

# C-7A Caribou Association

Volume 22, Issue 2

## Ben Het Remembered at Reunion 2011

Reunion 2011 began on 21 September with registration of participants outside the War Room of the renamed Park Inn by Radisson near Love Field in Dallas, TX. As each member registered, an informal picture was taken of

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him to begin a collection of member photos for future reference and possible use with stories they write for our newsletter.

The welcome reception featured our usual snacks, beer, wine, and hot hors d'oeuvres from the hotel kitchen. The memorabilia room was well stocked with Caribou items, including a new long sleeve denim shirt as a result of the survey at last year's reunion.

On Thursday, about 130 of the over 200 attendees visited the Frontiers of Flight Museum at Love field. This opportunity to see a large variety of aircraft, spacecraft, and aviation artifacts was arranged by Don Griffin who is a docent at the museum.

The buffet dinner on Thursday evening featured dishes typical of Tex-Mex cuisine to highlight the location of the reunion.

Friday started out with a big disappointment for those signed up for a flight aboard the Caribou of the Cavanaugh Museum. Despite the Herculean efforts of Pat Phillips and numerous letters and emails to influential Senators and members of the House of Representatives, the FAA steadfastly declined to grant an exemption for the museum to

fly the Bou for us. They failed to respond to the exemption request until 23 September, the day before the planned flights and, even then, sent the response by mail so that it did not arrive until after the reunion.

The Director of the Cavanaugh museum welcomed us to their facility and opened the Caribou so all could go aboard for a nostalgic visit. Their response was first-class, a real red carpet treatment. Last minute arrangements were made to visit the American Airlines flight simulator facility to see their systems in operation. Friday evening meal was Texas BBQ at a nearby restaurant.

The speaker at our banquet on Saturday evening was Glenn Ashley, a member of the Special Forces team defending the camp at Ben Het in June 1969 when the camp was under constant siege for most of the month. The remarks of this triple Purple Heart recipient were heart-felt and moving. His wife, Alyssa, came with Glenn. They are outstanding representatives of the Special Forces community of which our nation is proud and grateful for their service, yesterday and today, all over the world.

### Thanks From AFJROTC Group

On behalf of Lt. Col. Van Cheeks and all the young men and women of the Forney ISD Air Force Junior ROTC Cadet Group, I want to personally thank you for the invitation and the wonderful opportunity to participate in the C-7A Caribou Reunion. The highlight of the evening for the cadets was listening to the heroic accomplishments of the Airmen that flew and supported the missions of the C-7A. It will be an evening they will never forget.

Again, thank you for allowing us to participate.

Jeff Willie, Senior Master Sergeant, USAF (Ret.)

Aerospace Science Instructor, AFJROTC



## B-17 Navigator's Log

9-26-43 Today 3 squadrons went on a practice mission out over the North Sea.

We were in the 2<sup>nd</sup> squadron. The lead navigator took us too far. We ended up 20 miles from the Dutch coast – a practice mission so nobody had any machine guns aboard. Three ME 109's attacked the rear squadron and shot down two of our B-17's before anyone knew they were there. The 17's didn't even have any guns. One blew up in the air and we saw the other one ditch. Someone ought to be court-martialed for not putting guns in the ship or taking us out there. Two 17's gone and no bombs dropped. Really a mess. Had P-47 escorts, too. The Germans could have got all fifty 17's if they had known. Funny in a way – but not for those 20 guys who perished.

9-28-43 Mission #1 Went to Rheims, France, 130 miles into France – an airfield. P-47 protection all the way. Complete undercast. Couldn't see the airfield, so couldn't drop bombs. Flak on the way and 10 ME 110's who did not attack us on the way back. Coming back over England, a B-17 on our left got out of control and came up under another and its props cut its tail off completely – clean as a knife. Tail went up and the rest of the plane went up, over, and down. I watched it out our left window – 7000 ft. and they didn't have a chance. The other plane's wing came off and it spun down also.

Just like a moving picture! Ten miles East of London.

Just then our #2 engine caught fire and we came in on 3 engines. Good landing, however.



the newsletter to distribute to all of our members. For me, his talk will be saved and will be reread from time to time.

We were all given a pretty heavy work load while we served our tour in Vietnam. We learned our jobs well and we did what we were assigned to do. But at the same time, we probably only knew of our own local operation. We barely knew the people in our sister squadrons stationed on the same base. Pat's remarks brought together some marvelous facts and figures that paint the much larger picture and the broader mission of the Bou's operation, while individually we were all but a small part.

In reading the citations in the many awards describing the actions of the aircrews, those situations might seem foreign to those who didn't receive such awards and recognition.

Each morning as we mounted our birds, that were serviced and supported by our very best and loyal ground people, who in so many instances worked the entire night to get those birds ready to fly the next day's missions, we accepted our assignments without thought of the challenges we might face during the upcoming day. As Pat states in his remarks, at any time on any mission any one of us could have received the frags that would have put our bird and crews into those same situations. With almost certainty, we would have found ways to complete those assigned missions.

I feel that what we can derive from this discussion an acknowledgement of, and a participation in, the heroic accomplishments of all of our fellow Caribou Warriors, ground and flight, in the magnificent performance of our assigned duties in support of the total war effort in Vietnam.

Thank you Mr. President, Pat Hanavan, for a wonderful discussion of the total mission and accomplishments of the aircrews and all others supporting the Caribou operation in SEA.

Note: See next page for Pat's remarks at the banquet.

## 2011 Reunion Attendance by Unit

|                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| 457 Member/Spouse     | 9/6   |
| 458 Member/Spouse     | 21/13 |
| 459 Member/Spouse     | 10/5  |
| 483 Member/Spouse     | 2/1   |
| 535 Member/Spouse     | 19/11 |
| 536 Member/Spouse     | 19/9  |
| 537 Member/Spouse     | 23/14 |
| 4449 Member/Spouse    | 2/0   |
| AFAT2 Member/Spouse   | 1/0   |
| 908 TAG Member/Spouse | 1/0   |
| 5 SF                  | 1/1   |
| 12 CSG                | 1/0   |
| 427 VNAF              | 2/1   |
| 429 VNAF              | 2/1   |
| 431 VNAF              | 1/0   |
| Guests of Members     | 39    |
| Total                 | 215   |

## Bou Video

from Paul Witthoef [483, 1970]

There are videos of C-7A guys on the EAA site: <http://www.eaavideo.org/search.aspx?t=caribou>

## Reunion 2013

Reunion 2013 will be 9-13 Sep. at the DoubleTree Hotel, 16500 Southcenter Parkway, Seattle, WA 98188. Visit Boeing museum and plant, Pike Street Fish Market, wine tasting.

## Mail Call

by Dave Hutchens [459, 69]

Editor Emeritus

I asked Pat Hanavan, our newsletter editor, if he would place his remarks, and add my comments, in the newsletter regarding his presentation at the Caribou Reunion Banquet in Dallas, TX on Saturday the 24th of September.

I think Pat's remarks to us on our last night of the reunion brought back so many memories and thoughts, that to retire them after one night would not be putting them to their best use. We have over 800 members who receive our newsletter, many of whom were not able to join us. I feel it would be appropriate to include his remarks in



## Caribou Heroes

by Pat Hanavan [535, 68]

For the last two years, I have been researching the history of Air Force Caribou Operations in Vietnam (1966-1972). That work led me to 7th Air Force Special Orders, and the quarterly histories of the wing and the squadrons. It is very clear that insufficient credit has been given to the Caribou units in the military histories of the Vietnam War. The Caribou veterans earned 2 Air Forces Crosses and at least 28 Silver Stars, 1178 Distinguished Flying Crosses, 14 Airman's Medals, and 32 Purple Hearts. The Wing and its squadrons earned two Presidential Unit Citations, one Navy Presidential Unit Citation, and three Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards with Combat "V".

Those awards were earned while flying missions in support of 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces, II Marine Amphibious Force, the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cavalry, First Field Forces Vietnam, Second Field Forces Vietnam, USARV, ARVN forces, and other units. Of utmost prominence, however, were the missions flown in support of the Special Forces Camps. One of those Special Forces (SF) troops is with us this evening – Maj Glenn Ashley.

Glenn, would you and your lovely wife, Alyssa, please stand so everyone can see you? Glenn was in the Special Forces Camp at Ben Het in June 1969 during the siege which lasted nearly a month. There has always been a special relationship between Caribou crews and Special Forces troops and Glenn's presence with us this evening demonstrates the mutual respect between our two groups.

Locations like An Khe, Ban Me Thuot City, Ben Het, Bu Dop, Bu Krak, Cai Cai, Can Tho, Central Highlands, Dak Seang, Duc Lap, Ha Thanh, Katum, Kontum, LZ English, Nam Can, O Rang, Phouc Vinh, Phu Cat, Plei Mrong, Pleiku, SEA high threat area (read: Cambodia), and Vinh Long were the scenes of airlift and airdrop support

delivered by Caribou crews.

Some of the phrases used in the citations for these awards were:

a. nearly insurmountable hazards and obstacles

b. Tactical Emergency [during] a heavy fire fight

c. vital life saving missions in spite of the extreme hazards of the marginal weather conditions at both landing areas, mountainous terrain, and heavy hostile ground fire on final approach

d. supplied a SF Camp under attack with vitally needed ammunition and successfully evacuated seriously wounded personnel, circumnavigating thunderstorms in the immediate vicinity – executed a night, short field take-off, avoiding the departure end of the runway which was then under fire from hostile forces, and proceeded at low altitude, through minimal weather conditions

e. emergency resupply mission to Vinh Long where hostile forces were attempting to break through the field perimeter on three sides ... delivered the vital cargo despite the extreme adversities of smoke, fog, hostile ground fire, and incendiary flares

f. combining his knowledge of the terrain, ability to navigate by radar, and superior airmanship, he flew a smooth mission, during which seriously wounded patients received emergency treatment. As a result, all the patients on board survived their combat wounds.

g. flew on a Tactical Emergency resupply mission airdropping ammunition to the besieged SF Camp at Ha Thanh. His courage and professional skill in rigging and ejecting the cargo provided outstanding accuracy for the drops in spite of hostile ground fire

h. loaded combat troops and took off while the airfield at Phouc Vinh was under a rocket attack from hostile forces

i. the area around the camp was saturated with hostile forces. He was able to successfully complete two missions to the Bu Krak camp under the cover of air strikes and bombing raids

j. Combat Essential missions to Bu Dop which had seen extensive hostile activity for several days, despite concentrations of unfriendly troops near the perimeter and the presence of antiaircraft weapons one-half mile off the end of the runway

k. delivering a load of fuel and medical supplies to the remote airstrip at Duc Phong, he aborted the takeoff roll because of the explosion of a hostile mine causing damage to his aircraft and one crew member.

l. Emergency Resupply mission in direct support of the besieged camp at Dak Seang. With complete disregard for his personal safety he successfully completed the drop while flying through heavy automatic weapons fire

m. the number three aircraft in a five aircraft airdrop to resupply Dak Seang which was under extreme hostile attack and cut off from all other supply. Flying into intense ground fire, he successfully dropped his supplies to the besieged camp to sustain the lives of its defenders

n. the camp at Katum had been closed due to continuous hostile activity and mortar attacks. After a safe landing and rapid cargo offload, the camp again came under mortar attack, but through close crew coordination he effected an expeditious and safe takeoff

o. Emergency Resupply mission in direct support of the besieged camp. Sergeant X successfully completed the drop while flying through heavy automatic weapons fire

p. two combat essential sorties carrying vitally needed ammunition to the beleaguered SF camp at Katum. Flying through adverse weather, and under the cover of fighter and forward air controller support, he avoided both hostile ground fire and friendly artillery barrages

q. successful tactical approach to O Rang, offload, and departure from the field, but after takeoff the aircraft came

**Continued on Page 5**

## Caribou Heroes (from Page 4)

under hostile automatic ground fire. Evasive maneuvers were employed while checking the engine instruments for possible engine or system damage and maintaining close crew coordination through a successful landing at the nearest airfield

r. airlift mission carrying combat soldiers in support of a troop movement. Despite the fact that his aircraft was hit by hostile fire, he courageously accomplished this vital airlift mission

s. arrived at the scene of a fire in a barracks as personnel were abandoning fire fighting attempts due to exploding small arms ammunition and a rumor that hand grenades were stored in the burning room. He located a fire extinguisher and, with two other individuals, fought the fire until it was under control

t. extremely hazardous conditions including the continuous possibility of hostile ground fire

u. Tactical Emergency mission in support of besieged friendly ground forces at Bu Dop, he flew his reinforcement laden aircraft through extremely adverse weather conditions at night, into a short dirt strip lit only by smudge pots and an occasional flare, and coming under sporadic ground fire from hostile forces below.

One cannot help but be awed by the courage and daring of those crews. They tell about the actions of 3 Majors, 11 Captains, 5 First Lts, 1 TSgt, 1 SSgt, and an A1C. Collectively, they were awarded 22 Distinguished Flying Crosses, an Airman's Medal for heroism, and five Air Medals for extraordinary achievement on a single day.

All of these men are in this room this evening. Would the following please stand and remain standing: Tom Eller, Don Griffin, Bill Grosse, Charlie Austin, Dick Besley, Larry Brown, Brian Bowen, Gary Fox, Doug Boston, Josh Smith, Chris Nevins, Greg Leppert, Tom Nuetzling, Roger Wayland, Frank

Godek, Bill Buesking, Tom Snodgrass, Shanon Dunlap, Bob Korose, Tom Eller, Wayne DeLawter, Mike Murphy, and Dave Hutchens.

Hear, hear... Sierra Hotel!!! Gentlemen, please be seated.

While working on the Caribou history, I discovered that there was a lot of inconsistency in applying the rules for awards. Remember, however, that the guys assigned to duty as the squadron Awards and Decorations officer were, for the most part, unfamiliar with the criteria or how to prepare a recommendation for an award. If you listened carefully to the phrases I read earlier, you might have thought to yourself, "I did something similar, but I didn't get a Silver Star or DFC." Many of you rightfully thought that. We did the job because it was there to be done and the troops on the ground needed our support. It's as simple as that.

All Bou guys deserve to be recognized and to have their story told. Crew chiefs, personal equipment specialists, supply clerks, line chiefs, engine mechanics, instrument techs, command post personnel, phase dock personnel, admin specialists — all did extraordinary things ... everyone played a vital part in the success of the Caribou units. If I didn't call your name before, please stand NOW and be recognized for your part in our history.

