

# C-7A Caribou Association

Volume 1, Issue 19

Newsletter

January 2004

## Charleston Reunion A Smash Hit

Our Fourteenth Annual Caribou Reunion is another real success story. We keep saying that you can't top the last one, and then they go ahead and do it again. Our many thanks go out to Wayne DeLawter and the crews that work so hard and throw themselves into making our reunions a great success. If you missed this one, you missed another great one.

The beautiful city of Charleston provided a wonderful reunion setting to once again renew old acquaintances and meet new friends. What a great reunion it was. With about 200 members and guests, this was our largest turnout yet. There was plenty to do, lots of sights to see, and a lot of good old-fashioned visiting to just get done.

Quite a few of our members had been stationed at Charleston AFB, or had passed through the base. For many of our other members it was a first time experience. Back in the '60s they called Charleston AFB the country club of the Air Force. But what they didn't tell you was that for the air crews, it was just a place to come home to change clothes, pack another bag and eat a couple of good home cooked meals. Then it was time to brief for your next trip. The missions to South East Asia were really heated up and crews were turning

See **Reunion** page 6

## Bob Markham Elected President

Bob was born in Detroit, Michigan on 4 September 1931. He joined the Air Force in March 1950 and took basic training at Lackland AFB. After basic training he attended Ground Power and Pole Line Construction tech school at F.E. Warren AFB, Cheyenne, Wyoming. From there his next duty station was Biggs AFB, Texas, and Roswell AFB, New Mexico.

His next assignment took him to the far north working on Project Blue Jay, which was essentially the construction of Thule AB, Greenland. That was followed by other assignments in the North East Air Command of AACCS (Air and Airways Communication Service.)

In 1953 Bob was assigned to Offutt AFB, Omaha, Nebraska. He was sent TDY to Weeping Water, Nebraska to

## C-7A Caribou Reunion, Charleston, SC 5 – 9 November 2003

Bob Bowers, [536, 66]

Another great and memorable get together of the finest troops and ladies I've ever had the privilege of knowing. My wife Eve and I really appreciate the friendly and caring attitudes of everyone attending and, as in the past reunions, we cherish the fond memories of Charleston. We look forward and are planning for the next meeting in Midland, Texas.

It's really great to be able to grab the hand and slap the back of someone you haven't seen for over 35 years. I've wondered about Ken Pacholka (536<sup>th</sup> Crew Chief)

for all these years and then I hear my name and look up to see him in the flesh. Yes...exciting and emotional it is. Then, from out of nowhere, stands grinning at me, Gerry Ippolito, 536<sup>th</sup> flight mechanic – 1966. Gerry was a very young flight mechanic 37 years ago at Vung Tau and is now serving as an older police sergeant in Helen, Georgia. However, he looks pretty much the same...just not as

skinny! Ken Kemseu is a regular attender now and it's a distinct pleasure to see his smiling face every year. Ken and I go away back to the early 60's at Larson (Moses

See **Bowers** Page 7

### In This Issue

Association Business .....	Page 2
Reunion News .....	Page 4
Reunion Demographics .....	Page 4
Hutch on Intercom .....	Page 7
Help Wanted .....	Page 9
Mail Call .....	Page 10
War Stories .....	Page 11

maintain a homing beacon for aircraft flying into Offutt AFB. The TDY period was supposed to be for 90 days, but it turned out to be nineteen months. That was enough time for Bob to meet a local girl, Noni, who eventually became his wife. Bob says that meeting Noni was the best thing that ever happened to him.

After his TDY stint at Weeping Water he was stationed at Dhahran AB, Saudi Arabia for one year. In 1955 he was transferred to Bitburg AB, Germany, where he was involved in the construction of communications systems, control towers and radio stations in central Europe.

In 1957 he was assigned to McConnell AFB Kansas where he was in charge of flight line ground power equip-

See **Markham** page 6

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

**C-7A Caribou Association Web Site**  
**www.C-7Acaribou.com**

### Officers, Board Members, Committee Members

**Bob Markham** -President/Board Member  
459th 69

**Peter Bird** -Vice President/Board Member/Webmaster  
535th 71

**Stoney Faubus** -Secretary/Board Member  
458th 68

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

**Jim Collier** - Chairman of Board /Roster Chairman  
537th 67

**Paul Phillips** - Board Member  
459th 69

**Bill Avon** - Recruitment Chairman/Veterans Magazine Advisor  
537th 68

**Dave Hutchens** - Board Member/Newsletter Editor  
459th 69

**Bob Davis - George Spurger** - Co-Chaplains  
457th 69      537th 68

**Gerald Ippolito** - Historian  
536th 67

**Bob Markham** - Bereavement Committee Chairman

**Jim Collier - Bob Markham** - Nominating Committee

**Wayne DeLawter** - Reunion Advisor  
458th 66

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

Happy New Year

Now is the time for all good Caribou members to check their address label and determine if they have a T04 date or later. If not, your TAX is due. The Tax is used to support our web site [WWW.C-7ACaribou.com](http://WWW.C-7ACaribou.com) and the Newsletter. The Caribou Tax is \$10 a year, multiple years gladly accepted, and may be sent to:

Earl Reynolds

C-7A Caribou Association

11813 Market Place Avenue

Baton Rouge, LA 70816

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

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

## FROM OUR OUTGOING PRESIDENT...

We sincerely hope that everyone who attended the reunion in Charleston had a good and rewarding time. It was great seeing so many familiar faces and a good number of new faces. We appreciate the efforts of all who made this a wonderful event.



A highlight of this reunion was the attendance of a former 483<sup>rd</sup> Wing Commander. Colonel Wil Turk graciously agreed to be out banquet speaker. He also signed copies of his recently published book about his life as a pilot and USAF officer. Perhaps his attendance was the great draw for the number of people at this reunion. There were 200 people who attended this reunion – the largest number ever.

The reunion planning is a yearlong effort for these reunions. The officers and boardmembers begin working on the following reunion as soon as the last one is finished. The first thing that is done is work on the “After Action Report” — a look back at what we believe we did right and what we can improve on. Then we work in concert for implementing agreed upon changes.

The vice-president of most organizations sometimes isn't utilized to great extent, but this is not the case in this Association. Pete Bird was arguably my greatest asset throughout the year. He not only maintained the website, but provided technical inputs with various graphics, devised and implemented an efficient, successful postcard based recruiting technique, assumed leadership when I was away or swamped with operational coordination and planned and conducted the reunion's general business meeting.

I appreciated all the on-sight volunteers at Charleston without whose help it could not have been pulled off. While the officers and boardmembers did an incredible job year round, Christine Phillips as our administrator, swung into action in the last couple months before the reunion to track the registration, organize and coordinate many of the details. She did a great job as always.

I want to express my appreciation to Bob Dugan and the Board for their support and help during this past year. I stepped down as president to serve as the Association's planner because I found that doing both jobs was just too much. This will help spread the workload, an objective that we worked toward this past year. To the membership, I thank you for your support of our organization. We will be well served by Bob Markham's leadership. Thank you for taking the reigns, Bob.

Wayne DeLawter

## C-7A Caribou Association 2003 General Membership Meeting

### Charleston, South Carolina

November 8, 2003

### Minutes

**Call to Order**

Welcome and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Establishment of Quorum: As of Nov 1, 2003 we have 531 active members: 54 are needed for a quorum. A quorum is present.

**Old Business**

Approval of 2002 General Membership Meeting Minutes: Bob Markham made a motion to approve the minutes as published on the web page, seconded by Rex Sanford, Approved by the members.

**Financial Report**

An audit of the Treasurer's books was accomplished by Pat Dugan, Shirley Allison and Norma Sanford. The Treasurer's books were found to be in order. A motion to accept the audit and the Treasurer's report was made by Bob Dugan, seconded by Rick Patterson and approved by the members.

**New Business**

Motion was made by John Mood to make the Vietnam Center, Texas Tech University, the official C-7A Caribou Association Archive, and seconded by Ralph Erchinger. After considerable discussion, Wilson Petefish made a motion to move the question and Jim Collier seconded, and the members approved the motion.

Motion to approve a change to Paragraph 3 article 4 of the By-Laws was made by Wayne Delawte and seconded by Pete Bird, and approved by the members. The changed By-Laws are posted on the website.

After considerable motions seconds and discussions the follow list of candidates were agreed on:

- |                |                |                |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| President      | Bob Markham    |                |
| Vice President | Peter Bird     |                |
| Treasurer      | Earl Reynolds  |                |
| Secretary      | Stoney Faubus  |                |
| Board Members  | Larry Schiff   |                |
|                | Rick Patterson | Wayne Delawter |
|                | Al Cunliffe    | Paul Phillips  |
|                | Dave Hutchens  | Jim Collier    |

The Officers were elected by acclamation. And Dave Hutchens, Paul Phillips and Jim Collier were elected Board Members at large. Subsequently, Jim Collier was elected as Chairman of the Board by the new Board Members. The meeting was adjourned and all the members proceeded to the annual picture taking event.

