

C-7A Caribou Association



Volume 22, Issue 1

Come Fly in the Bou at Reunion 2011 in Dallas

The Radisson Hotel, 1241 W. Mockingbird Lane, Dallas, TX 75247, 214-630-7000 will be headquarters for Reunion 2011 from **21-25 Sep 2011**. The hotel has 296 rooms, free high-speed internet access, free guest parking, and space for parking of RVs. URL is www.radisson.com/dallastx_love. The hotel provides free shuttle bus from/to Dallas Love Field (3 miles). Love Field is served by Southwest, Continental Airlines, and Delta Airlines.

In This Issue

President’s Corner	Page 2
2011 Reunion activities.....	Page 3
Pig Roast	Page 4
Bou Heroes at Duc Lap.....	Page 4
Caribou Pipeline.....	Page 5
Short Timer	Page 7
Museum of Aviation	Page 8
New USAF Tanker.....	Page 9
Travis AFB Museum	Page 9
Duct Tape	Page 10
Mortars at Can Tho	Page 10
Extractions	Page 10
DFC at Katum	Page 11
Bou Heroes at Bu Dop	Page 12
Bou Heroes at Loc Ninh	Page 12
Pax from Hon Quan	Page 13
Con Thien.....	Page 14
Bou Heroes at Con Thien.....	Page 16
Med-evacs at LZ English.....	Page 17
Letter Home	Page 17
Ben Het Recalled	Page 18
Ferry Mission to U.S.....	Page 19
FCF ... Plus.....	Page 22
Return from Bangkok	Page 23
Most Embarrassing Moment.	Page 24
Noble Farewell.....	Page 26
Airpower Classics	Page 27

Dallas-Ft Worth Airport (DFW) is 16 miles away. Taxi and commercial shuttle bus are available at DFW.

Group room rate is \$109.25 (includes taxes). Check-in time is 3:00 PM. Reservations may be made starting 1 April. Specify “C-7A Caribou Association” when making your reservation. To get the group rate, your reservation must be made by 8/31/11.

War Room will be the Champagne Ballroom (sections A, B, and C). Tentative schedule of activities can be found on page 3.

Registration will open at 1200 on Wednesday, 21 Sep. The Memorabilia Room will be open from 1500-1700. Welcome reception from 1800-2000.

On Thursday, we will visit the Frontiers of Flight Museum for guided tours (see info on page 3). Buses will be provided by the Association and will depart the hotel from 1300-1400 and will return at 1600. A (optional) plated dinner will be at the hotel from 1900-2100.

On Friday, it’s time to kick the tires and light the fires! The highlight of the reunion is the opportunity to fly once again in our favorite airplane – the Bou. The Cavanaugh Flight Museum has a flying Bou, S/N 62-4149. We hope to be able to have 15-20 passengers on each 40 minute sortie of the Bou from Addison Airport (16 miles from the hotel), The flight will include takeoff and landing at Addison Airport, flight in the local area, and takeoffs and landings at an auxiliary field. Final permission from the FAA is pending on the number of passengers on each flight.

Buses will be provided by the Asso-

ciation to take the Bou fliers to Addison Airport starting at 0800. The museum has in interesting collection of aircraft (see information on page 3) and a small gift shop. Buses will make several trips to and from Addison Airport. All fliers will be back at the hotel by 1700.

For those not visiting the Cavanaugh Flight Museum and/or taking a Bou flight, Friday afternoon is an opportunity to visit Northcenter Park Mall (12 miles) from 1200-1600. The Mall has over 120 shops, over 20 places to eat, and a movie theater. Many consider that is a must for a visitor to Dallas. See <http://www.northparkcenter.com/> for information.

Friday evening is Texas BBQ time. No reunion in Dallas would be respectable without enjoying a good Texas BBQ. Buses will depart from the hotel, starting at 1800. All will be back at the hotel by 2100.

Business meeting will be in the Coral Room (1 and 2) from 1030-1200. While the members are making momentous decisions in the business meeting, the ladies can enjoy an optional Tex-Mex cooking class/demo led by Chef Michael Killgore. After the demo, the gentlemen may join their ladies for lunch, featuring the dishes the ladies have been seeing and assisting in the preparation.

Group pictures will be taken from 1700-1830. Pay-as-you-go bar opens at 1800 and the banquet is from 1900-2130.

Sunday morning wraps up the reunion. Checkout time is 12 PM. Last chance to pick up Memorabilia.

See you in Dover, DE in 2012.

The C-7A Caribou Association Newsletter
is the official publication of the
C-7A Caribou Association.

Elected Officers and Board Members....

Chairman of Board/Vice President - Peter Bird [535, 71]
President/Board Member - Pat Hanavan [535, 68]
Treasurer/Board Member - Mike Murphy [537, 68]
Secretary/Board Member - Al Cunliffe [458, 68]
Board Member at Large - Fred Dimon [535, 68]
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Bereavement Chairman - Jay Baker [535, 66]
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Reunion 2011 Planners - Don Griffin [536, 66],
 Doug Boston [458, 68],
 Charlie Austin [457, 67]
 Paul Witthoeft [483, 70]

Webmaster - Peter Bird [535, 71]

President Emeritus - Nick Evanish [457, 66]

Chaplain Emeritus - Bob Davis [457, 69]

Squadron Representatives...

457th Royal Moulton [457, 66], phone 540-720-7092
 457th Mike Thibodo [457, 70], phone 651-483-9799
 458th Lee Corfield [458, 69], phone 724-775-3027
 458th Al Cunliffe [458, 68], phone 334-285-7706
 459th Bob Cummings [459, 66], phone 865-859-0888
 535th Cliff Smith [535, 69], phone 804-453-3188
 535th Mike Messner [535, 70], phone 321-453-0816
 536th Dana Kelly [536, 70], phone 407-656-4536
 536th Chuck Harris [536, 68], phone 325-465-8096
 537th George Harmon [537, 69], phone 951-695-0630
 483rd Gary Miller [483, 68], phone 262-634-4117
 4449th Bill Buesking [535, 70], phone 210-403-2635
 18th AP Bill Buesking [535, 70], phone 210-403-2635

Members are encouraged to communicate with the Editor of the Newsletter. Send change of address, phone number, or e-mail address to:

Pat Hanavan
 12402 Winding Branch
 San Antonio, TX 78230-2770
 pathanavan@aol.com
 210-479-0226 (home), 210-861-9353 (cell)

\$10.00 dues are payable each January. Send your check to

Mike Murphy
 2036 Trailcrest Ln Apt 2r
 Kirkwood, MO 63122-2263
 MikeM53@earthlink.net

President's Corner

Finalizing the details of this year's reunion have been delayed somewhat by my slow recovery from cardio-thoracic surgery in January to remove a carcinoid tumor from my right lung. Menu for the banquet, details of the Tex-Mex cooking demonstration for the ladies, and the details and schedule for flights in the Bou owned by the Cavanaugh Flight Museum will be tied down in the next few weeks. The reunion flyer should be in your mailbox early in June. Our Dallas-based reunion team is pulling the last information now.



The list of possible reunion locations after 2013 includes: Ft. Walton Beach, FL; Fairfield, CA; and Sterling, VA.

If you have an idea about a good reunion location, e-mail your thoughts to a member of the Board.

War stories, humorous tales, and little known facts are needed for the newsletter. Jot them down and send them in. These items make our newsletter top notch.

B-17 Navigator's Log



1-18-44, mission #18. Frankfurt, Germany. Mean Point of Impact – business section of town. City of 500,000 people. Carried 38 incendiary bombs. Were #2 in lead squadron in high group. Pathfinder mission. Briefed at 0230. Took off at 0630 in the dark and had to climb through clouds and assemble at 18,000 ft. Left England at 0900. Got to I.P. and we threw out the carpet (aluminum filings to throw off the radar), dropped bombs using the pathfinder and pretty sure we hit the city. Got past before they could get the flak up.

Were attacked by at least 100 German fighters from target on for about one hour. No escort showed up. A Me-109 hit head on with a Fort over target. Fighter blew up and Fort went down. 5 min. Later Bostwick went down. 5 chutes opened. 10 min. later a Fort broke apart. A few min. later a Fort went over on his back and

went straight down. 15 min. later in the group next to us, one Fort came up under another one & cut its tail completely off.

We saw two bodies fly out. It spun down and one chute finally got out. The other plane tore its wing off and went down. Didn't see any chutes. A while later a Fort pulled out a little and one chute came out. It struggled along and finally came back. Couldn't figure it out. P-47's finally arrived. Got back to England at 1330. Let down through the clouds on our Splasher.

We lost 3 planes from our squadron. German fighters sure looked new and all painted up red and black. Came straight through the groups also.



Cavanaugh Flight Museum

Trace the steps of a century of flight during **Reunion 2011**. Walk past wood and fabric aircraft from the World War I era. Pass by significant aircraft of the 1930's and World War II periods. Stop and study the early jet planes of the 1950's. Walk on and look with amazement as newer, faster, more efficient aircraft technologies continue to be developed. In the process, you will see how much aviation affects our lives.

The collection includes: Fokker Dr.1, Fokker D.V, Sopwith Camel, A-26C Invader, TBM-3E Avenger, PV-2D Harpoon, B-24 Liberator, B-25J Mitchell, P-40N Warhawk, FG-1D Corsair, FM-2 Wildcat, Me-109, P-51D Mustang, P-47N Thunderbolt, Spitfire Mk VIII, Yak-3M, N2S-4 Kaydet, PT-13B, Tiger Moth, PT-19, AT-6, PT-22, BT-13, C-47, Piper L-4J, Aeronca L-3B, F9F-2B Panther, S2F-1 Tracker, F-104A, MiG-15, F-86, T-28B, AD-5 Skyraider, UH-34D, HU-16D Albatross, OV-1D Mohawk, F-4C, MiG-17, F-105, UH-1B, AH-1J Sea Cobra, Pitts Special, J-3 Cub, and L-1329 JetStar II.

There is also a small museum store in the complex of hangars and ramps.

Flights in the museum's Caribou are being arranged. Cost is from \$200-250 per person, depending on a final determination by the FAA about how many passengers can be carried on this special occasion. The museum has committed to providing the flights at their operating cost of \$3,000 per hour. Details will be in the reunion flyer which should be in your hands in early June.

So far 64 individuals have expressed interest in taking one of these nostalgic, historic (about 40 minute) "Bou Flights." If you haven't indicated your interest in riding in the Bou **one more time**, send an e-mail to pathanavan@aol.com with the number of seats you will need. Takeoffs and landings will be made at Addison airport and an auxiliary field.

Frontiers of Flight Museum

Embark on a memorable aviation journey – a tour of the Frontiers of Flight Museum. During your experience, you will bridge several lifetimes starting with the pioneers who realized their earliest dreams of flying; identifying with the aviators of the 20's and 30's, known as the "Golden Age of Flight"; understanding the sacrifices of the fliers of World War II; and progressing to the jet and rocket age of today. You will see, hear, and touch some of the rare artifacts that have contributed to this exciting history. On display is a World War I Sopwith "Pup" biplane along with hundreds of models, uniforms, decorations, engines, and propellers. You will long remember your "Flight Thru Time."

You will see displayed more than 200 aircraft models representing nations involved in WW II along with the uniforms of the men and women who flew them. A special exhibit commemorates the RAF No. 1 British Flying Training School in Terrell, Texas, where 2,000 British fighter pilots were trained. Dallas Love Field was the base for the 5th Ferrying Wing, including the 601st Women's Army Service Pilots (WASP). These gallant women flew all types of aircraft including the B-24 "Liberator," manufactured at Consolidated's Fort Worth plant, the P-51 "Mustang" manufactured at the North American plant at Grand Prairie, and the P-38 "Lightning" which was modified at Dallas Love Field's Lockheed Mod Center.

American air power emerged from World War II as a dominant force, both militarily and commercially. We ended the war flying the P-51 "Mustang" aircraft at a maximum speed of 450 mph. Barely 15 years later, our SR-71 "Blackbird" was cruising at 2,100 mph. You will be witness to the dramatic progression through artifacts including an early jet engine and a rocket powered ejection seat from the

F-4 "Phantom." Commercially, many of our airlines ended the war flying DC-3's which carried 21 passengers at 165 mph. Twenty-six years later, we were spanning the Atlantic Ocean in the "Concorde" at 1,450 mph. The full range of the airliner development is presented vividly through large-scale cutaway models, airline posters, and other memorabilia.

Your tour concludes with a close-up look at the challenges of space and our first step toward the stars with the most complex aircraft ever assembled, the reusable "Space Shuttle" Orbiter. Its weight is equal to almost two Boeing 737 jets. It is thrust into orbit 100 miles above the earth at 17,000 mph. All of this has occurred in less than 80 years since the Wright brothers first flew their biplane.

Aircraft and missiles on display include: Culver Dart, Regulus II, PT-22, T-33A, Tiger Moth, Thorp T-18, Learjet 24D, XQM-93A, Pitts S-2B, Piper Pacer, Christen Eagle II, Lear Fan 2100, Beech "Staggerwing," F-86L, Apollo 7 Command Module, RF-8G Crusader, A-7 Corsair II, and F-16B.

Reunion Schedule

Wednesday, 21 Sep.

1400-2100 Reunion Registration

1800-2000 Welcome reception

Thursday, 22 Sep.

1300-1600 *buses* for guided tours of Frontiers of Flight Museum

1900-2100 (optional) dinner at hotel

Friday, 23 Sep.

0800 *buses* depart for Cavanaugh Flight Museum (Bou flights and museum)

1100-1700 *buses* return to hotel

1200-1600 Northcenter Park Mall

1800 *buses* to Texas BBQ dinner

Saturday, 24 Sep.

1000-1130 Business Meeting

1000-1200 cooking demo for Ladies

1200-1300 Lunch for Ladies/guests

1700 Group pictures

1900 Banquet at hotel

Sunday, 25 Sep.

Depart for home

Note: *buses* provided by Association.

Pig Roast

by Tom Snodgrass [457, 70]

Vietnam was an education for me in so many ways. As with most 21 year olds, I figured I knew pretty much all I needed to know, but I wasn't prepared for the many lessons in store for me. For sure, hooch life for this kid resulted in exposure to, and participation in a lot of goofy stuff. This included, but was not limited to, staying up late, telling lies, and drinking ourselves silly – all made possible simply because we were guys who had no adult supervision.

While I would never confuse my home town in southern Ohio with a large city, I think it's safe to say that I was a city boy and not a country boy. That fact was driven home in a big way at Cam Ranh Bay when I learned where pork comes from.

