

# C-7A CARIBOU ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1

August 2002

ISSUE 16

## REUNION 2002 JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Welcome to St. Louis, Gateway to the West.

The C-7A Caribou Association's 13th annual reunion is scheduled for the week of October 6 – 12, 2002. Our annual bash is looking like it is going to be a smash hit again. The weather in St. Louis in October should be great. St. Louis is a beautiful city in the heartland of our country.

St. Louis was settled on the Mississippi river in the early 1800's. Since the arrival of early settlers in 1764, the St. Louis Region has connected with the explorer in all of us. Meriwether Lewis and William Clark headed west from the village that is now St. Louis in 1803 to explore the newly purchased Louisiana Territory. This began an odyssey that marked this area as the "Gateway to the West" for pioneers and trappers seeking fortune and adventure.

St. Louis is a great vacation destination city that greets more than six million visitors each year. There is so much to do and see that one should consider spending more time ex-

ploring the sights in and around St. Louis, the greater St. Louis area, and indeed, the entire State which includes the famous Meramec Caverns in Stanton and of course, Branson, which is less than a five hour drive from St. Louis.

Our reunion headquarters in Maryland Heights is about ten minutes from historic St. Charles, with its gas-lit brick paved streets and 26 blocks of French Historic District, riverboat tours, and many other fine attractions. We will be about six miles from Lambert International Airport. Casino gambling is just five miles from our reunion headquarters. And Scott AFB is only 45 miles for those who just cannot resist another visit to the BX or Commissary.

Our President Steve Kelley, host for our 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion, has an exciting and fun filled week planned for us. The reunion week starts on Sunday, October 6. Hotel reunion rates are available for the entire week. Sunday, Monday and Tuesday are pretty much "do what you want" days.

*See REUNION pg 4*

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## General Greenleaf Remembered

Lieutenant General Abbott C. Greenleaf passed away June 22, 2002. General Greenleaf was vice commander and then commander of the 483 Tactical Airlift Wing in Vietnam in 1969 and 1970. He was an ardent supporter of the C-7A Caribou Association and one of our most senior leaders. He will be missed by many of us.

President Steve Kelley, with board member Rick Patterson, and Christine and Paul Phillips, attended the services for General Greenleaf at The Falls Church Episcopal in Falls Church, Virginia. The church, built in 1769 is rich in history and full of character. The church was full; not an empty seat could be found. The service was solemn but had bits of laughter as General Greenleaf's son Daniel, related antidote's of General Greenleaf's dislike of a certain Navy football quarterback that went pro and did not fulfill his obligation to his country; or his dislike of a certain female senator from New York. Daniel also told us of his father's love of country, and his devotion to family and friends. As the service came to an end, with all standing, family and friends departed the church singing "Onward Christian Soldiers."

As a light rain began to fall a 10-motorcycle police escort assisted the funeral procession. Traffic was stopped in all directions at all intersections and major highways for the

nearly mile long procession to Arlington Cemetery.

At Arlington Cemetery, the rain stopped. A marching band, a color guard, and a flight of honor guards, were assembled along with a horse drawn caisson. When General Greenleaf's ashes were transferred to the caisson everyone showed their respect by saluting or standing at attention. As the honor guard turned and the band played, off marched the band, the color guard and the flight of honor guards, followed by the horse drawn caisson. The family, and those of us who wished, walked behind the caisson; a short walk to the corner, then a right turn down a narrow road to the large Greenleaf head stone on the right.

At the gravesite a service was held. Then three volleys of rifle fire. Then Taps, ever so fitting, by a bugler that was standing just over the knoll and out of sight. The color guard and the marching unit gave one last salute. The General's three star flag was rolled on its staff and covered. The honor guard folded the burial flag and presented it to the family. The caisson, band and honor guard marched away. Many people lingered to pay their last goodbyes to the General.

After the interment, a reception was held at Fort Meyer's Officer's Club. The family had on display a model of the C-7A Caribou along with his military and family photos.

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

### Association Officers and Board Members

**Steve Kelley** - President/Board Member  
536th 68

**Pete Bird** - Vice President/Board Member  
535th 71

**Earl Reynolds** - Treasurer/Board Member/Reunion Advisor  
537th 66

**Jim Collier** - Secretary/Board Member/Roster Chairman  
537th 67

**Bob Markham** - Chairman of Board  
459th 69

**Bob Dugan** - Board Member  
537th 68

**Rick Patterson** - Board Member  
459th 69

**Bill Avon** - Recruitment Chairman  
537th 68

**Dave Hutchens** - Newsletter Editor  
459th 69

**Peter Bird** - Webmaster  
535th 71

**Paul Phillips** - Historian  
459th 69

**Bob Davis** - Chaplain/Endowment Committee  
457th 69

**John Davis** - Endowment Committee  
457th 66

**Steve Kelley** - 2002 Reunion Chairman  
536th 68

**Wayne Delawter** - Reunion Advisor/Past Chairman of the Board  
458 66

**Nick Evanish** - Past President  
457th 66

**Christine Phillips** - Reunion Coordinator

Please advise the Association of any change of address, phone number, or e-mail address. Send your changes to:

Jim Collier  
5607 Jolly Ct.  
Fair Oaks, CA 95628-2707

Dues are payable annually. Either enclose your check with your registration form for the annual reunion or send your check to Jim Collier.

I would like to encourage members who might have a humorous incident, or an interesting anecdote, or an exciting story, to share it with all members of our association. If you will e-mail, snail mail, airmail, or pony express mail it to me, I will see that it gets published. Pictures are welcome. If specified, I will return the originals.

Dave Hutchens (918) 272-3518  
17916 E. 96<sup>th</sup> Street North Printhat@aol.com  
Owasso, OK 74055

## Financial Report

### C-7A Caribou Ass'n Cash Flow Report

1/1/2002 Through 7/11/2002

<b>INFLOWS</b>	
Donations	556.25
Members Dues	7,333.00
Interest Income	135.39
Dyess Memorial	
Pre Registration Receipts	2,058.00
<b>TOTAL INFLOWS</b>	<b>10,082.64</b>
<b>OUTFLOWS</b>	
Bank Charges	39.02
Memorials:	
Banquet	2,543.70
Memorials - Other	1,750.00
Newsletter	2,894.13
Postage and Delivery Expense	
Reimbursement	182.28
Misc. Taxes	500.00
Website Expenses	1,253.64
<b>TOTAL OUTFLOWS</b>	<b>9,162.77</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>919.87</b>

### C-7A Caribou Association Assets

1/1/2002 Through 7/11/2002

<b>ASSETS</b>	
Cash and Bank Accounts	
Hancock Association Act	1,983.01
Money Market - USAA	17,797.27
Pre-paid Dues	990.00
<b>TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts</b>	<b>20,770.28</b>
Other Assets	
Member Merchandise	756.50
Reunion Contract Deposits	700.00
<b>TOTAL Other Assets</b>	<b>1,456.50</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$22,226.78</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
Other Liabilities	
Dues for Future Years	990.00
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$990.00</b>
<b>OVERALL TOTAL</b>	<b>\$21,236.78</b>

## Message from your President

Hello again. A warm and pleasant greeting to all members. Our Association is growing with new members, thanks to the efforts of hard working individuals. We still need volunteer help in all areas of operations concerning the C-7A Caribou Association. Unit history is still being pieced together. Please submit any historical facts which you might have or know about of the C-7 operations.

I am currently attending the Khe Sanh Veterans Reunion at Dallas, Texas, July 4 – 8. These people would appreciate some information from our Association concerning early air operations at Khe Sanh during the time period January 1968 through April 1968. They would like any details from any of our members, i.e., the squadrons that flew missions to Khe Sanh, what loads were delivered, what were the flying conditions. Any stories or incidents, serious and/or humorous, would be appreciated.

The board is currently working on refining the by-laws. We will be asking for suggestions, and making recommendations at the business meeting. Our main objective is to promote our membership and perpetuate our association.

Many thanks go out to our hard working members for making the Dyess Memorial a huge success. Hopefully more memorials will be forthcoming. Remember, each year and each reunion is a celebration of life for us, and an opportunity for honoring those who made the supreme sacrifice. Your participation is greatly appreciated.