James L. Collier 537th 67  
Secretary, C-7A Caribou Association 2003



Bob Markham



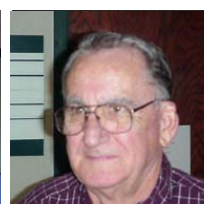
Pete Bird



Earl Reynolds



Stoney Faubus



Jim Collier



Dave Hutchens



Paul Phillips

## Reunion Demographics

The Charleston reunion turned out the most members and guests since we started keeping track of attendance. The 537th turned out more than twice as many members as the next highest, the 535th, which had 15. What is it about those 537th guys? This reunion produced the largest number of first time attendees, with 39. We continue to grow and have fun. Here are the numbers:

Total number of members and guests	193
Members	110
Guests	83
First Time Attendees	39

### Members by organization:

4449 - 3	458 - 12	483 - 4	536 - 14
457 - 14	459 - 14	535 - 15	537 - 32

### Members by year in country:

1964 - 1	1966 - 16	1968 - 22	1970 - 4
1965 - 1	1967 - 09	1969 - 17	1971 - 4

### Members by State:

AL- 1	GA- 3	MD- 1	NH- 1	OR- 1	UT- 1
AZ- 1	ID - 2	ME- 1	NJ- 8	PA- 1	VA- 4
CA- 11	IL - 5	MO- 2	NV- 3	SC- 1	WA- 2
CO- 1	KS- 1	MS -1	OH- 1	TN- 2	WI -3
FL- 5	LA- 2	NE- 1	OK- 5	TX -5	WV-1

### Numbers for the past five years are:

		Members	Guests	Total
Tucson	1999	84	55	139
College Park	2000	58	36	94
Las Vegas	2001	100	61	161
St. Louis	2002	78	54	132
Charleston	2003	110	83	193

### First Time Members (FNG's)

2001	19
2002	28
2003	39

## 2004 Reunion – Odessa, Texas – September 30<sup>th</sup> – October 2<sup>nd</sup>

The 2004 C-7A Caribou Association Reunion is built around the Commemorative Air Force (CAF) Airshow at the Midland-Odessa airport. For information on the CAF go to [www.airsho.org](http://www.airsho.org). It should be a great time, particularly if you are into old airplanes and airshows.

This year's reunion will kick off with a welcome reception on Thursday evening. There may be a mini-airshow on Friday, a prelude to the big one on Saturday. Our banquet will be on Friday night so we will have the entire day open for the Saturday airshow. Our members will be the special guests of the CAF and Don Malm, a Caribou Association member and chief of staff of the CAF. As their guests we will have special airshow seating in their Officer's Club area where we will lunch and evening BBQ.

At this point we don't have the final cost figures but it appears that the cost per person for all events – welcome reception, banquet dinner, transportation and airshow will be \$80. This is a good value.

### Misunderstanding Military Terms

One reason the Services have trouble operating jointly is that they don't speak the same language.

For example, if you told Navy personnel to "secure a building," they would turn off the lights and lock the doors.

Army personnel would occupy the building so no one could enter.

Marines would assault the building, capture it, and defend it with suppressive fire and close combat.

The Air Force, on the other hand, would take out a three-year lease with an option to buy.

One of the differences in planning for this year's reunion will be the advanced commitment for the reunion. The hotel requires that your hotel reservations be made by July 31<sup>st</sup>. Additionally, because of the airshow weekend you must be registered in the hotel for a minimum of 3 nights. Even though you must register early, you will be able to cancel until 7 days before the arrival date and recover your money. All reservations will be individually made directly with the hotel via a toll-free phone number.

With the 2 month in advance hotel registration policy the Association will have the same reunion registration and cancellation policy. This is necessary because the banquet dinner numbers must be finalized 2 days before the reunion begins.

Mark your calendars for the September 30<sup>th</sup> thru October 2<sup>nd</sup> reunion!

Wayne DeLawter, Reunion Planner

### Heads Up

**If you are planning on attending the 2004 reunion would you advise Jim Collier at [jascoll@pacbell.net](mailto:jascoll@pacbell.net) or 916-966-4044. We need to get a tentative headcount for planning. We realize this is early, and many may have to cancel. But a good estimate of attendees is all we need.**  
Jim Collier 537th 67, Chairman of the Board

## Reunion 2003 Attendees

Aubray & Judy Abrams, GA  
 Lacey & Iris Allen, SC  
 Max & Shirley Allison, WI  
 Francisco & Marcella, Archibeque, MS  
 Richard & Shelby Ardoin, FL  
 Richard & Susan Bailey, SC  
 William Bell, SC  
 Peter & Pattie Bird, NH  
 James & Barbara June Bisard, AL  
 Lee & Darlene Borts, SC  
 Brian Bowen, FL  
 Bob & Evelyn Bowers, CA  
 Patrick & Lesley Brooks, TN  
 Arthur Candenquist, VA  
 Lawrence Carter, SC  
 Kenneth & Venita Chrisman, MD  
 Jim & Betty Collier, CA  
 Tom & Chantell Collins, NJ  
 Robert Coper & Mary Furrie, TX  
 John & Nadine Craig, OK  
 Al & Shirley Cunliffe, AL  
 Richard & Maria Darvas, AZ  
 Robert & Georgia Davis, FL  
 James & Dot Davis, NJ  
 Wayne & Patty Delawter, TN  
 Wayne & Maria Dickerson, VA  
 Bob & Pat Dugan, TX  
 Roy & Burma Dunn, CA  
 Ralph & Ellie Erchinger, TX  
 Stony & Melva Fabus, CA  
 Jim & Joanne Farweather, MN  
 Charles, Carroll & Patrick, Findley, TX  
 R. Ted, Pam, Stephan & Matt Frank, Jr, SC  
 Huey & Mary K Frye, FL  
 Richard & Ruth Gaiser, GA  
 Tom Gaston, ID  
 Bruce Gerritty & Patricia Barnett, VA  
 Robert & Barbara Goebel, MI  
 Milton & Marjorie Golart, OR  
 Don & sue Griffin, TX  
 Gus & Tina Gustafson, FL  
 H.R. Bob & Marilyn Hannah, TX  
 George, Rebekah & Anna Marie  
 Harmon, CA  
 Charles & Dolores Henwood, FL  
 Robert & Eula Mae Hopkins, GA  
 David & Jill Hutchens, OK  
 Gerald Ippolito, GA  
 Charles & Dorothy Jordan, KY  
 Steve & Gail Kelley, MO  
 Richard & Mary Kent, SC  
 Kenneth Kimseu, CA  
 Stephen & Linda Kobelas, SC  
 David Kowalski, AL  
 Jim & Sandra Laney, CO  
 Doug Lewis, GA  
 Bob Markham, CA  
 Juan Martinez & Sandra Hill, OK  
 John & Hellen Matthews, TX  
 Thomas & Barbara McHugh, OH  
 Dave & Kaye Mellert, SC  
 Phil & Lynn Moloosky, TX  
 John & Pat Mood, HI  
 James & Julie Myer, TX  
 Mike Nassr, GA  
 Robert & Iola Neumayer, CO  
 Chris Nevins, NH  
 Clinton & Sandra Noren, SC  
 Terry Obermiller, TX  
 Art & Pat Oxley, OH  
 Ken Pacholka, MI  
 James & Alice Parmelee, AZ  
 Rick Patterson, VA  
 Bobby & Shirley Pennington, GA  
 William Perry, CA  
 Wilson & Betty Petefish, TX  
 Paul & Christine Phillips, PA  
 Gery Putnam & Alta Andrews, VA  
 Billy Quinn, ID  
 Harry & Marge Rexroad, SD  
 Earl & Pam Reynolds, LA  
 Russell & sue Riggelman, VA  
 W. Keith & Opal Ryland, AL  
 Rex & Norma Sanford, SC  
 Johnny & Ginger Scamardo, AR  
 Larry & Lee Schiff, PA  
 Allen & Karen Shanahan, WI  
 Robert & Wynell Slade, FL  
 Randall & Christine Smith, OH  
 William & Ann Smith, SC  
 Josh & Dolores Smith, Jr, FL  
 Sonny Spurger, TX  
 James Strickland, TX  
 Ray Tanner, NV  
 John & Fran Tawes, GA  
 Curry Taylor, AZ  
 Bob & Sondra Taylor, OH  
 Otto & Wanda Terrell, NM  
 John & Elaine Teske, NJ  
 John & Mary Thomas, Jr, FL  
 Charlie Tost, CA  
 Wilbert Turk, AL  
 Charles Vanness, TN  
 Richard Verrone, TX  
 Bill Vondersmith, GA  
 Phillip & Jeane Waller, FL  
 Lee & Sigrid Waters, FL  
 Miles & Margaret Watkins, TX  
 Wilbert & Adele Wetzel, AL  
 Clyde & Judy Wilson, CA  
 Frank Woznicki, NY  
 Daniel & Arlene Yost, CA

## The Commemorative Air Force

The Commemorative Air Force was the Confederate Air Force until 2001 when they changed the name. Many members were of the opinion that the name did not accurately reflect the primary objectives of the organization which are: 1) to restore, maintain, and fly World War II aircraft; 2) to maintain museum facilities for aircraft as a tribute to the thousands of men and women who built, serviced, and flew the planes; and 3) to perpetuate in the memory and hearts of all Americans, the spirit in which these great planes were flown in the defense of this nation.

You can read about the organization at: <http://www.confederateairforce.org>.

They have 145 World War II combat aircraft, the largest fleet in the world. The CAF Fleet includes many notable and extremely rare aircraft from both the Allied Forces and the Axis Powers. They have 2 DeHavilland aircraft – sister's of our Caribou.

The CAF perform in air shows throughout the year, but the big one is the one that will be held during this year's reunion. Come join your fellow Association members to enjoy this show.

## MCM Elegante Hotel

Our hotel, the MCM Elegante in Odessa, is a first-class hotel. It's located near the U.S. Presidential Museum, Commemorative Air Force Headquarters, an art museum, and theaters. The hotel provides courtesy shuttle service between the hotel and the airport if you are flying in. Unless you are going to spend extra days in Odessa touring the countryside and Midland, you won't need to rent a car. All transportation during the reunion days will be provided at no extra charge. Go to the hotel's website [www.mcmelegante.com/](http://www.mcmelegante.com/) to learn about it.

Because the CAF Airshow week is one of the areas biggest events, the hotels are always sold out. To get a group rate of \$89.27/night (\$79 + 13% tax) the hotel requires that our reservations must be made NLT July 31<sup>st</sup>. This is

2 months before the reunion. The cost of the rooms for reservations received after July 31<sup>st</sup> will be \$134.47/night (tax included) – this is 50% more. These rates are honored for check in 5 days prior to 5 days after the reunion.

Your credit card will not be charged for the reserved rooms until 7 days prior to your arrival date, therefore you may cancel until 7 days before and you won't be charged anything. However if you cancel within 7 days prior of scheduled arrival you will not be reimbursed for the 3 nights @ \$89.27 = \$267.81. Since you may cancel until September 23<sup>rd</sup>, it is important to get your reservations in before July 31<sup>st</sup> to avoid paying 50% extra.