Someone was collecting money to purchase a live pig for a good old country pig roast right in our hooch party area. Figuring that this fool and his money have been parted before, why not invest in this venture? After all, the concept involved three of my favorite pastimes: eating, drinking, and acting a fool. As the day approached to purchase a pig at Nha Trang to be air-freighted via Caribou to V-192, I was curious to see just what kind of pig would arrive. For all I knew, it would be a stuffed pig, a jar of pickled pigs feet, or just a picture of a pig and we would all have a hoot laughing about how we were scammed. Much to my surprise, when the crate arrived it contained a live 88 pound pig complete with squealing and pooping. I watched with interest as a few of the country boys prepared an area in the sand between two hootches for the pig to meet his maker and be prepared for our little soiree.

As I recall, they dug a hole in the sand to use as a fire pit, suspended a caldron of water over the fire, and brought the water to a boil. Then they fashioned a makeshift meat hook on one of the hootches and produced a ball peen hammer and a large butcher

knife. Faster that you can say "what's next" someone opened the door on the crate and out popped the pig's head. Immediately, one of the guys hit this pig square between the eyes with that ball peen hammer. It was a tremendous blow. All four of the pig's legs went out from under him and he was motionless for the millisecond it took for another guy to drive the butcher knife deep into the pig's neck severing what I assumed to be his jugular. This city boy stood their with his mouth gaping open and in a state of shock as he watched at least a gallon of blood shoot 2-3 feet from the pig's throat as he squealed his last. The only thing I could say was, "What the hell just happened here?"

After the pig expired, two guys pulled him from the crate and poured scalding water all over the pig. They followed this by using the blade of the butcher knife to scrape the hair off of the pig and then hung it on the meat hooks for the next phase of pig prep. An incision was made vertically in the pig's belly and someone who allegedly knew what he was doing surgically removed items from the pig's abdominal cavity. I'm not sure what the items were, but as I recall they would poison the meat if not removed. Imagine that, all this time, I thought that anything we ate at the feast would be reduced to benign status once WE were properly pickled.

After the prep work was completed, they put an apple in his mouth, mounted him horizontally on some sort of shaft and hoisted him over a huge barbeque pit where he roasted for the next 30-35 hours. A huge crowd gathered in our outdoor party area as the pig reached perfection and the feast began. For reasons I will never admit to, my memory is fuzzy on the details of what happened after we ate, but I know it involved a lot of sophomoric revelry and many participants taking a plunge in an ice water bath. In the end, even though the pig was consumed in its entirety, it still fared better than most of us. But a good time was had by all.

Oh ... to be young again!

Bou Heroes at Duc Lap

*7th AF Silver Star Citation
S.O. G-4044, 27 Dec 1968*

Sergeant Fred G. Carr distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force as a C-7A Flight Engineer near Duc Lap, Republic of Vietnam on 25 August 1968. On that date, Sergeant Carr was flying a Tactical Emergency Airdrop mission delivering critically needed ammunition through vicious concentrations of antiaircraft and automatic weapons fire in which his aircraft sustained severe battle damage, disabling it. Only through his perseverance during an additional pass in a new aircraft, through the same hostile environment which had destroyed five other aircraft, was this vital resupply mission accomplished. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Sergeant Carr has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.



*7th AF DFC Citation
S.O. G-3712 28, Nov 1968*

Lieutenant Colonel Elbert L. Mott distinguished himself by heroism in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force at Duc Lap, Republic of Vietnam on 25 August 1968. On that date, Colonel Mott flew an emergency resupply airdrop mission to beleaguered Special Forces personnel who were critically low on supplies and in imminent danger of being overrun. With complete disregard for his personal safety, Colonel Mott flew his aircraft through intensive hostile fire at low altitude to deliver his cargo with pinpoint accuracy. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Colonel Mott reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

Caribou Pipeline to Duc Lap

The Duc Lap Civilian Irregular Defense Group camp lives on the end of a U.S. Air Force C-7 Caribou pipeline. Caribou crews from the 483rd Tactical Airlift Wing almost daily shuttle food, ammunition, lumber, concertina wire and a variety of other supplies into this camp of CIDG troops with dependents and U.S. Special Forces advisers.

That predominantly Montagnard camp near the Cambodian border is but one of many locations that rely on the Caribou "pipeline."

"We just couldn't live without 'em," said 1st Lt. John Cronlum, Duc Lap advisory team executive officer. "It's pretty difficult to get a convoy into here, so we have to rely on the C-7s."

Coming into Duc Lap, the Caribou had to circle the field three times until a U.S. Army helicopter had cleared the landing area.

Cronlum said that, independent of the camp itself, the area is often used as a staging zone for U.S. and ARVN operations which are also supported by Caribou.

Time and time again the C-7s had visited the two red clay hills known as Duc Lap. Tree tops in the camp area are dotted with what looks like white hankies. "Those are parachutes from illumination flares fired from mortars. Your C-7s bring in the flares, as well as all our other ammunition." That includes the rocket launchers, recoilless rifles, grenade launchers, and countless small arms.

"The mission of the camp is to survey the area for enemy troop movements," Cronlum said. "We have two types of teams. One on perimeter defense four clicks (kilometers) around the camp. The other goes on regular operations to halt infiltration," he continued.

The first Caribou run of that day included food as well as gas for the jeep and truck that greeted the aircraft upon landing. Requests for goods are made to

the camp's immediate headquarters at Ban Me Thuot, starting point for sorties to and from Duc Lap. The Caribou pilot can and does act as bus driver between the two points by occasionally adding passengers to his load.

Cronlum said that about 95 per cent of the camp's personnel are Montagnards. "Now that they are better armed, they can stand up to Viet Cong and NVA intimidation. All they had before were crossbows which really are no match for automatic weapons," he went on.

The noticeable serenity of the area was quite a contrast to the times that the camp has been under heavy attack – times when the C-7s kept bringing in supplies.

Most of the working and living areas of the Camp are buried under clay, timber, and cement to withstand attacks. There is a project going on to cap sandbag bunkers with cement that is brought in by Caribou.

A maze of tunnels leads to the tactical operations center, the heart of the camp, where a radio operator keeps in touch with landing Caribous.

The camp dispensary is also underground and is run by Sgt. Charles Bickenheuser, a medical technician qualified to perform minor surgery. Bickenheuser refers to his dispensary as a "hospital" with its clean, well-equipped operating room and medical laboratory which is equipped to provide most of the services of a large hospital lab.

There is a second underground dispensary at another part of the camp that is used as a back-up. Medical supplies are Caribou delivered.

One of the Montagnard women at the camp is a trained nurse and assists Bickenheuser, who sometimes doubles as veterinarian for camp pets.

The advisory team spends much of its time in the "team" room, an above ground structure that serves as a dining hall by day and movie theater by night. Their refrigerator is stocked with refreshments brought in by Caribou.

They also use the building for group discussions and problem solving ses-

sions.

At night, those who aren't on watch descend like moles into underground sleeping quarters lit by glaring light bulbs.

As Caribou crews fly back to Cam Ranh Bay Air Base after a day of supplying Duc Lap, they are quite aware that Duc Lap lives. They make it so.

Enlisted Milestones in History

3 Oct 1993: TSgt Timothy Wilkinson, MSgt Scott Fales and SSgt Jeffrey Bray, members Task Force Ranger in Mogadishu, Somalia, respond to a firefight. Wilkinson earns the Air Force Cross for extraordinary heroism – the first since Vietnam; Fales and Bray earn Silver Stars for gallantry.

25 Jun 1996: Khobar Towers Dhahran, Saudia Arabia, nineteen Air Force personnel killed in the terrorist bombing.

Third Offensive: 1968

Excerpted from
Special Forces at War
by Shelby L. Stanton

The pace of the war in 1968 intensified again when the long-anticipated communist Third Offensive began on August 18 in Tay Ninh Province and then spread to other regions of the country. The most significant battle of this offensive occurred in the Central Highlands at Camp Duc Lap. From August 23 to 29 three North Vietnamese Army regiments (66th, 95C, 320th) attempted to destroy the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) camp as well as nearby South Vietnamese district headquarters. Camp Duc Lap was partially overrun, but the camp defenders eventually regained all fallen positions with the help of counterattacking elements from both 2nd and 5th Mobile Strike Force Commands. The North Vietnamese were forced to retreat.

Growing Old

Your kids are becoming you
... and you don't like them
... but your grandchildren are perfect!

Going out is good.
Coming home is better!

When people say you look "Great"
... they add "for your age!"

When you needed the discount,
you paid full price.
Now you get discounts on everything...
movies, hotels, flights,
but you're too tired to use them.

You forget names ... but it's OK,
because other people forgot
they even knew you!!!

The 5 pounds you wanted to lose
is now 15 and you have a better chance
of losing your keys than the 15 pounds.

You realize you're never going
to be really good at anything
... especially golf.

Your spouse is counting on you
to remember things you don't remember.

The things you used to care to do,
you no longer care to do,
but you really do care that you
don't care to do them anymore.

Your husband sleeps better on a
lounge chair with the TV blaring
than he does in bed.
It's called his "pre-sleep".

Remember when your mother said,
"Wear clean underwear in case you
GET in an accident"?
Now you bring clean underwear in case
you HAVE an accident!

You used to say,
"I hope my kids GET married...
Now it's, "I hope they STAY married!"

You miss the days when everything worked
with just an "ON-OFF" switch.

When Google, iPod, e-mail, modem ...
were unheard of, and a mouse
made you climb on a table.

You used to use more 4 letter words ...
"what?" ... "when?" ... ???

Now that you can afford
expensive jewelry,
it's not safe to wear it anywhere.

Your husband has a night out
with the guys, but he's home by 9:00 P.M.
Next week it will be 8:30 P.M.

You read 100 pages into a book
before you realize you've read it.

Notice everything they sell
in stores is "sleeveless"?!!!

What used to be freckles
are now liver spots.

Everybody whispers.

Now that your husband has retired ...
you'd give anything if he'd find a job!

You have 3 sizes of clothes in your closet ...
2 of which you will never wear.

But old is good in some things:
old songs,
old movies,
And best of all, **OLD FRIENDS!!**

I Want To Be A Fighter Pilot

Sir:

I am D. J. Baker and I would appreciate it if you could tell me what it takes to be an F-22 fighter pilot in the USAF. What classes should I take in high school to help the career I want to take later in life? What could I do to get into the Air Force Academy?

Sincerely,
DJ Baker

From: xxx, Lt Col, HQ AETC

Anybody in our outfit want to help this poor kid from Cyberspace?

A worldly and jaded C-130 pilot, Major xxx, rises to the task of answering the young man's letter.

Dear DJ,

Obviously, through no fault of your own, your young and impressionable brain has been poisoned by the superfluous, hyped-up, "Top Gun" media portrayal of fighter pilots.

Unfortunately, this portrayal could not be further from the truth. In my experience, I've found most fighter pilots pompous, backstabbing, momma's boys with inferiority complexes, as well as being extremely over-rated aeronautically. However, rather than dash your budding dreams of becoming a USAF pilot, I offer the following alternative:

What you really want to aspire to is the exciting, challenging and rewarding world of TACTICAL AIRLIFT. And this, young DJ, means one thing, the venerable workhorse, the C-130! I can guarantee no fighter pilot can brag that he has led a 12-ship formation down a valley at 300 feet above the ground, with the navigator leading the way and trying to interpret an alternate route to the drop zone, avoiding pop-up threats, and coordinating with AWACS, all while eating a box lunch with the engineer in the back relieving himself, and the loadmaster puking in his trash can!

I tell you, DJ, Air Combat Command airlift is where it's at! Where else is it legal to throw tanks, HUMVs, and other crap out the back of an airplane, and not even worry about it when the chute doesn't open and it torpedoes the General's staff car! Nowhere else can you land on a 3,000 foot dirt strip, kick a bunch of ammo and stuff out on the ramp without stopping, then takeoff again before range control can call to tell you that you've landed on the wrong LZ! And talk about exotic travel – when C-130's go somewhere, they GO somewhere (usually for 3 months, unfortunately). This gives you the opportunity to immerse yourself in the local culture long enough to give the locals a bad taste in their mouths regarding the USAF and Americans in general, not something those C-17 Globemaster III pilots can do from their airport hotel rooms!

As far as recommendations for your course of study, I offer these:

1. Take a lot of math courses. You'll need all the math skills you can muster to enable you to calculate per diem rates around the world, and when trying to split up the crew's bar tab so that the copilot really believes he owes 85% of the whole thing and the navigator believes he owes the other 20%.

2. Health sciences are important, too. You need a thorough knowledge of biology to make educated guesses of how much longer you can drink beer before the G.I.s catch up to you from that meal you ate at the place that had the really good belly dancers in some God-forsaken foreign country whose name you can't even pronounce.

3. Social studies are also beneficial. It is important for a good airlifter to have the cultural knowledge to be able to ascertain the exact location of the nearest topless bar in any country in the world, then be able to convince the local authorities to release the loadmaster after he offends every sensibility of the local religion and culture.

4. A foreign language is helpful but not required. You will never be able to

pronounce the names of the NAVAIDs in France, and it's much easier to ignore them and to go where you want to anyway. As a rule of thumb: waiters and bellhops in France are always called "Pierre," in Spain it's "Hey, Pedro" and in Italy, of course, it's "Mario." These terms of address also serve in other countries interchangeably, depending on the level of awareness of the addressee.

5. A study of geography is paramount. You will need to know the basic location of all the places you've been when you get back from your TDY and are ready to stick those little pins in that huge world map you've got taped to your living room wall, right next to the giant wooden giraffe statue and beer stein collection.

Well, DJ, I hope this little note inspires you. And by the way, forget about the Academy thing. All airlifters know that there are waaay too few women and too little alcohol there to provide a well-balanced education. A nice, big state college or the Naval Academy would be a much better choice.

xxx,

Major, USAF

Short Timer

by Kenny Bryant [458, 71]

At Phu Cat, we didn't have a BX, so twice a week we took a duce and a half to Qui Nhon for "supplies," taking turns riding "Shotgun." Once, my roommate (named Pavilok) took my place – I'd pulled a double shift and didn't remember that I'd volunteered.

On the way back, they got caught in a cross fire and the VC blew a half pallet of beer off the truck, so they retreated to an Army fire base. That night, the Army guys confiscated the rest of the beer.

I don't think he ever forgave me for getting him to take my place. I think he only had a couple of weeks left in country and you KNOW how skittish you get when you start getting short. We'd always say, "What a shame it would be to not make it home with only a week or two left."

Museum of Aviation C-7A S/N 62-9756

The Museum of Aviation at Robins AFB, GA is considering a major rework of its historic "Caribou." Your recent reunion made us more aware of its less than stellar condition. As a result we plan to move it up in the repainting queue to either late this year or sometime next year. While we can give her a good paint job we are still in need of other various items that will be needed for the serious restoration we plan before it goes into a future hangar.

As I mentioned when I talked to your association, it is very high on list to be sheltered either in the next hangar or, if I can figure out how to squeeze it in the back of our new hangar now.