Sixty years ago, Raymond Chandler defined a hero in clear and simple terms:

"...down these mean streets a man must go who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid. He is the hero; he is everything. He must be a complete man and a common man and yet an unusual man. He must be, to use a rather weathered phrase, a man of honor — by instinct, by inevitability, without thought of it, and certainly without saying it. He must be the best man in his world and a good enough man for any world.

... If there were enough like him, the world would be a very safe place to live in, without becoming too dull

to be worth living in."

There are other heroes I have not mentioned yet. They are the wives, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, fathers, and mothers who endured the loneliness and anxiety of having a loved one in harm's way. They struggled with loneliness, the leaking faucet, young children, doctor's appointments, the broken window, the hard-to-start car in winter, balancing the check book, and keeping the pieces together until he returned to the Land of the Big BX. You are **our heroes**, so please stand and be recognized.

We lost 39 brothers in arms during Vietnam. We remember them when we dedicate a memorial bench or plaque where a Caribou is on public display. We have installed five of these memorials. Others are planned for the future.

On July 4, 1776 Congress published and declared the Declaration of Independence, signed by the representatives of the American colonies.

Those representatives mutually pledged to each other their "Lives, ... Fortunes, and ... sacred Honor."

This began our American dream of democracy. They dreamed a dream which has not yet been fulfilled. Our fallen brothers in arms endeavored to make the dream a reality. They were devoted. They were true. They were brave.

They made a choice. They chose to live a life of service. They chose to put themselves in harm's way ... to be a guardian of the people of this great country.

We will never be able to thank them. They made the supreme sacrifice ... but, this we can do and will do. We will remember them always. We will remember that when under fire, they fought the good fight.

We will remember that in their lives and even in their deaths ... they embodied all that we, as citizens, can hope to be.

May God bless them and welcome them home... and ... God bless the United States of America.

## Minutes of 2011 Business Meeting

Al Cunliffe, Secretary, announced at 10:05 AM that a quorum, 80 members, was present.

President, Pat Hanavan, called the meeting to order at 10:05 AM.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Pat Hanavan.

A motion to adopt the agenda as published was made by Ken Pacholka, seconded by Chris Nevins, and carried unanimously.

A motion to accept the minutes of the 2010 business meeting as published on the Association Website was made by Ray Tanner. The motion was seconded by Bill Beusking and passed unanimously.

### Officer and Committee Reports:

#### Secretary Report

Al Cunliffe presented a report on the motions considered and passed by the Board of Directors for the previous year.

20100804: Authorization for 2010 Reunion Checks

20100831: 2010/2011 Organization

20100905: Reunion Expense Reimbursement

20100915: Nominating Committee

20100916: Reunion Refund

20101116: Newsletter Invoice

20110116: Reunion 2013 Location

20110309: 2013 reunion Contract

20110331: 2010 Audit Committee

20110415: Multiprint Invoice

20110613: Flyer Mailing Payment

20110722: Memorabilia Inventory Increase

20110901: Reunion Funding

#### Bereavement Committee Report

Jay Baker was unable to attend so Pat Hanavan provided a report of the previous year's activities, which consisted primarily of providing a letter of condolence or suitable condolence card to the deceased's family, and an offer for the widow to become an Honorary Associate Member of the C-7A Caribou Association if they so desire. One

widow has accepted an Honorary Associate Membership since the Macon Reunion.

#### Reunion Committee Report:

Pat Hanavan thanked the Dallas area members who helped with the planning and execution of the reunion: Doug Boston, Paul Witthoef, and Don Griffin. Pat Phillips was recognized for his help in keeping the pressure on the FAA to get permission for the Bou Flights. Although unsuccessful this year, we will continue to seek permission.

#### Report on the Roster:

Pat Hanavan provided an update of current membership; we have 805 active members and approximately 5686 names listed on the roster, of these, 736 are deceased.

#### Audit Committee Report:

Pat Hanavan provided a review of the audit committee's findings.

#### Treasurer's Report:

Mike Murphy provided a review of the Treasurer's Report.

#### Nominating Committee:

Chris Nevins, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, reported on the work of the Nominating Committee and presented the following names for positions on the Board of Directors:

President: Pat Hanavan

Vice President: Peter Bird

Treasurer: Mike Murphy

Secretary: Al Cunliffe

At-Large Members: Fred Dimon

Bob Neumayer

Pat Phillips

#### Old Business:

**2012 Dover Reunion:** The 2012 reunion will be held at the Holiday Inn of Dover, in Dover, DE 17 – 21 October. A highlight of this reunion will be the dedication of another Memorial Bench honoring our fallen comrades.

**2013 Seattle Reunion:** The 2013 reunion will be held 10-14 October 2013 in Seattle, WA. The possibility of using Gatherings Plus to aid in the planning this reunion was mentioned and is a possible topic for discussion by the Board of Directors.

#### New Business:

**Election of Officers:** A call for open floor nominations was made to the members. There were no floor nominations for any position.

Doug Boston made a motion, seconded by A.J. LaBove, that the members submitted by the Nominating Committee be elected to the Board of Directors by acclamation. The motion passed unanimously.

**Dash 2:** Pat Hanavan submitted a request to the members that anyone with a full or partial set of the 1C-7A-2 Technical Orders notify him so arrangements could be made for them to be digitally copied.

**Hats:** A motion was made by Ken Hocutt and seconded by Stoney Faubus that the current denim hat be deleted from the Memorabilia Inventory and a baseball cap style hat take its place. A spirited discussion followed. The motion passed with the proviso that possible colors and materials for the hat will be finalized after discussions with a vendor.

**WPAFB and Robins AFB Bous:** Pat Hanavan provided a report on the status of the Caribous at the National Museum of the Air Force (NMUSAF) and the Warner Robins Museum of Flight. The airplane at WPAFB has been repainted and moved to an exhibit on the War in SEA. Restoration work has begun on the airplane at Warner Robins, but a lot of work remains.

A motion was made by Pat Phillips, seconded by Mike Murphy, to provide a donation to the museum at Robins AFB to aid in the restoration of the Caribou in their museum. After some discussion, a sum of \$5000 was approved by the members, with the proviso that this money was to be used exclusively for restoration work on the Caribou.

**Long Sleeve Denim Shirts:** Mike Murphy made and Bob Dugan seconded a motion to include the long sleeve denim shirts in the Memorabilia Inventory. The motion passed with no discussion.

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## Minutes (from Page 6)

### Data Plate Trading Cards:

A small quantity of aluminum aircraft data plate trading cards will be obtained by Stoney Faubus for a "test the waters" sale for the memorabilia inventory at Reunion 2012.

### 2014 and Future Reunion Sites:

Possible sites for reunions in 2014 and beyond were briefly discussed, with no action being taken at this time. The sites were – Fairfield, CA; Ft. Walton Beach, FL; D.C. Area; San Diego, CA; Kansas City, MO; and Tucson, AZ.

**Free Room Nights:** A drawing for 7 free room nights produced the following winners: Jim Bailey, Tom Collins, Rick Hedrick, John Tawes, Bob Hamilton, Richard Urbanovsky, and Steve Reidner.

### The meeting adjourned at 11:45.

Respectfully submitted  
Hillis "Al" Cunliffe, Secretary

## Female Special Ops

by Christian Lowe, Military.com

Army Special Operations Command has deployed its first teams of female soldiers assigned to commando units in Afghanistan, and military officials are assessing their initial performance in theater as "off the charts."

In a controversial move early this year, the Army created a new avenue for women to serve with front-line combat units in some of the most specialized and covert missions. The so-called "Cultural Support Teams" are attached to Special Forces and Ranger units to interface with the female population to gain vital intelligence and provide social outreach.

"When I send an SF team in to follow up on a Taliban hit ... wouldn't it be nice to have access to about 50 percent of that target population – the women?" said Maj. Gen. Bennet Sacolick, commander of the Army Special Warfare Center and School.

"And now we're doing that with huge

## Balance Sheet As of Aug 31, 2011

### ASSETS

|                            |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1101 Checking Account      | \$19,935.34        |
| 1310 CD 1036               | 10,798.57          |
| 1320 CD 0930               | 22,891.33          |
| 1500 Reunion Deposit       | 1,000.00           |
| 1600 Memorabilia Inventory | 6,072.17           |
| 1700 Postage/Pkg pre-paid  | 90.81              |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>        | <b>\$60,788.22</b> |

### LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

|                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 3800 Advance Dues        | \$2,140.69        |
| <b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b> | <b>\$2,140.69</b> |

### EQUITY

|                                 |                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| Equity reserve (Adv Dues)       | -2,140.69          |
| Opening Balance Equity          | 39,744.67          |
| Retained Earnings               | 3,926.12           |
| Net Income                      | 17,117.43          |
| <b>TOTAL LIAB. &amp; EQUITY</b> | <b>\$60,788.22</b> |

success," Sacolick said. "They are in Afghanistan right now and the reviews are off the charts. They're doing great." So far, nearly 30 of the female CST Soldiers are deployed to the war zone, working in villages and towns that the commandos have cleared.

"They're supposed to be used on secure target areas," Sacolick said. "I don't want them fighting their way to a target."

While the Army has assigned women to front-line units in the past during searches of female civilians and detainees, the move formalizes what some advocates have been hoping for in terms of opening up combat arms units to women.

The soldiers assigned to the Cultural Support Teams aren't required to endure all the training of a Ranger or SF trooper, but they do have to learn advanced weapons handling and even fast-roping. Through three separate nine-day assessments so far, the Special Warfare Center and School has about a 50 percent attrition rate, officials say. Those who make it go through a six-week training course that teaches the soldiers regional culture, intelligence gathering, and small-unit combat tactics.

## Profit and Loss (2011 YTD)

### INCOME

|                            |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| 3100 Dues                  | \$4,020.00         |
| 3220 Donation – Mem. Order | 74.13              |
| 3230 Donation to Assn.     | 43.77              |
| 3200 Donation – Other      | 340.75             |
| 3500 Interest              | 92.54              |
| 3610 Reunion Registration  | 15,784.00          |
| 3620 Refund Registration   | -635.00            |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>        | <b>\$19,720.19</b> |

### EXPENSES

|                          |                   |
|--------------------------|-------------------|
| 4310 Newsletter Printing | \$1,238.87        |
| 4320 Newsletter Mailing  | 1,281.95          |
| 4800 Memorials           | 81.94             |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>    | <b>\$2,602.76</b> |

**NET INCOME** \$17,117.43

## Aviators

Author Unknown

Once the wings go on, they never come off whether they can be seen or not.

It fuses to the soul through adversity, fear and adrenaline and no one who has ever worn them with pride, integrity and guts can ever sleep through the *call of the wild* that wafts through bedroom windows in the deep of the night.

When a good aviator leaves the "job" and retires, many are jealous, some are pleased and yet others, who may have already retired, wonder.

We wonder if he knows what he is leaving behind, because we already know.

We know, for example, that after a lifetime of camaraderie that few experience, it will remain as a longing for those past times.

We know in the world of flying, there is a fellowship which lasts long after the flight suits are hung up in the back of the closet.

We know even if he throws them away, they will be on him with every step and breath that remains in his life.

We also know how the very bearing of the man speaks of what he was and, in his heart, still is.

**Because we fly, we envy no man on earth.**



## 2011 Reunion Attendance by Name

\* Aakhus, Don and Kathy  
Allison, Max and Shirley and  
guests Dick and Shirley DeVries  
\* Ashley, Glen and Alyssa (5<sup>th</sup> SF)  
\* Austin, Charlie and Karen  
Bailey, Jim and guest Susan Morgan  
Besley, Dick and Linda  
Boston, Doug and Ellen  
Bowen, Brian  
Bowers, Bob and Evelyn  
Boyd, Lloyd and Yolanda  
Brabant, Mick and Sue  
Brooks, Tom and Mary  
Brown, Larry and Karilyn  
Brunz, Wayne and Joyce and  
guest Roy Brunz  
Buesking, Bill and Mae  
Campbell, Larry  
Cathell, Allen  
Collins, Tom and Chantell  
Cooper, Bob  
Cowee, Bruce  
Cunliffe, Al and Shirley  
Cunningham, Al and  
guest Doris Prickett  
DeLawter, Wayne and Patty  
Del Monte, Denis and Pamela  
\* Dirkse, Tom  
Drury, Jon and Beverly  
Dugan, Bob and Pat  
Dunlap, Shanon  
Eller, Tom and Anne  
Elsasser, Steve  
Erickson, Mark  
Faubus, Stoney and Melva and guests  
Gary Faubus, Jr and Dana Golden  
Fox, Gary and Sharon  
Gannon, John  
Godek, Frank and guest Eli  
Griffin, Don and Sue  
Guild, Ned  
Hamilton, Bob and Sarah  
Hamrin, Bob and Kathy  
Hanavan, Pat and Alicia and guest  
Michael Hanavan  
Harmon, George  
Harris, Chuck  
Heard, Wyatt and Annell  
Hedrick, Rick and son Jason Hedrick

Helterbran, Glenn and June and  
guest Donovan Helterbran  
Hines, Joe and Mary Anne and  
guests Robert and Karen Wanzer  
\* Hocutt, Ken and Lou  
Holman, Paul and Pam  
Hutchens, Dave and Jill  
Ippolito, Gerald and Pam  
Jackson, Larry and Judy  
Kelley, Steve and guest  
Steve Dawber, USN  
Kimseau, Kenneth  
Kopp, Bob and Gail  
Korose, Bob  
Kowalski, Dave and Chris  
LaBove, AJ and Joy  
Langley, Steve and Cam  
\* Le, Hong and guest Hong Le II  
Leppert, Greg  
Lipscomb, Bob and Dodie and guests  
James and Mary Wilhite  
Mannion, Pat  
Martwig, Larry  
Mascaro, Ken  
\* McCarron, Bill  
McGinnis, Daryle and Cindy  
Mednansky, Ed  
Miller, Bob and Janice  
Molohosky, Phil and Lynn  
Murfhey, Thomas and Carol  
Murphy, Mike and guests  
Suzy Schoonmaker,  
Joyce Lockwood,  
Dan and Brenda Lockwood  
Neumayer, Bob and Iola  
Neutzling, Tom and guests  
Dustin and Mike Neutzling,  
and Jerry Storms  
Nevins, Chris  
\* Nguyen, Hieu and Phuong-thi and  
guest Nghi Le  
\* Nguyen, Ro and Nhung  
Obermiller, Obie and Candy and  
guests Jim and Steve Obermiller  
Pacholka, Ken  
Perry, Bill and guest Caryn Davis  
Phillips, Pat and Barbara  
Quillope, Andy  
Record, John and Pam  
Reynolds, Earl and Pamela  
Rhodes, Tom  
\* Ricks, Bill and Marinee  
Riedner, Steve and Mary Beth