We will soon be sending you a flyer with more specifics on how to make the hotel reservations.

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### Markham from Page 1

ment for the Strategic Air Command B-47 Combat Training Program. From there he went back to Offutt AFB and then on to Ramey AB, Puerto Rico. After his three-year tour at Ramey he went back to Offutt once again to serve two years on the SAC Inspection Team for Maintenance. Bob felt it was a great privilege to be chosen to serve with the inspection team.

In 1968 a strange thing happened. Bob was transferred to Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, 2nd Air Force Headquarters. After a short time there he received TDY orders to Homestead AFB to attend the F-4 Aircraft Maintenance School. Now Bob had always worked in the 421X3 field, Ground Power Maintenance. None the less, Bob completed the maintenance course, and in October 1969, he was assigned to the 459th TAS, Phu Cat, Vietnam as Field Maintenance Supervisor. Mind you, he still held the 42193 AFSC. His first encounter with a C-7A Caribou was when he was making his own way from Cam Ranh Bay to Phu Cat by way of Pleiku. He hitched a ride aboard a C-7A returning to Phu Cat. During that ride to Phu Cat, Bob received his initial check out on the operation of the C-7A aircraft.

Many of us now know the rest of the story. As 459 TAS Field Maintenance Supervisor Bob directed the recovery of about 25 C-7A aircraft throughout the country. One day we will try to get Bob to share some of his weird and exciting adventures. I can assure you they are interesting. In October of 1970 Bob returned to the land of the big BX, first to Robins AFB, and then to Norton AFB, working with C-141's. Then, after 22 years of active duty, he retired in 1972.

Bob has served two terms as Chairman of the Board of our Caribou Association. This year he allowed himself to be elected president. Bob also serves as the chairman of the bereavement committee and chairman of the nomina-

tion committee, and is the 459th TAS squadron representative for the Recruitment Committee.

Last year Bob began doing volunteer work with the Support Committee at the Riverside National Cemetery. Bob says the work he does with the C-7A Caribou Association and his volunteer work with the Support Committee is truly rewarding.

Bob, we all appreciate the hard work you do for the C-7A Caribou Association.

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### Reunion from page 1

around in minimum crew rest time.

The annual membership meeting revealed some of the soft underbelly of our association. The members who have been serving for several years are looking for relief from other members. But getting new people to step forward to fill the slots is not all that easy. We finally elected a slate of officers and board members, and appointed a new historian, Gerry Ippolito [536, 66] and a new co-chaplain, George Spurger [537,68]. Welcome aboard, Gerry and George. Bob Dugan stepped down after serving diligently for several years, and Paul Phillips is a new board member. Thanks Bob and welcome Paul.

The watchword for the new year is "Help Wanted."

Wayne Delawter is well into planning the next reunion in Odessa, Texas. He has prepared a couple of articles about the reunion for this edition of the newsletter. We feel that there will be another great turnout for our 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Reunion. Why doesn't everybody try to make contact with an old buddy, hooch mate, or acquaintance from your Vietnam days and get him to sign up a membership and come to Odessa with you in September? Now that would be great. Caution; you will have to act fast because of a much earlier registration period for the Odessa Reunion. Looking forward to seeing you all at our next one.

**Bowers** from page 1

Hole). We were SAC troops who didn't stay home very much in those days – with 90 day TDY's to Alaska, Guam, and Okinawa occurring on a regular basis. Ken was my replacement at Vung Tau in December 1967.

This year, sorrowfully, I had to tell Frank Woznicki, 536<sup>th</sup> flight mechanic, that his old buddy Marvin (Red) Hall had passed away in Montana. These two fellows spent most of their Vietnam time in Can Tho. It was nice to see Ralph and Ellie Erichinger and Don and Sue Griffin again. Both were 536<sup>th</sup> 'bou drivers in 66 and 67. We continue to miss Don Foster and Jim Furlong. I flew with Don on occasion to get my flying time. He asked me one day, "What in the world are you doing over here with a wife and five kids at home?" I was 37 and Don was 47. I wondered to myself at that time; "Colonel, what's an old duffer like you doing over here?" At dinner one night in Tuscon some 34 years later I reminded Don of that time in Vietnam. He got quite a kick out of that. Jim Furlong, as a young lieutenant had the unique distinction of being the best squadron weapons control officer that Colonel Yelton ever appointed. There's a story behind that deal...something to do with misplacing a side arm.

Charleston was our (Eve and me) fourth reunion with you good people. We continue to be impressed with your openness and friendship. There seems to be a universal feeling among all of the Caribou Association members, wives and friends attending which speaks very clearly...when we retired from or left the military we all become E-1's...I like that.



## Hutch on Intercom...

Well, the 14th reunion is behind us now and we are well in to planning the 15<sup>th</sup>. The Charleston meeting was truly a great one. About 200 members and guests turned out – our best yet – with nearly forty first-timers. And we had a myriad of fun things to do. Our hats surely go off to Wayne DeLawter (and his noble and able assistant, Patty) for the detailed, intricate planning and arranging of events, and to Christine Phillips for the backup logistics, as well as to the many volunteers who are needed and who step forward to insure that all goes well. The hotel accommodations were first class and the location was great. There were so many things to do — Charleston AFB flight line tour and luncheon, Fort Sumter tour, USS Yorktown Aircraft Carrier, Middleton Place Gardens, Downtown Charleston tour, Citadel Campus tour, Charleston Harbor tour — we just didn't have enough time to get them all in.

Jill and I liked all of the tours that we went on but we particularly enjoyed the cadet parade at the Citadel. I

haven't been to a parade in a long time. I loved the band, the bagpipes, the marching troops, and the passing by of the American Flag. We actually *sang* the Star Spangled Banner as we stood at attention. I asked one of our members standing next to me how long it had been since he had marched in a parade. We had a good laugh. It had been about 35 of 40 years, but we both felt like we could step right into the ranks and do as well as those young Citadel whipper-snappers were doing. Yes, we do love a parade.

The young Citadel cadet that was chaperoning our group told us that the cadets think that God also loves a parade. They reason that at 1500 hours each Friday the powers to be, who govern the calling of the parade, make a decision to hold or cancel the parade, based on the weather outlook at parade time. Well, at 1500 hours the weather is almost always good parade weather. So the parade is a go. But at 1600 hours, parade time, the clouds swell up and the skies blacken and usually there is a healthy shower...and the cadets get to march in the rain again. Their reasoning is that God has a big hand in seeing that the weather outlook at parade time is good and so, because He loves a parade, there is generally a parade at 1600 hours each Friday. And lo and behold, those same events took place on our Friday afternoon...at 1600 hours there was a parade and there was a shower.

At the end of September we will be gathering for our 15<sup>th</sup> annual reunion in Odessa, Texas. This reunion will be a little different than past reunions in that the hotel registration requirements are much more stringent because of the limited lodging facilities in Midland/Odessa during the annual Commemorative Air Force air show. The air show draws huge crowds and the hotels are firm about registration and cancellation. Be sure to read Wayne's article on page 4 that covers the reunion and hotel registration requirements.

You will notice that we have a new section in the newsletter called "Help Wanted Ads." We could call it the "Volunteers Wanted Ads," but our experience shows that those words aren't very effective in getting new people to help in the running of the association. In this new section we will be listing help wanted ads for the various jobs and positions that are in need of help. It might be interesting to note the length of time the current officers, board members and committee members have been serving: Wayne DeLawter – 5 years, Jim Collier – 5 years, Earl Reynolds – 5 years, Bob Dugan – 5 years, Bill Avon – 5 years, Bob Davis – 5 years, Pete Bird – 5 years, Bob Markham – 4 years, Steve Kelley – 4 years, Paul Phillips – 3 years, and so on. And you can add another year to those people who are currently serving. Nick Evanish put in a solid seven

**Hutch** from page 7

or eight years in running the association by himself, and that included putting out the newsletter.

What this is all about is that the association needs re-energizing. We are becoming burned out. Our batteries are running down. We need new, fully charged members to come in and carry the torches that will keep this association going. It would be great if each of you members would

eyeball a certain position that is interesting to you and then inquire as to how you might help out or step into that position. It is essential that members come forward and step into their position of choice. It would be really wonderful if members campaigned for their positions and at voting time we had a choice between two or more candidates for each position. Hopefully we can have a new slate of officers, committee members and board

members at the end of our next business meeting in Odessa in October 2004. You will be very pleasantly surprised at how enjoyable and satisfying it is to serve your association and your fellow members.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in Odessa at our 15<sup>th</sup> annual reunion. Till then...

Dave Hutchens, Editor

## Food For Thought

The U.S. Army is developing a new Combat Sandwich. Army food technicians say this sandwich can remain edible, without refrigeration, for three years. That's nowhere near the staying power of those \$4.50 hot dogs they sell at airports, some of which have been rotating on their grills since the Lindbergh flight. But it's still impressive.

I recently had an opportunity to field-test the new Combat Sandwich, and will give you my review once I get my artificial stomach.

No, I'm fine, and my review will follow this informative HISTORY OF MILITARY FOOD:

The legendary French general Napoleon "Bone" Aparte once observed that "An army marches on its stomach." Napoleon was talking about French soldiers, who drank large quantities of wine and often could not march on their actual feet ("Forward . . . CRAWL!"). In battle, they shot at their own artillery to make it shut up so they could sleep.

The point is that food is vital for soldiers. The ancient Romans understood this: No matter how far their soldiers ventured from Rome, they knew that, come dinner time, the Domino's delivery chariot would come thundering into camp, driven by a man who knew that if he was more than 30 minutes late, he would be disemboweled.

By the American Civil War, the

military had developed a ration called "hardtack," which was similar to plywood, but not as tender. The advantage of hardtack was that it did not spoil, so if soldiers were pinned down on the battlefield, unable to get supplies, they could simply reach into their knapsacks, pull out their hardtack and throw it at the enemy.

