

C-7A Caribou Association



Volume 19, Issue 1

May 2008

Visit the Cradle of USAF Aviation 19th C-7A Caribou Association Reunion – Sept. 2008

Place: The Hope Hotel & Conference Center, Bldg. 823, Area A, WPAFB, OH, 45433-5000. The Hotel has 266 guest rooms with the usual amenities. Our War Room is the Stratofortress Room on the main floor. Packy’s Sport Lounge and Restaurant, also on the main floor, will be available for all meals that are not on the agenda. A wide variety of restaurants and fast food places are a 10 minute drive away.

Hotel Reservations: The room block is under “Caribou Association” (\$71.18/night inclusive of taxes). To reserve a room, call 937-879-2696, Fax: 937-878-8731, or check on-line at www.hopehotel.com. Identify yourself with the Association so that you get our special room rate and the Association gets credit for the reservation (our prices are contingent upon meeting certain minimum registration requirements). Please note that hotel reservations are the responsibility of the attendee and

are not included in any fees paid to the Association.

Hotel Check In: The check in time is 3:00 PM or later, but we are working to try to get that moved up. Unless the hotel is full the night before, some rooms may be available a little earlier.

Weather: Not even Al Gore can predict what the weather will be like, but it can be chilly at this time of the year. Remember that the dedication ceremony is outdoors so bring warm clothes, just in case. The historical averages for our reunion period are highs of 73-70 degrees F, lows of 49-48 degrees and only a slight chance of precipitation.

Transportation:

By Car: Aim in the general direction of Dayton and get yourself on Interstate 675 to the east of the city.

By Commercial Air: Dayton International Airport is north of Dayton. The Hope Hotel is southeast of the airport on Hwy 444 just outside of WPAFB Gate 12A. The drive from the airport is 16 to 24 miles depending on the route you choose. Since you probably don’t want to walk, there are several options available: rental cars, taxi service, and shuttle bus service.

Reunion Registration: Note that several items on the registration form are in **bold type**. These are the **required** items to register. To facilitate reunion planning, we request advance registration with your prepayment by check for all selected events no later than August 1, 2008. Upon arrival you will then only have to pick up your nametag and registration package. If you do not

pre-register, every effort will be made to accommodate last minute arrivals, but we cannot guarantee the availability of every event due to varying prior-notice requirements for transportation, security checks to drive on base, and 72 hour advance meal counts. Please note that if you sign up and subsequently cancel for some reason, your payment will be returned except for the registration fee (\$15 per person). Registration will take place from noon to 4:00 PM on 29 September in the hotel lobby. For those who will not be arriving in that time period, just seek out the War Room and someone will take care of you. If you arrive before noon, come on in and help with War Room setup!

The **War Room** is large and will accommodate 300 people. It will be outfitted with tables to sit around and catch up with old acquaintances. It will open at noon on 29 September, closing at 11:00 PM, and then be available from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM on 30 September through 2 October and from 7:00 AM until noon on 3 October. Exception: During periods when reunion attendees are away at “off-campus” events, e.g., tours, memorial dedication, museum banquet, the War Room will be closed (locked up) unless an Association volunteer agrees to act as War Room monitor.

Breakfast: On 30 September through 3 October, a Continental Breakfast of coffee, Danish, and assorted juices will be served. The Caribou Association – not the Hope Hotel – will be responsible for War Room security throughout the reunion.

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

Elected Officers and Board Members....

President/Chairman of Board - Peter Bird [535, 71]
Vice President/Board Member - Pat Hanavan [535, 68]
Treasurer/Board Member - Bill Buesking [535, 70]
Secretary/Board Member - Al Cunliffe [458, 68]
Board Member at Large - Mike Murphy [537, 68]
Board Member at Large - Jerry York [537, 67]
Board Member at Large - Fred Dimon [535, 68]

Appointed Positions

Bereavement Chairman - Jay Baker [535, 66]
Chaplains - Sonny Spurger [537, 68], Jon Drury [537, 68]
Historian - Robert Blaylock [457,70]
Parliamentarian - Wilson Petefish [535, 68]
Newsletter Editor - Pat Hanavan [535, 68]
Reunion 2008 Planner - Tom McHugh [537, 69]
Reunion Advisor - Wayne DeLawter [458, 66]
Webmaster - Peter Bird [535, 71]
President Emeritus - Nick Evanish [457, 66]
Chaplain Emeritus - Bob Davis [457, 69]

Squadron Representatives...

457th Royal Moulton [457, 66], phone 540-720-7092
 457th Mike Thibodo [457, 70], phone 651-483-9799
 458th Lee Corfield [458, 69], phone 724-775-3027
 458th Al Cunliffe [458, 68], phone 334-285-7706
 459th Bob Cummings [459, 66], phone 865-938-7290
 535th Cliff Smith [535, 69], phone 804-453-3188
 535th Mike Messner [535, 70], phone 321-453-0816
 536th Dana Kelly [536, 70], phone 407-656-4536
 536th Chuck Harris [536, 68], phone 325-465-8096
 537th George Harmon [537, 69], phone 951-695-0630
 483rd Gary Miller [483, 68], phone 262-634-4117
 4449th Bill Buesking [535, 70], phone 210-403-2635
 18th AP Bill Buesking [535, 70], phone 210-403-2635

Please send any change of address, phone number, or e-mail address to:

Bill Buesking
 18520 Rustling Rdg
 San Antonio, TX 78259-3641
 wbuesking@satx.rr.com

\$10.00 dues are payable each January. Send your check to Bill Buesking (address above).

All members are encouraged to communicate with the Editor of the Association Newsletter.

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

President's Corner

As I sit here in the frozen north, winter is beginning to relax its grip and the vernal equinox is but a couple of days away. Although it has been a wonderful winter for those of us who enjoy the snow, it is time to look forward. Other than working with Tom McHugh and Wayne DeLawter on plans for the 2008 Dayton reunion, the business of the Board has been in the same state of hibernation as that of the New Hampshire black bears. On our spring and summer agenda is the search for the next location for a Caribou Association memorial plaque and as that search comes to fruition, I will be sure to keep everyone informed.

After the discussion in 2002 over voting on By-Laws changes by mail versus voting at the business meeting, your Board decided that the most prudent course was to offer a mail ballot for the changes proposed in San Antonio. The results are now in and they are somewhat disappointing. A total of 112 ballots were returned. Of those, there were 108 in favor of the changes and 4 that were inexplicably blank. There were no votes opposed. I am disappointed because the ballot went out to all active members (more than 700) and we got so few returns. In any case, the By-Laws changes were approved.

Elsewhere in this issue, you will find the results of the post-reunion survey that Al Cunliffe carefully recorded and Pat Hanavan analyzed. It is hard to know how representative they are when we have such a low percentage of returns, but the survey is always interesting and we do try to address any issues that are highlighted.

On the advice of last year's Audit Committee, your hard-working Treasurer, Bill Buesking, completed the conversion of our financial records to QuickBooks. As of 1 January 2008, the Association's books are being maintained with QuickBooks. We think this is a very positive step and one that will make the Treasurer's job a more manageable task.

Start planning now for the 2008 reunion! Tom McHugh has done a wonderful job of assuring that this will be another memorable event. New information will appear on the website as it is available and you will receive the reunion flyer with a registration form by mail.

Have a great spring and summer and I'll see you in Dayton!
 Many regards,
 Peter Bird (535, 71)



What Is a Veteran?

A "Veteran" – whether active duty, discharged, retired, or reserve – is someone who, at one point in his/her life, wrote a blank check made payable to "The United States of America" for an amount of "up to, and including his/her life."

Membership Report

by Bill Buesking [535, 70]

Our Association has made great strides increasing membership and communications capability. Since May of 2006 our roster of names has increased from 1932 to 2406, a 25% increase. Our active membership with Bou Tax paid through 2008 has increased from 546 to 746, a 36% increase and our e-mail address listing has increased from 788 to 905, a 15% increase. We have many names still listed in our roster without contact data to search for and of course we would like to add more current members with Bou Tax payments through 2008.

The San Antonio Reunion was a great success and I received about 60 e-mails or calls of thanks to our Reunion Committee for their efforts. We expect our 2008 Reunion to be a great success also. Tom McHugh, the Dayton Reunion Planner, and Wayne DeLawter, our Association Advisor, have provided a rundown of the events planned at the 29 September through 3 October event. This is posted on our web site at <http://www.c-7acaribou.com/reunion/reun-index.html>, so please check it out. The Hope hotel will host the event, so make your hotel reservations at <http://www.hopehotel.com/>. Another web site of interest is the National Museum of the USAF at W-PAFB (<http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/>), where we will have our Reunion Banquet. Make plans to attend. The Reunion Flyer should be in the mail around the first of June with information on registration.

The Newsletter section previously titled Mail Call has been reinstated. The purpose is to stimulate and encourage communications between members and between members and the newsletter. It is part "Letters to the Editor" and part just a good place for members to drop ideas, comments, and anecdotes by email. Feedback from our members is a dynamic that enhances the overall value of the newsletter to all members.

One caveat: all entries are subject to editorial review. E-mail your comments, ideas, etc. to Dave Hutchens at PrintHut@aol.com.

Our Association has established a formal Nominating Committee to actively seek interested Association members to fill our many management tasks. The nominating committee is working to complete a slate of nominees to place before our membership at the Business Meeting. If you would be interested in one of these positions, or have questions, or need further information, please contact a member of the nominating committee: Stoney Faubus stoneman57@juno.com, Chris Nevins vnav46@verizon.net, or Dave Hutchens prinhtut@aol.com.

Our Memorabilia Chairman, Jim Meyer, reports that his inventory stocks after the San Antonio Reunion have been replenished. An order blank is on page 27 of this newsletter or you can obtain one from our web site <http://www.c-7acaribou.com/> under the Memorabilia section.

E-mail, Write, or Call

by Pat Hanavan [535, 68]

This edition of the newsletter brings back the *Mail Call* column by Dave Hutchens. The intent of this column is to provide a forum for members to ask questions, make comments, search for missing roommates or buddies, make suggestions, etc. In general, it is somewhat like a bulletin board or blog for the Association. It is a **GREAT** way to communicate between reunions.

Use this feature! Dave Hutchens is poised at his computer looking for your email, listening for his phone to ring, and checking the mailbox every day for your letter.

Here's how you do it:
 email to **PrintHut@aol.com**
 call Dave at 918-272-3518
 write Dave at:
 17916 E 96th St N
 Owasso, OK 74055

2008 Reunion Events

Monday, 29 Sep:

1200-1600 Registration
 1200-2300 War Room open
 1730-1930 Welcome Deli Buffet

Tuesday, 30 Sep:

0700-2300 War Room open
 TBD-TBD Memorabilia available
 0900-1600 (Optional) Aviation History Tour

0900-1700 USAF Museum open for self-guided touring

1730-???? (Optional) Dinner at Hope Hotel

Wednesday, 1 Oct:

0700-2300 War Room open
 TBD-TBD Memorabilia available
 0900-1700 USAF Museum open for self-guided touring

0930-1130 (Optional) USAF Museum Restoration Hangar tour (presently limited to 100 members)

1800-2200 (optional) Social hour and Octoberfest Buffet with entertainment program at WPAFB Club

Thursday, 2 Oct:

0930-???? Business Meeting
 TBD-TBD Memorabilia available
 0930-1100 USAF Museum - Presidential Aircraft and Experimental Aircraft tour (ladies, guests, etc.)

1100-1500 USAF Museum open for self-guided touring

1500-1530 Dedication of our Memorial Bench at the USAF Museum

1530-1800 Group photos

1800-1900 Social hour adjacent to Museum's C-7A with (restored) interior open for viewing

1900-2200 *Dinner Under the Wings* at the USAF Museum, invited speaker is Maj Gen Curtis Bedke, Commander of the USAF Research Laboratories

Friday, 3 Oct: depart for home

Note: During periods when reunion attendees are away at "off-campus" events, e.g., tours, memorial dedication, museum banquet, the War Room will be closed (locked up) unless an Association volunteer agrees to act as War Room monitor.

Mail Call

by Dave Hutchens [459, 69]

Hi Dave,

I've been doing some research on one of our Caribous, 63-9755. Maybe you can use this in the newsletter. Most of the information comes from the Air Force Historical Research Agency at Maxwell AFB, the FAA, and a few phone calls.

1. Manufactured by De Havilland Canada, Toronto, Canada and accepted on 12-22-1964 as a CV-2B, and assigned to the Army's 17th Aviation Company.

2. Transferred to USAF on 31 Dec 1966. Assigned to the 483rd Tactical Airlift Wing. Deployments to Clark AB, Philippines; CamRanh Bay AB, Vietnam; and Kadena AB, Japan.

3. Sep 1971 assigned to 537th Tactical Airlift Squadron, tail code "KN." Deployments to Bien Hoa AB, Vietnam; Don Muan RTAFB, Thailand; and Tan Son Nhut AB, Vietnam.

4. Mar 1972 – Dropped from inventory by transfer to Military Assistance Plan.

5. Jul 1975 – Recovered at Utapao AB, Thailand by the 908 TAG, Maxwell AFB, Alabama. Ferried back to USA via the northern route, then to Hayes Aircraft, Napier Field, Alabama. It took 34 days and 93 flying hours (see Caribou newsletter, Jul 2005)

6. Aug 1975 regained into USAF inventory at Hayes aircraft, Napier Field, Alabama.

7. Feb 1976. deemed un-repairable and was picked up and flown by the 908 TAG (The same guys who had picked it up at Utapao AB, Thailand) to Military Aircraft Storage and Disposition Center, Davis Monthan AFB, AZ.