With all that in mind, we could sure use some help acquiring some of the parts we need for the complete restoration before it goes inside for the last time. Granted we're not sure exactly when that will be but some of the parts are getting scarce. I can only outline our requirements and if corporately or individually your members would like to help us we will always be appreciative. **Attached is a short slide show showing some of the parts we need and it will be pretty obvious why. Also attached is a list that reference the parts book to clearly identify what we need.**

We would sincerely appreciate any help y'all could provide. You know we are committed to preserving this bird and as I briefed, it will be here for at least 100 or 200 years. We just need a little help to make it the best possible example for posterity.

Ken Emery, Museum of Aviation Director
Robins AFB, GA 31098 478-926-5796



All of the cockpit glass is crazed and delaminating

Parts Needed by the Museum of Aviation for C-7A 62-9756 restoration

Location	T. O.: 1C-7A-4 Part Number	Qty
Cockpit		
Clock	A13A or AN5743	2
Cockpit Panel assy, LH	C4F1528-49	1
Cockpit Panel assy, center	C4F1528-51/57	1
Cockpit Panel assy, RH	C4F1528-9	1
Windows		
LH window Slider Assy	C4B1137-1	1
LH Slider Glass	C4B1133-3	1
RH window Slider Assy	C4B1137-2	1
LH Rear	C4B1139-3	1
RH Rear	C4B1139-4	1
LH Eyebrow	C4B1140-3	1
RH Eyebrow	C4B1140-4	1
RH Aft Overhead	C4B1141-5	1
LH Aft Overhead	C4B1142-3	1
LH Windshield	C4B10215-1	1
RH Windshield	C4B10215-2	1
Hatch, assembly	C4B1144-5	1
Panel assy, roof hatch	C4B1143-5	1
RH Slider Glass	C4B1133-4	1
Ramp		
Coupling	8-031	2
Adapter	C4B1885-1	1
Shaft Assy, drive	C4B1884-1	1
Shaft Assy	C4B1667-3	2
Gear assy, bevel	AR300	1
Gear assy, bevel	AR320	1
Gear bevel, RH	C4B1650-1	1
Gear bevel, LH	C4B1650-3	1
Mechanism assy	C4B1671-1	1
Actuator	R6116-11	1
Misc.		
Top Fuselage access Spring	C5P155-1	4
Panel assy, hinged	C4B1712-5	4
Spring	CSP155-1	4
Panel assy, hinged	C4B1712-3	4
Amplifier, elec control	AM6108ARN-97	1
Converter, RMI	CV1275/ARN	1
Panel, switch, IFF antenna	796-8663-001	1
Flap Seal, Fwd	C4W1861-7 or C4W1861-1	2
Flap Seal, Trailing edge	C4W1861-9 or C4W1861-3	2
Engine Cover assy, latch, LH	C4P1098-35	1
Engine Cover assy, latch, LH	C4P1098-41	1
Engine Cover assy, latch, LH	C4P1098-43	1
Engine Cover assy, latch, RH	C4P1098-44	1
Gear Cover L&R	C4U1050-5 or C4U1049-11S	2

KC-46A – New USAF Tanker

The Boeing Company has received a contract from the U.S. Air Force to build the next-generation aerial refueling tanker aircraft that will replace 179 of the service's 400 KC-135 tankers.

Boeing will design, develop, manufacture, and deliver 18 initial combat-ready tankers by 2017.

The Air Force chose an American-built, multi-mission tanker based on the proven Boeing 767 commercial airplane and meets all requirements at the lowest risk for the warfighter and the best value for taxpayers. The integrated "One Boeing" team is from various sites across the company, including employees from the Commercial Airplanes; Defense, Space & Security; and Engineering, Operations & Technology organizations.

The KC-46A tankers will be built using a low-risk approach to manufacturing by a trained and experienced U.S. work force at existing Boeing facilities. The KC-46A tanker also will fuel the economy, supporting about 50,000 total U.S. jobs with Boeing and more than 800 suppliers in more than 40 states.

The KC-46A Tanker is a wide body, multi-mission aircraft updated with the latest and most advanced technology and capable of meeting or exceeding the Air Force's needs for transport of fuel, cargo, passengers and patients. It includes state-of-the-art systems to meet the demanding mission requirements of the future, including a digital flight deck featuring Boeing 787 Dreamliner electronic displays and a flight control design philosophy that places aircrews in command rather than allowing computer software to limit combat maneuverability.

The KC-46A features an advanced KC-10 boom with an expanded refueling envelope, increased fuel off-load rate and fly-by-wire control system. The KC-46A burns 24 percent less fuel than EADS' proposed A330 tanker.

Travis AFB Museum C-7A S/N 60-3767

The Travis AFB Museum will soon change its name to the Jimmie Doolittle Air & Space Museum. On 1 January 2011, a fund raising effort was kicked off to build a new museum on 11 acres at the Travis Air Force Base Heritage Center. This \$12.5 million dollar capital project is for all who have a passion for aviation, for history, and a love of our country.

The Museum will tell the story and honor those that have made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom! Help is solicited to create a place of learning that inspires and educates.

The primary goal at the new museum is to educate the public on the history of Jimmy Doolittle, our war history, the Berlin Airlift, the return of POWs from Vietnam, and why so many hundreds of thousands of people have sacrificed and died to keep our country and the world free!

Located an hour from San Francisco or Sacramento, the Travis Air Museum has one of the largest collections of military aircraft and artifacts on the West Coast. Established in 1982 and opened in 1987, the collection contains 35 aircraft, including a C-7A Caribou, plus several hundred other artifacts. The current museum is in a 45,000 sq. ft. former commissary building.

Construction will begin in the spring of 2012 with the grand opening in the fall of 2013.

This is a possible location for one of our memorial benches and a reunion some time after 2013.

About Dogs and People

If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I die I want to go where they went. – Will Rogers

The average dog is a nicer person than the average person. – Andy Rooney

If you pick up a starving dog and make him prosperous, he will not bite you; that is the principal difference between a dog and a man – Mark Twain

One reason a dog can be such a comfort when you're feeling blue is that he doesn't try to find out why. – Author Unknown

A man may smile and bid you hail, yet wish you to the devil; but when a good dog wags his tail, you know he's on the level. – Author Unknown

There is no psychiatrist in the world like a puppy licking your face. – Ben Williams

Scratch a dog and you'll find a permanent job. – Franklin P. Jones

Don't accept your dog's admiration as conclusive evidence that you are wonderful. – Ann Landers

Anybody who doesn't know what soap tastes like never washed a dog. – Franklin P. Jones

If I have any beliefs about immortality, it is that certain dogs I have known will go to heaven – and very, very few persons. – James Thurber

If your dog is fat, you aren't getting enough exercise.

My goal in life is to be as good a person as my dog already thinks I am.

Dogs love their friends and bite their enemies, quite unlike people, who are incapable of pure love and always have to mix love and hate – Sigmund Freud

Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives whole. – Roger Caras

The most affectionate creature in the world is a wet dog. – Ambrose Bierce

Properly trained, a Man can be Dog's best friend. – Corey Ford

The reason a dog has so many friends is that he wags his tail instead of his tongue.

Women and cats will do as they please, and men and dogs should relax and get used to the idea. – Robert A. Heinlein

My dog is worried about the economy because Alpo is up to \$3 a can. That's almost \$21 in dog money. – Joe Wein-stein

Duct Tape

by Dave Kowalski [908, 75]

The 908th Tactical Air Group (Reserve) had the C-7A since 1971 and most of the maintenance troops learned how to work on them by October 1974. This was before Complete Tool Kits (CTKs) and everyone carried their own toolbox to the job site. We also carried our own goodie bag of spare bench stock items: nuts, bolts, gaskets, etc. I was flight chief at the time and carried some of the big stuff like duct tape, All Purpose Glue (APG), and rolls of Velcro tape in the flight line expediter truck. None of it was accountable. The guys just used the stuff as needed.

The flight crews want to get the heaters in the Bou working. Pilots can't fly if their feet are cold. Some crew chiefs learned that the main malfunction of the cockpit heater was the football valve that controlled the differential pressure operating the fuel control for the heater. It was located under the seam of the nose access hatch, right in front of the cockpit windows. The vent for the football valve was also located directly under the seam of the nose access hatch. When it rained, the seal leaked, the valve filled with water, and the valve became inoperative.

While the crew chiefs had the hatch open and were fixing this problem, they also fixed any broken or cracked heater ducts. The ducts were fiberglass and the quickest way to repair them was with duct tape. If you ever had the nose hatch open on a C-7, you know it is one of the most crowded compartments on the aircraft; with heaters and ducts, pulleys, gimbals, and brackets. Most of the heaters got fixed and the pilots were happy and they could keep their little footsies warm.

Sometime that fall season I discovered that my large roll of 3" duct tape was missing from the truck. The crew chiefs had a tendency to pass the tape from one person to another as required. Duct tape can be used for many things to repair a Caribou! I read everyone the

riot act and said that I wanted that tape back right away. After several days, it still hadn't shown up so I figured someone had taken it for a home project. We needed the tape, so I ordered another roll and the missing tape was written off.

Fast forward to a windy spring morning in April of 1975. The dogwood trees were in bloom and everything was beautiful. We had just blocked out our first four morning flights. Three of the birds took off on time. The last one sat on the takeoff row working his flight controls. The pilot on this aircraft was Lt. Col. C.B. (the same guy who was mission commander when we brought the Caribous back from Thailand). That tale was in the July 2005 newsletter. Lt. Col. C.B. always checked all of his flight controls one last time before releasing the brakes. Aircraft #4 came taxing back to the spot. During the debriefing Lt. Col. C.B. said there was something wrong with the elevators — big time. The crew chief confirmed it. When the nose access hatch was opened — yep, you guessed it! The missing roll of duct tape (*six months missing*) was wedged behind the elevator control bracket. Every time the control was moved, it got wedged tighter and tighter. Lt. Col. C.B. said he thought he felt a slight bump when he checked his flight controls. That roll of duct tape lay on a little shelf angle above the elevator control bracket through dozens of take offs and landings and had not dropped off until that spring morning.

This could easily have been one of those "unexplained" aircraft accidents. FOD kills!

Mortars at Can Tho

by Rich Coca [536, 67]

In March 1968 at Can Tho, sometime around lunch time, the pilots were over at the Special Forces chow hall getting some lunch and I was on top of the wing refueling a 536th yellow tail when a mortar round hit down by the fire station. I immediately let go of the fueling hose, slid down the flap and

took off running to the nearest cover I could find, which I thought was a duce and half truck.

I slid underneath the truck and was hugging the rear axle for protection. No sooner had I settled under the truck when I noticed there were two guys over in the ditch yelling for me to come over there. I knew the ditch ran between the Caribou parking ramp and the fire station road and was always full of water, so there was no way I was going to get wet and muddy.

After about 6 to 10 mortars, the attack stopped. That's when I found out these Army guys were the truck driver and his spotter. The real kicker is that when I crawled out from under the truck, to my surprise, I found that this truck was loaded with 105 mm charges that were to be loaded on the aircraft as soon I finished with the refueling.

I felt like a real fool that day, but I knew that someone was definitely looking out for me. From that day on, I was going to get in the ditch or run to the bunker, a Connex container, we built behind the 8th Aerial Port building.

Extractions

by Cary Stephenson [458, 67]

The original mission on 27 Sep 1968 was a routine Med-Evac. We had a busy day with 12 sorties, finishing up at Nha Trang. We refueled and headed home at dusk to Cam Ranh Bay. Enroute to CRB we got an emergency call from ALCE telling us to proceed to a staging area west of Ban Me Thuot City and pick up a 25 man Special Forces team and take them to Nha Trang. They reportedly needed immediate extraction as they had engaged NVA regulars, were low on food, water and ammo, plus some may be wounded. It was dark when we arrived over Ban Me Thuot. We made contact with the team and easily located them on the short grass strip which was flooded with moonlight. I elected to make a lights-out landing and planned to keep the engines running.

Once on the ground, the troops (all

Continued on Page 11

Extractions (from Page 10)

U.S. Army) quickly boarded. The leader was in a big hurry to get airborne as he felt that the NVA had been tailing them. I remember how exhausted the troops looked, some were shaking all over (malaria maybe) and it was obvious the men went through one hell of an ordeal on these interdiction missions. I believe we picked up 26 troops; don't recall the extent of the wounded. They wanted to take all of their weapons and equipment. I could see an over gross weight take-off in the making, but agreed to take everything. The over grossed condition didn't bother me as much as being able to clear the tall trees at the end of the short grass field. I made the take-off, brushing the tops of the trees at the end of the strip. At Nha Trang, I inspected the aircraft and found several small nicks in the propeller blades and a few scratches under the fuselage.

As we taxied out for take-off to CRB, ALCE called and told us to go back and pick up another 25 man team working their way to the staging area. They also needed immediate extraction as they were virtually out of everything and had seriously wounded troops among them. Upon arrival we did not see the troops, had no radio contact, and were unsure if the area was secure. We were prepared to wait them out if necessary. Again, I made a lights-out landing. The troops came out of the shadows and started boarding. The team leader was anxious to get airborne, he was also worried that the NVA was tailing them and were not far behind.

A medic came up front and told me two of his wounded could not make it over the mountains to Nha Trang – one was shot through the neck, struggling to breathe; another with a hand blown off who had lost a lot of blood. I suggested we fly around the mountains and he readily agreed. Then, I remembered that we would come close to Tuy Hoa and could get immediate help for the seriously wounded.

Once airborne, I contacted Tuy Hoa, declared an emergency, described our onboard wounded needing urgent attention, and requested that doctors meet the aircraft. The medical help was there waiting when we landed. I obtained contact information for a doctor so that I could check on the wounded later. We dropped the rest of the troops at Nha Trang and went home. Our crew day had been over 18 hours when we closed out the mission.

A follow-up late the next day made my day. The doctor I called told me the two most seriously wounded were stable and would survive, but likely would have died had they not received medical attention when they did.

Note: Major Stephenson and his crew received the DFC for this mission. Other crew members were probably Lt Castner R. Waddell and TSgt Lawrence F. Snyder, based on 7th AF Special Orders.

DFC at Katum

by Jan Gerstner [458, 70]

There was a Tactical Emergency or Emergency Resupply at Katum, I don't remember which, staged out of Bien Hoa. We got tapped to fly ammo to Katum and the copilot (from CRB) was replaced with a wing safety Capt. Don't know why.

Upon arrival at Katum, we were put in a hold while the "much more important" Herky Birds did some aerial deliveries. LAPES or airdrops, don't remember which. Fighters and gunships were tilling the countryside.

Our turn came. On final approach we saw artillery or mortar fire pitch dirt and a Herky Bird sent rubber into the air. There were already holes in the runway and I planned a full-flap approach. The Capt was less than happy that I continued and the flight engineer reported hearing the tinkle of ground fire modifying the tail.