"Retreat!" the enemy would shout. "They're throwing hardtack!"

In World War II, the army developed "K-rations," which were critical to the outcome of the war, because the allied soldiers knew that if they won, they would no longer have to eat K-rations. After the war, tons of leftover K-rations were given to starving war refugees, who gave them back. Today they are used primarily in road construction and fruitcake.

During the Cold War, there was a fierce competition between the United States and the Soviet Union to gain superiority in the field of military food. This culminated in the Red Army's development of the legendary "Big Ivan" Tactical Assault Sausage, which was the size of a subway car and theoretically could feed one infantryman for 400 years. In 1987, a dozen of these babies were dropped from bombers to Soviet troops in Afghanistan. Shortly thereafter, communism collapsed.

Food has played a vital role in military history, which is why the army's new Combat Sandwich is so exciting. When I heard about it, I

asked the army to send me one, and they graciously sent me two: one barbecued chicken and one pepperoni, wrapped in brown military foil packets that you need a bayonet to open.

I field-tested these sandwiches on a Florida beach, where the harsh battlefield-style conditions included heat, sand and a large pink man walking around in a tiny red thong. If anything is going to ruin a person's appetite for a sandwich, it is finding yourself face to face with the flagrant crevasse that this man was sporting. Authorities should crack down (Har!) on this kind of beach attire. Coast Guard ships should patrol along the beaches, and when they spot a large bethonged man ("CHEEKS HO!") I think that - Greenpeace be damned - harpoons should be employed.

Even under these conditions, the Combat Sandwich held up well. It's a "pocket" style sandwich, which means it looks as if it has spent time in somebody's pocket. But I thought it was quite tasty. Of course, I think everything is tasty, including cold cuts so old that when you try to take them out of the refrigerator, they skitter away on little mold legs and hide behind the beer.

So I gave a few bites of Combat Sandwich to my wife, who is very strict about food freshness, always rooting through the refrigerator and throwing out pieces of pizza that, in my opinion, still have years of ser-



## Help Wanted Ads!

### Standard Operating Procedure C-7A Caribou Association Squad- ron Representative (Sqd Rep)

Purpose: To establish the duties and responsibilities of a C-7A Caribou Association Sqd Rep.

The Sqd Rep will assist the Roster Chairman in recruiting new members into the Association. The Sqd Rep's primary responsibility will be recruiting new members from the people in the Sqd Rep's Vietnam era organization. Recruiting will be accomplished primarily by trying to contact members on the roster that have never paid dues. Additional contacts will be made by referring to old orders. Recruiting will also be accomplished by developing contacts with old comrades from leads provided by current members. The Sqd Rep will mail a welcoming letter to newly established contacts. This letter is in addition to the letter sent out by the Roster Chairman. The Roster Chairman will provide sample welcoming letters which the Sqd Rep may use to develop his letter. The Sqd Rep will copy the roster Chairman on his letters.

The Sqd Rep will also assist the Association in encouraging lapsed members to renew their membership. By keeping the lapsed member abreast of all upcoming events and activities the Sqd Rep will attempt to establish himself as a link between the lapsed member and the Association.

The Roster Chairman will furnish the Sqd Rep current rosters via e-mail.

The Sqd Rep will assist in keeping his squadron roster current by submitting updated member data to the Roster Chairman. The Sqd Rep will forward information on deceased members to the Roster Chairman and the Bereavement Committee Chairman.

The Sqd Rep will be reimbursed for postal and telephone expenses by sending a summary of receipts to the Treasurer.

Jim Collier, C-7A Caribou Association Roster Chairman

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### Help Wanted: Squadron Representatives

The job described above will undoubtedly prove to be all important to the ongoing success of our association. We must continue to strive to increase our membership base. Our association has that unique feature that there are no new potential members being created. We have to work with the base of people that now exist.

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### Wanted: Newsletter Editor

There is an immediate opening for newsletter editor. As of the end of the next issue there will be no editor.

### Help Wanted for Web Site Maintenance

I need someone who has HTML experience, preferably some experience with Microsoft FrontPage (even though the site isn't a FrontPage Web). Applicants will need a broadband Internet connection and an FTP client with the knowledge to use it. I could also use help with preparing images for posting. This includes scanning, cleaning up old photos, scaling to the correct size, and placement of copyright notices. Experience with Photoshop or Photoshop Elements is a big plus for this part. If you don't know what I am talking about, you probably aren't the person I am looking for. Having two people work on the same web site is akin to having two cooks in the kitchen; it only works with a strict discipline as to who is doing what and continuous communication. and coordination. Please apply to Pete Bird, Association Web Master, peterb@petester.com

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### Help Wanted for Historical Archiving

We have amongst us huge numbers of printed documents and the only way these become "alive" and searchable on the web is to convert them to electronic form. This is done through a process called Optical Character Recognition (OCR). OCR requires a decent scanner and OCR software such as OmniPage Pro 14. After scanning and OCR, the documents invariably require close proofreading. Getting a document in pure unformatted text is sufficient, as the styling can easily be applied on the web site. The styling produced by programs such as Microsoft Word is utterly useless for web use. Anyone who has the equipment, software, and ability is welcome to apply. Pete Bird, peterb@petester.com

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### Help Wanted

Volunteers needed to fill 2004/2005 C-7A Caribou Association Officers, Board Members and committee positions. Must have a computer and e-mail and willing to dedicate 2-4 hours per month.

Please contact Bob Markham at: markhambob@juno.com or 909-792-0848, or Jim Collier at: jascoll@pacbell.net or 916-966-4044

Association Nominating Committee.

Sent: Saturday, October 25, 2003  
10:44 AM

To: 'Jim Collier'

Subject: RE: Caribou Association:  
address change.

Dear Jim,

I was looking forward to being with everyone this November in CHS but "mother nature" has delayed all my plans. Isabel paid us a visit on 9/18/03 and we've just now gotten the reconstruction of the first floor started. As you can see from the address change we're still in TX. We're moving back to VA 11/21/03 so we can manage the rebuild of my house.

I'll be working at Wilmington DE for FSI in the Hawker 800xp, so a lot of changes are happening to the Fords in the "month of the reunion".

I really enjoyed the 9/2003 C-7A Caribou Association Newsletter especially Col Turk, a mention of Dick Scobe, and "Grimey" Bob Grimes.

I was a 535 Instructor Pilot with 855 hours total flying time boarded by Col Turk. I happened to be a Captain but was low time since my first two years in USAF was in Titan IIs. Dick Scobee gave me my first check ride in Viet Nam. Bob was a T-37 instructor at Laredo AFB, TX when I instructed there.

Here's the update. Also, could you forward this to Dave Hutchens, He's done a great job as have you all.

TY, Pat Ford, [535, 68]



Dave:

I believe I read that the September newsletter was your last but I want to congratulate you on a fine job. I have procrastinated long enough - I have had the newsletter sitting on my desk and next to my computer with the intention of making some inputs on some articles I read and now, finally I am doing it.

First, on the article on page 16, "The Blue Baron Does It Again," the article tells the exploits of one Captain Harl V. Piety. I do not know where he is located but I knew him as Van Piety. A burly sandy

## Mail Call

haired guy with a burly mustache to boot. I was the squadron maintenance officer and I remember some of the incidents Captain Piety was involved in. If my memory serves correctly we had to replace the wing on the subject aircraft that struck a land mine at Due Hoa. The wing was shipped from a depot in the United States in a large two-piece metal canister. Half of this canister, with the assistance of some great Structural Repair and Welding troops, became the largest Barbecue pit I ever saw. After construction we parked it at the Bung Lai hotel and with charcoal from Ham Tam and steaks traded with Special Forces troops, we had some great meals and camaraderie to go along with the meals.

I noted another article from page 11 signed by Jerry Ottem who was the Chief of Maintenance during my time in Viet Nam and I remember the incident on the Army aircraft that went gear up on the ground although I didn't witness it. What my maintenance troops and I witnessed was an aircraft parked with the gear up after the incident. We always seemed to be at friendly odds with the army over who had the best of everything and this incident was just another nail in their coffin as far as we were concerned. Jerry mentioned he couldn't remember what designation the aircraft was and just to close the book on his amusing article - the aircraft was an OV1 Mohawk.

My final comments are on the fine article on page 17 by Bob Bowers entitled "A Bolt of Ribbons Wins Many Battles." From my experience the article was right on target. I can remember sending troops out to change an engine out in the "boonies" and having to construct an A frame out of local tree timber. They did it selflessly and with great pride. I did try to take care of the troops but as a First lieutenant I often ran into obstructionist bureaucrats who would claim they were trying to cut the "red tape" however I found they weren't smart enough to realize it couldn't be cut lengthwise.

Jay Baker, [535<sup>th</sup>, 1966]

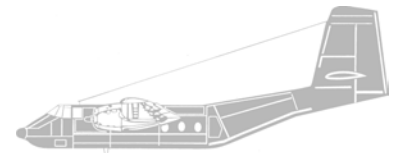
Hi, Dave,

The article in the latest newsletter brought back memories...I was the ops officer of the 535th when Capt. Piety was assigned. He was short (about 5' 5") and stocky, and soon became an Aircraft Commander. Although he wore the standard flying gear while in flight, at other times he delighted in wearing a leather jacket, long blue silk scarf, and leather helmet and flying goggles...where he got them, I don't know...and thus claimed to be the "Blue Baron", and the nickname stuck.

The article is accurate, the aircraft was a total loss, and miraculously there were no casualties. Piety was still with the squadron. when I left so I have no info on him after that.

Keep up the good work!

Walt Simons [535, 66]



**Food** from page 8

vice left. She actually liked the Combat Sandwich. So did my mother-in-law, who is picky about most things, although she has graciously made an exception in my case.

The Combat Sandwich is a strong addition to our nation's combat-food arsenal. It is a tribute to the men and women who devised it, and the courageous barbecued chickens and pepperonis who gave their lives to make it possible. I know I speak on behalf of a grateful nation when I say: What's for dessert?