Hope to see as many as possible in St. Louis, October 6 – 12, 2002. There is a lot to do and see in St. Louis.

Thanks,

Steve Kelley, President

## Comments and Reports from the Treasurer

First a note of thanks from the Treasurer: It is always easier doing the Treasurer's job when the members support what the organization is doing. I want to thank the Squadron representatives and others who have brought awareness to their fellow members as to the importance of keeping their dues, "Caribou Tax", up to date. I understand from Jim Collier, our ever-diligent secretary and membership database manager, that we have over 400 active members. You will note from the financial statements that the Caribou Tax receipts are substantially up for this year. If all of these members keep their membership active on an annual basis, we will be able to cover the costs of the newsletter, reunion and other notices, mailings, awards, and the website. As planned, we can then use the reserves for memorials and other C-7A awareness projects. Keep up the good work.

In keeping with the Board's policy that reunions should be a "wash" of costs, not costing the association any net expense, the Las Vegas Reunion was a success and I believe those attending enjoyed the Las Vegas Reunion. Staying

with the policy was accomplished with the extra efforts of Christine Phillips who enlisted members in selling and buying raffle tickets and members virtually buying out our stock of association merchandise. We stuck to the policy even though we were met with more restrictive rules from the hotel in Las Vegas. We were not allowed to bring in and sell our own drinks, which has been a moneymaking project for the association at past reunions.

All the costs were covered for the Dyess AFB Memorial Dedication. We had donations and coverage for the Honorees so that the association did not have to cover hardly anything at all.

**Tax Exemption Filing:** We have filed with the Internal Revenue Service for recognition as a veteran tax exempt organization. Because of User Fees charged by IRS, it cost us \$500 to file the application. We had to get a new tax number and are currently dealing with the reviewing agent to complete the process. I believe we should have our notification letter by Reunion time.

One final note not related to a Treasurer's Report: I want to promote something that our newsletter publisher, Dave Hutchens, has been promoting. Share your experiences or articles with the newsletter. You don't have to be an accomplished writer. We have accumulated photos on the website to remind us of our time; however, we have little verbal history of your years. I would call on all the Unit Historians to send copies of your histories to Paul Phillips who has volunteered to be the Association Historian. Also, so that we can try to have a complete list of all those who served with the C-7A Caribou, those who kept orders and other documents listing assigned personnel during your year, share these with Jim Collier. Share this information and history so that members from other squadrons will have a glimpse of the total history of your particular squadron. Even though we went to the various locations from time to time, each of our shared history is unique.

Earl Reynolds, Treasurer

## Lesson Learned

*This message was left on the forum page of our web site on 12/06/2001. Somebody didn't like the Bou...Ed.*

I was dumb enough to catch a hop on a Bou from Qui Nhon to Saigon in 1966 as an NCO when the Army still owned them. Damn thing was loaded with Arvn troops and family. As you know the C7 sways back and forth from the thermals and Noc Mum (sic) is bad enough the first time, but when it comes back up, it is four times as bad. The Viets on board uploaded their stomach contents from the swaying and damn that bird stunk. That was my last C-7 hop; from then on my priorities for hops (that I had to make in my job) was the C-130, UH-1 and then C-123 in that order. This soldier didn't have to be shown something but once to learn the lesson.

CW3 Sid Shown, USArmy Ret 12/06/2001 4:57:48 AM

**REUNION from pg 1**

There are no activities planned for those days. Christine will be setting up for registration on Tuesday. The War Room will open Tuesday evening at six.

On Wednesday there is a tour scheduled to take us to Grant's Farm, a 281 acre wildlife preserve and historical site located just south of the city of St. Louis and is operated by Anheuser-Busch, Inc. The Farm is home to hundreds of exotic animals from around the world and to the world famous Clydesdale horses.

The Farm takes its name from our 18th President of the United States, Ulysses S. Grant. In the 1850s, Ulysses S. Grant farmed a portion of the 281 acres. The land, which later became the ancestral home of the Busch family, today is preserved as a living symbol of the family's love for animals and Anheuser-Busch's commitment to wildlife conservation and preservation. The visit to the farm is free and lunch will be catered at a nominal fee (approximately \$6 per person.)

Wednesday evening we will have our official reunion "kick-off" reception, which is always a fun time to again meet old friends and new faces. And of course it is free.

Thursday we will visit the 630 foot high Gateway Arch, the riverfront area and Laclede's Landing. The Gateway Arch has a very nice historical learning museum. The Arch is America's tallest monument and there is a tram ride to the top. If you have not been to the top of the Arch before, you won't want to miss this ride. We will do some walking and have a nice lunch in a beautiful location. There is a lot to do and see in the riverfront area.

Friday will be a very busy day. The ladies will have transportation to a very nice shopping mall close to the hotel for shopping and lunch. The time will be approximately 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. There will be a board meeting at 12 noon, a general membership meeting at 2 p.m. and group pictures at 6 p.m. Then banquet at 7 p.m. and back to the war room at 9 p.m.

Times and dates of all scheduled activities will be posted in the war room. Literature and maps will be available at the hotel for all the local attractions.

The war room is open every evening from 6 p.m. until ??? There will be coffee and donuts every morning. Several more interesting trips can be arranged at the reunion. There is the Transportation Museum with many old trains and autos to help us remember the "good old days." We might visit the airport with behind the scenes access to flight simulators and other interesting areas. But to be sure, there are a lot of interesting things to see and do in St. Louis.

**REGISTRATION UPDATE:**

*Christine Phillips, Reunion Coordinator*

We have 16 early registrations for the St. Louis Reunion. Our first mail registrant was Robert Cooper of Fort Worth, TX. Our first e-mail registrant is Huey Frye of Silver

Springs, FL. Both of these registrants will be receiving a free T-shirt at the 2002 St. Louis Caribou free reception.

**Attendees**

1. Robert Cooper, [458th] and guest NaDeane Fulcomer from Forth Worth, TX
2. Bob Davis, [457th] and wife Georgia from Odessa, FL. Bob Davis is our Chaplin.
3. Roy Dunn, [535 TAS] and wife Burma from Chula Vista, CA
4. Allen Shanahan [537th] and his Karen from Shalimar, FL
5. Huey Frye, [535 TAS] and wife Mary K from Silver Springs, FL
6. William C. Berta [537 TAS] and wife Mary K. from Phoenix, AZ
7. Brian M. Bowen SR [459th] from St. Petersburg, FL
8. Ray Tanner [458th ] from Las Vegas, NV
9. Max Allison [537th] and wife Shirley from Appleton, WI
10. Jim Fairweather [457th] and wife Joanne from Bayport, MN
11. Michael K. Seidelman [483rd CAMS] and wife Debbie from Fisher IL. This is Michael and Debbie's first reunion
12. Russell Riggelman [536th Squadron] from Waynesboro, VA
13. Earl Reynolds [537th] and wife Pamela from Baton Rouge, LA. Earl is our Treasurer
14. Jim Collier [537th] and wife Betty from Fair Oaks, CA Jim is our Secretary
15. Bruce Cowee [458th] and wife Angie from Lafayette, CA
16. Dave Hutchens [459th] and wife Jill from Owasso, OK

**The Free Reception on Wednesday**, October 9th, 2002, will be a very lively event. The Reception is something you don't want to miss. At the reception this year we will have our famous door prizes. I am sure the door prizes will be a hit again this year. I am working on some surprises.

Some of the Categories for door prizes this year will be...

1. First time attendee
2. State with the most attendees...right now it is Florida, with California right behind it...but it is still early.
3. Travel Distance
4. Caribou person attending most reunions

If you have a suggestion for a category let me know.

**War Room.** Bring your pictures, photo albums, patches, VHS tapes, movies, slides, newspaper clippings, your Air Force papers, prior reunion pictures and anything else you want to bring.

If you are going to bring VHS tapes, slides and movies and will need a VCR, slide projector, screen, etc. please let Steve or Christine know by telephone, email or just jot a note with your registration so we can arrange to have the equipment you need.