8. Jul 8, 1976. Loaned to the Department of Agriculture for use on the Screw Worm Eradication Program along the Mexican border.

9. Sep 30 1981. Deregistered and returned to the MASDC at Davis Monthan AFB, Arizona.

10. Jan 8, 1990. sold to Aero Nostalgia, 7030 South C.E. Dixon, Stockton, CA 95206. Its registration was changed to N91NC and designated a DHC 4A.

11. Jan 17, 1990. Sold to New California Aviation, Inc., Little Ferry, NJ 07643. (civilian registration serial number is changed to 217).

12. Nov 1994. Sold to Pen Turbo Aviation Inc., Cape May County Airport, Rio Grande, NJ 08242. Pen Turbo was planning on installing turbo props on the old Bou but 9-11 put so many restrictions on export of aircraft that the plan was scrapped.

13. Jan 2008. The aircraft is now stored at Western International Aviation, Tucson, AZ.

I talked to the guy at Tucson and he said 755 was for sale for \$100,000, but I felt that he would sell it to a good home for somewhat less.

If anyone has any information on activities of 755 between 1972 and 1975, please let me know.

Well Dave, this is my history story for this year and I'm sticking to it.

Keep in touch,
Dave and Christine Kowalski
[908, 75]

70 Oakridge Lane
Titus AL 36080
334-514-0804

(A question to you readers out there: What distinguishes an "A" model from a "B" model as in CV-2B, C-7A or C-7B?)

Hi Bill (Buesking). Thanks for the update. I plan on attending the 08 reunion in Dayton. San Antonio was a good one, but I am looking forward to visiting the AF museum too.

I just wanted to send a note about C-7A models. Hobby Craft has several plastic models. They have the C-7A with Army markings, however it does have the radome on the nose. They have a DHC-4 UN model which doesn't have the radome. I ran into this information at a hobby shop at the Ft. Lewis Post Exchange in Tacoma, WA. You folks probably already know that the model

is available, but I thought I would let you know just in case you don't.

Hobby Craft Model # 1343, C-7A with Army decals 1:72 scale. See Blitz Hobbies at www.blitzhobbies.com Coupon code "AAFES" for a 5% discount.

Thanks again for all your work in San Antonio.

Greg Leppert [457, 69]

Jan 13. Mac McCorkle [457, 68] is trying to locate Morris Butts. We don't have good contact information for Morris in our roster. Can anyone out there offer some information about Morris Butts to Mac McCorkle?

Dave,

We went to Alexandria, LA to visit Alicia's sisters last week, so I thought I would see if any Caribou guys lived in the vicinity. To my surprise, there were 4 within 10 miles of where we were staying. I contacted each and had a nice visit with each of them. If anyone wants a list of Bou guys near them or near where you will be visiting, contact me and I'll see what I can come up with for you.

Pat Hanavan [535, 68]

Hi Bill (Buesking), Thanks so much for your e-mails, they are great. You guys are doing a great job. Congratulations!

Miles Watkins [536, 67]

I was impressed with the professional quality of the newsletter and wish to thank Pat for the job well done. I was especially interested in the article by John Vickery [457, 68] concerning the construction of the party hootch. I was scheduling officer, instructor pilot, and later chief of stan-eval under Lt. Col. Pisanos during the construction and had many occasions to enjoy the efforts of John and his young elves. It was truly a tremendous effort and result. We also stored ice cream in a freezer in the hootch, which we delivered to green

Continued on Page 5

Mail Call (from Page 4)

beret camps on the first flight of the day from CRB to the central highlands. The ice cream was donated by the Meadow Gold dairy at the Cam Rahn Army Port/Camp. I donated a number of Caribou Vietnam related items to the archives at Texas Tech, of which I am an alumnus. Some pictures of our hootch were among those items.

Dick Baird [457, 68]

Dave,

I read with interest the article on Robert S. Hopkins in the January 2006 Caribou Association newsletter. It reminded me of a story from my past. In late 1983 I was coming off a rated supplement tour as a Base Civil Engineer at Shemya AFB, AK, and returning to the cockpit as a KC-135 Aircraft Commander/Instructor Pilot at Grissom AFB, IN. When I was first introduced to my crew, my Co-Pilot was Lt. Robert S. Hopkins, III. (*aka*. Dr. Bob – he has a PhD in History). As we made small talk, he asked me what assignments I had and what aircraft I had flown. When I mentioned the C-7A Caribou as my first assignment out of pilot training [537/458, 71], Dr. Bob's eyes widened. Finally, I thought – after years of blank looks at this point in the conversation, I finally found someone who was familiar with the Bou. And with awe in his voice, he repeated "Wow, a Caribou," and then continued, "My dad flew Caribous."

Ed Yewdall

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Fax: (717) 705-1255

Dave,

A friend sent this article from some news service. It might be an interesting discussion piece for Mail Call.

Pat Hanavan [535, 68]

"Jan 5, 2008: The U.S. Navy awarded wings to its first two non-officer pilots

in over sixty years. Faced with a growing shortage of pilots, the U.S. Navy has finally adopted a solution the U.S. Army implemented long ago; warrant officer pilots. The first 14 navy warrant officer pilots were commissioned a year ago and sent off to flight school.

Noting over half a century of U.S. Army success with a warrant officer program, the U.S. Navy decided to try it out, and called for enlisted volunteers two years ago. The navy warrant officer pilots will serve as flying officers in patrol, electronic warfare, and helicopter aircraft. These pilots would remain pilots their entire careers. Commissioned officers are expected to move on to leadership positions. Traditionally, this often means spending some of your time flying a desk, instead of an aircraft. Many pilots don't like this, and the warrant officer program is, for them, an attractive option.

There's a sense of déjà vu with this. The navy had NCOs flying aircraft early in World War II. Ever since, there's been a controversy over whether all pilots (most of whom are highly trained warriors, not leaders, which is what officers are supposed to be) must be officers. At the start of World War II, the Army Air Corps (there was no separate Air Force yet) also had enlisted pilots. These men were NCOs ("flying sergeants") selected for their flying potential and trained to be pilots. Not leaders of pilots, but professional pilots of fighters, bombers, and whatnot. Officers trained as pilots would also fly, but in addition they would provide the leadership for the sergeant pilots in the air and on the ground. As the Army Air Corps changed into the mighty Army Air Force (with 2.4 million personnel, and 80,000 aircraft, at its peak), its capable and persuasive commander (General Hap Arnold) insisted that all pilots be officers. Actually, he wanted them all to be college graduates as well, until it was pointed out that the pool of college graduates was too small to provide the 200,000 pilots the Army Air Force eventually trained. But Arnold

forced the issue of only officers being pilots, and the Navy had to go along to remain competitive in recruiting. When the Air Force split off from the Army in 1947, the Army went back to the original concept of "flying sergeants," by making most pilots Warrant Officers. Many Air Force pilots envied the Army "flying Warrants" because the Warrant Officers just flew. That's what most pilots want to do, just fly an aircraft, not a desk. But a commissioned officer must take many non-flying assignments in order to become a "well rounded officer." Many Navy and Air Force pilots only want to fly. A lot of them quit the military to work for an airline. They often stay in the reserve, and fly warplanes on weekends. This is considered an excellent arrangement for the many pilots who take this route.

What the Navy is trying to do is address a shortage of pilots for combat support aircraft. Fighters are the most attractive aircraft for military pilots, but far fewer qualified people want to do the more unexciting work of piloting patrol aircraft and helicopters. The Navy is also confronted with the coming generation of robotic aircraft. These UAV (unmanned aerial vehicles) are usually controlled (when they are "flown" at all) from the ground. This job has been unattractive to pilots, and often NCOs are used (except by the Air Force, which has made some of its UAVs completely robotic so they could allow NCOs to push the buttons) to do this. Warrant Officers would be better suited to be career UAV operators.

The Navy received 69 applications, in 2006, for the 30 initial warrant officer positions. Only 42 of the applicants were found qualified, and 14 completed the initial training. The applicants had to be petty officers (E5-E7), have at least an associate's degree (two years of college), and be under 27 years old. As it turned out, four of the 14 graduates already had a civilian pilot's license, and seven had served as enlisted aircrew. The next selection for this program will take place later this year."

Perils of Command

by Col. Wilbert Turk [483, 1968]
from *Hangar Flying with Grandpa*,
pg. 355-358, 1st Books Library, 2002

My first order of business [after assuming command of the 483rd TAW] was to visit the squadrons located at the disbursed bases ... I scheduled a flight [for 3 Oct 1968] with the 459th Squadron. It was to be a routine re-supply mission to Da Nang Air Base and Camp Evans Army Base and return to Phu Cat. Another C-7 [63-9753] was on the same mission, but some time ahead of me. The pilot on that earlier flight was in the traffic pattern at Evans. Suddenly, without warning, a mass of Army helicopters launched into the air, from a hidden area near the landing strip and crossed into the traffic pattern. At least one [CH-47A 66-19041] or possibly two of the choppers collided with the C-7. All aircraft fell to the ground in a scene reminiscent of WWII action. Twenty-five brave American men [including C-7A personnel: Capt. Wayne Bundy, 1/Lt Ralph Schiavone, SSgt Donald Cleaver, and SSgt James Connor] unnecessarily lost their lives in that uncontrolled air traffic environment.

Instead of returning to Phu Cat, I continued south to my headquarters at Cam Ranh Bay. It was quite late in the evening by then. Colonels Chris and Les met my aircraft. We discussed the unfortunate accident at Evans. Someone remarked that Seventh Air Force regulations required that the commander of any subordinate organization in the Seventh was required, personally, to call the Commander, four-star General Brown, immediately, and explain the circumstances of a major aircraft accident. That was a preliminary report only. It was to be followed soon thereafter by a personal briefing of the general and his staff.

I read the "reg" handed to me by my executive officer and agreed that I owed General Brown a report, but at 2200 hours? Yes, I believed. The heat is no more intense from a call late at night or a call too late on the day after the

fact. I called the general the night of 3 October 1968. I told him about the loss of lives, the destroyed aircraft and the obvious inadequate air traffic control system at Evans. He was very gracious, considering the late hour, and said one of his staff would contact me about the briefing date. The next day I was told to appear before General Brown and his staff two days hence at his Saigon headquarters

Col. Turk and Col. Christensen



With the help of my staff, we gathered the pertinent facts, including my personal observations. We condensed the information into a 1-minute briefing and I took off to Saigon, long before dawn on the appointed day. En route, I thought of the stories I had heard about other USAF wing commander experiences during their accident briefings at the four-star command levels. Many, reputedly, were relieved from their commands on the spot. I hoped that easy solution was not prevalent in Vietnam, especially for a recent arrival in the country. I was so new that I didn't know how to pronounce the names of major RVN and USAF air bases such as Bien Hoa (Ben Wha).

But I put my concerns aside and concentrated on landing at Tan Son Nhut aerodrome, Saigon. My next item on the day's agenda was to check in with my immediate boss, General McLaughlin. He concurred in the general approach to the briefing and wished me well. Then off I went into the inner sanctum of the Seventh Air Force commander

where several members of his staff anxiously awaited his arrival. So did I. Within a few minutes an aide called, "attention." The General took his front and center seat and nodded for me to begin the briefing. With the help of a few hastily drawn charts, I covered the salient points of the tragic accident as I observed it and as it was reported to me. I concluded with the comment that the primary cause of the accident was the failure of helicopter units operating at Evans to comply with long-standing, air traffic control procedures, i.e., aircraft in the traffic pattern have priority over other aircraft – except planes in distress. Also aircraft are prohibited from crossing an airport traffic pattern unless cleared to do so by the air traffic controller. In this instance we could not determine if that permission had been granted. We assumed it had not for a responsible controller would not have – should not have – cleared a mass of aircraft to scramble into its flight path.

Following my comments, the general mulled over the situation briefly and said, "I want you, personally, to visit your squadrons and discuss this accident with their commanders and flight crews. They must be alert to the hazardous flight conditions that prevail around helicopter operations and fly accordingly. Next, try to work out an air traffic control arrangement with the Army for concurrent operations at their sites."

At that point, I just said, "Yes, sir." The General looked as if he was preparing to leave and I inhaled deeply. Suddenly, one of the senior officers in the audience asked a "nitpicking" question, the answer to which was beyond my limited experience in RVN. As I was about to admit my inadequate knowledge of the subject of his question, General Brown turned in his seat and conjured up the most withering stare I have seen, before or since, directed at the questioner. Absolute silence reigned in the briefing room as the audience slid down in their seats in an effort to

remove them from the list of suspects responsible for the breach of protocol. Then the General arose, nodded toward me, as his Aide called, "Attention." The briefing apparently over, I gathered my documents, chatted a few minutes with acquaintances, debriefed General McLaughlin, changed into my flight suit and took off for Cam Ranh Bay, grateful that I remained the wing commander. Those few days during the first week of October 1968 marked my grueling introduction into the real world in Viet Nam.

Accident Rates

From *Tactical Airlift*, pg. 368-369
by Ray L. Bowers

Air Force officers hoped to achieve a safety record with the Caribous superior to the Army's. Initial success was remarkable; the Air Force had no accidents, either major or minor, during the first three months of 1967. This compared with eight accidents the previous quarter and twenty-seven during all of 1966. For the rest of 1967 and 1968 the 834th Air Division reported ten major Caribou Accidents, equal to a two-year rate of 4.5 accidents per one hundred thousand flying hours. This was only slightly above the Air Force worldwide rate for all aircraft types.