Riess, Mike  
\* Robinson, Lee and Peggy  
Schuepbach, John  
Selvidge, George  
Shanahan, Allen and Karen  
\* Shankles, Troy and guest  
Bryan Shankles  
Shaw, Bill and guest Tom Rhodes  
Sidwell, Larry  
Snodgrass, Tom and Kathy  
Spurger, Sonny and Cindy and guests  
Scott, Jon, and Courtney Spurger  
Strickland, Jim  
Tanner, Ray  
Tawes, John and guest Fred Tawes  
Taylor, Curry  
Teske, John and Elaine  
Tidmore, Bill and Carol  
Tompkins, Staton and Debbie  
Toon, David and Dianne  
Tost, Charlie  
Toy, Bruce  
Tran, Gam and Kathy  
\* Tu, Nghia and Van Le  
Tuck, Wayne and guest Clay Tuck  
Urbanovsky, Richard and Robin  
\* Villarreal, Fil  
Wayland, Roger and Tara  
Wever, Gary and Restie  
Witthoeft, Paul and guest  
Mary Buenrostro  
Woznicki, Frank  
Yost, Dan and Arlene

\* Designates first time attendee

## 2011 Reunion Attendance by State

|    |    |    |   |    |    |
|----|----|----|---|----|----|
| AK | 1  | KY | 2 | NV | 2  |
| AL | 4  | LA | 2 | NY | 1  |
| AR | 1  | MA | 1 | OH | 1  |
| AZ | 4  | MD | 2 | OK | 5  |
| CA | 15 | MI | 2 | OR | 1  |
| CO | 2  | MN | 1 | PA | 2  |
| CT | 1  | MO | 4 | TN | 2  |
| DE | 1  | NC | 1 | TX | 29 |
| FL | 4  | ND | 1 | VA | 2  |
| GA | 4  | NE | 2 | WA | 2  |
| IA | 1  | NH | 1 | WI | 1  |
| IL | 2  | NJ | 2 | WV | 1  |
| KS | 3  | NM | 1 |    |    |



## 537<sup>th</sup> Reactivation

by George Harmon [537, 69]

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2011, former 537<sup>th</sup> TAS members (myself, Tom Collins, and Bob Strang – left to right in picture below) attended the Reactivation Ceremony for the 537<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Anchorage, AK. Col. William Routt, Commander 3<sup>rd</sup> OG, designated Lt. Col. Thomas McGee as Commander of the 537<sup>th</sup> Airlift Squadron. The squadron will fly C-130 aircraft, maintaining its airlifter tradition even though it was founded on 1 Oct 1943 as a Replacement Training Unit equipped with P-47 Thunderbolts.

The 537<sup>th</sup> was deactivated in 1944 and was reactivated in 1952 as the 537<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron at Atterbury AFB, IN where it flew C-46 Commandos as an Air Force Reserve unit. It was deactivated in 1953.

The 537<sup>th</sup> was reactivated again in 1966 as the 537<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron to receive the Caribou aircraft from the U.S. Army 17<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company. In Aug 1967, the 537<sup>th</sup> TCS became the 537<sup>th</sup> Tactical Airlift Squadron, assigned to the 483<sup>rd</sup> Tactical Airlift Wing and was based at Phu Cat Air Base, RVN. The 537<sup>th</sup> TAS provided intra-theater airlift to short landing strips in the northern part of South Vietnam and delivered cargo and personnel to specified organizations, including remote U.S. Army Special Forces camps.

The 537<sup>th</sup> was very involved in airdrops to support the besieged SF camps at Ben Het (1969) and Dak Seang (1970). During its six years of action in Vietnam, the 537<sup>th</sup> was awarded 19 campaign streamers, two Presidential Unit Citations, three Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards, and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm. It was deactivated on 31 Aug 1971.

During the last 40 years, the 537<sup>th</sup> has been kept alive by many old veterans, because of our affiliation with the C-7A Caribou Association where

all six “Bou” squadrons are well represented.

I recently heard a Catholic priest from Zambia make an interesting statement. He said, “We all die twice. The first time is when our body ceases to function and our soul leaves it. The second death occurs when we are forgotten.” I believe this applies to a squadron also. The deactivation of the 537<sup>th</sup> in 1971 was a death and we had the squadron on life support for the next 40 years.

I met many wonderful, young members of the “reborn” 537<sup>th</sup> who can now keep her “alive” for at least the next 60 years, long after many of us are forgotten. We enjoyed being honored guests of the newly activated 537<sup>th</sup> AS. We



were hosted by “our” new squadron commander, Lt. Col. McGee at a posh Anchorage restaurant activation evening. We presented a much appreciated, documented history of the 537<sup>th</sup> TAS, compiled by Pat Hanavan, to Colonel McGee and also two Caribou coins from our Association.

I presented my model of our 537<sup>th</sup> Bou S/N 63-9757 and photographs of it taken at Pleiku AB, RVN in 1970. The day after activation, we toured the Anchorage area with the squadron’s Chief Navigator, Lt. Col. Rob Wannier. We’re discussing a future 537<sup>th</sup> reunion.

## 537<sup>th</sup> Thanks

by Eric Knight [537 AS/PIO, 11]

Bob, George, and Tom,

I can safely say the comeback of the 537<sup>th</sup> would not have been the same without you. Having you guys here simply made the event. Being a history major in college, I can readily attest to the fact that it’s hard to know where you’re going if you don’t know where you’ve been. So, “Thank You” for your presence, for representing our heritage, and for giving us that tangible link to our identity as the 537<sup>th</sup>. We thoroughly enjoyed the pictures, gifts, stories, and company. Rest assured, you are all welcome here any time.

Please, keep us posted on the Association’s upcoming events, especially if they bring you to Alaska. With any luck, we’ll get the occasional mission to the lower 48 and would love to connect if at all possible. The reunions will definitely be on our scope, and I think they’d be a perfect reason for an off-station trainer.

The dinner and the ceremony were my definite highlights of the entire activation experience. If you’re ever up this way, please look us up or just stop by. Warmest wishes, until we meet again. God bless.

## The Man In The Doorway

by Michael Ryerson, USMC  
FAC, 1966-1968

### Tribute to the Door Gunner

They came in low and hot, close to the trees and dropped their tail in a flare, rocked forward and we raced for the open doorways. This was always the worst for us, we couldn't hear anything and our backs were turned to the tree line.

The best you could hope for was a sign on the face of the man in the doorway, leaning out waiting to help with a tug or to lay down some lead.

Sometimes you could glance quickly at his face and pick up a clue as to what was about to happen. We would pitch ourselves in headfirst and tumble against the scuffed riveted aluminum, grab for a handhold, and will that son-of-a-bitch into the air.

Sometimes the deck was slick with blood or worse, sometimes something had been left in the shadows under the web seats, sometimes they landed in a shallow river to wash them out.

Sometimes they were late, sometimes they were parked in some other LZ with their rotors turning a lazy arc, a ghost crew strapped in once too often, motionless, waiting for their own lift, their own bags, once too often into the margins.

The getting on and the getting off were the worst for us, but this was all he knew, the man in the doorway, he was always standing there in the noise, watching, urging ... swinging out with his gun, grabbing the black plastic and heaving, leaning out and spitting, spitting the taste away, as though it would go away...

They came in low and hot, close to the trees and dropped their tail in a flare, rocked forward and began to kick the boxes out, bouncing against the skids, piling up on each other, food and water, and bullets ... a thousand pounds of C's, warm water, and rounds, 7.62 mm, half a ton of life and death.

And when the deck was clear, we would pile the bags, swing them against their weight and throw them through the doorway, his doorway, onto his deck and nod and he'd speak into that little mic and they'd go nose down and lift into their last flight, their last extraction.

Sometimes he'd raise a thumb or perhaps a fist or sometimes just a sly, knowing smile, knowing we were staying and he was going, but also knowing he'd be back, he'd be back in a blink, standing in the swirling noise and the rotor wash, back to let us rush through his door and skid across his deck and will that son-of-a-bitch into the air.

They came in low and hot, close to the trees, and dropped their tail in a flare, rocked forward, kicked out the boxes and slipped the litter across the deck and sometimes he'd lean down and hold the IV and brush the dirt off of a bloodless face, or hold back the flailing arms and the tears, a thumbs-up to the right seat and you're only minutes away from the white sheets and the saws and the plasma.

They came in low and hot, close to the trees, and dropped their tail in a flare, rocked forward and we'd never hear that sound again without feeling our stomachs go just a bit weightless, listen just a bit closer for the gunfire and look up for the man in the doorway.



## B-52 Life Extension

Defense News, 26 Sep 2011

The U.S. Air Force's venerable Boeing B-52 bomber is getting its biggest makeover yet. A host of ongoing and planned upgrades will fit the 76 half-century-old jets to fly for three more decades.

The B-52, as a bomber, still has a nuclear mission in combination with the Air Launched Cruise Missile. The continued upgrade of the B-52's electronics and the effort underway for a new cruise missile are both examples of taking very old systems and making them last longer.

Central to the effort is the CONECT program, which will put a digital backbone and communications suite into a largely analog aircraft. The plane will also get a new 1760 databus architecture, which will allow the old bird to drop modern smart weapons from its internal weapon bays.

A strategic radar replacement program aims to replace a 1960's vintage system. These changes come on top of various upgrades fitted in the past decade, including the LITENING targeting pod, which allows the crew to designate its own targets and send video to ground stations.

The various upgrades do more than increase capability; they also make it easier – and, in some cases, cheaper – to maintain an aircraft with various subsystems and parts that have long ago gone out of production.

"The airframe itself is very solid, very reliable," with enough life to fly into the 2040's, said Lt. Gen. James Kowalski, commander of Air Force Global Strike Command. Moreover, the Air Force has a plentiful supply of engines.

Today's B-52 crews rely on talking to each other to pass weapons and flight data within and beyond their aircraft. CONECT is meant to replace voice with faster, surer machine-to-machine datalinks. Based on Microsoft Windows, the new distributed high-speed

network will add a line-of-sight Link-16 capability, new Internet protocol-based radios, variable message format system, and new satellite communications.

The crew will also get color displays of moving maps that fuse data from off-board sources and present the data in an easy-to-understand format. It's a huge situational awareness capability.

CONECT has completed all but about two flight tests. It will move into low-rate initial production next June, with batches of eight and 10 aircraft to be finished by 2014. The CONECT is also meant to ease other planned upgrades, including one for the planes' main target-seeking radar. The radar, which dates to the 1960's, received its previous major update in the 1980's.

The Air Force is looking at an in-production radar, but it would have to be hardened for the nuclear mission. The Air Force would like an active electron-



ically scanned array, but may have to settle for a mechanically scanned array because of budgetary constraints.

A competition is expected next year, but risk-reduction work is already well underway. If all goes well, the radar could be installed between 2016 and 2018. The addition of the 1760 databus hardware and associated software would allow the B-52 to carry smart weapons inside its internal weapons bay. Currently, the aircraft can carry precision weapons only on its external pylons, which limits the payload and increases the plane's drag.

Funding for the program's Increment I should be available soon for work to begin in earnest. By 2015, the aircraft should be able to load into its bomb

bay the Joint Direct Attack Munition (JDAM), Joint Air-to-Surface Stand-off Missile (JASSM), and Miniature Air-Launched Decoy (MALD). Increment I will allow crews to load the bay's rotary launcher with eight weapons of a single type.

Increment II will double the number of weapons, and allow them to be mixed and matched. It might also add the 250-pound Small Diameter Bomb (SDB), which would further increase the number of weapons available to the B-52 crew. The Air Force hasn't set a definitive operational date for Increment II.

Boeing is also adding the Sniper targeting pod to the B-52 in addition to the LITENING pod, which has already been integrated. That would give the plane more flexibility to use available resources.

Though designed and built in a bygone era, the eight-engine jet forms a vital part of the U.S. nuclear deterrent by launching stand-off missiles. Since converting its B-1B Lancers for conventional use only, the service's only other nuclear-capable strategic bombers are its fleet of 20 B-2 Spirits.

As part of Air Force plans to keep the B-52 relevant in its nuclear role, Boeing has been asked by the Air Force to support a fly-off for a new air-launched cruise missile. The competition will require Boeing to modify the hardware and software of the B-52 to support two different cruise missile designs.

The resultant weapon, called the Long Range Stand-off Missile, will be carried operationally on the B-52 and B-2 bombers, replacing the aging AL-CMs. It is part of the Long Range Strike family of systems, which includes the new Long Range Strike Bomber and Conventional Prompt Global Strike.

Stealthy and long-legged, the new missile will enable the B-52 to carry out strikes deep in enemy territory, even though modern radars and weapons mean the old plane would have to do it from stand-off ranges.



## Dog 05

by Dave Kowalski [908, 75]

Note: *Dave Kowalski wrote a previous article about his experiences in ferrying a Caribou from U-Tapao, Thailand. That article appeared in Vol 1, Issue 22, dated July 2005, Page 18.*

I researched background information on a C-7 Caribou that was abandoned at Anderson AFB, Guam in 1975. This Caribou was one of a group of Caribous that were given to South Vietnam in 1972 and then were evacuated to U-Tapao, Thailand upon the fall of Saigon in May, 1975. The Air Force decided to fly these Caribous back to the U.S. This Caribou, Dog 05, was the last to leave U-Tapao. It was number five in a flight of five that departed U-Tapao with the first stop at Clark Air Base, Philippines. The ferry crews were reservists from Maxwell AFB (908 TAG) and Dobbins AFB (94 TAW).

The following information came from flight mechanic Sgt Sidney Westerhouse who was assigned to the crew. The aircraft had no Data Plate so no one knew what the tail number actually was. The call sign "DOG 05" was assigned for this mission.