A 40° flap landing was, ahem, firm. Full reverse and braking let us taxi directly onto the ramp. The flight engineer and I had set up for a speed off

load, which we did to the accompaniment of mortar shell explosions. When the flight engineer called "Load clear," I shoved the throttles full forward and did a dance off the ramp and between the holes to take off. With holes in the aluminum and c**p in our pants I just headed back to Bien Hoa.

As usual, the "Queens of the Fleet" – the Herky Birds – got the front row seats and we were parked in the Out-back. The Capt was continuing a "discussion" he had begun about my undisciplined manner. Just as I was about to jump off the ramp, he "helped" me. As a courteous 1/Lt, I immediately "helped" him off, too. Two torn flight suits later we were in front of the crusty Maj in the ALCE. He feigned not noticing our bruised faces and torn cotton grays as he received our report, in writing.

After I returned to the U.S., the Lt Col squadron commander at the USAFA caught me as I was headed out the door at the end of the day (T-41 Squadron) at Peterson Field. With an enigmatic smile he said, in what was probably a mock stern voice, "Gerstner, wear your Class A's tomorrow and be here at 0700 sharp." Gulp.

All night I tried to think of what I had done and what he was going to do to me. I showed as ordered, to find the squadron in formation and a two-star standing beside him. It looked like a firing squad. Figured I was doomed.

The Lt Col called the squadron to attention and ordered me to stand beside him. He did a quick intro and the two-star proceeded to read the citation and pin the DFC on me. I've always wondered if the other guys got DFCs. Still can't figure out why I did.

Years later, I got what may be a partial explanation of the possible confusion about the date (8 Nov 70). Turned out it was the Army commander at Katum who put me (us?) in for the DFC. An E-6 in Personnel at Reese AFB said the Air Force probably didn't like the wording and changed the citation to reflect what they wanted. Don't know if that's true.

Special Forces in Vietnam: 1967

Excerpted from
Special Forces at War
by Shelby L. Stanton

The escalation of the Vietnam conflict during 1967 involved Special Forces in greatly expanded combat operations. During the year, more camps were opened in the midst of traditional Viet Cong base areas or North Vietnamese border strongholds. Camp Con Thien was constructed next to the DMZ separating North and South Vietnam. This placement was immediately challenged by two NVA battalions that attempted to overrun the compound on 8 May.

Another ill-fated northern camp, Lang Vei, suffered a ground attack aided by inside Viet Cong infiltrators on May 4. These actions underscored the increased tempo of fighting along the northern border. By year's end several North Vietnamese divisions were located inside Quang Tri Province.

Camps Prek Lok and Tong Le Chon were established in War Zone C northwest of Saigon. Both forts came under heavy enemy attack, and Tong Le Chon was reduced to shambles by a major North Vietnamese infantry assault on August 7.

Camp Loc Ninh [see *Bou Heroes at Loc Ninh* on this page], another War Zone C bastion, was close-assaulted several times between October 29 and November 2. During these encounters Detachment A-331 repulsed repeated attacks by the 9th Viet Cong Division's 272nd and 273rd regiments. The enemy sustained grievous casualties and failed to reach the outer parapets of the citadel.

Following this defeat, North Vietnamese and Viet Cong forces withdrew closer to the Cambodian border – within easy proximity of their main refitting and supply centers – and reconcentrated efforts against traditional targets like Camp Bu Dop [see *Bou Heroes at Bu Dop* in the next column].

On November 29 the enemy stormed

the Bo Duc district headquarters while pinning nearby Camp Bu Dop under intense mortar and rocket barrages.

In the western Central Highlands, heavy fighting erupted around Camp Dak To in Kontum Province on November 5, 1967. Camp and Mobile Strike Force reconnaissance units became embroiled in combat, and this action developed into one of the longest and hardest-fought engagements of the Second Indochina War.

On November 15 and 16, Camp Dak To was hit by several mortar volleys that caused serious damage and smashed three Air Force cargo planes on the runway [see *C-130 Losses at Dak To* on next page]. Another Special Forces camp, Ben Het was subjected to daily concentrations of mortar and rocket fire.

Bou Heroes at Bu Dop

7th AF Air Medal Citation

Lt Col Robert J. Wann, Maj Bobby H. Haverland, Capt Richard H. Solem, and SSgt William P. Murphy, all of the 458th TAS, received the DFC for actions at Bu Dop on 24 or 25 Mar 1967. Details are probably similar to those described in the citation for the Air Medal awarded to Capt Wayne E. DeLawter (7th AF SO G-1572, 3 Oct 1967).

“Capt Wayne E. DeLawter distinguished himself by meritorious achievement while participating in aerial flight near Bu Dop, Republic Of Vietnam on 24 March 1967. On that date, Capt DeLawter was flying a Tactical Emergency mission in support of besieged friendly ground forces. During the course of this mission Capt DeLawter 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. The besieged camp, using the airlifted reinforcements, was able to repel the attack by the hostile force. The

professional skill and airmanship displayed by Capt DeLawter reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.”

Bou Heroes at Loc Ninh

Adapted from
7th AF Silver Star Citation

Major Robert S. Hopkins II [and his crew: 1/Lt George C. Patrick, Jr and TSgt Allan E. Gustafson] distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing armed force as a C-7A Aircraft Commander near Loc Ninh, Republic of Vietnam on 2 November 1967. On that date, Major Hopkins was flying a Tactical Emergency Airlift mission carrying a Combat Control Team to Loc Ninh, scene of a fierce battle which had begun two days before. The airstrip was under hostile fire and Major Hopkins' aircraft came under automatic weapons fire throughout the approach. Less than five hundred feet of the dirt airstrip was useable due to craters from hostile artillery, and even this short stretch of dirt was covered with unexploded mortar shells. Major Hopkins made a successful landing, delivering the Combat Control Team, the first step in opening the field for the airlift vital to the forces at Loc Ninh. By his gallantry and devotion to duty, Major Hopkins has reflected great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

CRB Troop Center

Stars and Stripes, 19 Feb 67

The first 707 jet ferrying American servicemen directly to Cam Ranh Bay from the United States has touched down at the new airstrip here, officially marking the opening of the U.S. Army's 22nd Replacement Battalion.

The unit will process all Army personnel arriving at or departing from the I and II Corps tactical zones in the Republic of Vietnam. Previously, all USARV personnel were flown in or out of country through Saigon.

C-130 Losses at Dak To (15 Nov 1967)

Excerpted from
Vietnam Air Losses
by Chris Hobson

One of the bloodiest battles of the war was fought in the Central Highlands near Dak To between 3 and 22 November 1967. After three weeks of heavy fighting the US 4th Infantry Division and the 173rd Airborne Brigade forced the NVA to retire, leaving many casualties on both sides. Having noted the pattern of early morning arrivals of C-130's at Dak To, the North Vietnamese waited until three Hercules were sitting on the parking ramp before firing 10 rockets into the area. Two Hercules (62-1865 and 63-7827 of the 776th TAS at CCK) were hit and soon engulfed in flames. A third aircraft was backed out of the way of the inferno by Capt J. H. Glenn and his crew during a lull in the attack and a fourth aircraft, which had landed moments before the first rounds exploded, took off again rapidly. The attack also destroyed 17,000 gallons of fuel and over 1,300 tons of ordnance when the ammunition dump was hit by artillery. The airfield was closed for two days and when it re-opened only one C-130 was permitted on the ground at a time.

Pax From Hon Quan

by Mike Lavelle [535, 68]

I was upgrading to AC, parked on the ramp at Hon Quan, chatting with the IP in the right seat (do not recall his name) and our young flight engineer was loading villagers to ferry to Tonle Cham (there had been a BIG party).

We had been at this all day and it was getting dark. This was to be our last trip to Tonle Cham. The Special Forces guys asked us to take as many villagers as possible, because they had to provide security for those that remained overnight at Hon Quan. We told the flight engineer to board as many of the villagers as he could tie down. When he tapped me on the shoulder and told

us he was ready to go, I looked back down the fuselage.

It was teeming humanity – both the IP and I did the mental arithmetic and decided the flight was doable. And it was. I figured we had a record in the making and asked the flight engineer to count heads after landing (many children and old adults).

My memory is not exact, but the number he gave was around 70, counting the crew. Later on I related all this to the senior flight engineer. He told me our (pretty young) flight engineer that day had been afraid to tell us that he had counted about a 100.

Honey Bucket Humor

A C-141 was scheduled to leave Thule Air Base, Greenland at midnight during a winter month. During the pilot's preflight check, he discovers that the latrine holding tank is still full from the last flight. So a message is sent to the base and an airman who was off duty is called out to take care of it.

The young man finally gets to the air base and makes his way to the aircraft only to find that the latrine pump-truck has been left outdoors and is frozen solid, so he must find another one in the hangar, which takes even more time.

He returns to the aircraft and is less than enthusiastic about what he has to do. Nevertheless, he goes about the pumping job deliberately and carefully (and slowly) so as not to risk criticism later.

As he's leaving the plane, the pilot stops him and says, "Son, your attitude and performance has caused this flight to be late and I'm going to personally see to it that you are not just reprimanded but punished."

Shivering in the cold, his task finished, the airman takes a deep breath, stands tall and says, "Sir, with all due respect, I'm not your son. I'm an Airman in the United States Air Force. I've been in Thule, Greenland, for 11 months without any leave, and reindeer are beginning to look pretty good to me.

"I have one stripe, it is 2:30 in the morning, the temperature is 40 degrees below zero, and my job here is to pump s**t out of an aircraft. Now, just exactly what form of punishment did you have in mind?"

Ben Het: Jun-Jul 1969

MACV History, 1969, Vol. II

The Common Service Airlift System (CSAS) emergency airlift procedures as implemented by the 834th Air Div were used with considerable success when the enemy attempted to overrun the Ben Het CIDG camp in late May (see Chapter V, Ground Operations). Enemy activity intensified to the point where the CIDG camp was completely dependent upon aerial resupply. During this period of increased enemy activity, C-7A aircraft were operating into Ben Het. By 1 Jun intense enemy mortar attacks and deteriorating runway conditions forced the suspension of air-landed operations. Air drops of ammunition and supplies began on 3 Jun and continued through 10 Jun with FAC and helicopter gunship support. However, the ground fire threat continued to increase. By 12 Jun the C-7A's were experiencing intense ground fire in their runs over the drop zone. On 13 Jun, in spite of TAC fighter and helicopter gunship support, two of four C-7A's on the drop mission were hit; three crewmen were wounded. As the situation became more untenable, new procedures were employed to minimize the ground fire threat. These tactics included the use of TAC fighters to provide suppression fire, A-1E escort during the drop, close in-trail formation for the C-7A, and a smoke screen laid down by A-1 aircraft. The airfield became insecure and all drops were made inside the camp. With this change in tactics, the C-7A's sustained only one hit through the remainder of the operation. In summary, during the period 3 Jun-3 Jul, 98 airdrop sorties were flown in support of Ben Het CIDG camp, delivering over 200 tons of ammunition.

Con Thien

by Ron Alexander [459, 66]

I served in Viet Nam from November 1966 through November 1967. I was trained on the C-7 Caribou by the U.S. Army at Ft. Benning, GA prior to being deployed to Southeast Asia. When I arrived in country, I was immediately sent to Qui Nhon and assigned to the 92nd Aviation Company. It was quite an experience flying with the Army pilots. They were very cooperative and helped us learn where to go and where not to go. They also showed us many flying techniques that they learned through experience on combat missions. We flew mostly north of Qui Nhon in the I Corps area. Several of our missions took us into Da Nang where we were expected to land the Caribou on the overrun of the 10,000 ft. runway. We would turn off at the beginning of the actual runway and get out of the way of the faster aircraft. This was not a big problem since the overrun was 1,000 ft. in length. It actually provided good practice for the smaller fields we went into in the I Corps area.

In January 1967, the U.S. Air Force took over operation of the Caribou. I was assigned to the 459th Troop Carrier Squadron and our detachment was sent to Da Nang. We were given a jeep and a pickup truck and sent to downtown Da Nang to live in an old French hotel. We had a lot of security at the hotel – one Marine guard. We never had any problems however and we would often go to the top of the hotel and watch rocket attacks the Viet Cong were launching on the Da Nang Air Base.

After the Air Force took over the operation, one of the first directives that came down from Wing Headquarters was that we were no longer to land on the overrun of the runways at Da Nang. They did not consider this a safe operation. This really threw a curve at the controllers who didn't know how to sequence a 70 knot airplane for landing along with fighters who were flying final approach at 150+ kts. The

majority of our flying consisted of supporting U. S. Army Special Forces in the I Corps area along with several U. S. Marine Corps units. We had a small, tight knit group of pilots and mechanics. We worked well together, with a few airplanes. At one time we had 5 Caribous assigned to Da Nang.

I recall several memorable experiences during my year in Viet Nam. I will recount of couple of them. I am sure you have all seen the picture of the C-7 coming apart in the air after being hit by an artillery round. The crew flying that airplane was out of our Da Nang detachment. I was supposed to fly that mission, but Captain Alan Hendrickson asked me that morning if I would swap the duty officer position with him. He said he would take my flights that day if I would take his missions the next day. He needed to be off the following day for some reason.

Captain Hendrickson and the entire crew lost their lives during that mission. As they turned base leg to final at the Special Forces camp a 155 mm round was fired and went through the aft portion of the fuselage. The safety spotter for the artillery piece did not see the airplane turning into the field. The airplane separated at the aft section of the fuselage and the entire remains fell into a small pile on the field. For a long time I felt somewhat responsible for Alan's death, but I knew that it could not have been prevented by anything I might have done. I simply honored his request that day to swap trips. My crew was with him. All were killed immediately. Later, I had the duty of sorting through Alan's personal belongings and sending them to his wife. That is when I came across the poem he had written prior to his death. You may have read it before in the November 2008 newsletter.

During May 1967, a small outpost about 1 mile south of the DMZ was home for a Special Forces unit. As a matter of fact, when you landed toward the south at this outpost you were over the DMZ on base leg. The base was named Con Thien. From the very

first landing until the last airdrop, this Special Forces camp always presented some sort of challenge for the aircrews supplying it. Usually it was a very active area with the North Vietnamese being very active. They would sit a few miles away in the DMZ and lob rockets and artillery rounds into this small base. They would regularly fire at the aircraft flying into Con Thien. The few times we landed, we were warned not to stay parked for too long because they would try to hit the airplane with a rocket or a mortar. Our Caribou crews based out of Da Nang became very well acquainted with this outpost.