Rules of Engagement

by Pat Hanavan [535, 68] and
M.T. Smith [483, 68]

Flying the Caribou in wartime while still achieving peacetime accident rates was not just data analyzed after the conflict. It was a conscious attempt not only to better the Army records in supporting troops in the field, but to do it under these "rules of engagement" which amounted to achieving accident rates equivalent to air operations in peacetime. Accidents were bound to happen when you combine the pilot population with the hazardous mission. The following story illustrates that point.

One day, a senior officer in the chain of command entered my [Pat Hanavan] office and asked "Where could a Caribou be hit by enemy fire during landing and end up in a ditch along the side of the runway as a result of that enemy fire?" I thought for a minute and then replied, "Give me a few minutes to think about it and I'll bring you an answer within the hour." Accidents, especially ones caused by pilot error, were bad news for a squadron and the wing. As the chief test pilot for the 483rd, it was easy for me to come up with a critical part of the Caribou which could result in loss of control on landing. Any of several components in the aileron-wing flap system (e.g., wing flap attachment arm, bell crank) could prevent the pilot from holding the upwind wing down into a crosswind. A failure there, plus a narrow runway, could result in the aircraft going into a ditch.

M.T. Smith [the maintenance control officer], faced the same question. "I was sent to take charge of the recovery team and it was clear that 'the boss' could not afford another pilot error accident." The crashed aircraft was found to have a bullet hole through the aileron bell crank. The aircraft forms read, "Right wing aileron bell crank damaged; bell crank replaced." M.T. and Bruce Jack, the De Haviland tech rep, presented "the boss" with the shattered bell crank when he came to pick up the repaired aircraft ... no elaboration. His face was lit up like a beacon. He grabbed M.T. by the shoulders and said, "I'll never forget this." M.T. was told that he showed the damaged bell crank to the 7th AF Commander at one of the staff meetings ... what he said there we have no idea, we can only imagine.

The AK-47 is 7.62x39 mm and the M-16 is 5.56x45 mm. It's probably a good thing that bullets expand on impact, so that it would have been difficult to determine the exact caliber of weapon that produced the hole. We'll leave "the rest of the story" to your imagination.

Sweet Revenge

by Ed Breslin [537, 67]

I relate these happenings as the memory of an old man permits. As is my custom, I will try to include as much explanatory detail as possible for the benefit of those who were not privileged to "be there" physically, although our spouses, family, and friends were always with us in spirit.

Of all the pilots I flew with as FE, my fondest memories are of Colonel Jones, 537th TAS. While many who attained the exalted rank of O-6 might be accused of flying nothing but a desk, this certainly wasn't the case with the man we affectionately knew as, "Jonesy."

It was a dismal monsoon morning as we taxied into the parking area at An Khe, Army 1st Cav base camp. An Army sergeant stood in front of the aircraft with his yellow wands giving parking guidance to the aircraft commander, Colonel Jones. As I stood on the ladder behind the pilot, looking out the roof hatch, Colonel Jones said over the intercom, "Watch me dust this guy off." With that, he pushed the throttles up and pulled them into reverse, sending a shower of dust and rain at the hapless Army grunt. Getting out of the aircraft, the colonel got a snappy salute and a cheery, "Good morning, Colonel," to which he replied, "I gottcha that time, son." "You sure did," replied the soldier, with a big grin on his face.

On the way back to An Khe at the end of the day's work, I dropped the ramp door down to sweep the dirt, mud, and other debris from the floor and out the back of the aircraft. We did this to save work for the ground crews, who had more than enough to do already. Beside, it was much more efficient to sweep dirt into the slipstream than it was to try to do it on the ground. I did this after advising Jonesy that I was going off the headset to sweep out the plane and to use the relief tube.

The relief tube is the Caribou answer to a men's room, consisting of a black

plastic funnel on the end of a flexible hose. The hose is installed in the end of an aluminum tube with a curved end extending through the aircraft skin and facing aft to allow the slipstream to create a vacuum as the aircraft flies. It was the only "facility" we had aboard.

After sweeping out the plane, I closed the ramp door, which is audible in the cockpit, and proceeded to make use of the relief tube. During this operation, the tail of the aircraft suddenly began to sway violently from side to side. I almost couldn't stand. It was as if "someone" was deliberately kicking the rudder pedals! Thoroughly wet down, I went forward and plugged back into the intercom and Jonesy said, "Kind of rough back there today, ain't it chief?" Chief was the familiar way in which salty pilots called their FE, perhaps from the bomber crew chiefs of WWII. It was truly a term of endearment. "Yes, sir," I replied. "It certainly is!"

We came into An Khe with an empty aircraft. We knew there wouldn't be a load for Phu Cat. There never was. It was Jonesy's habit to use the relief tube on the short flight from An Khe to Phu Cat at the end of the day.

We pulled into the parking area and stopped with engines running. I opened the cargo door and dropped the ramp to speak with the Army rep. As soon as I confirmed that there was no load for Phu Cat, I went to the right side of the aircraft, just aft of the passenger door, and turned the relief tube extension into the wind. I told the aircraft commander that we were clear to call it a day and return empty to Phu Cat.

Just after we were airborne for home, Jonesy called me on the intercom. "Chief, get up here in the seat while I go in the back for a leak," he said. "And I don't expect any turbulent air while I'm back there." "Yes, sir," I answered.

A short while later, a very annoyed, and very frontally soaked full Colonel came back on the headset. "Some wise guy turned the piss tube into the slipstream," he wailed. "You just can't trust those Army troops," I replied.

Bad Day at the Office

by Capt. Michael Meridith
Bagram AB, Afghanistan

As an Air Force Joint Terminal Attack Controller embedded with ground forces, the job of Sergeant "Dean" was to serve as liaison between the ground commander and aircrews. On the afternoon of Oct. 27, 2007 the ten-vehicle convoy he was traveling with in Southern Afghanistan came under attack.

"We checked in with him and found out that they were taking small arms and RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) fire," said the pilot of one of two F-15E Strike Eagles that flew to the defense of the forces on the ground. "My wingman found the bad guys and we set up to strafe." After the pilot strafed about 30 to 50 attackers with his 20 mm cannon, both crews were startled by the JTAC's next radio call.



"I had noticed the shots were getting closer and closer to my truck, and as I reached for some ammo, I was hit," he said. At first he thought he had received only a glancing blow to his armor, but soon realized that he had been shot through the abdomen.

After calling for a medic, Sgt. "Dean" calmly informed the F-15E crews of his condition. "It was definitely a gut check for us when we got the call," said the weapons systems officer in the lead F-15E. "He spoke in a calm voice with no trace of fear or pain. It definitely keeps you calm knowing that he's got things under control and he's doing his best to make sure we can employ ordnance as quickly as possible."

Sergeant "Dean" attributes his calm radio manner to a need to communicate clearly with the pilots he's directing.

"If I sound all excited and worked

up on the radio it makes it hard for the pilots to understand me," he said. "I don't want to make any mistakes and the pilots don't want to make mistakes and the best way to do that is to keep everyone calm. I just kept my mind occupied on my mission, I wanted to see it to the finish."

Despite his wound, he worked with the aircrews, asking for a battle damage assessment on the first strafe and calling for additional strikes from both aircraft as the enemy forces regrouped, attempting to flank the convoy. All the while, he dismissed suggestions that he hand over his duties to someone.

"I know it sounds weird to say, but the first feeling that went through me when I was hit was embarrassment," he said. "Everyone has their job and then all of a sudden you're hit and all eyes are on you ... especially in a situation like that where everyone is getting shot at. You think, 'Why me? What did I do wrong?' You want to go back to doing your job. You don't want to be a burden."

"As a young wingman in the (336th Expeditionary Fighter) squadron with less experience than most, Oct. 27 was an eye-opening experience that I'll never forget," said the pilot of the second F-15E. "The JTAC displayed the most courage, bravery and professionalism that I've ever seen. It's people like him that make me strive to do what I do to the utmost of my abilities."

After several additional strikes and low passes by the F-15Es to deter further attacks, the convoy was able to rendezvous with a helicopter, to get the JTAC to medical treatment. After a day in the hospital, he was released and has fully recovered from his wounds.

"We kept working with him and he never once stopped doing his job," said the pilot. "The last thing he said to us was 'Looks like they're going to MEDEVAC me out of here, I've got to take the headset off and give it to somebody else. You make sure my boys get out of here okay.' At the very end, all he cared about was that he got his guys safely out of there."

Total Embarrassment

by Roger Schmidke [535, 69]

The Montagnard families, either at Bu Dop or Bunard (I don't remember which), were having a problem. When they went to town shopping, they had to walk in and that was no problem. On their return, the VC would come out of the jungle and take all their food and other stuff.

We got the job of flying them to town and going back in the afternoon and picking them up and returning them to the camp. When we landed, we expected maybe forty or fifty, but like everything else in Vietnam, it always has its own way of developing.

There to greet us were about two hundred women and children. To keep some semblance of order, when we parked and kept the engines running

in case of emergency, I dropped the ramp so it was level, to keep from being mobbed. The A/C came back to help me. He stayed on the ramp and I jumped to the ground and started picking up kids, bags of goodies, and women -- setting them on the ramp.

As we are about half way loaded (remember, the engines are running), I pick up two kids, turn, and grab their mother under the arms to pick her up. I was just about to set her on the ramp, when her wrap around skirt comes loose and passes me in the prop wash.

Now, I'm grabbing for her skirt as it goes by and out of the corner of my eye I see her falling backward out of the plane. Instinctively, I reach up and catch her. There I am, a naked woman sitting on my right hand, a sarong in my left hand, and an A/C standing on the ramp going bonkers...

Special Delivery

by Pat Hanavan [535, 68]

One morning during the 1968 Tet offensive, my crew was hauling a load to Tay Ninh City, a 100 ft by 3900 ft Pierced Steel Planking runway in the middle of the provincial capital in III Corps. After landing, I went back to help our flight engineer off-load our U.S. Aid For International Development cargo of civilian goods for self-help projects, schools, health clinics, etc. When he lowered the ramp, a Special Forces sergeant hopped into the aircraft to see what we brought. The salty NCO immediately proclaimed loudly and in no uncertain language that he was not pleased with what he saw. "We've been in a fire fight for 24 hours and this is what they send us!"

I asked him, "What do you need?" He continued to express his displeasure, so I repeated, "What do you need?" He looked puzzled and asked, "What do you mean?" I replied, "Tell me what you need. Make a list of what supplies you need and I'll see what I can do to get them for you." Still bewildered, he wrote a list of ammunition, grenades, mortar rounds, etc. and gave it to me. I told him, "Hang loose, I'll be back."

After takeoff, we climbed for altitude and called Bien Hoa ALCE (Airlift Control Element) and told the controller to contact Sgt. Baja on the 5th Special Forces ramp and have him meet us at the hot cargo ramp with the list of supplies I read to him.

When we landed at Bien Hoa, Sgt. Baja met us at the hot cargo ramp with a forklift and several thousand pounds of ammo. We took off ASAP and hauled our "ashes" back to Tay Ninh City. When the Special Forces sergeant saw what we brought, he was beaming and very thankful for our support of his unit. In less than an hour, we brought him the critical ammo they needed. This is just one of the many incidents which formed a special bond between the Bous and the Special Forces units.

Check this out:

<http://www.managedmusic.com/Music/PlayBeforeYouGoVN.php>

A-10 Motivation

Peace Through Superior Firepower



PEACE
Sometimes A Hug Isn't Enough.

Uncommon Valor Was A Common Virtue

by Michael T. Powers

from Earl Beech, C-7A Restorer
TheNational Museum of the USAF

Each year I go to Washington, DC with the eighth grade class from Clinton, WI where I grew up, to videotape their trip. I greatly enjoy visiting our nation's capitol, and each year I take special memories back with me.

The October 2000 trip was especially memorable. On the last night of our trip, we stopped at the Iwo Jima memorial. This memorial is the largest bronze statue in the world and depicts one of the most famous photographs in history – that of the six brave soldiers raising the American Flag at the top of a rocky hill on the island of Iwo Jima during WW II. Over one hundred students and chaperones piled off the buses and headed towards the memorial.

I noticed a solitary figure at the base of the statue, and as I got closer he asked, "Where are you guys from?" I told him that we were from Wisconsin "Hey, I'm a Cheese Head, too! Come gather around, Cheese Heads, and I will tell you a story." (James Bradley just happened to be in Washington, DC to speak at the memorial the following day. He was there that night to say good night to his dad, who had passed away. He was just about to leave when he saw the buses pull up. I videotaped him as he spoke to us, and received his permission to share what he said.

It is one thing to tour the incredible monuments filled with history in Washington, DC, but it is quite another to get the kind of insight we received that night. When all had gathered around, he reverently began to speak. (Here are his words that night.) "My name is James Bradley and I'm from Antigo, Wisconsin. My dad is on that statue, and I wrote a book, called "Flags of Our Fathers," was on the New York Times Best Seller list. It is the story of the six boys you see behind me. "Six boys raised the flag.

"The first guy putting the pole in the ground is Harlon Block. Harlon was an all-state football player.



He enlisted in the Marine Corps with all the senior members of his football team. They were off to play another type of game. A game called 'War.' But it didn't turn out to be a game. Harlon, at age 21, died with his intestines in his hands. I don't say that to gross you out, I say that because there are people who stand in front of this statue and talk about the glory of war.

"You guys [and gals] need to know that most of the boys in Iwo Jima were 17, 18, and 19 years old and it was so hard that the ones who did make it home never would talk to their families about it. (He pointed to the statue.)