On July 9, 1975 the flight departed U-Tapao. Dog 05 was airborne forty-five minutes when it lost the #1 engine at twenty five hundred feet. With the gross weight well over 31,000 pounds, they couldn't maintain altitude on the one remaining engine. Dumping fuel was not an option on the three bladder ferry system. The remaining options were: 1) roll a bladder out the rear cargo door, 2) use a crash ax to puncture the bladder and drain it on the floor, and 3) disconnect the fuel line and pump the fuel out the cargo window. The crew, after considering these options, decided to cross their fingers, say a prayer and hope for the best. That is what they did. They barely made it back into U-Tapao. After landing, a visual inspection revealed no structural problems.

A maintenance man was assigned to fly with each aircraft to help the flight

mechanic transfer oil and fuel, and do whatever else he could to assist during the flight. It so happened that the guy assigned to "DOG 05" was an engine man. He had worked on the engines in preparation for the long ferry flight home. He was not comfortable with the #1 engine because it continued to liquid lock and the oil pressure would not properly adjust. He gave his opinion, but the crew decided to take the aircraft anyway. The engine guy refused to fly on the aircraft and he hitched a ride on the "Duck Butt" escort plane.

After a month on the ground at U-Tapao, another engine was finally flown in from someplace. They got it changed and were on their way again to Clark Air Base, with "Duck Butt" escort and support. One hour out of Clark they had to feather the new engine because of a failed scavenge pump. By this time most of the fuel had been burned off, so the single engine landing was a "piece of cake."

These crews left the States in June, 1975 and were scheduled to be home in July. Now it was August. After a week or so at Clark Air Base coordinating aircraft maintenance, they had to pack up and go home. The flight mechanic, Sgt Sidney Westerhouse had college classes starting soon at Auburn University and the rest of the crew had civilian jobs to get back to.

The engine was changed again and a new crew arrived from Maxwell AFB (357 AS, 908 TAG) to continue the mission. The remaining information came from the pilot of that crew, Capt Ricardo Proctoral. Captain Proctoral was my pilot on the ferry flight back to the States of one of the original five Caribous at U-Tapao. This was his second trip.

After departing Clark AB, the next stop was Guam, a twelve or thirteen hour flight. There were no aircraft forms with the airplane when the mission started, so all of the flight data logged started at U-Tapao. At this time, the Form 781 showed about fourteen hours total aircraft time.

During the trip to Guam, Capt Proctoral stated that a lot more fuel had to be transferred to the right wing than was normal. Upon landing, the right wing was found to be leaking fuel badly and it had to be de-fueled for safety. A new bladder and maintenance support were requested from Robbins AFB, GA. The bladder arrived some 30 days later. During that time, the crew had to occupy their time by playing golf and drinking beer. Rough Life!!!

When the new bladder was installed, it also leaked!

There was a long waiting period for another replacement bladder to arrive. "DOG 05" was being run up periodically in accordance with the T.O. 1C-7A-6 requirement. On one run up, the generators would not come on line. A B-52 electrician trouble shot the problem and said it was a bad reverse current relay. A new part arrived from the States a week or so later and was installed by the B-52 guys. On the next run up there was a complete electrical failure. The B-52 electrician refused to work on the problem any longer, so an electrician had to come from the States.

By this time the crew's orders had to be extended two times for a total of over sixty days. The crew figured it would take at least another 30 days to fix the aircraft. After careful consideration, they decided that they were going home. They were also taking the aircraft G-File (the aircraft T.O. library) with them. Capt Proctoral had signed out an entire G-file from Maxwell and had promised maintenance that he would bring it back "come hell or high water." The aircraft that the G-file belonged to was in phase inspection. The crew advised the Air Delivery Group at Scott AFB and the Air Force Reserve about the decision they made. After the dust settled, it was decided that the crew would leave DOG 05 at Guam, but they would face a court-marshal when they arrived back at their home station.

I talked with Retired Col Proctoral

**Continued on Page 13**



## Dog 05 (from Page 12)

in August 2010 and he said as far as he knew DOG 05 was still at Guam in the fire pit, the place where crash crews and fire departments practice and develop their skills. Since the Air Force normally didn't pick up aircraft into inventory until the aircraft reached the States, there seem to be no records on DOG 05. It will be very hard to complete the history of this Caribou.

### Epilog

As far as the outcome of the court-marshal, it seems that it was some time before all paperwork was sent down through official channels to the unit. At the unit level, the crew received a slap on the hand and a report was up-channeled that appropriate action had been taken. There apparently was a wall of fog between USAF active duty and USAF Reserve personnel procedures. The matter was never pushed and apparently was eventually forgotten. Ricardo Proctoral retired as a full Colonel in the USAFR.

I contacted the FAA and it seems that back in 1995, at the request of Western International Aviation, they tried to identify a C-7 Caribou with no data plate, with no success.

Wayne Buser and Doug Lamerson contacted me and said aircraft 62-4178 was picked up on USAF records at the "bone yard" at Davis Monthan AFB, Tucson, AZ on September 15, 1977. Supposedly, this was one of the aircraft given to South Vietnam in 1972. Could it be one of the five Caribous that were evacuated to U-Tapao and eventually ferried back to the States? If anyone has any info on how 62-4178 got back to the States please let me know.

Could this be Dog 05?

## Help!!!

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

[pathavavan@aol.com](mailto:pathavavan@aol.com)

## Things to Learn From Disasters

### Ten Things to Learn from Japan's Earthquake and Tsunami

#### THE CALM

Not a single visual of chest-beating or wild grief. Sorrow itself has been elevated.

#### THE DIGNITY

Disciplined queues for water and groceries. Not a rough word or a crude gesture. Their patience is admirable and praiseworthy.

#### THE ABILITY

The incredible architects, for instance. Buildings swayed but didn't fall.

#### THE GRACE (Selflessness)

People bought only what they needed for the present, so everybody could get something.

#### THE ORDER

No looting in shops. No honking and no overtaking on the roads. Just understanding.

#### THE SACRIFICE

Fifty workers stayed back to pump sea water in the nuclear reactors. How will they ever be repaid?

#### THE TENDERNESS

Restaurants cut prices. An unguarded ATM is left alone. The strong cared for the weak.

#### THE TRAINING

The old and the children, everyone knew exactly what to do. And they did just that.

#### THE MEDIA

They showed magnificent restraint in the bulletins. No silly reporters. Only calm reportage. Most of all – NO POLITICIANS TRYING TO GET CHEAP MILEAGE.

#### THE CONSCIENCE

When the power went off in a store, people put things back on the shelves and left quietly.

*With their country in the midst of a colossal disaster – the Japanese citizens can teach plenty of lessons to the world.*

## Bird Wins 3 Emmys

*Jonathan Bird's Blue World* received three 2011 New England Emmy Awards: Outstanding On-camera Talent/Host for Jonathan Bird's *Blue World*, Outstanding Children/Youth Program for the segment "Antarctica," and Outstanding Magazine Feature/Segment for "Lobsters." Several other members of the *Blue World* production team were also named in the awards, including Jonathan's wife, Christine.

These are latest New England Emmy awards for Jonathan, who also won in 1995, 1996, and 2010.

*Jonathan Bird's Blue World* is an underwater adventure series for both children and families. Each episode brings viewers to the edge of their seats as they wait to find out what happens in nature's underwater world, such as: if a mother turtle, dragging herself across the beach in the middle of the night, is able to successfully lay her eggs, or what lurks behind the next stalagmite in an underwater cave. Audiences meet Wilma the Whale, a young beluga that lives by herself in an isolated Bay in Nova Scotia for several years, befriend-ing the local populace who come out to play with her, and then one day disappears. Stories like these engage audiences and teach them about the underwater world.

*Blue World* has been running on more than 260 public television stations in the United States since May 2008. Produced by Jonathan Bird Productions, an independent production company, the series has been shown over 5,600 times in 32 states to over 160 million potential viewers. Top markets such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, Washington DC, and Atlanta have programmed the show continuously for months.

Jonathan and the team were thrilled to win in several categories, showing that *Jonathan Bird's Blue World* is enjoyed by audiences of all ages, not just kids!

Note: Jonathan is Peter Bird's son.

## George Rawlings

Colonel, USAF  
458<sup>th</sup> TAS, 67

Colonel George Dewey Rawlings, USAF, Retired, husband of Joan Hughes Rawlings, and long time San Antonio resident, passed away on Sunday, January 16, 2011. He was born in Faxon, Oklahoma on March 2, 1922, the oldest child of George Dewey Rawlings and Ruby Inez Perry. George was preceded in death by his four brothers William Earl (Jack) Rawlings, Johnnie Lee Rawlings, Cecil Leroy (Tuck) Rawlings, and Donald Gene (Sonny) Rawlings; his sister, Lola Mae Marlow; and two sons, Robert Paul Rawlings and Donald Hughes Rawlings.

Raised in Tuttle, Oklahoma, he was a member of the Methodist faith. He graduated from Tuttle High School in 1940 and attended the University of Oklahoma. With the outbreak of WWII, he enlisted in the Army Air Corps. He completed B-17 bombardier training and was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in August 1942. In October, Joan took leave of absence from Oklahoma College for Women and followed George to Rapid City Army Air Base where they were the first couple married in the newly constructed base chapel. As part of the new 96<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group, George and his crew continued intensive training in Pocatello, Idaho and Pyote, Texas. Joan and other wives followed the group across the country, establishing living quarters in off-the-map towns to be able to see their husbands on rare days off. This ended when the group took delivery of new B-17's in Kansas and deployed to England in April 1943. Flying from RAF Grafton Underwood, George earned the dubious honor of being aboard the first two 96<sup>th</sup> Bomb Group aircraft to be shot down. On May 13<sup>th</sup>, during the group's first combat mission, his aircraft was accidentally damaged by its own waist gunner and rendered unable to land. After parachuting the enlisted crew to safety over the base, the officers

took the plane over the North Sea and managed to safely dispose of the bomb load. George parachuted to safety and landed on the beach near the town of King's Lynn. The pilot, Captain Derrrol W. Rogers, did not survive. Four days later, George was assigned to fill in on another aircrew on a bombing mission to Lorient, France. The B-17, named "Boot Hill", was crippled by German flak and shot down by Luftwaffe fighters. Once more parachuting to safety, he was captured by German troops and spent the remainder of the war imprisoned at Stalag Luft III in Sagan, Lower Silesia. In January 1945, the POWs were forced to undertake a winter march to flee advancing Russian forces and eventually arrived at Stalag VIIA in Moosburg, Bavaria. On April 29, 1945, General George Patton rode a tank into the compound as the POWs were liberated by the 14<sup>th</sup> Armor Division. During George's captivity, Joan returned to college and graduated from OCW in May 1945, just in time to be reunited with her returning husband. After the war, George continued his Air Force service and attended pilot training at San Angelo, TX.

Through the remainder of his 30 year Air Force career, he flew combat missions in Korea and Vietnam and commanded the 75<sup>th</sup> Air Transport Squadron, 458<sup>th</sup> Tactical Airlift Squadron, RAF Chelveston, and RAF Alconbury. He retired in 1972 after serving three years as Inspector General, Kelly AFB. Military awards include the Legion of Merit, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Air Medal, and POW Medal.

George was active in local Republican politics and served for 13 years as a Bexar County Election Judge; 5 years as Republican Precinct 3015 Judge; President of the Bexar County Republican Men's Club, delegate to 5 State Conventions and alternate delegate to the 1988 National Convention. George was a life member of the San Antonio Optimist Club, Volunteer Chairman for Christmas Tree Sales, and was Optimist of the Year in 1975-76. He gave much

of his time to supporting Boysville and was President, Boysville Board of Directors; Boysville Archangel 1984, Founder of Boysville 4-H Club, Chairman Building and Development for new Boysville Campus 1983, and Boysville Trustee for Life. George enjoyed golf and served as Chairman of Boysville Golf Tournament, 12 years, the American Cancer Society Golf Tournament, 5 years and was a member of the Kelly Retired Golf Association, 35 years. George was an avid gardener – growing flowers and vegetable crops, that he enjoyed sharing with his friends and neighbors. He also loved fishing in the Gulf with his son, Mike and daughter, Sonya. Colonel Rawlings was a Life Member of MOAA and Alamo Chapter MOAA, member of Stinson Flight Order of Daedalians and was twice awarded Caterpillar Club membership for successfully parachuting from a disabled aircraft. George was President of the San Antonio Knife and Fork Dinner Club in 1980.

George is survived by his wife of 68 years, Joan; three sons, Dr. Dennis (Kathryn) Rawlings of Sand Springs, OK, Capt David (Genie) Rawlings, USN, Ret. of Bluffton, SC and Michael (Sonya) of Houston; four grandchildren, Jennifer Clark, Amy Rawlings, Erin Rawlings, and Michael Rawlings, along with many nieces and nephews, who will always love and remember him as our hero. Burial and grave side services was at Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery, Sect 49A Site 464, on Monday, January 24, 2011.



## How To Pass A Check Ride

by Doug Clinton [458, 689]

It is Thanksgiving morning 1970 and man, I am getting "short." Fourteen days and a bag drag and my butt is on an eastbound Freedom Bird. It is almost eerily quiet around Cam Ranh with the wing standing down for the most part, observing the holiday in spite of the war. The usual roar of the F-4's is missing as is the background noise of the C-130's, engines at ground idle, across the runways from 458<sup>th</sup> Ops. I am waiting for my "victim" to whom I will administer a short field qualification, or disqualification, check ride as a new aircraft commander.

Yesterday, Mike Nassr, who is, by the way, the best boss I have ever had, apologetically asked me to fly this check on a candidate who didn't quite pass under another examiner a few days earlier. So it was make or break time for the Lieutenant. Mike suggested I find a genuine short field nearby, go do the check, and then call it a day. I went by the mess hall late in the afternoon and asked if the cooks would put together a Thanksgiving Dinner-To-Go that we could take to the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces advisors at Duc Xuyen in the morning and they were more than happy to do so.

The victim shows up on time (a good sign) in the form of a young Jewish kid from the northeast with a great, jovial attitude, whom I will call Irv (not his real name). We do a short briefing, check weather and NOTAMS, and then take the jeep to the mess hall for the groceries consisting of everything you would normally associate with Thanksgiving and then some. It smells a lot better than the usual odors emanating from the cargo compartment of a Caribou.

