately. At that point the sergeant came running over to us with another message from Baldy, “Tell those Air Force guys ‘Thanks a bunch. They really saved our skins. Things were pretty bad. Charlie was almost through the wire in a couple places. Then the choppers came in and

turned the whole thing around. We’re really kicking their butts now!’ ”

It made my day.

Fighter Support for C-7A Airlift

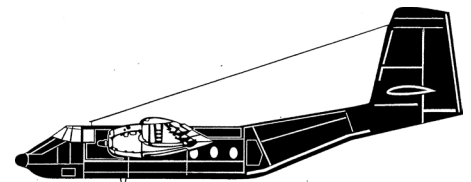
from *Caribou Airlines, Vol. III*

One of the significant C-7A operational changes in 1969 was the frequent use of Forward Air Controller (FAC) only and FAC/fighter support missions to support C-7A missions. The FAC and fighter support missions were flown to preclude the threat of enemy fire on C-7A aircraft operating into specific airfields or drop zones.

Depending on how active and imminent the enemy threat was, either a FAC would be “on station” with fighter support “on call” if needed, or both the FAC and fighters would be “on station” ready to respond quickly to suppress enemy fire. Sometimes A-1E’s or helicopter gunships provided armed escort for Caribou missions.

After several Caribous were hit by enemy fire at Ben Het, the support concept was changed from fighter escort to fire suppression with FAC-directed fighters attacking enemy anti-aircraft positions prior to Caribou drop times.

At various times during 1969, FAC only and FAC/fighter support missions were flown to assist C-7A airlift to many locations including: Song Be, Duc Phong, Katum, Bu Krak, Tien Phuoc, An Hoa, Ben Het, Dong Ha, Duc Hoa, Landing Zone Gerber, Hon Quan, Katum, Loc Ninh, Plei Djereng, Quang Ngai, Tra Bong, and Truc Giang.



Gear-up at Phu Cat

by Phil Jach [459, 66]

March 14, 1967 was a normal routine day of flying in Viet Nam. I was in the left seat with Major Dubberly, flying as Instructor Pilot, in the right seat. I was being checked out as Aircraft Commander. The flight originating from Pleiku was a routine courier flight that was scheduled to stop at several bases before returning to Pleiku late in the day. We departed early that morning and flew approximately 10 minutes to Dragon Mountain (Holloway field) which was the headquarters of the Army's Fourth Division. We picked up 17 soldiers, all of which were going on leave. Our first stop was Qui Nhon where all of the soldiers would depart to catch a flight for R&R (Rest and Recuperation).

After takeoff we settled into a 40-minute flight at probably 5,000 feet. We normally flew with the windows in the cockpit open and with the cargo door open but the cargo ramp closed. This was for air conditioning and at altitude it made a big difference in temperature. It also gave us a chance to hear any ground fire. Under the right circumstances, the ground fire was a simple popping noise. We did not hear any ground fire on takeoff, but that did not mean that it was not there. Had we heard ground fire, we would have done some checking before proceeding to the coast and Qui Nhon.

The flight from the Central Highlands to the coast was over the An Khe Mountains and then down into the coastal plains. The mountains are rugged and covered in jungle. The plains are covered with rice paddies. The An Khe River runs from the highlands through An Khe Pass and then onto the plains and eventually to the South China Sea at Qui Nhon.

Somewhere past the An Khe Pass, the left engine exploded into flames. We had some early warning with a



Maj. Robert H. Dubberly, 1/Lt. Philip E. Jach, and SSgt. Melvin P. Wolpert

smoke smell in the cabin, but could not identify the source. We were beyond the base at An Khe, and it was all down hill to the plains, so we continued. The engine shut down procedure did not work. The left prop was windmilling and could not be feathered. The engine fire extinguisher did not extinguish the fire. We were coming down at 300 to 500 feet per minute with the right engine at maximum power. If we had been carrying cargo in the cabin we could have jettisoned it and reduced our weight, but we did not have that option.

During the descent, we evaluated the An Khe riverbed as a possible site to land if necessary. It was the dry season and the river was mostly lightly colored sand as viewed from our altitude. We figured that we could make Phu Cat AB if everything worked in our favor. Maj. Dubberly called the tower at Phu Cat and declared an emergency.

We delayed the landing gear until the last minute to keep the drag to a minimum. The flaps worked, but the gear did not extend. With the throttle at the full forward position we just cleared the rice paddy dike at the end of the runway and landed gear up on the 2,000-foot dirt runway. When the aircraft stopped sliding, we shut down the other engine and I turned to tell SSgt. Wolpert to get everyone out. The cabin was already empty! The 17 soldiers and

SSgt. Wolpert had left the aircraft as we were sliding to a stop. Nice to have the cargo door open during flight!

After leaving the aircraft we were taken to the base flight surgeon and checked over. No one was injured and all 17 soldiers were taken by truck for the rest of their journey to Qui Nhon.

I never went back to the runway to see what happened to the aircraft.

Some time later the wings were cut from the fuselage and a Sky Crane helicopter came in and airlifted the fuselage off the base. As the wings were removed, it was determined that the left wing spar was severely burned and would have broken off had the flight lasted much longer.

I later flew up the An Khe River at low altitude. It was sandy but the sand was in banks and valleys. Any attempt to land in the river that day would have most likely killed everybody on board.

We were awarded the Air Medal for our action that day and we had the gratitude of 17 soldiers that lived to fight another day.

Afterthought #1

Upon returning to my Air Rescue squadron in California, I was on a mission in mid-1968 flying the HC-130 to escort aircraft being ferried to Viet Nam. We usually met the ferry crews

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Gear-up Landing (from Page 4)

at base operations when we were flight planning. Our mission was to navigate for them and to be the on-site rescue aircraft should anything go wrong. We would take them from San Francisco to the mid-point (Ocean Station November) on the way to Hawaii. Another HC-130 would join up with them to escort them into Hickam AFB, HI. We would then return to the mainland.

On one escort mission we had three C-7A Caribous in our flight. Upon further inspection, one of the Caribous was S/N 62-4170 from the March 14, 1967 fire and crash. The aircraft fuselage must have been returned to de Havilland in Canada, rebuilt, and was returning to combat in Vietnam. It flew on my wing as far as Ocean Station November.

Afterthought #2

In the summer of 2009 I received a call from one of the soldiers that was in the aircraft on that fateful day in March 1967. He had tracked me down through the National Archives and wanted to talk about our flight together so many years ago. He could not say enough about how we had managed to get the aircraft safely down with no one injured. He told me, "Thanks for saving my life."

After the crash landing he had taken pictures of the aircraft while he was waiting to continue on to Qui Nhon. He mailed me four of his pictures. They are probably the best gift I could have received. I have the photos and they are backed up on my computer.

Well Done Nomination

from 459 TCS History

"At 0905 hours on 14 Mar 1967, Major Dubberly as Instructor Pilot, First Lieutenant Jach as Copilot and Staff Sergeant Wolpert as Flight Engineer in a C-7A took off from Holloway Air Field, RVN, with seventeen passengers. As the aircraft was climbing through

4,500 feet, approximately 1,500 feet above the ground, a slight smoke odor was noticed by the crew members.

All instrument and circuit breakers were monitored with no abnormal indication noted. The side cockpit windows were closed and the smell diminished.

The climb was continued with level off and cruise power established at 7,500 feet. Approximately ten minutes later an acrid smoke odor was again detected. All instruments and engines were scanned and Major Dubberly left his copilot's seat, he was acting as Instructor Pilot, and tried to assist the flight engineer, SSgt. Wolpert, in locating the source of the smoke. Smoke in the cabin was now affecting the passengers' eyes. An all effort to locate the source was ineffective.

Because the intensity of eye irritation was increasing, SSgt. Wolpert opened the aft cargo door to help alleviate the smoke. First Lieutenant Philip E. Jach, flying from the left seat, had started a descent toward Phu Cat Air Base, RVN, as Major Dubberly was strapping himself into the right seat.

While descending through 5,000 feet and approximately 10 miles from Phu Cat Air Base, the number one engine fire light for zone two and three illuminated. Engine inflight fire procedures were accomplished but the propeller would not feather. Both fire extinguisher bottles momentarily diminished the now blazing fire. Fire was seen to be burning well aft of the firewall and back toward the left wing.

Maximum power was applied to number two engine and a three to four hundred foot per minute descent was the best performance attainable.

Major Dubberly advised the Phu Cat tower of his emergency, had the passengers briefed and continued his descent for a straight-in approach to Phu Cat Air Base.

At 1,000 feet, attempts to lower the landing gear proved unsuccessful. The gear controls had been burned away by this time. Still with maximum power on number two engine, number one



propeller windmilling, and zero flaps, Major Dubberly and Lt. Jach continued the approach. By now number one engine had burned many pieces off the nacelle and flames were engulfing part of the wing.

Bringing all his flying experience to bear, Major Dubberly took control of the aircraft from Lt. Jach, crossed the end of the runway and touched the aircraft down on the fuselage. The aircraft slid 657 feet and came to a rest on the centerline of Runway 01. All aircraft power was turned off and the 17 passengers and crew of three evacuated the still burning aircraft.

The base fire fighters quickly extinguished the fire. Subsequent investigation cited enemy action as the cause of the fire.

Because of both Major Dubberly's and Lt. Jach's crew coordination, pilots skill, and professionalism during a critical emergency, and SSgt. Wolpert's outstanding ability in re-briefing and controlling the passengers, all aboard escaped without injury. For their part in this harrowing emergency, all aircrew members were nominated for the Air Force Well Done Award.

Signed, Edward J. Thielen
Lt Col, USAF, Commander"

Editor's Note. On October 6, 1967, Major Robert H. Dubberly, 1/Lt Philip E. Jach, and SSgt Melvin P. Wolpert received the PACAF Able Aeronaut Award for their outstanding airmanship during their in-flight emergency on March 14, 1967.

Good Guys Save Bou

by Pat Hanavan [535, 68]
from *Newsletter 18-1, March 2007*

On Tuesday morning, January 14, 1969, a C-7A from Cam Rahn Bay (CRB) struck the rotor mast of a Huey on landing at Bu Krak, a Special Forces (SF) camp in II Corps, about five clicks (kilometers) from the Cambodian border. The runway (01 and 19) was 1,700 feet of laterite and clay and 70 feet wide, making it a Type 1 airfield, C-7A only. The Huey was parked very close to the left edge of the runway, probably less than 10 feet, and there was insufficient clearance under the Bou's wing to prevent the wing from hitting the rotor mast. The contact cut off about 6 feet of the left wing.

An attempt was made to fly a survey team into Bu Krak in the afternoon, but the weather was bad and the aircraft could not land. The next morning, the six-person recovery team arrived at Bu Krak to repair the aircraft and fly it back to Cam Rahn Bay. The left wing tip was completely cut away from the wing and was folded back, upside down, onto the rest of the wing and was attached only by the upper skin of the wing. The rotor mast had sliced the underside of the wing just outboard of wing rib 15, severing the outboard fore-flap and the aileron from the rest of the wing. The electrical connections to the left position light were severed and the outboard, hinged leading edge was torn up beyond repair. Other than that, the aircraft seemed to be in good condition.

The recovery team brought the usual complement of tools and potentially useful raw materials, aluminum extrusions (T- and L-shaped), and sheet aluminum of various gauges.

Work started immediately to cut the wing tip from the rest of the wing and to lay out a plan for rebuilding the wing tip. At lunchtime, the team ate in the camp's mess hall with the Special Forces personnel.

Bu Krak was the home base for an A-Team commanded by Capt. William H. Poe. After supper he would assign fighting positions and duties to each of us in case of a VC (Viet Cong) attack. If the camp siren went off, we would know where to go and how we could assist in defense of the camp. My assignment was to command the 180-degree sector of the camp opposite the point of attack. Right! What could a young Air Force Major do to "command" half of the camp, other than be alert and keep out of the way?

About 2 PM we were hard at work on the airplane. George Stephenson, my Flight Engineer in the Quality Control section at CRB, and I were on top of the wing, carefully removing rivets so that doublers of extruded aluminum could be attached to the skin and ribs to hold the rebuilt wing tip in place. We heard one "thump!" behind us, toward the south, then a second, and a third. Turning around, we could see clouds of black smoke rising from several places on the ground. Then the camp siren wailed moanfully and we realized that the "thumps" were mortar rounds being walked toward our airplane by the VC attempting to destroy it before we could get it repaired and flown back to CRB.

To this day I don't know how I got down from the top of the wing. The next thing I remember is being in the command post and hearing the camp's jeep-mounted 75 mm recoilless rifle cracking as it fired toward possible enemy locations and then the sounds of 4.1 inch mortars screaming into the air as part of the camp's counter battery fire.

After the dust settled, we got back to work and I cranked up #1 engine for electrical power to call *Hilda* on the HF radio to request that a Caribou be sent the next morning to take me to CRB with a list of additional supplies we needed to get the job done, e.g., left aileron, outboard fore-flap, outboard leading edge, various kinds of sheet metal, fasteners. *Hilda* responded favorable to my request when I told the

C-7 duty officer that we had been under attack by the VC trying to destroy the aircraft.

After evening chow there were six very attentive Air Force pukes listening, watching, and practicing the tasks assigned to us at our defensive positions as the Special Forces guys checked us out in mortar pits, ammunition storage bunkers, and gun positions.

On Thursday, a Caribou arrived and I went to CRB to get the needed materials. Major M.T. Smith (483rd Maintenance Control Officer) and the supply officer met the aircraft and I gave them our list and explained it to make sure it was understood. While the materials were being gathered and palletized, I went to my trailer and got a reverse "Caribou tax" to take back to the Special Forces guys. By early afternoon I was back at Bu Krak and we got on with the work of fixing our bird. That night, we ate steaks (the reverse Caribou tax) with the SF guys in the mess hall.