"The next guy is Rene Gagnon from New Hampshire. If you took Rene's helmet off at the moment this photo was taken and looked in the webbing of that helmet, you would find a photograph ... a photograph of his girl friend. Rene put that in there for protection because he was scared. He was 18 years old. It was just boys who won the battle of Iwo Jima. Boys. Not old men.

"The next guy here, the third guy in this tableau, was Sergeant Mike Strank. Mike is my hero. He was the hero of all these guys. They called him the 'old man' because he was so old. He was already 24. When Mike would motivate his boys in training camp, he didn't say, 'Let's go kill some Japanese' or 'Let's die for our country.' He knew he was talking to little boys.

"He would say, 'Do what I say, and I'll get you home to your mothers.'

"The last guy on this side of the statue is Ira Hayes, a Pima Indian from Arizona. Ira Hayes was one who walked off Iwo Jima. He went into the

White House with my dad. President Truman told him, 'You're a hero.' He told reporters, 'How can I feel like a hero when 250 of my buddies hit the island with me and only 27 of us walked off alive?' So you take your class at school, 250 of you spending a year together having fun, doing everything together. Then all 250 of you hit the beach, but only 27 of your classmates walk off alive. That was Ira Hayes. He had images of horror in his mind. Ira Hayes carried the pain home with him and eventually died dead drunk, face down at the age of 32, ten years after this picture was taken.

"The next guy, going around the statue, is Franklin Sousley from Hilltop, Kentucky ... A fun-lovin' hillbilly boy. His best friend, who is now 70, told me, 'Yeah, you know, we took two cows up on the porch of the Hilltop General Store. Then we strung wire across the stairs so the cows couldn't get down. Then we fed them Epsom salts. Those cows crapped all night.' Yes, he was a fun-lovin' hillbilly boy. Franklin died on Iwo Jima at the age of 19. When the telegram came to tell his mother that he was dead, it went to the Hilltop General Store. A barefoot boy ran that telegram up to his mother's farm. The neighbors could hear her scream all night and into the morning. Those neighbors lived a quarter of a mile away.

"The next guy is my dad, John Bradley from Antigo, Wisconsin, where I was raised. My dad lived until 1994, but he would never give interviews. When Walter Cronkite's producers or the New York Times would call, we were trained to say 'No, I'm sorry, sir, my dad's not here. He is in Canada fishing. No, there is no phone there, sir. No, we don't know when he is coming back.'

"My dad never fished or even went to Canada ... Usually, he was sitting there right at the table eating his Campbell's soup. But, we had to tell the press that he was out fishing. He didn't want to talk to the press. 'You see, like Ira Hayes, my dad didn't see himself as a hero. Everyone thinks these guys are

heroes, 'cause they are in a photo and on a monument. My dad knew better. He was a medic. John Bradley from Wisconsin was a caregiver. In Iwo Jima he probably held over 200 boys as they died. And when boys died in Iwo Jima, they writhed and screamed, without any medication or help with the pain.

"When I was a little boy, my third grade teacher told me that my dad was a hero. When I went home and told my dad that, he looked at me and said, 'I want you always to remember that the heroes of Iwo Jima are the guys who did not come back. Did NOT come back.'

"So that's the story about six nice young boys. Three died on Iwo Jima, and three came back as national heroes – 7,000 boys died on Iwo Jima in the worst battle in the history of the Marine Corps. My voice is giving out, so I will end here. Thank you for your time."

Suddenly, the monument wasn't just a big old piece of metal with a flag sticking out of the top. It came to life before our eyes with the heartfelt words of a son who did indeed have a father who was a hero. Maybe not a hero for the reasons most people would believe, but a hero nonetheless.

Editor's note: Today's heroes are our armed services men and women around the world, fighting and dying for our freedom. Every day that you wake up free, it's going to be a great day.

Forum Page

by Peter Bird [535, 71]

Last year it was necessary to remove the Forum from the web site due to thousands of unwanted and offensive posts, coming primarily from China. After letting things settle down for a while, I implemented an entirely new forum system that is less susceptible to offensive postings. The new system has been up for about four months and has collected no spam. The new Forum will require you to go through a very simple signup process, but once you have logged in once, your browser should remember your credentials for future visits. Give it a try!

Oh, Lordy!

from Jim Hope [536, 66]

An old southern country preacher from Georgia had a teenage son named David (AKA Rosebud) and it was getting time the boy should give some thought to choosing a profession. Like many young men, the boy didn't really know what he wanted to do, and he didn't seem too concerned about it.

One day, while the boy was away at school, his father decided to try an experiment. He went into the boy's room and placed on his study table four objects: a Bible, a silver dollar, a bottle of whisky, and a Playboy magazine.

"I'll just hide behind the door," the old preacher said to himself, "and when he comes home from school this afternoon, I'll see which object he picks up. If it's the Bible, he's going to be a preacher like me, and what a blessing that would be! If he picks up the dollar, he's going to be a businessman, and that would be OK. But, if he picks up the bottle, he's going to be a no-good drunkard and, Lord, what a shame that would be. And worst of all, if he picks up that magazine he's gonna be a skirt-chasin' bum."

The old man waited anxiously, and soon heard his son's footsteps as he entered the house whistling and headed for his room. The boy tossed his books on the bed and as he turned to leave the room he spotted the objects on the table. With curiosity in his eye, he walked over to inspect them.

Finally, he picked up the Bible and placed it under his arm. He picked up the silver dollar and dropped it into his pocket. He uncorked the bottle and took a big drink while he admired this month's centerfold.

"Lord have mercy," the old preacher disgustedly whispered, "he's gonna be a fighter pilot!"

Editor's note: Jim Hope passed away on 5 Jan 2008. He was always cheerful and brought joy to all around him.

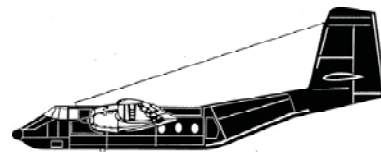
Requiescat in pacem.

Correction

by Jack Saux [536, 66]



The 'stop the fan' game played by Jack Saux, AKA "the Detonator," took place while Lt. Col. James Akin was the CO. It was a rather wild party, but it didn't get too far out of hand. We did have a good party with the Aussies and it resulted in the good relationship Col. Akin had with the Aussie commander.



Tail Colors

by Dick Baird [457, 68]

Some Lieutenants and I were having a couple of John Barley Corns in the 457th party hootch, when one of the youngsters suggested that it was politically incorrect or even worse to have the big C-7A model outside of the 483rd headquarters building painted with the 458th colors: **RED!**

About 1 AM one morning, a team of 457th types proceeded to talk the maintenance folks out of a ladder, some masking tape, and a can of blue spray paint. The next morning, the sun arose on a "Blue Tail." We enjoyed the success of the midnight requisitions and art work, and were pleased that it was a few days before the Command section noticed the change.

Once the change was noted, the tail was repainted red. The original team members wanted to do it again, but cooler heads prevailed. We always wondered why a neutral color was not used.

Tale of a Wing Weenie

by John Shilling [483, 67]

I was a Wing Weenie who arrived in-country on Christmas Day in 1966, arriving at Cam Ranh Bay the following day. The next day, Saigon was attacked. After the smells of Saigon and the bright lights from the flares and mortars, Cam Ranh was a welcome relief from my first day in-country.

We were officially a Wing several days after I arrived. Control was transferring from the Army to the Air Force and there were a lot of Army officers who weren't happy that we were taking their airplanes away from them. The Wing started out incredibly top-heavy with silver and gold. Some of the silver wasn't worn on the collars and shoulders. It was in the hair of many of the Lt Cols. In a one month period early in 1967, we got nearly 100 Lt Cols and only 3 enlisted personnel. It was to become a breeding ground for birdmen who would retire after their 12 months at Club Cam Ranh.

I spent all of 1967 and most of 1968 at Cam Ranh, occasionally venturing out of the safety of Wing Headquarters to check on things in Da Nang, Vung Tau, Saigon, and Thailand. TDY was more about having fun than working.

The wing building was really isolated from what was really going on. The Command Post was my duty section and I handled statistics for the wing and our 6 squadrons. It was all classified, CONFIDENTIAL information. My job was to amass that information and post it on a modified fluorescent light pallet showing passengers, cargo weight, and sorties flown. The board was outside the door to the Wing Headquarters building.

The isolation from the real part of what we were doing was often brought home when I was inside the command post. Controllers would be talking to pilots taking hits on missions flying in and out of the same airfield. The coolness of the pilots and co-pilots was amazing to a young kid from Ohio.

They often talked in matter of fact tones and described what was happening in a very low key way.

The true danger they were facing was lost in that calmness and professionalism. I was always amazed at the radio conversations intended to tell later pilots how best to approach the strip and where the fire was coming from. The names of these places meant absolutely nothing to me and looked strange on the grease pencil board in the command post, but later those names began to mean things after the war was over.

Years later, I have read some of the exploits of the pilots flying those missions. The voices I heard on the radios and what they were actually seeing and doing doesn't seem like the same places. I have always been amazed at the coolness and daring of the pilots, co-pilots, and flight engineers. Their sorties were only numbers that I accumulated on sheets and sent off to PACAF with no thought about what they really represented.

Few became heroes, but many of them were heroes in the strictest sense of the word. There are thousands and thousands of people alive today because of what these people did in moving people and supplies into and out of areas where few others could go.

An Airman's Friend

Some uses for WD-40:

- Protects silver from tarnishing
- Cleans and lubricates guitar strings
- Gets oil spots off concrete driveways
- Gives a floor that "just-waxed" sheen without making it slippery
- Keeps flies off cows
- Restores and cleans chalkboards
- Removes lipstick stains
- Loosens stubborn zippers
- Untangles jewelry chains
- Removes stains from stainless steel sinks
- Removes dirt and grime from the

barbecue grill

- Keeps ceramic/terra cotta garden pots from oxidizing
- Removes tomato stains from clothing
- Keeps glass shower doors free of water spots
- Camouflages scratches in ceramic and marble floors
- Keeps scissors working smoothly
- Lubricates noisy door hinges on vehicles and doors in homes
- Gives a children's play gym slide a shine for a super fast slide
- Lubricates gear shift and mower deck lever for ease of handling on riding mowers
- Rids rocking chairs and swings of squeaky noises
- Lubricates tracks in sticking home windows and makes them easier to open
- Spraying an umbrella stem makes it easier to open and close
- Restores and cleans padded leather dashboards in vehicles, as well as vinyl bumpers
- Restores and cleans roof racks on vehicles
- Lubricates and stops squeaks in electric fans
- Lubricates wheel sprockets on tricycles, wagons, and bicycles for easy handling
- Lubricates fan belts on washers and dryers and keeps them running smoothly
- Keeps rust from forming on saws and saw blades, and other tools
- Removes splattered grease on stove
- Keeps bathroom mirror from fogging
- Lubricates prosthetic limbs
- Keeps pigeons off the balcony (they hate the smell)
- Removes all traces of duct tape

And, as always.....The beat goes on

Who was Kilroy???



In 1946 the American Transit Association, through its radio program, "Speak to America," sponsored a nationwide contest to find the REAL Kilroy, offering a prize of a real trolley car to the person who could prove himself to be the genuine article. Almost 40 men stepped forward to make that claim, but James Kilroy from Halifax, Massachusetts had evidence of his identity.

Kilroy was a 46-year old shipyard worker during the WW II. He worked as a checker at the Fore River Shipyard in Quincy. His job was to go around and check on the number of rivets completed. Riveters were on piece-work and got paid by the rivet. Kilroy would count a block of rivets and put a check mark in semi-waxed lumber chalk, so the rivets wouldn't be counted twice. When Kilroy went off duty, the riveters would erase the mark. Later on, an off-shift inspector would come through and count the rivets a second time, resulting in double pay for the riveters.

One day Kilroy's boss called him into his office. The foreman was upset about all the wages being paid to riveters and asked him to investigate. It was then that he realized what had been going on.

The tight spaces he had to crawl in to check the rivets didn't lend themselves to lugging around a paint can and brush, so Kilroy decided to stick with the waxy chalk. He continued to put his

checkmark on each job he inspected, but added **KILROY WAS HERE** in king-sized letters next to the check, and eventually added the sketch of the chap with the long nose peering over the fence and that became part of the Kilroy message. Once he did that, the riveters stopped trying to wipe away his marks.

Ordinarily, the rivets and chalk marks would have been covered up with paint. With war on, however, ships were leaving the Quincy shipyard so fast that there wasn't time to paint them. As a result, Kilroy's inspection "trademark" was seen by thousands of servicemen who boarded the troopships the yard produced. His message apparently rang a bell with the servicemen, because they picked it up and spread it all over Europe and the South Pacific. Before the war's end, "Kilroy" had been here, there, and everywhere on the long haul to Berlin and Tokyo.

To the troops outbound in those ships, however, he was a complete mystery. All they knew for sure was that some jerk named Kilroy had "been there first." As a joke, U.S. servicemen began placing the graffiti wherever they landed, claiming it was already there when they arrived.

Kilroy became the U.S. super-GI who had always "already been" wherever GIs went. It became a challenge to place the logo in the most unlikely places imaginable. It is said to be atop Mt. Everest, the Statue of Liberty, the underside of the Arc de Triomphe, and even scrawled in the dust on the moon.

As the war went on, the legend grew. Underwater demolition teams routinely sneaked ashore on Japanese-held islands in the Pacific to map the terrain for the coming invasions by U.S. troops (and thus, presumably, were the first GIs there). On one occasion, however, they reported seeing enemy troops painting over the Kilroy logo! In 1945, an outhouse was built for the exclusive use of Roosevelt, Stalin, and Churchill at the Potsdam conference. The first

person inside was Stalin, who emerged and asked his aide (in Russian), "Who is Kilroy?"