Irv is doing fine with preflight, etc., and maintenance advises that wherever we are going, they would not recommend shutting down the right engine because it has been having starting

problems when hot. Well, I guess we can do an engines-running, Thanksgiving Dinner offload. Irv straps in, looks at me seriously and says, "I can't go on this flight." Humph, never had a student tell me that before. I ask why not and am told he can't be on the airplane because there is a ham on board!

Runup is good and we are quickly westbound over the mountains in the general direction of Ban Me Thuot. What a beautiful, clear Vietnam day, the air is smooth and even the radios are quiet. Irv finds his way to Duc Xuyen just fine and I make the initial call to the camp to tell them what we are doing and that we have a Thanksgiving gift from the folks at Cam Ranh Bay.

Now, these GIs are pretty proud of their compound and the work they have done with the local Montagnards, so they invite us for a tour. I explain about the engine, but they insist. Irv performs a couple of landings, marginal at best, on the 1500 foot strip. We park the Bou on the ramp, cross our fingers, and shut down. I am really not looking forward to spending the night at Duc Xuyen and wondering how I am going to explain my way out of this one if that right engine refuses to start.

Great bunch of guys, as all the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces folks are and their work is impressive. They thank us profusely for the Thanksgiving dinner and say, "This is fantastic, mom and apple pie, but we have a request that would make this Thanksgiving perfect." "Sure," I say, "what is that?" Well, it seems our (5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces) advisors in the camp are suffering a "visit" by their advisors in the way of an ARVN inspection team. Irv and I are told the ARVN have turned the Montagnards against the GIs and won't even let our folks in their own gun room. Would we please haul these @#%\*%s out of here?

"Where are they based?" I ask and am told they want to go to Ban Me Thuot. "Hey, I can't do that, wrong direction, unmanifested pax, and we are going back to Cam Ranh." The reply is, "Frankly, sir, we don't care where you

take 'em if you will just get 'em outta here!" Please!

Irv and I look at each other, silently and mutually coming to the conclusion that no risk is too great for a brother in arms. Quietly, so as not to be overheard, I say, "Okay, tell them to get their gear and that we will take them to Ban Me Thuot."

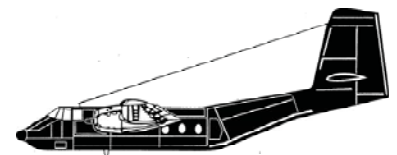
Irv and I swap seats and our passengers are loaded. Both engines are started, the right one on the second attempt. Phew! Off we go to Cam Ranh Bay.

We land on 10,000 feet of concrete and taxi to the MAC passenger terminal. The engineer raises the cargo door, drops the ramp, and invites our passengers to deplane. Next thing I hear on the interphone is, "Cap'n, they say they know this is not Ban Me Thuot and they are not getting off the airplane."

Oh, s\*\*t, now I have a new problem. Irv unfastens his seatbelt and shoulder harness as fast as I have ever seen it done, races to the back, and applies his size 8 jungle boots to the lower back-side of the passengers, assisting them in their disembarkment. I am looking over my right shoulder from the left seat at all of this happening and hear Irv yell, "TAXI!" and I do.

I have no idea how the inspection team will get back to Ban Me Thuot.

Irv's short field landings? Not so good, but he gets a passing grade based mostly on judgment and aggressiveness.



### Note to Hunters

in San Francisco newspaper

To all you **hunters who kill animals for food:**

**Shame** on you.

You ought to go to the store and buy the meat that was made there, where no animals were harmed.



## 134<sup>th</sup> AvCo in 1966

<http://www.134thahc.com/History.html>

At the beginning of 1966, the 134<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company found itself in a less than desirable situation. Because of the size of its 18 Caribou and the ramp space required for parking and maintenance, the company was divided between Soc Trang and Can Tho in the Delta region of Vietnam. The Company headquarters, 260<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Detachment and the second platoon with nine aircraft were stationed at Can Tho. The first platoon with nine aircraft and a small maintenance section were located at Soc Trang, roughly 30 miles away. Living conditions at Can Tho left much to be desired. The crew chiefs were living in a tin shed with a dirt floor at the airfield and the remainder of the enlisted personnel were living on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor balcony at the Delta Hotel, while the pilots were living in three different locations. Soc Trang living conditions were crowded, but at least everyone was living at the compound, within walking distance of the flight line, mess hall, and billeting area.

After the 80 hour flight from Fort Benning to Vung Tau, all of the aircraft were due a periodic inspection and most of January was spent performing maintenance while the unit waited for its equipment to arrive. Even though the 134<sup>th</sup> didn't become fully operational until 1 February 1966. It flew 744 sorties during January, delivering 450 tons of supplies and equipment and transporting over 5,000 passengers.

Living conditions in Can Tho improved on January 28<sup>th</sup> when the unit moved into its own four story hotel downtown. The first floor was used as an orderly room and small "COLA" (Cost of Living Allowance) mess. The enlisted men were housed on the second and third floors and the officers occupied the fourth floor. The chain of command at the start of the year was Maj. Ted N. Phillips, Commanding Officer, Capt. Raymond J. Riticher, Executive Officer, and Capt. Gary O.

Alton, Operations Officer. There were many different types of missions, but the primary one was to support the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces in the Delta.

On 6 February, an aircraft performed an emergency medical evacuation, under extremely hazardous conditions, of one American and six seriously wounded ARVN soldiers from Phu Quoc Island, flying them to the hospital at Saigon. Had the Caribou not flown this mission, several of the wounded would not have survived. Also during the month of February, 134<sup>th</sup> aircraft transported over 3,000 troops in support of tactical operations within IV Corps. Of the total cargo delivered, 1,322 tons were air landed, 47 tons were air dropped, and 38 tons were delivered by low level extraction. During the month the unit had seven aircraft hit by ground fire, two of which sustained major damage.

By March, after two months of combat flying behind them, local commanders had been shown what the Caribou could do for them. Due to a large backlog of supplies and equipment to be delivered, the unit was taxed to the maximum. Crews were flying from daylight to dark, seven days a week. Landing at remote strips with no radio contact and being recalled from scheduled missions to participate in a tactical emergency were getting to be everyday occurrences. During the month, the 134<sup>th</sup> moved over 5,200 troops in tactical operations.

On 23 March 1966, after completing a full day's flying, the unit was called on to airlift a Ranger battalion from Can Tho to Soc Trang at night. Aircraft 62-4165, after being cleared to land by the tower, collided with a VNAF H-34 whose rotor blades were overlapping the runway. The helicopter was a total loss and the left wing of the Caribou was damaged, but there were no injuries. The wing was changed on the Caribou and it was flying again within a week. During one week in March, the unit carried over 3,000 troops in support of combat operations in the IV

Corps area. In this same week, ARVN troops killed over 800 Viet Cong by body count.

May was a bad month for the Rough Riders. On 10 May 1966, aircraft 62-4165, while on a Special Forces airdrop mission at a remote camp at Cai Cai, had a load of rice hang in the rear of the cargo compartment on a low level extraction, causing the aircraft to crash. The pilot and copilot (Capt. Gil Roessler and CW2 Joe Hudson) escaped with serious injuries, but the flight engineer, SP5 Herbert N. Adams, and the Special Forces rigger on board were killed on impact. A few days later, another aircraft had a left main landing gear collapse on landing at Bien Hoa. There were no injuries, but the aircraft was down for about a month for repairs.

On 18 May 1966, Soc Trang Army Airfield (AAF) was the target of a mortar attack and three Caribous were damaged. One aircraft received 76 holes from shrapnel. On the same day at Can Tho, the new living quarters at the airfield were completed and the crew chiefs were the first to move in. On 29 May, the 134<sup>th</sup> NCO Open Mess opened and served three hot meals a day. Breakfast was 40 cents and dinner and supper were 75 cents. Everyone in Can Tho was drawing "COLA" because no class A mess halls existed in the Can Tho area.

On 31 May 1966, Maj. Robert L. Landry replaced Maj. Ted N. Phillips as Company Commander. Maj. Phillips had commanded the unit for over a year.

June found the unit well on its way into the monsoon season. Already many of the strips in the low lying areas were closed and slowly going under water. While on a Special Forces mission to Don Phuoc one crew landed at a strip that appeared to be firm, but with a few scattered water spots. However, after landing, the crew found the water to be knee deep on portions of the strip. The cargo was unloaded and when the crew attempted to take off the propel-

**Continued on Page 17**



## 134<sup>th</sup> AvCo (from Page 16)

lers picked up enough water to drown out the engines. A maintenance team had to be sent in by helicopter to dry out the carburetors, but the crew had to wait until the next day to take off, after the water had receded.

In July, the first platoon at Soc Trang learned that children of the local ARVN 212<sup>th</sup> Artillery Battalion needed additional school classrooms and they undertook the project in their spare time. Plans were drawn, the material obtained, and the platoon worked along with the men of the 212<sup>th</sup> Artillery Battalion to construct the school. The building was completed just one day prior to the opening of school. In appreciation, a dedication was held on opening day to name it "The Delta Rider School".

In early August the 134<sup>th</sup> was notified of "Operation Red Leaf," the transfer of the Caribous to Air Force control. On 13 August, Maj. John F. Tiernan arrived as the first Air Force replacement. Major Tiernan's blue uniform put him on the receiving end of considerable ribbing, but his good nature and quick wit soon made him a regular member of the unit. Shortly thereafter, every conceivable type of Air Force pilot showed up to be transitioned into Caribous (B-52, F-100, F-4C, Reconnaissance, etc.). Surprisingly, the transitions went smoothly. Also in August aircraft 63-9740 crewed by SP6 Thomas Dawkins and SP5 Harry "Tiger" Colly set a new Caribou record by flying 170 hours during the month.

Unfortunately, the Air Force never flew the Caribou like the Army. They were primarily interested in long-range "throughput" missions while the Army used the Caribou for local support to remote Special Forces camps and similar missions. After the Air Force takeover, this incredible short field aircraft was phased out in favor of larger, high-speed conventional air transports. Consequently, the Special Forces and others were left without support. This

was a role subsequently assumed by helicopter units.

More and more Air Force officers and enlisted men began arriving in November and living quarters again became a problem. Air Force and Army personnel now worked side by side. By this time almost everyone who came over with the 134<sup>th</sup> had reassignment orders and the old saying of "Happiness in Vietnam is DEROS" was finally coming true. The first large group of officers and enlisted men left on the 17<sup>th</sup> of the month, leaving only a small number of Army personnel remaining.

Also in November, Aircraft 61-4161 struck a mound of dirt with the left gear causing major damage while on a Special Forces low level extraction mission. The aircraft landed at Bien Thuy Airfield with no injuries to the crew. The left main gear was replaced and the aircraft then flown to Vung Tau for more repairs

By the beginning of December, only a few key Army personnel were left and the Air Force take over was almost complete. The remaining Army personnel were kept busy with the final phases of deactivation. The Air Force was confronted with the problem of moving the entire unit from Can Tho and Soc Trang to their new home at Cam Ranh Bay. The last Army pilots in the unit flew "Operation Rudolph" on the day before Christmas and air-dropped a Christmas package to every Special Forces camp in IV Corps. The last officer to sign out of the 134<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company was LTC Robert L. Landry.

During the company's tour in Vietnam, it carried 13,700 personnel on troop lifts; flew 26,170 sorties; carried 15,244 tons of cargo; 165,010 passengers; performed 620 medevacs; and flew 13,710 hours. The 134<sup>th</sup> Aviation Company was deactivated at Cam Ranh Bay on 1 January 1967.

Note: This history reflects the erroneous perception by many Army personnel that the Air Force did not use the Caribou in a suitable manner to support Army units in the field. *Sin loi!!!*

## Senior Texting Codes

from Lacy Allen [535, 67]

**BTW:** Bring The Wheelchair  
**BYOT:** Bring Your Own Teeth  
**CBM:** Covered By Medicare  
**CUATSC:** See You At The Senior Center  
**DWI:** Driving While Incontinent  
**FWBB:** Friend With Beta-Blockers  
**FWIW:** Forget Where I Was  
**FYI:** Found Your Insulin  
**GGPBL:** Gotta Go, Pacemaker Battery Low!  
**GHA:** Got Heartburn Again  
**GGLKI:** Gotta Go ... Laxative Kicking In  
**HOV:** High On Viagra  
**IMHO:** Is My Hearing-Aid On?  
**LMDO:** Laughing My Dentures Out  
**LMGA:** Lost My Glasses Again  
**LOL:** Living On Lipitor  
**LWO:** Lawrence Welk's On  
**OMMR:** On My Massage Recliner  
**ROFL...CGU:** Rolling On Floor Laughing ... Can't Get Up  
**TTYL:** Talk To You Louder  
**WTP:** Where's The Prunes?  
**WWNO:** Walker Wheels Need Oil

## RAAF Caribous

from Bob St John

315 Air Commandos

Royal Australian Air Force

RAAF Caribous A4-210 and A4-234 have been handed over to the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) at Albion Park Rail, just south of Sydney NSW where they will be kept in flying condition for the foreseeable future.

I inspected the aircraft at Oakey in Queensland last December and their condition was excellent. We hope that we will be able to fly them out from their current home to their new base at Illawarra Airport, the home of HARS.

Both aircraft will be kept in flying condition and they have now been named the "Vietnam Veterans Memorial Flight." The aircraft will join our fleet, which includes a Super Constellation, three P-2V7 Neptunes (two flying) two C-47s and a C-54..

**7<sup>th</sup> AF DFC Citation**  
**S.O. G-4923, 1 Dec 1969**

Staff Sergeant Charles H. Sitzenstock, Jr. distinguished himself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight over Southeast Asia on 25 September 1969. On that date, he superbly accomplished a highly intricate mission to support Free World forces that were combating aggression. His energetic application of his knowledge and skill were significant factors that contributed greatly to furthering United States goals in Southeast Asia. His professional skill and airmanship reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

**The Rest of the Story**  
 by Charles Sitzenstock [459, 68]

I recall a mission (citation above) into the mounds of North Vietnam at night to recover a Mike Force (five of our Special Forces guys and a special enemy KIA whom we took to Saigon). Interesting and difficult days.

Many things I experienced then were so surreal that I try to remember only the good things. Try and forget the bad and the heat, dirt and stench. There were times that were absolutely funny, crazy, cruel, and some beautiful, but always dangerous. Our youth and sense of duty was the blessing that kept the fear at bay.