Normally, we would end up air dropping into the camp because of the risk of landing. However, on one occasion we flew up to deliver a load of 155 mm shells, along with drinking water. The camp commander said he thought we could land to off-load. He told us the North Vietnamese had just finished a major offensive and things were quiet for the moment. We landed and off-loaded our cargo. We went inside to visit with the Special Forces troops and when we got ready to leave I noticed four Hueys pop up over the hill and land at the camp, right on the runway. There were two gunships and two "slicks." One of the slicks landed in front of our Caribou. I walked out to ask the pilot if he would move so we could depart and as I approached the helicopter I noticed a tall, gray haired man put his cap on to exit the helicopter. Upon closer inspection I noticed four stars on his cap. It was no less than General Westmoreland dropping in for a quick visit with the Special Forces troops. In the other slick was General Walt, the U. S. Marine Corps Commander in Viet Nam. They said hello to all of us, asked the Special Forces Captain how things were going and within 10 minutes they left the area. To say the least, as a young 1st Lieutenant, I was impressed. I was impressed that these two leaders chose to visit the hottest base in South Vietnam. It was a big morale booster for

Continued on Page 15

Con Thien (from Page 14)

the Special Forces troops. The generals let the troops know that they were not leading from Saigon – rather they were in the thick of the battle.

Within a few days, we were airdropping to the troops at Con Thien because of the enemy activity. I think myself and my crew flew the last airplane into and out of the base, to my knowledge (helicopters later went in). The North Vietnamese made a major offensive to take over the camp. For a period of a couple of weeks we were airdropping food, water, ammunition, etc. to the troops. Often, we would come under fairly heavy fire to the point that on more than one flight we would have to follow F-100's into the drop zone after they tried to take out enemy gun positions. We took a number of hits on each mission and the area became more and more active. Major Beardsley and 1st Lt. Ray Valentine, along with Sgts. Karnes and Shedd, distinguished themselves on one of these airdrop missions over Con Thien. Major Beardsley and his crew were awarded the Silver Star for their action.

During the last days of our resupply efforts, every flight to Con Thien was a major event. You got up in the morning knowing you were going to face heavy fire one more day as we normally would fly 2-3 missions per day into the area. Finally, my crew was given an assignment to drop 105 mm ammunition into the camp. We were told the camp had been under heavy attack and the Special Forces unit was on the verge of losing the base. When we contacted the camp on FM radio just prior to reaching the area. The response from the ground was "Who are you and what do you want?" I replied by telling them about the load we had and the voice on the other end of the radio said "Sorry, we don't need your supplies – the Marines have taken over the base and the Special Forces are gone. We are being resupplied by our own helicopters."

With a sense of relief, we returned

to Da Nang. That was the last mission to Con Thien by a Caribou, as far as I know. I was always curious as to the fate of the Special Forces people that we had so closely worked with and one day later in the year, I ran into the camp Commander, a Captain. He told me that they came under siege while defending their base and in the battle he lost a number of his men. He said they were unable to hold the base, so a large contingent of Marines was brought in to beat the enemy back. In July 1967, the Special Forces commander and his surviving team were withdrawn from the camp.

I know we were all relieved when we no longer had to fly into this base. During the time I spent in Vietnam the flights to Con Thien, along with the flights into Khe Sanh, were usually the most hazardous. You could count on some sort of action on just about every flight into either of these bases.

Later, when I was a pilot with Delta Air Lines, I was flying a DC-9 trip from Atlanta to Charleston, SC. In those days people boarded via the front stairs that came out of the airplane so the pilots had a bird's eye view of the people boarding. One evening I noticed a familiar figure walking up the stairs. It was General Westmoreland. After he was seated, I went back to greet him. I recounted the time we had met at Con Thien and he graciously said he remembered it, although I doubt he did. I am quite sure that he made much more of an impression on me than I did on him. No matter, I will never forget General Westmoreland and General Walt visiting Con Thien on that day and risking their lives to talk to their men. It was certainly a day that I will always remember.

Help!!!

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

pathavavan@aol.com

Many Different Jobs

by Harry H. Weaver [483, 66]

I was initially assigned as a SSgt crew chief, when most of the other crew chiefs were E-4's. It didn't take them very long to see that being a crew chief was going to be too easy for me. We were having so many engine problems and delays during launch that they let me pick a few more guys to come in with me after midnight to hot preflight "run-up" every Bou on the next day's flying schedule, to include the backup and spare.

Later, I was selected to drive the maintenance metro van around every morning during launch to try and help get the flight crews to block-out a couple of minutes early. I was also lucky enough to go out with Captain Bunting and a couple of other very fine pilots on a few of our ("You're going to land this thing where????") more exciting missions.

The fickle finger of fate landed on my name again and I spent a month or so as NCOIC of the Pleiku mission site – after it was determined that the officers were no longer needed at the site.

Bou on YouTube

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8PtXS-zSnYU>

Where Are We???

by Serge Molohosky [459, 66]

My most memorable flight with Ron Lester was also on a day when we were trying to get to Khe Sanh. It was another exercise in dodging numerous thunder bumpers. After a long time trying to find a way through with no success, we headed back to the coast with no idea where we really were. When we finally broke out over land, nothing looked familiar and we figured we were north of the DMZ. We dropped down as low as we could over the beaches as we headed south. We were skimming the beaches so low that the flight engineer said the props were making rooster tails in the sand!!!

Heroes at Con Thien

459th TCS History (1967)

Maj Clarence J. Beardsley, 1/Lt Raymond Valentine, SSgt Kenneth K. Karnes, and SSgt Lewis D. Shedd distinguished themselves by gallantry in connection with military operations against an opposing force as crew members, C-7A, at Con Thien Special Forces Camp, Republic of Vietnam on 12 May 1967.

On that date, Maj Beardsley, 1/Lt Valentine, SSgt Karnes, and SSgt Shedd volunteered to participate on an emergency air resupply of desperately needed 105 mm ammunition to Con Thien. Con Thien had been under constant attack for days and heavy fire was continually racking the camp.

Maj Beardsley, acting as instructor pilot, briefed 1/Lt Valentine on drop procedures as they proceeded to execute their first pass over the narrow drop zone from only 500 feet. Hostile forces were so intent on stopping this resupply that they fired mortar rounds at the defenseless C-7A as it started the drop.

Camp personnel warned the crew that mortar rounds were exploding immediately below the aircraft as they continued the emergency drop, and small arms fire cluttered the area.

As the crew, with complete disregard for their personal safety, turned to complete the last drop, they saw tracer rounds closing on their aircraft. Ground troops immediately notified the crew that they were being hit by .50 caliber machine gun rounds. The pilots were unable to avoid hits and continued their drop approach.

One tracer hit the right flap. A tracer and an armor piercing bullet hit the right side of the Caribou, entered the cargo compartment, narrowly missed both flight mechanics who were attempting to ready the ammunition for the drop, and nearly hit the ammunition before exiting out the roof.

An explosive bullet hit just behind the rear ammunition pallet, skimmed the

elevator cables and blew a large hole in the roof, spraying fragments throughout the cargo compartment, again narrowly missing the two flight mechanics.

An armor piercing bullet entered the bottom of the aircraft, ripped only feet behind both pilots, cut both mixture control cables attached to the aircraft roof, damaged the flap actuator rod and sprayed out through the roof.

Despite the intense, accurate hostile fire, and with insurmountable courage and heroism under extreme threat of loss of life and immaculate knowledge of all emergency and routine flight procedures, the crew displayed teamwork and devotion above the call of duty in continuing the drop approach.

When release of the load was attempted, a failure caused by hostile fire caused the load to hang up in the aircraft; thereby making it necessary to return over the drop zone. Special Forces personnel had managed to silence some hostile fire allowing the C-7A to complete the drop encountering only small arms fire.

Departing the drop area, Maj Beardsley realized it would be impossible to return the aircraft to Danang Air Base. The courage and professional skill displayed by the entire crew enabled them to successfully complete an emergency air drop under countless adverse conditions.

First Lieutenant Valentine's coolness and flying skill released Maj Beardsley from the task of continually flying the C-7A and allowed him to supervise and direct the entire mission.

Staff Sergeants Karnes and Shedd, working together with incredible speed and efficiency while under extreme threat of hostile fire, and numerous near misses, repositioned the load for the re-drop in less than half the normal time required.

By their gallantry and devotion to duty, Maj Beardsley, 1/Lt Valentine, SSgt Karnes, and SSgt Shedd have reflected great credit upon themselves and the United States Air Force.

Bou Drops Cargo 2 Miles from DMZ

Caribou Courier, Jun 1967

Con Thien Special Forces Camp is located only two miles from the DMZ. If you happen to land there you can expect small arms and automatic weapons fire on any approach. After landing you can expect a few rounds of 81 mm mortar or a couple of 105 mm howitzer rounds – anyway it's somewhat "hot."

On 2 May [*sic*], 1967, Major Clarence Beardsley, 1st Lt Raymond Valentine and SSgt Lewis Shedd, 459 TCS, departed Danang AB loaded with ammo for Con Thien. They were to airdrop the load. They arrived at Con Thien and established drop configuration and altitude. Now flying a drop pattern at 50 feet sometimes invites problems. It did.

On the first pass two .50 caliber rounds with explosive heads hit the rear section of the aircraft – one round tearing a hole approximately eight inches wide on top of the fuselage. The other round creased the exterior skin of the tail section. Sgt Shedd said, "I moved closer to the front of the aircraft." In addition, the load hung up so another pass was required.

On pass two, "Charlie" improved. One round came in behind the cockpit, one round blasted another hole on top of the fuselage, cutting both mixture cables and missing the control cables by inches. The drop was successful and the crew turned their ventilated "Bou" toward home.

Because of required maintenance, the Bou was returned to Phu Cat. The crew jumped out, looked casually at an occasional hole here and there, pre-flighted another aircraft and departed for Danang. "Another day, another 118 piasters" called one of the crewmembers.

Note: This piece was first printed in the August 2002 newsletter.

Med-evacs at LZ English

537th TCS History (1967)

On the night of 14 Feb 1967, LZ English sustained an attack. The 537 TCS med-evac crew, Capt William H. Grosse, Harry W. Howells, and Army SP4 Anthony Mockunas, was alerted at 1900 Local and airborne at 1930 Local. They were briefed that the five hundred foot ceiling and heavy rain showers at LZ English had prevented the med-evac helicopters from performing this vital mission.

After the hand-off from Phu Cat GCA to Tiger GCA, Capt Grosse was informed that the ceiling now was below 400 feet and that only 1,000 feet of the runway was usable due to a recent mortar attack. Med-evac Bravo was contacted – some of the wounded had to be moved to Qui Nhon for operations if they were to live. In complete disregard for their own safety, which was impaired doubly by the poor flying conditions and ground fire reported by helicopters to be within a quarter mile of the end of the runway, they decided to attempt a landing.

They elected to keep their lights on, increasing their vulnerability, because of the heavy gunship activity in the area. They successfully completed the landing and the patients were loaded. So that further injury to the wounded might not be incurred, they made a black-out takeoff while Tiger GCA provided a radar monitored climb.

The crew contacted Qui Nhon approach and were told that Qui Nhon was below minimums and that the GCA was out. They decided on the alternative of getting a radar descent by Phu Cat GCA to VFR conditions. With Qui Nhon still reporting below minimum conditions, they flew low level through the valley, made a visual landing at Qui Nhon, and delivered their wounded safely to the hospital.

On the next alert launch at 0045 Local, Capt Howells was the Aircraft Commander. He met further deteriorated weather conditions at LZ English, but successfully completed the landing, take-off, and climb out without incident. The weather at Qui Nhon had improved, making an ADF approach possible at that location. Capt Howells and each crew member who took part in those two flights experienced a deep sense of pride and achievement, knowing that their courage and determination saved many American lives.

Note: Captains Grosse and Howells received the DFC for these two night med-evac flights.

Capt Grosse was presented his DFC by Gen John D. Ryan, the new PACAF Commander. Capt Howells was honored by Col Paul J. Mascot, Commander of the 483 TAW, for his achievement at a squadron dining-in on 30 June.

Letter Home

by Jim Luntzel [536, 69]

Wednesday, 8 Apr 1970

Dear Lora Lee & Kids,

Fancy stationery, huh? Don't have a letter to answer – will check the mail again later on.

Sent cards and a small box to Jim & Jeff today so hope they get them in time – in any case, Happy 15th & 18th Birthdays to both!!

Lora Lee, I'm sorry I said I enjoyed that airdrop – I didn't really mean it that way – I did enjoy (for lack of a better word) the chance to do a job under difficult circumstances – and get out. We've lost three aircraft & crews in 5 days [at Dak Seang] – plus one which was disabled to the point he couldn't get home. I knew all the guys on the lost crew from Cam Ranh – in fact the last time I flew up there – in Feb – I had the co-pilot & engineer on the mission. We – they – are dropping at night now & no casualties yesterday. They've kept the whole thing quiet – no news at all until last Monday – see enclosed clippings – and it's probably the biggest battle since I don't know when

– there's more than a Division of NVA in the area and the ARVN [Army of the Republic of Vietnam] killed almost 500 yesterday alone.

Some of the C-7A crews have gone in there 5 & 6 times – it's an absolute crime that they're not using C-123's and C-130's – they have the power to climb out of there after the drop – which is where the worst of the hits are occurring. It makes you sick. They say the 123's haven't dropped in six months so the last two days they've made some hurried practice airdrops to qualify crews – but haven't used them at Dak Seang yet – the 130's say the DZ is too small – 500 ft by 500 ft? **BALONEY!**

So in the meantime we keep losing C-7A's and crews and the poor guys in the camp – yesterday they were running out of food & water & ammo – and no relief element could break through to them.

It's murder. That's why they've kept the news clamps on – it's that bad.

So, 17 days to go. I'm too short for that stuff – plus I've been ordered not to go up there again – but it's really frustrating sitting down here in Saigon when that's going on – when you know you can do the job. I'm not that much of a nut though – not really.

Looks like we will get a pay raise before getting out – that will help – originally, it wasn't going to be until 1 Jan 71 – but the Post Office thing accelerated it (see clipping).

Well, Sweetie, by the time you get this only about 2 weeks – Gads, one, two weeks! **TO GO!!** Will let you know the arrival time at Travis later – I'll just catch a ride over to Hamilton – or Novoto. Tell the Boys Happy Birthday!

Note: Recent research indicates that the DZ footprint at Dak Seang, drop altitude and airspeed made the Caribou the preferred drop aircraft over the C-123 and the C-130. Nevertheless, the Caribou crews paid a heavy price in providing critically needed supplies to the camp. **SIERRA HOTEL** to all the crew and maintenance personnel!

Ben Het Recalled

by Curt Fischer [457, 68]

I thought I would sit down and dredge up a few mostly forgotten memories about the 20 June 1969 Ben Het resupply mission. It was a long time ago and I don't trust my memory about much of anything that happened during my thirteen months in-country. However, that mission was different.

In June of 69, I was mid way through my tour with the 457th TAS squadron at Cam Rahn Bay. I was probably getting ready to upgrade to aircraft commander. I lived in a three bedroom "hootch" with six roommates and all of us were first lieutenants. Most likely we all had similar thoughts that the Wing "weenies" didn't know what they were doing half of the time. We flew when the schedule was posted and generally coped with our somewhat comfortable surroundings. We had a great squadron bar/club in the 457th, the "hootches" were air conditioned, and we had TV. I missed being away from home, but life was satisfactory.