To help prove his authenticity in 1946, James Kilroy brought along officials from the shipyard and some of the riveters. He won the trolley car, which he gave to his nine children as a Christmas gift and set it up as a playhouse in the Kilroy front yard in Halifax, Massachusetts.

Banking at An Khe

by Jim Wood [537, 66]

From September through December 1966, the 537th was a part of the 17th Aviation Company, 1st Air Cavalry at An Khe. We had an Officer's Club consisting of a parachute canopy tied to several trees which had been erected by the Army.

For a while, our "Club Officer" cashed checks for the troops and used them to buy supplies, i.e., beer for the club. Once his supplier discovered that our club wasn't a recognized establishment, they stopped honoring the checks.

One of our pilots had a solution. He was paid in cash and had been buying money orders to send money home to his wife. He suggested that he would cash checks for the squadron and asked that they be made out to his wife and he would mail them to her rather than buy money orders.

This was a great idea and worked well for everyone until several of the members got letters from their wives asking who was this woman in the U.S. that they were sending money to.

Laws of the Universe

Law of the Workshop: Any dropped tool rolls to the least accessible place.

Law of Probability: The probability of being watched is directly proportional to the stupidity of your act.

Brown's Law: If the shoe fits, it's ugly.

Oliver's Law: A closed mouth gathers no feet.

Friends

Civilian Friends: Get upset if you're too busy to talk to them for a week.

Military Friends: Are glad to see you after years, and will happily carry on the same conversation you were having last time you met.

Civ: Call your parents Mr. and Mrs.

Mil: Call your parents mom and dad.

Civ: Bail you out of jail and tell you what you did was wrong.

Mil: Would be sitting next to you saying, "Damn...we screwed up, but man that was fun!"

Civ: Have never seen you cry.

Mil: Cry with you.

Civ: Borrow your stuff for a few days then give it back.

Mil: Keep your stuff so long they forget it's yours.

Civ: Will take your drink away when they think you've had enough.

Mil: Will look at you stumbling all over the place and say, "You better drink the rest of that, you know we don't waste... that's alcohol abuse!!" Then carry you home safely and put you to bed...

Civ: Will talk crap to the person who talks crap about you.

Mil: Will knock the *#&^@ out of them for using your name in vain.

Civ: Know a few things about you.

Mil: Could write a book with direct quotes from you.

Civ: Have shared a few experiences...

Mil: Have shared experiences no civilian could ever dream of...

Civ: Would knock on your door.

Mil: Walk right in and say, "I'm home!"

Civ: Are for a while.

Mil: Are for life.

Newbie

by Mike Harvin [535, 69]

My first day in country was indicative of the year to come. Four of us brand new 1st Lt pilots were inbound to C-7A slots in Vietnam and had been trapped at Snake School in the PI for about a week (getting bumped by fighter pilot inbounds). We finally got into the course and then the school received a notice from the C-7A Wing CO to put any C-7A inbound crew dogs on a C-7A (returning to Vietnam after maintenance) the day the class ended.

We were handed revised travel orders, got on the plane and headed out. The crew had no inkling they were going to be hauling passengers so there were no chutes, rafts, etc. for the four of us back in the back!

When we landed at CRB around 6 PM (after a **LONG** flight from the PI, remember), the crew took us to the VOQ and dropped us off. That's what they normally did when they hauled visiting pilots from other units!!

We were in our tans since we hadn't processed in yet, so we stood out when we went to the O-club for dinner. Everyone else was in a flight suit or green fatigues. We couldn't buy anything since all we had were DOLLARS which didn't work in Vietnam (at least not at the O-Club). There was some consternation generated by the illegality of all of that, since it appeared that **MULTIPLE** laws/rules/SOPs had been busted by these four innocents. In hindsight, it seems that everyone decided we should have waited for the inbound freedom bird from the PI, as originally planned, so we could have been "processed" normally! From that day on, it got more interesting :-)

Message for the Moon

When NASA was preparing for the Apollo Project, it took the astronauts to a Navajo reservation in Arizona for training. One day, a Navajo elder and

his son came across the space crew walking among the rocks.

The elder, who spoke only Navajo, asked a question. His son translated for the NASA people: "What are these guys in the big suits doing?"

One of the astronauts said that they were practicing for a trip to the moon. When his son relayed this comment, the Navajo elder got all excited and asked if it would be possible to give to the astronauts a message to deliver to the moon.

Recognizing a promotional opportunity when he saw one, a NASA official accompanying the astronauts said, "Why certainly!" and told an underling to get a tape recorder.

The Navajo elder's comments into the microphone were brief. The NASA official asked the son if he would translate what his father had said. The son listened to the recording and laughed uproariously. But he refused to translate.

So the NASA people took the tape to a nearby Navajo village and played it for other members of the tribe. They too laughed long and loudly, but also refused to translate the elder's message to the moon.

Finally, an official government translator was summoned. After he finally stopped laughing the translator relayed the message: "Watch out for these *#&^@!, they have come to steal your land."

Flying in RVN

by Barry Wetherington [537, 66]

Our "Introduction" to in-country operations told us: "You have probably never flown (hopefully never will again) under the rather special conditions prevailing in Vietnam. Each flight entails a certain risk – the trick is to minimize this to acceptable standards.

You'll probably never file an IFR clearance, but be prepared to fly in weather, both IFR and marginal VFR. There is no way to get around it and do our vital combat support mission."

Mean Moms

Someday when my children are old enough to understand the logic that motivates a parent, I will tell them, as my Mean Mom told me:

I loved you enough to ask where you were going, with whom, and what time you would be home.

I loved you enough to be silent and let you discover that your new best friend was a creep.

I loved you enough to stand over you for two hours while you cleaned your room, a job that should have taken 15 minutes.

I loved you enough to let you see anger, disappointment, and tears in my eyes. Children must learn that their parents aren't perfect.

I loved you enough to let you assume the responsibility for your actions, even when the penalties were so harsh they almost broke my heart.

But most of all, I loved you enough ... to say NO even when I knew you would hate me for it.

Those were the most difficult battles of all. I'm glad I won them, because in the end you won, too. Some day when your children are old enough to understand the logic that motivates parents, you will tell them.

Was your Mom mean? I know mine was. We had the meanest mother in the whole world! While other kids ate candy for breakfast, we had to have cereal, eggs, and toast.

When others had a Pepsi and a Twinkie for lunch, we had to eat sandwiches. You can guess that our mother fixed us a dinner that was different from what other kids had, too.

She insisted on knowing where we were at all times. You'd think we were convicts in a prison. She had to know who our friends were and what we were doing with them. She insisted that if we said we would be gone for an hour, we would be gone for an hour, or less.

We were ashamed to admit it, but she had the nerve to break the Child Labor Laws by making us work. We had to

wash dishes, make beds, learn to cook, vacuum the floor, do laundry, empty the trash and all sorts of cruel jobs. I think she would lie awake at night thinking of more things for us to do.

She always insisted on us telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. By the time we were teenagers, she could read our minds and had eyes in the back of her head!

Mother wouldn't let our friends just honk the horn when they drove up. They had to come up to the door so she could meet them. While everyone else could date when they were 12 or 13, we had to wait until we were 16.

Because of our mother, we missed out on lots of things other kids experienced. None of us were ever caught shop lifting, vandalizing other's property, or ever arrested for any crime. It was all her fault.

Now that we have left home, we are all educated, honest adults. We are doing our best to be mean parents, just like Mom was.

I think that is what's wrong with the world today. It just doesn't have enough mean moms!

Hairy Moments Are...

by Mike Harvin [535, 69]

...having a recycled B-58 pilot go into reverse on you 100 feet in the air, because he couldn't get the plane to go down by diving at the runway with full flaps. It worked, since both engines went into reverse at the same time, but we had strong words on the ground!

...having an IP go into full reverse after touchdown on a short field during an emergency landing after full electrical failure (battery fire). **NOTHING** went into reverse without electrics, so after a great landing we started picking up speed toward the jungle at the end of the runway. No intercom either, of course, so I am screaming at him and fighting for the throttles. A very interesting few seconds. He made me promise not to tell, in exchange for multiple beers at the bar that night.

Where Did the White Man Go Wrong?

Indian Chief, "Two Eagles," was asked by a white government official, "You have observed the white man for 90 years. You've seen his wars and his technological advances. You've seen his progress, and the damage he's done."

The Chief nodded in agreement.

The official continued, "Considering all these events, in your opinion, where did the white man go wrong?"

The Chief stared at the government official for over a minute and then calmly replied. "When white man find land, Indians running it. No taxes, no debt, plenty buffalo, plenty beaver, clean water, women did all the work, medicine man free, Indian man spend all day hunting and fishing, all night having sex."

Then the chief leaned back and smiled, "Only white man dumb enough think he improve system like that."

Wit and Wisdom

"Talk is cheap...except when Congress does it." – Unknown

"What this country needs is more unemployed politicians." – Edward Langley, Artist (1928 - 1995)

"If you don't read the newspaper you are uninformed, if you do read the newspaper you are misinformed." – Mark Twain

"Government's view of the economy could be summed up in a few short phrases: If it moves, tax it. If it keeps moving, regulate it. And if it stops moving, subsidize it." – Ronald Reagan

"Foreign aid might be defined as a transfer of money from poor people in rich countries to rich people in poor countries." – Douglas Casey, classmate of Bill Clinton at Georgetown University

"The government is like a baby's alimentary canal, with a happy appetite at one end and no responsibility at the other." – Ronald Reagan



50,000 Names

by Jamie O'Hara
sung by George Jones

*There's teddy bears
and high school rings
And old photographs that Mamas bring,
Of Daddies with their young boys,
playing ball.
There's combat boots
that he used to wear,
When he was sent over there.
There's 50,000 names
carved in the wall.*

*There's cigarettes
and there's cans of beer,
And notes that say I miss you dear;
And children who don't say
anything at all.
There's Purple Hearts
and packs of gum,
And fatherless daughters
and fatherless sons;
And there's 50,000 names
carved in the wall.*

*They come from all across this land,
In pickup trucks and minivans;
Searching for a boy from long ago.
They scan the wall and find his name,
The teardrops fall like falling rain;
And silently they leave a gift and go.*

*There's stars of David
and rosary beads,
And crucifixion figurines,
And flowers of all colors,
large and small.
There's a Boy Scout badge
and a merit pin,
Little American flags
waving in the wind;
And there's 50,000 names
carved in the wall.
There's 50,000 names
carved in the wall.*

Enlisted Milestones

12 Jun 1969 TSgt V.R. Adams awarded Air Force Cross for extraordinary heroism

3 Dec 1969 Sgt M.E. Fish receives Air Force Cross for rescue of four Army helicopter crewmen.

18 Dec 1972 SSgt Samuel Turner scores the first of only two aerial kills

ever from a B-52, during Operation Linebacker II in Vietnam and becomes first enlisted MIG killer in SE Asia.

24 Dec 1972 A1C Albert Moore scores the second and last confirmed kill by a B-52 tail gunner, during Operation Linebacker II in Vietnam.

27 Jun 1973 Sgt Charles D. McGrath awarded Air Force Cross for heroic rescue mission.

Pet Store

A fellow walked into a pet store and was looking at the animals on display.

While he was there, an NCO from the local Air Force Base walked into a pet store and said to the shopkeeper, "I'd like a line service monkey, please."

The clerk nodded, went to a cage at the side of the store and took out a monkey. He put a collar and leash on the animal and handed it to the Chief, saying, "That'll be \$1,000." The Chief paid and left with the monkey.

Surprised, the fellow went to the shopkeeper and said, "That was a very expensive monkey. Most of them are only a few hundred dollars. Why did that one cost so much?" The shopkeeper answered, "Ah, that was a line service monkey. He can park, fuel, and service all Air Force aircraft; conduct all required ground ops testing; rig aircraft flight controls; and all with no mistakes. He is also trained in all air-field flight operations. He's well worth the money."

With his interest peaked, the fellow spotted a monkey in another cage with a \$10,000 price tag. "That one's even more expensive! What can it do?"

"Oh, that one is a "Maintenance Supervisor" monkey. She can instruct at all levels of aircraft maintenance, supervise all corrective and preventive maintenance programs, supervise a crew of maintainers, and even do most of the paperwork. A very useful monkey indeed," replied the shopkeeper.

The guy looked around a little longer and found a third monkey in a cage. The price tag read, "\$50,000". Holy cow! What does this one do?"

"Well," the shopkeeper said, "I've never actually seen him do anything but drink beer, chase the girl monkeys, and play around, but his papers say he's a flight engineer."



School Desks

In September of 2005, on the first day of school, Martha Cothren, a social studies school teacher at Robinson High School in Little Rock, did something not to be forgotten. With the permission of the school superintendent, the principal, and the building supervisor, she removed all of the desks from her classroom. When the first period kids entered the room, they discovered that there were no desks.

Confused, they asked, "Ms. Cothren, where're our desks?" She replied, "You can't have a desk until you tell me what you have done to earn the right to sit at a desk." They thought, "Well, maybe it's our grades." "No," she said. "Maybe it's our behavior?" She told them, "No, it's not even your behavior."

And so, they came and went, the first period, second period, third period.

Still no desks in the classroom. By early afternoon, television news crews gathered in Ms. Cothren's classroom to report about this crazy teacher who had taken all the desks out of her room.

The final period of the day came. As the puzzled students found seats on the floor of the deskless classroom, Martha Cothren said, "Throughout the day no one has been able to tell me just what he/she has done to earn the right to sit at the desks ordinarily found in this classroom. Now I am going to tell you."