Nothing more was heard from the local VC on Friday or Saturday. We held our collective breaths as we checked the flaps and flight controls. The leading edge was really a challenge. We couldn't insert the piano wire hinge the way it should be, so we did what we could with the hinge wire and used safety wire where we couldn't get the hinge wire through the holes. Duck tape was used to cover the rough edges of our jury-rigged repairs. The sheet metal guys constructed a lower skin from raw aluminum sheets, tying the skin to the ribs and homemade stringers. The end result just might have been stronger than the original!

As we were finishing up, I asked one of the guys if he had a can of spray paint in his tool box. Magically, a can of zinc chromate paint appeared.

I stood on an aero-stand and painted on the raw aluminum of the underside of the wing the following words: "MADE IN BU KRAK BY THE GOOD GUYS". The 483 CAMS and

Continued on Page 7

Good Guys (from Page 6)

FMS hootches at CRB were notable for the white picket fence surrounding the area and signs everywhere proclaiming "The Home of the Good Guys," complete with the silhouette of a white cowboy hat.



About 3 PM on Saturday, we were finished and ready to take the aircraft back to CRB. I got the team together and told them that we would take off on runway 01 even though it was uphill because there was a minefield at the end of runway 19. Also, I would hold the aircraft on the ground until nearly the end of the runway so that we would have a good margin of speed above the takeoff speed at lift-off. That margin and the downward sloping terrain after takeoff would give time and altitude to get the aircraft trimmed up for any bad effects of wing warp or drag from our repairs.

I also explained that this was a test hop and "the book" did not allow passengers or cargo on a test hop, but if they wanted to go back to CRB now, they should get their tool boxes and bags and get aboard, otherwise I would send an aircraft to pick them up the next morning.

A few minutes later we were all aboard (with a copilot flown in that morning) and we made an uneventful takeoff and flight back to CRB. Several hundred guys were on the ramp as we taxied in, anxious to see the aircraft. There were smiles and slaps on the

back when they saw our crudely painted message on the underside of the wing. The accident wasn't a major accident because the total hours spent making the aircraft flight worthy were below the criteria for a major accident, to some extent because George and I were supervisors whose time did not "count."

The hard work and devotion to duty by the recovery team was acknowledged by the award of the Bronze Star (7th AF Special Order G-1164, dated 24 March 1969) to every member of the recovery team: MSgt. George Stevenson, TSgt. David Merrill, TSgt. Vince Verastro, SSgt. Don Bednarski, A1C William Osborne, and myself.

In every way, this team operated in the finest traditions of the Air Force and was truly SIERRA HOTEL!

Caribou Development

by Tom Tawes [537, 70]

I visited the Canadian Heritage Aviation Museum in Hamilton, Ontario in October 2018. While they do not have a Caribou in their collection, they do have a Buffalo and it was an interesting afternoon.

I was fortunate to meet a guide who had been a test pilot for de Havilland. He was primarily involved in the development phase of the Twin Otter and Buffalo, but he had also done quite a bit of post-production flying in the Caribou. I believe his name was Bob Welland.

He spoke of George Neal who was instrumental in the early Caribou test flying and had given a similar account of the following incident.

"The first flight of the prototype Caribou was flown by Neal on July 30, 1958. Toward the end of the Caribou test program, during high-speed trials, a modified version developed aerodynamic flutter. After the loss of part of the tail surface, it became unmanageable, and Neal and the accompanying

Department of Transport test pilot were forced to abandon the aircraft. Neal's attention to detail before he bailed out prevented fire following the crash, and enabled a clear study of the cause of the flutter."

According to Bob, the elevator trim cable had been lengthened to accommodate a configuration change that induced the "flutter." The flutter became so severe the yoke separated from the Control column and that was when they decided to abandon ship.

Rules of Engagement (Golf during WW II)

Source: The Richmond Golf Club
Surrey, U.K.

Gentlemanly guidelines for playing golf in war-torn England in 1940:

"1. Players are asked to collect bomb and shrapnel splinters to save those causing damage to the mowing machines.

2. In competitions, during gunfire, or while bombs are falling, players may take cover without penalty for ceasing play.

3. The positions of known delayed-action bombs are marked by red flags placed at a reasonably, but not guaranteed, safe distance.

4. Shrapnel and/or bomb splinters on the fairways, or in bunkers within a club's length of a ball may be moved without penalty, and no penalty shall be incurred if a ball is thereby caused to move accidentally.

5. A ball moved by enemy action may be replaced, or if lost or destroyed, a ball may be dropped not nearer the hole without penalty.

6. A ball lying in a [bomb] crater may be lifted and dropped not nearer the hole, preserving the line to the hole without penalty.

7. A player whose stroke is affected by the simultaneous explosion of a bomb may play another ball from the same place. Penalty, one stroke."

Battle of Ben Het

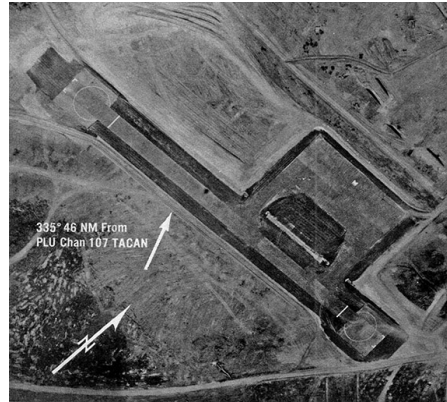
from *Caribou Airlines, Vol. III*

In February 1969, North Vietnamese forces directed fire against the outpost at Ben Het, within howitzer range of Base Area 609 in Cambodia. The shelling continued into early March when the enemy advanced on the camp using Soviet-designed amphibious light tanks. The attack was essentially a probe of the defenses of the highlands, rather than a serious attempt to overwhelm Ben Het. The NVA effort served mainly as a prelude for what was to come.

During May, North Vietnamese tanks, infantry, and artillery massed near Ben Het, which lay within 10 miles of the meeting point of the borders of South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos. Enemy interdiction of roads and trails in the vicinity of the camp signaled an impending attack on Ben Het.

Morning fog plagued Ben Het and afternoon thunderstorms drowned the region. Targeting for B-52 strikes around Ben Het became increasingly difficult as the siege wore on. Friendly outposts and patrols disappeared from the hills around the camp, depriving planners of a useful source of information. Instead of probing NVA positions and locating targets for air strikes, the South Vietnamese commander pulled his troops back into the camp itself or the nearby headquarters town of Dak To, yielding control of the ridges that overlooked Ben Het. The enemy anti-aircraft crews took advantage of the absence of threats on the ground and set up their weapons to cover the approaches to the airstrip.

The 537th Tactical Airlift Squadron (TAS), staging from Pleiku, routinely provided exclusive fixed-wing logistical airlift for Ben Het. Aircrews always strove for minimum ground time as the airfield was a favorite mortar target for the enemy. Increased mortar attacks were noted in May, with several intended air-landed sorties turned



away by Special Forces advisors due to incoming rounds. Air-land operations were continued throughout the month of May despite several aircraft encountering mortar explosions while off-loading equipment and personnel.

The airfield was closed in early June due to increased enemy activity and runway damage and C-7A's supplying the camp could no longer land to unload. The main supply route from Kontum also became very hazardous and was frequently closed to truck convoys. Airdrop missions became the only means of resupply.

The problem of resupply by air was complicated by a postage-stamp size drop zone (100 yards by 200 yards), intensive automatic weapons ground fire, and the seasonally adverse weather conditions. The high tonnage required daily brought an immediate evaluation aimed at using C-123 or C-130 aircraft to reduce the sorties and thus the exposure rate in the extremely hazardous conditions. It was determined that only the C-7A could do the drops into the limited landing area and small drop zone.

Aerial delivery of supplies, beginning on 3 June, was central to survival of the camp throughout the siege. The Caribous either parachuted their cargo from medium altitude or flew over the runway at an altitude of a few feet and released a chute that snatched heavily laden pallets out of the aircraft.

Escorts of fighter-bombers flew in support of the Caribous to suppress enemy fire.

For much of the siege, a Forward Air Controller (FAC) met the approaching cargo planes and escorted them, spaced 50 minutes apart, over the camp, while two F-4's stood by to attack any anti-aircraft battery the FAC might spot. North Vietnamese gunners scored hits on six C-7A's and wounded three crewmen during the first three weeks of June, but all aircraft were able to recover safely at Pleiku.

Mission planners increased the number of strike aircraft, made sure that fighters and FACs arrived a few minutes before the transports, and adjusted the tactics used by the Caribous and their escorts. After this change in concept from fighter escort to fire suppression, the FAC-directed fighter support (A-1E, A-37, F-4, F-100) played a significant role in reducing C-7A battle damage and casualties.

Supported by the FAC-directed fire suppression missions, a total of 86 airdrops were made, delivering over 200 tons of ammunition, POL, rations, water, and medical supplies. Sorties by Caribous averaged four per day with every load on-target and 100 percent recoverable. The majority of the airdrop missions (77) were flown by 537th TAS crews. The other missions were flown by 457th TAS and 458th TAS crews.

The siege of Ben Het ended on 2 July, when the North Vietnamese relaxed their pressure after some 1,800 tactical sorties had been flown in defense of the camp. The number of B-52 sorties in defense of Ben Het totaled about 800. Gunships, AC-47's and AC-119G's, averaged almost two sorties each night, firing more than 500,000 rounds into the hills overlooking the camp.

Three 537th TAS aircrew members were awarded the Purple Heart for injuries received on 13 June from bullet fragments or shrapnel while flying the *Soul 455* mission. Maj. Delbert D. Lockwood received facial wounds from bullet fragments. 1/Lt. William F. Quinn, Jr. received fragments in

Continued on Page 9

Ben Het (from Page 8)

his right leg. TSgt. John E. White was wounded in the right arm by shrapnel.

A total of two Silver Stars, 25 DFCs, three Purple Hearts, and seven single mission Air Medals were awarded to C-7A crews for their heroic actions in supporting Ben Het.

Maj. Delbert D. Lockwood and Maj. William A. Evalenko were both awarded Silver Stars for missions flown on June 13, 1969. *The texts of their Silver Star citations are not available.*

Hit at Ben Het

by Billy Quinn [537 68]

Newsletter 21-2, November 2010

First Lieutenant William F. Quinn, Jr. remembered his "Soul 416" mission to Ben Het on 13 June with Maj. William A. Evalenko as Aircraft Commander and TSgt. Emile P. Broussard as Flight Engineer:

On 13 June of 1969, Bill Evalenko was in the left seat and we were making drops at Ben Het. We took a couple of .50 caliber hits on the way down. One of them came up between my legs and could have made life a lot less dramatic during my earlier years. The shell casing lodged in my boot, stopped by the steel plate or I'd be toeless. It was quite a deal.

"Ev" took over ... cool, calm, and collected, assessing the situation, and making all the necessary cockpit decisions with his mike on "hot mike." When I got out of the airplane back at Papa Kilo [Pleiku], some of the guys were there to see us in. They looked at my flight suit that was shredded a bit below the knee and, in fact, was actually kind of bloody from some shrapnel damage of a minor nature. We all laughed and kidded that I might get a Purple Heart out of the deal. Darned if I didn't!

It was the third drop of the day. The first two with A-1E Spads flying cover were uneventful, as far as effective



*Special Forces SP5 John Shaw During C-7A Drop at Ben Het
(Copyright © 1969 USAF)*

ground fire was concerned, not that they weren't shooting the s**t out of us. They just weren't leading enough or something.

On the last flight, there was a mix up with the Spads and we had Army Hueys flying cover. They were great, but just not quite as potent and effective as the Spads, and that's when it happened.

Ben Het Air Support

from *Stars and Stripes*

July 16, 1969

Among the favorite sounds of the Ben Het defenders was the rolling, earth-shattering thunder of the B-52 Stratofortress raids. During a B-52 attack, all activity in the camp stopped; the men came out of their bunkers to watch the columns of flaming debris left in the wake of exploding bombs marching across the jungle hillsides occupied by North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops.

F-4 Phantoms from Cam Ranh Bay, Da Nang, and Phu Cat Air Bases; F-100 Supersabres from Tuy Hoa and Phan

Rang; and A-1 Skyraiders and Vietnamese Air Force A-37's from Pleiku and Nha Trang Air Bases provided a close air support punch.

To the men on the ground, the arrival of the tactical fighters meant a respite from enemy mortar and artillery fire. When the Air Force planes appeared overhead the enemy gunners were reluctant to fire. The muzzle flashes and smoke from their weapons revealed their location to sharp-eyed Forward Air Controllers and fighter pilots.

"We were always glad to see those fighters come in," commented Army SFC Carl A. Mayse, a Special Forces advisor at the camp. "The Spads (A-1E Skyraiders) were particularly good, because they carried a lot of ordnance and put it right where we wanted."

Daily, lumbering C-7A Caribou transports dropped tons of food, ammunition, and other supplies to the men at Ben Het. Because of intense enemy activity along the road from nearby Dak To to Ben Het, airdrops were often the only source of resupply for the embattled camp.

Continued on Page 10

Air Support (from Page 9)

Before the Caribou crews arrived, Skyraider pilots flew low between the camp and the NVA positions outside the perimeter dropping clusters of bomb-lets which exploded in the air, releasing billowing clouds of dense white smoke.

Then, hidden from enemy gunners behind the smokescreen, the C-7A's roared in. Over the camp, Loadmasters pushed out the cargo-laden pallets, their parachutes bloomed, and Ben Het was again resupplied.

“Buffalo Hunter” Drones

USAF Helicopter Association
July 8, 2013



“Buffalo Hunter” was the name given to U.S. reconnaissance drones flown over North Vietnam during the 1960's and early 1970's to collect tactical and strategic intelligence. These unmanned aircraft (the AQM-34 Ryan Firebee) were launched from airborne DC-130 Hercules cargo aircraft that remained over friendly territory. After their photo flight, the drones flew back to a location where they and their film could be recovered. The drones were reusable.