Last year I had several people call me and send me pictures and VHS tapes for the reunion even though they could not attend. If you have anything you would like to share but

can not attend, please contact Christine. I only ask that you DO NOT send originals. Any questions please contact me.

Please remember to put the number attending the Free Reception, so we can give the hotel an accurate number of attendees. Yes, I will email you or call you if you leave it blank.

### Volunteering

If you would like to volunteer during the reunion, we would love to have you. Last year, our volunteer system worked very well and was very easy.

I can't say enough about "many hands making light work", this was definitely the case at last year's reunion. We had a record number of "first time reunion attendees" volunteer last year.

So please check the box at the bottom of the registration telling me you would like to volunteer. If you know that you can help with EARLY Registration on Tuesday, October 8, 2002 please jot me a note on the registration form or email me.

Again, I want to just say Thank You to all my volunteers last year. . . and

**SEE YOU IN ST. LOUIS.**

Christine

## Some Last Minute Thoughts

### Hotel Information

**Best Western Westport Park  
2434 Old Dorsett Road  
Maryland Heights, MO 63043**

Phone: 1-888-299-3787

314-291-8700

Fax: 314-291-2891

### Advance Registrations.

Advance reunion registrations are a great help to the reunion planners because they need the input to finalize room requirements, tours, food, and the many other activities involved with our annual bash. Early input makes their job much easier. So please register for your hotel rooms, then complete and mail your registration form to Christine Phillips, at P.O. Box 143, Folcroft, PA 19032, or contact by phone at (610) 522-5981, or e-mail at christielee52@yahoo.com.

### Hotel Registrations

The hotel rates are \$59.00 plus tax per night during the entire week of the reunion. When making reservations be sure to tell the hotel you are attending the Caribou Association Reunion. It is important that you register under the Caribou Association Reunion Agreement because our room rates are based on an agreed upon number of occupancies. The latest date to make reservations is September 24, 2002.

### Airport Shuttles

Complimentary van services will be provided from 7a.m. until 10 p.m. daily to transport guests to and from the airport and the Westport area.

### Late Newsletter

I had intended for this newsletter to be in the mail by the third week of July. Most of the material had been gathered and much of it had already been composed. Terror struck on July 18<sup>th</sup> with a computer crash. I struggled with it for a couple of days trying to bring it back to life, with the help of the computer manufacturer, but to no avail. Since the computer was still under warranty I had to send it to California for repair. The manufacturer advised that the motherboard had failed and that it would have to be replaced. We had no idea whether the hard drive was still good or not. The "manufacturer" was really an assembler and he had to order a new motherboard, which took several days. With shipping time, I would be without my computer for about a month.

I borrowed back an old computer, a 486 with 16 meg of ram and a 28.8 modem, and have continued to put the newsletter together. Not everything was lost, as I had made a backup of "My Documents" on the 9<sup>th</sup> of July.

So that explains why the newsletter is late. My sense of frustration is high and I am very disappointed that the newsletter did not get out sooner.

*Ed.*

2/5/02

Dear Jim - Greetings:

Yesterday I received a copy of the excellent Bou Newsletter. I also receive several similar pubs from other Air Force associations. But the current Bou pub, without a doubt, is the finest of the lot. My congratulations and thanks to Dave Hutchens and all the other Association members responsible for the informative, timely and interesting Bou newsletter.

I regret I'm unable to attend the Dyess memorial and annual reunions. Family health problems prevent travel outside the local area.

Attached are tax payments for the current year and the following two years.

Warmest regards to you and the great 483rd members.  
Will Turk

*The above letter is from Col. Wilbert Turk, 483rd Wing Commander, 1969, to Jim Collier. Jim forwarded it to me and I liked it so well that somehow it found its way into this newsletter.Ed.*

# C-7A Caribou Association

**13th REUNION  
St. Louis, MO  
OCTOBER 6 - 12, 200**



If you are unable to attend the reunion, please send your annual dues to:  
Jim Collier, 5607 Jolly Ct., Fair Oaks, CA  
95628-2707 (916) 966-4044  
(Please, only dues to Jim – all other funds for reunion purposes to Christine)

## Registration Form

**Mail to: ChristinePhillips  
P.O. Box 143  
Folcroft, PA 19032  
(610) 522-5981  
Christielee52@yahoo.com**

To assist in planning and budgeting the reunion, we need the following information. Please return this registration form with your remittance ASAP, but no later than September 15, 2002. After September 15, 2002 call Steve Kelley at (636) 343-6969 to have a tentative Registration Form filled out with payment due at the reunion.

Please make a copy of this form for you records

Name of Member:		Spouse/Guest Name:	
Mailing Address:		Is This Your First Reunion (Y/N)?	
City:	State:	ZIP:	
Phone: (     )		E-mail Address:	
Squadron/Unit:	Vietnam Year:	Stationed At:	
Additional Guest Name:		Additional Guest Name:	

## Registration Fees:

Calculate your total Registration Fee below

Please Note: The registration fee is charged to ALL persons attending and is NON REFUNDABLE.

C-7A Member Registration Fee				\$	20.00
Non Member (Spouse/Guest) Registration Fee	#	x	\$ 5.00=	\$	.
C-7A Member Dues:			\$10.00=	\$	.
Friday Night Banquet					
Prime Rib	#	x	\$ 23.00=	\$	.
Roasted Chicken Breast	#	x	\$ 19.00=	\$	.
Roast Pork Loin	#	x	\$ 19.00=	\$	.
Wednesday Bus Tour	#	x	\$ 10.00=	\$	.
Thursday Bus Tour	#	x	\$ 10.00=	\$	.
Wednesday Night Caribou Reception	#	x	FREE		
<b>Total Cost (Please Enclose Check)</b>				\$	.

Make check payable to: C-7A Caribou Association

I would like to volunteer to help out with registration, war room, message center, etc. on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday.

*Looking Forward to Seeing You in St. Louis in October*

## Comments From Rick Patterson

Board Member At Large

At the reunion in Las Vegas Dave Hutchens asked me if I would accept a nomination to serve as a director on the C-7A Caribou Association board. Being a rather new association member of just two years I hesitantly agreed to accept, and subsequently was elected to the Board. I feel proud and I am honored to be one of the Board of Directors because, in a small way, I am helping to keep alive the memory of the many superior achievements made by C-7A crews and maintainers in Vietnam. I feel that I am finally supporting C-7A people, something that I was unable to do 30 years ago.

I hope this organization lives on for a very long time. But the Vietnam "Conflict" is quickly replacing the Korean War as the "forgotten war". I don't want that to happen, so I am doing my small part to keep the C-7A and its people in America's memory bank. No more C-7A crews will be produced, so the task of keeping the legendary C-7A as an integral part of American history falls to us. Our association members feel the same way about these accomplishments – and the only way these accomplishments will live on is for all of us to give a little time and effort to furthering the C-7A Association.

### Long live the memories of the "C-7A Family!!"

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Rick Patterson was a new 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant when he arrived in Vietnam on November 30, 1969. Rick was not yet checked out as a second pilot when, on December 26, 1969, just 27 days after arriving in the 459<sup>th</sup> Tactical Airlift Squadron, he was copilot on a mission that was downed by enemy fire while flying final approach to Tien Phouc. Dave Bowling, pilot, and E.J. "Squeak" Welch, engineer, both perished in the ensuing crash. Rick eventually recovered from his injuries and went on to complete a twenty-year Air Force career. Rick found our C-7A Caribou Association in 2000 and attended his first reunion at the College Park, Maryland Reunion. Rick is anxious to serve another term as a board member at large, and his name has been submitted to the nomination committee.*

## Bob Snyder - Formation Pilot Dies

Immediately after the dedication plaque was fully unveiled at the Dyess AFB Memorial Dedication Services in March 2002, Don "Tiny" Malm led a three ship flyover performing the traditional missing man formation. One of the three pilots, Bob Snyder, a rancher and oil drilling company CEO from Abilene, Texas flew the number three slot in the flyover. On the 18th of July Bob died in an accident while flying his own T-6 aircraft. Little is known about the cause of the accident.