At this point, Martha Cothren went over to the door of her classroom and opened it. Twenty-seven (27) U.S. veterans, all in uniform, walked into that classroom, each one carrying a school desk. The Vets began placing the school desks in rows, and then they walked over and stood alongside the wall.

By the time the last soldier set the final desk in place, those kids started to understand, perhaps for the first time in their lives, just how the right to sit at those desks had been earned. Martha said, "You didn't earn the right to sit at these desks. These heroes did it for you. They placed the desks here for you. Now, it's up to you to sit in them.

It is your responsibility to learn, to be good students, to be good citizens. They paid the price so that you could have the freedom to get an education. Don't ever forget it."

If you can read this, thank a teacher. If you read it in English, thank a soldier.

P.S. Cothren and her students have sent numerous care packages to military personnel serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. They write letters to soldiers in those theaters, sending 1,200 missives in 2005-2006. In 2006, the Veterans of Foreign Wars named Martha Cothren their "Teacher of the Year."

Retiree Facts

Q. When is a retiree's bedtime?

A. Three hours after he falls asleep on the couch.

Q. How many retirees does it take to change a light bulb?

A. Only one, but it might take all day.

Q. What's their biggest gripe?

A. There is not enough time to get everything done.

Q. Why don't retirees mind being called Seniors?

A. The term comes with a 10% percent discount.

Q. Among retirees what is considered casual attire?

A. Tied shoes.

Q. Why do retirees count pennies?

A. Only they have time.

Q. What is the term for someone who enjoys work and refuses to retire?

A. NUTS!

Q. Why are retirees so slow to clean out the basement, attic or garage?

A. They know that as soon as they do, one of their adult kids will want to store stuff there.

Q. What do retirees call a long lunch?

A. Normal

Q. What is retirement?

A. The never ending Coffee Break.

Q. What's the biggest advantage of going back to school as a retiree?

A. If you cut classes, no one calls your parents.

Mosquitoes In RVN

by SSgt Key [25th Inf Div, Cu Chi]

He's a sporting mosquito, with a lot of sense,

He carries spare beaks and a monkey wrench.

If the first one don't get you, then the second one will,

For added insurance, the tips are of steel.

He comes in low for he likes to glide,

To any spot of uncovered hide.

There's no need to slap for man can't win,

He dodges your blow then bores straight on in.

You can always fight back, but to no avail,

He evades your punches as you continue to flail.

He's a bit on the small side, but built really well,

Three quarters stinger and one quarter tail.

If he were as large as an eagle, he'd eat anything,

Can you image one quarter tail and three quarters sting?

Marshes and wet spots are the scenes of his birth,

At the size of an eagle, he'd conquer the earth.

Flying Formation

by Tom Dawes [537, 70]

One morning, enroute to Da Nang, I was going to fly a little formation with one of the other guys and saw another Bou, so I pulled up on his left wing and checked in. My buddy replied that he didn't see me and I responded, "I'm sitting right on your wing." At this, my co-pilot said "I think it's Col Barton (our squadron commander)." Thank goodness he never saw us.

Age Over Speed and Altitude

The setting was the O-Club at Kadena AFB, circa late 60's or early 70's.

The participants were an SR-71 crew, a Continental Airlines captain and his first officer, and two young school teachers for the US government schools in Okinawa. Actually, the last two should be called "targets of opportunity."

Ain't no way to say it nicely; but "Round Eyes" were a hot commodity in those days... especially unmarried ones. Our two young ladies were enjoying the unabashed and total focus of the four gentlemen sitting at the two tables on either side of them. 'Fight on'!

Since it was a "Dirty Shirt" bar, our two young studs were in flight suits, hepped up a little from their latest over-flight mission – fearless and bullet proof. They surveyed the opposition and knew they were already in the driver's seat, or soon would be. No real threat on the scope.

The Captain, while still handsome, was a bit long in tooth, a former Spad driver he was, but his first officer was of the jet age, having flown "Scooters" on little boats, until opting for the Good Life that the airlines promised.

Our two young damsels, were almost immediately overwhelmed by the two young "flat bellies" in their form-fit flight suits, covered with patches. They represented all that was good about virle, young, American manhood.

The Captain bought their drinks, but it was obvious that our two SR-71 types had the upper hand. One of the young ladies, looking at a patch on the shoulder of one of the two studs, asked what it meant. The patch was red (compliments green, Air Force guys know about such things). In the middle was the word *Habu* and just above it was a sinister looking snake. Above that was written *Lockheed Super Bird SR-71*. Just below that was *MACH 3+* and just below that was written *80,000*.

"Studley do right" knew it was time for the kill. He told the young ladies that *Habu* was the nickname of the airplane he flew. The teachers were new on the island so they weren't familiar with the venomous snake that lived there.

The prettier sweet young thing asked, "What does "match three mean?" Our steely eyed young buck knew it was all over but the shouting. Loud enough for most of the club to hear, he politely corrected her mispronunciation and explained that Mach was a technical word for the speed of sound. "Mach 3+ means I've flown over 3 times the speed of sound." He looks at the two airline types and says to the Captain, "Hey old man, you ever been above Mach 3?" In a humble mumble, the good Captain acknowledged he had not.

Studley knew her next question. Before she could even ask, he went on to explain that the *80,000+* stood for flying above 80,000 feet. Then Studley went too far. In a final move intended to seal the deal, Studley, erect and steely eyed, looked at our humble Captain and said what he should not have said; "Ever been above 80,000 old man?"

Our humble Captain looked at Studley and, ignoring his protagonist, he cracked a half smile, stared at the two young sweet things, and looked for signs of understanding for what he was about to say. He very calmly and eloquently said, "Only on my W-2 form hotshot, only on my W-2!"

Studley had no idea he'd just been smoked! He had no idea that the other gender, no matter what degree of blondness, or air filling of the head, wouldn't know Mach from match. They all knew what a W-2 was. It was a woman thing, it was innate, it was in their bones, and it was over. The good Captain said, "Why don't you ladies join us for dinner." An agreement was quick in coming and, as they left for parts unknown, Studley sat there stunned, having no idea what went wrong.

A simple government form had just trumped the fastest and highest flyer in the world. *Xin loi!*

Boo Boo Magoo Memoirs – Part 1

by Bob Ross [535, 69]

One of the more fascinating and occasionally frightening years in my short and happy life was 1969, when I spent time as a C-7A pilot stationed in Vung Tau, Vietnam. All of the squadron aircraft had names and the one that I flew the most often, by chance, was named Boo Boo Magoo. There was nothing special about this Caribou other than the fact it saved my butt a couple of times. For years after leaving Vung Tau, I thought I should write a book about my experiences, but I never did. When the Caribou Association Newsletter recently asked for stories, what I found left in my head after 39 years is a collection of memories, none of which is a full length feature film by itself, but in total they summarize my time as a C-7A pilot. These memories are dedicated to one of the many fine Caribous that kept me safe during my tour in Vietnam.

The Hotel Duy Tan

On board the Pan Am airliner departing Oakland full of military personnel headed for the Philippine Islands and eventually Vietnam, I was quite worried about how this was going to turn out for me personally. Right after lift off it occurred to me that the way my luck went, I would probably be killed on the trip over. Seconds later, the big jet made an emergency maneuver to avoid a mid-air with a small Cessna that I could see pass just below us. Great!

Many hours later, I was sitting in the Clark AFB Officers Club bar with several KC-135 pilots rotating to Vietnam assignments, swapping stories and expectations. Rumors were that in-country accommodations for aircrew members really sucked, but the odds for survival were pretty good. One of the KC pilots said there were twenty possible outcomes for him, one chance of getting killed and nineteen chances of getting back to SAC. I learned several

months later that he was killed when his O-2 was shot down.

My accommodation saga started to unfold when I arrived at Cam Rahn Bay. I was assigned to the 535th squadron in Vung Tau, but was to overnight at CRB before flying down. The room I was sent to for the night was full of two level bunks, off duty C-7A crewmembers, and, somewhat to my surprise, an American woman ironing clothes. Turns out she was dating the guy assigned the bed below where I was to sleep and spent the nights in his bed, after putting up curtains, of course. Made me a bit uncomfortable, but it seemed to be OK with the other guys because she did everyone's laundry.

The 535th's quarters turned out to be an old French Hotel named the Duy Tan, miles from the base with a ski boat parked inside the gate, a table in the lobby covered with paperback books to exchange, two beds to a room with a bath, air conditioner, and a bar/dining room on the roof. Now this was going to be my kind of war – fly all day, spend the evenings on the roof watching the airfield being rocketed, read a free book, sleep in relative comfort, and go water skiing on my days off. That turned out to have been mostly true, except for three things: the ski boat didn't run and the food and water had issues. The squadron had to scrounge for food for rooftop dining and choices were limited to what the Army didn't want. Diet included nonstop rice and canned fruit cocktail, which were pretty hard to eat after months and months, even if mixed together. Water had to be supplied by truck from the airfield resulting in it always being freezing cold and frequently running out. Cold showers were annoying, but not being able to flush the toilet was another matter. My personal solution one desperate evening was to pour four fifths of gin into the wall mounted French style toilet tank, which provided for one successful life saving flush.

Afraid of the Number 452

Thirty some years after the end of my

flying career I only remember one flight number and when I happen across the number 452 it still brings back a vivid and slightly frightening memory. During my first night in the squadron bar, one of the experienced pilots explained the next day's schedule postings. Types of trips were by number, with 452 and 453 for supporting the Fifth Special Forces. I flew my first flight as co-pilot the next day with an Instructor Pilot (IP). The mission was some simple passenger run and after a while I felt I was getting the hang of it. Late in the morning we landed at Ben Hoa and were informed that the airplane flying the 452 sortie had broken down and we needed to pick up the flight number in order to fly an emergency re-supply mission with ammunition for a camp under attack. Once airborne, after learning what the hot cargo ramp was all about, the IP informed me that I needed to establish radio contact with our fighter escort as soon as we were near the camp. Fighter escort! I had the feeling that I must have slept through the lesson about this type of mission in Caribou crew training. Contact established, the IP slowed the Caribou to stall speed over the camp while the two F-100's made strafing runs on both sides of the runway. As the Caribou started to stall, the IP dumped the nose 30 to 40 degrees and began a tight spiral down. Turning final, he horsed the nose up to bleed airspeed and called for gear and flaps. Habit patterns made it possible for me to accomplish these simple tasks just in time to land. As we rolled towards the ramp, the loadmaster cut all but one tie down strap. We pivoted at the ramp end of the runway, the last strap was cut, and we drove out from under the load on our takeoff roll skyward. My suspicion about having missed this lesson was now confirmed. Once safely airborne I managed to say, "Hope you didn't do all that for my benefit just because I'm new." He replied, "so much for the demonstration, next approach and landing are yours."

Continued in Next Newsletter

AF Donates TV for Hospital Ward

from *Tropic Lightning News*

Cu Chi – Members of the Army, Air Force, and the Nurse Corps have teamed up to provide Ward C-6 of the 12th Evacuation Hospital with a television set that was badly needed.

The hospital, serving the 25th Inf Div, is located at the base camp near Cu Chi and it was here that the idea first started with TSgt Pierce of the USAF. Pierce was assigned to the 8th Aerial Port Detachment at Cu Chi and was in Ward C-6 recovering from minor surgery. "I noticed that there was only one TV set in the ward and it was down at the far end," explained Peirce, from WV.

"None of the patients at the other end could hear what was going on and most of them couldn't even see the set, so I figured that a fund could be started to get another one," Pierce said.

Pierce mentioned his idea to the ward nurse, 1/Lt Theresa Morel of Newton, NJ, to see what she thought of it. Morel was all for it. "A TV set would be great for morale. These boys are all bedridden and can't get closer to the one set we do have, so it really depresses those at the far end," she said.

"They've already gone through hell," emphasized the nurse as she gazed around her at the patients. "Anything that can be done for them is great in my book." Many nurses and the patients themselves contributed to the fund while Pierce returned to his detachment and started asking for contributions.

"Every man in the Detachment contributed some money and when I went over to our area, the response was tremendous," Pierce beamed.

The Airmen stay with the HHC and Band where they draw rations and live. "Within 24 hours the fund had \$160," stated Pierce. "I'm putting up a box in the Air Terminal for anyone who wants to contribute something," said Pierce as he contemplated the future happiness of countless wounded soldiers.

Honoring Heroes

I sat in my seat of the Boeing 767 waiting for everyone to hurry and stow their carry-ons and grab a seat so we could start what I was sure to be a long, uneventful flight home.

With the huge capacity and slow moving people taking their time to stuff luggage far too big for the overhead and never paying much attention to holding up the growing line behind them, I simply shook my head, knowing that this flight was not starting out very well. I was anxious to get home to see my loved ones so I was focused on my issues and just felt like standing up and yelling for some of these clowns to get their act together.

I knew I couldn't say a word so I just thumbed thru the "Sky Mall" magazine from the seat pocket in front of me. You know it's really getting rough when you resort to the over priced, useless sky mall *^#%\$ to break the monotony.

With everyone finally seated, we just sat there with the cabin door open and no one in any hurry to get us going, although we were well past the scheduled takeoff time.

"No wonder the airline industry is in trouble," I told myself. Just then, the attendant came on the intercom to inform us all that we were being delayed. The entire plane let out a collective groan.

She resumed speaking to say "We are holding the aircraft for some very special people who are on their way to the plane and the delay shouldn't be more than 5 minutes."

After waiting six times as long as we were promised, the work finally came that I was finally going to be on my way home. Why the hoopla over "these" folks?" I was expecting some celebrity or sport figure to be the reason for the hold up. "Just get their butts in a seat and let's hit the gas," I thought.