At the peak of the Buffalo Hunter operations, the drones made 30 to 40 flights per month over North Vietnam and adjacent areas of Indochina controlled by Communist forces.

The drone operations in Vietnam were deployed to Bien Hoa in 1964 and were originally assigned to the



4028th Strategic Reconnaissance Wing (SRW). Initially, drone recovery was by the Army Sikorsky H-37's, but the search had already started for a more advanced heavy lift helicopter.

In February 1966 the 4080th SRW became the 100th SRW and the 4025th Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron (SRS) was renumbered the 350th SRS.

At the start, the operations were based at two locations in Vietnam with the two DC-130A's at Bien Hoa and the two CH-3E helicopters at Da Nang. Both of these operating locations being designated OL-20 (Operating Location). All DC-130 and CH-3 crews were assigned to the 350th SRS.

The CH-3E's modified to perform this mission were called MARS birds (Mid-Air Retrieval System). The drones were launched and controlled by the C-130's and were recovered by the CH-3's after the drones completed their flights.

The operations resulted in some very important reconnaissance/ELINT (Electronic Intelligence) gathering operations during the Vietnam War with the first photos of SA-2 Missiles, MiG-21D's, and intercepts of SA-2 arming and proximity fusing signals.

The drones also accurately launched Maverick and other smart bombs long before the present day Predator/Reaper came on scene. They also dropped leaflets and were nicknamed the “Bullshit Bombers.”

The drone's main parachute controlled the AQM-34's descent. Above it was a smaller engagement chute that the helicopter would snag to recover the drone. Engagement was done at 50 knots airspeed and rate of descent up to 1000 feet per minute. The drone

was then reeled in to within about 20 feet of the helicopter and flown back to base. The drone weighed around 2,500 pounds so depositing it on to the ground put a full load on the CH-3.

The 350th SRS and 100th SRW were moved to Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ and were operational there 5 August 1968 through 31 Dec 1968. The CH-3E helicopter recovery helicopters relocated to Nakon Phanom AB, Thailand from 1970-75.

Note. Although seven Buffalo Hunter unmanned reconnaissance drones were flown at treetop level to take photos of the Son Tay prison between early September and late October 1970, not a single drone actually succeeded in flying over the facility, forcing the Strategic Reconnaissance Center (SRC) at Offutt AFB, Headquarters Strategic Air Command, to use the SR-71 to provide the requisite imagery. The POW camps were the highest priority for SAC's imagery assets (drone and SR-71) operating over North Vietnam at that time and the failure to image the Son Tay facility was deeply felt by SAC personnel.

Aussies Remembered

by Mark Harvin [535, 69]

The terrific article in the *November 2018 C-7A Association Newsletter* regarding the Aussies at Vung Tau brought back some vivid memories and impressions.

1. They flew non-radar equipped planes so their Caribous were “different” in appearance.

2. Their aircraft were spotless inside, and seemed to be waxed on the outside. Where as, ours normally, except during “Santa Bou” season, looked like the “flying trucks” they were.

3. Their pilots were horrified to learn how much “yankin’ and bankin’ ” we

Continued on Page 11

Aussies (from Page 10)

did on our assault approaches. They reported that they had a very limited approved maneuver envelope.

4. Their aircrews' favorite game was to invite a "Green Tail" to their compound and see how many Foster's were required before the "Green Tail" could not stand without assistance!

Outstanding people all.

Good memories.

Two More Aussie Stories

from Earl Westergom [536, 69]

Here are two interesting stories. The first is from an Aussie friend I met while stationed at Vung Tau in 1969. At the time Col. (Ret) Peter Bysouth was a young 2/Lt. flying Bell 47 helicopters. The Aussies were stationed at Nui Dat just north of Vung Tau and visited the 536th TAS hotel bar when they could swing a little time off. Great people and world class "party-goers."

The second is a copy of an Australian after action report Peter found. Both show how sporty non-wartime service was "Down Under."

Following from Peter Bysouth:

When I left South Vietnam in August 1970 I thought that my days of being shot at by angry people was over. However, in New Guinea I found that the mountains were higher than I could go without oxygen, and the clouds and rain storms could respectively climb faster, and would gradually slow down the trusty old Bell 47. Also known as the Bell Sioux, the helicopter was used in Korea and, of course, was the one that Skippy the Kangaroo flew in the children's TV show.

Never on the receiving end of arrows, I was only ever treated with interest and kindness from very remote villages (being able to evacuate their sick was

a help).

However, in 1971, I was most distraught by being shot at by angry villagers protesting the opening of the Panguna Cooper mine on the island of Bougainville. This protest became the seed for the Bougainville Conflict, or Civil War for Independence from Papua New Guinea (PNG) in 1988. Luckily the natives only had left over WW II U.S. and Japanese bolt-action rifles with dubious old ammunition.



For amusement read the following official correspondence I found on the website of a KIAP (Australian Government Patrol Officer) who served in PNG. Some readers may think the local villagers just showed good judgment regarding fixed wing pilots!

"From: Sub-District Office, Menyamya via Lae, 5th June 1972

To: Wing Commander J Carter, Royal Australian Air Force, PO Box 811, Port Moresby

Subject: Air Transportation of Tractor and Trailer from Wau to Menyamya

1. The Menyamya branch of the Sai-Watut Society has asked me to thank you for delivering its tractor and trailer in your Caribou aircraft.

2. The delivery of the tractor and trailer was an important step in the economic development of this area because produce can now be transported by tractor instead of human carriers.

3. The sing sing to celebrate the arrival of the tractor was one of the few times that the Kukukuku tribes have gathered in such numbers on a peaceful occasion. The formation of warriors used to greet the tractor were in the past deployed only for tribal fighting. It is therefore understandable that in the excitement of the occasion, some arrows were inadvertently fired at the Caribou and its crew.

4. The Society therefore regrets any

damage done to the aircraft by arrows and assures me that any arrow wounds sustained by the crew were inflicted in a friendly manner.

Yours sincerely

(ML Mackellar), Assistant District Commissioner, Menyamya"

There was a later minute attached to the carbon copy of the letter responding to an enquiry from District headquarters in Lae.

"Minute to: The District Commissioner, Lae

Before the Caribou departed, some half-dozen arrows were removed by the crew from the wings and fuselage. As far as I am aware, no damage was done to the aircraft and no injuries were done to the crew. But I can imagine that there will be some wild stories circulating in the officer's mess at Richmond.

ML Mackellar, ADC Menyamya"

From C-7A Docks to the Supreme Court

by William G. Barnes
[483 CAMS, 68]

I arrived at Cam Ranh Bay on or about September 1, 1968. When I volunteered to teach English and typing to the locals on base, it was learned that I could type. I was pulled out of the docks, where I was initially assigned, and put in with Sandy (MSgt. John R. Sandy) to assist with the administrative aspects of our operations. I then moved to the flight line, launching, repairing, and recovering; then a bit of time on flying status; then back with Sandy when he had his heart attack; then clerking and training new arrivals with SMSgt. Oscar Garringer. SMSgt. Garringer took over Sandy's position as chief of the docks after Sandy left Cam Ranh on a medevac. I could type and had a marksman score, so I think they figured out that I could plug any hole where needed, including augmenting perimeter duties.

There was an old saying that I found rang true when I separated from service from Richards-Gebaur AFB in Kansas City, MO - happiness is seeing an Air Force Base in the rearview mirror for the last time! I do not regret my Air Force affiliation, because I made the best of it all while enlisted. Both John Sandy and Oscar Garringer were really great guys. I thoroughly enjoyed my relationship with them, along with many others that I came to know.

While at Cam Ranh Bay and at Richards-Gebaur, I enrolled in college, used tuition assistance to its fullest measure, and after separation I acquired three college degrees from one of the top twenty ranked schools in the nation. I used every nickel Uncle Sam afforded me in the G.I. Bill for my service and was even awarded more by the Congress of the United States. Military service propelled me to later be able to attend law school and earn not just one, but two law degrees, without incurring

student debt in my wake.

All of those accomplishments would have taken me a lifetime of effort had it not been for the father of a high school classmate of mine calling me one Friday evening, ahead of others on a six-month waiting list, and telling me that he had one opening for a reciprocating engine aircraft maintenance specialist that he was offering me, open for two days only, for the taking. I took the offer. My only regret is that obtaining rank was way too slow and internal upward mobility was too cumbersome, slow, and limited in the enlisted ranks for my satisfaction. That is a life story in a few lines and the rest is history.



I wrapped up a federal government career after my separation from the Air Force. I worked for the Navy in Weapons and Munitions for four years and, upon completing my Masters degree in Psychology and Education, I transferred to the Army as a psychologist with the Army Training and Doctrine Command.

I spent twelve years with the Army and subsequently transferred to the U.S. Treasury where I conducted organizational and training research and taught law to Federal Law Enforcement personnel at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. I took an early retirement at 28 years and moved the family to Birmingham, AL, in order to get my young daughter a top-notch education, and for me to open my own law practice.

I am a member of the United States Supreme Court bar; as well as the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals; the Northern

and Middle Districts in Alabama; and the Alabama State Bar. As Pat Hanavan put it so succinctly several years ago, "from the [C-7A] docks to the United States Supreme Court Bar." I have now been practicing law for twenty years and it is time to lay it down.

I have been asked how I came to be admitted to the U.S. Supreme Court Bar. First, you have to work really hard in the study of a jealous mistress, the law. After some very difficult studying, you have to finally graduate from law school. After law school comes the excruciating bar exam, which must be passed by the minimum established, but actually unconfirmed, reliability, standards that are arbitrarily set. When the bar exam is successfully negotiated, then one is allowed to begin the "Practice of Law."

Upon successfully practicing law for three years, or more, two members of the United States Supreme Court must recommend the person to the Court for membership entry. Upon acceptance, the member may then appear before the Court and be examined by the then sitting justices, and upon satisfactory appearance, may be admitted as recommended by the sitting justices. Then, the member's name is duly registered and put on the roll of members of the United States Supreme Court Bar to appear before the Honorable Court and argue cases before the sitting justices. That is it, in a nutshell. Hope it answers the question and further intrigues the imagination.

My youngest daughter Katherine will hopefully be joining me in a couple of years. She is also an Alabama lawyer and completed her Master of Laws (LLM) in Tax and International Taxation at the University of Florida, Levin School of Law on May 18, 2018. She then traveled to the Great State of Texas in August to work for Deloitte in Dallas in their International Taxation Division. My spouse and I tried our best to

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Supreme Court (from Page 12)

leave the nation a well-qualified legacy through our daughter who has the foundation of a half million-dollar education to work from. She received her BS from the University of the South (Sewanee), her JD and MBA from Samford University, and her LLM in Taxation from The University of Florida.

It will make me proud to present her before the U.S. Supreme Court for admission as I was presented many years ago.

North Platte

by Bob Greene

Wall Street Journal

July 23, 2018

“We were overwhelmed,” said Lt. Col. Nick Jaskolski. “I don’t really have words to describe how surprised and moved we all were. I had never even heard of the town before.”

Lt. Col. Jaskolski, a veteran of the Iraq war, is commander of the 142nd Field Artillery Brigade of the Arkansas Army National Guard. For three weeks earlier this summer, the 142nd had been conducting an emergency deployment readiness exercise in Wyoming, training and sleeping outdoors, and subsisting on field rations. Now it was time for the 700 soldiers to return to their base.

A charter bus company had been hired for the 18-hour drive back to Arkansas. The Army had budgeted for a stop to get snacks. The bus company determined that the soldiers would reach North Platte in western Nebraska around the time they would likely be hungry. The company placed a call to the visitors’ bureau: Was there anywhere in town that could handle a succession of 21 buses, and get 700 soldiers in and out quick?

North Platte said “Yes.” North Platte always said “Yes.”

During World War II, North Platte was a geographically isolated town of 12,000. Soldiers, sailors, and avia-

tors on their way to fight the war rode troop trains across the nation, bound for Europe via the East Coast or the Pacific via the West Coast. The Union Pacific Railroad trains that transported the soldiers always made 10-minute stops in North Platte to take on water.

The townspeople made those ten minutes count. Starting in December 1941, they met every train: up to 23 a day, beginning at 5 AM and ending after midnight. Those volunteers greeted between 3,000 and 5,000 soldiers a day. They presented them with sandwiches and gifts, played music for them, danced with them, and baked birthday cakes for them. Every day of the year, every day of the war, they were there at the depot. They never missed a train, never missed a soldier. They fed six million soldiers by the end of the war. Not one cent of government money was asked for or spent, save for a \$5 bill sent by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The soldiers never forgot the kindness. Most of them, and most of the townspeople who greeted them, are dead. And now, in 2018, those 21 bus loads from the 142nd Field Artillery were on their way, expecting to stop at some fast-food joint.

“We couldn’t believe what we saw when we pulled up,” Lt. Col. Jaskolski said. As each bus arrived over a two-day period, the soldiers stepped out to be greeted by lines of cheering people holding signs of thanks. They weren’t at a fast-food restaurant: They were at North Platte’s events center, which had been opened and decorated especially for them.

“People just started calling our offices when they heard the soldiers were on their way,” said Lisa Burke, the director of the visitors’ bureau. “Hundreds of people, who wanted to help.”

The soldiers entered the events center to the aroma of steaks grilling and the sound of recorded music: current songs by Luke Bryan, Justin Timberlake, and Florida Georgia Line; World War II songs by Glenn Miller, the Andrews Sisters, and Jimmy Dorsey. There were

steak sandwiches, ham sandwiches, turkey sandwiches, deviled eggs, salads, and fruits. Local church groups baked pies, brownies, and cookies.

Mayor Dwight Livingston stood at the door for two days and shook every soldier’s hand. Mr. Livingston served in the Air Force in Vietnam and came home to no word of thanks. Now, he said, as he shook the hands and welcomed the soldiers, “I don’t know whether those moments were more important to them, or for me. I knew I had to be there.”