Every day was an adventure, a test, and a challenge. We engineers had a hand sign that we used to give to our fellow Bou comrades as we taxied out each time. Two fists together (one above the other) the top one with the thumb up and the bottom one with the thumb pointed down. I guess the interpretation is "it could go either way today, so be careful and take care."

You never knew what you would carry or get involved in each day. You could be hauling or dropping pallets of 105's or powder, vegetables and fruits, cases of booze/beer, wounded GIs and South Vietnamese, KIAs, cows, pigs, Montagnards; drop paratroopers (with

or without their dogs); extract or rescue stranded GIs; relocate villages of scared Vietnamese civilians to a safe area; transport a missionary and his flock of school boys; move band members to play at the closing of a forward fire base; or take and pick up a damaged/repaired bird in Bangkok, then go south to Songkla, over to Phuket, north to the F-105 bases and then over Cambodia and Laos at 10,000 feet to Phu Cat.

We heard that one of our outfits got a letter from a North Vietnamese officer thanking us for transporting his troops from one place to another (you never knew who was coming onboard). I once transported a Vietnamese woman (who I initially thought was a gun shot victim) that was thrown aboard at one of our stops. Later in flight, I found out she was pregnant and I helped her deliver her baby (a girl). When we landed, she got off the plane and just walked away (unbelievable people). Beautiful country, but I wouldn't want to live there or die there, as so many did.

I also remember the many C-141 missions into Nam, before and after my C-7A tour, transporting wounded back to the states or an entire cargo compartment full of ten pallets (4 wide, 2 high) of KIA caskets (our boys) to Dover.

**7<sup>th</sup> AF DFC Citation**  
**S.O. G-0762, 31 Mar 1972**

Captain Michael F. Loughran distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as a C-7A Aircraft Commander at Thien Ngon, Republic of Vietnam, on 27 September 1971. On that date, Captain Loughran flew a resupply mission to deliver urgently needed food and ammunition. Despite the fact that the base had been under constant attack for several days, Captain Loughran courageously accomplished this vital airlift mission without loss of personnel or equipment. The professional competence, aerial skill and devotion to duty displayed by Captain Loughran reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

**7<sup>th</sup> AF DFC Citation**  
**S.O. G-1189, 18 Apr 1971**

Captain Stanley S. Sekimoto distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as a C-7A Aircraft Commander at Katum Special Forces Camp, Republic of Vietnam on 5 January 1971. On that date, Captain Sekimoto flew his aircraft on an emergency resupply mission to deliver urgently needed small arms ammunition, explosives, and food supplies to the occupants of this remote forward site, which was the target of a rocket attack by hostile forces. Despite the threat of hostile fire, Captain Sekimoto courageously accomplished the vital airlift mission without the loss of personnel or equipment. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Captain Sekimoto reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

**The Rest of the Story**  
 by Stan Sekimoto [457, 70]

It's been many years since I served in Vietnam, so my memory is somewhat cloudy. On a particular mission, maybe it was the mission to Katum on 5 Jan 71, as we approached the camp, the airfield controllers told us not to land since they were being hit with enemy rockets and mortars. So, I elected to orbit at a safe distance and altitude until we got an "all clear" signal.

I briefed my crew that we were going in, but that we were not going to spend any more time on the ground than necessary to off-load our cargo, consisting of food, ammunition, weapons, etc., including a water buffalo loaded in a wooden cage. The camp could get hit again while we were on the ground. I told the crew, "As soon as we land, and while taxiing to the cargo off-load area, open the rear cargo door, crop the ramp, and start jettisoning the cargo – just push them out the door!"

My flight mechanic complied and

**Continued on Page 19**

**The Rest ... (from Page 18)**

started pushing out the cargo while I kept taxiing at a slow speed through the off-load area, in a direction leading back to the runway for an immediate takeoff.

I wasn't going to take any chances of us being hit by rockets, gunfire, etc. from an enemy located somewhere in the wood surrounding the camp and its airfield. Approaching the departure end of the runway, I noticed that the crate holding the water buffalo broke apart upon hitting the ground. The water buffalo was running toward the woods with some ground personnel trying to catch it. As I gunned the engines for takeoff, I remember saying to myself, "Poor guy, I hope he survives this ordeal!" At least, we did. Amen!

**7<sup>th</sup> AF DFC Citation**  
**S.O. G-0264, 31 Jan 1972**

Captain Gary L. Seymour distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as a C-7A Aircraft Commander at Thien Ngon Airfield, Republic of Vietnam, on 24 April 1971. On that date, Captain Seymour flew an emergency resupply mission to Thien Ngon Airfield and made a hazardous night landing. Captain Seymour successfully delivered his cargo of desperately needed ammunition despite hazardous terrain, adverse weather, and a lengthy exposure to hostile ground fire. The professional competence, aerial skill and devotion to duty displayed by Captain Seymour reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

**WAR DEPARTMENT**  
**OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF THE AIR CORPS**  
**WASHINGTON**

May 22, 1939

SUBJECT: Flying Status for Flying Safety

TO: Brig. General Arnold N. Krogstad  
Langley Field  
Hampton, Virginia

1. The Chief of the Air Corps is deeply concerned that senior and older pilots take no unnecessary risks and thus jeopardize their valuable experience to the Air Corps.

2. To this end he has directed the classification of all pilots over forty-seven years of age into a group where they will not be required to pilot at night, to lead or drill with pursuit formations, to fly single seater aircraft, or to do any other types of particularly hazardous piloting where the natural and understandable depreciations coincident with age may render them less fit than men of younger years. He believes that there should be absolutely no evidence of any competition in piloting among men of higher rank and older age. There is no necessity and no justification for the feeling on the part of a senior officer that he must continue to pile up as much pilot time, or to pilot as skillfully as he did in his earlier years, or as well as younger pilots do.

3. Your particular attention is directed to the revision of War Department Circular 26 and to the minimum requirements set up in Circular 50-12, O.C.A.C. Every senior Air Corps Officer must use the soundest judgement at all times as to the types of flying performed and as to when, how, and where to fly, after a careful analysis of tactical situations and weather conditions. Officers in the command pilot group may fly as co-pilots or command pilots in meeting their flying requirements.

4. It is desired that you be accompanied by another pilot on all military flights.

Signed  
H. H. Arnold,  
Major General, Air Corps,  
Chief of the Air Corps

**Baghdad ER**

by Todd Baker, MD

This book is a page turner. Great read! The author was in Iraq in 2008 as an Army Major in charge of the ER at the 86<sup>th</sup> Combat Support Hospital in Baghdad. Vietnam veterans will relate to his stories of bureaucratic nonsense and the frustrations experienced by the guys and gals in the trenches (Emergency Room) trying to save the lives of our troops and civilians caught up in the combat action. Available at Amazon.com or at [www.BaghdadER.net](http://www.BaghdadER.net). Price is \$15. Worth every penny!

**Deadliest U.S. Hostile Air Actions 1970-1972**

from VFW Magazine, May 2011

| Action/Location         | KIA | Date               | Aircraft          | Units   |
|-------------------------|-----|--------------------|-------------------|---|
| Operation Linebacker II | 37  | Dec 18-29, 1972    | B-52              | 43 <sup>rd</sup> , 72 <sup>nd</sup> , and 307 <sup>th</sup> Strategic Wings |
| LZ Judy                 | 31  | Aug 26, 1970       | Helicopters       | 1 <sup>st</sup> Infantry, 196 <sup>th</sup> LIB, 178 <sup>th</sup> ASHC     |
| Siege of Dak Seang      | 25  | Apr 2-30, 1970     | C-7A, UH-1, HH-53 | 483 <sup>rd</sup> TAW, 37 <sup>th</sup> AARS, 17 <sup>th</sup> Cav          |
| Rescue of Bat 21        | 16  | Apr 2-7, 1972      | EB-66, Helicopter | 37 <sup>th</sup> ARRS, 42 <sup>nd</sup> TEWS, 8 <sup>th</sup> Cav           |
| Dinh Tuong Province     | 15  | Oct 31, 1972       | Helicopter        | 18 <sup>th</sup> AvCo, 16 <sup>th</sup> Cav                                 |
| Siege of An Loc         | 15  | Apr 26-May 3, 1972 | C-130, AC-119     | 374 <sup>th</sup> TAW, 18 <sup>th</sup> SOS                                 |

## New USAF Bomber

by Bill Sweetman

*Aviation Week*, April 21, 2011

Secret and slow could be watchwords for the U.S. Air Force's new bomber program. Although major spending is getting under way, the service does not expect to see the aircraft in service before the mid-2020's – a longer time-scale than the "2018 bomber" discussed in 2008. In addition, Maj. Gen. Dave Scott, USAF director of operations capability requirements, confirmed in February that the aircraft will be "highly classified – we are not going to talk about any of its attributes." Beyond stating that the aircraft will be optionally piloted and nuclear-capable, the Pentagon has said little.

The magic numbers for the bomber are a fleet size of 80-100 and a flyaway cost of \$500 million, both numbers set by Defense Secretary Robert Gates. "The secretary doesn't want another B-2," one Air Force leader remarked.

The extended schedule reduces risk and avoids overlap in funding with the delayed Joint Strike Fighter (JSF). Reports suggest that funding will average under \$1 billion a year through fiscal 2016, when JSF funding should tail off.

One key capability is almost certainly under development: the combination of extreme low-observable (ELO) technology and unprecedented aerodynamic efficiency. This will not only appear on the bomber, but on one of two critical "enablers" for the long-range-strike family of systems: unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) designed for stand-in airborne electronic attack (AEA), and for penetrating, persistent intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR). Both were identified by Scott in a briefing last October.

Stand-in AEA, with jamming effects delivered by an ELO platform, is an important adjunct to stealth. Although networked radar systems are improving their ability to detect stealthy targets in the Lockheed Martin F-22/F-35 class,

moderate-power jamming is likely to degrade that capability. It is also expected to defeat efforts to detect ELO targets in the foreseeable future. Lockheed Martin's RQ-170 Sentinel UAV could be the interim solution to this requirement.

Penetrating ISR demands a combination of endurance and ELO, and such a system is probably the goal of the large special access program (SAP) awarded in 2007-08 to Northrop Grumman. One key technology, the subject of a good deal of open-source work, is the ability to sustain laminar airflow on a swept wing: this technology alone could deliver 32 hr. of time-on-station in an all-wing UAV, according to a Northrop Grumman technical report.

If such a SAP produces results, in terms of the vehicle and its primary sensors (synthetic aperture radar with ground-moving target indication), it would explain why USAF has been willing to curtail the Global Hawk Block 40 program.

Penetrating, persistent ISR is vital for the long-range strike family of systems because it provides targeting for other weapons: a Conventional Prompt Global Strike missile, new subsonic cruise missile launched from aircraft or submarines, or a hypersonic missile. In turn, that capability allows USAF to focus the new bomber requirement more narrowly and avoid mission and cost creep that apparently affected the earlier Next Generation Bomber (NGB).

For example, the new bomber could be smaller than the NGB was envisioned to be, because it could also provide targeting for off-board weapons, with less need for a "deep magazine" of onboard weapons. Off-board sensors would also reduce demand for simultaneous long range and high resolution for onboard sensors, reducing aperture size. Overall, the new bomber may emerge smaller than medium bombers of the past, and well under half the size of the B-2.

The Air Force is also leaning toward

the adoption of features developed in Advent (Adaptive Versatile Engine Technology) and Heete (Highly Efficient Embedded Turbofan Engine) in the new bomber. Heete is aimed at cruise efficiency and delivering electrical power, necessary to support directed-energy weapons, and is expected to yield a fuel-burn improvement of 35% over current low observable-compatible subsonic engines.

One factor will drive up the cost of the bomber's R&D: its status as a SAP. SAP status – whether the program is an acknowledged SAP, as the bomber is likely to be, or completely black – incurs large costs. All personnel have to be vetted before they are read into the program. Information within the program is compartmentalized, reducing efficiency. SAP status has been estimated to add 20% to a program's cost.

The most likely reason for this measure is the sensitivity of ELO technology, combined with the fact that the U.S. is the target of what may be the most extensive and successful espionage program in history – China's Advanced Persistent Threat.

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## Time Is Running Out!!

Check the mailing label on this newsletter. If it does not show "2012" or later, then it is **TIME TO PAY** your Caribou Tax or this will be the **last** newsletter you will receive.

If you aren't up to date, you may have:

1. changed your address and the last newsletter went to an old address
2. just sent in your check
3. forgotten to send your check

### DO IT TODAY.

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

Mike Murphy  
2036 Traylorcrest Ln Apt #2  
Kirkwood, MO .63122-2263

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## My Year in Vietnam

by Frank Woznicki [536, 66]

I believe I was the first Air Force flight mechanic assigned to the Army 61<sup>st</sup> Aviation Company, later to become the 536<sup>th</sup> Troop Carrier Squadron. For those that did not fly with the Army during the transition period of the Bou to the Air Force, it was a different world. No set hour for a crew day, take off before daylight, and get back to the base whenever the mission was done.

The Army mentality was “If you broke them, you fixed them.” If you weren’t flying, you were on the flight line doing maintenance on the airplane. If an aircraft was on a Red-X status and they needed it — if the engines would run and the flight controls worked and it could get off the ground, they would down grade the Red-X and off you would go.

I remember one flight when we took off and the pilot said we had a nose gear light on after take off. I checked the nose gear through the inspection window. The doors had closed before the gear came up, jamming the doors into the wheel well. I informed the pilot and he dropped the gear. Then he retracted the gear, jamming the doors more, but we lucked out and the gear came out into the down and locked position.

We flew the rest of the day with the gear down. At the end of the day, when we got back to Vung Tau, the Army Sgt looked at the jammed doors and told me to be back there in the morning to fix the doors. I hope he is still waiting.

On another flight, we were flying out of Bien Hoa and we broke for lunch. SSgt Troy Shankles was with me as we were short of help that day. Troy and I went to lunch and looked around the PX, then went back to the flight line and our plane was gone.

I figured it would come back some time so we took a little nap on the edge of the ramp where we had parked the bird. Sure enough, I woke up as the bird taxied in. We walked out to the plane as the pilots were getting off and

I asked them if they enjoyed the flight. They were not happy campers. I guess the Army pilots didn’t have a sense of humor. Oh, well. We loaded up some livestock and air dropped them some place.