The flight attendant came back on the speaker to announce in a loud and excited voice that we were being joined by several U.S. Marines returning home from Iraq!!!

Just as they walked on board, the entire plane erupted into applause. The men were a bit taken by surprise by the 340 people cheering for them as they searched for their seats.

They were having their hands shaken and touched by almost everyone who was within an arm's distance of them as they passed down the aisle. One elderly woman kissed the hand of one of the Marines as he passed by her. The applause, whistles, and cheering didn't stop for a long time!

When we were finally airborne, I was not the only civilian checking his conscience as to the delays in "me" getting home, finding my easy chair, a cold beverage and the remote in my hand.

These men had done for all of us and I had been complaining silently about "me" and "my" issues. I took for granted the every day freedoms I enjoy and the conveniences of the American way of life.

I took for granted that others had paid the price for my ability to moan and complain about a few minutes delay to "me" while those Heroes were going home to their loved ones.

I attempted to get my selfish outlook back in order and minutes before we landed, I suggested to the attendant that she announce over the speaker a request for everyone to remain in their seats until our heroes were allowed to gather their things and be first off the plane.

The cheers and applause continued until the last Marine stepped off and we all rose to go about our too often taken for granted everyday freedoms.

I felt proud of them. I felt it an honor and a privilege to be among the first to welcome them home and say "Thank you for a job well done."

I vowed that I will never forget that flight nor the lesson learned. I can't say it enough,

THANK YOU to those Veterans and active servicemen and women who may read this and a prayer for those who cannot because they are no longer with us.

USAF Increases Use of Drones

The Associated Press reports, "The military's reliance on unmanned aircraft," or UAVs, "that can watch, hunt and sometimes kill insurgents has soared to more than 500,000 hours in the air, largely in Iraq." This "dramatic increase" also includes the Air Force doubling "its monthly use of drones, forcing it to take pilots out of the air and shift them to remote flying duty to meet part of the demand." The rising "use of drones across the armed services" is due in part to last year's troop surge in Iraq, according to a Pentagon report, with the UAVs carrying out surveillance, reconnaissance and "hunter-killer" missions using air-to-ground missiles. "The type of warfare" being conducted in Iraq is "heavy into intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance," and the Pentagon's report notes that military UAVs logged over 550,000 flight hours in the 2007 fiscal year to this end. The report added that "the Defense Department plans to develop an 'increasingly sophisticated force of unmanned systems' over the next 25 years," including improvements to "the drones' reconnaissance and surveillance abilities."

About 120 Air Force pilots were recently transferred from traditional piloting missions to man the drones, which can be operated remotely from military installations within the U.S. This includes Nellis AFB in Nevada, as well as "remote" locations...in North Dakota, Texas, Arizona, and California."

The military's UAV systems include the Global Hawk, the Predator, the Raven, and the Shadow. With "a wingspan of about 116 feet" and the capability to reach an altitude of 65,000 feet, the Global Hawk "provides high-altitude, high-resolution intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance in near real-time," and follows pre-programmed directions with "ground-based opera-

tors monitoring its progress."

The Predator, although similarly "equipped with cameras, sensors and radar" for surveillance, is also equipped with "a targeting system and can carry two laser-guided Hellfire missiles," making it "the military's main, [unmanned] hunter-killer system." With a five-foot wingspan, and "weighing a little more than four pounds," the Raven is "a critical reconnaissance tool for smaller Army units, such as companies and battalions," as it can be "used to locate roadside bombs or let soldiers know what lies around the next corner or over the hill." Troops can launch the UAV "by hand, though it also has an electric motor."

The Shadow is a small and light-weight aircraft, coming in at a little over 11 feet, with a gasoline engine that can run for about four hours." These UAVs are "commonly used for route reconnaissance, raid over-watch and searches," and are "launched continuously to support the ground units outside of the base ...increasing situational awareness for combat troops is the greatest advantage of the UAVs," and daily preventative maintenance is performed to "make sure nothing is torn, broken or not functional."

Lost Horizon

by Bob Cummings [459, 66]

While stationed at Da Nang, I was an engine mechanic who flew almost every day. If I was needed to repair a downed aircraft, I would fly to that location, repair the aircraft, and bring it back home to Da Nang. The following story is one of many experiences that I had while serving in Vietnam.

One day I was flying up the coast on a C-7A Caribou standing on the step between the pilot and the co-pilot. I was looking out the front window when the pilot, who was known as the squadron clown, asked me if I wanted to fly the aircraft. He asked me if I had my taxi and run-up license and I replied that I did. He also said that he knew that I

knew all about the engines since I was an aircraft engine mechanic.

When I got into the seat, the pilot said that the co-pilot would explain everything else that I needed to know and for me not to put my feet on the pedals, just to take the yoke. So the pilot took off his helmet, climbed out of his seat, proceeded to give me the helmet, and let me climb into his seat.

I hooked up the harness and he hooked up the radio communications cord. Then the co-pilot started telling me about the level (the bubble) and how to keep the aircraft straight and level. He also told me to watch the RPMs and to keep the engines synchronized. After the co-pilot explained everything, he said that it was all mine, to go ahead and take over.

At that time, everything was good, and I was looking out the front windshield and keeping a check on the bubble. All of a sudden I started to lose my horizon and all I could see was the sky.

I didn't know what was happening, so I asked the co-pilot what was going on, but the co-pilot said to just keep the bubble level. So I kept trying to keep the bubble level, and as I looked out the side window I could see land, but I had totally lost my horizon.

By this time the pilot was standing between me and the co-pilot, laughing himself to death.

I finally figured out what had happened – the pilot had been turning the trim wheel on the side of the seat and that caused me to lose my horizon, because he was raising the nose of the aircraft. So, I was stretching in my seat to try to see the horizon, but I would never have been able to find it because he had trimmed the nose up.

They had a big laugh at my expense, and then they trimmed the nose back down for me. I continued flying the aircraft up the coast for another 5 or 6 minutes which was really exciting for me. This was just another typical day in the life of an engine mechanic stationed at Da Nang.

USAF CV-22 Osprey

The V-22 Osprey is a joint-service, medium-lift, multi-mission tilt-rotor aircraft developed by Boeing and Bell Helicopters. Boeing is responsible for the fuselage, landing gear, avionics, electrical and hydraulic systems, performance, and flying qualities. Bell Helicopter Textron is responsible for the wing and nacelle, propulsion, rotor, empennage (complete tail system), ramp, over wing fairing, and the dynamics.

The nacelles rotate 90° forward once airborne, converting the aircraft into a turboprop aircraft. The aircraft operates as a helicopter when taking off and landing vertically. The nacelles rotate 90° forward once airborne, converting the aircraft into a turboprop aircraft.

The aircraft can provide VTOL (Vertical Take-Off and Landing) with a payload of 24 troops, or 6,000 lb of cargo at 430 nm combat range, or VTOL with a payload of 8,300 lb of cargo for a range of 220 nm. The helicopter is self-deployable worldwide, with a ferry range over 2,100 nm. Normal operating range is up to 1,100 nm.

The tilt-rotor aircraft is available in three configurations: the Combat Assault and Assault Support MV-22 for the US Marine Corps and the US Army; the long-range Special Operations CV-22 for US Special Operations Command (US SOCOM); and the US Navy HV-22, for combat search and rescue, special warfare and fleet logistic support. The first CV-22 was delivered to the USAF in October 2005.

The V-22 was approved for full-rate production in September 2005. The MV-22 achieved initial operating capability in June 2007 and left for its first operational deployment in Iraq in September 2007, with USMC Squadron 263. Initial operating capability for the CV-22 is planned for 2009, but a CV-22 flew a first search and recovery mission from Kirtland AFB, NM, in October 2007. 360 MV-22 (to replace



CH-46 Sea Knight) and 50 CV-22 (to replace MH-53J Pave Low helicopters) are required.

The flight crew has a pilot's night-vision system and a Honeywell integrated helmet display. The cockpit is equipped with six night-vision goggle compatible displays.

The aircraft is armed with an M240G 7.62mm machine gun mounted on the back ramp. BAE Systems has developed a remotely operated weapon turret for the MV-22, the Remote Guardian System (RGS), which provides 360 degree coverage. The RGS can be belly-mounted on the MV-22 and can be armed with a GAU-17 7.62 mm mini-gun or other gun up to 0.50 caliber.

The US Air Force and US Navy variants are equipped with a Raytheon AN/APQ-186 terrain-following, multi-mode radar. The helicopter night-vision system is the Raytheon AN/AAQ-16 (V-22) FLIR, which is mounted on the nose. This system contains a 3-5 micron indium antimonide staring focal plane array.

The aircraft's electronic warfare suite includes the ATK AN/AAR-47 missile warning system, which consists of four electro-optic sensors with photomultipliers, a signal processing unit and a cockpit display.

The aircraft will be equipped with

a 12.7mm turreted gun system. The aircraft is also equipped with a radar and infrared threat warning system and chaff and flare dispensers with 60 rounds of dispensables. The CV-22 will have the Suite of Integrated Radio Frequency Measures (SIRFC), being developed by ITT Avionics.

The aircraft is powered by two Rolls-Royce T406-AD-400 turboshaft engines rated at 4,400 kw maximum continuous power. The engines are fitted with Full-Authority Digital Electronic Control (FADEC) supplied by Lucas Aerospace, backup analog electronic control system, and fire protection system from Systron Donner. A transmission interconnect shaft provides single-engine operation. The thermal signature of the aircraft is minimized with an Ai-Research infrared emission suppression unit, installed on the nacelles near the engine exhaust. The entire rotor, transmission and engine nacelles tilt through 90° in forward rotation and are directed forwards for forward flight, and through 7.5° in aft rotation for vertical take-off and landing.

The Osprey has its good days and bad days. "It seems like these planes all talk to each other," said a Marine flight-line mechanic in Iraq. "When a part goes bad on one of them, it goes bad on all of them."

Disorder in the Courts

from Jim Hope [536, 66]

These are from a book called *Disorder in the American Courts*, and are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and now published by court reporters who had the torment of staying calm while these exchanges were actually taking place.

ATTORNEY: What is your date of birth?

WITNESS: July 18th.

ATTORNEY: What year?

WITNESS: Every year.

ATTORNEY: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

WITNESS: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

ATTORNEY: This myasthenia gravis, does it affect your memory at all?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: And in what ways does it affect your memory?

WITNESS: I forget.

ATTORNEY: You forget? Can you give us an example of something you forgot?

ATTORNEY: How old is your son, the one living with you

WITNESS: Thirty-eight or thirty-five, I can't remember which.

ATTORNEY: How long has he lived with you?

WITNESS: Forty-five years.

ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

ATTORNEY: The youngest son, the twenty-year-old, how old is he?

WITNESS: Uh, he's twenty-one.

ATTORNEY: Were you present when your picture was taken?

WITNESS: Would you repeat the question?

ATTORNEY: She had three children, right?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: How many were boys?

WITNESS: None.

ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death.

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

ATTORNEY: Can you describe the individual?

WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard.

ATTORNEY: Was this a male or a female?

ATTORNEY: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

WITNESS: No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All my autopsies are performed on dead people.

ATTORNEY: ALL your responses MUST be oral, OK? What school did you go to?

WITNESS: Oral.

ATTORNEY: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

WITNESS: The autopsy started around 8:30 p.m.

ATTORNEY: And Mr. Denton was dead at the time?

WITNESS: No, he was sitting on the table wondering why I was doing an autopsy on him!

And the best for last:

ATTORNEY: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for blood pressure?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for breathing?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

WITNESS: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

ATTORNEY: But could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

WITNESS: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law.

Aircraft Gripes

PILOT: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.

MECHANIC: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft. *****

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent

M: Cannot reproduce problem on ground. *****

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.

M: Evidence removed. *****

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.

M: DME volume set to more believable level. *****

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.

M: That's what friction locks are for.

P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.

M: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

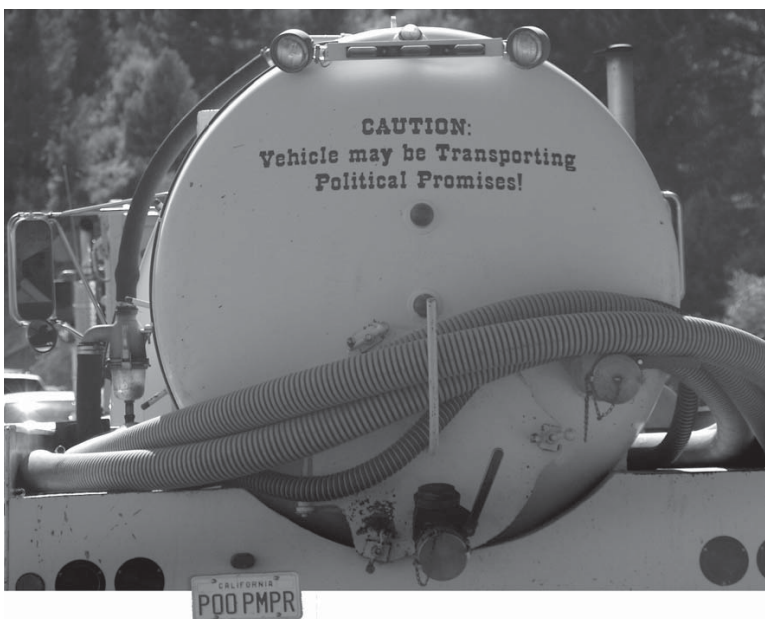


More on Missing Army Jeeps

by Rod Lester [537, 67]

While serving with the 537 TCS/17Aviation Company during 1966/1967, we had a number of spot/mid-night requisitions of jeeps at Cam Ranh Bay, Nha Trang, and Saigon. In these areas, every Army field grade officer and most captains had their personal jeep to get around in a one square mile area. These bases were easy targets, with lots of loose jeeps and parking ramps with easy access.