## Dak Seang Revisited

*The following is taken from an e-mail from Lt. General Bruce Brown to Bob Dugan. Bob forwarded it to me. General Brown is Bob's brother in law. Ed.*

I'm going to have to do this from memory, so it probably won't be exact in every detail, but I think I remember it well enough to get the chunks right.

By the time of Dak Seang I think I was the Director of Operations of the 14th Special Operations Wing located at Phan Rang AB, having moved up from the ADO's job shortly before. The Wing operated AC-119G and AC-119K fixed wing gunships, plus O-2B Psyops loudspeaker and leaflet-dropping aircraft. The aircraft we flew over Dak Seang was the AC-11G, equipped with four 7.62 mm mini-guns, a Forward-Looking Infra Red (FLIR) sensor, a Night Observation Device (NOD), a very powerful Illuminator with white-light and IR options, and an automatic flare launcher. We were still flying only night missions at the time; daylight missions didn't begin until the incursion into Cambodia in May.

My memory is that we had been flying night close air support missions over Dak Seang for several days before the C-7 guys started getting hammered as they flew their daylight aerial re-supply missions down that long valley heading into the camp to drop their bundles. We maintained a continuous CAP over Dak Seang throughout each night by relieving on station about every three hours or so; as you may remember, a gunship overhead tended to keep the VC quiet and off the wire as long as we were there.

After I think the second C-7 shutdown, Col. Frank Eaton, my boss, and I had an idea about how we might help. Frank and I had just graduated from National War College and had gone to the 14th together, he as the DO and I as the ADO until he moved up to Vice and I to DO. Another NWC classmate, Col. Roger Larivee, was the C-7 Wing DO (or Vice?), which at that time I think was commanded by Col. Abbott Greenleaf, with whom I had worked closely in the Pentagon before going to NWC. So, the principals in this story all knew and trusted each other before the Dak Seang operation came up. So Frank and I flew over to Cam Rahn Bay and met with Roger. The three of us came up with a scheme which we hoped would enable the C-7s to fly and drop successfully at night, rather than during the day. We would circle overhead Dak Seang in our normal gunship firing orbit with the Illuminator fired up and centered on the camp but with the IR filter in place. The IR filter, which could be switched in and out instantly, was necessary because the illuminator was so powerful that it would take ten or fifteen minutes to get up to its rated output after you turned it on. If you wanted white light on command, therefore, it had to be up and running when you wanted it. The IR, of course, was not visible to the naked eye, but it turned night





**Abilene, TX** - On Sunday, 10 March 2002, the C-7A Caribou Association dedicated a monument and plaque in front of the Caribou on static display at Dyess Air Force Base, Abilene, Texas, honoring the 38 aircrewmembers who were lost while engaged in USAF combat operations in Vietnam during the years 1968 to 1972. The names of all 38 are cast in bronze on the monument. General Eugene E. Habiger, USAF Ret, spoke at the dedication ceremony. **Betty Klein Illingsworth**, GSW MAL from the North Central Region, along with two sons and four grandchildren (all standing just to the left of the wreath), attended the dedication ceremony. MSgt Russell Klein, flight engineer, was one of the 38 crewmembers memorialized on the plaque. The association has a website with pictures of the dedication weekend: [www.c-7acaribou.com](http://www.c-7acaribou.com).

*This is a copy of an article I sent to the Gold Star Wives of America, Inc.: it was printed in their June 2002 newsletter. My scanner is not the best, but you get an idea of the clipping at least. BKI*

#### *C-7A Caribou Association Members:*

*We want to thank you for the beautiful dedication ceremony of the memorial plaque honoring the men who gave their lives in Vietnam. Our husband and father, MSgt Russell Klein, Flight Engineer, was one of those honored that day. It means so much that all of you cared enough to create this special monument.*

*This was our first opportunity to meet people who had been stationed with Russ in Vietnam and we certainly appreciated all the kind words and memories that were related to us. We were grateful for the opportunity to meet some of the other family members of the honored men as well as so many friendly and caring members of the association and their spouses. We thoroughly enjoyed the Saturday barbecue and the Sunday morning brunch.*

*We also wish to thank Bob Markham for his great detective work in "tracking us down", otherwise, we would not even have been aware of the association or the dedication. Bob was so good about e-mailing with answers to all of my questions and, of course, just had to mention that he was mowing grass and cleaning his pool while we were digging out after a snowstorm! Again, thanks to all of you for the wonderful memories. We know that weekend represented a lot of hard work and planning by a lot of people.... Words just cannot express our gratitude to all of you.*

*Betty Klein-Illingsworth*

*Mark and Paul Klein and Families*

*P.S. We have referred lots of family members and friends to your great website so they can see pictures of the dedication ceremony, etc.*

## **HELP WANTED!**

Will people who are interested in management, accounting, newsletter preparation, reunion organization, membership chairmanship or any contrived or created position with this association please identify your requested position and justify your selection in ten words or less. Seriously, we will have to spread the activities a bit thinner if my marriage is to survive another 30 years.

We really need an individual from every year group to take the Caribou by the horns and honcho each year group to help locating their guys. Any volunteers please contact HQs!! We will provide an info packet as best as possible for starters.

Will need dedicated volunteers to man the reception desk (Command Post) at the reunion, meet and greet etc., hand out name tags, COLLECT REUNION TAX, and help keep the ball rolling. (Sounds like Perot?)

## **CARIBOU TAX - LESS THAN 3 CENTS A DAY!**

Members present at Warner Robins ('91) voted the \$10.00 per year tax to keep things going. Most everybody has kept up. Some have tossed in a ten spot - never to be heard from again. Next to keeping your address (zip + 4, (AC) + PH 1) current and letting us know you are alive, keeping the exchequer stocked is most appreciated. The '92, '93, '94 on your address label tells the latest current dues paid year. Please report any error noted.

*Ed. Things seem to never really change. This item and the previous one are taken from Nick Evanish's 1993 Caribou Association Newsletter. They are as important today as they were nine years ago.*



## HOW IT GOT STARTED

By Bob Dugan, 537<sup>th</sup>, 1968 – 1969

I was asked to present something on how the Dyess Caribou Memorial Plaque (DCMP) was “put together” – what started it – the machinations of it – what it meant to us. Basically, someone at the 1992 Caribou reunion in Dayton recommended that we spend some of our “untouchable” funds to memorialize our Association at the USAF Museum at Wright-Patterson AFB. If I remember correctly, we either voted on it, or at least made a verbal resolution that it was a good idea. Unfortunately, two times it was supposed to have been taken care of, and two times, it died on the vine. Because I live only 85 miles from Abilene TX, we sometimes shop at the Dyess Commissary and BX and every time we drove into the base we were exposed to what is known as the Dyess “Linear Air Park”, a collection of 31 USAF aircraft in one continuous row along the main road into the base proper. There is a Caribou on static display there along with bombers, fighters, and other cargo types. Because I have always been a little impatient with plans which don’t seem to “gel”, or never get moving, it occurred to me one day that because I live relatively close to Dyess, and since Dyess was the locale of the last Caribou transition school, and since there was a Caribou handy, why not come up with some kind of plaque honoring the 38 aircrew members we lost during the time we flew the Boo in Vietnam? I looked at our Caribou website and found that there was a complete list of the 38 – names, ranks, tail numbers and dates. It was all right there.

I wrote a letter to the 7<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing Commander in which I informed him of our plans to put a memorial plaque alongside the plaque which had already been installed by a committee of Abilene citizens who had donated similar plaques for all 31 aircraft. Right in the middle of all this planning, the events of Sep 11 happened, and it slowed the return and approval of my letter. Finally, it was approved, and I began in earnest by locating the manufacturer of the plaques already installed, checking the spelling and placement of the names of the “38” and getting an agreed-upon price which we could afford. I procured a turn-key price of \$1750, including installation. The manufacturer was extremely nice to work with, and even agreed to honor the price after the 90-day limit expired.