The mission to Ben Het was supported by the two squadrons based at Phu Cat. Ben Het was located in II Corps (46 miles from Pleiku on the 335° radial) and was not in our usual delivery area. I speak only for myself, but my impression was that my roommates and I were happy to leave it that way.

As I recall, the Wing brought the mission to Cam Rahn Bay for at least a week. This was to allow Wing personnel to fly the mission. I think they scheduled a daily mission to fly to Phu Cat and stage out of that base and make the air drop into Ben Het.

My name showed up on the schedule during the middle of the week. I remember sitting around the living room of our "hootch" having a beer and laughing while my erstwhile roommates divided up all my worldly possessions in case I didn't return from the mission. They claimed my stereo, paintings, TV, and whatever else. I thought it quite funny at the time.

The next day my aircraft commander was Lt Col Edgar Thielen. He later became 457th squadron commander. He was a good pilot who treated his copilots well. When it was time to operate the radios, he would put on his reading glasses to dial in the different frequencies. Then he would take them off and fly the airplane.

For the Ben Het mission, we flew to Phu Cat and briefed in one of their buildings. There were to be three or four C-7's making the drop. We briefed the mission then sat around waiting for the departure time. I remember the horseplay that went on as a couple of the copilots wound up wrestling on the floor. We waited while the pallets were loaded onto the planes, then we left.

The actual drop went off well enough. We orbited the area and then were called in by the ground forces. Memory is now vague. We started in on our run and an A-1E flew ahead of us trying to draw fire. There was another A-1E flying behind us. I remember noting that there were red "flares" coming between the lead A-1E and our plane. I thought they were from the camp. I didn't learn until after we had finished our run that the flares were tracers and there were 13 or so bullets between the red tracers. I was rather naive at this time.

We dropped our load, left the area without difficulty or holes in the aircraft and flew back toward Cam Rahn and III Corps to finish the day's mission. That night, back at the "hootch," we had a celebratory beer as I collected back all of my worldly possessions.

The missions continued. No one from Cam Rahn was hurt and life went on. I received the DFC when I was stationed at McGuire AFB sometime in 1970. It was a nice surprise. No heroics, no outstanding feats of airmanship. We did our jobs.

Note: For missions during the siege of Ben Het in 1969, members of the 537th TAS were awarded:

2 Silver Stars

22 Distinguished Flying Crosses

7 Air Medals (for single missions)

Time Is Running Out!!

Check the mailing label on this newsletter. If it does not show "2011" 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 Trailcrest Ln Apt #2
Kirkwood, MO .63122-2263

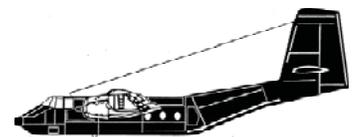
Laws of the Natural Universe

Variation Law: If you change lines (or traffic lanes), the one you were in will start to move faster than the one you are in now (works every time).

Murphy's Law of Lockers: If there are only two people in a locker room, they will have adjacent lockers.

Law of Rugs/Carpets: The chances of an open-faced jelly sandwich landing face down on a floor covering are directly correlated to the newness and cost of the carpet/rug.

Law of Location: No matter where you go, there you are.



Older Crowd

Some people

Try to turn back their odometers.

Not me!

I want people to know 'why'

I look this way.

I've traveled a long way,

And some of the roads weren't paved.

Missions to Ben Het

Name	10-30	2-3	Third	Name	10-30	2-3	Third
	Jun	Jul	Pilot		Jun	Jul	Pilot
Allison, Max L	3	1		MacFarren, Donald J	7	1	
Berta, William C	2			Maki, Dennis A	4	1	
Black, John W	4	1		Marshall, Lyle B	1		
Brethouwer, Richard L	5			Marvin, George C	6		
Broussard, Emile P	9	1		Mellert, John D	3		
Brownfield, Donald L	2			Miles, David A			1
Chasteen, Ralph E	3	1		Monroe, Kent M	5	1	
Cope, Jesse M	6			Murphy, Michael	5		
Crafton, Stuart B	2	1		Obermiller, Terry L	2	2	
Croach, Robert E	4		1	Overcash, Hugh M	2	1	
Davenhall, Kenneth L	6			Owen, Billy P	3		
Davis, James H	4		1	Poland, Robert F	5		
Donovan, Steven R	4		1	Prescott, Calgen A	1	1	
Dugan, Robert H	2			Quarles, Jown W	4		
Evalenko, William A	6	1		Quinn, William F	4	1	
Fletchall, Albert E	8	1		Riess, Michael T	3	1	
Furchak, Edward	6			Rodda, Allen J	2		
Girod, Allan L	2			Ryland, William K	1	1	
Greinke, Neil N	2			Selbe, George G	8		
Grigg, Dale	4	1		Shepherd, William L	2		
Grimsley, Joe W	1			Smolinski, Jerome P	1		
Hammond, Charles K Jr	3			Spurger, George A		1	
Harmon, George L	2			Taylor, Charles C Jr		1	2
Havins, Felton H	3	1		Taylor, Robert. H		2	
Hayes, Maurice C	3			Thomas, John L	1		1
Hill, Robert E	3			Vanness, Charles R	3		
Holdener, Irwin K	4			White, John E Jr	2	1	
Houghtling, Donald H	3	1		Wigington, John H	6		
Ketring, Charles E	5	1		Wilhelm, Frederick	1	1	
Koshko, Kent D	2			Wilson, Clyde M	3		
Lockwood, Delbert D	8			Wohrer, James F	4	2	

aircraft and flew to Clark AB, Andersen AB, Wake Island, Midway, Hickham AFB, Mc Clellan AFB, Davis Monthan AFB, and Maxwell AFB. The flight from Hawaii to California was 18.3 hours, mostly at night in the weather with lightning and St Elmo's fire. This is the flight that the Caribou ditched and the pilot was pulled out the top hatch by a PJ. We arrived at Maxwell the night of December 21 (88 hours total flying time). The TAC Commander arranged for a C-131 to take crews to anywhere they wanted east of the Mississippi (similar deal with C-130 for crews west of the Mississippi). I arrived at the Pittsburgh airport on December 22. Best Christmas I ever had!!

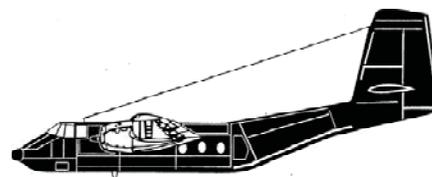
After Vietnam, I spent 4 years as a T-37 IP at Sheppard (mainly teaching Vietnamese to fly – so the end of the Vietnam War in 1975 was especially painful for me), AFIT MBA at the University of Tennessee, and a rated supplement in SAC as a Transportation Officer at Pease AFB. By three consecutive miracles I received an F-4 assignment (RTU at MacDill, F-4E's at Seymour Johnson, F-4E/Gs for 5 years at Clark AB where I was a squadron commander) then TAC staff, Air Attache to Italy, and Inspector General at Davis Monthan. I retired as a Colonel in 1998 and have worked in the defense industry since.

I have to say flying the C-7 was a great experience and great assignment.

I look forward to the 2011 reunion.

Bucks Walters
28 October 2010

Note: Two weeks after sending this story by e-mail to the editor, Bucks passed away on 14 November 2010.



Ferry Mission to U.S.

by Bucks Walters [458, 71]

I was a member of the 458th TAS from March 1971 until December 1971. The C-7 was my first assignment out of UPT.

My first flight at Dyess AFB was on January 19, 1971 and the last flight was on February 10. My first flight at Cam Rahn Bay was March 26, 1971. I was in the copilot checkout program and severely injured my ankle in early April playing basketball. Due to the injury, I missed two months of flying.

In November, my squadron commander offered to put me in the upgrade

program. By this time, I had already received my next assignment (T-37 IP at Sheppard AFB) and due to being a "stupid First Lieutenant," I declined to upgrade (a decision I always regretted).

I went on R&R to Hawaii in late November and when I returned, I found out we were ferrying 12 Caribous to the US. I was selected to fly in the lead aircraft since I was the most experienced copilot in the Wing. The Aircraft Commander was a Lieutenant Colonel that worked at Wing headquarters and rarely flew in-country.

We departed CRB on December 11 with three large fuel bladders in the

Gorgon Stare

Aviation Week, Nov 3, 2010

The U.S. Air Force's new Gorgon Stare Wide Area Airborne Surveillance System, described as a revolutionary intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) technology, made its combat debut, flying over undisclosed locations in Afghanistan on board MQ-9 Reaper unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs).

Gorgon Stare was conceived, designed and developed in less than three years by prime contractor Sierra Nevada Corp. and USAF's 645th Aeronautical Systems Group, a rapid acquisition arm also known as Big Safari. It offers an exponential expansion in the scope, amount, quality, and distribution of video provided to ground troops, manned aircraft crews, ISR processing centers and others, then-Lt. Gen. David Deptula, Air Force deputy chief of staff for ISR, said prior to his retirement on Sept. 30.

Gorgon Stare's payload is contained in two pods slightly larger than, but about the same total weight as the two 500-lb. GBU-12 laser-guided bombs the Reaper carries. The pods attach to the inside weapon racks under the wing. One pod carries a sensor ball produced by subcontractor ITT Defense that protrudes from the pod's bottom. The ball contains five electro-optical (EO) cameras for daytime and four infrared (IR) cameras for nighttime ISR, positioned at different angles for maximum ground coverage.

The pod also houses a computer processor. The cameras shoot motion video at 2 frames/sec., as opposed to full motion video at 30 frames/sec. The five EO cameras each shoot two 16-megapixel frames/sec., which are stitched together by the computer to create an 80-megapixel image. The four IR cameras combined shoot the equivalent of two 32-megapixel frames/sec. The second Gorgon Stare pod contains a computer to process and store images, data-link modem, two pairs of Common



Data Link and Tactical Common Data Link antennas, plus radio frequency equipment.

Gorgon Stare is operated independently, but in coordination with the Reaper's crew by a two-member team working from a dedicated ground station, which fits on the back of a Humvee. A second Humvee carries a generator and spare parts. A separate, forward-deployed processing, exploitation and dissemination team co-located with the Gorgon Stare ground station coordinates with commanders in-theater, directing the system's sensors and exploiting their imagery in real time.

The result is a system that offers a "many orders of magnitude" leap beyond the "soda straw" view provided by the single EO/IR camera carried by an MQ-1 Predator or a conventional Reaper UAV, D. The video taken by Gorgon Stare's cameras can be "chipped out" into 10 individual views and streamed to that many recipients or more via the Tactical Common Data Link (TCDL). Any ground or airborne unit within range of Gorgon Stare's TCDL and equipped with a Remote Operations Video Enhanced Receiver, One System Remote Video Terminal, or the Marine Corps Video Scout handheld receiver can view one of the chip-outs.

At the same time, Gorgon Stare will

process the images from all its cameras in flight, quilting them into a mosaic for a single wide-area view. That image can be streamed to tactical operations centers or Air Force Distributed Common Ground System intelligence facilities by the Gorgon Stare ground station via line-of-sight data link. The ground station team, which will control the system's sensors, can also transmit the relatively low-resolution wide-area view to recipients in-theater or elsewhere via other wide-band communication devices, plus chip-out an additional 50-60 views and forward them as needed.

Gorgon Stare's coverage area is classified but, as stated, considerably bigger than that provided by a single EO/IR camera. Instead of looking at a truck or a house, you can look at an entire village or a small city. Moreover, Gorgon Stare's computers will store all imagery its cameras capture on a single mission, allowing the data to be transferred for exploitation after landing. "You can review it and accomplish forensic study of the area by looking at movement and tracing activity," Deptula said. "If you know where an improvised explosive device went off, you can 'rewind the tapes' and see where the activity was and what led to it."

Continued on Page 21

Gorgon Stare (from Page 20)

Gorgon Stare operates independently of the Reaper's sensor ball, which MQ-9 operators will continue to control from U.S. ground control stations. Bandwidth limitations will prevent Reaper operators from viewing Gorgon Stare's imagery as they fly the MQ-9. They will be in contact with the team in the forward-deployed Gorgon Stare ground station, however, to coordinate requests to slew the sensor ball over a target, or for other purposes.

Big Safari gave Gorgon Stare its nickname, taking it from the gorgons of Greek mythology, Medusa and her sisters, whose gaze turned those who looked into it to stone. "Since the gorgon sisters had unblinking eyes, and their images wound up on ancient Greek beer mugs to ward off evil, Gorgon Stare seemed like a good name," a Big Safari official replied in response to e-mailed questions. Advances in sensor capability, particularly focal plane arrays, and in image-processing capacity are the key technologies that make Gorgon Stare possible.

The initial deployment, designated Quick Reaction Capability Increment I, will consist of four sets of pods built at a cost of \$17.5 million per set, excluding the cost of the ground control station. The production cost per pod set is expected to rise for a planned Increment II consisting of six pod sets, Marlin says, but "costs will decrease with larger production runs."

Reunion 2012

Reunion 2012 will be 17-21 Oct. at the Holiday Inn, 561 N. Dupont Highway, Dover, DE 19901. Visit AMC museum, Bombay Hook Natl. Wildlife Refuge, dedicate memorial bench.

Reunion 2013

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

7th AF News Release

Vung Tau, 1971

They aren't really pretty to watch. They have a fat nose and bent wings, and when they come in for a landing, they look like a staggering seagull.

To American and Republic of Vietnam forces at fire support and Special Forces bases in the southern part of the Republic of Vietnam, the C-7 transports of the 535th and 536th Tactical Airlift Squadrons are the most beautiful sight in the world.

Despite having a smaller load-carrying capability than its big brothers, the C-123 Provider and the C-130 Hercules, the C-7 is a tough, reliable aircraft that can land and take off from short, unimproved airstrips which couldn't handle the larger aircraft.

"The C-7 Caribou is built for rough handling and it gets it," said Maj Kenneth E. Crooks of Morrisville, PA, operations officer for the 535th TAS. "It stands up well under the constant grind of war. These planes are in the air from sunrise until sundown every day, and yet our on-time launch rate is nearly 100 per cent."

According to the Major, each Caribou makes from 12 to 16 landings and take-offs per day, delivering anything from ducks to people, rice to ammunition, pigs to POL (petroleum-oils-lubricants), or any other items needed in outlying camps.

The 535th and 536th Tactical Airlift Squadrons are part of the 483rd Tactical Airlift Wing based at Cam Ranh Bay Air Base.

"Our mission is to provide effective airlift support in the southern part of the delta," explained Lt Col Buford E. Collings, Jr of Virginia Beach, VA, commander of the 536th. "We operate basically in support of the Army, taking smaller loads into the smaller airfields and airstrips.