The jeeps we took were not for personal use, but for trading purposes. They were traded for AK47's and other North Vietnamese souvenirs. These items were traded for what we were really after: pallets of beer or soft drinks, plywood, as well as cases of steaks or lobsters. The crews were very efficient at having all bumper markings changed during the short flight home.



Vietnam Tour

by Bob Cummings [459, 66]

This report is the last in a series from Vietnam, where I am traveling with a group of former POWs and family members. I wrote earlier about Hanoi and Halong Bay, up-and-coming tourist destinations for adventurous travelers. Today, I'm coming to you from a region of the country that may never appear on any tour itinerary. If you are interested in Vietnam, please read on.

In the middle of a long, bleak night in 1972, 203 American POWs were removed from their cells in the Hanoi Hilton, shackled, and packed into army trucks that set out for an unknown destination. Peeking under their blindfolds, some of the men were able to determine that their direction was northerly. After many hours passed, they began to wonder if they were being taken to China, where they would be totally off the grid and impossible to find.

They did not make it all the way to China, though they came very close. In the mountainous jungle near the border, they were deposited in a cobra-infested compound that came to be called Dogpatch.

Other prison locations were well known, but Dogpatch was built in a remote and forbidding place to ensure that it would never be found by the Americans.

Most cells in other prisons were lit 24 hours a day, but there was no electricity at Dogpatch and the cells were perpetually dark. We left Lang Son early this morning in our quest to reach Dogpatch. Even today, it's an arduous journey with long stretches on rutted gravel or dirt roads hugging mountains and giving way to sheer drops into green valleys below. The isolated villages are few and far between and we drew curious stares in each that we passed through. We drove by an unmanned bird-flu checkpoint on a dirt road leading to China, and traveled on until our road disintegrated into ruts and puddles

that made it impassable. We stepped down from the bus and began a 2-mile hike to where we were met by jeeps driven by Vietnamese army troops, for the final leg of the journey.

A couple of miles later, we climbed out of the Russian-made vehicles and pushed our way into a dense tangle of trees, plants, vines, and thorns on the side of a mountain. The going was rugged and slippery. In the sweltering humidity, we were quickly wet with sweat.

The first structure I saw was a grey, concrete, rectangular cell that one of our pilots had once inhabited. The cellblock had partially collapsed, the wooden door had rotted away and bamboo screens that had prevented light from entering through the vent holes were gone. Massive vines and tree roots were growing directly out of the concrete, as if the jungle was determined to take back its own.

The undergrowth was so thick that visibility was frequently no more than 30 feet. The group splintered into small units that lost sight of each other, but whenever a new structure was found, people on the scene would call out to the rest. We located many damaged buildings, including some that may have been blown apart during the Chinese invasion in 1979, but only one complete cellblock remains standing. More than anything else, it looks like a decaying, unadorned mausoleum.

It was sunny above the jungle canopy, but shady below. We stepped inside the old cell block and felt our way through the rooms and halls and solitary cells in absolute, horrifying blackness, broken only by the occasional flash of a camera. Our pictures could in no way capture what it felt like to be inside those walls.

All of the former POWs I am traveling with were in that overnight caravan from Hanoi 35 years ago and two lived in this cellblock. We could hear their descriptions of who had slept where, but it was almost impossible to imagine the place inhabited. We emerged from

the jungle to find that our guides had located two villagers who claimed to have helped build the prison in the '60s. Like everyone we have met in the countryside, they were friendly, courteous, and respectful. We offered them beer, and they stayed with us as we tried to digest what we had just seen.

We also met an old man as we milled around near our jeeps. He lived with his wife in a small wooden hut built on stilts, with a livestock pen underneath. When our guide knocked on his door to tell him that there were Americans outside who had been held in the prison during the war, he apologized that he was not properly dressed and asked for a moment to prepare himself. In a short time, he returned wearing a new shirt and a black beret and invited the group into his home.

Our interpreter said the old man was 88 years of age and had served in the military. He was slight of build and moved slowly, and his eyes were tired but kind. During his adult lifetime, the Vietnamese have fought not only a civil war and the Americans, but the French, the Chinese, and the Cambodians. It's likely this old man has known more than his share of sorrow and hard times.

He spoke softly for a while, of the prison and other matters, and when it was time to leave, one of the former POWs grasped the old man's hand with both of his, as is the Vietnamese custom, and thanked him for his kindness and hospitality. Incredibly, the old man raised the back of the pilot's hand to his face and kissed it, as some in the room were moved to tears.

As the pilot, Al Carpenter, said later, there were no political ideologies in the room that afternoon, no Ho Chi Minh or LBJ. There were "just two old veterans, connecting for a brief and unexpected moment of mutual respect."

It's been decades since the angry skies over Vietnam went silent and these cellblock doors were opened to the light. Now, only cobras call Dog-

patch home. What man has built here is being consumed by the vegetation, vanishing into the green curtain. In a generation or two, only the jungle will remain.

Today, our pilots became the first Americans to return to Dogpatch since the war ended, and it has been a privilege to be allowed to tag along. The family members leave with a better understanding of the strength it took to survive and the courage it has taken to return.

People travel for many reasons. I can't tell you what these 11 men came looking for, but I sincerely hope they found it. As for others who might come, I've tried to depict Vietnam exactly as I have seen it. It's not for everyone, but for me at least, it was worth the long journey.

-30-

Danger!!! Danger!!!

Check the mailing label on this newsletter. If it does not show "2008" or later, then it is **PAST TIME TO PAY** your Caribou Tax or this will be the **last** newsletter you will receive.

If you aren't up to date, you:

1. may have changed your address and the dues reminder in the last newsletter went to an old address
2. may have just sent in your check
3. may have forgotten to send your check
4. are one of the 169 roster names who should send 2008 dues **NOW**.

DO IT TODAY.

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

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Your \$10 helps the Association grow and put on other outstanding reunions like the one in Dayton from 29 Sep to 2 Oct, 2008.

Night, VFR/Weather Landing

by Christy McKenzie [535, 68]

On my first mission after being checked out as an AC, as we were on our way back to Vung Tau and monitoring the tower frequency, we heard that the active runway was 36. It was getting dark – low clouds and fog – I asked the co-pilot, who was about to finish his tour, what he knew about landing to the north. Until then all my landings at Vung Tau had been to the south or east, in daylight, and in sunshine.

My copilot, who had seen landings to the north once or twice, suggested getting below the clouds and keeping the small mountain on our left wing until we could turn north to the field. So we did. We dropped down below the clouds, which were covering a good bit of the hill, drove over the water, and announced to the tower we were on final. Tower announced we were clear to land. Fog was pretty good by then – neither of us could see anything but the lights of the town and the hill on the left, but he was confident we were where we should be.

About that time we heard an Army helicopter say he was taxiing onto the runway for take-off. Tower told him we were on final, so the chopper pilot yelled at us “Don’t land – don’t land.” While we were going around straight ahead, I asked the copilot, “Any ideas?” He replied, “No, sir. I have never been here before.” After we got down, it occurred to me this was my absolute first night, VFR, weather, strange field landing.

Bou Pilots vs. F-4 Pilots

by Stan Bixler [483, 66]

In 1967, there was a confrontation between pilots of the F-4 wing at Cam Ranh Bay and the C-7A wing and squadron pilots.

One of our Caribou pilots painted a

large mural of one of our birds making a LAPES drop. The mural was hung in the Officer’s Club along with a mural of the F-4. The Caribou mural was removed from the club by F-4 pilots and deposited in the trash behind the Officer’s Club. Our pilots retrieved the mural from the trash pile and returned it to the 483rd TAW headquarters where it was displayed on the wall outside the Wing Commander’s office (Colonel Paul Mascot).

Not wanting the fighter jocks to think they could get away with this arrogant, unwarranted action, the F-4 mural disappeared from the club and could not be found. For some reason, the Caribou pilots were the prime suspects.

The F-4 wing commander paid numerous visits to Col Mascot’s office over a period of weeks, pleading for Col Mascot to have the mural returned. Col Mascot responded each time that he had no knowledge as to the whereabouts of the painting (when, in fact, it was in the storage area adjacent to his office).

Eventually, it was returned and the F-4 jocks no longer took our Bou pilots as someone to mess with.

Does anyone know what happened to the Bou mural?

Last Days in Country

by Gery Putnam [537, 70]

One of my best drinking buddies, the late Charlie Cramer, arrived in Nam a little more than a month before I did in early 1970. He was a C-141 driver determined to go with Delta Airlines, which he did. I had a 45 day rollback from flying the B-52 out of U-Tapao. This put our DEROS at the same time. He wanted to fly maximum sorties in minimum time on his fini-flight. I agreed to fly with him and ops scheduled us together on February 23, 1971, according to my Form 5. I have forgotten the name of our FE, but he was specifically recruited for this mission.

Charlie worked a deal with the ALCE at Chu Lai to schedule all of our loads

to restricted fields in the area of which I remember there were three. We were both IPs and restricted field qualified. The maximum number of restricted landings per day was six, so we reasoned between us that would be twelve. The maximum sorties (takeoffs and landings) for a day was 21. Everything went on schedule and we hit 10 restricted fields, which were relatively close to Chu Lai. After the last sortie, we flew to Phu Cat and were taxiing in at about 1430. Nobody except the flight crew and ALCE were aware of the plan. The ground crew knew we were on our fini flight, but certainly weren’t expecting us so soon. They were scurrying and almost missed hosing us down.

The next day, we were on the Cam Rahn courier to catch a flight home. A young lieutenant, Air Force Academy grad and football player, whose name escapes me was flying. He had been a lineman and we gave him the nickname “Baby Huey.” We were scud running the coast line with Charlie and I keeping an eye on the cockpit when Baby Huey asks us if he should fly around a rain squall dead ahead. We both screamed “turn left” and I thought Charlie was going to climb in his lap. The rain squall was a 2000 foot rock jutting out in the South China Sea.

Charlie and I planned on sipping a little Jim Beam on the flight across the pond. I had to turn down a seat to wait for an aircraft that could accommodate us both. When it arrived, it was all Army except us. We figured our sipping time was non-existent. Turned out the plane commander, John Mason, was an O-5 seminar mate of mine at the Armed Forces Staff College, which we both attended just prior to shipping out. It suddenly became a bearable flight to McChord.

I later heard that, after he was briefed on our fini-flight, Col. Greenleaf jumped in a Bou headed for Phu Cat to find out the particulars. We probably passed him in flight. A friend who was close to Col. Greenleaf said he didn’t remember any repercussions.

Memorabilia

MEMORABILIA ORDER FORM

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

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

1. Polo Shirt*	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$18.00	Total: _____
2. Colored T Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$15.00	Total: _____
3. Three-View T Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
4. Denim Shirt	Size - Please Mark: M L XL XXL	Qty. _____ @ \$25.00	Total: _____
5. Denim Hat	One size fits all	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
6. Baseball Hat	One size fits all	Qty. _____ @ \$13.00	Total: _____
7. 457 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
8. 458 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
9. 459 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
10. 535 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
11. 536 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
12. 537 th Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
13. 483 rd Replica Patch		Qty. _____ @ \$3.00	Total: _____
14. Caribou Lapel Pin		Qty. _____ @ \$2.00	Total: _____
15. Caribou Poster (12" x 18")		Qty. _____ @ \$5.00	Total: _____
16. Caribou Challenge Coin		Qty. _____ @ \$8.00	Total: _____

Total: _____

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

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

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

2007 Reunion Survey

(included in the November 2007 newsletter)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>1. How did you hear about the reunion?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Newsletter - 77% b. Web site - 8% c. Other - 15% <p>2. How did you travel to the reunion?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Airplane - 55% b. Private vehicle - 43% c. Other - 2% <p>3. What would you do to improve the War Room?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Nothing - 73% b. Larger - 27% c. Smaller - 0% <p>4. Would you like to see any changes in the memorabilia room?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Larger inventory? 70% Yes; 30% No b. Advance sales where you order the memorabilia online and pick it up at the reunion? 60% Yes; 40% No c. Would you like to help Jim during the next reunion?
Yes 26%; No 74 % <p>5. During the three days of the reunion did you have enough time to do all the things you wanted to do?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Yes - 80% b. No, we stayed longer to enjoy the sights. - 16% | <p>6. What are your thoughts on the Business Meeting?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Well prepared and not too long. Yes 98%; No 2% b. Reports were helpful and informative?
Yes 100%; No 0% a. Agenda was helpful? Yes 95%; No 5% <p>7. Are you planning to attend 2008 reunion in Dayton?
Yes 74%; No 26%</p> <p>8. Please rate your reunion experience. (72 responses)
1 being the worst and 10 being the best.
10 - 33%; 9 - 26%; 8 - 29%; 7 - 7%;
6 - 1%; 5 - 1%; 4 - 0%; 3 - 0%; 2 - 0%; 1 - 0%</p> <p>9. How do you like to spend your free time at a reunion?
(67 responses)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sharing experiences in the War Room - 25% b. On my own, visiting interesting places in the area - 13% a. Pre-planned tours to interesting places and entertainment in the area - 61% <p>10. How often should we have reunions? (89 responses)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Each year - 49% b. Every two years - 40% c. Every 3-5 years - 10% <p>Note: Questions 1-6 were answered by 40-50 members.</p> |
|--|---|

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