Wayne DeLawter, 458th 66

*(This article was furnished by Wayne DeLawter. It is not clear at this time whether Wayne did the original research on this subject or whether Wayne merely forwarded the article to the newsletter. Ed...)*

## War Stories!

### Cam Ranh Bay A Ghost Village

By Peter Arnett

Cam Ranh Bay, Vietnam (AP)—The love letter, tumbling across the sands, was scrawled in girlish handwriting. A few paragraphs of erotic description concluded: “Destory this letter “ when you’ve read it, please.”

The boy friend instead had stuffed it into a garbage can, and the monsoon’s breezes, the first in seven months, had scattered it

Hanging on a line were a pair of shrunken socks. A sign nailed to the door of a massage parlor read “Open Now.” Traffic lights at the main interesection bore the sign: “Times Square. “

And marching off across the sand dunes, their aluminum roofs glinting in the sunshine, were the sprawling Army, Navy and Air Force installations. ‘

No jeeps wait for the lights to change at Times Square. The vast supply warehouses and hangars are empty. The nearly 40,000 Americans who carved Cam Ranh base out of a desert wilderness and manned it for six years have gone home.

Yet the still, burning days seem to have suspended Cam Ranh base in time, like the old ghost towns in Nevada and Arizona.

The illusion of occupancy is strong.

An Illinois journalism professor, Marty Gershen, work-

ing his summer vacation as manager of the United Seamen’s Service Club in Cam Ranh, learned one day that a female cashier had been bitten by a snake.

Told that the nearest hospital was at the U.S. Air Force 483rd Tactical Air Wing Base, he jumped in his jeep and drove the girl five miles to the main gates.

“I thought I saw someone wave me through,” Gershen remembers. “I drove down the main air base road and saw the PX, the movie theater and the mess halls. I turned at a curb-side flower garden and pulled up at the emergency entrance to the hospital.

“I carried the girl inside and then I realized there was no one there. The hospital was deserted. The whole base was deserted. It was like a scene from the movie ‘On the Beach,’ where everyone disappeared in H-bomb fallout.”

Gershen finally found a ship’s doctor.

It was not fallout that has left Cam Ranh almost abandoned; a changing war and changing American policies combined to consign the 250-million-dollar base to the garbage pile.

A few Vietnamese troops have moved in. But the vast air bases and warehouses, handed over officially to the Saigon government June 1, are not likely to be used again.

*This article was taken from the THE KANSAS CITY STAR, Sunday, August 13, 1972. Note the author’s name.*

### Pinned Down from Can Tho to TSN

We went to Can Tho to recover a Caribou that had gotten torn up by the VC when they over-ran the base one night during TET. The RAM Team from Tan Son Nhut had patched it up as best they could, including a left engine change after having swallowed a grenade during the attack. They had pronounced the ‘bou fit for a one-time flight to TSN for more repairs.

Expecting the worst, Captain ‘A’ (Donald P. Abbinanti), 536<sup>th</sup> maintenance officer, picked a QC & E guy, MSGT Ed Rudd to go with me. We found a whole bunch of open red x’s. The work had been done but nothing had been signed off, including the

engine change, several landing gear components, all of the tires and a batch of sheet metal patches that needed to be inspected. Ed would clear the work and I would initial over the red crosses. We finally got to the last one and it was a real stinker!

It was a ¼” rigid stainless steel oil line that ran from the midsection of the engine to the nipple on the firewall. The nut was barely started but not tightened down. We found out why it wasn’t. Whoever worked on it couldn’t get it lined up straight. For fear of stripping the threads they had left it for us to finish...nice guys!

Meanwhile the flight crew was getting ‘antsy’; we’d been at it for a couple days by now. The Aircraft

Commander came over and said, “About got her there, Chief?” “One more, sir,” was the reply. Neither of us could reach the dirty bugger – even while standing on the toolbox. Just starrng at that line and at the flight crew was not going to get the job done. Finally, I said, “Ed, let me get up on your shoulders and you just shove me up in there.” Once I got my upper back squeezed past the engine mount I could hold the line straight with one hand and start that blessed nut with the other. I thought to myself, “If I cross thread this sucker now I’ve bought the farm.” But it went on straight, finger tight all the way down. After a quarter turn with an open ended wrench (a knuckle buster) it was tight. That’s all I could get on it.

**See Pinned** Down page 19

## Dak Seang Revisited...

Bob Dugan writes...Hutch,I just received this email tonite from Al Rustfold, one of my pilot training class buddies. He was a FAC at the time we were in Vietnam. He still corresponds with other FAC types and forwards some of his stuff to me.

**From:** skycowboy@aol.com

**Sent:** Thursday, December 18, 2003 3:23 PM

**Subject:** [FACNET] Dak Seang Special Forces Camp

The attached image is from a slide I took of the Dak Seang SF Camp in April 1970. This image would have been around 20-Apr-70.

Dak Seang was a camp 55 nm northwest of Pleiku and only 6km east of the Laotian border. Dak Seang was located in the Dak Poko River valley which ran parallel to the Laotian border. At the south end of the Dak Poko were the SF camps of Dak To and Ben Het. Then running north up the valley came Dak Seang, and finally Dak Pek.

On 1-Apr-70, two regiments of NVA crossed from Laos to attack Dak Seang and Dak Pek.

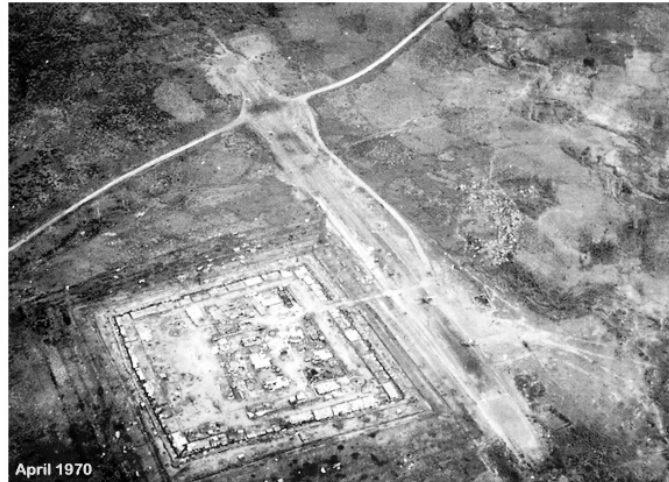
By the time I got to Kontum to fly missions over Dak Seang, most of the fighting near the camp had stopped and was now in the hills and mountains to the north and west as patrols from the camp tried to winkle out the artillery, mortar, and recce rifle positions that kept lobbing stuff into the camp.

Most of my missions over Dak Seang were in support of the patrols north of the SF camp. But on the day I took this image, my mission was to carry an Army artillery officer, and we spent most of four hours orbiting over Dak Seang adjusting artillery. The closest fire support base (FSB) was at Dak To which was too far away to reach Dak Seang. So the Army moved a temporary FSB half-

way up the valley that could reach the Dak Seang area.

Although we were supposed to adjust and control arty the day I took this, we did work some air when another FAC north of Dak Seang had to leave early. My Army FSO got sick as we maneuvered to control the air.

The two helicopters you can see on the runway had been hit by



**Dak Seang Special Forces Camp**

groundfire and made forced landings at Dak Seang. Their crews spent the entire siege in the SF camp. You can also see much of the damage to the camp from incoming NVA mortars and artillery.

Although the resolution isn't high enough to show them, there are still bodies of NVA soldiers in the perimeter fencing and around the ground around the camp. During the first few days of the siege, A-1s and F-100s caught a high number of NVA troops in the wire with napalm. I wasn't yet at Kontum, but talked to one of the FACs who controlled those strikes and the instructions he gave the fighters was to put the napalm in the wire.

The runway was also still closed at the time I took this, and the only way supplies could get into the camp was by USAF C-7s making low-altitude parachute drops, and Army Hueys and Chinooks dumping stuff

into the camp.

The story of the C-7s dropping into the valley is really one of courage. Because of the mountains around the camp, the C-7s could approach only following a predictable route from the south. The NVA had that route lined with 14.5mm and 12.7mm AAA. Here is a short account of of the C-7s at Dak Seang from one of their websites:

"A year later the Communists attacked Dak Seang, which lay just north of Ben Het. In spite of indications that the enemy was building up strength in the area, no preparations were made. Only 12 hours before the attack was launched on April 1, Caribous were landing at Dak Seang to pick up ammunition

for transport to another camp where the threat was thought to be greater. When the enemy made their presence known, it became clear that they had taken a lesson from Ben Het as numerous antiaircraft guns revealed their presence in the areas that were the most likely air resupply corridors.

During the afternoon of April 1, C-7 crews made the first drops into the camp. Enemy fire was light during the drop, but increased as the crews left the area. One airplane took two hits. The next morning the first C-7 over the camp reported ground fire while making a right hand turn after his drop. The second airplane turned left, and was hit by heavy fire. It crashed five miles from the camp; there were no survivors.

That afternoon an all-out effort was made to supply the camp. Eleven C-7s dropped to the camp while using tactics learned at Ben Het as they used descending turns to approach the

camp at 20-second intervals. Three airplanes were hit by ground fire. Over the next two days the C-7s made 31 drops using the same tactics. Fourteen airplanes were hit, and one was forced to land at nearby Dak To. For more than a week the C-7 crews continued the effort, with airplanes taking hits on each mission. On April 4 a second Caribou was shot down. A third fell two days later. Though supplies were getting into the camp, some were lost while the C-7s were paying a heavy toll.

In an attempt to reduce the losses, the C-7s turned to night drops under the light flares dropped by AC-119 gunships who would also provide fire suppression. The new tactics worked as the C-7s took less hits and most of the bundles landed within the camp."

I did get the chance to control one C-7 supply mission and their fighter support. As the C-7 approached from the south, I had the F-100s set up a race track pattern so that one of them was always flying parallel to the C-7s groundtrack. The idea being that as soon as any NVA guns opened up, one of the Huns would be close to firing position and could immediately start hosing the AAA site.