Along about this time, Bob Markham and Jim Collier and I began hunting for the next of kin of the “38”...we had no idea how many could be contacted after 30 to 36 years. Amazingly, we were able to contact 19 of the 38 families represented, and although not all could attend the dedication, 19 people were able to attend both the BBQ dinner we had arranged for on Saturday night and the Sunday dedication. One lady brought 7 of her family with her! While I managed to find a few of the survivors, most were found by Bob Markham and Jim Collier. I made a total of 14 trips

between Abilene and Brownwood, where I live. I never intended this ceremony to be of such magnitude that it turned out to be. When we first sent out the invitational letter, we had a total of 11 replies, and this included Markham’s and Collier’s wives and my wife and me! Soon, however, we were inundated with requests for more information, and although I had reserved only 50 rooms at a local hotel, it became apparent that we needed many more, and quickly! I took all the rooms they could provide – 75 total. A few of our association people lived in Abilene, and others came in travel trailers and RVs – we filled the parking lot. We served 173 at the BBQ dinner on Saturday night, and about the same, or a few more at the Sunday luncheon before the dedication began at 1400 hours. Originally, we were supposed to have General John Jumper, the USAF Chief of Staff as our speaker, but the events of Sep 11 precluded his ability to come, so General Gene Habiger was kind enough to drive up from San Antonio to handle the speaking for us. Both of these 4-starred gentlemen are former Caribou pilots.

As I mentioned earlier, this was intended to be a dedication of a bronze plaque, but as it turned out, we had people come who we had not seen for years. We had people come who we had never seen before. We had an opportunity to meet some of the survivors of the “38” which we would have never been able to meet before, and in return, they had the opportunity to meet some of their relative’s comrades-in-arms – it meant a lot to both us and them. The ceremony had the proper demeanor...the posting of the colors...the prayers before and after the ceremony...the ‘missing man’ flyover provided by one of our association flyers in his own aircraft accompanied by his friends in CAF aircraft...the reading of each of the “38” names...the tolling of the bell after each name...and a beautiful rendition of taps followed by the retirement of the colors. One of our association members provided an outstanding floral wreath with red, white and blue flowers with matching bunting posted in front of the Caribou aircraft. The unveiling of the plaque was more or less the highlight of the ceremony. After the conclusion of the ceremony itself, many photographs were taken, most of which are displayed on the Caribou Website, C-7acaribou.com>. This whole presentation provided an ancillary development – many Caribou crewmembers came from miles around to meet with us for the first time since their time in Vietnam. Many have signed up with the organization for the first time. It seems that this became a “drawing card”, although it was never meant to be. It just shows that being together in a combat situation tends to stick with us for many years, and hopefully, it will be for many more years.

## Tank Treads

Arriving in-country for the year 1970, I was prepared for 12 months of “trash hauling” without much anticipation of anything out of the unusual occurring. Was I in for a surprise! The first six months were spent in the 536th at Vung Tau.

The base was under the command of an Army full colonel with a host of Air Force tenants (two Caribou squadrons, ALCE, FAC unit, etc., plus an Australian Caribou squadron). The officers lived off base, very fortunate to have their own “clubs”.

An inevitable topic of discussion centered on the base commander. In his view of the war we had greater dangers from speeding on the streets of the base than we did, say, from VC infiltrators and the likes. Thus, he had installed broken tank treads across the heavily traveled streets of the base as “speed bumps”. They were very effective, did what they were intended to do, but a source of constant irritation to everyone. In the early spring after a rather unusually well attended late liquid evening at the 536th bar, the “troops”, with the enthusiastic support of the ALCE commander, returned to the base whereupon, using forklifts, each tread was loaded on a pallet, loaded on an aircraft and the ramp closed.

The next morning, bright and early as was his habit, the Army base commander was at the flight line to see all the aircraft takeoff. This particular day he was highly agitated as he was at a loss as to the whereabouts of his precious “speed bumps”. The aircrews flamboyantly called back to ops, “Bombs

Away” as their tank treads were air dropped (sans chutes) into the mud of the Mekong Delta.

The base commander, convinced that the “renegade and unruly” Aussies had stolen his tank treads, immediately barged into their CO’s office demanding an explanation. Bewildered (but truly laughing on the inside) the Australian CO could offer nothing, further infuriating the base commander. After dark that evening, the entire officer cadre of the Aussie squadron drove up to the 536th club demanding to speak to our commander. The Aussie CO yelled at our squadron CO saying, “it was the greatest thing in the world to get my ass chewed out by an Army colonel for something I had nothing to do with, let alone had any knowledge of”.

With that having been said (and agreed upon), everyone (Aussies included) adjourned to the bar to what can best be described as a night never to be forgotten. The victory was thoroughly enjoyed by all and esprit de corps among the crews of both organizations was never higher (thanks unwittingly in part to the U.S. Army)!!!

Dana Kelly  
536, 70

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## The Original Caribou Tax

Enjoyed the recent newsletter. I see that our 2002 “Caribou Tax” is Due and Payable.

I feel that many of our members do not know where the term “Caribou Tax” originated. When we delivered three pallets of Coca Cola and Beer to the Army, they unloaded the pallets with thanks. To show their appreciation, they put two cases of each product under the passenger seats for each of the three crew members. I can’t remember if they gave us two cases each per pallet or exactly how it went. I was told that this was a “Caribou Tax” offering that was made customary by the Army Aviation Units that flew the Caribou before the AF took over.

This “Caribou Tax” continued during my tenure at Vung Tau and Can Tho. Further; the crew was cautioned not to ask or demand a tax be paid. I remember one of our pilots who delivered steaks to an Army unit and he “took or demanded” three boxes of the steaks as “Caribou Tax.” Before he got home our Operation Chief received a call from the “Army” and was politely told that they sometimes pay a “Caribou Tax” in appreciation for good service, but we should neither “demand or steal” from the customer. The pilot was properly reprimanded. I also remember one time we delivered two pallets of American Beer and one pallet of Foreign Beer to an Army outpost. The American Pallets came off first with appreciation of the customer. However, the customer indicated that we could keep that “foreign stuff” on the aircraft and take it home with us. He indicated they had more of the Foreign beer than they could drink before it went bad. We were happy to oblige.

Methods of delivery by the Caribou were the most varied that I could imagine being accomplished by one aircraft type. They were (1) Airland, (2) Airdrop by parachute at 500 feet (maybe it was 300 feet?), (3) Airdrop by parachute at 8000 feet assisted by SAC radar and beacon on board the C-7a, (4) Lolex or LAPES (Army or AF style) with parachute extraction at low level, (5) Low level drop without parachutes, & (6) Quick/Rapid off load by backing up to the end of the runway, releasing the pallets, and applying Take Off power. Maybe some of our members can add to the list. It was a challenging and rewarding experience.

Ron Ham, USAF Retired, 536TAS, Vung Tau, 1967, Asst Squadron Chief Pilot

## Changes to Caribou Association By-Laws

Our Association’s officers and board members are of the opinion that there is a need for change to the association’s by-laws. There is activity at the present time to study the current by-laws and to make recommendations for changes. Those recommendations will no doubt be put forth in the form of a motion to change the by-laws, possibly at the business meeting in St. Louis in October or a mail ballot .

Undoubtedly a majority of the members do not carry a copy of the by-laws in their pocket for ready reference. Therefore we have printed the by-laws here so that each member can have his very own “Official” copy to refresh memories and to have for future reference. **Continued next page**

## Caribou Association By-Laws

### Article 1. Preamble

This association is composed primarily of persons formerly associated with the C-7A Caribou who come together through communication and fellowship to remember their service to the United States of America.

### Article 2. Name

This association shall be known as the "Caribou Association."

### Article 3. Purposes

The Caribou Association is formed to foster fellowship among those who have flown, maintained, or supported the C-7A Caribou; to maintain interest in the C-7A Caribou and in its mission; to maintain a roster of persons who may be entitled to membership; to continue to communicate with persons eligible to join the association; and to hold reunions of its members.

### Article 4. Membership

1. Membership in the Caribou Association is unrestricted, but is open mainly to those people who either flew or maintained the C-7A Caribou. For a person to be considered an active member they must have either paid dues for the current year or previous year, or, if in the future the dues are waived or eliminated, have attended one of the last two reunions. Membership may be activated by paying dues or notifying the membership to secretary of the association of the desire to become a member.