“It was one soldier’s 21st birthday,” Lisa Burke said. “When I gave him his cake, he told me it was the first birthday cake he’d ever had in his life.” Not wanting to pry, she didn’t ask him how that could possibly be. “I was able to hold my emotions together,” she said, “until later.”

When it became time to settle up – the Army, after all, had that money budgeted for snacks – the 142nd Field Artillery was told: Nope. You’re not spending a penny here. This is on us.

This is on North Platte.

Mr. Greene’s books include “Once Upon a Town: The Miracle of the North Platte Canteen.”

Time to Renew!

Check the mailing label on this newsletter. If it does not show “2019” or later, then it is **TIME TO PAY** your Bou Tax or this will be the **last** newsletter you will receive.

If the year is before 2019, you may have: changed your address and the last newsletter went to an old address, or you just sent in your check, or forgot to send your check.

DO IT TODAY!

Make your \$10 check to the **C-7A Caribou Association** and send it to:

Jess Cogley
244 Mecca Drive
San Antonio, TX 78232-2209

We Will Never Forget

On 26 July, 1969, 537 TAS C-7A S/N 62-4186 crashed on final approach while attempting to make a single engine landing at Vung Tau as a result of loss of power on #2 engine after takeoff, resulting in the death of 1/Lt. **James. F. Wohrer**, the copilot. There were major injuries to three personnel and 10 passengers had varying degrees of less serious injuries.

Bad Moon Rising

by Creedence Clearwater Revival

Bad Moon Rising by John Fogerty and the Creedence Clearwater Revival seemed appropriate in 1969 Vietnam, because it was true many a night.

I see a bad moon a-rising
I see trouble on the way
I see earthquakes and lightning
I see bad times today

Don't go 'round tonight
It's bound to take your life
There's a bad moon on the rise

I hear hurricanes a-blowing
I know the end is coming soon
I fear rivers over flowing
I hear the voice of rage and ruin

Don't go 'round tonight
It's bound to take your life
There's a bad moon on the rise

I hope you got your things together
I hope you are quite prepared to die
Look's like we're in for nasty weather
One eye is taken for an eye

Oh don't go 'round tonight
It's bound to take your life
There's a bad moon on the rise
There's a bad moon on the rise

Songwriter: John C. Fogerty

Bad Moon Rising lyrics © The Bicycle Music Company

D-Day Is Now

by Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower

This June will mark the 75th anniversary of the Allied invasion of Normandy on June 6, 1944.

Following is Gen. Eisenhower's message to the troops.



Soldiers, sailors, and airmen of the Allied Expeditionary Force,

You are about to embark on a great crusade, toward which we have striven these many months. The hopes and prayers of liberty loving people everywhere go with you. In company with our brave Allies and brothers in arms on other fronts you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, elimination of the Nazi tyranny over the oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.

Your task will not be an easy one. Your enemy is well trained, well equipped and battle hardened. He will fight, savagely. But in this year of 1944 much has happened since the Nazi triumphs of 1940 and 1941.

The United Nations have inflicted upon the Germans great defeats in open battle, man to man. Our air offense has seriously reduced their strength in the air and their capacity to wage war on the ground.



World War II Post Card

Our home fronts have given us an overwhelming superiority in weapons and munitions of war, and have placed at our disposal great reserves of trained fighting men.

The tide has turned. The free men of the world are marching together to victory. I have full confidence in your courage, devotion to duty and skills in battle. We will accept nothing less than victory.

Good luck and let's all beseech the blessing of Almighty God upon this great and noble undertaking.

General Dwight D. Eisenhower
Supreme Allied Commander

*H- hour was upon them.
0630 hours would come quickly.
The losses would be great.
The Victory would be mighty!*

Joe Jackson MOH at Kham Duc

by Kyle Rempfer
Air Force Times
January 14, 2019

Retired Air Force Col. Joe M. Jackson, 95 years old, a Medal of Honor recipient, veteran of three wars, and an Air Force legend, passed away January 13, 2019.

Jackson, a native of Newnan, GA, was famous within the aviation and Special Operations community for his daring rescue of a team of Air Force combat controllers who were stranded at the besieged airfield of an abandoned Army Special Forces camp during the Tet Offensive.

His exploits saved the lives of three men while risking his own. The airfield had been the site of multiple U.S. aircraft shoot-downs and aircrew fatalities over the previous 24 hours.

The Battle of Kham Duc

The action took place on May 12, 1968 at Kham Duc, a camp for U.S. Special Forces and South Vietnamese irregulars. The base was located 16 kilometers from the Laotian border and surrounded by sweeping mountains on all sides.

In early May 1968, the enemy began attacking outposts surrounding the Special Forces camp and paved runway at Kham Duc. The larger assault began May 11. Although the U.S. had by this time reinforced Kham Duc. The intense attack involving artillery, mortars, and recoilless rifles fired from tall mountains overlooking the base convinced Army Gen. William Westmoreland, commander of U.S. forces in South Vietnam, to order an evacuation.

More than 1,000 people, a mix of U.S. soldiers, local allies, and their civilian family members loyal to the American cause, needed to be airlifted out. The evacuation began the morning of May 12 and involved cargo and helicopter transports, as well as airstrikes around the besieged camp.

Three Wars-worth of Aviation Skill

Jackson was an experienced pilot by the time he arrived in Vietnam in 1967. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps during World War II and rose through the ranks from crew chief to pilot through an aviation cadet commissioning program. He flew the P-40 Warhawk and the P-63 King Cobra during the war. He stayed in the service as it transitioned into the Air Force and flew the F-84 Thunderstreak on 107 combat missions during the Korean War.

Following the war, he became one of the first Air Force pilots to fly the super-secret U-2 spy plane in 1956.

When Vietnam began, Jackson received orders to pilot a C-123 Provider with the 311th Air Commando Squadron. Although the C-130 was quickly becoming the premier airlift provider by this time, the C-123 proved useful for landing in the remote jungles and on the short airstrips dotting the country.

Jackson almost didn't land at Kham Duc on May 12. That morning, eight aircraft had been lost during the evacuation. One was a C-130 fully loaded with Vietnamese civilians. Jackson didn't arrive on-station until the afternoon. By that point, the evacuation was finishing up, the weather was deteriorating, and the former Special Forces base was littered with burning aircraft wreckage and artillery craters.

Except, there had been a mistake. As the last C-130 took off with the final group of evacuating personnel, the airlift commander ordered airstrikes to be dropped on the abandoned base and its equipment.

"Negative, negative!" a C-130 pilot yelled over the radio. He reportedly punctuated his remarks with profanity as he explained that he had just reinserted three airmen on the airfield based on orders from higher up.

The cacophony of fighter pilots, cargo aircrews, forward air controllers, and battle-space commanders abruptly ended. The C-130 pilot later remembered that an "unreal" silence fell over the radio waves.

Combat Controllers Left Behind

Major Gallager, Sergeant Freedman, and Sergeant Lundie, the three-man Air Force combat control team that was dropped off to direct airlift into and out of Kham Duc, had been left behind in the confusion.

The men had been at the airfield since May 10, but were evacuated earlier in the day on May 12 via a bullet-riddled C-130 after the jeep containing their primary radios had been pummeled by artillery rounds.

Not long after evacuating from Kham Duc, the combat control team was ordered back in, despite them being down to only emergency radios. After landing once more, they began searching compounds for personnel to help evacuate, but found no survivors.

The airmen didn't know how close they came to being victims of their own air power, because their radios weren't working and they couldn't communicate with the pilots flying overhead.

"They called that [airstrike] off, sent an observation plane down to see if they could locate them and they weren't able to," Jackson said, according to his archived interview in the Library of Congress.

At this point, the airmen on the ground, armed with only M16 rifles and .38 caliber revolvers, were hugging dirt as they watched the North Vietnamese set up .50 caliber machine gun emplacements on either side of the runway, one of which was under the wing of the destroyed C-130.

The airmen exchanged fire with the nearest gun emplacement as the enemy tried to load the weapon. They saw an enemy gunner keel over, silencing one of the machine guns, according to the after action report of the battle.

The other gun continued to fire at them periodically as they watched a second group of North Vietnamese approach from the west end of the runway. The men said that blasts from exploding ammunition dumps began to

Continued on Page 16

Kham Duc (from Page 15)

surround them.

The combat controllers recounted in their after action reports that they were convinced no one would come for them – that it was impossible to land at Kham Duc airfield now that the enemy was upon it. “[I] never felt so lonely in all my life,” Freedman later said.

Because the airmen’s radios weren’t reaching the pilots above, the men were convinced they would be considered dead. But unbeknownst to them, two C-123 aircraft were working through the problem.



There was one C-123 pilot ahead of Jackson in the airfield’s landing pattern. He was going to fly in first and try to find the lost combat controllers.

“He went in and landed, and I watched his approach coming in off the jungle from the southwest,” Jackson said. “Even at 9,000 feet I could see tracers coming out of the jungle aimed at his airplane. And as soon as he touched down, he came under heavy attack from both sides of the runway. But he touched down, rolled down the runway and he didn’t see anybody right offhand. So, he came under this heavy attack from both sides and he applied the power and went around.”

Just as the pilot took off, the combat controllers came running out of their hiding spot. The enemy fire forced them to dive for cover once again, but the pilot at least saw them. That C-123 was low on fuel, so he relayed to Jackson where he had seen the three men and returned to base.

Jackson’s crew was up next. “From 9,000 feet, I started an extremely steep

landing approach,” Jackson said. “We call it an assault landing approach, where it had full flaps down to cause as much drag as possible, put the landing gear out to increase the drag, put the propellers in flat pitch, so that would hold us back, and pitched over.”

Jackson didn’t know how fast they were descending, but he did know his air speed was maxed-out for that configuration at 135 knots.

I was the luckiest guy in the world

“The rate of descent had hit the limit on the instruments,” he said. “I told the guys I’m not going to reverse the propellers, because to do that would shut down the auxiliary jet engines. And I didn’t want to take time to restart them. ... I said, ‘We’re not going to be on the ground very long.’”

Jackson’s C-123 managed to touch down in the first 100 feet of the runway, stopping exactly opposite the three lost airmen who were taking cover in a ditch.

“I was the luckiest guy in the world,” Jackson said. “They started running out. ... They belly-flopped on-board the airplane.”

As the airmen jumped in, the Copilot called out, “Oh, my god, look at that!”

“A 122 millimeter rocket had been fired directly towards the airplane,” Jackson said. “It skidded down the runway and broke in half and stopped right immediately in front of the nose wheel of the airplane. I mean, really, really close. It didn’t go off. So, again, I was the luckiest guy in the world, I guess.”

The Loadmaster yelled back that they were ready for takeoff. Jackson hit the throttle, taxied around the unexploded ordnance and flew out of Kham Duc for good.

“As I was taking off, automatic weapons and small-arms fire was directly in front of me and probably behind me as well, from both sides of the runway,” he said. “The spot where we were parked, that spot erupted with mortar fire. They had just had time to load in some rounds in the tubes and lob them over there.”

Jackson cruised back to Da Nang

Air Base as artillery fire gave way to thunder, and the weather deteriorated over Kham Duc.

Jackson would be awarded the Medal of Honor by President Lyndon B. Johnson on January 16, 1969.

After the Vietnam War, Joe Jackson served at the Pentagon and at the Air War College until his retirement from the Air Force in 1974 at the rank of colonel.

Many of the bodies of the Americans who perished at Kham Duc would not be repatriated for several decades. The remains of six airmen from the downed C-130 weren’t located until the early 1990’s.

A little while after the fall of Kham Duc, a friend of Jackson’s named Keith Ferris did a painting of the May 12 evacuation. He sent Jackson a slide for critiques on accuracy, to which Jackson replied that it was mostly correct.

“But you know, with the actual layout of those airplanes, the [Cessna O-2] that had been shot down, the helicopter on the runway and the C-130 that was wrecked right there, I said the orientation of the C-123 I was flying was not correct,” Jackson told Ferris. “He told me that he had to take a little artistic liberty here to get all the action in. And I said, ‘Well, okay, you take all the artistic liberty you want to, but I’m not going back and pose for that picture again.’”

“We had a little chuckle over that. Anyway, he named his picture the Miracle at Kham Duc,” Jackson said. “A little later on, I was talking with Keith and he said, ‘Really, you know, there were two miracles there that afternoon. One is that you were able to get in and get out safely. And the other one is there was not a single bullet hole in your airplane.’”

Joe Jackson’s exploits and the significance of the battle he took part in were recorded in the *Southeast Asia Monographs, Volume V-7*, at the Airpower Research Institute, Maxwell Air Force Base, as well as first-person accounts archived by the Library of Congress.

458th AS Upgrades

from *Aero-News Network*

February 6, 2019

After 35 years of C-21 operations, mobility Airmen are celebrating 2019 as the “Year of the Lear” with upgrades for the airframe and changes within the units that fly it.

The C-21 is the military version of the Learjet 35A business jet. The twin turbofan-engine aircraft is used for cargo and passenger airlift. The C-21 is also capable of transporting one litter or five ambulatory patients during aeromedical evacuations.

A \$38 million avionics upgrade for the fleet is underway and a consolidation effort is moving four aircraft from Andrews AFB, MD, to join Scott AFB’s ten C-21s by late summer 2019.

“We are receiving phenomenal additions in terms of resources and people, and are excited about their upcoming arrival,” said Lt. Col. Brooke Matson, 458th Airlift Squadron (AS) commander. “As we combine forces to become ‘America’s Learjet Squadron,’ we’re fortunate to have such a supportive local community to grow with.”

One by one, C-21s are being sent to Wichita, KS, to receive new avionics and communications suites that will expand the aircraft’s reach, effectiveness, and capability. The upgrades come in time to meet the FAA’s 2020 equipment mandate to keep increasingly congested airspace safe.