One thought constantly in my mind as I worked north of Dak Seang was, "If I get hit, am I going to be able to make it onto the runway and into the camp?" We spent a lot of time while on the ground at Kontum thinking about how we were going to make a forced landing on that little runway, and whether we could get out and sprint into the camp before getting hit.

There was at least one FAC inside the camp during the siege, although I never got to meet him face-to-face. Apparently the living conditions in the camp got pretty gross by the time things became calm enough that C-7s could once more use the runway and helicopters could get in to land.

Regards,

Gary Dikkers"Mike 57"SOG, 1970

## Sweet Pea

It's only 1330 hours and the 'bou was on final approach. Maintenance Control had no information on him. Too early to be coming home unless he had a serious problem.

As I arrived on the flight line I see the flight crew departing in haste. The crew chief comes out of the ship with the forms and we all go over the write-ups in the 781A. It's a write up I'll remember for a long time. It read in part "...picked up thirty-one very, very ripe KIA's." It was a hot afternoon and the stench had become overpowering. We could just feel its ill effects wafting out of the 'bou.

We left the plane alone for the time being figuring maybe the cool night air might help disperse the smell...wrong! We fumigated the 'bou and closed it up all the next day and night. No success. Then we tried the fumigation treatment again keeping it closed for three days. We could hardly notice any change at all. The odor was stifling. No wanted to fly the plane so we had a dilemma on our hands.

Finally, a decision was made to send it to IRAN (inspect-repair-as-necessary) ahead of schedule. About five weeks later we get the bird back. It looked like a brand new 'bou, inside and out. New everything, and best of all, it even smelled new! Like a new car smell. Yes, it was the talk of the town!

While the 'bou was gone I'd been thinking about doing something to it when we got it back, even if it meant taking some heat from the "ruling hierarchy." We backed the old 'bou into the nose dock right by the R & R shop where TSGT Wm. Madden worked. I asked him to cut a stencil and spray paint it under the left cockpit window. He said, "I'll do it in Old English." "How long," I asked? "Couple of hours," he said..."It'll be done before chow." I was pleasantly surprised when he put on some guide marks and began to free-hand the lettering. The good lord always supplies the talent. Madden had just finished the first word whe Major Allen

Deardorff, the chief of Maintenance, came out of his office. He stood on the catwalk above the nose dock, watching intently. I thought, oh s...! he's gonna put the skids to this deal. Madden glanced down at me but I said, "keep going." Abruptly, Major D turned and went back into his office.

And it was done! In green letters, trimmed with a yellow border, was the name, "Sweet Pea." We rolled sweet Pea out onto the line and plugged her into the schedule. Anxiety and apprehension were washed away when Major Deardorff began asking about Sweet Pea's status during a morning launch, not by the tail number but by it's name... welcome home Sweet Pea!

I'm not a camera bug but the picture is clear in my mind, and with God as my witness, that's the way it was.

Perhaps someone out there in Caribou land might remember seeing or flying Sweet Pea, or recall the flight crew that brought it in that fateful day and made that form entry. I do apologize for not remembering the tail number (It was yellow-tipped). Maybe a little help out there?... Caribou Comrds?

Ken Kimseu, Line Chief, 536 TAS Vung Tau Army Air Field, 1967 - 1968

A Pan Am 727 flight waiting for start clearance in Munich overheard the following:

Lufthansa (in German): "Ground, what iss our start clearance time?"

Ground (in English): "Iff you vant un answer you must speak in English."

Lufthansa (in English): "I am a German, flying a German airplane, in Germany. Vhy must I speak English?"

Unknown voice from another plane (in a beautiful British accent):

"Because you lost the bloody war!"

## Vietnam Airlift is A Human Thing.

Capt. Robert P. Everett

*(Taken from the Airman Magazine, October 1968)*

Who would want a cargo aircraft with only two engines (old-fashioned piston type at that); an aircraft that grosses out with a mere 5,000 pounds of cargo; and sporting a maximum speed comparable to the venerable C-47 "Gooney Bird"?

Who would?

The United States Air Force, that's who.

Why?

STOL, that's why. STOL stands for short take-off and landing and you do a lot of that in Vietnam. STOL is one outstanding capability of the DeHavilland C-7 Caribou. So if there's such a thing as the right airplane for some very special airlift jobs in Vietnam, the Caribou has got to be it.

The C-7 is one of three primary types of aircraft flying the airlift mission in Vietnam. Together, these three aircraft—the C-7, the Fairchild Hiller C-123 Provider, and the Lockheed C-130 Hercules -- have virtually wrought airlift miracles in South Vietnam.

- More than two and three-quarter billion pounds of cargo airlifted in a year.
- An airlift takeoff or landing every 38 seconds, around the clock.
- Nearly four million people transported in a 12-month period.

That's just a sampling of the imposing figures being tabulated by the people who do the airlift job in Vietnam. Dozens of other equally impressive statistics could be cited, but all the figures in the world could only tell part of the story. But more importantly, there's another story behind those figures, a story that deals with response, priorities, management and – mostly – with people.

### Response is the Key

The fact that you haul a thousand tons of cargo to a battle area doesn't really mean a thing if you get it there too late to do any good for the ground force commander who needs it. *Response is the key.* When a ground force commander says he needs ammunition, weapons, supplies and troops, he also says when he needs them. Usually it's *right now.* And if you're the guy who pushes the airlift button, you've got to get the goods to him on time. That's where you succeed or fail.

The man who pushes the airlift button in Vietnam is Maj. Gen. Burl W. McLaughlin, commander of the 834th Air Division at Tan Son Nhut AB. He bears responsibility for all in-country airlift. The 834th's Airlift Control Center (ALCC) is the nerve center of all airlift operations in Vietnam. It's where the ground force commander's request is translated into cubage, weight and sortie. Specialists

take the airlift requests, which have been approved by Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, end program them against their available resources.

When you talk about available resources of the 834th Air Division, you're talking about those three reliables, the C-130 *Hercules*, C-123 *Provider* and C-7 *Caribou* aircraft, all assigned to or under the operational control of the 834th AD. ALCC's job is to match the right aircraft to the right requirement. This is to insure maximum, efficient use of the aircraft. You don't send a big C-130 with only a ton of rations to an outpost any more than you try to send 150 troops in a C-7.

Once the mission is scheduled the ALCC continues to monitor it until it is completed. Thus, the ALCC command post can tell you at any moment precisely where each of its aircraft is located, what it's carrying, where it will land and when it will complete its mission. One a typical day the command post controls more than 1,250 sorties. It's a big job, and a necessary one that insures quick responses to vital demands.

Take an emergency medical evacuation request. The ALCC could quickly unload cargo from a lower priority mission and launch the aircraft to meet the need but a more likely response would be to divert airborne aircraft near the injured man. An emergency call for ammunition from a besieged outpost would be similarly handled.

### Airplanes and Men

"Big Daddy" of the Vietnam airlift is the C-130. It moves most of the tonnage, averaging more than 74,000 tons a month. The C-130 is a big airplane, nearly a hundred feet long. It can carry 16 tons of cargo. And even though its wingspan is 132 feet, it can still operate from about 81 airstrips and runways in South Vietnam.

The C-130s and crews in Vietnam are under the operational control of the 834th Air Division, but belong to the 315th Air Division. They come to Vietnam from 315th units throughout the western Pacific. Each C-130 and crew normally flies missions in Vietnam for two weeks, then returns to its home base for four or five days for maintenance.

A middle-aged airlift bird that recently got a rejuvenation treatment is the C-123 *Provider*. Auxiliary jet engines were hung under its wings, giving it a short-field takeoff capability and increasing its cargo-carrying capability. The *Provider* can haul five tons. There are three C-123 squadrons at Phan Rang and one at Tan Son Nhut. All are assigned to the 315th Air Commander Wing.

Newcomer to the US Air Force airlift fleet in Vietnam is DeHavilland's C-7 *Caribou*, received from the Army on January 1, 1967, as the result of a fixed-wing/rotary-wing agreement.

Airlift from page 14

There are about 90 *Caribous* in Vietnam, assigned to the 483<sup>rd</sup> Tactical Airlift Wing at Cam Ranh Bay AB. Six squadrons have the *Caribous*, two each at Cam Ranh Bay, Phu Cat and Vung Tau.

*Caribous* missions differ from those flown by the C-130s and C-123s because much of the work of the 483<sup>rd</sup> is under the category of dedicated aircraft. That means the aircraft is allocated to fill the airlift needs of a specified organization, such as the Army's 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cavalry or 101<sup>st</sup> Air Cavalry Division. The *Caribous* also support Special Forces throughout the country. The C-130s and C-123s on the other hand, operate on a "common user" basis.

### Caribou a Busy Bird

Col William H. Mason is commander of the 483<sup>rd</sup> Tactical Airlift Wing. He puts his mission in the simplest terms: "The continuing goal of this wing is to maintain customer satisfaction by providing safe, reliable and effective airlift."

Performing the mission is a group of people the composition of which is, in itself, something of an oddity. First off, it includes more than 50 lieutenant colonels ("granddaddies of the *Caribou* fleet"). Then there are a half dozen Ph.Ds., in fields ranging from sociology to geophysics. There's an ex-Thunderbird pilot and a former NASA, pilot. One of the lieutenant colonels was a double ace in World War II; another a single ace. Still another was pilot of an ultraspeedy B-58 *Hustler* before "moving up" to the *Caribou*. Aircraft commanders run the grade ladder from first lieutenant to colonel.

During 1967, these people and their *Caribous* racked up more flying hours (100,159) and more sorties (157,576) than either of the other airlift aircraft in Vietnam. For the first half of 1968, both figures were up about 20 percent. As if to remind the *Caribou* pilots that their new records were being set under combat conditions, 23 *Caribous* took hits from enemy ground fire in the first 60 days of 1968 alone.