"Weather is a big factor for us," remarked Maj Crooks. "These airstrips have no tower facilities, so we have to depend entirely on instruments and

make visual landings."

Anything from small arms to a large slingshot is waiting for the Caribou crews when they land at some of the remote sites. "We don't stay on the ground longer than a few minutes because we make good targets for the enemy's mortars," the Major said.

Most of the time the off-loading process is a hurry up job for the Caribou crews. The heavy cargo is untied and left on rollers on the floor of the aircraft. The pilot revs the engines; the aircraft jerks forward. The cargo breaks loose and races down the rollers and out the rear door.

"Once the load hits the ground, we don't waste any time getting out of there," Maj Crooks said. "We fly zig zag patterns going out as well as coming in to give the enemy trouble sighting in on us."

The majority of pilots assigned to both squadrons are serving in the Republic on their first assignment. In the 536th, 66 per cent of the pilots are recent pilot school graduates. In fact, most pilots assigned to the squadrons don't have much flying time in the Caribou except what they received from Caribou training school at Dyess Air Force Base, TX, because the aircraft is used primarily in Southeast Asia.

Caribou pilots are trained and upgraded to aircraft commander as soon as possible, according to Lt Col Collings. Vietnam is one of the few assignments where pilots coming out of flight school can get upgraded to aircraft commander in their first year.

"I am particularly impressed with the quality of young men coming to us from pilot training," the Colonel said.

"The pilots aren't the only ones who have a rough schedule," Maj Crook added. "The aircrews and ground maintenance personnel put in a 12 hour day, every day. We have additional duties to perform when we aren't flying. After flying all day, I come back to the office and fight the paperwork war. Let's see, I had a day off in September I remember ..."

FCF ... Plus

by Roger Tripp [458, 66]

I made a deal with my boss to absolutely ensure that I had that day (18 Apr 1967) off as I had big plans for the night before with some Army officers from the Hawk Missile site just above Cam Rahn Bay where I was stationed. I knew it was going to get pretty rowdy and that overindulgence in booze was almost a certainty. Well, sure enough, that is what happened and I finally got to bed at least a little bit before the crack of dawn, but not much before. Sometime very early that morning someone was shaking my bunk and calling my name telling me to wake up. I told them, in none too kindly of terms I'm sure, to leave me alone, but they wouldn't.

It seems that we needed an aircraft critically and I was the only other qualified Functional Check Flight (FCF) pilot available to accompany the one shaking me awake. I realized that I didn't have much of an option so I agreed to sit in the right seat with the window open in case I needed to remove the contents of my stomach from the night before. It was for an engine change, which meant we had to feather the prop and do a dive as part of the checks – just what I needed, right?

Anyway, we had just finished the FCF and were on final approach when the tower called and told us to break out of the pattern and to contact the Wing Command Post. Upon doing so, we were told that we had a Combat Essential mission and they gave us our itinerary. I don't remember many details, other than we needed to pick up a new combat lead sergeant, at I think it was Nha Trang, and a full load of munitions. Apparently, Dak Seang had been under attack, their senior sergeant had been killed, and they were running critically short of ammunition. Unfortunately, it was raining pretty hard and it was going to be tough to get into that camp in heavy rains and weather. If we didn't get there before dark, we couldn't land at night in the weather as

there were no runway lights and it was a marginal dirt airfield with a "hump" in the middle and no overrun. Dodging mountains low level in the rain in the Central Highlands is not a great game plan. We also worried about how muddy the airfield might be since it had been raining for a while at that point. One of our questions was how were we going to get out of that place once we landed, as we might get mired in mud and not be able to get turned around to get out of there if we sunk into the mud. However, you do what you have to do and we went for it.

We found the runway and there seemed to be a lull in the shelling and small arms fire, so we tried to make sure that the Special Forces were still the landlords and made a really dicey approach and landing. When we touched down we were slipping and sliding all over the place in the mud and actually turned the nose wheel in an attempt to "slide" the Caribou to a stop somewhat sideways as the trees off the end of the runway were approaching much faster than we wanted. Fortunately, we came to a stop before we hit anything and then we needed some help to dig some of the mud out from around the nose gear and the landing gear so we could get enough motion to taxi and get in position to get out of there.

We realized we were the proverbial "sitting ducks," exposed out there and not mobile. The Special Forces troops were not all that keen about exposing themselves while they helped us off-load the ammunition by hand. It was too muddy to try a truck or jeep. If they got stuck, we might also be stuck, as we might not be able to get around them to take off again.

Fortunately, we got the ammunition pallets off-loaded and our landing gear dug out and cleared enough for us to taxi with something close to full power. The Viet Cong must have been having supper or something, as about the time we woke them up by applying all that power and making a heck of a racket trying to extricate our gear

from the mud and taxi, they starting coming alive and started shooting and lobbing in mortars again. Fortunately, we were moving some before they got the mortars zeroed in and we got airborne about the time the show really started up again. Sometimes you just get lucky!

I got two things from that particular day. I got a really good "cure" from imbibing. I did not take another drink of alcohol for the rest of my tour over there. It is one thing to have a terrible hangover in and of itself, but having a hangover, flying an FCF and then a really long and challenging mission in the weather low-leveling through the mountain passes in the rain and screwing around in the midst of a great fireworks display was just more fun than I care to repeat ... and I got a DFC as a reminder not to do that again!



Dak Seang – 1967

7th AF DFC Citation

First Lieutenant Roger C. Tripp distinguished himself by extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flight as a C-7A co-pilot near Dak Seang, Republic of Vietnam on 18 April 1967. On that date, Lieutenant Tripp was flying a Combat Essential airlift mission in support of friendly forces. Forced by extremely adverse weather to fly low level through mountainous terrain and rain showers, Lieutenant Tripp successfully navigated to Dak Seang as darkness was falling and delivered a cargo vital to the defense of the Special Forces Camp there which came under heavy attack as he departed from the field. The professional competence, aerial skill, and devotion to duty displayed by Lieutenant Tripp reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force.

Return from Bangkok

by Larry LaVerne [457, 67]

In July 1967, Chuck Schmitz and I were going to leave Bangkok (after a strenuous TDY) and go back to Cam Ranh via Saigon. As we were pre-flighting, we discovered the life rafts had been stolen the night before. As the route was over water, this was a concern. However, we still had life jackets so we decided to press on. No sweat (yet).

The battery was dead, so a new one was installed. The Aerial Port brought out 12 passengers. A 483rd Wing weenie (Colonel – nice guy) came out and wanted to go too. He asked Chuck if he could ride in the co-pilot's seat for "some combat time." Of course, Chuck agreed.

After a successful engine run-up, off we went into the wild blue yonder. We leveled off at about 10,000 ft after about 45 minutes and sat back to enjoy the 4 hr. over water flight. U-Tapao was off to the right about 40 or 50 miles, but we couldn't see it.

Suddenly, the right engine started backfiring. Bad. Chuck shut it down and feathered it. As we were talking about it, the left engine started backfiring. Bad. Chuck retarded the left engine throttle trying to find a setting that the engine wouldn't backfire, but the engine backfired all the way to idle. It got real quiet in the cockpit.

We restarted the right engine and it would run at about 14 inches without backfiring. We let it run while the left engine was shut down and feathered. We declared an emergency and turned toward U-Tapao. With one engine feathered and the other one barely running, the Bou wanted to go down. We hoped we could just make it to the shore.

Chuck did a beautiful job of making it to the end of the runway at U-Tapao, just barely. As we were stopping on the runway, we were surrounded by at least 150 vehicles. Out of one emerged a screaming SAC Wing Commander

informing us that this is a PPR (prior permission required) base. We didn't have prior permission to land and he could have all of us arrested according to AF Regulation such and such.

He ordered us confined to the BOQ. (Hey General, we're all on the same side here). I asked him if we were allowed to go somewhere and eat. He reluctantly agreed, but ONLY directly to the Officers Club with a minimum stay and directly back to the BOQ. Good deal.

Maintenance discovered that 3 of our 4 magnetos were bad and replaced them. We got life rafts. Only 4 of the original 12 passengers wanted to continue with us the next day. Off we went again for the uneventful "rest of the mission."

Operation Red Leaf

by Stan Bixler [483, 66]

I arrived in South Vietnam during September 1966. The 6252nd Operations Squadron was formed to receive personnel being assigned to the soon-to-be Air Force Caribou squadrons. The existing aircraft and airfields were still in the hands of the Army.

I was assigned to Vung Tau and just prior to boarding a Caribou for Vung Tau, I was called back to the squadron and informed that the Commander of the soon to be 483rd Troop Carrier Wing (Colonel Paul J. Mascot) had selected me to help form the new wing.

My AFSC was 702 – Administration. USAF Special Order AB-674 shows my reassignment and also the other two NCO's assigned to start the wing.

MSgt Harry F. Biddle was Maintenance NCO and MSgt Carl R. Tafoya was Supply NCO. The three of us were moved to Cam Ranh Bay to help form the wing. When we arrived, we had a headquarters building on the flight line and no furnishings.

My assignment for the year was Administrative Assistant to the Commander. Our Vice Commander was Col Ralph E. Bullock and Major Ralph O.

Brown was Executive Officer. Although I was assigned to the Commander, I also supported the Vice Commander. Both the Commander and Vice Commander preferred to fly the Caribou rather than their desks, so for the most part they alternated flying every other day.

You Might Be A Maintainer If ...

You can't figure out why 2 wks. of advance per-diem is gone after 3 days.

You can sleep anywhere, anytime. But as soon as the engines shut down you are wide awake.

Almost everyone thinks that all you do is wave your arms in the air.

You have ever used a wheel chock, or tow bar for a pillow.

You have ever stood on wheel chocks to keep your feet dry.

You have ever used a pair of dykes to trim a fingernail.

You have ever pulled the gun switch while riding the brakes.

You have ever started a jet inside the hanger!

You have ever wiped your hands on your pants.

You have ever wiped leaks right before a crew show.

You have ever worn someone else's hat just to go to chow.

All you care about is the flying schedule and your days off.

You have ever had to defuel your jet an hour after fueling it.

Everyone you know has some kind of nickname.

You have used the "Pull Chocks" hand signal to tell your buddies it is time to leave.

You have ever bled hydraulic fluid into a Gatorade bottle or soda can because you are too lazy to go get a hydraulic bucket and the Hazmat keys.

You hate that people who work at the gym handing out towels get the same pay as you.

You refer to ANY machine as "she."

You refer to QA as "the enemy."

My Most Embarrassing Moment

by Dave Hutchens [459, 69]

USAF Survival School. Fairchild Air Force Base, Spokane, Washington. 27 November 1968.

I thought this school was the E&E School. Escape and Evasion! When I was young and gung ho, I didn't equate escape and evasion with survival. Escaping and Evading was what it was all about, and I didn't think I would be too much in need of that survival stuff.

Our class consisted of all strangers. I didn't know a single person. Ranks ranged from about Airman 2nd to Light Colonels. About the only thing we had in common is that we were all Air Force, and we were all on shipping orders to Vietnam. None of us were interested in putting up with this training; it simply was one of the requirements mandated in getting ready to ship to SEA. I was scheduled to complete this course before reporting to Sewart AFB for my C-7 Caribou training. At this point I didn't even know what a C-7 was; I hadn't seen one or a picture of one. But I did know that as soon as I finished this stuff here in the state of Washington I was going home to my wife and kids for Christmas. Then I would be reporting to Sewart AFB right after the first of the year. So, like all of the other guys, my main thrust was to just get this over with.

This event happened a long time ago so the details might be a little rusty, but I am not rusty on the outcome of my training.

Our training started off with classroom instruction on the hazards of being in a combat zone and the consequences of becoming a POW. All of this stuff was pretty evident; after all, we were going to a war zone. The instruction was spiced up with a lot of show and tells and a lot of pictures, and even some live eyewitness accounts of becoming a captive by a hostile enemy.

The instruction turned to how to

survive in a hostile enemy environment while trying to escape and evade, and attempting to find your way back to friendly territory. There was a lot of very important instruction passed out in this phase, but what I remember mostly now is we were shown how to conceal pemmican, or more appropriately, beef jerky, in the lining of our field jackets for later use if needed. We were told to be sure to have some Hershey candy bars or other survival food to sustain us during the E&E exercise that was going to take place the next day.

The next day was filled with classroom lectures and briefings covering the upcoming E&E exercise that night. After dark we assembled to commence our exercise and we received our final instructions. The briefers set the stage – we had just found ourselves in an evasion situation in enemy territory. Our way to survival required us to cross several hundred yards of open fields in front of us. If we accomplished that, we would find ourselves in friendly territory. That mission didn't seem to be that formidable. So, with a bit of enthusiasm, we all set about evading the enemy and began to make our way across the open expanse in front of us, and to find our way to the safety of friendly forces on the other side.

The weather was crisp in Washington in November. We were dressed in our fatigues, boots, and the field jackets that we had prepared for this exercise. Our jacket linings were stuffed with beef jerky and our pockets were full of Hershey bars that we had purchased from the little BX at the school. I guess my thoughts were about the same as everyone else's – let's get this over with and we will get a good night's sleep. The course will be over tomorrow and we will be on our happy way home.

Yeah, right!

Shortly after we started slithering across the open plains on our bellies and hands and knees, the night sky was lit up by the bursting of what seemed to be hundreds of illumination flares. Land mines were exploding immediately be-

fore us and in back of us. In our instant state of shock and total confusion, we were overwhelmed by "enemy" troops and we instantly became POWs.

After a lot of pushing and shoving and threatening and a lot of very abusive language on the part of our captors, we were divided into small groups of about a dozen guys each and then led into small Quonset Huts where we were to be held captive. Guards were posted outside the doors.

Once we were secluded inside the buildings we immediately began to organize our group and to lay plans on how to escape and survive. We had just completed our formal training so we really knew how to do all of this very well! Someone appeared to be the ranking person among us so he became the leader. We each took all of our loot, the jerky and Hershey bars, and put them into a kitty. We would hide the loot, and ration ourselves appropriately. We developed plans on how we would survive and function, and started to plan for our eventual escape. It is absolutely amazing how all of our thoughts about just getting this exercise over with and getting home to our families just dissolved in thin air.

We were in the small building probably less than three or four hours when suddenly the door burst open and five or six of the enemy rushed in, screaming and hollering and shoving us around. It didn't take them long to find and confiscate our loot of jerky and Hershey bars. They threatened us with death if we even attempted to carry out our plans of escape. We were completely dumbfounded as to how they learned of our booty and escape plans. Eventually we learned that in our confusion of being captured and being placed in this small building, the enemy had planted a spy among us and he reported all of our plans. Boy, we were really sunk.