I found out that the 61<sup>st</sup> AvCo had a two plane detachment at Can Tho, so I volunteered to go there and spent most of the rest of my tour there. We supported the 5<sup>th</sup> Special Forces camps in the delta. We were among the first Air Force crews to air drop and LOWLEX loads before the Air Force took over the Bous on 1 January 67. Our detachment commander was Maj George J. Peck. A fine officer and the best commander I ever served under. We also had some great pilots with us. Don’t remember their names, but they were the cream of the crop. We were known as “Peck’s Bad Boys.”

When the Army was at Can Tho they didn’t check out who they were hauling on their flights so they didn’t get shot up too much. After the Air Force took over, we started taking a lot of hits. A rumor had it that a VC commander sent a thank you letter to the Army commander for hauling his troops around.

Our mission in the delta was mostly resupplying the Special Forces A-camps and the mercenary forces under Maj. Maracheck. You would never know when you went into the camps what you would encounter. There were usually no landing strips, just open fields.

Two different times when we landed at camps, we were mobbed by Vietnamese trying to get on the plane after we unloaded the supplies. I would push them off the ramp, but there would be so many people trying to get on the plane that they would never touch the ground, they would be pushed back in.

As soon as I was able to get the ramp up we would start taxing out, otherwise we would not be able to get off the ground. That night or the next day, the camp would get hit. That is why they were trying to get out of there.

## About Cats and People

It is impossible to keep a straight face in the presence of one or more kittens.  
– Cynthia E. Varnado

In order to keep a true perspective of one’s importance, everyone should have a dog that will worship him and a cat that will ignore him. – Dereke Bruce

There are few things in life more heartwarming than to be welcomed by a cat.  
– Tay Hohoff

If cats could talk, they wouldn’t. – Nan Porter

There are two means of refuge from the misery of life - music and cats. – Albert Schweitzer

A catless writer is almost inconceivable. It’s a perverse taste, really, since it would be easier to write with a herd of buffalo in the room than even one cat; they make nests in the notes and bite the end of the pen and walk on the typewriter keys. – Barbara Holland

If animals could speak, the dog would be a blundering outspoken fellow; but the cat would have the rare grace of never saying a word too much. – Mark Twain

Cats are rather delicate creatures and they are subject to a good many ailments, but I never heard of one who suffered from insomnia. – Joseph Wood Krutch

The cat could very well be man’s best friend but would never stoop to admitting it. – Doug Larson

There is something about the presence of a cat... that seems to take the bite out of being alone. – Louis J. Camuti

As every cat owner knows, nobody owns a cat. – Ellen Perry Berkeley

The problem with cats is that they get the exact same look on their face whether they see a moth or an axemurderer. – Paula Poundstone

Cats can work out mathematically the exact place to sit that will cause most inconvenience. – Pam Brown

## Quan Loi Jinx

by Deann Chapman [535, 69]

Every time I went to Quan Loi, something weird happened. The first time we were landing to the north and there were several Chinooks warming up on the left side of the runway. As we approached, one of them decided it was time to take off. I never realized what a CH-47 could do when you were close and they decided to pull pitch. The runway didn't look the same for a few seconds. Instead of straight ahead in the window it was all over the place. After passing the Chinook, we finally settled down and were able to land and take a deep breath. Believe me, I was always aware of them after that.

Another time, we were sitting in the cockpit, backed up to the aerial port, loading passengers when I noticed two GIs walking toward the tower opposite the aerial port. They were walking from different directions and toward each other. I thought that was strange since I had never seen anyone over there before. I watched them and suddenly they just stopped and raised their M-16's. I thought they saw some enemy over there and I was a little concerned. Unfortunately, they decided to have a high noon adventure and shot each other. I didn't realize the full meaning of what happened until the next day when we carried them to Saigon in body bags. Fighting the enemy is bad enough, but they decided the enemy was each other I guess.

Again, we were at the Aerial Port loading passengers for Bien Hoa when the flight engineer came into the cockpit and told me we were being hi-jacked by a young Army GI who said his Vietnamese girl friend wanted to go to Saigon because her mother was sick. Knowing Saigon and Bien Hoa were very close, I told him to tell the GI we would go to Saigon. I then got on the radio and informed the people working in the port facility what was happening. I suggested they have the Military Policeman take off the MP band on his

arm, conceal his weapon, and board the aircraft like any other passenger. If he thought he could disarm the young man, he should do so, but only if he was sure no one would get hurt. If he couldn't, we would go to Saigon and the MPs could meet him there. Fortunately for us the MP was able to disarm the young man and we went on to Bien Hoa uneventfully. I have often wondered what happened to that young GI and when he discovered the price he probably paid. Surely wasn't worth the camaraderie he was receiving from the young girl.

There are lots of little stories like this. Some would be great written up for all to read, but even better would be to come to a reunion and tell your stories first hand and hear about the exploits of others, whether funny, strange, or even make your heart skip a beat or two. See you at the next reunion.

## Your Story or Stories

Have you enjoyed the newsletter stories that our buddies have written up? Everyone says that they have. Now it's your turn. Think about the crazy situation you had in the air, on the flight line, in some local joint, or in the hootches. Write it up so other guys can read it and say, "Oh, yeah, that's the Vietnam I knew" or "Something just like that happened to me."

You don't have to be a Pulitzer winning journalist. Write up your tale or tales and send them to:

pathanavan@aol.com or  
Pat Hanavan  
12402 Winding Branch  
San Antonio, TX 78230-2770



## Phu Cat Incident

by Lou Eisenberg [459, 67]

In early 1967, when the Sault Ste. Marie National Guard F100's arrived at Phu Cat, they immediately started to play the Trash Hauler vs Fighter Pilot game, yelling insults and tossing beer cans at the Bou crews in the Officer's Club.

One of the Bou troops stood up and told the fighter pilots that the beer they were drinking, the steaks they were eating, the mail they received, all arrived at Phu Cat on a Caribou – and "TOMORROW THE BASE IS CLOSED!"

We hauled nothing in for them during the next two weeks, while we were eating lobster, shrimp, turkey, and all the beer we could drink.

Within a short time, the Operations Officer and Commander came to our squadron and requested that some of their people ride along on our missions. This was granted to help smooth out the relationship between the several units involved.

I was scheduled to take one fighter jock on a mission to Mo Duc II (a laterite strip, 60 feet wide and 1,800 feet long). As we arrived over the Special Forces camp, the fighter pilot wanted to know where we were landing.

I pointed to a straight and narrow dirt section of the road near the camp and said "That's our airfield." Since he was used to a wide, long runway, he could not recognize this area as being a landing strip.

His reaction was rather startling, as he turned pale. He held on with both hands upon landing and stood between the seats with a look of fear and amazement as witnessed by the crew.

On our flight back home, he never said a word and we never had another problem with the F100's.

## The Land of Sandra Dee

Anonymous

Long ago and far away,  
In a land that time forgot,  
Before the days of Diana  
Or the dawn of Camelot.  
There lived a race of innocents,  
And they were you and me,  
Long ago and far away,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

Oh, there was truth and goodness  
In that land where we were born,  
Where navels were for oranges,  
And Peyton Place was porn.  
For Ike was in the White House,  
And Hoss was on TV,  
And God was in His heaven,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

We learned to gut a muffler,  
We washed our hair at dawn,  
We spread our crinolines to dry  
In circles on the lawn.  
And they could hear us coming  
All the way to Tennessee,  
All starched and sprayed and rum-  
bling,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

We longed for love and romance,  
And waited for the prince,  
And Eddie Fisher married Liz,  
And no one's seen him since.  
We danced to "Little Darlin'"  
And sang to "Stagger Lee"  
And cried for Buddy Holly,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

Only girls wore earrings then,  
And three was one too many.  
And only boys wore flat-top cuts,  
Except for Jean McKinney.  
And only in our wildest dreams  
Did we expect to see  
A boy named George with lipstick  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

We fell for Frankie Avalon,  
Annette was oh so nice  
And when they made a movie,  
They never made it twice.  
We didn't have Star Trek Five,  
Or Psycho Two and Three,  
Or Rocky-Rambo Twenty  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

Miss Kitty had a heart of gold,  
And Chester had a limp.  
And Reagan was a Democrat  
Whose co-star was a chimp.  
We had a Mr. Wizard, but not a Mr. T  
And Oprah couldn't talk yet,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

We had our share of heroes,  
We never thought they'd go,  
At least not Bobby Darin,  
Or Marilyn Monroe.  
For youth was still eternal,  
And life was yet to be,  
And Elvis was forever,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

We'd never seen the rock band  
That was Grateful to be Dead,  
And Airplanes weren't named  
Jefferson,  
And Zeppelins weren't Led.  
And Beatles lived in gardens then,  
And Monkeys in a tree,  
Madonna was a virgin,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

We'd never heard of microwaves,  
Or telephones in cars.  
And babies might be bottle-fed,  
But they weren't grown in jars.  
And pumping iron got wrinkles out,  
And "gay" meant fancy-free,  
And dorms were never coed,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

We hadn't seen enough of jets  
To talk about the lag.  
And microchips were what was left  
At the bottom of the bag.  
And hardware was a box of nails,  
And bytes came from a flea,  
And rocket ships were fiction,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

Buicks came with portholes,  
And the side show came with freaks,  
And bathing suits came big enough  
To cover both your cheeks.  
And Coke came just in bottles,  
And skirts came to the knee,  
And Castro came to power  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

We had no Crest with fluoride,  
We had no Hill Street Blues,  
We all wore superstructure bras  
Designed by Howard Hughes.  
We had no patterned pantyhose  
Or Lipton herbal tea,  
Or prime-time ads for condoms,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

There were no golden arches,  
No Perriers to chill.  
And fish were not called Wanda,  
And cats were not called Bill.  
And middle-aged was thirty-five,  
And old was forty-three,  
And ancient was our parents,  
In the Land of Sandra Dee.

But all things have a season,  
Or so we've heard them say,  
And now instead of Maybelline,  
We wear Retin-A.  
And they send us invitations  
To join AARP,  
We've come a long way, baby,  
From the Land of Sandra Dee.

When was the last time you used one of these? Jan Gerstner [458, 70] can fiddle with his any time he wants.



## What Goes 'Round

by Daryle McGinnis [458, 70]

In 1971, my week in Bangkok for a C-7A overhaul and my R&R to Hawaii had only one day between. That shrank to nothing when the Bangkok plane was a day late coming out of overhaul. When we finally left Bangkok, a day late, my flight from Cam Rahn Bay (CRB) to the R&R departure point in Danang had already left that morning, I got back to CRB from Bangkok late that night, having missed it.

The actual R&R flight from Danang to Honolulu was to leave the next afternoon, the interim time used for out processing. But, I had no legal way to get to it other than ordinary leave status. That would never merit a stand-by seat to Danang, hordes of emergency and compassionate leaves had priority. That meant illegal measures, a mode of operation my roommate, Don Aakhus, and I occasionally utilized.

A first thing broke in our favor – Don had Supervisor of Flying (SOF) duty the next morning. At dawn, with the SOF's jeep, he drove me from plane to plane on CRB's in-country pax ramp. At each stop, I dashed onto whatever plane and asked if it was going to Danang. A negative answer sent me dashing back to Don's jeep which then sped to the next plane where we repeated the procedure. Speed became doubly important because quickly a WAF passenger service Captain patrolling the ramp perceived what we were doing. Her calling in life, or at least in Vietnam, was to foil such end-running activities by pilots.

The A/C of the sixth plane I darted onto, a C-130, said, "Yep, straight to Danang," to my head stuck into his flight deck doorway. Seconds became crucial; the passenger service sleuth had to be about to vault up the C-130's ramp. I had no time for an explanation, but did have an idea. "Are you out of CCK?" drew the A/C's nod. I talked very fast, "Wayne Alden is a good friend of mine from C-141's at

McGuire. He's on C-130's at CCK now. Do you know him?"

"Hell of a good guy," the A/C said. I took a huge chance and grinned. "No time to explain, but he wants you to hide me on the flight deck and take me to Danang."

In a second that took forever, the A/C considered it, then motioned me into his cockpit. No sooner had I found a cozy corner than the passenger service captain clattered up the flight deck steps and tried to enter the doorway in which the A/C now stood. "I know that Captain in a flight suit snuck on this plane. I want him off."

The A/C motioned around his aircraft. "Haven't seen any such person, but you can search the plane." The passenger service lady had to have scanned the rest of the plane, so she fixed on the flight deck. "I know he's up here. I demand you turn him over to me."

The A/C calmly told her I wasn't, she wasn't Air Police, and he couldn't let her onto the flight deck because she didn't know the switches and knobs and might mess something up. "Back of the plane is yours, front is mine." On the way to Danang, I told him I owed him hugely. He said, "What goes 'round comes 'round.'"

I made the Hawaii flight with a little time to spare. Got on it because an out processing E-5 didn't make me produce urine test results I didn't have. (The hospital office had been closed the short night I was there.) I told him the certificate was buried deep in my duffle bag. After watching me start to laboriously unpack it, a process that would have yielded nothing but a lost week in Hawaii and heartbroken wife who'd flown there from Miami, he smiled knowingly and waved his hand. "Long line behind you and it's time to board. You don't look like a drug user to me."

He was the second man that day that I owed big and would never see again. If you throw in Don, that makes three. I hope to God someday they find out that what goes 'round comes round is true.

## Sheep's Foot Load

by Boyd Burd [537, 67]

The Ellis 469 mission on 18 Nov 1967 was scheduled to be at V-232 (LZ English) at 0735 for two cargo runs to LZ Baldy, but due to three ground aborts and one air abort (all for pilot's interphone inoperative), we did not arrive at V-232 until approximately 1030 hours. We called the tower requesting load information and were told that we had a load of passengers for An Khe (V-29). The aircraft was configured for passengers, but after arriving at V-232, we were informed that our load would be a sheep's foot roller, a 1,500 pound pallet, and four passengers for Baldy.

The sheep's foot was on a pallet and loaded in the back of a 2 ½ ton truck, on rollers. The flight engineer was told that the sheep's foot weighed 2,500 pounds, but further investigation made him suspect that the actual weight was much more. Movement control was requested to use their 4,000 pound capacity forklift to load the sheep's foot, but they refused and stated that the load "was too heavy for the forklift!!!"