The *Caribou* can take off and land on an 800-foot strip. That means it can operate from about 160 runways or airstrips in Vietnam - far more than can either the C-130 or C-123. It is, therefore, the only fixed-wing aircraft that can fly troops and supplies to many of the allied outposts dotting the Vietnamese countryside.

Like the forts of the early American West, these Special Forces outposts are islands of relative safety in the heart of enemy territory. For airplanes to operate from their airstrips, pilots must make dangerous approaches and climbouts over enemy territory. And every day's missions include stops at these Special Forces camps.

### A Caribou Day

*Caribou* crews go to work early. A 5 a.m. crew briefing is routine. Let's follow as the airplane moves down the runway at Cam Ranh Bay AB and lifts easily into the early morning sky. First stop will be Nha Trang, just a few miles up the Vietnam coast.

By 6 o'clock, the *Caribou* is on the ground at Nha Trang. A sister ship is nearby, taking on cargo for the Special Forces camp at Ban Me Thuot, some 70 miles to the west. The cargo consists of a small amount of ammunition, a large amount of fresh vegetables and three live calves. That's a fairly typical load for a *Caribou*. The flight engineer/ loadmaster is accustomed to handling live animals and quickly spreads heavy plastic sheets across the airplane floor. Calves, after all, are not house-broken. The odor inside the cargo compartment is well - pungent. The crew delays the closing of the rear cargo door to the last possible moment. Finally it is closed and the sister *Caribou* is off for Ban Me Thuot.

By now our *Caribou* has off loaded passengers and taken on others. This morning's mission will not involve hauling cargo. Instead, the plane will fly to Pleiku AB to pick up Vietnamese paratroopers for a practice jump.

That's another feature of the *Caribou*. It can quickly be converted from cargo to passenger configuration. The large cargo door at the rear is an excellent jumping position for paratroopers. When opened in flight it adds not a whit of control problem for the pilot.

Touchdown at Pleiku is under a hot midmorning sun. Within minutes the paratroopers are on board and the *Caribou* is headed for the drop zone. The jump is routine. The *Caribou* returns twice to Pleiku for additional loads.

When the paradrops are finished the *Caribou* returns to Pleiku. Crews change and the bird is made ready for its afternoon mission, a resupply of the Special Forces camp at Dak Seang, not far from the Laos border.

*Caribou* pilots land routinely on the several hundred feet of dust and gravel at Dak Seang. But putting a fully loaded airplane on that short, narrow airstrip is hairy, any way you cut it. The plane barely touches ground before the props are reversed. A cloud of dust engulfs it. The rough, hilly airstrip at one point becomes so narrow that the wheels of the *Caribou* barely clear the ditch on the side of the runway. The pilots call it a routine landing.

Nowhere in Vietnam can you see more vividly the effect of airlift on *people* than in the resupply of these isolated Special Forces camps. Before the plane touches down, all the camp's vehicles - two trucks and a jeep - are moving to meet it. A US Special Forces sergeant jumps from the back of a truck onto the platform of the *Caribou*.

Airlift from page 15

*bou*. He spots a long-awaited package and shouts, "The hot water heater is here!"

The heater and a pallet of rice are unloaded. But in unloading the remaining two pallets of fiber sand bags, the crew demonstrates one of the *Caribou's* special extraction techniques - Ground High Speed Offload. The chains securing the two pallets are removed and the engines are revved up. Then the pilot releases the brakes and the *Caribou* lurches forward. The two pallets fly out the rear cargo door, remaining in an upright position, and slam down on the ground. It's a technique the *Caribou* pilots can use when they're under fire and have to get out of a place in a hurry, or to expedite offloading when a forklift is not available.

Taking the empty airplane off from the Dak Seang airstrip somehow lacks the drama of the landing. The *Caribou* heads for the next camp. The pilots refer to it as an international airport; it has a 2,000foot paved runway. Compared to Dak Seang, the description is apt.

Pleiku is again a pickup point for the last mission of the day; a supply paradrop at Dak Pek, scene of intense fighting between South Vietnamese forces and North Vietnamese regulars. No landing will be attempted at Dak Pek, but a couple of tons of supplies and equipment will be air dropped.

The area around Dak Pek has been an enemy stronghold and contains several suspected 37mm anti aircraft gun emplacements. Flying around it is especially hazardous. But today the drop is made without encountering enemy fire. The slowmoving *Caribou* comes in at about 300 feet over the drop zone and makes a gravity air drop. It's an efficient, accurate means of putting supplies on target.

By now the sun has set and it's time for the long flight back to Cam Ranh Bay. One day has seen the airplane carry paratroops on a practice drop, bring needed supplies to Special Forces camps and drop ammunition and food to allied troops on an active battlefield.

Other days bring other challenges; moving an entire orphanage from war-torn Ban Me Thuot to a safe area, making the first landing at a new or recaptured airstrip in the A Shau Valley, picking up 13 hits on takeoff from Hue-Phu Bai, or maybe setting a new record by hauling more than 50 tons of cargo in a single airplane in a single day.

It's all in a day's work for the *C-7 Caribou*. And in Vietnam, where the *Caribou* and its big brothers, the C-130 and C-123, are flying in history's greatest airlift, setting new records every day, it reminds you that airlift is, after all, a human thing.

## Falling On Hard Times

A short yellow-tail story none-the-less, but a story to be told anyway. There was a sharp contrast of the manning (536 TAS) of flight-line people in 1968 and manning of the same unit in late 1966 and most of 1967. During the earlier period, with the aircraft transitioning from the U S Army to the U S Air Force, there was a vast wealth of senior NCO's assigned to flight-line duties. There were five seven and nine level master sergeants for supervisory slots. Each of the sixteen assigned caribou aircraft were crewed by SSGT's or TSGT's mostly skilled and experienced seven level technicians with buck sergeants as assistances. Wow!! Were they fat! Yes, and there was a meaning to this madness. The USAF was hedging its bets that the transition from the Army would be highly successful...and it was.

Now...let's fast forward to 1968. As the 536<sup>th</sup> line chief I had one nine level MSGT, Jim Pennington, whom I had acquired through negotiations with quality control. Jim was shortly dispatched to Thailand to run a caribou maintenance operation, one that we had previously never heard of its existence. We pleaded our case of a severe shortage of supervisors to our Commanding Officer, but he must have had a lot of pressure on him because he simply roared, "He is going and that is that!"

Of the three remaining seven levels I had (all SSGT's) two of them, John Feeny and Bob Wilson, were assigned on a rotational basis for flight-line work at Can Tho. Within a short time both rotated back to the States. My last remaining seven level, SSGT Bob McCormick, was now the expeditor, flight-line controller and recovery chief, all rolled into one. Mac would come in after noon chow and cover the flight-line, recover the returning 'bous and get them cleaned up and buttoned up for the next day's missions. Often-times the work ran past midnight depending on what kind of shape the 'bous were in. The thing that would really grip me was when I would come in at 0330 hours for the first takeoff, scheduled for 0405 daily, seven days a week, and find Mac and the ground crew still there getting our second 'bou "glued together" for it 0435 daily takeoff - both of these flights heading for Can Tho. We could no longer leave aircraft at Can Tho overnight because of increased enemy activity there. Needless to say on most of these early morning efforts there was a "weeping and mashing of teeth" from our Chief of Maintenance and operations people.

Since I had just lost my two rotating NCOs at Can Tho I had no choice but to dispatch a newly acquired (and recently promoted) SSGT; E.L. Seeber, to Can Tho to cover the flight line maintenance there on the two caribou aircraft. Technically my man at Can Tho had to be a se-



483 CONSOLIDATED AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON (PACAF)  
US FORCES VIETNAM

APO SAN FRANCISCO 93623

NOTICE OF RELEASE AND RETURN

ISSUED IN SOLEMN WARNING THIS 21 DAY OF AUGUST 1967 TO FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, RELATIVES AND ACQUAINTANCES OF SMS TROY N. THOMPSON AF 18263017

In the near future, the above named enlisted man will once again be in your midst. Demoralized, devitalized, defeated and suffering from hunger pangs for a decent home cooked meal, he will take his place once more as a human being, with freedom and liberty, entitled to justice, life and a somewhat belated pursuit of happiness. For making your joyous preparations to welcome this trained killer back to society, you must make a few allowances for the extremely crude environment which has been his home for the past 11 months. In a word, he may appear a little cross, unpolished and suffering from what we term "unwontedness."

Show no alarm if his vocabulary seems limited to rather profane phrases. Do not be too concerned if he complains incessantly. Be tolerant if he prefers sleeping and eating to working. Exercise understanding if he dresses oddly or seems completely disoriented. In a relatively short time he can be taught to speak English again and to dress and act casually. In view of the fact that he was assigned to an aviation unit, never ask him why did the boy down the block make a rank or two more than he did. This may throw him into a violent fit. Any remarks concerning the Army, Navy, Air Force, or Marines, should be avoided because, being part of the 483 CAM Squadron he does not give a damn and will probably become beligerant if not downright nasty, at mention of any military service whatsoever. Above all say nothing of how he had it so good in "PICTURESQUE VIETNAM". This leads to a sun blind stare, a mopping of sweat from the brow, and a pronounced display of thirst, followed by frantic gestures to shield himself against imaginary creatures such as chiggers, VCs, snakes and the First Sergeant.

For the first few months he is home (until he is housebroken) act unconcerned when he mixes peaches with gravy, uses his hands while eating, tries to hold eating utensils like chopsticks, awakes screaming in the night, attacks your Japanese gardner (shouting "Charlies you die"), mutters furtively to himself, or persists in glancing over his shoulder frequently. Keep in mind that beneath this fouled-up exterior, there beats a heart of gold. This is the only thing of value that he has left. Treat him with kindness, tolerance, penicilin and an occasional quart of beer, and you will be able to rehabilitate that which now is the hollow shell of the person you knew him to be. So, get all the breakables out of sight, clear the children off the streets, pull his civies out of mothballs, for:

HE'S RETURNNG TO THE WORLD SOON!!!