“Our mission is to deliver rapid, responsive and safe airlift, but we do that in increasingly congested airspace here in the U.S. and around the world,” said Lt. Col. James Chapa, 458th AS director of operations. “Aircraft with the new avionics upgrade give our crews the tools they need to continue to operate safely in that busy environment, while also gaining access to some of the exciting new advances in communication and navigation systems being implemented now throughout the airspace system.”



The C-7A Caribou is towed across Rogers Dry Lakebed to the AFFT Museum restoration hangar. U.S. Air Force photo by Kenji Thuloweit.

Edwards C-7A Make-Over

by Kenji Thuloweit

412th Test Wing Public Affairs

October 24, 2018

from afmc.af.mil

Edwards AFB, CA. A retired Vietnam-era C-7A Caribou is now sporting its old look thanks to help from volunteers at Edwards AFB. The troop and supply carrier was pulled out of Hangar 1634 after getting the new paint job and some sheet metal work. It traveled across Rogers Dry Lakebed to the Air Force Flight Test Museum’s (AFFT) restoration hangar where it will await a home in the much-anticipated new museum to be built outside the west gate of Edwards AFB.

According to George Welsh, AFFT Museum director, the Caribou was an Air Force plane that served in the Vietnam War and was later assigned to the Fresno Air National Guard. Welsh said the C-7A was a prepositioned plane for the Army Golden Knights parachute team. When they would visit the region to perform their shows, the Fresno-based Caribou would be called into action for their use.

Being a former Air Force asset, and no longer used, the Caribou ended up in the Air Force’s heritage program and brought to Edwards AFB (possibly in the early 2000’s) where it had been sitting at South Base until volunteers

decided to give it a makeover earlier this year.

Welsh said while at South Base, the Caribou was actually picked up by winds and thrown into the Douglas C-53 Skytrooper parked next to it, causing damage to both aircraft. Volunteers pounded out the dents on the Caribou along with painting it.

The C-7 was used to move people and materiel into forward areas, where short, unprepared airstrips were normal. The Caribou could accommodate up to 32 passengers, 26 fully equipped paratroops, 20 litter patients, or an 8,740-pound cargo load.

The Caribou was a workhorse that went from sunrise to sunset every day operating in the heat, humidity, dust, and mud from the low-lying Vietnamese Mekong Delta to the towering mountain regions of the Central Highlands, according to the Air Materiel Command (AMC) Museum.

Help!!!



Check your email address on our web site, <http://www.c-7acaribou.com/>. Send any change to:

pathanavan@aol.com

Fire in the Hole!

by Tom Snodgrass [457, 70]

Scientists will tell you that the part of the human brain that produces rational thought, the prefrontal cortex, isn't fully developed until age 25. The following story will confirm that finding.

At the tender age of 21, I was having the time of my life as a flight engineer for the 457th TAS at Cam Ranh Bay (CRB). Work was hard, but I loved it and, as an extra bonus, I got to fly with a great group of pilots who made work even more enjoyable. We shuttled every imaginable type of load to and from the many fire bases scattered throughout the country. Just when we thought that Song Be couldn't possibly hold another load of ammunition or fuel, *Rocket Alley* ALCE (Airlift Control Element) would beg us to take "just one more load." It made for a very busy day, but we felt needed.

While every day was action packed and included as many as 15 sorties, boredom occasionally crept into the equation. On one such day, while flying "feet wet" from CRB to Bien Hoa, my 21-year-old brain began to wonder if the M16 I carried on every flight would actually fire if needed. After all, everyone knows that cars and airplanes need to be exercised regularly to remain in top condition, so why should M16's be any different? Also, it seemed like a test of my rifle would be the perfect elixir for my boredom.

It took me a few minutes to locate the clip of M16 ammo that the Army guy gave me a few weeks ago. It wasn't as clean and pretty as the clip of ammo that I was issued at CRB, but at least I wouldn't have to explain to the personnel equipment guys back home why the clip they issued me was empty. Moving to the rear of the aircraft I was greeted by a cargo door that was already opened part way so that we could enjoy some ventilation. I interpreted the partially open cargo door as an omen that I was meant to conduct a test fire at the

Pacific some 3,000 feet below. I was really looking forward to seeing the 5.56 mm rounds splash into the ocean. My M16 was locked and loaded in full automatic as I put one foot on the ramp and the other on the cargo floor and took aim at the Pacific. As I squeezed the trigger the M16 burped out about 10 rounds as fast you can imagine, but not as fast as the pilot jerked back on the yoke. We climbed at least 100 feet in what seemed like a second or two. My balance was shaken and my ears were still ringing from the M16 blast that I could barely hear the Pilot scream over the intercom, "What the hell was that!"

I sheepishly responded that I was just test firing my M16. The Pilot then asked the obvious, "Do you think that maybe you should have given us a clue BEFORE you fired that thing?" It quickly became apparent to me that they almost soiled themselves. I felt like the king of stupid. That was not the best example of good crew coordination and I apologized for the next 50 miles or so before the pilots started laughing. After all, they were only a few years older than me, so that whole prefrontal cortex thing had not necessarily reached full maturation with them either. Lucky for me.

As I replayed the event over in my mind that evening I realized some of the things that could have gone wrong with my choice of ways to combat boredom. For instance, I could have been thrown out the partially opened cargo door when the pilot yanked back on the yoke. In that case, it is probably best that I would have died upon impacting the ocean at terminal velocity, that way I would never have to read the accident report. Another possibility is that the sudden climb might have resulted in my trigger finger pulling the trigger again. Who knows where I might have sprayed those rounds. Neither scenario was very appealing.

Besides the fact that I should have notified the pilots of my intent to break my boredom, I learned later that it was customary to announce "fire in the

hole" prior to initiating any loud noise that could startle anyone within earshot. This practice originated with miners who needed to warn their fellow miners that a charge had been set. The practice was later adopted by the military to announce any number of pending explosions or loud noises. Obviously, I learned that too late.

I carried that example of poor crew coordination with me the remainder of my flying career and shared it with many of my students and fellow crewmembers. Hopefully, it helped some of them avoid joining me on the "king of stupid" list.

Note: Many thanks to Jon Drury, author of *Bou Pilot*, who shared several mistakes he made throughout his flying career. His book was an outstanding read! His frankness and humility encouraged me to share one of my own flying mistakes with my Caribou brethren. I may even have additional "mistakes" to share once the statute of limitations has expired.

Timing is Everything

by David Ashbaugh [459, 67]

One of the engines was due for overhaul and the Engine Shop crew and the prop man showed up around midnight to change the engine.

Wouldn't you know it? The prop man forgot his dome wrench. The Engine Shop Master Sergeant told the others that he had put on a pot of coffee before he left the shop, so everyone went back to the Engine Shop.

Just as they walked in the door at least seven mortars dropped around aircraft (tail number) 731.

The rest of the flight line crew had left just before this all happened.

Talk about timing.



Gander Hospitality

by a Delta Flight Attendant
from *Retired United Pilots*
Association News
May 2018

On the morning of Tuesday, September 11, 2001 we were about five hours out of Frankfurt, flying over the North Atlantic. All of a sudden the curtains parted and I was told to go to the cockpit, immediately, to see the captain. As soon as I got there I noticed that the crew had that "All Business" look on their faces. The captain handed me a printed message. It was from Delta's main office in Atlanta and simply read, "All airways over the continental United States are closed to commercial air traffic. Land ASAP at the nearest airport. Advise your destination."

No one said a word about what this could mean. We knew it was a serious situation and we needed to find terra firma quickly. The captain determined that the nearest airport was 400 miles behind us in Gander, Newfoundland. He requested approval for a route change from the Canadian traffic controller and approval was granted immediately – no questions asked. We found out later, of course, why there was no hesitation in approving our request.

While the flight crew prepared the airplane for landing, another message arrived from Atlanta telling us about some terrorist activity in the New York area. A few minutes later word came in about the hijackings.

We decided to lie to the passengers while we were still in the air. We told them the plane had a simple instrument problem and that we needed to land at the nearest airport in Gander, Newfoundland, to have it checked out. We promised to give more information after landing in Gander. There was much grumbling among the passengers, but that's nothing new.

Forty minutes later, we landed in Gander ... Local time at Gander was 12:30 PM ... that's 11:00 AM EST.

There were already about 20 other airplanes on the ground from all over the world that had taken this detour on their way to the U.S.

After we parked on the ramp, the captain made the following announcement: "Ladies and gentlemen, you must be wondering if all these airplanes around us have the same instrument problem as we have. The reality is that we are here for another reason." Then he went on to explain the little bit we knew about the situation in the U.S. There were loud gasps and stares of disbelief. The captain informed passengers that Ground Control in Gander told us to stay put. The Canadian government was in charge of our situation and no one was allowed to get off the aircraft. No one on the ground was allowed to come near any of the aircraft. Only airport police would come around periodically, look us over and go on to the next airplane. In the next hour or so more planes landed and Gander ended up with 53 airplanes from all over the world, 27 of which were U.S. commercial jets.

Meanwhile, bits of news started to come in over the aircraft radio and for the first time we learned that airplanes were flown into the World Trade Center in New York and into the Pentagon in D.C. People were trying to use their cell phones but were unable to connect due to a different cell system in Canada. Some did get through but were only able to get to the Canadian operator who would tell them that the lines to the U.S. were either blocked or jammed.

Sometime in the evening the news filtered to us that the twin towers buildings had collapsed and that a fourth hijacking had resulted in a crash. By now the passengers were emotionally and physically exhausted, not to mention frightened, but everyone stayed amazingly calm. We had only to look out the window at the other stranded aircraft to realize that we were not the only ones in this predicament.

We had been told earlier that they would be allowing people off the planes

one plane at a time. At 6 PM, Gander airport told us that our turn to deplane would be 11 AM the next morning. Passengers were not happy, but they simply resigned themselves to this news without much noise and started to prepare themselves to spend the night on the airplane.

Gander had promised us medical attention, if needed, water, and lavatory servicing. And they were true to their word. Fortunately, we had no medical situations to worry about. We did have a young lady who was 33 weeks into her pregnancy. We took REALLY good care of her. The night passed without incident despite the uncomfortable sleeping arrangements.

About 10:30 on the morning of the 12th a convoy of school buses showed up. We got off the plane and were taken to the terminal where we went through Immigration and Customs and then had to register with the Red Cross. After that we (the crew) were separated from the passengers and were taken in vans to a small hotel. We had no idea where our passengers were going.

We learned from the Red Cross that the town of Gander has a population of 10,400 people and they had about 10,500 passengers to take care of from all the airplanes that were forced into Gander! We were told to just relax at the hotel and we would be contacted when the U.S. airports opened again, but not to expect that call for a while.

We found out the total scope of the terror back home only after getting to our hotel and turning on the TV, 24 hours after it all started. Meanwhile, we had lots of time on our hands and found that the people of Gander were extremely friendly. They started calling us the "plane people." We enjoyed their hospitality, explored the town of Gander and ended up having a pretty good time. Two days later, we got that call and were taken back to the Gander airport. Back on the plane, we were reunited with the passengers and found

Continued on Page 20

Gander (from Page 19)

out what they had been doing for the past two days. What we found out was incredible.

Gander and all the surrounding communities (within about a 75 kilometer radius) had closed all high schools, meeting halls, lodges, and any other large gathering places. They converted all these facilities to mass lodging areas for all the stranded travelers. Some had cots set up, some had mats with sleeping bags and pillows set up.

ALL the high school students were required to volunteer their time to take care of the “guests.” Our 218 passengers ended up in a town called Lewisporte, about 45 kilometers from Gander, where they were put up in a high school. If any women wanted to be in a women-only facility, that was arranged. Families were kept together. All the elderly passengers were taken to private homes. Remember that young pregnant lady? She was put up in a private home right across the street from a 24-hour urgent care facility. There was a dentist on call and both male and female nurses remained with the crowd for the duration.

Phone calls and e-mails to the U.S. and around the world were available to everyone once a day. During the day, passengers were offered “Excursion” trips. Some people went on boat cruises of the lakes and harbors. Some went for hikes in the local forests. Local bakeries stayed open to make fresh bread. As for the guests, food was prepared by all the residents and brought to the schools. People were driven to restaurants of their choice and offered wonderful meals. Everyone was given tokens for local laundromats to wash their clothes, since luggage was still on the aircraft. In other words, every single need was met for those stranded travelers.

Passengers were crying while telling us these stories. Finally, when they were told that U.S. airports had reopened, they were delivered to the

airport right on time and without a single passenger missing or late. The local Red Cross had all the information about the whereabouts of each and every passenger and knew which plane they needed to be on and when all the planes were leaving. They coordinated everything beautifully. It was absolutely incredible.

When passengers came on board, it was like they had been on a cruise. Everyone knew each other by name. They were swapping stories of their stay, impressing each other with who had the better time. Our flight back to Atlanta looked like a chartered party flight. The crew just stayed out of their way. It was mind-boggling. Passengers had totally bonded and were calling each other by their first names, exchanging phone numbers, addresses, and e-mail addresses.

And then a very unusual thing happened. One of our passengers approached me and asked if he could make an announcement over the PA (public address) system. We never, ever, allow that. But this time was different. I said “of course” and handed him the mike.

He picked up the PA and reminded everyone about what they had just gone through in the last few days. He reminded them of the hospitality they had received at the hands of total strangers. He continued by saying that he would like to do something in return for the good folks of Lewisporte. He said he was going to set up a trust fund under the name of *Delta 15* (our flight number). The purpose of the trust fund would be to provide college scholarships for the high school students of Lewisporte. He asked for donations of any amount from his fellow travelers. When the paper with donations got back to us with the amounts, names, phone numbers, and addresses, the total was for more than \$14,000! The gentleman, a medical doctor from Virginia, promised to match the donations and to start the administrative work on the scholarship. He also said that he would

forward this proposal to Delta Corporate and ask them to donate as well.