The flight engineer then agreed to take only the sheep's foot and make another sortie for the 1,500 pound pallet and the passengers. The 2 ½ ton truck was positioned with the bed of the truck even with the ramp and an attempt was made to roll the load off the truck into the airplane. Two straps were attached to the front of the load to assist in pulling the load across the rollers. Ten men were called into the aircraft to pull on the straps and another six men were in the back of the load, pushing on it.

The load would barely budge, but, after much struggling and straining, it finally was moved to a position where half the weight was on the cargo ramp and half on the truck. This caused the aircraft aft end to settle until the steady strut made contact with the ground. This left the load balanced on the edge of the truck bed with the forward side of it resting on the cargo ramp. This

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## Sheep's Foot (from Page 24)

caused the bottom slats of the pallet, which were 2" by 6" planks, to snap in two. At this, the flight engineer became convinced that the sheep's foot was much too heavy to be hauled in a Caribou and he refused the load. The aircraft commander concurred. The aircraft was again reconfigured for passengers, loaded with 24 passengers, and took off for V-29.

The sheep's foot roller is hollow and is filled with water, oil, or concrete for most operations. The quoted 2,500 pounds weight was the empty weight. The flight engineer attempted to determine if the sheep's foot was full or not, but the filler plug was frozen in place and could not be removed with a large Ford wrench and three foot long "cheater" bar.

Note: This account appeared in the quarterly history of the 537<sup>th</sup> TAS.

## Fire at Tra Bong

by Don Aakhus [458, 71]

I was turning final at Tra Bong and noticed that the people on the ground were lowering the manual semaphores, closing off the road that bisects the dirt landing strip. At about ten feet off the ground I noticed that a local on his Honda 50 scooted under the moving bar. A few seconds later he noticed me in the flare and laid the scooter on its side right under the aircraft. I then figured the resulting collision with him would not be worth the paperwork. However the go around didn't look much better, as there was outgoing "friendly" fire at the end of the runway. There was only one way out, as this strip was somewhat in a canyon. This picture was beginning to look like a flack experience from WWII. My first FM radio call to the "artillery advisor" did absolutely nothing. I then dug into my John Wayne bag of tricks and screamed "If you don't shut down those F\*\*\*\*\* !!!!!!! guns, I won't turn back and return with YOUR MAIL!! The guns then went quiet and the troops got their mail.

## DFC at Ba Xoia

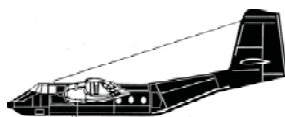
7<sup>th</sup> AF S.O. G-0346, 7 Feb 1972

Captain Douglas M. Senter distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as a C-7A Aircraft Commander at Ba Xoia, Republic of Vietnam on 8 April 1970. On that date, Captain Senter made four successful airdrops of ammunition to a United States Special Forces Camp which was under attack by enemy forces. Despite low ceilings, poor visibility and the lack of navigational aids, all airdrops were on target and accomplished without incident or injury to his crew. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Captain Senter reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

## Airdrop Under Fire

by Doug Senter [536, 69]

I made hundreds of air drops while in Vietnam, but I can't remember most of them specifically. I know once we were supporting a remote Special Forces camp with an airdrop of ammo, food, and water near Cambodia. The camp commander told us we had to drop from a lower altitude. It was critical to get the supplies, because they were under siege and were running short of everything. We dropped from 300 feet, about 100 feet lower than normal, and on the approach to the smoke, a PSP helicopter landing area inside their compound, we were getting .50 cal enemy fire from a ridgeline to the right of our flight path. I remember the tracer rounds coming at us and I ducked once when I thought a round was coming right through my open side window (I was performing instructor duties from the right seat training a new pilot, but I don't recall his name.) We were pulled off of our regular special forces support mission for an emergency airdrop.



## Checklist!

by Billy Quinn [537, 68]

"Uncle" Al Girod took over as the head Stan/Eval guy from Mike Murphy when he came in. He was always convivial and welcomed at any beer drinker's table, socially, but, I recall that if you were riding with him as a co-pilot or taking a check ride as an A/C, you'd better have your book knowledge ready, and set to go.

I was getting pretty senior as a co-pilot when I got Al's right seat for the 454 or the 455. We all loved those missions because almost all of the sporty C-7A flying usually staged out of Pleiku.

One of our sorties took us to the normally routine strip of Duc Lap. Duc Lap was not really a challenge with at least 1500 feet and a lot of PSP at both ends. It was a typical backwoods fly-in. It was cloudy, but not quite overcast, gray, but not wet. It was the time of year when there was activity on the ground. The siege at Ben Het wasn't too far into the future. It was a VC time of year in the Central Highlands.

Following procedures, we'd call into the base on Fox Mike using the names given like Whisky Treetop. They'd answer, tell us everything was all right and we'd roll in, unload, and off we'd go. When we got hold of them, for some reason, there was a combination of discernible anxiety of some kind coming from their end, but nevertheless, an A-OK on making the landing.

When we got to the off-load end of the runway, the guys rushed over and told us to unstrap our load, put the pedal to the medal, slide out from under, and just keep on going, out of the valley. Being good cadets, we did as we were told. We were there at one end of the runway, engines winding up, Bou starting to move when down at the other end of the runway an explosion went off. The bad guys were mortaring.

We moved down the runway, gathering speed, when at about 200 yards or so, poof another one, this one equally

**Continued on Page 26**

## Checklist! (from Page 25)

close. Al was flying the heck out of the plane, looking for enough airspeed to get it off the ground and out of range. It was taking a long time. We were getting ready for the next one which might be a lot closer when the C-7A lumbered its way into the air as only a Caribou can do.

Al had the flying hands of a surgeon. As we broke ground and lifted into the air, we were not the usual C-7A lift machine that we were used to. Al tried to bank into a climbing turn to get completely above and off-line. Then he noticed that, in the excitement, the flaps were still up. Down they came and off we went none the worse for wear. I've always told that on Al, in my mind, but actually it's on me. I was the co-pilot and should have run the before takeoff checklist, mortars or no.

## Survival Training

by Jerry Pankonen [536, 66]

My first encounter with Capt. Ray Burke took place on the island of Luzon. Our group of Ft. Benning trained Caribou pilots were shipped to the Philippines for jungle survival training in preparation for our coming Vietnam tour of duty. This was an escape and evasion (E&E) exercise where native Negritos, posing as the enemy, would attempt to find and capture us during an overnight stay deep in the jungle. Our goal was to avoid capture until we could be extracted in the morning via helicopter. The Negritos were rewarded with 10 pounds of rice for each successful capture.

On the morning of the first day of the E&E exercise, our class of 20, mostly city bred guys, were loaded onto a big 4x4 open bed Army truck and driven deep into the Philippine jungle along a dry stream bed, stopping every half mile or so to drop us off in pairs. The moment our feet touched the ground we were on our own. Our only goal was to avoid capture and reach the rendezvous point by noon, ready for our helicopter

ride to freedom!!

Inevitably, our turn finally came. The truck stopped and we jumped off with our survival gear. We began running for cover when the truck driver yelled, "STOP!!!" We looked back to see none other than Ray Burke leaping out of the truck, intending to join us on our epic E&E exercise. The truck then drove off, leaving the three of us to play hide and seek all night long with the cunning Negritos in hot pursuit.

My friend and I began quietly making our way through the thick underbrush, looking for a secure place to hide, but Ray had chosen a more direct route. Using his six foot two inch frame and two hundred pounds of muscle, he slashed his way through the thick underbrush with his trusty machete, cursing his way along. We thought for sure that the Negritos would hear the commotion and swoop down on us but our luck held. We eventually found a secure hiding place and set up camp, but Ray could not sit still. He finally stood up and said, "I've had enough of this b\*\*\* s\*\*\*!!," collected his gear and disappeared into the jungle, cursing as he walked.

As luck would have it, my friend and I managed to evade our counterfeit enemy, reached the designated pickup point safely, and returned to base via helicopter, chits in hand. Shortly thereafter, Ray arrived in the same truck that had dropped us off the day before. He had flagged the truck down, bribed the driver with his rice chits and a pack of cigarettes, and arrived back at base camp in style!!

We graduated from E&E school with flying colors and most continued the journey to Saigon without delay, with the exception of a lucky few who had to wait several days for available space. So, we remained behind and enjoyed the O-Club, golf course, round eyed nurses, and many drinks at pool side. Several days later, space became available and we made our way to Tan Son Nhut airport, Saigon. The unplanned delay in our arrival time allowed us the good fortune to be assigned to Vung

Tau, the coveted R&R center on the South China Sea.

About two weeks later, while enjoying drinks at the Pacific Hotel bar, who should walk in but big, bad Ray Burke. What a pleasant surprise!! He had somehow managed to get himself transferred from an under construction base of tents, mud, rats, and C-rations to Vung Tau, the R&R base we shared with the wild Aussie Caribou gang. Our Milo had finally arrived!!!

## Some Gave All

Song by Billy Ray Cyrus

I knew a man called Sandy Kane,  
 Few folks even knew his name.  
 But a hero, yes, was he,  
 Left a boy, came back a man.  
 Still many just don't understand  
 About the reasons we are free.  
 I can't forget the look in his eyes  
 Or the tears he cries,  
 As he said these words to me.  
 All gave some, some gave all  
 And some stood through for the red,  
 white and blue,  
 And some had to fall.  
 And if you ever think of me,  
 Think of all your liberties and recall –  
 Some gave all.  
 Now Sandy Kane is no longer here,  
 But his words are oh so clear  
 As they echo throughout our land.  
 For all his friends who gave us all,  
 Who stood the ground  
 And took the fall –  
 To help their fellow man.  
 Love your country and live with  
 pride,  
 And don't forget those who died.  
 America, can't you see?  
 All gave some, some gave all  
 And some stood through for the red,  
 white and blue,  
 And some had to fall.  
 And if you ever think of me,  
 Think of all your liberties and recall –  
 Some gave all.  
 And if you ever think of me  
 Think of all your liberties and recall –  
 Yes, recall –  
 Some gave all.

## We're Americans

Lt Col Oliver North, USMC

The average age of the young American serving today is 20 and ½ years of age,

Making him about 10 months older than his grandfather, who would have served in my war.

He is a high school graduate. He is a volunteer. He is brighter, better educated, better trained, led and equipped than any soldier, sailor, airman, marine, guardsman ... of any country in his history.

He goes to work wearing an eight pound Kevlar helmet, a forty-five pound flak jacket, and today in Kandahar it was 110 degrees ... and he'll hike up those hills and walk back down them without complaining.

He's been taught chemistry and physics and ballistics and avionics and electronics to operate and maintain the most sophisticated weapons and equipment ever designed by the hand and mind of man.

He can use his body like a weapon and his weapon like part of his body.

He can take a life or save one because he has been so remarkably well trained.

The images of the young marines and soldiers and sailors and airmen going to Bible studies and religious services aren't staged. They're all real. They're all spontaneous and nearly all of them are initiated by those young Americans in harm's way. When they gather in prayer circles and huddle up before a mission, they're not going out to play football. They're going into mortal combat and they know that some of them are liable not to come back. They do it because they have faith.

How many of you raised a teenage boy? Think about getting a teenage boy to clean up his own room, do his own laundry, fix his own meals, clean up everything without a size 10 in the backside. And yet that same youngster, today, washes and mends his own

clothing, feeds himself, takes care of cleaning his weapon, cleaning himself, he's totally self sufficient. The kid who once wouldn't share a candy bar with his little brother, now gives away his last drop of water to a wounded comrade, gives his only MRE to a hungry Afghan kid, and splits his ammo with a mate in a fire fight.

I always save this one for last when I am explaining to young people about who they are. So few of them know the truth of these youngsters. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of April, 2003 Baghdad is smoke filled in the background. A Marine element is the lead element of the attack on the eastern corridor. About 15 miles out of Baghdad, the Republican Guards Regiment ambushed the Marine rifle company I was embedded with. They spun their Humvees around and there is a gunfight between this regiment and the Marine rifle company. In the midst of the "beaten zone" (the area where the intersecting bullets are crossing) a United States Navy corpsman rushes into the battlefield, right through the fire, drags two wounded Marines out and carries them on his shoulders to a helicopter that landed in the roadway.

This corpsman, who has rushed now twice before and brought these two wounded Marines back, now has a third one. A Reuters news crew has set up their camera and is videotaping. As this guy staggers back into the gunfight, one of the news crew shouts out, "Hey, mate, what did you do that for, didn't you notice?" In other words, "You stupid American, didn't you notice that wasn't a Marine?" The wounded warrior, who has already been bandaged up by that United States Navy corpsman, isn't a Marine, it's a wounded Iraqi soldier. This US Navy corpsman has rushed into the battlefield to save his life.

In response to the Reuters news crew, the Navy corpsman gives them a gesture with his arm and hand and he says, "Didn't you notice ... he was wounded. That's what we do ...

**We're Americans!"**

## Incoming at Phu Cat

by Chuck Sitzenstock [459, 68]

Bill Zipple and a bunch of us were sitting around a camp fire at Phu Cat, Vietnam in 1969 when a mortar attack by Charlie came in. We were in the middle of our evening indigenous meal (shrimp, Army steak, 6 pack) when an incoming round hit close and Bill got second and third degree burns. I told him that it's time to take him to the hospital. He said, "They are not going to ruin our nightly meal tonight." I said, "Sorry, Bill, but it's not your call. It's time to get you where you need to be." I could feel he was hurting and he agreed. We went to the Phu Cat hospital tent. The next morning, we took off knowing our chief was ok.

Miss him (Bill passed away on 3 Sep 2011)

## Booby Traps

by John Maksymowicz [459, 68]

I remember two missions while in Danang. We just finished moving supposed civilians out of a hamlet that was going to be wiped out. We landed back at Danang with them. Suddenly, one of the South Vietnamese soldiers kept telling me we had a VC on board. Next, M-16's were drawn on this guy and he **WAS** VC. I started to check my aircraft and found wires under a troop seat. I called for EOD and cleared the area.

We had F-100's next to us, fully loaded with bombs. EOD got there and we towed the plane away. They found a Claymore mine wired to blow as soon as I lifted the seat. Luckily, I spotted the wires. Three sorties later, the same thing. I found a package that shouldn't have been under a troop seat. I called EOD again and got the same crew as the previous time. They asked if I had a death wish. We towed the aircraft away again and this time they found it was a bag of mail someone failed to take to the mail room.

That day, I was the flying crew chief and flight line supervisor. I will NEVER forget those two missions.



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