The United States Government  
Department of the Air Force

**Hard Times** from page 16

nior NCO, qualified to sign off and clear red cross conditions. We Had A Problem. Acting in place of our squadron maintenance officer and after reviewing E.L. Seebers's training records and his daily performance of duties, I typed a letter to newly promoted Capt Don Abbinanti, acting chief of maintenance for the two Vung Tau squadrons, (535<sup>th</sup> and 536<sup>th</sup>), requesting authorization for the young sergeant Seebers to inspect and sign off red cross

conditions on the Can Tho aircraft. In my letter I mistakenly listed him as holding AFSC 43141A. For anyone wondering what AFSC 43141A is, I can only tell you one thing...it's a number between three and five. Actually it was a typo, and I now admit responsibility, thanks to the high speed, all weather, non-automatic Remington that my good buddy Bob Bowers left for me. He typed poorly too.

Nuff said about **Hard Times On The Farm.**  
Ken Kimseu, Line Chief, [536, 67

## George Moore Named Disabled Veteran of the Year

*This article is excerpted from the Disabled American Veterans Magazine, September/October 2003.*

*(George Moore, [536, 67] is an active member of the Association, and attended reunions in Biloxi, 1997, and St. Louis, 2002. Hopefully he can join us in Midland in 2004. Ed.)*

The little boy looked to the sky above his Oxford, Miss., home and shouted, "App-pane! App-pane!" The military planes passing overhead were on their way to Biloxi and Gulfport to be ferried off to join the other war birds of World War II.

As George M. Moore, Jr. grew up, his mother often recounted to him and others that "app-pane" was the first word he learned to say.

Airplanes and love of flying became an exciting part of George's life, until a nearly fatal flying accident left him a triple amputee. That accident also started George on the road to being named the Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year for 2003, the highest individual award presented to a veteran by the DAV.

DAV National Commander Edward R. Heath, Sr. presents the Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year award to Mr. Moore during the opening session of the 82nd National Convention of the DAV and Auxiliary held in New Orleans, Aug. 15-19.

### A Winner Who Never Stops Trying

The journey to becoming the DAV Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year began on March 9, 1970, during Moore's second tour of duty in the Vietnam War. A 26-year-old, U.S. Air Force Captain, George was piloting his F-100 Super Sabre fighter-bomber through the pitch black skies over the Republic of Vietnam returning from a night mission, when he was diverted from his home air base to the American air base at Chu Lai.

Unknown to Capt. Moore, he was vectored to land on a runway with construction at the approach end. The construction included a ditch across the runway. It was approximately 3:30 a.m. when his F-100, traveling at nearly 170 miles per hour hit the ditch ... "I thought I had hit a vehicle or something crossing the runway," Moore said.

Capt. Moore's instinct, training and experience instantaneously reacted to control the aircraft, as the landing gear was ripped away. He knew he had to keep his fighter on the airstrip and out of the sand off the edge of the runway... keep it from flipping. Even as he struggled to control the craft, too many forces were out of control. The plane plowed off the edge of the runway

and began to flip and cartwheel 13 times before grinding to a mangled, burning halt.

Ground crews raced to extinguish the fire and cut Moore from the wreckage of his aircraft.

Burned over 70% of his body, the young captain had somehow survived the devastating crash. But, surviving was only the beginning. Moore spent the next 43 months hospitalized. He endured 49 surgeries, which included the amputation of both of his legs, his right arm and little finger of his left hand. His left arm did not require amputation, but was substantially damaged.

The man whose first words were "app-pane;" the man who dreamed of flying and made his dream come true as a U.S. Air Force pilot, the man who loved to fly was medically retired from the Air Force, but, he refused to be grounded.

"A winner is just a loser who tried one more time," is George Moore's motto, and he is living proof of a true winner, because he has never stopped trying.

Following his retirement, Moore returned to school. He had already earned a bachelor's degree in public administration from the University of Mississippi in 1966. He followed it with a second bachelor's in business and finance at Arizona State University in 1976.

Moore also met LuAnn Graber while in Arizona. She was working as a bank teller in Glendale, when George asked her out the first time. She declined the first invitation, but George stuck to his motto and asked her out again months later. This time she said yes. On Dec. 7, 2002, LuAnn and George celebrated their 28th wedding anniversary.

The Moores adopted and raised a son, Dalen, who is currently attending college. As he was growing up George was dad and pal. Being an Eagle Scout himself, George was active in Scouting with Dalen, and he helped coach his son's baseball teams, in addition to other father and son activities.

George Moore is a person involved with enthusiasm in all he does. He doesn't half step and he doesn't back up.

In addition to an active family life that includes dog breeding and showing (he has several first place ribbons for showing dogs), George is an active hunter and marksman. The same excellent hand-eye coordination that made



George Moore [536, 67]

More from page 19

him a fighter pilot makes him an excellent shot. Combine good shooting with the all-terrain vehicle he takes to the field in and he becomes a formidable hunter. And, while he could no longer fly for the Air Force after his accident, he continued his love of flying, obtained a pilot license, and eventually owned and flew his own specially equipped aircraft until selling it two years ago.

Moore returned to school and earned a master's degree in health care administration from Carnegie-Mellon University in 1986, the same year he became a life member of DAV National Amputee Chapter 76 in New York.

By the time he earned his master's degree, George was five years into a career with the Department of Veterans Affairs. Prior to joining the VA as a Prosthetics Representative trainee at the Memphis VA Medical Center (VAMC), he served nearly two years as a National Service Officer for the Paralyzed Veterans of America in Arizona and Mississippi.

Moore's career took flight in the VA health care system. He advanced from trainee at Memphis to Chief of Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service at the Pittsburgh VAMC; from Staff Assistant to the Center Director, to Assistant Director at the Cleveland VAMC; from Director of Operations to Acting Associate Regional Director

of the Veterans Health Administration, Southern Region, in Jackson, Miss.; and, in January 1997, he was promoted to Director/Operations Manager at the VAMC in Bonham, Texas. A year and a half later he was appointed to his current position as Medical Center Director for the VAMC at Martinsburg, W.Va.

For George Moore, helping veterans is more than a job or career. It's a passion. The same passion that made him a fighter pilot fuels his leadership as a medical center director. George Moore has experienced VA health care from both sides—patient and director.

Moore's philosophy of care is simple and powerful, and it applies to everyone under his direction: "Would you like your mother or your father to be treated the way you just treated that last veteran?"

Working 10-hour days and weekends are not unusual for Moore, but at the end of each day he stops in the emergency room to see how things are going for the staff and patients there. It's one last stop to check the pulse of his medical center—to be sure his hospital is doing well. For George Moore, the DAV's Outstanding Disabled Veteran of the Year for 2003, it's the way he would want to be treated.

**Pinned Down** from page 11

I made one more check of the aircraft forms to make sure everything had been signed off. The one thing that bothered me was the work that had been done on the left landing gear. I could find no record of a retraction test ever being done. All of us talked it over and agreed to "pin" the gear down for the flight to TSN. We also decided to do a high-speed taxi-takeoff roll first and check the left engine for leaks before lift off. By this time the AC was open to any suggestion. He wanted to get out of there because it was getting near dark. Everything looked

good on the take-off roll, as we all eyeballed that engine, so we lumbered off (as only a sick caribou can) with all three gears down, locked and pinned.

It took a little extra time to get to TSN, but we landed without a hitch. Once on the ground Ed and I split the cowling open to check our handiwork. It was bone dry. Not a drop of fluid was to be seen.

p.s. It was indeed a good day. I got to see an old friend, MSGT Ray Corby from by-gone days of flight engineering on C-47's in Japan, circa, 1955. Ray was doing transit alert duties at TSN. Ken Kimseu, Line Chief, [536,67]

The picture on the right was shown in the September 2003 newsletter. Could you name of the location?

The picture is of a memorial placed just outside the dayroom that the men of the 537th TAS, Phu Cat, constructed and dedicated to the memory of TSgt Dale E. Christenson, who was killed April 2, 1970 when his C-7A was downed by enemy fire during emergency resupply of the Vietnam Civilian Irregular Defense Group camp at Dak Seang.

Men of the 537th also constructed the three foot high monument on which the bronze plaque is mounted.



**Can You Name This Place?**

While taxiing at London Gatwick, the crew of a US Air flight departing for Ft. Lauderdale made a wrong turn and came nose to nose with a United 727.

An irate female ground controller lashed out at the US Air crew, screaming: "US Air 2771, where the hell are you going?! I told you to turn right onto Charlie taxiway! You turned right on Delta! Stop right there. I know it's difficult for you to tell the difference between

Cs and Ds, but get it right!"

Continuing her rage to the embarrassed crew, she was now shouting hysterically: "God! Now you've screwed everything up! It'll take forever to sort this out! You stay right there and don't move till I tell you to! You can expect progressive taxi instructions in about half an hour and I want you to go exactly where I tell you, when I tell you, and how I tell you! You got that, US Air 2771?"

"Yes ma'am," the humbled crew

responded.

Naturally, the ground control communications frequency fell terribly silent after the verbal bashing of US Air 2771. Nobody wanted to chance engaging the irate ground controller in her current state of mind. Tension in every cockpit out in Gatwick was definitely running high.

Just then an unknown pilot broke the silence and keyed his microphone asking: "Wasn't I married to you once?"

VITAL STATISTICS: January 2004

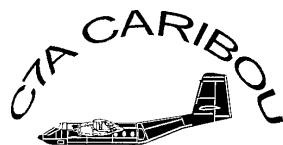
Check your vital statistics and mail label to insure that the information is correct. Send changes to:

C-7A Caribou Association  
Attn: Jim Collier  
5607 Jolly Ct.  
Fair Oaks, CA 95628-2707

\_\_\_\_\_ TODAY'S DATE

TAX YEAR	SQUADRON ARRIVAL YR.	RANK	AREA CODE	TELEPHONE
LAST NAME	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE INITIAL		
STREET ADDRESS				
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE PLUS 4	E-MAIL ADDRESS	

January 2004



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