From here we were treated to some personal discipline/punishment. After some initial, somewhat aggressive interrogation, in which I only revealed

Continued on Page 25

U.S. Casualties - Southeast Asia

	1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1960-1970
Deaths, hostile		11	31	78	147	1,369	5,008	9,378	14,503	9,414	4,225	44,638
Republic of Vietnam		1	31	77	145	1,331	4,946	9,314	14,537	9,361	4,176	43,919
North Vietnam					1	34	43	44	24	6	7	159
subtotal		1	31	77	146	1,365	4,989	9,358	14,561	9,367	4,183	44,441
Laos		10		1	1	4	19	20	31	47	38	171
Thailand									1		4	5
Deaths, other causes		4	29	47	56	383	1,101	1,737	2,021	2,204	1,909	9,752
Republic of Vietnam		2	18	36	48	359	1,043	1,537	1,899	2,076	1,829	8,847
North Vietnam								142	18	34	12	206
subtotal		2	18	36	48	359	1,043	1,679	1,917	2,110	1,841	8,291
Laos			3				2	1	2	3	3	14
Thailand		2	8	11	8	24	56	57	102	91	65	424
Wounded, non-fatal												
Hospital care required		2	41	218	522	3,308	16,526	32,371	46,801	32,941	15,212	149,351
Vietnam		1	39	218	521	3,307	16,520	32,539	46,783	32,898	15,177	149,208
Laos		1	2		2	2	6	12	16	42	34	141
Thailand									2	1	1	4
Hospital care not required		1	37	193	517	2,806	13,567	29,654	46,022	37,276	15,432	146,530
Vietnam			35	193	517	2,803	13,540	29,629	45,991	37,210	15,361	146,291
Laos		1	2			3	27	25	30	66	71	238
Thailand									1			1

Some totals include data which could not be identified to a specific year.

As reported by the Directorate of Information Operations, OSD Comptroller, 10 Mar 71

My Most... (from Page 24)

my name, rank, and serial number, I was placed head first into a horizontal box about five-foot-nine-inches long by twenty-inches square and about four feet off of the floor. I was six feet tall so I didn't quite fit into the cubicle. It was extremely tight all around. There was a door at the foot of the cubicle and the guards tried to close the door on my feet, but it would not quite close.

The guards pushed on my feet to force me to draw them up into the cubicle, but there wasn't enough space for me to bend my knees to draw up my feet. You can get a sense of how I was resisting their ill treatment. After a few vigorous whacks with their truncheons on the soles of my boots, I found that I could draw them up so they could close and lock the door.

I don't know how many hours I was kept in the lock up but I do remember that I figured these guys were getting pretty serious. I don't know what would happen if you were claustrophobic. I also didn't panic completely because I knew that I was still in the Air Force

and in the state of Washington. I was not happy!

After what seemed to be several hours of this lock up, I was taken for some more interrogation. There were three or four enemy guys in this room and they all started yelling at me at once and accusing me of mass murder and drug smuggling and espionage and whatever else they could think of. It was pretty easy to forget that you were in a training situation after having just gone through the isolation in the box. I guess I did take these guys pretty seriously. Then one of them, who seemed to be the senior, accused me of taking photos of their installation and planning to sell the photos to anyone who would pay me good money for them. Of course I denied their accusations. They insisted that I had canisters of 35 mm film hidden on me or hidden in the lining of my field jacket. I had the field jacket with me so I knew that there was nothing in the lining except maybe a piece of beef jerky or a remnant of a Hershey bar. Besides that, I didn't even have a camera. The thought did occur

to me that maybe they had possession of my jacket for a short period, and that they might have planted some film or canisters in it. After they accused me of hiding the film in the lining of the field jacket they took it and threw it on the floor in front of me. They told me that I could prove that I didn't have any film if I stomped on the field jacket, which would crush any canisters if there were any there. I knew there was no film in the jacket so I readily jumped up and down on it. That seemed to satisfy them and they sort of wound up the interrogation and they escorted me back to the room where I was to spend the rest of the night.

The next morning flyers were placed outside the doors of the prisoner's rooms. On the front of the flyer there was an 8 X 10 inch picture of an airman jumping up and down on his field jacket. The caption read, "AMERICAN AIRMAN DENOUNCES HIS COUNTRY AND THE VIETNAM WAR BY STOMPING HIS UNIFORM INTO THE DIRT." It was a pretty good picture ... **and it was of ME!**

A Noble Farewell For An American Soldier

by Joan Caraganis Jakobson

I was an antiwar protester; my father was a veteran loyal to the military. I think I finally understand why.

Two days after my father died, as the visiting hours at the funeral home ended and we were putting on our coats, there was one last visitor. He was a stooped, solitary man who walked slowly to the open coffin and gazed down at my father, lying in his military dress uniform. Suddenly, the visitor stood up straight and, still looking at his Army comrade, gave the brisk salute of the spirited, young GI he must have been 55 years ago. Then he slowly lowered his arm and became an old man once more, turning and shuffling out the door. His gallant gesture has come to symbolize a profound shift in my feelings toward the United States military.

My father was a retired Brigadier General, a World War II veteran of the Battle of the Bulge and the march on Bastogne, who maintained an unfaltering belief in the righteousness of the United States Army and any war it might choose to fight, including Vietnam. I spent the late 60's and early 70's marching in and organizing antiwar protests, including the Washington and New York moratorium marches in 1969, and formed a women's collective to raise money for a bombed-out hospital in North Vietnam.

I believed that the armed forces were an instrument for senseless destruction and imperialism. Visits home for family dinners meant arguments with my father that ended with my storming away from the table. Although our conflicts subsided as the war wound down, I couldn't begin to solve the mystery of my father's boundless devotion to the Army. Until he died.

The day before his funeral, my husband, daughter, son, and I were introduced to six soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division who had driven 400

miles to serve as the honor guard. As they talked with us, I realized that, to those men, my father was not simply an elderly war veteran they had never met, but a member of their military brotherhood whose life and deeds were important. I began to see the Army through my father's eyes and to understand the camaraderie and connection that sustained him. The following day at the funeral service, the soldiers draped the American flag over the coffin and accompanied it from the church to the cemetery. As we gathered at my father's grave site under a light December rain, four members of the honor guard stood at attention.

One soldier raised his rifle and fired three shots while the bugler played taps. The flag was removed from the coffin and slowly and meticulously folded into a triangular shape. After one soldier inserted the empty casings into the flag's angled pocket, the rest of the guard lined up in formation behind the highest-ranking officer, who approached my teenage son. The officer, holding the folded flag on his outstretched palms and looking straight at my boy, said, "Please accept this flag on behalf of a grateful nation."

And so it was, at the end, the United States Army that provided my family and me with a noble conclusion to my father's life. I began to realize that the military traditions I had once considered unquestioningly rigid endure because they serve a purpose. Every morning, as long as he was able, my father raised the American flag on the pole outside his house, observed a moment of silence, then stood at attention and saluted. I had always thought this exercise sweetly eccentric but meaningless – now I envy the ritual that I, as a civilian, will never know.

The impassioned arguments that my father and I had about the war in Southeast Asia echoed across the country and across the generations. Thirty years later, those tensions have been greatly eased, in part because of the passage of time, but also because of the books

and movies that have inspired a fresh interest in World War II, a just war that may ultimately eclipse the anguish of Vietnam in the nation's collective memory. I doubt I'll ever fully accept military ideology, but I understand that the Army offered my father and members of his generation a recognition of their commitment and courage. It provided reassurance that they had contributed a significant service to their country and a bond among soldiers that survives even death.

Soon after we got home from the funeral, my son called me into his room. Unbuttoning his shirt, he said, "Mom, remember when Grandpa gave me his dog tags? I kept them on a shelf with some of his medals, but when you told me he'd died, I put them on." He paused, looking down at the metal tags hanging from his neck. "He wore them all over Europe with General Patton, so I thought I should wear them until the funeral was over. I think he would have liked that."

I think so, too. And I think he would have been gratified to learn that his grandson's generation, those who grew up after the glorious victories of World War II and the raging divisiveness of the war in Vietnam, have achieved the equanimity that allows them to wear dog tags with nothing but pride.

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."

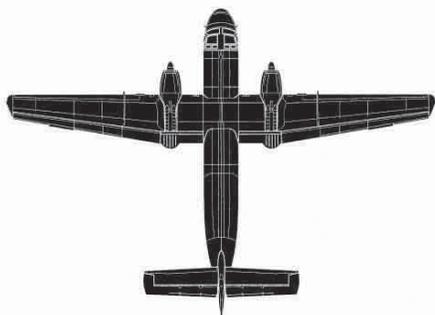
You don't have to be a Pulitzer winning journalist. Write up your tale or tales and send them to:

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

Airpower Classics

Artwork by Zaur Eylanbekov

C-7 Caribou



The C-7 Caribou was a twin-engine, short takeoff and landing (STOL) transport that saw extensive service in Vietnam, where it proved invaluable. The Caribou, built by de Havilland in Canada, started its US service in the Army, where it was known as AC-1 and then CV-2. On Jan. 1, 1967, a USAF-Army interservice agreement transferred the tactical airlifter into the Air Force inventory, where it was a star performer. USAF originally formed six C-7A squadrons, two each at Vung Tau, Cam Ranh Bay, and Phu Cat. By war's end, it was down to five squadrons.

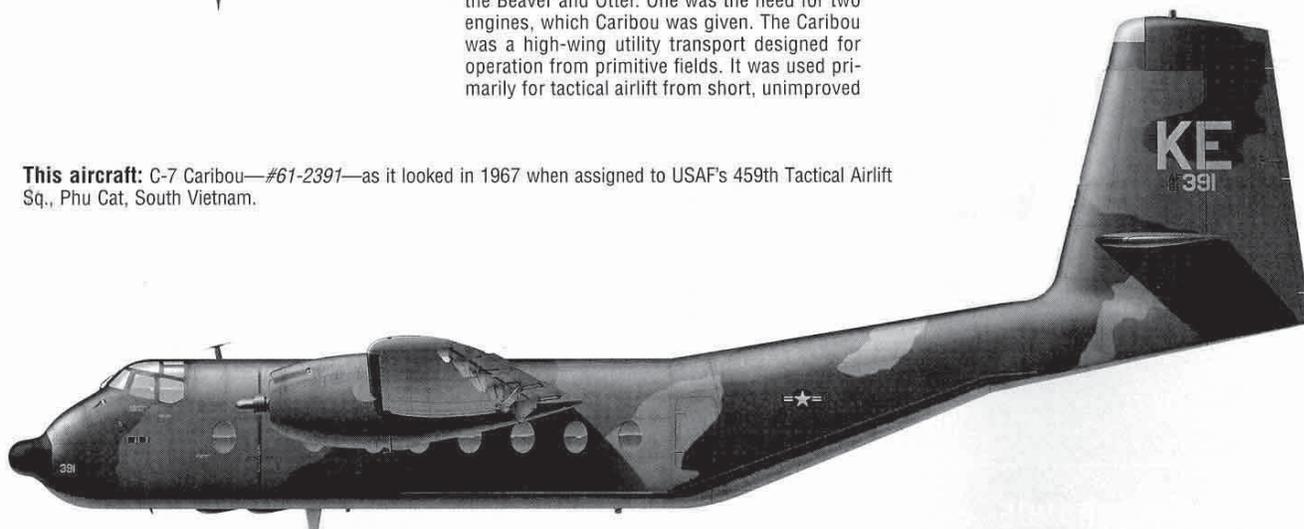
The Caribou was de Havilland's third STOL design, and built on lessons learned in the operation of the Beaver and Otter. One was the need for two engines, which Caribou was given. The Caribou was a high-wing utility transport designed for operation from primitive fields. It was used primarily for tactical airlift from short, unimproved

airstrips in forward battle areas. It could carry 32 passengers, 26 fully equipped combat troops, or more than 8,000 pounds in cargo.

In the war, it hauled everything from troops and howitzer shells to live pigs, ducks, and eels to feed Vietnamese troops. Capable of taking off and landing from very short runways, the Caribou demanded a high level of pilot skill in its operations. Perhaps its most famous mission came on Aug. 25, 1968; Maj. Hunter Hackney flew several aerial resupply missions at low altitude through intense enemy fire, incurring heavy damage. The airplane was a true workhorse.

—Walter J. Boyne

This aircraft: C-7 Caribou—#61-2391—as it looked in 1967 when assigned to USAF's 459th Tactical Airlift Sq., Phu Cat, South Vietnam.



A USAF C-7 Caribou on a mission over Vietnam in January 1967.

In Brief

Designed, built by de Havilland ★ first flight July 30, 1958 ★ crew of two or three ★ number built 307 ★ two Pratt & Whitney R-2000-7M2 radial engines ★ armament none ★ load 32 troops or two light vehicles ★ **Specific to C-7A:** max speed 216 mph ★ cruise speed 152 mph ★ max range 1,175 mi ★ weight (loaded) 28,500 lb ★ span 95 ft 7 in ★ length 72 ft 7 in ★ height 31 ft 8 in.

Famous Fliers

Air Force Cross: George Finck, Hunter Hackney. **Notables:** Eugene Habiger (former commander USSTRATCOM), John Handy (former commander USTRANSCOM), John Jumper (former CSAF), Steve Pisanos (World War II ace), Francis Scobee (astronaut).

Interesting Facts

Carried out many operations in Laos and Cambodia, serving Army's Special Forces ★ captured models flown in North Vietnamese Air Force in the 1970s ★ featured inward-opening rear doors ★ required takeoff run of only 1,200 feet ★ shorn of de-icing, cabin heating, and crew oxygen systems when operated in Vietnam ★ used extensively by CIA proprietary Air America ★ supported Army's Golden Knights demonstration team ★ served in 26 air forces and more than 20 civilian airlines ★ still in use as "bush" airplane.

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Memorabilia

MEMORABILIA ORDER FORM

Contact Jim Meyer at jmeyer3019@sbcglobal.net to check availability of items.

Fill out this form and mail with a check to: **C-7A Caribou Association, c/o Jim Meyer, 3019 Oneida, San Antonio, TX 78230.**

1. Polo Shirt*	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$18.00	Total: _____
2. Colored T Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$15.00	Total: _____
3. Round Engine (R-2000) T Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$12.00	Total: _____
4. Denim Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$25.00	Total: _____
5. Denim Hat	One size fits all	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
6. Baseball (white) Hat	One size fits all	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
7. 457 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
8. 458 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
9. 459 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
10. 535 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
11. 536 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
12. 537 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
13. 483 rd Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
14. Caribou Lapel Pin		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
15. Caribou Poster (12" x 18")		Qty. _____ @ \$5.00	Total: _____
16. Caribou Challenge Coin		Qty. _____ @ \$8.00	Total: _____
17. Caribou DVD – 1:10 long		Qty: _____ @ \$5.00	Total: _____
18. Caribou decal (outside)		Qty: _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____

*Polo shirt colors: White, Gray, Yellow, Red, and Light Blue (please specify)

Total: _____

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

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