2. Meetings. A business meeting will be held at each reunion for the purpose of reviewing the association's financial status, plans and actions, to elect officers and committee persons and to bring unresolved issues before the membership for resolution. Meetings will follow the Robert's Rules of Order as a basis for meeting conduct. Minutes will be recorded.

3. Quorum. Ten (10) per cent of the active membership present or represented by proxy at the reunion meeting shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of official business. If a quorum is present at a meeting, the affirmative vote of the majority of the active members present or represented by signed proxy shall be the act of the membership.

4. Meeting and voting by mail. Voting participation by fifty-one percent of the total active membership shall constitute a quorum for the purposes of meeting and voting by mail. If a quorum is obtained, the affirmative vote of the majority of the votes cast shall be the act of the membership. If a quorum is not obtained a grace period of an additional thirty days may be used to obtain a quorum and resolve the issue.

5. Eligibility. Only active members may vote on issues. An active member is one who has paid dues for the current year, or the previous year, or, if dues are waived, has attended one of the last two reunions.

### Article 5. Authority and Management

The Caribou Association shall be governed by the membership of the association, unless delegated to the association's officers and the board by these by-laws or by the membership. The association's officers and board shall manage the association between reunion business meetings by using internet email as the usual mode of communication.

### Article 6. Organization

1. Officers. The association shall have a president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer elected by the membership, generally at the annual business meeting. Appointments to fill associa-

tion officer, also termed "staff members," vacancies occurring between reunions may be made by the staff and the board. Duties are to conduct the associations business between reunions. The president shall be a member of the coordinating committee. All staff members will normally be members of the board.

2. Board. The association will have a governing committee called the "board" that is elected by the membership, generally at the annual business meeting that reflects the make-up of the general membership. Duties of the board are to resolve any policy issues in accordance with these by-laws and perform any other functions which the membership may delegate to it. The board shall elect a chairman, who shall serve during its term. The chairman shall coordinate issues, activities and motions. Passage of motions shall be by a majority vote. Appointments may be made by the remaining members of the officers and board members to fill vacancies on the board or to any vacated association officer position between reunions.

3. Elections of association officers and board. Any active member is eligible for election as an officer in the association or as a board member.

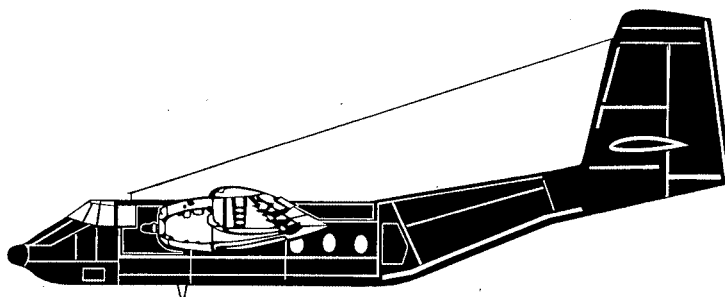
4. Term of office. The term of office for officers and board members shall be for one year, or until the next reunion. There is no limitation on successive terms.

### Article 7. Amendments to By-laws

The by-laws may be amended or initially adopted by the vote of the active membership according to the procedures for a vote by mail in Article 4. Only amendments proposed by the board or submitted to the secretary of the association over the signatures of five percent (5%) of active members shall be submitted for vote. A ballot with an explanation of the effect of any amendment shall be submitted to active members.

## The Latest word on Reunion 2003

Bill Hardie reports that plans are underway for the 2003 reunion to be held in the first week of October, 2003. Present plans are to arrive on Tuesday or Wednesday, ending up with a big band dance at the AMC Museum on Saturday night for everyone who would like to stay on. Reunion Headquarters will be the Sheraton Hotel in Dover. A day trip to Cape May, NJ with a stop at the Caribou rebuilding facility near by Cape May is in the planning stages. Mark your calendars now and start laying your plans to attend.



## Augmentee Duty

Jerry Presley [483,68]

In 1968 Cam Ranh Bay Vietnam was protected by the Korean Army, the Air Police and in case of emergency the Augmentees. There might have been other combat forces in the area but these were the only ones I was aware of.

In the 483<sup>rd</sup> CAM Squadron, the augmentees were a force of mechanics, electricians, sheet metal men and guys from numerous other career fields that would be called out to defend the base after the Koreans, Air Police and women and children had been over run. We're talking about a force composed of guys that had seen an M-16 rifle one time in basic training.

I have no idea what the procedure was for selecting the people who represented my squadron as an augmentee. Maybe it was one of those "new guy" or "E-4 and below" things where the bottom feeders got to do all the fun stuff. It sure wasn't based on your shooting ability because I barely qualified on the rifle range at Lackland.

I was in the process of clearing into the 483<sup>rd</sup> CAM Squadron and things were moving along pretty well on my first day in country. I had received my hooch assignment, job assignment in the phase docks, flak jacket and steel pot, bedding and mailbox when the clerk mentioned something about me being an augmentee.

He went on to explain that if the base came under a major assault we would be called upon to augment the Air Police in turning back the hordes. He told me not to worry because I would receive training at a later date.

Now, I'm just a dumb Okie but I do know that helping the Air Police turn back assaults in a war zone has something to do with shooting it up with someone. I felt that this John Wayne stuff was best left to the professionals i.e. the Army, Marines and Air Police. I figured I had enough to worry about what with my learning a new job, getting used to my new surroundings, meeting my new hoochmates and fellow workers and getting used to a new climate. I didn't feel that this was a good time to be traipsing off somewhere with the Air Police looking for some doped-up radical VC or NVA soldier to have a shoot-out with.

I decided to put the augmentee thing on the back burner and get on with the business of settling into my new job. I thought that if I didn't make a big deal out of it they might just forget about this insanity.

Things rocked along pretty well for a couple of months and nothing else was said about the augmentee thing. One day while checking the bulletin board, I found a list of folks who were to report on a certain day and time for augmentee training. My name was right there under the P's.

On the appointed date, forty or fifty of us assembled at the orderly room with helmets and flak jackets to receive our training. We filed past a metal connex from which the orderly room clerk issued each of us an M-16. Mine looked like a reject from the battle for Hue. It sure wasn't pretty and

shiny like the one I used at Lackland. I asked him if he was sure the thing worked and he said something about bringing it back if it didn't and he would give me another one. That brought heckles from a guy I knew who was from Texas, about Okies and guns that fire more than one round at a time without reloading.

About the time they had us armed and had made sure we were all on "safety", a couple of Sgts from the Air Police squadron arrived on the scene. They were the envy of all of us with their pressed fatigues, M-16 rifles, pistols and K-BAR knives on their belts, ammo belts full of M-16 clips and all the other paraphernalia they use in their line of work. These guys looked like they were ready to go kick Ho Chi Minh's butt all the way to Peking. Not your average "ticket-writer" Air Policemen. These were our instructors.

We loaded into some 2 1/2-ton trucks and took off. I don't remember exactly where we went but we went out the front gate and drove on a paved road for a few miles. We stopped at a row of bunkers on the side of the road in the middle of some sand dunes.

We unloaded and gathered around the two Air Policemen. The first one started talking about our duties as augmentees and went into a bunch of gibberish about frontal attacks, flanking movements, killing zones, sweeps and some other Audie Murphy jargon I can't remember. This guy gave new meaning to the term "loose cannon".

Next they separated us into groups of four and dropped us off at bunkers along the line. My group was dropped off at one of the end bunkers. The second Air Policeman told my group that we were the flank. He went on to say that in case of an actual assault we would probably be hit the hardest since the opposing forces always try to flank a position and get behind it. He went on to say that if we were called out for the real thing we would receive an initial issue of 80 or 100 rounds of ammo and the Air Police would keep us supplied as needed.

I didn't like that "as needed" stuff. I had been around long enough to know that an M-16 could get rid of a lot of ammo in a short period of time. What if the delivery guys got tied up and couldn't get back to you very soon? I was sure you couldn't call a time out until the ammo guys got back to you. I was thinking more along the line of a "stock-pile" system. Issue maybe eight or ten bandoleers of ammo to each guy for a little cushion in case you came up short. Call it a confidence builder if you will.