As I write this account, the trust fund is at more than \$1.5 million and has assisted 134 students in college education. I just wanted to share this story because we need good stories right now. It gives me a little bit of hope to know that some people in a faraway place were kind to some strangers who literally dropped in on them. It reminds me how much good there is in the world in spite of all the rotten things we see going on in it today. This story confirms that there are still a lot of good people in the world and when things get bad, they will come forward.

Editor’s Note 1. The actual numbers at Gander are less than those noted by the Delta flight attendant, but are none the less impressive. On 11 September 2001, a total of 240 flights were rerouted to Canada when American airspace was closed after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington D.C., and 39 of those flights ended up in Gander. The townspeople of Gander and surrounding areas responded magnificently to the crisis, providing support to 6,579 marooned passengers and crew.

Editor’s Note 2. Several books, including one named “Come From Away,” and a musical were written about Gander’s humanitarian response in September 2001.

The musical “Come From Away,” based on the book, tells the story of Gander’s hospitality to the passengers and crews stranded by the terrorist attack of 9/11. The show opened on Broadway in March 2017 and in October 2018 it became the longest running Canadian musical in Broadway history.

At the 71st Tony Awards, “Come From Away” was nominated for seven awards including Best Musical, Best Original Score, Best Featured Actress in a Musical, and won the Tony for Best Direction of a Musical for director Christopher Ashley.

Saving Willow Run

by Col. Ray Hunter, USAF (Ret)
Daedalus Flyer, December 2018

The Yankee Air Force was founded in 1981 at the Willow Run airport in southeastern Michigan by a group of volunteers whose objective was to find a B-24 Liberator bomber that was built at Willow Run Bomber Plant and bring it back to its birth place.

Of the nearly 9,000 B-24's built at Willow Run, only a few Willow Run B-24's remain, including one at the Global Power Museum, Barksdale AFB, LA, and several in museums in England and Canada.

The Willow Run Bomber Plant, located just outside of Detroit near Ypsilanti, was the pinnacle of American innovation at the time of its construction. Between 1940 and 1945, workers built the plant and accomplished something truly astonishing: one B-24 Liberator rolled off the production line every 55 minutes. This mind-boggling feat of engineering and logistics was accomplished by the Ford Motor Company to create an incredibly powerful industrial complex nicknamed the "Arsenal of Democracy."

The Willow Run Bomber Plant reflected the auto industries' expertise in producing these bombers. The engines were built by Buick in Illinois. Nash-Kelvinator built the propellers. Briggs Manufacturing built the gun turrets. The machine guns were produced by AC Spark Plugs, Inc., in Michigan. The engine nacelles and outer wing panels were both produced off-site by Michigan firms in the Detroit area. This was a cross section of expertise in the automobile industry. In 1940, the aircraft industry in the United States was manufacturing airplanes one at a time using what was known as "craft production." The aircraft were individually produced and parts from one aircraft would likely not fit any other similar model of airplane. Conversely, in the 1940's, the auto industry in Detroit was characterized by very little handwork,



interchangeable parts, specialized tools, and automation. This permitted extremely high volume production at a reduced cost.

The concept now known as "just in time manufacturing" was used at the Ford Bomber Plant. This involved introducing individual components to an assembly line at various stages of production. These components were built to extremely close tolerances. Sub-assemblies were introduced into the assembly process as the Liberator bombers moved along on a two-track assembly line.

The Willow Run B-24 Bomber Plant was designed by Albert Kahn, renowned architect, well known for buildings on the University of Michigan campus and in the Detroit area. At the time the plant covered 5,000,000 square feet, the largest factory in the world under one roof. Engineer Charles Sorenson was the brain behind the plant. He designed the two-track assembly line.

The plant employed over 40,000 people – men, women, whites, blacks – all received equal pay for equal work. Many of these workers migrated from the south in search of jobs and a desire to serve their nation. There was a group of "little people" who worked in places where others could not easily fit. Some of these workers, the "munchkins,"

were recruited from the Wizard of Oz movie. Charles Lindbergh was employed by the bomber plant to head up the flight testing program. Initially the plant had growing pains in the form of production problems so a group of government officials was sent on a fact finding inspection visit. The group was headed by none other than Harry S. Truman. Truman found that the plant was doing just fine and would be successful.

The final several hundred yards of the plant was where the fuel tanks, hydraulic reservoirs, and engine oil tanks were filled. The bombers were then rolled out, engine tested, and final checks made for flight testing.

While the rest of the nearly 5,000,000 square feet was demolished in 2012, the last two segments were purchased by the Yankee Air Museum. Over \$8,000,000 was raised.

The building is 143,000 square feet in size, has two huge hangar doors that still work, and will be renovated to become the new home of the Yankee Air Museum. The new museum at Willow Run will house: the B-17 *Yankee Lady*, the B-25 *Yankee Warrior*, and a C-47 called *Hairless Joe*, recently repainted to commemorate the pilots who flew in the China-India-Burma campaign.

For information on this project and the museum's activities go to www.yankeairmuseum.org

Caribou to the Rescue

by Link Spann [459, 67]

In May 1968, while flying a support mission from Da Nang to Khe Sanh, we received a broadcast on Guard channel asking for assistance in locating a downed Marine pilot. He had punched out after being hit near Dong Ha and had given his position as being 20 miles on the 089 radial of the Dong Ha TACAN.

We were “feet wet” off the coast from Quang Tri at the time, so we intercepted the radial and began flying east toward the specified mileage on the DME (Distance Measuring Equipment). As we were proceeding, we heard a conversation between a *Bookie* C-123 and the rescue helicopters indicating that *Bookie* had located the downed pilot and the search was over. We had made a 180-degree turn and were headed west towards Khe Sanh when the rescue helicopters advised that the C-123 had located a log and that we should continue searching. We turned around and resumed our outbound track on the 089 radial.

Searching from an altitude of 1,500 to 2,000 feet, we located the pilot in an inflated life raft at about 20 miles. We tried to radio the rescue helicopters, but for some reason we were unable to communicate with them. However, the pilot advised the helicopter pilots on his emergency radio that he was “being circled by an ugly green aircraft” they could “home-in” on. We also saw the pilot was being circled by a large hammerhead shark, which was at least twice the length of the raft.

Once the helicopters arrived on scene, we departed and headed for Khe Sanh. For the next hour, we keep hearing the conversation on Guard between the pilot and the helicopters discussing his need to get out of the raft so that he could be picked up – something he was reluctant to do because of the shark.

The pilot was eventually rescued.

Agent Orange Diseases Updated

Federal government information on diseases associated with Agent Orange has been updated. The following information is from the Electronic Code of Federal Regulations (e-CFR), current as of December 21, 2018, and the Veterans Administration (VA) website, as of February 2019.

Cancers believed to be caused by contact with Agent Orange:

Chronic B-Cell Leukemia: A type of cancer that affects the white blood cells.

Hodgkin's Disease: A type of cancer that causes the lymph nodes, liver, and spleen to get bigger and the red blood cells to decrease.

Multiple Myeloma: A type of cancer that affects the white blood cells made in the bone marrow, that help to fight infection.

Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma: A group of cancers that affect the lymph glands and other lymphatic tissue, a part of the immune system that helps to fight infection and illness.

Prostate Cancer: Cancer of the prostate.

Respiratory Cancers: Cancers of the organs involved in breathing, including the lungs, larynx, trachea, and bronchus.

Soft Tissue Sarcomas (other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, and mesothelioma): Different types of cancers in body tissues such as muscle, fat, blood and lymph vessels, and connective tissues.

The e-CFR lists 23 types of soft tissue Sarcomas believed to be associated with Agent Orange.

Other illnesses believed to be caused by contact with Agent Orange:

AL Amyloidosis: A rare illness that happens when an abnormal protein, amyloid, builds up in the body's tissues, nerves, or organs and causes damage over time.

Chloracne or other similar types of

acneform disease: A skin condition that happens soon after contact with chemicals and looks like acne often seen in teenagers. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10% disabling within one year of contact with herbicides.

Diabetes Mellitus Type 2: An illness that happens when the body is unable to properly use insulin, a hormone that turns blood glucose, or sugar, into energy, leading to high blood sugar levels.

Ischemic Heart Disease: A type of heart disease that happens when the heart doesn't get enough blood. It often causes chest pain or discomfort.

Parkinson's Disease: An illness of the nervous system that affects muscles and movement.

Peripheral Neuropathy, Early Onset: An illness of the nervous system that causes numbness, tingling, and weakness. Under VA rating regulations, it must be at least 10% disabling within one year of contact with herbicides.

Porphyria Cutanea Tarda: A rare illness that can make the liver stop working the way it should and can cause the skin to thin and blister when exposed to the sun. Under VA's rating regulations, it must be at least 10% disabling within one year of contact with herbicides.

Veterans may be eligible for disability compensation if they served in Vietnam for any length of time between January 9, 1962, and May 7, 1975, had contact with Agent Orange, and now have one or more of the illnesses listed.

Stuff Happens!

As the test pilot climbs out of the experimental aircraft, having torn off the wings and tail in the crash landing, the crash truck arrives.

A rescuer sees the bloodied pilot and asks, “What happened?”

The pilot replies: “I don't know, I just got here myself!”

Attributed to Ray Crandell, Lockheed test pilot

535th AS at Arctic Anvil

by TSgt. Heather Redman
15th Wing Public Affairs
October 19, 2018



Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, AK. A C-17 Globemaster III assigned to the 535th Airlift Squadron (AS), Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, HI, takes off from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, AK, during Arctic Anvil 19-01, October 9, 2018.

Arctic Anvil is a joint, multi-national, force-on-force training exercise designed to provide a realistic training event to validate participant's ability to fight and win as a combined arms team.

The 535th AS performed personnel and heavy equipment airdrops in a simulated contested environment.

USAF photo by Alejandro Peña

National Veterans Museum Opens



The National Veterans Memorial and Museum opened October 27, 2018 in Columbus, OH. The museum's goals are to honor, connect, inspire, and educate by focusing on the personal stories of veterans, many shared through personal correspondence.

The 20th national museum designated by Congress, *Architectural Digest* described the museum's \$75 million,

53,000 square-foot spiral-like structure as one of the most anticipated new buildings of 2018. The museum appears to grow out of the ground with elements that look like ribbons that act as a ramp to ensure veterans in wheelchairs have full accessibility.

The museum is open Wednesday through Sunday, 10 AM to 5 PM.

DoD Top 10

by Jack Corrigan, nextgov
from defenseone.gov
March 5, 2019

The Department of Defense (DoD) announced the ten research areas where it wants innovative small businesses to direct their efforts in 2019.

The agency's research office is also standing up an in-house startup accelerator to help companies usher their tech out of the lab and into the real world.

The Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) laid out the focus areas for its Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. Over the next year, DARPA will recruit companies to participate in cutting-edge national security research efforts like advancing "third wave" artificial intelligence, developing miniature satellites, building lethal lasers and upgrading the country's nuclear arsenal.

The programs are divided into two phases, with companies first exploring the viability of their idea before building a final product. Companies that can already prove their tech is feasible are eligible to jump directly into the second phase of the program.

Teams are eligible for up to \$251,250 in funding for phase one of the program and \$1.65 million in phase two. Last year, the agency allocated roughly \$101 million for the SBIR and STTR programs.

This year for the first time, selected companies will also have the chance to participate in a new Pentagon-spon-

sored startup incubator to bring their ideas to fruition faster. The DARPA Accelerator program will connect the most promising teams with industry and government advisors, as well as the agency's "extensive" network of investors, who can help commercialize their product. Under the program, groups will also be eligible for up to \$250,000 in extra funding for phase two of the program.

This year, companies can receive SBIR and STTR funding for research projects in these 10 categories:

Artificial Intelligence. Examples: Improve algorithms, enhance data quality, optimize human-machine interactions, and disrupt adversaries' efforts to corrupt systems.

Autonomy. Examples: Address the teaming of autonomous systems, enhance machine perception, improve reasoning and intelligence, and build trust between humans and autonomous systems.

Communications. Examples: Address high-performance, low power embedded processing and develop algorithms for resource allocation, self-configuring, and self-healing networks.

Cyber. Examples: Fix behavioral issues, develop self-securing networks and create strategies to assess cyber effects and consequences.

Directed Energy (Lasers). Examples: Address power scaling, jitter reduction, laser size and weight, adaptive optics, beam propagation, and target tracking.

Hypersonics. Examples. Create high-temperature materials, hypersonic vehicle manufacturing, air-breathing propulsion, and hypersonic guidance and control systems.

Microelectronics. Examples. Develop economically competitive domestic manufacturing capabilities, improve radiation hardening, and develop radio frequency technologies for special applications in nuclear, and space and electronic warfare.

Continued on Page 24

DoD Top 10 (from Page 23)

Quantum Sciences. Examples: Create quantum clocks and sensors, quantum communications technologies, and develop enabling technologies for quantum computing in the areas of cryogenics and photon detection.

Space. Examples: Develop low earth orbit nano-satellites for missile warning, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, navigation, and communications.

Nuclear Modernization. Examples: Modernize the nuclear triad (bombers, intercontinental ballistic missiles, and ballistic missile submarines) as well as the supporting infrastructure, including the national laboratories and the nuclear command, control, and communications network.

America Lost Vietnam but Saved Southeast Asia

by William Lloyd Stearman
Wall Street Journal
January 28, 2019

America got into World War II because of Vietnam. When the Japanese conquered what was then French Indochina in September 1941, the U.S. replied with severe economic sanctions, which convinced the Japanese that America was hostile and might use its fleet to block Tokyo's conquest of Southeast Asia. In December the Japanese attacked the U.S. fleet at Pearl Harbor.

President Dwight Eisenhower, remembering that Indochina had been a base for conquest, declared on April 7, 1954, that a communist victory there could topple the newly independent countries of Southeast Asia like dominoes. The containment strategy against Soviet communism dictated that Washington prevent this. U.S. involvement in Vietnam followed, step by step.

The military presence began with

advisors, whose numbers continued to grow. When the threat from North Vietnam increased in 1965, President Lyndon Johnson decided to introduce combat troops – first marines, then a far greater number of soldiers.

Things seemed to be progressing well until the Tet Offensive of January 30, 1968, in which North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces attacked much of South Vietnam. Even the U.S. Embassy grounds were occupied. Negative television coverage had a decisive effect on U.S. public opinion – yet the offensive ended badly for the communists. Hanoi was delighted that the U.S. media had turned its defeat into a victory.

President Richard Nixon began “Vietnamizing” the war in 1969 by withdrawing combat troops. This phase was largely completed in 1971. America did, however, continue to provide air, naval, and logistical support and advisors. On March 30, 1972, Hanoi staged a huge offensive aimed at final victory. Initially it seemed certain to succeed. But with massive U.S. air support and good advice, South Vietnamese troops were soon on the offensive. By autumn, “on the ground in South Vietnam the war had been won,” former CIA Director William Colby wrote in his 1989 book, *Lost Victory*.

Hanoi thus asked for negotiations, which interfered with continued fighting. The war ended with the January 27, 1973, Paris Peace Agreement, which was immediately met with gross violations, mostly by the communist side. After U.S. troops and prisoners of war returned, Americans lost interest in South Vietnam's fate. Congress greatly reduced aid and banned further U.S. military involvement in the region, effectively ensuring a communist victory. Saigon fell on April 30, 1975.

It is widely believed the Vietnam War was unwinnable. But a 2004 History Channel documentary featured interviews with knowledgeable North Vietnamese who thought otherwise. They said U.S. and South Vietnamese ground troops could have effectively

blocked the Ho Chi Minh Trail in eastern Laos, denying its enemy essential supplies and troop reinforcements. Other North Vietnamese said they were puzzled that the U.S. failed to do so. This logical, war-ending move was ruled out by decision makers in Washington because it would “broaden the conflict” – never mind that the enemy had already broadened it by using Laos as a base and supply chain.

The defeat created more than a million South Vietnamese refugees, who escaped by sea. More than 300,000 drowned, according to a Red Cross estimate. Large numbers also died in concentration camps or were executed.

Yet even the defeat in Vietnam accomplished a lot. “In 1965, when U.S. military moved massively into South Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines faced internal threats from armed insurgencies and the communist underground was still active in Singapore. Indonesia [was] in the throes of a failed communist coup,” Singapore's founding father, Lee Kuan Yew, wrote in his 2000 memoir, *From Third World to First*. “America's action enabled noncommunist Southeast Asia to put their own houses in order. By 1975, they were in better shape to stand up to the communists. Had there been no U.S. intervention, the will of these countries to resist them would have melted and Southeast Asia would most likely have gone communist.”

The 1965 combat-troop build-up had a bracing effect in Southeast Asia. It reportedly encouraged the British defense of Malaysia. Far more important was its effect in Indonesia. In 1970, President Suharto told U.S. officials and columnist Robert Novak that the large-scale introduction of combat troops substantially encouraged Indonesian forces to repulse a major, and nearly successful, Chinese-dominated communist coup that began the night of September 30, 1965. Coup assassination squads had already murdered six top generals,

Continued on Page 25

Lost but Saved (from Page 24)

and Suharto – then the army’s strategic reserve commander – must have been tempted to flee to safety. Instead, he rallied his units and suppressed the coup.

Had the coup succeeded, it probably would have spread to the Philippines. That would have triggered the 1951 Defense Agreement, which would have obliged the U.S. to help in its defense. Such a conflict might have been far worse than Vietnam. The U.S. intervention in Vietnam achieved a strategic victory – albeit not Vietnam itself – from communism.

Mr. Stearman, who served on the National Security Council staff under four presidents, is the author of “An American Adventure, From Early Aviation Through Three Wars to the White House” (Naval Institute Press, 2012).

Editor’s Note 1. During Tet 1968, The U.S. Embassy grounds were never “occupied” by enemy forces. Less than a dozen enemy soldiers breached the outer wall of the embassy compound. All were either killed or captured and none entered embassy buildings.

Editor’s Note 2. Mr. Stearman discusses how U.S. commitment in Vietnam strengthened the political will of other Asian nations against Communism, but he does not mention the economic impact of the U.S. commitment.

The war-devastated nations of Western Europe were rebuilt with the assistance of the Marshall Plan. There was no Marshall Plan for the war-torn nations of Asia. Their economies were rejuvenated and grew assisted, in some measure, by the enormous sums spent by the U.S. government, its contractors, and U.S. servicemen during and after the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

Would the economic growth throughout non-communist Asia been possible without the economic impact of the U.S. defense commitment to security and Communist containment in Asia?



Mission to Bu Dop

by Jon Mickley [535, 69]
from *Caribou Airlines, Vol. III*

As we approached Bu Dop, I used the standard overhead pattern to stay close to the camp perimeter as it reduced the amount of ground fire from the bad guys. We came in at 3,000 feet AGL (above ground level), pitched out, configured with gear and flaps, and tried to roll out on a close-in final, and low enough to touchdown on the first “brick,” aka “cloud of dirt!” As we turned final, the technique to get down in a hurry was to slip the airplane with a lot of rudder and cross-controlled aileron.

I remember seeing some tracers going by, but they were well off to the left, on the outside of the turn as we were making a right turn to final. I wondered who taught those guys to shoot, as they weren’t even close. Later, I learned that they were taught to just shoot in front of the airplane and let it fly into the bullets. Since we were in a big slip, the airplane was not actually flying in the direction of the nose, but to the right, hence I was not moving in the direction the guys on the ground thought we were. I have no idea if they ever figured out how an airplane can “point one way

and fly another!”

We landed and began a standard, engine running off-load in the small ramp area. I preferred the “drop the load in the middle of the runway” technique, but there was a lot of traffic into and out of Bu Dop that day so that wasn’t possible. The folks on the ground backed the duce and a half up to the ramp and we began off-loading the cargo, mostly Vietnamese food – the usual staples, live chickens and 55-gallon drums of live eels. They had to be live since there wasn’t much refrigeration available for the local folks. As usual, there were a lot of local people around to help the off-load, despite the threat of getting shot at.

Shortly after the off-load started, the first mortar round hit the corner of the parking ramp, but nobody really noticed, at least not in the cockpit, since it was behind us. But, the Flight Engineer did see it and started yelling “In-coming!” on the interphone, at which time the cockpit crew became involved. The Flight Engineer yelled, “Clear!” and off we went. We were taught that a mortar is not really effective against a moving target, even one

Continued on Page 26

Bu Dop (from Page 25)

as big as a Bou, so we got moving. We turned onto the runway, already having set up for a quick departure (25 degrees of flaps), and off we went. We did a low speed, corkscrew climb-out over the camp, got high enough to avoid ground fire, cleaned up, and departed.

No harm, no foul, except for one minor footnote. The locals had come out to help unload and apparently one was on the airplane when the mortars came in and, well, he didn't get off. Nice enough young man, but I doubt that he had planned on taking an airplane ride when he left home that morning! Naturally, we weren't going back to Bu Dop to drop him off, so we took him to Saigon and dropped him off there.

A few days later, I was talking to the crew that had flown the *Tong 452* mission the next day and they told me they took him back home. I assume that he spent the night on the ramp at Saigon. I always wondered what he told his wife when he finally got home. Perhaps it was, "I was helping unload an airplane yesterday and ended up in Saigon, dear!" To which she replied, "Sure honey, what was her name?"

I doubt if he ever got involved in unloading another Caribou!

Space-A Travel for Disabled Vets

from Military.com
February 10, 2019

Recent changes to policy under the 2019 National Defense Authorization Act now allow many disabled veterans to fly Space-Available (Space-A) on military flights. The new clause authorizes eligible disabled veterans to "hop" flights within the continental United States, as well as to Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam and American Samoa.

To be eligible for Space-A, disabled veterans must have a permanent and total service-connected disability rating from the VA as well as a DD Form 2765, DoD ID Card. Such veterans will be assigned travel priority of Category 6 for military space available flights.

Dependents of disabled veterans are not eligible to fly Space-A.

Space-A travelers may bring up to two pieces of luggage weighing up to 70 pounds each.

Letter Home 1970

by Gene Haran [458, 68]

I was serving my second tour with a Forward Air Controller squadron when I sent this letter home in 1970.

"Kate and Al,

How goes it there? I have changed bases for the rest of my tour. Much smaller, and more active. People respect what we are doing, and allow you to do your duty without interference.

The mail has been slow reaching me. Who knows where the Advance paper is. I received a letter from you dated the 22nd. You posted it on the 8th.

Another NCO was contacted by the Red Cross. His parents thought he was MIA (Missing In Action).

We've had some action here the last four days. So I guess the war isn't over with over here. We are still doing our job quite well. Our priority at this base is high. We have the only AF planes based here.

Just now, an AC-47 gunship crashed landed near our facility. It now lies in three feet of mud. It will be a while before the VNAF (South Vietnamese Air Force) get to it, due to hostile fire.

It's Sunday, [but] the war doesn't take a day off.

Must leave now, things are jumping around here.

See you next letter.

Gene"

B-17 Navigator's Log



1-3-44. Group went to Brunswick, Germany. We did not go.

Half of the Groups were called back near the target and half went in. Some got lost and it's rumored that some went over Berlin.

As a result, 59 Forts [B-17's] were lost. Plenty of German fighters over there. Col. Bowman, our former C.O. (commanding officer) at "Wash," went down. It was his second mission.

1-10-44. Mission scrubbed last night at midnight. On another Alert tonight.

Bell got back from Sweden tonight. The other nine members of crew are P.W. (Prisoners of War). He crash-landed in Denmark. Was his fourth mission. He came over with us.

1-12-44, Mission No. 17. Briefed at 1000 for installations in France. Left England at 1400.

Got to I.P. (initial point) okay and peeled off by squadrons. We were low squadron. Target was an orchard. 12,000 feet and twelve 500-pound bombs.

Missed target the first time. Covered by clouds. We made five bomb runs and couldn't find the orchard. Germans were shooting rockets at us from the ground.

The third time around we saw two Forts go down. One chute opened. One [Fort] hit the ground and exploded. Fourth time around two B-24's went down by German fighters. No chutes opened. Saw no friendly escort.

After the fifth run we figured it was time to get out, so we left and brought our bombs back.

No squadrons in either of our Groups dropped their bombs.

Landed at 1700.

Tuskegee Pilot Roster



The Commemorative Air Force (CAF) Red Tail Squadron, America's tribute to the Tuskegee Airmen, announced in early November 2018 that they have published the first-ever complete, up-to-date, and searchable Tuskegee Airmen Pilot Roster available to the public online.

The database contains details of the 1,007 pilots to receive their wings through the Tuskegee Airmen program.

The Tuskegee Airmen Pilot Roster is available on the CAF Red Tail Squadron web site at redtail.org

USAF Astronaut Hague on ISS Mission

Af.mil

March 14, 2019

Arlington, VA. AFNS (Air Force News Service) Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs.

Few Airman astronauts have aborted their space flight mission after launch, and even fewer received the opportunity to relaunch just months later.

USAF Col. Nick Hague, an astronaut, is scheduled for a second mission to the International Space Station (ISS) aboard a Soyuz MS-12, March 14, 2019, from Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.

Hague, who is set to join the *Expedition 59* crew, will conduct hundreds of research investigations and technology demonstrations to advance scientific

knowledge of Earth, space, physical and biological sciences according to NASA.

On October 11, 2018, Hague and his commander, Russian astronaut Alexey Ochinin, were forced to abort their mission when their rocket booster failed to detach once they reached zero gravity.

"We (were) at the apex of our trajectory, and I'm staring out there at the curve of the Earth, and the darkness of space ... you're so close you can touch it," Hague said. "And to have that ripped out of your hands, that's devastating."

As they plummeted to Earth at 4,700 miles per hour, Hague's years of Air Force training enabled his life-saving response.

"The career I had leading up to that launch prepared me to respond to that situation," Hague said. "It wasn't my first in-flight emergency – we had those when I was doing flight testing out at Edwards AFB. I think what you realize as you gain these experiences is the best thing you can do in the situation to help yourself is maintain your cool and trust in your training."

Hague began training with NASA in 2013, and learned to handle maintenance activities, maintain the space station as a national laboratory for research and conduct space walks to fix issues outside the station. A sizable amount of his training also included learning to fly the Soyuz with Ochinin.

"There's this common understanding we have with each other ... that even though I may be speaking broken Russian to him, and he's speaking broken English to me, we understand each other," Hague said. "We've been able to sit in the simulator over the last year and a half, to the point where we know how each other is thinking and we anticipate each other's moves and we're backing each other up ... it feels like a well-oiled machine and no different than any crew I could put together in the U.S. – we're in it together."

Though his arrival to the ISS was temporarily delayed, Hague knows the

information gathered from this mission will be worth it.

"The mission we're doing is so important," Hague said after his initial launch. "It's a mission where we're going up there and collecting data so the scientists on the ground can better understand our world, they can better understand our bodies, they can better understand the world around us ... and that's a vital mission that's benefitting all of humanity."

"Just because there's some bumps in the road, or some obstacles, doesn't mean we give up," he continued. "We learn from our failures and we move forward."

Failed FCF

by Tom Collins [537, 67]



It may be one of the fastest failed Functional Check Flights (FCF) ever.

As we cranked an engine and the hydraulic lines pressurized, the nose gear retracted. *Fini.*

No in-flight checks that day.



Reunion 2019

Golden, Colorado

September 4-8, 2019
by Doug Boston [458, 68]

The 2019 Reunion will be held at the Denver Marriott West Hotel in Golden, a few miles west of downtown Denver. Registration will be Wednesday afternoon with a reception in the evening.