Our crash course on infantry tactics continued for about an hour. We were told that our duties as augmentees could involve guarding areas such as POL storage areas and the ammo dump (the same ones that went BOOM a few years later).

That's just what I needed. I could just imagine a 5acre smorgasbord of bombs of every size, shape and explosive capability or a million gallons of JP4 and 115/145 going off in my face. This was not my idea of fun stuff to do. I have

always been known as an easy going, patient and open minded guy but this fiasco was beginning to get a smidgen close to the edge of the envelope of my comfort zone.

That was it, the straw that broke the camel's back! My future was decided in about one minute. I would play their game and do what was necessary to keep myself alive and help defend my immediate position to the best of my ability but that was as far as it would go. I felt it would behoove me to go ahead and do my duty as an augmentee, and face the VC if necessary, instead of having to explain to Col. Turk why I didn't feel obliged to join the fracas.

There would be no hero stuff like attacking machine gun positions or crawling around with a knife between my teeth. I would finish my year tour, go back to the states for 7 months, get out and use my GI BILL to learn another line of work. I thought I had been sent here to fix airplanes. If I had wanted to do this Hoot Gibson stuff I would have joined the Army or Marines.

Next we loaded up and headed for the rifle range to practice our riflery. We were issued some ammo and were allowed to do some shooting. This proved to be the high point of the day.

I remained a member of the augmentees for the rest of my tour and, as you can see, I survived. Cam Ranh Bay was attacked three or four times while I was there but I never got called out. I guess the chief honchos realized that we were not trained for that kind of stuff and gave us a reprieve while I was there.

If I have sounded critical or cynical of the Air Police or augmentees, that was not my intention. This was a true story to the best of my recollections. I was just trying to tell it with the same feelings I had as a 20 year old Buck Sgt.

In retrospect, I realize that we maintenance troops are indebted to the fine Air Police force we had at Cam Ranh Bay. It felt damned good to see those guys out there keeping watch while we were going about our business of maintaining the aircraft we were assigned to. My hat is off to them.

I have friends who were augmentees at Tan Son Nhut during the 1968 TET offensive. They stepped up and did their duty when called upon. I have no doubt that the augmentees I served with in the 483<sup>rd</sup> CAM Squadron would have done the same. I think we would have made Col. Turk proud of our behavior.

## Memories - G. Bode

Dave,

I won't be able to attend the Dyess AFB dedication ceremony. However I am looking forward to the 2003 reunion at Dover AFB Delaware. I should be able to make that easy enough. Again I thoroughly enjoy the site and congratulate everyone that put it together. GREAT JOB!!!

I discovered the Caribou site while surfing the information hi-way working the third shift (midnights.) I hope oth-

ers do the same. Another great site is [www.ec47.com](http://www.ec47.com). I would like very much to establish correspondence with any of my old buddies from my Air Force days. I worked on many a Recip Engine during my 3 years 5 months in the A.F. However my most rewarding time was working on the Caribou, the reason being that I spent the most time on them.

Now for some fluff and stuff and memories. You know, I killed a lot of brain cells in the past 36 years. WOW! That is a long time ago. I swore into the Air Force on January 4, 1966 at Hamilton A.F.B. in Brooklyn N.Y. The draft was on my ass. I had a draft date of 12/17/65 and I was supposed to show up at local draft board #3 in Great Neck, N.Y. As I found out later, on that day they drafted Army Army MARINE ...every third guy was a marine. My good old A F recruiter told me that I didn't have to show for the draft because I was an Airman in the U.S.A.F. Wrong! While at basic training at Lackland AFB I was summoned to the orderly room and had to sign and meet the F.B.I. Mom also got a visit and she really could not comprehend why the F.B.I. said "yeah, right lady" when she told them I was in the Air Force.

Basic was 6 weeks at the time plus 2 weeks second phase (8 weeks). On to Sheppard A.F.B., Wichita Falls, Texas for Recip Engines School. My first duty station was Stewart AFB, N.Y. Then in September 1966 I got orders for Tan-Son-Nhut, Saigon. Then M-16, M-60 and Grenade training at Hamilton AFB in San Francisco, then on to Travis, Hawaii, Wake Island, and Clark in the Philippines for 11 days training on R-2800 engines. Then to Saigon. I worked in the engine shop on the flight line so we worked on C-47, C-123 and A1-E aircraft. I think I was in the Ranch Hand Squadron but worked them all. Then a set of orders came down and 80 + mechanics went TDY to Clark AFB, P.I. We went back and forth between Vietnam and the Philippines a few times. In the P.I. I was in the 6200 F.M.S. I also remember something about the 460th F.M.S. Maybe that was in Nam. Anyway my DD-214 states 14 months S.E.A. duty. I arrived at Sewart A.F.B. in Smyrna (4 traffic lights and a dairy queen), Tennessee in October of 1967 and stayed until I got President Johnson's early out May 16, 1969.

I was in the 4449 CCTS and we worked our asses off keeping 17 or 18 Caribous flying with one always away in I.R.A.N. I have too many stories to tell so I will just get into some names from my 4449 CCTS days. It would be nice if we could locate each other through this site and chat. From the member board I seem to recall a Major Dillard. He checked me out for my Engine Run-up license. Squadron commander was Col. Glover, 1st Shirt CMSG Garcia from New Hampshire, Shop Chiefs SMSG Biddle, then MSG Tillary from Alabama. Engine mechanics SSGT Swanner (loved the rain) from Johnson City, Tenn. and TSGT Clemmer, I know, both trained on and took over the Caribou from the Army at Fort Benning GA. MSGT O'Neil

from Indiana & A1E's at Pleiku. SGT Sandy Sanders from Texas, SGT Gibalero, Kew Gardens N.Y. (phase Dock) A2C Powell from Indiana, SSGT Bell, SSGT Hill, A2C Johnson from Chicago, A2C Soto (from Argentina). Sgt Woodward (Woody). We did a TDY together at Cannon A.F.B. Clovis, New Mexico. Airman Sherman, Steffan, Hatch (prop shop), Hernandez (elec. shop). Flight line and Crew Chiefs, Gene Aldridge from Seattle, Rich Hoag from Bangor, Mich., Pat Ayres from Ohio, David Browne from Kentucky, Don McBride from Indiana, Gary Steiner from Zena, Ohio, Rich Saunders from VA. A pilot, Capt. Stinson, drove a Cobra. Many more that I can't recall.

Now for some 4449 CCTS, Sewart A.B. memories. I will start with "Why was the town named Smyrna?" when you had Mayor Ridley, Ridley Market, Ridley Furniture, Ridley Real Estate, and Ridley Chevrolet. I think RIDLEYVILLE would've been the better choice. Murfreesboro, M.T.S.U. and Shoneys, the drive in movie, Jane from Maine, the Woodshed Restaurant, the old and new V.F.W. Nashville with all there silly drinking laws. Bottle in plain view on table, 2 doors down bottle in paper bag under table, paying for ice and setups. Another place only Schlitz Malt Liquor was served. One place the waitress had to open the can (pop tops, band-aid fingers on waitresses.) One block over you had to open the can while they watched, like we were going to smuggle 7oz.cans off premise. Printers Alley, Ernest Tubs Record Shop, The old Grand Ole Opry. Rhineman Arena, Peabody U and Vanderbilt U., Centennial Park; the bands and singers would put on free shows while practicing for there Grand Ole Opry appearance on Saturday Night. Jefferson St., Davey Crockett Hotel. I think in January '69 Nashville passed "liquor by the ounce" and then you could go to a bar and buy a drink.