Thursday's excursions will include:

The **Colorado Railroad Museum**, which displays trains of both narrow and standard gauge rolling stock. The history of the narrow gauge railroads that served much of the early mining efforts in Colorado can be seen in the museum and outside on the fifteen-acre display area. There is also a roundhouse where restoration and maintenance of the trains takes place.

The **Coors Brewery** is a short drive from the Railroad Museum. The brewery, which has a river running through the property, is the world's largest single-site brewery! The tour will showcase the history and passion for brewing in a 30-minute look at the malting, brewing and packaging processes. Also on display are old photos, neon signs, historical beer cans, bottles and memorabilia from the Coors archives. There is also a Coors & Co. gift shop with unique branded and Colorado-themed merchandise.

Lunch, and an opportunity to stretch our legs, will be in Golden near the campus of the Colorado School of Mines where in a 7 to 8 block stretch there are over a dozen local and chain-operated eateries.

Thursday afternoon, a short drive to nearby Arvada will take us to the **Cussler Museum**. Clive Cussler, the collector, is a world-renowned adventure book author and shipwreck explorer. The complete collection is over 100 autos that are immaculately restored with about 70 on display at any one time.

Friday will entail a trip to Colorado Springs and a visit to the **U.S. Air**



Giclée color prints on canvas of our painting by Alex Durr, a member of the American Society of Aviation Artists, are now available.

“C-7A CARIBOU AT SPECIAL FORCES CAMP”

16” by 20” print \$150

18” by 24” print \$185

24” by 36” print \$305

Giclée prints are mounted on gator board, framed with real mahogany and acrylic glass, boxed, and shipped via UPS Ground.

Mail your order and check made out to the C-7A Caribou Association to:
Pat Hanavan, 12402 Winding Branch, San Antonio, TX 78230-2770
Call Pat at 210-479-0226 if you have a question.

Force Academy (USAF), where the Association has placed a memorial plaque memorializing the loss in Vietnam of two C-7A crewmembers who were graduates of the USAFA. Plans are not yet complete on the other facilities on the campus we will tour.

Another possibility, if time permits, is the U.S. Olympic Training Center, where American Olympic athletes receive specialized and intense training prior to both winter and summer Olympic competitions.

Friday evening we will enjoy our

usual sit-down dinner at the hotel.

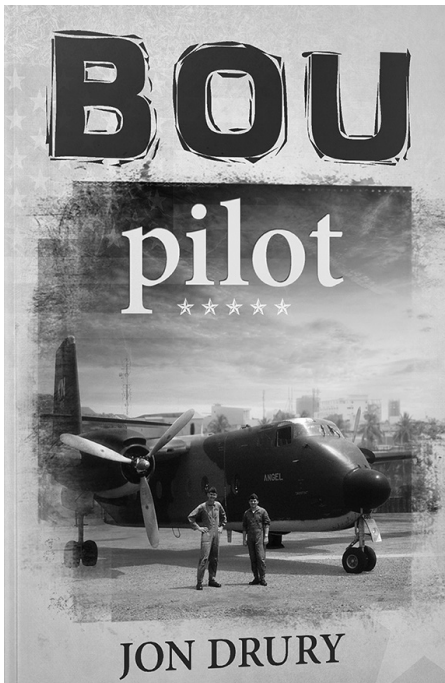
Saturday morning we will gather for our annual Caribou Bowl competition to determine how good our recall is of the C-7A and popular events that occurred during the Vietnam War years.

Photos of attending members of each unit will be taken in the afternoon and our traditional banquet in the evening.

Information on how to make reservations has been posted on the C-7A Caribou Association web site, including the hotel reservation telephone number and some transportation information.

Bou Pilot

by Jon Drury [537, 68]



Jon tells about his experiences flying the C-7A Caribou in Vietnam right after receiving his Air Force wings. Each vignette is a two-page account in the air or on the ground during his 1968-69 Vietnam tour.

The stories are written so military and civilian readers can appreciate what it was like for a young Second Lieutenant to cope with flying combat missions in different situations.

After Vietnam, Jon flew C-118 medical evacuation missions from Clark AB, Philippines. He then felt a call to Christian work and pastored for 40 years.

The book can be obtained by mailing a check for \$13.00 to Jon at:

Jon Drury
3502 NE 88th Ct.
Vancouver, WA 98662

The book is also available from the publisher, Redemption Press, at www.redemption-press.com for \$16.86, including shipping, and from Amazon.com for about \$17.68, including shipping.

If you want a free code to listen to the audiobook from Amazon, e-mail Jon your request at: jondrury2@yahoo.com

Additional Information

Not all crew members were identified in "What Happened?," *C-7A Newsletter Vol. 29-2, November 2018*.

The C-7A crash-landed near Can Tho on December 13, 1967 because an enemy rifle round hit the crossover valve, causing loss of fuel and eventual fuel starvation.

SSgt. John D. Trease [535,67] was giving a check ride to Flight Mechanic A1C James A. "Scully" Stikes [535, 67] on that flight.

Roughneck Nine-Out

by Frank Antenori and Hans Hablerstadt

Reviewed by Pat Hanavan

This 2007 book by a retired Special Forces (SF) Master Sergeant is an exceptionally well written and organized update on SF structure, concept of operations, composition of an A-Team and its training for battle, and the use of SF today.

In the 21st Century, SF are employed in a manner much closer to the vision prior to the Vietnam War than that used in Vietnam. Trained in-depth to fight as small units and possessing language skills for the area of the world where they will be employed, these warriors are able to fight independently, without being micro-managed by higher headquarters or Washington, DC. The wisdom of this unit structure and methods of employment have paid off in combat over and over again in recent years.

The authors assert that the Special Forces system is based on four fundamental ideas not usually associated with classical military organizations:

1. Soldiers are more important than hardware.
2. The maturity, courage, technical skills, cultural sensitivity and language proficiency, and their ability to lead

and follow is the foundation of their effectiveness.

3. The process of producing good SF soldiers is a long, slow, expensive one. Lower standards and faster training produces poor results.

4. The process of developing competent Green Berets can't be accelerated, despite pressure to do so faster.

A-391, Operational Detachment Alpha-391, prepared for deployment into Turkey and operations in northern Iraq at the onset of the Gulf War. When the Turkish government dithered, they moved to a base in Romania. When the balloon went up, the Third Battalion, Third SF Group was tasked to conduct special reconnaissance of specified Named Areas of Interest, conduct sensitive site exploration of suspected Weapons of Mass Destruction facilities, and provide route reconnaissance and screening operations in support of the 4th Infantry Division.

The 12-man A-391 team and its brother team, A-392, worked with less than 100 Peshmerga fighters (Kurds) in the fighting referred to as the Battle of Debecka Pass. The battle pitted 26 Green Berets (two support personnel added during the battle) and their Kurdish allies against a substantially larger and much better-equipped Iraqi force, including T-55 main battle tanks and armored personnel carriers. In the firefight, they destroyed two T-55 tanks and eight armored personnel carriers.

The Americans were outnumbered 30 to 1.

The engagement forced enemy forces in northern Iraq to stay in position and prevented them from moving south where they could have engaged the coalition assault on Baghdad. It also forced the enemy to face toward them and not to defend the important oil fields.

MSgt. Antenori's book is recommended for readers of military history (the Vietnam and Gulf Wars). It is especially insightful about the composition of an A-team, teamwork, cross-training, and leadership.

Vietnam to Western Airlines



Vietnam to Western Airlines Volume 2



Vietnam to Western Airlines

Edited by Bruce Cowee [458, 68]

The three books already published in this series are an oral history of the air war in Vietnam, including stories and photographs, of pilots who all had one thing in common. After returning from Southeast Asia, and separating from military service, they were hired by Western Airlines.

The stories are written by the men who were there and flew the missions. All the uniformed services who provided combat pilots, and all the types of aircraft and missions these pilots flew, are included in these volumes.

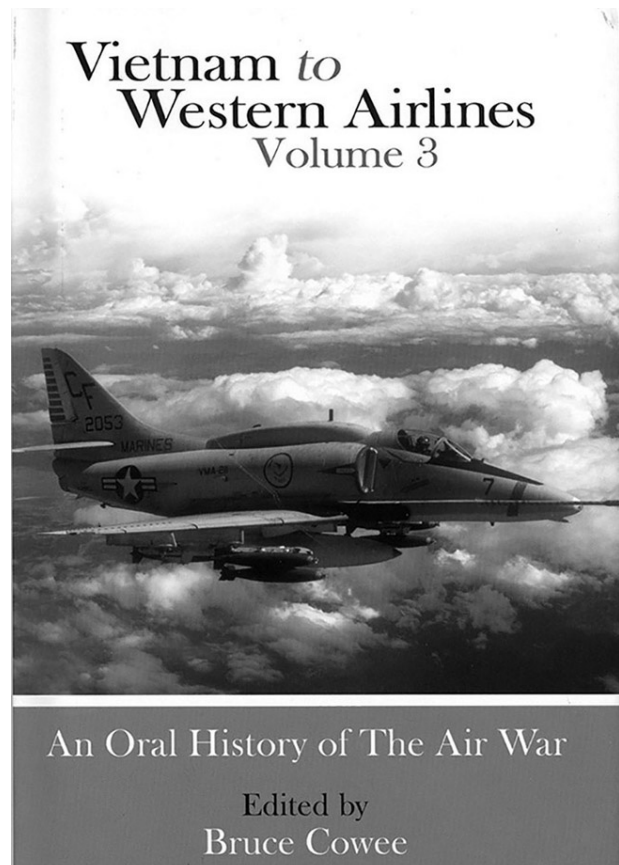
These are personal stories. They will capture and hold your attention. They will make you remember and they will teach you things you didn't know before. Above all – they will make you proud.

Vietnam to Western Airlines volumes can be ordered from:
www.vietnamtowesternairlines.com

If a personalized inscription is desired, you can also place an order through Bruce at:

b2acowee@aol.com

Vietnam to Western Airlines Volume 3



C-7A DVD #2



C-7A DVD

DISK 1:

- 7AF
- 834AD
- AFM 51-40
- AFR-64-4-Survival
- Air Base Defense
- Airman Magazine\Oct 1968
- Airman Magazine\Nov 1968
- Air_War_over_South_Vietnam_1968-1975
- Army Air Facilities 1973

Art

- Art\Logo Images
- Art\Patches
- Art\Poster
- Art\R2000
- ATC Manuals
- Aviation Week
- C-7A-1
- Cam Ranh Ammo Dump
- Cam Ranh Ghost Town
- Caribou Agreement (USAF and USA)

- Caribou Sales Brochure
- Caribou SEA newsletters\Caribou Courier and Clarion
- Caribou SEA newsletters\Surfside Sentinel
- CRB_Approach_Plates
- DHC-4 Maintenance Manual
- DHC-4_Type_Certificate
- Indochina_Atlas_1970
- M16_Comic_Book
- Misc_Manuals
- Squadron_Signal_C-7A
- Tactical_Aerodrome_Directory
- Tactical_Airlift-Bowers
- TO_1-1-4_Aircraft_Marking
- USAF Combat Wings
- Videos**
- Video\Aussie Bou
- Video\C-7A Training
- Video\Cam Ranh
- Video\Gimli Crash
- Video\Gunter News
- Video\Radial Engine Animation
- Video\UPT
- Vietnam Campaigns
- Vietnam Gazeteer

DISK 2

- City Maps
- Fire Bases
- Google Earth database (add-in)
- ONC_K-10
- Series 1301 Charts
- Series_1501_Charts
- Series_L509_Charts
- Series_L701_L7014_Maps
- Series_L701_L7014_Maps\L7014_Below_17N
- Tactical_VFR_Chart
- Vietnam Country Maps

Available on our web site:

<http://www.c-7acaribou.com/memorabilia/memorabilia.htm>
for \$8, shipped.

White House VA Hotline

A Veterans' Administration Hotline has been established at the White House. Call **855-948-2311** to communicate your problem.

12402 Winding Branch
 San Antonio, TX 78230-2770
 Address Service Requested



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 U.S. Postage Paid
 San Antonio, TX
 Permit # 244

Memorabilia (Previous Order Forms Are Obsolete)

MEMORABILIA ORDER FORM

Contact pathanavan@aol.com to check availability of items.

Fill out and mail with a check to: **C-7A Caribou Association, c/o Pat Hanavan, 12402 Winding Branch, San Antonio, TX 78230.**

1. Polo Shirt*	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$20.00	Total: _____
2. Colored T-Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$16.00	Total: _____
3. R-2000 T-Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
4. Denim Shirt (short sleeve)	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$25.00	Total: _____
5. Denim Shirt (long sleeve)	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$30.00	Total: _____
6. Cap, Denim	One size fits all	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
7. Cap, White	One size fits all	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
8. 457 th Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
9. 458 th Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
10. 459 th Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
11. 535 th Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
12. 536 th Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
13. 537 th Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
14. 483 rd Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
15. C-7A DVD (1:10 long movie)		Qty. _____ @ \$5.00	Total: _____
16. C-7A DVD Archives (documents, art, videos, charts, maps)		Qty. _____ @ \$8.00	Total: _____
17. C-7A Poster (12" x 18")		Qty. _____ @ \$7.00	Total: _____
18. 50 th Anniversary C-7A Coin		Qty. _____ @ \$11.00	Total: _____
19. C-7A Pin		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
20. C-7A Sticker (outside)		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
21. C-7A Magnet		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
22. C-7A Data Plate		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
23. C-7A Painting Paper Print		Qty. _____ @ \$25.00	Total: _____
*Polo shirt colors: White, Gray, Yellow, Red, and Light Blue (please specify)			Total: _____

Note: Each amount above includes cost of purchasing item and domestic shipping. Any excess funds are a donation to the Association.

Photos of items can be seen on the web site: <http://www.c-7acaribou.com/memorabilia/memorabilia.htm>