The original 4449 CCTS barracks across from the pool. Built in 1942 and given two coats of paint in 25 years. Actually I liked it better there then when me moved into the re-conditioned barracks in the "barracks row" area. The old barracks had plenty of parking and no one bothered you. We used to say we had more modern living facilities in Nam then at Sewart. The latrines were open bay. 6 bowls, 6 sinks, 6 mirrors, 6 shaving shelves, 6 showerheads, 3 on ea. side but only 2 faucets. One 40-watt light bulb in a step-in large galvanized room. A long trough as a urinal. Usually on Friday and Saturday nights some body fell asleep in it. It got pretty cold in the winter and hot and humid in the summer. I remember an Airman Meteyer had a bug eye Sprite in the parking lot, but the tranny and engine was in his cubical. I don't remember if he ever got it running. When we moved into the new barracks, I think we were in about a month or so, my roommate Harry Mueller was heating STP motor honey on a hot plate (illegal hot plate) and forgot about it. Well, I came back late on Saturday or Sunday afternoon and white smoke was billowing out of an upstairs window. The fire department was on their way up and every body in the

barracks was outside, when a buddy says, "Hey, isn't that your room." It was! I wonder if good old Harry is still around. Harry also had a Honda 305 bike that he had shipped from the P.I. in a crate. He kept talking that he could not wait until his bike arrived. When it arrived it wasn't a bike, it was a crate of parts. He had to build the bike. He used six Pabst Blue Ribbon beer cans brazed together for a fuel tank (yeah they leaked) but he rode it anyway. Pat Ayers had a new 700 Triumph. Hoag Aldridge and Ayers rented a trailer at the Smyrna trailer park (I am sure it was owned by Ridley.) We had a lot of parties there. I remember a squadron or base pig roast. I used some Sgt's black Chevy Suburban to make a beer run and I heard something rolling in the back. It was a Hog's head he was saving for the delicacies. I remember a guy named Harper who drove the Ford Econoline Specialist truck. He was coming around the phase dock hangar on a windy day and he laid the van on its side. No body hurt. I also remember running up a Bou (engine check sign off, a red x condition, think it was a hydraulic pump replacement) with a Tech Sgt on an ice covered parking area. When we looked up we were about 50 feet from the tail of a C-130 Hercules. We almost sledded into the 130. Boy that was close. We shut down and the crew chief got a tug and we re-parked the plane. I also remember with my run up and taxi license I had to get 4 hours a month flying time (crew) for the extra hazardous duty pay (\$65 a month.)

We used the Bou to pick up and drop the 82nd airborne out of Fort Campbell Kentucky. I had to fly to TAC headquarters at Langley, Va. for the air show. The BOU was a S.T.O.L. and I believe that Schaumburg, Dillard, Stinson and Foy were the pilots. Those guys were good. I think they could take off and land in 110 ft. (I think). Then we had to stand the static display and answer all the public's questions, usually with a hangover. The A.F. would put us up in a motel in Buckaroo Beach and rent us a Chevy nova to use. Usually two BOU's, one stood static, one flew the show. I remember now. We returned to base from the air show on a Saturday night March 15 1969. It was heavy fog and they almost sent us to land elsewhere, but the pilot took it in any way. Later that night I wrecked my VW on the way to the old V.F.W. on the old Nashville highway. Booze and fog, and at the end of the road you could only make a left or right turn. I went straight. I should have stayed at Langley for the Sunday static display and flew back with the other crew. Woulda, Shoulda, Coulda. AH YES. The Good Old Days! I also remember receiving Squadron Airman of the Month award at commander's call at the service club on base from Col Glover.

This E-mail is intentionally long winded. Maybe it will shake up the memories of some others. Let us not forget a time in our lives that we should all be very proud of.

Regards,  
G. Bode

**Dak Seang from pg 7**

into day for the NOD. So, the NOD operator (and the FLIR operator, too, I think) had a beautifully illuminated view of the ground within the illumination circle of the Illuminator, which I think was about the diameter of the camp from our orbit altitude.

At this point, my memory begins to get fuzzy. One way or another, the C-7s were able to fly their approaches to Dak Seang at night, but I don't remember how. Was there an HF beacon at the camp? Or did we track you on the FLIR, giving you range cuts so you could make your glide path altitudes? Or what? I don't remember. But what I do remember is that whatever the method was, it wasn't accurate enough in range to ensure that the C-7 drops would land inside the wire. So our contribution was to illuminate the camp at the very last minute so the C-7 crews could see where to drop — and then turn it off before the VC could get off a shot. I don't remember exactly how long you wanted the white light on, but I know it was pretty short — a matter of only a few seconds, as I recall! The radio call to switch to white light was "Green Light" and the call to switch it off was "Red Light." I don't remember whether it was the C-7 crews who made the call as they approached the wire or our AC-119G crews made the call to alert the crews as we observed them approaching the wire; but I do know that it worked. I do know that all the C-7 missions from then on were flown at night and that we never lost another C-7 over Dak Seang. I think the siege was eventually lifted and the camp survived, but I'm not sure of that either. (*General Brown later added the following comments.* Not that it much matters, but the more I think about it, I think the way we handled the light at Dak Seang was that we turned the white light on when a C-7 asked for it somewhere out on his approach, presumably so he could see the DZ from far enough out to line up and all, and we turned it OFF when he called "green light," which occurred just as he entered or was about to enter the light beam — and which I presume was also the command to kick the bundles out?)

Today, of course, the crews would be flying with night vision goggles and there'd be no need for such primitive measures as we had to invent at the time. But given the time and the circumstance, I think the two outfits did all right.

I hope this helps. And if any of the C-7 guys remember it differently, they're probably right. After all, they're bound to be a lot younger than I am.

Bruce

**Bou Drops Cargo 2 Miles from DMZ**

From the Caribou Courier, 483<sup>rd</sup> Troop Carrier Wing

APO S.F. 96326

June 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 81mm mortar or a couple of 105mm howitzer rounds — anyway it's somewhat "hot."

On 2 May, 1967, Major Clarence Beardsley, 1<sup>st</sup> 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, 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.

**Hutch on Intercom...**

Thanks to all of you guys who send in your good old memories to the newsletter. The best way for this newsletter to be really interesting is for all of you to dig back some 30 or 35 years and regurgitate some of the many, many funny, exciting, scary, stupid, ornery, clever, dumb episodes that you can bear witness too, that you heard about, or that you can now get off your chest without fear of reprisal, personal or Government. I'm sure that there must be a statute of limitations which covers war-time antics!

There just aren't enough things happening at the Association to fill a newsletter. But I know there are thousands of tales about getting ready to cope with the C-7A; cross training, aircraft crew training, escape and evasion, jungle survival, ferrying Bou's across the pond, either going or coming, arriving in country; disgust at the lousy living facilities, joy at the great living facilities. I would imagine that things happened in the hooches or barracks that would raise some eyebrows. No one says that you even have to sign your name to an article, if it would be wise not to.

An editor's dream would be having the chore of choosing which articles, out of many, to put in the newsletter. Then he wouldn't have to write things like I am doing now, begging for input. And if we would get enough articles it would really put the meat on the bones of the histories that we keep trying to build.

But anyway, many thanks to all of you who have contributed to our newsletter.



## Call Of The Caribou

From the 483<sup>rd</sup> TCW Caribou Courier, June 1967

The award of the Barracks Bag Cluster to the Good Conduct Ribbon is hereby awarded to the crew of Mission 427 who flew on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of May in support of the 4<sup>th</sup> Corp.

To the best of our knowledge they are the first crew to complete 100% of the required radio calls to ALCC during a mission. Congratulations to Capt Edward (Beads) Suranyi, Aircraft Commander, Maj. Robert A. Mellerski, (The Polish Aviator) Pilot, and John Lewis, Flight Mechanic.

**Excerpt...** from the 483<sup>rd</sup> TCW Caribou Courier, August 1967

### “400 ATTEND 1ST CARIBOU ROUNDUP”

In the sack race, each squadron furnished ten men for an elimination race. The best two men represented their squadron in the final race. Hopping rapidly through the sand, the winner for the 458TAS was Captain Wayne Delawter.

Wayne, could you do it now?

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IF THE INFORMATION ON YOUR MAIL LABEL IS INCORRECT OR NOT CURRENT, PLEASE ENTER CORRECTIONS AND RETURN TO:

C-7A Caribou Association  
Attn: Jim Collier  
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Fair Oaks, CA 95628-2707

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